Universal Ship Cancellation Society

Data Sheet # 13

Operation End Sweep - Mine Clearing of Haiphong Harbor
by Task Force 78
6 February 1973 - 18 July 1973

Compiled by Stewart B. Milstein (7205)

When the truce with North Vietman went into effect on 27 January 1973, the U.S. Navy was faced with the task of clearing the mines out of Haiphong Harbor as part of the Cease Fire Agreement. Task Force 78, commanded by RADM Brian McCauley, JSN, was established to accomplish this. ADM Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., USN (Ret), in his book On Watch, states that this operation was undertaken with the slogan "Slow is Good" because we did not want to dispose of all the mines before all POWs were released.

This operation was of special importance to the Navy because it was the first use of helicopters towing minesweeping equipment. The CH-53 "Sea Stallion" helicopters had not been built to withstand the structural stress caused by towing the heavy sweeping gear. However, the helicopters performed well and the mission was accomplished with the loss of only two helicopters and no men.

This data sheet lists the units of Task Force 78 and the dates the ships were on station during Operation End Sweep. Ships are grouped by hull classification and number within assigned task group. Also included is a selection of covers from the collections of Stew Milstein (7205) and Bob Rawlins (5490) to show the variety of hand-written, typed and rubber stamp cachets/markings applied by TF 78 units and to illustrate postmarks which are associated with Operation End Sweep mail.

Mail from TF 78 ships without a post office was usually serviced on station by the MCM support ship. But it is noted that collector mail was not always serviced promptly by the task force units; collector requests were sometimes held on board for later dispatch at a shore facility in Japan, Hong Kong, the Phillipines or Guam which the ships visited for rest and recreation or upkeep. This mail may be recognized by Op End Sweep cachets or markings and dates between or shortly after assignment on station.

Because of the short duration of this operation and the fact that the names of units assigned did not receive wide distribution, "End Sweep" covers are not plentiful. A sharp eye and close attention to dates will reward a patient search.

Reference: Declassified U.S. Navy reports of Operation End Sweep
# Operation End Sweep - Task Force 78

6 February 1973 to 18 July 1973

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/Hull Number</th>
<th>On-Station Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surveillance/Notification Line Forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPPERSON (DD-719)</td>
<td>31 Jan - 17 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HENDERSON (DD-785)</td>
<td>13 Apr - 18 Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MACKENZIE (DD-836)</td>
<td>17 Mar - 27 Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEONARD F. MASON (DD-852)</td>
<td>17 Feb - 26 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDSON (DD-946)</td>
<td>27 Jun - 30 Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TURNER JOY (DD-951)</td>
<td>26 Feb - 17 Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN KING (DDG-3)</td>
<td>23 Feb - 07 Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WADDELL (DDG-24)</td>
<td>19 Mar - 13 Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECATUR (DDG-31)</td>
<td>01 Jul - 06 Jul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN PAUL JONES (DDG-32)</td>
<td>15 Jun - 22 Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORDEN (DLG-18)</td>
<td>15 Jul - 19 Jul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STERETT (DLG-31)</td>
<td>21 Jan - 23 Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARLES S. BERRY (DE-1035)</td>
<td>19 Apr - 23 Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRADLEY (DE-1041)</td>
<td>22 Jun - 14 Jul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALBERT DAVID (DE-1050)</td>
<td>18 Apr - 23 Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'CALLAHAN (DE-1051)</td>
<td>07 Mar - 19 Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REASONER (DE-1063)</td>
<td>27 Mar - 02 Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEIN (DE-1065)</td>
<td>02 Apr - 19 Apr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COOK (DE-1083)</td>
<td>06 Jul - 15 Jul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 Jun - 27 Jun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 Jul - 19 Jul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Surface Mine Countermeasures Forces (SMCM)** |
| ENGAGE (MSO-433)                    | 28 Jan - 27 Mar    |
| ENHANCE (MSO-437)                   | 01 Jun - 22 Jul    |
| ESTEEM (MSO-438)                    | 08 Mar - 18 Mar    |
| FORCE (MSC-445)                     | 01 May - 22 Jul    |
| FORTIFY (MSO-446)                   | 28 Jan - 06 Mar    |
| ILLUSIVE (MSO-448)                  | 26 Mar - 12 Apr    |
| IMPERVIOUS (MSO-449)                | 28 Jan - 27 Mar    |
| INFLECT (MSO-456)                   | 01 May - 28 May    |
| CONQUEST (MSO-480)                  | 07 Mar - 18 Apr    |
| LEADER (MSO-490)                    | 01 May - 22 Jul    |
| WASHTENAW COUNTY (MSS-2)            | 28 Jan - 06 Mar    |
|                                 | 26 Mar - 18 Apr    |
|                                 | 01 Jun - 22 Jun    |
|                                 | 16 Apr - 23 Apr    |
|                                 | 01 May - 22 Jul    |
|                                 | 12 Apr - 18 Apr    |
|                                 | 01 May - 22 Jul    |
|                                 | 08 Mar - 17 Mar    |
|                                 | 18 Apr - 23 Apr    |
|                                 | 01 May - 22 Jul    |
|                                 | 06 Apr - 23 Apr    |
|                                 | 01 Jun - 24 Jul    |
Surface Counter Measure Support Force

WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST-1167) 28 Jan - 14 Mar
01 Apr - 23 Apr
01 May - 23 Jul

Airborne Mine Countermeasures Forces (AMCM)

HM-12 29 Nov - 18 Apr
01 May - 27 Jul

HMH-165 28 Jan - 01 Apr
16 Apr - 23 Apr
01 May - 24 Jul

HMH-463 28 Jan - 18 Apr
01 May - 22 Jul

Airborne Mine Countermeasures Support Forces

VANCOUVER (LPD-2) 16 Apr - 23 Apr
01 May - 23 Jul

OGDEN (LPD-5) 30 Jan - 18 Apr
01 May - 21 Jul

CLEVELAND (LPD-7) 01 Feb - 01 Apr
30 Jan - 18 Apr
01 May - 24 Jul

DUBUQUE (LPD-8) 01 May - 26 Jul

TRIPOLE (LPH-10) 29 Jan - 18 Apr

NEW ORLEANS (LPH-11) 28 Jan - 01 Apr

INCHON (LPH-12) 16 Apr - 23 Apr
01 May - 26 Jul

Salvage Forces

GRASP (ARS-24) 12 May - 12 Jul
08 Mar - 30 Mar

SAFEGUARD (ARS-25) 28 Jan - 06 Mar
30 Mar - 23 Apr
01 May - 12 May

BOLSTER (ARS-38) 01 May - 03 May
10 Apr - 23 Apr
01 Jun - 14 Jun

CREE (ATF-84) 01 Feb - 24 Mar

LIPAN (ATF-85) 05 Feb - 18 Mar
24 Mar - 10 Apr
03 May - 31 May

TAWASA (ATF-92) 14 Jun - 18 Jul

CHOWANOC (ATF-100) 12 Jul - 22 Jul

MOCTOBI (ATF-105)
Subic Bay

Commanding Officer
USS CONQUEST (MSC 488)
FPO, San Francisco 96602

A unit of Task Force 78
Operation "END Sweep"

R. H. NEUDELDER
Commanding

Dear Capt. Lawler,

USS DUBUQUE is among 15 ships of the U.S. Seventh Fleet involved in Operation End Sweep off the coast of North Vietnam. Mine clearing operations are currently being conducted in Haiphong Harbor by the minesweeping units of Task Force 78. The first mine detected in the End Sweep Operation was accomplished by a CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter attached to Helicopter Mine Warfare Squadron TWO-L (HM-12) Detachment ALAA flying from the deck of USS DUBUQUE.

Cecil J. Kemp
Captain, U.S. Navy
Commanding Officer

NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD
PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA

U.S.S. DUBUQUE
LPD-8
OPERATION END SWEET
21 Feb 73

Cecil J. Kemp

U.S. NAVY
LPD-8
DUBUQUE (LPD-8)
U.S.S. DUBUQUE
OPERATION END SWEET
21 Feb 73
Cecil J. Kemp

U.S.S. DUBUQUE
LPD-8
OPERATION END SWEET
21 Feb 73
Cecil J. Kemp
Operation End Sweep
Embosed Ship's Seal
Agana, Guam

USS FORCE (MSS-445)
OPERATION END SWEEP
1973

Commanding Officer
USS ILLUSIVE (MSS-448)
FPO San Francisco 96601

Commanding Officer
USS INFILTR (MSS 456)
FPO San Francisco 96601

United States Ship
Inchon
"Never More Brightly"

Yokosuka
USS IMPERVIOUS
MSO-449
A unit of
Task Force 78
OPERATION
"END SWEEP"

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS IMPERVIOUS (MSO-449)
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

OPERATION END SWEEP
20°33.5N Latitude
107°09.5E Longitude

F. M. Retolda
LCDP
USN

USS IMPERVIOUS
MSO-449
OPERATION END SWEEP
Latitude 20°33.5N
Longitude 107°09.5E
Hai Phong Anchorage

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS LEADER (MSO-490)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif. 96601

OPERATION END SWEEP
1973

COMMANDING OFFICER
USS LEADER (MSO-490)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif. 96601

OPERATION END SWEEP
1973

Subic Bay

Yokosuka

From:

SUBIC BAY:

To:

NEW YORK, N.Y.

March 23, 1973

USS LEADER (MSO-490)
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif. 96601

U.S.S. NAVY

Mar 23
1973
8.00 A.M.

107°09.5E

10°33.5N

Latitude
Longitude

1973

Task Force 78

USS LEADER

(MSO-490)

Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif. 96601

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(MSO 490)

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The Whiefe 460

The Whiefe 460
RADM BRIAN MCCAULEY, USN
COMMANDER TASK FORCE 78
OPERATION END SWEEP
CARRIED ON A MINE-SEEKING MISSION IN HAIPHONG HARBOR

Yokosuka

USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY
OPERATION
END SWEEP
LST-1167

Commanding Officer
USS ALBERT DAVID (DB-1020)
Flotsam Post Office
San Francisco 94601

FR 29 MARCH 1973