



Another example of a mission ready ship because of a U.S. Navy Port Engineer

USS Little Rock (LCS 9) Arrives in Mayport, Florida



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MAYPORT, Fla. (NNS) -- The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Little Rock (LCS 9) arrived to its homeport here this morning for the first time since it was commissioned.



The crew lined the rails in their dress blues as the crowd of friends, families, and shipmates greeted the ship with flowers, signs and waving American flags.

The ship made a memorable entrance, blasting the song "Back in Black" after mooring. The ship also played this song when pulling into Buffalo, New York, for commissioning, as a tribute to the ship's namesake, USS Little Rock (CL-92), and

to ring in their motto "Back With a Vengeance."

"Little Rock is a fast, lethal ship ready to go out and fulfill her mission," said Cmdr. Todd Peters, the ship's commanding officer. "The crew worked relentlessly to bring her home and make their way 'Back With a Vengeance.' We are ready to make final preparations to deploy and carry our motto into history."

Today's homecoming completes a three-and-a-half month journey from Marinette, Wisconsin, where the ship was built. The ship was commissioned in Buffalo, Dec. 16, and then transited the Saint Lawrence Seaway, navigating through 15 locks, until they reached Montreal, Canada. There, they paused their journey because of historical weather conditions and ice. When the weather permitted, the crew began their final leg home, stopping in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Virginia Beach, Virginia., before arriving here this morning.

"After so many months of training and preparing, we are proud to bring Little Rock home to Mayport," said Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Brett Ragan, whose wife and baby daughter were waiting on the pier.

"The families back home have been so supportive during this entire process; it is great to see the crew reunited with their families and to show off our ship," said Senior Chief Operations Specialist Tarius Williams. "We are proud of Little Rock. It is great to see it in the Mayport basin joining the Atlantic fleet."

Little Rock is the fifth freedom-variant LCS to join the fleet. The fast, shallow draft vessel has a modular design capable of implementing a variety of mission packages as an asset to the fleet in both the shallow coastal regions and the open ocean.

"Bringing the ship home is the first step to getting her ready for the bigger mission," said Ens. Brandon Alcorn. "USS Little Rock is an agile, capable ship ready to meet the demands of the U.S. Navy."

For more news from Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, visit www.navy.mil/local/surflant/.

Webmaster Note:

USS Little Rock (LCS-9) is a *Freedom*-class littoral combat ship (LCS) of the United States Navy. She is the second ship named after Little Rock, the capital city of Arkansas.