

FAMILY-GRAM

5-68



From the Captain -

After two years of being homeported in Yokosuka, Japan, the REEVES is now enroute to its new homeport of Long Beach, California. Our planned arrival time is 10 o'clock the morning of 12 August at the U.S. Naval Base, Long Beach. If such news excites you, I wish you could see a part of the excitement on board. Such questions as "What's the rate of exchange?" "Are the natives friendly?" and "How does one get back into the routine of driving on the right side of the road after two years of left handed traffic patterns?" are heard almost daily. But I would venture a prediction that each and everyone of us will make the required adjustments quickly and easily, especially when under the guidance of the many families and friends expected to greet us upon arrival.

Our route home has the REEVES visiting ports in Australia and New Zealand as a fitting end to our operations with the SEVENTH Fleet. The attached press release for our visits provide a resume of our achievements as a ship. Many of the ship's company have already been recognized for their part in this fine performance by receipt of medals, awards and letters of commendation. It is anticipated that additional men will be so recognized when the recommendations currently under review receive favorable consideration. The real reward for all our labors comes with the full appreciation and realization of the part we have played not only in maintaining freedom of the seas but also in the assistance provided a struggling nation to permit its citizens an opportunity to choose their own form of government and the laws under which they shall live.

Full advantage was taken of the opportunity enroute Australia to welcome into the Royal Order of Shellbacks those lowly individuals who had not sailed in waters south of the equator. The REEVES ceremony of welcoming Neptunus Rex and his Royal Scribe, Davy Jones, on board and the initiation of prospective Shellbacks provided the levity and entertainment which shall one day be a fond memory for the saltiest "sea-dog." Even the most detailed description we may provide will not compare favorably with the one you will receive from those who participated. I suggest you ask for a full accounting from your special interest in the REEVES when you are together again, for our initiation was one of the finest I have seen on any ship large or small.

When the ship left Japan, we left many friends behind. During the two years of association with the Japanese people a keen appreciation of this dynamic country and its customs was enjoyed by all. Naturally some of the customs will be missed, such as the widespread use of chopsticks. But I personally do not feel that I shall ever have a yearning for the Japanese breakfast of fish and rice garnished with edible seaweed. I am sure, however, that the entire ship's company joins me when I say that our loved ones in the states have been missed and it will feel mighty good just to be "home." It will be a genuine pleasure being back in the United States. Our return will be all the more appreciated with the thankful understanding that our ship and the men who sail her return without having been damaged or injured as a result of enemy action. We do indeed have much for which to be thankful.

Hope to see all of you in Long Beach upon our arrival on the 12th of August.

W. L. Atkinson

W. L. ATKINSON

POLLYWOG TO SHELLBACK

Ask your neighbor or any geography student what the equator is, and he will tell you that the equator is simply a reference line that divides the earth into northern and southern halves. However, if you ask your sailor on board the USS REEVES, a guided missile frigate of the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet, he will tell you that the equator is a line where the creatures of the deep wait to inflict "tortures" upon uninitiated sailors who dare to sail across the line. On July 6, 250 uninitiated "slimey pollywogs" were initiated by Neptunus Rex and his band of "Royal Shellbacks" as the REEVES crossed that magic line, the equator.

The USS REEVES crossed the equator enroute from Yokosuka, Japan to Sydney, Australia, and the 33 crew members, the shellbacks, who had been initiated at some previous crossing set about to initiate the "slimey pollywogs." The ceremonies began on July 5th, when Davy Jones, the Royal Scribe, arrived on board. Davy Jones, dressed like a ragged pirate, officially informed Captain Atkinson that his majesty, Neptunus Rex, would arrive soon, and decreed that the pollywogs should perform skits and select a beauty queen to entertain the shellbacks.

Each division performed a skit making fun of the shellbacks, and presented their queen candidate on the fantail that evening. The pollywog queens dressed in bikinis, night gowns, wigs, high heels, and assorted womens clothing paraded before Davy Jones. Surprisingly enough, many of the candidates were pretty good looking, but after much deliberation, "Miss Pollywog" was finally selected. Unfortunately for the pollywogs, "Pollywog day" came to an end, and the morning of July 6 brought many shellback "tortures."

Early on initiation day shellbacks mustered the "slimey pollywogs" on the main deck and began to soak them with fire hoses, swat them with paddles, place them in stocks, and make them perform exercises and stunts. This process was designed to "prepare the minds" of the pollywogs for the arrival of Neptunus Rex and his royal court in the afternoon for the official ceremony.

Finally, amid gun salutes and rows of side boys, the Royal Court arrived, and the real initiation began. "Slimey pollywogs," prompted by the paddles, were lead to Neptunus Rex who pronounced judgments on the lowly pollywogs. Then, the sentences were carried out. The sentences involved a physical and medication, "ugh," by the Royal Doctor, more fire hoses, a crawl through a garbage tube and finally a dunking after which the "slimey pollywog" was a "ROYAL SHELLBACK."

It was really a good time for all hands. Of course, there were a few sore bottoms, but everything was done in the spirit of fun. All the new shellbacks will never forget that day.

In Sydney, Australia, REEVES received a lot of press coverage, some shots on television, and the radio also made our arrival known. In fact, two of our junior officers, LTJG LYONS and ENSIGN VAN NATTA, made the front page of the Sydney newspapers touring the city on a bicycle (a gasoline strike was "on").

Reprinted below is the news release that was prepared on the ship, and sent ahead to Sydney while we were in Yokosuka. You can get an idea of the publicity that the ship got in Australia.

Press Release

The guided missile frigate, USS REEVES (DLG-24), is a complex, sophisticated warship with the capability of conducting anti-air warfare with the Terrier Missile System, anti-submarine warfare with rocket launched torpedoes, and surface to surface warfare with two twin 3"/50 caliber gun mounts. The men of the REEVES, 351 enlisted and 23 officers, are the driving force behind a full array of complicated radars, powerful radios, and electronic navigation equipment.

The ship has an outstanding record of accomplishment since she was commissioned in 1964, a record built by the men who man REEVES. The crew is a cross section of the United States. The youngest crew member is 18 years old, and the "Saltiest" is 46. All but seven of the individual states in the United States are represented by at least one member of the crew. Californians form the largest number. Forty-three men are from REEVES' home state of California, and such far away places as Connecticut and the Philippine Islands are also represented. Many men of the REEVES have made the Navy their career. Others plan to return to civilian jobs when they have fulfilled their military obligations. All are professionals at their jobs on board REEVES.

A wide cross section of skills is represented by the crew. Their jobs range from the Fire Control Technicians intricate maintenance of the missile systems, to the rough and ready work on the decks by the Boatswain mates. All of the sailors have specific rates, or jobs, that they are trained to perform. Quartermasters, Machinists, Laundryman, Gunner's Mates, Radiomen, Cooks and many others combined to give REEVES all the skills needed for operations at sea. For the past two years, these operations have been extensive.

USS REEVES (DLG-24) departed Long Beach, California on 26 May 1966 for a two year non-rotated tour with the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet. The ship, a unit of Destroyer Squadron NINE, was homeported in Yokosuka, Japan and operated as a unit of Task Force 77 in the Gulf of Tonkin. This extended tour of combat duty provided an exceptional challenge, placing great demands on both personnel and equipment. The ship spent 720 days under the operational control of Commander U.S. SEVENTH Fleet. Of this time, the ship was actually underway 493 days and spent 312 of these days conducting operations in the Gulf of Tonkin. In the course of these operations REEVES steamed 162,000 miles, consuming 12,272,000 gallons of fuel.

During this period REEVES completed 11 patrols, for a total of 262 days as an advanced Anti-Air Warfare/Search and Rescue Picket Ship, and 3 tours, for a total of 50 days, as an escort with various attack carrier groups. REEVES was fired upon twice by North Vietnam Shore batteries while picking up downed pilots.

REEVES successfully rescued 7 downed airmen in the course of her duties, however, her success as a Search and Rescue Unit cannot be measured by that fact alone. The many services provided by the ship which contributed to safety of flight, though less dramatic than actual rescues, averted the loss of many more aircraft.

The high tempo of two years of operations with the SEVENTH Fleet placed great demands on both equipment and personnel. Despite short and infrequent upkeep periods the ship achieved the enviable record of meeting every commitment during the past two years.

REEVES is now returning to Long Beach, California, and for many of the crew the first look at "home" in quite awhile. Their visit to Australia and New Zealand is a most pleasant reward for what they feel is a job well done. It is with great anticipation that they look forward to their visit, and a look at the great country "down under."

-END-

SYDNEY VISIT

Sydney, Australia is a beautiful city. It reminds an American visitor a little of San Francisco. Sydney is built on several hills, and a huge span bridge crosses the harbor. The city is clean and bustling, and most important to the REEVES' crew -- Sydney was wonderfully friendly to us.

REEVES arrived in the middle of a gasoline strike that limited motor traffic to a minimum, but that did not slow our hosts -- or us -- down at all. The American Australian Association, an organization that promotes good relations between the two countries, began our visit by co-hosting a dance for all hands. It was most enjoyable. Private clubs, designed like night clubs with floor shows and dining rooms, opened their doors to us. Everyone was friendly, and wanted to talk or show us around their city.

We did our utmost to return their hospitality and show our thanks. The ship held general visiting and showed thousands of Australians our ship. Many visitors came on board for meals, and the wardroom hosted a party for those Australians who had worked hard in preparation for our visit.

There were many unusual sights to see in this country "down under," and being able to speak the same language as the natives made it easy to get around to see them. Sydney has a good zoo where many of us saw Australia's strange animal life: Kangaroos, Wombats, Koala Bears, and duck billed platypus. It was almost like being on a science fiction show. The animals are strange, but also cute. Sydney's beaches, and even the mountains, could be visited by the really adventurous.

Our visit was a great success, and both our crew and the Australians enjoyed it. In fact, many of us have picked up their accent, so don't be surprised to be called "mate" or "bloke" when we return.

See you soon!

AWARDS CEREMONY

On Thursday, 27 June, while REEVES was celebrating the conclusion of her two-year deployment in the Far East with a three week "holiday" in Yokosuka, Japan, we paused from our daily routine to commend those men whose sustained performance has substantially contributed to the ship's success in fulfilling her numerous missions.

Seventy-five of our personnel were publicly recognized and commended as our Executive Officer, Commander D.L. HOWARD, read the citation of each individual's award while our Commanding Officer, Captain W.L. ATKINSON personally congratulated and presented to each man his award.

Unfortunately, available space in the Family-Gram does not permit us to quote the many citations awarded. But as you can see below, nine individuals received the Navy Achievement Medal, two received the Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet's Commendation, six received the Commander Seventh Fleet's Commendation, twenty received the Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Group Seventh Fleet's Commendation and thirty-two of our men received the Commanding Officer's Commendation.

The various awards were presented to the following named personnel:

Navy Achievement Medal:

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>HOMETOWN</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| LT Kenneth T. WELCH | Garland, Texas |
| LT John E. RUMMELE | Sheboygan, Wisconsin |
| LTJG Curtiss D. JOHNSON | Marysville, Washington |
| ENS Michael K. LYONS | Jamestown, New York |
| SPCM Gary L. MASTERS | Kansas City, Kansas |
| GMMC Jerry K. BARRICK | Fort Worth, Texas |
| SMC Robert H. BJORDAHL | Stoughton, Wisconsin |
| IC1 Michael L. CLAY | Monroe, Louisiana |
| SF1 Franklin E. BAXTER | Brookville, Indiana |

Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet Commendation:

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| BT1 George R. BROWN | Evansville, Iowa |
| DC1 Freeman D. HAUN | St. Loudon, Tennessee |

Commander Seventh Fleet Commendation:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| YN1 Robert L. GOINS | Mayfield, Kentucky |
| EM1 Candido R. CABUG | Cauite City, R.P. |
| EM1 Eufronio F. CRUZADO | Palocpol, R.P. |
| ETN2 Donald W. BOWLES | Standford, Kentucky |
| RM2 Louie J. SPANE | Mt. Vernon, Washington |
| SN Dennis L. SCHAETZ | Kaokauna, Wisconsin |

Commander Cruiser Destroyer Group Seventh Fleet Commendation:

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>HOMETOWN</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| RD1 Lloyd M. RAGLAND | Chicago, Illinois |
| FTM1 Ronald E. WARNER | Wichita, Kansas |
| GMG2 John R. SCHMELZER | Columbus, Ohio |
| RD2 Gary J. FRUITS | Winfield, Kansas |
| RD2 Thomas J. CARROLL | Cambridge, Washington |
| SM2 Thomas D. GREIBE | Calena, Illinois |
| SM2 Oleh SACIUK | Chicago, Illinois |
| SM2 William M. TATE | Glenwhite, West Virginia |
| STG2 Richard C. RICE | Canton, North Carolina |
| ETN2 Timothy H. WESTRICH | Cedar Falls, Iowa |
| RM2 Andrew V. CASELLA | Leemore, California |
| RM2 Theodore P. MCINTOSH | Ocala, Florida |
| RM3 Robert J. STELLA | Pittston, Pennsylvania |
| SN Wayne G. CORNETT | Freemont, Michigan |
| SN Gary W. ROGERS | San Angelo, Texas |
| SN Thomas W.E. STEEVER | Trenton, New Jersey |
| SN Eugene R. SCHULTZ | Reevesville, Wisconsin |
| SN Thomas R. HUSSEY | Winona, Texas |
| SN John F. HENSLEY | Norman, Oklahoma |
| SN Larry R. KIDDEY | East Liverpool, Ohio |

Commanding Officer's Commendation:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| CSC Robert E. MORRISON | Auburn, Maine |
| DKC John L. LEWIS | Ferndale, Michigan |
| HM1 Clarence E. THOMAS | Reading, Pennsylvania |
| CS1 Robert J. GAGNON | Dover, New Hampshire |
| EM1 David H. GARMS | Kewanee, Illinois |
| STG2 Arthur E. MANNING | Saegertown, Pennsylvania |
| STG2 Teddy J. PARKS | Radio City, South Dakota |
| MM2 Robert E. BROWN | Scranton, Pennsylvania |
| MM2 Charles H. SAULS | Kansas City, Missouri |
| MM2 John D. HARDAWAY | San Diego, California |
| BT2 James B. PERRY | Middlesex, North Carolina |
| SFM2 Roy W. PYLES | Lewisville, Texas |
| IC2 Charles C. BROWN | San Antonio, Texas |
| FTM3 Paul R. BUDNESS | Chicopee, Mass. |
| STG3 Richard W. DESGRANGE | McKinney, Texas |
| STG3 David R. ENGBRITSON | Kalispell, Montana |
| QM3 Gene A. OWEN | Sioux City, Iowa |
| QM3 Thomas J. SULLIVAN | La Cross, Wisconsin |
| YN3 Michael J. ROLAND | Shenandoah, Pennsylvania |
| CS3 Arthur R. KRUGLER | Grand Rapids, Michigan |
| BT3 Michael A. JONES | Pleasureville, Kansas |
| BT3 Ronnie V. MARTIN | Bridgewater, Iowa |
| SD3 Julian R. CABUG, Jr. | Caute City R.P. |

Commanding Officer's Commendation:

| <u>NAME</u> | <u>HOMETOWN</u> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| SD3 Fidel N. DENINA | Comarines Sur, R.P. |
| BT3 John M. WATENPAUGH | Longview, Washington |
| GMSN Dale E. JENNINGS | Columbus, Ohio |
| SN Theodore T. DIPIETRO | Reading, Pennsylvania |
| SN Florian D. ROMANOWSKI | Posen, Michigan |
| SN Gordon J. MILLETICS | Steelton, Pennsylvania |
| SN Arnold J. BUSHENA III | St. Petersburg, Florida |
| SN Sheldo R. BURT | Butte, Montana |
| FN Jim A. NEWBERRY | Fort Worth, Texas |