MY STORY

a show of Arms

by Dennis Lee
AIDAIP

I met my ship at Subic Bay Navy Base, Phillipines, 1974. The U.S.S. Constellation (CVA-64. ~~The Large a~~ The Aircraft carrier's nickname is Connie. The flight deck is equal in size to four football fields. The Flat Top is thirteen stories from the bottom of the hull to the top of the island. The structure rising above the flight deck.. With a crew of over two thousand, she's a floating city. ~~There's an ice cream parlor, the ship's stores, a barber shop, a gym,~~

There's an ice cream parlor, two ship's stores, a barber shop, a gym, a library, and a weight room..

My name is Dennis Lee Adair. I am 100% service connected, honorably discharged, disabled veteran. I volunteered for the Navy when I was seventeen. The Vietnam War was going on. My rate is AQ3, Aviation Fire Control Technician. My job was to test Avionics equipment. I received two years of electronics school. Sea Duty,

Sea Duty for five years on the Constellation.

My job on the ship was to test avionics equipment. Like the Black Boxes. I'd buddy and I took a walk down the hanger bay. The planes were loaded with every missile bombs that they could hold. Big-time Military from Iraq, Iran, Syria and all the middle east nations. Middle East.

Early that same day a tragic occured on the Flight Deck. A jet was turning around when the exhaust blew a sailor right off the deck. A chopper went back to look for him but came back and reported that no one was seen at in the choppy water. Connie did not stop or even slow down but kept her speed and bearing. There was five minutes of silence to show respect to the airman and his family. A telegram was sent to his family informing them of the tragic accident and stating that he was lost at sea and given a Purple Heart.

Sea Duty for five years on the Constellation.

My job was to test avionics equipment, black boxes, anything electrical or electronic. I'd hook up the piece to a computer in our repair shop. I went to the Navy's Class A and Class B schools. The Constellation and all of the ship's Carrier Group. A Carrier ~~is [illegible] made up of the [illegible] Group is [illegible] 2 destroyers [illegible] Carrier.~~

a Carrier.

A Carrier Group is usually made up with two guided missile Destroyers, one or two Guided Missing Cusers, and a Sub Marine (1).

The Under Way Replenishment was something to watch. The much smaller Fuel transport ship pulled right up next to us, the Connie just kept the same speed and bearing. Then they sent a cable over and attached a big hose. All of the ships topped

The Constellation stopped on the Equator to carry on an old maritime tradition. Every one who has been over the Equator are called Shell-backs. Every one who hasn't are called Polly Wogs. The initiation lasted all day. Some Poly Wogs were on the end of a heavy chain. The food was green spaghetti. They packed my ears with axle grease. At the end of the initiation the fattest Chief they could find and dubbed him King Neptunis Rex. He took our heads and rubbed our face in his greasy belly. Then I am a Shell Back. I got in the shower as fast as I could. A Navy shower, cold salt water.

In Boot Camp they showed us a movie of one of the arresting cables breaking. There is five arresting cables that run across the flight deck. Meant for the pilot to hook on one of the three inch diameter cables to stop. One of the cables broke one day and the wild end cut

young man right in half and the body was never found after falling into the drink.

The U.S.S. Constellation was in the path of a powerful typhoon. The Captain ordered the crew to get underway O.S.A.P. the reason being the ship will bash up against the concrete pier, possibly causing damage to the ship and the pier. We pulled away from the pier and out to sea.

The typhoon was very strong and the Connie rolled back and forth and pitching forward and backward all at the same time. I was walking down the corridor and the ship rolled on it's side and I was walking on the bulk head. (wall)

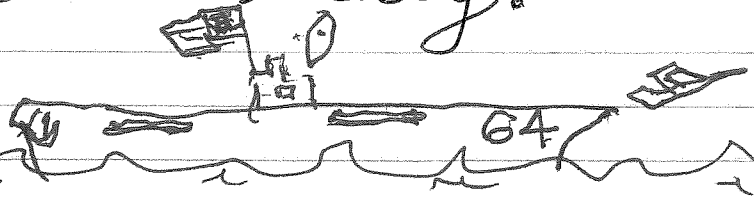
We anchored just off the coast at Karachi, Pakistan. Dignitaries from nations like Iran, Iraq, Syria & all of the Middle East countries were representatives were invited on board for a guided tour of the U.S.S. Constellation. As the Constellation drew closer to Pakistan, certain precautions were being taken. No radios or T.V.

signals. The only lights on were small red night lights those were meant to be less detectable.
The tour started the next day. It was a large group of people looking at all the firepower loaded on our planes.
All of the sea and airspace has been patrolled by Russia for more than thirty years. We were the first American ships to be in those waters or for over three decades. Below our Carrier Group were Russian subs. On the water all around us were boats and ships that Russia made then look like fishing boats. They actually are spy craft boats. Russian jets would fly very close to Connie.
We didn't fire a single bullet. And neither did the other side. After liberty in Karachi and riding camels and watching the belly dancers, it was time to go home. Connie

in the region

sailed back across the Indian Ocean and to Subic Bay, P.I.

One night a buddy of mine woke me up and said, "Hey follow me." I got up and I went with him up on the flight deck back on the fantail. I was looking at the most beautiful sight. It was the full moon and it's reflection on the water that had me in awe for a long time.

Along side our ship were whales swimming with us. Porpoises also jumping up and a school of flying fish came up out of the water and using their fins like wings they flew a good distance, then going back under water.

The voyage into Russian patrolled water and showing those on the four of the ships what we got. It was a show of arms. And we are ready.