A Date with Destiny â€“ Part III

Description

Today would have been a Sunday, those many years ago, preceding the even. Holiday Routine is the normal situation on the ship. Revillie is delayed, and only the Duty Section (on coming and off going) is required to muster. Chow is much more relaxed and extended, allowing the duty section to get a little extra sleep.

The day is not without work, and Iâ€™m sure there was extra activity, given the short notice of the operational requirement, and the shorthanded status of the crew during stand down. Stores and other supplies, delivered to the pier would have to have been broken down off of pallets and hand carried below to the store rooms, magazines and refrigerators. While there is an ammunition elevator in the center of the ship, most items still require â€œworking partiesâ€• to be called away to get the job done.

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The Command Duty Officer would be busy making sure the events of the Getting Underway Checklist are on track. Despite having easy to start and operate gas turbine engines, basic machinery still drives the propulsion plant and things like heating up the lube oil for the reduction gears, purifying fuel for the filling the service tanks and such things still require a long lead time. Communications checks would be in the works for the day, and checking the message traffic to ensure the request for tugs and pilots from Port services has been confirmed for the sailing times. walks about the ship, for basic cleanliness and to check that spaces are secured for sea are part of the routine. Making sure all the trash gets off the ship, and doesnâ€™t build up are part of the duty of the CDO and the Duty Department heads, as well as the Divisional Petty Officers on Watch.

The Officer of the Deck and his watchstanders monitor the comings and goings from the ship and are the keepers of the Shipâ€™s main phone line, relegating the Messenger or the Petty Officer of the Watch to receptionist duties. Some calls are easy to handle, some are not.

The Duty Engineer has a more extensive checklist and carries most of the responsibility for the efforts on the day before underway to assure the plant is â€œonline and ready to answer all bellsâ€• when the Commanding Officer gives permission to get underway the following morning.

By the end of the day, some of the crew not living aboard and not having duty will arrive, choosing to spend the night aboard, so they are not caught in the traffic the next morning. They have their goodbyes with wives and children and head to their berthing space to stow their gear, and then usually go and check to make sure their spaces or work for the dawn are on track, or maybe even complete a few things early, so the next day is not so much of a rush of activity.

The thoughts of many of the crew are not exactly charitable, regarding the sister ship of the squadron, which has been stateside for several months, is not going to sea, and they will be, 31 short days after doing their forward deployed assignment, but they are professionals and sailors, and we all know a happy sailor is a complaining sailorâ€¦

Tomorrow: Underway enroute a meeting with notable history.

Category

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