Ropeyarn Sunday â€œSea Storiesâ€• and Open Trackbacks

Description

Itâ€™s â€œthatâ€• day again. Post your posts if you have them!

â€œSea Storyâ€• of the day:

On Monday, I blogged that it had been 30 years to the day since I reported aboard my first command for work, rather than school. It, however, was a Saturday night, so it doesnâ€™t count as much as today, which was a Monday 30 years ago, and my first work day in the Fleet.

The routine when arriving at any command is to be noted in the Shipâ€™s Deck Log and the taken to the Executive Officer to commence your check in. And so it was, early that day on USS MILWAUKEE (AOR-2), still moored at Pier 2 in Norfolk. It was that time when I met CDR David Martin, a Surface Line Officer, and second in command. Tall and reasonably thin for a man in his middle age period of life, it was then when he looked in my service record and made a comment discussed here.

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I had been dropped from the skies on short notice aboard MILWAUKEE. I had visions of being a Diving and Salvage Officer, but a small issue of claustrophobia manged to help redetermine my career path. Just a few weeks before this day, I had sat with the Traing Officer at the Naval Diving and Salvage School, Anacostia Navy Yard, and told him I thought I would just decline to continue for fear of hazarding not only myself, but any diving buddies int he water. I was dispatched, not to a sleek â€œGreyhound of the Sea,â€• but to what, in my limited knowledge, was a dead end job for a young man with a desire to command a ship with many weapons, with a hope of playing a strong second to the legend of Lord Nelson, John Paul Jones and many others who had gone down to the sea before me.

On the advice of a family friend, who was responsible for advising one very well known and powerful senator, I had taken the orders. This man, who had served under Chester Nimitz, provide what was very sage advice: â€œI can get your orders changed, but just remember, there will be a very large stamp, unseen, but well known across the outside of your service record, saying â€œPolitical Influence. Take the orders, and if in a year you feel itâ€™s not to your liking, call me and weâ€™ll see what we can do.â€• I never picked up the phone, as I found I was enjoying my job far too muchâ€¦.

But, there I was, a whirlwind of a morning, taken to Admin, shuttled to the Captainâ€™s cabin, introduced to my Department Head, LCDR Frank Mueller, and all sorts of other things, but, the one detail I remember clearly was shortly after lunch, I was in my newly assigned stateroom and there was a knock at the door. I tentatively opened the door and there stood two second class petty officers. Before I could say anything, the one with black curly hair, Navy â€œBCâ€• glasses and a full beard shoved a manila folder in my direction and said â€œYouâ€™re our new Division Officer, sign this!â€•

Taken aback for a moment, I said: â€œNo, I havenâ€™t relieved ENS Ralston yet.â€• â€œSir, heâ€™s on leave and we need this signed. Youâ€™re our new Division Officer.â€• So I took the pen and signed the casualty report.

And so went my first meeting with ETR2 Mike Krutsch and ETN2 Craig Johnson, for I was, as they so clearly stated, their Division Officerâ€¦.

And that is what I distinctly recall of my first real work day in the service of the taxpayers.

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