Happy Birthday, UNITED STATES NAVY!

Description

Oct 13th, 1775 is a long time ago for our nation, but a short journey relative to the historical reach of many other nations. The difference? The US Navy burst onto the scene at the outset of out independence, and within a few short decades, demonstrated mastery of the ocean and navy combat. And, weâ€™ve come a long way, baby!

Today, Iâ€™ll recount a memory of 19 years ago related to the Navyâ€™s birthday. Dates: 10/4 â€“ 10/10/1988 Place: Tampa, Fl. Unit: USS CARR (FFG-52). Mission: Visit Ship for the city, as requested by the Navy League Chapter.

This is the other side of a like story told by Bookie in her post about a tour of the USS SHOUP (DDG-86) this very week.

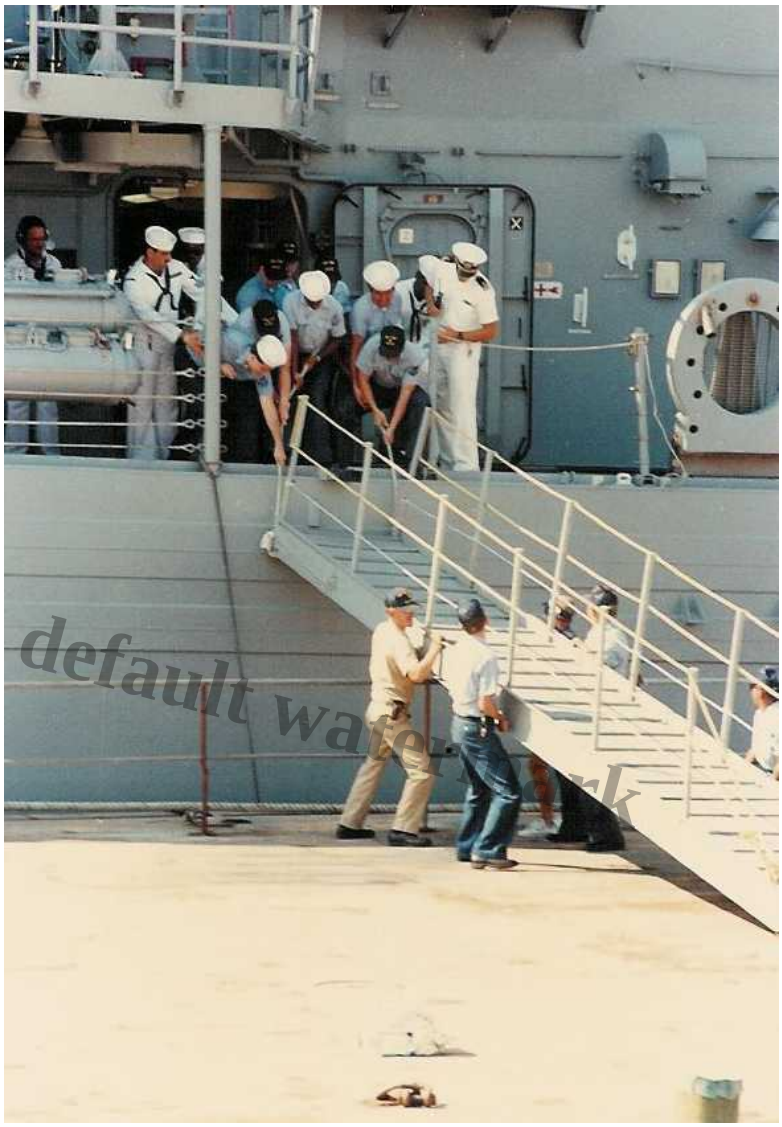
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RADM Leroy Collins, USN (ret) and CAPT Bruce McDaniel, USN (Ret) were the most prominent players is getting their request fulfilled. CARR sailed from Charleston, SC on 10/1, and arrived early on the morning of the 4th at the Skyway Bridge for the long transit to Harbor Island pier in downtown Tampa. On the way in, the *HMS Active*, which had just spent the week in the same place, was departing. Honors were rendered between ships per naval custom.

The transit in was long, but it was the end that was most interesting. In order to get alongside the pier, we had arrived with most of our JP-5 (aviation grade fuel) pumped from the tanks, which were aft, under the helo flight deck. This caused us to be slightly down by the bow for trim, but also enabled us to get over the shallow sand bars just before the pier. We shut down our engines, and were towed stern first to the pier in the final moments of the arrival. At low tide, we would be almost on the bottom.



Finally moored, in front of a large crowd of people, we prepared to receive our guests for the week.



According to the Shipâ€™s history report, 170 people visited the ship on the 4th (a Tuesday), with daily visitors peaking at about 2000, and a total of over 700 visitors for the 6 day period. The Shipâ€™s first Commanding Officer, CAPT Robert Horne, and his wife were there to meet the ship, as he was now stationed at Central Command at MacDill AFB.The inside story? The crew complained about having to take on the extra duty of being tour guides about the ship. Each day, most of the crew was either in the duty section, or dressed in their whites and stationed around the ship until late afternoon. The funny thing after the first day of visit ship? They were scrambling to get their whites cleaned and fighting to get assigned to help escort tour groups. It seems quite a number of phone numbers were passed to those who grudgingly went about their assignments, not realizing the opportunity at firstâ€¦ We were treated well.Our quarterdeck phone number was published and the city was invited to show their thanks to our crew. The line was constantly busy with offers to take a few sailors out for golf, fishing, BBQs, tours around Tampa, etc. The yellow sticky notes were posted on the weapons elevator doors in the centerline passageway by the phone watch. I can attest to the fact that you cold hardly see any exposed metal of the doors very quickly. For the sailors, there were so many great requests, they really could pick and choose from the top tier offers.

I was humbled that so many people would stand in the Florida sun in line for hours, just to walk around our ship. The sun, thankfully and unthankfully, was unhindered by clouds for most of our visit, yet they

still waited patiently for the opportunity to see what their tax dollars had purchased and to meet and show gratitude to the sailors.

The week in Tampa was filled with activities. The Navy League had a formal Navy Ball, with us as the honored guests. They also hosted a wardroom party at a club on the top floor of one of the skyscrapers downtown, which was a combination Hail and Farewell for then LCDR Tom Brown (the outgoing XO) and I.

This thank you is long overdue, but thank you Tampa, FL from one of the crew members of USS CARR (FFG-52) for your hospitality in 1988. We departed Tampa, for the transit home on the 10th with a happy crew, much more open to future assignments to â€œVisit Shipâ€• escort duty assignment.

The pictures? Well not the best, and located at a relativeâ€™s house these many years later. I was pretty busy, being involved in becoming both XO and Navigator, so there was no time to snap any pictures. If you note in the first picture, the skyline of Tampa, has changed radically since 1988. The club where the party was held is the tallest building in the background of the first picture.

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