And then there are Shipmates from another hull

Description

I havenâ€™t been popping in here much the last few years. My apologies.

I do have a very new twist on the things that this blog has done for me, and others. Itâ€™s been a connecting point and in December, and email arrived in my mailbox to the email address for this blog:

> Subj: Cruise Book
>
> I have a USS Milwaukee cruise book from the â€™78-â€™79 cruise. There are some coffee (Iâ€™m assuming itâ€™s coffee) stains on some of the pages covering the Ops department, but aside from that itâ€™s in pretty good shape. If you would like to have it, send me your address and I can send it to you. Regards, Mark.

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Mark hasnâ€™t a clue mine was left behind in one of those unfortunate relationship breakups several years back, so he thinks itâ€™s a nice gesture, but itâ€™s far more than that, itâ€™s a piece of personal history I never thought Iâ€™d see again. Iâ€™m exceptionally grateful for this simple gesture that means so much on this end.

I send the address and an offer to pay the postage. He turns me down and sends it compliments of another MSLF â€œfat shipâ€• guy the same day.

Just short of a week later, itâ€™s here. My time capsule, opened after 34 years. Ah, the memories, but I know most people landing here will fully comprehend what letters on a screen canâ€™t convey.

There will be more on this, but some background:

I was the CDIO (Collateral Duty Intel Officer), which included the Intelligence Photography course. We had a developing lab and the chemicals on the ship, way back aft, starboard side below the main deck somewhere. Some of my OSs allowed me to come and learn how to develop film, and I spent some time there, and I seem to recall, we did our own pictures of the crew for the layout to save costs in production. I probably developed and printed a number of those in the book.

Another collateral duty assigned was as Public Affairs Officer. Yes, you guessed, the publication fell under my responsbilities. It didnâ€™t hurt that I had been on the staff of my Senior Yearâ€™s yearbook, doing layout with the then girl friend, Palua, who roped me into such work. I did go willingly, if you have to ask.

I detached from MILWAUKEE very shortly after returning to Norfolk for my training for Pre-Comm LEFTWICH at FCTCL Dam Neck, but had a few weeks off before training began. I checked back aboard AOR-2 to finish the layout of the Cruise Book in that time.

As you see, this was much more than a memento of a cruise, it is evidence of my professional assigned duties as well.

Mark wasnâ€™t a shipmate, but he served aboard USS SYLVANNIA (AFS-2) a few years ealier. I havenâ€™t gotten the details of his procurement of â€œmyâ€• Cruise Book, but it matters not. The cruise of Oct 78-Apr 79 was with the USS SARATOGA (CV-60) BG, and USS SYLVANNIA was one of the units that supported us. While not directly assigned to the BG, the AFS units were on an altered deployment pattern, yet she sailed with us to resupply the BG units on numerous occasions and there are shots of her in the book.

The final background note for todayâ€™s post: The coffee stains (not bad ones, but noticeable) were on OC Division: I was COMMO for the cruise.

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1. Blogging
2. History
3. Maritime Matters
4. Military
5. Military History
6. Navy

Tags

1. History
2. med cruise
3. naval history
4. navy history
5. shipmates
6. uss milwaukee
7. uss sylvannia

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