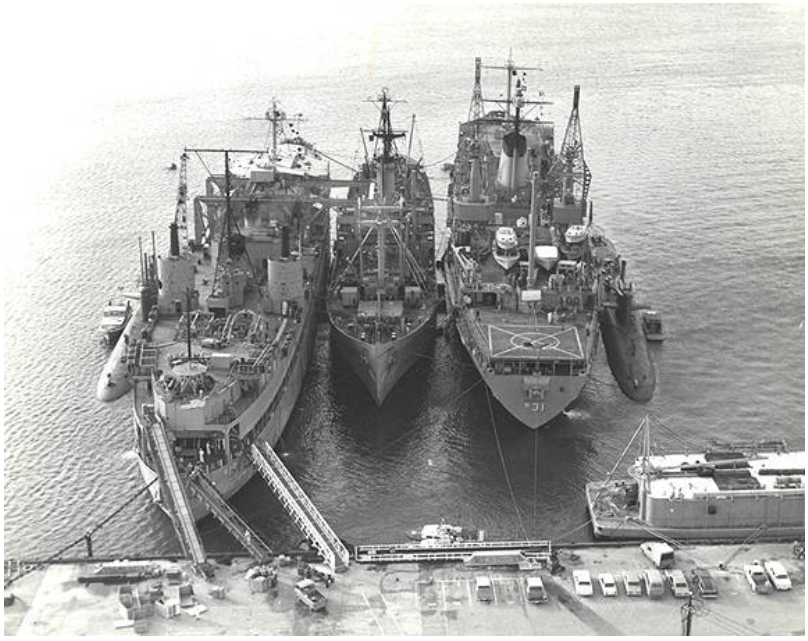
Ropeyarn Sunday â€œSea Storiesâ€• and Open Trackbacks

Description

Open trackbacksâ€¦well, maybe one dayâ€¦but in the meantime:

This â€œsea storyâ€• is not my own, but I heard it personally from HM2 Tom McKenney, USN. Now, it being a â€œsea story,â€• one always must consider the probability (not just the possibility) of the actual truth of the matter being, well, somewhat â€œdifferentâ€• from the verbally related tale of the sea:Tom was a crew member onboard the USS PROTEUS (AS-19) in the late 60s, while she was homeported at Naval Station, Guam in Apra Harbor. No, I was not wearing a uniform at the time, but, he was dating my older sister, so he was around a lot.



Anyhow, the PROTEUS generally remained moored med style to well out in the harbor, so she could

service two submarines at her side. Sometimes (and it was very occasionally), the ship got underway, transited out of the harbor and steamed about the local ocean areas, so as to show sailors knew the way of the seas.Now to the meat of the story: Tom says one day, while the ship is at sea, hears over the 1MC â€œNavigator to the Bridge!â€• Ok, not necessarily a big dealâ€¦but a little bit later: â€œOPS Boss to the Bridge!â€• Interest level is climbing. Next: â€œXO to the Bridge!â€• and then â€œCaptain to the Bridge!â€•

Just a little bit of khaki overload for a peace time (for them) steaming near your homeport on local opsâ€¦.

The kicker, subject to historical scrutiny, was the general announcement: â€œWould anyone who knows where the **** we are report to the Bridge!â€• Ah, therein lies the rest of the story. Yes, the Bridge watch team had lost track of where they were. Back in those days, GPS wasnâ€™t a twinkle in some engineerâ€™s eye yet. LORAN was electronic navigation, and, Iâ€™m not sure, they maybe had Omega, too. Other than that, the tools of the trade were the sextant, a chronometer and someone who could punch the pubs and do math, as well as manage to keep a DR track of the shipâ€™s movement. Oh, and add that the skills required to do this do require a modicum of routine exercise for proficiencyâ€™s sake.

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So Tom tells me one of the enlisted men showed up on the Bridge, went out on the Bridge Wing and surveyed the horizon. He pointed and said â€œOver there.â€• The leadership took that course, as was pointed out, towards a cloud, one of many in the sky, and, after some expenditure of fuel, found the tropical island home called â€œHome.â€• Asked later how this man discerned the location so urgently sought by the operational chain of command, he was said to reply: â€œI just looked for the biggest, darkest rain cloud.â€•

Some would call it â€œseamanâ€™s eye,â€• but Iâ€™m sure the CO called it salvationâ€¦

If youâ€™re interested, some great history for USS PROTEUS (AS-19) can be found at Tender Tales.

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