

The Rapinfire

USS Newport (CA-148)

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 1967

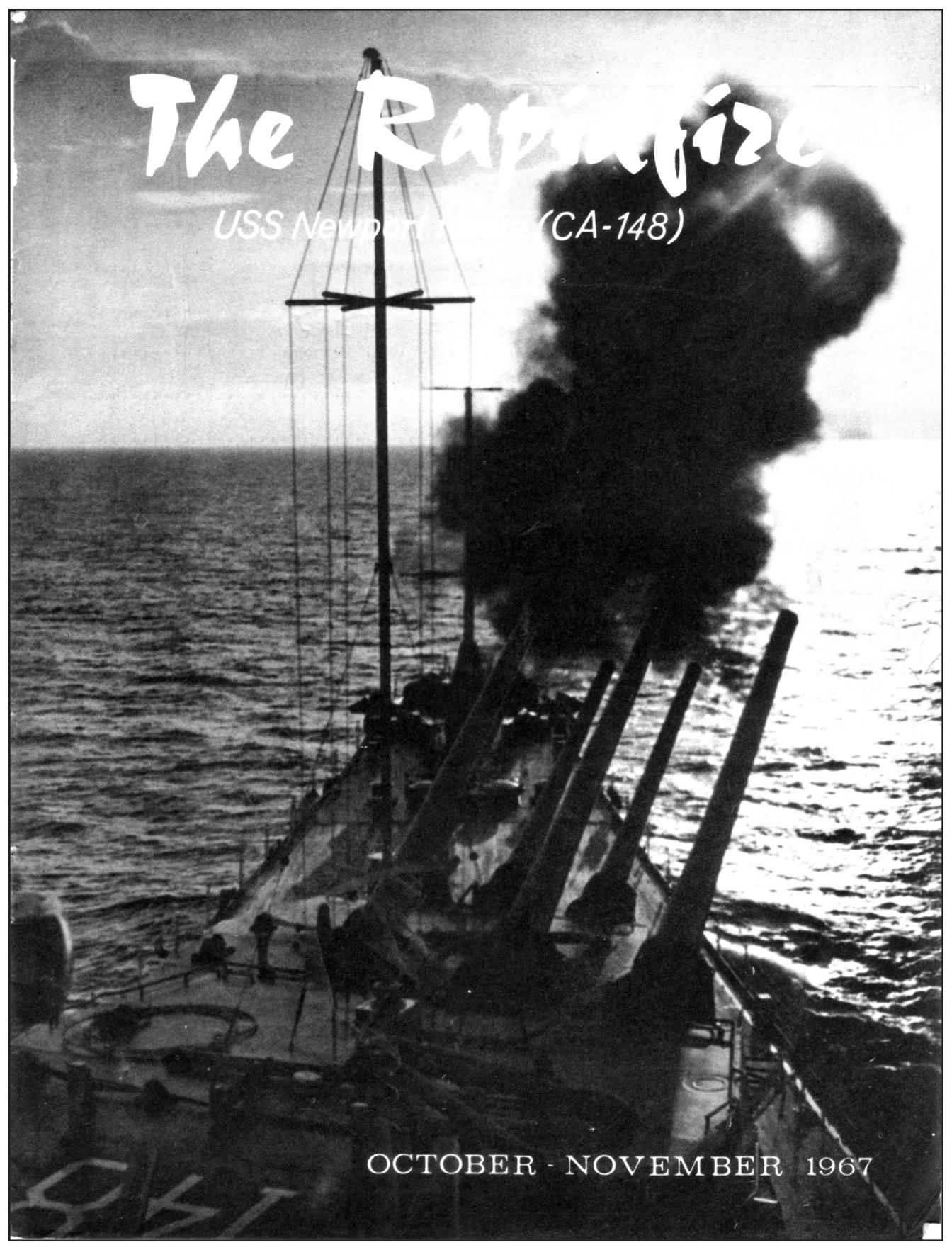


TABLE OF CONTENTS

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE.....	3
COMBAT FLAG.....	4
MORAL SIDE OF THE NEWS.....	6
BE A LEADER.....	7
CONGRATULATIONS...CAPTAIN RUXTON.....	8
DIVISION OF THE MONTH.....	9
NEWPORT NEWS ON THE LINE.....	12
HONG KONG.....	19
ONWARD, UPWARD, FAREWELL.....	22

The Rapidfire

USS Newport News (CA-148)

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VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

by CAPT Lindsay C. McCarty, USN

It is quite an event when a ship and crew enter battle for the first time. When it is the first time in the ship's 18-year history, it is an event of considerable significance. This is just what happened the evening of 9 October when NEWPORT NEWS struck at military installations well-inland from the shoreline of North Viet Nam. From that moment on, NEWPORT NEWS was to be a fighting unit: the past 18 years of helping to maintain the peace in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, were, in a sense, preparatory to the mission of engaging the enemy in combat. In the mind of everyone that night was the question as to how he and the ship would measure up.

Now it is a matter of record, a known fact. NEWPORT NEWS and her crew performed in a superb manner. The training and hard work to prepare people, equipment, and machinery paid off. Indeed, as the days of repeated engagement with the enemy passed, NEWPORT NEWS became more proficient: the 5" and Rapid-Fire 8" guns were performing to perfection, and their salvos made an awesome sight.

With only three weeks of action behind us, the ship is still relatively inexperienced. But it is a ship with officers and crew that have a deep-seated confidence that the job in the next four months can be accomplished and accomplished well. There are no illusions but that it will be a demanding period, that extreme fatigue and strain will be the



normal situation. Furthermore, it is recognized that the effort is a team one: every individual in the ship is an important cog in the battle organization; and for the team to function, the individual must do his part. If this fact can be remembered by each man aboard, and if each man does his best, NEWPORT NEWS will have contributed substantially to the winning of the war in Viet Nam. And after all, that is the sole reason for our being in the SEVENTH Fleet today.

Combat Flag



Rear Admiral Walter V. Combs, left, is welcomed aboard NEWPORT NEWS by Captain Lindsay C. McCarty and Lieutenant D. P. Vonkers, the admiral's Flag Lieutenant.

NEWPORT NEWS has a new flag. Rear Admiral Walter V. Combs, Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla Three, became the 20th admiral to embark on the world's largest heavy cruiser. Admiral Combs transferred his command from USS ST. PAUL to USS NEWPORT NEWS while the two heavy cruisers steamed side by side off the coast of South Vietnam. He officially broke his flag on board NEWPORT NEWS at 11:30 a.m., October 9, during the highline operations.

"One of the largest highlines I've seen," remarked Captain McCarty upon successful completion of the transfer of the Admiral, his staff of 13 officers and 57 enlisted men, and some five tons of equipment. The highline was completed in heavy seas in approximately 3½ hours. The original plan called for the NEWPORT NEWS to rendezvous with ST. PAUL in the inner harbor at Danang, South Vietnam, and shift the flag while the ships were at anchor. However, a nearby tropical storm made the harbor waters too rough

for an anchored switch and the decision was made to highline instead. The last line went back to ST. PAUL at 1:30 p.m. and the new flagship turned north into the Gulf of Tonkin, headed for her first combat mission.

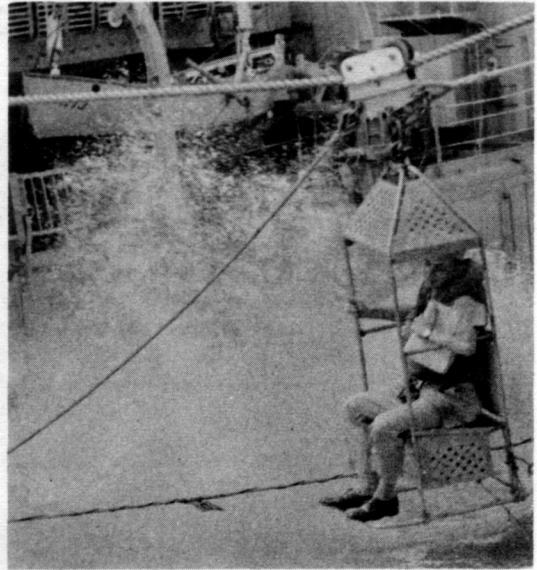
Rear Admiral Combs is in charge of Operation Sea Dragon. This operation includes the patrol of the North Vietnam coastline from the demilitarized zone northward. The direct supply route offered by the Tonkin Gulf was vastly superior to the infamous Ho Chi Minh trail. However, the 65-ship Sea Dragon cruiser-destroyer group headed by Admiral Combs has all but stopped this flow of supplies south.

A 1936 graduate of the Naval Academy, Admiral Combs holds a masters degree in Internal Affairs from George Washington University. He attended the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., in 1952-53, and the National War College, Washington, D.C., in 1960-61. Most of his World War II service was on board two destroyers.

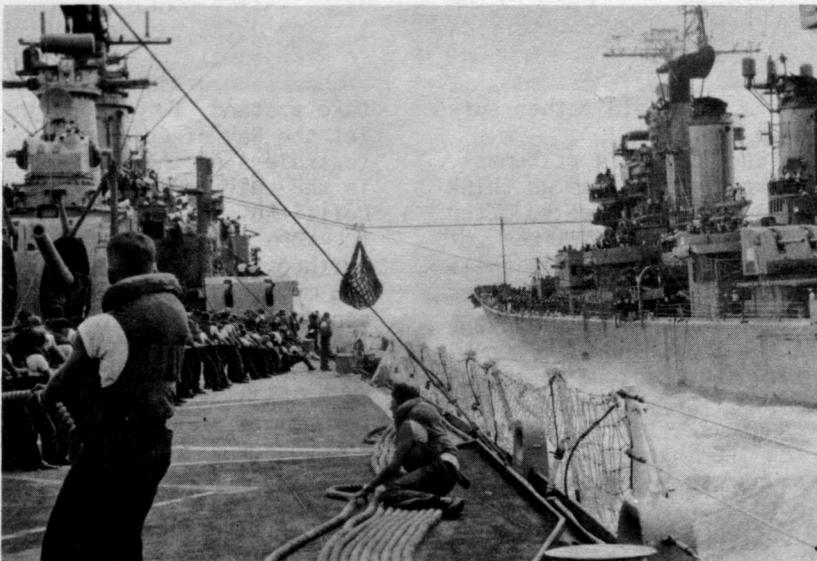
RADM Combs Directs Sea Dragon Forces

He was executive officer of the USS BUSH from February 1943-April 1944 and participated in action at Cape Gloucester, New Britain; the Eastern New Guinea Operation and the Admiralty Island landings. He took over command of the USS HARRISON until the end of the war, taking part in the Hollandia Operation, the capture and occupation of Guam, the Morotai and Leyte landings, the Fifth Fleet raids on Honshu and Nansei Shoto, the Okinawa Operation, and Third Fleet action against the Japanese homeland. It was during this tour of duty as C.O. of the HARRISON that Admiral Combs received the Silver Star and Bronze Star, with combat "V".

Having served on the battleship USS COLORADO and as commanding officer of the heavy cruiser USS LOS ANGELES, the Admiral is no stranger to heavy gun ships. NEWPORT NEWS is certainly no stranger in the role of flagship and will provide the services and the fire-power that Admiral Combs and his staff require on Sea Dragon.



The rough and sometimes-damp trip between NEWPORT NEWS and ST. PAUL in the highline chair was enjoyed by most staff officers.



NEWPORT NEWS' Seamen "lay back" on the highline carrying a portion of ComCruDesFlot Three's equipment.

Moral Side of the...NEWS

by Chaplain Walter "J" Schwartz, USN

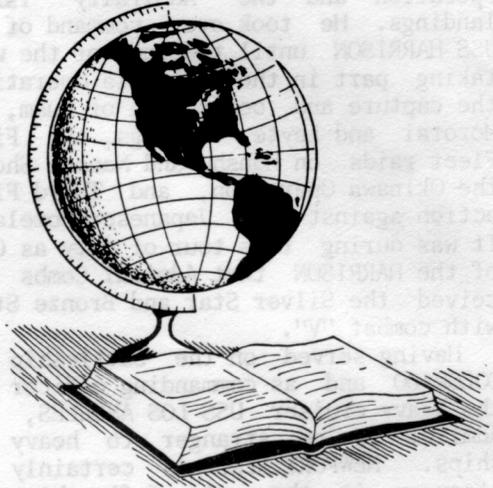
Navy people---Marines or sailors---are accustomed to service slogans. "Go Navy" or "This is a Navy Family" are mottoes familiar to all of us, and most of us have seen the poster which advertises the fact that "The Marine Corps Builds Men." But there is one well-known quotation which is seldom seen in such a conspicuous place as a car bumper or a compartment or office bulkhead, and this is the third Beatitude from our Lord's sermon from the mountaintop: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

We do not ordinarily use the word "meek" in our conversation today: it is possible that some people have never had occasion to use the word at all. When we do talk about a meek person, we usually refer to someone who is shy, timid, weak-willed, a person with little or no backbone at all. The Biblical use of the word is quite a different thing.

The Old Testament uses a Hebrew word which means God-molded: molded in the image of God. In the New Testament, a Greek word is used which means God-tamed: tamed by God. In either case, it refers to a person who would rather suffer wrong than do wrong.

The inconsistency of this statement, with life as we know it, or as we think it should be lived, is that we so often misapply the teaching. We sometimes get the very false idea that meekness calls for a submissive attitude at all times to all people and all causes.

If we take the Beatitude seriously, it will call for a submission, but only to the will of God. There is a vast difference between a weak, fearful, passive attitude on the one hand which allows anyone and everyone to run over you, and on the other hand, an attitude of forgiveness and patience which comes from being loyally committed to that which is right.



One of the things wrong with our world today is that we are all afraid of being called cowards. Now, cowards come in many different varieties, and what is so desperately needed today is the right brand of cowards, men and women who will take a stand for the right, willing to let the way of God work in their lives, regardless of the consequences. For this is the only way we can ever hope to inherit the earth. Someone has said that the meek might very well inherit the earth one day, but it is only the strong who possess it. The fallacy in such a statement is that it is the meek who alone are the strong: true meekness is certainly not weakness. To be meek means to be willing to let God's way work in our lives, regardless of the consequences, and this requires strength, not weakness.

Blessed are those of you who consider yourselves to be meek, for it is God's promise that you are the people who will inherit the earth.

BE A LEADER



1. *Would you like to be making more money?*
2. *would you like more responsibility and authority?*
3. *Would you like to attend advanced Navy "A" Schools?*
4. *Are you capable of contributing more to yourself and to the Navy?*

If the answer to any of the above questions is YES...then the time has come for you to "get that crow".

"Your appointment as a petty officer in the United States Navy carries with it the obligation that you exercise additional authority and willingly accept greater responsibility." This statement, printed on the Navy advancement in rate certificate, aptly points out what should be the goal of every Navy enlisted man.

One of the most difficult rungs in the ladder is the jump from seaman to third class petty officer. Competition is stiff among the many thousands of seamen going up for rate. These men have all shown they know how to take an order and are now ready to prove their merit as a petty officer.

One hundred and ninety-three NEWPORT NEWSmen have reaped the rewards of hard work and diligent study. They are the ship's crewmembers whose performances on the August petty officer examinations have entitled them to sew on new crow's.

Of this commendable group, 148 are being rated for the first time, having met the prerequisites of their particular ratings and having scored highly on their Third Class exams. In addition, NEWPORT NEWS has 27 new Second Class petty officers, 15 new First Class and

three who have navigated successfully the difficult path of advancement to Chief petty officer.

A new crow is always a matter of great pride for the individual, and each NEWPORT NEWSman who is being advanced deserves the warmest of congratulations for his accomplishment. And this pride is also shared by every last man aboard NEWPORT NEWS, for advancement in rate is seldomly an exclusively individual effort. The shipboard training, the counsel and wisdom of senior petty officers and the opportunity to work daily in a particular rating aboard NEWPORT NEWS have all undoubtedly been of significant benefit to many of the advancing men.

For the career-minded, the road is clear--to advance as far as possible in their chosen field. For the "short-timer", the object is to make a success of his tour of duty. The more you put into the Navy...the more you get out of it.

The next Navy-wide petty officer examinations will be given in February, and already many crewmembers are hard at work making preparations to go up for rate. If their anticipated success is in keeping with NEWPORT NEWS tradition, it will bring credit upon themselves, their ship and the Navy.

If petty officers are, indeed, the backbone of a good ship, then NEWPORT NEWS has a truly commendable posture.



NEWPORT NEWS' Commanding Officer, Captain Lindsay C. McCarty, congratulates the Executive Officer, Captain Robert T. Ruxton, on his recent promotion.

CONGRATULATIONS...

CAPTAIN RUXTON

What is the mark of a Navy Captain? It's not the silver eagles, four gold bars or "scrambled eggs", but rather the experience and knowledge that can be achieved only after many years of dedicated service. To make Captain is, for most Naval Officers, the realization of a life-long goal.

NEWPORT NEWS' Executive Officer, Captain Robert T. Ruxton, Jr., USN, recently attained this goal on November 2. He was promoted in a ceremony aboard NEWPORT NEWS while at anchor in Hong Kong harbor. The ship's Commanding Officer, Captain Lindsay C. McCarty, presided over the promotion ceremony.

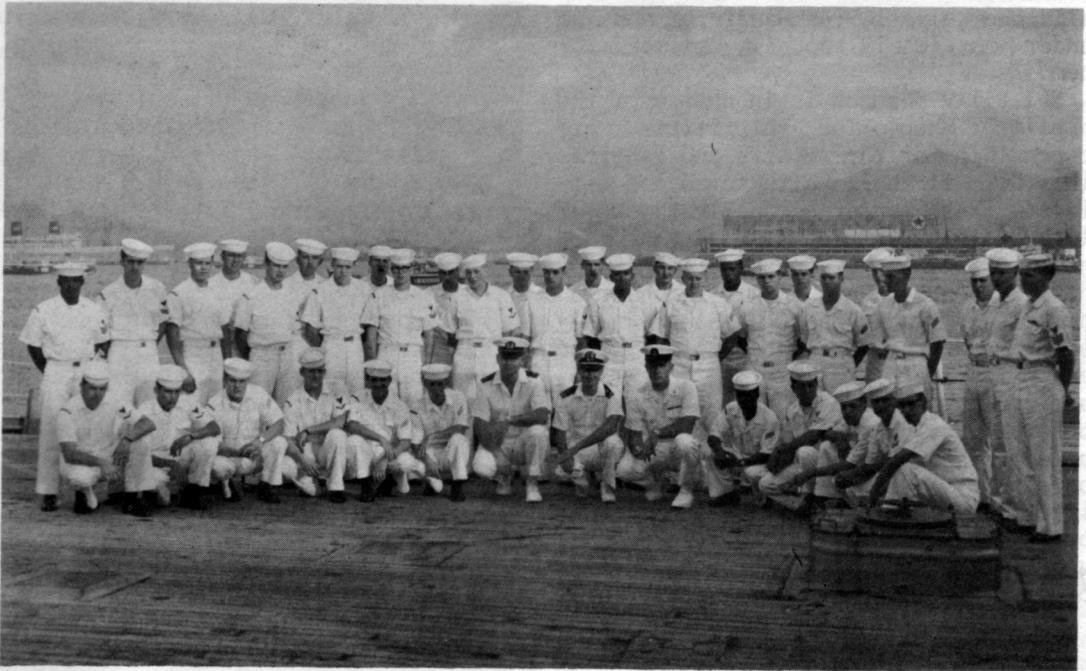
A 24-year veteran of Naval service,

Captain Ruxton has served aboard NEWPORT NEWS since August 1, 1966. Previously he has held numerous billets in both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. He served as Commanding Officer of the ocean-going minesweeper USS SALUTE and the destroyer USS MANLEY.

As yet, Captain Ruxton has not received orders to assume his own command. He commented that he would prefer to command a double-ender Guided Missile Frigate. He will remain NEWPORT NEWS' Executive Officer for the duration of this deployment.

When asked how he felt about his promotion, Captain Ruxton looked up from his desk and exclaimed, "Great!"

Division of the Month



“R” Division

Few people realize the importance and variety of services performed by the men of this month's division of the month--R Division. Their duties, which are either directly or indirectly vital to the successful completion of all the missions of NEWPORT NEWS, are carried out in a consistently efficient and professional manner.

R Division is under the damage control organization of the Engineering Department. Besides major repair and damage control services, the division contributes much to the health, comfort and welfare of the ship's officers and men. A few of their more obvious recent accomplishments are the new ship's store, the renovated barber shop, the soda fountain, the installation of ice machines and air conditioners throughout the ship, and helped E Division in the complex task of setting up the new closed circuit television system.

Supervisors of the 49-man division are Lieutenant Junior Grade Bob Degroote

and SHPRETECH Billy Richardson. They are assisted by DCCS Henry Hammonds and SFC Fred Fenton. These people coordinate the workings of the Pipe Shop, Shipfitter Shop, Carpenter Shop and Damage Control Shop. Each individual shop also has a petty officer in charge responsible for its operation.

In charge of the Pipe Shop is SF1 Grover Fisher. Under Fisher's supervision, the Pipe Shop is caretaker of over 1000 miles of piping. This includes all the salt water, fresh water, steam, freon, fuel, JP-5, hydraulic and drain lines. If the ship has a piping problem, Fisher is the man to see.

If it's a ruptured hydraulic line to one of the turrets, they will repair it and the guns will fire again. If it is a broken steam line, they will repair it so the laundry can press uniforms. If it's a severed fresh water line, they will fix it so the crew can take showers. If it's a deteriorated freon line, they will fabricate a new one so the

ship's spaces will remain cool. If a fuel oil line ruptures, they will repair it so fuel oil will flow to the boilers to make steam. The men in the Pipe Shop call themselves "The Handlers" and no wonder--no job is too big or small for them.

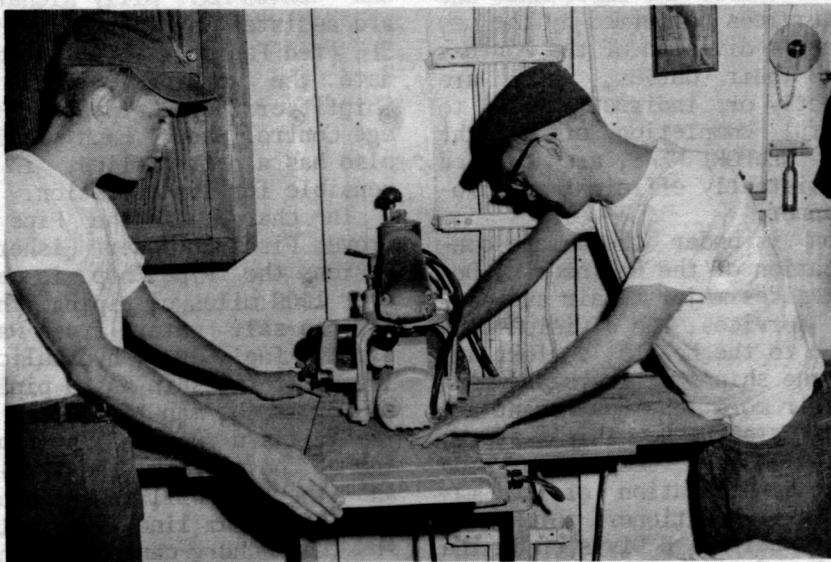
SF1 Billy Shannon is in charge of the Shipfitter Shop. The shipfitters are responsible for the repairs and fabrications of all hull structures and fittings. These men are actually "jacks of all trades." At one time or another they work in every area of the ship. They relocate the Captain's chair on the bridge; build chart tables; manufacture vent screens; patch holes in the deck; fabricate ventilation ducts; repair broken mess deck tables; install lockers; build and install shelves, cabinets and desks; repair flame-tight doors, etc. To assemble all of the shipfitters at one time is a difficult task, for their work scatters them throughout every part of the ship. The shipfitter's motto is: "If we can't repair it, throw

it away, for no one else can."

The Carpenter Shop, headed by DC2 Jim Crawford handles the building and repairing of all wooden structures aboard. The carpenters build officer's cruise boxes, cut wood for knot boards, and make up ship's plaques for VIP's, departing officers and re-enlistees. They make repairs on the teak wood decks and the hulls of the ship's liberty boats. Known as the "Comshaw Boys," the carpenters' motto is: "If it's wood, we can hack it!"

Last but not least is the Damage Control Shop. Under the supervision of DC1 N. A. Adams, this shop maintains all of the ship's damage control and fire-fighting equipment, including the overhaul and operation of pumps and foam proportioners. The D.C. Shop also charges the CO2 bottles, and repairs Oxygen Breathing Apparatus, nozzles, applicators and fire hoses. Monthly, the shop inventories the five repair lockers to make sure all equipment that is needed in the repair of battle damage is

"IF R DIVISION CAN'T REPAIR IT, NO ONE CAN!"



In the Carpenter Shop, DC3 Richard Alverson, left, and DC2 Dale Crawford use the radial arm saw to cut wood for shelves.



SF1 G. C. Fisher, left, and SFM3 J. R. Dawson repair an oil line in the Pipe Shop.

on station. They also make repairs to watertight doors and hatches on board the ship. Of all shops in R Division, the Damage Control Shop has the most thankless job. Few people really appreciate the extent of their work. In the final analysis though, the damage controlmen are the people who will contribute so very much in the case of battle damage.

Besides its above mentioned duties, R Division provides the fire fighting and refueling team for helicopter operations, and personnel in repair lockers during Condition III. The sounding and security watches, and damage control petty officer of the watch are also stood by R Division men in between their tight work load.

The men of R Division take great pride in their work and their appearance. They never fail to get the job done quickly, efficiently and professionally. "Well done" to each of the hard-working men in Romeo Division.

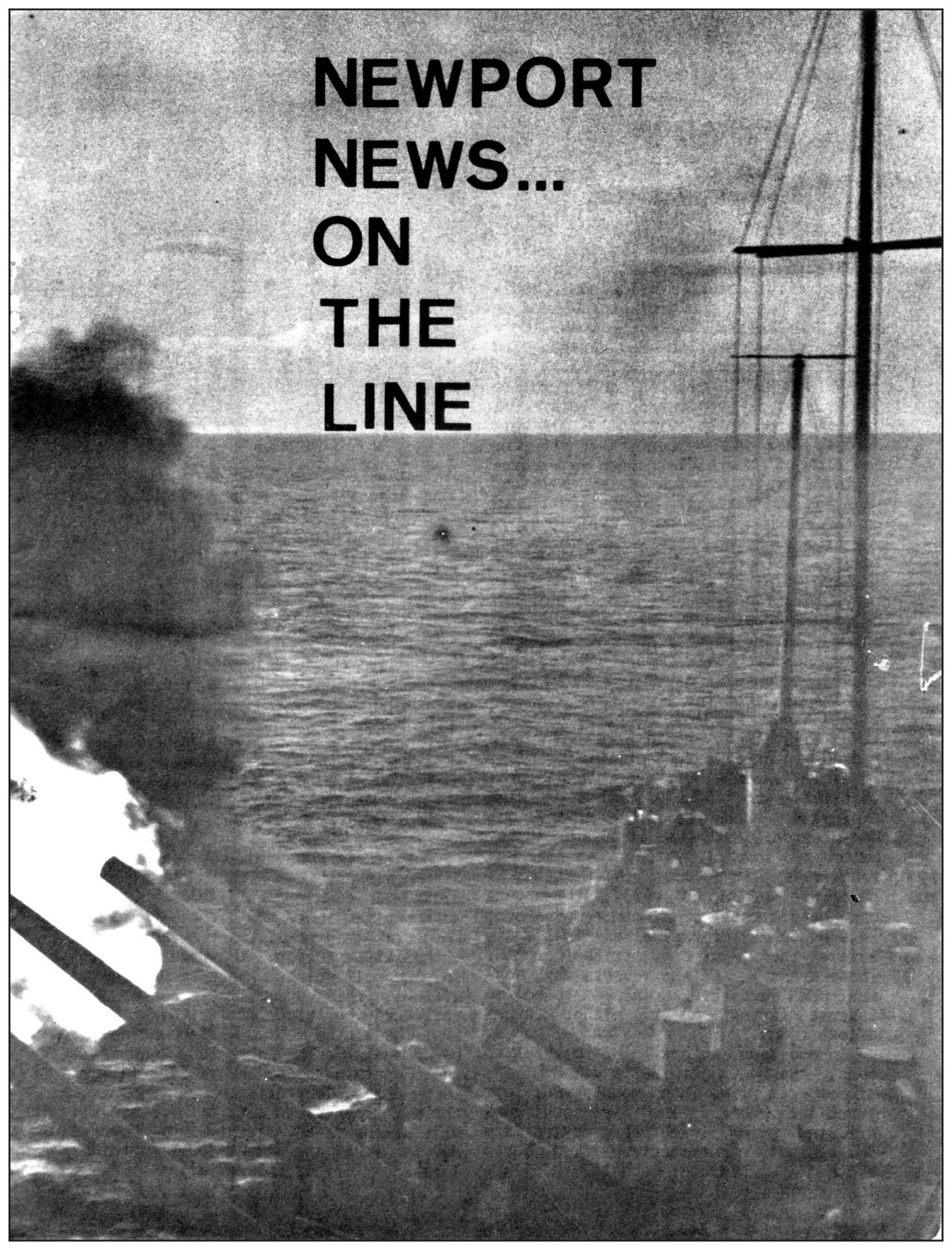


SN Forrest Brown checks a portable CO2 bottle in the damage control locker.



*From the tranquil, familiar waters of the Atlantic to the hostile stretches of the Tonkin Gulf, she steamed. The ship...
USS NEWPORT NEWS. Her mission...OPERATION SEA DRAGON.*

**NEWPORT
NEWS...
ON
THE
LINE**



OPERATION SEA DRAGON

NEWPORT NEWS arrived in the waters off Vietnam on October 8, 1967. With the ship's first combat mission only hours away, the heavy gun cruiser received on board Rear Admiral Walter V. Combs, Commander of Operation Sea Dragon and Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla Three.

NEWPORT NEWS' mission on Operation Sea Dragon is to destroy targets contributing to North Vietnam's military effort. Her primary concern is stopping the flow of North Vietnamese waterborne logistic crafts, which carry military supplies and materials to hostile troops in the south. These small crafts, varying from junks to barges, hug the coast to avoid detection.

Also of primary importance are military targets ashore in North Vietnam. Daily, NEWPORT NEWS directs her fire against inland targets such as bridges, ferry approaches, supply routes and coastal defense sites.

Although "on the line" for a relatively short period of time, NEWPORT NEWS' eight-inch, rapid-fire guns have proved to be a potent striking force. The ship expends over two thousand projectiles--some 230,000 pounds of high explosives--each week in carrying out her mission. Each gun, because of its automated loading system, can fire one round every six seconds. At their maximum range of 30,000 yards, three guns can have a total of ninety rounds--over 20,000 pounds of explosives--in the air before the first one strikes ground. These are some of the reasons why NEWPORT NEWS' guns are acclaimed to be the fastest firing, major caliber weapons afloat today.

In addition to her nine eight-inch guns, the heavy cruiser's armament includes six five-inch mounts and four three-inch mounts. The five-inch guns are used primarily for suppression fire and against counterbattery from North Vietnam's numerous coastal defense



Captain Lindsay C. McCarty views high-line operations from the bridge wing as NEWPORT NEWS takes on her new Flag.

sites. The three-inch mounts, although infrequently used, vigilantly guard the ship against the ever-imposing threat of swift P-T boats.

It is the sum total of this fire power and diversity that makes NEWPORT NEWS such a potent force on Operation Sea Dragon. Bringing this power to bear against hostile forces is why they are there.

But it is not machinery alone that distinguishes NEWPORT NEWS as a proficient man of war. It's the men. They work the machinery and get the job done. Each crewmember realizes the individual, enthusiastic effort required for the ship's well being. Every seaman, petty officer, chief and officer has now experienced the rigor of war. Each knows that the months ahead will continue to be demanding. The days, long and arduous, contain too few hours for the work to be done. They often probe deep into the night. While on duty off Vietnam the ship stands ready twenty-four hours a day to rebel any attack...poised to unleash her fury at inland targets.



Left: The director for three-inch mount #33 is "manned and ready." Phone connections have been checked and final preparations made. The director is now ready to lock on a specific target.

Once the director locks on a target the guns move simultaneously with it. The guns then may be fired either in the director itself or through use of computers in the plotting room.

Below: The Sky 3 director officer constantly scans the target area with high-power binoculars to locate targets and to obtain the results of hits when possible.





NEWPORT NEWSmen huddle around computers in After Main Plot. Always a busy place while the ship is on the line, this plotting room controls the fire of the eight-inch guns.



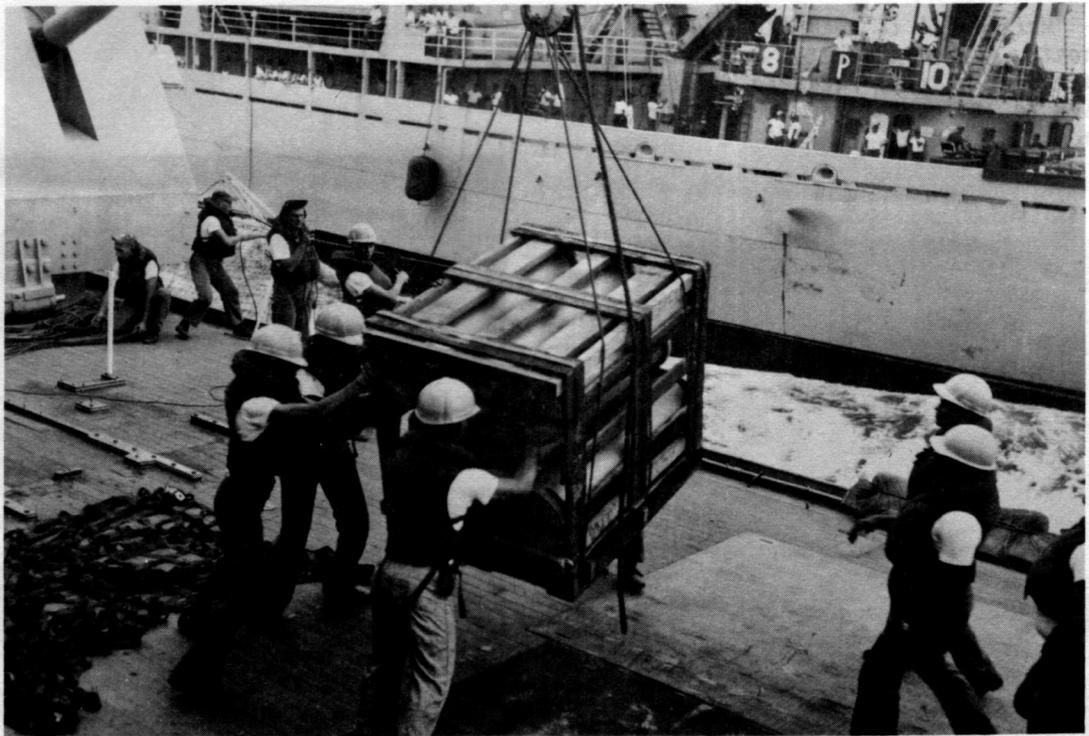
One of the key roles during general quarters is that of Officer of the Deck on the open bridge. This responsible position is ably filled by LTJG Rodney Hammonds who acts as the Captain's "visual eyes" during battle missions.

Concentrating on her mission, hours slip into days. Days fade into endless weeks. Dates and names of days are all but meaningless. Memories linger to home and loved ones. The present, jolted by the thunder of war, is timeless. The crew can only measure time in terms of fleeting moments between strikes. But each man, realizing the necessity for this rugged existence, stands his watch without complaint...without hesitation. From the signal bridge to the engine room, morale is high. The remark of one tired petty officer best describes the feelings of the crew: "We don't mind doing the work because we know it's important."

This is the first time at war for NEWPORT NEWS and most of her crew. As-

suming her combat duties is not the beginning, but really the end result of many months' preparation and training. Each man knows his job. Each intertwines his work with that of his shipmates' to produce a tightly knit organization. From the directors, to the plotting rooms, to the gun mounts... NEWPORT NEWSmen are working together towards a common goal.

Results...must be measured in a more human perspective than obtuse statistics, something more meaningful than rounds expended or targets liquidated. When called to war, NEWPORT NEWS was ready. When taken under fire, stood braced and resolute in her convictions. When called to rest, NEWPORT NEWS will retire with dignity.



Several weeks on the line necessitate replenishment of supplies at sea. The ship must refuel, re-arm and replenish food supplies via highline operations with supply ships. These major evolutions are a familiar sight aboard NEWPORT NEWS, and their successful completion require the co-operation of all hands.



"Mail Call" is normally sounded shortly after the helo makes its daily deliveries. The helo is also used to transport newsmen to and from the ship.



"Police Brass" is the order of the day...every day while on the line. Empty eight-inch powder shells give a clear indication of the amount of firing being done.

Hong Kong



Hong Kong boasts one of the largest and most beautiful natural harbors in the world. This view from the top of Victoria Peak shows the modern buildings of downtown Hong Kong, the Navy ships anchored in the harbor and in the distance, the city of Kowloon.

Multi-lane highways disappear into narrow, muddy streets. A weather-beaten sampan ties up to a modern steel pier for the night...

A young Chinese mother, buying yellow apples and glazed poultry in an open-air market, glances across the street at an oblique, marble building...

An old rickshaw runner huddles over his cart, ignoring the market banter and taxi horns. A young sailor asks him for a ride, and a smile sets deep lines of happiness across the old man's face...

Late at night, oriental music twangs against rock-'n-roll for predominance over the street...

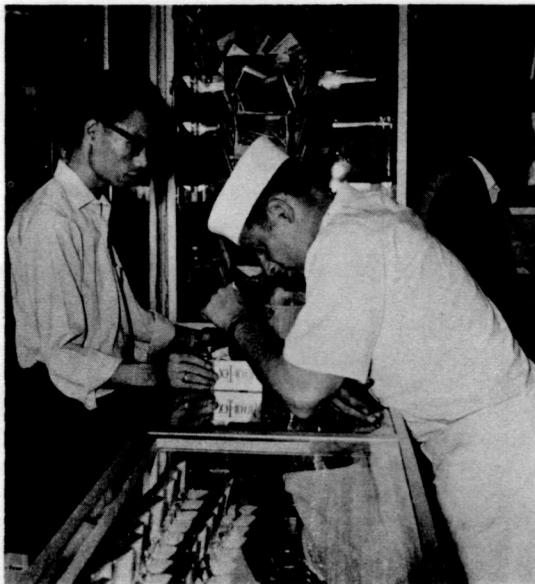
This is Hong Kong...where Western customs have made definite imprints on the way of life-while, at the same time, many ancient customs remain.

NEWPORT NEWS arrived in the British Crown Colony on October 30 for five days of rest and relaxation. Hong Kong has something to offer for everyone. The shopping facilities, entertainment and sightseeing available are acknowledged to be among the finest in the orient.

NEWPORT NEWSmen spent most of their time shopping and sightseeing. They shopped in the exclusive boutiques in modern shopping plazas in downtown Hong Kong and Kowloon, where goods from every area of the globe are brought to be sold. They also purchased souvenirs in the open-air markets where bargaining with the vendors for a better price becomes half the fun of buying.

From the majestic countryside to the bustling commercial center, Hong Kong presents scenes of unequalled charm and beauty for the photo enthusiast. Many NEWPORT NEWSmen toured the entire Island from the floating fishing village at Aberdeen to the top of Victoria Peak, which affords a truly spectacular view of the Colony.

The visit to Hong Kong certainly provided the officers and crew alike a perfect opportunity to sample the culture and meet the people of this great Eastern city.



As Hong Kong is a free port, no import duties are levied on practically all types of foreign merchandise. NEWPORT NEWSmen took full advantage of the bargains available on many items.



The side-street market places "hum" with activity throughout the day and into the night. Just about anything you desire can be bought in Hong Kong.



This sailor seems to have made a friend. It doesn't take much to please a Hong Kong youngster, as they appreciate the smallest of gifts.



Hong Kong portrays a unique combination of rich and poor, intrigue and industry, East and West.

Onward

Upward

Farewell

Captain Lindsay C. McCarty congratulates the following NEWPORT NEWSmen on their recent reenlistments while on the line.



BMCS Virgil Jennings



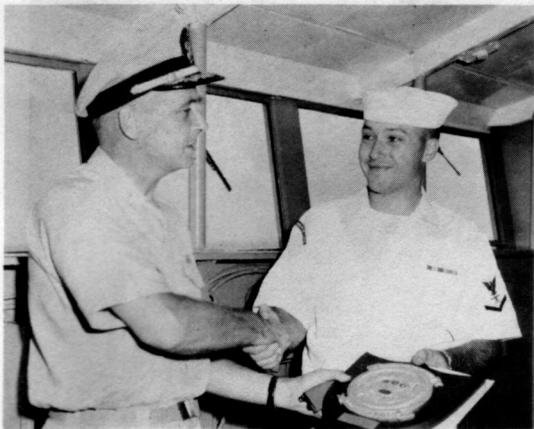
ETR2 Thomas J. Moore



RMC Joseph P. Pasqualucci



BM2 Marion C. Stephens



FTG3 William W. Diel



BM3 Donald L. Shepard



PH2 Harry L. Doyle



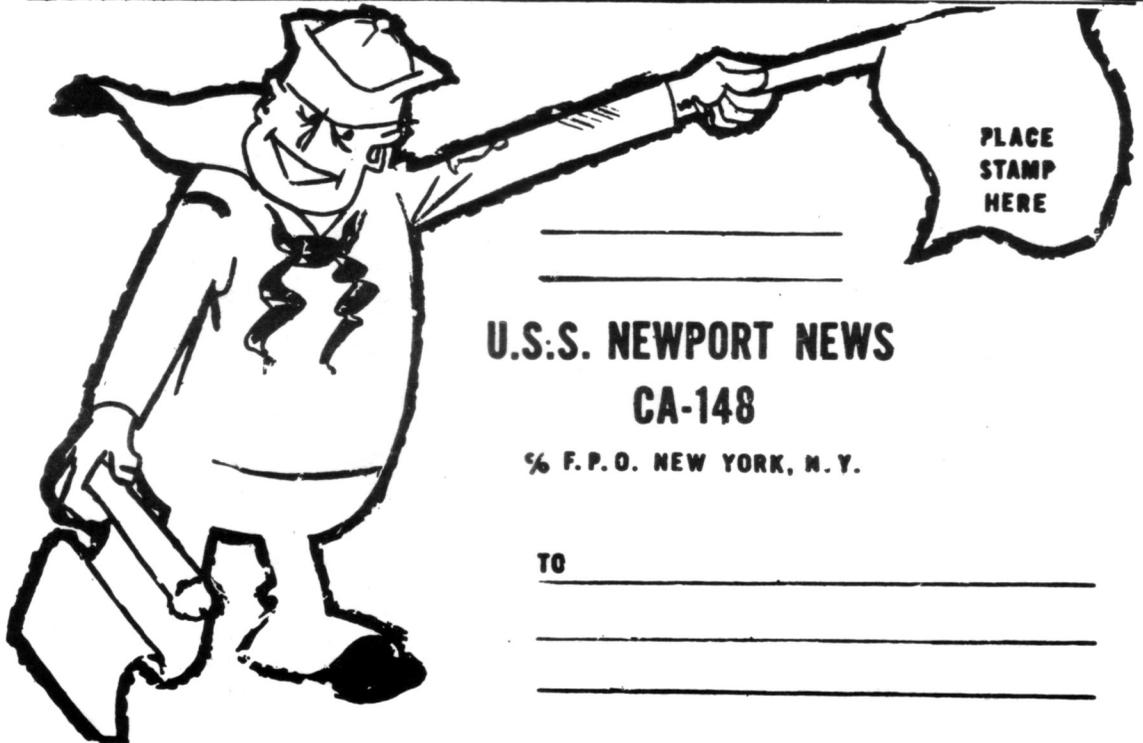
QMC Joseph H. Williams



BM2 Lawrence A. Sims



Vice Admiral John J. Hyland Jr., Commander Seventh Fleet, visited NEWPORT NEWS while the ship was in Subic Bay, Philippines, undergoing final preparations for her first tour off Vietnam. Captain McCarty, Commander Ruxton and Weapons Officer Lieutenant Commander Ralph Doe gave the Admiral a first hand tour of the ship. Admiral Hyland has been selected to replace retiring Admiral Roy L. Johnson as Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet.



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