



# Ready Eddie Reader!!!

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2001



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

*"First, I want to thank all of those who took time to fill out and mail in the R.S. Edwards Association membership form for this year (July 2000-June 2001) and for your donations to our group. These donations and our ships store sales are some of the ways in which our association can remain active. Another key component has been the aid of our volunteers. These many people continue to be the cornerstone of the R.S. Edwards Association. Their work is very much appreciated.*

*One of the more current things happening for the association is the updating of our mailing list. We want members to know that this is one of the only ways that the group can keep track of it's members and be able to maintain current R. S. Edwards Association information. Since the year ends for the association in June, 2001 and the new year begins a month later for our group, please help keep the R. S. Edwards Association list current. Please help keep our membership address list correct by filling out another membership form after July, 2001 and mailing it in. Thank you for doing this.*

*See you all at "Reunion 2002" (Seattle-Tacoma area) in just 16 months."*

Jack L. Sanders



Cal DeKnikker-THEN



Cal DeKnikker-NOW



Mike Lillie-THEN



Mike Lillie-NOW

## Back to the past!!!

Greetings!!! Welcome to you and to Spring. I think for the majority of us this was a tougher winter than we've had in the past. Different issues and situations depending on your area of the country, but a challenge nonetheless.

In this issue I hope to get back to the history of the Edwards. The reunion issue had so much important new info to pass on, I had to "put the past on hold". In previous issues I brought the official command history, as told by Uncle Sam, through 1974. Thankfully made interesting enough to read, by the real story, as told by you. Keep jotting down your memories and/or sea stories (same thing?) and share them with us. The government's command history for 1975 is *almost* 1-1/2 typewritten pages. Take out the headings and the de-classified stamps and it would fit on an 8 1/2 X 11 page. That's pretty much the average for all years. A year of our lives reduced to a single typewritten page. We all know there was more to it than that for *any* given year.

The two gentlemen above, EN Mike Lillie and BT Cal DeKnikker were members of the 1975 crew, are members of the association, and were generous enough to share past and current photos. I'd love to feature more "then and nows", and profiles on your naval careers (2-20+ years. Length is not a prerequisite for an interesting career). Many people have great "profiles" since leaving the service, also. Document them and send them along. Make them history.

Thanx, TUT

# The Ready Eddie revisited.....1975

## Command History, 1975

*(1975 was a year spent mostly dockside. The drydock period being the toughest. With the entire crew living off the ship, either in barracks, base housing or rented apartments I think we grew apart as a full team, but became closer to each other on an individual basis as we spent more time together on a personal level away from RSE. Tough for a destroyerman to get excited about a ship not able to go to sea, though. The most important decision made while on duty at Dry Dock #4 was whether to chance the box lunch for dinner or call for a pizza delivery. Many people used this period to enjoy as close to a normal life as possible. It was a job you went to every day, and went home from in the eve. Not exactly the exotic lifestyle of the Navy Destroyerman, but Hawaii made it easy to deviate from the norm. Crewmembers had a chance to settle down and get to know the area, buy cars, meet people, enjoy paradise. Let's hear about your 1975.)*

This was a year of overhaul and testing for the USS Richard S. Edwards. Eight months of the year were spent in the ship's regularly scheduled overhaul period at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard; 12 million dollars were to be spent and numerous hours utilized to upgrade the ship's engineering plant, replace old weapons systems, improve habitability, and install new electronic equipment. The ship was then to enter a period of testing and training that would stretch well into the New Year.

The months of January and February 1975 were months of routine steaming in the Hawaiian Operating Areas. The ship was underway from 6 to 9 January, 13 to 16 January, 4 to 7 February and 10 to 12 February for independent steaming exercises which were used for training at General Quarters stations and in Engineering Casualty Control drills.



Above: Chuck See and Lt. PKA Vosseler. Right: Dan James and Larry Jackson at Bellows Beach (brews and BBQ)



**Dry Dock #4**



**Big Sal retires**

On 8 April, EDWARDS covered with staging, red-leaded and her engineering plant disassembled by the first moves toward overhaul, was moved by harbor tugs to Dry Dock #4 and set on keel blocks to provide the necessary access to the hull. Holes were cut in the port side of the ship to gain access to the forward and after firerooms. In drydock, the ship's boilers and other vital propulsion systems were overhauled. In addition, work was accomplished on the sonar dome, propeller shafts, propellers, rudders and various intakes. The ship was un-inhabitable. All air conditioning was shut off due to lack of chill water, the galley was closed due to lack of steam and only the duty section lived onboard to provide the needed manpower in case of an emergency. With the crew living in barracks, work progressed around the clock to meet the undocking date.

All work required to be accomplished in the dry dock was completed on 25 July and the ship undocked on 26 July. At 0748 the ship was away from her keel blocks and once again afloat.

During August the ship prepared for the Propulsion Examining Board's LOE (light off exam) in the forward engineering plant. The month of September was marked by the successful completion of the Light Off Exam in the forward engineering spaces. In early October after receiving an unsatisfactory on the after engineering plant LOE, the ship successfully passed the LOE re-examination. The ship was now finally ready to steam.

Fast cruising on 20 and 21 October, the EDWARDS tested all overhauled systems and equipment. On 31 October a second fast cruise was held and the ship was found to be fully ready to commence sea trials.

On 5 November, Sea Detail was set and EDWARDS was readied for her first sea period in 8 months. The first Sea Trial lasted two days while engineering boiler flex tests and casualty control drills were conducted. The newly installed 5"/54 MOD 10 gun mounts were test fired and all electronic systems were tested. A second Sea Trial was held on 13 and 14 November.

(CONTINUED-PG 3)

(CONTINUED FROM PG 2)

On 18 November, EDWARDS completed the overhaul on schedule and again joined the fleet.

On 21 and 22 November the ship conducted Sonar and Fire Control systems accuracy checks, and a full power trial in the local Hawaiian operating areas. The full power trial was extremely successful with the ship attaining speeds in excess of 32 knots, making EDWARDS the fastest surface ship in Pearl Harbor.

On 24 November, EDWARDS departed Pearl Harbor enroute to the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Barking Sands, Kauai to conduct weapons systems accuracy tests (WSAT). During the transit an ASROC motor prematurely ignited and seriously burned one man. An investigation into the cause of the rocket motor ignition was conducted. Investigators found that the accident was caused by a manufacturing defect in one of the rocket motor components.

During the first two weeks of December, EDWARDS conducted independent ships exercises (ISE) in the local Hawaiian operating areas. Upon completion of ISE, the Richard S. Edwards commenced a holiday leave and upkeep period throughout the Christmas holidays.

## COMMAND HISTORY, 1976

During the year 1 January 1976 to 1 January 1977, USS Richard S. Edwards DD 950 was homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and assigned to Commander Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, as a unit of DESRON 35.

Richard S. Edwards commenced 1976 in regular overhaul at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard remaining until 22 February. Refresher Training-Phase I began on 23 February and lasted through 13 March. "REFTRA" was followed by an upkeep period at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard from 14 March to 4 April. This period led directly into a Repair Availability period with the USS Bryce Canyon AD 36 and FMAG, Pearl Harbor from 5 April to 23 May. During this period EDWARDS successfully passed the Nuclear Weapons Acceptance Test (NWAT). On 14 April, CDR Alan E. Witham was relieved by CDR John W. Walker as the Commanding Officer. EDWARDS was underway for Type Training in the Pearl Harbor Operational areas from 28 May to 16 June. An inport period from 17 June to 20 June was spent in the final preparations for REFTRA Phase II, which lasted from 21 June to 9 July. Several deficiencies were noted during REFTRA Phase II, which required Phase II to be rescheduled at a later date.

From 10 July to 19 July, EDWARDS was inport Pearl Harbor preparing for the upcoming Operational Propulsion Plan Examination (OPPE). On 20 July, Richard S. Edwards was underway for 4 days of engineering training with the NAVSEC Mobile Training Team

(MTT), followed by nine days of upkeep and OPPE preparations and four more days of MTT training beginning 2 August. Engineering training continued in full force while EDWARDS joined various other units of the Pacific Fleet on 6 August for a major fleet exercise, COMTUEX 1-77, during the week of 6 August.

COMTUEX 1-77 was followed by nine days of intensive inport OPPE preparations. EDWARDS got underway on 23 August with the OPPE board embarked. By 25 August, EDWARDS had satisfactorily completed the OPPE with the exception of the boiler flexes, and returned to Pearl Harbor. Technical problems with the automatic combustion control equipment resulted in the EDWARDS being awarded a conditional satisfactory by the OPPE board which provided that EDWARDS would undergo boiler flex tests at a future date.

From 26 August until 9 November, EDWARDS alternated between upkeep periods in Pearl Harbor and Type Training. On 10 November, Refresher Training Phase II recommenced, completing on 16 November. EDWARDS received a grade of satisfactory on all phases of Refresher Training. On 17 November, EDWARDS departed Pearl Harbor for a ten day transit to San Diego, CA. Upon arrival in San Diego, EDWARDS participated in five days of inport Type Training. On 2 December, EDWARDS departed San Diego in a multiple ship sortie for the commencement of READIEX 2-77. This seven day major fleet exercise was followed by an eight day transit back to Pearl Harbor arriving on 12 December. The remainder of the year was spent inport in Pearl Harbor in upkeep and holiday leave status.

*("I remember OPPE in 73-74. It was a new method of evaluating a ships Engineering capabilities and we were one of the first to undergo it. As I recall, other departments were asked to volunteer people to do the chipping and painting in the bilges because the Engineering people were too involved in OPPE preps. As a Sonar Technician at the time it all seemed like a scam to me".....TUT)*

## On the road again.....

**A trip is in the planning stages by Don Farrar (OS3,70-73) from his home in Dittmer, MO to Rochester, NY. Don is heading North to Burlington, WI first to pick up fellow shipmate Bob Sheard (CS3,70-72) on Sat June 9th and head East on Sunday to rendezvous with a mutual friend from another ship, in NY. They will be travelling the northern route across Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, PA and into NY to Rochester. Anyone wanting to get together to say hello along the route, or during their stay in NY, should contact Don (dfarrar@nightowl.net or through the Association PO Box). Sounds like a Northeast get together.**



## COMMAND HISTORY, 1977



PC3 Lonnie Collins



BT ZINKE in RAD suit

The year 1977 for the USS Richard S. Edwards DD-950 began with a two day leave and upkeep period. Commencing January 3, EDWARDS entered a repair availability until 10 February 1977. During the RAV, Edwards began pre-inserv preparations. From 25 to 28 January, Edwards underwent INSURV inspection by the Sub-Board of Inspection and Survey (Pacific). Immediately following INSURV, EDWARDS commenced a pre-overseas movement period. Preparation for overseas movement continued until 17 February when EDWARDS departed Pearl Harbor to participate in a major fleet exercise (RIMPAC 77).

Upon completion of RIMPAC on 25 February, EDWARDS was detached and began the transit to the Western Pacific. EDWARDS steamed westward in company with USS Coral Sea (CV-43), COMCARGRU 1 embarked, USS Benjamin Stoddert (DD-22), COMDESRON 35 embarked, USS Morton (DD-948), and USS Bradley (FF-1041) until 7 March when EDWARDS was detached to proceed independently to her first port of call at Guam on 11 March 1977. EDWARDS immediately entered a repair availability with the Ship Repair Facility which lasted until 14 April 1977. Upon departing Guam, EDWARDS transited to Okinawa for a fuel stop on 16 April departing that same day. On 16 April while enroute to rendezvous with TG77.3 off Pusan, Korea, EDWARDS was tasked with surveillance operations on a Soviet Kresta II cruiser, Kanin destroyer and Kashin destroyer transiting to the China Sea.

EDWARDS maintained surveillance operations on the Soviet Task Force for the next six days, conducting visual and photographic studies of the Soviet units. On 2 April, EDWARDS was detached from the special operations and transited to Yokosuka, Japan. After a four day upkeep period, EDWARDS got underway to participate in a four day joint U.S.-Japan ASW exercise. Upon completion of the exercise, EDWARDS returned to Yokosuka for a two day upkeep.

On 3 May EDWARDS departed Yokosuka to participate in an eight day major fleet exercise (MULTIPLEX 4-77). Upon completion of this exercise, EDWARDS was detached from TG77.3 to proceed independently to Yokosuka. EDWARDS next commitment was to be the

U.S. representative at the Black Ship Festival 16-19 May 1977 in Shimoda, Japan. The Black Ship Festival annually commemorates the opening of relations between the U. S. and Japan by Commodore Matthew Perry's Black Ship Fleet. Shimoda was one of two Japanese ports first opened to Western trade. Aboard EDWARDS for the half day transit from Yokosuka to Shimoda on 16 May 1977 were Rear Admiral Thomas B. Russell Jr., Commander Naval Forces Japan, and Mr. Thomas Shoesmith, U.S. Charge D'Affaires, American Embassy Japan along with numerous other guests.

Departing Shimoda on 20 May, EDWARDS transited independently to Subic Bay, Phillippines arriving May 24. EDWARDS then commenced a repair availability with the Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay, lasting until June 6. From 7 June to 18 June EDWARDS escorted USS Coral Sea (CV-43) in the South China Sea, conducting plane guard duties and various training exercises. On 18 June EDWARDS returned to Subic Bay for another availability at the Ship Repair Facility, which lasted until 9 July. On 9 July COMDESRON 35 embarked in EDWARDS and remained embarked until 30 July. From 10-19 July, EDWARDS participated in a major fleet exercise, MULTIPLEX 6-77. Upon completion of the exercise EDWARDS returned to Subic Bay for a five day repair availability. From 25-28 July EDWARDS requalified in Naval Gunfire Support exercises at Tabonnes Island, then returned to Subic Bay for three days.

EDWARDS departed Subic Bay, enroute to Hong Kong, on August 2. A four day liberty port call in Hong Kong ended 8 August. EDWARDS then proceeded to Okinawa where services were provided for the Marines 10-13 August. EDWARDS departed Okinawa on 14 August, rendezvous with TG77.5 off Hong Kong on 15 August and conducted task group operations until the morning of 18 August when TG77.5 entered Subic Bay. A repair availability with SRF Subic Bay lasted until 5 September. On 6 September, EDWARDS, in company with COMDESRON 35, USS Benjamin Stoddert, USS Somers, departed Subic Bay enroute to Pearl Harbor, via Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa. On 12 September EDWARDS crossed the equator. On 18 September EDWARDS arrived at the port of Albany, Western Australia. During Edwards four day visit the ship was open to the public for guided tours. On 23 September EDWARDS got underway for the three day transit across the Australian Bight with the Mayor of Albany, Mr. Homer Smith and the local member of the Western Australian State Parliament, Mr. Leon Watt as guests. On 25 September EDWARDS arrived at Portland, Victoria, Australia. As in Albany, the ship was open to the public during the five day port visit.

EDWARDS departed Portland on 30 September

enroute to New Zealand, arriving in Auckland on 5 October. Once again the ship was open to general visiting. EDWARDS remained in Auckland until 10 October, at which time the transit to Pago Pago, American Samoa began. Arriving at Pago Pago on 14 October, EDWARDS refueled and departed the following day. EDWARDS then proceeded independently to Puka Puka Island in the Danger Island Chain to deliver supplies to a Smithsonian Institute Research Expedition on 16 October. EDWARDS departed that same day for Pearl Harbor. The six day transit ended the morning of 22 October as EDWARDS entered her homeport, completing an 8 1/2 month WESTPAC deployment.

Upon arrival EDWARDS entered a standdown period which lasted until 7 November, and then commenced an upkeep period which lasted through 30 November. On 1 December EDWARDS departed Pearl Harbor for one day of local operations, returning that afternoon. Then 2 December, EDWARDS departed for Lahaina, Maui with dependents aboard, remained in Lahaina over the weekend and returned to Pearl Harbor with dependents on 5 December. On 6 December EDWARDS proceeded to sea for Type Training, returning to Pearl Harbor for the weekend of 10 December. On 12 December EDWARDS transited to Kahoolawe Island for Naval Gunfire Support exercises for Marine spotters. Upon returning to Pearl Harbor on 17 December, EDWARDS began a holiday leave and upkeep period for the remainder of 1977.

## Editor's Notes...and Stuff!!!

This issue of the "Reader" is a special one in a couple of ways. Happy and sad for the same reason.

The previous 6 newsletters were mailed to all the former crewmembers on the association's contact list. That list currently numbers approximately 325. As stated in the last newsletter, the Ready Eddie Reader is now a benefit of membership in the association. It is now going out to those folks interested enough in the group to send in a current membership form. It's been you folks, giving us moral and financial support, that have grown the Ready Eddie Association into a relatively well organized, fun group. Hopefully, a good link to our common, shared past.

The "happy" in this equation is the fact that we know we are working for those who appreciate our efforts. It takes the work out of the work in progress and makes it a labor of love. To quote the great statesmen Bartles and James, "We thank you for your support". The "sad" is the fact that only about 135 of the 300 plus people on the contact list sent in current membership forms. We realize that some may think they are up to date, while many others are members of other groups and can't join all. We'll continue our recruiting efforts, though. We don't give up that easy.

The next membership "drive" will be this Summer. We apologize to those of you who have recently sent in forms and encourage you to do so again at the start of our new year in June-July. This year we will be sending out membership cards, and are planning some T-shirt and ball cap giveaways for the first current forms sent in. Another new membership benefit is personalized DD950 email addresses. You may contact the Webmaster at [webmaster@dd950.com](mailto:webmaster@dd950.com) to take advantage of this. You can pick "anyname" @dd950.com as your email address and have it forwarded to any address you'd like. Mine is now [TUT@dd950.com](mailto:TUT@dd950.com). You may pick PingJockey, or Snipe1, CaptainCrunch, whatever@dd950.com. It's something you can have fun with and it also keeps your real email address off the Net if you so desire. Those of you without Internet access can still have your own email address listed on the web site, and have it forwarded to a friend, neighbor, family member without publishing their email address on the Net. Other web site benefits for members are in the works. Stay tuned. Film at 11.

Please take a moment after finishing the newsletter to send in some feedback to us about anything in the newsletter, the websites, or the association in general. Email or snail mail. Just let us know what you think. The Association contact information is on page 9.

Finally, my personal thanx for the contributions of photos and articles for the newsletter. My newsletters come out OK. **Your** newsletters are AWESOME!!!



### **New Shellbacks born in 1977**

## **MEMORIES**

Bob Sheard (CS, 70-72) has volunteered to start documenting whatever memories of our days aboard the Edwards we have left. What were your most vivid memories or incidents? All materials including photos, newspaper clippings, official documents and memorabilia will be used and saved as part of our history of the Ready Eddie. We'll publish some in the "Reader" and compile all info, hopefully, for future publication. Bob's vital stats are listed with the Association contacts. Get in touch!!!

# Ready Eddie Arrivals

*(We all came aboard EDWARDS at different times, in different ways. Some routine, some not so. I enlisted in 1970 under the Advanced Electronics Program for 6 years. For that agreement to extend my enlistment for the two extra years, I was guaranteed schooling and automatic advancement when school was complete. After basic training and Basic Electricity and Electronics at Great Lakes, I was assigned to Fleet Sonar School in Key West, FL for almost a year. It wasn't a bad gig. (Just went back last year for the first time since 1971. Had a great time) In accordance with my "contract", at the completion of "C" school I was advanced to E4 and arrived at the ship on Sunday, December 7, 1971. Part of the Zumwalt years was putting raw, boot E4's in the fleet. I was nervous. I'd been in the Navy for almost a year and a half and really had no idea of what it was all about. I learned real quick as less than 3 months later we departed on 72 hours notice, 4 months early for a very active WestPac. Most of us walked aboard, some were highlined, some came by boat or helicopter. How did YOU come aboard? Here are a couple of other "Arrivals".....TUT)*

## Arriving Early (pre-com)

(Steve "Rat" Whitney (EM2, 58-59) has been a regular contributor to the Reader. His recollections of the pre-com days of '58 are an important part of the Ready Eddie's history that will only be documented if those involved share their experiences of those times. What was it like for you?)

*"My relationship with the the DD-950 began with a notice in the "Plan of the Day" of the USS Saint Paul, my then present duty. It read something like this;*

*"Volunteers are being requested to form the crew of a destroyer of the Forrest Sherman class now under construction in Seattle, Washington. Volunteers must have a minimum of two years obligated service remaining and no disciplinary action pending. Requests from all enlisted pay grades and ratings will be accepted and must be received prior to (month and date) 1958 to be considered.*

*Although I liked serving aboard the Saint Paul and had several good buddies aboard, I decided that I would submit my chit. Our division officer had recently departed to be XO on the Gallant and his replacement was not exactly popular. There were a few of us old timers who were having real problems with him, myself included. So, I promptly submitted my request.*

*You probably noticed that I referred to the ship as the DD-950 and not as a name. This is because at the time it had no name, only a hull number. Until a ship is put into commission, everything, other than the hull number, is "prospective". This includes not only the name, but the entire crew, including the CO. There have been many ships whose name, for one reason or another, have been changed before commissioning. The Saint Paul was one of them, having been originally the Rochester.*

*About a month went by before I received notification that I had been accepted as part of the nucleus crew. A short time later I received my transfer orders and was off to DesBase, San Diego to attend pre-commissioning*

*school. It was here that I met those who were to become my shipmates. Those I remember most were Vaden BM2, Beaver BT2, Vann BT2, and Manning BT2. There are others whom I recall from the early days but these men are the ones that I remember from what became known as "Precomm School".*

*Notice that I used the term "nucleus crew". Although all of us that comprised the original crew liked to call ourselves plank owners, in truth we are not. The true plank owners were perhaps a dozen or so who had been assigned to the prospective crew even before the keel was laid in December 1956. It is the fact that they were present for this occasion (when the first "plank" was laid) that makes them plank owners. Several of these plank owners were no longer assigned to the ship when it finally went into commission in February 1959.*

*Our quarters at DesBase were, of course, in a barrack. The prospective crew of the Oriskany shared the barrack with us. They on one floor, we on the other. There were rooms in the barrack in which the petty officers lived and the usual long room in which the non-rated personnel were housed.*

*Pre-commissioning school was made up of a variety of subject matter. We attended fire fighting classes, ABC warfare classes, and many other classes that were a staple of basic training. The petty officers also attended Instructor School and were assigned, TAD, for a week at a time to the USS HULL DD-945 which was going through underway readiness training in preparation for making a cruise to WestPac. Our only duties while aboard were to be observers and to familiarize ourselves somewhat with the new equipment that was present on the class of destroyers. We were attached to the division corresponding to the one we would be assigned on our new ship. Thus, I became part of "R" Division. After a few weeks of training we were given our orders to travel to Pier 91, Seattle, Washington.*

*The base at Pier 91 was mostly vacant. About the only other personnel aboard at Pier 91 were the few*

**(continued from previous page)**

who were a part of the regular crew of the nearby supply building and some Air Force personnel whose status I am uncertain of. So we pretty much had the base to ourselves. The berthing arrangement was the same as it had been at DesBase. There were, originally, no messing facilities so we all received per diem pay. At least we were supposed to. However, for one reason or another this pay was often late in coming. This made it difficult since we had to buy all our meals. Finally a mess hall was opened and meals were available on the base. Those of us who spent our days at PSB&D still were receiving per diem, however, because we still needed to buy at least one meal per day.

The duties of the petty officers while at Pier 91 consisted of making the trip from the base to Puget Sound Bridge & Dredging Co. daily. Here we could board the ship and observe the progress of its construction, become familiar with its layout and machinery, gather essential information, etc. We would also make notes of things we felt should be changed. We had been assigned office space in one of the dock buildings where we could perform the necessary task of compiling the data into the initial records. There were meetings to go over and compare our notes. Any suggestions, etc. were passed along to the builder by a committee formed of higher ranking petty officers, officers, and representatives of P.S.B.&D.

The ship finally was sufficiently completed to begin trials of the various machinery. There were countless hours of dockside operation of every piece of equipment to uncover "bugs" so that necessary repairs could be made.. Finally, it was time to begin "builders trials". The ship would get underway under the operation of the civilians with essential Navy personnel riding along as observers. There were several of these trial runs culminating in the "acceptance trial". Shortly after this the ship was turned over to the Navy and towed to PSNS, Bremerton, Washington.

In Bremerton the crew moved aboard. Gradually life aboard began to resemble that of any other fleet component. There were endless working parties to onload everything from food to light bulbs. Bright work was polished. Decks were scrubbed. Etc., etc., etc. The ship was operated by the crew for the first time, under the watchful eyes of some PSB&D employees. Finally we had the "final" acceptance trial and preparations for commissioning began.

The day of the commissioning ceremonies the weather was miserable. We were, after all, in the Pacific Northwest and it was February. The wind blew and it was raining. Sheds had been provided on the pier to shelter the guests, sponsors, and prospective crew. Nonetheless it was not a pleasant experience. I had been assigned to Section 1, so had the first duty

and had this displeasure added to that of standing in my dress blues, in inclement weather, through the endless speeches all the while knowing that I would have to change back into dungarees and stay aboard when this whole thing was finished.

Finally the command "Man the ship" came and we went aboard. The ship was now officially the U.S.S. Richard S. Edwards. Commander R.R. Law was officially the original CO and we were officially a crew.

**Steve Whitney**

## Taking the scenic route

(Cal DeKnikker served aboard in '74-'75. He is currently a self-employed Landscape Gardener and is very active in Veterans affairs. Says Cal, "We Veterans are the insurance policy that current active duty get fair and just treatment for the service they provide." Cal can be reached at [cal@christianjames.com](mailto:cal@christianjames.com) or through the RSE PO Box)

"I came aboard the USS Richard S. Edwards in a round about way. I took a weeks leave after BT "A" School in Great Lakes, was advised to stay in my hometown for an additional 3 weeks and my orders would be mailed to me. I departed from Travis AFB in California with the intention of going to Pearl Harbor. My next stop was Alaska. At age 17 I figured the military had "important stuff" to do in Alaska. Next stop, Japan. Having had good grades in geography, I knew what was Southeast (Hawaii), and what was Southwest (not good). I called home collect from Japan and asked my Dad what I should do. Some fatherly advice pointed me toward personnel to help with my orders. They ascertained that I was enroute to Subic Bay, Phillippines. I arrived at Clark AFB just before the monsoon season. I spent 3 weeks in the transient barracks waiting for the USS Edwards. When she arrived I was assigned to the forward fireroom as a BT/FA under CPO Pickard, BT1 Turner, BT3 Bowen, BT3 Berg, and we steamed back to Pearl. Shortly after returning, we took a few commitments for the USS Hancock and other ships coming out of the yards prior to us going into the yards. As luck would have it, I finally had to serve my mess cooking duty just as "B" Division shut off the steam. I was then assigned to the Main Mess Hall on base at Pearl Harbor. That duty was great! I tried to sign up again, but no luck.

**Cal De Knikker**



Anyone know the year or occasion for this Honor Guard?  
(Hint: Submitted by Doug Teeter)

# SHIPS STORE!!!

## World Famous Ready Eddie Ball Caps

These great (Navy) blue hats have "USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS DD-950" embroidered in gold, and underneath "the Ready Eddie" in a subtle (haze) gray. A limited number are usually available for immediate shipment. Please make checks payable to Richard S. Edwards Association and mail to Jim Kress  
c/o: RSE Association, PO Box 970, Broken Arrow, OK 74013-0970

Prices are: 1. \_\_\_ \$15.

2. \_\_\_ \$25.

Shipping is \$5 and is subject  
to changes in Postal rates.

## ...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...

The Ready Eddie T-shirts are white Hanes Beefy T's of 100% pre-shrunk cotton. The silhouette of the Ready Eddie in black, gray and red is available in pre and post conversion styles and states that she is "Just another proud old war veteran", "Serving America from 1959 'til 1982". Please make checks payable to Richard S. Edwards Association, and mail to Jack Sanders at: PO Box 970, Broken Arrow, OK 74013-0970. All T-shirts and sweats, are in stock and available for immediate shipment.

Please specify pre-1971 or post-1971 silhouette.

### T-shirts

Small to XL \_\_\_ \$15

XXL \_\_\_ \$16

XXXL \_\_\_ \$17

### Mid-weight (7oz) Sweatshirt

Small to XL \_\_\_ \$19

XXL \_\_\_ \$21

XXXL \_\_\_ \$23

### Heavyweight (9oz) Sweatshirts

Small to XL \_\_\_ \$22

XXL \_\_\_ \$24

XXXL \_\_\_ \$26

### NEW ITEM AVAILABLE!!!!

*Ask Jack about the ashtrays now available for sale. (Candy dishes for us non-smokers)  
They are approx. 6' in diameter and sell for \$9. We'll try and get a picture posted at the  
ships store on the web page, and will include one in the next newsletter.*

Prices include shipping, which is subject to changes in Postal rates.

All items for sale include a small mark up for the association. All labor and handling are done on a volunteer basis by your fellow shipmates. As we grow, prices and shipping times should get better. Thankx for your support. Any help for, or feed back about the Ships Store will be greatly appreciated.



# WEB WORLD!!!!!!

The web sites continue to be our best means of contacting alumni. Not only are many of you checking in, looking for new info, people are finding us while out "surfing" or hear about us through friends, family, neighbors who came across us on the Net.

Please take the time to fully explore your web sites and give us some feedback. We need help in putting names to the hundreds of faces now on the photo site. Look through the photos of your years aboard and see who you remember.

The "Forum" has many unanswered questions and searches waiting for the right person to give us a clue.

Check your info on the Crew and Member lists to be sure we have all of your vital stats are correct.

We will soon have a printable membership form on line. Hopefully in the not to distant future we will be able to offer online membership registration, and the ability to make purchases from the "Ship's Store" and donations to the Association via the Net.

As always we need photos, past and current. Not all of us saved our glamour shots from the old days, but we can send in one from the "new" days. Your scans or our scans of your pictures are needed now!!! Contact the webmasters. Thanx!!!

# REUNION, 2002

Our next reunion is coming up fast. The next issue of the newsletter will devote some space to going over all of the reunion info once again. Please mark a date on your calendar this August to make your reservations for accommodations and travel. Hotel reservations can be made anytime after August 15, 2001. Those of you with Internet access can check that info online at the web site anytime.

Don't get shut out of a room at the La Quinta. As in St Louis, we aren't going to be the only game in town and you'll need to make your reservations early. I'm sure that hotel rooms and campsites will be at a premium in August.

When we had 18 former crewmembers at the reunion in '98, we never dreamed that we would more than triple that number in 2000 in St Louis. We are shooting for 100 in 2002 in Washington. So save the date, and save your pennies. We only do this every two years, so make your plans now to join us once again. Contact any of the association officers for information.

See you there!!!!

## Association Contacts

*(Feel free to go through the webmasters or send correspondence to the Ready Eddie PO Box to get in touch with any crewmember on our list, or for association info or news)*

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**BOB TUTTLE...VICE-PRESIDENT**  
**JIM KRESS...TREASURER**  
**ED HOVATTER...SECRETARY**  
**BRUCE CHILD...ASST.SECRETARY**

### MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

**JIM KRESS**  
**CARL DEGE**  
**DON KRUGER**  
**DOUG SWIRES**  
**TOM PETERSEN**

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## COMMAND HISTORY, 1978



On 9 January 1978, USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS (DD-950) departed her homeport at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii for her first underway exercise of the new year. For five days she steamed independently conducting Naval Gunfire Support exercises on the Hawaiian island of Kahoolawe. On 14 January EDWARDS returned to Pearl Harbor to off-load all ammunition, torpedoes, and ASROC's for an upcoming Planned Restricted Availability (PRAV). This PRAV ran from 14 January 1978 until 20 March 1978. Edwards On-loaded weapons on 23 March 1978 and operated in Hawaiian waters on 31 March 1978.

Commander Richard E. BARBOUR, USN, relieved Commander John W. WALKER as Commanding Officer of USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS (DD-950) on 1 April 1978. Following the change of command, major emphasis was placed on preparing the ship for the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE) conducted by CINCPACFLT's Propulsion Examination Board. From 6 April until 28 September EDWARDS operated in and out of Pearl Harbor conducting Independent Ship's Exercises (ISE) to prepare for OPPE and a forthcoming Western Pacific deployment. After many months of grueling work on 26 September 1978 USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS passed the OPPE.

Lieutenant Commander Ronald D. HORNER relieved Lieutenant Commander David W. CHENAULT II as Executive Officer on 3 October 1978. After passing OPPE, EDWARDS deployed to the Western Pacific on 10 October 1978. On 17 October, EDWARDS became a unit of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. The days transiting to WESTPAC were spent operating with the carrier CONSTELLATION (CV-64) conducting exercises in electronic warfare, over the horizon targeting, anti-air warfare and acting as a plane guard. EDWARDS entered Yokosuka, Japan on 26 October 1978 for a two week upkeep period. On 8 November she was underway again but salt water contamination of the fore and aft feedwater system forced EDWARDS to be towed back to Yokosuka, Japan on 11 November by the USS WORDEN (CG-18). After affecting quick repairs EDWARDS returned to sea and joined the carrier MIDWAY (CV-41) for electronic warfare, over the horizon targeting, anti-air exercises and plane guard.

On 26 November 1978 EDWARDS entered Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines, and departed the

same day to load out a practice ASROC and check out the Naval Gunfire Support Range at Tabones, R.P. Once again EDWARDS entered Subic Bay on 27 November and was underway the next day for Tabones, R.P. At Tabones, EDWARDS earned her NGFS qualification and the gunnery "E" with an average of 92.3% for all the gunnery exercises. Also in November EDWARDS won the communication "C" by meeting the prescribed qualifications throughout the year. She arrived in Subic again on 10 December 1978.

EDWARDS steamed out of Subic on 11 December and joined up with USS HEWITT (DD-966) and USS KINCAID (DD-965) to conduct Harpoon exercises. During this period the pre-overhaul test and inspection team was aboard and a full power run was conducted. On 15 December 1978 an ASROC was fired during anti-submarine warfare exercises being conducted on the submarine GREYBACK (LPSS-574). Also on 15 December EDWARDS pulled into Manila, R.P. for three days of well earned liberty. On 18 December she left Manila and steamed to Subic Bay for a week long maintenance period. 26 December saw EDWARDS leave the Philippines for Hong Kong, B.C.C. where she arrived on 29 December for a week long liberty period.

During the WESTPAC deployment in 1978 USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS (DD-950) continually improved her skills in the numerous underway replenishments (UNREP) vertical replenishments (VERTREP), and other seamanship exercises. The year with the USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS in a high state of material readiness with a well qualified and highly trained crew.

## The rest of the story....1978

(Dave McPeak, an RM from '78-'80 remembers the cruise of '78 like this. Some of Dave's photos from '78 head this article and will be added to those at the web site and in future newsletters. Dave can be reached at [dmacaroon@yahoo.com](mailto:dmacaroon@yahoo.com) or through the Association PO Box)

*"The reason why the '78 cruise is known as the Jap-Pac is because the ship completely lost the engines and it took 3 (?) days to tow her back to Yokosuka. Spent a lot of time there after that unfortunately. We were also diverted from going to Taiwan after some anti-American demonstrations raised enough concern that they cancelled that port of call. There were some anti-nuke demonstrations outside of Yokosuka Naval Base, too. It was strange getting to the base by walking through thousands of Japanese who did not approve of us on their soil. They were peaceful and we experienced no problems beyond a horrible delay. Spent Christmas at Subic and New Years in Hong Kong. The whole Hong Kong part of the trip was the best part.*

*(Continued)*

(continued from Page 10)

Soon after, the Eddie was assigned to tag along with the Russian Flagship, I believe it was the Admiral Soltzenitzen. We stopped at Guam to load up some supplies, drank two beers each (no charge), and then hit the seas for another month out.

Watching the Soviets through the "Big Eyes" you could see major differences in the way the ships were made. Our crew was put out on deck with personal cameras to snap photos of their ship, which Naval Intelligence I am sure was happy to get. While 40-50 U.S. sailors snapped photos brazenly in broad daylight, one Russian sailor would peek around from behind the mast and snap a photo and then hurriedly disappear. One night they put a spotlight onto our bridge. More then once I believe they highlighted us with their fire control radar which I am sure probably gave Commander Barbour fits.

The greatest part of the cruise was returning to Pearl Harbor. Kind of odd that just for a short while, I could call paradise home.

Soon after that, they moved her to drydock, and that was where she lay when I left her."

Dave McPeak

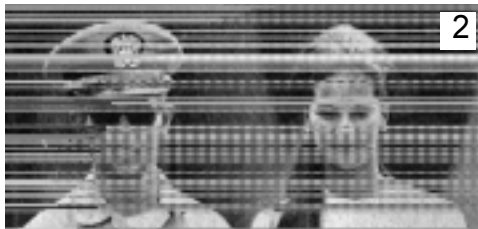
# FLASHBACKS!!!



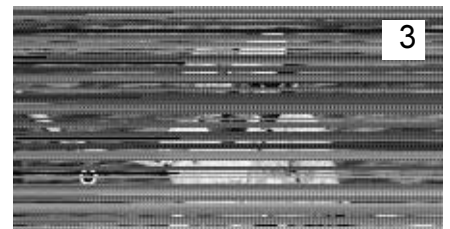
I thought we would try this photo of the Ready Eddie football team again. Taken 10-20-61, I'm sure it's still fresh in someone's mind. Rex Knodle, an STG2 '59-'61 recalls "Standing 2nd from the right--ENS Richard Pariseau. Kneeling 3rd from the right is Barry (?) Senkel, FT3. Kneeling 4th from the right--Wesley Schmaltz, SOSN (Were these guys any good?) Must be some great Naval sports stories out there. Wasn't there an out of control ball game in Guam or Midway? Bowling for beers? Etc.



1



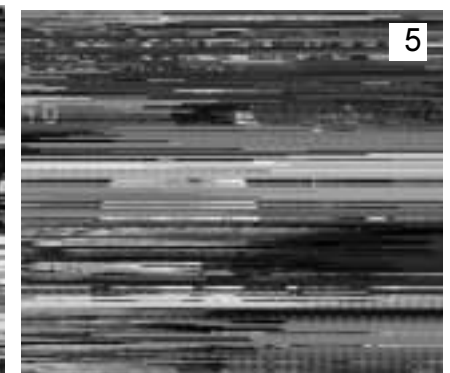
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## Who's who.....1969

Thanx to Dave Loring and Rex Rader for helping identify some of these folks from the cruise home-coming. These are the days when you really wish you had written some notes on the back of those photos you took 30 years ago. We all knew each other then by first, last, and nicknames. Gets a bit more difficult as the years go by. Take out those pictures and jot down your own "Who's who"s.

Thanx!!The Reader loves feedback.

1. Ltjg and Mrs. Robert Griffin
2. Ltjg George Diehr and greeter
3. EM2 Bernat
4. ST1 Campbell
5. LTjg Nat Fuller and wife
6. (left)EM2 Lucas and friend, with STG3 Kostenbauder and Mom (?)



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**Ready Eddie Newsletter**  
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## **THE BACK PAGE**



Former Ready Eddie Chiefs Bill Hess (PNC, '60-'63) and Reuel Eck (EMC, '62-'66) celebrated a reunion last Summer after 37 years. They were able to get together again thanks to the web site. It doesn't need to be a national reunion for buddies to get together. Get in touch. Meet halfway. Just don't forget the camera!!!



**Main Control door near  
the "bug juice" machine**













