

Ray E. Demming, Jr.
Pensacola Pre-Flight Class 15-48

Married 12/31/51 to ENS Lois Boleyn - Navy nurse - 3 children.

VA 15 (Air Group 1)	6/50 - 5/53
Med Cruise USS <i>Coral Sea</i>	3/51-10/51
USS <i>Wasp Med</i>	4/52- 10/52 (including collision with and sinking of our plane guard USS <i>Hobson</i> (the <i>Wasp</i> was relieved by <i>Leyte</i> 5 SEPT 52 at Gib. [raltar] per my diary)

Instructor training CMD Saufley Field	5/53-7/54
Back to college	Rensselaer Poly Tech & Reserves Floyd Bennett & Schenectady Co.
Graduation	June '56

To West Coast job with North American Aviation Missile Program
7/56 - 10/57

Transitional to F9F-6 Panthers at NAS Los Alminitos

Back to East Coast Boston area, to work for AVCO Missile Systems - Reentry vehicles for Titan, & Minuteman missiles.

Continued in Reserves at NAS So Weymouth (Bill Wilkinson also at Weymouth firing R5Ds), flying F9F-8 Cougars, S2Fs, A4 Skyhawks, retiring in 1988.

In civilian job retired from GE Aircraft Engine Division Lynn, Mass. In 1991. Sold home in Peabody, Mass. And moved to Orange Park, Fla.

Enjoying retirement, spending summers on Cape Cod (Truro), try to take one travel trip/year. It's a great life thanks to the Navy.

Commands held:

VA 912	1966 - 1968	A4 Skyhawks
VTU 9191	1976 - 1979	
NAS Brunswick 4291	1979 - 1980	

Group of six newly commissioned officers from VA-15 at NAS Jacksonville.



left to right: Porter E. Clemens, Charles McDowell, Ray E. Demming, Jr., Ken Beckman, Joe Sherin, and Jack E. Speiser

missing: Ralph Bennie. He was flying AD-4 Skyraider in background

letter to Bob Brennan

1781 Waterbury Lane
Orange Park, FL 32073
29 Mar '97

Hi Bob:

Many thanks for the 15-48 picture & data on the class. It's the first listing I've seen that identifies the single & multi-engine pilots. Nice to know you were in CAG 3 on the *LEYTE*. Ken Beckman & Porter Clemens & (Kirkpatrick – Class 16-48 - not in picture) were in VA-15 at JAX & Bennie, Mac Dowell, Joe Sherin and Joe Speiser [not on your list]. (I have picture of us all except Bennie, who was flying). We all got our commissions the same day. Shortly after Clemans, Kirkpatrick, & Speiser & Sherin left for other squadrons. Sherin went to VA-45 then to 175. Don't know were Speiser & Kirkpatrick went. Nice to know Clemens & Beckman were with you on the *LEYTE*. Would like to know more about your Korean cruise.

Best regards,

/s/ Ray D.

P.S. The other CROWE on your list - 1st name was DALE. He was my roommate for a while. He told me h had had a date with Liz Taylor when in college. Don't know what happened to him.

Joe Dupnik & I both finished up at RPI on 6/56. He worked for Sikorsky Helicopter Division of United A/C. He & wife Mary lived in Trumble, Conn. He was a rising star in that Div. He went on a Co.. trip to N.J. - I think Bell Tel. Lab., came home with a terrible headache & fever. They treated him for symptoms. The next day worse - went to hospital - died encephalitis. What a loss. He flew P2Vs with Jim Halle. We visited Mary a couple of years ago - stayed overnight on our way to Cape Cod.

Data from Midshipmen Ray Demming's Log Book and Diary

6/25/48 Rec. Navy orders while on R.P.I. civil engineering field surveying course. Departed Poultney, VT for Pensacola, Fla. Met Mid'n Ralph Bennie at Cincinnati, OH. Arr Pensacola 6/28 - Jean Marie Stark met us.

6/30/48 Reported to Officer Candidate Training Unit (OCTU) for 2 two weeks training - learning to march and take orders.

4/14/48 Appointed Midshipman, USN Reported to Pre Flight School.

2/4/49 To NAS Whiting Field - Primary

2/9/49 21 years old

4/13/49 Soloed in SNJ - Whiting Field

5/21/49 Completed "C" stage - moved to Mainside

7/25/49 Completed "D" stage at Corey Field, on to Saufley Field

9/29/49 Completed gunnery stage - on to Corey Field FLCP

10/13/49 Qualified with 6 carrier landings on *USS CABOT* in SNJ

10/18/49 To NAS Corpus Christi for Advanced Flight Training - Attack Squadron

11/7/49 To Cabaniss Field - F4Us, ATU - VA4

12/15/49 "FAM ED" in F4U (Corsair) "What a plane"

12/16/49 2nd hop in F4U, Christmas leave starts. 0210 HRS took a commercial non - scheduled airline ride to "Philly" with Ralph Bennie - met by his parents & aunt

1/2/50 Returned to Cabaniss Field. Members of my flight #33 str: Bennie, Rochester, Scalla, Ewertz, & Behrens

3/21/50 Complete F4U training at Cabaniss and departed for Pensacola - ADV Carrier Quals

5/5/50 Made 6 carrier landings in F4U on *USS CABOT*

- 5/8/50 Received Naval Aviator Wings of Gold. On 21 days leave to Buffalo. Drove home with Clemens, Carlton and Conrad.
- 6/1/50 Reported to ComAirLant - assigned VA-15 - NAS JAX
- 6/5/50 Reported to VA-15 at NAS JAX
Reported for duty Attack Squadron Fifteen (VA-15) together with 8 other Flying Midshipmen:
- Porter Clemens Charlie MacDowell
 - Ken Beckman Hank Bailey
 - Darrell Kirkpatrick Willie Lassen
 - Ralph Bennie
 - George Carlton
- Leave VA-15 for other VA squadrons on start of Korean War
- LCDR Clay Mitchel is acting Commanding Officer and ENS Paul Peck, USN is Admin Officer. LCDR John E. Lacouture soon reports aboard as Commanding Officer and Clay Mitchel becomes XO.
- 6/17/50 I FAMED in AD-4 Sky Raider less than 2 weeks in the squadron
- 6/24/1950 North Korea invades South Korea - Korean War starts
Pilots in separation stage (and there were many) for discharge were frozen and reassigned. A new Carrier Air Group formed - the ADM Holloway Flying Midshipmen Program provided the new pilots for the Korean War. THE *USS LEYTE* which had been in the MED was recalled to Norfolk - resupplied with a new air group pilots and sent to Korea. Air Group 7 from NAS Quonset Point, R. I., also sent a little later. Air Group 1 will go to the MED.
- No entries for the month of July but I'm sure we were flying, bombing & rocket training hops with great intensity. VF-11 & 12 had their new Banshees, VF-13 & 14 had F4U-5s & VA-15 AD-4s.
- Skipper Lacouture loved tail chases. There were many. Also we had Air Group exercises - Night Flying & FCLP hops as well.
- 8/3/50 X.O. Clay Mitchel collided with Eng Dan Dayton in mid-air off JAX beach - XO not recovered, Dan OK.
- 8/4/50 ENS Newbauer & Gillis - mid air - both back OK.
- 8/5/50 Qualified on USS *CABOT* - 6 Carquals - in AD.
- 9/5/50 Hurricane threat - planes flew to Miami.

11/16/50 Operation "Convex" at Cherry Pt - I week.

12/7/50 USS *ORISKANY* down to JAX for work - UPS will be on shake-down cruise to Caribbean.

12/18 Christmas leave - Drove to Scranton with Ralph. Drove on to Buffalo. Visited with Carl & the folks. Met with & had drink with Jeannie Dahlinger.

12/25 Back to JAX

12/29 Date with Navy Nurse Lois Boleyn from Lexington, Mass.

12/31 Took Lois to Air Group New Year's party at JAX O-Club.

1/11/51 Carrier Air Group One flew aboard USS *ORISKANY* for shake-down cruise to Gitmo Cuba

1/13 Arrived Cuba - flew off to Leeward Pt. Field temporary airbase.

1/15 Rocket & glide bombing hop.

1/16 2 night FLCP hops

1/17 FAMED in VF-13's Corsair F4U-5

1/18 1 day bombing hop & 1 night FLCP

1/19 Qual night FLCP

1/20 Flew in SNB to Havanna with LCDR Red Nelson, Bill Kostik, & Bill Quarg, Dan Dayton & Conley. Rest of squadron went to San Juan with Skipper. They were not allowed in Caribbe Hilton without jackets.

1/21 Back to Gitmo

1/22 Soft ball game

1/23 Night Carrier Quals - 2 night landings - Qual.

1/24/51 CAG 1 off-loaded gear at Gitmo - [USS] *ORISKANY* back to States.

1/25 Unpack at McCalla Field (Mainside) Jets at Leeward Field.

1/26/51 Dance at O-Club - Cuban gals.

2/2/51 Skipper let Ralph & I fly to JAX for the weekend in VP Squadron's P2V. Dinner at Club with Navy Nurses Lois & Lorna.

2/4 Back to Gitmo on MATS FLT.

2/8 Bacardi AÑE 50 Rum Party. Bill Quarg under the weather next day. Birthday celebration.

2/9 I am 23 yrs old

2/10/51 Rocket & Bombing ORI (Operational Readiness Inspection)

2/12 Moved back aboard [USS] *ORISKANY*

2/13 Flew ashore for night flying.

2/14-2/17 Ashore, to ship, ashore, etc. back and forth

2/22 At Leeward Field packing

2/23 Squadron flew back to NAS JAX - Lois & Margot both came to the Squadron to meet me. What to do?

3/1 Lois trans to Portsmouth VA Naval Hospital

3/3 Flew to Norfolk for work-up on USS *Coral Sea* (CV-43)

3/7 Flew back to JAX

3/10 X-country to NAS Niagara Falls

3/11 Back to JAX

3/15 Pack & Room party

3/16 Flew to Norfolk with Bo McMillian

3/20 Departed Norfolk for MED

3/21 I hop

3/22 Rough seas

3/23 1 hop

- 3/25/51 Easter Sunday Up at 0500 to conduct search for downed Air Force C-124 Globemaster Ship heading for North Irish Sea.
- 3/26 Ship heading further north to search area.
- 3/27 200 mile search sectors. 1 AD with radar with 1 F4U. 2 hops - no results. Search area around 23°- 30° West long; Lat, 50° - 50° North
- 3/29 2 hops - sighted debris - no survivors
- 3/30/51 2 more search hops heading for Gibraltar. It was during this period that Skipper Lacouture commented on LT Sullivan's response was "At least I didn't break the tail wheel" referring to the Skipper's hard landing of a few days earlier. Skipper exclaimed, Sullivan - "10 days in hack for that remark." After two days in hack reading Playboy magazine while the rest of us were dragging with 3 hops/day Sullivan was called out of hack & placed on flight schedule.
- Note - hack is a mild form of punishment like sending a kid to his room for 10 days.
- 4/1/51 Arrive at Gibraltar - I was boat officer
- 4/2/51 Left port and headed for Augusta, Sicily.
- 4/3 VF-13 XO LCDR Harnish bailed out of his F4U. Parachute & life raft recovered but no pilot.
- 4/6 Aix anchored at Augusta, Sicily - went to Syracuse to see Ruins.
- 4/13 Departed Augusta
- 4/14 Joined CVB-42 USS *Roosevelt* & CVL-48 USS *WRIGHT*. George Carlton operated on for appendix.
- 4/16 Malta operation with BRITTS.
- 4/20 Livorno, Italy
- 4/21 Went on liberty to Florence, Italy
- 4/23 Boat duty
- 4/24 Departed Livorno

4/25 ARR Naples

4/28/51 Depart Naples - FLT OPS

4/29/51 Sun - FLT OPS

4/30/51 Anchored in Gulf de Tunis. Went ashore. Rode back to ship in Admiral Gallery's barge. Rough seas.

5/3/51 FLT OPS against CVB-42

5/5 ARR Oran - liberty

5/8 Dep Oran

5/9 FLT OPS Jets jumped us

5/10 CAP & strafing

5/12 Rocket attack on Malta

5/14 Was nearly killed - A very hairy hop. LCDR MCGovern climbed us (12 A/C) up thru the goo ceiling 2000' VIS ¼ mile - to 25,000' to get on top. Go back down to attack a cruiser to the west of us only to breakout over Sardinia with mountains all around us. Fired live rockets on Malta once we got re-joined.

5/15 Anchored off Naples.

5/16 Liberty - spent \$37 on Borsalino hat & gloves.

5/19 Depart Naples

5/22 2 hops: AJ's from Port Lautey, Morocco were escorted on strike mission to Turkey - 7 hrs flt time. Butt sore. 4 AJs landed on carrier - only one got off next day for the strike.

Note - The AJ's were Navy's effort to get into A-Bomb delivery. AJ's had a jet engine in tail to boost speed on run-in to target.

5/23/51 Afternoon bombing hop

5/24 Arrived at Palermo Sicily

5/25 Went ashore - very dirty city

- 5/25 Depart Palermo
- 5/28 Pilot CRACRAFT from VF-12 killed - stalled out on CAT shot
- 5/29 Finished Navy REG correspondence course
- 6/1 ARR SUDA BAY CRETE. Hiked up mountain with Charlie MacDowell
- 6/3/51 Depart Suda Bay - FLT OPS
- 6/4/51 ARRIVE Phaleran Bay, Greece
- 6/5 Went ashore saw the Acropolis & Parthenon Remember UPPA the Acropolis - per Geo. Muirhead
- 6/8 Depart Athens/Piraeus (Port City for Athens) - 3 hr hop.
- 6/9 Sunday - church - flew gunnery hop
- 6/10 Dive bombing - 62° angle
- 6/12 400 mile bombing mission to island of Crete. Dropped 2 -1000 # bombs - got 2 bulls eyes.
- 6/13 Wed - Holiday routine - this is rare.
- 6/14 Arrived Taranto, Italy the headquarters of Mussolini's former fleet. A beautiful marble O-Club.
- 6/15 Squadron beer party on the beach - 40 cases of beer, Ball game etc. Men vowed to dunk officer's. Munna, Bailey, Lassen & Demming departed the area with case of beer. No DUNKS.
- 6/18 Gunnery hop VF-13 had a mid-air. Both pilots got out O.K.
- 6/19 Flew night hop. Rough engine. Had to return to shop. Fouled plug.
- 6/20 Stood engineering watch in engine room.
- 6/22 Arrive Leghorn, Italy
- 6/23 Charlie MacDowell left for States on emergency leave - Retention notice arrived. I'm in USN together with Charlie, Ralph, George Bailey, & Geo. Carlton.

- 6/24 Rough seas - liberty launches halted. Men left on shore overnight.
- 6/25 Sea still rough - no boating
- 6/26/51 Left Leghorn & anchored at La Spezia. SDO duty
- 6/27 Overnight liberty for Section 1. Went to Florence. Bought accordion & clarinet. Went night clubbing.
- 6/29 Depart La Spezia.
- 7/2 Arrive Golfe Juan, France
- 7/3 Liberty - swam at Eden Roc Hotel. What a beautiful place. Churchill vacationed here. Bought a Retina 2 camera through U. S. Army Maj. from Germany.
- 7/4 Left ship for tour to Suisse - visited Geneva, Lausanne & Montreux.
- 7/5 Arr at Montreux, Suisse at 0600. Visited Chateau de Chillon. Re Lord Byron's poem, "Prisoner of Chillon." Met Maria. Danced at café.
- 7/6 Took tour to St. Bernard Hospice in mountains on Italian border. Date with Maria in evening. Took 11:30 train to Geneva. Stayed at residence Hotel.
- 7/8 Left Geneva at 0700 for Cannes. Arr 0200 what a long ride.
- 7/9 Depart Golfe Juan - flew 1 hr.
- 7/10 Flew 1 hop. Corsair from VF-44 ditched.
- 7/11 Flew 2 hops
- 7/12 ARR Genoa.
- 7/15 Went swimming at Cap du Norest Resort at Rapallo, Italy on the beautiful Med.
- 7/16 Left Genoa
- 7/17 Close air support Sardinia - 1 hop

- 7/18 More close air support Sardinia - VF-44 put another plane in the drink.
- 7/19 One strike hop in afternoon. USS *ORISKANY* put a Corsair in the water.
- 7/20/51
** No fly. Ralph nearly skidded off deck while coming out of arrested landing onto #2 elevator. Banged up flaps & prop. They tried to blame it on Ralph for taxiing too fast but the Admiral's endorsement noted that there was an earlier oil spill onto the elevator which caused the plane to skid.
- 7/21 Flew 1 hop "LOOK" Magazine took pictures of us in Division dive bomb run.
- 7/22 Transiting the Dardanelles to the Sea of Marmara & ISTANBUL (Constantople)
- 7/23/51 ARRIVE ISTANBUL, TURKEY - dropped anchor in Bosphorus - 6KT current.
- 7/24 SDO
- 7/25 Went ashore visited mosques, Sultan's Palace & Bazar
- 7/27 Went to party given by Army & Navy people stationed in Istanbul
- 7/28 Depart Istanbul - "Operation Pinwheel" - AD's tied down on each corner of the [USS] *CORAL SEA* to aid ship's turning with AD engines full power. The Bosphorus is very narrow & current strong. Have to get ship turned down stream. *Toute de suite*.
- 7/30 Flew with Skipper LaCouture's division & pulled 5½ g Thach weaves.
- 7/31 Flew 1 hop
- 8/1 Pay day - Flew 1 hop
- 8/2 2 VF-11 jets lost at Sea. [This later written up by ADM Gallery & published in "Sat Evening Post"]. Organized search hop.
- 8/3 Flew 1 search hop. Pilots located in raft about 1400. They had been on instrument chase hop and tuned in ships freq. Which it turns out was 1 KC away from Tel Aviv station which was much stronger so they flew away from carrier till out of fuel.

8/4 In Suda Bay, Crete - Quarg & I visited Com Six FLT Bar.

8/6 Suda - 1 hop. Operating from beach

8/7 1 hop

8/8 Swimming - nice.

8/9/51 Duty Day

8/10 Swimming

8/11 Swimming

8/12 APM (All Pilots Meeting) gave a ship recco lecture. - Left Suda Bay
- operation "Beehive."

8/13 Flew 1 strike hop on Malta. Vampires & Sea Furies all over. One
flew under Quarg & I & we were on the water.

8/14 2 strike hops. "Sunk 2 subs, 2 CL's & downed 1 Lancaster bomber"
- not bad for AD's.
My 97th Carrier Landing

8/15 1 sub patrol hop

8/16 1 ASW patrol hop

8/17/51 Refuel & reprovision

8/18 Arrive CANNES, France - Duty Day

8/19 Sun - Church - then to the beach

8/20 To the beach & Martinez Hotel for Martinis

8/21 Duty Day

8/22 Shopping in "Juan Les Pin" with Bill Mathews.

8/23 Back to Martinez Beach. Met Janet Pette from Long Island (Kew
Gardens). Her father a NYS Supreme Court Judge. Took her to
ship for dinner. After went to Palm Beach Club & danced & drank
champagne. Very nice.

- 8/24 I got a stand by for boat duty - probably Ralph or Charlie met Janet at Eden Roc. Went swimming & later had dinner. She & her girlfriend had to pack then took her to train station.
- 8/25 Liberty Day. Bo & I went shopping. Bo McMillian (Bo) & I met a model in fashion shop. Took her out to ship for dinner. Very nice. She would not eat sweet corn "For cows"!
- 8/27 Leave CANNES 0800. Flew 1 hop. My 100th landing.
- 8/28 1 hop CCA (Carrier Controlled Approach)
- 8/29 Anchored off Aranci Bay, Sardinia.
- 8/31 went swimming - the natives catching octopus - little ones - they eat them.
- 9/1 LV Aranci Bay
- 9/3 1 hop - Smith from VF-13 ditched his Corsair off Marseille
- 9/5/51 1 hop - flew along coast of Spain
- 9/7 1 hop, saw a water spout, a mini tornado
- 9/8 Sat Arrive La Spezia, Italy. Took train to Florence with Ed Rosendall - met Janet Pette. Stayed at the Excelsior Hotel & danced on Roof Garden.
- 9/9 Went sight seeing with Janet. She is leaving for Paris. For me - it is back to La Spazia.
- 9/12 Depart La Spazia.
- 9/14/51 Flew early hop. Made strike on the [USS] *FDR* (CVB-42)
- 9/15 Joined with USS *FDR* & *LEYTE* & *ORKSKANY* - 4 Carrier operation and formation.
- 9/17 Flew 1 hop
- 9/18 Flew 1 hop
- 9/20 Passed thru Straits of Gibraltar - Homeward bound.
- 9/21 Refueled

- 7/22 ARR Lisbon - I did not go ashore.
- 7/26 LV Lisbon, Portugal for good old USA.
- 7/27 Flew on Skipper's wing - made a low slow approach - got wave off. Lets not put it in the potato locker this late date.
- 10/6 USS *CORAL SEA* tied up to Pier 7, NS Norfolk 1200 hours. Lois & Lorna here to meet us (Ralph & me).
- 10/7/51 went to club dancing with Lois
- 10/8 Lois got hop to NAD Quonset PT R. I. to visit her folks & I go to JAX.
- 10/9 To Squadron - unpack. Party for CAG Kelly at the Club.
- 10/10 Inspection
- 10/11 Leave - drove to Scranton in my 1950 Pontiac
- 10/13 Ralph & Lorna married at Avoca. Lois is Bride's Maid.
- 10/16 To Cleveland
- 10/17 Back to NYS Clifton Springs, N. Y. to visit folks.
- 10/18 Drove to Lexington to visit Lois's parents.
- 10/19 Danced at Totem Pole - Tommy Dorsey.
- 10/20 Back to Norfolk & JAX
- 11/1 Bo & I drove to NAAS Sanford Fla. for LANT FLEX exercises.
- 11/10 Landed on CVE USS *MINDORO*. Kissick had engine problem. Stayed overnight. WOW is this a baby carrier or what!!
- 11/15/51 Ralph & I depart JAX on leave for Norfolk. I rammed Ralph's new Chev into car ahead at traffic light in Folstar Ga. Charlie brought my Pontiac up so we could continue. Charlie Folkston got Ralph's radiator fixed next day.
- 11/16 Lois & I became engaged

11/17 Ralph, Lorna, Lois & I had dinner then to Breezy Pt.

11/20 Back to JAX - Squad preparing for ADMIN INSP.

11/29 Flew AD to Quonset to O & R. Saw Paul Gilbert - VA-75

11/30 Flew transport to Norfolk - Saw Lois

12/2 Tried to get hop to JAX tough luck. Dinner with Lorna - Lois on duty.

12/3 Back to JAX on MATS FLT.

12/21/51 CDR Lacouture being relieved by CDR Isaman

12/23 Worked at Squadron

12/28 Ralph & I left for Norfolk & on to Lexington arriving on 12/30

12/31 Lois & I were married.

1/2/52 To Norfolk

1/3/52 Reported aboard the U.S.S. *WASP* at Portsmouth VA. I have 2 wks TAD at ComAirLant Intelligence School. How great. Lois stationed at Portsmouth Hospital.

1/27 Got bumped from MATS flight to GITMO RATS - 2 more days with Lois. She is working

1/9 To GITMO

2/2 Flew 3 hops from the beach.

2/9 Another year older - party at the Club.

2/16 Enroute to Culebra

2/17 OPS at Culebra

2/19 Air Group ORI

2/27 Ship enroute back to JAX after ship's ORI

2/28 Planes flew off the [USS] *WASP* to Cecil.

2/29 Up at 0500 off load [USS] *WASP* at Mayport

3/4 LCDR Isaman made CDR. Party after work. X-country to Norfolk. Lois met me. She's on night duty.

3/6 Breakfast with Lois. Back to Cecil.

3/8 Sat - Air Group Party

3/9 SDO

3/10 Co-piloted SNB to Norfolk

3/11/52 Ret to Cecil

3/12 Flew AD to Quonset O & R. Went to Lexington to see Lois's family

3/13 Back to Quonset

3/14 Back to JAX

3/28 Flew to Norfolk for O & R. IFF change. With Charlie MacDowell - with Lois that evening.

3/29 Lois' last duty night

3/30 Lois & I drove to Kitty Hawk - Dinner back at NOB Norfolk.

4/1 Tues - Charlie & I flew back to Norfolk in rain all the way.

4/3 Bombing competition

4/4 Fri - All hands party

4/5 Sat SDO

4/10 On leave. Drove to Norfolk with Charlie O'Brien VF-44.

4/14 Mon. Depart Norfolk on USS *LEYTE* for CarQuals prior to deployment.

4/15 Flew 1 hop

4/16 SDO again - no flying - bad WX [weather].

4/17 2 hops off [USS] *LEYTE* - flew off to Norfolk.

4/22 Departed Norfolk aboard USS *WASP* (CV-18) for MED - 6 months deployment.

4/23 Flew 1 hop.

4/25 No fly. Refueling.

4/26 Sat: At 2220 the [USS] *WASP* collided with DM5 [Destroyer Mine Sweeper] HOBSON - our plane guard cutting her in two. 170 lost at sea.
*

4/27 Sun Search OPS all day & thru the night.

4/28/52 Left the scene 0800 - backing down - Bow damaged. Both anchor chains hanging 800' down 182 men missing. Heavy seas & wind.

5/3 Sat 400 miles from Nantucket. Props 7 A/C preparing to fly off ship with deck run. Jets can't be catapulted due to bow damage.

5/4 Flew off [USS] *WASP* to NAS Quonset then to Norfolk. Flew on to Cecil.

5/6 Flew to Norfolk with the Skipper.

5/20 Received word to move Squadron back to Norfolk to re-board USS *WASP*

5/21 Mustered Squadron 0500. Train left at 1300 with men & gear.

5/24 Once again departed Norfolk. LCDR Red Nelson gets shored orders & duty. We are down to 20 pilots.

5/26 FLT OPS

5/30 Myself & 5 other Ensigns had dinner with CAPT McCaffree, C.O. USS *WASP*. Very pleasant evening.

6/2 ARR Gibraltar. Relieved the USS *TARAWA*. Departed 1800.

6/4 Join with USS *CORAL SEA* & task force (2 CVs, 2 CLs, 12 DDs)

6/6 ARR Agusta for 6 days.

6/11 0000 [midnight] commence OP "Beehive II" with French & British -
a 0300 - 0700 hop. Launched 10 Ads 6 A/C at 1000 HRS.

- 6/12 6 HR hop to attack Bizerte across Sicily 0300 to 0900
- 6/13 2 ASW Patrol Hops one at 0300 & one 1200 - 1600
- 6/14 FLT OPS cancelled - "MALTA TAKEN"
- 6/16 ARR Genoa 4 tours: Paris, Suisse, Rome, Venice. I didn't go to Paris Ralph buys Necci sewing machine. Large Communist demonstration. No liberty til 1800. "Bo" goes to Paris. Stuart & Peters to Suisse tomorrow.
- 6/18 Duty Day
- 6/19/52 Boat duty, rough water.
- 6/22 Liberty went with Ralph to "Cap du Nor EST" - Rapallo
- 6/24 Commence NATO Exercise "June Primer" - 5 NATO countries flew low level 450 miles up France's Rhone River valley to attack NATO Air Base in Florrens, Belgium. Caught 45 F84's on deck - a 5½ hr hop Past Lyon & Reims.
- 6/25 Skipper signed our promotions to JG.
- 6/26 4 HR hop - strike on [USS] CORAL SEA.
- 6/27 Flew 2 hops (1 night).
- 6/28 Squadron flew 108 hrs - will break 1000 hrs this month aboard ship with only 20 pilots. Ship refuels - Lost a man overboard. Recovered by plane guard.
- 6/30 Senate passes GI Bill for Korean vets.
- 7/1/52 CAPT. McCaffrey stopped the ship and sounded swim call on ships 1 mc. The #2 elevator lowered & about 200 - 300 nuts jumped off (me included). A long way down. Water was wonderful. Very soon we were aft by the fantail & swimming to stay abreast. The ship was coasting still. The whale boat was full & kept having to pick up stragglers. A second jump off the elevator was enough.
- 7/2 ARR Marseilles for a 5 day visit. Ashore with Willie Lassen.
- 7/4 4th of July - Ralph, Charlie & I attend a dance given by French American Club.

- 7/5 Ashore with Bill Mathews & Bill Lassen. Bill played piano in a little café. The bar maid had a cute little 3 yr old girl.
- 7/7 Depart Marseilles - Flew 1 hop
- 7/8 ARR Golfe Juan - CAPT McCaffree is relieved by CAPT R. S. Clarke. Whites - inspection - ashore with Mathews to Cannes. Met Charlie, Sam Elway and Sully at Martinez Hotel Bar.
- 7/9 Swimming at "Eden Roc" with Bob Roth, Charlie MacDowell & Chuck Peters.
- 7/10 Duty Day - I got a stand by & went swimming again at "Eden Roc" meet Don Amechi & son.
- 7/11/52 Went swimming again & meet Don Ballew's French girl Jeanette - a show girl - dancer. from Paris - went to Maxim's where Sidney Bechet is playing clarinet & sax.
- Note - Sidney Bechet - an ex-patriot & great jazz clarinetist.
- 7/12 VF-12 Party at Martinez & Texas night. Champagne & Texas girls - French 75.
- 7/14 Swimming again Eden Roc
- 7/15 Depart Cannes - Flight OPS - Ens. Larry Emingholtz killed (VF-13) on torque roll in F4U after getting wave off. Not recovered.
- 7/16 FLT quarters 0300 4 AJ's fly in from Port Lyaute, Morocco Lauyte.
- 7/17 Flt quarters 0200. A 0300 launch - strike hop + 3.5 HR hop in P. M.
- 7/18 I flew 8 HR today (1 night hop)
- 7/19 Sun - Memorial service for Larry Emingholtz
- 7/21 2 hops - strike on Greece Air Field. A barren, mountainous area
- 7/22 Operating with [USS] *CORAL SEA* - night hop. I nearly landed on [USS] *CORAL SEA* Got long downwind & followed Corsair. Saw my error & made another pass to the USS *WASP* this time. 4 Carriers in battle formation.

- 7/23 16 plane hop. Flew over Athens in Parade Formation for NATO Parade.
- 7/24 Anchored in bay near Piraeus south of Athens.
- 7/25 SDO
- 7/26 Admiral Inspection - whites
- 7/27 Depart for Suda Bay, Crete
- 7/28 Suda Bay beer party - 4 cans of beer - Bo says he doesn't drink he guzzles.
- 7/30 Bunk room is 95° F. - Depart Suda Bay, Crete.
- 7/31 Steaming thru Dardanelles.
- 8/1/52 Anchored in stream (Bosphorus) Istanbul
- 8/2 VA-15, VF-12 JG's party at Istanbul. Great time. I drank 3 screw drivers & 2 white ladies (vodka & lemon juice) & returned to the ship O. K.
- 8/4 Liberty - into Istanbul.
- 8/5 Ashore with Ralph & Don E. Ballew. Drank screw drivers at Park Hotel. Had to go pick up large copper tray for Skipper Isaman. Skipper Lacouture had asked Isaman to get him one. He left it at the Hotel the previous night. It is big - 3' diam.
- 8/6 Depart Istanbul. The President of Turkey & COM six FLT aboard.
- 8/7 FLT OPS - Air Show for VIP - a VC-12 AD into barrier.
- 8/8 2 day OPS against Malta. Flew 2 hops
- 8/9 1 hop - Vampires & Sea Furies meet us out of Malta.
- 8/10 [USS] WASP puts into Malta to get port cat repaired.
*
- 8/11 Anchored at Malta for 8 days to get port catapult fixed.
- 8/14 We invite 3 RAF pilots to dinner aboard USS WASP. They invite us to "Grog" party (rum) at Takali Field. They are a "Right Bully Bunch." After drinking beer for a while they broke out the scotch &

with ice cubes too. [following from a letter to Lois] Later they broke out what they call "Lightning Flash." It's a 10" fire cracker - very much like a 3" gun. After throwing around a couple in the club, the Commandant of the base arrived & closed the bar so we piled into their cars & headed for the Phoenicia Bar (best hotel in Malta). There were 10 of us Yanks & 20 of the Brits. After a few more drinks & a few more lightning flashes thrown in the bar area the Police arrived & everyone was thrown out. They went on to other bars & after I went back to the ship. We invited 3 RAF pilots out the ship for dinner the next evening. We had roast pork. Really good. They said that would be a whole weeks ration for them.

- 8/15 Visit Canadian CVL "HMCS Magnificent" - have a rum party. Chuck Holm selected for LSO School for Air Group. Departed ship. Also Bill Mathews, Jack Stuart and Joe Noonan will be leaving squadron after our return to Conus [Continental U. S.]
- 8/17/52 Liberty on Malta - Ride on Motor Scooter "VESPA" - nice. With Stretch Conrad.
- 8/18 Depart Malta - I depart ship 0300 to fly 1 of 3 AD back to ship after a 3 HR hop.
- 8/19 1 hop live ordnance - bombs on Little Rock off Malta.
- 8/20 up 0315 - another 3½ HR hop & one at 1230. XO Noonan tells me I will be assigned Material Officer, Taylor will take Comm & Intell.
- 8/21 3½ HR hop
- 8/22 Two hr hop with Bill Mathews in lead - went sight seeing in straits of Messina. Past Stromboli to see Ingrid Bergman & her hot lover (Roberto Rosselini).
- 8/23 Anchored in Palermo this AM. Had an all pilots meeting last night. XO "Fox" Noonan said that all pilots must be in Ready Room by 0800 & anyone who is late would get the SDO duty. The Skipper promptly stated we will muster 0830 & no one will get the SDO duty as punishment. The XO withdrew his remarks.
- 8/24 Anchored Palermo - dirty - stayed aboard the whole period.
- 8/27 Boat duty
- 8/28 Leave Palermo

- 8/29 ARR Taranto - H.Q. of Italian Fleet - party at O-Club - Beautiful
- 9/1 Depart TARANTO, Italy steaming for Gibraltar to meet & be relieved by USS *LEYTE*. Robert "Bo" Macmillan got a terrible hair cut. They butchered him. John Ashby got out electric razor, scissors, and a sheet and tried to trim up the rough edges. Poor Bo he didn't have anything to lose.
- 9/2 Lecture in eve by LCDR Breen XO (VF-13) former Naval Attache Spain.
- 9/3 2 hops
- 9/5 ARR GIBRALTER - Relieved by USS *LEYTE*. Pass the Ball. [a ceremony passing the football symbolic of handing off the MED. Duty] Liberty. Ralph, Bo & I have steak dinner.
- 9/6/52 Depart GIB
- 9/7 2nd day out Rain & cold. Fans off, blankets out. Flying cancelled. Lecture on upcoming NATO Exercise "Main Brace."
- 9/9 Cold. Steaming up St. Georges Channel between England, Wales, Ireland. Storm & heavy seas. Rendezvous with [USS] *FDR*. USS *WRIGHT* & others of 2nd Fleet
- 9/10 Steamed up Firth of Clyde & anchored off Greenrock, Scotland near Glasgow.
- 9/11 Liberty - Charlie & I go to Glasgow
- 9/12 Bo & I go to Greenrock - drink scotch & buy the bar - a few "old timers."
- 9/13 Depart Greenrock for "OP MAIN BRACE". The fleet departure was impressive steaming in columns down the Clyde 8 carriers 2 battleships 6 cruisers GQ sounded at 0800
- 9/14 FLT quarters 0430. In condition 3 - with survival suit half on in R/R
- 9/15 WX poor 500' ceiling - many seasick
- 9/16 Cross Artic circle - very cold & heavy seas
- 9/17 Heavy seas. [USS] *FDR* loses a jet. Stalled on approach. Pilot not recovered

- 9/21 MAIN BRACE did not go well because of weather. Flew 3 hour hop. Sully & I find USS *WISCONSIN*. It is big!!!
- 9/22 Today we strike Denmark. They gave us 20 min notice - takes 15 to get into poop suit. Got 7 ADs launched - on the deck to Denmark.
- 9/23 Weather terrible - they canceled my 0530 hop.
- 9/24 CAS (Close Air Support) over Denmark
- 9/25 On way to Portsmouth England. Ashby, George Carlton & I draw cards to see who rides train Norfolk to JAX on return. Carlton wins. HA!
- 9/26 Arrive Portsmouth, England. See Nelson's flagship HMS *VICTORY* here.
- 9/27/52 Charlie & I take train to London see Buckingham Palace, take in play & go to Picadily Circus. Stay overnight
- 9/28 Back to ship
- 9/29 Depart Portsmouth for Norfolk
- 10/10 USS *WASP* arrives Norfolk VA - Great to be home. Air Group flies off. Party at Breezy PT - Our AD's rifled by plane Capt. - mine, Stuart's & Dozier's - lose all our gifts & uniforms. On to Cecil -
- note - Culprits caught by N15. Dozier & I were witnesses at Courts Marshal. Recovered my belongings.
- 10 JAN 53 All over again starting with shake down on U.S.S. *Champlain* to Cuba. Boarded at Mayport, Fla.