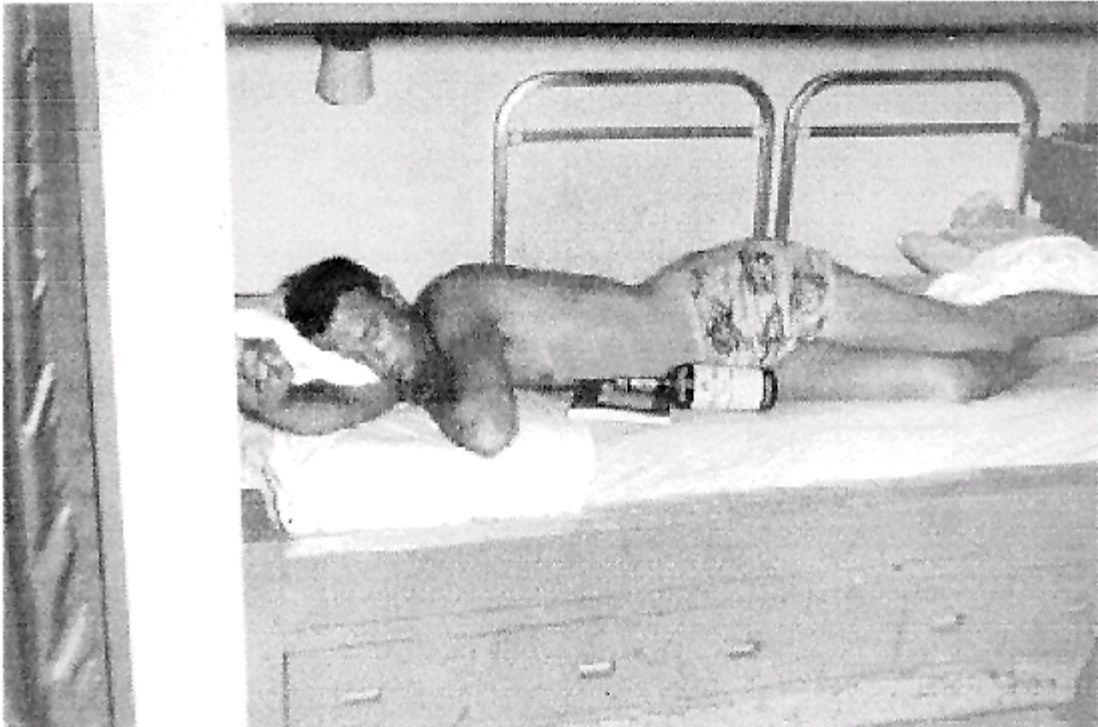


Gene Kyle
(Goodlivin" Four-One)
VF-781
1950-1951



USS Bon Homme Richard (CV-31)

1951



Skipper checks out an upright Gene Kyle

1950

Oral Interview

Gene Kyle and Lou Ives
3-05-88

Question: "When did you get into VF-781?"

I joined the active reserve in 1946. We reported to the North Island Naval Air Station and flew every other week. Our squadron was VF-54L. There was also a VF-55L at North Island. The Navy decided to move the Fighter Squadrons out of North Island to Los Alamitos. The two squadrons became VF-781. At that time we started flying just once a month for a two day weekend.

Question: "How was VF-781 recalled to active duty as a unit?"

VF-781 had their two week active duty tour in early June 1950. We were an active squadron and liked to party. Our motto was "FUMID" (Fuck You Mack, I'm Detached). We were restricted from using the 'O' Club by the Station Executive Officer. He made a statement to the effect, "You guys think you are so good. Just you wait - some day there will be an Emergency and you will be the first Squadron on this base to be recalled to Active Duty." An Emergency did arrive shortly after that. It was good politics to Volunteer and stay together. The Exec told me: "volunteer or not, you are going to be back on active duty."

Question: "What was your funniest experience?"

I think the funniest thing I experienced was when Rick Eccles got ready to start his car and the three in the front seat apparently pushed real hard with their legs and the seat broke loose and they fell upon us in the rear seat.

Event leading up to this was -- We had gone into Long Beach to party. We were restricted from the 'O' Club. When we decided to return to the base [Los Alamitos], Rick and Ray Crandall decided to do a little soft shoe on the roof of Rick's car. Several minutes later, the roof was several inches lower. The head room was restricted - particularly in the front area. I understand it was reported to the insurance company as "vandalism."

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