



The Cable

Official Newsletter of the IUSS CAESAR Alumni Association

Alumni Association

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ORDERS TO SAN SAL -circa 1955

LT Jack King, USN (Ret)

When I first received orders to NAVFAC SAN SALVADOR I was an SO3 serving on a minesweeper. Imagine my surprise that I was going to San Salvador. Of course the only San Salvador I was aware of was in Central America so I assumed I was being assigned to some military assistance group. Naturally, I had to go to school in Key West at the Fleet Sonar School infamous "Green Door Academy". I well remember those 4" grams and the wonderful, lovely odor. It was here that reality set in when I found out that San Sal was an island in the Bahamas. So, I finished school and reported to PATRICK AFB, Florida FFT "down range" to San Sal.

Just to digress for a moment - who can ever forget PATRICK AFB in the 1950's and 1960's: the missile range and all the strange characters (RCA, PanAm, etc.) who worked the "range". An adventure was the C-130 or C-54 plane ride down through the islands; assuming it even flew or didn't breakdown on GBI or Eleuthera. Landings and takeoffs on some of the island strips were always good to get the adrenaline flowing. You get the picture I'm sure.

Anyway, back to SAL. I arrived there in January 1956; was met at the plane by the mailman. As we journeyed to the "FAC" there was nothing but scrub vegetation and the remains of salt flats and land crabs (which were not very good to tires). Upon arrival I was given time to shave, shower, get checked in and be told welcome you are now the section leader for Section 3 and you have the mid-watch tonight!!

How many people remember that the old equipment had its own individual stylus belt. It was not uncommon to go through 20-25 stylus belts per watch. How about the carbon in those days? Coming off an 8-hour watch was like coming up from the coal mines. The TTYs were in the display room as it was not uncommon for the sonarmen to do double duty as radiomen. Of course it did get a little dull once in awhile so the eve/mid watch was enlivened a bit by putting a large live crab in OWO desk drawer or in the commode. On rare occasions one of the more enterprising lads would manage to come up with a "risqué" flick which would be shown in the back room.

From the Director

Ed Dalrymple

Well, winter hopefully is behind us. Washington D.C. was not the greatest place to be this winter. We had a record level of close to 50 inches this winter although if you measured in my yard we well exceeded that level. I'm certain some New York staters and northern plains people are not impressed. Our membership continues to grow but we always welcome new members. Please keep passing the word. OTCM Jack Holdzkom, USN (Ret) has offered to head a more concerted membership drive. Jack is in the process of contacting the people whose names you have submitted (as long as we had addresses or telephone numbers). He will also follow up on people who were previously contacted and have not responded. Historically, I have had good luck in getting people to respond the second time they are notified.

A more somber note is that I sadly report the passing of three members since our last newsletter. CAPT Bob Richards, Mr. Curt Hambrick and OTCM Jack Kilgore. Three very fine gentlemen who served IUSS well.

As we continue to try make the newsletter a publication you will find worthwhile we need to have your inputs. Write us about what you are doing, your family (remember many of us grew up together and would like to know what that 3 year old boy or girl is doing now that they are 25 or 30 years old). Feel free to submit articles you think may be of interest to the other members. Provide information if you own your own business; we will keep the last page reserved for free advertising.

On a more formal note I would like to start a continuing column on the history of the "SYSTEM". Some foundation work in this area has been done but not published to my knowledge. Captain Joe Kelly started this and his work is now in the Navy Archives. We will make an effort to gain access to these notes. Helen Walkinshaw of Bell Laboratories has indicated some work has been done by some of the BTL group. But more importantly each and everyone of you have the history of the "SYSTEM" locked in your memories. I'm asking, no pleading with you to take the time to share those experiences with the rest of us in an effort to paint the history of our community. Official milestones and

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