

“A” IS FOR APPENDIX

WWII veteran Irv Eisenberg RM3 has contributed several stories to our newsletter. A recent conversation with him revealed a wartime operation on Irv with a front row seat.

Eisenberg looked young. He was young enough that he did not shave. The captain CDR Ford looked at Irv one day and told him “Get rid of that peach fuzz, Eisenberg!” Irv had to find his way, at sea, to his first shave. Soon after Irv realized he was not well and sought out the corpsman. Told to rest, he checked back in the following day. This time he was sick, really sick. The corpsman advised the Captain that he suspected Irv had appendicitis. You can visualize the chain of events. A Message to the task force commander and arrangements to transfer a patient at sea. Rig for a high line transfer at sea. Rendezvous at sea and transfer the patient by highline to a ship with a doctor and full medical facilities. “I don’t remember a thing! Irv recalled.

Now Irv’s memory returns as he recalls there were two doctors to operate on him. Appendicitis confirmed Irv is prepped for surgery on board a ship in the operating suite. The doctors gave Irv a spinal, numbing him waist down. Irv looks up to see – MIRRORS! He’s going to have to watch his own surgery. Not many of us watch as we get a shot, seeing that needle go into your arm. Irv is watching as the two physicians operate and repair his appendix. Appendix repaired, Irv is returned to the USS FRANK KNOX for duty in the radio room. I am happy to say those war time surgeons did a fine job. Irv is still with us 75 years later and he’s had his COVID shots thanks to the VA.