

EQUIPMENT WE LOVE-TO HATE

Roger Carter recalls the Knox returning to the states to Mare Island shipyard, late 1950, for a 3-month refit to remove the quad 40mm mount and replace it with the new Mk 56 director system and rapid fire 3" gun system. The system was to make the Knox gun crews "top gun" in the Pacific Fleet recalls Carter who loved the new system. The rate of fire for the 3"50 system was 15-20 rounds per minute for single guns, up to 50 rounds per minute for twin mounts. The 3" shells weighed 13# each. They replaced the 40mm mount which had a greater rate of fire but the shell was only 2#. No proximity fuse was available for the 40mm; the 3" not only had a proximity fuse but a greater variety of rounds. GM Orv Krieg says "some of my best friends were FT (Fire Control Technicians)" however "*gunners mates referred to the FT's as the 'distaff'*". Carter recalls some GM's referring to the FT's as "female gunners mates" – all in good fun.