

OFFICER ASSIGNMENT

William King served aboard the USS Frank Knox from 1964-66. The first of his recollections about reporting aboard and his assignment follows: (He is writing to John Sartin, LT a fellow officer.) *“You and I were the three newly minted 1964 Ensigns assigned to the Knox, and Jerry and you had reported board well before I completed my post-graduation, cross-country trip to join the ship in Vallejo in late June. I recall my arrival vividly. Just finishing overhaul at MINSY, the ship was bustling with workman doing punch-list jobs and longshoreman and sailors restocking. (A few days later the ship moved to Port Chicago for reloading of ammunition.) I reported to a harassed Captain Goodfellow, who welcomed me by asking what my major at Harvard had been. When I responded “Government”, he said “Wonderful, we have the perfect billet for you - the engine room; they have governors down there!” It was only then, when I was appointed the Main Propulsion Assistant and E Division Officer, that I became aware that previously - reporting Ensigns Krumweide and Sartin had snared billets in Operations and Gunnery Departments. I don’t think I informed the Captain that the 3rd year Engineering” was the only college NROTC course for which I had not gotten and “A”. I promptly met the E Division Chief – Clark? And he, I and Engineering Officer Gordon Carpenter quickly established a rapport that basically kept me out of their hair and available to do other useful jobs assigned to the Junior Officer. I retained those formal MPA and E Division billets throughout my two years on the Knox, although most of my time and my duty was on the bridge or in CIC.”* **William King’s full letter is posted on the website ussfrankknox.com. ED**

SOME BACKGROUND - for the Next Story by William King, LTJG

On January 20, 1955 the PLA’s (Peoples Liberation Army – Communist Forces) conquest of Jiangshan led to the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. The Formosa Resolution of 1955 passed in U.S. Congress, leading to the orderly evacuation (Operation Pullback) of the Dachen Islands by the United States Navy in February 1955. The US Seventh Fleet used 132 ships, boats and 400 aircraft to move 14,500 civilians, 10,000 Republic of China serviceman and 4,000 guerilla fighters, along with 40,000 tons of military equipment and supplies from the island. Three days after the evacuation, the islands were taken by the PLA forces. Chaing Kai-shek grudgingly allowed the islands to fall to the Communists so that the other offshore islands, Kinmen (Quemoy) and Matsu, could be successfully defended. USS Frank Knox, assigned to DESDIV 112 was part of the US Navy forces supporting Operation Pullback.

“HOW I STARTED WORLD WAR III”

William King LTJG writes – *“I particularly remember that Craig Allen (another LTJG) , who was one of the ship’s most experienced air-controllers in CIC, had orders to leave the ship in Subic Bay for travel back to the US for discharge from active duty, but was still on board when DESDIV received orders to rush up to the Tachen Islands to provide close support for the USN-assisted evacuation of CHINAT back to Taiwan. While most of the support for the evacuation was controlled by the carriers and a cruiser safely off shore, the Knox also provided air-control and Craig had control of a plane that flew too far inland and was forced down. At breakfast the next morning, Craig mumbled something to the effect that “If I ever get home, I’m going to write a story [for the Saturday Evening Post] “How I started WWII!”*”