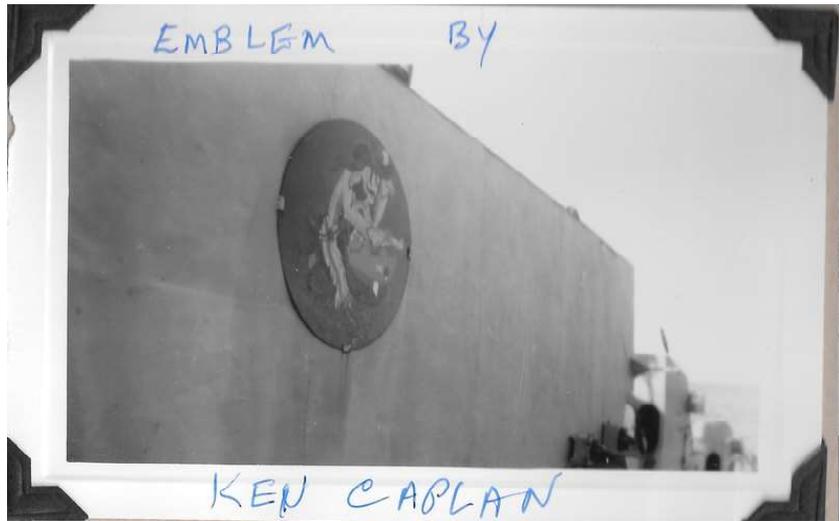


ROUGH RIDER PATCH

CREATOR – According to Irv Eisenberg RM3 it was a signalman named Jack Lypman SM3 who designed the “Rough Rider” insignia/patch for the USS FRANK KNOX. After approval by the XO and CO, CDR J. C. Ford USN, the insignia design was then converted into a unique symbol carefully painted on to a large metal disc. The domed metal was sealed against the elements then welded on each side to the Number 1 stack [PHOTO]. The photo is from Bob O’Kon’s album and part of our reunion display.



Irv did not hesitate to give me the name of the originator. When I looked for Lypman’s name on the original roster it wasn’t there. At the time of commissioning there were a total of 12 officers and 144 enlisted formed in Norfolk VA then transported to Boston MA to join their ship. This number is far below the war time manning of the crew. When deployed to the Pacific FRANK KNOX carried 23 officers and an estimated 150 additional enlisted. The original crew listing makes special mention of LT J. T. McBroom the ship’s Fighter Direction Officer and in charge of the Combat Information Center for the KNOX.



Eisenberg completed Radio School in October, 1944 and was ordered to pre-commissioning crew based at Norfolk VA. Like all young SM he was trained in the equipment but unexperienced in the operation of a war time Radio Room or a ship at sea in the combat zone. He did have frequent access to the XO and Co, bringing in urgent messages. When he reported aboard for duty Eisenberg still did not shave and reported he did not know how to shave himself. One visit to the CO changed Irv into a dedicated “shaver”. While delivering a message to the CO on the bridge Irv’s emerging new growth was visible. The CO received the message, glanced at Eisenberg and barked “Eisenberg! Get rid of that peach fuz!”. Irv hustled below and found an experienced friend to shave him and give him lessons. Irv remained clean shaven the rest of the time in the Navy.

The identification of ships was carefully concealed during WWII. Crewman were directed to remove the unit identity ribbon from their flat hats. Numbers on the ships bow were

smaller and likely not readable beyond 3-4000 yards. The bold shield with the painted Rough Rider seemed to stay on the number 1 stack until the ship returned to San Diego CA Spring, 1946 from Tsingtao China.

The Rough Rider honors the Spanish American War Service of Secretary of the Navy, William Franklin Knox, 1940-1944. He was a member of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Rider Regiment and was an early backer of Roosevelt in his Presidential campaign. Knox was also the Vice Presidential nominee opposing Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936. Roosevelt admired Knox, his organizational abilities, political following in the New England states and his backing of Roosevelt's policy of allied support prior to the entry into WWII. It was Knox flanked by his assistant who walked into Roosevelt's office at 130pm EST to announce that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor in three waves doing massive damage. On December 11, 1941, Adolph Hitler mentioned Frank Knox by name in his declaration of war against the United States.

Special thanks to: Irv Eisenberg for his recollections; the late Bob O'Kon YNC for preserving so much of the ship's history in his scrapbook and Helen Smith Tarchalski for sharing her father's photos from WWII and post-war Japan.