

Visit to USS Intrepid's 80th Commissioning Celebration

Smitty,

Just got the [Aug.] Aerograph and was surprised to see my 26-year-old self, pictured with Chief Akers and LCDR Morgan. I am the "unknown AG" (aka AG2 Curtis Arnold). I went to Intrepid's 80th commissioning ceremony last August and got a tour of the OA Division space on level 08. The space has not been restored and all the equipment is gone. I spent some time telling the Intrepid Museum guides what our weather office looked like "back in the day."



Faded deck of OA Division onboard the USS Intrepid (CV-11)





Curtis sharing a few sea stories with museum guides.

[Regarding the picture in the August Aerograph], as I remember it was intended as an illustration for an article in the Intrepid's internal newsletter, The Ketcher. The article was about the weather office during the recovery of NASA Astronaut Scott Carpenter on May 24, 1962. LCDR Morgan was the Division Officer and forecaster, Floyd Akers was the Division Chief, and I was the leading PO on duty. As I remember, I had 4 AGs on duty - Grewe, AG2, Henry, AG3, Glass, AGAN, and Steward, AGAN. Cloud cover was the critical factor at the Landing Zone and I rotated the observations so everyone got a shot. We reported the cloud cover every 15 minutes. After over an hour of clouds above the maximum, the Admiral's dog robber came up the ladder and told us what the cloud cover should be.

As it turned out, it didn't make any difference. Carpenter was 3 seconds late in firing his retro rockets and overshot the LZ by 300 miles. He was found by an Air Force recon out of Roosevelt Roads, Puerco Rico, because he activated his SARA beacon. The 19 year old Intrepid fired off all the boilers and laid down a wide wake eastward. The primary and backup helicopters were all launched and sped eastward. I have a couple of pictures of his coming off the recovery helicopters.

As far as I can determine, I am the only one still alive from this event. (Aside -- it's the good who die young.) Joe Morgan was USNA '44, a multi-engine pilot and got his weather certifications at the PG School in Monterrey. He died in the 90's. Floyd Akers you all know. Chief Akers was the best chief I served with along with Pete Taylor. Grewe, Henry and I were classmates at Lakehurst in class 5912. We went to various assignments, then back together again on Intrepid. W.H. Grewe went back to Minnesota in 1962, died in 2003. Jack Henry went back to Virginia, then to Texas. He created several businesses for grocery security and travelled the world teaching others until Alzheimer's robbed him of the capability. He died in 2016. Stephen Glass went back to the Boston area, worked for a regional airline, died in 2004. I've lost track of Rupert Steward. I assume that he went back to Chicago. If he is still around, I'd like to know. After active duty, I went back and finished college, had a long career in IT, and now I'm living the indolent life of a retired gentleman.

Submitted by xAG2 Curtis Arnold, USN (Rel.)

Editor's note: Having a curiosity about the event Curtis described, I came across the following picture on NASA'S website. To read more about the distinguished career of former Navy Pilot and NASA Astronaut Carpenter, please visit the following link: [M. Scott Carpenter - NASA](#)



S62-03907 (24 May 1962) — Astronaut M. Scott Carpenter looks into his Mercury-Atlas 7 spacecraft, the Aurora 7, before being inserted to begin the launch. Official NASA photograph