

HELICOPTER ANTI-SUBMARINE SQUADRON SIX (HS-6)

FLEET POST OFFICE

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96601

7 August 1969

Wives, Families, and Friends of HS-6s:

In my last letter to you, I mentioned that we were eagerly looking forward to our Fourth of July Celebration on the 5th. I am happy to report that it was a huge success, greatly acclaimed by all hands as one of the most active and entertaining stand-downs the "Mighty K" has ever experienced. Fried chicken, baked beans, potato salad, fruit punch, pickles, olives, and other "picnic fare" delectables were enjoyed by all. As usual, even though the entire ship takes a holiday, HS-6 must "do their thing". We were required to launch a helicopter during the picnic for personnel transfers to destroyers. This provided us with the opportunity for the "last laugh" on our shipmates. As the wind created by the downdraft of the rotors covered the flight deck, it neatly lifted the baked beans and potato salad from many plates and not so neatly deposited them into everyone's faces, and onto their uniforms. Actually it proved to be quite humorous to all except the ship's Chief Engineer who immediately recognized that there would be an excessive drain on his precious fresh water supply that evening as everyone cleaned up the mess and themselves. The climactic moment, however, was the grand finale in the evening - a very impressive pyrotechnic display. The night was brilliantly illuminated by many various sizes, shapes and colors of pyrotechnics, completing the traditional celebration of our National Holiday.

Our accomplishments during the past two week line period totalled 575 flying hours; we carried over 320 passengers throughout the Gulf, delivered more than 21,240 pounds of mail and cargo to other Task Force 77 ships, and still managed to fly 131 hours of valuable ASW training. As always, all hands performed in the outstanding professional manner expected, maintaining the Squadron's established reputation as being a highly effective, reliable, and efficient organization and very deserving of another hard earned "Well Done"*

We arrived in Sasebo, Japan on the ninth and were excitedly greeted at the pier with the welcome sight and cheers of those wives who were able to meet their husbands in Japan. The beauty of Sasebo as the westernmost city in Japan became even more apparent as we went ashore, especially since we arrived at the end of the rainy season which accounted for greatly appreciated mild temperatures, cool breezes, and rich, lush green countryside. The city and its surrounding areas offer an abundance of recreation opportunities, including various sports such as swimming, sailing, and golf, and many noteworthy historical and geographical points of interest. On Kyushu Island lies Nagasaki, the oldest port city in Japan, long remembered as the "other place" where an atomic bomb was dropped ending World War II. Only a few grim reminders of this catastrophe of war remain, and restoration of the city has been both remarkable and expeditious. Just a few miles from Sasebo are national parks: Unzen with its famous hot springs; Mount Aso, Japan's "Yellowstone", known for its many natural wonders including a live volcano; the Karatsu Resort area which is famous for its beautiful natural scenery and excellent white sand beaches* Even more breath-taking

is Yumihara Peak, just thirty minutes from downtown Sasebo. It commands a panoramic view of Sasebo Harbor and its large shipbuilding complex, the picturesque "Ninety-Nine Islands", Hirado and Cato Islands, and Omaro Bay. Everyone enjoyed their stay in Sasebo, even if they only remained in the local area for additional shopping, swimming, or some well earned relaxation.

Just prior to our arrival in Sasebo, we bid a hearty "Farewell" and "Smooth Sailing" to Lieutenant Commander Hi BRONSON and Lieutenant Jim ROONEY, who departed for new assignments stateside.

During July I had the pleasure of promoting Vern VILHAUSR to the rank of Commander, Rick RISHER and Ken BURNS to the rank of Lieutenant, Russ MCKAY to the rank of Ensign and Frank STRONG to Chief Warrant Officer. In addition, the following squadron personnel were recognized for their advancements in rating:

AVAN	Harry FINCH	advanced to	AW3
ATNAN	Roger FLEMING	"	ATN3
ATNAN	Robert HAUKOM	"	ATN3
ATRAN	Jeffrey NOLTE	"	ATN3
ATRAN	Frederick TAYLOR	"	ATR3
AN	Glenn PENSE	"	PH3

The following were designated as "strikers":

AN	Warren DYER	designated as	AMSAN
AN	Michael HARDING	"	AMSAN
AN	Dennis MAGEE	"	ADJAN
AN	Leroy VAUGHN	"	ADJAN

Shortly thereafter, we "Hailed" the following new personnel who reported aboard during our in-port period:

AE2	David DeROSSETT	ADJAN	Bob GRAY
AWAN	Mike NASH	AWAN	Jimmie YOUNG
AW3	Tom PROBST	ABHAN	James RICHMOND
PH3	David POWELL	ATN3	Keith CHRISTIAN

Toward the end of our visit many of us became involved in the preparations and briefings for a coordinated ASW exercise with the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). When these were completed, we departed for the Sea of Japan to commence operation "Beach King". From the moment we departed port and commenced the exercise we all once again experienced the long, arduous tempo of "around the clock" operations which continued until the afternoon of the 22nd when we returned to Sasebo for one day of exercise reconstruction and debriefs. On the 23rd, we had an all hands personnel inspection in "Tropical White Long" uniform with CAG MILLER as the Inspecting Officer. Again, the men of H5-6 exhibited great pride in their country, the Navy, the Squadron and themselves. CAG MILLER reported at the conclusion that HS-6 looked "outstanding". This was our last day in Sasebo and as usual it seemed all too short to complete the necessary last minute shopping, picture taking, and preparations for our departure the next morning.

After we bid Sasebo and all its wonderous beauty "Farewell", we began organizing and preparing for our current line period in the Gulf. The weatherman advised us of the possibility of encountering rough seas from typhoon "Viola". Storm Condition III was set and all hands busied themselves making the necessary preparations for anticipated heavy weather. As the sea state increased, so did the pitching and rolling of the "Mighty-K"; some of us rapidly recovered our "sea-legs" while others experienced difficulty standing erect, walking, sleeping and, unfortunately for some, eating. However, we managed to out-run any really significant weather, and joined Task Force 77 in the Tonkin Gulf on July 27th. Upon arrival we experienced a considerable decrease in our accustomed tempo of operations due primarily to acceptance of our share of the Department of Defense's budget reductions for fiscal year 1970. The resultant extra time available gave us an opportunity for additional training, indoctrination and discussions of the various aspects of the Navy. In addition, more time is being spent on professional training to enable all personnel to perform their jobs more safely and effectively, and more readily pass advancement in rating examinations.

On July 28th our Midshipmen guests departed after successfully completing their summer training which included introduction to the complexity of carrier operations, the "art" of shipboard living and the "wonders of the Orient". We enjoyed having these young college men with us, and hope that they departed with a greater understanding of Carrier ASW Force Operations.

As support operations continue here in the Gulf, we look ahead to August 15th when we arrive in Hong Kong for six days of liberty in the "melting pot of the Orient". It is considered the best shopping port on our schedule and many have been saving their money in anticipation of the many purchases to be made there.

During the tedious day-to-day operations, our thoughts turn ever homeward to you, our loved ones. We look beyond Hong Kong, and with you anticipate the joys of November when we'll all be together again. We are well and doing fine; we trust all is equally well with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "W. H. Reed".

W. H. Reed
Commander, U. S. Navy
Commanding Officer