

## XXII. 1965 ~ 20 Years Old and a Mother's Visit

**1965:** The official log for the first day of 1965 was written by Ensign J. M. Holmes, USN and reads as follows:

00-04

*Starboard side to Pier Five, Berth 36  
Norfolk Naval Shipyard, is where we are fixed.  
Portsmouth, Virginia is the town,  
But Norfolk is usually where we are found.  
With standard mooring lines we are tied,  
USS Robert A. Owens on our port side.  
Others in the nest, there are none yet,  
While aboard this ship, cold iron watch is set.  
Water and electrons we get from the pier  
And with steam from the yard we have nothing to fear.*

*While five is the condition of readiness here,  
Yoke is the state of our material  
Even though it's modified, everything's well.  
There are ships all around us from the Atlantic Fleet,  
Which on our voyages, we are bound to meet.  
Craft from the district are not jus' to be found,  
And those from the yard are always around.  
To SOPA, we look for guidance fine,  
In the Long Beach (ICGN – Hine).  
We have no need to feel blue,  
For today we join with DesRon Two.  
And though were not partaking of my cheer,  
We wish you one and all a Happy New Year.*

*Signed/J. M. Holmes, Ensign, USNR*

*The year began with the Gyatt becoming a member of DesRon Two. Some of the destroyers in DesRon Two included the USS Blandy (DD-943), USS Furse (DD-882), USS R. A. Owens (DD-827) and the USS Rich (DD-820). January also saw the Gyatt returning to OPTEVOR (Operational Technical Evaluation Force) operations. These operations continued until the end of June.*

*On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, at the Norfolk Destroyer Piers, the Gyatt had a Ship's Anniversary Party. The Gyatt had been commissioned on that date, twenty years earlier. Captain Peterson, USN Commander of OPTEVFOR; Captain Mack, USN Commander of DESRON 2; and Captain Wilbur H. Cheney, Jr. USN retired, a former captain of the Gyatt, attended the celebration. At*

*the end of the month, specifically the 29<sup>th</sup> day of July, the Gyatt, accompanied by other destroyers of DESRON 2, had a family cruise. The ships departed Norfolk and spent the day in the vicinity of the Virginia Capes.*

*In September Mrs. Hilda Morrell, the mother of Edward Earl Gyatt, accompanied by her youngest son Emil Morrell, who also served in the U.S. Marine Corps, visited the Gyatt, while on a trip to New York City. It was more than twenty years since Mrs. Morrell visited the Gyatt. It was sometime during this period that Rear Admiral Ben B. Pickett, as the Commander of Cruiser-Destroyer Flotillas Twelve and Four, visited the Gyatt. Admiral Pickett had captained the Gyatt ten years earlier.*

*The Gyatt returned to operations until mid November when it went to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth, Virginia for a long needed overhaul. An area requiring considerable attention during this shipyard visit was the improvement of habitability aboard the ship for all hands. A special grant of funds from the Squadron Commander was obtained in order to acquire foam rubber mattresses for each man. In addition vinyl utility bags that could be mounted to each bed frame were ordered for storage of personal items, such as toilet articles. Irons and ironing boards were also ordered for each compartment. The galley ranges and ovens were replaced after more than twenty years with more up to date equipment and a soft ice cream machine and salad bar were added to the mess decks. A jukebox was also obtained for the mess deck and a ship-wide AM/FM tape entertainment system with high fidelity speakers in each living space was also installed. While all of this was going on the crew was housed in barracks at the shipyard and took their meals at the shipyard messhall.*

*With the squadron deployed to the Mediterranean, the Gyatt took the responsibility of hosting a Christmas Party for the families, of all squadron ships, who remained in the area. Santa was a success and the children appreciated the gifts received. Commodore Mack, the Squadron Commander sent the following message to the Gyatt: "The reports are pouring in on the wonderful Christmas Party you arranged and held for our children. We in the Med are deeply grateful to you and very proud of the Gyatt. WELL DONE." Even more rewarding were excerpts from letters received by the Gyatt, which read as follows: "...I received a letter from my wife...telling me about the Gyatt Christmas Party, and I think that letter was the best Christmas present anyone could ever receive..."*

*Medicare first proposed by John F. Kennedy in 1960 finally became law. Major race riots and violence occur in Selma, Alabama and Watts, California. The Russians and the Americans each have a man float in space – for the first time. The first arrest for draft card burning was made in October. November saw the land speed record reach 576 miles per hour at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah.*

*The Academy Award winning movie was "The Sound of Music." The winner should have been "Doctor Zhivago." Top songs in 1965 were: "It Was a Very Good Year – Frank Sinatra, A Hard Day's Night – The Beatles, King of the Road – Roger Miller and Gotcha Babe – Sonny and Cher."*

*The Los Angeles Dodgers beat the Minnesota Twins to win the World Series. The Green Bay Packers, under Vince Lombardi win the NFL championship for the third time in five years. The Boston Celtics win their seventh straight NBA championship beating the Los Angeles Lakers four games to one. Jack Nicklaus with \$140,000 in total winnings is golf's big winner for the second year in a row. Cassius Clay, who was the Olympic heavy weight champion in 1964 and was later known as Muhammad Ali, floored Sonny Liston in 48 seconds to win the world heavyweight championship of boxing.*