

Night before Christmas 1955 (Bennington Version)

by: Paul Lazzaro JO2

'T was the night before Christmas, when all through the ship
Not a swab was a 'stirring, not a faucet did drip.
The stockings were hung in the heads with care
in hopes they'd dry before morning was there.
The men were tangled all up in their beds
while visions of Yokosuka danced in their heads.
The Captain in his nightshirt and the Exec in his too,
had just left the Bridge as the chronometer struck two.
When out on the flight deck, the watches did scurry
to avoid the landing of an FJ-2 Fury.
Away up the ladders and through the hatches I tore,
and then I cracked my shins on a watertight door.
When, what to my bloodshot eyes should appear,
but a hot rod pilot rigged in strange looking gear.
And then, in a jet blast, I heard on the deck,
the bellowing roar of that airdale wreck.
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his boots;
it looked like he was wearing one of those Hong Kong suits.
Six cases of beer, he had flung on his back,
I knew at a glance it was the famous Schlitz six-pack.
His eyes - how they twinkled! His smile was so weird.
And I wondered if he had permission to grow that beard.
He had a cigarette dangling from his mouth;
He didn't care if the smoking lamp was out.
He was chubby and plump, he looked naughty as sin,
But, I had to laugh, in spite of my shin.
He spoke not a word, but went right to his work.
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk.
What he put in each one, I could hardly believe,
late sleeper's chits plus thirty days leave.
A year's supply of P.O.D.'s
which granted nothing but early liberties.
Then, pulling the life ring of his "Mae West",
He said he'd give the "cats" a test.
With a shout of "launch aircraft", he jumped to his jet
and took off, for where, I know not yet.
But I heard him exclaim, before he zoomed out of sight,
"Happy Christmas, Big Benn and to all a good night".