



A Tip of The Hat To Benn's Boat Crews



The Hukster staff wishes to tip their ink-stained white hats to the unsung heroes of Bennington, Second Division's Boat Crews.

The importance of their job is often misunderstood by the crew but when liberty call is passed, then the Boat Crews are really appreciated. Too little has been said about the important work necessary to keep the boats in top working order and the rigorous training that goes into the making of a top notch boat crew.

When men of Second Division are assigned duty in the boats there normally are four men to a boat crew; the coxswain, an engineer from A Division, a

bowhook and also a sternhook. The coxswain of the boat is held responsible for the safety of his crew, the liberty party and is in complete command of his boat.

To be qualified as a boat coxswain, a man goes through intensive training in such subjects as rules of the road, boat etiquette, bells and honors, reading and steering by compass course, chart reading, boat signals, etc. Once a man is qualified as a boat coxswain, it is entered in his service record. Most of the boat coxswains aboard Benn now are qualified in more than one boat, with the thought in mind that they might someday have to take over the helm of any one of the ship's liberty boats in an emergency. Proficiency in small boat handling is a must with these men.

One of Second Division's career boatswain mates, Charles Moran, BM2, knows almost all there is about Bennington's boats. He reported aboard 15 November 1957 as an SA and rose to his present rate after his first re-enlistment. Moran has been the coxswain of the Captain's gig since January of 1963.

H. C. Carroll, BM2, PO in charge of the boats, must see

that the regular maintenance and upkeep goes on schedule whenever a few extra hours can be squeezed in the boat's busy schedule.

Hulls must be scraped and painted with anti-fouling paint, decks and gunwales must be sanded and varnished, and boat engines must be kept in top operating efficiency.

Whenever boats must be repositioned on the hangar deck, the boat crews often have a tractor to help them, but when the quarters get a little close, the heavy boats and their trailers must be moved by hand.

To shuttle the liberty parties, Benn has two utility boats, two motor whale boats, one officers' personnel boat, and of course the captain's gig. The whale boats are seldom, if ever, used for liberty parties, one of them being the life boat and the other used mostly for beach guard if the occasion warrants it.

A big round of thanks goes to a small group of men for the great work they do in a large job, the Boat Crews of Second Division.

The Second Division Officer is Lt(jg) B. A. Johnson and the Division Junior Officer is Ens. Yates.

