

BENN "OUTSTANDING"

This Is The Captain Speaking....

As the cruise draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on the history of the ship we have called home these past six months. For twenty years BENNINGTON has roamed the oceans of the world. She has ranged from the vast reaches of



the Atlantic to the shores of the Orient, from the cool waters of Alaska to the peaceful islands of the South Pacific. The number of miles she has sailed in these many years would defy the wildest imagination. Thousands upon thousands of officers and men have tread her decks and have flown from her in war as well as in peace. Time has dimmed

much of BENNINGTON's gallant history, but those of us who are serving or have served in her will long remember this great ship.

As we return to our home port, and to our loved ones, I am filled with pride at the way BENNINGTON's crew and embarked Air Group have performed. We have added another successful chapter to the BENNINGTON Story. My personal thanks goes out to all who have shared in this great adventure.



Rear Admiral Caldwell Sends....

As we depart the Western Pacific and turn towards home, all hands can take pride in the reputation we have established for our Task Group and the U. S. Navy in this important and challenging area of the world. I have always been glad that BENNINGTON is my flagship. Several factors mark a Navy ship as outstanding, such as operational capability, spirit, cleanliness, good conduct and combat readiness. "BIG BENN" takes a back seat to none in any of these. However, in some vital categories BENNINGTON has done such an outstanding job as to be clearly superior. I refer



in particular to your People-To-People Program and your enviable record of service to other units of the Task Group. You have made good and lasting friends for our country throughout the Orient and have enhanced the already bright reputation of Naval Aviation with our destroyer friends. Such results cannot be achieved by one person nor even a small group. Rather they demonstrate vividly the general attitude which pervades the BENNINGTON. Each of you can be justifiably proud to be a member of her crew. I am proud of her as my flagship.

As we approach home, it is my hope that each of you may have a most joyful reunion with your loved ones.



Once Around The Benn

With Gary Cooper

From the tears in Long Beach, to the swaying palms of Hawaii; from Kimonos and clicking getas to China nights and hustling rickshaws, the men of Bennington have traveled a long way. Seeing Diamond Head as we stood on the flight deck for quarters, was only the beginning of the many beautiful things that awaited us on the lovely island.

We sunned on the beaches at Waikiki and watched the skinis go by, (all part of the scenery), did our shopping at the International Market Place, went swimming and surfing at Hanalei Bay, had dinner at Don the Beachcombers, and as we relaxed at the Queen Surf, we knew it wouldn't be long, soon we would be heading for Japan.

Yokosuka was our first introduction to "The Land of the Rising Sun." Perhaps some were dis-

appointed, others amazed, and for the old timers it was "the same old thing." But first impressions are the most interesting, and as a "first timer" I was awed by the small people: some on bicycles, some on motor scooters, but most of them walking. Men in baggy pants; hard looking, yet with happy faces. Women, some in Western dresses, others in the traditional Kimono all walking with a quick, short, step. From Yokosuka busses took us to Tokyo, Hakone Hot Springs near Mt. Fuji; and Kamakura where the Great Buddha stands as it did 700 years ago.

Then goodbye to "Yoko," as we steamed for Iwakuni and our first experience with the liberty launch. Although the liberty post is not the most convenient way to travel, it helped us on our tours to new and different places: Hiroshima; Miyajima (where kamikaze pilots prayed before flying their perilous missions), and historic Kantai Bridge.

(CONTINUED OVERLEAF.)