

Evening marauders Raise Benn's skirts

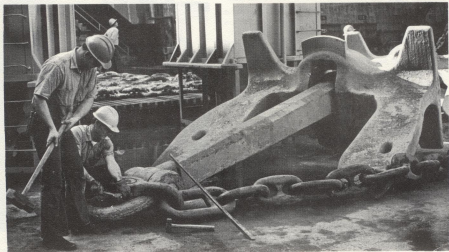
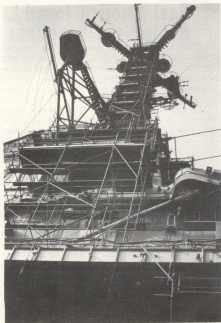
Stealthily, four of them...tough guys with lots of guts...crept up behind her. They positioned themselves, then suddenly carted her off around the corner.

Kidnapping? Rape? Not quite. No ransom has been demanded, she was only taken a thousand feet away or so, and everyone knows where she is.

Right now, thanks to the four tugboats, "yardbirds", and line-handling sailors, she's high and dry in Drydock One at the Naval Shipyard.

It's no easy task to set down an 889-foot, 44,000-ton aircraft carrier on a series of blocks. But the shipwrights, proper name for those proficient in the arts of shipbuilding and its related trades, made it look simple.

The move mainly involved backing from its berth at Pier One on January 7 toward Drydock One. The caisson, floatable stopgap to seal off the Pacific from the dock itself, had been emptied of its ballast once the water level inside the drydock and equaled that of the harbor. The caisson was then nudged out of the way, and Benn was backed in.



SN Thomas D. Purling, left, and KB Evan E. Swan remove pin from the anchor shackle.