

## Served On Ship In World War II



Left to Right: Jack McHaney, AD2; Electrician Robert Lee Thompson; and John F. Lynch, FN

Electrician Robert Lee Thompson, Jack McHaney, AD2, and John F. Lynch, FN, first came aboard the Bennington at its original commissioning, in 1944; and they were on the ship throughout World War II, until its return from the Pacific to be put into mothballs. The three met for the first time one day last week on the flight deck of the ship. They are all serving aboard the Bennington again.

It was easy to understand why they had not met before. For one of them was taking care of generators below the third deck, on that first trip, one worked in a fire room and the third was on the flight deck.

### Had Just Made Chief

Electrician Thompson had just made Chief and been married when the Bennington left New York on its first shakedown. The destination was Trinidad. "The crew was green," he recalls. "There was flying and drills day and night." Trying to remember something inter-

esting that happened on that first shakedown, he says, "They kept us so busy there wasn't a chance for anything to happen."

### Plane Captain

McHaney, too, remembers the long periods of standing flight quarters on that trip. His first job on the new ship had been as plane captain for the Commander of the first air group to come aboard. He spent the cruise and, later, the entire Pacific tour in aircraft maintenance.

One incident of the late days of the War he remembers very clearly. Sitting in one of the planes on the flight deck, he saw a Jap torpedo bomber break out of a cloud just ahead of the ship and come in for a bombing run. The run was perfect; but for some reason the pilot dropped no bombs. McHaney, not one to reason at such times, was out of his plane and off the flight deck in seconds.

Fireman Lynch remembers a major emergency in fire room

## Cruise Book

*Continued From Page 1*

will be able to place orders with Business Manager LTJG T.P. Halpin after the 15th of April. Anyone who expects to leave the ship before September will be able to arrange to have his copy mailed to him when he places his order.

### Typhoon.

Four. Only three months before the War was to end the ship suffered its worst damage of the Pacific campaign. A typhoon hit the carrier with winds of more than 90 knots, crumpled the forward end of the flight deck, ruined living spaces on the forecastle and put all steering gear out of commission. Lynch recalls the frantic activity in the fire rooms. "They had to steer the ship by the screws, and we were turning fires on and off, throttling and cutting the power to the screws. That day was no good."

### Separated

Thompson, McHaney and Lynch left the ship and headed in different directions as the Bennington returned to the States to be decommissioned. The Chief transferred to a destroyer in Tokyo Bay. Then, at Honolulu McHaney joined a shore-based squadron. Lynch left the ship on the West Coast, was discharged there and returned to his home in Philadelphia.

### Six Years Later

Lynch reenlisted six years later. In the Receiving Station a yeoman told him, "They're bringing the Bennington out of mothballs again and we've got a draft

*Continued On Page 6*