

Tradewinds

Vol. 8 No. 3 **USS TARAWA cv/a/s - 40** Sept. 1997



COLORS HOISTED ON TARAWA - The 1,700 officers and men of the new aircraft carrier Tarawa salute and the hundreds of civilians who throng her flight deck stand silent as the Stars and Stripes are hoisted during ceremonies commissioning the 27,000-ton Essex Class carrier at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth. (STORY, PICTURES, PAGES 8-9)

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USS Tarawa Is Ready for Peace or War

*Marine Survivor of Battle
Issues Prayer at Carrier's
Commissioning*

By Harry Nash
Associated Press Writer

A United States Marine who survived bloody Tarawa stood on the flight deck of a new aircraft carrier in Portsmouth yesterday, raised his eyes to blue skies and prayed:

"Please, God, let this ship sail on and on in a world forever at peace."

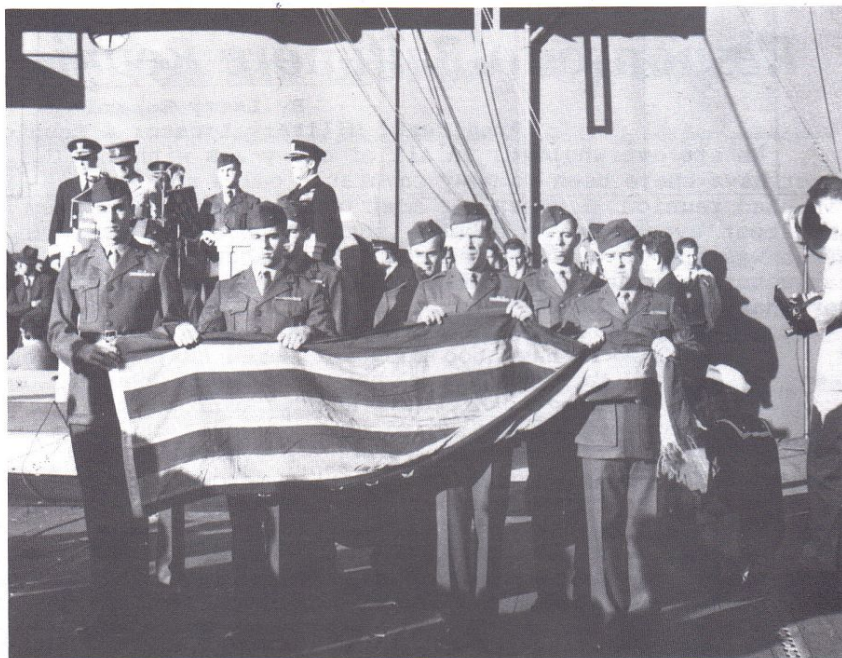
The Marine, Col. David M. Shoup, holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor, uttered his prayer in a hushed silence that gripped thousands of persons assembled on the flight deck for ceremonies commissioning the new Essex-class carrier Tarawa, named for the historic Pacific battle.

This article is reprinted as it appeared in the Sunday, 9 December 1945 edition of the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot. The pictures were contributed by several Association members.

During the ceremonies at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard Shoup presented the ship a tattered American battle flag that was hoisted on Tarawa at the conclusion of the battle. The British Union battle flag, hoisted simultaneously on the island, was presented by Col. Vivian Fox-Strangways, British resident commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellize Islands Colony, who said "we know our colors could have no better resting place than beside the American ensign".

Captain Malstrom, Skipper

Capt. A.I. Malstrom, the new carrier's skipper, accepted the flags on behalf of the ship and turned them over to a color guard composed of men of the Second Marine



FLAG RAISED ON TARAWA - The Tattered American battle flag which was raised on the island of Tarawa after it was taken by United States forces in November 1943, was presented to the new aircraft carrier Tarawa at commissioning ceremonies at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Holding the ensign are men of the Second Marine Division who participated in the bloody battle for the important Pacific atoll.

Division who fought at Tarawa. The ensigns will remain for a while in the ship's flag case and later will be given to the U.S. Naval Academy Museum.

Rear Adm. W. L. Ainsworth, commandant of the Fifth Naval District, placed the ship in commission, and Vice Adm. P.N.L. Bellinger, commander Air Force, Atlantic Fleet, delivered an address in which he expressed opposition to the proposed merger of the Army and the Navy.

Consolidation of all the land, sea and air strength of the United States, he said, has "one advantage. It takes the least time to describe. But it not born of America's experience in war."

"One of the great characteristics of the war was the originality and variety of contributions made to the defeat of our enemies by all services. This was exemplified at Tarawa where the Marines applied so brilliantly the tactics they had developed and which were so well co-ordinated with the air and surface units of the Navy."

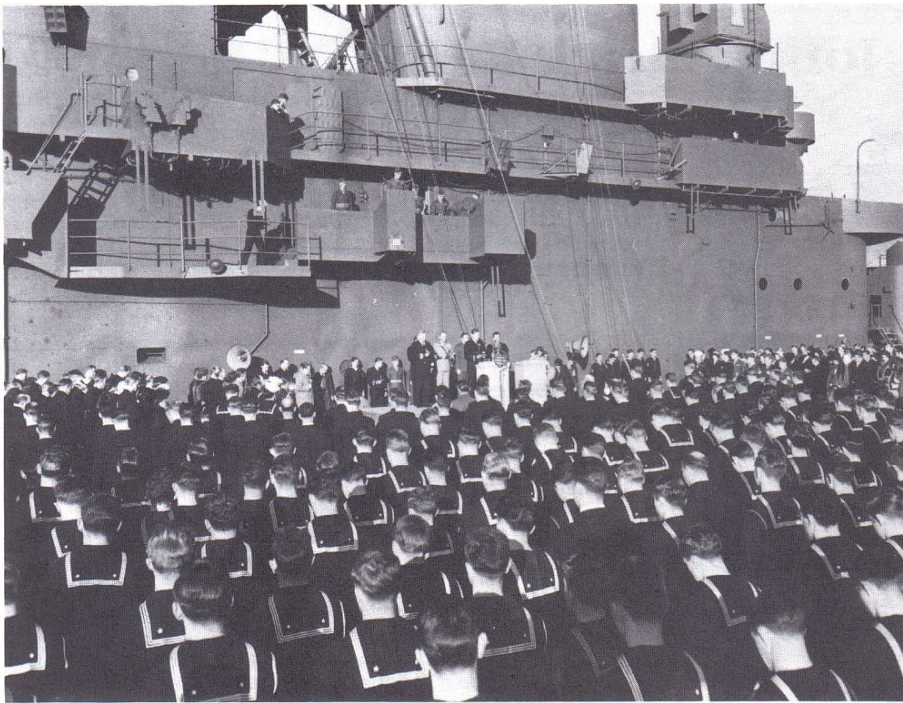
Plaque Unveiled

A plaque made from the door of a Japanese tank by Marines and Navy men was unveiled during the ceremony and a memorial service for the dead of Tarawa was conducted by the ship's chaplain.

British guests at the ceremony in addition to Colonel Fox-Strangways were Rear Adm. J.W.A. Waller, RN, chief of staff of the British Admiralty delegation; John Balfour, of the British Embassy staff, and Mrs. Balfour; E.M.C. Abel-Smith, naval attache at the British Embassy, and Lady Abel-Smith, and Capt. E.B.K. Stevens, chief of British naval intelligence in Washington, and Mrs. Stevens.

Three members of the Tarawa's crew who distinguished themselves in combat in the war were decorated by Admiral

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THE UNCOVERED OFFICERS AND MEN of the Tarawa bow their heads as they listen to a prayer from the new ship's senior chaplain, Commander C. W. Nelson, during commissioning ceremonies at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard at Portsmouth. The Essex-class carrier is named for the Battle of Tarawa.

First Commissioning...

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Bellinger during the ceremonies.

Lieut. Comdr. Robert A. Kincaid, (1641 Harvard Street, N.W.), Washington, D.C., received the Navy Cross, the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Air Medals for service as a pilot of a fighter bomber in strikes at major Japanese units in Tokyo Bay.

Joseph F. Benkert, chief water tender, 1902 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, Va., was presented the Presidential Unit Citation for participation in the capture of the German Submarine U-505 in the Atlantic Ocean.

Lieut. Comdr. Willard A. Sampson, of Evanston, Ill., received three Distinguished Flying Crosses and six Air Medals for service as a pilot of carrier-based planes in a number of Pacific strikes.

The 27,000-ton Tarawa has a peace-time complement of 1,700 men compared with the 3,000 officers and men who served aboard other Essex-class flattops during the war.

The carrier, which was launched at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard here last May 12, was christened by Mrs. Julian C. Smith, wife of the general who led the Second Marine Division in the battle for Tarawa.



CAPTAIN ALVIN INGERSOL MALSTROM, right, new commanding officer of the Tarawa, talks with Rear Admiral W.L. Ainsworth, Commandant, Fifth Naval District, and Rear Admiral C. H. Jones, Commandant, Norfolk Navy Yard, just prior to commissioning ceremonies for the aircraft carrier.