

## USS HORNET (CVS 12)

FPO San Francisco 96601

29 July 1969

Dear HORNET Family,

Here we are on our way home, and by the time you receive this letter we should be back in Long Beach. I imagine that most of you watched our activities on the television, however, that told only part of the story. The long hours of practice, particularly those recoveries at night in the rain, were quite difficult. During the practice sessions we trained enough personnel so that we were three deep in all positions. Fortunately, we did not need this insurance. As you could see, these many practice sessions paid off handsomely on the big day.

Each of you have reason to be proud of your husbands, fathers and sons. Each man in this crew performed his duties in an outstanding manner. The sum of these performances was a flawless recovery. I would like to pay particular tribute to our Engineering Department. They kept this ship operating at top efficiency, throughout the cruise, generally in temperatures as high as 140° in the fire and engine rooms. My hat is off to them. Every other department performed just as efficiently, but I mention the engineers because of the difficult conditions under which they worked, and also because they saw little of the recovery operation.

One of our customers, Astronaut Neil Armstrong, after being picked up said, "we are most pleased with the recovery, it was the smoothest and most professional operation we have ever witnessed or participated in." Admiral John S. McCAIN, Commander-in Chief of all U. S. Military Forces in the Pacific sent the following message to HORNET:

"1. Yesterday I was privileged to join President Nixon aboard HORNET to witness firsthand the recovery of our Apollo 11 Astronauts. The completion of this historic mission, another significant milestone in the progressive heritage of our great nation and one in which we can all be justly proud.

2. The President personally expressed to me his appreciation for the exceptional performance of every Bluejacket, Soldier, Airman and Marine who participated in the flawless execution of the entire Apollo 11 mission.

3. I wish to add my personal commendation to that of the President. The selfless performance, dedication and professionalism of each individual participant in the recovery Task Force contributed significantly to the success of the epoch achievement. I commend all hands on a job exceptionally well done. Admiral John S. McCain, Jr., U. S. Navy."

Mr. J. B. Hammack, Chief of Landing Recovery Division, National Aeronautics and Space Administration sent the following message to HORNET, "This is to officially express my heartfelt congratulations for the great recovery job done by the USS HORNET. I was fortunate to observe the recovery operation personally and want you all to know how deeply impressed I was at the great performance of your fine ship. I have never been on a ship that had greater morale and dedication to purpose than USS HORNET."

Many other messages were received from other high ranking officers such as Vice Admiral SHINN, Commander, Naval Air Force Pacific Fleet and Rear Admiral TRUM, Commander ASW Group FIVE, however, I wanted to quote the few above which are typical of the high opinion in which we are held. This praise was earned through long hours of hard work by every man on this ship.

You also made your contribution to this operation by holding up your end at home. Often this is more difficult than actually doing the job. To our HORNET family, a "WELL DONE".

In looking at our proposed schedule I see that we will be in port in Long Beach on the following dates:

4 August	-	18 August
25 August	-	1 September
6 September	-	10 September
16 September	-	21 September
2 October	-	12 October
31 October	-	2 November
7 November	-	11 November
21 November	-	1 December

This is only tentative since there is a possibility that we will be assigned to Apollo 12. That mission is scheduled for 14 November. As soon as something is decided I will let you know. Until then, the above schedule is the best we have.

From all reports the family picnic was a big success. About 40 families attended. We are planning another picnic when the ship is in port, and are hoping for a big turnout for that one. We will give you a date soon.

As now planned, the dependent's day cruise is scheduled for Wednesday, 27 August. This date was picked so that the weekend could be free. A majority of the men are not married and a cruise on a Saturday would reduce our too few weekends in Long Beach by one. I am hopeful that wives who work can get a day off for the event so that we can have a big turnout. Let us know if getting a day off is a problem for most of you, and we will re-view the date again. However, at the minute 27 August looks like the best date in view of our schedule.

We are looking into the possibility of having families come aboard and dine in the General Mess. If it is permissible under the rules we will set up a weekend schedule when families will be able to come on board to dine with husbands and fathers who have duty. More on that later.

Attached is a list of the various divisions on the ship showing their designators. This is the "code" used in the address. The CVS-12 after "HORNET" means Anti-submarine Warfare Aircraft Carrier. 12 shows that HORNET is the 12th carrier built for the U. S. Navy.

Upon return to Long Beach from this and subsequent cruises, we will have an area set up onboard for families to wait for their husbands after the ship docks. We are also looking into the comfort station situation on the piers. This may be a problem, but we will do the best we can to solve it. We also will talk to Base Security concerning admission of dependents to the Naval Station when the ship is due to return.

There are HORNET bracelets for sale in the Ship's Store. We have requested price quotations for an Apollo 11 charm to attach to this bracelet which I believe now sells for \$3.50 (with a HORNET charm only).

Thank you again for your fine support. Your HORNET men did a truly great job. We all have reason to be extremely proud of them.

Sincerely,

  
C. J. SEIBERLICH

Attachment