

PRISON NEWS

July 4, 2010



VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE



D.A. SCHNELL, Commanding Officer

Hello to the Sailors and Marines of PELELIU, as well as to all our friends and families ashore!

We sailed this morning after spending the past five days in Darwin, enjoying the terrific hospitality of Australia! Darwin is a unique city, famous as the gateway to the great Australian Outback. It is also well known as the capital of the Northern Territories and for being a rather remote outpost that has been rebuilt twice. In 1942, Darwin was attacked by 188 Japanese warplanes from the same fleet that bombed Pearl Harbor. The attack killed at least 243 people and caused immense damage to the town. In 1974, Darwin was again destroyed, this time by Cyclone Tracy which killed 71 people and collapsed over 70% of the town's buildings. After the disaster, 30,000 people were evacuated in what turned out to be the biggest airlift in Australia's history. Today, Darwin is a cosmopolitan city with a beautiful, modern skyline and our Sailors and Marines enjoyed being able to easily walk from the ship to the downtown area.

On our first night in Darwin, the ship co-hosted (with the U.S. Embassy) a reception onboard for over 125 distinguished visitors. The reception took place in our Helo Hangar and I want to thank Supply Department for working so hard to pull off this 5-star event. It was truly beautiful! As I said in my opening remarks, it was an honor for me to have the opportunity to thank the local community in advance for the generous hospitality I knew they would be showing my Sailors and Marines this week.

There were countless activities to do in Darwin, most associated with the Outback.



Col. Osborn, Deputy Chief of Mission for the U.S. Embassy, Mr. Jason Hyland, and Capt. Schnell toast in the hangar bay during a reception on board USS Peleliu, June 27.

Some Sailors and Marines went to Kakadu National Park and saw Crocodiles and Kangaroos. Others took pontoon boats down the Corriboree Billabong which is a winding river teeming with wildlife and the ever-elusive Barramundi. Still others ventured out to Katherine's Gorge and Litchfield National Park for the beautiful geological formations they afforded. All in all, there was something for everyone in Darwin and I hope everyone enjoyed themselves.

As I wrote earlier, we are now underway and proceeding northwest up into the Timor Sea. Over the next two weeks, we will transit the Flores Sea, the Java Sea, the Strait of Malacca, and eventually enter the Indian Ocean. I do not know what our next port call will be, but I do know that adventures await us wherever we sail. And I'll ensure you have a front row seat to that adventure in this newsletter!

To our Sailors and Marines, thank you for being outstanding ambassadors of the United States during our visit to Australia. To our families and friends back home, thank you for your continued support of our deployment. Be safe and have a great week!

FROM THE DECK PLATES



By CMDCM
(SW/AW/SS)
Brent Williams

Good Day Shipmates,

As we come just past our first, very successful, month at sea; we now find ourselves celebrating our nation's birthday. Many of us associate this date with cookouts, family reunions, and neighborhood parties. I am sure all of you will be missed. We are only a small part of the almost half of the Navy's ships and submarines that are on deployment on any given day. But we will celebrate in Iron Nickel fashion and remember the true reason why this date means so much.

This 4th of July will celebrate the country's 234th birthday. We actually have

the opportunity to celebrate this 4th of July at sea, protecting our county and ready to complete whatever mission that comes our way. We will also be keeping true to the ideals that came about many, many years ago which made this the most powerful nation in the world; and us, the strongest and best prepared Navy afloat.

Many of us start our day with the Sailor's Creed at quarters. One line of that creed should remind us all that what we are doing is necessary, and means something not only to our family and friends, but those that made it possible to still sail freely around the globe.....

"I represent the fighting spirit of the Navy and those who have gone before me to defend freedom and democracy around world."

This creed has gone through a couple of minor changes over the years, but the meaning is still there. If you are not making this a part of your routine then take a stand and make it happen. I truly believe that if this were applied more often, we as a Navy and a ship would be better for it. Take care and see you on the deck plates.



Commanding Officer

Capt. David A. Schnell

Executive Officer

Capt. James T. Cox

Command Master Chief

CMDCM(SW/AW/SS)

Brent Williams

Public Affairs Officer

MCCS(SW) Dan Smithyman

Managing Editor

MC1(SW/AW) R. David Valdez

Designers/Editor

MC3 Foster Bamford

MC3 Ian Campbell

Staff

MC1(SW/AW) R. David Valdez

MC1 Kenneth Hunter

MC2(EXW) Andrew Dunlap

MC2 Michael Russell

MC2 Edwardo Proaño

MC3 Omar Dominquez

MC3 Foster Bamford

MC3 Ian Campbell

MCSA Destiny Cheek

July 4, 2010

Happy

Painting by John Vanderlyn and commissioned by James Monroe

By MC1 (SW/AW) R. David Valdez

Today, we celebrate the 234th anniversary of the independence of our nation. Granted, the Iron Nickel, the Pearl, and the Dubuque didn't exactly celebrate with fireworks, but we did have a day of celebration. Fortunately, it was a Sunday, and we had the ability to rest and relax. Maybe some of us reflected on the courage it took for a group of men to agree to band together and fight a war against one of the most powerful nations of that age. Most, if not all, of us spent the day comfortable with the idea that July 4, 2010 was the 234th birthday of these United States of America.

The fact is that most of those people aren't exactly right. It's not so much that they're wrong, but there are a few details which support the argument that the United States' birthday isn't July 4, 1776.

While the Continental Congress did actually ratify the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, the laws defining the

James Madison was the 4th President of the United States and was instrumental in the creation of the Constitution.

Birth

Birthday?

July 4, 2010

government we all serve didn't actually get ratified for about another 12 years.

The Constitution of the United States of America, ratified June 21, 1788, is the document that established our government. It's the oldest and shortest constitution in history, and it defines our government in terms of structure and function. Before that, our nation lived under the Articles of Confederation (ratified March 1, 1781), which made our country less of a single nation and more of a loosely-knit group of smaller nation-states with a weak organization running the show from above. In fact, under the Articles of Confederation, the Federal government had to ask the individual states for funding. Each state was required to provide funding according to the size of its population, and each state only got one vote in the legislature. On the other hand, it was the Articles of Confederation which actually provided our nation with the name "United States of America."

Perhaps it made a little bit of sense at the time to have the Articles of Confederation established as the rules for governing our nation, since we'd just successfully rebelled against the British Empire (the first time a colony successfully rebelled), and the founders of our nation had enough of centralized government. However, the Articles really didn't work. States were creating their own currency, imposing tariffs on each other, and it was difficult for our fledgling nation to maintain a standing military.

We needed a new set of rules and a stronger federal government. Those rules became the definition of our country, which was a brand new concept in nation building. We are a nation founded upon ideas. Before that, nations developed out of ethnic groups, military power, natural borders, ambition and greed. The founders of our nation created something different by establishing a country rooted in the rule of law.

Every four years, we elect the leader of our nation based upon the rules laid out by the Constitution. That leader takes an oath of office wherein he swears (or affirms) that he will support and defend the laws that allowed him to get elected in the first place.

Every day, men and women swear an oath of enlistment, and part of that oath states that we will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Unlike other countries,

we don't swear to serve a monarch, preserve a faith, or even defend a specific plot of land. Instead, we're charged with defending a set of laws which supports the idea that a change in political power doesn't have to lead to bloodshed, and there is a way to ensure that individual citizens have an equal say in determining who governs in our name.

The Constitution amounts to radical thinking for the 18th Century when we consider the time period. Before the United States came along, nations and empires established themselves as dynastic institutions which would last forever, untouched by time, because they were ordained by some kind of divine influence. Naturally, our Constitution had to set that old way of thinking on its head.

It was and is such a radical document that the Framers of our Constitution knew their system wasn't perfect. They knew society would change, and the things Americans found commonplace in 1788 might be completely unacceptable in 2010. In order to make the Constitution stand the test of time, it has a system which allows us to change the rules from time to time. In fact, the Constitution itself wasn't going to be ratified without the introduction of the Bill of Rights.

In the end, maybe the Fourth of July is an appropriate way of celebrating the birth of our nation. The idealists who came up with the Declaration of Independence were some of the same people who ratified the Constitution, and if we read the Declaration carefully, we might be able to pick out the thread of ideas starting on July 4, 1776 and extending to June 21, 1788. The Declaration of Independence might not have created a legal government, but it did start framing the identity of a nation. It explained in very clear terms that the English crown failed to meet the idea of what a government is supposed to do. We wanted better ideas, fought a revolution, created a new nation, and forever changed the way citizens would think of their relationship with their government. It might be nice to have another federal holiday, though.

June 21 is a little ways behind us, but perhaps we can stop and think about the Constitution. It's an impressive document that changed history in ways we feel two centuries later. Maybe we can give it a read. After all, shouldn't we all know the document we've sworn to support and defend against all enemies, foreign and domestic?



July 4, 2010

Down Under in DARWIN



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho



Photo by EMFA Rex Camacho

Peleliu Hosts Reception in Darwin

By MCCS(SW) Dan Smithyman

USS Peleliu (LHA 5) hosted a reception in its hangar bay during a port visit in Darwin, Australia June 27 to celebrate and strengthen the relationship between the United States and Australia.

Many of the guests included the top Australian military and government leaders in the Northern Territory. Jason Hyland, Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy and Captain David Schnell, commanding officer of Peleliu, co-hosted the reception.

Among the notable Australians to attend were Tom Pauling, Administrator, Northern Territories, Fred Marrone, mayor of Darwin, Brigadier Gus McLachlan, commander of the 1st Brigade of the Australian Defence Force, and Commodore David Gwyther, Commander, Northern Command.

The Aussies and Americans have a longstanding relationship more than a century old. This reception recognized the many contributions the two countries have made in providing security, regional stabilization and economic support around the globe.

“We have remained true friends and allies through good times and hard times, including two world wars, the cold war and now the war on terror.” said Schnell. “We share a common love for freedom and democracy, and a common goal of ensuring peace and stability.”

The hangar bay was decorated with signal flags and two static aircraft displays, a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter and an AV-8B Harrier jet. Guests were treated to hors d’oeuvres and cake, along with a brief tour of the ship.



IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

26

When in the course of these events, a great multitude of brave men, who were united in the same views, and who were distinguished by their talents and their virtues, were called upon to declare their sentiments on the rights of the Colonies, and on the measures which they ought to take in consequence of those rights. They were called upon to declare their sentiments on the rights of the Colonies, and on the measures which they ought to take in consequence of those rights. They were called upon to declare their sentiments on the rights of the Colonies, and on the measures which they ought to take in consequence of those rights.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the thirteen united States of America, in Congress assembled, do hereby declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connections between them and that Crown are and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as to the future, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other things which independent States may do.

John Hancock
President