

DAVID EDENBURN



David Edenburn was born in Renville County Minnesota and grew up as a farmboy in the Sioux Agency Township. He attended county school and graduated from the West Central School of Agriculture at Morris Mn in 1951.

David Edenburn entered the US Navy on 28 November 1951 when he was only 17 years old. He was sent to Great Lakes Illinois for boot camp. David was expecting a very difficult experience during boot camp so things ended up easier than he expected. He also trained for his job as a Gunner's Mate. Soon he graduated from his training and was ready to see the world with the Navy.

He then took a train to Norfolk Virginia where he awaited the arrival of the USS Coral Sea. David boarded the USS Coral Sea and set out for a Mediterranean Cruise.



USS Coral Sea CVA-43

David and the crew of the Coral Sea departed the United States on 19 April, 1952.



They were assigned to the 6th Fleet and visited Yugoslavia. During a one day cruise, they carried Marshal Josip Broz Tito, leader of the Republic of Yugoslavia, to observe carrier operations.

While in the Mediterranean, Edenburn had the opportunity to see the Rock of Gibraltar. 55 years later when I talked with David he still recalled how impressive it was.



During the cruise, the ship was reclassified as an Attack Aircraft Carrier and redesignated with hull classification symbol CVA-43 on 1 October 1952. They returned to Norfolk on 12 October for overhaul.

While in the United States, the Coral Sea conducted training carrier operations off the Virginia Capes and Mayport Florida. In April 1953, the carried the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives for a three day cruise.

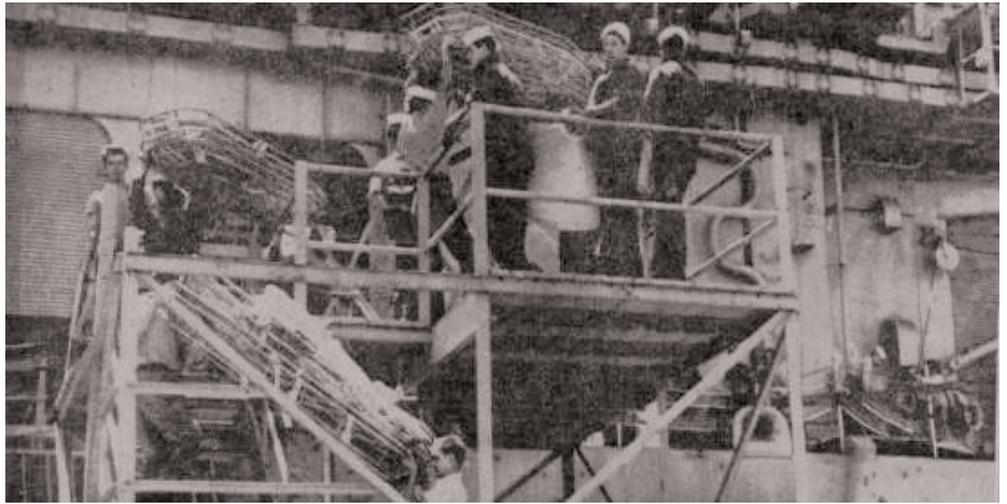


On 26 April 1953 David and the Coral Sea departed for a second cruise to the Mediterranean. During this second cruise, David vividly recalls visiting the Isle of Capri. Capri is an island in the Tyrrhenian Sea off the Sorrentine Peninsula, on the south side of the Gulf of Naples in the Campania region of Italy. The main town Capri on the island shares the name. It has been a resort since the time of the Roman Republic.

They also visited Spain and participated in the NATO Exercise Black Wave with the Deputy Secretary of Defense R. M. Kyes on board. Soon, the cruise was over and on 21 October 1953 they returned to Norfolk Virginia. After this tour David was a "Short Timer".

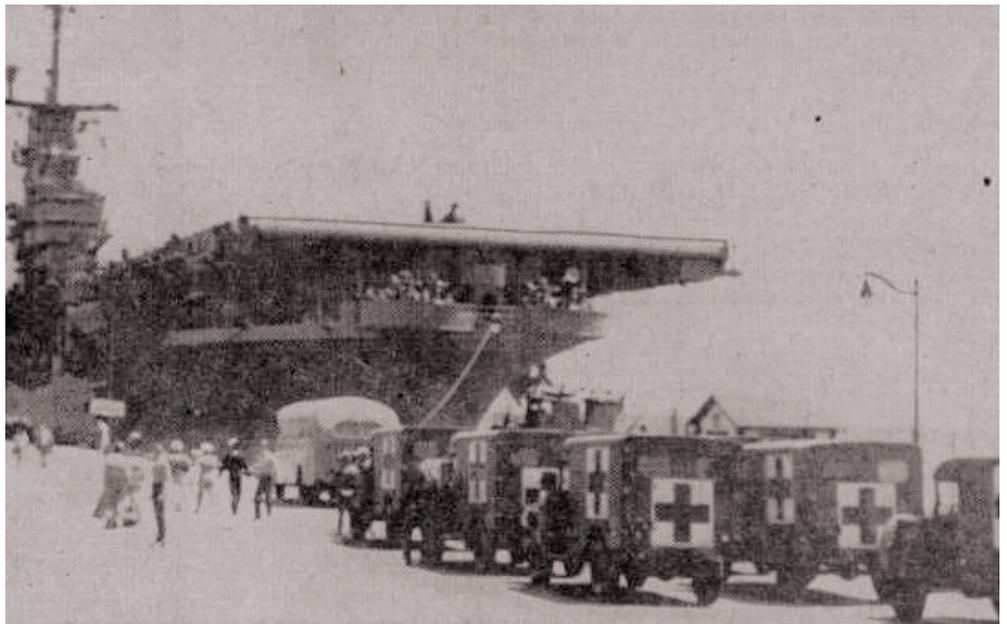
He was transferred to the USS Wisconsin and then to the USS Bennington (CVA-20). After a short leave he boarded the Bennington. The Bennington was a newly revitalized Attack Aircraft Carrier, designed to allow for the new Jet Aircraft to take off and land on deck. During its recommissioning ceremony on 13 November 1953, Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter said the Bennington was "the most modern carrier in our fleet today." The ship was set to operate off the Eastern seaboard of the United States.

On 26 May 1954, while cruising off Narragansett Bay, a horrific explosion occurred at 8:11 am aboard the Bennington. The fluid in one of the ship's catapults exploded setting off a series of secondary explosions. One hundred three crewmen were killed, and over 200 were injured in the accident. David was uninjured, but did recall the violent blasts from that day.



Under its own power, the Bennington proceeded to Quonset Point Rhode Island to land her injured. The explosion caused the US Navy to evaluate and switch from hydraulic catapults to steam catapults for launching aircraft.

A monument was built in the southwest corner of Fort Adams State Park in Newport Rhode Island honoring the memory of those killed in the accident.



Recovery of the wounded aboard the Bennington after the explosion.

David and the men of the Bennington moved to New York Naval Shipyard for repairs. Beginning on 12 June 1954 the ship underwent a complete rebuild. On 18 November 1954 David was discharged as a Gunner's Mate 3rd Class from the US Navy.

Following his service in the Navy, David was married and settled in Echo MN farming and raising three children. He was a 56 year member of the Echo American Legion Post.

Edenburn is the first cousin of my mother, and I had known little of his military experience. In 2006, at the Veteran's Day Observance I was able to visit with him and find out a little more about his time in the Navy.

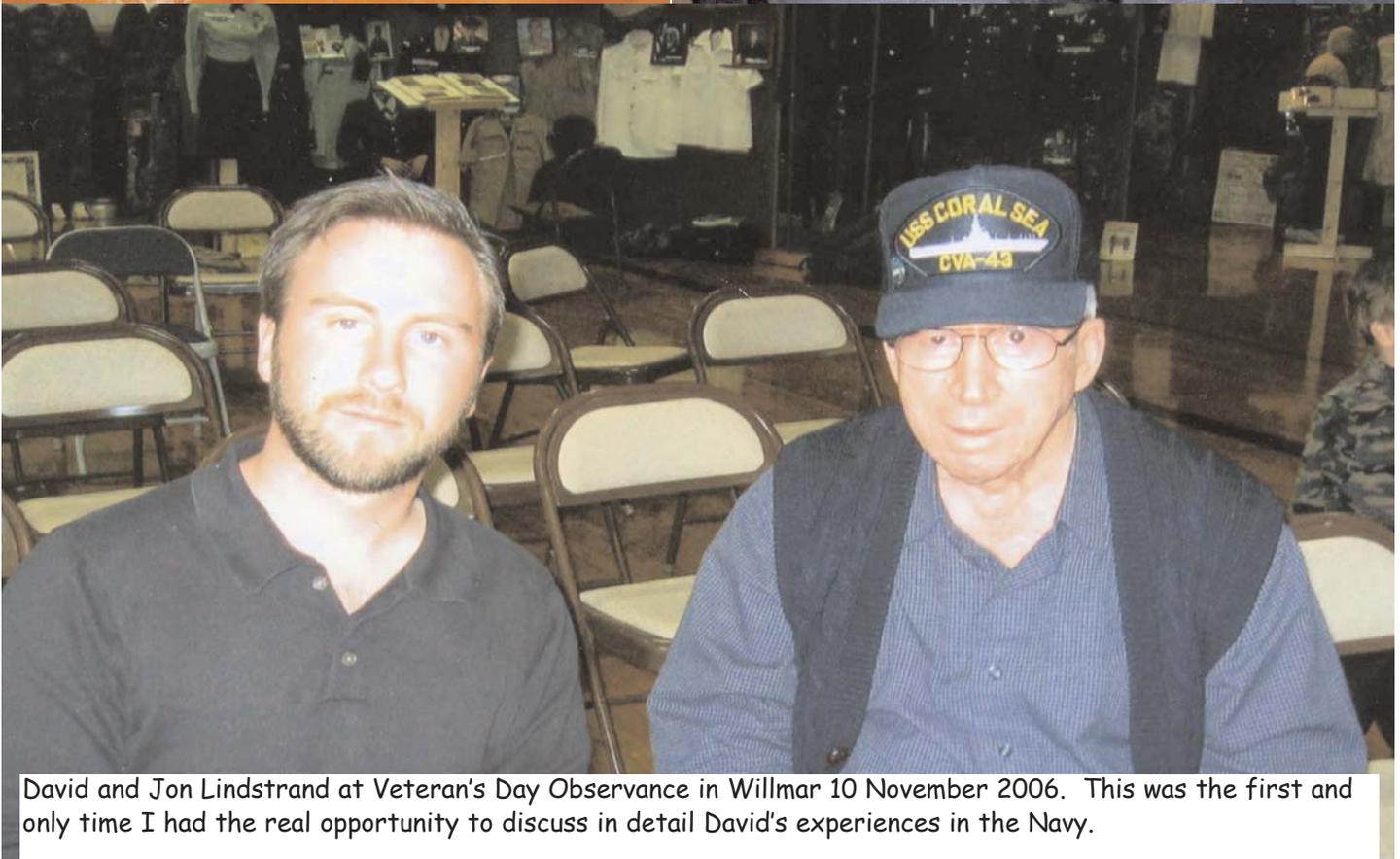
On 28 August 2011, David passed away in Redwood Falls MN. He was survived by his wife, three children, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was 77 years old.



David's Navy uniform
donated 9 November 2006
by his Daughter, Lori.



David by his uniform and photo while on display at the Veteran's Day Observance in Willmar 10 November 2006.



David and Jon Lindstrand at Veteran's Day Observance in Willmar 10 November 2006. This was the first and only time I had the real opportunity to discuss in detail David's experiences in the Navy.