

*Decommissioning
Ceremony*



*United States Ship
Ticonderoga*

8 May 1944-16 November 1973



*Mole Pier
U.S. Naval Station
San Diego, California*

PROGRAM

INVOCATION

REMARKS BY

*Vice Admiral Robert B. BALDWIN, USN
Commander Naval Air Force
U. S. Pacific Fleet*

REMARKS BY COMMANDING OFFICER

*Captain George W. BRUCE, USN
Commanding Officer
USS TICONDEROGA (CVS-14)*

HAULING DOWN OF THE COLORS --- NATIONAL ANTHEM

PRESENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ENSIGN

PRESENTATION OF THE COMMISSIONING PENNANT

SECURING OF THE WATCH

*Commanding Officer Naval Inactive Ships
Maintenance Facility
accepts custody of
TICONDEROGA*

BENEDICTION



CAPTAIN GEORGE W. BRUCE, USN
COMMANDING OFFICER

Captain George W. Bruce began his naval career in 1952 at Naval Training Center, San Diego. He was then assigned to NTC Bainbridge, Maryland, for Hospital Corpsman School and served as a Corpsman at the Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland prior to entering the Officer Candidate School at Newport, Rhode Island. After receiving his commission as an Ensign he reported to NAS Pensacola for flight training and received his wings in September 1954.

Captain Bruce's prior assignments include Patrol Squadron Forty-Four, Advanced Training Unit 501, USS LEXINGTON (CVA-16), Air Anti-Submarine Squadron Thirty-Seven, OPNAV (OP-90D35), and Air Anti-Submarine Squadron Forty-One. He reported back to Air Anti-Submarine Squadron Thirty-Seven in August 1969 and served as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer respectively until July 1974.

Captain Bruce is a graduate of the University of Richmond, General Line School, Armed Forces Staff College, Naval War College and holds degrees of Bachelor of Arts in chemistry and Master of Science in International Affairs.

Captain Bruce reported to USS TICONDEROGA (CVS-14) as Navigator in September 1972 and assumed the duties of Executive Officer in January 1973. He assumed command of USS TICONDEROGA (CVS-14) on 14 August 1973.

Captain Bruce and his wife, Mary Ann, reside in Coronado with their five children, Steven, Robert, Dorothy, Lisa and Julie.



COMMANDER NEWTON C. YOUNGBLOOD, USN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Commander Newton C. Youngblood was commissioned as Ensign in the Navy in 1954 after graduating from the University of Texas at Austin. His initial assignment was as Operations Officer in the USS FIDELITY (MSO-443). From there he entered flight training and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1956. His initial aviation assignment was in VS-21 where he flew the S2F Tracker, qualifying as Carrier ASW Plane Commander and serving as Landing Signal Officer. In 1960 Commander Youngblood, then a Lieutenant, was ordered to the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California where he was graduated with a Master of Science Degree in Management. The next two years were spent in VX-1 where he served as Editorial Officer and project pilot and from there to CVSG-58 in 1964. After a two year tour Commander Youngblood attended the Armed Forces Staff College. Upon completing the course of study in 1967, he reported to Commander Carrier Division Twenty as Air Operations Officer. In February 1969 he reported to the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, for duty and in August of 1970 Commander Youngblood reported to Fleet Tactical Support Squadron Fifty and served as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer respectively until October 1972.

Commander Youngblood reported to USS TICONDEROGA in January 1973 as Navigator and assumed the duties of Executive Officer in August 1973.

Commander Youngblood and his wife, Donna, reside in Coronado with their two children Jacki and Becky.

HISTORY OF TICONDEROGA

The name Ticonderoga is richly steeped in American history. Long before the American Revolutionary War, French and English pioneers penetrated the wilderness of what is now upper New York State. They discovered an excellent portage between Lake George and Lake Champlain. Iroquois Indians had named the spot Ticonderoga, which means "place where the lake shuts itself." French forces in 1757 built a fort there because it offered an ideal strategic spot from which to control the surrounding waterways. They called it Carillion.

In 1759, the British captured the fort from the French and renamed it Ticonderoga. In 1775, during the Revolutionary War, Ethan Allen, Benedict Arnold and 83 Green Mountain Boys surprised the defending British garrison and captured Fort Ticonderoga in the name of the "Great Jehova and the Continental Congress." The guns, ammunition and heavy cannon which they captured assisted the American Army at the siege of Boston.

The first American ship to be named TICONDEROGA was a 120-foot schooner built in 1814. Purchased for \$12,000 by the Navy for the War of 1812, the vessel participated in the Battle of Lake Champlain on September 11, 1814. With her guns and 100 officers and men she aided in the defeat of the British Sloop FINCH.

The second TICONDEROGA was a barkentine-rigged steam-powered sloop-of-war. She was commissioned on May 12, 1863 and served the Union during and after the war. Her contributions included the protection of commerce in the Caribbean Sea, the bombardment of Fort Fisher in North Carolina, and the protection of American fishing rights off the New England coast. After the war, TICONDEROGA became the first American steam-powered warship to circumnavigate the globe. The voyage lasted from December 1878 to August 1881. Afterwards she was decommissioned and sold. The second TICONDEROGA was 237 feet long and was armed with 14 various sized guns.

The third American ship to be named after the fort was the interned German freighter SS CAMILLA RICKMERS. She was outfitted, manned by a Navy crew, renamed TICONDEROGA, and on January 5, 1918, was commissioned. She was used in convoys running supplies to France for World War I troops. On her fourth crossing she was attacked by the German Submarine U-152. She finally succumbed to shelling and torpedoing on September 30, 1918. Only 16 persons survived. She was 401 feet long and had two medium sized guns for protection.

The aircraft carrier is the most recent in the TICONDEROGA line. She was the tenth Essex Class Carrier built. Her keel was laid February 1, 1943, in Newport News, Va., and she was first commissioned on May 8, 1944.

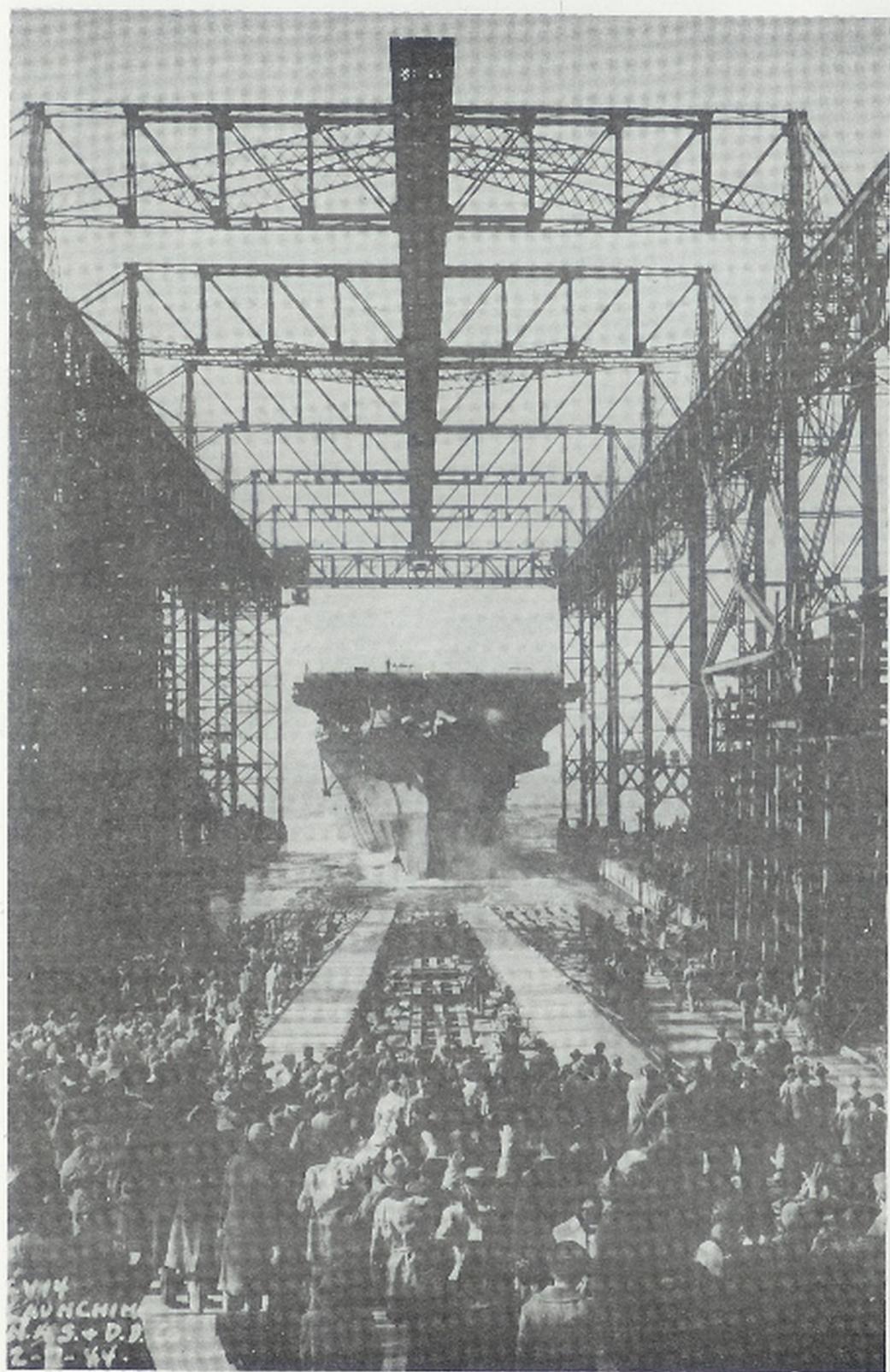
TICONDEROGA steamed into the Pacific Theater of World War II and for three months was highly active in the destruction of Japanese ships and airfields in and around the Philippines. Then on January 21, 1945, in the South China Sea, while enroute to attack Formosa, TICONDEROGA was attacked without warning by a suicide plane that dove out of the sun and clouds. The kamikaze crashed into the ship's flight deck aft of her Number 1 elevator and the bomb it carried went off just above the hangar deck, setting fire to many planes as well as killing and wounding about 100 men. Though many were trapped and seriously burned in the gallery deck spaces, all the pilots were safely evacuated without casualties.

TICONDEROGA flaming and with smoke rising hundreds of feet high, was apparently considered an easy target as suicide planes attacked in succession. Three were downed by the carrier's gunners, but despite their defense, a second kamikaze, hit many times in the air, struck the carrier on the side of the island structure starting several fires. The second plane's bomb exploded just inboard of the island, fired planes, ripped holes in the flight deck and killed or wounded some 100 men. Captain Dixie Kiefer, though wounded remained on the bridge until he was sure all injured men had been cared for. He would not be evacuated to sickbay until twelve hours after the attack.

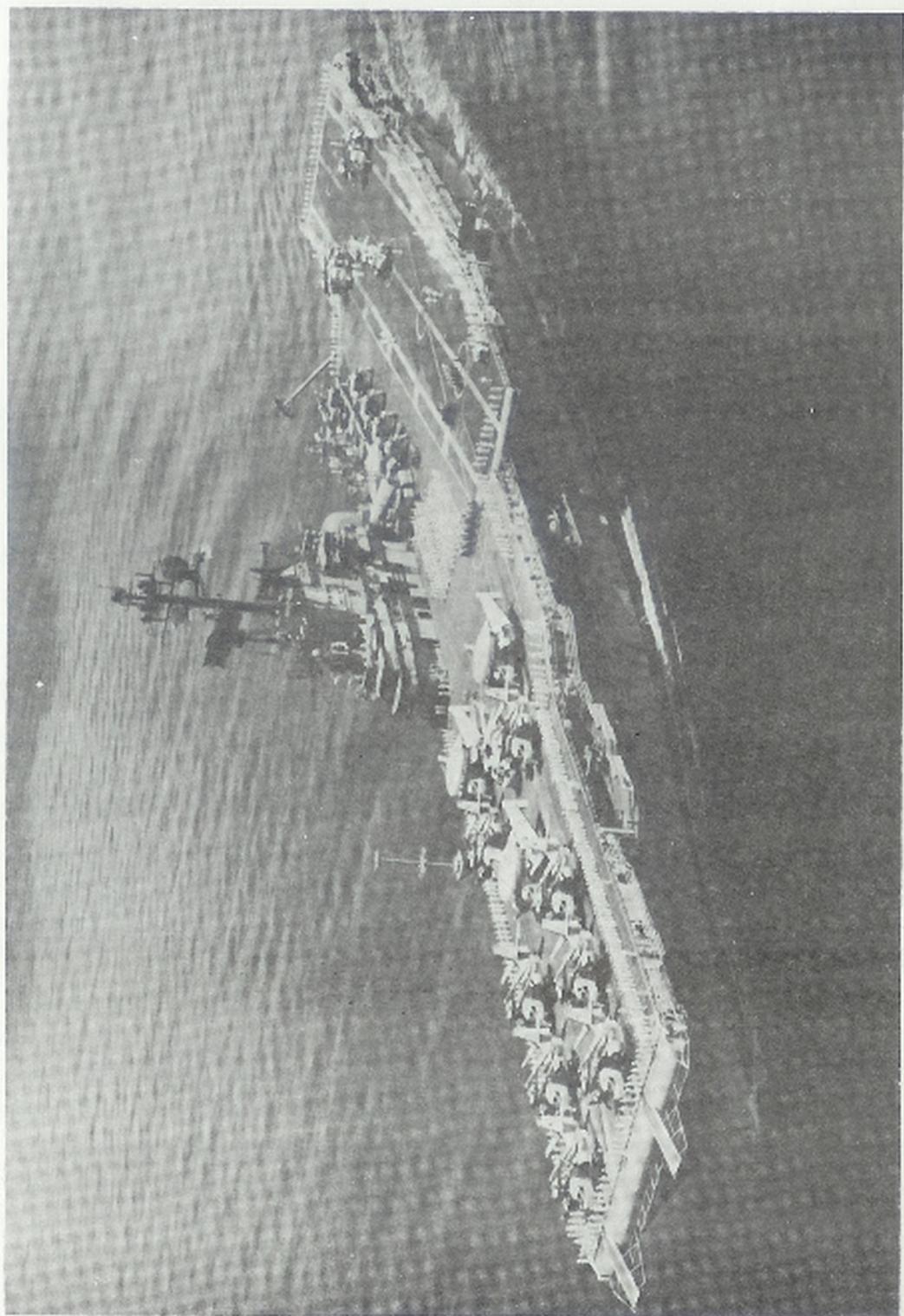
After two months of extensive repairs, TICONDEROGA was back in action for the remaining five months of the war. She was kept busy attacking Japanese held islands, supporting Allied forces ashore, and destroying enemy shipping.

The fighting "T" ended her Pacific campaigning in World War II with an outstanding array of awards. She received five Battle Stars for the Western Caroline Islands, Leyte, Luzon and Okinawa operations, and for the Third Fleet Operations against Japan. In addition, she won the Navy Occupation Medal (Asia) and the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Badge.

For five months after the war, TICONDEROGA was one of the ships used to return veterans to the United States from Pacific battlegrounds



CVN
LUNCH
N.S. + D.J.
2-7-44



as part of the transportation service known as the "MAGIC CARPET" Operation.

In January 1947, she was placed in the Bremerton Group of Inactive Reserve Ships. Brought out of the reserve in 1952, TICONDEROGA was placed in reduced commission for conversion that included steam driven catapults to launch modern jet aircraft, a nylon barricade, a deck edge elevator, a streamline island, and the latest in electronic and fire control equipment.

After two years in the yards, TICONDEROGA was recommissioned in 1954, and then participated in fleet exercises along the East Coast and in the Mediterranean. She returned from the Mediterranean in August 1956, and entered the Norfolk Naval Shipyard for conversion that included installation of an angled deck and enclosed hurricane bow. After her yard work was completed, TICONDEROGA again headed for the Pacific.

During five peace-time cruises to the Far East the ship earned the Battle Efficiency "E" for 1960, 1961, and 1962. She also received Efficiency Awards for her outstanding performance in the Communications, Operations, Weapons and Engineering Departments.

In August 1964, during her sixth Far East deployment, TICONDEROGA sent air support to the USS MADDOX and the USS C. TURNER JOY which were under attack by North Vietnamese torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin. Shortly afterwards, TICONDEROGA began the first strikes against bases in North Vietnam. For fast action support of the MADDOX and C. TURNER JOY, TICONDEROGA received the Navy Unit Commendation.

TICONDEROGA finished her 1964 deployment and returned to San Francisco Naval Shipyard for repairs. In September 1965, she sailed for combat operations in the Tonkin Gulf. During five at-sea periods on the line in six months, she did not miss one day of scheduled operations. Her aircraft destroyed or severely damaged more than 2,000 military and logistic structures and 35 major bridges. She returned from the Western Pacific in May 1966.

TICONDEROGA'S next deployment lasted from October 1966 to May 1967. She won a second Navy Unit Commendation for the high performance of her crew under combat conditions. During four combat

periods on the line in six months her pilots destroyed 1,300 strategic military targets in North Vietnam. These included major attacks on the Haiphong thermal-power and cement plants. After she returned to San Diego, she received orders to Bremerton, Washington for yard work. TICONDEROGA embarked hundreds of members of the crew's families for the "TICO TREK," a three-day trip to Bremerton.

When the yard work and refresher training were completed, TICONDEROGA again deployed to the Far East in December 1967. During this deployment TICONDEROGA and the embarked Carrier Air Wing achieved a number of firsts. She made more than 16,500 launches with her catapults in 120 days of action. This is a record for TICONDEROGA performances. On two days she launched more than 170 aircraft with a record of 175. Once she hurled 20 A-4 attack jets from her deck in under eight minutes. This averages six seconds per shot faster than what is considered outstanding. Commander Samuel Chessman became the holder of the record of the most combat strikes flown over North Vietnam when he flew his 30th. Lieutenant Commander John Nichols became the first and only TICONDEROGA pilot to shoot down an enemy MIG fighter plane.

Pilots of the Air Wing dropped 9,600 tons of ordnance which topped the previous deployment by 300 tons. The bombs destroyed or damaged 119 bridges, 118 truck parks, 424 barges, 28 radar sites, and many other targets. For this fourth combat mission to Vietnam, TICONDEROGA was awarded a third Naval Unit Commendation.

On August 17, 1968 TICONDEROGA returned to her homeport of San Diego. One week later she sailed for Long Beach, California for two months of repairs and refurbishing before returning to San Diego for refresher training.

On February 1, 1969, TICONDEROGA left San Diego for her tenth Western Pacific deployment. In early March her Air Wing pilots began flying strikes in support of friendly forces in the Republic of Vietnam. Prior to starting her third line period on Yankee Station the ship celebrated her 25th year with the fleet on May 8th while in Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. Upon her return to the U.S., the Secretary of the Navy awarded the veterans the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

In mid-October, the carrier shifted her homeport from San Diego to Long Beach. At the same time, TICONDEROGA was designated an

Anti-Submarine Warfare Support (ASW) carrier. Upon arrival in Long Beach she entered the Naval Shipyard there and began an eight-month yard period for regular overhaul and physical conversion to an ASW carrier.

On April 1, 1970 it was announced by the CNO that TICONDEROGA would shift her homeport from Long Beach to San Diego in July 1970. After changing homeports in July, TICONDEROGA began underway training in preparation for still another proposed WESTPAC cruise for 1971. In January, TICONDEROGA deployed for one month to Hawaii to participate in a Pacific training exercise.

In March 1971, she began a four-month deployment which would take her to the Indian Ocean, Tonkin Gulf, Philippine Sea and Sea of Japan to test anti-submarine warfare equipment and techniques. In the Sea of Japan, she participated in anti-submarine exercises with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force, then returned to San Diego in early July.

TICONDEROGA then resumed training exercises in the Eastern and mid-Pacific areas which included a major ASW exercise with Canadian, Australian and New Zealand naval units in the Hawaiian area. This exercise was called RIMPAC 71.

On March 23, 1972 TICONDEROGA sailed for the South Pacific as the Prime Recovery Ship for the Apollo 16 Lunar Landing Mission. Weeks of intensive preparation resulted in one of the most accurate and quickest recoveries in the history of the space program. On April 27, Astronauts John W. Young, Thomas K. Mattingly and Charles M. Duke, Jr. were brought safely aboard TICONDEROGA after their historic 11 day journey to the moon.

TICONDEROGA arrived back in San Diego on May 5. Twelve days later she was departing for another cruise - this time to the Western Pacific for anti-submarine warfare support operations in Southeast Asia. During her overseas deployment TICONDEROGA made brief stops at Hawaii and Guam before visiting Subic Bay in the Philippines, Sasebo and Yokosuka, Japan.

On July 31, TICONDEROGA pulled into San Diego harbor from her 2½ month WestPac deployment. One month later TICONDEROGA again headed west for a unique trip to Hawaii. Exercise RIMPAC 72, an international anti-submarine warfare exercise with the Navies of Australia, Canada and New Zealand was conducted during September.

The cruise was unique in that guests of the ship's crew were allowed to make the journey to Hawaii. Fifty-five guests were instructed in in shipboard routine and drills, and witnessed air operations, gunnery and replenishment evolutions.

TICONDEROGA returned to her homeport on September 26th to spend a month in preparation for another ASW exercise, UPTIDE IIIB, and the recovery of the Apollo 17 Astronauts in December.

UPTIDE IIIB, a ten day ASW exercise with units of the Pacific Fleet was held in Southern California waters from October 30 - November 8. On 24 November, TICONDEROGA sailed for Hawaii and then the American Samoan recovery area of the Apollo 17 Lunar Mission. On December 19th, she added another page to her long history by recovering Astronauts Eugene V. Cernan, Ronald E. Evans, and Harrison H. Schmitt, Americas final scheduled mission to the moon.

The first three months of 1973 again found TICO providing the needed deck time for carrier qualifications. During the ten day at sea periods each month, TICO logged 3,985 arrested landings, while working with 397 pilots from over 23 squadrons with eight different types of aircraft. In March it was announced TICONDEROGA had won the Battle "E" for the first time since converting to a CVS in 1969.

In early January 1973, the Chief of Naval Operations announced that TICONDEROGA would be decommissioned. Before that fateful event however, she was tasked as the first Primary Recovery Ship of America's newest space exploration series ...SKYLAB... which she accomplished by retrieving the SKYLAB II Astronauts Conrad, Kerwin, and Weitz from the Pacific Ocean on 22 June 1973, 750 miles Southwest of San Diego. Upon her return to San Diego on 24 June 1973, she began preparations for decommissioning; a major task with a reduced crew, which is finalized with this ceremony today.

A ship that has known the inflictions of war and the glory of victory is being laid to rest with the dignity and honor which she so justly deserves for her three decades of service. She was born of metal with the efforts and sweat of man but never knew defeat at the hands of man; only at the hands of time and strenuous service.

PAST COMMANDING OFFICERS

| | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | CAPT Dixie Kiefer, USN (19) | 8 May 44 - 21 Jan 45 |
| | CDR Harmon V. Briner, USN | 21 Jan 45 - 28 Jan 45 |
| | CAPT Giles E. Short, USN | 28 Jan 45 - 7 Feb 45 |
| | CAPT William Sinton, USN | 7 Feb 45 - 7 May 46 |
| | CDR Warren R. Thompson, USN | 7 May 46 - 4 Nov 46 |
| | LCDR W. J. Pendola, USN | 4 Nov 46 - 27 Dec 46 |
| | CDR Warren R. Thompson, USN | 27 Dec 46 - 9 Jan 47 |
| | CAPT Paul W. Watson, USN | 31 Jan 52 - 2 Apr 52 |
| | CDR Arthur T. Decker, USN | 2 Apr 52 - 4 Apr 52 |
| B | CAPT William A. Schoech, USN (28) | 11 Sep 54 - 9 Sep 55 |
| | CAPT Andrew M. Jackson, USN (30) | 9 Sep 55 - 24 Aug 56 |
| | CDR Harold C. Miller, USN | 24 Aug 56 - 8 Oct 56 |
| | CAPT William A. Stuart, USN | 8 Oct 56 - 4 Oct 57 |
| | CAPT Irwin Chase, Jr., USN | 8 Oct 57 - 20 Sep 58 |
| | CAPT Wilson M. Coleman, USN (34) | 20 Sep 58 - 5 Sep 59 |
| | CAPT Turner F. Caldwell, USN | 5 Sep 59 - 24 Aug 60 |
| | CAPT Robert F. Farrington, USN | 24 Aug 60 - 25 Aug 61 |
| B | CAPT Eugene G. Fairfax, USN (39) | 25 Aug 61 - 7 Jul 62 |
| | CAPT James G. Daniels, III, USN | 7 Jul 62 - 20 Jul 63 |
| | CAPT John P. Weinel, USN | 20 Jul 63 - 3 Jul 64 |
| B | CAPT Damon W. Cooper, USN (41) | 3 Jul 64 - 14 May 65 |
| B | CAPT Robert N. Miller, USN (40) | 14 May 65 - 1 Jun 66 |
| | CAPT Martin G. O'Neill, USN | 1 Jun 66 - 4 Nov 66 |
| | CAPT James B. Cain, USN | 4 Nov 66 - 10 Nov 66 |
| | CAPT Ward Miller, USN | 10 Nov 66 - 3 Nov 67 |
| B | CAPT Norman K. McInnis, USN | 3 Nov 67 - 23 Dec 68 |
| | CAPT Richard E. Fowler, Jr., USN | 23 Dec 68 - 24 Oct 69 |
| | CAPT William H. McLaughlin, USN | 24 Oct 69 - 14 Dec 70 |
| | CAPT Edward A. Boyd, USN | 14 Dec 70 - 14 May 72 |
| | CAPT Frank T. Hemler, USN | 14 May 72 - 6 Oct 72 |
| B | CAPT Norman K. Green, USN (47) | 6 Oct 72 - 14 Aug 73 |
| B | CAPT George W. Bruce, USN | 14 Aug 73 - 16 Nov 73 |

