

I first met Ken Belke '37 as a fellow member of the Brotherhoods. At the time I was interviewing some of the older members about their time at CB. I was also delighted that this was one place in town that I could go and not be the oldest person there. I think Ken was around 92 at the time.

After his interview I asked if he had any memorabilia. He said he had but didn't know where he had put them. I thought he was putting me on, so I asked his wife if she knew of any such box. A week later she found the mystery box. Ken and I opened the treasure chest together. To my surprise, it told a very different story than about the good times he had while in the Navy. He had seen a lot of combat

It all started when the draft board told him that it would be a while before he had to join the Army. He checked with them a little later and to his surprise found out he was ready to be drafted in a short time. He told them that he wanted to join the Navy and was informed that it was too late to do so. He asked if he hand carried the paperwork around could he join the Navy. They told him he could try. Through a lot of luck and diligence he made it. He was assigned to the Navy school to become a storekeeper. From there he was assigned to the aircraft carrier Santee

Because of the need for air craft carriers, the Navy purchased three of the largest fuel tankers in the world from Standard Oil Company, and converted them into air craft carriers. The Santee was one of them. Information about the ship and its use during the war can be seen in the following section.

Ken's job during attacks against the carrier was to man one of two groups of guns to protect the rear of the Santee. The picture shows Ken with his shirt off to the right in charge of aiming the guns. Later he was in charge of the unit and stood where the man in the middle is in the picture. The guns were also increased to four rather than the two in the picture.

When the U.S. was ready to attack the Japanese in the Pacific Ocean, they needed air support for the Army and Marines. Since there were no practical airports around, they used the aircraft carriers to carry the planes. Consequently, the enemy wanted to knock out the aircraft carriers. They used torpedoes, bombs, and Japanese aircraft would fly their planes into the carriers loaded with explosives. All three of these methods had been used to attack the Santee at one time or another. The last attack was so devastating that the ship limped back to San Diego for repairs. By the time the ship was repaired, the war was over.

Information about Ken's time at CB is chronicled in the Class of '37.



Sacramento Calif

Kenneth & Lillian 6/1925



Sacramento, Calif. 6/1925

Sister & Claire's Home



Sacramento Cal. 6/1925



Sister & Claire's Home - Sacramento 6/1925



Sacramento Cal. from Capital Home - 6/1925



1930 - 5th Grade Class - St. Francis Grammar School

3rd Row From Bottom: Tom Corrigan '37, Jackie Collins, Ken Belke '37, ? Paul Akrop,
? Joe Puliz '37, ??????????

Top Row: Far Right James Harrington '37

ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL
Commencement Exercises

Sunday Evening, June 11th, 1933

Seven-thirty o'clock

ST. FRANCIS CHURCH

Reserve Seat for One Person

Invited by *Henneth Wilke.*

Thirty-eighth
Annual Commencement

ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL
Sacramento, California

*Sunday evening, June the eleventh
nineteen hundred thirty-three
at seven-thirty o'clock*



In St. Francis Church
26th and K Streets

PROGRAM



1. Hymn: ON THIS DAY

On this day O Beautiful Mother,
On this day we give thee our love,
Near thee Madonna fondly we hover,
Trusting thy gentle care to prove.

On this day we ask to share,
Dearest Mother thy sweet care;
Aid us ere our feet astray,
Wander from thy guiding way.

Fast our days of life we run,
Soon the night of death will come,
Tower of strength in that dread hour,
Be to us, Thou gentle power.

2. Invocation: VENI CREATOR

Veni Creator Spiritus,
Mentes tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia
Quae tu creasti pectora.

Deo Patri sit gloria,
Et Filio, qui a mortuis,
Surrexit, ac Paraclito
In saeculorum saecula. Amen.

3. Address by REV. FR. SAMUEL

4. Awarding of Diplomas Class of 1933

Bettie Ann Blair	Paul Akrop
Betty Ann Corkran	Maurice Bamberg
Clare Coyle	Kenneth Belke
Dolores Creegan	Leo Bennett
Virginia Dumont	Thomas Corrigan
Alice Fennell	Jack Collins
Frances Graves	Nicholas Fitzgerald
Lucille Groth	Edward Gabel
Eileen Kennedy	Robert Guy
Koreen Koewler	James Harrington
Irene Lawrence	Arthur Hagus
Lucinda Lawrence	Stanley Hickok
Phyllis Leavens	Lloyd Keberline
Camille Lissman	William Masters
Mary Madden	Leonard McClure
Barbara Nevis	Elwood Moran
Catherine O'Dea	Robert Resch
Marie Sullivan	Charles Schatz
Mildred Strukan	Clark Tucher
Frances Wesely	Peter Viducich
Henry Wild	Kenneth Willett

5. Class Hymn: THERE IS NO HEART LIKE THINE

There is no heart like Thine sweet Lord,
There is no heart like Thine,
If its eclipse is loveliness
How bright its glow divine,
The beauty Thou art hiding now
But to return more bright;
There is no smile like Thine sweet Lord,
To give me delight.

Sweet Jesus to Thee I come,
Thy heart is my home dear Lord,
Sweet Jesus to Thee I come,
Thy Heart is my Home dear Lord,
Thy heart is my home.

6. Benediction.

O Salutaris Hostia,
Quae coel pandis ostium;
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur fer auxilium.

Uni trinoque Domino,
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.

Tantum ergo Sacramentum,
Veneremur cernui;
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui.
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

Genitori genitorque,
Laus et jubilatio;
Salus honor, virtus quoque,
Sit et benedictio;
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. Amen.

7. HOLY GOD.

Holy God we praise Thy Name,
Lord of all we bow before Thee;
All on earth Thy scepter claim,
All in Heav'n above adore Thee.
Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign.

Hark the loud celestial hymn,
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heavens with sweet accord
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord.

CLASS COLORS: Orchid and Honey Dew
CLASS MOTTO: No Victory without Labor.

St Francis Grammar School 8th Grade Names 1933

Top Row: Leonard McClure, Jim Harrington '36, Ken Willett, Maurice Bambery, Lloyd Keberline, Leo Bennet '36, Priest?, Clark Tucher, Bid Masters, ? , ? , ? Edward Gabei, Ken Belke '36, Thomas Corrigan. '36.

Middle Row: ? , Pete Viducich , Far Right: Ken Willett.

Bottom Row: Charles Schatz, Elwood Moran, Far Right: Paul Akrop, Arthur Hagus.



CITY OF SACRAMENTO

Recreation Department

Award

Presented to Kenneth Belle

For First Place in the One Hundred Yard Dash - Class G - in the
All-Sacramento Roller Skate Tournament - Ninety Hundred - Sixty-five

K. P. Fry
Supervisor

J. Melroy
Superintendent of Recreation

KEN BELKE'S CB BLOCK FOR PLAYING FOOTBALL





Picture top left: taken when he was in the Navy. Bottom left: taken during Supply training school. Main picture: Ken delivered the Sacramento Bee after school. The papers were delivered to this location at 21st and Q Streets, and he would deliver them in the down town area by bicycle. They apparently dressed up for this picture. Because of the depression, many students at CB had jobs after school. Ken is located bottom row 4th from left.



2718-Quell
Gae 40

Local Board No. 25 91
Sacramento County 007
OCT - 3 1941 025
(STAMP OF LOCAL BOARD)
Rm. 213, 1300 J Street
Sacramento, California

Oct. 3, 1941

(Date)

NOTICE OF SELECTION

To Kenneth James Belke, Order No. S 4110

You have been selected for training and service under the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940. You will receive an Order to Report for Induction—such induction to take place on or about about Oct. 27, 1941, 1941, when adequate facilities are expected to be available.

This notice is given you in advance for your convenience, and is not an order to report. Persons reporting to the induction station in some instances may be rejected for physical or other reasons. It is well to keep this in mind in arranging your affairs, to prevent any undue hardship if you are rejected at the induction station. If you are employed, you should advise your employer of this notice and of the possibility that you may not be accepted at the induction station. Your employer can then be prepared to replace you if you are accepted, or to continue your employment if you are rejected. The Order to Report for Induction will specify a definite time and place for you to report.

W. A. Carroll
Member of Local Board.

INDUCTED IN ARMY JUST
BEFORE ENLISTING IN NAVY
RETR.

NAVY DEPARTMENT, BUREAU OF NAVIGATION

SERVICE



SCHOOLS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This certifies that

Kenneth James BELKE, Sea. 2c., V-6 USNR

has satisfactorily completed the prescribed course of study at the

Storekeeper Division

NAVAL TRAINING SCHOOL, TOLEDO, OHIO

this 12th *day of* May 1942

Grade - 3.456

F. J. McManamon, Lt. Comdr. D-V(G)

U. S. Navy, Commanding.

KEN BELKE WAS ON THE SANTEE WHEN IT WAS FIRST COMMISSIONED TILL THE END OF WW 2

Web [Images](#) [Maps](#) [Shopping](#) [More](#) Search tools

About 185,000 results (0.28 seconds)

[USS Santee \(CVE-29\) - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Santee_\(CVE-29\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Santee_(CVE-29))

The second **USS Santee** (CVE-29) (originally launched as AO-29, following reclassification as an escort carrier, was originally ACV-29) was launched on 4 ...
World War II Post-war Awards Notes

[USS Santee \(1855\) - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Santee_\(1855\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Santee_(1855))

The **USS Santee** (1855) was a wooden-hulled, three-masted sailing frigate of the United States Navy. She was the first U.S. Navy ship to be so named and ...

[USS Santee - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Santee

Three ships of the United States Navy have been named **USS Santee**, after the Santee River of South Carolina. Santee was one of the last sailing frigates of the ...

[Images for uss santee](#) - Report images



[Escort Carrier Photo Index: USS SANTEE \(ACV-29\)](#)

www.navsource.org/archives/03/029.htm

Mar 22, 2012 - Port bow view of **USS Santee** (ACV-29) in the rare Measure 17 camouflage pattern. U.S. Navy photo, Norfolk Navy Yard, Portsmouth, Va., serial ...

[U.S.S. SANTEE LOOKING FOR CREWMATES 1942 to 1945 CVE 29...](#)

www.topix.com/forum/blogs/TVOPBFMR7636AKMV1

20 posts - 1 author - Oct 7, 2007

My father, Robert L. Elliott(Bob), served on the **Uss Santee** from 1942-1945 also. He was in the Visual communications Dept., according to him.

[USS Santee \(CVE 29\) of the US Navy - American Escort carrier of ...](#)

uboat.net/allies/warships/ship/2428.html

The U-boat War in World War Two (Kriegsmarine, 1939-1945) and World War One (Kaiserliche Marine, 1914-1918) and the Allied efforts to counter the threat.

[USS Santee](#)

www.historylink101.com/ww2_navy/org/.../USSSantee/index.html

Planes on the deck of the **USS Santee**, Plane on the deck of **USS Santee**, **USS Santee**, Deck of **USS Santee**. **USS Santee**, Crew on deck of **USS Santee**, Crew ...

[USS SANTEE \(CVE-29\) Deployments & History](#)

www.hullnumber.com/CVE-29

CVE-29 **USS SANTEE**. **USS Santee** was built at Chester, PA with the original name of Esso Seakay. The ship was bought by the Navy and redesignated AO-29 ...

[USS Santee | War Tales](#)

donmoorewartales.com/tag/uss-santee/

Nov 23, 2011 - Harry Weis of Punta Gorda, Fla. served aboard the escort carrier **USS Santee**. He took part in the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval ...

[USS Santee \(CVE-29\): History, Patrols, Crews](#)

www.mesotheionrweb.org > ... > Cruisers of the United States Navy

Commissioning. The **USS Santee** was a member of the Sangamon class of escort aircraft carriers. The vessel was originally known as the Esso Seakay, a tanker ...

USS Santee

CVE-29

The second **USS Santee** (CVE-29) was launched on 4 March 1939 as *Esso Seakay* under a Maritime Commission contract by the Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company at Chester, Pennsylvania, sponsored by Mrs. ...
Wikipedia

Construction started: May 31, 1938

Launched: March 4, 1939

See results about



USS Santee
1855

The **USS Santee** (1855) was a three-masted sailing frigate of the U

USS *Santee* (CVE-29)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The second USS *Santee* (CVE-29) (originally launched as **AO-29**, following reclassification as an escort carrier, was originally **ACV-29**) was launched on 4 March 1939 as *Esso Seakay* under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 3) by the Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company at Chester, Pennsylvania, sponsored by Mrs. Charles Kurz, acquired by the United States Navy on 18 October 1940; and commissioned on 30 October 1940 as **AO-29**, with Commander William G. B. Hatch in command.

Prior to her acquisition by the Navy, *Esso Seakay* had been operated by Standard Oil of New Jersey on the west coast. During her commercial service, she set several records for fast oil hauling. Its original model was a type T3-S2-A1 tanker.

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World War II

After commissioning, *Santee* served in the Atlantic. When American neutrality ended on 7 December 1941, *Santee* was carrying oil for a secret airdrome at NS Argentia, Newfoundland. In the spring of 1942, *Santee's* conversion to an aircraft carrier was begun at the Norfolk Navy Yard.

1942



USS *Santee*

Career



Name:	SS <i>Esso Seakay</i>
Owner:	Standard Oil Company
Builder:	Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Chester, Pennsylvania
Laid down:	31 May 1938
Launched:	4 March 1939
Sponsored by:	Mrs. Charles Kurz
Fate:	Purchased by the US Navy

Career



Name:	USS <i>Santee</i>
Acquired:	18 October 1940
Commissioned:	30 October 1940, as AO-29
Decommissioned:	Early 1942
Recommissioned:	24 August 1942, as ACV-29
Decommissioned:	21 October 1946
Reclassified:	CVHE-29, 12 June 1955
Struck:	1 March 1959
Fate:	Sold, 5 December 1959 Scrapped in Hamburg in May 1960.

General characteristics as escort carrier

Class & type:	<i>Sangamon</i> -class escort carrier
Displacement:	6,534 long tons (6,639 t)

On 24 August 1942, *Santee* was commissioned as an escort carrier with designation ACV-29, with Commander William Sample in command. The ACV was fitted with such haste that workmen from Norfolk were still on board during her shakedown training and her decks were piled high with stores. After conversion, nominally completed on 8 September, *Santee* reported to Task Force 22 (TF 22) and the first plane landed on her flight deck on 24 September.



SBD bombers on *Santee* during convoy duty in the Atlantic.

After shakedown, *Santee* departed Bermuda on 25 October and headed for the coast of Africa. While the escort carrier was *en route* on 30 October, an SBD Dauntless being launched from a catapult dropped

a 325 lb (147 kg) depth bomb onto the flight deck. It rolled off the deck and detonated close to the port bow shaking the entire ship, carrying away the rangefinder and a searchlight base, and damaging radar antennas.

Nevertheless, *Santee* continued steaming with Task Group 34.2 (TG 34.2). On 7 November, the escort carrier, with *Rodman* and *Emmons* and *Monadnock*, left the formation and, the following morning, took positions off Safi, French Morocco. *Santee* launched planes and fueled ships until 13 November, when she rejoined TG 34.2 and returned to Bermuda. The group departed that island on 22 November and anchored in Hampton Roads, Virginia two days later.

1943

After voyage repairs and drydock, *Santee* got underway with destroyer *Eberle*, on 26 December. On 1 January 1943, *Santee* anchored at Port of Spain, Trinidad. Two days later, with *Eberle* and *Livermore*, she headed for the coast of Brazil. After disembarking passengers at Recife, she sailed to join Task Unit 23.1.6 (TU 23.1.6) at sea in tightening the noose on enemy merchant shipping and naval activity in the South Atlantic.

For a month, her planes flew anti-submarine missions and regular patrols. On 15 February, the escort carrier put in at Recife, remaining until 21 February. Back conducting routine sorties in the same manner, *Santee* operated from 21 February – 2 March when she again put in to Recife.

Her next period at sea, which began on 4 March, brought action. On 10 March, light cruiser *Savannah* and destroyer *Eberle* were investigating a cargo liner which had been spotted by *Santee*'s aircraft and which had been tentatively identified as the *Karin*, a Dutch merchantman. It turned out to be the German blockade runner *Kota*

Length:	559 ft (170 m)
Beam:	75 ft (23 m)
	114 ft 3 in (34.82 m) (extreme width)
Draft:	32 ft 4 in (9.86 m)
Propulsion:	2 × steam turbines 2 × shafts
Speed:	18 kn (21 mph; 33 km/h)
Complement:	860 officers and men
Armament:	2 × 5 in (130 mm)/51 cal guns ^[1]
Aircraft carried:	31
Aviation facilities:	2 × elevators

Service record

Commanders:	William Sample (1942–44)
Operations:	World War II
Awards:	9 battle stars

Nopan (ex-Dutch *Kota Pinang*). As the *Eberle* boarding party drew alongside, explosives placed by the abandoning crew detonated, killing eight boarders. On 15 March, *Santee* set out for Norfolk and anchored at Hampton Roads on 28 March.

Underway again on 13 June, with destroyers *Bainbridge*, *Overton*, and *MacLeish*, *Santee* reached Casablanca on 3 July. Four days later, the escort carrier departed the harbor with a convoy of homeward-bound empties. No submarines were sighted, but one of her Avengers made a forced landing in Spain, and its crew was interned. *Santee's* small task group left the convoy on 12 July with orders to operate independently against Nazi submarine concentrations south of the Azores. She remained at this anti-submarine work until 25 July and managed to attack seven surfaced U-boats, at the price of two Dauntlesses.

On the 25th, she joined a west-bound convoy, which reached the Virginia coast on 6 August. On 26 August, *Santee*, with *Bainbridge* and *Greer*, again headed into the Atlantic; and two days steaming brought them to Bermuda.

Santee made another convoy run from Bermuda to Casablanca and back to Hampton Roads from 29 August – 13 October. On 25 October, the escort carrier departed the east coast for Casablanca, reaching Basin Delpit on 13 November. Standing out of Casablanca the next day, she rendezvoused on 17 November with battleship *Iowa*, carrying President Franklin D. Roosevelt. After providing air cover for the battleship and her escorts for several days, *Santee* was ordered to the Bay of Biscay, where she engaged in anti-submarine work until the end of November.

As TG 21.11, *Santee* and a trio of four-stackers patrolled the North Atlantic from 1–9 December. The group was dissolved upon arrival at the Norfolk Navy Yard on 10 December, and *Santee*, minus her aircraft, stood out of Norfolk on 21 December, and headed for New York in company with battleship *Texas*, and several destroyers. From 22–28 December, the escort carrier packed her hangar and flight decks with P-38 Lightning fighter planes at Staten Island. Getting underway in convoy on 29 December, she steamed unchallenged across the North Atlantic, reaching Glasgow on 9 January 1944.

1944

Emptied of her P-38 cargo, *Santee* departed Glasgow in convoy on 13 January and returned to Norfolk on 24 January. She stood out of Norfolk on 13 February with destroyer escort *Tatum*, transited the Panama Canal on 18–19 February and moored at San Diego, California, on 28 February. There, she embarked 300 Navy and Marine Corps personnel and 31 aircraft for delivery to Pearl Harbor. She also took on 24 F4F Wildcats and TBF Avengers as her own air group. Standing out of San Diego Bay on 2 March, *Santee* unloaded her ferried aircraft and personnel at Pearl Harbor upon her arrival on 9 March.

Sangamon, *Suwannee*, *Chenango* and *Santee*, all former oilers, swarmed out of Pearl Harbor with a flock of destroyers on 15 March, heading southwest. Designated Carrier Division 22 (CarDiv 22), they joined the fast carriers of the United States Fifth Fleet on 27 March and sped west to the Palaus. There, their planes of CarDiv 22 flew patrols over vulnerable tankers before setting course for Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides on 4 April.

In this, the closing phase of the New Guinea campaign, *Santee* fueled and provisioned near Espiritu Santo from 7–10 April; then sailed to Purvis Bay, Solomons on 13 April. CarDiv 22 joined CarDiv 24 and a destroyer squadron on 16 April and set course for New Guinea.

Santee's air group aircraft aided in destroying 100 enemy aircraft and ripping up enemy airfields before the landings, prior to departing for Manus Island, Admiralties, on 24 April. Arriving at Seeadler Harbor the next day, she and her sister ships took on fuel and food; then sailed again on 26 April for Hollandia (currently known as Jayapura). From 12 May – 1 June, she traded in her own air arm for 66 F4U Corsairs and 15 F6F Hellcats and personnel of Marine Air Group 21 (MAG 21). On 2 June, CarDiv 22 started north for Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshalls. On 4 August, *Santee* reached newly-won Guam. The 81 aircraft of MAG 21 became the first planes to operate from the reconquered island.

After training exercises and the re-embarkment of her own planes at Manus, *Santee* got underway on 10 September and rendezvoused with TF 77 near Mapia Island. At Morotai in the Moluccas, her Avengers bombed ground installations. One plane was lost to the enemy, but *Santee* herself had no contact with the Japanese. By 1 October, she was back in Seeadler Harbor.

Sailing from Manus on 12 October, *Santee* and accompanying combatants reached Philippine waters on 20 October. Her gunners shot down an enemy plane during an air attack that morning, and her aircraft splashed two more.

At 07:36 on 25 October, *Santee* launched five Avengers and eight Wildcats for an attack against Japanese surface units some 120 mi (190 km) to the north. At 07:40, a *kamikaze* — carrying what was estimated to be a 138 lb (63 kg) bomb — crashed through the flight deck and damaged the hangar deck. At 07:56, a torpedo fired from a Japanese submarine struck the ship, causing flooding of several compartments and creating a 6° list. Emergency repairs were completed by 09:35.

Between 18 and 27 October, *Santee* planes shot down 31 Japanese planes and sank one 5,000 long tons (5,100 t) ammunition ship, in addition to damage inflicted by strafing during their 377 sorties. On 31 October, she anchored in Seeadler Harbor for temporary repairs.

Underway again on 9 November, she moored at Pearl Harbor on 19 November. Following more repairs, she embarked 98 Marines for transportation to the U.S. and entered Los Angeles Harbor on 5 December. *Santee* completed the year undergoing repairs to battle damage and general overhaul.

1945

After post repair trials at San Diego, the escort carrier headed toward Hawaii on 31 January 1945, and arrived at Pearl Harbor on 8 February. On 7 March, she got underway for Ulithi in the Western Carolines, altering her course *en route* to assist in the search for the B-24 Liberator which had disappeared while carrying Army Lieutenant General Millard F. Harmon, before anchoring on 19 March. Two days later *Santee* steamed toward Leyte Gulf.

On 27 March, *Santee* departed the Philippines to provide air coverage for southern transport groups Dog and Easy *en route* to the objective area at Okinawa Gunto for the invasion of Okinawa Jima, the largest combined operation of the Pacific war.



An FM-2 flying over *Santee* in October 1944.

On Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, *Santee* provided direct support to the American ground forces landing on Okinawa and she continued this duty until 8 April, when she turned to aid British carriers in denying the use of Sakishima Gunto airfields to the enemy. For 42 consecutive dawns, *Santee's* aircraft winged over target sectors in the East China Sea, with daily returns to Okinawa itself for routine ground support. On 16 June, *Santee* launched a fighter bomber mission against specified targets on Kyūshū, Japan.

Pulling out of the Okinawa area that day, *Santee* reached Leyte Gulf on 19 June, where minor repairs were made. Out again on 1 July, she operated west of Okinawa from 5–14 July, covering minesweeping operations. On 7 July, a tail hook broke on a landing aircraft, allowing it to clear all barriers, crash among parked planes, and cause a fire. Four fighters and two torpedo bombers were jettisoned, six torpedo bombers were rendered non-flyable duds, and one of the pilots of the parked aircraft was killed.

Santee was detached from the task unit on 15 July and proceeded to Guam, arriving at Apra Harbor four days later. Following flight deck repairs and general upkeep, the escort carrier got underway on 5 August for Saipan, engaging in carrier aircraft training for squadrons flown from that island *en route*. Anchoring in Saipan Harbor on 9 August, the CVE got underway for the Philippines on 13 August. *Santee* received word of the cessation of the hostilities against Japan on 15 August and anchored in San Pedro Bay, Leyte, two days later.

On 4 September, while *en route* to Korea to support occupation forces there, *Santee* was ordered to northern Formosa to evacuate ex-prisoners of war. On 5 September, the escort carrier received 155 officers and men of the British and Indian Armies from destroyer escort *Kretchmer*. These soldiers had been captured by the Japanese in Malaya in 1942. They were given medical aid and berthed on the hangar deck. The next day, *Santee* picked up additional men from *Finch* and *Brister*, making a total of 322 officers and men. They included 30 American Army and Navy officers and men who had been taken on Bataan and Corregidor, and 10 officers and men from the Dutch Army and Merchant Marine, captured in Java. On 9 September, *Santee* disembarked the 477 evacuees at Manila Bay.

Five days later, *Santee* stood out of Manila Bay and steamed for Okinawa, anchoring at Buckner Bay on 19 September. Underway again the next day, *Santee* reached Wakanoura Wan, Honshū, Japan, on 22 September. From 24–26 September, *Santee* steamed along the coast, providing air coverage for occupation forces landing at Wakayama.

Post-war

Santee departed Wakanoura Wan on 3 October, leaving her formation on 6 October to search for a missing PBM Mariner flying boat carrying Rear Admiral William D. Sample, the ship's first commanding officer after her conversion to an escort carrier.

On 20 October, *Santee* got underway for Okinawa, arriving two days later at Buckner Bay. On 23 October, *Santee* got underway for Pearl Harbor, disembarking 375 passengers there on 4 November. The next day, *Santee* continued her role in "Operation Magic Carpet" by embarking 18 Marines bound for the west coast.

Anchoring at San Diego on 11 November, *Santee* remained there until 26 November, when she got underway for Guam on additional "Magic Carpet" duty.

On 27 February 1946, *Santee* departed San Diego and arrived at Boston Harbor on 25 March, via the Panama Canal. The CVE was placed in reserve on 21 October. *Santee* was reclassified on 12 June 1955 as an escort helicopter aircraft carrier, **CVHE-29**, and struck from the Naval Vessel Register on 1 March 1959. On 5 December, she was sold to the Master Metals Company for scrap.

Awards

Santee received nine battle stars and the Presidential Unit Citation for her World War II service.

Notes

- ↑ Friedman 1983 p. 407

References

- Friedman, Norman (1983). *U.S. Aircraft Carriers*. Naval Institute Press. ISBN 0-87021-739-9.
- This article incorporates text from the public domain Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. The entry can be found here (<http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/s5/santee-ii.htm>)*.

External links

- navsource.org: USS *Santee* (<http://www.navsource.org/archives/03/029.htm>)
- hazegray.org: USS *Santee* (<http://www.hazegray.org/danfs/auxil/ao29.txt>)
- <http://www.t2tanker.org>

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=USS_Santee_(CVE-29)&oldid=542763717"

Categories: Type T3-S2-A tankers | Ships built in Pennsylvania | 1939 ships

Merchant ships of the United States | Cimarron-class oilers (1939)

World War II auxiliary ships of the United States | World War II tankers of the United States

Sangamon-class escort carriers | World War II escort aircraft carriers of the United States

Ships damaged by kamikaze attack

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TARDON WHEN SHIP CROSSED THE EQUATOR

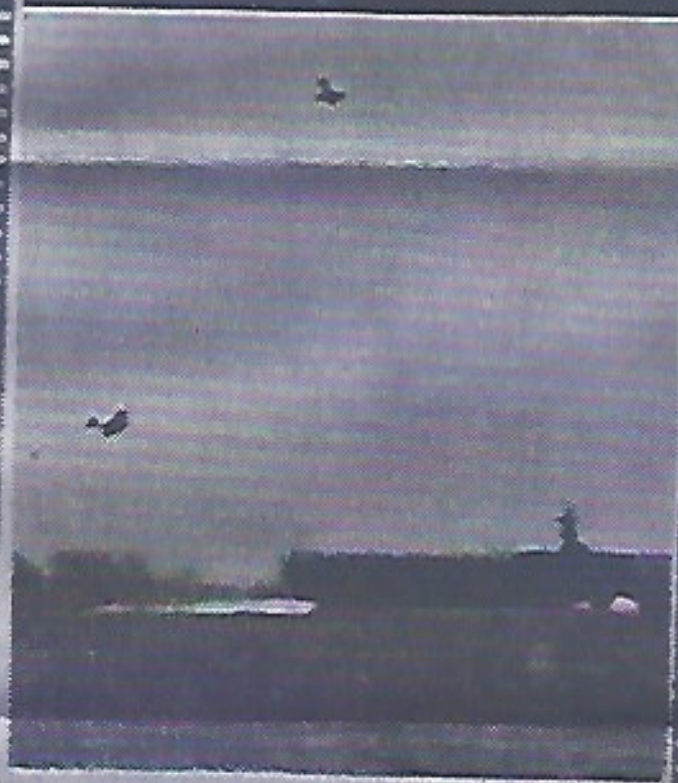


TAKEH WHEN SHIP C HOES ON THE EQUATOR

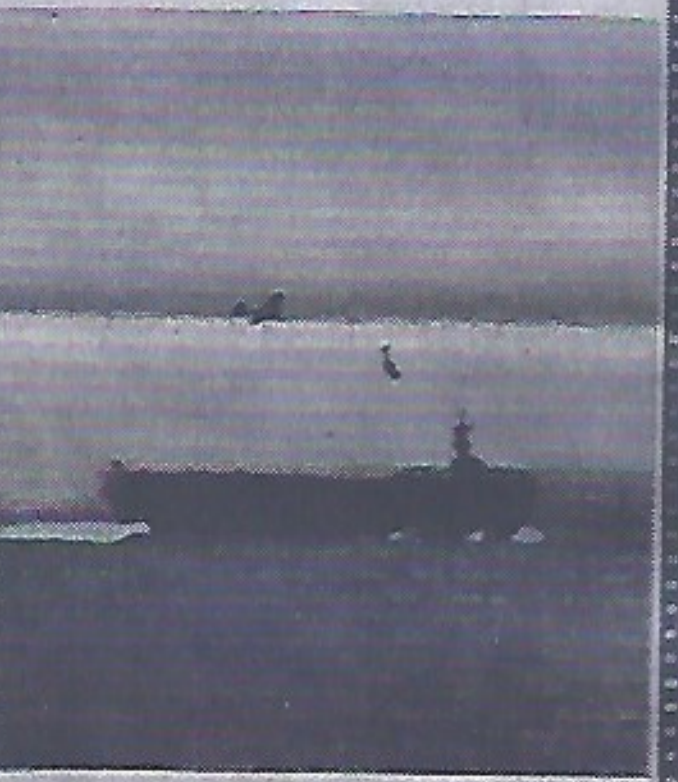




Jap Suicide Plane Dives on Carrier



1. This is the beginning of the story of a kamikaze which died a suicide — and of a gallant escort carrier which lived on. The kamikaze (right) streaks toward the carrier, while a United States plane (left) comes in to land . . .



2. The U. S. plane (left), which is about to

Visit Home Thrills Sailor Who Shared In African Invasion

The thrill of participating in the original landing off Morocco in the African invasion was nothing compared with coming home on leave in the mind of 23 year old Kenneth Belke, storekeeper second class in the navy.

Here on a visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Belke of 2718 Q Street his first since the attack on Pearl Harbor, Belke declares it is "the most exciting thing I've done since the war started."

Attached to an American task force in the Atlantic the last 18 months, Belke witnessed the African invasion from his ship.

Two Service Bars

He wears a service bar for his part in the African campaign, and another for his service in the American theater of war.

He has suffered a single injury since enlisting in the navy in October, 1941, and that was the result of a freak accident.

"One of our ships was firing and the shell exploded as it passed over our ship," he said. "A piece of shrapnel hit my left foot. I felt something, but it didn't start hurting for a half hour. When it did, it was like a knife twisting around."

Belke spent three and one half weeks in sick bay before he was able to get around on crutches. He was the only casualty.

Life aboard ship was characterized as uneventful by Belke except, of course, during an engagement. Then, he says, "what scares you most is waiting for it to happen, knowing it's coming and having to wait five or ten minutes for it. When it does happen you're too busy to care."

Belke's routine duties include work in the pay office.

Here During Hawaiian Attack

The youth last visited Sacramento the day before the Pearl Harbor



Kenneth Belke
See Photo

attack, arriving home on a 10 day leave which was canceled the day. Now, he declares "Sacramento looks beautiful after 18 months."

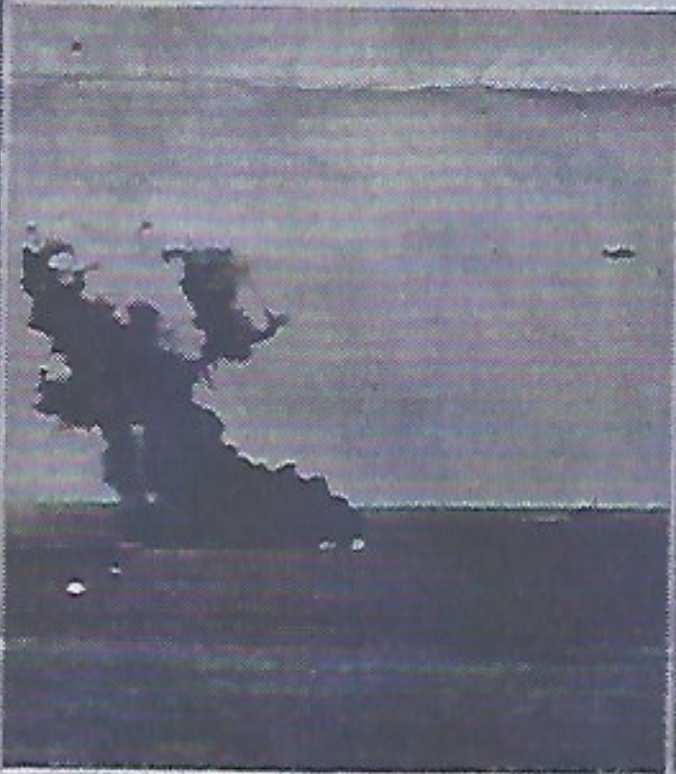
A 1937 graduate of the Christian Brothers School, Belke was attending the Sacramento Junior College at the time of his enlistment. Brother, Don, 18, has passed test for the merchant marine. Other brother, Louis, is employed in the identification bureau of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D. C. His father is a city fireman.

Kenneth and his brother, former Sacramento Bee boys.

2. The U. S. plane (left), which is about to land on the carrier, the USS Suwannee, has seen the Jap and veers off. The kamikaze continues its dive on the carrier, hoping to blast it out of the action off Leyte . . . and sink it . . .



3. The Suwannee has been hit and flames are spreading on its deck. One of its own planes (right of flames) is still going away from the flaming ship, part of a covering force in invasion of the Philippines. Fight to live begins . . .



4. Smoke billows, for the kamikaze scored a direct hit. But the Suwannee, which had been picking up returning fighters, battled on, and lived. It's back in action again, after repairs, to challenge other kamikazes. U. S. Navy pictures.



SHIP WAS HIT NORM HIS

nd Tribune, Friday, April 6, 1945

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A dense smoke cloud rises from the bow of the U.S. escort carrier Suwannee after the vessel had been hit by Japanese bombers in the battle for Leyte Gulf last October 25. The

vessel suffered three hits before she headed for the Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton, Wash., for repairs. She has since returned to action.—A.P. Wirephoto from Navy.

Petty Officer Belke Is Home From South Pacific War Theater

Sacramento.—Kenneth J. Belke, Petty Officer 1/c in the U. S. Navy, is spending a 30 day leave at his home in Sacramento, after 20 months' service in the South Pacific. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis L. Belke of this city.

Before going to the Pacific he saw service in the European war zone, and took part in the invasion of North Africa. He has been assigned to duty on an aircraft carrier.

Young Belke attended St. Francis School and was graduated from the Christian Brothers' School. He was attending the Sacramento junior college when he enlisted in the navy two months before Pearl Harbor.

His brother, Donald Belke, Petty Officer 1/c, is serving in the Pacific with the Fleet. He enlisted in the navy just before his graduation from the Christian Brothers' School in this city, and was assigned to duty last February.

The brothers at one time were within the same battle zone, but did not meet. Their father is an engineer in the Sacramento City Fire Department.

Sacramento Beautiful, Declares Sailor Home After 18 Months

WEARING a service bar for taking part in the African campaign, and another for his service in the American theater of war, Kenneth Belke 23, storekeeper second class in the navy, is home for the first time since the attack on Pearl Harbor.

"Sacramento looks beautiful after 18 months," Belke declares. He is visiting with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Belke, 2718 Q street.

A ringside seat at the original landing off Morocco was afforded Belke. During an engagement he says, "what scares you most is waiting for it to happen, knowing it's coming and having to wait five or 10 minutes for it. When it does happen you're too busy to care." Otherwise, he says, life on ship-board is uneventful.

A single injury has been suffered by the youth since enlisting in the navy in October, 1941.

He described it as a freak accident. "One of our ships was firing and the shell exploded as it passed over our ship. A piece of shrapnel hit my left foot. I felt something, but it didn't start hurting for a half hour. When it did it was like a knife twisting around."

Belke has been attached to an American task force in the Atlantic for the last 13 months. He

last visited Sacramento the day before the Pearl Harbor attack. Before enlisting he attended Sacramento junior college and is a 1937 graduate of Christian Brothers school.

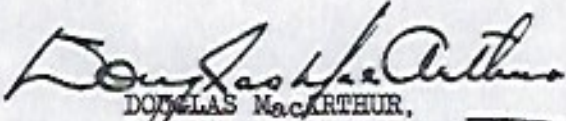
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SOUTHWEST PACIFIC AREA
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

To: The Commander in Chief, Japanese Military Forces
in the Philippines, Field Marshal, Count Terauchi:

The surrender of American and Filipino forces in previous campaigns in the Philippines was made in full reliance that prisoners of war would be accorded the dignity, honor and protection provided by the rules and customs of war.

Since then unimpeachable evidence has been furnished me of degradation and even of brutality to which these gallant soldiers have been subjected, in violation of the most sacred code of martial honor. For such violations the Imperial Japanese Government will of course be fully responsible to my Government.

As Commander in Chief of the Allied forces in the field, I shall in addition, during the course of the present campaign, hold the Japanese military authorities in the Philippines immediately liable for any harm which may result from failure to accord prisoners of war, civilian internees or civilian non-combatants the proper treatment and due protection to which they, of right, are entitled.


DOUGLAS MacARTHUR,
General, U.S. Army,
Commander in Chief.

**Accountant Wins
State Certification**

Kenneth J. Belke of 1808 Venus Drive is one of 49 Californians who have been named certified public accountants based on results of a recent two and half day examination. The state board of accountancy made the announcement.

Dear Bill,

BEING A SUPERB (ARTIST?) FOR GOODBYE
YOUR



First down play

Ambling Art Solis, lightweight Lancer halfback, is shown scampering for a first down in the fourth quarter Saturday as Cordova's varsity scored a 7-6 win over South Tahoe. Steve Woods, (No. 44), Viking senior,

made the stop on Solis, as Gene Sticca makes the swing to try to block for the ball carrier.

(SSN Staff photo by Ron Sathre)

AT LEAST MY PICTURE DIDN'T APPEAR IN THE PAPERS, ONLY A STORY. WHO'S YOUR P.R. MAN? BY THE WAY, WHAT'S THAT IN YOUR MOUTH? AND SHORT SLEEVES YET! MY, MY!

VTR
Gina Scotland