

Norman (Bob) Geer—Kennebec Memories

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In the fall of 1961 myself and two friends reported from our Naval Reserve Unit in Connecticut to the Brooklyn Receiving Station for assignment to two years active duty.

During our one and one-half years in the Reserves we had been to boot camp together, and I had taken a two weeks cruise on a destroyer which sailed from Norfolk to Baltimore. It took about two weeks to receive our assignments: My friends were assigned to an aircraft carrier whose name I can't recall, and I was assigned to the Kennebec.

The Kennebec had recently been brought out of the "mothball fleet" in New Jersey because of the Berlin crisis, and was docked in another section of Brooklyn called Red Hook. She had to be retrofitted and completely supplied, so there was much work to be done. One of my first memories is carrying my mattress from a truck in the pier up an icy gangway to my rack in the aft berthing compartment. It was a cold winter, but at times it was cozy sleeping next to the Boiler Room. At other times, and later in San Francisco, there were open portholes with hoses running through them. During those nights everyone slept fully clothed. Conversely, it got so hot during our West Pac Cruise that I would take a blanket, and look for a place to sleep topside (preferably under a ship's boat).

Norman (Bob) Geer-SK3
1961-1963