

from USS Princeton's System, June, 1956

Air Group News

The first of June was a day of birth and of passing away for the Princeton's Air Group. On that date VS-20 ceased to exist, and HS-6 was born. The change was one in name only, the personnel involved simply turning their hats around and getting back to work.

The commissioning of HS-2, Detachment November, the Princeton's helicopter ASW team, as Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Six was unique in that it marked the first time a squadron had been commissioned while embarked aboard a ship operating at sea. All hands who could be spared from watch were turned out to attend the commissioning ceremony held on the hangar deck. Lieutenant Commander Dougal D. MacKay, USN, formerly Officer-in-Charge of Detachment November, assumed command of the new squadron and dedicated it to the principles and objectives of the former Commanding Officer of HS-2, the late Commander Joseph S. Allen, USN, and to the memory of another HS-2 pilot, the late Lieutenant Commander John R. Widmer, USNR. Both pilots lost their lives in separate helicopter crashes in the U.S. during the past two months while engaged in anti-submarine training exercises. Before reading his orders, Lieutenant Commander MacKay commented on the increased recognition the helicopter is now receiving as a weapon in anti-submarine warfare.

Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 20 passed from the scene on the same day without ceremony. Its pilots and crew members were merged with VS-21 to form one large cohesive unit, with the result that the Princeton now has two full-fledged squadrons, one S2F and one helicopter. On 6 June, Commander L. J. Carr, USN, formerly Commanding Officer of VS-20, relieved Commander A. H. Wellman, USN, as CO of newly enlarged VS-21, and became Senior Squadron Commander. The change-of-command ceremony took place on the hangar deck and was attended by squadron personnel.

The commissioning of HS-6 brings to four the number of helicopter ASW squadrons in the Pacific Fleet. The other three -- HS-2, HS-4 and HS-8 -- are presently training on the West Coast.

The new squadron now operates ten HO4S-3 helicopters but anticipates the as-



LCDR MACKAY ASSUMES COMMAND OF HS-6

signment of the newer and more potent HSS-1 when it returns to its base at Ream Field in August.



"BIRTHDAY" CAKE