



Sea Stories

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Flying boat open sea rescue of USS Watchman sailor

At the Colorado reunion MMA member, Bob Noble related an open sea medical evacuation involving a YAGR ship off Seattle .He could not recall the ship or the crew members name. I asked and he volunteered to check his records and forward the details. Unfortunately he died (he was 96) before he could find the information. However his daughter, Carla Noble, going through his belongings came across my business card with a note on the back about the incident. She subsequently found the newspaper article about the operation and graciously forwarded it.

The crewman that was evacuated was Signalman Petty Officer 2 (SM2) R.L.Cypher from the USS watchman AGR-16
YAGRS Association has no record that Petty Officer Cypher was ever located or was member of the group.

9-2-59



VP-50 crew makes open sea evacuation

An emergency call was received by Navy Operations about 2 p.m. Wednesday from the USS Watchman, a Navy ship several hundred miles at sea.

Petty Officer 2nd class R. L. Cypher from Vallejo, California was stricken with what was believed to be appendicitis and it was considered advisable that he be transferred ashore to more adequate medical facilities.

Within an hour a Navy P5M Marlin from Patrol Squadron 50 based at Whidbey Island was winging its way to the ship to accomplish the transfer.

The pilot, LCDR R. E. Noble, reported the open sea landing uneventful despite heavy swells that were running in the area. Pilot Noble stated he was extremely proud of his Marlin and her crew.

Transfer of Cypher from ship to plane was completed in jlg time and about 9 p.m. they were landing back at Whidbey Sea Drome.

Cypher was transferred to the Whidbey Island Naval Hospital where his condition was diagnosed as not critical. He will remain there for observation for a brief period before returning to duty aboard his ship.

CREW OF THE P5M "MARLIN" flying boat that evacuated a critically ill sailor from a patrol craft off the Washington coast the night of Sept. 2 are: (left to right, back row) AD1 C. R. Hart, AO3 E. H. Earland, LTJG D. H. McDonald, LCDR R. E. Noble, the plane commander; LT D.

P. Kirchner. (Front row) AE1 R. D. Brown, ADC J. N. Bostick, and AT3 A. E. Britton. All of the crew members are from Whidbey Island Naval Air Station, Oak Harbor. The Marlin made an open sea landing to bring in the sick man.