

FROM THE USS MIDWAY

October of last year I made a contact with the radio club on the USS Midway in San Diego working the ship station NI6IW. Ok so it was when they were using DSTAR on 29A and not real radio but yet it was fun. I got an exchange QSL card from them and along with it were tickets for the museum. I decided to drive down there and not only see the ship but try to get in the radio room. Just so happens that on May 13th they were having one of their special event stations operating.

What an opportunity!!! 300 miles, 5+ hours and I would be down there from Nipomo. I left here in the morning, got to San Diego in the afternoon and checked into my motel. Saturday morning I headed to the flat top parked at the wharf and went up the gang plank.

I know you would like to have seen me going down the plank while out to sea....hi hi.....

What a fantastic trip. That boat is much bigger than you can imagine. I won't go into details as you can look up the info on the net. It was actually a floating city while in service between 1945-1992 when it was retired.

While in line at the parking lot I turned on my ICOM 7100 and tuned to 7.250 the 40m frequency they would be working. I heard the CQ CQ call and connected right up. The radio op said I had a great signal and I told him to look out the window and we could have an eye ball as I was looking at the ship. He thought that was pretty funny for sure.

After looking around the ship for a while I made my way down to the radio room. The three guys there were working stations on different bands/modes and pretty busy. I got the attention of one of them and said I had just made a contact with the station and wanted to have an eyeball. It turned out to be KK6BGI that I had talked to. He invited me

into the shack and we started to have a chat but the other two guys turned around and gave the "lips shut" motion as they were trying to do business. Hi Hi. George and I went into the hall way where there were quite a few other hams there also. George says follow me and he started taking me on a "private" tour of sorts to places that are open to the public but a bit of a challenge to get to. We spent about 20 minutes going through some neat places on the ship while I took a lot of pictures and in awe of everything. Finally George said he needed to get back to the shack and do his duties so we shook hands, exchanged pleasantries and parted ways.

I continued on looking at pretty much everything I could before running out steam going up and down stairs and wearing out my feet. After close to three hours I made my back down to the hanger deck, ended up seeing George again while he was on a break (they have a number of guys there that take turns) picked up the pictures they made from the one they take when you first come on board then headed down the ramp to the parking lot.

A fantastic experience for sure and worth every minute of it. I would recommend to anyone if you ever have the chance to take the tour of the ship. Be ready for lots of traffic, people and some money for all of it but you only live once.