

# The Keweenaw

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## Enterprise memorial plaque travels to historical reunion

by Mabel Temby

In 1959 the Kewaunee Enterprise was one of 245 newspapers throughout the country that received a "Memorial Paperweight" of the U.S.S. ENTERPRISE. The paperweight reads - "USS ENTERPRISE (CVA6) May 12, 1938 to October 2, 1956. The attached aluminum is from an elevator that raised planes to the flight deck of the famous carrier to participate in thousands of history-making flights. ENTERPRISE was in all major carrier action in World War II."

The carrier was built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Newport

News, Virginia. The firm also built the U.S.S. ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)65), the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

The idea of the paperweight originated with Earl Doucette of The Enterprise, Lisbon Falls, Maine. It started when Doucette read an editorial titled, "The End of the ENTERPRISE" and remarked to one of his fellow editors, "Here it says we're dead."

The discussion was followed with the question of perhaps tying the name of the paper and the carrier together and a letter was sent to the Navy Information Officer at the Pentagon outlining the idea of a small memorial for the



THE ENTERPRISE PAPERWEIGHT that is on its way to California after some 20 years on Mabel's desk.

-photo by Linda Jeanquart

# Kewaunee Enterprise

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## ENTERPRISE.

Several months passed and then came a telephone call to the paper from Rear Admiral C.C. Kirkpatrick, Chief of Naval Information, thanking them for sending him the idea and saying it was just what the Navy wanted to do to memorialize the famous carrier. The Information Office contacted the Supervisor of Shipbuilding at Newport News, who in turn passed the idea to the Company.

The next action was to develop a practical way to execute the idea. The first suggestion was to use steel from the ENTERPRISE in the shape of a small easel. This plan was discarded as being too heavy and costly. The second suggestion was to use small blocks of teakwood from the carrier's flight deck in the form of a paperweight with an appropriate plate attached. Everyone liked this idea and a telephone call to the Lipsett Company, who were scrapping the ENTERPRISE in Bayonne, New Jersey, revealed that the teakwood was available and they would be happy to furnish any amount needed. However, when a truck called in New Jersey to pick up the teak for shipment to Newport News, few pieces could be found that were large enough for the purpose. Someone remembered that the carrier had an aluminum elevator. This material would be light and could easily be attached to a block of wood with a suitable metal photo plate on top. Another call was made to the Lipsett people and the aluminum was obtained and shipped to Newport News.

There the attractive memorial paperweight was built, and every paper named the Enterprise received one. President W. E. Blewett, Jr., in forwarding the paperweight wrote, "The famous Aircraft Carrier ENTERPRISE, which

appeared in so many news items in your paper during World War II, is now being scrapped. We were able to obtain some of the aluminum from an elevator of this great vessel and since your newspaper has the name of this historic ship in its title, we thought you might like the enclosed souvenir. A booklet of the history of this great vessel is also enclosed.

"We naturally take pride in the fact that we built this great fighting ship and we are happy that the famous name will continue active in the United States Navy with the world's first nuclear aircraft carrier which is to be launched next year."

This week we received a letter from Bud Owens, Historian of the USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN/CYN-65) Association, 243 Midtown Plaza, Suite 173, Rochester, New York, advising us that an ENTERPRISE Collection is being displayed at their annual reunion to be held in Oakland, California October 5-9, 1988 and they would like to have us donate our paperweight to that reunion.

A tour of the ship is planned at that time, and anyone wanting more information may get in touch with Owens.

The paperweight has been on my desk, a cherished possession, since 1959. Because of the ship's name, we had a particular interest in the USS ENTERPRISE and read every word about her during World War II. And we grieved when she was scrapped.

I felt as though I were parting from a friend as I carefully wrapped and returned the souvenir of the USS ENTERPRISE. Now it becomes part of history.

