



# In Search of El dorado

A daily journal of my travels and adventures in my.....Search for Eldorado

Hello to Family & Friends

Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup> 2021 Day 15



I was able to find a free parking spot just a block away from the USS Lexington, packed a snack and a bottle of water, and walked on over.

This truly is a museum, not just a tour of an aircraft carrier as the USS Midway is. The Lexington saw action in WWII and I tried to keep most of my photos centered on her history. But there are displays for several other Navy vessels throughout the ship. I could have taken photos of each of the 440 models on display, along with their info placards; or the memorials to the thousands of lost sailors; or tributes to twenty or so other ships; but I mostly stuck to the Lexington or what I found interesting.

They had a great 3D movie in a huge on-board theater about RIMPAC, the world's largest international maritime warfare exercise, this one from around 2012. The technology they showed in the ships, subs and planes was stunning, and it was eight years old. I can't even imagine what that technology is like today.



These items were in the Lexington Plaza at the bottom of the walkway.



## MARK 37 TORPEDO (MOD. 2)

Beginning in the 1950s, the Mark 37 was the *standard torpedo launched from all U.S. Submarines*. It was an excellent *submarine weapon until new submarine speeds reached over 20 knots and the diving depths began to exceed 1,000 ft*. The probability of sinking or seriously damaging a submarine capable of speeds over 20 knots with this torpedo is *incredibly low (unofficial figures give a 10% success rate for the Mark 37)*. To challenge the threat of newer and faster submarines, the U.S. navy developed new torpedoes and eventually retired the Mark 37 in the 1970s.

## A-4B SKYHAWK



*At the end of World War II, Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz ordered the formation of a flight demonstration team to showcase naval aviation. The team performed its first flight demonstration less than a year later, June 1946.*

*In 1950, the Korean Conflict put a great demand on naval aviation. The Navy responded by reassigning the Blue Angels to the aircraft carrier USS Princeton (CV-37), where the Blue Angels became the nucleus of the Fighter Squadron 191 (VF-191).*

*The Blue Angels reorganized in 1951 and reported to NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. The team remained in Corpus Christi until the winter of 1954.*



In December of 1974, the Blue Angels reorganized as the U. S. Navy flight Demonstration Squadron with CDR. Tony Less, as the commanding officer and flight leader. The squadron added support officers and redefined its mission to support Navy recruiting. The Blue angels transitioned to a new aircraft in 1974, the McDonnell Douglas A-4F Skyhawk II, a small but very nimble attack aircraft that had been the backbone of the Navy's Vietnam efforts. The Skyhawk debuted on May 18 1974, during an airshow at Offutt AFB, Nebraska.

## KAMIKAZE "DIVINE WIND"

Kamikaze, meaning "divine wind," was an echo from Japan's legendary past. It was the name of a wind god who was said to have sent a typhoon that repulsed a Mongol invasion fleet heading for Japan in the year 1281. Nearly seven centuries later, the divine wind again became the curse of an invading Armada.

What the U.S. Navy did not know was that Japan had no other choice in weapons or tactics. The air battles from the Coral Sea to the Marianas had stripped the nation of its best pilots, and American submarines had sunk so many oil tankers that training flights had been severely curtailed. Many student pilots had no time to learn conventional bombing and torpedo tactics.

Faced with these grim realities, Admiral Takhiro Onishi, the tactician who more than three years earlier had favorably assessed the idea of attacking Pearl Harbor, conceived the extreme measure of using navy planes to crash dive into enemy ships. The result was a Kamikaze Corps of young volunteers, glad to have the opportunity to serve in so special a role. The Japanese base their lives on obedience to Emperor and Nation.

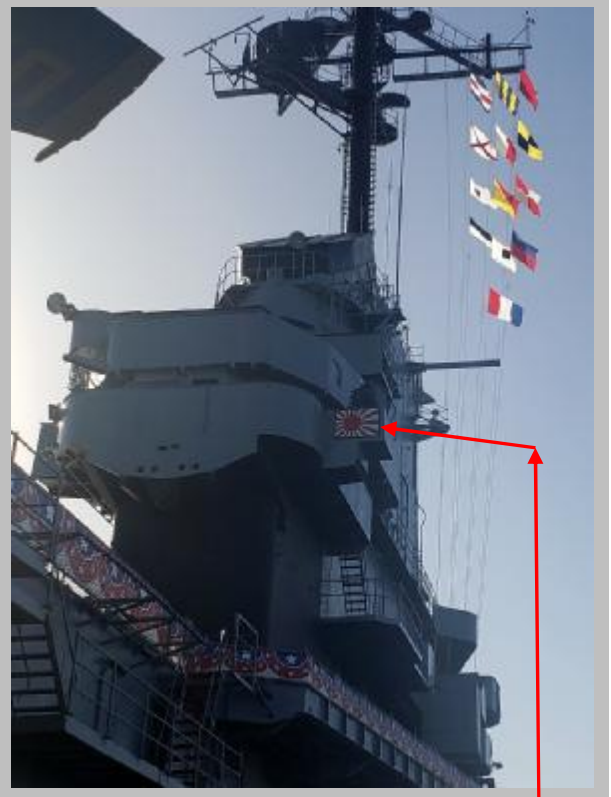
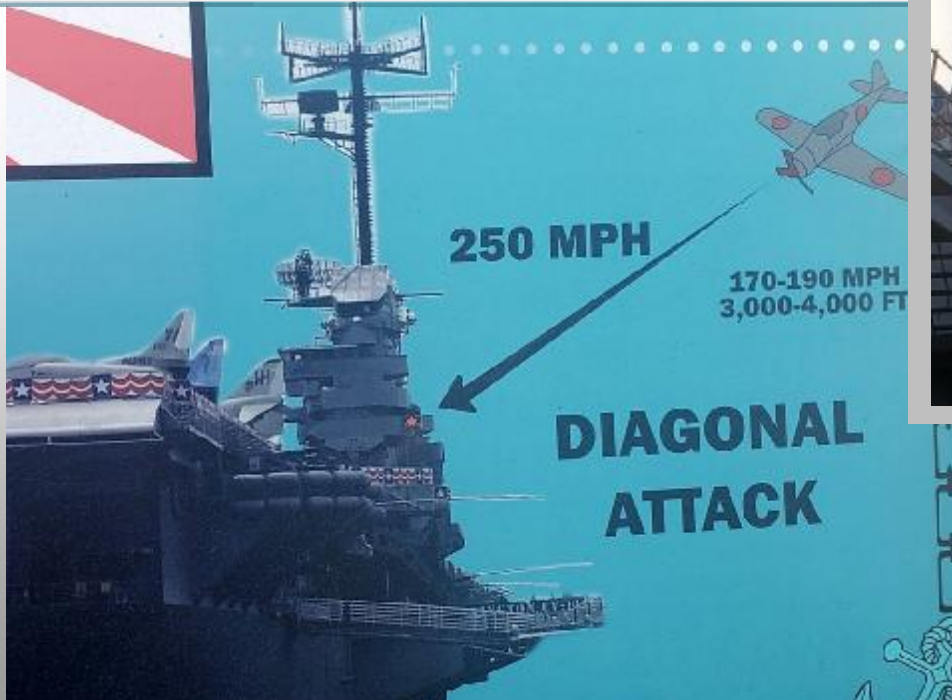
On the other hand, they wish for the best place in death according to Bushido, the ancient warrior code. One Kamikaze pilot had a simpler explanation of his role. "I am nothing," he wrote on the eve of his sacrifice, "but a particle of iron attracted by a magnet - the American Aircraft Carrier."



# RISING SUN THE FLAG AND THE MEANING



On the aft side of the island superstructure you see a Japanese Rising Sun flag with a black border. This flag indicates the exact location where, on 5 November 1944, a Japanese Kamikaze plane, code name Zeke, crashed into USS LEXINGTON killing 49 crew and injuring 132.



Just in case you can't find it

## TARAWA TO TOKYO

FR 82

SEPTEMBER 1943 to SEPTEMBER 1945



Total Planes Shot Down 387

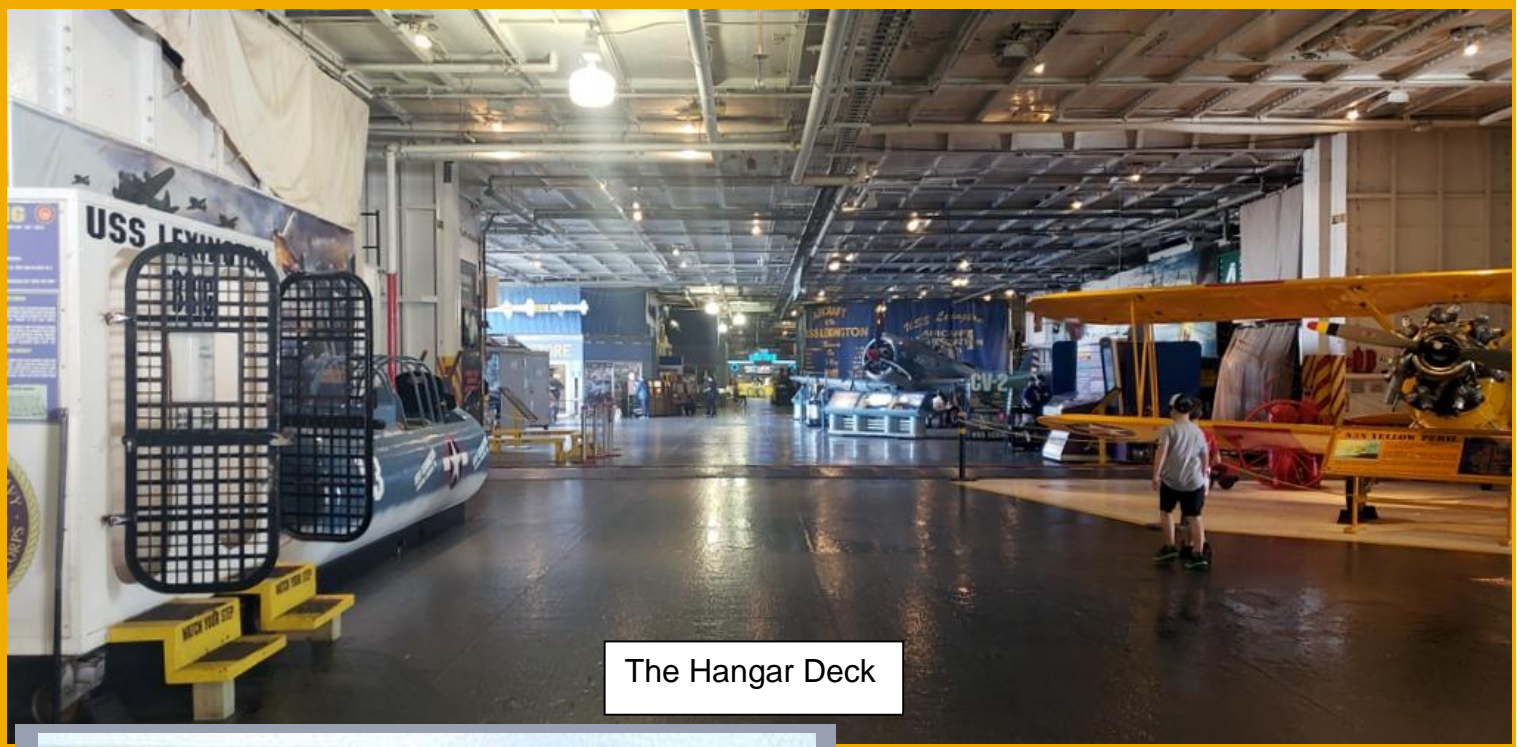


Total Planes Destroyed ON THE Ground 635

Naval Vessels Sunk or Damaged 588,000 TONS

Merchant Shipping Sunk or Damaged 497,000 GROSS TONS



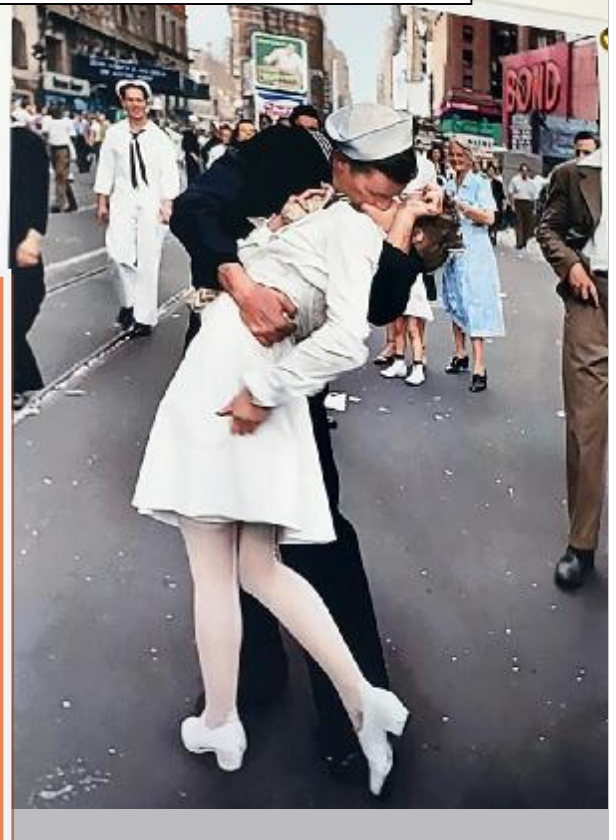


The Hangar Deck



There were about ten photos on the wall, these are the ones I found most interesting.

Remember the large statue of the scene below last year in San Diego?









# USS LEXINGTON

In 1941, Pearl Harbor was the base of the *USS Lexington CV-2*, one of 3 aircraft carriers assigned to the Pacific Fleet. On December 5, *Lexington CV-2* left Pearl Harbor carrying aircraft and supplies to reinforce troops at Midway Island. She was at sea on the 7th, and did not return until December 18, 1941. In May 1942, *CV-2* was lost in the Battle of the Coral Sea, to be replaced by the present *USS Lexington CV-16* in 1943.

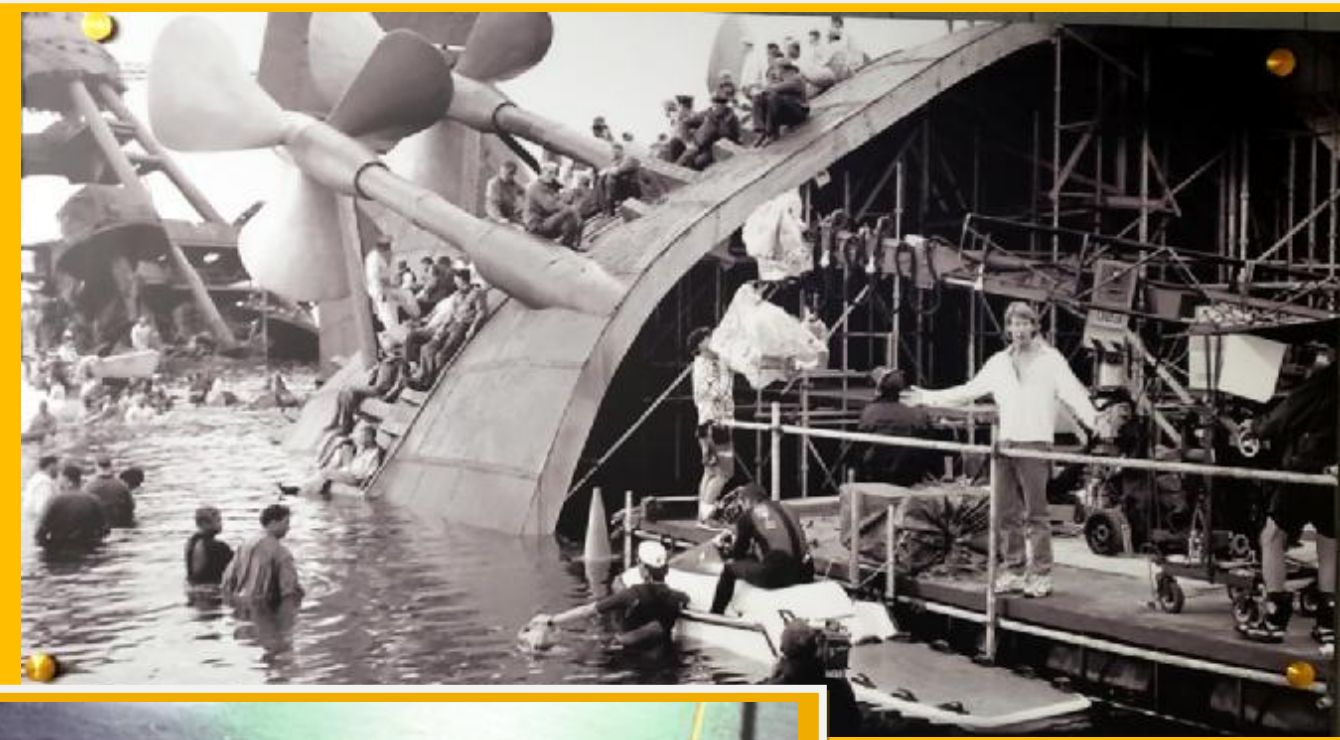


Each of those links weighs in at 130 pounds. That's my size twelve for a frame of reference.





**Michael Bay, pictured on the right, directed the movie *Pearl Harbor*. The USS LEXINGTON (CV-16) was used for most action scenes. This picture depicts Bay directing the filming of the capsized USS OKLAHOMA (BB-37). Although a Disney film, Bay wanted an R rating to graphically portray the horrors of war and was not interested in marketing to a younger demographic. Because of this, budget fights ensued throughout the planning of the film. The film was finally released in 2001 with a (PG-13) rating.**



A B-25 launches from the flight deck of *Lexington* during the filming of the movie *Pearl Harbor*.

**USS ARIZONA (BB-39) on the East River, New York City circa 1916 shortly after her commissioning. Naval tradition dictates that a ship is commissioned by breaking a bottle of champagne on her hull. Due to prohibition sentiment of the time, she was commissioned using water instead of champagne. Till this day, some believe she was doomed from the start.**



# MACHINE SHOP



Using the Shop's equipment, the MR's were able to make machine repairs or fabricate new parts to repair machinery. The machine shop is in operating condition and is currently used to perform repairs for the USS LEXINGTON Museum

# VEGETABLE AND BUTCHER SHOP





## Hobart Model 6030 Commercial Potato Peeler

No more bucket and a paring knife I guess.



# DENTAL CLINIC

They had another display with a victim in a chair and the dentist holding a drill. As you walked by the sound of the drill whirred louder for a few seconds and then faded away and you could hear the victim groaning, aaaahhh, aaaHHH, AAAHHH. I literally laughed out loud at that one.





**HOW MANY SAILORS DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE A SALAD?  
IT MUST BE A TRAINING DAY**



They had several areas where a short film was shown, the area paying tribute to Pearl Harbor was quite good. This one told the story of the schooners that helped the Texas Republic win independence in 1836.

"The Texas Navy...it's no exaggeration to say that without it there would probably have been no Lone Star Republic and possibly the state of Texas would still be a part of Mexico".

**Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. 1936**

"The loss of Texas will inevitably result in the loss of New Mexico and the Californias. Little by little our territory will be absorbed . . ."

Jose Maria Tornel y Mendivil  
SANTA ANNA'S

**SECRETARY OF WAR**

## **AN "ANYMOUSE" REPORT**

**NAVY FOLKLORE TELLS OF A SAILOR WHO WANTED TO REPORT A SERIOUS SAFETY ISSUE BUT WAS AFRAID TO GO HIGHER UP "THE FOOD CHAIN" SO HE DROPPED A NOTE IN A MAIL BIN AND SIGNED IT "ANYMOUSE" AS HE WAS UNABLE TO SPELL ANONYMOUS. THROUGHOUT THE SHIP YOU WILL SEE PLACES TO DROP AN "ANYMOUSE" REPORT.**





From the deck to the top of the radio mast is about 90-100 feet - The height of a ten story building.



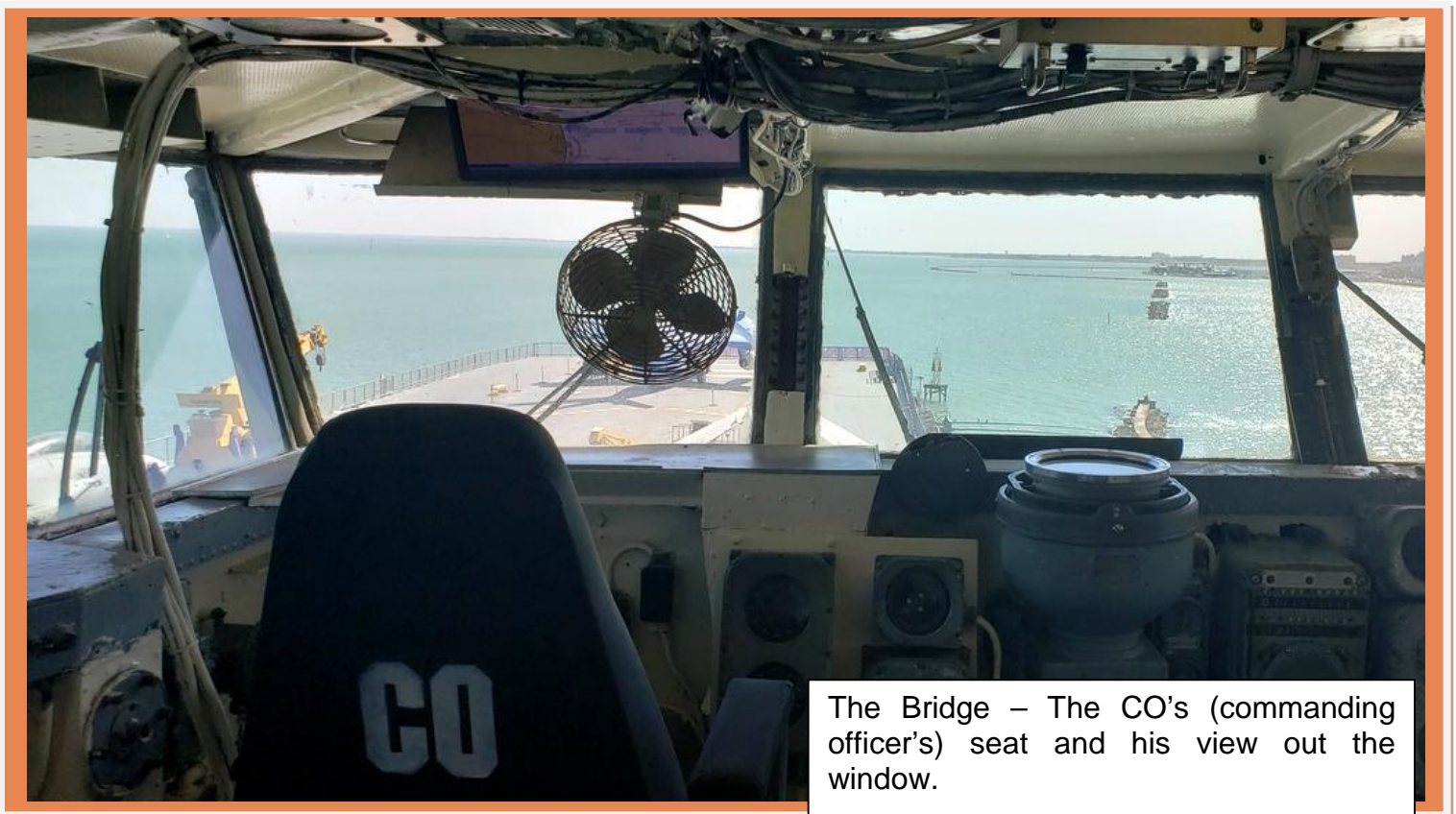


The F-14A Tomcat above, BUNO 160164, was used in the filming of the 1986 movie *Top Gun*, starring Tom Cruise, Kelly McGillis and Val Kilmer. *Top Gun* brought in positive publicity for Naval Aviation, and significant increases in Navy recruitment. The tactical paint scheme depicted on this aircraft is authentic for fleet aircraft, and also includes some markings specifically used just for the movie. Originally called the United States Navy Fighter Weapons School, TOP GUN was founded in 1969 at NAS, Miramar, CA, after a study determined that Naval Aviators needed better air combat maneuvering training. In 1996 TOP GUN was absorbed into the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center (NSAWC) at NAS Fallon, NV. TOP GUN classes last twelve weeks.

If you saw the film, where Maverick and Goose buzz the control tower and the air director spills coffee on himself, this is the actual jet that was used in that scene.



Unfortunately, several of the info boards on the flight deck were in this or a similar unreadable condition.



The Bridge – The CO's (commanding officer's) seat and his view out the window.



# LIFE RAFTS



**IN 1943 THE US DEVELOPED A Balsa wood life raft that would not sink, irrespective of the number of holes (from enemy fire) in it. These balsa life rafts were designed to hold five to ten men on a platform suspended on the inside or fifteen to twenty-five hanging lines placed on the outsides. They were inexpensive, and during the war thousands were stored in any space possible on US warships and merchant ships. These life rafts were intended only for use during a short term before lifeboats or another ship in the convoy or group could bring them aboard.**

**These life rafts were built by Disney in 2000 to be used for the filming of the movie "Pearl Harbor." Parts of the movie were filmed on board the USS Lexington CV-16 Museum. For more information on the making of the movie "Pearl Harbor," please visit Tour Route 2.**

So what do you think? Not too bad right? I skipped A LOT. There was one display of a Tokyo newspaper with each article recreated in English, and each one about the size of a small cell phone. I took one glance and passed it by. I already mentioned the 440 ship and plane models. What you see above is from the four and a half hours I spent on the ship. I hope you enjoyed it. I enjoyed most of it.

I will mention one major difference between the Lexington and Midway tours – The Midway had ten times as many volunteers answering questions and giving demonstrations. There was one story teller today, and when I asked for help because the APP was not working, "ask her, she's been here longer." Her, "Let me check on that." She returned with another person who told me "let me ask someone who knows more about it." I never did get an answer, and I never did use the App.





Ah yes, The Art Museum. I was both right and wrong in my guess yesterday. Wrong because the steer to the right and a buffalo are the only western items on display; right, because I guess I just don't understand some people's idea of art.

Some of these I may have an opinion, most you won't want to hear my opinion.





I'll admit, this one made me do a double-take.



**CÉSAR MARTÍNEZ**  
American, b. 1944  
*Mona Lupe: The Epitome of Chicano Art, 1992*  
Acrylic on Canvas  
Museum Purchase Funded by the Corpus Christi Art Foundation  
1995.3



**MARY MCCLEARY**  
American, b. 1951  
*Immigrant, 2011*  
Collage on paper  
Gift of the Art Museum of South Texas 2011 Collectors Club  
2011.6

I do like this one, it has action and it's three dimensional. Hard to tell in the photos.







## JOEL SHAPIRO

American, b. 1948

Untitled, 1976

Charcoal on paper

Museum Purchase Funded by the Corpus Christi Art Foundation  
1978.3

Ah.....no comment. The same artist had two more hanging here.

The first was about 2x3 feet, a pencil outline of a stocking, and two postage stamps.

Second was a piece of cardboard, like the back of a tablet of paper but much larger, with a square and four triangles inside it. Baffled!!!! Do you think if I draw a circle with four squares inside that I might be able to sell it to this art museum?

Here is another one I *did* like. Very creative, in my average Joe opinion. It's about eight feet high

## DALE CHIHULY

American, b.1941

*Blue Cascade Cohn Chandelier, 1999*

Blown glass

Gift of Francine and Marc Cohn, St. Louis, MO  
2003.10.1-185







It was still too early to go back to my Sam's/Ashley parking spot for the night, and I didn't want to break out the grill over there. I also needed to cook the chicken breasts I bought a couple days ago before they go bad. So I fired it up, added a little Italian seasoning and paprika and I have dinner for the next week. The weather was perfect. Low humidity, 80 degrees, nice breeze.

Needless to say I only spent about 45 minutes at the art museum. I probably spent more time in their parking lot cooking chicken than I did inside.

Not much else going on today. I think the Aquarium and Science Museum are closed on Mondays, so I will see what I can find tomorrow to keep me busy.

Until next time.....