

THE BLUE

BONNET

U.S.S. HOUSTON

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1938 IN RETROSPECT

THE PRESIDENTIAL CRUISE

On the 16th of July, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, with his entourage, boarded the HOUSTON at San Diego, California, for a fishing cruise off the coast of Mexico and Central America, and the East Pacific Equatorial Islands. The occasion marked the third time that Mr. Roosevelt had honored the HOUSTON, with his presence on a cruise.

With the Galapagos Islands as the ultimate objective, stops were made for fishing in succession at Cerros Island, Magdalen Bay, Cape San Lucas, the Socceros Island, Clipperton Island and Tower Island. A week was spent in cruising among the Galapagos Island Group. In addition to fishing, several recreation and exploring parties were put ashore. Contact was made with the self-exiled German Wittmer family on the Island of St. Charles. A bundle of recent magazines, first aid supplies and other items were left on shore.

A King Neptune Party was held at which time more than 200 officers and crew were transformed from lowly Pollywogs to highly respect-

ful Shellbacks. A gala affair, this, with the unfortunate Pollywogs squeaming in terror and anguish, throughout the procedure. The succession of devices of torture were almost unlimited; the Steeks, Royal Coffin, Royal Bludgeons, Royal Prongs, Royal Milk, Royal Medicine, Royal Operation, Royal Hair-cut, and Royal Dip, were sufficiently barbarous in nature to assure a whole-hearted respect for King Neptune's Royal Court forever after. The President viewed the ceremony with manifested pleasure and regal aplomb, he being the Senior Shellback aboard.

On the eve of the ship's departure for the North, and the return to the United States, the quarter-deck was rigged for a smoker and social hour. Boxing, wrestling, instrumental and vocal music comprised the evenings entertainment.

Two days at Cocos Island, famed Pirate hideout, provided an opportunity for trips ashore and search for pirate gold. To date no one has claimed success in this objective. (Page 4)