



The E X E C

Commander Keith Low has come back to the sea after 15 years in the wild blue yonder.

Commissioned at the Coast Guard Academy in June 1943, the Eastwind's Exec immediately put in for flight training.

Three years later, after marrying his Westerly, R.I. high school sweetheart Jessie Mitchell, he was assigned to flight school. Prior to that, though, his three years of waiting were not spent in idleness.

With orders to the Attack Transport USS Leonard Wood out of Norfolk, Va., the XO saw action as an ensign in Saipan, the Philippines, Mariannas, Carolinas, Gilberts, and the Marshalls. He received a Navy unit commendation for his ship's outstanding achievements during those campaigns.

Holder of the Rhode Island state record for high hurdles, it was only natural that he would make good as a flyer. After completing flight school, he flew a host of aircraft ranging from the Grumman Goose, to PBY's, PBM's, and UF's.

"The PBY was an amazing airplane," recalls the Commander with a smile. "You took her off at 90, flew at 90, and landed at 90."

During the summers of 1956-57, Commander Low flew mapping missions in Alaska for the Coast and Geodetic Survey. Then, a change of pace, Helicopters. In 1951 he became a certificated helo pilot and has flown more rescue missions in them than he can remember.

Adept at golf and a cribbage devotee, the Commander does very little hurdling anymore except for an occasional short hop over a padeye at quarters.

He lives with his wife and two sons, Keith Jr., 14, and Robert, 9, in Marblehead, Mass.

Was he happy when he learned he was going to Antarctica? "Certainly," affirms Commander Low with a wry grin. "I've always wanted to go there."

