

Chapter XVIII

Leave it to Younger Men

April 8, 1961 – December 31, 1961

Sheffield had been fascinated by the prospect of space travel for many years. It was natural evolution of his love of flying. Ever since project Mercury, the first manned spaceflight program, had been announced in December of 1958, Sheffield had followed the latest developments.

When the Mercury Seven, as the first group of astronauts were called, were selected, Sheffield read their stories in Life Magazine, which portrayed them as patriotic and God fearing family men. They were selected from among five hundred applicants which was whittled down to one hundred ten candidates. The candidates could be no taller than five feet eleven inches and weigh no more than one hundred eighty pounds. They had to be under forty years old with a bachelor's degree or equivalent, fifteen hundred hours of flying time, and had to be qualified to fly jets. Of the final seven, three were naval aviators, three were air force, and one was a marine. Sheffield was surprised to learn that one of the Navy pilots, Alan Shepard, had actually been one of the test pilots who had participated in the tests of the angled deck concept. He was sure that he must have met him but couldn't recall his name. If he were twenty five years younger, Sheffield would have certainly applied, but he was content to leave it to younger men.

Beginning in August of 1959, there were seventeen unmanned test flights to develop launch vehicles, the launch escape system, the spacecraft, and the tracking network. Some of the launches were spectacular failures. In one, the rocket fell back onto the launch pad two seconds after lift off and exploded. Something was learned from each one, even if it ended in failure. One of the more published launches occurred in January 1961 when a chimpanzee named Ham was strapped into a space capsule and was launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida on a sixteen minute thirty nine second suborbital flight which splashed down in Atlantic Ocean four hundred twenty two miles downrange. All of this leading up to the first manned spaceflight.

Then on April 12th, Sheffield saw a report on the evening news in which the Soviet Union had again upstaged the United States, as they had with Sputnik, by sending Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin into space. The flight lasted just over an hour and made one orbit of the earth. The reporter said that there were mixed feelings in the United States due to fears of the potential military implications in the Cold War.

Then on the morning of Friday, May 5th, Sheffield got ready for work while the the television was tuned to the live coverage of the launch of Freedom 7, the first American manned space flight. Alan Shepard had entered the spacecraft at five fifteen a.m. in preparation for the seven twenty launch. Then at seven oh five, the countdown was put on hold to allow the cloud cover to clear off. After one hour, the count resumed, only to be put on hold again to restart a computer at the Goddard Spaceflight Center in Washington. By then Sheffield had to leave for work.

That evening, Sheffield came straight home to see what happened on the evening news, where he got a condensed version of the fifteen minute twenty two second flight. The launch actually took place at nine thirty four. Five minutes into the flight, the spacecraft reached a maximum altitude of one hundred fifteen miles, while one hundred five miles downrange from Cape Canaveral. At that altitude, the spacecraft was well above the sixty two mile mark that defines outer space, but didn't have the velocity to achieve earth orbit.

Fifteen seconds later, with the space capsule turned around, Shepard fired the retro rockets to slow his decent and began re-entry into the atmosphere two minutes later. At twenty thousand feet, the drogue parachute was deployed to slow and stabilize the decent. At ten thousand feet, the main parachute opened and five minutes and fifteen seconds later, the capsule splashed down about three hundred miles from the launch site.

A recovery helicopter arrived a few minutes later. The capsule was lifted partly out of the water in order to allow Shepard to exit the main hatch and climb into a sling hoist, and was lifted into the helicopter. Both the astronaut and the spacecraft were flown the USS Lake Champlain. The whole recovery process had taken only eleven minutes, from splashdown to arriving aboard the aircraft carrier.

Sheffield was amazed by the entire feat, calling it a major milestone in the history of flight. He looked forward with eagerness to what accomplishments the space program might have in store. Less than three weeks later, President Kennedy made a speech before a joint session of Congress. Although Sheffield didn't share the Presidents political philosophy, he applauded the direction laid out in this speech.

In the speech, Kennedy stated that the United States should set as a goal "landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth" by the end of the decade. Acknowledging that the Soviets had a head start in their space program, he urged the U.S. to work diligently to lead the achievements of space travel because "in many ways it may hold the key to our future on earth."

The space program was something that Sheffield would of loved to been a part of but he was content to be an armchair observer and let men much younger and much smarter than him set out into this vast new frontier. "Imagine that." Sheffield said. "A man on the moon by the end the decade. Maybe I'll live to see it after all."

The same day of the President's speech, school let out for the year. The following Tuesday was the annual Brason Memorial picnic and family reunion. As always it was held in the stand of trees in the pasture down by the river.

The following Saturday was Ramona's fifty eighth birthday. For once it was celebrated at home rather than while traveling someplace or another. That afternoon, the kids, except for Janet of course, and

the grandkids came over to celebrate. Later that afternoon they all attended Gean's baptism. She was supposed to have been baptized a month earlier but it had to be postponed due to an outbreak of chicken pox. That evening Sheffield and Ramona went out to dinner and to a movie. Since it was her birthday, she got to pick the movie. She chose "Gidget Goes Hawaiian", a romantic musical starring Deborah Walley and James Darren, and was shot on location at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki Beach. It wasn't all that good of a movie, but the scenery made Ramona long even more to return to Hawaii. If only she could find some excuse.

While looking for a reason for returning to the Islands, they got Takara's most recent letter telling them that she was expecting in December. Perhaps going to see Takara and Teancum would be reason enough. In the end she settled for planning on a month long vacation in Hawaii when they retired.

For the rest of the summer they had no plans to go anywhere in particular. They had just seen Harvey and Marcella when they flew up to get Anna and Paul. All it took was a telephone call from Janet to give them a reason for somewhere to go.

On the Wednesday after Ramona's birthday, the telephone rang while Ramona was fixing dinner. She picked up on the third ring and answered, "Hello."

"Hi Mom."

"Well, hi Janet. You sound excited. What's going on?"

"We have a baby!"

"A baby?" Ramona asked in disbelief.

That got Sheffield's attention and he came and stood next to Ramona in an attempt to hear Janet's side of the conversation.

"When did this happen?" Ramona asked.

"Just today. It was a complete surprise to us too. Like I told you about three months ago, we filled out an application with the Relief Society Social Service Department to be placed on the waiting list for an adoption. We went through the interview process and they told us that it may take up to three years.

"Then this morning, out of the blue while I was hanging up laundry on the line, they called us to say that they had a baby for us, if we still wanted one.

"I told them yes, definitely, but that my husband was at the ranch and asked if I could call them back in a few minutes. They said that that would be fine. I left the rest of the laundry still in basket laying there and hopped into the car and drove over to the ranch to find Jerry.

"They were busy getting ready to ship the lambs to market later this week, but when I told him what was going on, Wayne told him to go, he could manage without him for a while.

"We came back home and called them back to tell them that we were definitely interested. They

asked how soon we could be there. We said that we could be in Logan in about an hour.

“So Jerry cleaned up and changed his clothes and we hurried into town. After talking to us and telling us a little about the baby, they brought him in for us to see. They placed him in my arms and that was all it took to fall in love with him. We agreed to take him and signed the paperwork and brought him home. Of course it will take time to go through the entire process.”

“Wow. That's fantastic” Romona said excitedly. “So tell me all about him.”

“For starters, his name is Wesley, he was born a week ago on the thirty first in Logan. All we know is that his mother and father were unmarried teenagers. The mother is seventeen and is a Northern Ute Indian. The father is eighteen and white. At birth he weighed eight pounds ten ounces and was twenty two inches long.”

“My, he was a big baby wasn't he.” Ramona commented.

Ramona looked at Sheffield, who had been listening to the whole conversation, and asked, “How soon can you take me to see them?”

“How soon can you get packed? I don't see why we can't leave first thing in the morning.”

“Did you hear that Janet? We can be there tomorrow. This is costing you money. You can tell us all about it when we get there. See you then. Bye.”

“Bye, Mom.”

Ramona hung up the telephone and threw her arms around Sheffield. “I don't believe it.” she said with tears of joy. “I've got to call Craig and Norma.” she said with urgency and let go of him and picked up the telephone to call Norma.

After talking to Norma and Craig, Ramona turned her attention to packing for the trip. She figured on taking enough to last a week. While she was packing, Craig came over and helped Sheffield get the Staggerwing ready. That evening Sheffield arranged for his counselors to handle things in his absence.

The next morning they had breakfast early, loaded up the plane, and took off from the Two Star Ranch around eight o'clock. They followed their customary flight path with stops in Springfield and McCook. It was mid to late afternoon when they landed in Wayne Gover's pasture just east of Clarkston.

Janet and Jerry were already there and heard the plane make a pass on its landing approach before circling around to land. Jerry and Wayne came out to greet them and help them in with their luggage. Janet remained in the house with the baby.

As soon as Ramona came in, the first thing she said, even before greeting everyone was, “Where's my grandson?” as she made a beeline for Janet and took him out of her arms. That was all it took and she was in love with him too.

“He's so precious.” She said. “Just look at that precious little face. He's got a lighter complexion than I

had imagined. Now I'm not the only one in the family with Indian blood. Oh, look Sheffield he opened his eyes.”

“He's a handsome lad alright. Do I get to hold him.”

“Just be patient, I'm not through with him yet.” Ramona quipped. “Just look at all of that thick black hair.”

She went on and on. She had to unwrap the blanket that he was wrapped up in to look him over all the better.

“We still had the things we had ready for Anthony.” Janet said. “I wasn't ready to take them down yet, even though it has been a whole year. I was thinking about giving it away, but now I'm glad that I didn't.”

All the while that Ramona was fussing over the baby, Sheffield was talking to Wayne and Gale. Finally, Ramona let him have his turn with Wesley.

They sat around the living room while Janet and Jerry filled them in on the details as to how it all came about and what still needed to be done before the court could make it all final.

Janet concluded by saying, “I think its interesting that I was adopted, and now, I've adopted a child of my own.”

Janet looked so happy. It had been a long hard year for her as she had to deal with all that went with loosing Anthony, not to mention healing from her injuries. Now with Wesley in her arms, the healing was about as complete as it could be. She had really looked forward to being a mother and, now she was one. She even mentioned the possibility of trying for another adoption when he got older.

Form there, they went home with Janet and Jerry where they where put up in the spare room. Ramona spent a lot her time over the next few days with Janet and the baby. Word got around the ward pretty quickly that they had Wesley. Brenda Archibald, the mother of the little boy who had knocked Janet over, causing her to fall down the stairs a year earlier, offered to put together a baby shower for her. The initial plan was to have it the following Wednesday, before Ramona went home.

Sheffield made himself useful by being another hand on shipping day. He found sheep a lot easier to handle than cows. For one thing, he was bigger than they were and could show them who was boss. Morris came out to help as well.

On Sunday they attended church in the Clarkston Ward. Wesley was still too little to take out in public but Jerry arranged with Bishop Ravsten to have Wesley blessed at home while Janet's parents were with them. Morris and Sheila and their family as well as all of the rest of the Gover family came out for the event, which was followed by a huge family dinner. Sheffield had a chance to visit with Morris and catch up on what was going on in their lives.

On Tuesday, Sheffield and Ramona took advantage of the opportunity to attended the Logan

Temple. On the day of the baby shower Sheffield took a ride up in the hills with Wayne while he went to check on the sheep on the range. When he got back, Ramona and Janet showed him all of the shower gifts that she had received.

The week had gone so fast and Ramona hated to leave her new grandson, but she had seven more at home who she hadn't seen all week. With the plane loaded, they got an early start and were back home late in the afternoon of the 15th. The previous year, she had missed out on Geoffrey and Teresa's birthday, but not this one. It was hard to believe, but at six, they would be going off to school in the fall.

Since the economy had improved in the early spring, Ramona was beginning to see better returns on her investments again. She decided that it was time to trade in her 1957 Mercury on a new car. It was still in good shape as Craig had kept it maintained for her. In fact, he took care of all of their vehicles and the Staggewing for them. Even the old 1942 Chevy pickup was still in good running order. The old Farmall tractor was still running too but it was more than twenty years old and Craig was trying to talk Sheffield into trading it in on something a little newer.

With a little money to spend, Ramona went car shopping. She hadn't liked the fins that the auto makers had been putting on all the cars since 1958. General Motors had abandoned the fins on their 1961 models. After driving a few cars, she selected a 1961 Chevrolet Impala. It was maroon and loaded with features.



On the 4th of July, Sheffield and Ramona went to the Austin/Brason celebration at the cabin, but they were the only ones from their family. Norma and Wade celebrated with the Rowans and Craig and Edith had taken the Staggerwing and flew to Utah to see Janet and spent a week out there. The Gover's still had a few late season lambs around and Gean fell in love with them. When they got back, Craig fenced off a portion of the pasture next to their house. Then he went to the livestock auction and bought a half a dozen lambs and brought them home to finish out.

Sheffield was able to watch the second manned space flight on television. The flight of Liberty Bell 7 with Gus Grissom on July 21st was another suborbital flight to test the orbital version of the Mercury space capsule. The flight was a success, except for the fact that when the hatch was opened after splashdown, the capsule filled with water and sank. Grissom was plucked from the water by a helicopter.

July marked five years since Sheffield had been called as the branch president. During that time he had grown a lot from the varying experiences that he had encountered. During that time the branch had grown by a good amount, thanks in part to the full time missionaries. The missionaries were always

welcome in their home and they stopped by quite often.

Sheffield knew that a General Authority from Salt Lake was touring the mission, but he was quite surprised when the mission secretary called to set up an appointment for him and Ramona to meet with Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy. He figured it was to talk about the missionary efforts in the Salem Branch.

They met Elder Hunter at the Mission Home and the interview started out much as he had expected. He was surprised to find that Elder Hunter was actually a little younger than him. For some reason he had the idea that all of the General Authorities were older. After talking about the branch and telling him about their background and conversion, they learned that before he had been called as a General Authority in 1945 that he had been a public school administrator and taught seminary in Logan for seventeen years.

Sheffield was stunned to learn the real reason for the interview when Elder Hunter extended a call to him to serve as the first counselor in the mission presidency. Sheffield had somewhat of an idea what it entailed. Of course it meant that he would be released as the branch president. Then Elder Hunter surprised Ramona by calling her to be his traveling companion. They both accepted the callings. Elder Hunter left it up to President Aposhian, the mission president, to explain the details to them.

The interview was over and Sheffield and Ramona met with President George Aposhian who explained that Sheffield was to be the representative of the mission to the districts and branches in Virginia, as well as the Virginia Stake in Richmond, although it was independent of the mission president's authority. Merrill Duke, the second counselor worked with the districts and branches in North Carolina.

Sheffield and Ramona knew President Aposhian who had been the mission president since 1959. They had met with him in temple recommend interviews and on other occasions. President Aposhian was born in Turkey in 1905 and had immigrated to Utah with his parents when he was five years old. He and his wife, Catherine, were the parents of four children.

Sheffield had never met Merrill Duke, who lived in Greensborough, North Carolina. He traveled the one hundred miles to Roanoke each Tuesday for their presidency meetings and he spent the night at the mission home.

Sheffield was replacing Rex Garrison from Richmond. Sheffield new him from all of the times he had been to their district conferences and other leadership meetings in Roanoke. Sheffield learned that he would be traveling to various conferences and other leadership meetings at least once and sometimes twice a month. He would preside at these meetings, unless President Aposhian or a general authority was in attendance.

A lot of his business would be conducted over the telephone. His responsibility was to interact with the local leadership so President Aposhian could focus his attention on working with the missionaries. There

were certain matters that only the mission president could deal with, the rest he would rely on Sheffield to handle. After five years as a branch president, he was experienced enough to know what to do.

Sheffield was sustained in all of the branches throughout the mission the following Sunday and met with the presidency on Tuesday night. Prior to the meeting, the family gathered at the mission home for him to be set apart by President Aposhian.

Sheffield hadn't been released as the branch president yet, that would come the following Sunday. On Saturday night, he had his counselors, Nathan Little and Leonard Brown and his trusted clerk, Phil Moncur out for one last barbecue to show his appreciation for all of their hard work.

His first out of town assignment happened to be a special missionary conference in Norfolk for the eastern half of the Virginia Stake. He and Ramona flew over in the Staggerwing on Saturday morning. Having a plane would sure cut down on travel time with this calling. As Sheffield made his approach, he flew over the naval base out of curiosity, just to see what was there. Sure enough, the Reprisal was in port. From the air he could see that she had been refit yet again since the last time he saw her. If he got a chance, he'd like to pay a visit to his old friend.

They landed at the Norfolk Municipal Airport and after securing the Staggerwing, Jacob Messner met them and took them to his home, which was two and half miles from the airport. When Jacob found out that Sheffield would be attending the conference, he called and insisted that they stay with them. Sheffield graciously accepted their offer. When they got there, Paula had lunch waiting.

Sheffield's first meeting was at two o'clock. Since Jacob was also to attend the meeting he drove him to the Norfolk Ward meetinghouse located at 2741 Greendale Avenue, where the conference was to be held. It also happened to be the same chapel where they attended. Sheffield spent an hour and a half meeting with the stake president from Richmond, his counselors and members of the high council and the stake seventy quorum presidents from that part of the stake prior to the missionary meeting.

Ramona didn't need to be there until the missionary meeting, so in the meantime she visited with Paula. She had always teased Sheffield about her being his girlfriend. Paula told her side of the story and how she wanted there to be something between them. "When there wasn't, we both moved on." Paula concluded. "I found Jacob and Sheffield found what he had with you all along. I'd say we both came out on top."

Paula dropped Ramona off in time for the four o'clock missionary meeting and went in and found Sheffield. For the rest of the day she was at his side as his companion. The meeting was with all of the full time and stake missionaries, which included a number of lady missionaries and other women and anyone who had anything to do with missionary work in that part of the stake, from Newport News down to Elizabeth City North Carolina,. After a few speakers, Sheffield took the rest of the time and passed along the

instructions that he had been sent to give.

At six o'clock there was luncheon for all of the stake leadership and the representative of the mission presidency from Roanoke and their wives, which was hosted by the Norfolk Ward Relief Society. That was followed by a meeting of all of the adults in the area at seven. The first hour they heard from speakers selected from among the stake members. Following a special musical number that had been prepared for the occasion, Ramona was the next speaker. She had been a little nervous about the assignment, but gave an excellent talk. Sheffield began his remarks by telling of their conversion story and talked related it to President McKay's "every member a missionary" slogan. The Stake President was concluding speaker.

After the meeting, Paula and Jacob took them home. Paula's daughter, Evelyn, who had taken a particular liking to Sheffield when he was seeing her mother, and her husband had been to the meeting as well. They had showed interest in the church off and on over the years but were never willing to commit. They agreed to go the meeting when Paula told her that Sheffield would be there. They came over after the meeting for desert and ended up talking to Sheffield and Ramona until quite late. They agreed to come to the conference the next day and committed to allow the missionaries to teach them.

The next day began early for Sheffield with another meeting with the stake presidency at seven, followed by a meeting at eight for all of the priesthood leadership from that part of the stake. Ramona joined him at nine for a special meeting that Sheffield had called for with the members of the Norfolk Serviceman's Branch in which he talked to them about the opportunities for missionary work all around him and told of his member missionary experiences during the Korean War.

Finally, at ten they attended the general session of the conference. The building was filled to capacity as that part of the Virginia Stake was the fastest growing area in the mission, having outgrown the Roanoke District. There were plans in the works for the stake to be divided in the next two or three years. As with the night before, Ramona and Sheffield were among the speakers.

Following the meeting, Sheffield and Ramona had lunch with the stake presidency and their wives in the home of the Second Counselor, who lived in Portsmouth. Afterwards they went back to the Messners to collect their things and visit for a while before they drove them back to the airport.

Sheffield still wanted to see his old friend. By then it was three o'clock in the afternoon. He decided that there was still plenty of time left in the day. After stashing their luggage in the Staggerwing, Sheffield called for a cab to take them to the navy base. At the gate he showed his credentials that identified him as a retired admiral and they were allowed in.

The cab waited at the dock near the gangplank while Sheffield and Ramona walked up and down the dock, looking over the ship. The Reprisal had undergone many changes throughout her long career. Now she was as modern and up to date as any of the Essex Class carries still in front line service. One thing that

was obviously different was her hurricane bow. She had had an enclosed forecastle even before she was fitted with an angled deck, but now the entire bow was enclosed.

As they walked back to the cab, Ramona asked, "Are you going to go aboard?"

Sheffield told the cabbie to wait a little longer. He and Ramona went up the gang plank where he again showed his credentials to the officer of the deck. The young lieutenant immediately recognized the name that had become synonymous with the history of the Reprisal and allowed him to come aboard. A moment later, they were greeted by the executive officer, who took them up onto the flight deck to show them around. Their brief tour ended on the bridge where Sheffield stepped out onto the wing bridge where he could look up and down the length of the flight deck.

When they returned to the cab, the meter was still running. The cost added up by the time they got back to the airport, but it was worth it to see his old friend again. As they took off and gained altitude, they flew low over Newport News. Sheffield pointed out the gigantic aircraft carrier with the distinctive boxlike superstructure with a beehive on top.

"Do you see that carrier tied up at the dock?" he said, "Now that's the future of carrier aviation. I've been reading about that one."

"Whats so special about it?" Ramona asked.

"That's the new Enterprise, named after the old Enterprise that I served aboard when we lived in Hawaii. She's nuclear powered and can operate for years without refueling."

"My, its huge."

"From what I read, she's longer than three football fields." Sheffield said with admiration. "She's supposed to be commissioned later this fall. I'd sure love to go to sea aboard her someday"

"I sometimes think you should of stayed in the Navy."

"What? And miss out on all we've done the last several years. No, I'll just watch from a distance and leave it to younger men."

The biggest ship in the world grew smaller as they climbed higher into the sky and headed out over the Virginia countryside. It was late afternoon when they returned home from their first out of town assignment. Three weeks later, they attended a similar conference in Lynchburg. Only this time they drove and stayed in the home of the district president.

Summer came to an end with Labor Day and the semi annual Brason family reunion at the Two Star Ranch. Two days later school started and the whole routine started all over again. Geoffrey and Teresa were excited for their first day of school in the first grade.

There was yet another new high school in the district with the opening of Patrick Henry High School in Roanoke just down the street from the Roanoke Branch Meetinghouse. Being two and half miles from

Jefferson High School, a good share of Jefferson students went to the new school, including a number of wrestlers. As Sheffield and Coach Warfman put together a new team during the tryout period, they had to select from a lot of new and untried athletes. Right from the very beginning the two schools became cross town rivals. When the tryout period was over, Sheffield was confident that he had a decent team, but it probably wouldn't be another undefeated team like the year before.

There was something else too. Sheffield sensed a difference in attitude among the student body. It was something that he had noticed creep in over the last few years. The level of respect shown by the young people seemed to have diminished and they were more challenging of the long established norms. Some went as far as to blame it on the Rock and Roll music that was sweeping the airwaves from the likes of Elvis Presley and Ricky Nelson. Along with the music came new dance styles such as the twist and the pony.

After the last five years, Sheffield had become accustomed to juggling his job and his calling. Being in the mission presidency wasn't as busy as being the branch president had been. Then he was on call and at the demand of the branch members pretty much constantly. His Tuesday nights were still tied up with meetings, but other than spending time on the telephone and being away one or two weekends a month, he actually had more time.

He found himself involved at a whole new level of detail. Rather than being involved at the branch level, he got to know church members across Virginia. In September it was time to change the district president in the Roanoke District. The mission presidency considered several men and in the process, it became clear who it should be, Sheffield's brother Walt.

During the fall he attended district conferences in Roanoke, where Walt was sustained, and in Charlottesville. He also attended Stake Conference in Richmond. On that occasion he was there in a secondary role while Elder Stirling W. Sill, an Assistant to the Twelve, presided. While at that conference, they had an opportunity to visit with Paula and Jacob and Evelyn and her husband, who had been baptized only two weeks earlier.

Before long it was Thanksgiving all ready. Sheffield and Craig put up their out door lights the weekend before. When school let out the day before, the wrestling team had an even number of wins and loses. The whole family, except of Janet, were together for Thanksgiving dinner along with the full time missionaries assigned to the Salem Branch. The weekend was spent selecting Christmas trees at the cabin and decorating them.

Two weeks after Thanksgiving, Sheffield celebrated his sixty third birthday. Sheffield and Ramona took time to reflect on the fact that it had been twenty years since Geannie, Sandy, and Austin had been gone. Twenty years since that Day of Infamy when Sheffield took off from the Enterprise and flew into world

that was forever changed.

For his birthday, Craig presented him with another special gift, similar to what he had given for Fathers Day a while back. This time it was a model of the Enterprise, that Sheffield had served aboard from when she was commissioned in May 1938 until he left the ship at the end of April in 1942. It was completed in her original prewar configuration in navy gray and a mahogany flight deck with yellow markings. Even the aircraft that came with the kit were painted in prewar colors with yellow wings and blue tails.

Sheffield put it on display on the top shelf of Ramona's curio along with the model of the Reprisal. For next to the Reprisal, the Enterprise was his next favorite ship. It was a shame that she had long since been cut up for scrap metal. There was an effort to preserve her but it had failed because they couldn't raise enough money. Admiral Halsey had spearheaded the effort and had even called Sheffield personally to solicit a contribution. Sheffield was more than happy to make a generous donation. He hoped that when it came time for the Reprisal to be retired, that she wouldn't meet a similar fate. At least the newest carrier in the navy proudly bore the name, Enterprise.

Takara continued to stay in touch and in mid December they received a letter from her with news of the birth of their daughter, Leilani, on December 4th. Janet also stayed in touch with her informative and descriptive letters, which often included photographs of Wesley so Sheffield and Ramona could see how he had grown. Now he was six months old. Since Janet and Jerry had come the last two years for Christmas, they weren't coming this year. Instead they were planning on coming the in the summer. Therefore Christmas was a little more low key, Which allowed for Craig and Norma to spend more time with their in laws. Nevertheless they did get together a few times as a family during the holidays. They spent New Years Eve together and welcomed in 1962.

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As a test pilot, Alan Shepard did participate in the Navy's trials of the first angled carrier deck aboard the Antietam.

In 1919 the Relief Society Social Service Department was created by Amy B. Lyman, an official in the church's Relief Society. In 1969, the organization was renamed Unified Social Services. In 1973, the organization became a corporation separate from the church's Relief Society and renamed LDS Social Services; in 1995, the name was changed to LDS Family Services.

They visit of Elder Milton R. Hunter to the Central Atlantic States Mission in July 1961 is purely hypothetical.

George Zadik Aposhian was the president of the Central Atlantic States Mission from 1959 to 1963. His background is as described.

The special missionary conference is a fictional event. According to an article in the The Virginian-Pilot, the meetinghouse located at 2741 Greendale Avenue was built in 1960 and would have been a likely place for such a meeting.

The USS Enterprise, the first nuclear powered aircraft carrier, was built at Newport News Shipbuilding. She was launched on September 16, 1960 and commissioned on November 25, 1961. At the time, she was largest ship in world at 86,000 tons fully loaded and 1,123 feet long