



USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CV 67)

SHIP'S SEAL

The ship's seal is based on the coat of arms of the Kennedy and Fitzgerald families. These ancient symbols represent the stability that stems from tradition. In addition, modern symbols have been incorporated to show the progress that stems from innovation. Both stability and progress were notable characteristics of the policies of President John F. Kennedy, and both are essential to the continued accomplishment of the ship's mission.

The black shield with three gold helmets is the traditional coats of arms of the O'Kennedy of the Ormonde. The helmets represent the original Gaelic word for Kennedy, Ceinneide, which means "helmeted head." The red and white borders are the colors of the Fitzgerald of Desmond. Above the shield is the single helmet, crowned with a wreath of the Kennedy colors, black and gold, and flanked by the red and white mantel in Fitzgerald colors, symbolic of courage.

The crest of the coat of arms is a malleed forearm, holding a sheaf of arrows, framed by olive branches, symbolizing power and peace, as with the eagle's claws in the presidential seal.

The bottle-nosed dolphins holding the banner at the bottom are traditional symbols of the sea and seamen. They represent our freedom to roam the seas, freedom essential to progress in the world community. Dolphins are friends of man, but deadly enemies of aggressors. Dolphins attack only when provoked.

The shamrock shaped banner symbolizes good luck, President Kennedy's Irish ancestry, and our ties with Ireland. Written on the banner in Latin is the ship's motto, Date Nolite Rogare, which means "Give, be unwilling to ask." The phrase represents the spirit of President Kennedy's inaugural address and specifically the famous line, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

The wings are symbols not only of KENNEDY's air power but also of progress and the freedom to roam the skies. Stars, representing the 50 states, surround the shield. A 51st star, the topmost in the seal, represents the high state of readiness sought by KENNEDY. In the years that she earned the coveted Navy (Battle) "E" for efficiency, the top star was colored gold (the ship earned this award 9 times over the course of her active career. The last time being in 1983). Around the seal is an unbroken rope, symbolic of the unifying force among Shipmates in a common mission. The ship's seal was designed by KENNEDY's first Commanding Officer, Captain Earl P. Yates.