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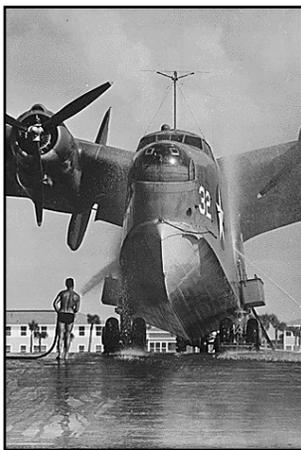
Meet the  
Squadron's CMC

2014 Jax Reunion  
Information

VP-45 Association  
Selects New Logo

THE VP-45 ASSOCIATION'S  
**Pelican Post**  
**Newsletter**

[www.vp45association.org](http://www.vp45association.org)



## Association Officers

Doug Mitchell.....President

Dick Gray.....Vice President

“PJ” Imhof.....Treasurer

Jack Keane.....Secretary

Bill Hobgood.....WebMaster

## Newsletter Info

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## Newsletter Contents

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(Pelican photo by Jerry Hagen)

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### From the Editor:

Welcome to the second edition of the Pelican Post. Our Previous September 2013 edition was the first in this all color, fully digital format. We hope you enjoyed it and continue to let us know of any ideas you have by which we can continue to improve. You can contact us via the website or by sending an email to either of the email addresses listed above

On behalf of the Association officers, I truly hope you’ll continue to enjoy the new format of YOUR Association’s newsletter.

Jack Keane

“We are planning for this to be the largest reunion in the history of the Association...so please plan to attend and help us make this a reality! Please invite all of your Pelican friends to join us for what will be a most memorable occasion!”

From the Desk of...

*Doug Mitchell*

## President's Report

### 2014 VP-45 Association Reunion

Happy New Year! I trust everyone had a nice Christmas or Holiday Season with your families and friends, and that 2014 has been good to you so far. Excitement is in the air...we have our Reunion coming up in October, and I promise you Dick Gray and the MRP Staff have been very busy planning it for some time. In fact, if you want to mail in your registration form for the reunion and the many events/tours offered, use the form toward the end of this issue of the *Pelican Post*. You can also make your Hotel Reservations now (See info contained in the Vice President's article of this issue). If you prefer to signup online, just click [HERE](#) to go to the MRP website.

We are planning for this to be the largest reunion in the history of the Association...so please plan to attend and help us make this a reality!

Since Victoria and I live part of the time south of the Jacksonville area, Dick asked me to do some scouting around for reunion accommodations. I'm happy to announce we've selected the Crowne Plaza Jacksonville - Riverfront - Hotel located on the southbank of the beautiful St. John's River in downtown Jacksonville. Some of us remember the Hotel from the 2008 Reunion, and now, six years later, I guarantee you will be very pleased. Every room and hallway in the Hotel will have been elegantly decorated/renovated in either 2013 or 2014!

I met with the Hotel Manager of Sales and toured the Hotel this past October. We will have a choice of three Room Types from which to choose located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> Floors:

The Standard at \$99.00



The Riverfront at \$119 (same as the Standard with various views of Jacksonville and the River)



Or the JR Suite at \$139 (All of these suites are located Riverfront with a view)



Transportation is plentiful as well as fairly inexpensive in Jacksonville as compared to some cities. Starting with your arrival at the Jacksonville International Airport, your best bet is to proceed from Baggage Claim on the lower level to the Island in front of Ground Transportation Gates A and B and look for “Go Shuttle”. Their prices are the cheapest at \$20.00



*Fireworks at The Jacksonville Landing*

for the first person, \$8 for the second, plus tip for Baggage handling, and they run every 30 minutes.

From the Hotel to local area Restaurants and Entertainment, ask the Desk Clerks to call you a Checker Cab. They provide mini-vans, vans, etc. to

meet the needs of your party on a metered basis. You also have the 2.5 mile Jacksonville Skyway a short distance in front of the Hotel that will take you over the River and downtown to the Jacksonville Landing. Additionally, you can walk a short distance east of the Hotel on the sidewalk along the river to the Water Taxi that docks near The Chart House Restaurant.

For your dining pleasure, I want to mention a few restaurants in and around the hotel and Jacksonville Landing. First of all, in the hotel is their own American Grill Restaurant as well as Ruth’s Chris Steak House. Please note that Ruth’s Chris has a \$7 special menu selection Sunday – Friday from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. as well as Happy Hour prices in their Bar/ Lounge area. There is a Chart House Restaurant east of the hotel and The Jacksonville River City Brewing Company Restaurant is nearby just west of the Hotel. Don’t forget about BB’s Bistro south of the hotel - I highly recommend all these establishments.

The Jacksonville Landing, located on the north bank of the St. John’s River, has some interesting shops for the ladies and the following restaurants available: American Grille, Benny’s Steakhouse, Cinco de Mayo Mexican, Chicago Pizza, Hooter’s, Sushi Korean/ Japanese, and Vito’s Italian Café.

If I can be of any assistance to anyone concerning the upcoming reunion, please do not hesitate to call or email me at 678-650-7500 or [poohbearmit@aol.com](mailto:poohbearmit@aol.com).

Please invite all of your Pelican friends to join us for what will be a most memorable occasion. All of you former Pelicans who are Jacksonville natives and are reading this newsletter, please sign up for the 2014

Reunion and come on down! We would love to see you!

Best Regards,  
 Doug “Pooh Bear” Mitchell  
 President, VP-45 Association

## From the Vice President

# REUNION NEWS



**By: Dick Gray**  
**Association Vice President**

Folks, as we draw closer to the 2014 Jacksonville Reunion (Oct 15-19), details are coming together and it's REALLY looking good! Accommodations, tours and banquet arrangements are firming up and they should provide the best reunion experience yet.

You will find information relating to the reunion, as well as the Registration Form, in this Newsletter (next to last page) and on our website. Obviously the easiest way to register is via the online registration form at the Military Reunion Planners (MRP) Website. There is a link to MRP at the bottom of our website home page ([www.vp45association.org](http://www.vp45association.org)). Should you need to mail in your registration form and check, again, that form is located toward the end of this newsletter.



Reunion Headquarters: Crown Plaza Riverfront Hotel

The Reunion “Headquarters” will be the Crowne Plaza Riverfront Hotel. This is the same Hotel where the 2008 Reunion was held. However, it has been completely renovated and, in fact, is just now in the final stages of that renovation which includes updating all rooms. The folks there are good at this and are looking forward to hosting our Reunion again! NOTE: Don't forget to call the Crowne Plaza Riverfront for your room reservations! (Very specific and important information for making a Room Reservations is near the end of this article)

As usual, we will have a “Ready Room” set up, with complimentary drinks and light snacks provided. This will be the location for the Thursday night “Ice-Breaker/Welcome Aboard” where you can meet both old and new friends and re-connect with your shipmates.

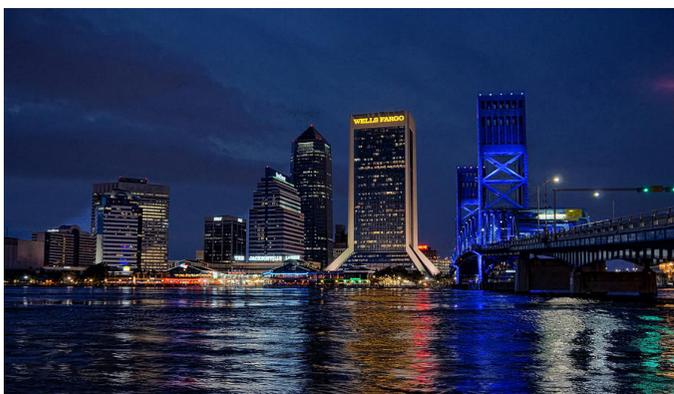
Something “new” we are trying for this Reunion is a “Ladies Ready Room.” The ladies can meet here, if they so desire. It will be a place for them to sit and talk in a quiet space. Let us know later if this idea is a “keeper!” (Ladies: Bring your Crafts to share with your friends!)

Thursday we plan to have a Jacksonville City tour with a stop at the Anheuser Busch bottling plant included. There is also a tour set for Kings Bay Submarine Base.

Friday is the “premier” tour to NAS JAX and our active duty squadron. We start with a buffet lunch (included), after which we will visit the VP-45 squadron spaces for an update on their status/plans/transition, as well as a tour of one of

their new P-8A Poseidon Aircraft! You will not want to miss this!!

On Friday, for those who don't want to visit the squadron, there is a tour set to take you to Amelia Island and Fernandina Beach. You will explore the town and have lunch on your own. In the evening, after our Friday tours, we have scheduled an evening trip to the Alhambra Dinner Theater. We were able to work with them on the theater presentation and it will be "The Rat Pack." You will see the show and also enjoy their "Fine Dining" style dinner. Be



*Downtown Jacksonville at Night*

aware that the Alhambra received the "Best in Jacksonville Dining" Award for 2013!

On Saturday 18 October, we have our morning Association Business Meeting, followed by a trip to St. Augustine for shopping, etc. We have tried to leave some "down" time today to allow additional Jacksonville touring/shopping, enjoy more time with old friends or just do-your-own-thing.

Our main event, the Reunion Banquet, is Saturday evening. Cocktails at 1800 – Dinner, Presentations and Ceremonies will commence at 1900. Your meal choice should be made on your Registration Form.

Sunday morning we will have a "Until Next Reunion" breakfast room where you can sit and enjoy your shipmates and friends before we all say our farewells.

I would be remiss if I did not announce a most sincere "Thank You" to the CO, XO, CMC and all of our active duty VP-45 shipmates for their help as we prepare for this reunion. Without their assistance, this reunion would certainly not be coming together so easily. We are also looking forward to having a GREAT turnout from the Squadron for the Saturday night banquet.

For your Reservations at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Please call 888-233-9527. This will go direct to the Hotel Reservation system and you MUST tell them you are with the "Patron 45" Reunion group (I have given them "VP-45" as well so that should also work). They have a block of rooms set aside for us, and by advising them you are with our group ensures you show up on our listing and allows me to better work with the hotel if you should need any type of assistance.

NOTE: Do not call the central Crowne Plaza reservations phone number, as they will not be aware of our Reunion!

For me....heck, I'm just as excited as I was for my first reunion with this great outfit. Looking forward to seeing all Pelicans - former and current - in JAX!!

Dick Gray  
VP-45 Association Vice President

207-266-7287  
[dickgray@brooksendway.com](mailto:dickgray@brooksendway.com)





# AT THE TOP



The current Command Master Chief of the World Famous “Pelicans” of Patrol Squadron Forty-Five is CMDCM(AW/NAC/SW/IDW) E. Thomas Ayers, USN.



**M**aster Chief Ayers was born 14 May 1966 in Rock Hill, SC and graduated from Northwestern High School in 1984. He enlisted in the Navy two years later, completed Recruit Training and attended the Defense Language Institute/Foreign Language Center. He studied the Arabic language and was designated a Cryptologic Technician (Interpretive) upon completion of Phase II at Goodfellow AFB, San Angelo, TX in May of 1987.

The following June, he reported to Naval Security Group Activity Athens, Greece for Aircrew duty. It was here, while still a second class PO, he qualified as a Naval Aircrewman and served as a Mission Supervisor onboard EP-3E and EA-3B aircraft. When NSGA Athens closed, he received orders to Naval Reconnaissance Support Activity Rota, Spain to continue duty in the EP-3E & ES-3A aircraft aboard USS NIMITZ. During this tour he compiled numerous combat flight hours in support of Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM and SOUTHERN WATCH.

Duty as an Arabic Instructor (NTTCD Goodfellow Air Force Base), earned him the “Master Training Specialist” designation and he was selected as Senior “Instructor of the Year” for 1994. After this tour, he returned to aircrew duties in Spain at NSGA Rota serving as Training Officer and Leading Chief while logging nearly 5000 career-flight hours. He re-toured at Rota as an Assistant Cryptologic Resource Coordinator for Battle Group Staffs aboard four different carriers.

Two years later, Chief Ayers reported to the Gordon Regional Security Operations Center at Fort Gordon, GA, where he served as a Senior Arabic Linguist and Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the Mission Management Branch and was, during this tour, advanced to Senior Chief Petty Officer. He was then assigned to the Center for Information Dominance serving as the Senior Enlisted Leader for the Center for Language Regional Expertise and Culture.

Before his current position as Command Master Chief for the Patrol Squadron Forty-Five Pelicans, he served as CMC of Navy Information Operations Command (NIOC) Bahrain and NIOC Texas.

Master Chief Ayers’ personal decorations are numerous and consist of the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with Bronze Star, two Joint Service Commendation Medals, six Navy Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, five Navy Achievement Medals and the Air Force Achievement Medal. In addition he wears numerous unit, service and campaign awards. In 2007, he was selected as Naval Network Warfare Command’s “On-the-Roof-Gang” recipient for career contributions to Naval Cryptology.

In 2007, Master Chief Ayres was selected as Naval Network Warfare Command’s “On-the-Roof-Gang” recipient for career contributions to Naval Cryptology.

He is married to the former Kimberly Ann Murray of Savannah, GA and has two sons, Avery (18) and Jacob (7).

# NAVY TRIVA

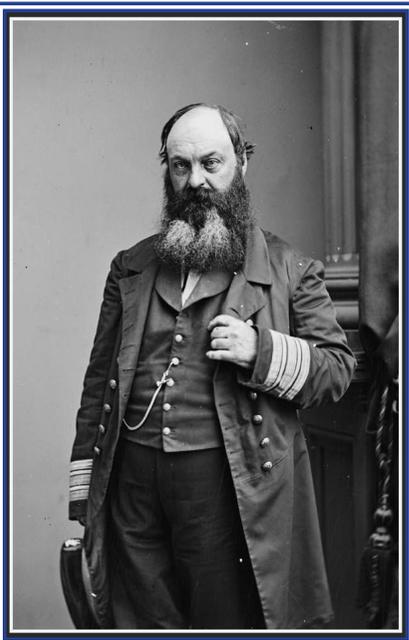
## Brief History of the Naval Officer Rank: Commodore

by: Bill Hobgood

1776: During Revolutionary times (and until 1862), the Continental Congress was reluctant to have an Admiral rank in our Navy because it smacked of royalty. Our founding fathers hated royalty. So the Navy had only four officer ranks: Midshipman, Lieutenant, Master Commander and Captain. The “honorary” term Commodore was used by very senior Captains and was only a temporary assignment when a Captain was in charge of more than one ship. However, once authorized to use the temporary title “Commodore,” many officers were reluctant to give it up (like Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry). Woe be to the lieutenant who addressed an officer once a Commodore as “Captain.”

1857: Congress established the grade of “Flag Officer” for Captains in charge of a squadron of ships. Thus the “flag ship” flew the “flag” of the “Flag Officer.” But there was a requirement that once the assignment was over, they reverted to the rank of Captain.

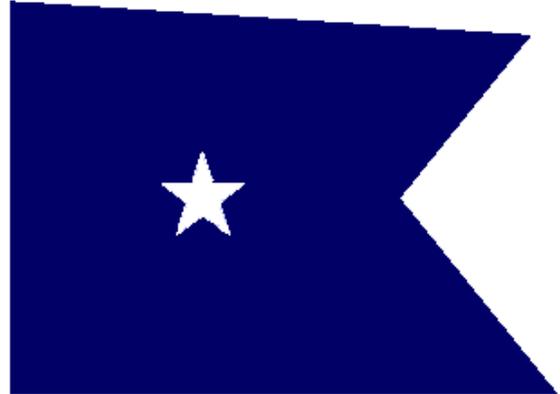
1862: The larger Navy in the Civil War ignored tradition and officially promoted 18 senior Captains to the rank of Commodore. They wore one star and a broad 2 inch gold stripe on their sleeves. As opposed to the mess that was to come, this is the way it should have stayed. This rank continued as the highest in the navy for 37 years.



Commo W. D. Porter, USN Circa 1863

1899: US Navy Commodores complained up the chain that they got no respect from foreign military of-

ficers because they were not “Admirals.” So Congress, in its civilian wisdom, made all Commodores into Rear Admirals. They paid them as “one stars” but authorized them to wear two stars. Well...this ticked off Army Brigadier Generals (one-stars) who now found them-



Commodore's Broad Pennant

selves junior to newly promoted Navy Rear Admirals. This squabble lasted decades; even after the Navy came up with the Rear Admiral “upper half” and “lower half” ranks. Both Upper Half and Lower Half Rear Admirals wore two stars but the Upper Half officers were senior and were paid more...however there was no way to look at the uniform of Rear Admirals and tell which they were.

1943: During World War II, the Navy brought back the rank of Commodore when they realized that they (again) had no special rank for the commander of a squadron of ships. By the end of that war, about 100 naval officers were Commodores. Since few of these officers were promoted to flag officer, most were retired by 1950 and the rank was (again) no longer used.



1982: Continued bickering by Air Force, Army and Marine one-stars regarding Navy O-7's (Rear Admiral “lower half”) who got to wear two stars finally got

loud enough to require action. The Navy brought back the one star rank but decided to call it “Commodore Admiral.” With the exception of Commodores, who liked being referred to as an Admiral, everybody else thought “Commodore Admiral” sounded stupid. So, the very next year (1983), it was changed back to simply “Commodore.” Everybody liked that except the Commodores who were, now, no longer Admirals. Additionally, real Commodores didn’t like it that lots of senior Navy Captains (wing, submarine and destroyer squadron commanders) were sporting the honorary title “Commodore.”

CAPTAIN	CAPT		1 SILVER SPREAD EAGLE	
REAR ADMIRAL LOWER HALF	RDML		1 SILVER STAR	
REAR ADMIRAL UPPER HALF	RADM		2 SILVER STARS	

1984: After numerous food fights in the Pentagon’s flag & general officer dining room, the Navy (again) changed the O-7 rank title back to Rear Admiral (lower half), hoping that the services’ senior leadership would just try to get along. That didn’t happen because the other services were still unhappy that all Navy rear admirals were (again) wearing two stars. Food fights continued.

1985: Someone finally saw the light and the Navy officially reduced the rank insignia for Rear Admiral (lower half) to one star and one broad gold stripe. The rank “Commodore” again reverted only to an honorary title for appropriately assigned Navy Captains.

1989: Food fights had abated but two-star (upper half) rear admirals now figured out something else to complain about. They didn’t like it that lowly “lower-half” Rear Admirals got to use RADM as an abbreviation for their rank. Since they had two-stars and were close to god-like, they felt these junior guys should not be entitled to that rank abbreviation. So, as the last chapter in this saga, the rank abbreviation for lower-half rear admirals was changed from RADM to RDML. Hardly anybody below flag rank took notice, or even cared about this change and most, when they saw RDML next to an admiral’s name, thought it was a typo!

## SECRETARY’S PODIUM

During the last two newsletter distributions, I have received return mailings from the below members. If you have any information as to their location please ask them to contact me or send me their contact information.

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Last Known Location</b>
Roy L. Anderson	Chula Vista, CA
Mrs. Mary Izzo	Lansing, MI
Edward H. Joyce	Vienna, VA
Mrs. Judy Missler	Hollywood, MD
William P. Myers	Leonardtown, MD
Robert L. Pascal	Anchorage, AK
Mrs. Betty Majors	Ponce de Leon, FL
Mrs. Virginia Waldrod	Lusby, MD
Charles O. Womeldorf	Waldo, FL

You’ll notice a new addition in this issue entitled “Military Reading.” If you know of any military reading specifically of interest to our Association members, please let us know and we will try and make our membership aware of your recommendations.

Also, if you are a member and behind in your membership dues, please renew! Remember, you must be current in your dues to continue receiving the *Pelican Post* and Roster. You can pay online via our website (see below) or send in the last page of this Newsletter with your check. Dues are \$15 for one year, \$65 for five years, or \$300 for lifetime membership. If you are 80 years of age or older, and have been a member in good standing for the past few years, you automatically qualify for lifetime membership. Just let one of the Association officers know and we’ll make the necessary corrections to the roster.

And finally, we’re always looking to expand our membership base. If you are in touch with current or former squadron mates who are not members, encourage them to join and attend the next reunion. They can visit our website at [www.vp45association.org/membership.html](http://www.vp45association.org/membership.html) where they can join online via PayPal, or print out an application and mail to PJ Imhof.





## ASSOCIATION MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### CAPT Hank Gorman, USN (ret)

**C**APT Henry “Hank” Gorman was born in 1921 in Charleston, SC to Morris and Ida Gorman, eight years after his parents immigrated to the US from Ukraine. At the age of seven, with his brothers David and Frank, and sister Anne, the family moved to Greenville, SC. After graduating from Greenville High School in 1938, Hank enrolled at Clemson University where, for the next two years, he majored in Electrical Engineering. In 1940 he accepted an appointment to the Naval Academy, graduating in June 1943 with the war-accelerated



*Plebe Gorman 1940*

class of 1944. It was while attending Annapolis that he met his life partner, Margaret “Peggy” Camp, at a tea dance at Carvel Hall. Peggy’s father, Ernest Camp, was the first Commissioner of Customs under Calvin Coolidge. She was living in Baltimore at the time and was convinced by the sister of Jim McKay, the famous sportscaster, to attend the dance. The two were married on 24 July 1943 at the chapel at NAS Jacksonville.

After their honeymoon, Hank reported to Bahia, Brazil, for duty aboard the USS *Milwaukee* (CL-5) as a member of the ship’s gunnery division and, until the ship’s departure for the



*CAPT Gorman, USN (ret) 2013*

Brooklyn Navy Yard on 8 February 1944, conducted barrier patrols between the Brazilian and African coasts. After a brief refit, *Milwaukee* departed New York on 27 February, and escorted a convoy across the Atlantic, arriving in Scapa Flow on 8 March 1944. Three weeks later, she departed for Murmansk in Convoy JW.58. Ranged against this one convoy were 16-19 U-boats and Luftwaffe bombers based in Norway. All 48 merchant ships of Convoy JW-58 arrived in Murmansk on 4 April 1944 after sending four Type VIIC U-boats to the bottom and downing six shadowing Luftwaffe bombers.



*USS Milwaukee*

Three days after arriving in Murmansk, Hank departed in Convoy RA.58 in HMS *Saumarez* (G12), *Milwaukee* being turned over to the Soviets as lend-lease and recommissioned as *Murmansk*. In actuality, the *Milwaukee* was given to the Soviets in order to placate Stalin from taking the Italian fleet after Italy’s capitulation. Convoy RA.58 arrived in Loch Ewe, Scotland on 14 April 1944 and Hank reported for duty aboard USS *President Warfield* (IX-169) (formerly a Chesapeake steamer on the Baltimore-to-Norfolk run) as Navigator and Senior Watch Officer. It is of interest to note that, in De-

ember 1946, the USS *President Warfield* was purchased by the Weston Trading Co., a front for the Haganah, the Jewish military underground. Given the name *Exodus* from Europe 1947, she embarked approximately 4500 refugees at Sète, France in July 1947 and, was rammed by British destroyers off Haifa, Israel a week later, where she was burned to the waterline.

In July 1944, while steaming off Omaha Beach, France, Hank received the orders that would change the direction of his career – flight school and his wings of gold. He was awarded the Legion of Honor by the French Government for his World War II service off Omaha



The “Yellow Peril”

Beach at a ceremony in 2012.

On 10 August 1944, he arrived at the “Carrier on the Prairie” at NAS

Ottumwa, IA as part of the first student officer group where, for the next year, he trained in the N3N. Nicknamed “The Yellow Peril,” the N3N was an open-cockpit bi-plane. Even in freezing weather, Hank recalls seeing 60-70 aircraft in the air on any one training day.

Designated a Naval Aviator on 3 July 1945, Hank reported to VP-201 in December 1946 in San Juan, PR as Communications Officer where, for the next 18 months, he flew the PBM-5E until his transfer to VP-74/VP-MS-10 in Coco Solo, CZ for the next nine months. In June 1949, after 14 months as a flight instructor at NAS Pensacola, Hank and Peggy returned to Annapolis, Hank as a student at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). A year later, just prior to the School’s move to Monterey, he

In July 1944, while steaming off Omaha Beach, France, Hank received the orders that would change the direction of his career – flight school and his wings of gold.

graduated first in his class, receiving a Master’s degree in Applied Communications.

For the next two years, Hank served as Communications Officer on board the staff of Commander, Fleet Air Wings Atlantic. Based at NAS Norfolk, the staff had administrative and operational responsibility for three

Fleet Air Wings (FAW-3 at NAS Quonset Point, RI, FAW-5 at NAS Norfolk, VA, and FAW-11 at NAS Jacksonville, FL), Fleet Airship Wing One (FAW-1 at NAS Lakehurst, NJ), and four Barnegate-class seaplane tenders (USS *Duxbury Bay* (AVP-38), USS *Greenwich Bay* (AVP-41), USS *Timbalier* (AVP-54), and USS *Valcour* (AVP-55)), each of which alternated as the flagship for Commander, Middle East Force in Kuwait. Additionally, the staff provided communications and crypto guard for assigned units as well as Heavy Attack Wing ONE (HATWING ONE), the Navy’s first nuclear attack unit at NAS Norfolk, VA.

In June 1954, after a two-year tour in the Air Warfare Division at OPNAV, Hank and Peggy reported aboard NAS Coco Solo, CZ, where Hank assumed duties as Admin Officer with the Pelicans of VP-45 and flew the P5M-1. Upon completion of their tour in Panama, Hank and Peggy returned to Norfolk, VA where Hank reported aboard the staff of Commander, Second Fleet (C2F) as ASW Officer. For the next two years (1956-1958), he earned his sea pay embarked in both USS *New Jersey* (BB-62) and USS *Northampton* (CLC-1), calling on ports throughout the Atlantic and North Sea.

August 1958 found Hank and Peggy transiting cross-country to NAS Alameda, CA where



Hank and Peggy 1955

Hank assumed duties as Executive Officer of VP-47. He assumed command in October 1959 and, within two weeks, the squadron deployed to NAS Iwakuni, Japan, conducting mining experiments in Buckner Bay, Okinawa under the direction of CTF-72. The following summer, in August 1960, the squadron relocated to a new home base at NAS Whidbey Island, WA. Two months later, Hank and Peggy were headed east to Arlington, VA where Hank was part of the original crew to set up the Defense Communications Agency (DCA), the forerunner of today’s Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), with the primary mission of operational control and management of the Defense Communications System.

After two years at DCA, Hank was off to his final sea tour as Navigator and eventually Operations Officer on

board USS *Bennington* (CVS-20). Converted to an ASW aircraft carrier in June 1959, *Bennington* was undergoing the Fleet Rehabilitation and Maintenance (FRAM) Overhaul at Puget Sound Navy Yard at Bremerton, WA to receive new sonar equipment when Hank arrived aboard. In May 1963, after refresher training in San Diego, CA, *Bennington* arrived at her new homeport in Long Beach, CA.

Immediately after departing *Bennington* in December 1963, Hank reported to DCA Pacific where he served as the Deputy Director. While DCA dealt with the communication crises of the Cold War, a “hot war” was waging in Southeast Asia. America’s commitment to South Vietnam led to the creation of a DCA Southeast Asia Region unit in 1964. DCA developed a plan to integrate the region’s communication systems into a single modern network. That would extend the commercial-quality communications to the battlefield. While temporarily assigned to Clark AFB, RP, Hank received a telephone call from a General in Washington directing him to lead a team of communications experts to determine the defense communications system needs for an increase in in-country troop count from 18,000 to 555,000. Upon completion of this task, Hank was ordered back to DCA Headquarters in Arlington, where, on 1 May 1966, he retired at the rank of Captain, USN.



*Oldest and Youngest - CAPT Gordon at 2013 Heritage Event*

Hank was just as active and just as successful in his civilian life, holding positions as Director of Pacific Region Planning for COMSAT (May 1966-May 1968), retiring as Director of Planning and Government Relations for Honeywell in April 1985 after 17 years of service with that organization. In 1994, Hank was elected Vice-President of the VP-45 Association at the October Reunion in Las Vegas, NV. After planning the 1996 Association Reunion in Virginia Beach, VA, Hank was elected President. For the next two years, he led the Association relinquishing the reins at the October 1998 Reunion in Pensacola, FL.

## ODDS & ENDS

### Heads Up!

Your Association is in the process of designing and ordering Polo Shirts and Caps with our new logo (see special section about the logo elsewhere in this newsletter). We do not have prices yet for either the shirts or caps but please be aware that they will be offered for sale at the upcoming reunion. We intend to make both as affordable as possible.

Right now we will have the shirts in navy blue and maybe white also. The caps will definitely be in navy blue and possibly khaki also. Below are a rendering of how they should look.



To evaluate demand, please feel free to send an email to the Webmaster at [hobgood.bill@gmail.com](mailto:hobgood.bill@gmail.com) with your comments.

## FROM THE WEBMASTER

By Bill Hobgood

Since our last newsletter, in coordination with our Secretary, Jack Keane who did all of the searching, obtaining, scanning and other administrative tasks, I have added a new section to the VP-45 Association Website. That section is called “Archives” and is accessible from our Home Page ([www.vp45association.org](http://www.vp45association.org)) via the “Archives” button on the red and blue navigation panel on the left side of that page.



This section is further divided into four sub-sections. Each of those is accessible via one of the four “buttons” on the [Archives page](#). The four sub-sections are:

**1. Cruise Books.** We currently have eight various cruise books scanned to PDF files. The blue and gold table allows you to look at each of these books. This page also gives instructions on how to get cruise books to us if you have one not already listed.

**2. Photo Albums.** This section is not new and it is also accessible directly from the Home Page. At some point, I intend to update these galleries so send in photos (scanned images preferable) if you have some from the era in which you were in VP-45.

**3. Old Association Newsletters.** This is the section where you can read just about every newsletter produced by the Association since 1988. We are missing (and look-

ing for) newsletters from the years 2002-2004.

**4. Miscellaneous Archives.** Here is where we have placed other historical squadron information of interest that doesn't fit any other category. This page also has instructions on how to send us information that you have that might fit here.

Another new feature is that we are now listing “News, Announcements and Events” in a section at the bottom of the Home Page. Currently we have a Reunion announcement (with a Link for signup) and a link to the current Newsletter.

Finally, some of our members may visit our website via a smart phone or a tablet (like the iPad). Be aware that all iPad tablets/phones and most browsers on Android tablets/phones will not display animation that was created with an Adobe software application called “Flash”...the standard for delivering high-impact, rich Web content. The prime example of this is the Flash banner just below the header on the Home Page ([www.vp45association.org](http://www.vp45association.org)). What you will see on your PC or Mac is a welcoming animation followed by the “Orion's Game” artwork by



Screen shot of the Home Page showing a “still” image of the Flash “Welcome” animation. Click image to view.

Peter Wenman. On tablets and smart phones that area will be blank. There is currently no fix for this issue. Rumor has it that this problem started as a result of a business disagreement between Steve Jobs, when he was president of Apple, and the Adobe company. Best I can tell there is no fix in the works for this.

# A SEA STORY

A Selection From Our Website “Sea Story” Page  
Submitted by Carl Sandlin

## “Hardly a Routine Patrol”

“And there I was...” flying aboard LN-6 with VP-45 Crew 6. The PPC was LCDR Peckham and he was in the left seat as we departed Shemya, Alaska after a two night stay-over. I was the FE. This flight just happened to be Crew 6’s last scheduled operational mission on the 1965-1966 Adak deployment. Not sure of the date, but would place it about January 5th, 1966.

Back in the mid-1960’s all squadron flight crews rotated through Shemya to stand “the ready alert.”



ADRC Carl Sandlin USN

Typically a crew would depart Adak and fly an operational mission enroute to Shemya. The first night was a night of leisure. The second day the flight crew had the alert duty for 24 hours, and the third day, if we didn’t launch on a ready mission, we were scheduled for a routine patrol back to Adak.

We had finished our Ready Alert rotation and departed Shemya for our routine patrol back to Adak. Our Operational Area was west of Shemya and we conducted surveillance over the Bearing Sea. I don’t recall our altitude or how close we were to Russia, but all of a sudden the TC, in an anxious voice, reported three aircraft had launched from an military airbase in Russia. (The U.S/Russia International Boundary is only two hundred miles from

Shemya).

LCDR Peckham immediately turned away from the potentially intercepting aircraft and descended the aircraft to approximately two hundred feet above the cold choppy sea. I reflected that I really had no desire to go swimming that day. Additionally, the PPC asked for, and immediately got, full power on those four big Allison engines. We remained at that speed and heading until we were confident we had not been picked up by Russian radar and had put enough distance between us to feel safe. Afterwards, when the pucker factor eased and everything else settled down, we continued our mission flight profile back to Adak.

Upon arrival to Adak it was snowing (what a surprise), with several inches accumulated on the runway. I can’t recall why we landed in that direction but I remember the wind was blowing from the left rear of the aircraft at about 35 to 40 knots. Maybe it was more of a wild left crosswind.... not sure. Anyway, after being seriously blown to the right side of the runway after touchdown, we aborted the first two landings. LCDR Peckham decided to give it one more shot. Being in the Flight Engineer seat, it was easy for me to see our tire tracks from the previous attempts running to the right side of the runway, but this last attempt was even more chilling. The aircraft was actually blown off the runway and we ran over a few of the runway lights.

The PPC decided that was it and he climbed out to continue to our alternate airfield; which was Kodiak - about twelve hundred miles and four hours away. After an uneventful landing there, we inspected the aircraft and discovered a tire had been damaged. The next day, one of our crews from Adak delivered us a spare wheel and tire and, after repairs, we returned to Adak.

That was a lot of action during a very long day. I think I recall it so well because it was our last flight on that deployment.

Submitted by: Carl Sandlin, ADRC – FE, LN-6 (BUNO 151360)

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## CPRW-11 Change of Command Liedman Relieves Wiese

by: LT Eric Frank, CPRW-11 PAO

Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing Eleven (CPRW-11) held its 53<sup>rd</sup> Change of Command on 16 January as CAPT Sean Liedman relieved CAPT Eric Wiese as Commodore. CAPT Liedman is a 1991 graduate of the United States



*CAPT Sean Liedman (left) and CAPT Eric Wiese (right) shake hands on the Change of Command ceremony stage.*

Naval Academy as well as earning his Masters in National and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College.

CAPT Liedman's Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force tours include: Patrol Squadron Forty-Five; an instructor at Patrol Squadron Thirty; a department head tour with the VPU-1 Buzzards; and Commanding Officer of Patrol Squadron Eight. He has served as Federal Executive Fellow at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs; Flag Lieutenant to Commander, Carrier Group One; and as P-3C/P-8A Requirements Officer in the Air Warfare Division on the Chief of Naval Operations' Staff.

Commodore Liedman's awards include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with Combat V and 3 Strike/Flight, three Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, and many other unit and campaign awards. CAPT Liedman will continue CPRW-11's transition from the P-3C to the P-8A aircraft.

## Other Community News

Recently, RDML Matthew Carter, Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group (CPRG), provided a summary of the maritime patrol and reconnaissance community's accomplishments in 2013 and what the community could look forward to in 2014.

Commander, Operational test and Evaluation Force released the P-8A Poseidon Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E) report in July 2013 with an overall finding of operationally effective and suitable and recommended P-8A for Fleet introduction. This milestone led to a favorable Full Rate Production decision by the Honorable Frank Kendall, USD (AT&L), on 3 January 2014.

East Coast VP transition executed per plan in 2013. NAVAIR and Boeing delivered eight P-8A aircraft in 2013 for a total of 13 fleet aircraft on the ramp at NAS Jacksonville. The community successfully completed transition of two VP squadrons (VP-16 and VP-5) with VP-45 expected to be certified safe-for-flight in February 2014. In



*The first operational P-8A Poseidon - the first of six aircraft from VP-16 - takes off from Jacksonville, Florida, marking its inaugural operational deployment to the Western Pacific in December 2013.*

order to allow the P-8A inventory to build back to a level to sustain deployed and at-home requirements, there will be a six-month pause in transition following VP-45. The next P-8A is scheduled to arrive in Jacksonville early this summer and Boeing is scheduled to deliver the first seven of 11 Lot 3 aircraft this year. East Coast transition will complete in FY16. West Coast P-8A transition training

will begin in FY17 and the last VP squadron in Whidbey Island will complete transition in FY20. P-3 inventory continues to increase due to airframe sustainment deliveries from Lockheed Martin facilities in Greenville, SC, and L3 Communications facilities in Waco, TX. Currently there are 103 of 138 P-3C aircraft available on the flight line.

Laying the groundwork for the MQ4-C Triton, Broad Area Maritime Surveillance – Demonstration (BAMS-D) continues to provide operational support as well as lessons learned in preparation for fielding the MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS). Calendar year 2013 marked the fifth year of continuous BAMS-D operations in Central Command (CENTCOM) and achieved the significant milestone of 10,000 total flight hours in December 2013.

MQ-4C Triton UAS, which is currently undergoing system development and demonstration, made significant strides in 2013. A successful Flight Readiness Review (FRR) in March enabled commencement of flight test with Triton, achieving first flight 22 May 2013. Aircraft will transition from Palmdale, CA to NAS Patuxent River, MD in 2014 for continued development flight testing incorporating mission sensor packages.

A major milestone in 2013 was the stand-up of the US Navy's first fixed-wing unmanned squadron, or VUP-19 "Big Red". Established as the first of two Triton squad-



*MQ-4C Triton BAMS*

rons, VUP-19 is a pre-establishment unit that lays the foundation for the maritime patrol community's transition to the MQ-4C Triton UAS. Following stabilization in program budget and schedule plans, significant contract actions in 2013 incorporated program re-plan activities with Northrop Grumman Corporation and led to award of Triton Aircrew trainer (2F230) with anticipated delivery to NAS Jacksonville in 2014.



*P-3/P-8 Flightline at NAS Jax 2014*

# A Special Report

## NEW ASSOCIATION LOGO

By Bill Hobgood

One of my collateral and “unofficial” duties as Webmaster is to be the Association purveyor of all things new and cool. Probably because all aging self-made computer technology geeks have tons of neat software like Photoshop, Flash, Illustrator, Light Room and others.

Anyway, about eight months ago we Association Officers were discussing which squadron logo (current or the old “Goofy Pelican”) should adorn the pages of our website and the banner we had discussed with our membership at the last reunion. I commented that perhaps, instead of using a VP-45 squadron logo, “...being as big an organization as we are, perhaps we should come up with a unique logo design for the Association.” As those words left my lips I knew I was in trouble. Everybody thought it was a great idea and that I should immediately “get to work” on the new design.

Part of the backstory is that I have a friend who is quite the wildlife photographer. While on Facebook one day I noticed he had posted a batch of new photos of various birds...a number of Pelican shots were included. A couple images in particular caught my eye and I instantly thought that they

might be just what I needed for the new logo design. Got his permission and some Photoshop work later, these “drafts” (large multi-image at bottom of page) emerged. I emailed them to the other Association Officers and we discussed them during our next scheduled conference call.

Initially we decided upon the Pelican flying straight



*Embroidery - First Attempt*

and level with red lettering (one of these “drafts” below - bottom far right). To see what that particular logo would look like when embroidered onto shirts and caps, we hired a lady who does that sort of stuff and had her do up two shirts and two caps. When she mailed them back to us we really were not satisfied that this logo was going to work...and therefore it was decided I should keep working on the logo but go in another direction – with some different Pelican design as the centerpiece of the new logo.



*Initial Association Logo “Draft” Images*



*Genesis of The "Majestic Pelican"*

It just didn't seem like any of the pelican images I had worked on already were going to work well so I chose a completely different pelican. This one (top of page) is actually two sequential Pelican shots while the bird is "touching down" for landing. These were taken by another photographer friend – Jerry Hagen, a retired Coast Guard officer.

I had these two photos and I really liked the wing positions in the shot taken just as the pelican touched down on the pier; but to have the final result look like a pelican in flight, I "borrowed" the feet from the middle image above to come up with what our President, Doug Mitchell, has unofficially dubbed the "Majestic Pelican."

Many iterations later, this is the logo (right and above) that was endorsed unanimously by your five officers. We then sent an email to all our members asking them to comment on all these different styles



*The "Majestic Pelican" Logo*

and a huge majority (86%) liked the "Majestic Pelican" version for a new association logo

But the story does not end here. Much to my surprise and chagrin, the "Majestic Pelican" design would not work (for technical and visual reasons) as the new "logo" in the top left hand corner of each page at our website....a use that was always intended. In order not to have to reconfigure our web design/layout, we needed our logo to be round and more symmetrical (like the old squadron "patch" that was already there). I went back to work. I took the "Majestic Pelican" back into Photoshop and tried to get the more oval shape to fit in a round compartment. After a lot of reconfiguring, I eventually came up with the image (left) that looks more like a squadron "patch" and it fit perfectly in the space where we previously had the old VP-45 logo (far left).



*"Old" Squadron Logo*



*New Association "Patch"*

# ALUMNI EVENTS

## 50th Anniversery

Margo and Jerry Austin celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, 8 February 2014.



“Margo and Jerry Austin were married in Sanford the same day and same year that Roy and Claire Langlais were married in Lewiston, Maine – Feb. 8, 1964. They have been friends for the past 42 years and have celebrated their anniversaries together since then. The families’ children threw a big party on Feb. 8 in St. Augustine, where approximately 180 family and friends gathered to celebrate. Margo Austin is the former Margo Dunn, and Claire Langlais is the former Claire Poirier. The Austin Children are Chris Austin and Stacey Kirsch, both of Jacksonville. They have five grandchildren. The Langlais children are David Langlais, Eau Clair, Wis., Stuart Langlais, Front Royal, Va., and Michael Langlais, Houston. They have four grandchildren.” Additionally, Jerry Austin celebrated his 72nd birthday on 10 February 2014.

## Porsche Patrol

On 22 September 2013, Tom Rau wrote to say, “Can’t fly but I can still drive!” He had just returned to St. Augustine after a trip to the Miami Homestead Speedway where he drove the newest, latest and greatest Porsche has to offer on the high bank oval and on the road course. Tom went on to say, “If you ever get



Tom Rau - Still Patrolling

the chance to attend one of these events it’s a serious adrenaline push and if you choose to go with a Porsche professional driving instructor out on the track the education and

degree of skill set improvement is incredible in a very short period of time. Can you believe Porsche let me go it alone for a few laps [with a pace car out front]? Awesome nonetheless!”

## Mini Reunion

In November 2013, numerous Pelicans got together for a mini-reunion in Williamsburg, VA.



Top Row: Les Carl, Bob Colvert, Doug Hankins, Ray Figueras, Rick Barbour, Mike Olenick, Don Stanton  
 Middle Row: Dave Bennett, Dave Spisso, Bill Slagle, Jane Carl, Tom Perkins, Tom Rau  
 Bottom Row: Carol Bennett, Martha Spisso, Marilyn Colvert, Diane Figueras, Jane Perkins, Peggy Gachet - Rau, Nancy Slagle

## Ski Patrol

Jack Keane and Scott Bosecker managed to get some time in on the slopes of California and Nevada in February 2014.



Left-to-right – Jack Keane, Scott Bosecker, and Steve Myers (a retired VAW NFO who stood in for the missing Pelicans)

Missing from this year’s trip to Lake Tahoe were Chuck Geyer and Scott Woolfrey.



# SQUADRON NEWS

By: LTJG Joseph Johannes, VP-45 PAO

## QA Dept Leads P-8A Transition

The “World Famous Pelicans” continue to excel as they transition into the Navy’s newest maritime patrol aircraft, the P-8A Poseidon. VP-45’s Quality Assurance (QA) department has been leading the charge in becoming the Navy’s third operational P-8A squadron.



*VP-45 Quality Assurance department standing in front of the squadron’s newly accepted aircraft 434.*

As the primary department overseeing safe and correct maintenance practices, QA has paved the way in preparing the squadron to receive its first aircraft.

The mission of QA is to ensure that maintainers complete repairs and maintenance not only correctly and expeditiously, but safely as well. Quality Assurance representatives provide the supervision and final checks on aircraft maintenance to confirm the P-8A is safe for flight. “It’s our job as QA to make sure that maintenance work is completed safely and up to code,” said Quality Assurance Officer, Lieutenant Jordan Young. “For us, quality and safety are everything. We not only make sure that maintenance is getting the job done safely, but that the work is done correctly so that the aircrew can be safe and confident in the plane when

out completing their missions.”

Magnifying the excitement of the approaching transition completion was news that the “Pelicans” would accept delivery of their first P-8A Poseidon, aircraft side number 434. For the past month Pelican maintainers have already taken possession of aircraft 434 and worked on the plane under QA department’s as well as VP-30’s guidance. “It’s exciting. We have really taken ownership of 434 and I’m excited to see what the future holds for this plane as a part of VP-45,” said AM2 Jonathan Harrod. Following the aircraft acceptance, QA will continue to lead the “Pelican” maintenance team as they prepare for their Safe for Flight evaluation next month.

## Surprise Promotions at Holiday Party

With holiday cheer in the air, the “World Famous” Pelicans of Patrol Squadron FORTY- FIVE descended on the Hyatt Riverfront Hotel in downtown Jacksonville to enjoy a night of camaraderie and togetherness. Pelicans demonstrated their Christmas spirit with everything from gift giving to dancing to wearing light up Christmas sweaters. The party saw the VP-45 Morale,



*CDR John Brabazon congratulates AT2 Ford and LS1 Staton on their CAP promotions.*

Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) committee give away over \$4,500 worth of gifts to include electronics, gift

certificates, and weekend getaways.

The gifts were a huge hit among the Pelicans, but the true spirit of the holiday season fully blossomed when the Skipper CDR John Brabazon presented the last two unique “gifts.” As part of the Command Advancement Program (CAP) he surprised two deserving Pelicans, Petty Officers Timi Staton and Thomas Ford, with promotions to the ranks of First Class and Second Class Petty Officer respectively.

CAP was established in 1978 as an incentive for sea-going personnel to be recognized for superior performance. The program enables commands to identify sailors who have shown exceptional leadership and dedication and promote them to their next rank outside of the normal means of advancement. Emotions poured from newly promoted LS1 Staton as she exclaimed, “I can honestly say I didn’t see it coming. I’m just so happy the command saw fit to make me a First Class (Petty Officer) and I’m so grateful to the people around me who made it happen.”

With everyone’s excitement riding high from the promotions, the Pelicans kicked the party into high gear with a dance party that would make even the most popular dance clubs jealous. “It was a fun time for everyone here. We’ve been really working hard with upgrading to the new aircraft, so it was great to see everyone come together to relax and celebrate the upcoming holidays,” said LTJG Chris Duncan. At the end of the night the Pelicans left the Hyatt tired from dancing, but brimming with excitement from having the opportunity to spend the evening together.

### **Pelicans Adopt a Road!**

The “World Famous” Pelicans of Patrol Squadron FOUR FIVE were honored by Jacksonville City Councilman Jim Love Friday for their tireless work as part of the Beautify Jacksonville Adopt a Road program. Councilman Love met with members of the Pelican Team and helped dedicate a sign signifying VP-45’s commitment to cleaning up the Jacksonville area.

As part of the Adopt a Road program, the Pelicans are responsible for maintaining approximately a mile of Argyle Forest Blvd in Orange Park. As part of the “adoption”, the Pelicans took over the responsibility of removing any trash that had accumulated and making sure that the area looked clean and neat. The Pelicans took this responsibility to heart and set about mak-

ing this little stretch of road theirs. Making several visits over a two month period, the Pelicans were responsible for removing over forty bags of trash from



*Pelicans discuss Adopt a Road with City Councilman Jim Love. Pictured left to right CO CDR JJ Brabazon, XO CDR TJ Grady, Councilman Jim Love, AME1 Scott Walker, and NCI Natalie France*

the road side. “We really wanted to give back to the community,” said AME1 Scott Walker, who took the lead in organizing the program at VP-45. “Coming up through the ranks, I noticed a lack of community service opportunities in my commands and I wanted to change that here in VP-45.”

In recognition of their hard work, the Pelicans were honored by Councilman Jim Love with a sign recognizing their achievement in cleaning up the Jacksonville streets. “You have all shown a love of country, serving in the military,” said the councilman, “now you’re also showing your love for your community.”

### **Pelicans Complete P-8A Transition**

Patrol Squadron FOUR FIVE officially completed their transition to the P-8A Poseidon and became the Navy’s third active duty P-8A squadron following VP-



16 and VP-5. Before they could officially complete their transition, the Pelicans had to run the gauntlet of “Safe for Flight,” a grueling week long inspection

by Wing Eleven inspectors who checked everything from emergency drills to NATOPS jackets to make sure that VP-45 was up to fleet standards and could perform these drills safely. “It was a challenging experience,” said Aviation Safety Officer LT Donnell Exum, “But it is one that we are more than happy to undertake.” The drills, which were meant to simulate such incidents like an aircraft mishap, both on the ground and in the air, pushed the maintainers of VP-45 to their limits, but in the end the Pelicans came through in flying colors.

“The many months of hard work paid off as VP- 45 accepted, met, and conquered the challenges set forth



*A VP-45 Tactical Crew works at their stations in the “Tube” of a new P-8 Poseidon*

by the wing SFF inspection,” remarked Chief Mario Caligiuri. The Pelicans’ success impressed everyone involved, from the VP-45 XO, CDR Grady, to the inspectors from Wing Eleven. “After six months in the school house over at VP-30 learning the P-8A, I am proud of the Pelicans,” said the XO, “They went above and beyond my expectations during this transition.” With their transition over, the VP-45 Pelicans look



now to preparing for their next WestPac deployment Kadena Airbase in the Seventh Fleet area of responsibility. While they know that the future will be challenging, the Pelicans look forward to the opportunity to put the skills they have learned during their transition to the real world test that their upcoming deployment will bring.

## TREASURER’S REPORT

### PATRON FOUR FIVE ASSOCIATION TREASURER’S REPORT

Checking Acct	1 July 2013	\$4232.60
Income:		
Dues	839.36	
Total Income	\$839.36	
Expenses:		
Printing	139.20	
Postage	386.88	
Supplies	23.95	
Website Fees	168.77	
Total Expenses	\$718.80	
Net Income		\$120.56
Checking Acct	31 Dec 2013	4353.16
Money Market	31 Dec 2013	15504.38
Total Capital		\$19857.54

#### Fellow Pelicans:

We used to receive most payments by check and communication was mostly “snail mail” and telephone. Now we receive almost all of our dues by online payment via our new website and most of our communication is via email. One favor: Please, please check the roster (or email any of the officers) to see if you are past due...and, if so, send in payment as quickly as possible. Paying for multiple years at a time makes it easier for everybody.

V/R, “PJ” Imhof  
Association Treasurer

# MAILBAG

**Editor's Note:** We received a lot of mail over the past six months, many commenting on the new *Pelican Post* format and style. Although the correspondence was addressed to me, I can in no way take credit for the artistic talents of Bill Hobgood. He performed the lion's share of the work on the September issue (as well as this issue) and deserves the credit for an outstanding publication. We are hoping that members, after reading this newsletter, are prompted to send us your thoughts, remarks, accolades, complaints, quips or short memories. Email is by far the easiest way to get a hold of us. Please send your letters to the MAILBAG by addressing them to this email address ([jack\\_keane@verizon.net](mailto:jack_keane@verizon.net)).

Thanks, Jack Keane  
Association Secretary

**PS:** Additionally, PJ Imhof and Bob Johnson sent us several photos. If you have photos that you can scan, please send them to me or Bill Hobgood so we can use them in future editions of the Post.

**Finally, many of you provided your thoughts on the new Association logo, the vast majority of which was in favor of the selection.**

Hey Jack!  
GREAT job. This *Pelican Post* is the best newsletter I've ever seen. I don't envy the challenge you face in making the future posts better or even equal to this one. I'm really impressed! I'm sorry I couldn't make the heritage event but I hope to see you next year.  
Best regards, Ben Wentworth

Hey Jack!  
Love the newsletter too! Great Job to both you and Bill!  
WELL DONE, BZ. Ken App

Hey Jack!  
Young Man: You do a damn good job.....many thanks.  
Bob Bailey

Hey Jack!  
I want to complain. Everything on mine is perfect. Keep up the fair work ;~)  
Joe Brundage

Hey Jack!  
I Just finished reading the new *Pelican Post*. Outstanding job to ALCON. Very interesting and informative. Obviously a lot of work went into this issue. This is without question the way to get the word out.  
Ron Christopher



Hey Jack!  
I love it! Very professional and enjoyable - well done.  
Bob Ziegler

Hey Jack!  
WoW!! What a great Newsletter...nice work by the Pelican team.  
All the best,  
Captain Rich Fite (Former VP-45 CO)

Hey Jack!  
I can't tell you how much I enjoyed the new format. The 1956 NARMID cruise book was of such value. It put such a personal face on those days in the squadron. Thanks so much for your efforts.

Note I was a transplant from VP -34 following the move from Trinidad.

Thanks again, Pete Smith

Hey Jack!

Super job on the new *Pelican Post* - it really jumps out at you, and is very easy to read. I'm very happy to receive it, and the roster, in electronic format and please ensure that I'm **not** listed in your files to receive any paper. This is the way to go.

I'll scan the roster to see if I can come up with local former Pelicans not on it, and set off to twist their arms to join and attend the next reunion here in JAX. It's a great opportunity - I wholeheartedly agree with Buck's observation; they don't know what they've been missing until they attend a reunion.

Not surprised, re: Bill H. I think we chatted some on framing the 'Orion's Game' print. Got off an e-mail to 6-8 former Pelicans I did not see on the current roster. Let's hope it generates some interest. Unfortunately I missed the 2012 reunion - got sidelined by a bypass and subsequent rehab. Definitely want to make the next one.

Jim Cole

Hey Jack!

Great Pelican Post!

FYI I am the author of the 40 degree lock on error in Adak 1965. I have a few other sea stories that I will send you.

Tom Golder

Hey Jack!

You have outdone yourself with new format and content of the Pelican Post ... thanks for bringing fresh air to a rather archaic publication.

Bill Hobgood has moved us into the 21st century ... that's terrific!

Wally Massenburg

Hey Jack!

Great Newsletter with all the different sections!!

Cheers,

Bill Rodriguez

Hey Jack,

On my request, this photo (below) was sent to me by Laurie Feest, wife of VP-45 10 Boat Plane Captain, "Pup" Feest. Pup has a whole bunch of photo slides and I've been trying to get them in our archives.

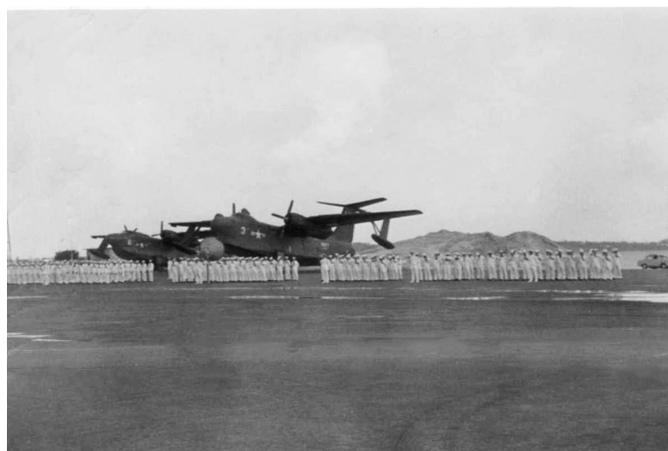
PJ Imhof



*"Spy vs Spy" P-5 Nose Art*

Editor's Note: Bob Johnson also provided several photos from the Squadron's days in Bermuda. A couple are the next two (below) of a Squadron inspection in 1958.

Bob went on to say, "I also hope that I will be able to attend the reunion in Jacksonville in 2014. I attended a reunion many, many years ago in Jacksonville but never had a chance to do that again. I will be sending you more photos as I locate them."



*Summer White Inspection, Bermuda circa 1958*

Hey Jack!

May I say that you have outdone yourself on this



(newsletter). Not only are the layout and quality of the production outstanding, but the writing and assortment of articles reflect a real sense of the long and proud history of the squadron, the men and women who have served in it, and the spouses who have given so much for it. You've set a new benchmark—Well Done!

Rich Robison

**Editor's Note: after I let Rich know that Bill Hobgood did ALL the heavy lifting on the newsletter, I received the below:**

"Then I take back everything I said about you, Jack! ;- ) Great job, Bill—and thanks for all the hard work you put into this."

#### **Comments on the Logo:**

Hey Doug:

Not having had a chance to attend the last reunion the proposed banner is interesting. However, if the Association needs a banner I would opt for keeping the Pelican Patch that has been proudly worn by squadron members since the 1940's. If a banner is to be designed I believe it would be meaningful to a majority of members of the association if the banner read "Patrol Squadron VP-45" over the pelican and "Association" under the patch. The art work and various pelican images on the sample are well done but they don't hold any identity or signifi-

cance for the members of the association that have proudly worn the existing pelican patch for the past 60+ years. The Navy places a great deal of stock in tradition and moving to a "modernized pelican" image for the Squadron Banner would take away the squadron's identity for many members. It should be interesting to see what other members recommend.

Art Pearson

Hey Doug,

I think the logo you guys designed and recommend look great! Thanks for all of your hard work on behalf of the Association.

Gene "Curly" Summerlin

Hey Doug,

I think that Bill Hobgood did a great job and the Assoc. Officers made an excellent choice. It gets my "vote".

Ivan Vinkovich

Editor's Note: Solicited comments regarding the new Association logo (see article on this logo in another section of this newsletter) were at least three to one in favor of the logo.



## BACK IN THE DAY

### VP-45 & Project “CHURCHY” in the 1950’s

by: Jack Keane

In 1994, while Association Secretary, Chuck Caldwell set out to expand the Association’s archives. In so doing, he reached out to Hank Ingber, Al Raithel, Roger Tully, and the USS *Currituck* Association to reconstruct the files of an event that took place in September 1953 in the Galapagos Islands known as Project CHURCHY.

In the early 1950s, the Office of Naval Research (ONR) and the Atomic Energy Commission conducted a series of joint tests to collect data in the upper atmosphere. Since 1947, ONR had been using Skyhook balloons developed by the Research Laboratories of General Mills, Inc. to carry nuclear emulsions and complex scientific instruments to altitudes of 100,000 feet to obtain cosmic radiation data. Earlier efforts included Project MUSH-RAT, a series of studies of low-energy particles which took scientists to the North Geomagnetic Pole.



*“Churchy” the Turtle and Project Mascot*

Then, on 28 July 1953, William E. Wright, Acting Head of the Nuclear Physics Branch at ONR, announced to the scientific community another series of studies. This series of tests was to launch an estimated 14-16 Skyhook balloons as near to the geomagnetic equator as possible for the purpose of investigating high energy cosmic radiation. The new expedition, known as Project CHURCHY would be conducted in the area of the Galapagos Islands because “only at the Geomagnetic Equator can the



*A VP-45 PBM (“Fineart ONE”) circa 1954*

high-energy cosmic-ray particles which the scientists wish to study be obtained without the complication of accompanying low-energy particles.” Since many turtles are known to roam the desolate volcanic shores of the Galapagos Islands, it seemed appropriate to name this project in honor of a turtle named “Churchy” after “Churchill ‘Churchy’ LaFemme”, one of the principal characters in the popular comic strip of the day, “Pogo”.

Six American research groups participated in the primary investigations under the direction of the ONR. In addition, scientists from 29 other US and European laboratories furnished nuclear emulsions which were flown in three gondolas prepared by the University of Rome.

The CHURCHY Group was formed and was comprised of USS *Currituck* (AV-7) as Mobile Base Unit, USS *Ellyson* (DMS-19) and

USS *Rodman* (DMS-21) as Retriever Units,, Patrol Squadron Forty-Five (VP-45) as Tracking Unit, and an Evaluation Unit consisting of ONR and civilian



USS Currituck AV-7 with Project Churchy balloon

personnel. LCDR Malcom D. Ross, USNR, of the ONR Air Branch, Naval Sciences Division, was named Director of the Scientific Expedition Group, embarked in *Currituck*.

The Group was activated on 24 August 1953 and, on 1 September, the Evaluation Unit left Balboa, CZ



Pelican PBM ready for balloon launch

aboard *Currituck* with *Ellyson* and *Rodman* in company. Operations commenced on 6 September and were concluded on 12 September.

*Currituck* anchored in Caleta Aeolian, Isla Baltra each evening to provide support to both the Tracking and Evaluation Units. Since navigational charts of the area were unreliable, *Currituck* was required to confine all movements to daylight hours. At sunrise each morning, *Currituck*

departed Aeolian Bay and steamed for an hour to an area where sea room would permit obtaining a zero relative wind condition over the seaplane deck for the scheduled balloon launch. Recovery requirements before darkness prevented launching more than two eight-hour balloon flights on any one day.

Immediately following launch, the tracking crew on the *Currituck* would maintain track for the balloon's first hour of flight, at which time the aircrews of VP-45 would take over. Aircraft reports were the



“Churchy” data collection equipment

only source of tracking information once the balloon had floated beyond the visual contact range of the *Currituck*.

Aircraft tracking was primarily conducted through visual contact with the floating balloon. Once the equipment was in the water, the aircraft marked its position with smoke lights and orbited the location until arrival of the recovery unit. The distance of the average splash point from the base permitted the aircraft to orbit until the recovery vessel had arrived.

On one occasion, however, the winds at floating altitudes exceeded prediction considerably and the aircraft was required to transit 521 miles to the actual splash point. Fuel requirements for the extended transit time forced the aircraft to depart the splash point before the retrieving unit had arrived. Departure was made after dark and although a smoke light was used to mark the downed equipment, the recovery vessel was unable to locate the equipment upon its arrival.

In an April 1995 letter to Chuck Caldwell, Roger Tully, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ordnanceman on Crew 2 stated, "I remember one balloon launch that took us almost past the point of no return. We landed back at the *Currituck* with very little fuel remaining. LT Hall was the PPC. He really kept PO1 Smith busy at that radar console to help get us back."



*Balloon Pre-Flight*

The retrieving units reached the actual drop position by: first, the position report of the aircraft orbiting the drop; second, radio direction finder bearings taken by the plane on the assigned retrieving vessel; third, radar contact with the tracking

aircraft; fourth, visual contact with the tracking aircraft; and fifth, visual contact with smoke markers



*USS Currituck (AV-7) with balloon ready to launch*

dropped by the aircraft. When the retrieving vessel arrived at the position of the drop, recovery was effected by use of the ship's motor whaleboat without incident.

Balloon launches were scheduled to permit a reasonable time for the recovery vessels to arrive at the splash point and effect recovery before darkness. Winds at the floating levels were not always predictable due to very sparse upper air data available, and on two occasions the actual splash point could not be reached by the recovery vessel before darkness.

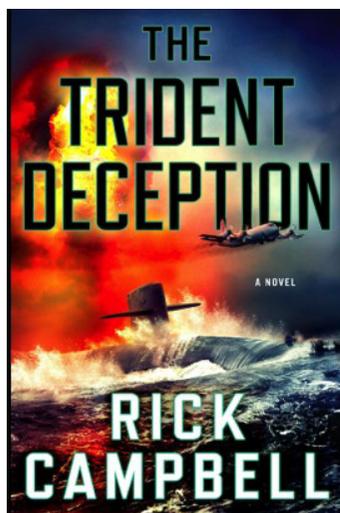
During the course of the operation, VP-45 accumulated a total of 324.5 hours of flight time.

In December 1953, a two-page article on Projects MUSHRAT and CHURCHY was published in the Navy's All Hands magazine ([http://www.navy.mil/ah\\_online/archpdf/ah195312.pdf](http://www.navy.mil/ah_online/archpdf/ah195312.pdf)).

Current Association members who participated in Project CHURCHY include Roger Tully, Dan Faas, George Dragos, Don Kohlmayer, Hank Ingber, Al Rotering, Charlie Baron, Richard Moore, and "Mike" Johnson.

**FLY NAVY**

# MILITARY READING



## "The Trident Deception"

*"A terrific thriller debut. Campbell does an amazing job, balancing character interaction with high-octane action. This is the best novel about a submarine since Tom Clancy's classic The Hunt For Red October."*

— Jeff Ayers - Booklist (starred review)

*"No one puts the reader inside a submarine like Rick Campbell does in The Trident Deception. I couldn't put it down. Compelling and thrilling, this novel is a must read."*

— Jack Coughlin, New York Times bestselling author of *Shooter* and *Time to Kill*

The 24 missiles carried by a TRIDENT ballistic missile submarine can obliterate an entire country, leaving behind a wasteland uninhabitable for 10,000 years. A single radio transmission stands in the way...

Israeli Intelligence confirms Iran will complete assembly of its first nuclear weapon within a month, and the Israeli Security Council decides the Iranian facility must be destroyed. As the USS Kentucky transits to within launch range, the Pacific Fleet is sorted to prevent the unthinkable...([see more](#))

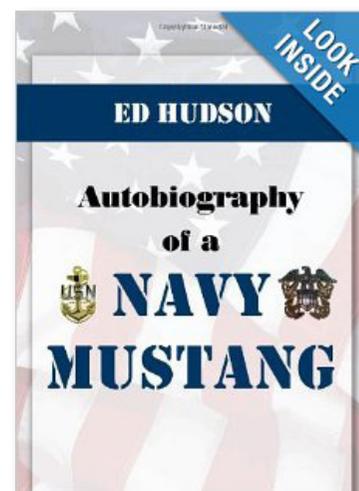
To order the Hardcover or eBook from Amazon.com, [CLICK HERE](#)

## "Autobiography of a Navy Mustang"

*"This is basically the story of one man's naval career. Ed Hudson is not a professional writer, which makes this book much more interesting because you get the true feeling of what it was like to serve your country during that particular time period. Since he served as both an enlisted man and as an officer, he has a special perspective on the important roles of the two positions. I recommend this book to "Old Salts" looking to relive memories of their service time or to young men and women looking for something meaningful and rewarding to do with their lives."*

— J. Carlson

Autobiography of a Navy Mustang by Ed Hudson is a compilation of entertaining anecdotes of his very successful naval career from his enlistment during the Korean War through his retirement in 1981. To quote the author, "I will strive to take you through boot camp in San Diego, California, and the other schools I attended, as well as all the various duty station assignments from the shores of the Mainland United States and Hawaii, to the shores of Bermuda, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Vietnam, citing the promotions I received along the way." A man with great ambition, he took advantage of every opportunity for education and made continued progress up the ladder from enlisted man to officer.....([see more](#))



To order the Hardcover or eBook from Amazon.com, [CLICK HERE](#)

*Note: These books are brought to your attention solely because they appear to represent works of particular interest to our members. Both happen to have been written by current Association Members. Any further listings in future newsletters are solely at the discretion of the Association officers.*



**LCDR Walter (Wally) Coupe' USN (ret)**, age 92, passed on Monday, 24 February 2014. Wally was a WWII veteran and a member of the Silver Eagles, an association of enlisted pilots. Following the war, he was a Flag pilot to numerous Admirals and also flew various celebrities including Bob Hope and Jackie Onassis.



After his retirement from the Navy in 1972, he once again established a relationship with Steve Kaiser, a fellow naval pilot with whom he had gone through flight school. They developed an incredibly fun and successful fishing passion that led to him winning the Pensacola Big Game Fishing Club's Grand Champion award numerous times as well as multiple category awards.

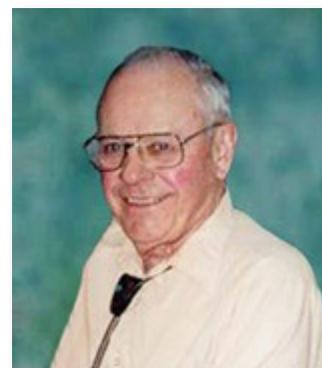
Wally is survived by sons Mike and James, as well as granddaughters Julie, Jessica and Olivia, and great grandsons Brendan and Tyler. He was preceded in death by both wife Patricia and son

Tim. Solace, comfort, and joy was found in his two dogs, Jill and Jo-Jo.

**CDR Martin Joseph Gillan III, USN (ret)**, age 83, of Kailua, HI, an entrepreneur and Navy Commander, died in Honolulu on 29 September 2012. He was born in Pennsylvania.

He is survived by wife Leonide D.; sons Martin IV and Michael; daughters M. Joy and Margret Gillan, and Michaela Sano; and three grandchildren. He was buried at National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, HI. Martin served in Vietnam, and Korea.

**Robert Alexander McClelland III**, age 89, passed away Tuesday, June 4, 2013 with three of his five children by his side. He was born Dec. 2, 1923 in Dwight, IL to Robert Alexander McClelland, Jr. and Fredrica Maurine Bragg.



After graduating from Dwight High School, he attended the University of Illinois and was a member of Theta Chi fraternity. The following year he was accepted to the United States

Naval Academy from which he graduated in the class of '46. After serving on the USS Alabama in Bremerton, WA, he attended flight school in Pensacola, FL. He received a second degree in Aeronautical Engineering from the US Naval Postgraduate School in 1953. From Purdue University he received a Master of Science Degree in Industrial Engineering in 1954.

He was a proud member of VP-45 and enjoyed telling stories of his adventures as a sea plane pilot.

His career in the US Navy took him from Panama, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Florida, California and finally to New Mexico where he worked at Naval Weapons Evaluation Facility until his retirement in 1965. After working at JTF2 in civil service, he again worked at NWEF until his retirement in 1986.

He was preceded in death by his loving wife, their young son, Robert Alexander McClelland IV, and his sister, Jean McClelland of Los Alamos. He is survived by his children, Ann M. Jost and her husband, Robert of Farmington, NM, Alice M. Roche and her husband, Steve

of Albuquerque, Robert A. McClelland and his wife, Laura of Frankfort, IN, Philip G. McClelland and his wife, Janice of Caballo, NM, and Scot P. McClelland and his wife, Gerri Duran of Albuquerque; and numerous grandchildren.



*"I can imagine no more rewarding a career. And any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction: 'I served in the United States Navy.'"*

*John F. Kennedy*

## Patron 45 Reunion Reservation Form

DATE	TIME	EVENT	COST	QTY	TOTAL
		Reunion Registration Fee (per person ~ non-refundable)	\$40 pp		
		All Hands your membership must be current in order to participate in reunion activities. If your Patron 45 membership has lapsed or you are a new member please include dues below:			
		1 Year Membership	\$15 pp		
		5 Year Membership	\$65 pp		
		Lifetime Membership	\$300 pp		
		<b>SELECT EVENT A OR EVENT B:</b>			
THU10/16	9:00-4:00	EVENT A: King's Bay Naval Submarine Base Tour	\$40 pp		
THU 0/16	10:00-4:00	EVENT B: Jacksonville City & Anheuser Busch Tour	\$32 pp		
		<b>SELECT EVENT C OR EVENT D:</b>			
FRI 10/17	10:00-4:00	EVENT C: Amelia Island & Fernandina Beach Tour	\$28 pp		
FRI 10/17	10:30-4:00	EVENT D: Naval Air Station Jacksonville	\$36 pp		
FRI 10/17	5:30-10:00	EVENT E: Alhambra Dinner Theatre	\$69 pp		
SAT 10/18	10:00-3:30	EVENT F: St. Augustine Tour	\$49 pp		
SAT 10/18	6:00-10:00	Banquet Dinner – make selection below			
		Roast Sirloin	\$38 pp		
		Chicken Marsala	\$33 pp		
		Non-refundable Late Reservation Fee (If registering after September 3, 2014)	\$15 pp		
		Tour Cancellation Insurance: Protect your \$\$ (Fee is non-refundable)	\$15 pp		
<b>TOTAL</b>					

**>>> PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

NAME (As you want it to appear on badge): _____	
SPOUSE: _____	GUEST: _____
ADDRESS: _____	CITY: _____ ST: ___ ZIP: _____
PRIMARY PHONE: _____	EMAIL ADDRESS: _____
EMERGENCY CONTACT: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____	
YEARS IN VP 45: _____	TO _____ ADDITIONAL YEARS IN SQUADRON _____ TO _____
IS THIS YOUR FIRST REUNION YES ___ NO ___ PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU ARE A WW-II VETERAN ___	

>>> Mail this completed form with a check payable to: MRP, Box 1588, Colleyville, TX 76034  
 OR You may register online at: [www.MilitaryReunionPlanner.com](http://www.MilitaryReunionPlanner.com) Use Pass Code: mrp&patron

**RESERVATIONS ARE DUE BY SEPTEMBER 3, 2014**

- Reservation money is non-refundable after due date unless Tour Cancellation insurance is purchased above.
- Insurance holders are eligible for a refund less processing fee until Midnight before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the reunion.
- Insurance ends once the reunion begins – notification in writing/email must be received prior to start of reunion.

# PATROL SQUADRON FORTY-FIVE ASSOCIATION

## Membership Registration Form

Please print off and complete this form and return it to the address below. The personal information you send will ONLY be used within the Association for inclusion in the Association Roster. Dues are \$15/yr, \$65 for 5 years or \$300 for life...payable to:

Mr. Patrick J. Imhof, Treasurer  
Patron Four Five Association  
3204 E. Moreno St  
Pensacola, FL 32503-6529

(H) 850-432-0036, (C) 850-221-1237, Email: daddypaddy@att.net

### ROSTER INFORMATION

Name: First \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Tel (w/area code): (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

### FORMER SQUADRON SERVICE/DUTIES

Squadron during your service (circle one): VP/VPB-205 (PBM)    VP-45 (PBY)    VP-45 (PBM)

VP-45 (P5M)    VP-45(P-3A)    VP-45 (P-3C)    VP-45 (P-8)

Dates Served: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_; From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

If Aircrew, circle as appropriate: Pilot    NFO    Aircrew: \_\_\_\_\_

Duties/Division \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about the Association \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any "seas stories" or interesting recollections of your time in VP-45, consider sharing those with all the members. The easiest way to get your story or recollection listed and displayed on our website ([www.vp45association.org](http://www.vp45association.org)) is to email it to the Association WebMaster or any Association officer. The email address for the current WebMaster and can be found at the website. If you have a photo that "accompanies" your story, please email it also and we'll include it with your story! Additionally, any other squadron photos, squadron rosters, papers, crew lists, etc. that you would like to share are invited. Welcome Aboard!