

2022  
SEPTEMBER

THE VP-45 ASSOCIATION'S

Pelican Post

# Newsletter

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



***Last LantFleet P-3 Orion  
Flight to Boneyard!!***

***The Royal Air Force's  
MRA/P-8A Program***

## In This Issue

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**The last Atlantic Fleet P-3 Orion heads**  
**for the Boneyard in Arizona**

(Cover Artwork and Design by Bill Hobgood;)

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## Visit Our Website!



For over 70 pages of VP-45 information,  
 click on the Pelican above!



### From Jack Keane, the Editor:

In this issue of the Pelican Post, we provide you with the most up-to-date information on the August 2022 Pelican Reunion in Jacksonville! Additionally, Don Stanton has spelled me this time around and assembled the “Back in the Day” article on the CP-901, Bill Hobgood provides an interesting perspective on where all the P-3s have gone in the “Navy Trivia” section, and Bob Hall provides us with an update on the P-8 happenings at RAF Lossiemouth.

Should you need to for any reason, you can contact us via the website or by sending an email to either of the email addresses listed in the “Contact Information” section just above.



# YOUR ASSOCIATION OFFICERS (2020 - 2022)



Click on pictures below for more biographical info



## President

Doug Mitchell was elected to this office in 2012. He was in VP-45 from 1972 to 1975 as an FE. He retired from the Navy in 1994, after 30 years service, as an LDO LCDR. He calls both Florida and Georgia home.

## Vice President

Previously Treasurer, Spence Cunningham became VP in 2018. He served as an AW aircrew member in the Squadron from 1982-1987 and retired in 2013 as a Master Chief. He lives in Orange Park, FL.



## Secretary

Jack Keane has been our Secretary since 2012. A VMI grad and retired LCDR, he completed his Navy career in 1995 and is recently retired from Johns Hopkins. He was a TACCO in VP-45 from 1982-1985.

## Treasurer

Michael Riley assumed Treasurer duties in 2021. He was an Ordnanceman in VP-45 during the 80s and retired a Chief Petty Officer. He has recently moved from Florida to Michigan.



## WebMaster

Bill Hobgood built the new Association website in 2011 and was elected WebMaster in 2012. He was also a TACCO (Crew 13) and was in VP-45 from 1971 to 1974. A retired CDR, he resides in Lantana, Texas.

*“Who would have thought when I became President of the Association in October of 2012 that I would still be serving as your president in 2022! That’s right...almost ten years! What an honor it has been! I’ll say it again, we have the Best VP Navy Squadron Association in the World! And once again, it is because of you, our loyal members.”*

From the Desk of...

*Doug Mitchell*



*Doug “Pooh Bear” Mitchell in a P-3 Flight Engineer’s seat for, perhaps, the last time.*

## President’s Report

I can’t believe this is my last Newsletter Article as President! Almost ten years went by so quickly, and as I mentioned in my March comments, I’ll miss it. But all good things must come to an end, and I look forward to attending reunions as a spectator.

On May 13th and June 3rd and 4th, we attended a couple of mini-reunions with VP-56 and VP-49 folks, and I can tell you I am so proud we have our Association and an Active Duty Squadron to participate with us. No offense to anyone, but our reunions are superb in comparison.

Now for the Great News...I have arranged for a VP-30 P-3C Orion to be parked at VP-45 spaces, so we will have a P-3 and a P-8 Tour on Friday August 19th! Sitting in the Flight Engineer seat on 4 June brought back so many memories of my 10,302 Flight Hours in those beautiful aircraft.

Lastly, if you haven’t registered for our August Reunion...we will make every effort to get you in.

Sincerely,

Doug “Pooh Bear” Mitchell  
[poohbearmit@aol.com](mailto:poohbearmit@aol.com)



Congratulations to my replacement and good friend Jack Keane, who with your votes at the Reunion Business Meeting, will take over as President after our Saturday evening Banquet Dinner!

My wife Victoria and I have been very busy visiting NAS Jacksonville this year. We attended VP-45’s Change of Command on 5 May, when CDR Stephen Bruner relieved CDR Seth Eisenmenger as Commanding Officer of the World Famous Pelicans (See page 11). On May 11, I attended the



*Doug in front of the VP-30 P-3C that we will be able to tour at the reunion.*

# FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

by: Spence Cunningham



Fellow Pelicans!! We are a go for Jacksonville!! As I write this, we are in the final stages of bringing the Reunion to fruition! After a Covid forced hiatus, this August will find us gathering for a long-awaited reunion here in JAX and VP-45 is in town to join us!

Plus, we will have heavy Hors-D'oeuvres and open bar for all members to enjoy on Thursday and Friday. Please take note when the hospitality room will be closed from the finalized schedule of events:

## Wednesday, August 17, 2022

4PM — Members can begin Hotel Check-in followed by reunion check in at the “Deleon” room on the second floor of Pelican HQ. The Hospitality Room occupies “Osceola”, “Dupont” and “Desoto” rooms.

Midnight — Hospitality room closes.

## Thursday, August 18, 2022

8AM — Hospitality room opens. Deleon room will open for reunion check-ins.

9AM — Muster/depart for Mayport tour (VUP-19) with Lunch at the Ocean Breeze.

9:30AM - 3PM — Mayport tour and return.

6PM — Reunion Meet and Greet/Kickoff in the hospitality room. Heavy hors-d'oeuvres and open bar.

Midnight — Hospitality room closes.

## Friday, August 19, 2022

8AM - 2PM — Hospitality room is closed.

8:30AM — Muster for VP-45 visit at NAS Jacksonville. Tour bus departs at 0900.

9:30AM - Noon — Arrive at the VP-45 spaces and enjoy a P-8A AND P-3C Tour!!

Noon-ish — Buffet lunch at River Cove Community Center aboard NAS Jacksonville.

2PM — Return to Pelican HQ; Ready Room Opens.

4:30PM - 10PM — Alhambra Theatre (Grumpy Old Men). Coach departs at 1645.

6PM — Heavy hors-d'oeuvres and open bar in the ready room.

7PM - 8PM — Mr. Jack Keane and Mr. Don Stanton present “Patrol Aviation’s Role in the Vietnam War”.

8PM - 9PM — Mr. Bill Hobgood hosts “A Walk Down Memory Lane” video presentation.

Midnight — Hospitality room closes.

## Saturday, August 20, 2022

8AM — Association business meeting; St. Johns Room, 1st floor with coffee service.

9AM — Hospitality room opens.

11AM and 1PM — “A Walk Down Memory Lane” video in the Hospitality Room.

4PM — Hospitality room closes for Banquet.

6PM — Banquet social hour begins. Cash Bar opens in the Duval room.

7PM — Banquet program begins. At 7:15PM, dinner is served!

10PM — Banquet concludes, and Hospitality Room opens

Midnight — Hospitality room closes...until 2024! Location: TDB!!

## Sunday, August 20, 2022

7AM - 11AM — Final breakfast and we conclude the reunion!



**CLICK HERE!!**

I hope everyone has made their hotel reservations and registered for the Reunion! We will be in the final days to do so by the time this Pelican Post is published! I am so looking forward to seeing everyone and I know we will all have a great time catching up!! See you all soon! Spence

# NAVY TRIVIA

## “Where Have All the P-3s Gone?”

By: Bill Hobgood

VP-8 took delivery of the very first lot of P-3A Orion Aircraft in 1962. We, VP-45, got ours also in 1962 and soon the entire active fleet of VP squadrons was so equipped. That was 60 years ago!

While the P-3B was more of an airframe/engine upgrade, the P-3C was a major avionics improvement that brought aviation ASW into the computer age in 1969...sort of. The CP-901 “central computer” in the new P-3C possessed processing power equivalent to about 1/10th of one of today’s iPhones, but it was a definite improvement over grease pencils and hand written logs. Though the trusty Orion received many later “updates” it remained essentially the same aircraft most of us flew in VP-45 and elsewhere. But, I digress.

An NAS Jax based VP-62 flight crew briefed in the

early morning at the start of a cool, breezy day this past June, to make the historic last flight of an Atlantic Fleet P-3 to the “boneyard” at Davis Mothan AFB in Arizona. The very last squadron still flying the P-3 is VP-69 (a PAC-FLEET reserve squadron) who will transition to the P-8A sometime in 2023. Then all P-3s will be gone! Or will they?



*Part of the VP- boneyard fleet representing two full Cold War P-3 squadrons.*

Nope! The P-3 still patrols the world’s oceans. More than 750 Orions were built by Lockheed Martin and, as of 2020, 400 were still flying and operational with 21 operators in 17 countries including the US, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Greece, Germany, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Taiwan, Spain and Thailand.



*An overhead shot of some of the P-3s that reside at Davis Motham AFB. In this photo, nearly 60 are all are poised to be made ready to return to service if needed.*

So the Lockheed P-3 aircraft is alive and well...and will likely be around for years to come. Only the B-52, C-130, KC-135 and U-2 have operated as long or longer than the Orion!

And here is some quick trivia about “The Boneyard” at Davis Mothan AFB. Planes don’t just come here to die. Mechanics reclaim parts and regenerate entire aircraft to go back into service. 3100 aircraft are there...due to the corrosion killing heat, low humidity and drought, and rock like dirt. About 300 arrive per year and the same number are “processed out” with 50 to 100 of those being returned somewhere to flying service!

## FROM THE WEBMASTER

By: Bill Hobgood



Please check out the cover of this edition of the Pelican Post Newsletter. My idea was to build something that represented that the US Navy P-3 aircraft is almost completely gone.

VP-62, the venerable reserve VP squadron in JAX, will soon begin transition to the P-8 and they flew the last LANTFLEET P-3 to the “boneyard” in Arizona (see this issue’s *Navy Trivia* article) this past June. This story caught my eye and I decided to design a cover artwork on that flight.

I’m NOT an artist so all Pelican Post covers are created in Photoshop.

I had a photograph of a World War II B-17 flight crew briefing outside their plane for a bombing mission. I liked it because of the morning sunrise look. In Photoshop, I removed the B-17 but left the crew in. Then I found a suitable P-3 photograph and cut the aircraft out and turned it fully dark and substituted it into the photograph as a layer over the top of the sunrise scene.



Wa-La! I had a VP-62 P-3 crew sitting outside their aircraft getting ready to take their last P-3 to the boneyard...a sad experience, I’d guess; though I bet the flight crews are excited about flying their new Poseidons.

Have any questions for me? Please shoot me an email to: [hobgood.bill@gmail.com](mailto:hobgood.bill@gmail.com).

## SECRETARY’S PODIUM

By: Jack Keane



Greetings fellow Pelicans!

Well, we’re a few weeks out from the reunion and I’m looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible. You’ll notice that you’re receiving this issue of the Pelican Post earlier than the norm. That’s simply because I’ll be on the road to Jacksonville when I normally send the newsletter to our membership. As I will be stepping down as Secretary of the Association at the reunion hopefully our new Secretary will get us back on track. On a personal note, thanks to Doug Mitchell for ten years as our Association President!

I would like to continue to stress the need to draw new members to our Association. As I said in my Secretary’s Podium in March, many veterans’ organizations have seen a significant reduction in membership since the start of the pandemic. We are hanging at about 472 members, down from approximately 515 (9%) at the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Other veterans’ organizations have seen as much as a 25% reduction in membership.

Please, reach out to former Pelicans who are not members and strongly urge them to join – especially squadron members from the 1990s to the present. Let’s all try to bring in at least one new member in time for them to join us in Jacksonville in August. And for those of you who are members, don’t forget to keep your dues current and provide us with your birthdates so that we can verify lifetime membership when the time comes.

Looking forward to an outstanding reunion with “The World Class Pelicans”!

Have any concern, question, remark or any comment appropriate for our Mail Bag? If so, Click [HERE](#)

# SEA STORIES

## A Selection From Our Website “Sea Story” Page

### A Pilot Rambles about Adak - 1966

By: Tom Golder

Once, during daylight hours, we came upon a Russian missile tracking vessel, and flew a close-in maneuver to rig the ship (rigging the ship involved a low pass alongside, at 100 feet altitude, to get close-up photos



*The former Soviet Ship Kosmonaut Vladimir Komarov is likely the ship they were tracking in 1966.*

and observe on-board activity). We put the plane on auto pilot then we all ducked down in the cockpit; so that, to anyone on the ship, our plane would appear to be a pilot-less drone. I often wonder what kind of a report they sent back to their bosses.

After an 8-hour patrol, ending at night, we found ourselves facing bad weather all the way up the Aleutian Chain. I decided to land at Shemya Air Force Base at the western end of the island chain rather than deal with low ceiling and turbulence in the mountains near Adak. The weather at Shemya was clear. Shemya is a small island with a single runway.

The only problem was the runway rests about 200 feet above sea level. If there was a crosswind, we could experience wind shear at the end of the runway. Of course, on this particular approach, we had 44 knots of wind from the north, dead abeam on our right wing as we were landing to the west. It was

Dave Parker’s turn to land, and I decided to let him attempt it. In hindsight, this was not a wise choice on my part as plane commander; for in a tight situation like this, I should have made the landing. But, I had great confidence in Dave’s skill as a pilot. I thought, he can make just as good a landing as I can, maybe even better.

As we were setting up for the approach, our third pilot/navigator, Roger Marlatt, came up to the cockpit with the NATOPS manual showing us that the landing should not be attempted. The P-3 aircraft was out of the limits for this crosswind landing, and the added danger of wind shear would not help matters. I acknowledged that by simply saying we would be extra careful. I thought we would make one try; and, as we had plenty of fuel, then fly on to Adak. On our close-in final approach, Dave had a good position and air-speed. Suddenly, BOOM! We hit the wind shear and were instantly thrust downward, craning our necks and looking up at the end of the runway. I know now that our wheels were down amongst the pole-mounted approach lights; but, mercifully, we somehow missed them.

Everyone in the cockpit cried out in unison, “Power!” We simultaneously jammed up the throttles, and were instantly looking back down at the runway. We eased power and Dave held the crosswind correction—right wing down, top rudder—and planted the plane on the runway. (The P-3 is a low wing aircraft, and the crosswind restriction is in place to keep the wings’ props, from hitting the ground in the wing down, top rudder configuration; but, again, we must have missed by inches.) I said to Dave, “Get on the brakes.” He replied that his legs were trembling so much he was having trouble doing just that. We finally got the plane slowed, and taxied to the barn. God was surely with us on that landing. He and David had determined that it just wasn’t our time.



*Not a P-3, of course, but likely similar to the crosswind conditions Tom Golder and his crew had to deal with.*



# ALUMNI NEWS

*This section can contain just about anything that deals with our members and their activities by themselves or with other members. The Editor might choose to publish your input in the "Mailbag" instead of here. Regardless, don't be shy...tell us what you are doing and include pictures!! Ed.*

## A Distant Memory

Between 16–20 July 1991 the Slava-class cruiser *Marshal Ustinov*, accompanied by the oiler *Dnestr* and the destroyer *Simferopol*, paid a visit to the naval base at Mayport, Florida. This marked the third time Soviet warships had visited the United States since the end of the Cold War.

Our own Pelican, Al La-Bella, after a tour in VP-45 and then VX-1, was in college at the time and had the opportunity to board the *Ustinov* and take a few photos. Below is from Al:

“Attached are several “up close and personal” pictures of various weapon systems from the *Marshal Ustinov*, especially the SA-N-6 which could reach out and touch us...interestingly, I have an appreciation for being on the receiving end as well as the shooting

end of surface-to-air missiles, having served in a Patriot Battalion and Brigade in Korea for three years.

The North Korean tactical ballistic missile threat was always present and kept us focused on the mission. I have served with several officers that have Scud kills during the opening days of Iraqi Freedom to include one with a manual engagement. Unfortunately, the Patriot does not discriminate targets as in the case with the Tornado shoot-down ... I served as a deputy to a Brigade Commander who was a battalion op-



*Fresly painted for a Mayport visit, the Ustinov looks beautiful and deadly.*

erations officer at the time working with the Brits in the Air Operations Center when the report of a fratricide came across the net ... it went from a bunch of high fives thinking it was another Scud kill and within seconds to a somber atmosphere when the Brits confirmed the fratricide.”

Below, Al rivals Admiral Rickover in his ability to “wander aimlessly” around a Soviet vessel in port!





**Command Master Chief Ryan King**

Master Chief King is a native of Toledo, Ohio and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in December 2003. Upon completion of initial training, King attended and completed operations specialist (OS) 'A' school in Dam Neck, Virginia.

During his time as an OS, he served onboard USS *Fitzgerald* (DDG 62) where he qualified as a combat information center (CIC) watch supervisor, CIC watch officer, air intercept controller, as well as holding multiple warfare coordinator positions, which supported the ballistic missile defense of the Korean Peninsula.

In 2009, King transferred to USS *Mustin* (DDG 89)



*While still with the U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard, Senior chief King is here being frocked to Master Chief Petty Officer.*

where he was selected to the rank of chief petty officer, serving as OI Division leading chief petty officer. During his tour, USS *Mustin* executed multiple humanitarian assistance and disaster response missions to include Operation Tomodachi following the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

In 2012, King completed his next tour of duty across multiple Navy forward-operating task forces within the Arabian Gulf directing over 30 Army, Navy, and Coast Guard units in the validation force interoperability against multi-axis threats, while executing daily counter-narcotic, anti-piracy and life-saving operations.



*CMC King came to VP-45 with a wealth of experience gained during multiple surface navy tours. Two of those tours were served aboard USS The Sullivans DDG-68 (top) and USS Withita LSC13 (bottom).*

In 2015, King was selected for his shore-tour aboard the prestigious U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard, where he was selected to command senior chief and eventually command master chief. Additional command master chief tours include USS *Wichita* (LCS-13), USS *The Sullivans* (DDG-68) and currently as the command master chief at VP 45.

King is a qualified enlisted surface warfare specialist and his personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (Two Gold Stars), Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal (Silver Star), Joint Service, Korean Service, Navy Unit Commendation, and multiple other service or campaign awards.

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# SQUADRON & COMMUNITY NEWS

## Pelican Change of Command

VP-45 held a Change of Command ceremony at NAS Jax, May 5th. CDR Stephen G. Bruner has relieved CDR Seth R. Eisenmenger as Commanding Officer.

Eisenmenger is native to Clifton, New Jersey. He received his commission through the NROTC at the State University of New York, Maritime College in 2003, and was designated a Naval Flight Officer in December 2005. His operational tours include time with VP-8, VP-45, VP-47 and VP-30. He also served as a future operations planner while assigned to U.S. Southern Command J35. It was during this tour that he was selected for operational command and ordered to report to VP-45 as the Executive Officer in June 2020. In June of 2021 he took the reins and led VP-45 through deployment, out of Kadena airbase, and through home cycle.

CDR Eisenmenger reflected on his time as Commanding Officer. "It has been an absolute blessing to serve with the men and women of VP-45. Their ability to navigate the dynamic nature of our mission and excel at every opportunity is a true testament to the culture of this squadron and its long legacy of excellence. I am beyond grateful to have had this opportunity and am humbled by the personal drive and professionalism of each Officer, Chief, and Sailor. The sacrifice and support of the Pelican families, friends, and alumni is not lost on me and we couldn't have executed without you. Thank You!"

He also commented on what the future holds for VP-45. "The Pelicans are in the midst of deployment preparations and couldn't be better postured to succeed on the global stage. CDR Bruner is a proven and gifted leader who has the vision to guide VP-45 into the future. His sage counsel and friendship over the last year has been tremendous and he is beyond ready to take Command of the Pelican team."

CDR Stephen "ANGRY" Bruner was born in Saint Petersburg, Florida, enlisted in the Navy in 1996, and is a 2006 graduate of Florida State University.

He earned his Wings of Gold as a Naval Aviator in 2008. He has completed deployments to U.S. FIFTH, SIXTH, and SEVENTH Fleet areas of responsibility. Following his department head tour, he was assigned to the CNO staff as Deputy Executive Assistant to Director, Air Warfare, OPNAV N98. He was selected for operational command and reported as Executive Officer of VP-45 in the Spring of 2021.



*CDR Bruner (R) has received the reins of Command from CDR Eisenmenger, fleeting up to finalize the 80th Change of Command in VP-45 history.*

CDR Bruner spoke of the respect and admiration he has gained for the Pelicans over the past year. "I am honored to take the helm as the Pelicans' Skipper and I am grateful for the opportunity to learn under Skipper Eisenmenger's thoughtful leadership. His steady guidance enabled the hallmark Pelican connectedness that underpins VP-45's legacy of mission excellence and positive culture, and this last year has blessed me with an even greater appreciation for VP-45's enduring, winning traditions."

## AP Exclusive: US Admiral Says China Fully Militarized Isles

By Jim Gomez and Aaron Favila, March 2022

OVER THE SOUTH CHINA SEA (AP) — China has fully militarized at least three of several islands it built in the disputed South China Sea, arming them with anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems, laser and jamming equipment, and fighter jets in an increasingly aggressive move that threatens all nations operating nearby, a top U.S. military commander said Sunday.

U.S. Indo-Pacific commander ADM John C. Aquilino said the hostile actions were in stark contrast to Chinese President Xi Jinping's past assurances that Beijing would not transform the artificial islands in contested waters into military bases. The efforts were part of China's flexing its military muscle, he said.



*Admiral John C. Aquilino, left, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), looks at videos of Chinese structures and buildings on board a US P-8A Poseidon reconnaissance plane flying at the Spratlys group of islands in the South China Sea on Sunday March 20, 2022.*

“I think over the past 20 years we’ve witnessed the largest military buildup since World War II by the PRC,” Aquilino told The Associated Press in an interview, using the initials of China’s formal name. “They have advanced all their capabilities and that buildup of weaponization is destabilizing to the region.”

There were no immediate comments from Chinese officials. Beijing maintains its military profile is purely defensive, arranged to protect what it says are its sovereign rights. But after years of increased

military spending, China now boasts the world’s second-largest defense budget after the U.S. and is rapidly modernizing its force with weapons systems including the J-20 stealth fighter, hypersonic missiles and two aircraft carriers, with a third under construction.

Aquilino spoke with the AP onboard a U.S. Navy reconnaissance aircraft that flew near Chinese-held outposts in the South China Sea’s Spratly archipelago, one of the most hotly contested regions in the world. During the patrol, the P-8A Poseidon plane was repeatedly warned by Chinese callers that it illegally entered what they said was China’s territory and ordered the plane to move away.

“China has sovereignty over the Spratly islands, as well as surrounding maritime areas. Stay away immediately to avoid misjudgment,” one of the stern radio messages said in a veiled threat.

But the U.S. Navy plane dismissed the multiple warnings and pressed on defiantly with its reconnaissance in brief but tense moments witnessed by two AP journalists invited onboard. “I am a sovereign immune United States naval aircraft conducting lawful military activities beyond the national airspace of any coastal state,” a U.S. pilot radioed back to the Chinese.

“Exercising these rights is guaranteed by international law and I am operating with due regard to the rights and duties of all states,” he said.

Navy commanding officer Joel Martinez, who led the P-8A Poseidon’s crew, said there has been an incident when a Chinese jet flew close to a U.S. aircraft in a dangerous maneuver in the disputed region. The U.S. flight crew calmly reminded the Chinese to comply with aviation safety regulations, he said.

Washington’s main objective in the disputed region is “to prevent war” through deterrence and promote peace and stability, including by engaging American allies and partners in projects with that objective, Aquilino said.

“Should deterrence fail, my second mission is to be prepared to fight and win,” said Aquilino, who leads the largest U.S. combatant command with 380,000 military and civilian personnel covering 36 nations and territories.

## Naval Flight Officer Sentenced to Four Years After Failing to Disclose Contact with Chinese Citizen

By Diana Stancy Correll – Navy Times

A naval flight officer was sentenced to four years in prison for failing to disclose the nature of his relationship with a Chinese citizen for a security clearance background investigation, among other things.

LT Fan Yang, who operated in the back of P-8A Poseidon surveillance aircraft for anti-submarine warfare missions, routinely concealed from the Navy his connection to Songtao Ge, who owned a company that exported military-style inflatable boats and other equipment to China, according to the Justice Department. Prior to joining the Navy, Yang established online communication with Ge, and the two met in person while Yang was in flight school in 2013, the Justice Department said.

Yang also advised Ge to hire his wife, Yang “Yuki” Yang, at Ge’s company, Shanghai Breeze Technology Co. Ltd., in 2016. The company took on Yuki Yang, and she was paid more than \$300,000 from the company, Ge’s executive assistance and the company’s creditors, the Justice Department said. Furthermore, the funds were regularly routed through BQ Tree LLC — the Yang’s family company.

Yang also purchased firearms on behalf of Ge on two occasions: once in 2017, and again in 2018. When he asked his chain of command for time off in 2018, he said he was going to “Disney” to spend time with family. In reality, he and Yuki Yang were in Nebraska with Ge.

Yang did not reveal the nature of his relationship with Ge in 2019 while he was serving as a tactics instructor with VP-30.

The evidence at trial showed that Ge employed Yang [Yuki] Yang, had been to the Yangs’ home, and had paid for the Yangs to travel and visit him,” the Justice Department said in a news release. “Fan Yang consistently hid their relationship from the Navy.”

“Yang failed to disclose the extent of his

contacts with Ge and hid that he had maintained a bank account in China, sometimes worked for his family business, BQ Tree LLC, and possessed an expired Chinese passport,” the Justice Department said.

A federal jury convicted Yang in November 2021. Ge was sentenced to three years and six months in federal prison, and Yuki Yang was sentenced to time served.

## Navy Proposes Conversion of 2 Active P-8 Squadrons to Reserve

Posted on April 28, 2022 by Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor – Sea Power Magazine

ARLINGTON, Va. — The U.S. Navy proposes to shift two P-8A VP squadrons from the active component to the Navy Reserve in 2026, one from each coast.

The Navy currently fields 12 P-8A VP squadrons, six each at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington, and NAS Jax. In addition, the Navy Air Reserve operates one P-8 squadron at Jacksonville and a P-3C squadron at Whidbey Island. If the above conversion occurs, it would give the reserve component four P-8A VP squadrons.

The Navy estimates the shift would result in savings of \$55.5 million over the Future Years Defense Plan.



*LT Fan Yang, left, formerly a TACCO assigned to Patrol Squadron 5, demonstrates the systems onboard a P-8A Poseidon aircraft to members of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces in March 2018 while in U.S. 5th Fleet March 1, 2018.*

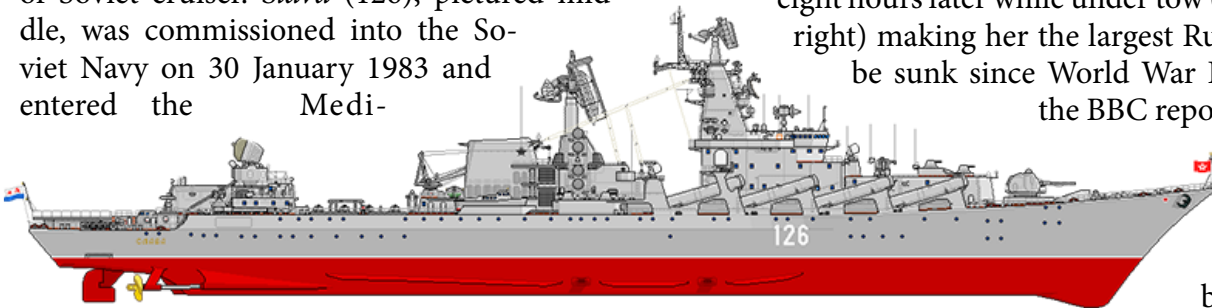
## A Special Mini-Report This Just In

### A Pelican Connection to Ukraine

by: Jack Keane

Some of us remember the 1983 Sigonella deployment...water restrictions in the BOQ, having to flush your toilet with water that we kept nearby in an SLC, sponge baths out of bottled water, the list goes on. Then there were the operations ... the American Embassy in Beirut had been attacked as the Pelicans arrived in theater, supporting Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS) for multiple carrier battle groups, and of course, ASW.

One often overlooked event that took place that summer was the work-up cruise of a new class of Soviet cruiser. *Slava* (126), pictured middle, was commissioned into the Soviet Navy on 30 January 1983 and entered the Medi-



terranean through the Bosphorus that summer. Over the next few months, VP-45 (with VQ-2) flew some of the very first intelligence collection missions against *Slava* to include several PARPRO flights into various anchorages.

*Slava* was decommissioned in 1990. On 15 May 1995, she was formally renamed ...you guessed it... *Moskva* (121) and, in April

2000 formally recommissioned, replacing the *Kynnda*-class cruiser *Admiral Golovko* as the flagship of the Russian Black Sea Fleet.

In February 2022, *Moskva* departed Sevastopol to support the Russian invasion of Ukraine, to include



*Moskva* in her heyday literally bristled with weapons, including 16 anti-ship missiles and 64 long range surface-to-air missiles.

the assault on Snake Island. On the evening of 13 April 2022, while approximately 80 miles south of Odessa, *Moskva* was struck by two Ukrainian R-360 Neptune anti-ship missiles and sank roughly eight hours later while under tow (pictured bottom right) making her the largest Russian warship to be sunk since World War II. On 22 April, the BBC reported that she was

declared an underwater cultural heritage site by Ukraine.



# MAILBAG

Hey Jack!

Just a quick note to THANK all of you for providing us with such great information and articles. Another masterpiece! On behalf of our squadron mates, we thank all of you!

I was a witness to the extremely expansive joke called the A-12 when I worked at NADEP Jacksonville. Teams of folks from NADEP Jacksonville would fly to the contractor's site every week, yet none of them EVER reported there was no airplane, no mockup, not even a wooden ¼ scale model at the contractor's site. That should have been a huge red flag, yet no one ever said a word that it was a huge hoax. Thanks for bringing this well-kept embarrassment into the light of day!

Paul Nadeau

Hey Jack!

Another absolutely fabulous Newsletter and thank you and your team so very much for "all" your efforts and sharing of your time. "BZ!"

Jay Thomas



Cover of our last Newsletter.  
(Click it to read it).

Hey Jack!

Another superb issue! Again, and still – anonymously yours,

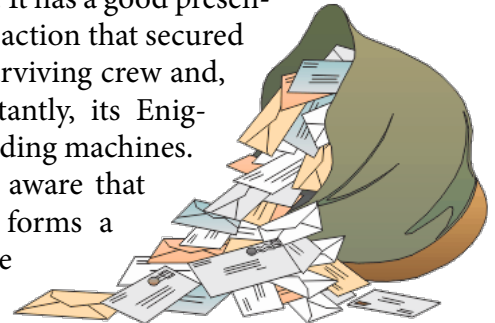
Mort Eckhouse

Hey Jack!

Rosie and I are enjoying a week in Bermuda and today we visited the ex-Royal Navy Dockyard where we saw the subject

plaque. You may be aware of its existence, but just in case I attach a photo of the subject plaque.

Within the Dockyard, what was the Dockyard Commissioner's House, is now the Bermuda Museum. One of the rooms is now focused on the US Navy. It has a good presentation of the action that secured U-505, its surviving crew and, most importantly, its Enigma en/de-coding machines. You may be aware that U-505 now forms a center piece of an excellent exhibit area in the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry.



In addition there are three Memorial plaques, one each to crews from VP-45 and VP-49 and to John Smith, a USN Seaman, born in Bermuda, who won the Medal of Honor on 19 September 1880. There was no copyright showing and visitors were free to take non-flash photos for personal, non-commercial, use. I believe, therefore, that the photo can be published in Pelican Post and on the web-site pro-

vided credit is given to the Bermuda Museum.

Though I also have photos of *U-505* in the Chicago Museum, without further research to check, I'm not sure of the copyright status for those.

See you in Jax!, Bob and Rosie Hall

[Editor's Note: Bob, would love to see the photos from Bermuda and *U-505*.

Also, the plaque that Bob refers to is dedicated to those seven VP-45 crewmen who lost their lives in the crash of LN-3 (a P5M) in September of 1961. The aircraft ditched, broke apart upon impact and immediately sank. Three of the crew managed to get out and were rescued. One was our own "PJ" Imhof who comes to every reunion.

The full account of this mishap is contained in the Sea story section of our website [HERE](#). ]

Hey, Jack:

You know I have been re-doing the era-videos for the upcoming reunion. The P-5M video was almost complete and I decided to give Jay Thomas (an Association founding father and P-5M aircrewman) a sneak peek and ask his opinion. This was his flattering reply in a written note to me:

"Dear Bill,

Just wanted you to know the beauty of your video creation! We will never know all the tears of joy that will be shed as wonderful memories are revisited, but there will be many.

What you have done will bring happiness and joy to many. It is beautiful! I love it! thank you for your labor of love!

God Bless You. Your Shipmate, Jay Thomas"

Hey, Jack!

Just wanted to let you know that I finally met RADM Cozad. He knows you quite well and says

that everyone knows you!!

Friday, I got to fly in a N3N Stearman Biplane !! I have longed to accomplish that since 1957 when the Middies would come down to fly them at NAS NORVA. Saturday I flew in a T-34!! What a wonderful weekend !!

The event was put on by The Veterans Flight, mainly for WW II Vets. No, I'm not that old, but my neighbor mentioned my name to the people that are in charge and they ever so graciously agreed to let me



*A Stearman similar to the one "PJ" Imhof flew recently. "PJ" was our Association Treasurer for 10 years!*

fly. My main wish is that I had more control over the English language so as to express my joy and happiness, that readers could comprehend.

Very much looking forward to seeing and voting for you. You will make a Great President!!

Take care, my friend. V/R,

"PJ" Imhof

[Click Here to Send a "Mail Bag" Letter to:](#)

**"Hey Jack!"**



## SPECIAL REPORT BY ONE OF OUR MEMBERS

### The Royal Air Force P-8A Maritime Reconnaissance and Attack (MRA) 1 Program

by: Robert Hall

Under FMS, the RAF bought 9 aircraft to the US Navy's Increment 3 standard as being delivered to the USN at the time of individual aircraft build. Therefore, the initial batch of five are to Fleet Release (FR) 75.2 and the last four to FR 85.1, which means they have 6 workstations rather than the 5 of the initial batch. Notwithstanding, they are all the same as US Navy aircraft to those same standards. Moreover, weapons and sonobuoys are the same as those used by the USN. However, some UK weapons, for example the Stingray torpedo, may be added in due course. Moreover, to add redundancy and reduce supply lines, a UK sonobuoy production facility will be sourced. The last of the 9 aircraft arrived at RAF Lossiemouth on 11 January 2022.

A major infrastructure project has been completed that delivered parking ramps and one building, the Atlantic Building, that houses two squadrons; all training facilities for air, ground, and support per-



*The Atlantic Building and Poseidon Parking Ramp at RAF Lossiemouth.*

sonnel; operational briefing, debriefing, analysis, and intelligence support; a three-bay hangar; and engineering maintenance spaces.

The first five courses of RAF personnel, both air and ground crew, were trained at VP30 and delivered 10 crews. The first UK based course is now about half-way through and is about to start the flying phase.



*The first 5 aircraft on the line at RAF Lossiemouth in a Scottish winter.*

The second UK based course has just started the ground school phase.

The RAF has re-formed two squadrons (sqn(s)) to operate the aircraft, 120 and 201 Sqns. 120, also known as CXX, Sqn was the first and is a pure front-line operational sqn with, currently, 5 crews. The second sqn to stand-up was 201 Sqn, half of which is the training unit (equivalent to VP30) and half will be front-line once the UK has trained more crews. Currently, 201 Sqn's instructors and senior students could add more crews to front line strength should demand require it.

The RAF's Poseidon Force has reached its Initial Operational Capability (IOC). Full Operational Capability (FOC) should be declared in 2024. When at FOC there should be 18 crews available to the front line and a few more would be made up of instructors.

As the training unit, 201 Sqn is responsible for all air-crew and groundcrew training. Under command, OC 201 Sqn has all the ground, air and engineering instructors, the simulator training teams, the mission



*Entrance to the Atlantic Building.*

support teams, and the engineers on the flight line and in the hanger bays. Being the front-line sqn, OC 120 Sqn has just the personnel of the 5, but increasing, operational crews under command.

Rear crew and pilot simulators are to the same standard as the USN. There will be two of each, but, for now, there is only one WST (#19) at TSR 15 standard, which equates to FR 75. The second WST (#21) will be delivered later.

You will be aware that the Royal Norwegian Air Force (RNoAF) has also bought the P8. I understand their first crews are being trained on VP30 now. However, under an MoU between the RAF and RNoAF, the latter's later crews will be trained at 201 Sqn. The first RNoAF personnel have arrived at 201 to set up that training.

While the German Navy has also bought P8s and there will be close cooperation between them and the RAF, no MoU like that with the RNoAF is in place between the RAF and German Navy.

There has been very close cooperation between the USN and RAF at Lossiemouth for Exercises and Operations. In this photo taken from the RAF Lossiemouth Facebook page in December 2020 there are 5 a/c from VP46 and 4 from 120 Sqn. Those from the USN, as with 120 Sqn, are split with some on Exercise Joint Warrior and some on Ops.

RAF Poseidons have been participating in National and NATO exercises, and operations away from

home base. For example, Exercise Cold Response in Norway and, as part of the UK's lead of a 10 nation Baltic Rapid Response Force that includes Sweden and Finland, conducting ASW operations in the Baltic in March 2022.

The following photo was taken in Sigonella in February 2022 while CXX Sqn was in the Mediterranean for Exercise Dynamic Manta. During the exercise, the sqn was re-tasked from the exercise to CTG 67.1 as part of NATO's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Along with other ships and aircraft they shadowed a Russian TG transiting the Med. During these operations a Poseidon landed at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus for debrief and re-tasking.

The RAF should have been participating in Exercise RIMPAC in Hawaii this year, but operational commitments caused a withdrawal of the aircraft and crews. Nevertheless, some ops support personnel did deploy for experience and to prepare for full participation in 2024.



*The Poseidon Line in December 2020.*

Despite being busy on ops and exercises, the Poseidon units have also been participating in ceremonial events; most notably the RAF Flypast for Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on 02 June 2022. Other such events have included flypasts to mark the naming of the Atlantic Building in conjunction with the Presentation of a new Sqn Standard to 120 Sqn in September 2021; the installation in February 2022 of the new Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, an island with which 201 Sqn is closely associated; and on 12 April 2022 a flypast over Limavady in Northern Ireland to mark the granting to the RAF of the Freedom



*120 Sqn in Sigonella February 2022*

of the Borough of the Causeway Coast and Glen Borough. Of note, the aircraft used for this latter flypast was named after Terrence Bulloch DSO\* DFC\*, a Northern Ireland pilot who held the record for the most U-Boat kills during the Battle of the Atlantic. Squadron Leader Terence Bulloch DSO\* DFC\* was based at RAF Ballykelly, near Limavady, for a period during the war.

I should mention Exercise Poseidon Progression flown from RAF Lossiemouth in late June 2022, which coincided with NATO's Exercise Dynamic Mongoose. This was a 72-hour Operational Evaluation to test the ability of the RAF Poseidon fleet to sustain 24-hour continuous operations; it passed the test.

Looking to the future, the RAF is acquiring the E7 Wedgetail to replace its E3D. Given the airframe similarity, a new construction project has started at RAF Lossiemouth alongside the P8 facilities

for the future home of 8 Sqn, which will be transitioning from the E3D to the E7.

Once 8 Sqn has re-equipped and moved from its current base to Lossiemouth, a new Operational Conversion Unit (OCU), equivalent to the RAG, may be formed to train both P8 and E7 personnel. This has yet to be confirmed and as such the sqn number for



*In this depiction, a RAF P-8 is conducting workup exercises with the Royal Navy aircraft carrier Queen Elizabeth.*

this new unit has not yet been announced. If, and when, this new unit stands up, 201 Sqn will become a pure front-line unit and cease its hybrid training and operational existence.

I'm pleased to say that the Personnel Exchange Programme (PEP) of which I was a part continues. Though the great majority of RAF instructors have now left VP30, one remains. A USN pilot, Lt John 'Taf' Glassman, is now on 201 Sqn as an Instructor Pilot (IP). Originally assigned to 120 Sqn, his IP experience was thought to be better utilised by instructing on 201 Sqn. Later this year, an experienced USN TACCO arrives and will be assigned to 120 Sqn.

Robert Hall

R J Hall  
Squadron Leader RAF  
Exchange Officer in  
VP-45 1975 – 78.



*The author outside RAF Poseidon No 1 in July 2022 at RAF Lossiemouth*

## TREASURER'S TWO CENTS

Fellow Pelicans:



We had about a half dozen outstanding dues of shipmates at the end of June. We hate to have some of our shipmates fall off the records, hopefully just an oversight and wish all is well with them. Keep in mind that you can save money in the long run (and not have to pay as often) if you just send in \$40.00 for five years or, if you are young enough, \$200.00 for a life membership. Even if you're all caught up and would like to change up to life membership and not sure where exactly you are please contact me or any officer.

If you have Pelican shipmates you are in touch with who are not members, get them to JOIN!! Regardless, get in touch with us. We love to hear from our shipmates from times gone by.

Michael Riley  
AOC, USN (Ret.)  
Association Treasurer

### PATRON FOUR FIVE ASSOCIATION TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

All Funds	<b>01 Apr 2022</b>	\$26,634.29
Income:		
Dues	\$200.62	
Interest	6.63	
Misc/Reunion/Sales	203.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	\$410.25	
Expenses:		
Printing	\$304.26	
Postage/Shipping	56.64	
Office Supplies	8.47	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$369.37	
<b>Net Income</b>		40.88
<b>Total Cash Assets</b>	<b>30 Jun 2022</b>	<b><u>\$26,675.17</u></b>

## BACK IN THE DAY

### The New Digital P-3C and IFT Pioneer, AVCM Jim Cole

by: Don Stanton

In the early 1960s, key developments converged to make the digital ASW P-3C a reality: transistors, computers, software languages, inertial navigation, NTDS data link, and something to put all that new technology in - the P-3 aircraft. NADC initiated the “A-New” concept for a digital airborne ASW computer system and, in 1962, Sperry-Rand started to build a programmable computer which, in 1968, evolved into the CP-901/ASQ -114 computer. A computer that would coordinate avionics and sensor information with a multi-purpose display to enabled faster, more accurate prosecution of submarine and surface contacts. CAPT Ed Waller shepherded the development of the P-3C.

Dave Bennett (CO VP-45, P-3 Program Manager): “The 1960’s and early 70’s saw ASW capability improvements coming exponentially and in the span of a few short years, I went from flying in the P-2V7 (“2 burning and 2 turning”) to the P-3C and the digital age, where we actually found and kept track of submarines.”

The P-3C was a fully integrated system with its heart and soul being the CP-901. The products of a mission were digital and analog tapes not only of the mission, but recordings of all the acoustic data from the AQA-7s.

In September 1969, VP-56 at Pax River received the first P-3C, followed by VP-49 in 1969-70.

Doug Mitchell: “VP-49 deployed first to Keflavik in the Summer 1970, followed by VP-56 that November. VP-49 was first because they had 12 Qualified P-3C Crews before we did in VP-56. The reason was that we in VP-56 were showing the world the P-3C.”

Mike Haskins (COMPATWINGSLANT): “Deploying

with brand-new Charlies in VP-49, we had the time of our lives. With the Charlie, we actually knew exactly where we were and with the new DIFAR buoys we could find and track Soviet subs. On deployment at Keflavik, we were let loose to see if the P-3C could actively prosecute Soviet subs. With the DIFARs, we tracked a Yankee, dropped down, got a MAD-MAN, gained attack criteria, surrounded him with pingers, and continued prosecuting.”

Dave Bennett: “After TSC training at Pax River, I went to the Operational Control Center at Com-FairKef in Jan 1971, shortly after VP-49’s arrival. For the next 2 ½ years we developed tactics, refined the interface between the P-3C and the TSC, exploited the capabilities of the TSC’s newly developed acoustic replay/analysis system, and tracked every Soviet ballistic missile submarine enroute to their station off the East Coast.

“The new P-3C had the capability to launch sonobuoys from belly storage which allowed us to develop tactics that required rapid launching; for example, “walking barriers.” I believe the Greenland- Iceland-UK (GIUK) Gap is several feet shallower due to the tons of sonobuoys currently on the bottom...sonobuoy intensive, but very very effective!”



AT1 Jim Cole, USN

Jim Cole joined the Navy in 1965 and was in VP-56 when the first P-3C arrived in September 1969 and deployed to NAS Keflavik in November 1970.

When I asked Jim what it was like getting the new P-3C, he emphasized “getting the Charlies changed everything. The ‘Charlie’ was such a quantum leap in ASW—I don’t think we’ll ever see another leap like that in weapon systems again. If getting a hot contact

in ASW, it was very rare for a crew of a P-2 or a P-3A/B to still have contact when going off station. The opposite was true of the P-3C; when it got a sniff with a competent crew, it hung on. With the spectrum of aircraft I got to fly, I'd say what made the Charlie so much better than its predecessors, outside of the digital integration, was DIFAR which had so much better capability to isolate the 'fly shit from the pepper' of the underwater sound spectrum than did the older AQA-4 and AQA-5 systems."

I checked into VP-45 in December 1976 as we deployed to Keflavik where I met our Jim Cole, our crew IFT.

Jim Cole: "I enjoyed watching our TACCO, LT Bob Miller, work as I hung from the overhead handrails with my back against the bay doors behind the NAVCOMM. Like Admiral Tobin, I feel really good about the sub-hunting we did, especially in the late '70s and early '80s."

Mike Olenick: "I did some calculations between the CP-901 and my iPhone 13. The iPhone memory is over 2 million times larger than the base CP-901."

Jim Cole: "The CP-901/ASQ-114 (alias UNIVAC 1830A) is a general purpose, 30-bit Instruction Set Architecture, computer. The unit was a bit taller than me, with the Control Panel comprising the height from about my shoulder level upwards. Be-



*P-3Cs on deck in Iceland.*

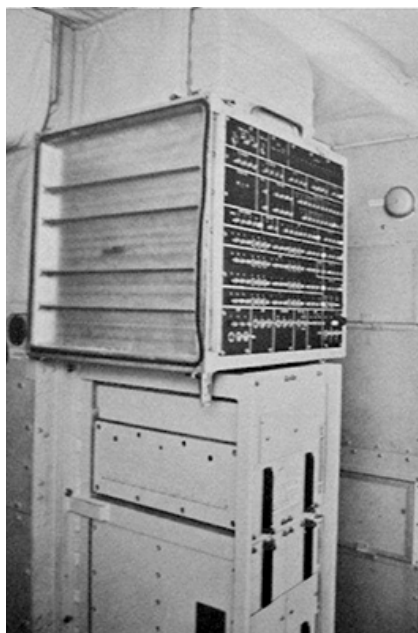
low the I/O unit were the Central Processor, 4 memory units and a power supply. Generally, it could be said the CP-901 was pretty reliable, although some of them could get heat-ornery. In my estimation the Central Processor failures were the pits, because the software diagnostics weren't reliable more than 50% of the time.

"The most common failures experienced were memory failures, most often 'Sense Amps'. Luckily, we had the ability to pinpoint a memory problem to a core-stack quickly - isolating it to the stack or a sense amp, but fixing it was a pain."

The CP-901 had to be kept cold or it would fade and was known for dying at just the wrong time: like during engine start electrical load transfers or the run-in to attack.

Jim Cole: "The various computer components had different temperaments and reliability. Of course, you heard the stories of putting stuff in the refrigerator to cool it down and return its functionality. I was in '56 when we got the Charlie in '69 and by the time I got to '45 in '76, a lot of the bad actors had been replaced; the S/D converter I've already mentioned, the doppler, the sono receivers, the UHF's, and the HF's were all redesigned with improved reliability. The older Doppler and the On Top Position Indicator (OTPI) receiver were the most frequent residents of the refrigerator."

Stump Richey: "That damn P-3C computer always was a problem. One technique was to have the IFT sit on the sextant bench between the TACCO and NAVCOMM...kinda like the "gods" were there--dar-



*The venerable CP-901 Computer.*

ing the computer to “bomb.”

Jim Cole: “To the left of the CP-901 were two Magnetic Tape Transports (MTTs). Programs used by the computer had to be loaded from these transports and after the Op Program was up and running, the program ‘repurposed’ the MTTs to run an Auto Recovery tape on one MTT and a Data Extract tape on the other. Initially they’re blank tapes, with the Data Extract tape serving as a digital log of the mission, recording things from all systems that the CP-901 had comms with. The Auto Recovery tape, having a copy of the Op Program put on its front end and a sequential chronological picture of mission events following, was to bring the system back to life in the event a system crash occurred. The OP Program could be quickly reloaded, and mission events, up to the point of the crash, restored, and the crew could be brought, digitally, right back to where they were when the crash occurred.

The MTTs were a severe weak point; we were forever cleaning them with Freon and cotton swabs. They could ‘dirty themselves up’ on a single tape; I saw many instances of loading the STP or Op program on a freshly-cleaned MTT which would be halted by the read-head getting dirty again. You can imagine what the chance of producing a pristine Data Extract or Auto Recovery tape over a 10-hour mission was. I did have a couple instances where an Auto Recovery worked perfectly; the whole tactical plot, plot stab – everything came back--a beautiful thing to watch!”

Data Link. In 1956, CNO Arleigh Burke authorized Naval Tactical Data System (NTDS) for Fleet data link. In 1961, the first NTDS was introduced and “ASW” NTDS was deployed in 1967.

Jim Cole: “Data Link had a Roll Call mode where a net was set up and all participants were polled sequentially and responded. That kind of continuous transmission made little sense in the P-3 world, so there was a ‘burst mode’ where the ONSTA aircraft could push a button and the relieving A/C would get the entire tactical picture sent. Blank scope, then all of a sudden there is all the data accumulated by the aircraft you’re relieving on your scope. I only saw this work once, but it was something to behold.

Warren Tisdale: “Navigation school at VT-29 in Corpus left me with little taste for paper off-line navigation; I thought it would be much more rewarding to be a NAVCOMM on a Charlie. I had not thought much past navigation at that point, but certainly a TACCO had much more information and control on the P-3C.”

Don Stanton: I checked into VP-30 in July 1976 and we learned to fly the P-3C doing systems, trainers, and some flights. Over several months, we ‘Charlie-assigned’ pilots were immersed in tactics and learned about the Tube, including NAVCOMM duties and inertial navigation.

Don Hefkin (VP-30) “The progression of the Lock-



*The P-3C, with computer technology provided by the CP-901, dramatically enhanced the flight crew’s ability to gain and maintain ASW tracking and navigate, plot and attack with greater precision than ever before.*

heed P-3 Orion from the earlier P-3A/B variants to the P-3C with its system updates, dramatically changed and improved the way aircrews performed ASW missions. Through digital technology the crew TACCO was better able to integrate and process incoming information from sensor operators, and tie this information to the current aircraft position, to determine the next step in the prosecution of a submarine. The integration of improved sensor and current aircraft position data, which was lacking in the earlier models, greatly improved the speed and quality of tactical information flowing between aircrew positions and enabled the TACCO to more effectively direct the actions of the flight station and the sensor operators in performing the ASW mission.”



## 1950s

**Margie J. Kennedy** was born October 23, 1943, in San Antonio, TX, to Ocampo and Marguerite Martinez. She married Frank Kennedy on June 17, 1967, and they spent better than fifty years walking this life together. Margie was a treasured daughter, wife, sister, mother, and friend. She was a fifth-generation Texan, a descendant of an Alamo defender. Her love

for her home state ran as deep and wide as Texas itself.



*Margie Kennedy*

Margie always knew where she'd come from, so she always had a pretty good idea where she was going. Her memberships in both the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and the United Daughters of the Confederacy informed much of

that, but it was family first and foremost that formed the best of her.

Margie especially loved attending her husband's Navy reunions, where her pride in both him and in our country could be on display all at once. She was a people person from way back. She loved volunteer work and donating her time to folks who needed it. She loved to celebrate her own cancer survivor status and participate in fun survivor activities. But she never really saw herself as just a survivor. She knew she'd won something important and it meant something to her to help others find the same fight and spirit in themselves.

Margie passed away on March 11, 2022 and is survived by her husband Frank Kennedy, her daughter Angela Kennedy Cook, her son-in-law James Cook, her younger brother Richard Martinez and his wife

Neta Martinez, brother-in-law Billy Kennedy, sister-in-law Linda Kennedy, and many nieces and nephews.

**Commander Alan Spenser Lee, USN** was born in Long Beach, CA, 22 June 1922. He died 16 January 2022 at Green Valley, AZ.

He came from a long service family. He was born to Captain Lamar Lee USN and Mrs. Edna Walsh Lee. He was predeceased by all his siblings: brothers Rear Admiral Lamar Lee, Jr., USN, Captain Charles R. Lee, USN, Colonel Lynn C. Lee, USA, and his sister Lois Lee Robert.



*CDR Alan Spenser*

He was appointed to the U.S. Naval Academy in 1940 by Congressman Monkeywitz of Connecticut. He graduated with distinction 9 June 1943 with the accelerated class of 1944 (due to WWII) as a member of the ninth company.

He married Jane Elizabeth Senter of Brunswick, Maine in her hometown on 16 July 1945, who predeceased him on 16 April 2019. They were married for 73 years. They had three children: Alan S. Lee, Jr., James S. Lee, who predeceased him on 28 Jan. 2019, and Elizabeth L. Burnham. They have five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, all of whom survive him.

Commander Lee served in USS *Dashiell* (DD-659), USS *Dayton* (CL-105), USS *Missouri* (BB-63), USS *Wisconsin* (BB-64) and USS *Wasp* (CVS-18). He was a designated naval aviator and served in Observation Squadron Two (VO-2BC), Scout Observation Service Unit (SOSU-2), Fleet Aircraft Service Squad-



ron Three (FASRON-3), Patrol Squadron Forty-Nine (VP-49), and as Executive Officer and Commanding office of Patrol Squadron Forty-Five (VP-45). He also served on the staff of Commander Fleet Air Wings, Atlantic Fleet (COMFAIRWINGSLANT).



He enjoyed technical assignments at the Bureau of Aeronautics, Bureau of Naval Weapons and the Office of Naval Research. He received higher education at the Naval Postgraduate School and Harvard University. He served ashore at NAS Ottumwa, NAS Pensacola, and NAS Norfolk. While serving in patrol squadrons he was based on board USS *Currituck* (AV-7) and USS *Greenwich Bay* (AVP-41) in addition to deploying to bases throughout the Atlantic Ocean area.

Commander Lee retired from the Navy April 1, 1965, to accept a position as Chief Scientist with the Curtis-Wright Corporation in NJ. Following his employment as chief scientist, he conducted independent technical analysis in physics and engineering. He did his civic duty in a volunteer ambulance corps in NJ as an Emergency Medical Technician. He was a life member of several technical, professional, and veteran organizations.

Commander Lee was cremated, and his ashes and those of his beloved wife, Jane S. Lee, will be inurned at the U.S. Naval Academy Columbarium at Annapolis 17 October 2022.

**Kenneth R. Sadler** of Milton, FL passed away on 21 April 2022.

ADJ1 (retired) **Vernon Ivan Smith (Smitty)**, 90, of Jeffersonville, PA, passed from this life into eternal life on October 9, 2020, at the home of his son, John Smith, West Norriton, surrounded by family.



*Vernon "Smitty" Smith*

Vernon was born in Norristown, PA to John and Ethel Smith, on September 24, 1930. He went to Upper Merion High School and graduated in 1948. Vern (Smitty) lived his life around 3 core beliefs, Family, Faith and Service. He went on to serve 20 years for his country as an aviation mechanic during two wars, Korean and Vietnam.

He was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church, where he would volunteer his time to serve those in need. When Vernon could not drive, his son, Ezekiel would bring him to the church to continue this service to his community weekly. He was a Post Commander of VFW Post 1074, of Conshohocken, PA., readily available whenever the need arises to carry a rifle or the post banner in all community parades or walk with the men to honor his fellow brothers and sisters of the Armed Services.

He faithfully volunteered his time to help VFW Post 1074 place flags and flowers whenever it was needed. Continuing in the same respect, he was an active member of Washington Fire Company of Conshohocken, and social member of George Clay Fire Company. Vernon loved gathering with his family for many backyard events and vacations. His advice to children and grandchildren at weddings was "don't go to bed angry".

Vernon is preceded in death by his two wives, first wife, Margaret Kirkpatrick Smith, and second wife Rosemary Lang Smith; his parents, John and Ethel Smith.

### 1960s

**Sylvan "Bud" L. Cavitt**, age 93, passed away on Thursday, June 16, 2022, surrounded by his loving family. Born in Haskell, TX on April 29, 1929, he was a son of the late Sylvan V. and Mary Opal Cavitt. The



*Sylvan "Bud" Cavitt*

first of 12 children, Sylvan is survived by son, Steve; and daughters, Jan and Karen.

Sylvan spent 22 years serving in the US Navy where he mastered his skills and trained countless others in the field of aviation. He was an accomplished and proud Flight Engineer and Crew Chief overseeing the air-worthiness of his and his crewmates aircraft. A retired veteran of three wars, he really enjoyed attending his squadron reunions of VP-21 and VP-45. He loved being in the air but wasn't fond of commercial flying as he wasn't in the cockpit. Thank goodness he loved driving the open road. Although his first duty station was Quonset Point NAS, RI his duties took him all over the world. After retiring from the military, Sylvan obtained his Associates degree and purchased the Harborside Grill in Wickford, RI. A few years after selling the Harborside, he purchased the Meadowbrook Diner in Warwick, RI. He then took to the road again as a truck driver for Cornucopia.

After his final and well deserved retirement, Sylvan met Claire, with whom he shared a love for traveling. Together they traveled the United States in their "fifth-wheel" for several years before settling in Ocala, FL.

Sylvan cherished the time he spent with his grandchildren, serving his country in the Navy, driving, his dog Izzy, the heat, old westerns and crossword puzzles. We will miss his stories of growing up in Texas and his amazing memory.

**1980s**

On Sunday May 15, 2022, **Michael Joseph Kane**, best known as pawpaw, passed peacefully with loved ones by his side at Hospice of Savannah Georgia. Mike was born on October 21, 1945, in Bennington, Vermont. Mike was the second oldest child in a family of eight siblings to his late parents John and Julia Kane.



Michael Joseph Kane



Upon his graduation from Mt. Anthony Union High School in Bennington, Mike joined the US Navy. This adventure led him many wonderful locations around world, but a key location was Jacksonville, Florida where he would meet his bride of 52 wonderful years, Betty Colleen Kane, and her son Erick Shawn, whom Mike later adopted and loved as his own.

In 1988, Mike fully retired from his career in the Navy where he earned the rank of Command Master Chief after 24 dedicated years to his country.

Mike built a successful business in Jacksonville, Florida which afforded him a second retirement at the early age of 50 where he relocated with his wife and grandson to Beech Creek, West Virginia. There he was able to fully enjoy with friends and family his hobby of hunting, fishing, camping, and enjoying Almost Heaven off his front porch. He also saw the start of his next chapter, becoming a great grandfather to Bryson Shawn and Alana Paige Kane.

As if retirement would seem fulfilling enough, Mike and Betty relocated in late 2021 to Richmond Hill, GA with Timmy, and his wife Courtney Kane, to be immersed in their favorite roles yet as live in great grandparents. He in fact became quite a pool boy and kept his puppy Deuce very well fed.

**Douglas H. "Doug" Snitch**, age 68, of Newport, DE passed away at his home on May 5, 2022.

He was born and raised in Wilmington, DE and was the son of the late Wilbert, Sr. and Agnes Snitch. Doug was a 1971 graduate of Conrad HS. He was proud of his 22-year career in the US Navy, retiring as a Master Chief in 1993. Doug volunteered during the Vietnam War and his career lasted through Desert Storm and he retired during Iraqi Freedom. His second career was at the Newark Post Office for over 20 years also where he was a sorter. He loved fishing, especially bass and in freshwater ponds along with his truck that got



Douglas "Doug" Snitch

him to those fishing holes. Humor was his way to get through the day and enjoyed passing it along to those he met.

Doug is survived by his sons Matthew (Mandee) and Todd (Nichole), 5 grandchildren and a brother, W. Lenard, Jr. (Ann). He is also preceded in death by his brother Robert.

**David Joseph Spisso**, 78, of Hardeeville, SC, passed away unexpectedly on June 20, 2022, at Coastal Carolina Hospital.



David Joseph Spisso

David was born on June 14, 1944, to Joseph Louis Spisso and Mildred Carmella Cataldo in Plainfield, NJ. After graduating from Watchung Hills Regional High School in 1962, he went on to study Naval Science at the United States Naval Academy. After graduation, he

was commissioned as an Ensign. He was designated a Naval Aviator flying the P-3C Orion and was also a Navy Recruiting Command Officer. He served for 25 years and retired as a Lieutenant Commander in Macon, GA.

He married Martha Ellen Fondren in 1971 in Jacksonville, FL. David was a proud father and family man who was determined to provide for his family and give them the life he felt they deserved. His

family meant more to him than anything else in the world, something he often mentioned. He was unendingly proud of his boys DJ and Michael, and his wife Martha. David and his family resided in Macon, GA for 28 years where he played an active role in the community.

He served as a Vice President of Acquisitions Management Incorporated, President of the Middle Georgia Soccer Association, and was selected as a "Local Hero" to carry the Olympic Torch for the 1996 Olympic games in Atlanta, GA. He loved to cook and share a wonderful meal that he prepared for all guests. He was best known for making his family lasagna recipe during the holidays.

David and Martha retired and moved to Sun City/Hilton Head in 2011. He brought his compassion for community with him and served 2 terms on the Hardeeville City Council. Hardeeville was his "Hometown" where he has provided lasting effects on the community to include the Jasper County School System, Police and Fire Protection as well as championing numerous parks and recreation facilities for families. Anyone who knew David knew that he was the most loving husband, father, and "Grandpa" a family could ask for.

He is survived by his loving wife of 51 years, Martha Fondren Spisso, his sons Colonel David Joseph Spisso II and Michael Fondren Spisso.

*"The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen."*

*Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross*

## THE PATRON FOUR FIVE ASSOCIATION

### New 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 \$10 per year, \$40 for 5 years or \$200 for life...payable to:

**Mike Riley, Treasurer, Patron Four Five Association**

**6618 Blue Jay Way,**

**Charlotte, MI, 48813**

**517-980-6235; Email: mlriley@gmail.com**

#### ROSTER INFORMATION

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

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ 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 (Position): \_\_\_\_\_

Ground 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!