

9/10/88

Greetings,

My name is Jay Thomas and I'm sending this form letter to all the men listed in the "Mariners" roster, plus two others, in regards to a VP-45 reunion. I served as a member of this squadron from Spring of 1958 to Fall of 1960.

Over the past few years, I have become more and more interested in renewing the acquaintance of the individuals I served with in VP-45 and this interest has provided the motivation for this correspondence. I could think of no better way to accomplish this than thru a reunion.

If a VP-45 reunion organization already exists, I have no interest in forming another. Please let me know if you are aware of such an organization, I would love to join. If this correspondence fails to reveal the existence of such an already formed organization and I find sufficient interest from yourself and others, I may try to put a VP-45 reunion together.

As of this writing, I have only the names/addresses of the men listed in the recently published "Mariner" master roster plus two other friends. Your assistance in providing additional names/addresses is extremely important.

Please respond to this letter providing all the relevant VP-45 info you can including:

- When and where you served in VP-45
- Existing reunion organization info
- Interest in a VP-45 reunion
- Names/addresses of other former VP45'ers.

I will provide a follow-up letter in a month or so informing each of you with the results of this correspondence.

Thank you for your time, interest, and cooperation.

Sincerely
Jay Thomas

P.S. JAY E. THOMAS
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(316)-943-3304

20 DEC. 1988

Greetings VP-45 Shipmates,

I'm hoping this 2ND mailing reaches you in time that I may wish each of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and further hope that each of you and your families are enjoying good health.

Please accept my apology for being a month later with this mailing than promised and planned.

The first mailing (dated 9/10/88) was sent to 25 persons even though a few of them were sent nearly two months later. All of us interested in a reunion should be pleased to know that I received 14 replies (not as many as hoped for but more than expected). That's nearly a 60% response which translates to a small group with good spirit. Thanks to each of you for your reply. Too bad I can't enclose a copy of each of the letters received, all of them were interesting and some quite informative. Following are some items of interest from reply letters:

- VPB-205 moved to BDA from the Pacific in late 1945 or early 1946. Squadron designation was then changed to VP-MS-5 and then a few months later to VP-45
- VP-45 moved from BDA to Norfolk in early 1950 and later moved to Coco Solo in April 1951. Squadron moved back to BDA in 1955 and was still there in the early 1960's. No knowledge beyond that.
- Squadron lost PBM SN 84618 in open sea landing while attempting to remove a sick sailor from a ship. Plane sank but entire crew rescued by ship.

- One of our shipmates ended up in VP-45 Coco Solo when Akron OBI reserve squadron was activated during Korean War.
- Received copy of another squadron reunion schedule.
- In late 1940's, enlisted rates were changing. ARM's became AL's, and later became AT's. Aviation Carpenters & Aviation Painters became AM's.
- VP-45 had (3) enlisted pilots: Garso AP1, Richards AP1, and Gallagher AP1.
- Another shipmate sent a copy of the March 1956 redeployment schedule for return to Coco Solo from San Juan Springboard. This schedule includes the names, rank/rate, ⁽¹⁰⁾ aircraft SW's, (99) aircrew members, and (81) ground support men.
- The most amusing comment was from one of our shipmates that has seen reunion attempts in the past that died and therefore he wasn't going to dig out all his VP-45 "stuff" until he saw that I made good on my promise to send a follow-up letter. ^{ha} Good idea.

I'm still interested in helping with a reunion even though it now looks like I will be unable to attend Mariners reunion in Anaheim as hoped. My sincere hope is that those of you in attendance will take the time to get together and put some serious thought towards a VP-45 reunion and let the rest of us know. Providing I receive a reply from those at Anaheim, I plan on sending a third mailing shortly thereafter. One thing we must all keep in mind, some of our shipmates are in their 70's, consequently time is of the essence.

I have addresses for the following and will be glad to forward correspondence to them if you send a stamped sealed envelope with name on it. All of the following are being sent the second mailing. An "*" indicates they were sent the first mailing.

- * BAIRD, FRANCIS C. (TEX) (AIRCREW) * MORELAND, STEVE (?)
- BAIRD, W.D. (PILOT) * MYERS, W.P. (WM.) (AIRCREW)
- * CAIN, C. DAN (PILOT) * RAITHEL, AL (PILOT)
- * CHAPPELL, JOHN (PILOT) * ROOKASIN, J. (ROOKY) (AIRCREW)
- CIPOLAT, A.A. (PILOT) * RUSLING, JOHN (PILOT)
- * DAVIS, EDWARD A. (PILOT) * SABOL, DAVID (AIRCREW)
- * DEAN, GEORGE (AIRCREW) * STEIN, E.M. (JOE) (PILOT)
- * DILWEG, JON C. (PILOT) * STEMA, PETE (AIRCREW)
- * EMRICH, MANNY (PILOT) * STOCKHOUSE, AL (PILOT)
- * FAGAN, ED (PILOT) * STONE, ALFRED EUGENE (AIRCREW)
- * GOZMAN, HENRY (HANK) (PILOT) * TESTA, A.J. (TONY) (PILOT)
- * GRANNEMAN, RALPH (AIRCREW) * WEIXELMAN, JIM (AIRCREW)
- * KING, W.W. (BILL) (PILOT) * WILSON, G.A. (RED) (PILOT)
- LEACH, RALPH W. JR. (PILOT) * WOLF, R.L. (EL LOBO) (PILOT)
- MILLER, RICHARD A. (PILOT)

We have barely touched the potential VP-43 reunioners. My best guesstimate is that there are at least 1,000 men out there somewhere that we need to contact and that is a job that can only be achieved through the efforts of all of us. Dig deep and see if you can come up with more contacts. Make some phone calls, write some letters, do whatever is required to get more names/addresses. Nearly all responses mentioned the "good times" spent in our Squadron. Lets work together to really make a reunion happen.

Those of you, not currently members of the "Mariners", I sincerely urge you to join. You will join approximately 1,500

shipmates that have a vested interest in Martin manufactured seaplanes. You'll also receive a master roster, a quarterly newsletter, plus an invite to an annual reunion. The "Mariners" and the men I've been in contact with have inspired my VP-45 reunion interest.

Thanks to all of you that returned letters and thanks also to Dave Sahol and George Dean for their contribution to the last "Mariners" newsletter. I enjoyed them both.

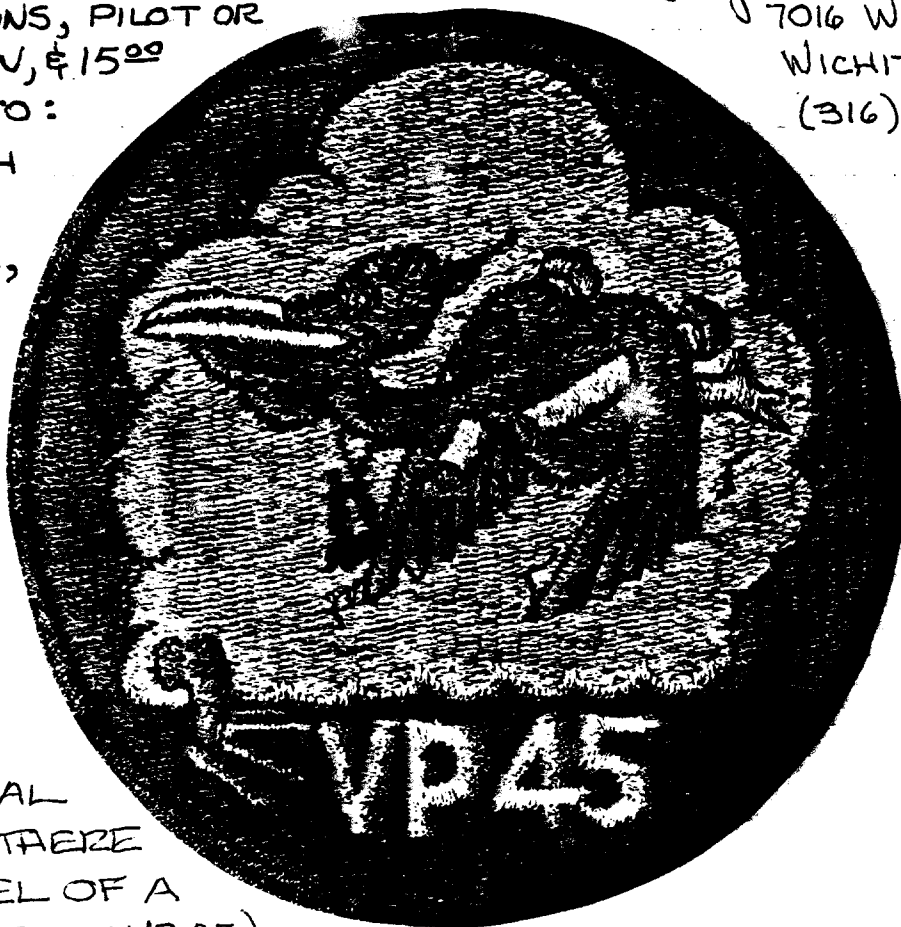
God speed to each of you. Lets keep in touch.

P.S. TO JOIN "MARINERS"
SEND: NAME, SPOUSE NAME,
ADDRESS, PHONE NO,
SQUADRONS, PILOT OR
AIRCREW, \$15⁰⁰
CHECK TO:

Dedicated to help

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NEED YOUR
SUGGESTIONS
FOR REUNION?
TIME,
LOCATION,
ACTIVITIES,
& ETC.

DO ANY
ONE OF YOU KNOW
IF VP-45 IS STILL
ACTIVE?
SQUADRON?

I'VE HEARD
THAT SEVERAL
YEARS AGO, THERE
WAS A MODEL OF A
PSM-1 (LN-8 OF VP45)
ON THE MARKET. I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFO
ON THIS ITEM. I WAS FORTUNATE TO SERVE AS
A RADIOMAN ON THIS PLANE FOR 24 MONTHS.

THANKS