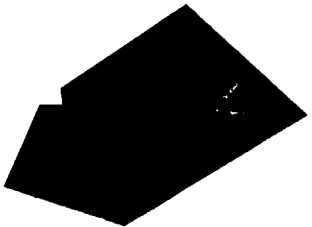




27 June, 1989



constant words of encouragement, brilliant ideas (it's all his idea that I put this reunion together); and, his kind offer to help with his new word processing equipment. Thanks Bill. (Skyking also has some excellent ideas for a regular newsletter).

As of this writing, the exact date for our reunion is undecided. I have written the Naval Aviation Museum for the dates their facility will be available for our reunion anytime between the 2nd week of July and the 3rd week of September, 1990. Our preliminary plans are built around the idea of having an informal get together on Friday Evening, (yet to be determined for the daytime Saturday activities), a formal Saturday Night Banquet with speake and, an informal farewell brunch Sunday morning. This reunion will take place in Pensacola, Florida.

As of now, our reunion organization differs from a "low budget" operation in that this is a "zero budget" operation. Therefore, I respectfully request that you help by correcting any of the names/addresses on the list that you know are incorrect so that I may get this information to them without further wasted postage. Our enclosed roster is a rough draft and even though I have double-checked names/addresses, I'm sure that there will be errors and changes. Also, if I have included anyone's name/address and you wish not to be included please accept my sincere apology. Please inform me and I will remove your name/address.

I anticipate sending out 2 more communications prior to our reunion. One later this fall and one next Spring. The next communication will include complete plans, times, dates, when, where, activities, costs, and so on. Folks, if the "Lord" is willing and the ocean don't rise too much - - -, this reunion is going to happen in just a little over a year from now. Buy your wives/girlfriends new dresses, write your friends, and start digging in your archives for pictures, relics, and so on.

I would appreciate hearing from those of you who are interested. Sure would make the facility arrangements in Pensacola a lot easier.

God's speed to each of you and your families, let's keep in touch.

Respectfully,

*Jay E. Thomas*  
Jay E. Thomas

PS: Would be grateful for any info that may help me locate some of my "ole" LN-8 crew: LT. Frank Agnew PPC Clinton C. Abbott (AMC & PC) Wendel S. Timmons AE2 (last known to be with TWA in Orlando, Fla.) A. E. Ruis (AO) - Jacksonville, Fla. Austin Gifford Langley AT3 (last known to be with Medical Equipment firm in Columbus, Ohio).

PS: Again, 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 Marti 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. To join "Mariners" send: Name, Spouse name, address, phone No., squadrons, pilot or aircrew, and \$15.00 check to: Dick Gingrich, 468 East Baltimore Street, Greencastle, PA. 17225. (717) 597-8250.

Greetings Shipmates and Families,

This is the third mailing being sent to all the ex VP-45 shipmates for which I have addresses.

What started out to be an attempt to relocate the "Ole" seaplane crew I flew with many years ago has turned into plans for a full scale squadron reunion. As you can see from the enclosed list, we now have names/addresses for shipmates that served in VP-45 from 1942 thru 1976. That covers an era prior and subsequent to the two years ('58 - '60) I spent as a radioman in a P5M-1. A very special thanks to those of you that were able to send reply letters. Not only were your letters loaded with info, they also provided some very needed moral support.

The first mailing was sent approximately a year ago to the 18 or so men listed in the Mariners Roster, and from your reply letters, our roster grew to approximately 50 that were sent the second mailing last fall. Through our combined efforts, our list of shipmates now exceeds 170 men.

Special thanks to:

George Dean for nice letter and 2 names/addresses.

Pete Stema for nice reply letter.

Bill Myers for the P5M paying cards and copy of VR-1 reunion plans/schedule.

John Chappell for nice letter including names/addresses of 8 new men.

John Rushling for nice letter, catalog, and RADM. Sneads address.

Manny Emrich for nice letter, some very necessary corrections to the second mailing, plus the name/address of Tom Wade. (There were 4 men recalled to active duty from the Akron, Ohio reserve during Korean conflict, not just the one as I reported. They were: Manny Emrich, Robert Wolf, Al Stockhouse, and Buz Parker).

Glen Wilson for the nice long letter and name/address. (When teaching U. S. World Sea Power and Aerodynamics at Purdue Univ., he had 25 students become Naval Aviators plus 3 students that became Astronauts).

Art Holveck for nice letter, name/address (he is about to set up a new Dupont Plant in Singapore).

Dave Sabol (one of my "ole" radio crewmates on LN-8) for the nice letters and especially for the info on the P5M-2 (SP-5B) model kit).

Dick Knott for nice letter plus names/addresses of 17 shipmates. (Thank you for writing your book, "The American Flying Boat" - truly the finest historical literature I've ever read). I quarantee any/all seaplane enthusiasts will love the way Mr. Knott has incorporated the total emotion and character of man into the history and development of the flying boat. His book is probably available at most good book stores and libraries.

Lester Pate for his nice letter containing 6 names/addresses.

Mort Eckhouse for the many communications we've had and for sending his list of 122 names/addresses. Also a very special thanks for offering to help with the reunion arrangements in Pensacola.

Last but certainly not least, "ole" Bill (Skyking) King for the many communications,



PATRON FOUR FIVE  
ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER # 4

November, 1989



Newsletter which was returned, "not deliverable".

- Joseph H. Bretton, 524 Winding Way, Warminster, PA 18974
- James A. Bestul, 12931 5th Ave. So., Burnsville, MN 55337
- Carl Hausler, 185 Lowell Rd., Salem, NH 03079
- Jerry L. Livingston, 1159 W. Pearson St., Hernando, FL 32642
- Jerry Stewart, 78 Sudburry Sq., Sterling, VA 22170
- Leo M. Nau, 5918 Norde Dr. W., Jacksonville, FL 32244
- Don Dawson, 990 So. Florida Tr., Inverness, FL 32652
- Bruce M. Elvin, 1614 Eddy Ct., Redlands, CA 92374
- Robert L. Ashcraft, 3303 Hollyfield Cr., S.W., Roanoke, VA 24018
- M. L. (Doc) Burger, 603 6th St., Baraboo, WI 53913

Dear Shipmates/Spouses,

Folks, our reunion is going to take place in Pensacola the 26th, 27th, and 28th of October, 1990.

At this writing, we have a legal name, "Patron Four Five Association", and a voluntary organization in place and running quite smoothly in high gear as you will see from all the arrangements currently made. Mort Eckhouse is our co-chairman and is in charge of all the Pensacola arrangements. Dave Johnson is our treasurer and responsible for all of our financial arrangements. Bill (Skyking) King is our secretary and is responsible for our mailing list and roster. I will remain as co-chairman and be responsible for the letters, printing, and mailing of the newsletter.

I would like to reiterate the key elements that have fostered our success thus far. Two years ago, I started with only 17 names/addresses listed in the Mariners Unlimited roster. From this small number, many of you responded likewise by providing new names/addresses, and so on. Because of your caring and personal effort, our roster approximately tripled with each subsequent mailing. Today we stand at over 230 because you care. Think of where we are today and the possibility of how large we could be tomorrow.

I've received over 60 reply letters since our last newsletter, containing photographs, cartoons, personnel rosters, aircraft serial numbers, Springboard rosters, slides, newspapers, postage donations, many individual offers to help, many new names/addresses, and the thing I enjoy the most, and that is, news from one of our own that he has finally relocated and communicated with a special shipmate of time passed. Reuniting shipmates is the true essence of this reunion effort, and its been pure pleasure to be a part of it. Thanks so much for caring and returning your personal contributions. I hope to have bulletin boards to display them at our reunion.

\*\*\* TAPS \*\*\*

Along with all the good news, there is also news that will sadden our Shipmates hearts. I've received notice from Mrs. Ed Fagan that her husband, Ed died of colon cancer 5/9/89. I was informed by Mrs. Elizabeth June Lowry that her husband, Gerald D. died 3/2/89. In letters from other Shipmates, I've been told that we have also lost Frank Lavelle, Harley Broom, and Charles Shaw. Also the following were sent the 3rd

Now back to the reunion! Our schedule/arrangements will be as follows:  
Our first gathering will be a stand-up Cocktail Party at the Naval Air Museum on Friday the 26th from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Our meal will be "heavy" Hors d'oeuvres, truly a meal in itself. Saturday evening, the 27th, will be our dinner banquet at the Pensacola Hilton, where we will have a very short meeting, announcements, introductions, dinner, and our featured speaker, -well known and published Naval Aviation writer, Capt. Richard (Dick) C. Knott (USN-RET). Dick has chosen the topic "Water Wings" for presentation to our group. More on our speaker and his subject in the next communication. Saturday morning and afternoon plans will be offered when confirmed. Sunday morning, the 28th, will be our farewell brunch at an as-yet undetermined location.

Mort Eckhouse has secured a block of 75 rooms at the Pensacola Hilton for the 26th and 27th at a reduced cost of \$64.00 room/night (1-4 people). 25 of these rooms will be available one day earlier on the 25th and also one day later on the 28th. Reservations will be on a first-come basis. The hotel requires reservations by 7/25/90 to obtain these special arrangements. For those of us, including Shirley and I, that will be traveling a good stretch to get to PNS and back, Mort has swung a giant deal by declaring Delta Airlines as our preferred carrier whereby each of us will receive a 40% fare reduction (see attached letter). Thanks again Mort, that represents a significant savings to many of us.

Dave Johnson has already filed for our tax number and has set up our organization with a free checking account in the name of "Patron Four Five Association". At this writing, I have received a total of six individual personal postage donations totaling \$75.00, all of which has been turned over to Mr. Johnson. The first three newsletters are gifts from Shirley and I, for the pleasure I've enjoyed thus far; but, with the roster still growing and the newsletter getting larger, our Assoc. will be covering the expense

of this and subsequent mailings. Because of this change in financial planning, the officers of our Assoc. are jointly asking each of you that have not already made a donation, please consider making a voluntary contribution of \$5.00. Any/all monies received will strictly be used to cover expenses encumbered by our organization for newsletters, notices to be placed in several publications, deposits, and other costs relative to our reunion. Again, I want to emphasize, this is to be "voluntary" and in no way will negatively reflect on anyone's standing in our Assoc. If you so desire, please make remittance to "Patron Four Five Association" and send to Dave Johnson, 1500 South Fairfield Dr., Pensacola, FL 32507.

From the recent roster and newsletter I received from "Mariners Unlimited" it appears that ten more of you VP-45 Shipmates have recently joined the Mariners. Again, I would like to emphasize that the Mariners organization is a fantastic group and provide sheer enjoyment to all members. They play primarily to the 1500 or so persons earlier involved with Martin manufactured seaplanes, but I feel any and all flying-boat enthusiasts will enjoy their quarterly publication and their annual reunion. Their 1990 reunion will be held April 4-7 at Capital City, VA. The yearly dues are \$15.00. For information or those wishing to join, please contact Dick Gingrich, 468 East Baltimore St., Greencastle, PA 17225-1006.

A Large number of you have offered to help and I assure you your help will be needed and very much appreciated. We will need lots of help setting and cleaning up at all of our reunion functions. We will also need help with the registration at each of these functions. I respectfully request all offers to help be extended to Mort Eckhouse, our Florida Boss.

SPECIAL TREAT: W. P. (Bill) Myers has had a professional video company convert some super 8 film he took while in Coco Solo to VHS video tape. I purchased the tape from him (at his cost of \$30.00) and as I told him, it's not hollywood quality, but I wouldn't sell it back to him for ten times the amount. The film has multiple scenes of P5M takeoffs and landings (including jato assist) and also the PBM. Also included are scenes of the surrounding Indian villages and the base. Our tentative plans are to have this video set up for viewing at the cocktail party. Anyone interested in purchasing the tape should contact W. P. (Bill) Myers. (see roster for listing).

SPECIAL OFFER: Miller Carmichael (pilot-'59-'62 BDA era) has graciously offered to try to put together a video of the Squadron/BDA days for people to view at the reunion. All he needs is for all of you to send him your photos, slides, and movies from your BDA days and he will take care of the rest. What do you say, let's overwhelm

Video Variants, 156 Second Street SW, Winter Haven, FL 33880. (c/o Miler Carmichael)


For those of you not familiar with the squadron insignia on the left of the header, it is a copy of the one carried by the first members of VP-45 that served during WWII in the North Pacific. VP-45 was first commissioned in the Spring of 1943 and was "disestablished" sometime near the end of the year. The present VP-45 was commissioned in the North Atlantic in the Spring of 1946 and has remained active ever since. VP-45 is currently home-based at NAS JAX. Those who would like more info on the earlier squadron, I suggest you write to Carl Amme (see roster for address). He has put together a very complete epistle documenting the "earlier" squadron history. Let's not forget what our earlier Shipmates went through to help preserve and protect the very freedom all of us enjoy today. WELCOME TO OUR REUNION GROUP.

Our next scheduled communication will go out next Spring. All info not available now, will be sent to each of you at that time. Thanks for all your letters and related info and the pleasure they have brought to many of us. I would like to close my portion of this newsletter with a paragraph I've taken from a letter sent to me by Jim Johnstone, and with his permission, as follows:

"Thanks again for the newsletter. Keep up the good work. I have now been to four reunions and each provides something that money cannot buy. Naturally you are saddened by those you wanted to see but find they have predeceased you. Then the lies and sea stories become embellished each time. My problem has always been "unwinding" on the way home and for a week after I return to the normal life. Ours was a rich and rewarding experience, the seriousness of which we did not understand at that time. The sheer joy is being able to thank God that HE let us do it - and live through it."

Hope this communication finds you and your families well. Let's keep in touch, please.

Respectfully,

  
Jay Thomas

P. S.....I hope each of you realize the importance of letting us know whether or not you will be attending our reunion. Appropriate food and facility arrangements cannot be made without your help.

BONUS.....At the time of our reunion, the Naval Air Museum will have undergone and have completed an expansion program approximately doubling its size.



August 25, 1989

Mr. Mort Eckhouse  
4207 Rosebud Court  
Pensacola, Fl. 32504

Re: Patrol Squadron 45 Reunion  
October 26-28, 1990 - Pensacola

Dear Mr. Eckhouse:

Delta Air Lines Special Meetings Network is pleased to have this opportunity to work with you on your upcoming meeting, and to have been selected as your preferred carrier. We specialize in coordinating travel arrangements for meetings, and strive to provide the best service possible at the lowest applicable fare available.

Arrangements have been made to allow a 5% discount off Delta's domestic published fares if all applicable restrictions are satisfied. The exception to this would be when traveling solely on the Delta Connection carriers: Atlantic Southeast, Comair, Business Express and Skywest.

For passengers not qualifying for any published discounts, a 40% discount off Delta's published roundtrip coach fares will be offered on Delta's domestic system. A 35% discount will apply on the Delta Connection carriers and from Delta's Canadian cities. This discount will be based on Delta's published roundtrip coach fares when the following ticketing and booking requirements are met:

1. Valid travel dates: October 23-31, 1990.
2. 35% or 40% is applicable off our unrestricted coach fares.
3. Tickets must be purchased at least 7 days prior to departure date.
4. File reference number: I-25013.
5. Changes to the originating flights must be made 7 days in advance; returns may be changed anytime.
6. Roundtrip on Delta only.
7. No penalties for changes or cancellations.
8. One complimentary ticket to this meeting is approved for every 40 roundtrip Delta bookings which can be confirmed 10 days before departure.

When publishing information to your attendees, the following is suggested: "Delta Air Lines has arranged special discounted fares for your meeting travel (certain restrictions may apply). For further details regarding these discounts, you or your travel agent can call Delta at 1-800-221-1212 and ask for Special Meetings Network. Your file reference number for this meeting is I-25013".

For your convenience, our direct number for meeting planners is (904) 393-4760. We look forward to working with you to enhance the success of your meeting. Thank you for your endorsement of Delta Air Lines.

Sincerely,

*Paula Whaley*

SPECIAL MEETINGS NETWORK  
Paula Whaley - Coordinator

PW/py

#### "TALES FROM THE BUOY PATCH"

These musings have been carefully selected from the creative mind of a former junior officer, any resemblance to any persons living or dead is not coincidental.

The scene begins at the U. S. Naval Station Bermuda, home of the Finearts, Woodpeckers and a group called FASRON. The Finearts have recently arrived from Panama and are upset because maids aren't as cheap as they were in Coco Solo. However, their grumblings pale beside those of the displaced persons from Trinidad. Their Squadron has been completely dissolved and they can no longer hear good steel band music at the club. Poor babies.

Into this happy home walks a grinning Ensign Nugget with sparkling wings of gold, brilliant smile, and a desire to take to the skies in the defense of God and Country. Little does he know he will soon be sentenced to Purgatory at the navigators station for life or twelve months, which ever comes first. The only time when he will have control of a "bird" is on the dance floor at The Elbow Beach or on watch in the buoy patch.

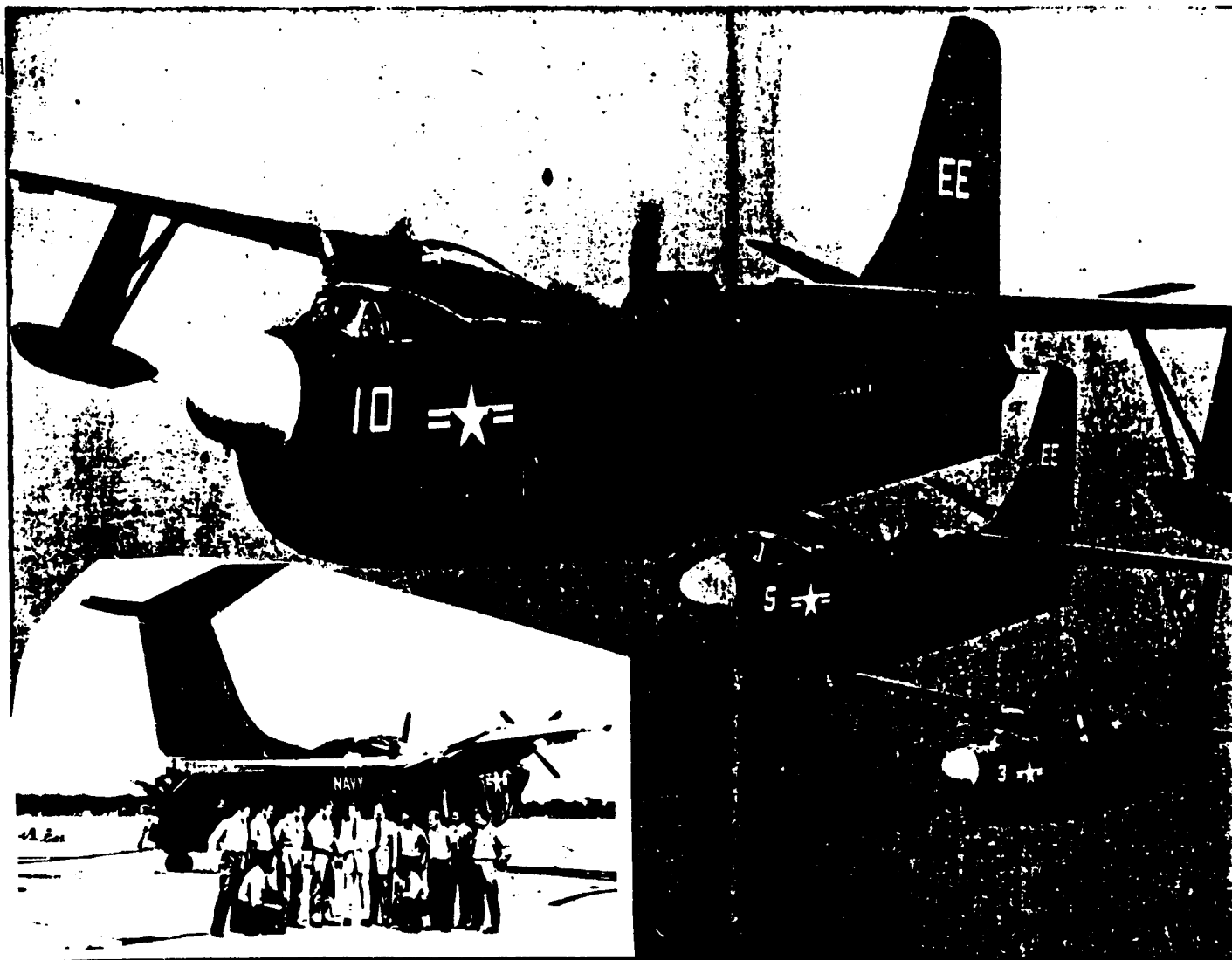
Our hero longs for tales of aeronautical exploits, combat victories and acts of derring-do from the senior wizened airmen, but alas, they talk only of Planter's Punches at Macaripe and sunning on the beach far below. Into what hapless Hell has our fearless champion fallen?

Ensign Nugget, as all good aviators, adapts to his new environment rapidly. The arduous tropical working hours do not faze him in the slightest. He whiles away the afternoons improving his tan base and water skiing technique. The evenings are spent utilizing other techniques at various hotels on the island. This paradise in the Atlantic is most conducive to extra curricular activities that hasten the passage of time, even unto the dawn, whence the hero must once again return to NOB. Perchance to fly, "sidesaddle" at the nav table taking drift readings, sun lines and loran fixes. He performs these duties without complaint because he knows the P6M Seamaster is coming soon and he will then be flying the jet airplane which he has long desired. Certainly it must be so, because the officer who convinced him to change from VA to seaplanes was an honorable man. Wasn't he?

These and other questions will be answered in future episodes of Ensign Nugget, USNR, Officer and Gentleman.

The large photo was copied  
from the supplement to  
"The Sunday American"  
Panama, R. P. Sunday Aug.  
14, 1945.

Paper provided by:  
John Lovric



### Marlin patrol planes of VP45 in Limon Bay, off Coco Solo,

Small inset photo was taken on the ramp at Glen Martin Co., Baltimore, MD 23 June, 1954. This was the first U.S. Navy P5M-2 (#135477) picked up by crew from Service Test, NATTC, Patuxent River, MD. Standing L to R: Dorman, Lovric, Lcdr. Richmond, Cdr. Dietchman, (2) Martin Reps, Smith, Stuir, & Fred Klapproth (Service Rep. at PAX). Kneeling: Focht-----Patton. Photo provided by John Lovric