



The Pelican Post

of the

PATRON FOUR-FIVE ASSOCIATION

President	Tom Golder
Vice President	Chuck Comeau
Treasurer	Dave Johnson
Secretary & Newsletter Editor	Chuck Caldwell

Newsletter #25

PLEASE READ THIS

ALL HANDS: Dues are \$10 per year 11/1 to 11/1 (\$40 for five years and \$100 for Life Membership). Roster and e-mail addendum are included for members' personal use only. If you change your address please inform the Editor so we will be spared the charge the USPS makes for each correction notice. If this edition is forwarded to you by the postal service, we will automatically receive your new address and be charged for the service.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Tom Sez . . .

There is a wealth of important information in this issue of the Pelican Post. I call your attention to the article by our Treasurer regarding the future of our association, and the need to get new members especially from the younger groups, the 1970's and 1980's Pelicans. These guys should be approaching the age where they recall fond memories of their squadron days. If any reader knows of any prospective members please contact Chuck Caldwell. If you have a friend from the Squadron who is a non-member, call him and tell him about the Reunion 2000 and have him join and meet you there. Chuck Comeau and others on his Reunion Committee have been very hard at work and have arranged a super reunion; you can read all about it in this issue. Also, please examine closely the article about Reunion FAM trips and seriously consider the offer therein. Additionally, all the Officers of your association have informally agreed to stay on for another term. This is not a "power grab"—we all agreed that it may be easier and more expedient than producing a new slate of officers. However, you will have the opportunity, if you wish, to propose nominations from the floor at the business meeting in October or by mail. Finally, keep those cards, letters and E-Mails coming, we welcome any and all comments from members.

See you in October!

Notes From All Over



There are 5346 words in this newsletter -- but you don't have to count them unless you want to. Just read 'em.

UNITED STATES NAVY P-3C PROGRAM

1999 has been a dynamic year for the U.S. Navy VP Community, from force structure and basing changes to the wartime performance of the newest aircraft variant, AIP, over Kosovo.

Force Structure — Commander, Patrol Wings U.S. Atlantic and Pacific Fleets became Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Force Atlantic and Pacific in June to reflect the addition of the Navy's EP-3E squadrons under their command. The squadrons are VQ-1 (NAS Whidbey Island, WA) and VQ-2 (NAS Rota, Spain). The number of active VP squadrons remains at twelve. The three Hawaii-based squadrons gained a tenth aircraft, all others remain at nine. Hawaii squadrons moved from NAS Barbers Point to Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) Kaneohe in June. Reserve squadrons were reduced to seven with the (disestablishment) of VP-91 in April. Reserve aircraft have been reduced from eight to seven per squadron, and next year will be reduced to six.

Anti-Surface Warfare Improvement Program (AIP) — The AIP program has produced nineteen aircraft to date. An additional eighteen are on contract with 25 more in the outyear budget, for a total of 62 aircraft. VP-10, augmented by VP-4 and VP-5, provided support for Operation NOBLE ANVIL and Operation ALLIED FORCE from NAS Sigonella. They operated with five P3C AIP and six P-3C UIII aircraft, providing 24 hour coverage of the opposition fleet in Bar and Tivat harbors, and participated in NATO air strikes.

The baseline for AIP installation is the P-3C Update III. AIP consists of the APS-137B(V)5 ISAR/SAR radar, AAS36 infrared, AVX-1 electro-optics, ASX-4 AIMS Advanced Imaging MultiSpectral Sensor (replacing the AAS-36 and AVX-1 in a turret-mounted imaging system), AAR-47 missile warning and ALE-47 countermeasures systems, fuel tank foam, and Maverick and SLAM missile capability. Planned improvements include radar upgrades, Link-16, Tactical Common Data Link (TCDL) and digital weapons capability.

P-3C Update III — The P-3C UIII program was restarted in 1999 to convert UIII/H.5 aircraft. Deliveries begin in 2001. Twenty-three kits are budgeted. These new Update III conversions will combine existing UYS-1 acoustic processor and USQ-78 display/control functions into a single chassis USQ-78B. The existing 140 Update III are also being retrofitted with the new processor.

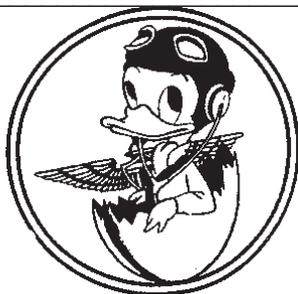
Inventory Sustainment Programs - The Sustained Readiness Program (SRP) extends the P-3C service life from its current average of 29.5 years (driven by poor material condition) to the fatigue life of 38 years by refurbishing or replacing airframe components. Five aircraft have been completed of thirteen now programmed.

A **Service Life Assessment Program (SLAP)** is underway to define a Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) for P-3C and EP-3E airframes. SLAP will consist of reaction frame testing, teardown, analysis, and SLEP kit definition. Results are expected in 2001. SLEP is planned to begin in FY 2002 as part of a combined SRP/SLEP.

Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA) -- The MMA study of potential P-3C and EP-3E replacements is in its second year, with all expected milestones completed. MMA is expected to have an Initial Operational Capability of 2010, and options include new design, commercial derivative and remanufactured P-3's. The study has garnered active international participation as other nations look at their own replacement options.

Commander C. J. Kalb, USN, P-3 Requirements Officer with the Chief of Naval Operations Staff Washington, prepared this article, most of which appeared in the VP International newsletter. It was updated by him on 24 February for our newsletter and is printed with his permission.

George Creamer sent in the photo below with the comment, "Fella sent me a photo — said it might be called a *Career Ending Fly-by*. Looked OK when it



There will be an AVCAD/NAVDAD reunion in Corpus Christi from October 12 to 16 for those intrepid aviators who won't make it to JAX. If you are interested, contact Joe O'Brien at (361) 852-3910 or <gob8282086@cs.com>, FAX (361) 853-9360.

The Iron Duke Saga

The Flying Boats of Bermuda

British author **Squadron Leader Colin Pomeroy**, who wrote about the Bermuda Railroad mentioned in an earlier *Pelican Post*, has a new book out with the title above. With a RAF career spanning over 20 years, during which he spent innumerable hours patrolling the lonely North Atlantic wastes, and a second career as an airline captain, Squadron Leader Pomeroy is well qualified to chronicle the Colony's remarkable marine aviation history. The first seaplane came to Bermuda in 1919 and the last operational military flight was by VP-45 in 1964. The book, which costs \$27.50 (+p&p), has 240 pages and over 200 photographs, can be ordered from Print Link, PO Box HM 937, Hamilton, HMDX, Bermuda. Tel (441) 295-4343 or e-mail at netlink@ibl.bm.

Ken App sent this little jewel for all to enjoy



Airman Jones was assigned to the induction center, where he advised new recruits about their government benefits, especially their GI insurance.

It wasn't long before Chief Smith noticed that Airman Jones had almost a 100% record for insurance sales, which had never happened before. Rather than ask about this, the Chief stood in the back of the room and listened to Jones's sales pitch.

Jones explained the basics of the GI Insurance to the new recruits, and then said: "If you have GI Insurance and go into battle and are killed, the government has to pay \$200,000 to your beneficiaries. If you don't have GI insurance, and you go into battle and get killed, the government only has to pay a maximum of \$6000."

3 "Now," he concluded, "**which bunch do you think they are going to send into battle first?**"

In our last newsletter we published the Iron Duke's statement of policy, "Just What Do The Iron Duke Do", about a detachment operation from the 1966/67 deployment. The following, *in the Duke's own handwriting*, is perhaps the latest (last?) to surface, **thanks to Dave Parker**

The Very Very Last Ode by the Iron Duke (in Absentia yet!)

The Duke grows rusty, his Iron erodes,
he misses VP, its various modes.

In the fast P3 he can no longer play,
he's doomed to one-seventy in the C-1A.

He misses the P3 with its quiet power to spare
and listens while piston-banging rents the air.

With Brad and Bob Bass we meet new friends,
in our "moving" Navy it never ends.

Big Julie is short, Black Mac's almost gone,
who remembers Big Red, Hawk and Sloopy Hang on!

But FORTY FIVE endures 'tween Bermuda & Arg.
with Cdr Townes, the sly fox, fully in charge.

The Duke plays with Sparrows, Bullpups & Sidewinders too,
I stash 'em and stow 'em and test them true.

I put 'em together and take 'em apart,
their intricate workings I know by heart.

But alas, near the pickle the "I.D." will not get,
it's fired by some "jock" in a sleek new jet.

But fear not, for as the missile comes out of the skys,
the enemy will know, just before his demise,

that it's the real thing, it isn't a fluke,
on the side will be stenciled: "From the Iron Duke"



Letters



24 October 1999

Dear Mr. Caldwell,

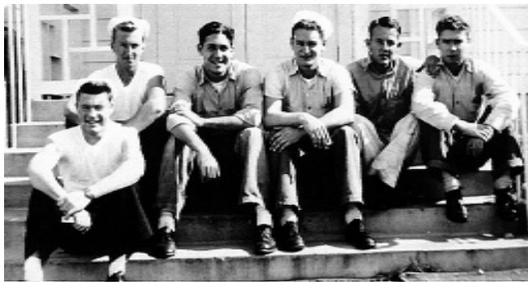
Thank you for the October 1999 newsletter. I was particularly interested in Roger Ferguson's piece, "A bit of first hand history." It brought back memories of my tour of duty with VP-45 (PBY).

VP-45 was in Belem and later in Bahia (Brazil) with about 12 PBY pilots and crews — all did their share of patrolling the south Atlantic area conducting convoy escort and anti-submarine patrols. As we all know, most PBY flights were on a daily basis and lasted for several hours, often having a large can of Chicken a la King for our meal on the plane.

As previously discussed with you from our exchange of letters in October 1998, on February 4, 1944, our pilot, Lt. Chuck Schwarze and crew were assigned to return (courtesy Army Air Corps) to NAS Norfolk. When we arrived we were informed that the plane BuNo 46602 would not be ready for about two weeks. As a result, Lt. Schwarze was able to negotiate our getting two weeks leave before returning with the PBY to Belem. As you indicated in your letter, that PBY-5A is at the museum in Pensacola.

Considering what was going on in other parts of the world, I consider myself fortunate to have been associated with a bunch of good sailors that were attached to VP-45. I am enclosing a new print of an old photo taken in Belem (Bahia) of a few of them.

(That's Tom, Top row 2nd from Left) Sincerely,
Thomas A. Cerrone



(In a later letter, Tom said . . .) William Rose and I were part of LT Schwarze's flight crew. Bill and I

usually started out on liberty together and, after having eaten at the mess hall or in town, would go on our separate way and meet on the last bus going back to the base. Her would always return with a bottle of beer for a morning eye-opener. He occupied the top bunk above me and when he dangled his feet and reached for that warm bottle of beer, *I was out of there!*

October

Hi Dave,

Here are my annual dues. Thanks to my old classmate Gordon Barnett and Chuck Caldwell, I found my squadron (VP-49) and attended our Nov 97 reunion. You've got a great bunch of guys.

Thanks for allowing me to be a member.

John Bradley

5 November

Dave,

Here's my check for \$100 which, I believe, will put me back on the rolls of the VP-45 Association for life. An e-mail from Chuck Caldwell spurred me to do something that's been on my mind for quite some time.

Many thanks. If this is not enough, let me know.

Jake Tobin.

7 November

Dave,

Enclosed, check for \$10 for 2000 dues.

Well, one year down and one to go for the next reunion. I wish we had a few more members from the 1942-45 era. Being the only one there makes one feel out of place.

Hoping to make the next reunion and see you there!

Sincerely,
Ben (Butch) Kostyk

(Ed.Note: OK all you folks who served with Butch -- let's see you there this time!)

8 November

Hi,

Please accept my check for my yearly dues. Hope to see everyone in October!

Tony Navarre

November
Thanks for your hard work. Enclosed is dues for 5 more years. I am not sure when my dues run out but I think it may be this year.

Gerry Grieser

21 November
New member Troy Thweatt sent dues. Said he, “. . . made perhaps the first no-flap JATO take-off in a PBM; a case of my being ‘head-up-and-locked’.”

Norma and Troy

(*Can't resist → No Flap? Yes, no thweatt!*)

3 December
Dear Dave,
Enclosed is my dues check for the coming year. This Pelican thanks you and the other officers of our Association for their efforts on our behalf.

Best regards,
Tony Testa.

November
Dear C. B.
The Navy Memorial Foundation lists a VP-205 reunion. I served with VPB-205 (1942-44) (Plankowner) and if there is a connection between the two, please send me info for the JAX get-together. I was never assigned to any one crew due to my ability in the use of radar and the arc light. I flew whenever requested to do so. No bad!!! Will keep in touch.
Thanks.

Herman Perfit

(*Ed. Note - There you go, Butch. You and Herman better be there!*)

22 December

Dear Dave,

I found you and the Association through two good friends of mine, Dave Vincent and Steve Riddle. I lost contact with both of them for quite a number of years and out of the blue I received a call from Dave. In the course of our conversation he was talking about the Association and the past reunion. I think the Association is great and I'm looking forward to the next reunion. Steve put me to thinking about some of our other shipmates and how we lost contact with them also. Through the Internet I've been able to locate three other squadron members who are also very interested in the Association and reunion; Charles Knott, Valentine Springer and Jerry Jurkowski.

Thanks for the newsletter. I'm happy and proud to be joining an Association with a great bunch of guys. Have a great holiday season and a Happy New Year.

Best regards,
Jim Spotts

29 December

e-mail

Today I received a package from Chuck. Included was the newsletter of October 1999. When reading it I saw a letter from George Dragos saying he had just found out about the Association.

In November I had just visited the web site (vpnavy.com) and sent a message asking for any info on VP-45 from 1951-53, and specifically asked for 5 shipmates. George was one of them. You guys act fast!

I'll send in the form, etc. this week but in the meantime can you send me George's e-mail or mail address?

Thanks . . . Ken
(*Ed. Note: Did that. Ken's reply -- "Thanks a million. I'll buy you your beverage of choice in JAX." ☺*)

December

Chuck,

Things have seemed to mellow out by now and hard times are a distant memory. My CPO initiation at Sangley Point CPO club still stands out in my mind; with my sponsors Doyle Ard, Bob Henderson and Chuck Maher. There were many others that are too numerous to mention but all played a part in the *Best Duty* I was ever assigned to. It was a team effort and we were winners!

It is still hard to forget a horrible airplane - LN 21 - which had a progressive fuel leak and consumed more maintenance hours than most other aircraft combined!
Raymond Avery, AMSC (Ret)

12 February
Roster info: Responded to notice in *Navy Times*.

I went from AA to AO2 while in VP-45 from 1960 to 63. I transferred to VP-8 in Pax River and left active duty on 12 December 1963. I tried the Reserves and stayed with it until retirement in 1996.

Peter W. Kline

February

Dear C. B.,

Here is a photo of crew EE-9 from September 1953. LTJG Souders is deceased. Some non-members who may be remembered are; Ray Ranger AM1, William H. Rose ATC (Ret) - he was in crew 5 as AL1, and another radioman - Gene Vander Werf ALC (Ret). Just a little info to spread.

Respectfully,
Daniel P. Faas

Crew 9



L to R (top): LT Wolf, LTJG Souders (PPC), ENS Fry
Bottom: Hatten ALAN, R. M. Ranger AM1(PC), Unknown AD2, D.P. Faas AL1, Henry Ingber AT3, Unknown AO3, Unknown AO3.

In Memoriam



Ellis A. Collins November 1998

Robert J. "Jamie" Trauger May 1999

Steve Boyett July 1999

Nancy (Mrs. Al) Raithel August 1999

Ed Stowers August 1999

Judson D. Fulghum September 1999

A. A. Cipolat November 1999

Mrs. Barrett McCandless December 1999

Frieda (Mrs. Glenn) Wilson January 2000

William A. O'Toole



TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance

September 1, 1999 \$14,470.72

Income

Dues/Donations	\$1,930.00
Interest	122.99
Total Income	\$ 2052.99
Total Capital	<u>\$16,523.71</u>

Expenses

Printing/Postage	\$1,493.44
Yr 2000 Theatre Deposit	343.40
Miscellaneous	
Tax Preparation	145.00
Bank Serv. Chg.	3.00
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 1,984.84</u>

Ending Balance

1 March 2000 **\$ 14,538.87**

D. R. Johnson, Treasurer
7814 Bay Meadows Drive
Pensacola FL 32507-1518

Attention All Hands

There are currently 431 squadronmates on our roster, of which 107 have paid for life membership. We have only added 16 new members since the last reunion; two of those weighed in as life members. When our members pass away their spouse (in my opinion) if they so desire. A quick scan of the roster reveals that the majority of our old eyes counted 336 who left the squadron inactive roster of approximately 320 who, have decided to let their active membership inactive, but few responded. Some may now be in the big crew above. As this issue of *The Pelican Post* goes to press, we have 86 members who are delinquent in 2000 dues.



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The point of this essay is that, aside from the fact that we desperately need to recruit as many new (younger) members as we can, we could run short of funds in just a few years. Inevitably, our aging membership and income totals can only result in ever-decreasing numbers at the current rate of new member recruitment.

We now have about \$2200 in the checking account and about \$12,200 in the Money Market Fund. The current income from annual dues just keeps our heads above water. We paid \$2858 last year to print and mail the Newsletter in April and October. Do the math and it is easy to see that if our 431 members pay in \$10 a year, that is \$4310. Subtract the \$1070 that life members are no longer paying, from the \$4310, and we have left around \$3240 income per year. Printing and postage will reduce that to less than \$400. We also have miscellaneous costs other than the Newsletter. Income from the last reunion amounted to \$2629, which was deposited in the Money Market Fund. Interest from that fund averages about \$20 to \$21 per month, or about \$245 a year.

It appears to me that we cannot afford to do at the reunion in 1998. Furthermore, of new Life Memberships, other than Although there are not many members year memberships, we might consider

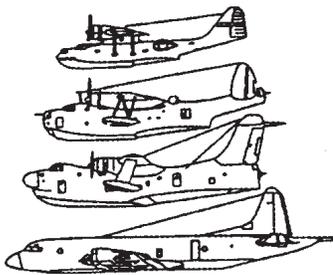


vote \$10,250 for contributions this year, as we ought to consider discontinuing acceptance those resulting from the death of a member who have paid the bargain price of \$40 for five discontinuing that practice, as well.

Your serious and considered comments

and suggestions are requested to help solve the

Pelican Tales



Imagine What It Would Be Like . . .

To be in the bow turret, in the full down position, on landing and can't get out!

That was the predicament **Kenneth King** found himself in when, after three hours of flight, the hydraulics failed. "The weight of the guns pulled the turret down until I was suspended out front looking straight down at the water. Thankfully the intercom still worked so the conversation was witty and assuring, as you can imagine. We were not allowed to manually position the turret so I could exit safely since a sudden shift would cut me in half — so I had to sit there for the duration of the flight. I saw the ocean from a new perspective!

"As we were turning base, I thought we were a bit

low since I could recognize some of my favorite liberty spots, and so commented to our pilots, Jansen and Hitchcock. To this day I don't know if either of the pilots did it intentionally, but we seemed to come in at a *rather severe attitude* with a last minute nose up.

"After we got pulled up on the beach, they got me out and I walked bent over for as long as I could to avoid any details." 😞 😊

And There's More . . .

"At one time there were a number of guys from Massachusetts in the crew of EE-8. I believe CPO Berube from Fitchburg was plane captain, Harrington from Quincy and myself from Arlington were radiomen, and Hitchcock from Everett and Hunt from Belmont were pilots.

One time in Trinidad we were talking and Hitchcock said his family owned a Ford agency in Massachusetts and that he was bitter about being called back — and would do almost anything to get out. I understand that after he left VP-45, sometime around 1953, he did just that. I never was able to trace him to any car dealers after I got out in 1953, and gave up looking soon after that.

"Legend has it that he flew a plane under the bridge on the St. Johns at JAX and, on another occasion, got into it with an air traffic controller, also at JAX. I can't confirm either story, but wouldn't be the least bit surprised (if both were true).

"See you in JAX."

Ken King

Do You Know . . .



Who was the first VP-45 Naval Aviator to qualify as PPC in the P5M?

That was a long time ago, but our archive file contains the answer! Glenn A. "Red" Wilson (1952-55) was first out of the buoy patch in 1954 with a P5M (SP5A) PPC designation. Red left VP-45 and taught US & World Sea Power and Aerodynamics at Purdue. Three of his students later became Astronauts and twenty-five became

Naval Aviators. Red retired after twenty-nine years of active duty and now lives in New Iberia, Louisiana. Sadly, Red sent a note to the Association saying, "I lost my beautiful wife, Frieda, on 11 January 2000."

When Did VP-45 Have P2V (SP2H) Aircraft?

Never did, you say? Nay, not so. On page 80 of the book *Lockheed P2V Neptune* by Wayne Mutza, there is a picture of a SP2H with the tail letters LN, big as life. **Rick Burgess**, who is an Association member and Secretary for Navy League, reports, "When I was in VP-31 in 1977 training for my first VP tour (VP-9), one of my classmates was a LCDR who spent his first tour in VP-7, an SP2H squadron in Jacksonville that was disestablished on 8 October 1969. He was on a UNITAS detachment in South America at the time that VP-7 was shut down. Because the detachment had a few weeks left to go in UNITAS, the Navy made the decision to CHOP the VP-7 SP2H det to VP-45, which flew P3As at the time, until the end of the exercise. The now VP-45 SP2Hs completed the exercise and were transferred out from Jacksonville soon thereafter."





From The Editor's Desk



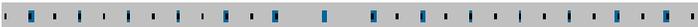
VP-45 Change of Command

On March 17, St. Patrick's Day, CDR Patrick M. Mills is to be relieved by CDR Dennis J. Sinnett as Commanding Officer of VP-45. CDR Hugh H. Cook will assume the duties of Executive Officer. CDR Mills will report to CINCUSNAVEUR, London, UK, for duty as N52 Policy Branch Head.

All of us in the Association wish CDR Mills Godspeed in his next assignment, and CDR Sinnett a safe and successful command tour. Patrick promised to become an active Association member upon his departure ☺.

CDR Mills was commissioned an Ensign in 1980, was designated a Naval Flight Officer in 1981, and is a graduate of Indiana State University. He served with VP-8, VP-31 COMCARGRU THREE, BUPERS, VP-49, and his first tour as a Pelican as Maintenance Officer until 1994. He reported to VP-45, as Executive Officer, a second time from the Staff PATWING ELEVEN in 1998.

CDR Sinnett graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982 and entered flight training. He was designated a Naval Aviator in March 1984 and served in VP-10, VX-1, USS Saratoga, Staff PATWING ELEVEN, VP-46, and a second tour with Staff PATWING ELEVEN before his assignment as VP-45 Executive Officer.



Where Will The 2002 Reunion Be and Who Will Host?

We seem to have some of the very best reunions of any group such as ours. *It doesn't just "happen"*. It takes a large commitment from some member to be a host for our reunions, and it is a hard task — ask any who have done it.

Although the Association Vice President is the designated coordinator for reunions, it is not he who has to always

be host, too. Our present VP, Chuck Comeau, has done a tremendous job getting things ready for the upcoming reunion in JAX. He and his committee have really worked hard, and it will be evident in October when we again have an outstanding meeting and reunion.

Military reunions are big business now, and some commercial organizations are advertising their function as a reunion organizer — for a fee, of course. That's not all bad because host motels/hotels are getting more particular about what and how their facilities are used for reunions. Legal considerations, liability and such, are increasingly important, and contracts that used to be simple documents are full of "legaleze." It's easy to get caught off guard if you are a novice contracting for a reunion. With our usual attendance of over 350 people, we can command top service but are possibly liable for big bucks penalties if we aren't careful.

One outfit in the reunion organizing business is The Reunion Network. Their newsletter is chock full of "lookoutfers" and advice on how to both DO a reunion and how NOT to do one. It also hosts several conferences, in conjunction with local Convention and Visitor Bureaus and businesses soliciting reunion business, annually in different locations in excellent reunion locations. For no cost to a reunion coordinator except transportation to get to one of these conferences and a registration fee of \$25, the coordinator is afforded free room and board for four days and is the guest at briefings on how to do his job, and gets to visit all the locations in the area first-hand. For an extra \$20, a spouse/guest can also attend.

Here is an offer **YOU** should consider! Our Association will pay the registration fee and one guest fee for any member who wants to attend one of these FAM trips for 2000. All you have to do is to volunteer for any one location and be serious about considering hosting, with the help of Reunion Planners International (a division of The Reunion Network), our reunion at that location. You are not obligated to follow through as host, but , well . . . think about it!

Confirmed conferences & FAM trips for 2000 are:
April 25-28 Norfolk, VA
May 18-21 Branson, MO
November 6-10 Myrtle Beach, SC.
A tentative schedule includes Winter at Savannah, GA; Spring/Summer at Louisville, KY; and Fall in

Corning, NY and Central FL.

Here are some of the things RPI does for the planner:

- ✓ Investigate locations chosen by you.
- ✓ Survey hotels and negotiate on your behalf for services desired (rooms/banquet, etc.)
- ✓ Submit terms to you for approval/comment.
- ✓ Submit contract for legal review.
- ✓ Process registrations (which includes their fee).

Some cities with approximate Price-Per-Person (all inclusive):

- ❖ New Orleans \$450
- ❖ San Diego \$380

If you are interested and want to know more ☺, raise your hand at the reunion business meeting or contact the Secretary at (619) 445-5072.



Every Member Get A Member!!!

For our Association to continue its steady growth, members can be a big help by recommending squadronmates who are not in our roster.

Send your nominations to the Secretary and a complimentary newsletter and letter of invitation to join will be mailed to that person.

Or

Tell the friend about our group and suggest he send for information. **Remember — active duty personnel are eligible and encouraged to join.**

C. B. Caldwell, Secretary
PATRON FOUR FIVE ASSOCIATION
1061 Arnold Way
Alpine CA 91901-2721
Tel: (619)445-5072
<cbc@cts.com>



For those 86 who have not paid dues for 2000

If your address label has two asterisks (**) after your name, it is your notice that you have not paid your 2000 dues. This is the last newsletter you may receive until the Treasurer has received your payment of \$2 plus dues of \$10 for the year (\$12) as stated in the Association bylaws.

When the Treasurer receives your payment you will immediately receive the latest roster and reunion supplement by first class mail. **Please do not let your membership continue inactive.**

Here is the applicable section of the by-laws:

Article III

Membership Section 1.

The membership of the Association shall be open to all who have served in the squadron, collectively known as VP-45, on active duty. They shall be called members. Associate membership is open to all others who are interested in the objectives of the Association and/or who desire to be on the Association mail list. Only members may vote.

Section 2.

The annual dues for both memberships shall be \$ 10.00, payable annually by November 1 of each year. The Treasurer shall notify members and associate members whose dues are 3 months in arrears, and those whose dues are not paid within 30 days thereafter shall be automatically removed from the active rolls and mail list. Reinstatement is automatic upon remittance of

one year past due dues plus \$2.00 for postage. Surviving spouses of members and associate members shall be exempt from payment of dues.

Section 3.

On 1 March annually the Treasurer will notify the Secretary of those who are to be removed from the active list.

Remember

Your continued participation in our fine organization is dependent on you. Our dues are very low and our expenses are monitored carefully.

If you prefer to discontinue your membership, please let the Association know why; or, how you think it may be improved so as to attract new members.



Help Wanted

Attention VP-45 (PBY) folks who were in Belem, Brazil, 1944:

Editor needs any and all recollections relating to the crash and loss of the entire crew of PBY-5A on 10 May 1944 (LCDR Atkinson, Commanding Officer). Any data about where you were, what you were doing and what you recall will be valuable. If enough data are received, we will have an article in the next news-

The Reunion Supplement and Registration Form, and Association Rosters, are enclosed with this issue of *The Pelican Post* for those who are active members.

Did You Know . . .



People will Remember . . .

10% of what they READ

20 % of what they HEAR

30% of what they SEE

but

70% of what they SEE and HEAR

so . . . READ this newsletter to yourself OUT LOUD!



You must be an active member or a guest to attend the reunion.

If you are now inactive, you may join or renew at the Association desk at the HolidayInn . . . but there may be no room at the functions if you delay until then.



VP - 45 (PBY)
1943 - 45

The Pelican Post

of the

PATRON FOUR-FIVE ASSOCIATION

President Tom Golder
Vice President Chuck Comeau
Treasurer Dave Johnson
Secretary & Newsletter Editor Chuck Caldwell

Newsletter # 26

Au-

PLEASE READ THIS

ALL HANDS: Dues are \$10 per year 11/1 to 11/1 (\$40 for five years and \$100 for Life Membership). Roster and e-mail addendum are included for members' personal use only. If you change your address please inform the Editor so we will be spared the charge the USPS makes for each correction notice. If this edition is forwarded to you by the postal service, we will automatically receive your new address and be charged for the service.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Tom Sez . . .

I was very impressed with the Arizona Memorial when we visited it recently in Pearl Harbor. The "Mighty Mo" (USS Missouri) is tied up to a pier on Ford Island and is easily accessible by a new bridge. If you have the opportunity to go to Oahu, don't miss the Arizona Memorial and the USS Missouri, the Alpha and the Omega.

The other good deal for Navy active duty and retirees is the Hale Koa Hotel at Fort DeRussy right on Waikiki Beach. My son, his wife and our oldest grandchild were eligible to stay there with us. Room rates are based on rank/rate (mine was \$114.00). The hotel has two beautiful pools, five restaurants, all great food and reasonable prices, lots of activities, Luau, magic show for kids, etc. Leave it to the military to give you a briefing the morning after you arrive, on what's going on. At the Luau we attended, they introduced a Retired Army couple celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary with 21 of their children and grandchildren! We are going back next year.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the reunion in October. It promises to be the best ever so try to attend.

Notes From All Over



There are over **9,200** words in this newsletter -- but you don't have to count them unless you want to.
Just read 'em.

Naval Aviation History Office Publications

The Navy Historical Center has released a new CD that contains the history of naval aviation squadrons and much much more. Volume 1 contains the history of VA, VAH, VAK, VAL, VAP, and VFA Squadrons. Volume 2 contains the history of VP, VPB, VP(HL), and VP(AM) Squadrons.

Also on the CD is *United States Naval Aviation 1910 - 1995* (which is also available separately in hardback), *Dictionary of American Naval Aviation Squadrons, Volume 1*, and fifteen monographs or collection of articles on Naval Aviation that are no longer in print. They contain just about everything you ever want to know about Naval Aviation.

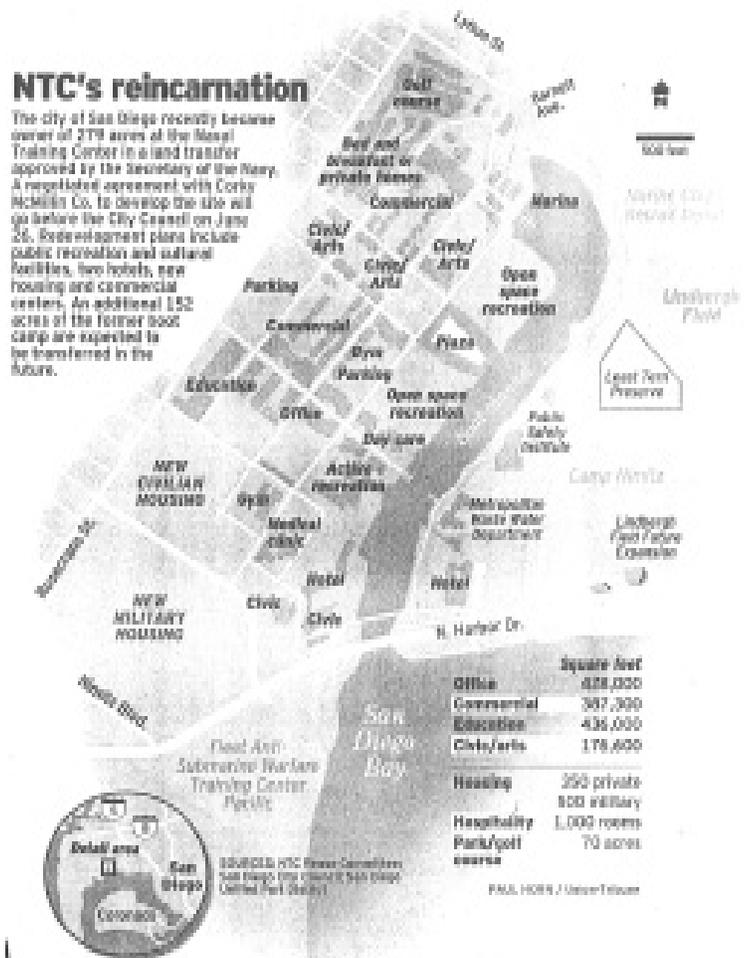
Any part of the data can be printed using the CD's software (PC, Unix or Macintosh).

There are some errors of fact in the data, but this is the only source for much of the information. (The name of the first CO of VP-45 (PBY) is in error, for instance, even though the History Center was advised of the error long ago.)

The order blank for obtaining this and other material from the Superintendent of Documents is at the end of this newsletter. Order Volume 2 of the CD for only \$19 and you get data that will keep you busy for many enjoyable hours.

Naval Training Center San Diego

In newsletter #23 we had an article about the Navy's closing the NTC, and that the land would revert to the city of San Diego. For those who spent some time there, as many of our members did, here is the latest news.



Books Of Interest

THE FLYING BOATS OF BERMUDA

by
Colin Pomeroy

The first seaplane came to Bermuda in 1919. VP-45 (205) was stationed there on two occasions, the last being from the summer of 1956 to January 1964.

Colin's book is the result of an obviously monumental research project that thoroughly covers all aspects of seaplane operations in Bermuda, from beginning to end!

This book contains over 90,000 words in 260 pages and has over 220 photographs and diagrams, including twelve detailed annexes. It describes every type seaplane to operate from Bermuda, how the operations were conducted and from which part of the Island's seaplane ramps and water areas.

Of particular interest to PATRON FOUR FIVE Association members who conducted operations from Bermuda, is the chapter on the United States Naval Operating Base. It covers the period 1940 - 1964 and is a very thorough covering of all operations, even the early days out on Darrell's Island and before the NOB was completed. Incidentally, the first ever flight above Bermuda (1919) was flown by an ensign in the U.S. Navy.

Read all about it in this book by Squadron Leader Colin Pomeroy, now retired from professional flying, who is also the author of *The Bermuda Railway - Gone But Not Forgotten!*

Order from Print Link Ltd., PO Box HM 937, Hamilton HM DX, Bermuda. Include \$32.50 for the book and air mail postage.

Our Association will hold a raffle at the reunion and the winner will receive an autographed copy of this "one-of-a-kind" book! ☺☺☺☺

If you can't be there, we'll miss you!

THOSE NAVY GUYS AND THEIR PBY'S

by
Elmer Freeman

Here is a fitting addition to your World War II library — This is the story of PBY operations in the Aleutian Islands. No other theater of operations subjected the great P-boat to any tougher test, according to the author. Read how the men and planes survived the killer elements, and enjoy over 140 photos of the Aleutian experience. Although written from the perspective of a member of VP-42 and its parent organization, Patrol Wing Four, the events and situations applied to all the patrol squadrons in that theatre. There is, again, a factual error in naming the first commanding officer of VP-45 (page 241), but the overall content of the book makes for enlightening reading. (Ed. Note: The Navy Historical Center shows a LT by the name of Howard as first CO of VP-45 (PBY), and Freeman names LCDR Carl Amme as first CO. Thorough and complete research proves beyond a doubt that LT Robert L. Donley was the first CO. Howard was never in VP-45 and Amme was the second CO.)

FILE UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
P16-4/00/ 0113 FLEET AIR WING SIX H1
C-O-N-F-I-E-E-N-T-I-A-L April 22, 1943.
From: Commander Fleet Air Wing SIX.
To: Lieutenant Robert L. DONLEY, A-V(N), U.S.N.R.
Subject: Change of Duty.
References: (a) ComFaw Seattle Verbal Orders.
1. In accordance with reference (a) you will proceed on or about April 22, 1943 with six (6) airplanes and crews assigned and report to the Commander Fleet Air Seattle for further assignment.
C. E. GIESE,
Acting.

FIRST ENDORSEMENT UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
P16-4/00 AIR FORCE
FLEET AIR, SEATTLE NAS, Seattle, Washington
April 22, 1943.
From: Commander Fleet Air, Seattle.
To: Lieutenant
Robert L. DONLEY, A-V(N), U.S.N.R.
Acting Commanding Officer, Patrol Squadron
FORTY-FIVE.
1. Reported this date.
R. W. MURKIN
By direction

Squadron Patches

From time to time members want to know where they might order a patch for one or another of the squadrons in which they served. For those with Internet access, go to www.epatches.com and follow the instructions. The VP patches available are sparse, but here are the ones available: VP-5 / 30 / 40 / 45 / 47 / 50 / 56 / 62. The price ranges from \$4.49 to 6.49 (VP-45 is \$5.49 and shipping is free).

For those without Internet access, there is a telephone number - 1-904-642-0721. The company also sells caps, prints and books, but there are no prints of PBY/PBM/P5M.

The museum at Pensacola may still sell VP-45 patches, and the squadron sells all sorts of squadron gear.



The Last Mariner



Herman Perfit took this picture, sent in May of this year, of the PBM, BuNo 122071, under restoration at the Pima Air Museum in Tucson. It is a PBM-5A and is the only PBM still in existence, according to historians.

The first PBM took to the air in 1939; over 1,300 were built; and the last to see service exited in 1956. VP-34 at Coco Solo turned in their last PBMs that year when the squadron was disestablished.



After almost two years absence, the VPI magazine is back in production, and a welcome sight to many who belong to this world-wide organization. Reunion 2001 will be held 18-21 May 2001 at 19 Wing Comox, Lazo, BC, Canada. It will be a celebration of 35 years of VP International; costs \$50 Canadian per person, and more information can be seen at the Web site www.comox.dnd.ca/squadrons/407/home.htm. Telephone (250) 339-8211 Ext 8627/8428 or FAX (250) 339-8128.

VPI Headquarters e-mail address is vpihq@glinx.com, or visit their Website at www.14wing.dnd.ca/vpi.

Nomination of Association Officers

Nominations are in order for the officers of our Association; President, Vice-President, Secretary/Newsletter Editor, and Treasurer. As stated in the last newsletter, all present officers have volunteered to serve again, but nominations are in order from the floor and from the nominating committee at the reunion, and by members via mail. If you, or a member with whom you have discussed his nomination, would like to serve in any of the above officer positions, please send the nomination to Tom Golder as soon as possible. The nominee need not be at the meeting to be elected, but must have agreed to have his name placed in consideration. The election vote will be taken at the business meeting on Saturday at the reunion.

If you have any constructive suggestions for the operation, or any activity, of the Association, your comments are welcome and desired. It is our Association and only we can make it better or more efficient through our active participation. ☺



LETTERS

3 February

Thanks Chuck.

Being the Chief of Staff at Naval Space Command is an interesting way to take advantage of a space sub-specialty that I picked up after a tour with US Space Command in Colorado Springs (93 - 96) which was just before I went up to NAS Keflavik (96 - 99). I arrived here in September and am still learning about the importance of Navy being involved in, and an advocate for, the space business. The only drawback to duty here is that my log book is sitting in a drawer gathering dust!! The tour in Kef was magical and I took full advantage of the flying billet there utilizing the base P-3 (150495). I just took out my log book and noticed that my last flight up there was on 12 August and that my flight hours total over 4,600.....is this a great Navy or what?!?!

I am looking forward to continuing a relationship with the association and will begin to dig out some pictures from my department head days (85 - 88) that included deployments to Bermuda and Sigonella. There are some real characters and great memories from those days. Of course the ultimate privilege of being a Pelican Skipper (91 - 92) carried the most memorable moments, deepest emotions, great pictures and a deployment to Iceland.

Keep in touch!

A. A. Efraimson, CAPT USN, Chief of Staff
85 - 88 / CO 91 - 92



14 March

Thank you for the information about "Frenchy" LeB-

lanc and Mary. I talked with her and plan to see her and family.

Membership dues mailed to D. R. Johnson. See you in Jacksonville!

W. W. Bill Goodson
46 - 47



14 March

Dear Dave,

I seem to have the same problem as last year. I was again left out of the roster. I suppose my paying in advance was a little confusing. I received a call from one of the people who was in VP-45 at the same time as myself and his comment to me was, "I didn't see your name on the roster, did you pay your dues?"

I received a letter from you in March 1999 saying that you had researched your records and, as I indicated, was paid up until the year 2003. If paying in advance is causing so much problem, perhaps we should not allow people to pay in advance. Needless to say, I am a little disappointed that my name was again left off the roster, but I am confident that it can be corrected.

Sincerely,
Charles E. Fields
77 - 80

(Ed. Note: Thanks for the kind and gentle reminder and we promise we'll try to keep better track of who pays what and when.)



15 March

Dear Chuck,

Sorry for not keeping my dues current. This check should pay me up through 2004 — if I'm still alive! Someone can remind me again then.

Ray Grzechowiak, who was an AK2 at Bermuda 1960-63, changed his name to Ray Hoviak, (address). Get on that rascal and sign him up. He just retired December 30 from MCRD San Diego and he's my very good friend. *(Invitation sent; no response, sorry to say.)*

See you in JAX!

Jim Norman
60 - 63

15 March
Sorry to be late with dues. I appreciate the reminder.
Mr. Caldwell was the last pilot I flew with in 1957. I
retired in '60.

Sincerely
Ova Jones
55 - 57



25 March
Dear Chuck,
Enclosed are my dues check for the next five years.
My, how time flies! We look forward to seeing you in
JAX.

I saw Joe Binzak in JAX a few months ago. We need
to get him to renew! (*We tried! No response but some-
one with whom he spoke is joining!*)

Jim Means
69 - 72



16 March
Dear Dave,
Due to a serious illness in the family, several things,
including my dues for 2000, fell through the crack. I
have attended every VP-45 reunion and I thank you
for reminding me to catch up!

Enclosed is my check for Life membership. In the
event this does not cover my dues for 2000, I am en-
closing a separate check for \$10. If the check for Life
does cover my dues for 2000, please retain the \$10
check as a donation.

I am looking forward to receiving the reunion sup-
plement and registration forms. I greatly appreciate the
time and effort you are devoting to us.

Sincerely,
Bill Myers
54 - 56

*(The check for Life dues covers all. Donations to the
Association are tax deductible.)*



22 March
Dear Chuck,
Here is my check for \$20 dues to cover my end. I

sure miss the San Diego weather. The weather here
(Ohio) is up and down, as is most of the country.
There is an expected drought season on its way for our
area.

All else is fine and I am fully recovered from my
second hip replacement. Hope all is well on . . . (*The
postal service cut this letter into two parts and some
words are missing*).

Sincerely,
John Lovric
54 - 58



22 March
To: Dave Johnson
From: Charlie McKinney
Subject: Dues for five years

Was saddened to learn of the passing of Bill O'Toole
and Barrett McCandless. Spent time with them both at
our last JAX reunion in the early nineties. Look for-
ward to seeing Chuck Comeau, Suzanne and all the
P-Boat gang in October.

Cheers,
Charlie McKinney
60 - 63 / 76 - 78



27 March
To: Chuck Caldwell
Dear Secty!

The Association roster just received has two errors in
my listing. Residence address should be 3664 Bar-
rington, and the area code should be 330 (and this may
not be the last change in area code).

It seems Ohio is overrun with too many cell phones,
computers, etc., requiring many more numbers. When
the change again? Dunno!

Keep up the good work!

Bob Wolf
53 - 54



30 March
Hey, Dave
I haven't been able to keep the membership up to
date since we first came aboard. I suppose my only
recourse is to pay for a life membership and be done

with it.

We're hoping we can get the Longhorns independent enough that we can be away for a week in October and see everyone in JAX. We're calving right now, eight on the ground and another eight to go. The old girls know what they're doing and don't want any help or advice . . . kinda like good Navy wives . . . , we just try to keep 'em fed and comfortable.

Enclosed is a check for Life Membership. Looking forward to seeing you.

Greg and Paige (Evans)
55 - 58
Whisper Crossing Ranch
Registered Texas Longhorn Cattle



28 March

Hello —

Saw the reunion information in the current TROA publication concerning VP-45 gathering October 11-15 in Jacksonville, Fl. Please include us in any mailings for this event.

Thank you,
Bob and Dot Kunkle
50 - 53

(Ed.Note: When Bob was a LTJG flying PBYS in WWII, he was awarded both the Navy Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross for separate actions as a pilot. In response to a request by the Editor, his recollections and a copy of the awards are included later in this newsletter.)



15 April

Dear Chuck,

I started to mention the possibility of a late winter (Feb 3rd week is rodeo week) or late fall (Nov) as a really great time to have a reunion in Tucson; however, I felt that it would be a bit presumptuous of me. I'm afraid the group would have to look a very long distance to see any water — fresh or salt! Nonetheless, there are a lot of places to go and things to see around here so it might be a great success. Held in the middle of the East Coast winter, etc., you might be very surprised at the number who might welcome a change!

I expect to take a few pictures after they get the PBM positioned at the inside display (Pima Air Muse-

um) I'll send you one if you would like.

Have a great day.

Best regards,
Howard Ross
49 - 50



19 April

My husband was in VP-45 in Bermuda from October 58-April 63. He was disappointed not to recognise many of the names on the roster, only Ivan Mendenhall and Donald Porter. We have been looking through the 1962-63 year book and he remembered quite a few faces but names appear to have retreated from his memory.

We would very much like to know where Walter Veith is now.

We were married in Bermuda December 24th, 1960, and we had many friends, but maybe they were in VP-49. I believe they shared the same work spaces.

We are attending the VP-24 reunion (Dean's last squadron) in Pensacola November 9-11. Best wishes for the success of your reunion.

Pamela Freeman



19 April

Hi Chuck,

We have not communicated for some time. I'm working on getting the Springfield Quiet Birdman (QB) Hangar Alternate Governor to attend the QB Governor's Conference in Las Vegas October 9-12 as my proxy. If so, I hope to go to JAX but he hasn't agreed as yet. He indicated he would let me know "soon." George Stark from Pittsford, NY and I haven't seen each other since May 1945, but we hope to get reacquainted in person in JAX. If so, that would insure at least two 1944-45 VP-45 pilots at the convention! Hope it works out.

As you probably know, PBYCIA is having their convention this year (November 9-11) in Branson, Missouri which is only about 40 miles from me. I have already indicated to them that I plan to attend. I have a good Navy pilot friend in Branson who flew PBY-5As but not in VP-45. It would be great if they could find a PBY-5A to display.

Roger Ferguson

Mr. Charles D. Hudson
PO Box 352
Eddy TX 76524-0352

Dear Ed,

Dave forwarded your letter of 13 May to me for our archive files. I am very disappointed that you feel you should no longer maintain your membership in our Association. I thought we had established a rapport and a good communication link.

I have spoken to many members at reunions and in written correspondence about the very subject that you mention; that reunions are maybe for flight crews only, or that they are for officers only — or that they cater to a particular group within the group. I find that no one with whom I have broached the subject considers any of those a problem or consideration in reunion attendance, nor the enjoyment of membership even if reunions aren't attended. Some of the most active members at reunions were not flight crew members — I can recall that John Pavlick volunteered, at every reunion he attended, to do whatever the coordinator needed done. And, when he felt he had not enough to do, he went to the squadron to secure objects from the store to sell to members, and also set up raffle events that were very well received. Tony Navarre is always circulating about the room getting folks to become acquainted with those they had not met. John was head of the APU shop and Tony was not flight crew but one of the leading petty officers in the Electronics Shop. I believe there are many others as well who do not seem to notice who is flight crew and who is not. Some members alternated from flight crew to ground and back. One such member is traveling from Madrid to attend the coming reunion.

A person does not have to attend the reunion to participate in the camaraderie of our Association membership. Contributing stories for the newsletter or just reading and enjoying someone else's story is great fun for many. The reminiscing and enjoyment of re-living those days is plenty for a great many. Being able to remember and communicate with some of those with whom you associated is also something for which many join and remain active members.

Fair skies . . . , Chuck

<p style="text-align: right;">17 May</p> <p>Via e-mail</p> <p>I am very interested in getting any information about the upcoming October 2000 Reunion for VP-45. I was in the squadron from 1982 to 1988 as a SS1/2 on various crews. Please contact me at (address) or (e-mail).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Thank you, Charles J. Bowling 82 - 88</p> <p style="text-align: center;">■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">18 May</p> <p>Hello Dave:</p> <p>I had a telcon with Chuck Caldwell the other day about joining the VP-45 Association. I was with the squadron at Coco Solo from mid-1954 to mid-1957. I was an AM3 in the Airframes Division. I made deployments to San Juan PR, operating with USS Currituck, NARMID '56 in Corpus Christi, and moved with the squadron to Bermuda in 1956. I plan on attending the Oct 11-15 reunion in JAX.</p> <p>I switched over to the Air Force in 1957, so I am retired military as well. I live here in Madrid, Spain. We have a military retired organization at Torrejon AB, compliments of the Spanish Air Force. The Americans _</p>
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moved out in 1992.

Caldwell said he would send me the info on the re-union, rosters and a newsletter. Enclosed is a check for \$10 dues to the organization.

Sincerely,
Joe Esculano
54 - 57

.....

2 June

Dave,

As you can see, I have had this roster information sheet for quite a while from Chuck (7/21/98). I've been employed at Kennedy Space Center for 35 years with the Apollo program and shuttle program in systems engineering — and before that in several other missile programs. It seems that I never get away from flight hardware of one kind or another. It's been demanding but very interesting at the same time.

The 2000 reunion seems well placed, as I originally met up with VP-45 at NAS JAX and took my first flight in a P5M from JAX to Coco Solo with the squadron in late 1955. Later I joined the Reserves at NAS JAX with VP-62 augmenting squadron 516 with P-3s.

Sincerely,
Freddie Wallace
55 - 57

(Ed.Note: See Sea Story later in this issue.)

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6 June

Dear Shipmate Caldwell,

I am looking forward to leaning more about the PATRON FOUR FIVE Association. I am a member of the USS Wasp (CV-7) Stinger Club and our reunions are always held around mid-September. October is just fine and we can plan on seeing some of our relatives also.

I'll hurry and get this in the mail today.

Best regards,
H. Steve Carbo
48 - 52

.....

10 June

Via e-mail
Chuck,

My \$10 is on the way! Checked my discharge papers and recalled that service specifically was as follows: HEDRON 14-1 Fleet Air Wing Fourteen at San Diego; HD Sqd 5 at Norfolk, and VPB-205 in Bermuda.

I'd like to get a BB cap with a PBY or PBM on it. Flew in both types.

Specifically looking for following mates with whom I went thru training but with whom I did not serve, and lost track of them: *Frank James* (Virginia Wash or Ore), *Bob Shwarz* (LA), *Lowell Shipper* (mid west).

We'll talk again.

Milt Lowe
45 - 46

(Ed.Note: See Sea Story later in this issue.)

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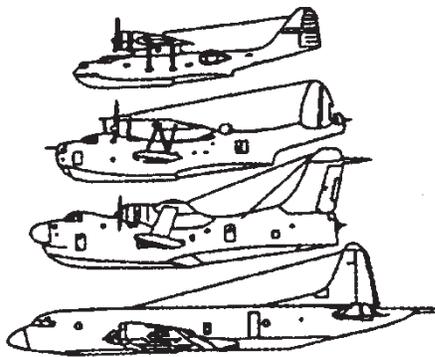
In Memoriam



- Francis C. Baird March 1999**
- John M. Delperuto February 2000**
- Russell F. Germain May 1999**
- Edwin F. Mailander April 2000**
- John A. Pavlick January 2000**
- Wallace E. Smith January 2000**
- Isadore Stema June 1999**

.....

Pelican Tales



Ah, Yes . . . The Bermuda Triangle . . .

Strange things happen there, and here is a short story about one of those incidents:

In a flight of five PBMs, Norfolk to Bermuda in late winter of 1945, most of the navigation equipment in our plane went crazy. Everything seemed to be buried in noise. I checked out the LORAN and couldn't get any readings. I recalculated the step-stair counters that controlled the time delay readings and managed to get a couple of sequential pair fixes, and headed us right towards Hamilton in Bermuda. I don't know if the other planes in our flight experienced the same problems. Before we actually got within fifty miles of Bermuda, everything cleared up — the radio compass, mag compass, radar and all the communications gear.

Milt Lowe
Aircrew 45 - 46

Bill Berg and Ken Gold remembered this incident at Coco Solo:

Our crew was doing a preflight or post flight check parked on the concrete apron next to the ramp. At the same time another squadron aircraft was undergoing a similar evolution about two hundred feet or so to our right. Both aircraft had their engines running at the time.

All of a sudden a full auxiliary bomb bay tank was released from one of the bomb bays of the other aircraft. The tank was full of 115/145 gas and it split completely open when it hit the concrete! The fuel splashed everywhere, it seemed. Not a thing else happened -- no fire, no "hollering", no nothing.

Both aircraft immediately shut their engines and

clean-up began — very carefully. Thank God there was no explosion.



Harry Mendelson remembers this "tale," also from Coco Solo duty:

I don't know if any of you remember **Jim Allen**. He was, I think, a professional seaman in the Ordnance Division.

For no good reason that I can remember, we checked out 2, 12 gauge shotguns from the armory and went hunting for what; I am not too sure. I think Peccary, if that's the name of the local wild porker. Anyway, as I remember, we found little or nothing to shoot at but did find "El Legarto" sunning himself on a riverbank.

Jim displayed the reason he was a seaman for so long. He walked up to it, and standing a short distance away, with a survival manual in one hand and a large Bowie knife in the other. He read out loud that these critters were eatable, if you were really hungry but, as parenthetically stated, not to be messed with if they were over 6 feet long. This one was, he estimated, about 5.5 feet long. Coming to that conclusion, he immediately went into his "Tarzan" mode. It reminded me of a "Roadrunner" cartoon — just a blur. After about 10 minutes, he let out a howl that could be heard in Harmony, PA. He was either doing a victory whoop, or yelling for help. Of course if was help, I would have been very happy to go find some. ☺

After the critter stopped snapping and struggling, we skinned it and took the hide and 2 steaks to the mess hall. The cook, I think we called him the "Greek", broiled the two steaks for us. He said it needed a lot of "Tabasco Sauce" to make sure we wouldn't acquire dysentery. It tasted like motor oil basted in hot sauce. I was really unable to eat for about 3 days (I really had a tough stomach then.)

Hanging around with Allen was not really too smart nor educational. About 10 years later, I saw him on TV. He gave a little speech about being a Guided Missleman and that his job was to load and make sure these things worked...?

I tried to find Jim on the Internet, but the name is too common and I am sure he no longer lives in San Jose area.

It would be interesting to see what happened to

him... (Maybe, I should go to the local swamp and ask any of the residents if they saw him. Perhaps he tasted better, that is if you added enough Tabasco Sauce.)

Harry



In today's Navy the duties of Radioman (if there is such a duty) in a Patrol Squadron aircraft is restricted, most probably, to a keyboard and CRT screen. Send a message . . . just type it out and punch the "send" button. Incoming? It just shows up on the screen or prints out automatically.

Many of us don't really know about those things now, but **Dennis Trampe** was a Radioman (AL/AT) in VP-45 back when the Radioman "sat the panel" in P5Ms. That meant watching the engine generator dials, APU output, operating the trailing wire antenna, sending and receiving in CW, and tuning the radios manually and loading the antenna to be used -- among other duties. One day, as a not-so-experienced Radioman, he was called upon to sit the panel, or circuit. "We had just completed an ASW exercise at Roosevelt Roads "Springboard" just east of Puerto Rico, and I had the job of sitting the circuit on the return to Coco Solo. I read a message from USS Currituck directed to 2Z80 (EE-2) and I copied '(-.-,-n.-)', which I read as CUNT. I had to take that message to the second Radioman and ask him what the devil it meant. He howled as he explained that in Radioman shorthand it meant *See You Next Time*. Enough already!!!"



Freddie Wallace submitted this dandy story about another Coco Solo incident:

Once at Coco Solo, an Air Force Grumman Albatross (HU-16) amphibian landed in the seadrome and began to climb the ramp to dry land. Something was holding them back and the pilot applied more and more power to the engines and **shoved** the aircraft halfway up the ramp, when it stopped and just laid over on one wing float. The pilot had forgotten to lower the landing gear!

It was really funny to us Navy guys at the time, but it was very embarrassing to the USAF pilots! ☺



Bill Tapp has this recollection about a flight in a P5M from Coco Solo to Jacksonville:

I cannot forget the time we dropped at least 5000 feet on a trip to JAX. Poor **John Huskey**, ADC and our plane captain, was down in the galley cooking eggs and they flew everywhere! (That is also the electronic black box area, so . . .) I was in the lower bunk resting and the guy above, I cannot remember his name, slammed up on the overhead, caught the edge of the bunk on his way down and landed on his backside right next to me. I don't know who was more surprised, but he was black and blue for about a week.

Bill also recalled the time a crewman, who used to chew tobacco in flight and carried a paper cup around with him, was caught in a similar "air pocket" and spilled tobacco juice all over himself. "Couldn't happen to a nicer guy! Of course we all laughed our heads off for about fifteen minutes. He didn't think it was so funny."



Joe Brown e-mailed this "Coco Solo Incident:" -- He was going through some of his old pictures and out jumped **Daley** -- "His beach-crew buddies got him to chug-a-lug a fifth of vodka (or as much as he could hold) in the barracks. When he passed out, they threw him in the shower (bare buff) and went to town. I was barracks MAA and finally went to see why the shower was running so long. Corpsman Caruso (Gad, what a memory!) said that fifteen minutes more and he'd have been a goner. Little guy -- he was from New York City, I think."



Did You Know

Navy Unveils Aviation Bonuses

Aviators who are eligible for an aviation bonus for the first time in fiscal 2000 can sign a five-year contract that provides \$25,000 a year for pilots and \$15,000 for naval flight officers. Eligible officers may receive a lump-sum payment of 50 percent of the entire bonus upon signing the agreement.





From The Editor's Desk

In the previous *Pelican Tales* section, you read some first-person accounts of a few incidents that occurred in VP-45 in the 50's. The Editor has had the privilege of "listening in" on the accounts as they were exchanged among a unique group.

It seems that a few weeks ago, quite by chance at a party in Los Angeles, **Harry Mendelson** began talking with a new friend named **Bill Tapp**. While talking, Bill mentioned he had served in VP-45 beginning in March, 1956. That happened to be the month that Harry departed VP-45, and the chances were that the two had not met before; however, Bill was an AT in EE-5 and that crew Harry, an AO, knew well. So began a new friendship that the two decided to try to widen by finding others from that era.

Harry and Bill began searching the Internet and found the www.vpnavy.com web site. **Ken Gold, Bill Berg, Jerry Rookasin, Denny Trampe, Al Thompson, Joe Brown** and yours truly were names recognized there and in other searches, and contacted by e-mail or USPS/telephone. As the circle widens, those on the Internet have begun swapping remembrances via e-mail and making everyone a "Copy To" on the messages. Some of those mentioned were/have become Association members, and the search for more from that era continues. Judging by the tales they have told, the reunion in JAX may be a lively spot if they all, or even some of them, attend ☺ ☺

VP-45 was, and is, a squadron whose members usually fondly recall their tour(s) of duty there. Communication from members constantly confirms that VP-45 was a very large part of their lives, and that our Association is a great place to renew old acquaintances and make new ones.

These first-person accounts, sent in to our archival files, of events that happened while serving in VP-45 are treasures available no other way. As many as possible are included in our newsletters for all to enjoy, and comments from members prove they are truly "jewels". Events to record are those you remember, no matter how small or unimportant you may consider them to be — just that you recall an event is more than

enough reason to write it down and send to the Association for posterity. If you remember more than one -- the more the merrier!!!

Bob Kunkle was VP-45's Maintenance Officer from 1950 -53. There are not many Navy Officers who have had such a varied and distinguished career, and his is an inspiration to us all. Those members who served in WWII will readily understand this story; others may have to think about it and can only imagine what it was like to be in his shoes during the events narrated below.

Dear Chuck,

Received your letter and request for a few highlights concerning my 33 years active duty -will try and keep it short.

A bit of personal background: I grew up on a farm in Indiana. After graduating from high school in 1936 and, because of financial matters and the job market being less than poor, it was just not in the cards for any college, I wound up enlisting in the Navy.

After boot camp in San Diego in 1937, I was assigned to the USS Vestal and its aviation detachment that took care of the cruiser planes in the Pacific. The O-in-C of our unit, one CWO and ex-member of the Lafayette Esquadril of WWI, took a liking to me and my desire to fly and helped me apply for flight school. After some 3 years, and as an AMM2 aboard USS Savannah, I got orders to Pensacola. I received my wings 1 April 1941 and was assigned to VP-52 at Norfolk.

The squadron had PBYs and flew out of GTMO and Panama until WWII, then Brazil and Bermuda doing the usual anti-sub and air/sea search and rescue. My crew picked up the first 26 survivors off Brazil. My PPC could not get the plane off the water and finally let me try it. Over his objections I got rid of our four 650 pound depth charges and made it out OK.

One incident I think may be of interest: We were operating off the tender, USS Green. One night during a severe storm the ship broke its mooring and ended up *directly under the balcony* of the biggest house of ill repute in Natal.

Bermuda was next, and I was lucky to be assigned to a crew headed by Freddie Haig who had just been promoted to CWO and PPC. A couple of events may be of interest.

1. After a daylong search east of Bermuda we were finally on the last leg home. Just at dusk we spotted a sub wake and Freddie promptly attacked. I was in the bow and was ordered to drop the whole load on command. Well, yours truly did just that . . . and we tallied a direct hit — *and blew the waterspout to pieces.*

2. Another time out of Bermuda we spent a bit too long on a last minute sub search and discovered that we only had enough fuel to reach Floyd Bennett Field, New York City. Unfortunately we approached after dark *and caused one of the first NY city blackouts.* Ho-hum, just another day.

Still in Bermuda, the Navy decided some of us APs should be commissioned and I was made CWO and PPC. In the fall of 1942 the squadron was ordered to southwest Pacific. After regrouping and flying out of Kaneohe Bay we proceeded to the Solomons and finally Perth, Australia.

About this stage we painted the planes black and became one of the first “Black Cat” squadrons. We also got rid of the bombsight and made room for four fixed 50-cal. guns. These were used primarily for strafing small shipping and troops in the New Britain and New Guinea areas.

The squadron was quite active against Jap shipping. I got involved one night west of Rabaul with a couple of Jap DDs - *one of which never made it back to port.* The Navy decided to award me the **Navy Cross** for sinking it. The squadron finally was sent to rest camp for a week south of Brisbane, Australia. When we got back to flying out of the Admiralty Islands they sent us out in daylight to find the Jap fleet. My crew spotted some ships and, as we tried to get close enough to find numbers and their course, my copilot spotted Jap planes attacking us. I headed for the water when all hell broke loose. They got the starboard engine on fire, shot off my aileron controls and dumped all the fuel from the metal tank. *The Jap planes turned out to be four F6Fs from Task Force 58!*

Anyway I ordered the crew not to return fire. After three or four more tries they left us. Meantime I had gotten rid of our bombs and, after bouncing off the water a couple times, managed to get the engine fire out and restore power. By using the engines and rudder to help steer, we managed to get back to the tender. The crew had stuffed blankets, mattresses and anything else available in the gaping holes in the hull to keep us afloat long enough after landing to have the tender hoist us aboard. This action resulted in my being awarded the **Distinguished Flying Cross**

We were very fortunate that day. One man back aft was hit and the co-pilot took a couple through his life jacket. They found a couple of incendiaries in our rubber tank. I’ve still got some of the scraps and someday I hope to walk in to a bar and hear four F6F jockeys bragging about how they took care of an old Black Cat.

Anyway, I’ll stop this nonsense and hope it may bring back some memories to a few of the remaining.



Navy Cross



Distinguished Flying Cross

After the war I married a gal that I still have, thank God. Have a family of 3 sons, all of which have served in Naval aviation. Soon one will put on his broad stripes this summer.

Other duties included a PBM squadron, VP-45 in Coco Solo, CZ; VR-2 (Mars Boats); and VR-21, all hauling the brass, etc.

Retired as a CDR in 1970 after a tour as Exec of NAS Jacksonville, and Director of Training at NATTC.

Respectfully,
Bob Kunkle

PS. I still miss those good old days. I’m a member of the Orlando Wing, Silver Eagles Association.

Bob Kunkle's Citations

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY CROSS to

LIEUTENANT, JUNIOR GRADE, ROBERT DEE KUNKLE
UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following:

CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism as Commander of a Catalina Patrol Plane in action against enemy Japanese forces off the north coast of New Britain Island on the night of December 28, 1943. Flying his craft with outstanding skill and determination, Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Kunkle braved darkness and extremely adverse weather conditions to locate two Japanese destroyers, immediately launching a vigorous assault at mast-head level upon sighting the hostile vessels. When his bombs failed to release on the first run, he courageously pressed home a second attack and, diving through withering antiaircraft fire from the enemy ships and shore installations, succeeded in scoring two probable hits on one of the destroyers. Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Kunkle's expert airmanship, cool courage under fire and resolute devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President,

James Forrestal
Secretary of the Navy

NAVY CROSS CITATION

By virtue of the power delegated to me, I take pleasure in awarding in the name of the President of the United States, the Distinguished Flying Cross to:

LIEUTENANT (JG) ROBERT D. KUNKLE, U.S. NAVY

CITATION

For distinguishing himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. On 28 March 1944, as commander of a Catalina patrol plane (B) while on route of the island of Iwojima, he skillfully kept the plane in the air after it had been hit thirty-six times by fifty caliber bullets, one of which severed its aileron control cable, another of which put large holes in one fuel tank, enabling it to a few minutes, during an attack on his plane by four Zivk aircraft. With an aileron control whatever to brought the plane safely back to the base without reporting the presence of the task force of which the attacking planes were a part. As a result of his conduct the Catalina and the crew were saved, and the task force's position was not disclosed. His actions on this occasion showed a high degree of professional skill, heroism, determination and coolness under fire, and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Navy of the United States.

T. C. KIRWAN
T. C. KIRWAN
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy,
Commander Seventh Fleet.

Classified Citation.

PBY Catalina International

... will hold its reunion 8 - 12 November 2000 at the Radisson Hotel in Branson, Missouri. Contact Jim Thompson, 1510 Kabel Drive, New Orleans LA 70131-3632. (504) 392-1227.



USS Hornet Club will hold its reunion 23 - 28 August 2000 in San Jose CA. Contact R. Masse, PO Box 7189, North Port FL 34287. (941) 423-4547.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance

March 1, 2000 \$14,538.87

Income

Dues	\$2,522.00
Donations	38.00
Interest	118.89
Registrations	4,788.25
Total Income	\$ 7,467.14

Total Capital \$22,006.01

Expenses

Printing/Postage	\$ 750.76
Book <i>Flying Boats of BDA</i>	32.50
Reunion Coord. Deposits	1,500.00
Telephone	10.55
Total Expenses	\$ 2,493.81

Ending Balance

1 August 2000 \$ 19,512.20

Note: Money Market Balance \$17,025.77
Checking Account 2,486.43

D. R. Johnson, Treasurer



R 2 K - JAX

Reunion 2000 Reunion 2000 Reunion 2000
(Jacksonville, Florida 12 - 15 October)

A Report From the Coordinator

We're closing in on the home stretch, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Jacksonville. I am so happy to announce that our speaker for Saturday evening's banquet will be Captain Alex S. Hill, USN. Bill Rodriguez and I had the pleasure of hearing his remarks at the recent VP-45 Change of Command and we both thought you would and should hear what he has to say. I have seldom heard such a forceful and incisive speech.

Captain Hill enlisted in the Navy in 1969 and was commissioned in 1976 after receiving a degree in Physics from the University of Utah through the Navy Enlisted Scientific Education Program. Following flight training, he served in VP-49 and VP-31, simultaneously earning his MBA. He then served as Aide and Flag Secretary to Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan, and then reported to the USS America where he led the Communications Department to distinction with two consecutive Green 'C' awards. His next assignment was in VP-11, followed by a stint as Flag Secretary and Assistant Chief of Staff for Administration to Commander, Patrol Wings Atlantic.

He then went on to command VP-11, followed by assignments at the Bureau of Naval Personnel and Secretary of Defense, where he was Director of the Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate.

Captain Hill commanded Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing ELEVEN (with VP-45 as one of its squadrons) until April of this year, and he is now a Fellow on the Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group XX.

He and his wife, Kristi, have two sons.

I am certain that you will find his remarks to be thought-provoking, worthwhile, and very informative. *See you there!*

By the way, we had to commit ourselves to the dates we have now, before the NFL announced its 2000 schedule. Unfortunately, our Jaguars will not be in town on October 15, but will be featured in an away game on Monday night football the following day.

Chuck Comeau
Association VP and Reunion Coordinator



As of 1 August, the following members have registered with the reunion coordinator

Regie and Pat Ashley
Jack and Joyce Barry
Walter and Barbara Baxter
Bill Berg
Jim and Nancy Bestul
Tom Butler
Chuck and Joan Caldwell
John and Billie Chappell
John and Dorothy Collins
Chuck and Suzanne Comeau
Richard and Pauline Cook
James and Marilyn Coulbourne
George and Christine Dean
Patrick and Beverly Doughty
George and Mary Dragos
Mort and Eloise Eckhouse
Dottie Emrich
Bob and Mina French
Ken Gold
Tom and Susan Golder
Bill and Nancy Goodson
Bob and Rosie Hall
Dave Johnson and Carmen Jones
Herb and Fran Keschull
Bill and Lou Kelly
Frank and Margie Kennedy
Mel Koonce
Donald I. McKay
Frank and Nancy Mendenhall
Jim and Agnes Norman
Cliff and Jeanne Oberlander
Dave and Elaine Parker
Bill and Anne Pendley
Herman Perfit and Renee Duh
Don and Ann Porter (with guests
Bill and Ann Creed)
Bill and Carolyn Rodriguez
Howard T. Ross

and Liz Roterling
Rusty and Carolyn Rust
Sandy and Lucy Sadler
Bob Sheffield
Jerry and Mary Stewart
John Stout
Jim and Betty Walsh
Ernie and Barbara Westvig
Gloria Willen and Julia Brock
Bob and Nancy Young

Note: There are others who have registered only with the motel, or plan to attend, but have not yet registered with the coordinator.

It's Not Too Late



If you need a replacement copy of the reunion supplement included in the last newsletter, just let the Editor know. One will be sent via first-class mail or e-mail -- or you can call for the information.



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