

# PATRON FOUR-FIVE ASSOCIATION

*Pelican Post*



March 2004      Newsletter #33

## ***From the President.....***

It's February, there is 8 inches of new snow on my driveway and the OAT is 8 below. I'm ready for JAX. October can't arrive too soon. Seems like a long time but it will be here before we know it. I'm looking forward to our reunion and I hope you are too. Our regular two year reunion is scheduled for 14-17 October at the Radisson Riverwalk Hotel in Jacksonville. This is the same hotel we used in a previous reunion. I think it was 1994. I'm not sure of the date, but I do remember it as a great venue and feel fortunate that we are able to return. You will find much more information about the reunion and planned activities elsewhere in this newsletter. We've got a great team working on putting it together. We are trying our best to fill your visit with good times and good memories. The registration form for the reunion is included in this newsletter. I urge all to consider attending and to send in your completed registration form as soon as you can make the commitment. We need to reach minimum attendance levels in order to fulfill our

contract with the hotel. The minimums are not excessive and we should easily meet them, but the sooner we do, the more effort we can put into organizing the event.

A major effort to locate and contact all former members of VP-45 was started late last year. A review of the current membership list reveals that most of our members served in the squadron prior to the middle 1960's. There are many potential members that have not joined. Harry Mendelson accepted the challenge to try to locate and enlist these "lost shipmates". He has put together a committee and from the e-mail I have seen, they have performed spectacularly. I think we will see a number of new members at the reunion. Each of you can help in this effort. Review the Patron Four-Five Association roster that has been sent to you. If you know of a former squadron mate who is not on this list, send his name and any information you may have (present address, old ad-

dress, etc.), to one of the Association board members. If he is not on our current list, we will try to contact him and enlist his membership.

Best wishes to all, and I'll SEE YOU IN JAX!! Leo Cimino

## ***Candidates Needed.....***

The nominating committee led by Harry Mendelson and assisted by Dennis Trampe, Art Pearson, Bill Berg, Bill Tappe, Hank Ingber and others have been hard at work looking for candidates to fill the association offices being vacated at the end of this term in October.

Their hard work and persistence have paid off with Gene Graham stepping forward with an offer to accept the nomination for President. This is great news! However, the committee is continuing to search for persons that are willing to accept nominations for the offices of Vice President and Treasurer. I have offered to continue in the office of Secretary for another term.

To keep our very special organization alive we must have more members willing to get involved and serve as officers. *ED*

**REUNION 2004  
Jacksonville Florida  
October 14-17**

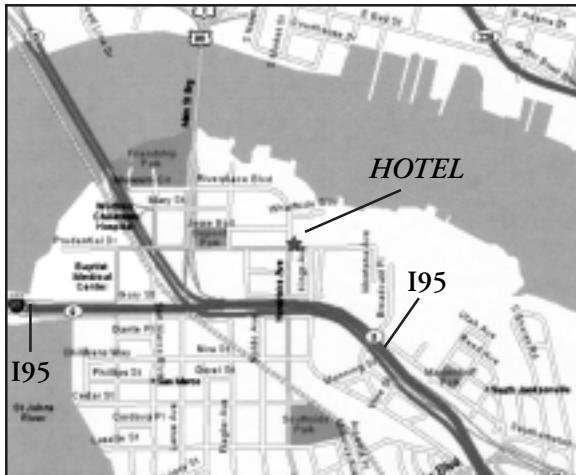
# *Patron Four Five Association Reunion*

## *October 14-17 2004*

### *Radisson Riverwalk Hotel*



*View from the hotel looking across the St. John's river*



#### **Driving Directions:**

Arriving from the North on I95 take exit 350B at San Marco. Turn left and drive to Prudential. Turn right on Prudential. Drive 6 blocks to hotel on the left.

Arriving from the South on I95 take exit 350A. Turn right on Prudential. Drive three blocks to hotel on the left.

1515 Prudential Drive , Jacksonville Florida 32207 ,  
USA

Reservations: (800) 333-3333 US  
Telephone: (904) 396-5100 Fax: (904) 396-7154  
Email: sales@radjax.com

Located on the banks of the beautiful St. John's River in downtown Jacksonville, the Radisson Riverwalk Hotel proudly boasts being the city's most complete hotel. A conference center with resort appeal, you'll discover a world of hospitality, Florida-style.

Walk the unique waterfront area with its many shops and restaurants. Take a water taxi to nearby cultural and sporting activities, tee off at any of the numerous golf courses, or head to the beach. Feeling hungry? The Radisson Riverwalk Hotel is located between the Chart House Restaurant with its exceptional steaks and seafood, and Morton's Steak House.

Enhance your Florida experience with superb dining in the Rivers Edge Cafe, relaxing in Currents Lounge, or with a cool drink at Poolside Terrace listening to the breeze swirl through the palms.

Completely renovated in the Fall of 1998, the spacious guest rooms offer your choice of either a king-sized bed or two double beds and feature the following amenities:

- Coffee Maker
- Full-size iron/ironing board
- Hairdryer
- Web TV and dataport
- Free HBO
- High speed internet lines (T1)

*Note: Room reservations must be made directly with the Hotel. The rate is \$69 per night for single or double occupancy rooms and \$139 per night for a junior suite. The rates do not include a sales tax which is currently at 13%. The hotel amenity fee, which includes parking, local phone calls and 800 number is waived. Call 1-800-333-3333 and tell the reservation agent that you are a member of the VP-45 Association in order to receive the discounted rates. Reservations should be made as soon as possible but no later than 1 September 2004.*

# ***Patron Four Five Association Reunion***

## ***October 14-17 2004***

Jacksonville is a great town to visit anytime but the opportunity for fellowship with former squadron mates will make the October visit very special. Reunion planners have arranged the schedule to give attendees a blend of scheduled and unscheduled (free) time and they have chosen a hotel that is located conveniently close to many activities and restaurants. The scheduled activities (on the registration form) are listed again below. The visit to NAS Jacksonville, home of VP-45, is the highlight. For some of us it will be the first opportunity to go aboard a P3 aircraft. For all of us it will be an opportunity to show our support for the squadron. Please choose your activities and mail the completed form and a check to Dave Johnson as soon as possible. Also listed below are some sample choices for your unscheduled time. Additional information will be available when you sign in at the hotel ready room.

### **Scheduled Activities:**

1. Thursday, October 14: 13:00 -17:00. An afternoon of golf at Bay Meadows Golf Club.
2. Friday, October 15: 09:30-13:30. Tour of Jacksonville Naval Air Station. Go on board a P3. Buy your lunch in the base cafeteria. 18:00-20:00 Evening cocktail reception with an open bar and light hors d'oeuvres'. Dress is casual.
3. Saturday, October 16: 09:00-11:00. *Business Meeting*. 12:00-14:00. River cruise with lunch. 18:00-21:00. Banquet with sit down dinner and guest speaker.
4. Sunday, October 17: 08:00-10:00. Farewell Breakfast Buffet.

### **Unscheduled Activities:**

1. *Jacksonville Landing* - Located on the north bank, it's a river front marketplace that is filled with shops and restaurants and a lively atmosphere. There are more than 65 stores here, but shopping is secondary to dining and entertainment. You can choose from a half dozen full-service restaurants, plus an inexpensive food court with indoor and outdoor seating overlooking the river. Walk to the river taxi pick up point and allow about 30 minutes for the trip over and back. Stay as long as you like but allow at least an hour. The water taxi charge is \$4.00 each way.

2. *Maritime Museum* - Located on the river walk not far from the hotel, this museum offers excellent displays publicizing the maritime history of Jacksonville and North Florida. In addition to an extensive collection of paintings, photos and artifacts, popular highlights include models of naval ships and an award-winning to-scale replica of the Titanic. There is no admission charge. Estimated time to walk to it is 20 minutes and allow a hour and a half to go through the museum. Hours: Mon-Fri 10:30am-3:00pm, Sat-Sun 1:00pm-5:00pm.

3. *St. Augustine* with its historic sight-seeing and shopping - Founded in 1565 by the Spanish, St. Augustine is a city of carefully preserved historic sites, attractions, and neighborhoods. The Spanish influence is seen in the architecture, street names, food and art. Historic landmarks include the Castillo de San Marcos National monument, the oldest stone fort in the United States; the Spanish Quarter Village, a living history museum which interprets life in colonial St. Augustine circa 1740; The Fountain of Youth Discovery Park, where it is said Ponce de Leon sought everlasting youth; and the Mission of Nombre de Dios, where Pedro Nenendez de Aviles first set foot on Florida's shore in 1565.

4. *Jacksonville Beaches* - Atlantic Boulevard (Fla. 10) will take you to **Atlantic Beach** and **Neptune Beach**. The boulevard divides the two towns, and where it meets the ocean, you'll come to **Town Center**, a quaint community with a number of shops, restaurants, pubs, and a few inns. Beach Boulevard (U.S. 90) dead-ends at **Jacksonville Beach**, where you'll find beach concessions, rental shops, and a fishing pier. This is also the most popular local surfing beach.

5. *Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens* - Located in the Riverside Historic District. The St. John's River discreetly flows behind this beautiful museum, offering a scenic backdrop and accenting the peaceful atmosphere. Three acres of formal gardens encompass this home that once belonged to Arthur and Ninah Cummer. Hours: Tue & Thu 10:00am -9:00pm, Wed/Fri/Sat 10:00am-5:00pm, Sun noon-5:00pm. Admissions: Adult \$6, Senior/Military \$4, Child \$1. Payment Method: Cash.

### **Ready Room:**

The customary squadron ready room will be available for your enjoyment. Tentative hours are listed on the registration form. *Bring your pictures, memorabilia and sea stories.*

### **Climate:**

In October the average high is 79 degrees and the average low is 60 degrees. The record high is 96 degrees. The record low is 36 degrees. Average rainfall is 3.86". At the last Jacksonville reunion the weather was perfect but be prepared just in case it is cool and/or rainy.

# *VP-45 Returns Home From Six Month Sigonella Deployment*

*by Lt.j.g. Jon Tasch - VP-45 PAO*

After more than 650 operational missions, with 5,600 mishap-free flight hours, and a very successful six-month deployment to Sigonella, Sicily, Italy the "Pelicans" of VP-45 returned home to NAS Jacksonville. VP-45 aircrews began arriving in Jacksonville Feb. 2 to a hero's welcome from their families and friends.

The remaining P-3C Orion aircraft arrived over the course of the next six days with the final plane arriving on Feb. 8. At the controls of the final P-3C was the Pelicans' Commanding Officer Cmdr. William Fitzgerald.

The dedicated men and women of VP-45 hit the deck running upon their August 2003 arrival in Sigonella. Two aircraft and three aircrews were immediately detached to Dakar, Senegal, along with 20 maintenance personnel to support Joint Task Force-Liberia. The crews arrived in Africa within 24 hours of landing in the Mediterranean theater. Maintaining airborne coverage of a humanitarian crisis developing on the ground, aircrews remained on-station until former Liberian President Charles Taylor stepped down from power.

In just over two months, the Pelicans flew 87 sorties totaling nearly 800 flight hours. The Pelicans, who remained in Sigonella were just as busy as their counterparts in Africa. VP-45 aircrews flew Operation Active Endeavor missions to ensure the safe transit of allied commercial shipping through the Strait of Gibraltar and performed a critical role in Operation Enduring Freedom during the opening months of the deployment.

Supporting NATO forces, the squadron enhanced security within the Balkans region as a participant in



Operations Joint Guardian and Deliberate Forge. VP-45 directly contributed to contingency operations in support of national objectives in the global war on terrorism.

While operational events constituted the majority of the squadron's flights, VP-45 was also called upon to perform other missions in the Mediterranean theater due to its versatile array of on board mission systems.

One instance that proved especially rewarding, was a search and rescue mission led by Combat Aircrew 12. The aircrew recovery of a local fisherman lost at sea for three days off the southern coast of Malta. After a difficult search, the crew located the adrift fisherman and aided in rescue efforts.

The successful deployment demonstrated once again that the Maritime Patrol Reconnaissance community has strong bonds with our trans-Atlantic and Mediterranean allies.

The squadron, along with more than 15 nations participated in two exercises and other NATO operations. Pelican aircrews took part in Keflavik '03 out of Iceland, and Basileic '03 in France.

These multi-national exercises promoted cooperation in the antisubmarine warfare arena between NATO maritime patrol aircrews, submarines and surface ships.

Additionally, VP-45 aircrews made detachments to Turkey, Crete,

Germany and Spain for similar exercises during the course of the six-month deployment.

As the deployment came to an end, every Pelican continued to push hard for mission accomplishment. Maintainers kept the aircraft flying at peak operational conditions, which led to a phenomenal 97 percent mission completion rate and an 89 percent sortie completion rate.

The Pelicans leave behind a number of accomplishments achieved on-station and within the Sicilian community. Their presence will no doubt be missed in the Mediterranean theater.

None of this, however, would have been possible without the love and support of families and friends back home. Letters, care packages, emails and phone calls were just a few of the things that kept the sailors going throughout their six months on the island of Sicily.

During the course of the next few weeks, the men and women of VP-45 will enjoy some well-deserved rest and relaxation with their friends and loved ones.

They look forward to the upcoming Inter-Deployment Readiness Cycle with the same enthusiasm and determination they displayed throughout their challenging deployment in the Mediterranean.



*Mid-Deployment Meeting in Sigonella  
CAPT Chavez (COMMODORE CPRW11),  
CDR Fitzgerald (CO VP45) & CDR Fite  
(XO VP45)*

## **VP-45 Visits Orphanage While on Det in Italy**

*by Ltjg Jon Tasch - VP 45 PAO*

The "Pelicans" of VP-45 recently visited the Alexandra and Vincent Institute for Handicapped Children in Pecarino, Sicily, Italy. The squadron is currently deployed to NAS Sigonella, Sicily, Italy. The visit was planned to make the day a little brighter for a group of children who have not been dealt the best hand in life.

A number of officer and enlisted personnel from the squadron including pilots, naval flight officers, aircrew, maintainers, yeomen and sailors from various other rates participated in the visit.

Lt. Jeremy Hankins, the visit coordinator, did a tremendous job organizing the visit. Working with a representative of the institute, he quickly gathered volunteers from within the squadron and brought a special day to the kids at Pecarino.

It was not very difficult to fill the list with squadron volunteers; in fact, the sign up sheet was full within days of the event being announced. The men and women of VP-45 jumped at the chance to enrich the lives of the young orphans, if only for a short time.

This was the first visit to the orphanage for the Pelicans this deployment. The volunteers were given a tour of the facility followed by time spent with the children.

The Sailors gave out toys and candy, while others played games with the children and read stories to the younger kids in the group.

The children were not the only ones to benefit from the visit. Many of the Pelicans were glad they could put a smile on a child's face and bring a little laughter to their surroundings. The trip gave squadron members the opportunity to get away from their daily duties and work with these very special kids.

The Pelicans plan to make several other visits to Pecarino before they return home to NAS Jacksonville.



**ADAN Karla Alvarez**

the worldwide campaign against terrorism, and is a part of the NATO action that followed the declaration of Article 5 on Sept. 12 2001. Since the start of the operation, more than 24,000 merchant vessels have been monitored as they pass through the Strait of Gibraltar.

VP-45 aircraft began flying armed patrol missions over the Strait of Gibraltar the first week in August in support of Operation Active Endeavor. Maritime patrol aircraft bring a valuable asset to the mission in their ability to patrol large areas of the strait quickly and being able to promptly respond to trouble calls. P-3 aircraft also have the ability, through the use of AIMS video surveillance equipment, to monitor maritime vessels unseen from miles away. The abilities to conduct unobtrusive surveillance and to cover vast tracks of ocean are the reasons that P-3's have been tasked with supporting Operation Active Endeavor on this deployment.

## **VP-45 Participates in Rescue at Sea**

*by Ltjg Rick Foster - VP 45 PAO*

Ready one launch can happen at any moment. A crew on the ready has already pre-flighted their aircraft and personal survival gear.

They will stay together or in their rooms on base for the entire 24 hours of their watch. No one knows if they will get the call, or if they do, what the mission will be.

Some are sent out on tactical missions, but most are search and rescue (SAR) related. That's exactly what happened in the early morning hours of Aug. 28th for Combat Aircrue 12.

They were called into the Tactical Support Center and briefed that there would be a SAR mission later that morning. The search would be difficult; the area the crew was given was relatively large, and the missing vessel was a small, personal boat.

The initial search began 80 miles southeast of Malta, with the crew searching in long northeast to southwest tracks. Calm seas and good visibility aided the crew in locating the derelict vessel. The 16 foot boat had lost power and had no radios to communicate its position to the search party.

After a five-hour search, CAC 12 found the boat and its owner inside their search box. Fortunately for both the man and the search crew, the boat was still afloat and intact.

It becomes significantly more difficult to locate someone in a small life raft or worse, in only their life-vest.

The Patrol Plane Pilot, Lt. Brian Bradford, and the Tactical Coordinator, Lt. Damian Sanders, were the first personnel to find the boat.

From that point on it was fairly simple: the crew orbited overhead and called Malta Rescue Control Center, which dispatched the recovery helicopter. Within 45 minutes, the man was in the hands of the rescue team and on his way to safety.

"That was probably the most rewarding search and rescue I've been a part of," said Bradford. Sanders seconded that feeling, adding, "It took quite a while to find the boat. Every window was manned the entire time. It was a great effort by the whole crew."

Once the helicopter was headed home, the crew returned to NAS Sigonella for some well deserved rest and relaxation.

## **VP-45 Flies in Support of Operation Active Endeavor**

*by Ltjg Steven Seney - VP 45 PAO*

On March 10, NATO maritime forces began escorting allied civilian shipping through the Strait of Gibraltar. The North Atlantic Council, the Alliance's highest decision-making body, decided to extend NATO's Operations Active Endeavor to include escorting nonmilitary ships traveling through the Straits to maintain security in the area and to secure the safe transit of designated Allied ships. The narrow Strait of Gibraltar is widely recognized as a potential site of terrorist attacks, and so the measure has been agreed upon as a precaution. Operation Active Endeavor was initiated on Oct. 26, 2001 to monitor shipping in the eastern Mediterranean Sea as part of measures aimed at assisting the U.S. after the Sept. 11 attacks. As such it is a valuable part of

## *VP-205's War in the Caribbean*

*The following excerpt is from an award board recommendation which resulted in the distinguished flying cross being awarded posthumously to LTJG Clifford C. Cox. It was sent to several of our WWII veterans to request that they share their memories of the event. ED*

**A**t 0025Q August 3, 1943, a patrol plane, 205-P-6, commanded and piloted by Lt. (jg) Clifford C. Cox USN, delivered a depth charge attack upon a fully surfaced s/m. The plane failed to return to base and no further information on the attack is available. The following message was received from the plane. **"Sighted Sub making attack position 1135N 54-05W time 0025 Queen."** This message was sent and repeated blind, but efforts to contact or establish communication with the plane failed. Extensive air coverage for several days failed to reveal any trace of the missing plane or the s/m. It is presumed from the s/m tactics currently being used in this area by the U-Boats that the plane was shot down.

Steve,

I read your message with very mixed feelings. CC, as we knew him, and I went through Pensacola in (I think) '32, as enlisted APs. We brushed each other in passing for some years, then I lost touch when I left the Navy to go with CAA as an ATC. When war broke out, I was at the Washington National TCC, and immediately started trying to get back in. I finally made it, was sent briefly to (I think) VP85, then came back to Norfolk to activate VP205. I was amazed and delighted to find CC already on the scene as a Chief AP, flying #1 seat but barred from being PPC, since he wasn't commissioned. Once we took off, we spent some time at San Juan, then went to Chagaramas Bay, in Trinidad. We had 8 PBMs and did ASW searches in the southern Caribbean. CC, as an enlisted pilot, was barred from night flights (for some reason), which was OK by him. I was flying #2 to the squadron XO, Malcolm McGrath (a great guy, but so short he needed help with the pedals - come to think of it, CC was pretty short too). Fate then intervened when the Navy, in its wisdom, sent through a commission as JG for CC, about mid July of '43. The skipper immediately made him a PPC, and

let him loose on night flights. The flight in question was only his third or fourth night flight. When he went missing, I went crazy - I didn't think we were doing enough to attempt to locate him, and I remember storming into the Wing Commander's office and demanding that he let me take the Wing Widgeon and look for him.

CC was the first in a series of night flights that went missing. We lost, all told, three planes in a relatively short period of time and no one knew what was happening. About this time, I made Ensign and was sent back to Ops at NAS Norfolk. While there, in reading the various journals, I read an issue of RAF Coastal Command bulletin, already at least eight months old, relating the experience they had in the Bay of Biscay with U-boats equipped with quadruple 50mm mounts on the tower, which they operated by remote control from inside the conning tower. At night, of course, our people had no idea what they were getting into, and were diving all out to drop cans before the boats could submerge. Only to run into a hailstorm. Mac and I made a couple of night runs ourselves afterwards, but fortunately, Mac was cautious by this time and we drew their

fire while still far enough out to be able to see what we were doing.

CC was one of the best seaplane pilots I ever knew, and we were very close during our time in 205. I truly was devastated when he was lost. I recall bringing his personal effects back with me and delivering them to his beautiful wife, in Texas - a job that was in itself very painful.

Bob White VP 205

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Dear Steve,

You are to be congratulated for being excited enough about our long past to ask for thoughts of the time.

I think recognition of Lt(jg) Clifford C. Cox and his crew was the minimum our Navy could do to recognize the bravery and dedication of the pilot and his crew.

Charging a sub with our twin 50 caliber bow guns and looking face to face with firing 8 mm machine guns and 20 mm cannons was our order of the time. Remember we lost 3 PBMs and 34 people in 2 weeks.

Finding a sub at periscope depth was ideal compared to finding a surfaced shooting sub.

I was navigator for Lt Jester when attacking a sub about the same time as you refer in your letter.

After dropping our depth charges we were circling back to see the results when our plane was ripped by 20 mm cannon. Twenty mm bullets ripping thru your plane is a shock of your life. Lt Jester was able to dodge and get us away alive. Fortunately only a lot of holes were made in our plane and our fuel system never burned.

You asked for thoughts. We had many. Our job was mainly to protect convoys from the US to Africa or Europe via the southern route. Seeing thousands of troops on the deck of those troop ships and supply ships in a convoy was very moving; and we were their only air coverage. We covered them 24 hours a day from Panama, past Trinidad and the Guianas and out to sea until the B-25's from Ascension Island picked them up.

We made bombing runs on many periscopes but the sub commanders always knew convoy surface protection was near and chose to dive.

Remember not a single ship in convoy was ever hit while we gave them air coverage. We continued to lose single ships that had no air coverage.

I had a problem with a sub at Colon, Panama. A sub was close to a convoy forming after coming thru the Panama Canal. The sub dove quickly when I made a bombing run at him and he continued to stay out of sight. That sub was later sunk off Scotland.

I have tremendous respect for the pilots and crews who fought the battle of the subs at that time.

Thank you again for asking.

Michael W. Raibley VP-205

Dear Steve,

I am enclosing a copy of the memorial service for the 34 members

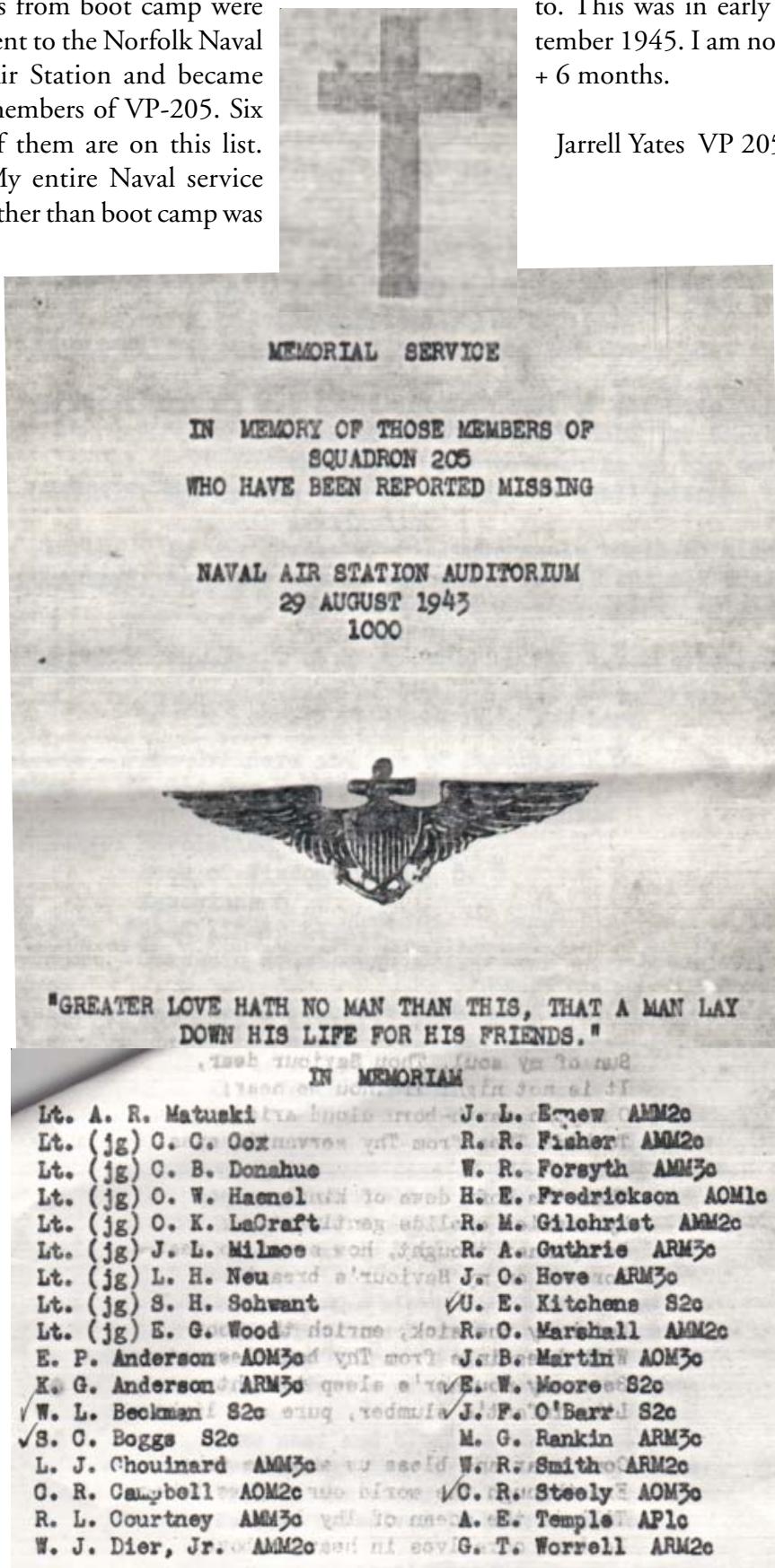
that we lost in 1943. I have placed a check mark before the names of several of the missing men.

Let me explain why. About 15 of us from boot camp were sent to the Norfolk Naval Air Station and became members of VP-205. Six of them are on this list. My entire Naval service other than boot camp was

in VP205. My ratings were AOM3C, AOM2C, AOM1C and I was offered Chief if I would extend my enlistment for 6 months but I chose not

to. This was in early September 1945. I am now 83 + 6 months.

Jarrell Yates VP 205



# *U.S. Navy Memoirs by George Kovach (VP-205)*

## *Part I -- The Beginning*



**VP-205 Crew 9 (1943)**

*Front Row l-r: FE Hession, unk AMM-3c; PC Bright, Allen AMM-2c; FE Wysocki, Al AMM-3c; Radio Grady, Francis ARM-2c  
Back Row l-r: SN Lowe, unk; SN Rogers, unk; 2P/Nav Ensign Mitchell, unk; PPC LT Smith, W.P.; Copilot LTJG Jorgenson, unk; Radio Kovach, George ARM-2c; Ordnance unknown name*

My life in the Navy can almost be co-titled VP-205 memoirs; except for boot camp, some incidental training enroute, and riding home on an available ship at war's end, I was in VP-205 the whole time -- in both the Caribbean and Pacific theaters.

My first memory of VP-205 started in Norfolk in November, 1942, when I joined the fledgling squadron at its commissioning. There were some 25 enlisted that showed up with me, some seamen and some third class petty officers, of which I was the senior (Actually, I was an ARM-3, an aircraft radioman). There were so many people checking in at the same time, that there was no room in the barracks at NAS Norfolk and we ended up in a barracks in Portsmouth, VA with me assigned as the Master-at-Arms... And there we stayed until Christmas day, when late in the evening

we made the move to NAS.

We started training right after New Year's day (1943) in PBM aircraft; my logbook tells me they were PBM-3s. However, on 21 January, my USN/VP-205 career almost came to an early end. I was one flight away from finishing my training (to be first radioman on a combat flight crew) when I was sent up on the wing (on the ramp) to sweep some snow from the top of the wing preparatory to launch. No one had ever checked me out on this procedure, and I had never been on the wing before; what safety harness???

Unfortunately, just as I got positioned behind the starboard prop, somebody on the flight deck decided to "run the prop through", obviously without checking to see if anybody or anything was in the way... Now that wing is slippery even without snow, and with no warning that a prop was to be turned

over, when that blade moved, so did I!! Right off the trailing edge of the wing I went, landing on my back on the concrete ramp. The PBM is a high wing aircraft, and when sitting the "stilts" of the beaching gear, it sits quite high above the deck.

Why this fall didn't kill me outright has to be a miracle. It did leave me with multiple broken ribs, a punctured lung, a concussion, some leg/hip damage--- and a broken wrist which was not discovered until two weeks after the accident. (I was in such bad shape, coughing up blood etc., that the wrist injury went unnoticed).

The squadron finished its shake-down, and left for Puerto Rico with me still in the hospital. I was still there 2 months later, and according to the medical personnel, awaiting discharge. But I had gone this far to be in the squadron, doing what I had been trained to do, so I faked a much better physical condition than was the case, and I joined VP-205 as a radioman in March (1943). Unfortunately my status was so uncertain that the squadron had ordered in a replacement for me and he arrived about the same time I did. Since he was a second class ARM, I was assigned as second radioman (to crew 9, same crew as my replacement).

That still wasn't the end of my injury-plagued beginning (I was limping badly, and my wrist was so weak I couldn't properly charge the machine gun I was assigned as gunner during battle stations). The squadron wanted to send me back to the states, but I convinced them that I could perform the job, so I was put on physical probation for a time.

I finally did take my place as first radioman on crew 9, where I stayed throughout my VP-205 tour. I also made first class petty officer, which is what I left the Navy as when the war ended in 1945.

## *VP45 in Southeast Asia 1968-69*

Steve,

Thank you for your letter concerning VP45. My email is rec767@att.net.

I was the Schedules Officer and Copilot on crew 12 at the time of this deployment. After the deployment I got my own crew.

You may know much of this but I will give you some information. Due to the fact we were going to Southeast Asia, we were pretty top heavy. The PPCs of the 12 crews were 2 Commanders, 6 Lcdrs, and 4 Lts. All the PPCs were at least 2nd tour except 3 of the lts. About half of the crews also had a qualified PPC as co-pilot.

Our skipper was William H. Saunders III and the XO was Ralph A Mason Jr. The main part of the squadron was based at Sangley Point, PI. The Market Time operation was basically flown out of U-Tapao, Thailand.

The plans for the rotation of crews and the operational flying out of U-Tapao was worked out in Jacksonville before we deployed. That schedule stayed good for the complete deployment. Four crews, 3 aircraft and some ground personnel (mostly maintenance) were in U-Tapao for the complete deployment. When we rotated crews, there would be a 4th aircraft for a few hours. While the flight crews were at the detachment they flew 2 day time Market Time patrols and 2 night Market Time patrols. The patrols were all scheduled for 10 hours. The flight crews also had 2 duty days and 2 off days for each cycle at U-Tapao.

The squadron operated 3 wings (one always at U-Tapao). The 10 wing had crews 10, 11, 12 and 13 under Cdr Saunders. The 20 wing had crews 20, 21, 22 and 23 under Cdr. Mas-

son. The 30 wing had crews 30, 31, 32 and 33 under the OPS Officer Lcdr. Jack Plesur.

Most of the training, admin, etc were out of Sangley Point. When we were at Sangley crews had R&R in Hong Kong and other places.

Most of the missions other than Market Time were flown out of Sangley. The 30 wing was sent for about a week to operate out of Cam Ranh Bay, South Vietnam. Crew 30 was launched on a search and rescue mission of an Air Force C130. Crew 12 was launched out of Sangley to Yankee Station off the North Coast of Vietnam on New Years Day. Crew 10 was sent on a special mission to the Indian Ocean. One wing was sent to Guam for a week on a special exercise. I am sure I missed many things but it may give you a little insight.

We worked hard and played hard. It was a great deployment. I know that I have a lot of pictures and will try to find some for you.

Bob Croci  
PILOT '67-'70

Hi Steve,

Randy Hotton here, VP-45 crew 20 October 68 to March 70. You had asked for information about VP-45's West Pac cruise flying Market Time Missions around Vietnam. I have enclosed some stuff from our West Pac Cruise Book, (notice the patch that Cdr Bill Saunders tried to have changed for the squadron patch). There is also an article about the P3A we lost in Adak, AK on the way back to Jacksonville.

This cruise was my first experience flying in an operational unit. It was great. We flew about 110 hours a month, had almost no ground duties, got lots of

R&R to places like Hong Kong, Manila, Bangkok and Tokyo. The planes were always 100% ops ready. You would write something up and it would be fixed within 15 minutes. We set a record for the least aborts in that operation.

Bill Saunders, our CO, said if your airplane is flying, there is no reason to abort. Normal NATOPS abort criteria did not apply in a combat zone as far as he was concerned.

Beer at happy hour every day in U-Tapao, Thailand was 5 cents and a coke was a dime. At U-Tapao we ate at the Thai Officers Club. The waitresses could not speak English and of course we could not speak Thai. We ordered by number on the menu.

We were able to see the Bob Hope USO show at U-Tapao. Ann Margaret was in a skin tight black body stocking which was enough to make me break out in a cold sweat on a 95 degree day. It was nearly see through and at age 22 she was a hot dish (not that I remember this).

It was a fantastic adventure and I was lucky to get to go on the deployment.

Randy Hotton



# *VP45 in Southeast Asia 1968-69 (Continued)*

## *Borrowed From the Squadron CruiseBook*

"Market Time", Jeepneys, Sattahip, Pakjansan Falls, "Wawadee", Cubi Point, Water Sample, Kowloon, Baguio, Pattaya, Club Orient, Cavite, Sansui, "Manhattan", Baht bus, San Miguel, Seiko, Nazarino, U-Tapao, Beggar Watch, Atsugi, Monkey Pod, Peitou, Naha, "The Spiders", Sangley Point, "Mumbles", Teac, "Panama", Elsie Gaches, Yankee Team, Tiger Balm Gardens, Papa Echo Six, "U.A.", "Mabuhay", "Buff", Lubang, Newland ..... Meaningless words to the average American but not so for the Red Darters of Patrol Squadron Forty Five during its WestPac deployment from December 1968 to June 1969. To them, these names, places and sayings represent six months of hard work, interesting experiences, demanding schedules and more than a few good times. Some termed it "Six long months away from home"; others, "The Great Oriental Shopping Tour." Whatever the individual views on the deployment, it was an experience none of us will ever forget.

The rare excursion of an East Coast VP squadron to West Pac was no spur of the moment operation. The squadron had known about the deployment for months in advance of its December departure date. BUPERS built up the squadron to one of its peak personnel levels to help meet the need for added manpower in the Southeast Asia combat zone--60 officers and 300 enlisted men.

Squadron preparations had started as early as six months prior to leaving Jacksonville to get the unit "peaked" for the arduous half year on the other side of the world. When the squad-

we Red Darters would not see again for six months. This section arrived at Naval Station Sangley Point, Republic of the Philippines, on December 8th, culminating a 9500 mile journey that included overnight stops at NAS Moffett Field, California and NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii. A second section including LN-12, LN-21 and LN-32 touched down at Sangley two days later, having departed Jacksonville on December 6th. The majority of the squadron's ground personnel were the next to leave, boarding huge Air Force C-141 "Starlifters" on December 7th for a two day trip that included a fuel stop at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska. LN-20, LN-22 and LN-31 comprised

the rear guard which took to the air December 9th, touching down at Sangley Point on the 14th. VP-45 thus became the first Atlantic Fleet VP squadron to deploy twice to West-Pac, having spent six months in Adak, Alaska in 1965-66.

ron bade farewell to Jacksonville in December 1968, the Red Darters were ready for whatever might befall them in the adventure that lay ahead.

The initial contingent of VP-45 aircraft, consisting of LN-10, LN-11 and LN-30, lifted off NAS Jackson-

Generally speaking, there wasn't much time for seeing the sights of the Philippines, for several days at least. Unpacking operations commenced almost as soon as our first aircraft touched down so the Red Dart squadron would be ready to relieve VP-49 of NAS Patuxent River on December 14th. Several crews were dispatched

to U-Tapao, Thailand to initiate turnover of the Navy detachment there. One of the early VP-45 arrivals in U-



Bidding farewell to VP-49 over the Gulf of Thailand.



"Sawadee, Y'all!"

*BOB  
HOPE  
SHOW*

28 DECEMBER 1968  
U-TAPAO



Ann-Margret-- Oh my, yes!

ville early on a sunny but brisk December 4th morning after a stirring send-off by wives and families that

Tapao, Thailand was delayed in taxiing to the Navy ramp by a friendly water buffalo which had to be driven off the field!

We officially assumed the duty on the 14th, as the last VP-49 planes headed Eastward to complete six months in the combat zone. From then on we were in the war and on our own.

From the beginning, the squadron operated under a strict wing concept. One wing of three aircraft and four flight crews was maintained in U-Tapao with the other two wings operating out of Sangley Point. The wings rotated every eight or nine days, flying Market Time and special missions enroute to and from U-Tapao.

Operation "Market Time" was our primary concern operationally while in Southeast Asia. Our mission was to patrol the waters off the South Vietnamese and Cambodian coasts, keeping a watch on shipping and remaining alert for infiltrator vessels attempting to deliver supplies to enemy forces ashore. Our flights on the Market Time barrier were long, usually 10 hours or more, however, some chow and occasional shut-eye for rotating crew members helped make them bearable. Crews normally flew two day and two night patrols per rotation to Thailand and had two duty days and two days off.

Back in Sangley Point, the squadron's administrative and training machinery functioned in high gear. The ad-

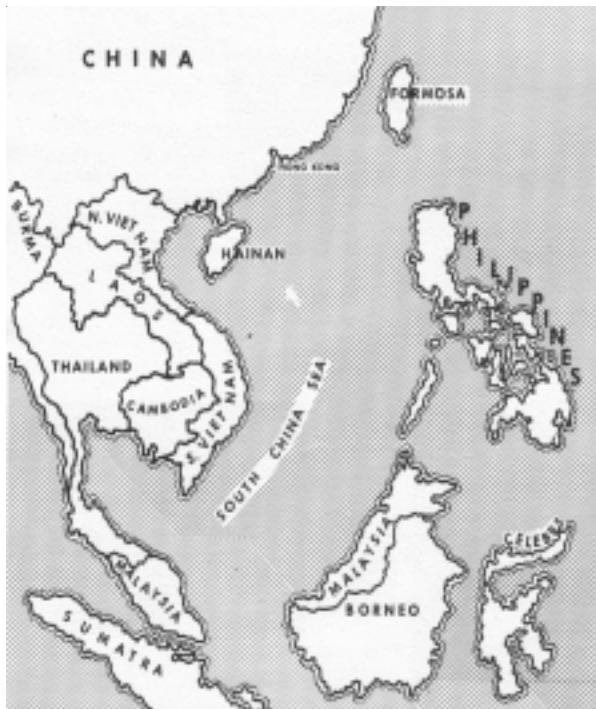
min corps ably handled all the chores it had encountered back home plus the additional burden of processing air medals, reports to the Seventh

Jacksonville. As a result, all crews returned home 100 percent ASW qualified (Alpha). Pilot, Tacco and Aircrewman training flights were daily occurrences, resulting in numerous new designations.

Down on the hangar deck, the Maintenance Department was performing miracles. It was forecast that our arduous flight requirements would be taxing on our planes -- maximum hours, continuous low-level flying, corrosion, hot weather -- and that Maintenance could expect a real challenge. The hangar deck crew responded by keeping the planes in such a good state of repair that we aborted only four operational missions during the entire six months of operations. Considering we launched more than 330 missions on Market Time alone, this was impressive; So impressive in fact, that Rear Admiral W. T.

Rapp, Commander Patrol Force Seventh Fleet, saw fit to write us a special letter of commendation for our maintenance effort. Maintenance personnel contributed to this overall effort in different ways. Some were ini-

tially dispatched to U-Tapao, where detachment personnel sometimes had to work round the clock by the illumination of an Air Force generator floodlight to get a P-3 ready for the next morning's launch. Others were assigned to AMD to perform the more complex work on inoperative equipment. In Thailand, there was



Fleet chain of command and other overseas requirements.

The training branch procured more Alpha sub time for us during our six months in West Pac than we could have expected in two years at



*COMBAT AIR CREW 10*

## *VP45 in Southeast Asia 1968-69 (Continued)*

no Navy AMD, but we did contribute some personnel to FASU-- the Fleet Airborne Support Unit, which existed solely for the support of the Navy P-3 detachment at U-Tapao. Without FASU in U-Tapao, VP-45's excellent reliability record would have been only a myth.

In addition to Market Time and routine squadron operations, there were always a few surprises waiting to be sprung. Ready Alert launches were commonplace; hence, the Ready One Crew wore flight suits and often experienced a dreaded phone call in the early hours of the morning. Among others, we launched on a downed F-4, transiting submarines and aborts of other West Pac deployed VP squadrons. Crew 30 was launched on an Air Force C-130 that went down attempting to aid a sinking Japanese ship in the South

classified missions which took them to areas of the Pacific never before encountered by the VP Navy; others conducted experiments in the development of new ASW tactics while an entire wing was 'redeployed' to Guam for a week on a special exercise.

ically handicapped and mentally retarded Philippine children outside Manila, for example, was "adopted" by the squadron. Spending Christmas away from home was made a bit less lonely when the squadron threw a Christmas party, complete with a

Philippine Santa Claus, for the kids of the village. Throughout the deployment, we provided weekly working parties to clean up, repair and build facilities at Elsie Gaches.

As the weeks passed, the weather, which was never anything less than hot in the P.I. and Thailand, began to get hotter. None of us seemed to mind too much though, for the deployment's days were numbered.

VP-6, our relief, began arriving in late May, and our own personnel air-lift departed for home on the 29th. Wings 10 and 30 flew from Sangley Point by way of Hawaii, while Wing 20 stopped over at Iwakuni, Adak and Moffett. We lost an aircraft in Adak but excellent performance of emergency procedures led to all personnel escaping without injury.

Those of us who made the deployment will continue to recall and relive the events and experiences for years to come.



Squadron P-3 at U-Tapao Thailand

Wing 30 became the VP-45 "combat" wing when it was dispatched to Cam Ranh Bay, South Vietnam, to supplement the Navy detachment there. The four crews stayed

in the area more than a week to get the straight word on what the war was all about.

While operational and administrative commitments often left squadron personnel wondering if "liberty" had been removed from the dictionary, there were some outstanding opportunities for us to relax and take in part of the world most of had never seen previously. Of course we were able to visit sites in the Philippines and Thailand but the general opinion was that Hong Kong, Japan and Taiwan rated as the best liberty areas in the Orient.

While R & R and off base liberty provided our most common means of getting away from it all, there were others which were just as memorable. Elsie Gaches Village, a home for phys-



"Anybody wanna pet it?"

China Sea. The crew was instrumental in saving the life of the one surviving crewman and received a letter of commendation from Admiral Rapp for a job well done.

But it wasn't always the Ready One that got the special flights. Some of our crews went out on scheduled



Take a Look at Bob Hope's Hat

## *Some of Our Members That Were There*



AT1 Monte Clark  
1st Tech/Julie



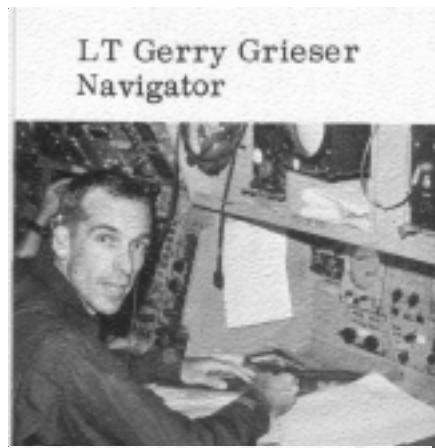
AX3 Dave Higgs



LT Travis Foster  
Co-Pilot



LT Bob Croci  
Co-Pilot



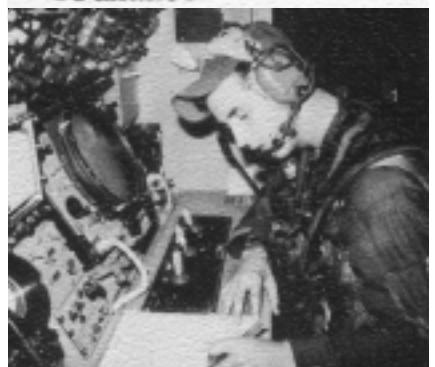
LT Gerry Grieser  
Navigator



LT Greg Gantzert  
Flt. Trng. Officer



AO2 Tommy Ussery  
Ordnance



ATR3 "Little Joe"  
Broxson Radar



LTJG Randy Hotton  
Navigator



AMSC Buck Jones  
Flight Engineer



LCDR Tom Leshko  
Tactical Coordinator

# *Pacific Fleet Patrol Squadron Flying*

*(author unknown - provided by Chuck Caldwell)*

How long has it been since we were all young together:

Strangers becoming more like brothers than friends. Sharing things that most will never know, building bonds that are stronger than blood.

Rolling down the runway into a formless black night, when land and sky are one. Only the gauges point to altitude and life. Or into a hot, still day, dangerously over safe engine out weight, and lift seems but a theory. Straining your grommet, willing the tired bird to climb.

Hours strapped in those hard seats, waiting for those delicious (?) steak dinners to be passed up from the after station, seemingly alone in the universe except for eleven other daring airmen. Sweating the minimums at destination (can sweat replace fuel?) GCA through the muck, bathed in St. Elmo's ghostly glow. On the gauges, occasional glances outside, searching for faint lights and hopefully a decent runway. Gear down, flaps down, whoa Nellie! Down at last and slam into reverse, YES!!!

And who can forget those dreaded postflight intel briefings, and paperwork that wouldn't quit. Finally either off to the O-Club or to the sack. And joys that never grow old: On top of sunblessed clouds, little less than gods. Or high on a clear night, a billion stars humbling the soul. The low-level rush, hills grabbing for your guts, firing off the rockets, dropping sonobuoys and hearing something lurking down under the sea.

Happy hours at the club. Unplanned weekend parties. Married couples feeding bachelors. Off to WestPac. Memories of Iwakuni, Missawa, Naha and Kadena and the Friday night Habu/Mongoose fights.

Singing "Rolling down the runway, headed for a ditch, I looked down in the cockpit, my God, I'm in high pitch. I pulled back on the yoke, rose up in the air, Glory, Glory Hallelujah, how did I get there."

Sangley Point and San Miguel, Cam Ranh Bay, U-Tapao, Hong Kong suits, floating restaurants, Tiger Balm Gardens and T.Y. Lee. Fishing in Kodiak. Rebuilding the hunting lodge. Landing in Anchorage at midnight in broad daylight. Crosswind landings in Adak and Shemya. And who can ever forget the homeward bound flights, the first strains of Hawaiian music, and J. Aku Head Pupule. Formation flyovers, and the waiting wives, kids, and band.

Life on the edge brings soaring highs but also crushing lows. Friends, so full of life, can they really be gone? Empty BOQ rooms bring a sad truth: fatherless kids, widows, young men who will never grow old. Knowing that death was right around the corner but convinced that it would never be you.

Practicing for war until the real thing came along. Then, the wrong war in the wrong place, fought the wrong way. Too many giving their all for so little good. Does anyone remember but those of us who loved them? The wall may be black, but the names are golden. Now, those who remain come together in joy, the memories and the bonds forever strong.

And, for a moment, we are all young together again!

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## *Naval Aviators*

*During my first month of combat, I shot down six planes, took out a Comm Center and a Fuel Dump. This may have had a lot to do with my being taken out of combat training in San Diego and reassigned to the weather observation sqdn in Guam.*

# **USN To Slash Orion Fleet - Defense News Nov 24, 2003**

*By Jason Sherman*

**T**he U.S. Navy plans to almost halve its P-3C Orion fleet, but new deployment and maintenance policies - including sharing planes among squadrons - will allow the remaining maritime patrol aircraft to continue to meet combatant commanders' needs, according to Navy officials. The service will likely cut its Orion stable from 288 planes to perhaps 150 over the next 18 months, Capt. Steve Eastburg, head of the service's Maritime Patrol Aircraft Office, said Nov. 18. The move came in the wake of last summer's instructions from the chief of naval operations, ADM. Vern Clark, to cut the fleet.

Further reductions might arrive even before the P-3's eventual replacement, the Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA). Rising operation and maintenance costs of the venerable aircraft were threatening to rob spending accounts for the MMA and other programs. "If you were to have to sustain more than 150 aircraft, it would be certainly more expensive and present a lot more funding risk to other programs as well," said Eastburg, whose office oversees the planned MMA as well as the P-3, at the Defense News Media Group's ISR Conference in Arlington, VA.

P-3 operators are adopting the surface ship community's new "surge" approach, which seeks maintenance and training processes that allow the quick deployment of many forces. The aim is "presence with a purpose for the maritime patrol community, with a large focus on being more employable," said Cmdr. Mike Hewitt, P-3 requirements officer in the Pentagon. This "is going to allow us to be more employable on short notice without disrupting a peacetime presence that we give [combatant commanders] today."

For now, the Navy has no plans to pare its 12 active and seven reserve squadrons. Instead, the new deployment scheme will make policy of a familiar practice: sharing aircraft. Training and six-month deployment cycles will remain.

"What I think will be different is [active squadrons] will be more aligned with their reserve counterparts, training together on our most modern airplanes," Hewitt said. "I don't think that the guy or gal in the hangar deck will feel an appreciable change in their day-to-day business."

The Navy, which flew its first P-3 in 1961, originally hoped to get 10,000 flight hours from each aircraft. Today, the average age of an Orion is 26 years, and many have flown more than 20,000 hours. In the last decade, the service has attempted a number of things to keep the planes flying, but a service-life assessment program conducted earlier this year concluded that P-3Cs are showing more signs of fatigue than expected. "Instead of having a whole lot more life left in the airplanes, like we thought, we're going to have a lot less life," said Eastburg.

Two maintenance programs are being established to "buy us back thousands of flight hours" and keep the remaining aircraft fit to fly until they are completely replaced by the MMA between 2013 and 2019, he said. Less-fatigued aircraft that

remain in service will undergo a Special Structural Inspection (SSI) that scrutinizes the airframe and makes minor repairs. Navy officials expect each inspection to cost \$250,000 to \$300,000. Aircraft with more wear and tear will be sent to a depot for the Special Structural Inspections Kit (SSI-K). The name is similar to the first program, but the estimated cost is not: \$2.5 million and \$3 million apiece.

These aircraft will undergo "preemptive repair and replacement of certain structural elements identified as being highly fatigued," especially wind and fuselage parts, said Eastburg. "So we're going to go in during the SSI and SSI-K program and take that material out and replace it with new material." In the 1990s, the Navy launched a short - lived Sustainment Readiness Program to repair corroded areas and fix other problems. This program, led by E-Systems, now Raytheon Co., "ended in disaster," said Richard Aboulafia, vice president for analysis at Teal Group Corp., Fairfax, VA. "It is incumbent on the Navy to show also why this [SSI and SSI-K] wouldn't be a disaster in terms of cost overruns and unmet expectations," Aboulafia said.

To make this plan work, the Navy is seeking cooperation from combatant commanders who request P-3Cs for missions for operations around the world. The plea is simple: "Help us keep the fatigue life expenditure rate at a level that we can resource to and get to MMA and make it affordable," Hewitt said. "We don't want to put a plane out there and have it flown hard every single day." He said the Navy will ask the commanders "to make sure that when you do employ the maritime patrol force, that it is toward a good tasking so we are husbanding the fatigue life every day." Fatigue life of the P-3s can be managed by monitoring hours flown, times the cabin is pressurized and depressurized, full-stop landings, and touch-and-goes. Each aircraft will be closely observed "so that we don't burn up the fatigue life and have a dip before we get MMA."

Boeing Co., Chicago, and Lockheed Martin Corp., Bethesda, MD., are in the homestretch of a two -way race to win the Navy's MMA program. Boeing is proposing a militarized version of its commercial 737 and Lockheed Martin is proposing a modernized P-3 dubbed Orion 21. Final proposals are due Dec. 29 and the winner selected in May.

Meanwhile, the Navy is continuing its efforts to equip the remaining P-3Cs with advanced communications, surveillance and targeting capabilities installed in the Anti-Surface Warfare Improvement Program (AIP). The Navy, which began installing the P-3C AIP package in 1994, has 59 AIP-equipped P-3Cs and orders for a further 12. The service is still determining how many more will be ordered.

"The mantra is smaller, more capable, more ready," Eastburg said.

CAPT KEN LEWKO  
Director of Air Operations  
COMNAVRESFORCOM N3A

## Messages & Notes

Steve

It was so nice to hear from you and for you to offer me the opportunity to join the Patron Four Five Association. I served in the squadron in the early 1950s in Coco Solo, CZ and often wondered about old shipmates that I knew from the era.

I am sending you a few articles that may be of interest for your library. I was a flight crew member while in the squadron and have many good memories of the events we had while serving.

When we were due to convert from PBM's to P5M's, cracks were found in about half of the PBM wings.. We were ordered to fly to Norfolk, avoiding any turbulence, where we were checked out in the new P5Ms.

I am sending you my dues for five years and am looking forward to being in contact again. You had my address in New York State but since I have moved to Puerto Rico so please note my new address.

Bob Searles

Steve,

The September article by Gloria Willen evoked many bittersweet memories.

Gloria's first husband and I flew together in Bermuda, and later in Jacksonville, when the squadron went into P3's. "Scotty" Florance and I flew on the C.O.'s crew in P-3s. He as navigator and I as TACCO. The C.O. was John Collins.

The X.O. was Dave Hume (now deceased), and at the time of the Argentia crash, he was OinC in Argentia. I was the duty officer that night, and but for the grace of God, might have been TACCO on that flight. I had tried to swap duties with the TACCO (whose name escapes me at the moment) in order to fly with the PPC, Les Duffield, with whom I had considerable rapport, but said TACCO preferred flying

to being duty officer.

Suffice it to say that night was one of the saddest of my life (probably Dave Hume's as well). In the aftermath, I had the duty of supervising the inventory of the belongings of the crew--to be returned to the next of kin. "Scotty" Florance believed everything he was taught in flight training; including the fact that you were not supposed to wear rings while flying. His wedding ring was in his BOQ room and I had the honor, and the sorrow, to personally deliver it to Gloria.

I documented the details of the Argentia crash as best I could (maps, witness interviews, etc.) and prior to the '98 reunion (at the suggestion of Mort Eckhouse) sent the originals to Chuck Caldwell, who suggested that the originals should go to the National Museum of Naval Aviation at NAS Pensacola, with copies being kept in the VP-45 Association's archives. That, so far as I know, has been done.

I recall with great pleasure that at the '98 reunion in Pensacola, both Gloria and one of her daughters had an opportunity to look over the documents. Even more pleasurable was the fact that I got to dance with both at that reunion!! (And my bride didn't complain!)

I recently attended the 35 year reunion of the outfit (VAH21) I served with in Vietnam. It was OK, but nothing like the memories I treasure from Bermuda, Jacksonville and even Argentia. VP-45 will always be the brightest shining star in my relatively short Navy career.

Fair winds and following seas to you, and to all in the Association.

Cliff Oberlander  
(TACCO, 62-65)

Steve,

I am Richard L. Shoup, LT USNR (RET. DIS.) and am a member but you do not have my email address. It is dshoup@mind.net. Please add it to the roster. We are well and enjoying Ashland, OR . We look forward to enter-

taining any VP-45 old-timers passing through.

Dick and Sally Shoup

Steve,

I received my newsletter last week and have really enjoyed it. You are doing a most wonderful job on it. I thank you very much for taking on the job. I hope we can meet in JAX next year. I am responsible for Grant Krakowski signing up in the association. After the last reunion in JAX I got him a VP-45 hat and have been on him to join ever since. Thanks again from Roswell, GA. (Airframes Shop and Corrosion Control Leader).

Richard Mays '67-'70

Hi Steve,

Enjoyed the newsletter, especially the letters about Bermuda. I had just brought Jane down as a new bride in August 48 and a month later a hurricane came across the island. Since we had to fly the planes away to San Juan, Jane was left alone on a rental place near Belmont. That was the big storm of September 1948 and it did a lot of damage to our rental place. We have just celebrated our 55 years of marriage and Jane still remembers that as her initiation to Navy life in VP-45. Please correct our email to rjnupp1@juno.com. Thanks and hope to see you in Jacksonville.

Ralph Nupp  
(PILOT '47-'49)

Steve,

I was F/E on Crew 3. In fact, our crew was Crew 10 originally and took LN-9 to Argentia. We then changed crew numbers and became Crew 3. We lost LN-9 shortly thereafter in Palencia Bay with all hands on board. (one member of the lost crew had missed his Lajes trip, so was with us at the time of the accident:.

John Covert, a VP-45 Association

member, was Radioman on Crew 3 with me. "Buster" Gregory was Co-Pilot (PPC) with us as well. He had been a member as well, but have not seen his name on the last couple of rosters? I will ask him about it at "Christmas Card" time.

I made the Adak deployment, but not the later one where they lost the A/C. I will see what I have after we get settled from this "move". (Just selling our house, and moving full time to camp & a 5th wheel!!) It is a big mess but we are getting there slowly...

More later, Shipmate

Dick Gray

ADR1 F/E Crew 3  
USN (ret) AFCM

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Steve,

I was part of a whole bunch of ASW techs that reported to NAF Bermuda during March '63. The squadron was on deployment to Gitmo so there was little for us to do besides cleaning the barracks and donating our time to the endless parties of "College Week", more like about six weeks. Never before or since have so many females recognized the qualities of physical attractiveness that only I seemed to know I possessed. Eventually the squadron returned from Gitmo and we were assigned to flight crews to fulfill the destiny the Navy had prepared us for.

Almost immediately eight of us were sent to NAS Norfolk for an eight



ASW Techs Rhiner, Dencore, Bamberg, Schroder and Covert at Club Bermadoo

week Morse code course to qualify us as SP5B radio operators. By fall '63 things were really winding down at Bermuda. We were the last P5 squadron in the Atlantic fleet and the word was out that we would get P3's in 1964. I recall one day when the entire crew worked on an engine change in bathing suits. In January, 1964, the last of the Marlins was turned in and the remaining "long time" people were sent to NAS Pax for transition to P3s. We would be joining VP8, 44 and 49 as the vanguard of the P3 Navy in the Atlantic Fleet. Nearly everyone else was flying P2V-7s.

Most crews were reorganized and I found myself attached to several newcomers in crew 10 lead by Lcdr J.D. Jones (possibly still Lt) and Ltjg Bill Fussell. AD1 Harvey Lakey dubbed "the canary" for his habit of attentively perching on the flight engineer's seat was our crew chief. Transition was intense, flying over 150 hours per month.

VP-45's new home was NAS JAX. I recall receiving a 1000 hour pin long before a year had passed. The squadron received the "E" for its rapid and safe transition.

We did several partial deployments to Argentia. Crew 10 became 9 and eventually 3 as Lcdr Jones moved up the pecking order. Dick Gray became our FE and crew chief. Our crew jelled into a cohesive and effective fighting machine and garnered quite a bit of praise for tracking an American nuke

for several hours. Cdr Jones liked to travel and crew 3 got their share of airshows and interesting assignments. We did airshows in Corpus and Sault City, Iowa. We did RON's to Panama, Barbados, Bermuda, Puerto Rico, Azores, Thule, and New Orleans.

On Palm Sunday, 1964, Lt Fussell was tragically killed in the crash of a Ryan PT-22 owned by the JAX Navy Flying Club. Lt Fussell,

a carryover from the P5s, was the most skilled and knowledgeable Navy pilot I ever flew with. He knew every system and position on the P3A at least as well as the man that held it. I credit him with saving our lives once and possibly twice by his quick analysis and appropriate response to hazardous situations. As a Ltjg he was designated a P5M PPC. He claimed to be the youngest man in the Navy holding that designation at the time.

Crew 3 had it's closest call when making a GCA at JAX in fog after being awake for nearly 28 hours (we were the Ready crew). Somehow we got to the left and below glidepath and struck one of the spuds (I-beams) sticking up from a barge anchored in the St. Johns River. The collision tore one blade off the #1 prop, put a groove in the nacelle, took a chunk out of the flap, and sent a piece of prop into the radio two feet in front of my face. I recall seeing men blown or diving off the barge. The guys in the tower got quite a scare too! The incident was written up in Approach Magazine.

In July, 65 the entire squadron was detached to Adak. Crews had R & R's in either Hawaii or Iwakuni, Japan. We chose Iwakuni.

My active duty was scheduled to end on September 20, 1965. Cdr Hume, our C.O., approved a one month early out so I could start college in Michigan. The Navy announced that anyone being separated from active duty after September 15 had an automatic six-month extension. Cdr Hume could have cancelled my early out but did not elect to do so. Crew 3 had an R&R in Iwakuni during August and some of the crew threatened to maroon me in Iwakuni so that I could not get back for my separation. The night before our scheduled departure I went down to the plane, pulled up the ladder and closed the doors until the officers arrived the next day. I was taking no chances!

Cdr Hume, who had accompanied

us on our R&R, offered to divert to Saigon so that I could reenlist in a combat zone and receive my bonus tax-free. Having made up my mind to return home and attend college, I declined his offer.

After returning home I joined the Naval Air Reserve at NAS Grosse Ile and spent three years flying in the back seat of S-2s. I tried out for flight training but couldn't pass the eye test.

I spent the next thirty years as a high school science teacher and three years ago became a Private Pilot. I now fly a Cessna Cardinal. I correspond with Dick Gray, retired in Maine.

John Covert  
(AX) '63-'65

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Steve,

When I got to the squadron in December 1966 they were on a split deployment between Bermuda and Argentia with one plane rotating to the Azores. We still had two or three P2V Neptunes and traded them in for P3As when the squadron returned home. We went to Roosevelt Roads PR in February for the war games, then made another deployment to Bermuda and Argentia, with stops in Thule, Greenland and the Azores. We launched a ready alert crew to the Ascension Islands because a small fleet of Russian vessels were thought to be bringing weapons to Cuba by coming around the southern tip of Africa. The entire crew came down with dysentery and were sick for quite some time.

We deployed to West Pac on December 10, 1968 and I mustered out on December 8, so I did not make the deployment. Buck Jones could give you some real scoop on what went on over there and he is listed in the VP-45 Association directory. I stay in touch with him through Email at his Dallas, GA home. He works for Lockheed Martin in Marietta, GA.

From what he told me they had a three way split deployment with 3

planes in the Philippines, 3 in U-Tapao, Thailand and 3 at Cam Rahn Bay Naval Air Facility. The patrols were either on Yankee station in the Tonkin Gulf or some sort of recon over Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos.

Send my mail to the Powell address as I will be spending most of my time there. I am retiring next week from education and will be a volunteer coach for the Ohio State Buckeyes Football Team beginning October 16th. I will be heading south for short vacations but I am not ready for the 6 months north and 6 months south routine quite yet.

Todd Alless  
(FE) '65-'68

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Steve Riddle,

My Father passed away October 30, 2003. He was a long time member of your organization. His obituary is attached.

Glenn E. Welch Jr.  
Obituary of Commander Glenn Ernest Welch, Sr. USN, Ret. (provided by son)  
October 24, 1916 - October 30, 2003

Born in Minneapolis, MN, Glenn graduated from University of Minnesota in 1940 and completed aviation training in 1942. He served as second pilot in VP-205 and was transferred to VP-32 in 1943 to serve as Patrol Plane Commander. Promoted to LT in 1944, he served as PPC in VPB-27 from June 1944 to August 1945, including the Okinawa Campaign.

Glenn married the former Jean R. Crail of Minneapolis in 1941 and they had fifty-five years together before she predeceased Glenn in 1997. Together they lived in Glenview, IL, Ottumwa, Iowa and Pensacola, FL before Glenn became plane commander of the MARS aircraft in VR-2 at NAS Alameda, CA. They spent a year at Naval Station Kwajalein, Marshall Islands with their four children where they witnessed the hydrogen bomb test in 1954. This was followed by two years in Barbers Point, HI as PPC in the WV-2 Super Connie aircraft in VW-1, Early Warning Squadron One. Following the next 3 years in Minneap-

olis, the family moved to Bermuda for 3 more years, and then to McLean, VA where Glenn spent his last 7 years in the Navy trying to squeeze "the Pentagon" into a circle.

Glenn moved to Coronado to be next to his son, Glenn, Jr. and family in 1997. He was an avid lawn bowler, bridge player, and story teller to those who crossed his many paths of interest. He enjoyed his friends and acquaintances in Coronado and especially enjoyed attending Coronado Community Church where he particularly loved to hear the church choir on Sunday mornings.

Cdr. Welch holds the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Naval Unit Citation, and seven Campaign and Service Medals. He was a member of the Association of Naval Aviation and will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery.

Glenn is survived by two sons, Capt. Glenn E. Welch, Jr., Ret. of Coronado and Thomas Bradford Welch of the Panama Canal Zone; two daughters, Sally Jean Welch of Lovettesville, VA, and Cassandra Welch Laub of Kemmerer, WY, eight grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. He is greatly missed.

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Dear Steve:

To start with I was the plane captain in the page 15 picture in the newsletter that I received on 9-18-03. This is the list of the crew: L to R Back Row: ENS Hembree, LTJG J Hoge, LT R.E. Fleischli PPC; and LTJG R.A. Miller (P5M 1 Buno 135457); L To R Bottom Row: Bob Ferullo AO1; R. Sturgis AT; R.E. Morris AM; J.N. Lovric AD2 (PC); H. L. Spoor AT; J.H. Dial AT; and B.M. Sands AT. Picture was taken about 15 Jan, 1955 at Coco Solo. At that time we were flying patrol between Costa Rica and Nicaragua for the OAS. Our Crew, EE11, made 4 hops, averaging 9 hrs per hop. That should answer and settle that matter.

I should also mention that on 12 Jan, 1956, we flew an endurance aloft for 21.8 hrs (Buno 135467) EE 11. The crew: LTJG C. Caldwell; LTJG A.L. Raithel; LTJG R.T. Chase; ENS

J.M. Barry; E.H. Barnes AT1; W.F. Bruns AT1; J.R. Frimodig AT2; J.N. Lovric AD2 (PC); C. Butler AT2 and Lon Gailey AM1.

I still have the newspaper from Panama "The Star and Herald" dated 14 Jan 1955 and also a supplement of 14 Aug, 1955 showing pictures and a story on VP-45, VP-34 and FASRON 105.

Hope this answers any lingering questions.

John Lovrick USN (RET)

Steve,

The Iron Duke (me, however there may have been some that did not know this) evolved from me posting a picture of LN07 on the bulletin board at Adak in December 1966. I had skillfully added a large lemon involved in the air-

frame, pointing out the fact that the XO's (Cdr J.H. Chapman) plane needed some work. Our crew (4) had flown it and experienced a 40 degree lock on error on the TACAN that could have planted us on the Razorback mountains east of the field if it had not been our third pilot flying the approach was high and I luckily was letting him go on with the approach to see if he would recognize that he was off and how he would correct. (This incident was written up in the April 2002 issue of the PP).

Anyway, several "missiles" were put up on the bulletin in the dead of night, some involving comments concerning the female school teachers assigned to Adak, that evolved into crude attempts at poetry, akin to that of the famous Yukon poet Robert Service. The October 1999 and April 2000 PP issues had

more including a Very Last Ode, that I penned on the USS Independence and sent to Dave Parker, the copilot on our crew.

I was going thru some papers and found the poem I sent to you. This was a (very crude!) response by another crew that thought I had shafted them in scheduling my crew (by then it was 3) for the coveted "long loop" patrol sequence out of Bermuda. Of course I will never admit to being anything other than fair and impartial and besides, after 36 years I guess it doesn't matter much.

Steve, this is probably more than you bargained for but here it is. If you need more let me know.

Great job on the last Pelican Post!

Tom Golder  
PILOT '65-'67

**T**he following is a continuation and ending (we hope) of the saga of the Iron Duke and the 1966/1967 Bermuda Detachment. As some of you may recall from past issues of the Pelican Post (October 1999 and April 2000) the Duke was somehow left in charge of scheduling crews in the three plane detachment. The coveted "Long Loop" was a series of 10 hour patrols, Bermuda to Lajes, Lajes to Rota, Rota to Lajes, and Lajes to Bermuda. It was a chance for some good flying and a chance to get off the Island to visit the exchanges at Lajes and Rota. The Duke was accused of favoring his crew by scheduling them for a "Long Loop" when other crews thought they were in line for the trip. The Duke justified his actions in "The Very Last Ode to the Iron Duke" but when they returned from the Loop, they were greeted with the following which was found on the bulletin board:

#### ONE LAST ODE TO THE IRON DUKE

The Iron Duke strikes again and with real class  
For he has shot down eleven men from reaching Spanish grass  
Although he and most of his gang have been there twice  
They are now called crew three and they deserve more than one slice  
For as the old ledgend (sic) goes to all who know  
The curse of crew three is too strong to hold low  
*(Note: This is a reference to the "old" crew three whose PPC was the Operations Officer and the feeling was to the rest of the crews, that crew three got all the good deals, especially in Adak)*  
We thought we had left it in the bygone land Alaska  
But the curse has sprung up again like a cobra from a basket  
As dependable as Santa emerging from the chimney covered with soot  
The curse strikes again with a new master—the Iron Duke  
Be not too forlorned(sic)—hold down the old fort  
For the ledgend(sic) may yet perish—the Iron Duke is short!  
//s// The Phantom "for" Big Red"

Note: Big Red was one of the school teachers at Adak, who started the whole Iron Duke saga. Her legacy carried on to Bermuda. The Duke left the squadron in February 1968, without knowing the identity of the Phantom. The end?

## E-Mail From a Capt in Iraq

We knew there was a dinner planned with Ambassador Bremer and LTG Sanchez. There were 600 seats available and all the units in the division were tasked with filling a few tables. Naturally, the 501st MI battalion got our table.

Soldiers were grumbling about having to sit through another dog-and-pony show, so we had to pick soldiers to attend. I chose not to go. But, about 1500 the G2, LTC Devan, came up to me and with a smile, asked me to come to dinner with him, to meet him in his office at 1600 and bring a camera. I didn't really care about getting a picture with Sanchez or Bremer, but when the division's senior intelligence officer asks you to go, you go.

We were seated in the chow hall, fully decorated for Thanksgiving when aaaaallllll kinds of secret service guys showed up. That was my first clue, because Bremer's been here before and his personal security detachment is not that big.

Then BG Dempsey got up to speak, and he welcomed ambassador Bremer and LTG Sanchez. Bremer thanked us all and pulled out a piece of paper as if to give a speech. He mentioned that the President had given him this thanksgiving speech to give to the troops. He then paused and said that the senior man present should be the one to give it. He then looked at Sanchez, who just smiled. Bremer then said that we should probably get someone more senior to read the speech.

Then, from behind the camouflage netting, the President of the United States came around. The mess hall actually erupted with hollering. Troops bounded to their feet with shocked smiles and just began cheering with all their hearts. The build-



ing actually shook. It was just unreal. I was absolutely stunned. Not only for the obvious, but also because I was only two tables away from the podium. There he stood, less than thirty feet away from me! The cheering went on and on and on. Soldiers were hollering, cheering, and a lot of them were crying. There was not a dry eye at my table. When he stepped up to the cheering, I could clearly see tears running down his cheeks. It was the most surreal moment I've had in years. Not since my wedding and Aaron being born. Here was this man, our President, came all the way around the world, spending 17 hours on an airplane and landing in the most dangerous airport in the world, where a plane was shot out of the sky not six days before. Just to spend two hours with his troops. Only to get on a plane and spend another 17 hours flying back. It was a great moment, and I will never forget it.

He delivered his speech, which we all loved, when he looked right at me and held his eyes on me. Then he stepped down and was just mobbed

## In Memoriam

Owen P. Duffy '42-'43  
(Plankowner VP-205 Pilot)  
Glenn E. Welch '42-'43  
(Plankowner VP-205 Pilot)  
Howard F. Randall, Jr. '65-'67  
(Operations Officer)

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by the soldiers. He slowly worked his way all the way around the chow hall and shook every last hand extended. Every soldier who wanted a photo with the President got one. I made my way through the line, got dinner, then wolfed it down as he was still working the room. You could tell he was really enjoying himself. It wasn't just a photo opportunity. This man was actually enjoying himself! He worked his way over the course of about 90 minutes towards my side of the room.

Meanwhile, I took the opportunity to shake a few hands. I got a picture with Ambassador Bremer, Talabani (acting Iraqi president) and Achmed Chalabi (another member of the ruling council) and Condoleezza Rice, who was there with him. I felt like I was drunk.

He was getting closer to my table so I went back over to my seat. As he passed and posed for photos, he looked me in the eye and said, "How you doin', captain." I smiled and said "God bless you, sir." To which he responded "I'm proud of what you do, captain." Then moved on.

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## KIDS IN CHURCH

*A little boy was overheard praying:  
"Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."*

## ***A Blast of Cool Air*** *(from Military Officer - July 2003)*

*Retired Navy Lt. Cmdr. James E. Stalter, of Como, N.C., sent this story from his daughter, Lisa A. Blazer, a chief hospital corpsman in the Navy stationed with the Marines near the Iraqi border. Lisa e-mailed this story to her parents. Dad says her methods are sometimes graphic but almost always effective.*

We've had an airconditioner since we got here. It was put in under duress, and of course the engineers made it seem like a favor. It has worked one day since we've been here, and I gave up calling the engineers to get it fixed.

When the temperatures seriously started to rise, the lieutenant colonel in charge asked me what my plan was for heat casualties. I said, "We will spray them with water from a spray bottle, put a fan on them, and pray." He was shocked. I explained that my air conditioner did not work, and without a cool space to take a heat casualty, we might as well pray.

He told me the command-and-control tent had two air conditioners and was quite cool, so I could take the casualty there. I argued that I didn't think it a good plan to have to take a casualty all the way over to another tent and haul all my equipment down there, then violate the patient's privacy just because no one cared enough about medical to arrange for us to have a functioning air conditioner. And by the way, I told him, it amazed me that the computers in the command tent were more important than the people of the camp. He was unmoved.

Shortly after that, a young (and very big) Marine was found unresponsive out in the heat. Actually, we had treated him for a heat-related illness before. We immediately took him to the command-and-control tent (which had about 20 people in it at the time) and proceeded to treat him the way we do all heat casualties: We undressed him, sprayed him down, took a rectal temp, and started an IV -- all in the middle of the office. The Marines were trying to help by staying out of our way while at the same time erecting a sort of privacy curtain around us -- too late, of course. Things have to move fast when you suspect someone's temperature might be too high.

As it turns out, the Marine was fine. He was suffering from heat exhaustion, which is bad but not as bad as heat stroke. After a few hours, we moved him out of there, and we'll be sending him home.

We'd been back in our (sauna-like) tent for 15 minutes when the engineers showed up with an air conditioner (from where, they wouldn't say) and hooked it up. Thirty minutes later our tent was nice and cool. It's amazing what'll move some people to act.

Maybe I was a bit dramatic with the rectal temp part...

---

## ***Naval Aviator's Dream***

*(This is too good not to pass on to all of you! ....  
Mort Eckhouse)*

I hope there is a place, way up in the sky,  
Where Naval Aviators can go, when they have to die.  
A place where a guy could buy a cold beer  
For a friend and comrade whose memory is dear.  
A place where no blackshoe or porkchop could tread,  
Nor a Pentagon type would e're be caught dead!  
Just a quaint little O'Club; kind of dark, full of smoke,  
Where they like to sing loud, and love a good joke.  
The kind of place where a lady could go  
and feel safe and protected by the men she would know.

There must be a place where old Navy/Marine pilots go  
When their wings get too weary, and their airspeed gets low.  
Where the whiskey is old and the women are young,  
and songs about flying and dying are sung.  
Where you'd see all the shipmates you served with before,  
And they'd call out your name as you came through the door,  
Who would buy you a drink, if your thirst should be bad  
And relate to the others, "He was quite a good lad."

And then thru the mist you'd spot an old guy  
You had not seen in years, though he'd taught you to fly.  
He'd nod his old head and grin ear to ear,  
and say "Welcome shipmate, I'm pleased that you're here!  
For this is the place where Naval Aviators come  
when the battles are over and the wars have been won.  
They've come here at last to be safe and afar  
From the government clerk and the management czar,  
Politicians and lawyers, the feds and the noise,  
Where all hours are happy, and these good ol' boys  
can relax with a cool one, and a well-deserved rest!  
This is HEAVEN, my son, you've passed your last test!"

---

*It is far more impressive when others  
discover your good qualities without your  
help.*

# Congratulations Dan!!!



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
NAVAL & MARINE CORP  
RESERVE CENTER  
3655 SOUTH WILMONT ROAD  
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85730-3259

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Tucson Man to Receive Medal from Department of the Navy for Historical Preservation Work at the Pima Air & Space Museum.

(TUCSON, AZ) — Former Navy pilot and Tucson resident Charles D. Cain will be awarded the Meritorious Public Service Medal on December 3, 2003. The award is in honor of Mr. Cain's countless hours of preservation work to restore the last remaining U.S. Navy PBM-5A Mariner seaplane. The aircraft is now on display at the Pima Air & Space Museum. The Meritorious Public Service Medal is among the highest medals offered to a civilian by the Navy and will be presented with full military honors.

Since 2001, Mr. Cain has been working with the Department of the Navy, the Smithsonian Institution and the Pima Air & Space Museum to restore the historic aircraft. As the Restoration Project Coordinator, it has been his responsibility to oversee the complex and challenging restoration process. Had it not been for Mr. Cain's exemplary leadership skills, restoration expertise, planning, project management, and personal commitment, such a successful undertaking would not have been possible.

This achievement is even more impressive when you consider Mr. Cain's age, a retiree now in his 70's. The award ceremony will take place directly in front of the PBM-5A *Mariner* at the Pima Air & Space Museum on December 3 at 2 P.M.

Following the award ceremony, the restored PBM-5A *Mariner* will be available to the media for tour and photo opportunities. Mr. Cain will also be available for interviews to discuss the restoration process and the significance of this extremely rare military aircraft owned by the National Air & Space Museum.



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **THE MARINER/MARLIN ASSOCIATION**



Next (22nd) reunion will be held at Crystal City, Washington D.C. 6-9 May 2004. Headquarters for the reunion will be the DOUBLE TREE HOTEL, CRYSTAL CITY. Contact E. Doug Anderson, 1101 S Arlington Ridge Road Apt. 605, Arlington, VA 22202-1925, phone: 703-892-5893, email: dandfreddy@aol.com, for additional information.

---

### **THE MARTIN P5M "MARLIN"**

*"the end of an era in naval seaplane aviation"*

by Bruce D. Barth

The complete history of the last U.S. Navy flying boat. Detailed coverage of the P5M from 1946 to 1968 including prototype development, P5M-1, & -2, SP-5, USCG and foreign use, squadron activities, special projects, next generation models, significant flights and much more. Complete photo record with over 180 B & W photographs and illustrations. Now available on CD-ROM. Price per CD-ROM \$14.95 plus \$4.00 US Shipping. Checks payable in U.S. dollars to: Bruce Barth, 7049 Auckland Drive, Austin, Texas 78749-4162. Email contact bbarth1@austin.rr.com.

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### **MARTIN PBM MARINER RESTORATION DOCUMENTARY AVAILABLE**

A documentary video of the December 2003 US Navy Award Ceremony at Pima Air & Space Museum honoring Dan Cain for his exemplary work in restoring the last surviving example of a Martin PBM Mariner has been prepared. The video was commercially produced by the Mariner/Marlin Association for the US Navy. This 30 minute VHS film not only honors Mr. Cain, but is a tribute to all parties and organizations involved in the restoration and to the many who served aboard these aircraft. Copies of this film are now available for purchase directly from the production company. Mike Quatraro; Qmmunication Technologies; 530 S. Sugar Loaf Mountain PL;

Tucson, AZ 85748; Phone: 520-320-3996; Email:

QTECH2@mindspring.com.

Our sincere heart felt thanks to everyone for their help and support in making this event possible...

Bruce Barth, Author/Historian  
Mariner/Marlin Association  
Capt. Bruce Handler, USNR (Ret)

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### **Rules for Writers**

1. Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
  2. Be more or less specific.
  3. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
  4. Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.
  5. Be careful to use the rite homonym.
  6. Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat.)
  7. Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.
- 

### **TREASURERS REPORT**

**(March 2004)**

Beginning Balance:

August 1, 2003 ————— \$24,753.89

Income:

Dues ————— \$2,495.00

Money Mkt. Int. ————— 79,81

Less Maint Fee ————— 20.00

Total Income: ————— \$2,594.81

Total Capital: ————— \$27,348.70

Expenses:

Printing ————— \$1032.11

Postage ————— 302.00

Delaware Franchise Tax ————— 25.00

Delaware Reg. Agent ————— 175.00

2004 Reunion Coordinator Dep 300.00

Radisson Reunion Hotel Dep 500.00

Total Expenses: ————— \$2,324.11

Ending Balance:

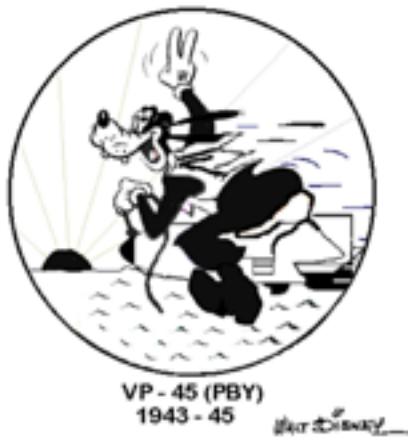
March 1, 2004 ————— \$25,014.59

Money Market Balance: ————— \$22,746.12

Checking Account Balance: ————— 2,268.47  
\$25,014.59

David R. Johnson  
TREASURER

## PATRON FOUR-FIVE ASSOCIATION



*President*

*Leo Cimino*

*Vice President*

*"vacant"*

*Treasurer*

*Dave Johnson*

*Secretary/Editor*

*Steve Riddle*

**Dues are \$10 per year 11/1 to 11/1 (\$45 for five years/ \$200 for life)** and are payable to Mr. D.R. Johnson, Treasurer; VP-45 Association; 7814 Bay Meadows Drive; Pensacola, FL 32507-1518. The roster is included for members' personal use only. Please inform the editor if you change your address. An asterisk after your name on the address label indicates your dues are now due.

### *Note From the Treasurer.....*

Many of our members have been paying dues for years now. Some have even made contributions in excess of the required dues. We have also made some profit on past reunions (we just broke even after the smoke cleared from the 2002 reunion in San Diego). As a result, we have accumulated a healthy treasury of about \$25,000.00.

Costs for every reunion event have continued to rise to the point that it has become very expensive for members to attend reunions. We know that travel and lodging costs, when added to the cost of reunion events has undoubtedly cut down on attendance.

With these thoughts in mind, the Directors of the VP-45 Association have decided it is time to give something back to our members. Therefore, the Association plans to subsidize a portion of certain events, such

as the registration fee, hors d'oeuvres' at the cocktail party, the favors (which have not yet been determined—hats, cups or whatever) and the Sunday farewell brunch. This will cost the Association \$2,000.00 or more, depending on the number of attendees. The fees listed on the registration form reflect the subsidized prices.

Even though we have a fairly large balance in our treasury, we are going to have to be careful about being too generous in the future. Our membership now has one hundred eighteen life members, who will no longer be paying dues. Twenty-eight members are paid beyond 2008; eighty-three are paid through 2007 and 2008, forty-five through 2006 and seventy-two through 2005. There are only seventy-three members whose dues will need to be paid in 2004 (\$730.00), which will not cov-

er the cost of printing the Pelican Post newsletter twice that year.

We are not in danger of going broke. However, we will need to be careful about expenditures. There were about 27 members who had to be dropped from the roles this year, as a result of nonpayment of dues; this after sending two postcard reminders. We have gained a few new members, but we still need to recruit more, especially young ones—lest we become extinct.

*Thank you Dave for providing us further insight into our financial position. The 2004 cost for permits, printing and mailing will be about \$2000 for two newsletters, far more than the \$730 we will receive in dues. Without additional members or increased dues, the annual revenue shortfall will occur indefinitely. ED*

# PAIRON FOUR-FIVE ASSOCIATION

*Pelican Post*



August 2004      Newsletter #34

## *From the President.....*

In the last newsletter, I told you of the plans we were making for the upcoming reunion in Jacksonville. I can now report we have completed those plans. Reunion announcements and registration forms have been sent. We are processing the registrations as they are received. Understandably, so far, returns have been few. The contracted cutoff for hotel reservations is Sept. 14. I urge all to

finalize their reservations as soon as possible since the reunion weekend coincides with an NFL football game in Jacksonville and we will probably have difficulty keeping our reserved rooms past that date. Also the contracted room rate will not be held past the cutoff date.

Enough on that. We're looking forward to a great reunion. Many of our members have worked hard and continue to do so in putting the program together. We also have had

great cooperation from the squadron. Our guest speaker is scheduled to be the current CO of VP-45. Hopefully,

ning. Looking forward to seeing all in Jacksonville.

Regards,

Leo Cimino

## *Candidates Found*

The nominating committee led by Harry Mendelson and assisted by Dennis Trampe, Art Pearson, Bill Berg, Bill Tappe, Hank Ingber and others came up with an outstanding group of candidates for association officers. Gene

## REUNION 2004

Jacksonville, Florida  
October 14-17

### ***IMPORTANT PLANNING DEADLINES***

***Reunion Registration 1 September 2004***

***Hotel Reservations 14 September 2004***

he will update us on recent squadron activities. We also anticipate having the XO and a number of active duty squadron members in attendance. There will be scheduled activities each day, Thursday through Sunday plus plenty of time to visit. The "ready room" will be available most of each day to 12 PM.

We need to have reunion registration forms returned to Dave Johnson by 1 September to allow time for completion of activity plan-

Graham accepted the nomination for President, Jim Means accepted the nomination for Vice President and Patrick Imhoff accepted the nomination for Treasurer. I offered to serve as the Secretary and newsletter editor for another term.

More information on the candidates can be found later in the newsletter. *ED*

*Peace is our aim and strength is the only way of getting it.*  
--Winston Churchill

## *Reunion 2004*

*October 14-17*

## **Radisson Riverwalk Hotel**

1515 Prudential Drive , Jacksonville, Florida 32207,  
USA

Reservations: (800) 333-3333 US  
Telephone: (904) 396-5100 Fax: (904) 396-7154  
Email: sales@radjax.com

Located on the banks of the beautiful St. John's River in downtown Jacksonville, the Radisson Riverwalk Hotel proudly boasts being the city's most complete hotel. A conference center with resort appeal, you'll discover a world of hospitality, Florida-style.

Walk the unique riverfront area with its many shops and restaurants. Take a water taxi to nearby cultural and sporting activities, tee off at any of the numerous golf courses, or head to the beach. Feeling hungry? The Radisson Riverwalk Hotel is located between the Chart House Restaurant with its exceptional steaks and seafood, and Morton's Steak House.

Enhance your Florida experience with superb dining in the Rivers Edge Cafe, relaxing in Currents Lounge, or with a cool drink at Poolside Terrace listening to the breeze swirl through the palms.

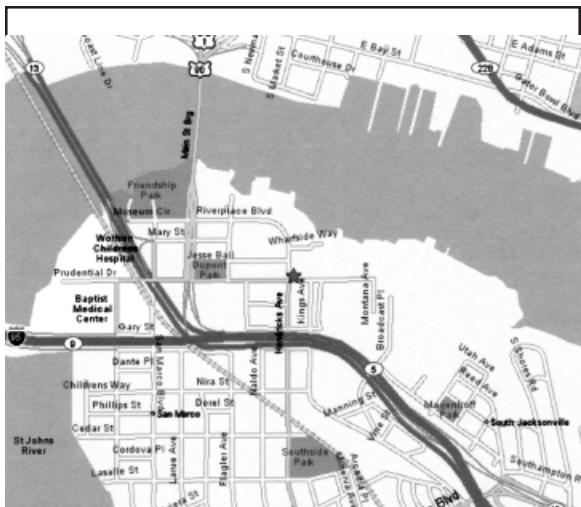
Completely renovated in the Fall of 1998, the spacious guest rooms offer your choice of either a king-sized bed or two double beds and feature the following amenities:

- Coffee Maker
- Full-size iron/ironing board
- Hairdryer
- Web TV and dataport
- Free HBO
- High speed internet lines (T1)

*Note: Room reservations must be made directly with the Hotel. The rate is \$69 per night for single or double occupancy rooms and \$139 per night for a junior suite. The rates do not include a sales tax which is currently at 13%. The hotel amenity fee, which includes parking, local phone calls and 800 number is waived. Call 1-800-333-3333 and tell the reservation agent that you are a member of the VP-45 Association in order to receive the discounted rates. Reservations should be made as soon as possible but no later than 14 September 2004.*



*View from the hotel looking across the St. John's river*



### **Driving Directions:**

Arriving from the North on I95 take exit 350B at San Marco. Turn left and drive to Prudential. Turn right on Prudential. Drive 6 blocks to hotel on the left.

Arriving from the South on I95 take exit 350A. Turn right on Prudential. Drive three blocks to hotel on the left.

**I**t won't be long now. Reunion planners are making final arrangements. Make sure you have mailed your completed reunion registration form and check to Dave Johnson no later than 1 September. Also be sure you have reserved your hotel room by 14 September. Don't miss our scheduled visit to NAS Jacksonville, home of VP-45. It should be a very special event. Some of us will have our first opportunity to go aboard a P3 aircraft. All of us will have a rare opportunity to show our association's support for the squadron.

#### **Scheduled Activities:**

1. Thursday, October 14: 13:00 -17:00. An afternoon of golf at Bay Meadows Golf Club.
2. Friday, October 15: 09:30-13:30. Tour of Jacksonville Naval Air Station. Go on board a P3. Eat lunch on base. 18:00-20:00 Evening cocktail reception with an open bar and light hors d'oeuvres'. Cash bar after 20:00. Casual.
3. Saturday, October 16: 09:00-11:00. *Business Meeting*. 12:00-14:00. River cruise with lunch. 18:00-19:00. Pre - Banquet Cocktail Hour (cash bar). 19:00-21:00 Banquet - *Guest Speaker Commander Rich Fite, CO, VP-45*.
4. Sunday, October 17: 08:00-10:00. Farewell Breakfast Buffet.

#### **Unscheduled Activities:**

1. *Jacksonville Landing* - Located on the north bank, it's a river front marketplace that is filled with shops and restaurants and a lively atmosphere. There are more than 65 stores here, but shopping is secondary to dining and entertainment. You can choose from a half dozen full-service restaurants, plus an inexpensive food court with indoor and outdoor seating overlooking the river. Walk to the river taxi pick up point and allow about 30 minutes for the trip over and back. Stay as long as you like but allow at least an hour. The water taxi charge is \$4.00 each way.

2. *Maritime Museum* - Located on the river walk not far from the hotel, this museum offers excellent displays publicizing the maritime history of Jacksonville and North Florida. In addition to an extensive collection of paintings, photos and artifacts, popular highlights include models of naval ships and an award-winning to-scale replica of the Titanic. There is no admission charge. Estimated time to walk to it is 20 minutes and allow a hour and a half to go through the museum. Hours: Mon-Fri 10:30am-3:00pm, Sat-Sun 1:00pm-5:00pm.

3. *St. Augustine* with its historic sight-seeing and shopping - Founded in 1565 by the Spanish, St. Augustine is a city of carefully preserved historic sites, attractions, and neighborhoods. The Spanish influence is seen in the architecture, street names, food and art. Historic landmarks include the Castillo de San Marcos National monument, the oldest stone fort in the United States; the Spanish Quarter Village, a living history museum which interprets life in colonial St. Augustine circa 1740; The Fountain of Youth Discovery Park, where it is said Ponce de Leon sought everlasting youth; and the Mission of Nombre de Dios, where Pedro Nenendez de Aviles first set foot on Florida's shore in 1565.

4. *Jacksonville Beaches* - Atlantic Boulevard (Fla. 10) will take you to **Atlantic Beach** and **Neptune Beach**. The boulevard divides the two towns, and where it meets the ocean, you'll come to **Town Center**, a quaint community with a number of shops, restaurants, pubs, and a few inns. Beach Boulevard (U.S. 90) dead-ends at **Jacksonville Beach**, where you'll find beach concessions, rental shops, and a fishing pier. This is also the most popular local surfing beach.

5. *Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens* - Located in the Riverside Historic District. The St. John's River discreetly flows behind this beautiful museum, offering a scenic backdrop and accenting the peaceful atmosphere. Three acres of formal gardens encompass this home that once belonged to Arthur and Ninah Cummer. Hours: Tue & Thu 10:00am -9:00pm, Wed/Fri/Sat 10:00am-5:00pm, Sun noon-5:00pm. Admissions: Adult \$6, Senior/Military \$4, Child \$1. Payment Method: Cash.

#### **Ready Room:**

The customary squadron ready room will be available for your enjoyment from noon until midnight on most days. Hours will be posted daily during the reunion. *Bring your pictures, memorabilia and sea stories.*

#### **Climate:**

In October the average high is 79 degrees and the average low is 60 degrees. The record high is 96 degrees. The record low is 36 degrees. Average rainfall is 3.86". At the last Jacksonville reunion the weather was perfect but be prepared just in case it is cool and/or rainy.

# *VP-45 Holds Change of Command Ceremony*

*by Lt.j.g. Jon Tasch - VP-45 PAO*



**Commander Richard T. Fite  
Commanding Officer  
Patrol Squadron 45**

**C**mdr. Rich Fite relieved Cmdr. William Fitzgerald as commanding officer of VP-45 during a change of command ceremony April 2 at Hangar 1000.

The ceremony culminated an extremely successful tour for Fitzgerald. Under his guidance, the squadron effectively transitioned from a challenging inter-deployment training cycle in August of last year to a demanding Mediterranean deployment in support of the global war on terrorism.

Fite, a native of Washington, D.C. is the son of a career Air Force pilot. He graduated from Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio with a bachelor of administration degree in political science.

Fite received his commission in December 1985 through the Aviation Officers Candidate Program and was designated a naval flight officer in April 1987. His first tour was with the "Golden Pelicans" of VP-44 at NAS Brunswick, Maine.

He made subsequent tours to Navy Recruiting District Ohio, VP-45 ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Cruiser Destroyer Group Two as a flag lieutenant and the Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, D.C. He completed his department head tour with the "Golden Swordsmen" of VP-47 at Barbers Point, Hawaii, at the conclusion of which he then reported to Commander, Patrol Wings Pacific as assistant chief of staff for manpower.

Fite received his masters of science degree from the National War College at Ft. McNair in Washington D.C. In April 2003, Fite reported to VP-45 as the executive officer.

He will lead the "Pelicans" during another transition to an 18-month inter-deployment readiness cycle in preparation for their upcoming deployment in June 2005.

Fitzgerald's operational foresight and inspirational leadership elevated the command to an unsurpassed level of achievement.

During his watch, the Pelicans charted a new course for the operational employment of maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft. His aircrews participated in several high visibility North Atlantic Treaty Organization and multi-national operations such as Joint Guardian, Deliberate Force, and Enduring Freedom. Pelican aircrews also flew missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Joint Task Force- Liberia.

In his remarks, Fitzgerald spoke of the many successes of the Pelican team and thanked the men and women of the squadron for their dedication, loyalty and professionalism. He spoke of his pride of being part of a great organization and how he was honored to have served them. He told them the keys to the successes of VP-45 have been an en-



**Commander William A. Zirzow IV  
Executive Officer  
Patrol Squadron 45**

gaged chief's mess, the wardroom, the aircrews and the hard working, dedicated Sailors.

He also thanked the spouses of VP-45, recognizing the many sacrifices they make in order to allow their Pelicans to do their job.

VP-45 also welcomed its new Executive Officer, Cmdr. Bill Zirzow. Zirzow is a native of Saratoga, California and received his bachelor of arts in economics from San Jose State in May 1984. After attending Aviation Officer Candidate School, he was designated a naval aviator in August 1987.

Zirzow's career highlights include two operational tours with VP-47 and one with VP-31 as an instructor pilot. He also served as the assistant navigator on board USS Abraham Lincoln (CV-72). Most recently, Zirzow served as a navy legislative fellow on Capitol Hill. He was then temporarily assigned in February 2002 to Commander Fifth Fleet, Al Udeid, Qatar during combat operation in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

## **VP-45 Receives Golden**

### **Wrench Award**

*By Lt. j.g. Jon Tasch*

*VP-45 PAO*

To recognize its superlative efforts and achievements in maintaining the highest degree of aircraft readiness and safety, VP-45 was recently awarded the Golden Wrench Award for aircraft maintenance excellence for the year 2003.

The squadron's ability to remain a front-runner in the maritime patrol and reconnaissance community would not have been realized without the dedication, perseverance and ingenuity of VP-45's Maintenance Department.

Behind

every VP-45 operational flight hour, completed sortie, and squadron milestone, an exceptional maintenance department stands committed to ensuring the ongoing success of the command.

The Golden Wrench Award is given annually to the maritime patrol squadron that executes the most flight hours while minimizing aircraft down time, demonstrating maintenance ingenuity, and experiencing no ground safety mishaps.

VP-45 met all mission tasking head-on in 2003, including a challenging deployment to the European Command area of responsibility. While deployed, the squadron's maintenance department achieved an incredible 86 percent aircraft mission capability rate.

This level of readiness led to an 89 percent sortie completion rate covering over 5,900 flight hours. This unparalleled success was due to the



dedicated maintenance team whose efforts kept the aircrews flying over their targets.

Remarkably, VP-45 has logged more than 219,000 mishap-free flight hours in the last 35 years. By utilizing the isochronal scheduled inspection system (IS1S), the maintenance team significantly reduced maintenance manhours, which in turn improved aircraft availability. ISIS was also responsible for saving the squadron millions of dollars in costly equipment repairs.

Capt. Carlos Chavez, Commodore of Patrol and Reconnaissance

Wing 11, formally presented the Golden Wrench Award trophy to VP-45 on March 31.

Also in attendance was Lockheed Martin

Representative Jim Parlosi. Chavez expressed his highest praise to the "Pelicans" assembled that afternoon for quarters and hopes the squadron continues its 'lead by example' excellence in all aspects of maritime patrol aviation.

Cmdr. Rich Fite, VP-45 commanding officer, said 'We are extremely proud of our entire Pelican Maintenance Team. Their dedication to excellence is what VP-45 is all about.'

VP-45's selection for the 2003 Golden Wrench Award reflects an impressive performance level in every measurable category of maintenance excellence.

### ***Quiet Diesel Subs Surface as New Threat***

*San Diego Union Tribune*

Years after the Cold War threat of a Soviet submarine attack ended,

the U. S. Navy is confronting a new danger - the growing fleets of quiet, diesel-electric subs among potential enemy nations.

As a result, the service is creating a San Diego-based command tasked with training and developing strategies and tactics for hunting undersea foes.

"We have a plethora of capable diesel submarines throughout the world," said Bob Brandhuber, a retired Navy sub captain who is spearheading the opening of the Fleet Anti-Submarine Warfare Command at Point Loma.

Added military analyst Patrick Garrett: "The Navy is in dire straits. If you can't track down submarines, it's impossible to control the seas."

Over the past decade, the submarines that once cruised the ocean depths waiting to launch nuclear missiles at U.S. cities have rusted away at Russian naval bases.

Relieved, the Navy mothballed many of its anti-submarine forces, including sub-hunting submarines and aircraft based in San Diego. Naval training has largely eschewed looking beneath the waves, instead focusing on long-range missile attacks and escorting aircraft carrier strike groups.

### ***Navy Establishes Anti-Sub Command***

*San Diego Union-Tribune*

The Navy underscored its focus on thwarting the threat posed by quiet diesel-powered submarines by cutting the ribbon on a new unit here yesterday.

The Anti-submarine Warfare Command will also focus on mines, doctrine and training.

"One emerging threat is the improved diesel submarine technology," said Adm. Walter F. Doran, U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander.

He said the Navy needs to reinvigorate anti-submarine capability to stop threats to Navy warships.

Bob Work, a senior analyst for the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, said anti-submarine warfare is one of the priorities of Adm. Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations.

He said a new technology called Air-Independent Propulsion that allows submarines to cruise quietly is seen as potentially a major threat. Previously, diesel submarines were relatively easy to track because they were loud and had to regularly surface.

### **P-3 Shortage Spells End Of Over-Land Missions**

*Navy Times, March 29, 2004*

Looks like it's back to flying over water and sniffing for submarines for the P-3 Orion fleet.

After spending the past few years flying combat missions over Afghanistan and Iraq - conducting surveillance for troops on the ground and in some cases firing off missiles - the mission of the P-3s is being "re-centered" back to maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare, said Vice Adm. John Nathman, head of warfare requirements and assessments for the Navy.

"That is clearly not the role, or why we bought that particular airplane," Nathman told members of the House Armed Services Committee during a March 11 hearing. "We are trying to bring back the current force to a more maritime focus."

The 10 P-3s of Patrol Squadron 9's Golden Eagles, for example, flew 100 combat missions and logged 3,000 hours over Afghanistan from October to December 2001.

Since the war on terror began, P-3s have flown night and day reconnaissance missions, pinpointed targets for attack aircraft, performed battle-

damage assessments, downlinked surveillance information to Marines and fired Standoff Land-Attack Missiles at Taliban and Iraqi forces.

Nathman said the planes flew over land at the request of Central Command, which needed surveillance on the ground for operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. "We put them as far forward as we could because in that fight, our commanders wanted that platform," said Marine Lt. Gen. Edward Hanlon, head of Marine Corps Combat Development Command. "It might very well be that because of the terrain that we had in Afghanistan and Iraq, it really optimized that particular platform."

Land surveillance is a nontraditional role for the P-3, Nathman said. "This

is interesting to me as an individual who has spent a great amount of his time in air warfare, that we would put a very large, poorly maneuvering [compared to a fighter] plane, without a whole lot of electronic protection, over certain battle spaces," he said. "We would not have done that a long time ago, but that is because our commanders knew an awful lot about the battle space they were flying in."

But the P-3s are being overused, Nathman said, so the Navy needs to eliminate this extra mission to keep the aircraft flying until its successors arrive several years from now.

"The high usage rate has now put us in the position of having to limit the way we fly these airplanes to ensure that the force can transition to its follow-on capability," Nathman said.

Cmdr. Mike Hewitt, P-3/Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft requirements officer, said the Navy is asking Central Command to ease up on the P-3 requirements. "We don't tell them how to utilize their maritime patrol aircraft," he said last month in an in-

terview. "What we're telling them is that we need to protect the core competency, which is ASW, because if we continue to fly them the way we do today in all of these other mission areas, we won't be able to sustain a viable force until [the replacement] gets here."

Last spring, after officials assessed the wear-and-tear on the aircraft, which entered the fleet in 1969, the Navy cut its number of P-3s from 227 to 148 and began a sustainment program for its remaining aircraft.

The P-3 mission will be replaced by a combination of a Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft and an unmanned Broad Area Maritime Surveillance vehicle. The MMA either will be a modernized P-3 variant offered by Lockheed Martin or a modified Boeing 737 jet, and is expected to enter the fleet in 2012.

In the meantime, the Navy's acquisition chief said contractors from several companies will be allowed to compete to build the BAMS UAV. The decision, announced March 16, meant the Navy was sidestepping an Air Force plea to skip the competition and buy into one of its existing UAV programs to save money.

Top Air Force officials sent letters to the Navy secretary and chief of naval operations in February, urging them to go with Northrop Grumman's Global Hawk as their answer to BAMS. The Air Force plans to buy 51 of the large unmanned aerial vehicles.

John Young, assistant Navy secretary for research, development and acquisition, said in a statement released March 16 that the program will be competed instead. "The Navy will get the best value solution through a competitive process," Young wrote. "This decision was reviewed carefully by the acquisition team working in collaboration with the requirements

sponsor. Our competitive acquisition strategy will leverage prior Defense Department investments and continue our pursuit of joint procurement opportunities."

Besides the Global Hawk, other possible contenders for the BAMS UAV are General Atomics and Lockheed Martin, which are working together to build a larger version of the Predator UAV, and General Dynamics' Gulfstream, which is working on an unmanned version of its G550 business jet.

The Navy will send out requests for proposals in early summer, and expects to award a System Development and Demonstration contract in the second quarter of fiscal 2005. The Navy estimates the cost to develop and buy Low Rate Initial Production systems will be roughly \$1.3 billion. The aircraft is expected to reach the fleet in 2010.

### **Fleet Will Replace Aging P-3s**

*AP Washington*

The Navy has awarded a Boeing Co. subsidiary a \$3.89 billion contract to develop a long-range patrol plane to replace an aircraft that once was the sea service's main submarine hunter, the Pentagon announced yesterday.

Boeing will base the plane on its 737 airliner. The Chicago-based company was chosen over rival Lockheed Martin for the project, which could be worth \$44 billion by the mid-2030s.

The plane, called a Multimission Maritime Aircraft, will replace Lockheed's P-3 Orion, a design that has been in use since 1962. The P-3 production line shut down in 1990, and Navy officials said the average age of the 196 aircraft in the inventory is 26 years. The plane developed into an airborne battlefield ob-

servation platform, including missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Like the P-3, the new plane will be designed to hunt submarines and surface vessels and conduct long-range surveillance. Unlike the P-3, the plane will be a jet instead of a turboprop.

John J. Young Jr., the Navy's Assistant Secretary for Research, Development and Acquisition, said during a news conference that he expects the plane to be ready to deploy by 2013. According to Young, Boeing said it could be finished a year sooner.

The initial \$3.89 billion development contract includes money to build three demonstrator and test aircraft, Young said. It also includes \$314 million in incentives if Boeing completes work on schedule, said Thomas E. Laux, a Navy executive overseeing the program.

The production run of 108 combat-capable planes is expected to cost \$20 billion; including development, production and at least 20 years of maintenance, the program will run to \$44 billion.

Boeing subsidiary McDonnell Douglas of Long Beach won the contract. The airframes will be built at the Boeing plant in Wichita, Kansas, and completed in Washington state.

Lockheed Martin had based its proposal on an extensive upgrade of the P-3.

Young praised both the Boeing and Lockheed proposals but suggested Boeing's proposals for its production line gave it the edge.

The plane will have a crew of nine and have a weapons bay capable of launching antisubmarine torpedoes, air-to-surface missiles and dropping underwater mines. It will have the ability to fly long distances, then linger over the deep sea or a

coastline, the Navy said.

He also said a plane built to hunt submarines still has a role in the post-Cold War world, saying that 40 countries operate about 400 submarines.

### ***The Old Couple***

A couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things. They decide to go to the doctor for a checkup. The doctor tells them that they're physically okay, but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember. Later that night, while watching TV, the old man gets up from his chair. His wife asks, "Where are you going?" "To the kitchen." "Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?" "Sure." "Don't you think you should write it down so you can remember it?" "No, I can remember it." "Well, I'd like some strawberries on top. You'd better write it down because you know you'll forget it." He says, "I can remember that! You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries." "I'd also like whipped cream. I'm certain you'll forget that, so you'd better write it down." Irritated, he says, "I don't need to write it down, I can remember it! Leave me alone! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream for cripes sakes!" Then he grumbles into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes the old man returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs. She stares at the plate for a moment and says, "Where's my toast?"

### ***KIDS IN CHURCH***

One particular four-year-old prayed,

*"And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."*

# **Backers' Dedication Kept Idea of Museum Aboard Hornet Alive**

*The San Diego Union-Tribune • Sunday, December 14, 2003*

*By Ronald W. Powell*

**A**fter winning a legal battle to save the Hornet aircraft carrier from being reduced to scrap metal, supporters of converting the ship to a naval museum were upbeat.

They opened the museum at the former Naval Air Station Alameda in August 1998 with grand expectations that soon went bust.

Their experience has served as a cautionary tale for supporters of the Midway museum in San Diego, which is expected to open in April.

"We've studied virtually all of the museums created on ships to learn the upside and the downside," said John DeBlanc, a spokesman for the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum group. "We spent a lot of time on what we called 'lessons learned.'"

The Alameda group began with several miscalculations.

They expected to draw 600,000 to 800,000 visitors a year but initially attracted 150,000.

They thought a ferry service from San Francisco would bring boatloads of tourists to the World War II commissioned vessel retired in 1970. The transport service was ended within six months for lack of riders.

Gerald G. Lutz, Chief Executive Officer of the Hornet Museum, blamed a sour economy.

"It used to be that when people visited San Francisco, they'd stay a week. Now, they only stay two or three days. And, as massive as it is, it's not easy for tourists to find the Hornet. It is across the bay from Fisherman's Wharf, the Golden Gate Bridge and other San Francisco attractions."

By contrast, the San Diego group expects the Midway to become a tourist favorite on the North Embarcadero, a prime haunt for visitors.

Lutz, a retired Navy captain, said creative marketing was needed to over-



**Docent Bud Beal talked recently about the Combat Information Center, one of many areas aboard the aircraft carrier restored for the Hornet Museum in Alameda. Dan Trevan / Union-Tribune**

come location in the case of the Hornet.

A sleepover program for the Boy Scouts and other groups was started, and it became the Hornet's biggest moneymaker, bringing in \$750,000 last year.

The carrier was marketed for conferences and events, earning \$250,000 last year.

A resurgence in swing dancing led to the Hornet hosting four or more big band dances annually, generating about \$300,000 last year.

Admissions bring in about \$500,000 a year, with sales from the Hornet's store accounting for \$300,000 more.

Overall the Hornet has an annual budget of \$2.1 million, with about 55 percent accounting for wages, salaries and benefits.

The attraction saves money by using 650 volunteers, many of them Navy retirees, to lead tours and perform tasks aboard the ship, Lutz said.

Navy veteran George Boggs, 70, volunteers 15 hours a week at the Hor-

net, working the security detail.

"I want to make sure no kids are running around on deck getting hurt," Boggs said. "I enjoy it."

Features include aircraft, a flight simulator and a decontamination facility where astronauts from the first two moon missions—Apollo 11 and 12—were taken after their capsules were plucked from watery landing sites by the Hornet.

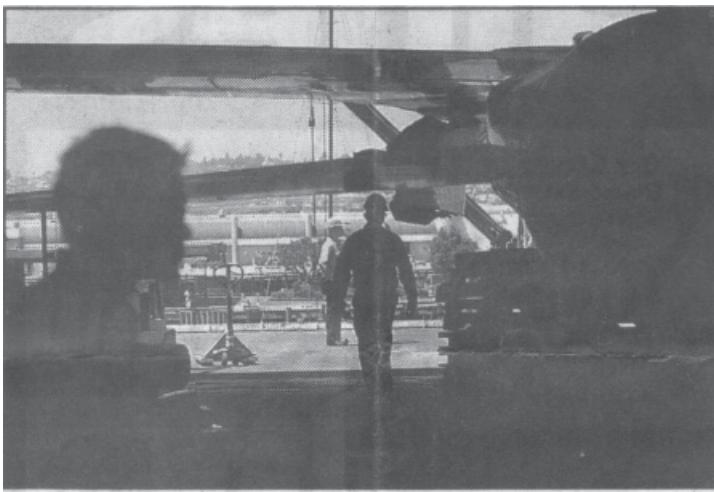
Kurt Gutzka, a businessman from Vancouver, Wash., toured the Hornet last month. "You've got your bleedingheart liberals who are anti-war-mongers and don't care about something like this," Gutzka said. "A lot of proud men served on this boat. A lot of blood, sweat and tears were spilled here so we can enjoy the freedoms we have."

"Navy veteran Jim Yuschenkoff, 54, the museum's curator, has lived aboard the Hornet for five years. Part of his job is to keep it secure after hours.

"This is a piece of history and a memorial for the guys who served and died aboard it," Yuschenkoff said. "It's also a great place to see the sun set."

# Midway Launches Career as a Shipshape History Teacher

The San Diego Union-Tribune Saturday, June 5, 2004



Loose ends are being secured aboard the carrier Midway, which opens Monday at Navy Pier on Harbor Drive in downtown San Diego. *Nelvin Cepeda / Union-Tribune*

Pete Clayton surveyed the freshly painted flight deck of the carrier Midway and offered this critique: "JC's gone from junkyard to jewel."

Clayton, a retired Navy commander, should know.

He is in charge of restoring the flattop for its assignment as a floating museum of naval aviation history at Navy Pier on San Diego's North Embarcadero.

The museum opens to the public at 10 a.m. Monday.

Today, an invitation-only celebration will be held aboard the Midway to mark the historic naval battle for which the carrier is named. The battle between U.S. forces and Japan occurred June 4-7, 1942, near the Midway Islands and established U.S. superiority in the Pacific for the rest of World War II.

Midway veterans, former commanding officers, senior Navy officers and various dignitaries are scheduled to attend today's festivities on the carrier's newly restored flight deck.

Clayton, 54, began the renovation last July in Bremerton, Wash., where the vessel had been stored since its decommissioning in 1992. He walked onto a disaster.

The carrier's paint was chipped,

peeling, or pocked with orangish-brown rust. Many of its exposed surfaces were hidden beneath thick coatings of moss or bird droppings. The flight deck was faded and torn.

But over the months, in Washington, Oakland and San Diego, Clayton supervised paid workers and volunteers who brought a shine back to many parts of the vessel, commissioned in 1945, that the public will tour.

Additional sections will be painted, polished and opened to visitors in coming months in phases.

"This is an incredible achievement for all of us involved," said Clayton, the museum's chief engineer. "There are lots of Most Valuable Players here."

Visitors can get a feel for flying in a simulated cockpit of a military jet and get a up-close view of restored jets and a helicopter.

They can walk the 4-acre flight deck and its control area, and check out a berthing space where sailors slept.

Many docents served aboard the Midway and will be available to regale visitors with stories from their cruises. There also will be 30 exhibits on Navy history.

Food and beverages will be available at the Fantail Cafe, and pins, T-

By Ronald W. Powell  
STAFF WRITER

## Checking out the Midway

The aircraft carrier museum debuts Monday and will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on holidays. The Midway is moored at Navy Pier, 910 N. Harbor Drive.

A special ceremony will be held at 3 p.m. Monday through Friday during the first week, with each day offering a different theme. Monday will feature music by a band of Navy veterans and a demonstration by a color guard from Serra High's ROTC program.

- Where: Navy Pier, 910 N. Harbor Drive.
- Parking: \$7 at Navy Pier.
- Admission: \$13 for adults (18 to 61); \$10 for seniors (62 and older); \$10 for military with ID; \$10 for college students with ID; \$7 for youths (6 to 17); free for children under 6 and active-duty military in uniform.

Admission includes an audio guide to more than 30 exhibits on the hangar deck, mess deck, flight deck and superstructure.

shirts, jackets and other items will be on sale at a gift shop.

Clayton and his crew logged 12-hour work days as the Midway's debut approached.

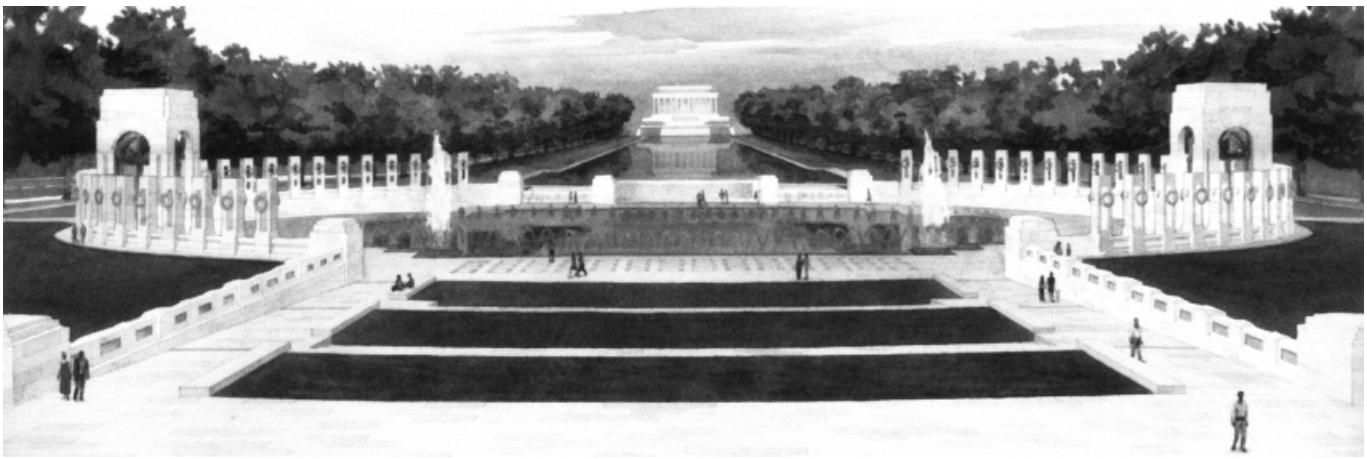
Late this week they were completing work on a phone system. Electricity was being wired to soda machines and a ticket office on the pier. Lighting for nighttime events is still needed on the flight deck.

A 480-volt generator is supplying all of the power aboard the ship, and Clayton said he wants to establish an onshore electrical connection in July.

Midway workers this week set up a lift system to provide ship access to people with disabilities. Wes Johnson, president of Accessible San Diego, a consulting company on access issues, endorsed the system after using it to board the Midway Thursday and yesterday.

Mac McLaughlin, the museum's chief operating officer, said he wants to raise \$400,000 to install two elevators for people with disabilities. He would like one to operate from the pier to the hangar deck and a second from the hangar deck to the flight deck.

"I want everyone to be able to come aboard Midway independently", McLaughlin said.



## *An Incredible Weekend: The Dedication of the National World War II Memorial by Dave Sanderson*

Memorial Day weekend of 2004 was an experience of a lifetime. Jane and I were in Washington, DC for the dedication of the National World War II Memorial. The memorial itself is a moving experience, but for us it was a very personal experience. My uncle, Roger Durbin, is recognized as the father of the memorial. It all began with a chance meeting at an annual township trustees picnic in Lucas County, Ohio. U.S. Representative Marcy Kaptur made an appearance as politicians often do at such events and Roger seized the opportunity to ask about something that had been bothering him for a long time. He asked her, "Where is the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC"? She responded, as most people would, "Why, it's the Iwo Jima Memorial". Roger, not being the least bit shy, replied, "That's fine for the Marines at Iwo Jima, but what about the rest of us"? After a pause, she said, "Let's go somewhere and talk about it". Thus began the seventeen year journey to May 29, 2004. Over the next thirteen years until Roger's death in 2000 the former WWII Army tech 4 and retired rural letter carrier and the U.S. Representative from Toledo, OH became close friends and partners in a noble project. Marcy authored and pushed bills in the House for 5 years before the legislation authorizing the memorial was passed. She recruited Senator Bob Dole and Fred Smith of Federal Express as co-chairs of the movement. Roger wrote letters, made phone calls, even gave speeches (something he had never done before) to anyone who would listen and many who would have rather not. Eventually the "squeaky wheel" got the grease. His granddaughter, Melissa Growden was appointed to sit on the design advisory board. Roger was summoned to Washington several times to testify, and take part in ceremonial occasions. He shared the unveiling of the cornerstone with President Clinton. Unfortunately, he never saw even the ground breaking. But his presence is there. His funeral card is buried beneath the Ohio column and the 17<sup>th</sup> star (the Ohio star) on the flags that flank the entrance to the memorial were sewn on using thread from his widow's sewing basket.

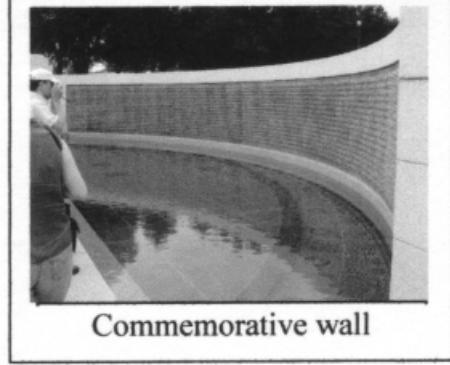
Our weekend began on Thursday, May 27<sup>th</sup> when about forty family members met at Representative Kaptur's office in the Rayburn House Office Building. Members of Marcy's staff conducted a tour of the Capital Building for us. Jane and I had toured the Capital Building before, but this was a unique experience with insights you don't get from a normal public tour. Because we were part of Roger Durbin's family, we stayed at the JW Marriott Hotel with the dignitaries, organizers and their families. Upon returning to the hotel from our tour we encountered a gathering I will remember as long as I live. There were 30 WWII Congressional Medal of Honor recipients assembled in the lobby – all wearing their awards. I had never seen one CMOH worn with civilian clothes in public before. It was my privilege to salute 12 of them.

Friday morning we visited the memorial for the first time. The picture above shows the memorial as viewed from 17<sup>th</sup> Street facing west with Lincoln Memorial in the background. The memorial is located in a depression at the site of the Rainbow Pool at the east end of the Reflecting Pool. The Rainbow Pool, which had fallen into disrepair, has

been rebuilt with two large fountains and a ring of smaller fountains around the perimeter. The main entrance on 17<sup>th</sup> Street is flanked by base reliefs depicting scenes from World War II, overseas and the home front. Entrance from the north and south ends is provided by two 45-foot high memorial pavilions – one each for the Atlantic and Pacific theatres. Within each pavilion, four eagles hold a suspended victory laurel wreath and the WWII victory medal is inlaid on the floor. Each pavilion has a waterfall fountain. Fifty-six 17-foot granite pillars, one each for DC and the fifty-six states and territories during the WWII era, connected by a bronze sculpted rope celebrate the unprecedented unity of the nation. The western side of the memorial has a commemorative wall bearing 4000 sculpted gold stars – one for each 100 that made the ultimate sacrifice. The area was overflowing with veterans. Some of them were wearing their WWII uniforms and each one on his or her personal pilgrimage. While the focus seems to be on veterans, the memorial is intended to remember and honor all who served, defense workers, civilian support personnel and anyone who contributed to the war effort, and their families.



Atlantic pavilion



Commemorative wall

Friday afternoon there was a three hour salute to WWII veterans at the MCI Center. It featured all of the service bands, a pageant portraying all aspects of the war and the Air Force Show Band playing Glen Miller music and wearing the uniforms the band wore during its WWII tour.

The actual dedication ceremony was on Saturday. We arrived early, hours before the scheduled time because of the crowds. Security was intense. We had to walk because public transportation was overwhelmed. No one was allowed within 4 blocks of the White House grounds which made for a long walk. SWAT teams made an open display of their presence. Our family connection gave us access to seating near the stage. It was a long wait in the sun, but it was a pleasant one whiled away by visiting with the veterans and listening to the Coast Guard Swing

Band. The ceremony started with a parade all the flags of the states and territories. The Medal of Honor recipients were seated on the stage as special guests of honor. Former Presidents Ford, Bush, and Clinton were there. Marcy spoke first and eulogized Roger in her speech. She asked my cousin, Melissa to join her and I will always remember the two of them standing there side by side with their arms around each other. She was followed by Senator Dole, Fred Smith, Tom Brokaw, Tom Hanks and former President Bush. Of course, President Bush (the younger) was the keynote speaker.



surprise guest



It still fits

The memorial is indeed impressive and appropriate as were the dedication and the other events, but the best part of this incredible weekend was being there among all of those WWII veterans and watching their reactions. Every where we went people stopped what they were doing to shake a veteran's hand and thank him or her. I spoke with many of them and in spite of all the controversy about the design and location created by a vocal minority, they had nothing but praise for their memorial. In August, I will visit Uncle Roger's grave near the village of Berkey, OH where he lived most of his life and Aunt Marion, his widow, at her nursing home, though she won't know me. I will say to them and my cousin, Melissa, "You did well. You can be proud." And, I will echo the only complaint I have heard from them and the veterans I met, "Why did it take so long?"

## Messages & Notes

Dear Dave,

My apologies for being so late in sending in our dues.

Sadly, Dean fell and broke his hip last August. Life has been a roller coaster since--a short hospital stay, 2 months in a nursing home, 2 months at home with a little help and now in the Hospice programme and with extra help so Dean can continue to be at home.

We will not be able to attend the reunion---travelling is no longer a possibility. I have talked to Dean about the reunion and he remembers VP-45 very fondly--what wonderful days we spent in Bermuda from '58-'63.

We look forward to receiving the newsletter and hope that the reunion in October will be a successful and happy occasion for you all and we wish we could be a part of it. We both send greetings to all who remember us.

Best Wishes,  
Pamela & Dean Freeman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dear Mr. Johnson,

My apologies for not mailing my dues in time but I have been ill and in the hospital. We enjoy reading the newsletter and trying to see if there are still people that we remember. I know that you had written to me wanting me to write an article on VP-45 when I was stationed in JAX. As soon as I feel better and have some time, I will do it for your newsletter. I am retired from the Navy, The State of Texas and have been working for Lockheed Martin as a Flight Simulator Instructor for the past seven years at the Naval Air Station here in Corpus Christi, Texas. I love doing what I do

and enjoy teaching the students.

Recently, Larry Maloy, who was my plane commander (I was the copilot) when we were in Vietnam in 1968-1969, passed away here in Corpus Christi. Larry spent a period of several years (1966-1969) involved in Vietnam operations. He had several operational tours flying P2V Neptune and P3 Orion surveillance aircraft, which included command of Patrol Squadron Sixteen in Jacksonville, Florida. Larry and his wife Marie lived in Corpus Christi. I was an Honorary Pallbearer at his funeral. At the time of his death, Larry was employed by Boeing Aerospace Operations as a Curriculum Management Specialist for the T-45 Strike Flight Training program.

Enclosed you will find my check for \$45 for five years. You guys are doing a good job.

Sincerely,  
John B. Boyd

\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve,

Here is a photo that Jack Dockery's son, Shawn, sent to me. He thought that I was in the picture, but I'm not. Jack is in the picture. Who is the First Class on the left? Some of the faces look familiar, but I'm not sure. Since Gunning was on Crew 5,



I wonder why he isn't in the picture, along with some other missing crewmembers.

On another note Eileen and I are leaving tomorrow for a wedding in New Jersey. We will also visit relatives in Pennsylvania. I'll try to monitor my email on relatives computers. I hope to get to see Pete Hofstedt. One of these days he is going to join and come to a reunion.

Somehow I managed to delete my Newsletter that you emailed to me. Could you please send another. I'll pay the internet postage!! My snail mail copy arrived today.

Thanks for all you and Nicki do.  
PJ Imhof

\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve,

I was sent to VP-45 following 'boot camp'. At the time, VP-45 was based at NAS Norfolk. A short time later the squadron was deployed to Coco Solo, Panama. I was assigned to Aircraft EE-4 as the second AO. After spending two months on the ground crew I began flying with the crew. Most of our flights were around Panama and along the east coast of the US. I was transferred to NAS Oceana around December 1953 to a A4D squadron and was separated from active duty in May 1954.

I joined the US Army after being out of the Navy for about six months. I served in many countries including the US, Germany, Korea and Vietnam. In Vietnam I was a SFC (E7) with responsibility for a platoon (four squads of 11 men each). My platoon conducted night operations against hostile forces in and around the Delta (area 4) in Vietnam from May 69 to May 70.

I was awarded the Bronze Star, as were several of my men. I departed Vietnam at the end

of May 1970 and was assigned as the NCOIC of the US Army recruiting station in Mansfield, Ohio until my retirement on 1 February 1972.

I hope to be at the reunion this October in Jacksonville to see some of the men that I served with while in VP-45.

Robert K. (Bob) Alley

---

Dear Steve,

I just rediscovered your letter dated 5/30/2003 after I had misplaced it. I wish I had been aware of the association when the reunion was held in San Diego. Since I don't have the return envelope you sent, I'll address this registration form to D.R. Johnson in Pensacola and hope the following info is forwarded to you for incorporation in the next newsletter.

My two years in VP-45 were spent in Coco Solo, Panama. I was an Electronics Technician (AT3 & AT2) assigned to the shop but I did fly 4 hours most months to qualify for a half set of flight skins. During most of my tenure the squadron had Martin Mariners (PBM-5S2) which were later replaced with P5Ms. My principle duties in the shop included maintenance of the IFF equipment, APX2 and later APX6. I participated in several "whiskey flights" to Trinidad and was part of a contingent that relieved VP-34 in Trinidad while they obtained their P5Ms. I also flew as a passenger on several flights to Jacksonville and one to Floyd Bennet Field in New York. I was from Long Island.

One of my most memorable flights was one of the JAX flights. As I recall, it was dark when we left the seadrome for our return to Panama and the flight deck filled with smoke just as we lifted off the river at which time the pilot throttled back and settled back onto the river. After open-

ing all hatches to clear the smoke we turned around to taxi back to the base. Not long after we turned around we noticed a bridge crossing above us! We never knew whether we flew above or under it during the aborted take-off! Oh, the cause of the smoke was an 800 cycle inverter that failed.

Perhaps the most notable thing about my participation in the squadron was during my off duty hours. I spent a large fraction of the time at the base hobby shop building a hot rod. The picture enclosed was taken from in back of one of the hangers and the barracks where we stayed is visible in the background. The car



started off as a '41 Ford 2 door sedan but ended up with a '32 Ford roadster body and a '51 Lincoln engine, transmission and overdrive. I never did have a top for the car so it was some fun driving across the Isthmus during the 9 month rainy season. When encountering rain I would pull off the road and take shelter under a "chiva" bus stop lean to. By the way, the Navy did ship my car home when I left Panama and I had a lot of fun beating Harley Davidson '74 motorcycles in drag races.

Douglas E. Sahlin

---

Steve,

Enclosed is a copy of an ad that appeared in Aviation History. I sent for a picture of the Marlin and it arrived a week later. The artist has done a beautiful job. I chatted with his wife a bit. He is an aviation enthusiast who

flies his own airplane and when he decided to paint aircraft called around to various museums and asked what people asked for most that they didn't have. The answer was P3 and P5 so he painted both.

My wife Kay likes it so we hung it in the entrance hall for our bed and breakfast and we get a lot of comments about it. I thought perhaps others would be interested as well. Looking forward to Jacksonville in the fall.

Tom Binns

Feight Studios  
8044 S. Race Way  
Littleton, CO 80122  
(303)730-2340  
don@feightstudios.com

*Thanks for the information Tom. Since I was unable to get a printable copy of the advertisement I have provided contact information. ED*

---

SH-H-H-H!

Charlie McKinney and crew and I were flying the P-5 on a quarantine mission during the Cuban missile crisis when we noticed a freighter offloading to several lighters in Manilla Bay. Turning in to investigate we saw splashes in the water ahead. Sure enough, there was a Cuban gunboat between us and the freighter and we saw occasional puffs of smoke from its guns followed by splashes. That was enough for us to halt our approach and set up a racetrack pattern outside the gunboat's range.

We then called in a nearby destroyer, reported in to home base, and waited for the tin can's arrival. When the destroyer appeared over the horizon, the gunboat stopped firing. That gave us the temerity to move in and take some overhead photos of the

gunboat and then move up to the US-recognized (3 mile) territorial limit to photograph the freighter. Later we headed for Gitmo.

During the debrief, the intel folks confirmed the 37mm shots were in-

tended to do us harm. The State Department rep forbade us from telling anyone else about the incident. Shame on you for reading this!

Provided by John McLaurin



*VP-45 P5Ms at Guantanamo Bay Cuba  
1962-1963*



*VP-45 P5M (LN5) Flying Past Naval Station Bermuda*



*VP-45 P5M Passing Gibbs Hill Lighthouse  
Approaching Naval Station Bermuda*

Gunnar, et al.

Always very good to hear from you. I was a crewman on two boat. You were the PPC. We tied up to a buoy in San Juan harbor and took the boat to the Currituck and arrived just in time for liberty. When it came time to catch the last boat back to the Currituck, Art Buchanan, always a bad influence, said, "Lets go back into

San Juan and go out to the plane later."

That is what we did. Some hours later, we appropriated a row boat, found EE-2, went aboard and kicked the boat off into the tide.

I crashed on the navigators table on the flight deck. Very shortly, when the rest of the crew came aboard,

someone pushed me off the table and I took my position at the APS-44 radar doing my part of the pre-flight.

On climbout, heading for Roosevelt Roads, I heard you, Gunnar, calling the Currituck saying, "Trampe is aboard", thereby calling off the search for the AWOL sailor.

That succinct message was the last I ever heard of my malfeasance. I appreciate it 49 years later.

It's been good to know you.

Dennis Trampe

---

*Life is not about how fast you run, or how high you climb, but how well you bounce.*

## Coco Solo Messages & Sea Stories



**Bill Tapp & Gene Martinez**

Gerald Green/Arthur Buchanan,

Last night Flo and I had dinner with Doris and Gene. They are here to see his daughter and we hooked up for a get together.

During conversation we noted that in two years we will have known each other for 50 years. My how time flies. I am sure many of you have the same time frame relationships. What did you do in those 50 years and what is the most important things in your life now?

I know I may be a bit philosophical due to the fact that my newly married daughter's husband is a broken rag doll in a hospital in Edmonton, but what is the real important things in our lives? By the way Roland is still undergoing operations to mend all of his broken bones and we are still hoping for a full recovery. Thanks to you who have sent me their concerns and good wishes.

I will tell you for me the most important things right now are my family and friends. Especially my VP-45 friends. It is true that a group of us old Coco Solo Vets have somewhat banded together, and it is a wonderful bonding. We are all interested in each others lives and what we can do to support and help each other when it gets to be stormy skies. A lot of us are tough old birds that tend to keep personal stuff off the plate of the friendships we have. While I understand that, I also think we as a group can be very helpful in troubled times.

I know I have appreciated your concerns about my daughter and her husband, and I am very interested in supporting each of you as well. I do enjoy being involved with my extended fam-

ily, VP-45.

Take good care of yourselves.

Bill Tapp

I do recall a very scary incident that happened to me. I had a lot of drinks in the Missouri and Manhattan bar one night and I was 18 yrs old going on 40 or so I thought. We were warned about Panamanians mugging sailors and then killing them. I didn't think anything of it! I was walking to catch the Ceva back to the base and I fell for the oldest trick to man. This beautiful girl lured me into going with her and we entered this alley and before I knew it this guy came from behind me and grabbed me around the neck and another guy came in front of me with a knife and put it up against my stomach. A knife at my back and one in front of me and I thought I was a goner. They demanded money of which I gave them. The girl told them to leave me be as I was just a baby. They gave back my wallet and gave me enough money to get on the Ceva. How's that for luck! I was shocked and didn't think it could happen to me. I was thinking of fighting them but I could not because of the guy with his arm around my neck with a knife at my back of which I felt the pressure. I decided to be passive and because of the girl and my baby face looks, I was spared.

Paul Loria

You were indeed lucky you were accosted by a lady with money only in mind. The lone drunk sailor was an easy target and source of revenue for the locals. Even in my naive youth I was always aware of the desperate poverty that was in Colon. Gene was very friendly with many of the middle class families in Colon and I had the opportunity to see how they lived and also to see how the lower end people struggled to survive in Panama at that time. I am sure it is worse now.

The only time I was ever exposed to danger, that I remember, was when they had elections. We were in town doing

what young sailors do...probably in the Missouri Bar. The SP came in and said get back to the base. We all asked why because we really had no clue what was happening and things at the bar were "normal". We did as we were told and on the way back to the bus to the base we saw machine guns at the intersection of the streets manned by their corrupt National Guard troops. That woke us up and we had no problem returning to the base as requested. On the way back I did hear shots being fired, but by that time we were half way to the base.

The Panamanians took their election very seriously. The people in power wanted to stay in power at all cost and they used any means necessary to do that. This was one of my many lessons in Geopolitics by experience. Also one I will never forget.

It also points out how lucky we are to be in the USA.

Bill Tapp

See, it was dangerous in Colon even in those days. I remember going to Panama City one Saturday with my wife to be, Regina, and her two nieces that were always with us. It was election time in Panama. We were sitting at an outdoor counter having ice cream when the bullets started flying around us. We got on the ground and avoided getting hit. Political parties were real rivals then. We came back to Colon and Coco Solo and soon after the base was closed and no one could go on leave, except me and one other guy. We had girl friends in town, and I looked like a Panamanian, and we were not going to be walking the streets. I had a hard time getting to, and into, the base that night. The buses were not running. WOW! Those were the good old exciting days.

Gene Martinez

Denny was at the bullfights in Panama City, in our '51 Lincoln, with a car load of sailors, when the president of Panama was shot from a big black sedan

driving by! It took 5 or 6 hours to get back to Coco Solo. We were detoured by way of the police station, etc, etc! We stayed close to home for a week or so. I don't remember the date, 1954, I think.

We were going to take a shortcut, wound up on a dirt road with many soldiers with guns in the windows of the car, told us to turn around and go back to Panama City. Must have been near midnight. We finally made it back after midnight (2 a.m.). Maybe someone can fill in some of the blanks for me (Denny?...help!!)

My memory tells me that someone caught him in his box at the bullfights in Panama City. They never caught the assassin, but did blame the Vice President. As I remember he had to serve several years under "house arrest" but the guards were only stationed at the front door.

Harry

You old timers were in Panama at the time. I was in Norman, OK or Memphis, TN during 1955, but did get to Coco Solo at the end of 55. Before that I knew where Panama was on the map but very little else, and certainly nothing about local politics.

Even when I was in Panama I was not too up on the local politics. I did know that the police/national guard/army (all one organization) was pretty corrupt and I tried not to have anything to do with them...and I was pretty successful with the program.

Bill Tapp

Bill, your comments on corruption got me to thinking. Denny and Buc were out in the Blue Lincoln and went somewhere. When they came back, they picked me up in town and asked me to drive out to a drinkery on the way to Panama city. On the way out, they really gave me orders not to speed (I didn't). Anyway, there was a cop standing along the side of the road who waved me to a stop, mumbled something in Spanish. He just looked at my license, added my name to the already filled out ticket and walked away.

Now, I knew why Denny and Buc

wanted me to drive... Anyway, at that time, my Spanish was not too good. (Not that its much better now.) I had visions of being in "El Cárcel" for about 200 years.

Anyway, Jim Leathery (one of our Ordnanceman) had received several tickets and had the routine all worked out. He told me to say he was my "Abogado," telling me that I could really get arrested for a long time if I didn't do it correctly.

We went into town to the Police Station. Apparently, he knew "Escritorio Sargente" from his many incursions. He told him that someone else had stolen my license and that I wasn't the driver. At that point, I knew I was going to be breaking rocks for about 200 years.

El Escritorio Sargente said to Jim, "Did he get his license back?" Jim replied "yes!" El Escritorio Sargente said he would need the mans name because he "comitted un crimen Y si arréstese." Jim answered, "We gave him a "shoepolish shower" and he learned his lesson. The cop said, "I cannot forgive this ticket, either you have the man turned in or pay the fine."

Jim said, we didn't want to have the man hurt any more and that he learned his lesson. I was thinking "400 years."

Jim shrugged his shoulders and said, "perhaps you could use something for your family and children?" 1000 years...

The cop said perhaps you could help me take care of the shopping, I am really busy and don't have time for shopping. We need a 25 pound box of Klim (powdered milk,) some baby powder, baby oil, and several boxes of soap for diapers.

The Klim was \$15.00 (Gringo price I suspect,) and the rest came to about \$22.00, total, \$37.00 and change. We took it back to the station and gave it to the cop right over his desk. The cop ripped up the ticket.

When he did that, I asked him how much the fine was. He said forget it, its only \$5.00 and thank you helping me shop.

I'm so glad James Leathery Esq. remains among the missing and am so glad Denny and Buc are my very best friends.

Now I have one question, who was most corrupt? Special note, to this day, do not even think of letting Denny and

Buc flip you for coffee.....

Harry

Harry was right about the flip for coffee! We (Denny and I) had a scam for getting someone to buy us coffee. When we came out of the coffee mess behind the hanger we would approach anyone coming in and ask if we could "flip" them for coffee! Then, Trampe on one arm and me on the other, we would each grab an arm and letarily "flip" our victim! Then back for another coffee!

Bill Tapp

I returned from APS-44 (radar) school from Norfolk, was transferred to Fasron 105 and given the job of setting up the new radar shop. While involved in that, I walked out of the Manhattan Bar one night. When I hit the sidewalk, I said to myself, "Self, you've no business driving back to the base in the condition you're in." Looked down Front street and saw a blinking sign, "Hotel" Vacancy. Being smart, I checked in leaving a call for 6:30 A.M.

They might have tried, don't know, I slept soundly in those days. I woke at 8:30 AM and rushed back to the base AWOL.

I was standingly nervously in the passageway in my dress whites when the Fasron XO, LtCdr Bok came by. He had been kindly communicative before, but on this occasion he said "Next time you're going over the hill, let me know. I'll pack a lunch and go along." Fifty years later, I'm still grateful for that.

At the Captains mast, the skipper asked me the name of the hotel where I'd crashed. Having been an SP, I knew that hotel was off limits. I said, "I decline to answer that on the grounds that it might tend to incriminate me." I got the max. Thirty days restriction to the base. Didn't keep me out of the White Hats Club. Which reminds me of another SEA STORY! Chuck, and all you shipmates, I am so grateful for having known you.

Denny

*More from Coco Solo in the next newsletter. ED*

## *VP-45 Association Officer Candidates*

*President*



*Vice President*



*Treasurer*



Genie K. (Gene) Graham was born and grew up in Decatur, Mississippi. He entered the U S Navy via the NAVCAD program and completed Flight Training in February 1960. His first duty station was VW-11 in Argentia, Newfoundland where he qualified as PPC and Training Pilot. He had his first tour in Patrol Squadrons with VP-18 at NAS JAX and NS Roosy Roads. His remaining tours in the VP community included VP-31 where he trained Army "Crazy Cat" pilots to fly the SP-2E, VP-45 where he was the Admin and Ops officer, VP-30 as XO and VP-24 as XO and CO. His last duty assignment in the Navy was as Executive Assistant and Senior Naval Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management). After retirement from the Navy, he went to work for Electronic Data Systems (EDS) where he retired as a Vice President with the Federal Group. He holds a BS from the U S Naval Postgraduate School and an MBA from The George Washington University. He is married to Jerry Lynn Brown and they have three children and five grandchildren. Gene and Jerry now reside in Fairhope, Alabama.

James F. (Jim) Means, the one on the right, was born in Oklahoma but grew up in Amarillo, Texas. He attended Oklahoma State University on a football scholarship and went into the NAO Program in June 1962. After Navigator training in Texas, he went to AEWBARRON PAC at Barbers Point. The Barbers Point assignment was followed by recruiting duty in Oklahoma and then Safety School at PG School in Monterey, California. He served with VP-30 prior to going to VP-45 in December 1969 where he served as the aircraft division officer and the TACCO on the Black Jack Crew 21. Jim had a great time while in VP-45 with three deployments in three years. Next, since he was a TAR, he went to his first TAR assignment at NARU JAX as the safety officer. Next he went to VP-23 in Brunswick, Maine, and then to WINGSLANT. In 1979 he came back to JAX to be in charge of the reserve WST, working on Wing 11. His last duty was at NAR JAX where he retired in October 1984. He is married to Suze Jones. They have three grandchildren and reside on a beautiful lake in Earlton, Florida.

Patrick J. (PJ) Imhof was born and grew up in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the U S Navy as a "kiddie cruiser" in December 1955. PJ went to AN "P" and AMS "A" schools in Norman, Oklahoma and Memphis, Tennessee. After training, he served with VAP-62, VAH-15 and VP-56 before separation from active duty in September 1959. PJ reenlisted in September 1960 and was sent to VP-30 at Norfolk for training on the P5M before being transferred to VP-45 at NOB Bermuda. Later in his career he served on board the USS Hornet, USS Coral Sea, and was based at NAS Lakehurst, NAS Ream Field, NAS Ellyson Field and NAS Imperial Beach performing maintenance and quality control duties on helicopters. PJ retired in July 1975 and returned to Pensacola where he worked on flight simulator hydraulic systems at NAS Whiting Field and worked as an Electronic Technician on Army contracts in Pennsylvania. He has also worked as a part-time volunteer at the Naval Air Museum. PJ is married to Eileen McHale of Philadelphia. PJ and Eileen reside in Pensacola and have three children and five grandchildren.

## *Honoring the Fallen, Quietly*

*Provided by Dave Sanderson*

**T**here are no reporters on the tarmac at Dover Air Force Base. The public is not allowed to witness the military tradition of "receiving the remains." Instead, there are soldiers, roused at dark hours to stand in the confines of what seems like a secret as the dead are brought home. I am one of the soldiers. Nearly every day we learn of another death in Iraq. In our collective consciousness, we tally the statistics of dead and wounded.

The number is over 500 now. But none of our conjuring is as real and tangible as the Stars and Stripes folded perfectly over a transfer case cradling one of those statistics on his or her way home. It does not matter where somebody stands politically on the war, but I believe that all who have an opinion should know the cost of that opinion.

When a soldier dies in a foreign land, his or her remains are returned to the United States for their final rest. The remains arrive in Dover, Delaware, without fanfare. No family member is present. There are no young children to feel sad or confused. Just a small group of soldiers waiting to do their duty and honor the fallen.

"Dover flights" are met by soldiers from the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Regiment, the storied Old Guard. They are true soldiers, assigned to an esteemed regiment, but it is a unit defined by polish, not mud. It seems that they quietly long to be tested with their comrades "over there." But it is clear to me as I watch them that they find immense pride in honoring their country this way. In Silence.

I am a helicopter pilot in the U.S. Army, and it is my job to have the honor guard at Dover at whatever hour a flight arrives. In military-speak, the plane's grim contents are



referred to as "HRs"—"human remains." Once the plane arrives, conversation ends. The soldiers form a squad of two even ranks and march out to the tarmac. A general follows, flanked by a chaplain and the ranking representative from the service in which the fallen soldier served.

The plane's cargo door opens slowly revealing a cavernous space. The honor guard steps onto a mobile platform that is raised to the cargo bay. The soldiers enter in lock-step formation and place themselves on both sides of the case. The squad lifts, the soldiers buckling slightly under the weight. The remains have been packed on ice into metal containers that can easily exceed 500 pounds.

The squad moves slowly back onto the elevated platform and deposits the case with a care that evokes an image of fraternal empathy. It is the only emotion they betray, but their gentleness is unmistakable and compelling. The process continues until the last case is removed from the plane. On bad nights, this can take over an hour. The few of us observing say nothing, the silence absolute,

## **In Memoriam**

Victor M. Izzo '52-'57

Gene Wilmouth '55-'57

Charles (Bob) Worthington  
'53-'55

underscored by something sacred.

There is no rule or order that dictates it, but the silence is maintained with a discipline that needs no command. The cases are lowered together to the earth, where the soldiers lift them into a van, one by one. The doors close, and the squad moves out.

Just before the van rounds the corner, someone speaks in a voice just above a whisper. We snap to and extend a sharp salute.

There are those who would politicize this scene, making it the device of an argument over the freedom of the press. But if this scene were ever to be exploited by the lights and cameras of our "infotainment" industry, it would be offensive. Still, the story must be told. A democracy's lifeblood, after all, is an informed citizenry, and this image is nowhere in the public mind.

The men and women arriving in flag draped cases do not deserve the disrespect of arriving in the dark confines of secrecy. But it is a soldier's story, and it must be told through a soldier's eyes. In the military, we seldom discuss whether we are for or against the war. Instead, we know intimately its cost. For those of us standing on the tarmac at Dover in those still and inky nights, our feelings have nothing to do with politics. They are feelings of sadness, of empathy. And there is nothing abstract about them.

By Jonathan Evans

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Navy Reunions*

**USS Salisbury Sound (AV-13)**, Seot, 9-11, Mount Laurel, NJ. Contack: M. Bruce, 813 Branding Iron St., Albuquerque, NM 87123, (505) 293-3841, brubru@nm.net.

**Patrol Sqdn 46 (VP-46)**, Sept. 26-30, San Francisco. Contact: J. Williams, 4890 Oakhaven Ct., Carmichael, CA 95608, (916) 961-5029, jmwesqret@aol.com.

**Patrol Sqdn Two (VP-2/VPB-130)**, Sept 28-Oct. 2, San Antonio. Contact: G. Jenista, 710 Aqua Vista Dr., Granbury, TX 76049, (817) 279-7259, fax: (817) 681-8455, george-pat@itexas.net.

### *History*

**WE FLEW ALONE: United States Navy B-24 Squadrons in the Pacific February 1943 to September 1944** - by Alan C. Carey. This is the first comprehensive book written on the operations of Navy B-34 Liberator squadrons in the Pacific War. In this first of two volumes, Alan C. Carey, the author of the Reluctant Raiders, the story of United States Navy Bombing Squadron VB/VPB-109 in WWII, the formation and use of the B-24 Liberator by the US Navy. From the birth of the first squadron and their deployment to Guadalcanal in early 1943 to the squadrons that participated in the Central Pacific campaign, every Navy Liberator squadron is discussed in detail. 8 1/2" x 11", over 90 b/w and color photos and drawings. 120 pages.

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### *Photocopying a Military ID*

It's prohibited by law, right? So why is it, when you go to your local military hospital or civilian doctor, the medic or someone in hospital administration asks to make a copy of your ID? In this case, you can hand over your card without fear. Paragraph 1.6.7 of DoD Instruction 1000.13 states, "photocopying (military ID cards) to facilitate medical care processing, check cashing, or administering other military-related benefits to eligible beneficiaries are examples of authorized photocopying."

## TREASURERS REPORT

(July 15, 2004)

Beginning Balance:

March 1, 2004 \$25,014.59

Income:

Dues — \$ 545.00  
 Money Mkt. Int. — 40.36  
 Reunion 2004 — 5,368.00

Total Income: \$5,953.36

Total Capital: \$30,967.95

Expenses:

Printing — \$ 844.00  
 Postage — 140.85  
 Reunion Coordinator Fee — 720.00  
 Money Mkt. Annual Fee ----- 50.00

Total Expenses: \$1,754.85

Ending Balance:

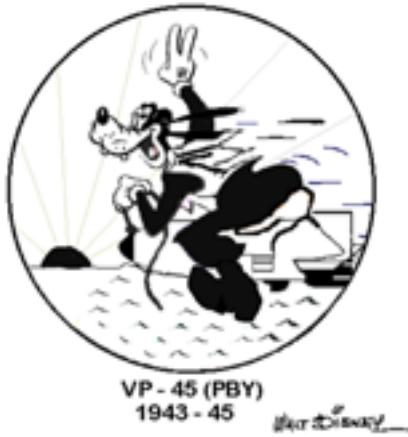
July 15, 2004 \$29,213.10

Money Market Balance: \$22,736.48

Checking Account Balance: 6,476.62  
 \$29,213.10

David R. Johnson  
 TREASURER

# PATRON FOUR-FIVE ASSOCIATION



*President*

*Leo Cimino*

*Vice President*

*"vacant"*

*Treasurer*

*Dave Johnson*

*Secretary/Editor*

*Steve Riddle*

**Dues are \$10 per year 11/1 to 11/1 (\$45 for five years/ \$200 for life)** and are payable to Mr. D.R. Johnson, Treasurer; VP-45 Association; 7814 Bay Meadows Drive; Pensacola, FL 32507-1518. The roster is included for members' personal use only. Please inform the editor if you change your address. An asterisk after your name on the address label indicates your dues are now due.

## *From the Editor.....*

CDR Fite, the CO of VP-45, is very glad association members will be coming to the base to visit the squadron's current home. Be sure and sign up for optional transportation if you need a ride to the base and back.

The Commander is interested in the squadron's history and has tasked some of his personnel with gathering stories and photographs. I plan to share information from our archives, but if you have inputs that you think might be of interest and have not been provided to either Chuck Caldwell or myself, send them by email to DurarteJR @vp45.navy.mil.

Since we don't send out notices when association dues are expiring, I place an asterisk on the address label for the envelope that you receive your newsletter in. Please check your label!

I'd like to thank you for supporting me the past two years and look forward to the same support during the following two years.

See you in Jacksonville!!

Steve Riddle  
PO Box 123045  
Fort Worth, Texas 76121  
(817) 244-2703  
[s.riddle@ieee.org](mailto:s.riddle@ieee.org)