



# VP ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

AN ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS WHO SERVED WITH THE NAVAL AIR RESERVE PATROL SQUADRONS BASED AT NAS SQUANTUM MA, NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH MA, AND NAS BRUNSWICK ME.

NOTE, CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF ANY U.S. NAVY PATROL SQUADRON ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!

**ISSUE 48**

**[HTTP://WWW.VPASSOCIATION.ORG](http://www.vpassociation.org)**

**JUNE 2012**

Welcome to another edition of the VP Association newsletter. As always, please direct all general VP Association-related inquiries or correspondence to William Hanigan, 23 Parkview Terrace, Duxbury MA 02332, 781-585-4950, [vpassociation@aol.com](mailto:vpassociation@aol.com). Please send all newsletter-related correspondence to Marc J. Frattasio, P.O. Box 30, Pembroke MA 02359, [marc\\_frattasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com).

## **RECCO:**



**ABOVE:** VP-92 Lockheed P-3B Orion "Lima Yankee Four" BuNo 153435 is parked outside recently demolished Hangar One at NAS South Weymouth on December 12, 1984. Turn to page 8 for a more recent shot. Photo by Tom Cuddy. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio.

## **FINAL FLIGHTS:**

It is our sad duty to report the recent deaths of Lawrence Cherry, Wes Croucher, and Arthur Seaton. Lawrence, who most recently lived in Riverview, NB, was in VS-912. Wes was in VP-92 during its final years. Arthur lived in Abington, MA and was a Korean War vet and was in VP-911 and VP-92.

## **THE VP ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION:**

It is time to start planning to attend the VP Association's annual reunion banquet. This year, the annual reunion will be held on Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup> from 1200 to 1700 at the Weymouth Elks

Hall at 1197 Washington Street in Weymouth, MA. **Please note that this is a new location for the reunion.** In the past the reunion has been held at Hanscom AFB but this will not be the case this year. The buffet style banquet, which will be similar to what we have had in the past, costs \$40 per person and a mail-in reservation form is presented on the last page of this issue of the newsletter.

This year every VP Association member who attends the annual reunion will get a commemorative VP-92 "challenge coin" originally commissioned for the squadron's decommissioning weekend in October 2007. The bas-relief coins have a P-2 Neptune on one side and a P-3 Orion on the other.

The Weymouth Elks Hall is just a few miles from old NAS South Weymouth, which is being redeveloped into a mixed commercial and residential community called SouthField. Plan on driving to Weymouth a few hours earlier, visit the base, and take a look at the remaining USN structures as well as the new SouthField apartments and townhouses. In addition, through special arrangement with the Association of Naval Aviation Patriot Squadron, the Shea Field Naval Aviation Historical Museum will be open the day of the reunion between 9 and 11 AM. The museum is located in temporary spaces inside the Shea Fitness Center at 495 Shea Memorial Drive and is normally only open on the last Saturday of the month. Admission is free. If you have any naval aviation memorabilia gathering dust at home please consider donating to the museum! See [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org) for details.

Reunion attendance is limited, reservations are required in advance, and will be taken first-come first served. Tickets will not be sold at the door. Please mail your reservation in as soon as you can to prevent possible disappointment and so we can tell the caterer how many people to expect. There is a Holiday Inn and Comfort Inn located a few miles away from the Weymouth Elks Hall in Rockland.

Note, although dress is officially CASUAL for the reunion, if you want to wear a uniform (whatever you have) or a flight suit feel free to do so. We first did this last year in honor of the CONA and from the feedback we received it is clear that many of you enjoyed doing this. So, we'll make uniforms and flight suits a regular feature of the annual reunion for as long as there is still interest in wearing them.

Try to pass the word about the annual reunion to as many of your old Squantum/South Weymouth/Brunswick reserve VP squadron friends as possible. Don't assume that every former shipmate you're in contact with is affiliated with or aware of this group. Guests, military or civilian, are also welcome to attend the reunion. We will have a guest speaker, details in the next newsletter.

Tables will be available at the Elks Hall to display any memorabilia that you may wish to bring. If you have photos, cruise books, patches, caps, NATOPS manuals, or any other interesting Navy things that you'd like to show off to your friends please plan to bring them with you. Your newsletter editor is bringing a portable scanner. If you have any NAS Squantum, NAS South Weymouth, or NAS Brunswick-related photos or slides please bring them so they can be scanned for the newsletter.

#### **ADMIN FUND DONATIONS:**

As you know, the VP Association has no dues but voluntary contributions are always welcome to help defray the cost of printing and mailing newsletters to shipmates without e-mail. Many thanks to Philip Baker, L. Robert Connolly, Charles Daly, Ed Dembrowski, John Donatello, Marc Frattasio (via Lulu Press), Harry Jacobson, Peter Kullen, Douglas MacDonald, Richard O'Connor, Peter Pace, Earle Riffle, Karl Rogalski, George Swallow, and Fred Squires for recent contributions to the admin fund.

#### **IF YOU HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS MAKE SURE TO GET IT TO US!:**

If you have an e-mail address and have been receiving this newsletter through the U.S. Postal Service then we do not have a valid e-mail address for you. If this is your situation, please contact Bill Hanigan via e-mail as soon as possible so we can begin sending your newsletter to you by e-mail.

## **LOST CONTACT:**

Please let Bill Hanigan know whenever your street or e-mail address changes. We are looking for a valid home or e-mail address for Steve Harris formerly at 550 Bowsprit Lane in Longboat Key, FL.

## **RECENT CHANGES OF ADDRESS:**

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## **NEW MEMBERS:**

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**A MESSAGE FROM STEVE MALONEY:**

Please share this information with anyone who had military active duty service between January 1957 and December 31, 2001 and is planning for retirement. You qualify for a higher social security payment because of active duty any time from 1957 through 2001 (the program was done away with 1 January 2002). Up to \$1,200 per year of earnings credit credited at time of application - which can make a substantial difference in social security monthly payments upon your retirement. You must bring your DD-214 to the Social Security Office and you must ask for this benefit to receive it!

This is something to put in your files for when you apply for Social Security down the road. It is NOT just for retirees, BUT anyone who has served on active duty between January 1957 to December 31, 2001. FYI - this benefit is not automatic, you must ask for it! We've all been on active duty between 1957 and 2001 or know someone who has. Passing on good information for all you military folks when you apply for social security. I know this may be too early for some of you to think about social security but keep living and you will get there. See <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm> for details.

**A MESSAGE FROM KEVIN CAHILL:**



***ABOVE:*** VP-92's Jim Wing and Kevin Cahill in front of Jim's American Airlines jet in Paris, France!

I was in Paris, France last week doing FAA work for American Airlines. On Wednesday morning (February 22nd) I was in the hotel lobby waiting on the AA crew bus to go to the airport. An inbound AA crew had just arrived on an overnight flight from JFK. I suddenly heard somebody shout "Kevin Cahill" and when I looked over in that direction none other than First Officer Jim Wing was standing there! You may recall that Jim was an AW2 SS2 in VP-92 back in the 80s and 90s. He said that he first met me when he was 18 years old...ouch! Well, he was tired and I was on my way into the airport so we said "see ya" for now. The following morning I was again headed from the hotel to the airport and found myself with Jim and his crew. We talked on the bus for a bit and later met again in

his aircraft. He was there getting his Initial Operating Experience Check ride from a Check Airman to qualify as an International First Officer on the B-767-300. Big airplane!

**A MESSAGE FROM JEFFREY SIMPSON:**

The Class of 1980 alumni association from Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham, Maine is selling a commemorative “challenge coin” that they designed to honor NAS Brunswick. The funds raised will be used for various school projects. The coins are \$15 each, shipping included. Send a check to Mt. Ararat Class of 1980, 401 Oak Grove Ave. No. 9, Bath ME 04530 or contact Jeffrey Simpson at [jeffthebubby2@aol.com](mailto:jeffthebubby2@aol.com) for more details.



**A MESSAGE FROM KEN SHERMAN:**

The Worcester County Chapter of the Military Officer’s Association of America is open to new members. I belong and have enjoyed their events. For more information call president Tom Vantre at 978-369-0786 or send him an e-mail message at [thecolonel2421@msn.com](mailto:thecolonel2421@msn.com).

**A MESSAGE FROM MARC FRATTASIO:**

If you have an old leather flight jacket that needs repairs I suggest that you contact Willow Rose Evans of 103A Main St., White Bluff TN 37187 at 615-428-1391. Willow is a seamstress who specializes in repairing leather flight jackets. She can do almost any kind of repair such as replacing zippers, waistbands, cuffs, linings, and buttons. She can also patch small holes, re-sew loose stitching, and recondition dried-out leather. Willow is not cheap but she is the best in the business.

**A MESSAGE FROM LEE SLEGER:**

Anybody interested in doing some space available traveling as a group? If so, contact Lee Sleger at [lsieger@comcast.net](mailto:lsieger@comcast.net) or 781-245-5275.

**VP ASSOCIATION MEMBERS AT THE MPRF REUNION AND SYMPOSIUM:**



Several members of the VP Association traveled to NAS Jacksonville, FL to participate in the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force annual reunion and symposium during the last week of

March. The highlight of the week-long event was the delivery of the first production Boeing P-8A Poseidon aircraft to VP-30 and the ribbon-cutting for the new P-8 training facility. Shown above at left are VP-92's Kurt Podlogar, Jerry Lach, Bob Park (VP-93), Marc Frattasio, and Pat Kelly in flight suits at the Heritage Dinner along with active duty VP-30 instructors and an unknown retired guy and at right is the small VP-92 squadron memorabilia display that was put together by your newsletter editor.

**MPRF REUNION AND SYMPOSIUM RECAP (by John Larson via Jerry Lach):**

Here is the recap of this year's MPA symposium. It was held from March 27th through March 30th at NAS Jacksonville, FL.

On the first day we had the members meeting. Since the MPA was formed last September, there are over 700 members. Active duty is 319 and retired is 323. There are 6 volunteer members on the board, all officers. They would like to get an enlisted person for the 7th member. They will be elections in the future for the board. There are National officers. The president is Commodore Wheeler, CPW 11 and the vice-president is Capt. Stevens, CO of VP-30. At the present time, all future symposiums will be held at NAS Jacksonville. There are 4 local chapters in Wash D.C., Pax River, Whidbey Island, and Hawaii.

There has been a Hall of Honor started at the ITC (Integrated Training Center). It is a new facility that was dedicated at the symposium. One wall has the Navy Medal of Honor awardees, and the wall across is dedicated to those who have been inducted into the Maritime Hall of Honor. I will mention this year's inductees later on.

Some things the MPA wants to do in the future, is develop a MPA scholarship fund, and develop more local chapters.

At the reception Tuesday night, we talked to a member of the reserve squadron. The squadron is back to the old days. They have their own aircraft again. With the active squadrons getting P-8's and in transition, the reserves will have to pick up the slack. Individuals will mobilize for 4 months and this will last a few years.

On Wednesday was the roll out of the first production P-8A and its delivery to VP-30. I was chatting with the Canadian Commodore before the ceremony. They have a little over half of their aircraft updated. They are getting new wings, tail, aft bulkhead and repairs around tank 5. They are getting a new avionics package. They say it is as good as the U.S. AIP planes. There were British, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, and Japanese in Jacksonville during the week as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the P-3.

At the rollout ceremony, the dignitaries were Under Secretary of the Navy, Honorable Robert Work, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Mark Ferguson, Commander Naval Air Force, Vice Admiral Allen Myers, Commander Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Group, RADM Hewitt, Mayor Alvin Brown, and Mr. Dennis Muilenburg, President and CEO of Boeing Defense, Space and Security.

After the rollout, the ITC building had a ribbon cutting ceremony. There are now 4 full motion cockpit simulators with room for 10. There is room for 9 weapons trainers, with the 5 tactical crewmember positions. Each station is interchangeable. They are "on the rail". With the Tacco in the middle, the Nav is to the left and then the SS3 and SS4. To the right of the Tacco would be the two acoustic sensor operators. Again they could be in any seat. None of the equipment was turned on, so we could not see any displays. The Commodore said that the current generation doesn't like the rail system, while the old guys prefer that. The classrooms will have an instructor and stations were the students study. They have two large screens on top of each other. They are the same as in the

airplane. The students will learn at their own pace. If most are having trouble then the instructor will go back to instructing. The P-3 training was 70% flying and 30% simulators. The P-8 will be 70% simulators and 30% flying.

Here is some info on the crews. There will be 3 pilots (if over 6 hrs. of flying). The Tacco and Nav. There will be 4 AW's. One will be loading the sonobuoys. If there won't be any ASW, then there would be 1 acoustic operator and 2 SS-3's (SS3 and SS4). So there is a total of 9 crewmembers. There will be a plane captain assigned to the plane but no FE. He won't fly with the crew, unless they are going on a DET and then would accompany the crew. There are 21 seat positions on the aircraft.

We then took a tour of the aircraft. I took a lot of pictures inside. I started at the front and worked backwards. The cockpit has a heads-up display. All the info you need is right in front of your eyes for flying. The plane can hold about 65K of fuel. There is a refueling capability. But that won't be used until about 2015. The limiting factor is oil in the engine and possible crew time. There is an airline galley where they can cook their meals. No more cruise boxes and hopefully box lunches. Next comes the head, I didn't look inside, but assume it is a standard airline bathroom. Then next to head, are the two crew rest seats. They fully recline. Further back was the crew stations with seats next to them. There were not many avionics bays, no main load center, and very few circuit breakers. Then there were the sono racks. They have a total capacity of 121 buoys. There are three circular buoy containers, each one holds ten sonobuoys. There were three individual launchers, and you don't have to depressurize. They can monitor 64 buoys. The AIP planes can monitor 32 buoys. The bomb bay is behind the wing. They will carry the MK 54 Torpedo and the Harpoons. In the back of the plane is a storage area, for the lobsters, Coors beer, the furniture, and motorcycles. GEEDUNK!!

The Tacco who was on board was at Pax River and has been on the plane 3 years. She said that top screen you could have radar and IRDS, split screen. On the bottom CRT you could have the grams.

Then in the afternoon we received our briefing. Commodore Wheeler started off the briefs. Also in attendance were Commodores from Whidbey Is and Kaneohe. We also had CTF 72, CTF 57 and CTE 67 there to brief us.

Last year during the briefing, they would not show the Maverick firing on a Libyan small craft. We got to see it this year. The Maritime Patrol and Recon forces is 18 squadrons, 6169 sailors = 1186 Officers and 4983 Enlisted. There are 127 aircraft and 65 mission capable aircraft. VPU-1 and VQ-2 are going away this year. So they will be incorporated into the other squadrons. Info from Whidbey Is, VP-1 now is deployed in El Salvador and Misawa. There are 4 P-3 squadrons there. VQ-1 will have 12 crews and 600 sailors after the consolidation. Hawaii has 4 squadrons. Jacksonville has 7 P-3 squadrons. VP-16 will be the first to transition to the P-8 when they come back from deployment. First P-8 deployment will be Dec 2013. One squadron will transition every 6 months. All the Jax squadrons will get the plane first then probably Whidbey Is and then Hawaii. There will be 12 crews and 6 planes in each squadron.

They then talked about the different threats. Iranian subs don't go far from home. They are kind of novice at it. The Iranian P-3's are still flying out of Bandar Abbas. The PRC (Peoples Republic of China) are now going East of Guam. Their ops are getting more complex. The PRC claims a lot of the South China Sea and that has the countries around it concerned. So we have had a crew go into Cambodia, search and rescue exercise with Vietnam. We are also going back into Cubi Pt. That drew a big cheer from the attendees.

Deployment sites for Jax are to El Salvador and Misawa. The squadron out of Misawa helped out after the earthquake with mapping the debris field last year. We have not had deployments to

Misawa for 4 years. Whidbey Is goes to Kadena, Bahrain and Qatar. Kaneohe is going to Sicily and Djibouti. VQ is in Crete, Curacao and Qatar. We left Diego Garcia in 2006

With the tension with Iran and their treats of shutting down the Straits of Hormuz, the aircraft carriers want 4 armed P-3 in the area to verify the threats. The UAV's (BAMS) have been flying now for 3 years. There are 5 of them and 1 is forward deployed. They can do 24 hr. missions. The carriers also want BAMS coverage on the Straits of Hormuz.

Then that night we had the Heritage Dinner. There were three new inductees into the Hall of Honor. Commander Scott Carpenter. He flew P-2V's in VP-6. He was the 4<sup>th</sup> man into space and the second to orbit the Earth. Also inducted were Captain Isbell and RADM Wolkenstorfer. The Admiral's wife was there to accept the honor. P-3 crews with the highest proficiency in ASW would be awarded the Isbell trophy.

VADM Harris was the guest speaker. He is the Assistant to the Chairman of JCS. He has a P-3 background (VP-44, VP-4, and VP-46). We had in attendance the original acceptance crew for the first P-3A. They flew the plane from Burbank, CA to NAS Jacksonville in 1962. Everyone received a coin commemorating the 50th anniversary of the P-3.

*Please check out the MPRF Association at [www.maritimepatrolassociation.org](http://www.maritimepatrolassociation.org). The VP Association is a local group for the most part that is composed mainly of people who served with the reserve patrol squadrons based over the years at Squantum, South Weymouth, and Brunswick. This MPRF Association is composed of both active and retired VP people from around the country. Both groups are complementary and it is worth it to belong to each of them. The MPRF is now producing a quarterly newsletter called "Planeside" and you can check out the first issue on the group's web site.*

#### **CRANLAND AIRPORT PANCAKE BREAKFAST AND FLY-IN REMINDER:**

Several VP-92 alumni meet at the pancake breakfast and fly-in held at Cranland airport on Route 58 in Halifax, MA on the third Sunday of the month from April through October. The pancake breakfast runs from 8 to 10 AM, costs only \$6 per person, and is an excellent deal if you like to watch airplanes.

#### **HELP WANTED:**

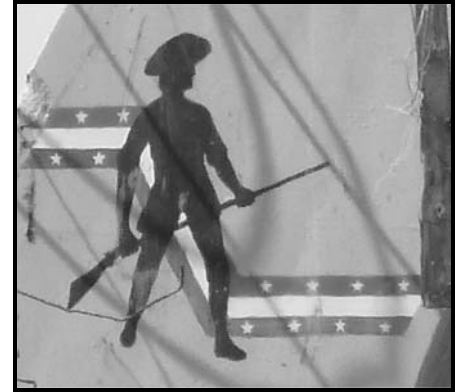
I recently joined the local American Legion, Post 20, in Brunswick, Maine. Now that NAS Brunswick is closed, some of the local Legion posts got together and are attempting to get space in the old base Chapel to set up a veterans center. Meanwhile, Post 20 continues its normal activities and has decided to do something new – stage a memorial ceremony in memory of the two VP-26 crews that were shot down in Vietnam. The ceremony will accomplish two things: honor the service and memory of those VP-26 aircrewmembers, and focus public attention on the Chapel and our plans to create a veterans center there. You may already know this, but a separate group of veterans has come together to form a museum committee and they plan to establish a Naval Museum and Memorial Gardens on the Chapel site: <http://www.brunswicknavalmuseum.org/>. We are working closely with that committee and have mutually agreed that a vets center and a museum can co-exist in the Chapel to the benefit of each organization.

Anyway, the real reason I am contacting you is to try and obtain the names of the "hometowns" of the men on Crew 1. I found the hometowns for Crew 8 listed with their names on the VP Navy website. The Veterans Services branch of Maine state government wants to be involved in our ceremony and award State of Maine medals and certificates in honor of both crews. I'm not sure yet what they have in mind – to whom they intend to present the medals and/or certificates – but I expect they particularly want to honor crewmembers who were Maine residents at the time of their deaths. At this time, I don't foresee a dedicated effort to contact the crewmember's NOK about the ceremony.



The members of VP-26 Crew 1 were AME2 Donald W. Burnside, AT1 Kenneth L. Crist, AO2 William S. Cutting, LTJG Frank E. Hand, AXC Donald E. Kulacz, AX3 Delmar L. Lawrence, LTJG Brian J. Mathison, LTJG Stuart M. McLellan, LTJG Michael J. Purcell, AE1 Donald F. Wood, ADJ2 Edward O. Wynder, and AX1 Alvin G. Yoximer. If you have hometown info on any of these men or suggestions on how I can obtain that info, please let me know. Marty Diller, mgdiller@comcast.net, 207-729-0197

### **GOING-GOING-GONE:**



The photographs shown above of Hangar One at NAS South Weymouth were taken on Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup>. As of that date the lean-to office spaces on either side of the hangar and all of the structure except for the roof and concrete arches had been torn down. Surprisingly, a VP-92 Minuteman insignia was still on one of the exposed concrete arches that day. Today the hangar and the Minuteman are gone. After years of delay old NAS South Weymouth is being redeveloped. Many new homes have been built at the northern end of Runway 17/35 and a new road will go through where Hangar One used to be. This is another good reason to attend the VP Association annual reunion in September. The reunion will be held in Weymouth this year and you can go see what's left of the old base before everything is gone.

### **Counterfeit Chinese Parts Slipping Into U.S. Military Aircraft (ABC News 5/22/2012):**

Counterfeit electronic parts from China are "flooding" into critical U.S. military systems, including special operations helicopters and surveillance planes, and are putting the nation's troops at risk, according to a new U.S. Senate committee report. A year-long investigation conducted by the Senate Armed Services Committee found more than one million suspected counterfeit parts made their way into the Department of Defense's supply chain and were bound for use by "critical" military systems, according to the 70-plus-page document released Monday. In addition to Navy helicopters and surveillance planes, the parts were slated to be put into the Air Force's newest cargo planes.

"The failure of a single electronic part can leave a soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine vulnerable at the worst possible time," the report says. "Unfortunately, a flood of counterfeit electronic parts has made it a lot harder to prevent that from happening."

Chinese companies were identified as the "primary source" of the counterfeit goods and the Chinese government was criticized for its alleged disinterest in cracking down on counterfeiting there. The report said that Chinese companies take discarded electronic parts from all over the world, remove any identifying marks, wash and refurbish them, and then resell them as brand-new – a practice that poses a "significant risk" to the performance of U.S. military systems. But the committee also pointed a finger at the Pentagon and U.S.-based defense contractors that rely on "hundreds of unvetted independent distributors."

According to the document, the investigation "revealed failures by defense contractors and [the Department of Defense] to report counterfeit parts and gaps in DoD's knowledge of the scope and impact of such parts on defense systems." "Our committee's report makes it abundantly clear that vulnerabilities throughout the defense supply chain allow counterfeit electronic parts to infiltrate critical U.S. military systems, risking our security and the lives of the men and women who protect it," said Senate Armed Services Committee ranking member Sen. John McCain (R.-Arizona). "As directed by last year's Defense Authorization bill, the Department of Defense and its contractors must attack this problem more aggressively, particularly since counterfeiters are becoming better at shielding their dangerous fakes from detection."

A spokesperson for the Department of Defense did not immediately respond to requests for comment on this report, but another spokesperson told CNN the Pentagon was aware of the report and officials "looked forward to reviewing it." "The Department takes very seriously the issue about counterfeit parts," Col. Melinda Morgan said. "We are working aggressively to address this issue..."

Months after the Senate committee launched its investigation, the Pentagon said in November it was moving to protect against counterfeit parts by modifying policies and improving its internal process as well as working more closely with private companies in the industry. Then, Defense spokesperson George Little noted that "there has been no loss of life or catastrophic mission failure as a result of these parts entering the supply chain." Representatives for the Chinese government at its embassy in Washington, D.C., and consulate in New York, New York did not immediately respond to request for comment on this report.

*ABC News Article by Lee Ferran*

#### **VPU-1 'OLD BUZZARDS' TO DISESTABLISH (JAX Air News 4/25/12):**



**ABOVE:** VPU-1 P-3C parked in front of Hangar 511 at NAS Jacksonville. U.S. Navy photo.

Special Projects Patrol Squadron (VPU) 1 will hold its disestablishment ceremony April 27 at 10 a.m. at NAS Jacksonville Hangar 117. The "Old Buzzards" trace their lineage back 40 years when the Chief of Naval Operations requested the creation of a specially trained maritime patrol unit possessing the necessary expertise, flexibility and quick reaction capability to respond to immediate tasking from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As a result, a unique "special projects" detachment of P-3s was formed from operationally proven aircrew and maintenance professionals.

As the demand for P-3 Special Projects assets increased, the detachment became an independent unit under the command of its first officer-in-charge. During this period, the Sailors of VPU-1 continued their proud tradition of operational maritime patrol expertise, rapid response and

professionalism. The Old Buzzards served during the Cold War, in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, as well as numerous other military operations and crises. In March 1996, the unit was formally established as a patrol squadron under the command of Cmdr. Walter Kreitler. For more than 16 years the "Old Buzzards" upheld the highest standards of the U.S. Navy and the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force.

The squadron, flying at least two specially equipped Orions, has operated from NAS Jax since July 2009 when they relocated from NAS Brunswick, Maine. Squadron personnel have earned seven Joint Meritorious Unit awards, six Navy Unit Commendations, seven Meritorious Unit Commendations, seven Navy Battle "E" awards and various other unit, service and campaign awards.

Several "Old Buzzards" alumni are in town for the disestablishment events that include the Buzzard Ball, a golf tournament and Buzzard Night at the Baseball Grounds of Jacksonville to see the Suns play. As part of the Friday ceremony, Cmdr. Lee Boyer, the last "Old Buzzards" commanding officer, will lower the command pennant and dismiss the squadron for the final time. "It's definitely going to be a bittersweet ceremony. On one hand, it is sad to see such a great squadron being retired – but on the other hand, disestablishment has renewed the bond between every generation of Old Buzzards. I have truly been humbled by the support and the obvious attachment that former and retired 'Old Buzzards' have for this squadron," Boyer stated.

Cmdr. Chris McDowell, the former VPU-1 executive officer and now commanding officer of VPU-2 at MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii had these thoughts on the events. "The 'Old Buzzards' of VPU-1, and the dedicated professionals, families and friends who support us, repeatedly accomplished some amazing things over the past 40 years. With several current 'Old Buzzards' destined to continue our fine tradition of mission accomplishment as members of our sister squadron, VPU-2, I look forward to carrying our unrivaled capabilities forward."

### **P-3 CREW HELPS RESCUE FISHERMEN (from Stars and Stripes 4/23/12 via Dick Shafner):**

The 11-person P-3 crew was flying over Western Pacific waters when it received a message at about 4:30 p.m. Saturday from U.S. Coast Guard Sector Guam that a ship was on fire roughly 700 miles west of Guam. After pinpointing the ship's location, the crew of the anti-submarine and surveillance aircraft planned for a rescue.

The emergency beacon from the 70-foot Taiwanese vessel Shin Maan Chun began showing up on radar once the aircraft came within 100 miles, crew members said. After a roughly two-hour flight, according to 7th Fleet officials, the aircraft's cameras spotted both the burning vessel and a nearby life raft carrying seven of the Shin Maan Chun's nine-man crew. "I don't think they could see us at first, but once we got closer, you could see the excitement and the relief on their face," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Eric Benavidez, of Albuquerque, N.M., the flight's radar operator. A few survivors began jumping and waving their shirts, while another began popping rescue flares, Benavidez said.

As the plane circled, it spotted two remaining crew members waving at them from the burning ship's bow. The aircraft dove to 300 feet and dropped two inflated life rafts in the water. One of the rafts dropped no more than 50 yards away from the burning ship, said mission commander Lt. Chris Swigart, of Greensburg, Pa. To the crew's surprise, neither of the men jumped off the burning ship. It was unclear on Monday whether the men could not swim or were concerned about sharks. Regardless, those men wouldn't be able to stay aboard the ship for long. "When we first got on station, it was mostly heavy black smoke -- the flames weren't that large," said tactical coordinator Lt. j.g. Matthew Zelinkas, of Dover, Del. "By the time those guys finally got rescued the entire ship was on flames. It was a very hot fire."

Each of the fishermen was unharmed and last reported on their way toward Qingdao, China, aboard the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier Semirio, 7th Fleet officials said Monday. During the hour or so that the plane remained on scene, it stayed in contact with the 980-foot Semirio, which had been about 40 miles from the site when the Taiwanese crew radioed for help. The Semirio is enrolled in a voluntary Coast Guard-sponsored ship reporting system that identifies nearby ships in case of an emergency. The Semirio arrived on scene, deployed a lifeboat and brought it close enough to the burning ship to rescue the final two fishermen. "It's something we had no plan on doing when we took off," said Lt. j.g. Ryan McFeely, a pilot from San Jose, Calif. "But based on how it ended, it was a very rewarding mission."

The aircraft then left the site, and was awaiting its next mission at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa on Monday. The crew is normally based out of Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Wash., but currently deployed to Misawa Air Base, Japan. It was a particularly satisfying mission for Swigart, who said he had participated in two other search missions previously, but had never seen all survivors rescued alive. "We were pretty relieved when we had a full head count at the end," Swigart said.

*Stars and Stripes Article by Eric Slavin*

#### **NEW AIRCRAFT INTRODUCED AT P-8A ROLL-OUT CEREMONY (JAX Air News 3/29/12):**



**ABOVE:** VP-30's P-8A Poseidon at NAS Jacksonville on March 28th. Marc J. Frattasio photo.

More than 1,200 distinguished visitors filled the Patrol Squadron 30 hangar at Naval Air Station Jacksonville March 28 to celebrate the first fleet delivery of the P-8A Poseidon multi-mission aircraft. "In the same year that our maritime patrol and reconnaissance force (MPRF) is celebrating 50 years of service for the P-3 Orion, we're also celebrating the fleet introduction of P-8 Poseidon," said Capt. Mark Stevens, VP-30 commanding officer and master of ceremonies.

In his remarks, Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mark Ferguson said, "The P-8 is the future of Navy maritime patrol. It will be a critical component of our maritime security and the fleet's eyes and ears for generations to come. While this aircraft is impressive, the strength of our Navy does not rest with technology alone. The real capability will reside in the men and women who fly and maintain this aircraft. In the hands of our great Sailors, it stands ready to meet the needs of the nation and challenges ahead as we continue to operate forward to reassure allies, deter aggression and when needed, prevail in conflict."

Under Secretary of the Navy Robert Work provided keynote remarks. "As the Navy's replacement platform for the P-3C, the P-8A Poseidon is transforming how the Navy's maritime patrol and reconnaissance force will man, train, operate and deploy. The P-8A is a network enabled aircraft for the network age, and gives Sailors the added benefits of working with manned and unmanned

systems," said Work. "The training and readiness concept for the Poseidon was designed around a high fidelity simulator solution to provide cost-wise warfighting readiness. The P-8A Integrated Training Facility includes leading-edge operational flight trainers, which will provide innovative and cutting-edge training for today's warfighter."

During his remarks he highlighted the partnership of the Navy and industrial base, which made this day possible. "On behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, I would like to thank the maritime patrol and reconnaissance community, veterans, industry, and the city of Jacksonville." He added, "thanks and gratitude goes to the City of Jacksonville, which has been such a great host to this base for more than 75 years, and whose citizens embody the values our Sailors fight to protect." The next phase for Poseidon will be its integration with the unmanned BAMS platform to create a cohesive team that covers an even greater territory.

"Maritime patrol is the forward indicator of the U.S. presence around the globe," said Work. "MPRF is often the first to respond to natural disasters and provide humanitarian relief. These Sailors embody the CNO's guidance for executing the maritime strategy by demonstrating daily that our Navy is flexible, adaptable and ready to respond globally to preserve the peace. Thank you for allowing me to be part of today's ceremony."

At the conclusion of Work's remarks, Boeing President and CEO of Defense, Space and Security Dennis Muilenburg handed over the "key" for P-8A Poseidon LL 428 to Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Rear Adm. Michael Hewitt. He, in turn, gave the key to Stevens who ordered, "Poseidon aircrew and maintenance department, prepare LL 428 for flight operations."

Following the roll out, Work, Brown and Hewitt answered questions from the media. Work was asked if every P-3 in the Navy would be replaced by the P-8A. "The P-3 continues to fly after 50 years of service. Only two military aircraft have served longer, the U-2 spy plane and the B-52 bomber. As the P-3C fleet begins to retire aircraft, they will be replaced by a combination of the P-8A and its new partner, the unmanned BAMS (Broad Area Maritime Surveillance)," said Work.

Brown was queried about the importance of Jacksonville's mayor being part of the ceremony. "This is a historic occasion for our great city and northeast Florida. We've been a military friendly city for a long time and I believe military affairs are an important part of our community. The P-8 shows the benefits of private/public partnerships for the Navy in their development and acquisition process. We're proud to be part of the P-3/P-8 transition and will support it in any way we can," replied Brown

Hewitt fielded the question, "How does this P-8 event help the Navy overall?" "This is a great day for our maritime patrol and reconnaissance force. We wouldn't be here today without bold leadership from the City of Jacksonville and the creativity of our industry partners. It's also a humbling day in that many MPRF squadrons are actively patrolling oceans and land areas around the world. So while many P-3s are on station protecting American interests, we're proudly rolling out the formidable, new P-8 Poseidon," said Hewitt. "It brings new technology and innovation to bear wherever our country needs us. We're also very proud of our young naval aircrew and maintainers who are bringing this aircraft to life. We know that the platform is new and important -but it's the men and women who fly it that makes it a naval asset to be reckoned with."

After the roll-out event, attendees were invited across the street from VP-30 to the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the P-8A Integrated Training Center (ITC). Flight crew and mission specialists are assigned to the ITC where they undertake classroom instruction as well as full-motion, simulated exercises that present the highest degree of realism.

NAS Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Bob Sanders welcomed a large crowd that seemed eager to tour the \$38 million training facility. "Thank you for being part of this history making day at NAS Jacksonville," said Sanders. "We're proud you could join us and learn about the exciting future taking shape for the P-8A Poseidon within the maritime patrol and reconnaissance community."

*JAX Air News Article by Clark Pierce*

### **BOEING DELIVERS FIRST PRODUCTION P-8A TO NAVY (Seattle Post-Intelligencer 3/6/12):**

Boeing delivered the first production version of its new maritime patrol jet for the U.S. Navy Tuesday. The P-8A Poseidon, based on a Boeing 737-800 airliner, is set to replace the Navy's P-3 Orion turboprop airplanes as the Navy's anti-submarine, anti-surface warfare, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft. The Navy has ordered an initial batch of 13, on top of the six flight-test and two ground-test airplanes, and ultimately plans to buy 117. The first ones are set to enter operational service next year.

"Delivering this capability to the war fighter is the ultimate goal and we're proud to be able to meet our commitment and hand over the P-8A 'keys' to the Navy fleet," Chuck Dabundo, Boeing vice president and P-8 program manager, said in a news release. Rear Admiral Paul Grosklags, U.S. Navy Program Executive Officer for Air Anti-Submarine Warfare, Assault & Special Mission Programs, said the P-8A "will provide the users and operators a step increase in mission capabilities."

After delivery in Seattle, Navy pilots flew the jet to Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., for use to train aircrews. The flight-test P-8As are based at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md. The basic aircraft goes through Boeing's 737 production process, ending with assembly in Renton, Wash., and then heads to a facility near Boeing Field, in Seattle, for addition of military systems. Boeing also has orders for eight P-8I variants for India's navy.

*Seattle Post-Intelligencer Article by Aubre Cohe*

### **VP-92 WRIST-WATCHES FOR THE REUNION?:**



If there is sufficient interest we will have VP-92 watches as shown here at the annual reunion. The watches will cost \$60 and all profits will go to the VP Association admin fund. The dial of the watch is 1.25 inches in diameter and the straps are black leather. Since there is considerable expense in having the watches made we need to know how many to obtain in advance. If you are going to the reunion and want a watch, contact Marc Frattasio at [marc\\_frattasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com). Please do not say you are interested in a watch unless 1) you are going to the reunion and 2) you will definitely buy one there. Be sure to indicate if you want a gold or silver case. A \$20 deposit will eventually be required before we order.

### **RECOMMENDED READING:**

NAS South Weymouth began as a blimp base during WW2 and even after the war the base hosted blimps from the Naval Air Development Unit (NADU) until 1961. Even NAS Squantum had a reserve blimp squadron, ZP-911, and this unit drilled at NAS South Weymouth until 1959. Where is this leading? The definitive book about Navy blimps is "U.S. Navy Airships" by James R. Shock (ISBN 0-9639743-8-6) published by Atlantis Productions. This 224-page book is filled with hundreds of photographs and presents the complete story of the Navy's rigid airships and blimps. This book can be ordered from bookstores or directly from the publisher via the Internet at [www.airshiphistory.com](http://www.airshiphistory.com).

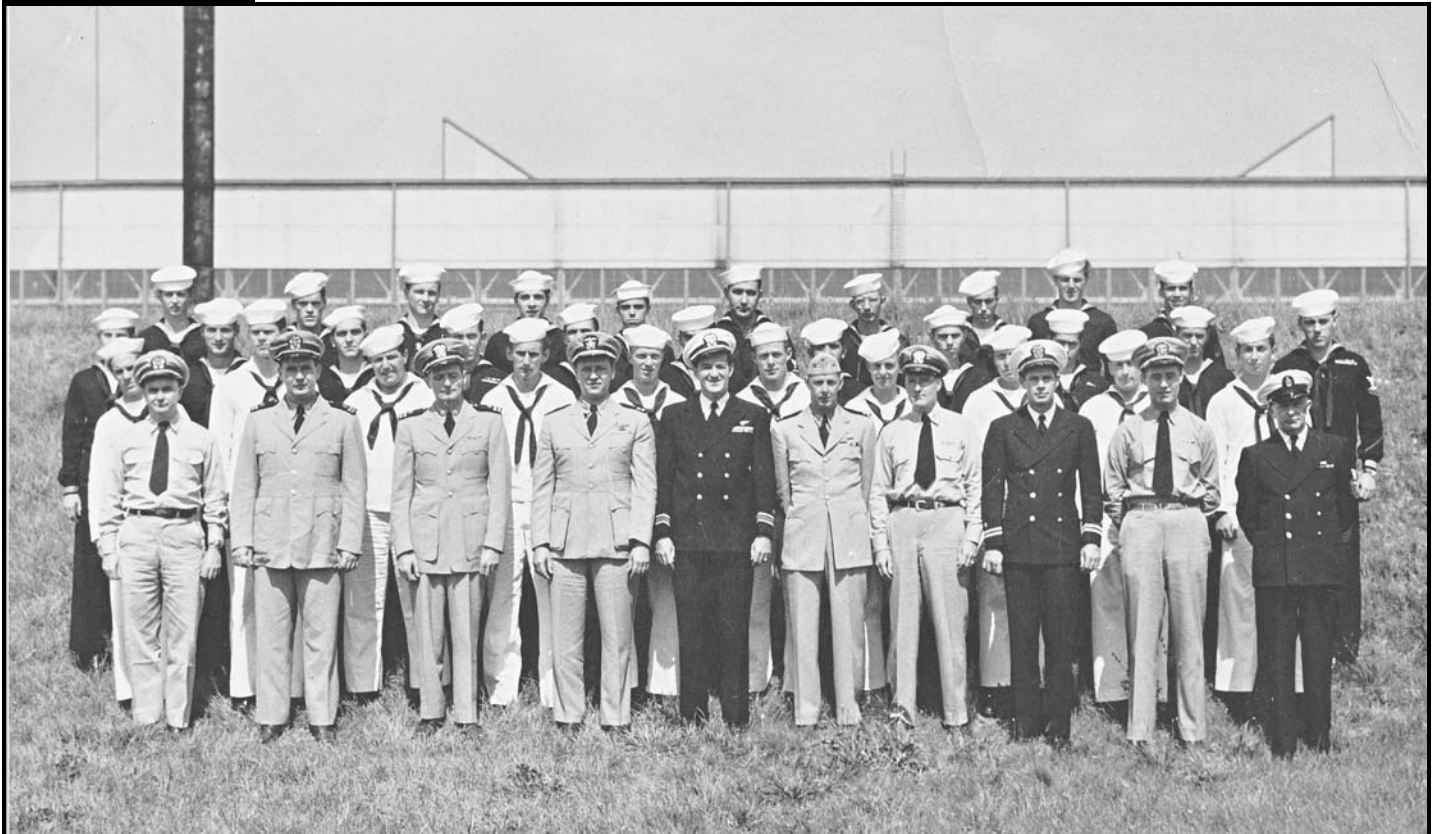
### **ON THE INTERNET:**

DD-214's are now available on-line. The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has a web site for veterans to gain access to DD-214's online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. There is also a deceased retiree survivor's guide that some of you may find useful at [www.goatlocker.org/retire/deceased.pdf](http://www.goatlocker.org/retire/deceased.pdf).

### **MONTHLY MEETING:**

Don't forget that we meet for lunch on the last Thursday of every month at the Officer's Club at Hanscom AFB in Bedford, MA from 1130 to 1330. Please join us if you can. If you don't have a military ID (base stickers are no longer required) contact Bill Hanigan at 781-585-4950 so your name can be added to the base's security access list. Note, all persons without a military ID are required to enter the base at the civilian gate, not the Hartwell gate.

### **PARTING SHOT:**



**ABOVE:** ZP-911 personnel on an annual training cruise to NAS Lakehurst, NJ around 1955. ZP-911 was a reserve blimp patrol squadron that operated from NAS Squantum from 1950 to 1953 and from NAS South Weymouth from 1953 to 1958. The squadron had no blimps of its own and borrowed them from the NARTU at NAS Lakehurst. On drill weekends a ZP-911 crew would be flown down to NAS Lakehurst on a transport and would then fly a blimp up to NAS Squantum or NAS South Weymouth on Saturday morning. On Sunday a different ZP-911 crew would take the blimp back. Many ZP-911 personnel were transferred to reserve VP squadrons at NAS South Weymouth after the unit was disbanded. Ralph Hadlock collection. If you'd like to see some of your old Navy friends plan on attending the VP Association's annual reunion in September. Our annual reunion banquet order form is presented on the last page of this newsletter.



***Until Next Time, Lose Not Thy Speed In Flight Lest The Earth Rise Up And Smite Thee – "Frat".***



VP ASSOCIATION 2012 ANNUAL REUNION  
WEYMOUTH ELKS HALL, 1197 WASHINGTON ST., WEYMOUTH, MA  
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22, 2012 FROM 1200 TO 1700  
*Appetizers and Cash Bar between 1200 and 1300, Dinner at 1300, Music between 1200 and 1630*

BANQUET RESERVATION ORDER FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Squadron Affiliation(s) and Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Number in Party: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Military ID (Yes or No): \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed (\$40 Per Person): \$\_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable to “**The VP Association**” and Mail to William Hanigan, 23 Parkview Terrace, Duxbury MA 02332.

***If you haven't been to a VP Association reunion before, how about joining us this year?***

***Don't assume that everybody you know from your Navy Reserve or regular Navy patrol squadron days is aware of the VP Association or the annual reunion banquet. Spread the word about us to your Navy friends and former shipmates.***

***Dress is CASUAL. However, if you would like to wear a uniform (any kind) or flight suit to the reunion that's fine.***

***We expect to have a guest speaker and will provide complete details in the next newsletter.***

***Tables will be available for displays of any Navy memorabilia that you may wish to bring. If you have photos, cruise books, squadron or crew patches, squadron ballcaps, NATOPS manuals, or any other interesting memorabilia that you'd like to show off to your friends and former shipmates at the reunion banquet please bring it with you and we'll find a table for you.***

***The ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Field Naval Aviation Historical Museum at 495 Shea Memorial Drive on old NAS South Weymouth will be open from 9 to 11 AM on the day of the reunion. Come see the old base and visit the museum. Admission is free! If you have any old photographs, films, or Navy memorabilia associated with NAS Squantum or NAS South Weymouth tucked away gathering dust consider donating it to the Shea Field Naval Aviation Historical Museum.***