



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 47

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

MARCH 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. Please send all newsletter-related correspondence to Marc J. Frattasio, P.O. Box 30, Pembroke MA 02359, marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

RECCO:



ABOVE: *It's not the best but photos of P4Y-2 Privateers at NAS South Weymouth, like this one from the ANA Patriot Squadron, are rare. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio.*

FINAL FLIGHTS:

We lost two VP Association members since the last newsletter, Robert Moran and Robert Silver. Robert Moran, formerly of New Hartford NY, passed away on November 14th. Bob served with VP/VPB-92 during the Second World War. VP/VPB-92 (the Navy changed the designations of all wartime patrol squadrons from VP to VPB in 1944) flew PBY-5 Catalinas in the Caribbean and Mediterranean theaters of operations. The squadron was involved in combat operations against German submarines and in at least one case an enlisted aircrewman was killed when struck by anti-aircraft gunfire from a U-boat. Though sharing its designation with modern-day VP-92, the Navy does not consider the wartime squadron to have been an ancestor of the USNR unit. Regardless, several members of wartime VP/VPB-92 are part of this group and we are happy to have them with us. Robert Silver, who lived in Auburdale MA and was in VP-911, was ill for a long while.

THE ANNUAL REUNION:

It is never too early to plan to attend the VP Association's annual reunion. As before it will be on a Saturday in September but we may pick a new location closer to old NAS South Weymouth this year.

ADMIN FUND DONATIONS:

The VP Association has no dues. Voluntary contributions are always welcome to help defray the cost of printing and mailing newsletters to shipmates without e-mail. We'd like to thank Philip Baker, Peter Fern, Ray Guerin, and Peter Pace for their recent contributions to the administration fund.

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT NEWSLETTERS SENT VIA U.S. MAIL:

It is now costing us over \$300 each quarter to print and mail newsletters to those of you who do not get it by e-mail. Even with the donations we get, this is becoming very difficult for us to do. **If you receive a paper copy of the newsletter via the U.S. Mail please be sure to read the important message from Bill Hanigan that is presented on the last page of this issue.**

LOST CONTACT:

Please let Bill Hanigan know whenever your street or e-mail address changes. We are missing valid e-mail addresses for Andy Berlow, Paul Dormant, and Dan Gilbert.

RECENT CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

Bill Doherty
4 Marshall Road
Stoneham, MA 02180
centuryacres@comcast.net

Steve Harris
88 Pea Hill Drive
Valentines, VA 23887

Dennis Nealon
605 NW 12th Loop
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Daniel Walsh
48 Shore Road
Nantic, CT 06357

Please note new e-mail addresses for Ron Hoffmann at ronhoff0427@yahoo.com, Dennis Nealon at nsp10950@gmail.com, and Larry Middlebrook at middawg@aol.com.

NEW MEMBERS:

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STEVE BAXTER RETIRES:

Steve Baxter, formerly with VP-92, recently retired from the Navy as a captain on January 13th. If you'd like to wish him well or contact him for any other reason his e-mail address is bax224@aol.com.

A PHOTO AND NOTE FROM BOB MANDEVILLE:



I came across this photo while swapping shots with some friends who were also pilots and I came across this shot taken in Nimes, France. I thought you guys might appreciate it. Here was the deal. We were on our 2-week Active Duty working out of Rota, Spain. For whatever reason, we drew the short straw and just 'had' to go to France for one overnight, to play with one of their subs for practice. This picture was taken on the way back to the airstrip for the trip home. We all had some French francs left and no way to cash them in, so we stopped at a bakery to spend them and have some munchies on the trip back.

For those of you with vision problems, I'm first row, left. For those of you who are observant, the guys in the CC Line are members of my crew. Some of them are listed here; standing, left; Bill Hanigan

(ordnance, loves to make things go BOOM). Next to Bill is Ray "Stonge" Saint Onge... Flight Engineer. Usually had plenty of Playboy magazines with him. Standing, 3rd from left, Ned Rogerson, Tactical Coordinator - runs the tactical group and drops the torps (would love that job, myself). Standing, 4th from Left, Mike "Swatman" Swatkowski, helluva good pilot but we don't tell him that. Next to Mike is Dick Shafner, Flight Engineer. Loves it when things break so that he can show off and fix them. Standing, right end, is "Captain Kirk" Hassle, Navi-guesser. and a good one. Gets lost when driving, though. Standing, 2nd from right, Ed Sabatini. Radar. Can find a rusty can of beans in 10-ft seas. Kneeling, right end.. Bill Barry, my twin. We both ran the same gear and annoyed Ned as much as possible. Helluv an operator.

Question; after seeing this motley crew, would you trust the defense of your country to them????

A PHOTO AND NOTE FROM STEVE MALONEY:



A couple of months ago I ran into an old VP-49 sailor by the name of Bob Funderberg. I figure that even though he was not have been a Minuteman, there may be someone in the squadron that knew him or at least knew of him, given the large number of former East Coast sailors that get the newsletter. He is living in the Little Rock, AR area, and is semi-retired and doing some consulting work.

More importantly, Bob gave me a photo of two old VP-49 P5M Marlin flying boats over Bermuda. The photo was taken on 15 February, 1962. Even though its a bit of a "way back on the tapes" item, I thought there might be some interest from our fellow Minutemen in the picture. In any case, I hope all is well, and wish all the Minutemen, wherever they may be, a safe and prosperous new year.

HELP WANTED:

Henry Piel is looking for a silver Zippo lighter with the NAS South Weymouth insignia on it. These were sold in the NEX on the base for many years. If you've got one that you'd like to part with contact Henry at 774-217-3506 or hwpiel@post.harvard.edu. Also, Cindy MacKool is still looking for a VP-92 challenge coin. If you can provide her with one contact her at 586-242-7777 or cmac404@aol.com.

NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH'S HANGER ONE MEETS THE WRECKING BALL:

During the week of February 13th demolition crews started tearing down Hangar One, the largest structure remaining at old NAS South Weymouth. The hangar is supposed to be gone by the end of the first week of March. Hangar One, which was used to house and maintain training aircraft assigned to Navy Reserve squadrons and utility aircraft assigned to the base itself, was completed during November 1970. It is being razed to make way for a new road called the East-West Parkway.

The 276 foot long, 259 foot wide, and 76.5 foot tall structure replaced a much larger hangar that was built during 1942. The earlier structure, which was specially designed to support blimps used during the Second World War to protect coastal shipping from German submarines, was 960 feet long, 337 feet wide, and 192 feet tall. In its day it was the second largest aircraft hangar in the world and a landmark easily visible from high ground across Boston's South Shore region. The old hangar, which was unheated, difficult to maintain, and tended to obstruct radar signals, found itself on borrowed time after the Navy stopped operating blimps from NAS South Weymouth during 1961. It was torn down during the late fall of 1966.

The modern Hangar One took four years to build. On August 18th 1967 tragedy struck when several of the 120-ton reinforced concrete arches that served as the hangar's framework collapsed like dominoes, crushing two civilian construction workers to death. Over the years Hangar One served as the base of operations for Naval Air Reserve squadrons VP-92, HS-74, HSL-74, and VR-62. The last of these reserve units, VP-92 and VR-62, were relocated to NAS Brunswick, Maine before the end of July 1996.

The airfield at NAS South Weymouth was closed on September 30th 1996 thus ending Hangar One's career. The base itself remained in Navy hands for another year, until September 30th 1997. During the following fifteen years the hangar has remained vacant and subject to the depredations of the weather and neglect.

Most of the former Navy buildings at NAS South Weymouth, including Hangar Two, which in recent years was used exclusively by the Marine Air Reserve squadrons, still remain more-or-less intact. However, they will soon follow Hangar One and will be torn down to make way for the SouthField real estate development. If you care, get out there and take your pictures now...

P-8A MAKES DEBUT IN "BOLD ALLIGATOR" EXERCISE (Navy Times 2/7/2012):



Swooping low over the aircraft carrier Enterprise, the Navy's newest jet looks every bit a war craft, with little to belie its commercial airliner lineage or current test missions. The P-8A Poseidon maritime multi-mission aircraft apparently made its first appearance in an operational, fleet exercise February 3rd when it began flying sorties in support of Exercise Bold Alligator, the largest amphibious exercise in a decade, now taking place along the coasts of Virginia and North Carolina.

The P-8A flew 20 missions in support of the Enterprise and its strike group, and another 14 sorties operating with the amphibious strike group and Marine expeditionary forces, according to U.S. Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk, VA. That's a departure from the extensive P-8A flight test programs being flown by Air Test and Evaluation Squadrons 1 and 20 (VX-1 and VX-20) from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md.

Sporting a spiffy sinking submarine logo on its tail, the VX-1 P-8A photographed from the Enterprise is known as "T-6," the last of six test and evaluation aircraft delivered to the Navy by Boeing. It was accepted by the Navy and arrived at Pax River on Jan. 17, said LaToya Graddy, a spokesperson for Naval Air Systems Command. The aircraft also will be used in upcoming operational test exercises set to begin this summer, she added. The P-8 is under development by the Navy to replace the venerable, turbo-prop P-3 Orion.

Navy Times article by Christopher P. Cavas

NAVY TESTING DRONE THAT TRACKS SUSPICIOUS VESSELS (www.military.com):

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan -- The Navy is testing a long-range drone that hovers 70,000 feet above aircraft carriers and allows fleet commanders to track suspicious vessels across vast expanses of sea. A prototype of the as-yet-unnamed drone, referred to as the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance (BAMS) system, is in action with the Navy's 5th Fleet and, according to one naval expert, could help keep tabs on any Iranian threats to shipping in the Persian Gulf.

Iran's army chief, Gen. Ataollah Salehi, on Tuesday warned American aircraft carriers not to return to the Gulf – the latest in a series of provocations responding to new sanctions imposed by the U.S. over Iran's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Navy officials won't talk specifics about the missions the unmanned maritime aircraft is taking part in around the region, saying only that the drone flies a 24-hour long mission every three days and is providing more than half of 5th Fleet's aerial intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance information.

But the Navy could use the BAMS Demonstrator – an RQ-4 Global Hawk equipped with modified Air Force radar, a high resolution camera and infra-red sensors – to track hundreds of suspicious vessels in the Gulf, according to Jan Van Tol, a retired U.S. Navy captain who is a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington, D.C. "This is obviously an important mission, especially in view of current tensions," he said. Potential Iranian threats include submarines, torpedoes, missiles, mines and small boats that might be packed with explosives to attempt swarming attacks on U.S. ships. The BAMS and other intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets would have plenty of time to spot suspicious vessels because the entrance to the Persian Gulf is about 20 miles wide at its narrowest point, Van Tol said.

The first BAMS aircraft off the production line will make a maiden flight in June, with a target date on entering the service in 2015, according to its manufacturer, Northrop Grumman. The drone, in combination with new manned P-8A Poseidon jets, will replace the Navy's aging fleet of 250 P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft, representing a sea change in the service, according to Capt. James Hoke, program manager for the Navy's Persistent Maritime Unmanned Aircraft Systems Program Office in Patuxent River, Md. "It's the first time we are really going forward with... unmanned replacement for a manned aircraft," Hoke said.

The P-3, which began service in the 1960s, is one of only a few aircraft that have been operated by the U.S. military for more than 50 years. The Navy will purchase 117 Poseidons from Boeing, with the first of the modified 737 commercial jets operational from 2013. Twenty of the new long-range maritime surveillance drones will be fielded from 2015 with all of the aircraft operational by 2019,

Hoke said. The new planes will join a patrol and reconnaissance group at Jacksonville Naval Air Station, Fla., Hoke said, with personnel spending part of their time flying drones and part of it piloting the P-8s.

While being piloted from afar, the unmanned aircraft will be assigned to the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean, 5th Fleet in the Middle East, and 7th Fleet in the Pacific. Four of the new drones will be based on the Pacific island of Guam, where the Air Force already flies its unmanned Global Hawk. Four will be at Sigonella, in Sicily, four will be at a secret location in the Middle East, Hoke said. And Walt Kreitler, Northrop's director of business development for the new drone, said he expects four of the Navy drones to fly out of Beale Air Force Base, Calif. and four to fly out of Jacksonville Naval Air Station.

The Navy's new drones look like the Global Hawk, but the resemblance is skin deep. The front edges of the aircraft's wings have been toughened to withstand bird-strikes while its electronics are designed to withstand power surges from lightning, Kreitler said. The Navy drones have stiffer wings that allow them to dive below 10,000 feet to get a closer look at targets floating on the water. At that altitude there are strong wind gusts that could tear a Global Hawk to pieces. To survive in rough weather the Navy drones will also add de-icing equipment, Hoke said.

The system that will be fielded in 2015 also will include state-of-the-art maritime radar and sensors that can rotate 360 degrees and capture full-motion video, according to Cmdr. Craig Dorrans, who is helping lead the drone project. "BAMS will have an automatic identification system that picks up transponders on commercial shipping that gives us position, course and flag," he said, adding that air-to-air radar will help the drone avoid mid-air collisions. The ability of the drone to pick up ships' transponders will help commanders focus on vessels that are not sending the signals or which appear to be sending bogus signals, Hoke said. The Navy's demand for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance information about what's going on in the world's oceans is almost unlimited, Kreitler said.

Northrop's initial contract, to develop and build the first two drones for the Navy, is worth \$1.6 billion. The company expects to manufacture 68 aircraft but it is still negotiating the price, Kreitler said.

NEW CHICOM MARITIME PATROL AIRCRAFT:

Here's another example of how Communist China is spending the money they are making at our expense from outsourced manufacturing. This photo shows a new CHICOM maritime patrol aircraft based on the Shaanxi Y-8 transport. The aircraft has four turboprops, a large search radar antenna under its nose, an enclosed weapons bay in the fuselage just forward of the main landing gear, numerous ESM antennas, and a long MAD boom.



MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE AT THE SHEA MEMORIAL GROVE:

The ANA Patriot Squadron will host a public Memorial Day observance featuring the Yarmouth Moose Lodge #2270 Afghan/Iraq Moving Memorial Wall at the Shea Memorial Grove at former NAS South Weymouth on Saturday May, 26th from 9 AM to 3 PM.

The Afghan/Iraq Moving Memorial Wall is a portable war memorial, similar in concept to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, which carries the names of all US service members killed in action during the first Persian Gulf War and in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan that followed the 9-11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. There are presently about 6,000 names on the Afghan/Iraq Moving Memorial Wall and it is updated, as necessary, on a monthly basis. The Memorial Day observance will also feature an appearance by hundreds of motorcycles from the "Rolling Thunder" motorcycle club sponsored by Braintree Moose Lodge #413, parading of the colors by representatives from veterans' organizations, and speeches by local officials.

The ANA Patriot Squadron will open the Shea Field Naval Aviation Historical Museum, temporarily located in the base gymnasium (Shea Fitness Center), from 9 AM to 3 PM that day. All active duty service members and veterans are encouraged to attend the Memorial Day observance in uniform.

Please note also that the Shea Field Naval Aviation Historical Museum is now open on the last day of every month from 9 to 11 AM. Admission is free. See www.anapatriotsquadron.org for details.

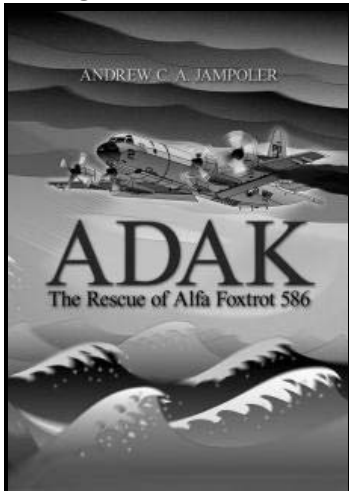
SQUANTUM AVIATION HISTORY LECTURE::

Your newsletter editor will give a presentation on the aviation history of the Squantum peninsula, which of course will include NAS Squantum, for the Squantum Community Association at the First Church of Squantum at 164 Bellevue Road, Squantum (Quincy) starting at 7 PM on Wednesday May 9th. Admission is free and refreshments will be served. Call 617-851-1673 for more information.

EXCELLENT SOURCES FOR FLIGHT JACKET NAME TAGS:

Replacing your long-lost or too-small flight jacket and need a new leather nametag for it? Contact Robert Rice at sales@flightbadge.com or call 800-331-6263. Rice's company, Flight Badge, makes high-quality black or brown leather flight jacket nametags with silver or gold text and with all USN wings and rating badge insignia at a very reasonable price. See www.flightbadge.com for details. Another business, Flight Suit Name Tags, can make embroidered nametags with the VP-92 minuteman insignia like the ones the squadron used during its final two decades. Contact David at military@flightsuitnametags.net and see www.flightsuitnametags.net for details.

RECOMMENDED READING:



"ADAK: The Rescue of Alpha Foxtrot 586", by Andrew C. A. Jampoler, tells the story of a VP-9 Lockheed P-3C Orion that was ditched in the Bering Sea west of the Aleutian Islands on October 26, 1978 due to an engine fire. Five crewmen died and ten survivors were rescued by a Soviet fishing vessel after spending the night and part of the next day in the frigid Arctic water. The paperback book features 240 pages and 11 illustrations. Published by the Naval Institute Press, it can be obtained on-line directly from the publisher at www.usni.org or can be special ordered by any decent book shop by referencing ISBN 9781591144106. This book tells a tale of Cold War survival that should be of interest to anybody who served in the maritime patrol community. Many of us have heard some things about the VP-9 ditching incident over the years but this book presents all the details.

ON THE INTERNET:

Here's a link to a recent DOD hazardous materials abatement report about Hangar One at old NAS South Weymouth that may be of interest due to the structure's demise - http://us.mc393.mail.yahoo.com/mc/welcome?.gx=1&.tm=1328298109&.rand=ak7esitu63r88#_pg=showMessage;_ylc=X3oDMTBucmhobGR0BF9TAzM5ODMwMTAyNwRhYwNkZWxNc2dz&mid=1_734076_AKLuXkIAAUYmTyvncwwSEH15WTY&fid=Inbox&sort=date&order=down&startMid=0&filterBy=&.rand=1794065232&hash=7aa90ef3bfa5115d7892c05293ffc17b&.jsrand=3649054

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: Recognize anybody? Here is VP-913's CAC-4 posed in front of an SP-2E Neptune for an official crew photo taken at NAS South Weymouth during 1965 or 1966. Don Sherwood collection.

MESSAGE FROM BILL HANIGAN REGARDING MAILED NEWSLETTERS:

This message is for those members who receive the VP Association Newsletter by the U.S. Postal system. I understand that many of you are not computer literate (no e-mails) but many of you are.

The mailings have become very expensive lately, costing about \$325 per newsletter mailing, and while the Association has been very blessed in the number of members who have provided donations to help defray the expense of putting out the newsletter, I believe that it is waste of their donations to continue to mail the Newsletter to those who have e-mail addresses, but for whatever reason do not wish to provide them to us. Additionally, there may be some people receiving the newsletter by mail who don't want to receive it any more.

If you have an e-mail address and are getting the newsletter via the U.S. Postal Service, we really need to start sending your newsletter to you via e-mail. If you do not have an e-mail address, we need to confirm that the newsletter is actually going to somebody who actually wants to get it.

As a result, below this message you will find a tear off slip that I am asking you to fill out with all the information we need, including your e-mail address if you have one, and mail it to me at:

VP Association
C/O William Hanigan
23 Parkview Terrace
Duxbury MA 02332

Alternatively, you can send the information via e-mail to vpassociation@aol.com.

Please note that only those of you who get the newsletter in paper format via the U.S. Postal Service have to fill out and return this form to me. If you are getting the newsletter via the U.S. Postal service and do not return this form your name will be removed from the mailing list.

If any of this is confusing call me at 781-585-4950. Thank you very much for your help in this. Bill Hanigan.

----- Tear Off And Mail Form Below -----

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

E-MAIL: _____



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

