



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 55

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

MARCH 2014

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, vp92association@gmail.com. Please send all newsletter-related correspondence to Marc J. Frattasio, P.O. Box 30, Pembroke MA 02359, marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

RECCO:



ABOVE: Consolidated PBY-5A Catalina flown by VP-ML-69 crews at NAS Squantum during 1948. The "ZP" on the tail stood for "Squantum patrol squadron". In 1950 the Navy abolished the type identifier ("P" for "patrol", "A" for "attack", "F" for "fighter", etc.) on reserve aircraft tail codes. Thereafter, the tail code for all aircraft assigned to the reserve aircraft pool at NAS Squantum, regardless of type, changed to "Z". Joe O'Neill photo. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

FINAL FLIGHTS:

Dana "Digger" Deguio passed away unexpectedly in Topsham, ME on November 24th. Dana had been in VP-MAU Brunswick and VP-92. Orlando Albani passed away in Tequesta, FL on December 21st. He was a WW2 veteran who had also served in VP-911 and VP-92.

THE 2014 ANNUAL REUNION:

Please note that the 2014 VP Association Annual Reunion will be held at the Elks Hall in Weymouth, MA on a Saturday in September. At this point we have not fixed the date. The date, a banquet reservation form, and more detailed information will appear in the next issue of the newsletter (June).

ADMIN FUND DONATIONS:

The VP Association has no dues but contributions are always welcome to help defray the cost of printing and mailing newsletters to shipmates who do not have e-mail. We'd like to thank Philip Baker, Tom Carroll, Andre Castellanos, Dave Childers, Les Connolly, Fran Creney, Jerry Eisenhour, Gene Forgit, Ray Guering, Allan Hansen, Paul Harriman, Paul LaPinski, Joe McCann, Ed McDonough, Gary Moore, Bob O'Brien, Arthur Ricca, Leo Salmeri, Harvey Shore, Fred Squires, and Herb Tallent for recent contributions to the administration fund.

SPEAKING OF THE COST OF PRINTING AND MAILING NEWSLETTERS...

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 at vp92association@gmail.com as soon as possible so we can begin sending the newsletter to you by e-mail, which costs us nothing other than time, instead of via the U.S. Postal service for which we have to pay for printing and postage. Remember, this group does not charge dues and we operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations.

LOST CONTACT:

Please be sure to let Bill Hanigan know whenever your street or e-mail address changes so we can update our files. Note new e-mail addresses for Bruce Donahue at soxnut4@verizon.net, Bill Reardon at wereardon@yahoo.com, Grant Strakoulas at rqsequipment@cox.net, Ken Sherman at asa663@verizon.net, and Kasim Yarn at kasim.yarn@yahoo.com. We are looking for a current mailing or e-mail address for Donald Dempster, who was formerly in Gilford, NH.

NEW MEMBERS:

Glen Maners South Portland ME glesan@aol.com VP-11	Gary "Smokie" Moore 1857 Tierra Verde Atlantic Beach, FL 33233 garydewmoore@gmail.com	Leo F. Murphy PO Box 7176 Daytona Beach, FL 32116 murphd82@erau.edu VP-92	James Oikle 322 Princess Point Rd Brunswick, ME 04011 joikle@gwi.net	Bob Richards PO Box 214 Henderson, IL 61439
Mike Smith carmilmem@aol.com VP-92 (TAR YNC)	Jack Steventon 7 Carson Rd Budd Lake, NJ 07828	Dave Supple 58 Helen St Needham, Ma 02492 dpsupple@gmail.com		

NEWS ABOUT THE MONTHLY MEETING:

Due to continuing problems at the Hanscom AFB club we have gone back to holding our monthly lunch meetings at Waxy O'Connor's Irish Pub at 94 Hartwell St. in Lexington, MA. The lunch meetings are held from 11:30 to 13:30 on the last Thursday of the month unless otherwise noted. Please join us if you can. Waxy O'Connor's Irish Pub is just outside the Hanscom Field Hartwell gate. This is the gate that's located on the north side of the base if you are driving on Route 128.

ANYBODY WANT TO VISIT THE NAVAL WAR COLLEGE MUSEUM?

Al Firnrohr is interested in putting a group together to visit the Naval War College Museum in Newport, RI at some point in the near future. He has a retired ID card and can get people on to the base. If you'd be interested in going contact Al directly via e-mail at akamacs40@gmail.com.

A NOTE FROM PAUL WILLIS (Former TAR Administrative Officer VP-92):

I've never read anything about CDR Thomas Kahabka in the "Final Flights" section. Tom was VP-92's first TAR OIC. He died at his home in New Orleans on January 31st, 2010. Seems that he trimmed some shrubbery in his yard, ate a little supper, had a mild upset stomach, went to bed early, and died in his sleep of a heart attack. Also, was wondering if you could put a note in a future Newsletter asking if anyone remembers the officer's Closed Mess (restaurant area) at Weymouth being closed in early 1974 due to contamination of the building from decades of treatment for termites with heptachlor and chlordane. As I remember, the base CO overrode the inspectors recommendation to close the entire building, and kept the Officers' Club open and the BOQ open for short time stays only (usually limited to overnight). If anyone has any knowledge of this problem, I would appreciate their contacting me at hamlet922002@yahoo.com.

BOOK SIGNING AND LECTURE AT THE SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM – APRIL 26TH:

The ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum at 495 Shea Memorial Drive on the SouthField real estate development on old NAS South Weymouth has lined up author Tommy H. Thomason to present a book signing and lecture on Saturday April 26th. Mr. Thomason will give a lecture on the Bell HSL, the world's first helicopter designed specifically for ASW. He will have copies of the book he wrote about the HSL, "The Forgotten Bell HSL: U.S. Navy's First All-Weather Anti-Submarine Warfare Helicopter" and his other books available for sale. The museum will be open to the public at 9 AM and the lecture starts at noon. See tommythomason.com for more details about Mr. Thomason and his books. For more information about the Shea Naval Aviation Museum see www.anapatriotsquadron.org.

2014 MARITIME PATROL ASSOCIATION REUNION AND SYMPOSIUM:

The Maritime Patrol Association will hold their annual reunion and symposium at NAS Jacksonville, FL on April 9th through the 11th. See www.maritimepatrolassociation.org/symposium for more details. Note, your newsletter editor had a feature article about NAS South Weymouth's wartime airship patrol squadron ZP-11 published in the current issue of this fine organization's "Planeside" newsletter.

WHEN EUGENE ELY INVENTED NAVAL AVIATION (via Bob Mandeville):

103-years ago is a very long time. Yet in the very hierarchy of these modern marvels, the ability to recover and launch aircraft from the deck of a moving ship stands out as one of our most signature of his accomplishments. Which just goes to show you: Some tricks never grow old.

US Naval aviation was invented 103 years ago, on January 18, 1911, when a 24-year-old barnstormer named Eugene B. Ely had just completed the world's first successful landing on a ship. It happened in San Francisco Bay, aboard the cruiser USS Pennsylvania, which had a temporary 133-foot wooden landing strip built just above her afterdeck and gun turret as part of the experiment.

But back then, innovation was afoot. Ely's Curtis Pusher had been fitted with a clever new invention called a tailhook. The idea was to quickly halt the aircraft after landing by using the tailhook to catch one or two of 22 rope lines -- each propped up a foot above the deck and weighted by the 50-pound sandbags tied to each end -- strung three-feet apart along the Pennsylvania's temporary flight deck.

Mark J. Denger of the California Center for Military History has now written a tidy biography of Eugene Ely which narrates this historic day: On the morning of January 18, 1911, Eugene Ely, in a

Curtiss pusher biplane specially equipped with arresting hooks on its axle, took off from Selfridge Field (Tanforan Racetrack, in San Bruno, California) and headed for the San Francisco Bay.

After about 10- minutes flying north toward Goat Island (now Yerba Buena), Eugene spotted his target through the gray haze – the PENNSYLVANIA.

Ely's plane was first sighted one-half mile from the Pennsylvania's bridge at an altitude of about 1,500-feet, and cruising at a speed of approximately 60 mph. Now ten miles out from Tanforan, he circled the several vessels of the Pacific Fleet at anchor in San Francisco Bay. The airplane dipped to 400-feet as it passed directly over the MARYLAND and, still dropping, flew over the West Virginia's bow at a height of only 100-feet. With a crosswind of almost 15 knots, he flew past the cruiser and then banked some 500-yards from the Pennsylvania's starboard quarter to set up his landing approach.

Ely now headed straight for the ship, cutting his engine when he was only 75-feet from the fantail, and then allowed the wind to glide the aircraft onto the landing deck. At a speed of 40 mph Ely landed on the centerline of the Pennsylvania's deck at 11:01 a.m.

The forward momentum of his plane was quickly retarded by all the ropes stretched between the large movable bags of sand that had just been placed along the entire length of the runway. And as the plane landed, the hooks on the undercarriage caught the ropes exactly as planned, which brought the plane to a complete stop.

Once on board the PENNSYLVANIA, sheer pandemonium broke loose as Ely was greeted with a bombardment of cheers, boat horns and whistles, both aboard the PENNSYLVANIA and from the surrounding vessels.

Ely was immediately greeted by his wife, Mabel, who had greeted him with an enthusiastic, "I knew you could do it," and then by Captain Pond, Commanding Officer of the PENNSYLVANIA. Then it was time for interviews and a few photographs for the reporters.

Everything had gone exactly as planned. Pond called it "the most important landing of a bird since the dove flew back to Noah's ark." Pond would later report, "Nothing damaged, and not a bolt or brace startled, and Ely the coolest man on board."

After completing several interviews, Ely was then escorted to the Captain's cabin where he and his wife were the honored guests at an officer's lunch. While they dined, the landing platform was cleared and the plane turned around in preparation for his takeoff. Then the Elys, Pond and the others posed for photographs. 57-minutes later, he made a perfect take-off from the platform, returning to Selfridge Field at the Tanforan racetrack where another tremendous ovation awaited him.

Both the landing and takeoff were also witnessed by several of the distinguished members of both U.S. Army and Navy, as well as state military officials. Ely had successfully demonstrated the possibility of the aircraft carrier.

Indeed. The US Navy's first aircraft carrier, the USS Langley, was commissioned in 1922, eleven-years later. But Ely didn't live to witness the milestone; he died just a few months after his historic flight, on October 11, 1911, when he was thrown from his aircraft during a crash at an air show. But 103-years-ago, he merged the power of naval warships and aviation in ways that remain cutting-edge, even today. A truly amazing story and I hope that you enjoyed it!

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE P2V NEPTUNE (from DAN DWYER via GENE FORGIT):

1. Original development started in 1941. This plane is still in service today, although not in its originally designed role.
2. Even though this plane was designed during war time, it didn't enter military service until after the war.
3. This plane was built by its origin country, and eventually built by one of its enemies (Japan) as well.
4. No longer used for military service in 1984.
5. Plane has been used by 4 different countries.
6. The plane was at one point modified to take off from a carrier, but could not land on the carrier and had to land at a friendly base or ditch in the ocean.
7. Normal crew, 9 to 11.
8. Was used as a gunship at one point in its life.
9. Plane's main role during service was anti-submarine warfare.
10. Fitted with both piston and jet engines, but jet engines burned regular Avgas instead of jet fuel.
11. Jet engines were only used for takeoff and low level operations.
12. This plane is currently being used for aerial firefighting bombardments.
13. The third production plane of this type was used for a record setting distance flight with the record standing until 1962.

For more information about the Lockheed P2 Neptune check out <http://www.verslo.is/baldur/p2/>.

HELP WANTED:

The Brunswick Naval Museum and Memorial Gardens is looking for members and donations of cash and NAS Brunswick related artifacts. The BNM&MG are a 501c3 non-profit organization so donations are tax deductible. For more information see www.brunswicknavalmuseum.org or contact John Briley at info@brunswicknavalmuseum.org.

NAVY ORIONS LIKELY DAMAGED IN HANGAR COLLAPSE (Stars and Stripes 02/18/2014):

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The condition of several U.S. Navy and Japan Self-Defense Force surveillance planes is still unknown after heavy snow caused the roof of a hangar to collapse Saturday near Naval Air Facility Atsugi, according to U.S. and Japanese officials. No injuries were reported in the collapse, but there is extensive damage to the building, and the 10 aircraft parked inside appear damaged as well. “Although the immediate damage to the hangar appears extensive, the possible damage to aircraft is not currently known,” Atsugi base spokesman Greg Kuntz said.

The condition of the hangar has slowed assessment of condition of the aircraft, which include four U.S. P-3 Orions, officials said. However, the tail sections of several aircraft poking through the collapsed roof can be seen in aerial photographs. The 550-foot-long hangar — built in 1955 and owned by NIPPI Corp., a Kawasaki Heavy Industries Group subsidiary — is used to repair Japanese Self-Defense Forces and U.S. Navy aircraft. The central part of the hangar collapsed because of the weight of the snow, said Kawasaki Heavy Industries spokesman Teppei Kobayashi.

NIPPI Corp is working on cleaning up the debris. The collapse “has not affected operations at this point, but it is important to assess the situation quickly when thinking about the future,” Japan’s Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said at a Tuesday news conference. Onodera said the damage to the aircraft appears to be severe.

The P-3 Orion has patrolled the Pacific theater on anti-submarine and surveillance missions since its introduction in the 1960s. Each four-engine turboprop aircraft costs \$36 million, according to the U.S. Navy, which is slowly phasing out the P-3 in favor of the new P-8 Poseidon aircraft. The P-8 planes,

which have upgraded airframes and avionics, began arriving at U.S. bases in Japan in December. The record snowfall also impacted operations on other U.S. bases in and around Tokyo, with many facilities closed at the weekend.

Staff Sgt. Eryn Buckner of the 374th Operations Squadron said 21 inches of snow fell on Yokota Air Base last week. So far, 35 inches of snow have fallen on the base this month, almost double the most recorded in February since the squadron began keeping records in 1973. More snow is expected this Week.

Stars and Stripes article by James Kimber.

IRAN SENDING WARSHIPS TOWARD U.S. MARITIME BORDERS (CNN 2/9/2014):

Washington (CNN) -- A senior Iranian naval official says Iran is sending warships toward U.S. maritime borders to send a message, a move a U.S. defense official characterized as an announcement, not a deployment. "Iran's military fleet is approaching the United States' maritime borders, and this move has a message," Adm. Afshin Rezayee Haddad said, the semiofficial Fars news agency reported Saturday.

The plan, according to Fars, is a response to the United States beefing up its naval presence in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. 5th Fleet is based in Bahrain. Haddad said the Iranian fleet was under way and approaching the Atlantic Ocean "via the waters near South Africa," a claim that has not been confirmed.

It's not the first time Iran has made such a threat, said the U.S. defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It's important to understand that, at this point, we have an announcement not a deployment. They've stated this aspiration before," said the defense official, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

In 2011, Iran twice announced plans to send ships toward the U.S. maritime borders. "Freedom of the seas doesn't just apply to fish. It applies to all maritime nations, all navies, everywhere -- so long as they understand the responsibilities which come with that freedom," the defense official said. "So if they chose to send their ships to the Atlantic, I'm sure they won't be surprised to find many, many others already there."

The Iranian navy is the smallest of its military forces, according to GlobalSecurity.org, which tracks defense and intelligence issues.

CNN News story by Barbara Starr and Chelsea J. Carter

TOP WEAPONS BUYER DISPUTES P-8 TESTING WOES (www.dodbuzz.com 01/28/2014):

The Pentagon's top weapons buyer defended the P-8A Poseidon from an audit that found the aircraft can't perform its main missions such as hunting submarines and conducting wide-area surveillance. Frank Kendall, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, described the Boeing Co.-made plane as a "good product" and the Navy's acquisition effort to buy a total of 122 of the aircraft at an estimated cost of \$35 billion as a "relatively successful program."

His comments came Tuesday during a House Armed Services Committee hearing on the military's plans to shift strategic emphasis to the Asia-Pacific region. He was responding to questions from Representative Jackie Speier, D-California, who cited a forthcoming report by the Pentagon's top weapons tester, J. Michael Gilmore, that concluded the aircraft isn't effective at such missions. Gilmore, the Pentagon's director of operational testing and evaluation, in a report expected to be

released Wednesday, “found the aircraft is not effective for the mission of hunting submarines or performing reconnaissance over large areas due to a number of major deficiencies,” Speier said. “So tell me why the department decided to go into full-rate production anyway,” she said, referring to the Pentagon’s January 3rd authorization to increase production of the aircraft.

Kendall replied that the P-8 is being fielded in phases with incremental advances in technology. “The capabilities that the DOT&E report talked about not being there are underway. They’re coming,” he said. “We’re going to move onto wider-area surveillance capabilities I think within a few years. So the aircraft actually is, I think, a relatively successful program despite the tone of that report.”

“So you just dispute the report outright?” Speier asked.

“The report is factually correct but it doesn’t acknowledge the fact that this was the plan,” Kendall said. “The plan was to develop a certain set and field a certain set of initial capabilities for local anti-submarine warfare capabilities and then add capabilities to that in increments. It’s an acquisition strategy that has been used on a number of programs.”

When Speier asked whether the plane’s other mission components were performing to task, Kendall said the aircraft will initially be able to conduct anti-submarine warfare, or ASW, missions over a local area. After receiving additional sensor and processing packages, it will be able to do similar operations over a wider area, he said. “But have we continued the production of this particular component, even though it has major deficiencies is my question,” Speier said. “When you say deficiencies, what that means is, it can’t do certain things,” Kendall replied. “It doesn’t mean that it’s a bad design. It doesn’t mean that there are problems with the airplane. It’s a very good product.”

The Pentagon’s inspector general’s office in a report last year said the Navy needs to conduct more “critical testing” of the aircraft deciding to buy production models of the plane. The manufacturer later dismissed the report, saying it was satisfying the service’s flight-testing program.

The P-8 Poseidon made by Chicago-based Boeing is based on the company’s commercial 737-800 twin-engine narrow-body airliner. The naval version is designed to replace the P-3C Orion made by Bethesda, Maryland-based Lockheed Martin Corp, in conducting long-range missions to hunt submarines, among other ships, and collect intelligence. Six of the P-8 planes in recent months were transferred to the Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan, as part of the so-called Pacific pivot.

“This is a super aircraft,” Adm. Harry Harris, commander of the Navy’s Pacific Fleet, said after flying in one as part of an eight-hour maritime surveillance mission last week over the East China Sea, according to an official press release. “In my opinion, the P-8A is exceeding its key performance parameters by a wide margin.”

DOD Buzz article by Brendan McGarry

BOEING SURVEILLANCE PLANE NOT YET EFFECTIVE (Businessweek 01/23/2014):

A new Boeing Co. (BA:US) surveillance aircraft deployed to Japan last month isn’t yet effective at hunting submarines or performing reconnaissance over large areas -- two of its main missions, the Pentagon’s weapons tester found.

Flaws in the \$35 billion program included the plane’s radar performance, sensor integration and data transfer, Michael Gilmore, chief of the Pentagon testing office, wrote in his annual report on major weapons, which has yet to be released. He said the new P-8A Poseidon exhibited “all of the major deficiencies” identified in earlier exercises when subjected to more stressful realistic combat testing from September 2012 to March 2013.

“Many of these deficiencies” led Gilmore to determine that the P-8A “is not effective for the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission and is not effective for wide area anti-submarine search,” he said in a section of the report obtained by Bloomberg News. The Navy plans to conduct additional testing “to verify the correction of some deficiencies,” he wrote.

Gilmore’s conclusions suggest the initial aircraft in the program -- which packs a modified Boeing 737-800 with radar and sensors -- aren’t ready for deployment. Among its primary missions is tracking Chinese submarines. Six of the planes have been deployed to Japan supporting 7th Fleet maritime patrol operations at Naval Air Facility Atsugi as part of the U.S. strategic pivot to the Asia-Pacific region.

Vice Admiral Robert Thomas, commander of the 7th Fleet, said in a Jan. 10 press release that the aircraft “represents a significant improvement” over the older P-3 Orion from Lockheed Martin Corp. (LMT:US), “providing the opportunity to detect, track and report on more targets than ever before.”

Chicago-based Boeing last month delivered the 13th of what’s to be a 113-aircraft program. The Navy in November declared the aircraft ready for combat deployment after determining the criteria for performing effective patrols “were fully met,” Lieutenant Caroline Hutcheson, a Navy spokeswoman, said in a telephone interview.

“The P-8A was ready, needed in theater, and continues to more than meet fleet commanders’ expectations,” she said. Hutcheson said Gilmore’s office has “consistently highlighted both effective warfare areas as well as recommendations for areas to revisit.” “Most issues cited have been collectively identified” and the Navy developed “software upgrades to correct deficiencies” she said.

Boeing spokesman Charles Ramey said in an e-mailed statement that he hadn’t seen Gilmore’s report and was unable to comment directly. “Feedback we’ve received to date is that the Navy is very happy with the P-8A’s performance,” he said. “As always, Boeing will work hand in hand with the Navy to support any issues that come up.” Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, during a trip to Japan in October, lauded the P-8A’s “cutting-edge technologies.”

Gilmore spokeswoman Jennifer Elzea said the test office concluded the aircraft was effective in providing small-area searches similar to the P-3C Orion it’s replacing. The aircraft also is effective in conducting “unarmed anti-surface warfare missions,” and its radar and supporting sensors “provide an effective, all-weather surface target search,” she said in an e-mailed statement.

Gilmore’s office also concluded the airframe is reliable, offering “significant improvements in hardware reliability, maintainability and availability” over the P-3C, she said. Overall, the Boeing system “provides increased range, payload and speed,” she said.

Gilmore’s report said the recent realistic combat testing confirmed earlier results on flaws in the P-8’s radar “and revealed the operational implications of the radar’s limitations for some targets.” It said details are classified. Raytheon Co. makes the ocean and land-surveillance radar.

Deficiencies with on-board electronics to detect enemy anti-aircraft radar “limited threat detection” while “seriously degrading capabilities and aircraft survivability across all major missions,” the report found. Northrop Grumman Corp (NOC:US) makes the “Electronic Support Measures” equipment.

Elzea said the Navy is conducting additional testing “to evaluate several system technical improvements” that will be assessed by Gilmore’s office “as they are delivered.” The Navy has plans for fielding two sets of aircraft upgrades to “improve anti-submarine warfare capability over several

years” and has developed “an adequate test and evaluation master plan” to evaluate improvements, she said.

Businessweek article by Tony Capaccio

SOUTHFIELD STARTS 2014 IN UNCERTAIN TERRITORY (Patriot Ledger 01/04/2014):

WEYMOUTH - The new year could bring big changes for the SouthField project, but just how those changes might end up looking like is anyone’s guess, say lawmakers and observers who’ve been watching the latest controversy over the stalled redevelopment unfold. The project ended 2013 with its master developer, Starwood Land Ventures, and its governing body, South Shore Tri-Town Development Corp., at loggerheads over a sweeping overhaul proposed by Starwood. The proposal would change the project’s governance and its relationship with the three towns in which the former air base is situated: Weymouth, Abington and Rockland.

Officials in Rockland have joined Tri-Town in opposing the changes, which would slash Tri-Town’s authority and shift responsibility to the towns. Weymouth and Abington officials are still eying the proposal but appear far from endorsing it. And lawmakers are still reluctant to say where they would come down if the developer’s plans ever make it to Beacon Hill. But lawmakers and outside observers say there could be some kind of compromise in 2014. “I think the project does move forward in some shape and form,” said Peter Forman, president and CEO of the South Shore Chamber of Commerce. “It’s just going to be a question of how smooth that progress is and how soon in the year it happens.”

SouthField is the planned residential and commercial development on the site of the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station. The project faces major obstacles, including a lack of water and sewer capacity, incomplete roads and an inability to draw commercial development. Plans for SouthField include 2,855 homes and apartments and 900,000 to 2 million square feet of commercial space. About 500 people on the former base now.

The stakes appear high in the standoff over Starwood’s proposed changes. Tri-Town has threatened to kick Starwood off the project, and Starwood has hinted it could walk away if it doesn’t get sweeping changes through the Legislature by the July 31 end of the Legislature’s formal session. Both sides have accused each other of violating the contract between them.

Tri-Town CEO Kevin Donovan said he’s hoping Starwood will come back to negotiate proposed changes in the new year. Matthew Barry, a vice president at Starwood, said he’s still hoping to build consensus, but if the changes don’t go through by this summer, the company “would look to move on to other opportunities.”

Abington Town Manager Rick LaFond said hesitation from lawmakers to back anything that doesn’t win support from their constituents could push Starwood back to the bargaining table with Tri-Town. “I think that’s the direction you’re going to see this year, and I think that’s going to prompt Starwood to forge a working relationship with Tri-Town,” he said. “I think that’s the inevitable approach.”

Starwood’s proposal would slash Tri-Town’s authority and shift responsibility for public services to each town for its section of the former base in exchange for collecting taxes on the land. The developer has also proposed to take over from Tri-Town responsibility to set up additional water and sewer capacity and is proposing the state take over the cost of completing a parkway across the site. The developer says the changes would mean a windfall for the communities, but Tri-Town says its analysis shows that they would saddle the towns with debt.

State Sen. John Keenan, D-Quincy, whose district includes Abington and Rockland, said he's hopeful that the two sides will settle on a compromise. "I think it'll be sorted out. When in the next year, I don't know," he said. "I think ultimately there will be some sort of resolution. I think there has to be."

State Sen. Robert Hedlund, R-Weymouth, said there is a wide consensus that the 2008 legislation that broadened Tri-Town's authority and laid out plans for the redevelopment needs to be updated, but there's little agreement on how to do that. "I think that's the biggest complication," he said. As for how that shakes out in three town halls, Tri-Town's headquarters and the House and Senate chambers in 2014, that's impossible to predict, Hedlund said.

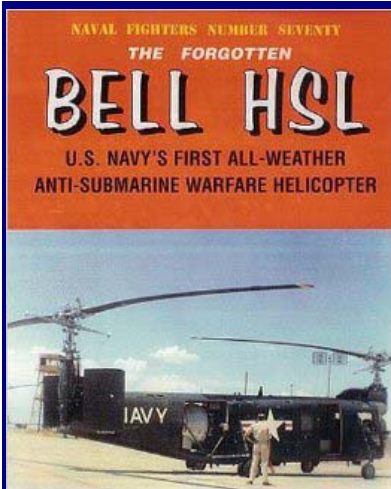
Patriot Ledger article by Christian Schiavone

VP-913 SQUADRON PATCHES AVAILABLE:



McGrogan's Patch Designs has VP-913 squadron patches available. They are 4.5 inches tall by 4 inches wide and cost \$7 each plus shipping. VP-913 was a reserve patrol squadron that was operational at NAS South Weymouth from 1956 to 1968. To order, go to www.mcgrogans.com on the Internet or call 1-208-762-4481.

RECOMMENDED READING:



Here's the book and subject that author Tommy H. Tomason will be presenting at the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on Saturday April 26th as described above in this newsletter. The odd twin-rotor Bell HSL is the helicopter that pioneered "dipping sonar". Although HSLs were never assigned to NAS South Weymouth, and in fact they never really went into operational service, they were the ancestors of the SH-34s, SH-3s, and SH-2s that served with the HS and HSL squadrons that were on the base over the years. If you're in the eastern Massachusetts area come see author Tomason at the museum and buy an autographed copy of his book. If you can't make it to the museum or can't wait until April you can buy a copy for less than \$20 on-line at www.amazon.com.

ON THE INTERNET:

Here are a few military history web sites that will keep you occupied for many hours if you are looking to kill some time on the Internet:

- WW2 European Theater (ETO): http://acepilots.com/usaaf_eto_aces.html
- WW2 Pacific Theater (PTO): http://acepilots.com/usaaf_pto_aces.html
- WW2 US Navy Aces: http://acepilots.com/usn_aces.html

- WW2 Mediterranean (MTO): http://acepilots.com/usaaf_mto_aces.html
- Korean War Aces: http://acepilots.com/korea_aces.html
- Vietnam Era Aces: <http://acepilots.com/vietnam/main.html>
- Airplanes: <http://acepilots.com/>
- WW2 Fighters: <http://acepilots.com/planes/main.html#fighters>
- WW2 Bombers: <http://acepilots.com/planes/main.html#bombers>
- WW2 Airplane Pictures: <http://acepilots.com/archives/main.html>
- Postwar Jets: <http://acepilots.com/jets/main.html>

Also, please note that there are Facebook groups on the Internet for VP-92, NAS South Weymouth, and NAS Brunswick. Go to www.facebook.com and search for keywords “VP-92”, “NAS South Weymouth”, and “NAS Brunswick”.

The VP Navy web site at www.vpnavy.org has large sections devoted to NAS Squantum, NAS South Weymouth, and NAS Brunswick and to every VP and VS squadron that the Navy ever had. The site is very easy to use. It has many photos and e-mail addresses of many people organized by base and squadron affiliation.

MONTHLY MEETING:

Please note that we will be meeting for lunch on the last Thursday of every month at Waxy O’Connor’s Irish Pub at 94 Hartwell St. in Lexington, MA from 11:30 to 13:30 instead of at the Hanscom Field club until further notice. Please join us if you can. The pub is just outside the Hanscom Field Hartwell gate.

PARTING SHOTS:



ABOVE: Card game in the back of a VP-92 P-3C sometime during the late 1990s.



ABOVE: VP-92 maintenance crew at Roosevelt Roads during the late 1990s. **BELOW:** VP-92 personnel standing quarters at NAS Brunswick not long before the squadron was decommissioned.



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

