



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 67

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

MARCH 2017

Welcome to another edition of the VP Association newsletter. Until further notice please direct all VP Association-related inquiries or correspondence to Marc Frattasio, PO Box 30, Pembroke MA 02339, 781-294-4491, marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

RECCO:



ABOVE: Here's a photo taken in February 1960 for all our members who flew Grumman S2F Trackers before the last two reserve VS squadrons were disestablished at NAS South Weymouth in 1970. If you have similar things to share contact Marc J. Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com. Also, a friendly reminder that if you are interested in the S2F then Tommy Thomason's recent book on the subject is a must-have item. You can check this book out on-line at www.ginterbooks.com.

FINAL FLIGHTS:

Paul "Lumpy" Lancaster, Charlie Rector, and Fred Squires passed away recently. All three were in VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth.

ILL SHIPMATE IN NEED OF CHEERING UP:

Tom O'Connor, who served in a number of VS and VP squadrons at NAS South Weymouth, is undergoing radiation treatments for cancer. You can contact him at tom_oconnor2001@yahoo.com.

THE ADMIN FUND:

The VP Association has no dues but contributions are welcome to help defray the cost of web site hosting, postage, and other expenses. A big "thank you" to Ray Beauchamin for his recent donation.

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

If you have an e-mail address and get your newsletter in the mail please contact George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com ASAP so we can send it to you via e-mail. Remember, we do not charge dues and operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. If you have an e-mail address and get a paper newsletter it would be better for us to send it via e-mail.

LOST CONTACT:

Please inform George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com when your home or e-mail address changes so we can update our database. We need contact information for Donald Ball and Manny Kramer. Please new contact info for Ed Peabody's at ed.peabody69@gmail.com and for Jerome Perrone at 24063 Redfish Cove Drive, Punta Gorda FL 33955, 941-621-8459 and dad6991@gmail.com.

VP-92 10TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION:

Although anybody is welcome to join us, the VP Association is basically the alumni association for VP-92 and its predecessor reserve patrol squadrons. As you should know, VP-92 was officially disestablished on November 30, 2007 at NAS Brunswick, ending a sixty-year heritage of USNR patrol aviation in New England. 2017 will mark the 10th anniversary of the disestablishment of VP-92.

This is an important milestone that must be commemorated. Former AWC Scott Savelle, with the help of other former squadron personnel, is organizing a reunion event to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the decommissioning of VP-92. This event will be held in Brunswick, Maine over the weekend of Friday August 25th through Sunday the 27th. Please note that this weekend coincides with the appearance of the Navy's Blue Angels flight demonstration team at the Great State of Maine Air Show on old NAS Brunswick on Saturday and Sunday.

There will be a full weekend of activities starting on Friday night. The main event will be a squadron picnic style event on the grounds of Flight Deck Brewing on Saturday. Flight Deck is a brewpub that recently opened on old NAS Brunswick across from the static display P-3 Orion. This will be an outdoor, fully-catered, rain or shine event. More details and cost information will be provided as this event approaches. Periodically check the VP Association web site at www.vpassociation.org or the VP-92 Alumni group on Facebook at www.facebook.com as information will be posted there from time to time.

We have been asked not to hold a VP Association reunion in 2017 and encourage all members to consider going to the VP-92 10th Anniversary Reunion instead. We are complying with this request and are asking all members to consider going to Brunswick to attend this important squadron reunion.

There is currently a block of 49 rooms at three Brunswick area hotels and 15 rooms at one hotel in Freeport under the group name "Patrol Squadron 92 Reunion". All blocks are for Friday and Saturday night (August 25th and 26th). Information for these hotels follows:

- Best Western Plus Brunswick Bath, 71 Gurnet Road, Brunswick, ME 04011, 207-725-5251. Holding 6 rooms with king-size beds at \$155.96 + tax.

- Days Inn - Brunswick Bath Area, 224 Bath Road, Brunswick, ME 04011, 207-725-8883 and 866-460-7456. Holding 35 rooms with two double beds each at \$119.00 + tax. Note, all rooms not booked by June 1st will be dropped from the room blocks and will go back in the inventory.
- Comfort Inn, 199 Pleasant Street, Brunswick, ME 04011, 207-729-1129. Holding 8 rooms (2 doubles, 6 king sized) at \$153.00 + tax.
- Casco Bay Inn, 107 US Route One, Freeport, ME 04032, 207-865-4925. Holding 8 double queens and 7 king rooms at \$145.00 + tax. They can accommodate guests with mobility issues.

NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH 20TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION:

NAS South Weymouth was closed 20 years ago on September 30th 1997. To commemorate the old base, a 20th anniversary reunion will be held at the Randolph Elks Hall at 21 School Street in Randolph, Massachusetts on Saturday September 30, 2017. Please note that this is about the same date that we normally hold the VP Association reunion. Although we strongly encourage all VP Association members to go to the VP-92 10th anniversary reunion event in July or August, those who can't travel to Maine are welcome to come to the NAS South Weymouth event in September.

The NAS South Weymouth reunion will run from noon to 5 PM. It will include memorabilia displays, a continuous slide show of historic photos, two guest speakers, a presentation on the history of the base, and a buffet meal. Everyone who goes will get a special commemorative NAS South Weymouth polo shirt based upon an actual design that was sold at the Navy Exchange on the base during its final years. The ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth will be open from 9 AM to noon on the day of the reunion for all attendees to visit.

The NAS South Weymouth 20th anniversary reunion will cost about \$50 per person. Reservations will be required in advance (tickets will not be sold at the door) and will be limited to 230 people. There is also a cutoff date, August 1st, after which no more reservations will be accepted. All funds collected above the cost of organizing this event will be donated to the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum. Reservations will be taken starting in March. Go to the ANA Patriot Squadron's web site at www.anapatriotsquadron.org for more details. Please note that reservations will be taken first-come first-served. If you want to attend this event please print out and mail in a reservation form as soon as it appears on the Patriot Squadron web site to avoid possible disappointment.

MPA REUNION AND SYMPOSIUM:

The Maritime Patrol Association will hold its annual reunion and symposium at NAS Jacksonville from April 26th to the 28th with events every day. For information go to <http://maritimepatrolassociation.org>.

RUSSIAN SPY SHIP LEAVES CT COAST, SPOTTED NEAR VA (New York Daily News 2/17):

The Russian spy ship previously seen loitering off the coast of Connecticut has found a new place to anchor. The vessel, named Viktor Leonov, is now positioned northeast of Norfolk, Virginia, ABC News reported. The ship was spotted Wednesday 30 miles south of a Navy submarine base in New London, Connecticut. It spent about 24 hours there before it set sail. By Thursday morning, the ship was seen loitering 75 miles northeast of Norfolk.

Although the ship has become a source of concern for some people, officials said there is nothing to worry about and the spy ship is operating in international waters and gathering information about U.S. Navy submarine operations. "It's lawful (and) similar to operations we do around the world," Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis told reporters on Friday.

During a press conference Thursday, Donald Trump joked about the ship's lurking presence — which some might say is trailing the President who is currently in South Carolina — saying his critics probably think the "greatest thing" he could do is shoot the ship "right out of the water." "Everyone in

this country's going to say, 'Oh, it's so great,'" he continued. "That's not great. ... I would love to be able to get along with Russia."

This isn't the first time Viktor Leonov was seen loitering in international waters near the U.S. coast. In 2014 and 2015 the ship was seen near the submarine base at King's Bay, Georgia. According to CBS News, the ship is expected to eventually head in the direction of Cuba.

New York Daily News article by Minyvonne Burke

RUSSIAN SPY SHIP LURKS OFF CONNECTICUT COAST (CNN 2/15):

A Russian spy ship sits 30 miles off the coast of Connecticut, a US defense official told CNN, while an armed Russian warplane recently carried out a "mock attack" against a US ship. This is the farthest north the Russian spy vessel has ever ventured, according to US defense officials.

CNN reported that the Leonov, which conducted similar patrols in 2014 and 2015, was off the coast of Delaware Wednesday, but typically it only travels as far as Virginia. The ship is based with Russia's northern fleet on the North Sea but had stopped over in Cuba before conducting its patrol along the Atlantic Coast and is expected to return there following its latest mission. The vessel is outfitted with a variety of high-tech spying equipment and is designed to intercept signals intelligence. The official said that the US Navy is "keeping a close eye on it."

The Leonov is a Vishnya-class spy ship, as is a Russian vessel that trailed the US ship that encountered close-flying Russian aircraft in the Black Sea on Friday. The USS Porter was sailing in the Black Sea when it had three encounters with Russian aircraft Friday. They were deemed unsafe and unprofessional because of how close the Russian planes flew to the American destroyer, according to a senior defense official. The Pentagon later released pictures of the encounter.

Another defense official said that one of the planes, an armed Su-24 attack jet, flew within 200 yards of the Porter, traveling at a speed of 500 knots (about 570 mph) and flying 300 feet above the water. The Navy said the aircraft did not cross the deck of the Porter but assessed that the Su-24 was carrying out a "mock attack" on the American ship, according to the official.

Two additional Russian aircraft, an IL-38 maritime patrol plane and another Su-24 jet, also flew nearby. The Porter's crew attempted to radio the Russian planes but received no response. Moscow denied Tuesday that its aircraft had made any unsafe moves. Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov told Russian state media, "There has been no incident on February 10 involving flybys of Russian military planes in the Black Sea next to USS Porter."

The development coincided with reports that Russia had deployed a land-based intermediate range cruise missile, a move that one official labeled a violation of the 1987 arms control treaty.

CNN article by Ryan Brown and Barbara Starr

CHINESE CARRIER ENTERS SOUTH CHINA SEA AMID RENEWED TENSION (Newsmax 12/26):

A group of Chinese warships led by the country's sole aircraft carrier entered the top half of the South China Sea on Monday after passing south of Taiwan, the self-ruled island's Defense Ministry said of what China has termed a routine exercise. The move comes amid renewed tension over Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own, ineligible for state-to-state relations, following U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's telephone call with the island's president that upset Beijing. The Soviet-built Liaoning aircraft carrier has taken part in previous exercises, including some in the South China Sea, but China is years away from perfecting carrier operations similar to those the United States has practiced for decades.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry said the carrier, accompanied by five vessels, passed southeast of the Pratas Islands, which are controlled by Taiwan, heading southwest. The carrier group earlier passed 90 nautical miles south of Taiwan's southernmost point via the Bashi Channel, between Taiwan and the Philippines. "Staying vigilant and flexible has always been the normal method of maintaining airspace security," said ministry spokesman Chen Chung-chi, declining to say whether Taiwan fighter jets were scrambled or if submarines had been deployed. Chen said the ministry was continuing to "monitor and grasp the situation". Senior Taiwan opposition Nationalist lawmaker Johnny Chiang said the Liaoning exercise was China's signal to the United States that it has broken through the "first island chain", an area that includes Japan's Ryukyu Islands and Taiwan.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said people should not read too much into what the carrier was up to, as its movements were within the law. "Our Liaoning should enjoy in accordance with the law freedom of navigation and overflight as set by international law, and we hope all sides can respect this right of China's," she told a daily news briefing. Influential state-run Chinese tabloid the Global Times said the exercise showed how the carrier was improving its combat capabilities and that it should now sail even further afield. "The Chinese fleet will cruise to the Eastern Pacific sooner or later. When China's aircraft carrier fleet appears in offshore areas of the U.S. one day, it will trigger intense thinking about maritime rules," the newspaper said in an editorial.

China has been angered recently by U.S. naval patrols near islands that China claims in the South China Sea. This month, a Chinese navy ship seized a U.S. underwater drone in the South China Sea. China later returned it. Japan said late on Sunday it had spotted six Chinese naval vessels including the Liaoning traveling through the passage between Miyako and Okinawa and into the Pacific. Japan's top government spokesman said on Monday the voyage showed China's expanding military capability and Japan was closely monitoring it.

China's air force conducted long-range drills this month above the East and South China Seas that rattled Japan and Taiwan. China said those exercises were also routine. Last December, the defense ministry confirmed China was building a second aircraft carrier but its launch date is unclear. The aircraft carrier program is a state secret. Beijing could build multiple aircraft carriers over the next 15 years, the Pentagon said in a report last year. China claims most of the South China Sea through which about \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year. Neighbors Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also have claims.

RATINGS RESTORED (Navy Times 12/20):

Navy leaders are reversing their controversial decision to eliminate sailors' ratings and will restore job titles across the fleet, according to a Navy message set for release Wednesday. Effective immediately, enlisted sailors will officially regain their ratings, the traditional job titles that have inspired a deep cultural loyalty and that have defined enlisted career tracks for generations, Navy officials said.

The move comes three months after the Navy stunned sailors in September by eliminating ratings titles, including those such as boatswain's mate that dated back to the founding of the service. The extraordinarily rare move comes after a fierce backlash from the fleet that became a distraction from the Navy's broader effort to reform the antiquated personnel system, Navy officials said.

Adm. John Richardson, the chief of naval operations, called it a "course correction" and acknowledged the overwhelmingly negative reaction from the fleet was a key factor in the decision. "We have learned from you, and so effective immediately, all rating names are restored," Richardson wrote in a Navy message set for release Wednesday. A copy of the message was obtained by Navy Times Tuesday.

Cmdr. Chris Servello, Richardson's spokesman, confirmed Tuesday night that the Navy planned to restore ratings Wednesday and that a fleet-wide message from the CNO would be released online in the morning, along with more details from CNO and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Steven Giordano. Though the ratings have been restored, change still lies ahead as the Navy plans to press ahead with its broader effort to fundamentally change the rigid personnel system and make career paths more flexible in the future.

"The feedback from current and former Sailors has been consistent that there is wide support for the flexibility that the plan offers, but the removal of rating titles detracted from accomplishing our major goals," Richardson wrote. "There is a way to have the benefits of the rating modernization program without removing rating titles," the CNO wrote in the message. "This course correction doesn't mean our work is done – rating modernization will continue for all the right reason," Richardson wrote. "Modernizing our industrial-age personnel system in order to provide Sailors choice and flexibility still remains a priority for us." These changes will ultimately mean that sailors' titles may have to change in the future, Richardson continues, but he's going to solicit sailor feedback.

As early word of the restoration spread on social media Tuesday night, many sailors celebrated the news, both because they welcomed the return of the traditional titles but also because the decision showed that the Navy's leadership was responsive to the concerns of sailors. "Nobody wanted to see ratings taken away. The traditions and identities associated with them are undeniable. My sailors will be relieved and gratified that their voices appear to have been heard," said one East Coast command master chief who spoke to Navy Times and asked not to be named to speak candidly about a high-level decision. "And I'm just glad I don't have to open a manual to find out what kind of Sailor I'm getting the next time orders cross my desk," the command master chief said.

The reversal did not surprise many sailors, though many believed it would come after a new Navy secretary takes over early in 2017. "I genuinely believe sailors expected this. I think we've all been waiting and watching to see if someone was going to take a step back and determine that an interesting idea had been pushed too quickly," the master chief said.

Despite the return of the rating titles, Navy officials say the underlying effort of the change in the first place – to give sailors greater flexibility in their careers to go from job to job – is still a top priority for Navy leaders. The broader goal is to allow more sailors to qualify for more skills and even advance in multiple ratings. To get there, the Navy is still planning to redraw community lines that distinguish skills by specialty today. "Today we have 12 career fields that group the [over 90] Navy enlisted ratings we have today," Vice Adm. Robert Burke, chief of naval personnel, told Navy Times in an October interview. "Most sailors will be hard pressed to tell you what they are because they are outdated for the most part."

The plan is to establish new career fields that are more broadly defined, Burke said, which should allow Navy leaders to tailor training within the fields and identify gaps that a sailor might need filled to take a specific billet that they would otherwise be qualified for, rating or no rating. For example, he gave a hypothetical example of a future career field that might be called "aviation maintenance." "We'd like to get to the point in the first step where we can move sailors between types of engines, and then maybe move between engines and airframes and into avionics, too — then possibly move between maintaining combat systems on an aircraft to combat systems on a ship."

This system is being designed to offer training throughout a sailor's career, instead of in a lump at the beginning as many ratings have today. It's also designed so it could also be adapted to qualify sailors in new skills to cross them into a related field. "You might have to go to a brick and mortar schoolhouse for a couple weeks, but it will be at a fleet concentration area so you are not going to

have to leave home,” Burke said. “You might only need enough training that could be accomplished through an app on a smart device, or through a distance learning course — or even by acquiring an additional certification at your current shop or at your squadron.”

It could even put more money in your pocket as you might qualify in something. “It will open up more timing options — maybe move into an NOS that has special or incentive pay or even a re-enlistment bonus.” The changes could also radicalize the advancement system and has Navy leaders discussing to possibility of killing advancement exams all together. “I think that’s one possibility we’re looking at,” Burke said in the interview. “But we’re just getting started in deciding where we need to go with the advancement exams.”

Navy Times article by David Larter and Mark Farnam

CHINA AGREES TO RETURN SEIZED UNDERWATER U.S. DRONE (Star-Telegram 12/17):

China has agreed to return a U.S. Navy underwater drone that it seized in a contested area of the South China Sea while a U.S. crew watched, the Pentagon said Saturday. “Through direct engagement with Chinese authorities, we have secured an understanding that the Chinese will return the UUV (underwater unmanned vehicle) to the United States,” Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said in a statement. Cook called China’s capture of the drone an “unlawful seizure.”

Crew members in a small boat dispatched from a People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Navy vessel stole the unmanned vehicle Thursday as U.S. crew members remotely operating the drone from aboard the USNS Bowditch, an oceanographic vessel, prepared to retrieve it themselves, Pentagon officials said. The incident occurred about 50 miles northwest of Subic Bay in the Philippines. The Pentagon reported the seizure Friday.

U.S. officials said the drone was conducting routine operations, specifically mapping the sea floor and collecting oceanographic data, although outside analysts said the vehicle may have been charting submarine routes used by China as it tries to exert naval control of the South China Sea, one of the globe’s most transited sea routes. The seizure threatened to unleash new tensions between the two countries, already highly charged amid a series of statements from President-elect Donald Trump.

Trump weighed in on the drone seizure in an early Saturday tweet to his more than 17 million followers. “China steals United States Navy research drone in international waters -- rips it out of water and takes it to China in unprecedented act,” Trump tweeted.

Trump irritated China two weeks ago by speaking by telephone with the president of Taiwan, which China considers a renegade province. Last week, Trump criticized China’s military buildup in the South China Sea, where it was built up artificial reefs and placed anti-missile systems on them in an effort to expand its maritime control.

In a press conference Friday, President Barack Obama suggested that Trump should “think it through” before changing a decades-old U.S. policy toward Taiwan in a way that might agitate China. “The idea of ‘one China’ is at the heart of their conception as a nation. And so if you are going to upend this understanding, you have to have thought through what the consequences are, because the Chinese will not treat that the way they will treat some other issues,” Obama said. “This goes to the core of how they see themselves, and their reaction on this issue could end up being very significant. That doesn’t mean you have to adhere to everything that’s been done in the past...it does mean that you have to think it through,” he added.

Star-Telegram article by Tim Johnson

RUSSIA TESTS NUCLEAR-CAPABLE DRONE SUB (Washington Free Beacon 12/08):

Russia conducted a test of a revolutionary nuclear-capable drone submarine that poses a major strategic threat to U.S. ports and harbors. U.S. intelligence agencies detected the test of the unmanned underwater vehicle, code-named Kanyon by the Pentagon, during its launch from a Sarov-class submarine on Nov. 27, said Pentagon officials familiar with reports of the test.

No details were available about the location or results of the test. Pentagon spokesman Capt. Jeff Davis declined to comment. “We closely monitor Russian underwater military developments, but we will not comment specifically about them,” Davis said.

Development of the new drone submarine was first disclosed by the Washington Free Beacon in September 2015 and then confirmed by the Russian military two months later. Russian officials said the secret program was mistakenly disclosed.

Russia calls the drone development program the “Ocean Multipurpose System ‘Status-6.’” The developer is Russia’s TsKB MT Rubin design bureau, the defense industry entity that builds all Russia’s submarines. U.S. intelligence agencies estimate the Kanyon secret underwater drone will be equipped with megaton-class warheads—the largest nuclear weapons in existence, with the killing power of millions of tons of TNT.

The weapon likely could be used against U.S. ports and bases, including those used by ballistic missile submarines. The two U.S. nuclear missile submarine bases are located at Kings Bay, Georgia, just north of the Florida border, and Puget Sound in Washington State.

Russia’s nuclear weapons development in recent years has alarmed American military leaders in part due to a new doctrine adopted by Moscow that increases its reliance on nuclear forces in a conflict. The new doctrine indicates that Russia will quickly escalate to the use of nuclear arms to compensate for its aging and outdated conventional forces.

U.S. intelligence agencies also have detected Russia’s development of new low-yield tactical nuclear weapons—arms that could be used more easily in regional conflicts. Former Pentagon official Mark Schneider said the test of the underwater nuclear delivery vehicle poses a new strategic threat. “The Status-6, a nuclear powered, nuclear armed drone submarine, is the most irresponsible nuclear weapons program that Putin’s Russia has come up with,” said Schneider, now with the National Institute for Public Policy. “Status-6 is designed to kill civilians by massive blast and fallout,” he said, noting that such targeting violates the law of armed conflict.

According to a Russian document disclosed on state television Nov. 10, 2015, the weapon is a self-propelled underwater craft capable of carrying a nuclear warhead up to 6,200 miles. The vehicle can submerge to a depth of 3,280 feet and travel at speeds of up to 56 knots.

A drawing of the drone submarine shows it will be nuclear powered, controlled by surface ships, and supported by a Sarov submarine. Russia’s Sarov has been described in Russian press reports as a diesel electric-powered vessel for testing new weapons and technology. It also has been described as an intelligence-gathering submarine.

The Russian document said Russia planned to build a Kanyon prototype by 2019 and begin testing that year. The Nov. 27 test indicates the document may have been a disinformation operation aimed at deceiving the United States about the program. U.S. intelligence agencies assessed that the 2015 leak was Moscow’s attempt to warn the United States about its displeasure with U.S. missile defenses in Europe and the deployment of missile defense ships to the region.

Russian presidential spokesman Dmitri Peskov told reporters one day after the leak that classified information had been accidentally disclosed—an unusual public admission of a security error that has raised concerns about false Russian strategic messaging. The Russian nuclear arms buildup has coincided with what U.S. officials say are unprecedented public statements by Russian leader Vladimir Putin about nuclear weapons in response to Western opposition to Moscow’s military annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean peninsula.

In addition to the nuclear-tipped drone, Russian nuclear modernization includes a new class of ballistic missile submarines, new submarine-launched ballistic missiles, two new land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, and a new long-range bomber. Russia also is building a new railroad-based missile system. The U.S. Navy is developing new underwater drones, but none will be nuclear armed.

Schneider, the former Pentagon official who has held a number of positions involving strategic weapons, said reports from Russia indicate the drone sub will be armed with a 100-megaton warhead. “The Russian government daily Rossiyskaya Gazeta reported that to achieve ‘extensive radioactive contamination’ the weapon ‘could envisage using the so-called cobalt bomb, a nuclear weapon designed to produce enhanced amounts of radioactive fallout compared to a regular atomic warhead,’” Schneider said. “A cobalt bomb is a ‘doomsday’ weapons concept conceived during the Cold War, but apparently never actually developed,” he said.

Testing of the drone, which is said to be powered by a nuclear reactor with limited shielding, poses environmental risks. A guidance failure could result in an undersea nuclear disaster. “The Obama State Department appears to be asleep at the helm on this issue,” Schneider said, noting the New START arms treaty requires notification of new offensive strategic weapons in a U.S.-Russia commission. “We could even propose a ban on such weapons,” Schneider said. “There is no indication from the Obama administration that any negotiations are underway, or that the U.S. has even raised the issue with Russia.”

During congressional testimony in December 2015, Rose Gottemoeller, then the undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, said the Russian nuclear-armed drone is a concern. “I know we are concerned about it; of course we are concerned about it as a threat to the United States,” said Gottemoeller, now NATO’s deputy secretary general. She noted that the system would pose a great threat if “widely put into operation.”

The Obama administration, however, took no action against Russia’s violation of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty. Retired Air Force Gen. Robert Kehler, former commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, has said development of the underwater nuclear strike vehicle is one element of a “troubling” Russian strategic nuclear buildup.

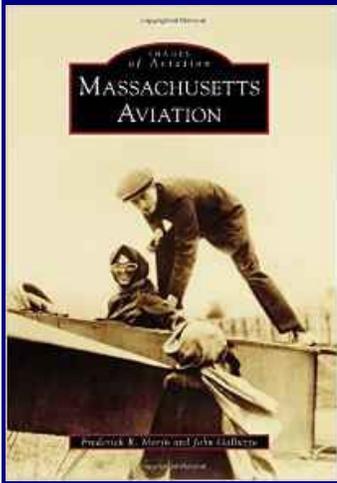
Rep. Mike Rogers (R., Ala.), chairman of the House subcommittee on strategic forces, has said that the Russians assert the nuclear drone submarine will be used to target coastal areas and inflict “unacceptable damage to a country’s territory by creating areas of wide radioactive contamination that would be unsuitable for military, economic, or other activity for long periods of time.” “What does it say about a country that feels that nuclear weapons are such a significant tool of its military and diplomatic strategy that it discloses systems in this manner?” Rogers asked during a House hearing. “And what does this say about a country that would invest resources in such a weapon? This is nuts.”

Pavel Podvig, a Russian nuclear forces watcher, stated two years ago that the Status-6 payload “looks like a massive dirty bomb,”—a nuclear device that kills with radiation as opposed to a combination of a nuclear blast and radiation. “A number of people noted that the description does not

necessarily exclude the possibility that the initial ‘damaging’ can be done by a regular nuclear device,” Podvig said. “Which only makes this whole thing even more insane—do they think that a nuclear weapon on its own would not inflict ‘unacceptable damage’?” he said.

Washington Free Beacon article by Bill Gertz

RECOMMENDED READING:



Those of you who were at our annual reunion last September should remember our guest speaker, author John Galluzzo, who gave a terrific presentation about NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth. Well, John has had a new book go into print since then, “Massachusetts Aviation”, which is shown here. This is another Arcadia Press “Images of America” photo album, and it’s filled with a couple of hundred terrific photos associated with the aviation history of Massachusetts. There are many photos of NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth in this book that should make it of great interest to all VP Association members. John Galluzzo will be at the upcoming NAS South Weymouth 20th anniversary reunion with copies of this book but if you can’t wait there’s a link to it posted on the “geedunk” page of our web site at www.vpassociation.org.

ON THE INTERNET:

George Driscoll recommends a video on the P-8A Poseidon at <http://www.aiirsource.com/take-a-rare-look-inside-us-navy-p-8a-poseidon-surveillance-aircraft>. He also suggests this comparison between the P-8A and the Japanese P-1 at <https://battlemachines.wordpress.com/2015/12/06/boeing-p-8a-vs-kawasaki-p-1-the-comparison-of-modern-mpas>. George Griffin suggests you check out a GIGANTIC 12-toof long (!) radio-controlled model P-3 Orion at <http://www.bylouddesign.com/products/p-3-orion>.

MONTHLY MEETING:

Members who can do so are welcome to join us 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. The pub is just outside the Hanscom Field Hartwell gate.

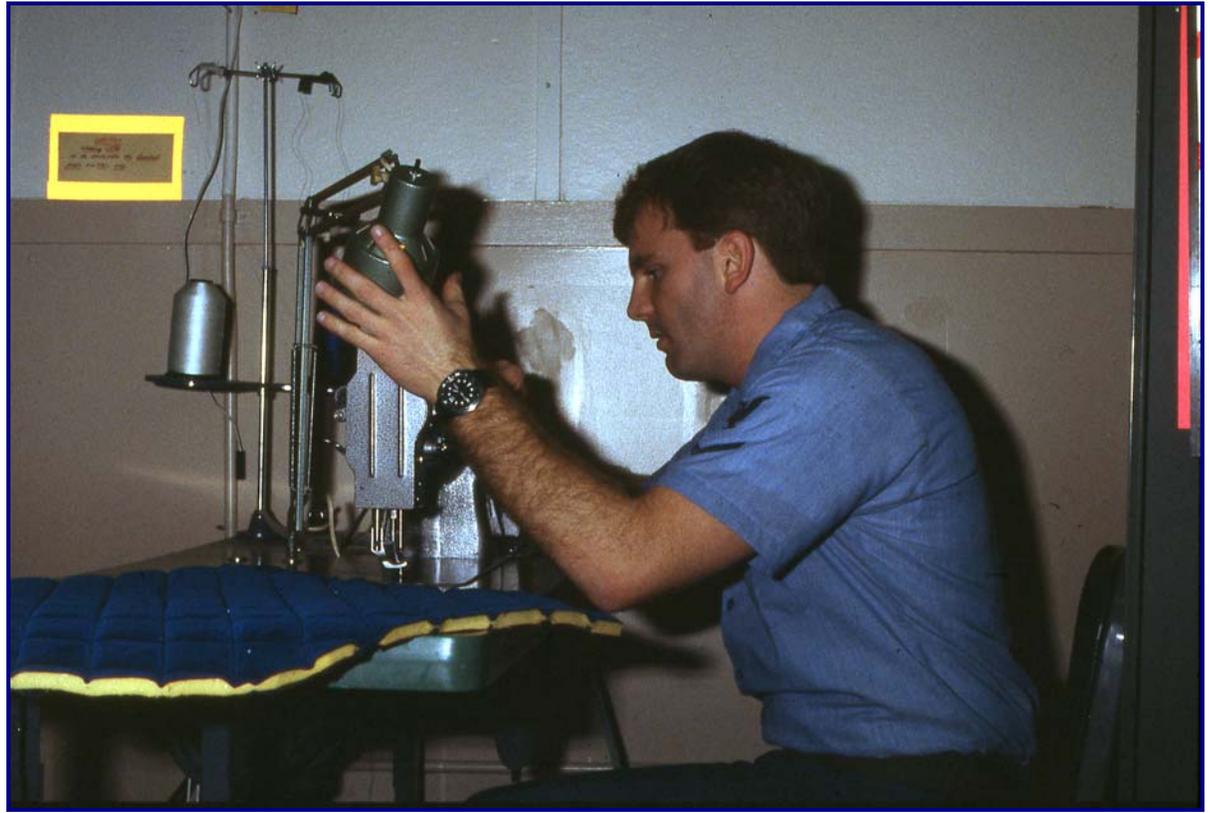
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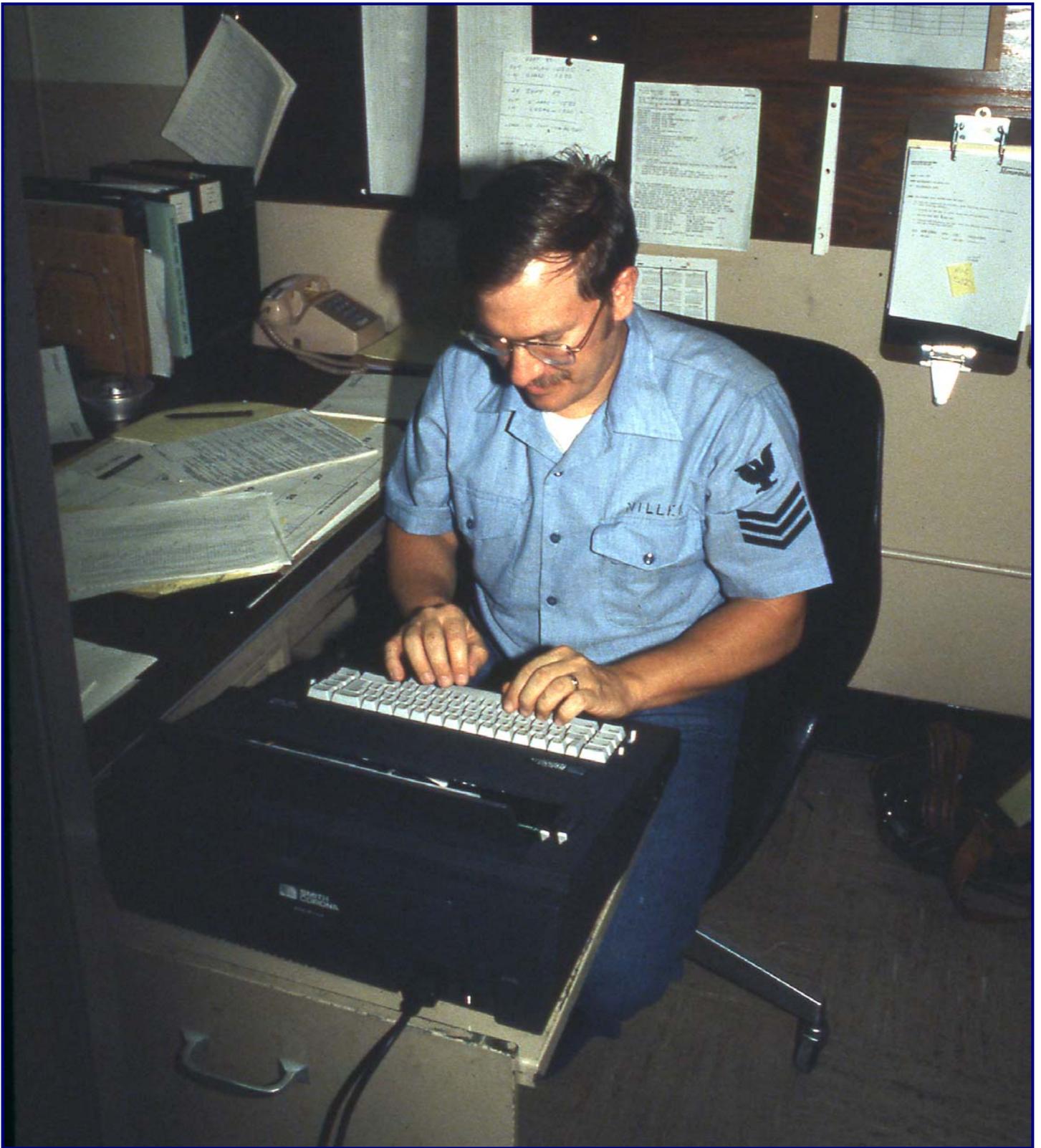


ABOVE: *VP-92 personnel inspection at NAS South Weymouth’s Hangar One in the late 1980s.*

RIGHT:
VP-92 PR2
working on
what appears
to be a VIP
seat cover in
the paraloft at
NAS South
Weymouth
sometime
during the
1980s.

BELOW:
Planeside
briefing on
board a VP-92
P-3C at NAS
South
Weymouth
during the
early 1990s.





ABOVE: VP-92 AZ in old Hangar One at NAS South Weymouth. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com



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

