



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

ISSUE 36

JUNE 2009

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 02359, 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:



Yikes, has it really more than TEN YEARS since the USNR was operating out of NAS South Weymouth? Here's P-3B "Lima Yankee Zero-Zero-One" parked at the west end of Hangar One on June 2, 1995 on the occasion of the next-to-last airshow held on the base before it closed. Many thanks to Tom Cuddy for this photo. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio.

FINAL FLIGHTS:

It is our sad duty to report the recent deaths of VP Association members Frank D. Heyer and George Mullen. Frank flew PBY Catalinas with VPB-92 during WW2 and George was in VP-911.

ILL SHIPMATES IN NEED OF CHEERING UP:

Several VP Association members, all former VP-10 people, have had recent health issues requiring hospitalization. These include Frank Dixon (quadruple bypass) at 186 Brook Road, Falmouth ME 04105, 207-797-2992, wmfedixon@cs.com; Dempsey James (chemo and radiation), 6234 Bradley Way, Virginia Beach VA 23464, 757-424-1266, dejams@aol.com; Don Shaw (hip replacement) at 541 Erie Road, Quakertown PA 18951, 215-536-0337, dj10@enter.net; and Bob Wilson (internal bleeding) at 1596 Broadway, South Portland ME 04106, 207-772-0555, vp10_archives@juno.com. Also, Walter O'Connell of VP-911 and VP-92, at 123 Colonel's Lane #4, South Weymouth MA 02189, 781-335-0553, wocon24376@aol.com, has been in and out of the hospital in recent months. Cards, calls, and e-mails from friends and former shipmates would be appreciated.

ANNUAL REUNION:

The VP Association's annual reunion banquet will be held at the Officer's Club at Hanscom AFB in Bedford, MA on Saturday September 26, 2009 from 1200 to 1700. The banquet, which will be buffet style again, costs \$40 per person and a mail-in reservation form is on the last page of this newsletter.

Attendance is limited, reservations are required in advance, and they will be taken on a first-come first served basis. Tickets will not be sold at the door. Please mail your reservation as soon as you can to prevent possible disappointment and so we can tell the caterer how many people to expect.

Hanscom AFB requires a military ID, active or retired, to be presented to the gate guards for entry under normal circumstances. If you do not have a military ID be sure to indicate this on the banquet reservation order form so your name can be added to the base's security access list for the reunion. All persons without a military ID will have to enter the base at the civilian gate, not the Hartwell gate. If you have any questions about this contact Bill Hanigan at 781-585-4950 or vpassociation@aol.com.

Anyone who wants to stay overnight should contact Hanscom AFB directly at 1-888-235-6343 for information regarding accommodations on the base or in the local area. Please try to get the word out about the reunion to as many of your old Squantum/SoWey/Brunswick reserve patrol squadron friends as possible. Don't assume that every former shipmate you're in contact with is affiliated with or aware of the VP Association. Guests, military or civilian, are also welcome to attend the reunion.

As in prior years tables will be available in a room adjacent to the banquet hall for displays of any memorabilia that you may wish to bring. If you have photos, cruise books, patches, caps, NATOPS manuals, or any other interesting memorabilia that you'd like to show off please bring it with you.

ANY INTEREST IN A SUMMER CLAMBAKE?

Al Firnrohr would like to know if there is any interest in getting together at the military campground at Fourth Cliff in Marshfield, MA sometime this summer for a traditional New England clam bake. Al knows a caterer and thinks he can make arrangements to provide littleneck clams, lobsters, beverages, etc., for about \$35 per person or so, depending upon number of people who participate. If this is something that you'd like to do, e-mail Al at almoef@aol.com or call him at 781-834-6462.

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 who do not have e-mail. We'd like to thank Marc Frattasio (via Lulu Press) and Eric Jensen for their recent contributions to the administration fund.

ADMIN FUND FUND-RAISERS:

If you missed out on buying a VP Association ball cap (P-2 Neptune or P-3 Orion styles) or a VP-92 polo shirt and wish to buy any (if we still have them) or would like to get your name on a waiting list in

the event we restock in the future please contact William Hanigan, 23 Parkview Terrace, Duxbury MA 02359, 781-585-4950, vpassociation@aol.com.



VP-911



VP-912



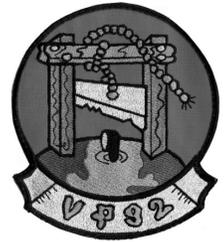
VP-913



VP-914



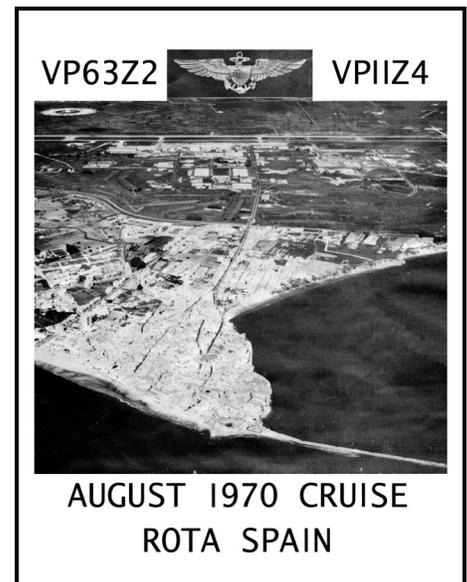
VP-915



VP-92

Bill Hanigan is still taking orders for the replica VP-911, VP-912, VP-913, VP-914, VP-915, and VP-92 (original guillotine insignia) squadron patches that we recently had commissioned. The VP-92 guillotine patches are now in but there have been delays in getting the other patches produced. They should be available soon and if the guillotine patches are any indicator of how the others will be, you'll be impressed. If you'd like to buy any of these patches please contact William Hanigan for current pricing and shipping information.

In August 1970 VP63Z2 and VP11Z4 went on AT together to NS Rota, Spain. When the squadrons returned to NAS South Weymouth, the base photo lab produced a little 19-page cruise book full of photos taken during this event. This vintage cruise book has been reproduced as a fund-raiser for the Admin Fund. It costs only \$12 plus shipping. To order on-line go to <http://www.lulu.com> and do a search on keywords "VP Association" and you'll find it and other special fund-raising books recently produced for the group. Your newsletter editor is willing to consider having other Squantum/South Weymouth/Brunswick reserve VP cruise books reproduced. If you have any that you like to loan or donate to the cause contact Marc J. Frattasio. Note, your editor has access to VP-92's 1978 and 1987/1988 cruise books. If others surface (at least one more was produced for a cruise with SP-2Hs in the early 1970s) then a compilation volume may be created.



Please note that copies of the books that were recently produced as fund-raisers for the VP Association's Admin Fund (the 1967 VP-910 cruise book reprint, the "Defender's History" reprint, the "Men of Squantum" reprint, and the "VP Association Sea Story Library: Volume One") are still available directly from the printer, Lulu Press. To order go to the Lulu Press web site on the Internet at <http://www.lulu.com> and do a search on the keywords "VP Association", "NAS South Weymouth" or "NAS Squantum" to find them. All the profits from the sales of these books go to the VP Association's admin fund.

LOST CONTACT:

Please let Bill Hanigan know whenever your street or e-mail address changes. Also, 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 as soon as possible so we can begin sending your newsletter to you by e-mail. We are presently seeking the current e-mail address for David O'Donnell of VP-92, who was formerly at mthome9th@aol.com.

RECENT CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

John J. McFadden (VP-92)
1022 Bristol Lane
Missouri City, TX 77459
281-208-6270
john.j.mcfadden@comcast.net

Robert McGuigan (VP-92)
1266 Brooklet South Drive
Brooklet, GA 30415
mcguigan@bulloch.net

James Ray Richardson
(VP-92)
2400 Barratt Creek BVLVD
Apartment 1209
678-386-8166
Marietta, GA 30066-4945
tommiesueg@gmail.com

Please note new e-mail addresses for Paul Harriman at harrimancynthia@yahoo.com, Bob Hickok at hickok1@myfairpoint.net, Daniel Johnson at daniel.a.johnson@comcast.net, Thomas O'Connor at toconnor3@maine.rr.com, and Charles Sylvia at cssylvia@myfairpoint.net.

NEW MEMBERS:

Sam Brass
vbrass@roadrunner.com
Raphael Coll (VP-62)
rafaelcoll@sbcglobal.com

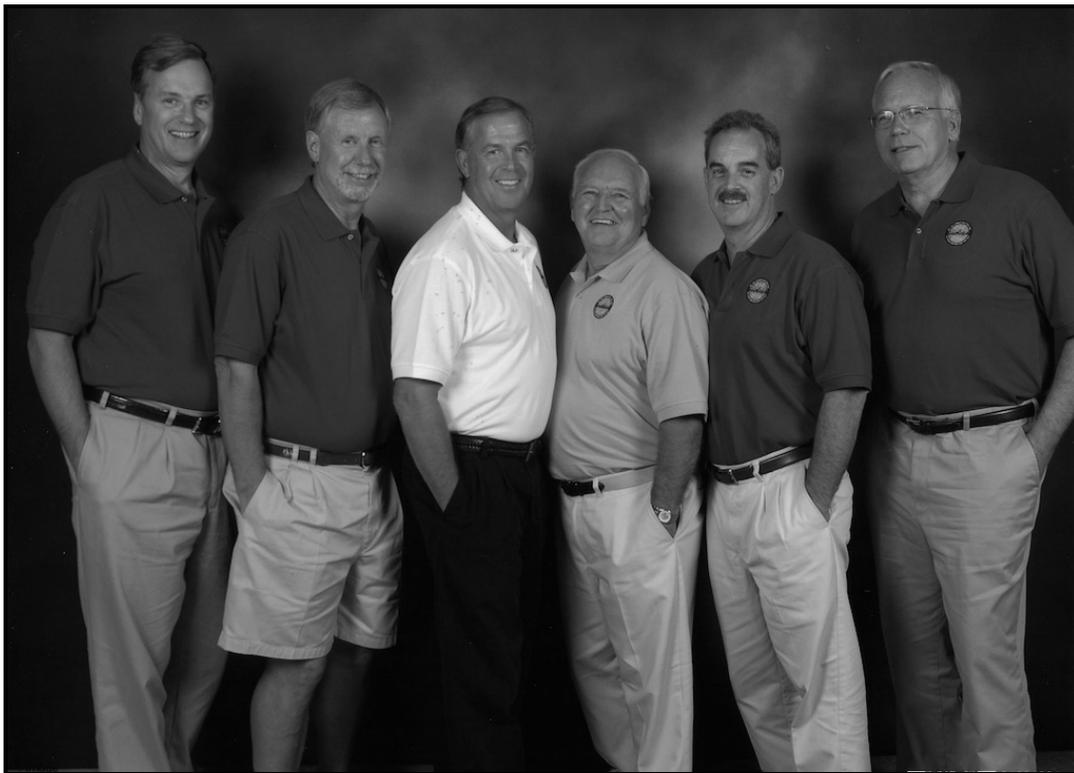
Frank Collins
wrenchmaster1@gmail.com
Bill Deane
wjdeane1@verizon.net

Gerald Durbin
gtdurbin@gmail.com
Mike McGann
nmcgann@yahoo.com

Wayne Seer
wseer@comcast.net
Rick Sinatra
bear6667@hotmail.com

VP-92 CAC1 CRUISE:

Some of the boys from VP-92's CAC1 (circa 1980) recently went on a cruise together. This particular cruise did not involve a gray ship, nor were there any aircraft landing on it! The attached picture of the boys was taken on Veterans day while cruising the Caribbean on the "Liberty of the Seas" cruise ship. If you look closely, you can see the CAC1 patch embroidered on our polo shirts. Bob Kowalewski had the original silk screening of the patch. He contacted a former Minuteman, Larry Daly, to have the shirts embroidered for the cruise. As you can imagine, there were no shortage of sea stories, not to mention the new sea stories and memories from this cruise. All in all, it was great to spend time with my former shipmates and their wives. We are looking forward to the next cruise.



Former VP-92 CAC1 crewmembers CAPT Jim Cunningham, AWC Bob Kowalewski, CDR Andy Berlo, AWC Ed Sabatini, AFCM Jim FitzGerald, and CDR Dick White are shown here on their recent cruise. Many thanks to Jim FitzGerald for this photo. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio.

CAPTAIN GERARD “DOC” HAYES IN IRAQ:

As reported previously, Captain Gerard Hayes, who VP-92 alumni will know as “Doc Hayes” is now serving on active duty with the Navy’s construction battalions (the SeaBees). He is now in Iraq. According to his wife Kerry, he’d appreciate letters and snacks that won’t melt and can be contacted at Gerard B. Hayes, NMCB 24/Co. H, FPO AP 96601-2401. For security reasons, do not reference the Doctor’s rank in any letters or packages sent to Iraq. Note, your newsletter editor recently sent Doc Hayes a box of goodies and it took a little less than two weeks to get from Pembroke, MA to Iraq.

HELP WANTED:

A non-profit organization called the Naval Aircraft Restoration Foundation, which is active in restoring former Navy aircraft as static displays at the Museum of Aviation at Robbins AFB in Georgia, is seeking donations of any size to help defray the estimated \$20,000 cost to move a Lockheed P2V-7 (SP-2H) fuselage that the group owns from Greybull, WI to the museum.

The group intends to restore the Neptune’s crew compartments back to their original Navy configurations and replace large sections of the skin panels with Plexiglas to allow museum visitors to view the interior. All donations are tax-deductible. For more information about the Naval Aircraft Restoration Foundation go to http://www.conniesurvivors.com/1-narf_may_2008.htm or contact the group’s treasurer Gerald Durbin (CDR USN-R) at gtdurbin@gmail.com.

SPACE AVAILABLE TRAVEL TIPS FROM AWCS GEORGE DRISCOLL (USNR-R):

At a recent Hanscom AFB luncheon, the subject turned to Space-A travel. Most had never even tried it. Since my wife and I have done a reasonable amount, it was suggested that I produce something for the retirees with travel tips we have learned over the past few years. The following is not intended to be all-inclusive, but will assist with the Space-a learning curve. If you have a blue retired military ID, you’re qualified. Make sure your spouse has an up-to-date dependents ID if he or she plans to accompany you. Both will need passports for overseas travel.

Preparation

Go to <http://www.militaryliving.com/store/newstore2.html> and purchase “Temporary Military Lodging” and “Space-A Travel”. Both are worth their weight in gold for a Space-A traveler and can be purchased online or at your local Exchange. Cheaper at the Exchange. Their website is worth visiting for all kinds of Space-A info.

Get yourself a generic e-mail address to use while traveling. I’ve found that I’ve had difficulty connecting to my Verizon web mail from military owned (Base library, public access in terminals) computers. [Http://www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com) is a good choice. When you login to shared computer, remember to uncheck “leave me logged in to this computer for two weeks”. Remember to “logout” when done. If you’re clever you can even import your Contact List from Outlook.

I email myself, to this generic email address, a list of all the links that I think I may need while away from home...bank, bill paying, the links attached to this document, etc. Obviously, don’t include login names or passwords/pin. We make photocopies of our passports, driver’s licenses, and Military Ids and each carries our own plus a copy of the other’s in the event the original is lost or stolen and needs to be replaced. Bury them securely in your carry-on luggage.

Get a phone prepaid phone card. The Exchange sells one put out by ATT. All you need to know is the access number for ATT for the country from which you’re calling. These ATT cards are usable from most hotel phones and many on-the street public phones. In some European countries, some public phones require a local phone card to get the public phone to work and give a dial tone. These cards can be purchased for around \$5 at Tobacco shops, found everywhere. Another option is to buy

a cheap prepaid Cellphone in the foreign country, about 10 Euros. Then buy a phone card for that phone's company. Fairly cheap rates within the European Union, but about one Euro/minute to call the US. If you have a US quad-band GSM cell phone (check with your wireless provider) you can use it in Europe. Verizon Wireless users need not apply as Verizon does not use GSM.

Notify your credit card company of your plans to be in another Country(s) or they may freeze your card. We forgot to do this in September and were in Paris when we found our card was frozen. It took a lot of time on the phone talking to one person after another to rectify the problem.

Sign-Up

All retirees are category VI (Cat-6), which means we are at the very bottom of the A/C boarding order. Cat-6 people are ranked by the date on which they signed-up for Space-A flights. You must sign-up for each and every base from which you expect to fly. A sign-up is valid for a period of 60 days with the person who signed-up 60 days ago having the best possibility of getting on a flight, while a person who signed-up today having the lowest chance. The trick here is to plan ahead by signing-up with all of the bases from which you may depart, while going outbound, about 45 days prior to your planned departure. Then sign-up for all bases from which you may depart on your return trip approximately 45 days prior to your expected return date. Once you fly from a base, your sign-up is used up and you must sign-up again for that base. A good idea is to immediately re-sign-up at the departure base upon arrival at your destination or leave a new sign-up sheet at the terminal desk before you actually depart. Keep track of your sign-up dates so as to keep a good high number, yet not have your sign-up expire before you get to use it. Do the math!

Sea Story: There we were, in Rota on day 60. If we didn't get out on the next flight home, we would have gone back to the bottom of the list. I guess you could say that was perfect planning.

The easiest method of base sign-up is done on-line. The link is at the bottom of this paragraph. This website allows you to sign-up for five bases at a whack. Fill in all the data. Border Documents refers to Passports. Leave blank the boxes regarding leave status. In the destinations, select four destinations and make the fifth "ALL". This way you don't have to be completely specific as to where you wish to end up in case plans change. It costs nothing to sign-up, so sign-up at all bases from which there is any possibility of an outbound or return departure. Then click "Send Request". The website will, in turn, send an email to you to verify your email address. You then must double-click the link sent in this email to forward your request to the bases you have selected. Make sure you click the link or your request will NOT be forwarded. The sign-up website will later send you a copy of your request. Print this email, as it is not unusual to get to a base to find they have no record of your sign-up. Seeing this printout will help convince the terminal people to update their computer with the correct sign-up date. They are usually pretty accommodating about doing this. If there some reluctance on the part on the desk agent (usually E-3 or 4), ask for a supervisor. Upon arrival at the terminal, don't forget to sign-in. <http://www.takeahop.org/signup>.

Another sea story: There we were, planning a departure on a C-5 from Stewart AFB, scheduled to fly to Dover, DE and on to Ramstein, Germany. Shortly before boarding, it was announced the itinerary had been changed to Charleston, SC and on to Rota, Spain. Being flexible, the first rule of Space-A, we said, "Hey, we like Rota". I immediately got on the Stewart DSN (AUTOVON), called Ramstein, cancelled our lodging reservations, and then called Rota and made new ones. We stayed in Rota for four days. Once there, why would you want leave immediately? Later we flew on to Germany, but that's another story.

Credit Cards and ATMs

We always carry at least two credit cards and an ATM card when traveling. ATMs are everywhere and will disburse the local currency. You will get the correct rate of exchange, plus a small fee,

charged to your local bank. No need for traveler's checks. Most local joints don't take them or charge a fee for cashing them. Using a credit card will also get you the correct rate of exchange. Capitol One is the only credit card (that I know of) that does not charge an exchange fee when making purchases in a foreign country. We use the credit card as much as possible and carry as little cash as possible. Our Capitol One gives "frequent flier miles", so the more we charge, the more points we get.

Mess Hall and Exchange Privileges in Foreign Countries

Due to individual Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) made with each host country, your privileges, as a retiree, will vary. For example, in Rota, Spain, you will have no exchange/commissary privileges and, depending upon the mood of the base CO, you may or may not eat in the mess hall. In Rota, there is Quick Mart, which you may use and where you can get most of the stuff you'll probably need. In Germany, no commissary, no exchange, no mess hall. In sunny Sicily, everything is available. NAS Sigonella is divided into two locations, NAS I, where the Navy Lodge is located and NAS II, where the terminal/commissary/exchange are located. NAS I, all new, looks like a California college campus; beautiful grounds, gym, library, and a mess hall with an outdoor patio...totally beautiful.

While on the subject of food: Bring plenty of snacks to the terminal. Amenities in MAC terminals vary widely. Norfolk has a large cafeteria where you can get meals and box lunches made to order. Dover has vending machines. McGuire has sort of a cafeteria that was not open while we were there. Stewart and Westover have essentially nothing. Rota has a food court. Ramstein has a Subway. But, the most important thing to remember is these food courts have limited hours, while flights go out at all times of the day and night. There are fast food restaurants on the bases, but again, limited hours plus a bit of a distance. You may find yourself passed through security and then hanging-out for several hours waiting at the boarding gate. Most MAC terminals allow the ordering of in-flight box lunches for about \$3.75. The lunches are exactly as you remember them from the P-2 and P-3 days.

Car Rental

We always arrange for a rental car prior to our arrival. Of course, traveling Space-A, you really can't be sure of your actual arrival time, but by making use of the phones and computers in the terminal you can always re-schedule the pick-up time and/or location. On-base car rental is the best for pick-up and drop-off, but if not available, Europcar (AUTO EUROPE) seems to usually have the best rates outside the bases in Europe. Using Europcar you can pick-up the car in one place and drop it at another. We once rented a car in Frankfurt and dropped it in Venice with a minimal drop charge. Unless you're planning to rent a very upscale car, expect to have a manual transmission, typically five or six-speed. Always request a diesel since diesel fuel is about 20% cheaper in Europe and the diesel car will get better gas mileage. Make sure your credit card has a decent limit on it as the rental agency will attach a \$3000 to \$5000 lock on the card until you return the car. Check with your credit card company to make sure they cover the Collision Damage Waiver (CDW) and for how long they will cover it. Typically the max is 30 days. If you plan to exceed 30 days, you may have to re-write the rental contract for another 30 days. The car rental companies have a certain amount of mandatory coverage that must be taken. Make sure that amount is stated in the quote. An International Driver's License is not necessary, but could be of help as it provides a translation of your U.S. license in a bunch of languages.

Last year was the first time that we had a GPS and cannot understand why we never had one before. It was awesome. Our TOM-TOM with European mapping did an outstanding job of guiding us around France and Germany. The one we bought even knew the posted speed limits and would warn us when we were speeding. Yes, it's possible to speed in Germany and I have a ticket to prove it. In the days before the GPS we found that we could always find our way into a city, but it was nearly impossible to find our way out without constant backtracking and when finally out having no idea

where we were. For European maps, I would recommend Michelin. AAA maps are just ok, but for detail you can't beat the Michelin.

Some bases have on-base shuttles which have limited hours of operation and may not run at all on weekends. For example: Ramstein consists of four, large, widely spread bases and when you're assigned quarters, the rooms may be on another base as much as 15 miles away from the terminal. When the shuttles aren't running the taxi fares can be outrageous. There is a new on-base hotel opening soon directly across the parking lot from the terminal. This will be a boon for Space-A folks.

Don't turn-in your rental car until the very last possible moment when leaving on a departing flight. Some rental agencies have a drop box in the terminal. We've actually checked our bags, gotten boarding passes and boarded the A/C when the flight was cancelled or the Plane Commander has decided that the plane is too heavy and all excess weight (Cat-6) must be offloaded. So hang on to your room (see below) and car as long as possible.

Keeping In Touch

We have just started to carry a very small, very lightweight ACER NetBook type laptop. It has built-in Wi-Fi and is great for keeping in touch with home, tracking flight schedules, local weather reports, and using the links in this document.

Lodging

For on-base lodging, you have, typically, two options, DOD Lodging (Air Force Inn or Navy Gateway Inn) <http://www.dodlodging.net> or Navy Lodge. The DOD lodging, Space-A for retirees, has advance sign-up as much as thirty days in advance with a maximum stay period of three nights with extensions available, to as little as same day check-in (1800) with a mandatory check-out by 1100 the next day. Cost is from \$35 to \$40 per night and usually quite nice. Dover AFB is very nice. The Navy Lodge allows the making of reservations up to thirty days in advance, but will run \$65 to \$70 per night. Don't use the 1-800-NAVYINN for making reservations. Call the lodge directly as the on-site desk staff has a much better handle on room availability than the central number does.

When flying to Rota or Sigonella and we can't get a reservation in DOD lodging, we will usually make reservations at the Navy Lodge and upon arrival try for the Gateway Inn or TML (Space-A). It's usually smart to guarantee your first night's arrival with a credit card, as your flight will probably be delayed and you don't want to end up sleeping in the terminal. It's also wise to not give up your room too soon when departing, since it's not unusual to have a flight delayed or postponed to the next day. Having a confirmed room, and not using it, is cheap insurance against having to sleep in the terminal or worse. Some terminals close when there are no flights being actively processed. This could mean ending up homeless and sleeping in a cardboard box or a dumpster...if you can find one not taken by all the other PAX who have no place to stay. Immediately use your cell phone to make room reservations before every other soon-to-be-homeless person in the terminal. Put the necessary phone numbers in memory on your phone before you need to use them.

Checking the Flight Schedule

One of the biggest hassles is the flight schedule. Since 9-11, the bases have been quit secretive about posting their flight schedules and have become really limited what they may give out over the phone. Use the link www.pepperd.com to get a feel of which base flies to where you want to go and when they tend to depart. But to get the most nearly correct and up-to-date information, you must call the terminal. DO NOT rely on the daily recorded announcement of the next two day's schedule. That schedule is posted at 0930 and by noon the schedule has completely changed. You must talk to some live person. Tell them where you hope to go and they will usually give some helpful assistance. Even when in the terminal, frequently check with the people at the desk because flights are added,

dropped and changed constantly. Don't rely on the TV monitors in the terminal. They're up to date only if someone gets around to updating them with the continual changes. Use Google to find the websites for the individual bases and phone numbers although you will find most on the above link.

Aircraft

For the most part, MAC flies C-5A/Bs and C-17s. The C-5s have 73 comfortable, reclining passenger seats way at the top of the A/C. You fly backwards. On the C-17s and KC-135s, you fly sideways on less than comfortable fold-down seats. The C-5s breakdown frequently, while the C-17s are very reliable. The C-5 and the C-17 have approximately the same cruising speed. All of the above can be quite cold so dress warmly, even in summer. If you're lucky, you'll get a KC-10, a chartered 767 or the ultimate, one of the small 6-10 pax executive jets, C-20, C-21, UC-35. When flying on the small jets you're limited to a maximum of 30# of checked baggage as the planes are small and the pilots usually have to load the A/C themselves. The Navy flies C-40s, a 737-800 configured ½ cargo, ½ pax. Very comfortable! We've gone from Brunswick, ME to Rota and back on one. Hand-carry a bag with a couple of day's worth of stuff and meds.

Be Flexible

Don't expect to get where you're going when you want to get there. Leave lots of leeway and always keep in mind the direction in which you wish to travel. For Example: Dover is only 2.5 driving hours from McGuire and both have nearby HERTZ rental offices who will pick-up and allow one way rentals. Moron AB, Spain and Rota allow you to rent a car at one base and drop it at the other. Moron always has lots of empty seats going to the US East coast. In our travels over the last six years, we have returned to our point of departure (where our car is parked) only once. We've gotten close a couple of times, but...

I hope this piece will be of use to you who are adventurous enough to try Space-A travel. Anyway, good luck and happy travels. If anyone has any corrections, additions or suggestions, please contact me. gdriscoll@verizon.net

George Driscoll, AWCS (ret)

Useful Web Links

- DOD Navy & Air Force Lodging: <http://www.dodlodging.net>
- Army Lodging: http://www.armymwr.biz/lodging_facilities.htm
- USMC Lodging: <http://www.usmc-mccs.org/lodging/index.cfm?sid=rf&smid=1>
- Space-A Information, Flight schedules, Lodging information, etc.,: <http://www.pepperd.com/cgi-bin/spacea/discus.cgi>
- Space-A Sign-Up: <http://www.takeahop.org/signup>
- "Home Away". House and apartment rentals. Last September we rented an apartment for five days in Paris and a house for seven days in Normandy. Way better and way less expensive than hotels: <http://www.homeaway.com>
- Armed Forces Vacation Club. Short notice condo rentals for about \$329 or less a week: <http://www.afvclub.com>
- Space-A Requirements, Tips, etc. <http://www.travis.af.mil/library/spaceavailabletravel/index.asp>
- Tricare Phone numbers 715-843-8400: <http://www.tricare.mil/contactus>
- Web-Mail reader: <http://www.mail2web.com>
- Travel Guides and Maps: <http://www.languagequest.com/traveler/productTypes/guides.php>
- All kinds of information and links for the Space-A traveler. <http://www.pepperd.com>
- Currency Converter: <http://www.xe.com/ucc>
- Universal translator: http://www.worldlingo.com/en/products_services/worldlingo_translator.html

NEW SUBMARINE COULD MAKE 100 KNOTS UNDERWATER (From the Providence Journal)

WASHINGTON — Imagine a craft that could make 100 knots underwater, with a propulsion system so compact and powerful that it would leave ample room for payloads — small combat teams bound for missions on the shore, for example. Electric Boat, the Groton, Conn.-based submarine builder, is part of a team that won a Pentagon contract to explore the high-speed sub two years ago. The progress has been encouraging enough to make it possible that such a craft will move from the research labs to open-water testing as early as 2010. Much of the research work is being conducted at Pennsylvania State University's research testing facilities.

Major obstacles must be surmounted before the Underwater Express, as the experimental program is known, can be considered for production, according to Kevin J. Poitras, EB's vice president for engineering and design programs. But the concept shows enormous promise for both military and commercial mariners. Some experts have described the challenge of the Underwater Express as comparable to the technological leap that took aviation from propeller-driven planes to jets — extremely difficult to perfect, but extremely rewarding. The project is, in a sense, a fresh attack on a limitation of physics that is familiar to anyone who has walked from the beach to go wading in the shallows. The drag resistance of water — orders of magnitude greater than that of air — really slows you down.

Shipbuilders and naval engineers have gone at the problem for centuries, improving speed through, and under, the water by refining different forms of propulsion, hull shape and construction materials that cut down on a vessel's friction with the sea. Modern advances have included space-age coatings, such as polymers, on the skin of vessels, and the creation of a sheath of tiny bubbles to reduce drag around the surface of the craft.

The Underwater Express takes off from a theory developed by an American scientist in the 1960s: supercavitation. Supercavitation (it comes from the same root as the word "cavity") is a way to cut down on the friction between an object and the surrounding water by enveloping the object in a huge bubble of gas. During the 1980s, the Soviet Union used supercavitation to produce the Shkval torpedo — essentially an underwater rocket capable of a top speed above 170 knots, according to the Pentagon agency that commissioned the Underwater Express contracts with EB and a competitor, a unit of Northrup Grumman in Annapolis, Md.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) gave EB, a division of General Dynamics, a contract in November 2006 to total about \$43 million with options. EB's Poitras explained at an industry convention near Washington last month that the basic assignment was to develop a sub "that could go 100 knots underwater, with a propulsion system that would leave at least 50 percent of the vessel's volume for payload."

A vessel that could make 100 knots underwater would have dramatic implications for war fighting and commerce. One hundred knots is more than twice the speed of the fastest submarine on record, the Soviet Papa-class sub, according to naval analyst and author Norman Polmar. The speed of the fastest U.S. sub, Seawolf, is secret, but Polmar wrote last year that a top Navy official said during its construction that it would be able to go 35 knots.

If the Underwater Express is ever produced, it could provide an alternative to the Mark V, a 40-knot boat that Navy Sea, Air, Land teams (SEALs) use for transport. That craft has limitations that can't be controlled: it can be seen and detected by radar and waves make for a difficult ride at high speed or, in very bad weather, cancel missions. Eventually, DARPA envisions a 60-ton craft, 8 feet in diameter. DARPA said in its proposal that it wanted builders "to determine the feasibility for supercavitation

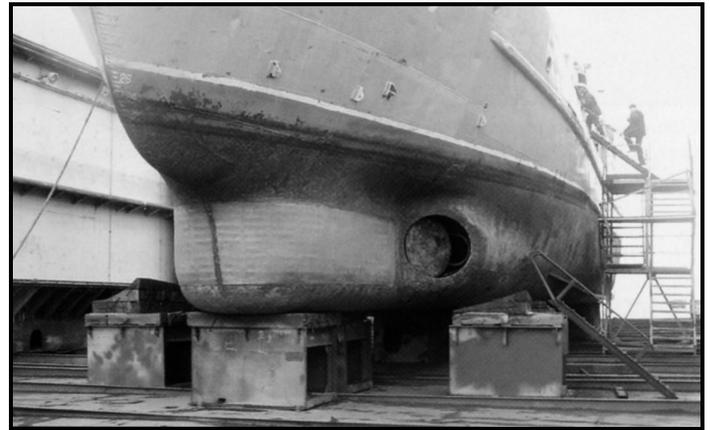
technology to enable a new class of high-speed under water craft for future littoral missions that could involve the transport of high-value cargo and/or small units of personnel."

The goal was a scale prototype that could give "a credible demonstration" to prove that "a supercavitating underwater craft is controllable at speeds up to 100 knots." Control is one of the toughest tasks, according to Poitras. "You have to be able to turn," he said. Another big problem, experts say, is noise. The quieting technologies of modern submarines add up to the invaluable battle asset of stealth. DARPA has noted, too, that there would be great difficulties with communications, and with sonar and other sensing tools essential to submarines.

But many of those problems would be tackled later — if and when the shipbuilders demonstrate that the Underwater Express is feasible. If progress on the vessels continues as it has to date, said Poitras, a new phase of open-water testing could begin in early 2010.

SUSPICIONS CONFIRMED (From the Winter 2008 Issue of The Hook)

Remember those Soviet "fishing" trawlers that hung around our aircraft carriers? Pictures taken in a St. Petersburg floating dry dock in April 2007 show they weren't gathering only electronic beeps and boops. The sonar dome was the same as on Foxtrot-class SSK submarines and the torpedo tubes were, well, torpedo tubes.



Left: Russian trawler OC-57 in a St. Petersburg floating dry dock for repairs. Right: Close-up of the OC-57's bow-mounted sonar with a torpedo tube on either side.

DD-214s NOW ON-LINE:

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has now made it possible for veterans of the Navy and all other branches of the armed forces to get their DD-214s on-line at <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>.

DID YOU KNOW?

NAS Squantum has always been recognized as having been the first naval reserve air station but RADM William A. Moffett, the father of the modern Naval Air Reserve, first authorized an experimental naval reserve aviation unit at Fort Hamilton, NY. NRAU Fort Hamilton began operating as a U.S. Naval Reserve Flying Corps double-unit with four Curtiss N-9 seaplanes during early May 1923 and was commissioned on August 13, 1923. NRAS Squantum, which had been a regular Navy primary flight training base during WW1, was not re-commissioned as a reserve air base until August 15, 1923, two days after NRAU Fort Hamilton.

RECOMMENDED READING:

In the summer of 1958 the Navy sent two missions to the far north. The most famous of these was the nuclear submarine USS Nautilus, which traveled to the North Pole under the polar ice cap. Lesser known was the simultaneous arctic mission of the ZPG-2 blimp "Snow Goose" of the Naval Air Development Unit (NADU) that traveled from NAS South Weymouth to an ice island above the Arctic circle and back. "Arctic Mission – By Airship & Submarine to the Far North" by William F. Althoff, published by Tiola Consolidated Limited in 1999, ISBN# 0-9583693-3-X tells the story of both missions in 291 pages. This excellent book contains numerous photographs that were taken on NAS South Weymouth. Purchase on the Internet using your credit card at <http://www.airshiphistory.com>.

ON THE INTERNET:

A number of VP-related groups have been established on Facebook recently that should be of interest to VP Association members:

- VP-92
- VP-92 Minutemen
- Naval Air Station South Weymouth Alumni
- The Mighty P-3 Orion
- Naval Aircrew Alumni
- US Navy Aviation Warfare Systems Operators
- VP International (VPI)

To join any of these groups, you must first register with Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com>.

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 Okie O'Connell at 781-335-0553 or 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 SHOTS:



Those of you who started in the Naval Air Reserve program at NAS Squantum will remember the TBM-3E Avengers flown by VS-911 and other ASW squadrons on the base. TBMs were built by Eastern Aircraft, a subsidiary of General Motors, under license from Grumman. Avengers built by Grumman were designated TBFs and they were retired soon after WW2. Many TBMs were transferred from Squantum to South Weymouth where they were used for about two years before being replaced by Grumman AF-2S and AF-2W Guardians. Photo courtesy of Bill Horsch. Thanks!



Lockheed P-3C Orions at last Brunswick air show on September 6, 2008. Marc J. Frattasio photo.



If you attend the VP Association's annual reunion banquet at the Hanscom AFB Officer's Club in Bedford, MA on Saturday September 26, 2009 the chances are good that you'll run into a few old shipmates such as the guys from this VP-911 crew posed in front of a Lockheed SP-2E Neptune at NAS South Weymouth about 1967. Many thanks to Walter O'Connell for this photo. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio.



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



----- **Please Detach Here** -----

VP ASSOCIATION 2009 ANNUAL REUNION
HANSCOM AFB OFFICER’S CLUB BEDFORD, MA
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 2009 FROM 1200 TO 1700

BANQUET RESERVATION ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Squadron Affiliation(s) and Years: _____

Number in Party: _____

Guest’s Name(s): _____

Military ID (Yes or No): _____

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

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

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

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