



# 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 60

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

JUNE 2015

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, [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com).

## RECCO:



**ABOVE:** The USNR patrol squadrons were not the only P2 operators at NAS South Weymouth. From 1954 to 1961 the Naval Air Development Unit (NADU) also operated Neptunes from the base in support of various projects sponsored by the Office of Naval Research. This NADU P2V-5 was on display inside LTA Hangar One during an air show held at NAS South Weymouth on May 14, 1957. For more information about the Naval Air Development Unit check out "NADU: The Forgotten Naval Air Development Unit" by John Yaney. There's a link to this very fine book presented on the "geedunk" page of the ANA Patriot Squadron's web site at [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org). Tom Cuddy photo. If you have similar things to share contact Marc J. Frattasio at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com).

## **FINAL FLIGHTS:**

Herb Tallent passed away in March after a brief illness. Herb helped found the VP Association and produced the newsletter for many years. He served in VF-911 at NAS Squantum and with VP-911, VP-63Z1, and VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth. Charles Porcelli also passed away in March. "Charlie" was a TAR who served as a pilot and maintenance officer in VP-92 in the 1970s before moving on to become the Program Manager of the VP-SAU at South Weymouth. Jerry Eisenhower passed away in April. He was in VS-911 at Squantum and the Naval Air Development Unit (NADU) at South Weymouth. Larry Clapp and Eric Gregory, both VP-92 alumni, passed away in May.

## **ILL SHIPMATES IN NEED OF CHEERING UP:**

Bill Hanigan (stroke) is back home. You can send e-mail to him at [haniganwilliam@gmail.com](mailto:haniganwilliam@gmail.com). He may not be able to write back, but will enjoy reading messages from his friends. Arthur Hapenny is recovering from recent knee replacement surgery. You can contact him at [arhapenny@verizon.net](mailto:arhapenny@verizon.net).

## **THE 2015 ANNUAL REUNION:**

The VP Association's annual reunion will be held on Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 to 17:00 at the Weymouth Elks Hall at 1197 Washington Street in Weymouth, MA. This is the same place the reunion has been held for the past two years. It is just a few miles from old NAS South Weymouth.

The buffet style banquet is \$40 per person. As always, attendance is limited, reservations are required in advance, and will be taken first-come first served. Tickets will not be sold at the door. Please complete and mail the reservation form on the last page ASAP to prevent disappointment and so we can tell the caterer how many people to expect. Directions to the Weymouth Elks Hall follow:

### From the North (i.e., from Boston)

1. Take Route 3 south from the Boston area to Route 18 (Exit 16 South).
2. Go south on Route 18 about 1/2 mile to top of hill. At traffic light, turn left on Middle Street.
3. Continue on Middle Street, under Route 3, for about 1 1/2 miles.
4. At traffic light, turn right on Washington Street. Proceed through one traffic light and the Elk's Hall is about 200 yards on the right.

### From the South (i.e., from Cape Cod)

1. Take Route 3 North from the Plymouth/ Cape Cod area. Get off Route 3 at Exit 15 (Derby Street).
2. At end of exit, turn left on Derby Street.
3. Drive on Derby Street about 1/2 mile to second traffic light.
4. Turn left at light on Cushing Street.
5. On Cushing Street go about 1/2 mile to next traffic light and turn left at the light on Route 53 (Whiting Street)
6. Stay north on Whiting Street (in Weymouth, it becomes Washington Street). At first traffic light be in the left lane. Go through the traffic light and the Elk's Hall is about 200 yards on the left.

The Holiday Inn at 929 Hingham St. (781-871-0545), the Best Western at 909 Hingham St. (781-871-5660), and the Comfort Inn at 850 Hingham St. (781-982-1000) are all located a few miles away off Exit 14 on Route 3 in Rockland, MA.

Our guest speaker will be author Len Sandler, who will give a presentation about local Medal of Honor recipient Army SFC Jared Monti. We also hope to have SFC Monti's father Paul with us at the reunion as well. Mr. Sandler wrote a book about SFC Monti called "See You On The High Ground". See the "required reading" section towards the end of this newsletter for more details. Mr. Sandler will have copies of his book available for sale at the reunion and will autograph them for purchasers.

As you know, the Weymouth Elks Hall is just a few miles from old NAS South Weymouth, which is being redeveloped into the SouthField condominium community. Plan on driving to Weymouth a few hours earlier, visit the base, and take a look at the remaining USN structures as well as the new SouthField apartments and townhouses. As was the case in previous years the Association of Naval Aviation Patriot Squadron will have the Shea Naval Aviation Museum open from 9 to 11 AM on the day of the reunion. The museum is located in temporary spaces inside the Shea Fitness Center at 495 Shea Memorial Drive and is normally only open on the second and last Saturday of the month. Admission is free. If you have any naval aviation memorabilia gathering dust at home, especially items pertaining to South Weymouth or Squantum, please consider donating it to the museum. See [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org) for details.

Although dress is officially CASUAL for the reunion, we encourage you to wear your old uniform (whatever you have) or a flight suit if you've got one.

Try to pass the word about the reunion to as many of your old Squantum/South Weymouth/Brunswick reserve VP squadron friends as possible. Don't assume that every former shipmate you're in contact with is affiliated with or aware of this group. Military or civilian guests are welcome to come with you.

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

#### **THE ADMIN FUND:**

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

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

If you have an e-mail address and have been getting a hard-copy newsletter in the mail then we do not have an e-mail address for you. If this is your situation, please contact Marc Frattasio at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com) so we can send the newsletter to you by e-mail. Remember, this group does not charge dues and we operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. Please note that despite concerns that we might have to suspend them, we are continuing the mailings. For now at least, Bill's wife Barbara has been handing the printing and mailing effort. We are still trying to sort out who is going to do what within this organization going forward and we may have to reach out for some help. If you have an e-mail address and have been getting paper newsletters, it would be better in this difficult time for us to send it to you via e-mail.

#### **LOST CONTACT:**

Please be sure to inform Marc Frattasio or George Driscoll at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com) whenever your street or e-mail address changes so we can update the group's contact list. Patrick Howe has a new e-mail address at [n800hs@gmail.com](mailto:n800hs@gmail.com).

#### **NEW MEMBERS:**

Cecil Curtis  
NAS Brunswick AEC  
255 Park Rd  
Westbrook, ME 04092  
[cc47rider@yahoo.com](mailto:cc47rider@yahoo.com)

Den Forbes  
TAR PRCM  
NAS South Weymouth, NAS Willow Grove  
[den.forbes@nemoves.com](mailto:den.forbes@nemoves.com)

John Schoonmaker  
VP-19, VP-50  
[pkogunner@catskill.net](mailto:pkogunner@catskill.net)

### **A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS ORGANIZATION:**

They say that one person can't make a difference, but they say a lot of stupid things these days. Recent events have shown how things can come close to falling apart when one person, if that person is basically a one-man-show, can no longer continue. At some point we're going to need to plan for succession if the VP Association is to continue. We're not in a state of crisis yet, but we are perhaps one or two more people falling by the wayside away from a crisis. It does not take too much work to keep the VP Association going, but right now everything is basically being done by two or three people. If you'd be willing to take on an active role in this organization please contact Marc Frattasio or George Driscoll at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com). For example, we can use help organizing the upcoming annual reunion and at some point we're going to need somebody to take over the web site and this newsletter, not immediately, but we do have to plan for the future. Once again, if you'd like to take a more active role in this group please reach out to Marc or George.

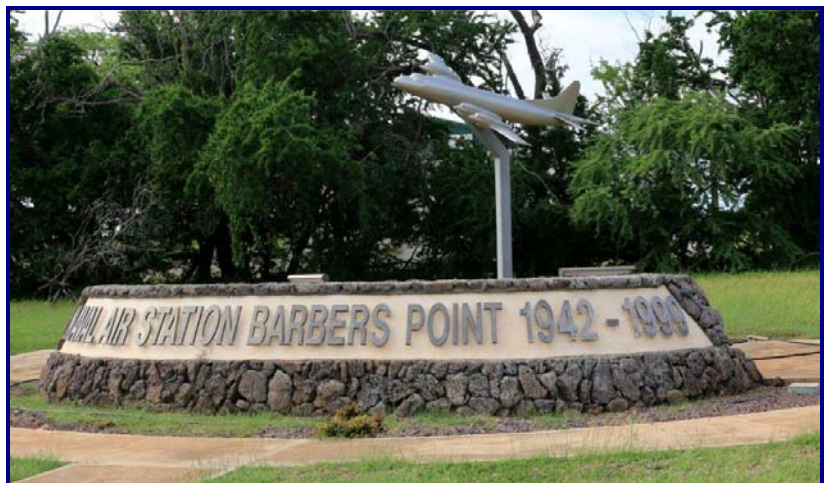
### **2015 MINUTEMANCIPATION WEEKEND:**



Here are most of the VP-92 people who showed up at the cottage at Fourth Cliff in Hummarock, MA over the weekend of May 15-17 for the 2015 Minutemancipation Weekend. This started as a way for a few AWs to keep in touch. At ground level, from left to right are Matt Sharpe, Steve O'Donohugh, Marc Cortemanche, Mark Hausler, Rick Caesar, and Marty McCormack. Standing on the deck behind them are, from left to right, George Driscoll, Randy Minet, Brian Clougher, Marc Frattasio, Ron Clemments, Faith Frattasio, Al Firnrrohr, Susan Zimmerman, Russ Johansen, Bob Mandeville, A. J. Buchi, and Tim Burke. Missing from the photo is Scott Savelle, who had to leave early. A good time was had by all, even though the planned field trip to the EAA pancake breakfast and fly-in at Cranland Airport on Sunday morning had to be cancelled due to hangovers.

**A NOTE AND SOME PHOTOS FROM JERRY LACH (VP-93 AND VP-92):**

While visiting Oahu I wanted to see what is left of the old NAS Barbers Point and the P-3 Memorial honoring aircrew that were lost. NAS Barbers Point has been turned into a civilian use airport. It was very quiet when I was there. The former P-3 “Rainbow” hanger is now used for storage. I was surprised that there is a nice NAS Barbers Point Naval Air Museum. They have a UP-3A that needs work, but they do have a 95% intact P-3C Update II.5. Both aircraft were open for interior tours. They have about 10 other aircraft on display. I found the P-3 Memorial. The P-3 is still there but all the plaques that list the lost aircrew were missing. I was told the plaques were removed to keep the ‘crack heads’ from stealing them for their scrap value. Supposedly they are in storage “some where”.



**TOP:** The so-called “Rainbow” hangar at former NAS Barber’s Point. **MIDDLE:** P-3s and other aircraft associated with the NAS Barber’s Point Naval Air Museum. **RIGHT:** The P-3 memorial.



This was VP-911's "Gold Crew 8" in the 1960's. Herb Tallent was Plane Captain along with AD1 John Rosen. Herb is the 3rd from the left in the back row. I'm the 1st one in the left back row (AW1). John Rosen is 1st left bottom. Next to me is AOC Ray McDonald (deceased), Herb Tallent, radio operator AT1 "Swanie" Swanson (deceased), not sure who is next to him. Bottom left is AD1 John Rosen (deceased), AD2 Dexter Rust, CDR Cote (deceased), Pilot Gene Sich, CoPilot not sure, and AW not sure. Have a good one shipmates.

**A SHORT NOTE FROM CHARLES SYLVIA (VP-92):**

The picture of the P-3 over P-Town, I believe, was taken in 1989 and the Photo shoot was for my retirement picture. I have the same picture hanging on my wall. If I remember correctly Bill Hanigan was in that plane or the one taking the picture. That was my last flight in the P-3.

**HISTORY OF ZP-911 PUBLISHED IN NAVAL AIRSHIP ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE:**

Your newsletter editor had a feature article about ZP-911 published in the spring 2015 issue of the Naval Airship Association's "Noon Balloon" magazine. ZP-911 was a reserve blimp patrol squadron that was based at NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth. When ZP-911 was decommissioned in 1958 its members were transferred to the reserve VS and VP squadrons at NAS South Weymouth. For more information about the Naval Airship Association go to <http://www.naval-airships.org>. Copies of the spring 2015 issue of the "Noon Balloon" should still be available from Richard Van Treuren at [rgvant@juno.com](mailto:rgvant@juno.com).

### **IS FINLAND REALLY GETTING READY FOR WAR WITH RUSSIA? (CNBC 05/21):**

Finland has informed its 900,000 military reservists of what their roles would be in the event of a military crisis against a backdrop of rising tensions between Russia and its neighbors. The letters campaign by the Finnish army has ostensibly been carried out to "keep in touch" with its reservists, the Finnish Defense Ministry said on its website, and reservists have been asked to update their personal details that the army holds for them. The letters have been sent as a result of "an extensive reform starting in 2008 affected the task of many reservists and the Defense Forces contacted the reservists to inform them what their individual role would be should Finland enter a conflict," the military's website noted.

The timing of the letters that has raised eyebrows, however, as relations between Russia and its neighbor Finland sour. Russia has become increasingly isolated on the global stage for over a year now as a result of its annexation of Crimea and role in the recent conflict in Ukraine. Nonetheless, it has been conducting military exercises over the last year, including in the Baltic Sea near the shores of Finland - as well as other northern European countries.

Finland shares a land border with Russia but neither country is a member of the military alliance NATO, potentially making it more vulnerable to any future Russian aggression. Seemingly aware of the potential military risks, the defense ministers of Nordic nations Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland warned in April this year that Northern Europe must prepare for possible crises or incidents because of Russia. "Russia's leaders have shown that they are prepared to make practical and effective use of military means in order to reach their political goals, even when this involves violating principles of international law," the ministers wrote in a joint statement in Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten, Reuters reported.

Finland's army has around 16,000 members, although the number rises when including its Naval and Air Forces. The forces would be given a significant boost were reserves to be called up. Reservists are those "who are liable for and have completed their military service," the Finnish Defence Forces (Finland's military) said on its website. The first letters were sent at the start of May with the final batch sent out in the last few days. Reservists were told by Finland's Defense Forces that within the letters: "You will find your own details and your wartime assignment in the appendix with the letter. In other words, you can see whether you have an assigned wartime task, are in the reserve or have been reserved for other tasks by your employer."

### **U.S. VOWS TO CONTINUE PATROLS AFTER CHINA WARNS SPY PLANE (Reuters 05/21):**

The United States vowed on Thursday to keep up air and sea patrols in international waters after the Chinese navy repeatedly warned a U.S. surveillance plane to leave the airspace over artificial islands China is creating in the disputed South China Sea. The Chinese navy issued eight warnings to the crew of a U.S. P8-A Poseidon, the U.S. military's most advanced surveillance aircraft, when it conducted the overflights on Wednesday, according to CNN, which was aboard the U.S. aircraft.

When the American pilots responded by saying the plane was flying through international airspace, a Chinese radio operator said with exasperation: "This is the Chinese navy ... You go!" The Poseidon flew as low as 15,000 feet (4,500 meters), CNN said, and video provided by the Pentagon appeared to have been taken from directly above one artificial island.

The incident, along with recent Chinese warnings to Philippine military aircraft to leave areas around the Spratly archipelago in the South China Sea, suggested Beijing is trying to enforce a military exclusion zone above its new islands there. Some security experts worry about the risk of confrontation, especially after a U.S. official said last week that the Pentagon was considering sending military aircraft and ships to assert freedom of navigation around the Chinese-made islands.

The senior U.S. diplomat for the East Asia, Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Russel, told a media briefing in Washington the U.S. reconnaissance flight was "entirely appropriate" and that U.S. naval forces and military aircraft would "continue to fully exercise" the right to operate in international waters and airspace. He said the United States would go further to preserve the ability of all countries to move in international waters and airspace. "Nobody in their right mind is going to try to stop the U.S. Navy from operating, that would not be a good bet," he said. "But it's not enough that a U.S. military plane can overfly international waters, even if there is challenge or hailing query. We believe that every country and all civilian actors should have unfettered access to international waters and international airspace."

A spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry said he was not aware of the incident. "China has the right to engage in monitoring in the relevant airspace and waters to protect the country's sovereignty and prevent accidents at sea," ministry spokesman Hong Lei said in a regular briefing. "We hope the relevant country can earnestly respect China's sovereignty in the South China Sea."

### HIVE OF CONSTRUCTION

Footage taken by the P8-A Poseidon over the new islands, and aired by CNN, showed a hive of construction and dredging activity, as well as Chinese navy ships nearby. CNN said it was the first time the Pentagon had declassified video of China's building activity and audio of challenges to a U.S. aircraft.

"We were just challenged 30 minutes ago and the challenge came from the Chinese navy," Captain Mike Parker, commander of U.S. surveillance aircraft deployed to Asia, told CNN on the flight. "I'm highly confident it came from ashore, this facility here," Parker said, pointing to an early warning radar station on Fiery Cross Reef.

Military facilities on Fiery Cross Reef, including a 3,000-metre (10,000-foot) runway, could be operational by year's end, one U.S. commander recently told Reuters, and Washington is concerned China will use it to press its extensive territorial claims at the expense of weaker rivals. China claims sovereignty over most of the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also have overlapping claims.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week asserted Beijing's right to reclaim the reefs and said China's determination to protect its interests was "as hard as a rock." China has also said it had every right to set up an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the South China Sea but that current conditions did not warrant one. ADIZs are used by some nations to extend control beyond national borders, requiring civilian and military aircraft to identify themselves or face possible military interception.

During the P8-A Poseidon mission, the pilot of a Delta Air Lines flight in the area spoke on the same frequency after hearing the Chinese challenges and identified himself as commercial. The Chinese voice reassured the pilot and the Delta flight went on its way, CNN said. Delta Airlines did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

*Reuters article by Dean Yates*

### **FINAL FLIGHT OF THE EAST COAST P-3C ORION (USN Press Release 05/05):**

The Patrol Squadron (VP) 26 "Tridents" based out of Naval Air Station Jacksonville are currently conducting missions in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. This is the Navy's final active duty deployment of the P-3C Orion aircraft from the East Coast. The Navy is in the process of replacing



the decades-old Lockheed Martin P-3C turbo-prop aircraft with the new multi-mission maritime aircraft P-8A Poseidon, a modified Boeing 737-800ERX.

Historic events aren't new to the Tridents. VP-26 was the Navy's first operational P-3 squadron when they received the first production of the P-3B, which replaced the P2-V Neptune in January 1966. Then, in 1979, VP-26 transitioned to the P-3C aircraft used today. "It's incredible and it means being a part of history," said Lt. Cory Solis, tactical coordinator assigned to VP-26. "The plane has been a fighting force for the Navy for so long and we're still able to employ it. We can still count on her to get up in the air and be vital part of something like what we are doing now in the Middle East."

Even in the final missions of the P-3C flights, VP-26 continues to work with joint and coalition forces in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. During this deployment, VP-26 has worked with British and French naval vessels and successfully executed combined operations with the Bahraini Coast Guard. Today's P-3 is equipped with the latest Command, Control, Communications and Computer (C4) technologies to enable it to integrate with other forces and to facilitate network-centric warfare. The P-8 is designed to take these capabilities to the next level.

"The P-3 is an icon of Cold War anti-submarine warfare and it has proved extremely flexible, adapting to meet a variety of missions assigned by forward fleet commanders in the 25 years since," said Cmdr. Gregory A. Smith, commanding officer, VP-26. Transition to a new aircraft goes beyond utilizing the physical capabilities of the aircraft and its technology. "This flexibility is one of the hallmarks of U.S. Naval service, however, it is not the airframe that provides this flexibility," Smith said. "It is the people. The same people who are making P-3s succeed on station will be the ones who make the P-8 succeed on station. The airframe will change, but the culture and legacy of excellence in maritime patrol and reconnaissance will remain."

Personnel are already preparing for the road ahead. Sailors will have to adjust, retrain and in some cases, find a different career path in the Navy. "My training is P-3 specific and there's not actually a spot for the in-flight technician in the P-8," said Naval Aircrewman (Avionics) 2nd Class John McDaniel, in-flight technician assigned to VP-26. "So, I will be switching platforms. I will be going to the EA-6B Prowler and will have to attend another "A" school. I have been with P-3s for five years. I feel pretty good and feel it's time to do something new."

All maintenance Sailors will be required to attend the P-8 general familiarization course, which is between five to 10 days. They will also be required to attend P-8 rate training. Upon completion, they will be assigned to Fleet Replacement Squadron, VP-30, in Jacksonville, and work in their rating specific area to become qualified collateral duty inspectors (CDI) and plane captains on the P-8 for approximately six months. All current VP-26 operators (aircrew) identified for transition will return home and complete Category II training at VP-30, which lasts approximately six months. Upon completion of training, they will receive their new respective navy enlisted codes (NEC) and begin their first P-8 inter-deployment readiness cycle.

"You either ride the waves of change or drown beneath them," said Command Master Chief James B. Daniels Jr., command master chief, VP-26. "The point is change is going to happen whether you like it or not. The P-8 is a new, more capable aircraft, and as we did with the P-3, we will maximize the use of it to further the Navy's mission." The new P-8 aircraft is expected to arrive in Bahrain in approximately one year.

"I am extremely proud of what the men and women of VP-26 do every day," said Smith. "They make complex and challenging evolutions seem routine. We don't set out every day to make history; we set out to do the little things the right way, the first time, to the best of our ability. Being a part of a "first"

or a "last" makes it sound more special, but what is really special is the way Team Trident works together to overcome a challenge or rallies behind a shipmate who needs extra support. To me the last (P-3) deployment from the East Coast will always imply the additional work and sacrifices required to do more with less, and meeting mission in spite of those challenges; the way VP-26 has always done before."

#### **FINNISH MILITARY FIRES ON SUSPECTED SUBMARINE IN BALTIC (AFP 04/28):**

Finland said Tuesday its navy had fired warning shots at a possible submarine off the coast of Helsinki in the early hours of the morning. "During surveillance of (Finland's) territorial integrity, the navy detected a possible underwater object at midday (0900 GMT) on April 27, 2015, within Finland's territorial waters close to the border outside Helsinki," the defence ministry said in a statement.

A second sighting was made during the night and "a warning was given with light depth charges at three in the morning," the ministry added. No further sightings were reported after the warning shots and no details have been given of the type of object that was detected.

Defence Minister Carl Haglund explained to daily Hufvudstadsbladet that the depth charges "make a loud noise but don't cause any direct damage." "With them, we can show that we've detected (some kind of) activity." "The navy is continuing its investigations now about what exactly happened," defence ministry spokesman Max Arhipainen told AFP.

Meanwhile, the navy's chief of operations refused to confirm whether the detected object was a submarine. "At this stage it is impossible to say what this potential underwater object is," Captain Olavi Jantunen told reporters at a press conference. The material gathered by sensors "will be studied and analysed in detail. It will take days, even weeks probably," he added. However, he said the navy had "a very accurate picture of what was happening at sea."

The navy was tight-lipped about the size of the object, where it was detected, and the depth. It said however that it had concluded its patrols in the area and was now monitoring the situation from land. The incident comes during an uptick in Russian military activity in the Baltic Sea area, including several airspace violations and war planes allegedly flying without their identifying transponders. This has prompted non-aligned Finland to announce closer military cooperation with its Nordic neighbors -- including NATO members Norway and Denmark.

Finland shares a 1,340-kilometre (830-mile) border with Russia, and has aimed to maintain good relations with its powerful neighbour since the end of World War II. In October, Sweden's armed forces hunted unsuccessfully for a week for what they believed to be a foreign submarine in waters close to the capital Stockholm, after several observations were made.

Political observers noted that the suspected submarine incursions in Sweden and Finland both occurred shortly after the election of new governments in the two non-NATO countries, and could possibly be interpreted as warnings to the new administrations to steer clear of NATO cooperation. Sweden elected a new government in September, while Finland voted for a change of government earlier this month.

#### **SOUTHFIELD PROJECT IN WEYMOUTH SOLD AGAIN (Patriot Ledger 04/14):**

Starwood Land Ventures, the well-heeled Florida firm that promised to right the fumbling SouthField project, is selling its stake in the massive redevelopment, the prospective buyer confirmed Tuesday. Officials with LStar Management, a North Carolina-based real estate investment firm that owns or controls more than 50,000 residential units across the United States, said Tuesday that the company

had reached a purchase and sale agreement for Starwood's stake in Southfield. Terms of the sale were not made public.

Starwood's exit from the project comes before it has delivered on promises to set up long-term sources of water and wastewater to support future development and following only one major land deal since it took over as master developer almost exactly two years ago. It also raises big questions about how long it will take the new master developer to deliver on those promises. The master developer owns the majority of the undeveloped land at the 1,400-acre former South Weymouth Naval Air Station, which includes land in Weymouth, Rockland and Abington. Its job is to sell off pieces of land to developers to build the new housing and commercial space that was supposed to bring an economic boom to the towns

Starwood's parent company, Starwood Capital Group bought the previous master developer, LNR Property Corp., in April 2013 as part of a \$1.05 billion deal in which the company and its affiliate, Starwood Property Trust, acquired LNR's parent company. Plans for SouthField include 2,855 homes and apartments and at least 900,000 square feet of commercial space. Delays and false starts have put the project years behind schedule and the commercial development that was supposed to be the backbone of an economic revival for the towns has yet to materialize. About 600 people now live at the former air base, which is still dotted with abandoned Navy buildings and a \$43 million parkway that cuts across the mostly empty landscape.

Shortly after taking over as master developer, Starwood announced that the long-stalled project was unworkable and would grind to a halt without changes giving it wide leeway to decide what gets built when. Company officials said the old Navy land was worthless without the changes and authored a sweeping legislative overhaul. The changes Starwood pushed included disbanding the project's quasi-governmental overseer, South Shore Tri-Town Development Corp., and replacing it with a new board of directors and shifting tax revenue and responsibility for public services to the towns.

Starwood launched a six-month campaign to woo officials in Weymouth – the town with the largest financial and geographic stake in the redevelopment – promising that the changes would turn the project around and bring in a cash windfall for the three communities. As part of its pitch, Starwood took on responsibility for the water and wastewater, both seen as key to drawing in further development. Company officials also said Starwood could walk away from the project if the changes didn't go through. Then-governor Deval Patrick signed the overhaul into law in August, days after the Legislature passed it.

Starwood's relationship with the towns and the new SouthField Redevelopment Authority had grown increasingly tense in recent months. First Starwood rankled the authority's board, town officials and lawmakers who steered the bill through Beacon Hill when it paid a \$761,000 property tax bill more than a month late in December and only after it closed on a \$4.5 million land sale to another developer that plans to build 200 condominiums. Earlier this month, Weymouth Town Councilor Kenneth DiFazio called out the company for missing deadlines laid out in the new legislation and a separate agreement with the town to provide plans for open space and amenities and to sign design contracts for the water and sewer systems. The company had also been increasingly tight-lipped about its plans leading up to Tuesday's announcement.

*Patriot Ledger article by Christian Schiavone*

**VP-26 COMMEMORATES 65th ANNIVERSARY OF FALLEN SQUADRON MEMBERS (USN 4/13):** Members of the Patrol Squadron (VP) 26 "Tridents," based out of Naval Air Station Jacksonville, participated in a ceremony April 8, 2015, in Liepaja, Latvia, honoring 10 squadron members who lost

their lives 65 years ago. On April 8, 1950, a PB4Y-2 "Privateer" maritime patrol aircraft with 10 Sailors aboard was downed during a mission over the Baltic Sea, just south of Liepaja, Latvia. This was an opportunity for the squadron to not only pay tribute to the fallen aircrew, but to showcase the U.S. Navy's relationship with Latvia and demonstrate its dedication to the NATO alliance.

Latvian key leaders and more than a hundred Latvian service members; the Chargé d'Affaire of the U.S. Embassy, Sharon Hudson-Dean; the Liepaja Deputy Mayor and other local officials; VP-26 Commanding Officer Cmdr. Greg Smith, and VP-26 Command Master Chief James Daniels attended the 65th anniversary commemoration of the loss of the aircrew. Additionally, Kathy Fiffick, a surviving relative of PB4Y-2 pilot Lt. John H. "Jack" Fette, attended the event with her husband Paul. Escorted by the members of VP-26, they laid wreaths at the Mother Sea monument, where the townspeople of Liepaja had dedicated a plaque memorializing the lost aircrew.

The Latvian army band played the U.S. national anthem as part of the official ceremony as a symbol of the solidarity and strong relationship with the U.S. Afterwards, the attendants boarded a Latvian naval vessel to lay wreaths near where the PB4Y-2 impacted the water. Guest speakers included the Latvian Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Defense Andrejs Pantelejevs, the Deputy Mayor of Liepaja, and the U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, gave speeches that highlighted themes of partnership, sacrifice, and resolve. Smith concluded the ceremony with his remarks.

"I am privileged to represent the U.S. Navy today for this commemoration. Our squadron is proud to continue the legacy that stretches back to our predecessors in 1950 – the aircrew we pay tribute to today," said Smith during his remarks at the ceremony. "As allies, the U.S. and Latvia enjoy a strong partnership and friendship. We are grateful that your country has sought to honor the lives of this crew with this impressive memorial."

VP-26 is the last active duty P-3C Orion squadron to deploy from Naval Air Station Jacksonville. This deployment marks the sunset of the aircraft's 50-year service. U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied, joint, and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.

*U.S. Navy press release by Daniel Schumaker*

### **PAKISTAN TO BUY EIGHT CHINESE SUBMARINES (Dow Jones Business News 04/02):**

Pakistan's plan to buy eight Chinese submarines is likely to be one of China's biggest arms deals and to intensify an emerging undersea contest in the Indian Ocean. The deal, confirmed by a senior Pakistani defense official, is also expected to be among Pakistan's biggest-ever weapons purchases.

Rear Admiral Mukhtar Khan, additional secretary in Pakistan's Ministry of Defense, revealed the plan at a meeting of parliament's Standing Committee on Defense on Tuesday, according to an official record of the meeting. The official record quoted him saying that "the National Security Committee (NSC) has approved, in principle the project to acquire eight Chinese submarines. Financial negotiations for the same are in advance stages." The National Security Committee is the top decision-making body for defense issues, with both civilian leadership-- including Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif--and the military chiefs sitting on this committee.

Pakistan Navy officials declined to comment. An official in the press office of China's Defense Ministry referred questions on the submarine deal to local defense industry representatives but declined to say which ones were involved. A senior Pakistani government official said that

discussions were ongoing, but the financial and technical details of the deal won't be publicly discussed until negotiations are wrapped up and it has actually been signed.

China and Pakistan have had close relations for decades based largely on their mutual suspicion of India, and China has long been one of Pakistan's main arms suppliers. Hua Chunying, a Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman, didn't respond directly when asked about the submarine deal on Thursday but said: "China and Pakistan are traditional friends and neighbors." She said that China abided by its principles and international standards when selling arms. She also said that Chinese President Xi Jinping was looking forward to paying a state visit to Pakistan "as soon as possible" and both sides were in close contact on that issue. She didn't give a date for the visit.

Military experts and defense industry publications say the deal is most likely for Pakistan to buy China's diesel-powered Yuan class attack submarines, which are also known as Type 039A or Type 041. However, some earlier reports have suggested that Pakistan could purchase another Chinese diesel-powered attack submarine called the Qing class, or Type 032. Pakistan's navy currently operates five French-designed Agosta class submarines, two purchased in the 1970s and three in the 1990s, according to the navy's official website.

"I think the reasoning for Pakistan, is, as always, competition with India," said James Hardy, Asia Pacific editor of IHS Jane's Defence Weekly. "These subs would be attack subs so conventionally armed [antiship missiles and torpedoes rather than nuclear armed] and would be designed to complicate any Indian blockade operations around Karachi or elsewhere in the event of a war. "

China's global arms exports more than doubled between the five-year period ended in 2009 and the five-year period ended in 2014, according to an annual report on weapons transfers published last month by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. China was Pakistan's biggest arms supplier between 2010 and 2014, accounting for 51% of Pakistani weapons imports. The U.S. was in second place with 30%, according to the report.

*Dow Jones Business News article by Jeremy Page and Lilian Lin*

#### **P-8 NEWS: INDIAN OPTIONS, AUSTRALIAN PRODUCTION (DefenseNews 02/26):**

A Boeing official said negotiations are underway with India to convert options to buy four P-8I Neptune maritime intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance aircraft into firm orders. India ordered eight P-8Is in 2009; six have been delivered.

"We're currently talking with them about executing those four options," said James Detwiler, Boeing's P-8 business development director for maritime systems, at the Australian International Airshow. "We understand there is an interest to get that done sooner rather than later." Detwiler also said that manufacture of long-lead items for the first of eight P-8As for the Royal Australian Air Force was underway to support an early-2017 delivery.

Australia holds options to buy four more P-8As, which will be considered as part of the forthcoming Defense White Paper process and in conjunction with up to seven Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton high-altitude, long-endurance (HALE) unmanned maritime surveillance aircraft. The transition from the current Lockheed Martin AP-3C Orion has begun; RAAF personnel are training with the US Navy at NAS Jacksonville in Florida.

"Seven aircrew arrived there in January this year, they have commenced their training and they will stay and become P-8 instructors with the US Navy," said RAAF Group Captain Roger McCutcheon, who directs the Australian P-8 transition office. "Three technicians will arrive in Jacksonville in

mid-year to do the same thing and become instructors on the maintenance side of things and then tactical operations center personnel will begin their training towards the end of this year."

The acquisition of the eight P-8As will cost the Australian taxpayer about \$4 billion (US \$2.15 billion), including infrastructure and facilities upgrades. The existing AP-3Cs are expected to be retired around 2019.

*DefenseNews article by Nigel Pittaway*

### **S2F AUTHOR TO APPEAR AT SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM 9/26:**

Author Tommy Thomason is scheduled to present a lecture and book-signing at the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth on Saturday September 26<sup>th</sup> from noon to 1 PM. The subject of his lecture is undefined at this time but it will involve airborne ASW. Mr. Thomason is expected to have a new book on the Grumman S2F Tracker ready by this time and will sign copies that visitors buy at the museum that day. All are welcome and this event is free. For more details, check the museum's web site at [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org) in late August.

### **RECOMMENDED READING:**



The guest speaker at our up-coming reunion will be author Len Sandler, who wrote "See You on the High Ground" about Medal of Honor recipient Army SFC Jared Monti, who was killed in action in Afghanistan in 2006 while heroically trying to save a badly wounded comrade. SFC Monti was the first Massachusetts resident to be awarded the Medal of Honor since the Vietnam War. He was born in Abington and raised in Raynham, MA. Go to [www.seeyouonthehighground.com](http://www.seeyouonthehighground.com) for more details. We also hope to have SFC Monti's father Paul and his famous pickup truck at the reunion. Paul Monti maintains his son's pickup truck in the exact same condition that it was in when he was deployed to Afghanistan. This practice was the inspiration for Lee Brice's #1 country hit song, "I Drive Your Truck". You'll enjoy Len Sandler's presentation and it will be an honor to have Paul Monto join us at the reunion. Copies of the book will be available for sale at the reunion and the author and Mr. Monti will autograph them for you.

### **MOVIE TIME:**

If you'd like to add some Navy oriented films to your DVD library you won't go wrong with these:

- Cinderella Liberty
- Dirigible
- Dive Bomber (the only Hollywood movie about a Navy flight surgeon)
- On the Town
- The Best Years of Our Lives
- The Bridges at Toko Ri
- The Caine Mutiny
- The Last Detail
- The Sand Pebbles
- This Man's Navy (the only Hollywood movie ever made about blimps)
- Wing and a Prayer

If you haven't seen them, check them out. Also-rans, which are somewhat spoiled by unrealism, include An Officer and a Gentleman, The Final Countdown, The Hunt for Red October, Top Gun, and Under Siege.

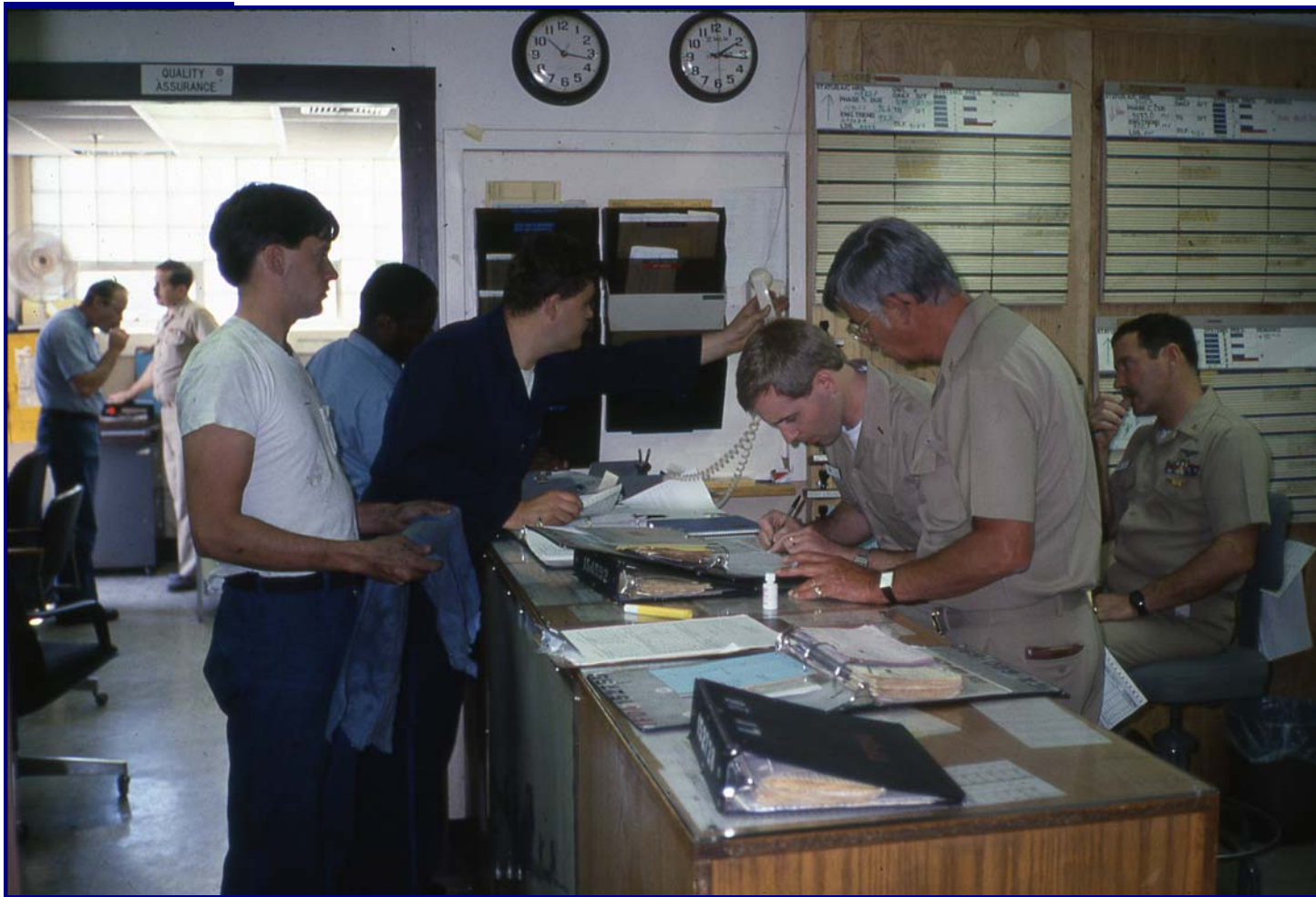
### **ON THE INTERNET:**

John Edwards thought you might enjoy looking at some interesting photos of the aircraft "boneyard" at Davis Monthan AFB at [http://www.dhc-2.com/Monthan\\_Memories.html](http://www.dhc-2.com/Monthan_Memories.html).

### **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.

### **PARTING SHOT:**



**ABOVE:** VP-92 maintenance personnel working at the squadron's maintenance control office in Hangar One on NAS South Weymouth sometime during the 1980s. In recent years Hangar One was demolished and Shea Memorial Drive was extended through the old hangar's footprint and across the eastern end of the old east-west runway. If you have similar photos to share contact Marc J. Frattasio at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com) and we'll try to get them into a future issue of the newsletter.



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



VP ASSOCIATION 2015 ANNUAL REUNION  
WEYMOUTH ELKS HALL, 1197 WASHINGTON ST., WEYMOUTH, MA  
SATURDAY OCTOBER 24, 2015 FROM 1200 TO 1700

*Appetizers and Cash Bar between 1200 and 1300, Dinner at 1300, Music between 1200 and 1630*

BANQUET RESERVATION ORDER FORM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

***Please help reduce Barbara Hanigan's workload by getting your banquet reservations in to her as soon as possible. Don't wait until the last minute. Thanks!***