



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 65

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

SEPT 2016

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: *VP-92 P-3A over the North Atlantic soon after the first Orions arrived at the squadron in 1975. If you have similar things to share contact Marc J. Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.*

ILL SHIPMATE IN NEED OF CHEERING UP:

Gerald Brown is very sick. As some of you know, "Brownie" was an aviation storekeeper (AK) with VP-92 for many years. He does not have an e-mail address, but if you'd like to send him a card or call him his home address is 402 W Union St., East Bridgewater, MA 02333-1721 and his telephone number is 508-378-7590.

LAST CALL FOR THE 2016 ANNUAL REUNION:

This will be your final reminder that the VP Association's annual reunion will be held on Saturday September 24th 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 costs \$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. Please note that all reservations need to be in Barbara Hanigan's hands by no later than Friday September 15th. 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.

We expect to have two guest speakers at the reunion this year, Donald Cann and John Galluzzo, co-authors of the popular Arcadia Press book "Squantum and South Weymouth Naval Air Stations". The authors will give a presentation on the history of both bases. They will bring copies of their book to the reunion to sell and will personally autograph them or copies purchased elsewhere that you may bring to the reunion. See the "Required Reading" section of this newsletter for more details about "Squantum and South Weymouth Naval Air Stations".

Also, as in previous years, everybody who attends the VP Association reunion this year will get a special surprise gift commissioned especially for this event. To find out what it is, you'll have to come to the reunion.

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 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.

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 site hosting, postage, and other expenses. A big "thank you" to Andre Castellano for his recent donation.

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

If you have an e-mail address and are getting your newsletter in the mail then we do not have an e-mail address for you. If this is your situation, please contact George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com so we can send the newsletter to you by e-mail. Remember, this group does not charge dues and operates on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. If you have an e-mail address and have been getting paper newsletters, it would be better for us to send it to you by e-mail. Please note that we have had trouble with government and work e-mail addresses rejecting our communications. If you are using a government or work e-mail address to get the newsletter we would prefer to use your home or personal e-mail address instead.

LOST CONTACT:

Please be sure to inform George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com whenever your street or e-mail address changes so we can update the group's contact list. Please note a new e-mail address for Tim Burke at timmyburke@comcast.net for Paul Harriman at harrimancyntia@yahoo.com, and for Joe Mortland at shiftcdr@comcast.net.

NEW MEMBERS:

Jason Gruss

jkgross@hotmail.com

VP-92

Bill Welsh

bwpatsfan@yahoo.com

VP-92

STEVE O'DONOHUE HAS RETIRED:

Steve O'Donohue retired from the Navy Reserve as an AWCS at the Shea Memorial Grove on old NAS South Weymouth on Saturday July 9th. Steve, who had a total of 26 years of service, was one of the last people from VP-92 still serving and like many others who remained in the USNR in recent years really had to scramble after the squadron was disestablished to find billets to continue his career. Although he started out as a naval aircrewman, in later years he served as a master at arms.



ABOVE: A very unusual occurrence in 2016 - a Navy ceremony held at the Shea Memorial Grove on old NAS South Weymouth. **LEFT:** "Odie" at the podium addressing his family and friends. **BELOW:** Former VP-92 personnel who attended the retirement ceremony assembled together for a group photo.



A SHORT NOTE AND SOME PHOTOS FROM PHIL FORTNAM:

Thought you might be able to use these photos. I was at Whidbey last week on AT and saw more than a dozen P3s on the tarmac. Looks like the community is alive and well at Whidbey. Phil a.k.a., LT Fortnam.



IMPORTANT ANNIVERSARYS COMING UP IN 2017:

Next year will mark two very important anniversaries for VP Association members – the 10th anniversary since VP-92 was decommissioned at NAS Brunswick in 2007 and the 20th anniversary of the decommissioning of NAS South Weymouth in 1997. There are plans in the works for separate events to commemorate both anniversaries.

There are plans in the works to hold a 10th anniversary VP-92 reunion at or near old NAS Brunswick sometime during the summer of 2017. The organizers of this event hope to have a weekend of events similar in concept to what was done when the squadron was disestablished in 2007. Those of us who went to NAS Brunswick for the squadron decommissioning weekend remember what a special event that was. The organizers of the 10th anniversary VP-92 reunion hope to recapture the spirit of that unique time. We'll have more information about this event in future issues of the VP Association newsletter. Right now the planning is in the very early stages and things such as the venue, date, cost, etc., have not been defined yet.

It looks like the NAS South Weymouth 20th anniversary reunion will probably be a go for Saturday September 30th 2017. We did not get the numbers that we were looking for (300 people) but there was enough interest expressed via Facebook and other channels to seriously consider taking the financial risk involved with organizing this event. For more information and to express interest in going please join the "NAS South Weymouth Reunion" group on Facebook at www.facebook.com. As with the VP-92 reunion, we'll present more information about this event as it approaches.

CHINA'S NEW SEAPLANE IS AS BIG AS A 737 (Popular Mechanics 7/26):

China has started production on the world's largest seaplane. Known in China as the Jiaolong, or Water Dragon, the AG-600 is built by Chinese aviation giant AVIC, who held ceremony to start up the aircraft assembly line on July 23.

The AG-600 is much larger than its predecessor, the Harbin SH-5 flying boat, which was introduced in 1986. It has a wingspan of 121 feet and a maximum takeoff weight of 53.6 tons. According to Chinese state media, it's as large as an Airbus 320 or Boeing 737. The plane uses four WJ-6 turboprop engines descended from a 1950s-era engine designed by the Soviet Union. It has a range of 3,100 miles and can stay in the air for up to 12 hours.

The amphibious seaplane can take off and land from both water and hard ground. It features a boat-like hull for taking off and landing from water and a conventional tricycle-style set of landing gear for operating from conventional land airstrip.

According to Xinhua, the AG600 will be used for seaborne search and rescue. It will be equipped with infrared sensors and optical cameras for searching vast stretches of ocean, and built-in emergency medical facilities for treating survivors. It can rescue up to 50 people at a time.



The plane is also meant for firefighting. Landing in water, it can collect 12 tons of water in 20 seconds, dumping it on forest fires.

Unlike its predecessor, the AG-600's resume doesn't include anti-submarine warfare. At least, officially. China appears to be deliberately downplaying the military side of the seaplane. Aside from hunting submarines, performing reconnaissance and rescuing downed aircrews, the plane could also be used to resupply China's remote military bases on contested islands in the South China Sea.

AVIC has 17 orders so far, and expects the plane to appeal mostly to the domestic market. Few countries still build seaplanes, although Japan recently came out with the US-2. The Indian military plans to buy twelve US-2s for operating across the vast Indian Ocean.

SAILORS, CIVILIANS REUNITE AT BRUNSWICK NAVAL AIR STATION (Newstimes 7/16):

The Brunswick Naval Air Station has been closed long enough - five years - for the community to organize the first reunion for sailors and civilians. Sailors and civilians from as far away as Hawaii, Washington state, Michigan, Wisconsin, Texas and Florida joined local residents this weekend to reminisce over good times at the former Navy base, built in World War II to train Royal Navy pilots.

Organizer Jeff Simpson said he has fond memories of the U.S. Navy's P-3 Orion "sub hunter" patrol planes and other aircraft. "Everybody misses the sound. You'd hear them humming all night long," said Simpson, who lives in Topsham along what was the flight path.

The Brunswick Naval Air Station formally closed on May 31, 2011, after being ordered closed by the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission. The closing left the military with no active-duty airfield in New England. The Navy patrol aircraft, which kept watch over Soviet submarines in the North Atlantic during the Cold War, now operate from Jacksonville, Florida.

It was a blow both to the local economy and to a region where Navy personnel and their families were part of the fabric of the community. But there are good memories. Simpson is the administrator of Remember Brunswick Naval Air Station Facebook page with more than 4,000 members. For the reunion, golf and a barbecue were being held Saturday, followed by tour of redeveloped property. There's also a Sunday service in the chapel.

The 3,200-acre base has been transformed into a business campus that's called Brunswick Landing. The dual, 8,000-foot runways are now part of Brunswick Executive Airport. Brunswick Landing has so far attracted 950 jobs, surpassing the goal of 700 jobs for the five-year mark in the base redevelopment plan. Those numbers will grow when online furnishings retailer Wayfair creates up to 500 jobs at a new customer service center. The base is on track to reach up to 5,000 jobs over the next decade, said Steve Levesque, director of the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority.

SOUTHFIELD REDEVELOPMENT RECHRISTENED UNION POINT (Patriot Ledger 7/7):

Over the past decade SouthField has been synonymous with economic rejuvenation, bureaucratic logjam and eye-rolling resignation – sometimes all at once. Now it has a new association: history. LStar Communities, the North Carolina company in charge of redeveloping the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station, announced Thursday that it's stepping away from the long, tangled past of SouthField by re-christening the property Union Point.

LStar Managing Partner Kyle Corkum said the re-branding was partly to disassociate with the years the project seemed broken beyond repair, mired in in-fighting and an unworkable oversight structure. But he said it was also to reflect the partnership between Weymouth, Rockland and Abington, each of which has a piece of the 1,400 former base within its borders, and LStar's new ambitious vision for

a denser, more urban redevelopment, Corkum said. “What we inherited was a glorified single-family subdivision in the suburbs,” Corkum said. “The new vision is more urban and more like a small city outside of Boston.”

The new name is also a nod to the two Union Streets, one in Weymouth and one in Rockland, that dead-end at the edges of the property and LStar’s commitment to use union labor for some of the work on the property, Corkum said. New temporary signs went up Wednesday at the property and LStar redirected the redevelopment’s former website to a new one, www.unionpointma.com.

Mayor Robert Hedlund said LStar had already made strides turning around SouthField’s image before changing its name. “I think that the name means less in the long run than the actual development that will take hold and the benefits we’ll see,” he said. “If it helps them do a better job of marketing the site and bringing in more commercial activity and more tax revenue for the town, that’s great.”

Eric Miller, president of the SouthField Neighborhood Association, said even though the name may have officially changed, it’s not clear yet whether the new label will stick with residents of the new development and the three towns. He said even after a decade of the property’s official naming as SouthField many people still refer to it simply as “the base.” “It’s really going to come down to whether the community accepts the new name,” he said. “Who knows if Union Point is going to stick any more than SouthField did?”

LStar, which specializes in reviving failed or struggling planned communities, bought the property from previous master developer Starwood Land Ventures last year. LNR Development Corp., which preceded Starwood, first dubbed the property SouthField in 2006. New homes and businesses were supposed to start springing up by the following year but a series of delays and false starts pushed back the start of construction by three years. When did begin it was more of a trickle than the flood that the towns had hoped would spur an economic revival through an influx of new tax revenue.

A legislative overhaul in 2014 scrapped the old oversight agency, replaced it with a new one and gave the three towns more control over their portions. Since taking over, LStar has signed several land deals with developers and won approval from the three towns to add more housing and triple the amount of commercial space around the cluster of homes and apartments already there. Plans for SouthField now include 3,900 homes and apartments and up to 6 million square feet of commercial space.

Some vestiges of the old name will remain. The 2014 legal rewrite refers to the property created the new oversight agency, the SouthField Redevelopment Authority, and recognized the SouthField Neighborhood Association.

Patriot Ledger article by Christian Schiavone

A NEW AGE DAWNS FOR NAS JAX AIRCRAFT (JAX Air News 6/29):

A P-8A Poseidon landed on the new NAS Jacksonville primary runway June 27, signifying the reopening of Towers Field following a major yearlong construction project that required all fixed-wing aircraft operations to move to Cecil Airport for expeditionary style operations. In the predawn, Runway Project Manager Lt. Jamie Wallace, CEC, noted that it was exciting for her to call the control tower and request the newly installed LED lights to be switched on, after the runway spent a year in symbolic darkness. “It was significant to me and that’s what made this project feel complete,” Wallace said. “The \$52 million invested in this project will safely serve the Navy’s Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force – as well as our rotary community and Reserve squadrons.”

Dozens of guests, including military, state and local officials, civilians and retirees, mingled as they shared their experiences with the armed forces. Patriotic music was delivered courtesy of Navy Band Southeast. Master of ceremonies NAS Jacksonville Executive Officer Capt. Sean Haley welcomed guests and introduced Cmdr. Dennis Andrews, NAS Jacksonville command chaplain, who delivered the invocation, followed by a blessing the runway. "The completion of the runway represents the collective efforts of hundreds of people, who gave the very best of their skills and abilities to see this project accomplished," said Andrews. "God, as we dedicate this air field help us to be mindful that it is a symbol of freedom."

Remarks were also given by lead contractor Archer Western Project Manager Justin Cooper. "Conversations about teamwork for this major project started long before the runway was shut down and torn up for recycling," Cooper said. "That kind of communication is what kept everything going."

NAS Jacksonville Commanding Officer Capt. Howard Wanamaker, keynote speaker, welcomed the distinguished guests, but also recognized the contractors and other key personnel who worked on the project. "Your dedication, cooperation and patience helped complete this project safely, on time and on budget – thank you," Wanamaker said. He also thanked the Jacksonville Aviation Authority and Cecil Airport personnel for their assistance helping to save taxpayers money, with a minimum impact to the community. "Cecil Airport became our second home and proved to be a dynamic airport, capable of handling all our requests and requirements," he said. "From the start, with the many facilities upgraded and strong ties to the community, we knew we were going to be successful."

Wanamaker remarked about the P-8A Poseidon that was circling overhead of the ceremony "That P-8 is just itching to land, isn't it?" he joked to the audience. NAS Jacksonville Air Operations Officer Cmdr. Stephen Polk asked Wanamaker for permission to land the circling aircraft on the secondary runway 14-32. Wanamaker suggested the use of the primary runway 10-28 and the P-8A briefly touched down and then took off again to the delight of the crowd. Wanamaker finished his presentation by declaring, "Towers Field is now open for military aviation!"

According to Wanamaker, NAS Jacksonville is home to the most advanced anti-submarine warfare aircraft in the world —The P-8A Poseidon and the MH-60R Seahawk helicopter. The P-8A Poseidon is designed for long-range anti-submarine warfare; anti-surface warfare; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

The MH-60R Seahawk is the world's most advanced maritime helicopter designed for anti-submarine warfare; anti-surface warfare; surveillance; communications relay; combat search and rescue; naval gunfire support and logistical support.

After Andrews gave the benediction, a ceremonial cake was served followed by aircraft tours. "Just staying committed to it. Not giving up," said Lt. Wallace. "You can explain the same thing to a group of folks, but each person will interpret it differently. It really is just about staying committed." Naval Air Station Jacksonville says planes will be returning through Monday and Tuesday.

JAX Air News article by Julie M. Lucas

NAVY UNIT LEAVING KANEOHE FOR WASHINGTON (Honolulu Star Advisor 6/19):

A Navy patrol and reconnaissance wing with roots in Hawaii back to the 1930s will be eliminated May 1 as U.S. Pacific Fleet consolidates two wings and transfers missions to Washington state. The planes and personnel of Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 2 at Kaneohe Bay, which had three squadrons of P-3C Orion turboprop aircraft, are shifting to Naval Air Station Whidbey Island. Six to eight P-3Cs were assigned to each of the patrol squadrons — VP-4, VP-9 and VP-47.

The Navy decided it would be cheaper to base the units and newer replacement aircraft — P-8 Poseidon jets — at Whidbey. In 2012, the Navy estimated it could save \$300 million by consolidating the aircraft on the West Coast and in Florida instead of maintaining those locations and Hawaii, too. Eighteen Poseidons, a military version of the Boeing 737-800, were originally slated for Hawaii. As previously reported, the squadrons and planes will go to Washington state under the revised plan. The Poseidons were expected to bring more jet traffic and noise to Marine Corps Air Station at Kaneohe Bay, as well as 904 personnel and about \$150 million in base upgrades. However, Kaneohe Bay will become the operating point for a permanent detachment of two P-8s that will perform a Hawaii homeland defense mission.

Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 2 is the evolution of Fleet Air Wing 2, established at Pearl Harbor in 1937 and with later service at Kaneohe Bay, Barbers Point and Kaneohe Bay again. Even before that, in 1934, the U.S. Navy was worried about Japan's expansion and transferred six P2Y-1 patrol flying boats from San Francisco in what amounted to the first nonstop formation flight from the United States to Hawaii. PBV Catalina seaplanes were a signature aircraft on Dec. 7, 1941, with more than 60 on Oahu. A patrolling Catalina spotted a Japanese minisub off Pearl Harbor's entrance before the attacks. Since the 1950s, Barbers Point was known for its "Rainbow Fleet" of patrol squadrons that routinely deployed with P-2 and later P-3 aircraft to the northern and western Pacific, Indian Ocean and Arabian Gulf. The Navy said the aircraft tracked Soviet submarines off the West Coast of the United States and supported operations in the Vietnam War, Gulf War and Kosovo. Later P-3 missions also included Iraq as well as Afghanistan.

Patrol Squadron 4, the "Skinny Dragons," departed from Kaneohe Bay for the last time in March on a deployment to Sigonella, Sicily; Djibouti; and El Salvador to deter drug trafficking. The 12 aircrews of VP-4 will be the first of the three Hawaii squadrons to make the move to Whidbey Island to transition to the P-8 Poseidon. "VP-4 has enjoyed great success for many years in Hawaii," Cmdr. Christopher Smith, squadron executive officer, said in a Navy-produced news story in March. "Our sailors from today and years gone by have fantastic memories of serving in the Aloha State."

Effective Feb. 1, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific will relocate from Hawaii to Washington state, the Navy said recently. On April 1, VP-47 will relocate. Command of VP-4 was to change immediately to Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 10 at Whidbey; on Sept. 1 for VP-47; May 1 for VP-9; and May 1 for the highly secretive Special Projects Patrol Squadron 2, or VPU-2. P-3 Orions and the newer P-8 Poseidons are in high demand for surveillance, particularly across the vast expanses of the Pacific and Indian oceans. But changing missions coupled with operations out of locations including Asia, the Middle East and Europe have made the Hawaii basing less essential. Capt. Steve Newlund, the commodore of Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 2, said in October that he saw no strategic detriment to reducing the maritime and sub-hunting capabilities in Hawaii, because that same capability will come from Whidbey Island.

Honolulu Star Advisor article by William Cole

CHINESE JETS INTERCEPTING US SPY PLANE WERE A LITTLE TOO CLOSE (Newsmax 6/8):

An "unsafe" intercept of a U.S. spy plane over the East China Sea by two Chinese fighter jets on Tuesday emphasized China's demand for an end to American surveillance flights. The U.S. Pacific Command said the U.S. plane was on routine patrol in international airspace, reported Reuters.

The intercept involved two Chinese J-10 fighter planes and a U.S. Air Force RC-135 reconnaissance plane, U.S. Pacific Command said in a statement. "One of the intercepting Chinese jets had an unsafe excessive rate of closure on the RC-135 aircraft. Initial assessment is that this seems to be a case of improper airmanship, as no other provocative or unsafe maneuvers occurred," Pacific

Command said. It did not say how close the Chinese fighter came to the U.S. plane. "The Department of Defense is addressing the issue with China in appropriate diplomatic and military channels," the statement said.

China's Defense Ministry said it had noted the report and was looking into it. "Judging by the report, the U.S. side is again deliberately hyping up the issue of the close surveillance of China by U.S. military aircraft," it told Reuters in a statement. "Chinese military pilots consistently carry out operations in accordance with the law and the rules, and are professional and responsible," it added, without elaborating.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said such patrols seriously harmed China's security, and repeated a demand they stop. "China has the right to take defensive measures," he told a daily news briefing, without identifying the site of the intercept. Asked if the incident had been timed to coincide with high-level China-U.S. talks in Beijing, attended by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Hong responded, "Ask the Americans."

In May, the Pentagon said two Chinese fighter jets flew within 50 feet (15 meters) of a U.S. EP-3 aircraft over the South China Sea. The Pentagon determined that the May incident violated an agreement the two governments signed last year.

Earlier this week, Secretary of State John Kerry said the United States would consider any Chinese establishment of an air defense zone over the South China Sea to be a "provocative and destabilizing act." U.S. officials have expressed concern that an international court ruling expected in coming weeks on a case brought by the Philippines against China over its South China Sea claims could prompt Beijing to declare an air defense identification zone, or ADIZ, as it did over the East China Sea in 2013.

China has claimed most of the South China Sea, through which \$5 trillion in trade is shipped every year. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei have overlapping claims. Washington has accused Beijing of militarizing the South China Sea after creating artificial islands. Beijing, in turn, has criticized increased U.S. naval patrols and exercises in Asia. At a conference in Singapore last week, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said the U.S. approach to the Asia-Pacific remained "one of commitment, strength and inclusion," but he warned China against provocative behavior in the South China Sea.

BRITS INTERCEPTED RUSSIAN SUB HEADING TO ENGLISH CHANNEL (Business Insider 6/8):

The Royal Navy's HMS Kent intercepted the Stary Oskol, a Russian Kilo-class submarine capable of carrying torpedoes and antiship cruise missiles, on Tuesday evening, The Guardian reports. The publication reports that HMS Kent's commanding officer, Cmdr. Daniel Thomas, said, "Locating this submarine was a combined effort with NATO allies and shadowing such units is routine activity for the Royal Navy." The Stary Oskol, a diesel-electric submarine, can go nearly silent when submerged and operating on stored electric power, making it difficult to detect.

This incident represents just one in a long line of Russian military planes and ships encroaching on UK and NATO territory. The trend has become prominent enough that Vice Admiral James Foggo III of the US Navy characterized the uptick in Russian submarine activity as the beginning of a "fourth battle of the Atlantic."

According to Foggo, Russian submarine activity is at its highest level since the Cold War, and that should be cause for concern. Foggo wrote in the June issue of Proceedings, the US Naval Institute's monthly publication: "Once again, an effective, skilled, and technologically advanced Russian submarine force is challenging us. Russian submarines are prowling the Atlantic, testing our

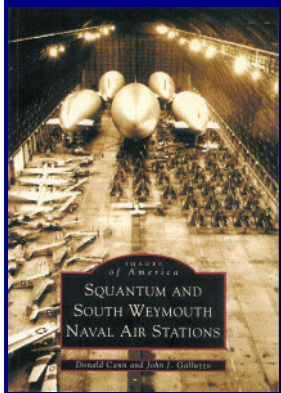
defenses, confronting our command of the seas, and preparing the complex underwater battle space to give them an edge in any future conflict. Not only have Russia's actions and capabilities increased in alarming and confrontational ways, its national-security policy is aimed at challenging the United States and its NATO allies and partners."

In his piece, Foggo specifically mentioned the Kilo-class of Russian subs: "Russia rapidly is building and deploying more advanced and significantly quieter attack submarines and frigates armed with the long-range Kalibr cruise missile (including six new Kilo-class diesel-electric attack submarines destined for the Black Sea)." "As demonstrated last December by Kalibr launches into Syria from the Eastern Mediterranean, Russian leaders will use such weapons at will, without the same qualms we have about collateral damage," said Foggo.

Though the Royal Air Force and NATO forces spotted and intercepted this submarine in particular, the threat remains that there are more unidentified Russian subs patrolling valuable underwater infrastructure, such as oil rigs and telecommunication lines, that the US and NATO forces desperately rely on.

Business Insider article by Alex Lockie

RECOMMENDED READING:



Here's the book that our guest speakers for the up-coming reunion put together and which will be the subject of their presentation and book-signing on September 24th. This neat little book is part of the popular Arcadia Press "Images of America" series of photo books. If you patronize bookstores you'll see them for just about every town in America. "Squantum and South Weymouth Naval Air Stations" has 128 pages and is filled with nearly 200 photos. Not only are there chapters on both bases, as you'd expect from the title, there are also chapters on the famous Harvard Air Meet and the Victory Plant shipyard too. You can preview this book and if you can't wait to buy one directly from the authors at the reunion you can order it on-line via links on the "geedunk" page of the VP Association web site at www.vpassociation.org.

ON THE INTERNET:

Here are a few things that were recently found out on the Internet by VP Association members that they suggest you check out if you have the time and/or the interest to do so:

- George Driscoll found a blog about the Japanese P-1 maritime patrol aircraft at <http://daisetsuzan.blogspot.com/2016/01/kawasaki-p-1-maritime-patrol-aircraft.html>
- Jay White suggests that you check out this inspirational YouTube video about a USAF pilot who flew SR-71 Blackbird spy planes at <https://www.youtube.com/embed/3kIMTJRgyn0?autoplay=1>
- Eric Jensen found an old VP-92 related video on Youtube at https://youtu.be/Cda_Cc7WUH8

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 SHOTS:



Come to the reunion on September 24th and reconnect with old friends and shipmates such as these!



VP ASSOCIATION 2016 ANNUAL REUNION
WEYMOUTH ELKS HALL, 1197 WASHINGTON ST., WEYMOUTH, MA
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 2016 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!