



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 54

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

DECEMBER 2013

Welcome to another edition of the VP Association newsletter. As always, please direct all general VP Association-related inquiries or correspondence to William Hanigan, 23 Parkview Terrace, Duxbury MA 02332, 781-585-4950, vp92association@gmail.com. Please send all newsletter-related correspondence to Marc J. Frattasio, P.O. Box 30, Pembroke MA 02359, marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

RECCO:



ABOVE: VP-92 P-3A Orion LY9 parked outside Hangar One at NAS South Weymouth on July 31, 1976. Tom Cuddy photo. Got something similar to share? If so, contact Marc J. Frattasio.

FINAL FLIGHTS:

Bob Forand of Burlington, MA passed away on Tuesday September 17th. Bob was a blimp pilot with ZP-11 at NAS South Weymouth during WW2. He also served in the USNR during the postwar era at NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth with ZP-911 and VP-913.

ILL SHIPMATE IN NEED OF CHEERING UP:

Jerry Eisenhour, who served with VS-912 at NAS Squantum and NADU at NAS South Weymouth, is undergoing chemotherapy. He'd love to hear from any of his old shipmates. You can contact him at 69 Main St. Unit 46C, Stoneham MA 02180, 781-438-1790, or geejr@verizon.net.

THE 2013 ANNUAL REUNION:

About 80 VP Association members met at the Elks Hall in Weymouth, MA for the annual reunion banquet on Saturday September 21st. A terrific time was had by all. Mark Saturday September 20, 2014 down on your calendars. This will be the date of next year's reunion. The location will be the same, the Elks Hall in Weymouth, MA. As was the case this year we will make arrangements to have a guest speaker and to have the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth open for VP Association visitors that day. Expect the first reunion banquet reservation form to appear in the June newsletter. A few photos taken at the annual reunion follow.



ABOVE: Overview of VP Association members and guests at the Weymouth Elks Hall. **BELOW LEFT:** Master of Ceremonies Bill Hanigan begins the banquet with a short speech. **BELOW RIGHT:** Barbara and Bill Hanigan being served stuffed chicken and roast beef in the chow line.



RIGHT: Kevin Cahill, Richard Volk, Ken Sherman, Paul Gilbert, and Dave Childers enjoy their meal and pleasant conversation. **BELOW LEFT:** Faith Frattasio and Mary Primiano. **BELOW RIGHT:** Bob O'Brien, George Carter, and Paul Harriman. **BOTTOM:** Guest speaker Robert "Barney" Rubel giving his fascinating presentation.





***LEFT:** Paul Lapinski, Paul Harriman, Fred Squires, Al Firnrrohr (in mirror), Tom Carroll, Bill Hanigan, Gene Forgit, and Bob O'Brien socializing in the display room after Robert "Barney" Rubel's presentation.*

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 Philip Baker, Tom Carroll, Andre "Casey" Castellano, Dave Childers, Les Connolly, Fran Creney, Jerry Eisenhour, Gene Forgit, Ray Guerin, Allan Hansen, Paul Harriman, Paul Lapinski, Joe McCann, Ed McDonough, Gary Moore, Bob O'Brien, Arthur Ricca, Leo Salmeri, Harvey Shore, Fred Squires, and Herb Tallent for their recent contributions to the administration fund.

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

If you have an e-mail address and have been receiving this newsletter through the U.S. Postal Service then we do not have a valid e-mail address for you. If this is your situation, please contact Bill Hanigan via e-mail at vp92association@gmail.com as soon as possible so we can begin sending the newsletter to you by e-mail, which costs us nothing other than time, instead of via the U.S. Postal service for which we have to pay for printing and postage. Remember, this group does not charge dues and we operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. Also, please be sure to let Bill Hanigan know whenever your street or e-mail address changes so we can update our files.

NEW MEMBERS:

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|---|--|--|---|--|
| Philip Aasen
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THE NEWSLETTER'S NEW LOOK:

If you got this issue of the newsletter via e-mail or through the VP Association's web site you should have noticed something different by now...its in color. This was an experiment that may or may not be continued going forward depending upon the time it takes to do (lots more – color slows things down) and the resulting PDF file sizes. There is a substantial amount of work involved in producing this newsletter on a quarterly basis. Any assistance in terms of stories, photos, etc., would be much appreciated. If you have anything to share contact Marc Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

THE 2013 OKIE MEMORIAL LOBSTER FEST (via Bill Hanigan):



Had a great time at the "Okie Memorial Lobster fest" at the Fourth Cliff Military Reservation in Marshfield, MA on Aug 14th. There were 24 of us there including Jack Leonard who came with two of his daughters. The weather was beautiful, friendships renewed with new sea stories, lots of great food and tremendous help. It would not have happened without the tremendous help of Al Firnrroh and all the others who help so much in the cleanup.

HELP WANTED FOR THE SELFRIDGE MILIARY AIR MUSEUM'S P-3A:



Pat Peterson and Jerry Lach of the Selfridge Military Air Museum are looking for P-3 related items to display with their P-3B LH03. See the recent photos of the aircraft above sent along by Pat Peterson.

Former VP-93 personnel, many of whom transferred to VP-92 after VP-93 was disestablished, give tours of the aircraft from Memorial Day to Labor Day on the weekends. They are looking for shapes (bombs, mines, torpedoes, etc.) that they can hang on the P-3 or in the Bombay. They also need two P-3 first aid kits (the outer cover without contents would be OK), a flight station storm scope, a PRT-5A emergency radio, and five old-style parachutes (the outer cover and straps would be OK).

Any assistance or direction you can provide will be greatly appreciated. The Michigan Air Guard Association DBA the Selfridge Military Air Museum is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization with a Federal EIN of 51-0164512. LtCol Nigro or Skipper Rundell always follow up on all donations with an appreciation letter.

The museum has coordinated multiple items from various P-3's to LH02 and will not only coordinate transportation but will also coordinate all part transfers to LH02 via Pensacola' Ms Lenore Taylor. We do know how to do this all, in the legit! If you can help contact Pat Peterson at pat@strategicmi.com or Jerry Lach at ss1jsl@comcast.net.

ROBERT "BARNEY" RUBEL TO SPEAK AT SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM IN JANUARY:

Robert "Barney" Rubel, guest speaker at our recent annual reunion, has agreed to speak at the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on Saturday January 25, 2014. Mr. Rubel is a retired Navy Captain and attack aircraft pilot who is presently (at least until next summer) the dean of Naval Warfare Studies at the Naval War College. The lecture, which will begin at noon and will last for about an hour, will be on the famous Battle of Midway. This was the first major naval battle between aircraft carriers and is considered to have been the turning point in the war against Japan in the Pacific Ocean. The lecture is free and all are welcome to attend. The Shea Naval Aviation Museum is located at 495 Shea Memorial Drive on the SouthField real estate development (old NAS South Weymouth) in Weymouth, MA. See www.anapatriotsquadron.org for more details about the Shea Naval Aviation Museum.

U.S. NAVY TO DECLARE BOEING'S P-8A SPY PLANE READY FOR USE (Reuters 11/15/13):

WASHINGTON, Nov 13 (Reuters) - The U.S. Navy is expected to announce soon that Boeing Co's P-8A aircraft, a long-range maritime surveillance plane based on the company's 737 airliner, is ready for initial operational use, sources familiar with the program said.

The Navy plans to buy 117 of the new anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare planes to replace its P-3 spy planes built by Lockheed Martin Corp. Boeing won the contract to build the P-8A planes in 2004 and the plane had its first flight in 2009.

The Navy's declaration of "initial operational capability", or IOC, will pave the way for the plane's first deployment in December, said the sources, who were not authorized to speak publicly. Boeing, which is also building eight of the new planes for India, will have a P-8A aircraft on display at the Dubai air show that begins on Sunday.

The decision will enable the Navy to deploy its first P-8A squadron this winter for operational missions, said a Navy official speaking on background. "This program milestone supports Navy plans and operational force structure for the maritime patrol community."

Boeing spokesman Chick Ramey declined comment on the expected decision but said an announcement would come "very soon." "We have been working hand-in-glove with the Navy to help prepare for the first fleet deployment," he said. The P-8A was on track to achieve IOC as planned when the program began, a rare feat for a major weapons program, Ramey said.

So far, under contracts awarded in 2011, 2012 and 2013, Boeing is building 37 P-8A Poseidon aircraft for the Navy. It had delivered 12 through October. Boeing's P-8A program manager, Rick Heerdt, has said the program is meeting all cost and schedule milestones as the company ramps up production and airplane deliveries.

Boeing says the new aircraft will provide more combat capability for the Navy using a smaller force and less infrastructure than the P-3s. The P-8As have an extended global reach, greater payload capacity, higher operating altitude, and an open systems architecture that make it easier to implement future upgrades.

Reuters article by Andrea Shalal-Esa and Lisa Lambert

THE NAVY'S FIRST SUPERCARRIER TO BE SCRAPPED IN 1 CENT DEAL (Fox News 10/24/13):

Here's a penny for your thoughts: A scrap metal company got one red cent from the Navy to take its first supercarrier, the decommissioned Forrestal, off its hands. The U.S. Navy turned over the 1,067-foot behemoth to a Texas company, All Star Metals, to be dismantled, scrapped and recycled, giving the firm the sum of one penny for its trouble, Navy officials announced. It's an inauspicious fate for a ship with a colorful — and tragic — history. It's perhaps best known for a 1967 incident in which stray voltage triggered an accidental explosion that struck a plane on the flight deck whose cockpit was occupied by a young John McCain. A chain reaction of blasts and fires ultimately killed 134 men and injured more than 300.

But its rich past and nearly four decades of service are not enough to spare it. The Navy tried to donate the historic ship for use as a memorial or a museum, but no "viable applications" were received. "It's something that the Navy is caught between a rock and a hard place," said Ken Killmeyer, historian for the USS Forrestal Association and a survivor of the 1967 incident. "They have to have these vessels no matter how big or small they are, and they use them as you would your car until they're no longer financially viable. So, they decommission them."

The company plans to tow the aircraft carrier from its current location at the Navy's inactive ship facility in Philadelphia to its facility in Brownsville, Texas. All Star Metals gets the proceeds and a penny but now must pay for moving and dismantling the ship, according to a Navy press release.

Named for James Forrestal, the former Navy secretary and the first U.S. Secretary of Defense, the carrier was lauded as the "biggest ship ever built" by Popular Science, which detailed it in its August 1954 issue. More than 16,000 engineers, draftsmen and builders worked on the ship, which took an estimated \$217 million — nearly \$2 billion in today's dollars — to build. Readers were amazed to learn that the ship featured enough air-conditioning equipment to cool New York City's Empire State Building two-and-a-half times over. It launched on Dec. 11, 1954. "Her 3,500 crewmen will use nearly twice as much water as the eight big boilers that feed her main turbines," Popular Science reported. "To supply both needs, her water tanks must store nearly 400,000 gallons."

The July 29, 1967, incident occurred while the ship was in the Gulf of Tonkin during the Vietnam War. Stray voltage triggered a rocket to launch from an F-4 Phantom on the flight deck, ultimately striking an armed A-4 Skyhawk piloted by then-Lt. Cmdr. John S. McCain III, who would later spend five years as a POW, serve in the U.S. Senate and run for president. A chain reaction of fires and explosions ensued, causing a day-long fire aboard the ship's deck, which was packed with planes. In addition to the deaths and injuries, 21 aircraft were damaged. The incident prompted changes within the Navy to damage control and disaster response training, as most of the sailors who were trained as firefighters were reportedly killed during the initial blast, forcing the remaining crew to improvise its rescue efforts.

After seven months of repairs, the ship later returned to sea for more than two decades before ultimately being decommissioned in 1993. It was stationed in Newport, R.I., until 2010, when it was moved to Philadelphia's Naval Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility, where more than 20 decommissioned naval vessels are reportedly being stored for possible foreign sale transfer, donation or artificial reefing. Meanwhile, Navy officials say the award of contracts for two other conventional carriers, the ex-Saratoga and ex-Constellation, are also pending and are contingent upon facility security clearances.

Messages seeking comment from Sen. McCain, R-Ariz., were not immediately returned early Wednesday, but Killmeyer, who survived the fire as a 20-year-old sailor, told FoxNews.com that the sale marked a "sad day" for all Americans. While the ship could have made an excellent educational tool, Killmeyer said the "very costly" process to maintain massive aircraft carriers was difficult to overcome. "If they're not painting them or working on it somehow, it's an odd day because they're always maintaining something to keep them afloat," Killmeyer told FoxNews.com. "The weather plays havoc on their exterior no matter what climate they're in. The biggest expense is maintenance."

Killmeyer, now 67, said he can still smell the "total devastation" aboard the ship and the broken sense of security felt by the crewmen, who thought they were much safer at sea compared to their counterparts on land. "As crewmembers, we relive July 29, 1967, every time we hear a loud, unexplained noise, whether you're at the beach or you're in your office," Killmeyer said. "Or, some people are affected by certain odors. When you smell flesh burnt from jet fuel, it kind of stays with you forever. You can't get away from it."

Fox News article by Joshua Rhett Miller

STUDY: LINK BETWEEN AIR BASE AND MLS CASES UNLIKELY (Patriot Ledger 10/04/13):

WEYMOUTH — A new state study runs counter to the long-held suspicions of neighbors of the former South Weymouth Air Station that contamination from the base made them sick, but some aren't convinced by the findings. The rate of people with multiple sclerosis is higher in communities adjacent to the former South Weymouth Naval Air Station compared to surrounding towns in southeastern Massachusetts, but it is unlikely that exposure to the base contributed to making people sick, according to the Department of Public Health report.

The long-awaited results were first made public at a meeting held Thursday night at Weymouth Town Hall. The report looked at cases of the disease from 1998 through 2003 in 30 communities, including all of Plymouth County, plus Raynham, Weymouth and Cohasset. Among residents of Weymouth, Abington and Rockland, which border the base, the rate of verified MS cases was 144 per 100,000 people, compared to 103 for all 30 communities. The average rate for communities in the northern United States is between 110 and 140 per 100,000.

But Suzanne Condon, the department's associate commissioner, said the study found a higher prevalence of cases farther from the base rather than clustered around it, making it unlikely that the base contributed directly. "The pattern of MS actually suggested strongly that the base was unlikely to have played a primary role," she said. "There are a lot of people (with MS); that's what we documented. But we also documented the less likelihood the base played a role."

Condon said scientists still don't know exactly what causes MS and could not explain why the rate was higher in the three towns. She also said the findings could not completely rule out the possibility that contamination on the base contributed to people getting sick.

The 1,400-acre World War II-era base closed in 1997 and is still considered a Superfund site, with areas that were contaminated with heavy metals and solvents, contaminants that have been linked to MS. The area is now being redeveloped as a residential and commercial community called SouthField. The Navy is cleaning up the remaining pollution.

The state began the study in 2002 after residents who lived near the base documented cases of people diagnosed with MS in their neighborhoods, but it wasn't completed until earlier this year. Condon said that was because of severe cuts in funding and personnel that put the study on hold, and extra time was needed to get the findings peer reviewed.

Patriot Ledger article by Christian Schiavone

NAVY RESERVES HUNT, "SINK" ELUSIVE SUB (Quincy Patriot Ledger ca. 1965):

Being bounced around a Navy aircraft swooping low over the cold Atlantic is not everyone's idea of spending a weekend at the nation's capital. But this is precisely what hundreds of "Weekend Warriors" did Saturday and Sunday to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Naval Air Reserve.

The first naval reserve air station was located at Squantum, which formed the nucleus of today's Naval Air Reserve Training Command. And last weekend air reservists from its successor - the South Weymouth Naval Air Station - joined a flotilla of destroyers hunting for a submarine off the coast of Virginia. The submarine, manned by a regular Navy crew, played a cat and mouse game for the first joint exercise of its kind in the history of the reserves.

The exercise was being coordinated from Andrews Air Force Base on the outskirts of Washington. But few of the air crews from six bases along the Eastern Seaboard had time to get more than a glimpse of the city from the air as they made sorties over the ocean in their search for the evasive submarine. The results of the exercise will not be known until all reports are analyzed. Meanwhile, intelligence officers were reluctant to say just how many times the submarine was actually "destroyed" by dummy depth charges. However, it is understood that an aircrew from South Weymouth made one of the first confirmed "kills" after detecting the submarine in a 30-by-60 mile stretch of ocean with electronic equipment.

A handful of regulars joined the reservists for the exercise. One of these was Edward S. Dziergowski, 29, son of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley J. Dziergowski of 583 South St., Bridgewater. Dziergowski, an aviation antisubmarine warfare technician, was the radio and teletype operator on the Lockheed P2V Neptune that flew me from Washington to join 30 other aircraft hunting the USS Carp, the target submarine from Norfolk, Virginia. Piloting the Neptune was Lieutenant Commander James R. Rabun of Washington who was stationed at South Weymouth in 1960. It was his job to locate the submarine, some 90 miles southeast of Norfolk.

Meanwhile, reserve crews on five destroyers - including the Fall River-based USS Purdy - were sweeping the search area for the elusive submarine. Two hours flying time from Andrews AFB we still had no contact, although other Neptunes and Grumman S2F Trackers occasionally could be seen in the distance. By now the airwaves were filled with reports from pilots and the destroyers as the search pattern narrowed.

Another 30 minutes passed as we flew 500 feet above a huge whale skimming along the surface of the ocean. Suddenly, the routine flight was broken. "We have a bearing..." the voice of a distant pilot crackled in the earphones. "We're attempting to close..." Map coordinates followed and our Neptune altered its course.

A few minutes later LCDR Rabun told me: "We have surface contact 50 miles north." It was at this stage that we dropped out of the serious exercise and the submarine gave us a slow count so that a radar fix could be made on its position. "We don't want you to be disappointed and not see the submarine," a crewman explained, with a laugh. By now it was almost 2 1/2 hours since we had left the runway at Andrews.

The Neptune descended from 4,500 feet to 500 feet and I fastened my safety belt as an escape hatch was opened beside me so that I could get a clear view of the operation. The aircraft banked sharply to the left and the submarine came into view. The initial stage of the cat-and-mouse game was over.

Smoke markers from the Neptune and two other aircraft which rendezvoused over the target dotted the ocean around the submarine as it darted off in an evasive tactic. We circled the area for about 30 minutes and watched the submarine submerge, first to periscope depth and then to 100 feet. Its outline was still clearly visible in the water.

Soon, though, we lost all visual contact as the submarine dropped deeper under the water. The three pursuing aircraft dropped explosive echo detection charges in a wide pattern to keep the location of the submarine under constant scrutiny with the aid of sonar equipment. Its position was further localized with magnetic detection gear located in the Plexiglas dome of our aircraft. Eventually we broke away as a fresh wave of aircraft reached the scene.

We gained altitude and another Neptune flew with us in wing-tip formation for a few minutes before it finally banked off, the wings of the two Navy planes were less than 50 feet apart. En-route back, our Neptune flew over two of the destroyers participating in the exercise. Helicopters patrolled ahead of them. Each destroyer was manned by a crew of 120.

Area reservists who flew in aircraft from South Weymouth during the two day exercise included LCDR B. A. Knapp of 103 Fisher St., Westwood, Aviation Electronics Technician Second Class C. J. Treciokas of 110 Union St. Norwood, and, Aviation Electrician's Mate Second Class L. S. Salmer of 87 Farrington St., Quincy. Also taking part were LT William Bousun of 21 Roses Lane, Scituate, LCDR A. F. Mencely of 57 Oakdale Road, Canton, Aviation Machinist's Mate First Class Thomas N. Meehan of Old Oaken Bucket Road, Norwell. Aviation Electronics Technician Third Class George J. Gallivan Jr. of 22 Gushing St., Quincy, Aviation Anti-Submarine Warfare Technician Third Class Dennis P. Welch of 56 Hills St., Randolph, and Aviation Anti-Submarine Warfare Technician Third Class George E. Driscoll Jr. of 69 St. Agatha Road, Milton.

These men, whose job it was to find, track, identify and theoretically destroy the submarine, normally report for flying duty from South Weymouth one weekend every month. Their mission this week was to achieve maximum combat readiness qualifications. Following the exercise, the aircrews were inspected at Andrews by Vice Admiral Alexander S. Heyward Jr., chief of Naval Air Training and Vice Admiral Charles E. Weakley, commander of the Atlantic Anti-Submarine Warfare Force. They also received a "well done" from Rear Admiral Richard L. Fowler, chief of Naval Air Reserve Training. Admiral Hayward said there are now 21,000 active and 3,000 reserve aviators in the Navy.

As recounted by Patriot Ledger reporter Larry Masidlover

VP-92 COMMAND BALL CAPS:

The ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth has tracked down the original supplier of command ball caps to VP-92 in the squadron's final years. By the time you read this the museum should have them in stock. The caps will cost \$20 each at the museum or \$25.60 via mail order. Go to www.anapatriotsquadron.org for more details about the museum.

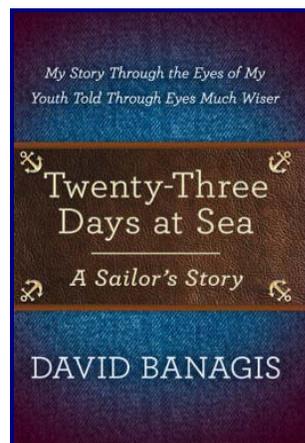
MEMORIAL BRICKS AT SHEA MEMORIAL GROVE:

The ANA Patriot Squadron has started laying memorial bricks at the Shea Memorial Grove at old NAS South Weymouth. The first batch of 80 bricks have been placed in a row along the left side of the main pathway into the park. There's plenty of room at the Shea Memorial Grove for more bricks, which cost \$50 each and are a fund-raiser for the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum. The memorial bricks can be used to commemorate an individual's military service, unit, command, or anything else in good taste. An order form can be obtained on-line on the ANA Patriot Squadron's web site at www.anapatriotsquadron.org.



RECOMMENDED READING:

Just in time for the holiday season. Retired YNC David Banagis recently published his Navy memoirs, "Twenty-Three Days at Sea". Banagis spent three tours at NAS South Weymouth during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. In between his time at NAS South Weymouth he served in a SeaBee unit based at "Gitmo Bay" in Cuba, on the First Naval District staff at the Boston Navy Yard, and at NAS Detroit. There's lots of NAS South Weymouth related content that should be of interest to anybody who was assigned there. The book is very interesting and actually quite funny in parts. Dave's book can't be purchased in bookstores and can only be obtained on-line directly through the publisher. There's a link to his book on the "Geedunk" page of the ANA Patriot Squadron web site at www.anapatriotsquadron.org. Check it out. It really is a very good book.



ON THE INTERNET:

There are Facebook groups at www.facebook.com associated with VP-92, NAS South Weymouth, and NAS Brunswick that may be of interest to all of you. Check them out if you have Internet access.

MONTHLY MEETING:

VP Association members meet 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. Join us if you can. Waxy O'Connor's Irish Pub is just outside the Hanscom Field Hartwell gate. Please note that due to the Christmas holiday the December lunch meeting will be moved back to Thursday December 19th.

PARTING SHOTS:





PREVIOUS PAGE: VP-92 FOD walkdown at NAS Brunswick. **ABOVE:** VP-92 CPO selectees bracing for some form of harassment in the hangar spaces at NAS Brunswick. **BELOW:** The VP-92 static display crew at the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford, England in 1995.



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

