



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 75

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

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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: Early VP-92 P-3A Orion parked at NAS South Weymouth in 1976. Thomas Waller photo. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

FINAL FLIGHTS:

James "Homer" Harrald passed away recently. He was an aviation electronics technician in VP-92.

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. We'd like to thank Dexter Morrison for his recent generous donation to the admin fund.

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

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

LOST CONTACT:

Be sure to inform George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com about home or e-mail address changes. Please note a new e-mail address for VP-92 pilot Steve Maloney at silver1313@protonmail.com.

DR. GERARD HAYES HAS RETIRED:



Captain Gerard Hayes, known as “Doc Hayes” to everybody who served with him, retired from the USNR on board the USS Constitution in Boston, MA on Saturday December 22nd. Doc Hayes was VP-92’s flight surgeon from 1991 to 2007. A pulmonary and critical care surgeon in civilian life, Doc Hayes put 31 years into the USNR. After VP-92 was disbanded Doc Hayes served with the Seabees, with which he was activated and deployed to Iraq in 2009, and then with the Marines. For the past year or so Doc Hayes served with a VTU. Several former members of VP-92 showed up to see the Doc piped over the side for the last time. Shown above from left to right are former Minutemen Arthur Ricca, Robert Clark, Marty McCormick, David Guililand, Scott Bailey, Doc Hayes, Jim Fitzgerald, Marc Frattasio, Faith Frattasio, and Suzanne Krause. It is worth noting that Robert Clark was the guest of honor at this event. He was the last executive officer of VP-92 and is now a rear admiral.

VP-92 REPRESENTED AT USS THOMAS HUDNER COMMISSIONING CEREMONY:

Minutemen Faith Frattasio, Marc Frattasio, and former VP-92 C.O. Sean O'Neill represented VP-92 at the commissioning ceremony for the new Arleigh Burke class destroyer USS Thomas Hudner at the Black Falcon Pier in South Boston, MA on Saturday December 1st. The new ship, which was built at Bath Iron Works in Maine, was named for Korean War Medal of Honor recipient CAPT Thomas Hudner. We didn't get a picture of Sean that day, unfortunately, but here's Marc and Faith Frattasio posed in front of the new ship's command board. When Sean ran into Marc, he said "Weren't you supposed to turn that flight jacket in when you left the squadron?"



VP-92 SQUADRON INSIGNIA SPOTTED AT NAS JACKSONVILLE:



Believe it or not, Paul Lapinski and his wife spotted an old VP-92 squadron insignia "zap" sticker on the main entrance door of the "T-Bar" at the Navy Gateway Inn & Suites on NAS Jacksonville during a recent trip to Florida. That's Paul shown above pointing to the insignia.

VP ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION:

As of now we're tentatively planning to hold our next reunion on Saturday September 21st, so put this date on your calendars. Most likely this year's event will be held at the same location as last year's, but the venue has not been firmed up at this time. We'll have more information in the June issue of this newsletter. We'd like to get more of you to start coming to our annual reunions. Now that Doc Hayes has retired from the USNR, and presumably has his weekends free, perhaps we'll see him...

NAVY'S BEST ASW AIRCRAFT FACING SOME NAGGING PROBLEMS (Business Insider 2/1):

The P-8A Poseidon, introduced in 2013 to replace the P-3 Orion, has quickly become one of the most highly regarded maritime-patrol aircraft in service, fielded by the Navy and sought after by partner countries all over the world. But the P-8A is dealing with some lingering issues that could affect the force as a whole, according to the fiscal year 2018 annual report produced by the Pentagon's Office of the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation.

The Poseidon's capabilities now include receiver air refueling, employment of the AGM-84D Harpoon Block I anti-ship missile, and several upgrades to its communications systems. But, the report said, "despite significant efforts to improve P-8A intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) sensors, overall P-8A ISR mission capabilities remain limited by sensor performance shortfalls." Moreover, the report found, data from the operational testing and evaluation of the P-8A's latest software engineering upgrade as well as metrics from the Navy "show consistently negative trends in fleet-wide aircraft operational availability due to a shortage of spare parts and increased maintenance requirements." Forward-deployed P-8A units have reported "relatively high mission capable rates" when they have access to enough spare parts, sufficient logistic supply support, and priority maintenance. However, the report said, focusing on supporting forward-deployed units "frequently reduces aircraft availability and increases part cannibalization rates at other fleet operating locations."

Shortages in spare parts for the Poseidon are exacerbated by the nature of the contracting and delivery system for the P-8A, according to the report. The use of engineering model predictions rather than reliability data from the fleet itself, "ensures that some mission critical spare part contracts lag actual fleet needs," lengthening the already long six- to nine-month contracting process. These delays are exacerbated by consumable-item processes at the Defense Logistics Agency, which requires depleting stocks and back orders before starting to procure new items, according to the report. "These delays are a major contributing factor to the observed increases in aircraft downtime awaiting parts and higher part cannibalization," it added, saying that the P-8A program is working with Naval Supply Systems Command to procure parts on a more flexible and proactive basis and to start basing procurement on fleet-reliability data.

More than 60 P-8As are in service for the US Navy. The plane is based on Boeing's 737 airliner but built to withstand more stress and outfitted with a suite of electronic gear to allow it to detect and track ships and subs — even just their periscopes — across wide swaths of ocean, as well as to conduct surveillance of ports and coastlines. "I went up on a training flight, and basically they could read the insignia on a sailor's hat from thousands of feet above," Michael Fabey, author of the 2017 book "Crashback," about China-US tensions in the Pacific, told Business Insider in early 2018. "It's not the aircraft itself of course," he added, but "all the goodies they put in there." The Navy plans to improve the aircraft's capability going forward by adding the Advanced Airborne Sensor radar and by integrating the AGM-84 Harpoon Block II+ missile and the High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability MK 54 torpedo.

Interest in the P-8A continues to grow. India has bought 12 of the P-8I variant, and the country's navy chief has said it's looking to buy more. Australia is buying eight and has an option for four more. Other countries in the Asian-Pacific region are looking to buy, too, including South Korea, to which

the US State Department approved the sale of six in 2018. NATO countries are also looking to reinvigorate their airborne anti-submarine-warfare capabilities, including the UK and Norway, which are adjacent to the Greenland-Iceland-UK gap, a chokepoint for submarines traveling between the Atlantic and the Arctic, where Russia's Northern Fleet and nuclear forces are based. The US recently sent P-8As back to the Keflavik airbase in Iceland, though it does not plan to reestablish a permanent presence. At the end of January, Boeing was awarded a \$2.46 billion modification to an existing contract for the production and delivery of 19 P-8A Poseidons — 10 for the US Navy, four for the UK, and five for Norway.

Business Insider article by Christopher Woody

BOEING GETS FURTHER \$9M FOR HAAWC INTEGRATION ON P-8A (navaltoday.com 1/10):

The US Naval Sea Systems has awarded Boeing a \$9.2 million contract modification for the integration of the High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability (HAAWC) on the Poseidon P-8A submarine-hunting aircraft. The HAAWC integrates an Air Launch Accessory (ALA) with folding wings and GPS guidance onto a MK54 torpedo, allowing it to be launched from high altitudes. Boeing says the HAAWC could be launched from heights of up to 30,000 ft, compared to just 100 ft which P-3C Orion crews had to descend to deploy torpedoes.

In June 2018, the US Navy said it intended to award Boeing a contract for full rate production of the HAAWC Air Launch Accessory (ALA) for use in launching the MK 54 Torpedo from the P-8A Poseidon aircraft from high altitude. The primary HAAWC capability requirement is to increase the standoff range and weapon release altitude for the P-8A Poseidon aircraft during ASW missions for employment of a lightweight torpedo against submarine targets.

The ALA will be used exclusively with the MK 54 MOD 0 and MOD 1 torpedoes and will be carried and released from the weapons bay of the P-8A Poseidon aircraft. The Navy requires capacity to carry and release five HAAWC weapons on the P-8A. HAAWC is expected to be fielded by 2020.

IRAN TO DEPLOY WARSHIPS TO AMERICA'S BACKYARD (Breitbart News 1/2/19)

Iran is expected to deploy its most advanced homemade destroyer and other warships to waters in the Atlantic Ocean near the shores of the United States starting in March, marking the second time the rogue regime sends its navy to the region, the Islamic Republic's naval commander reportedly revealed Friday. Tehran's revelation came after Iranian Rear Adm. Touraj Hassani, the commander, reportedly said last month that Iran was planning to deploy two to three combat vessels, including the newly domestically-built destroyer named the Sahand, on a mission to the anti-U.S. socialist country of Venezuela, right in America's backyard. "The Atlantic Ocean is far and the operation of the Iranian naval flotilla might take five months," Iranian Rear Adm. Touraj Hassani told the state-run Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), noting that the flotilla will leave on March 21, Reuters reports.

Hassani identified the Sahand, named after a mountain in Iran, as one of the ships the Islamic Republic will send to the Atlantic. In December, Iran's state-owned media noted that the 1,300-ton Sahand, identified as Tehran's "most advanced" destroyer, is capable of traveling an estimated five months without refueling. Iran has reportedly equipped the warship with a helicopter landing pad, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles, anti-aircraft batteries, sophisticated radar, as well as radar-evading capabilities.

Iran, considered the world's leading sponsor of terrorism by the United States, thinks the presence of U.S. aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf is a threat, claiming that its navy is seeking to combat that security concern by showing its flag near American waters. "A senior Iranian military official said last month that the navy could sail in the Atlantic near U.S. waters since U.S. aircraft carriers were

allowed to move around in international waters near Iran. Iran's navy has extended its reach in recent years, launching vessels in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden to protect Iranian ships from Somali pirates," Reuters notes.

Iran's scheduled naval deployment in March marks the second time the Islamic Republic has deployed warships to the Atlantic Ocean. Tehran first deployed its navy to the region two years ago as a show of "the Islamic Republic's power," Rear Adm. Habibollah Sayyari, the then-commander of the Iranian navy, declared. U.S. President Donald Trump's administration — which has heavily sanctioned the Iranian regime's oil, banking, and shipping, among others — has vowed to combat the Islamic Republic's nefarious activities, triggering a war of words between the American commander-in-chief and Tehran. Last month, Iran promised to ensure that "no oil" is exported from the Persian Gulf if the United States moves ahead with restrictions on Iran's oil industry, threatening to blockade strait of Hormuz in the region.

The U.S. and Iran's hard-line Revolutionary Guards have faced one another in the Gulf in recent years. However, the number of confrontations has subsided as of late. According to the latest Global Firepower (GFP) index, which ranks 133 countries annually, the United States military is the most powerful fighting force in the globe, trailed by Russia, China, India, respectively.

Breitbart News article by Edwin Mora

JAPAN ANNOUNCES FIRST AIRCRAFT CARRIERS SINCE WWII (Breitbart News 12/18):

The Japanese government announced on Tuesday that it will deploy aircraft carriers for the first time since World War II as part of a defense strategy that will involve purchasing a great deal of American military hardware, a course of action U.S. President Donald Trump has strongly urged. Japan's aircraft carriers will be the 27,000-ton JS Izumo and Kaga, which currently serve as helicopter carriers. The military will refit the ships to launch U.S.-made F-35B jet fighters, which require very little runway space for takeoff and can land vertically, a capability known as "short takeoff/vertical landing" or STOVL.

The Defense Ministry stressed that Izumo and Kaga will not carry fighter jets at all times, only when they are needed to deal with particular security situations. Each ship will be able to carry about a dozen F-35Bs, less than one-fifth the strike power carried by current U.S. aircraft carriers and considerably smaller than even the more modest carriers fielded by some other navies. As Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya put it, the goal is to "increase their applications" rather than converting the ships into power-projection platforms on par with U.S. aircraft carriers — or, more to the point, China's new aircraft carriers.

The South China Morning Post quoted concerns from Japanese opposition politicians and some international observers that China will overreact to Japan's carrier announcement, no matter how hard Tokyo strives to portray the ships as small multipurpose platforms, and use the Japanese carriers as an excuse to ramp up military spending. One such observer was Hong Kong-based analyst Song Zhongping, who joined many Chinese (and some other Asians, including pacifist Japanese) in viewing Japan's announcement as the Empire of the Rising Sun clawing its way from the grave of World War Two to menace the Pacific again:

"Japan has so far refused to recognize its aggression against China during the Second World War," he said. "Any move to build its first aircraft carrier would not only violate its pacifist constitution — which forbids it from operating such an attack vessel — but would also make China and other countries that were victims of its aggression very uneasy." The plan was "obviously targeting China",

Song said as Beijing had accelerated its own naval build up with the addition of advanced destroyers and aircraft carriers.

Beijing has made significant advances in its naval firepower in recent years. It already has one aircraft carrier – the Liaoning – in active service, and a second – the domestically developed Type 001A – is set to join it next year. By 2030, at least four aircraft carrier battle groups are expected to be in service. Another Chinese analyst quoted by the SCMP, Zhou Chenming of Beijing, reasonably pointed out that Japan's two tiny part-time aircraft carriers would be no match for the four full carrier battle groups China plans to deploy.

These details will not mollify opportunistic Chinese politicians or pacifist Japanese, who are deeply philosophically opposed to developing an offensive military capability. Japan's increasingly influential Buddhist minority party, Komeito, is especially committed to this point.

From a strategic perspective, Japan's carriers are significant to China because they would make it much easier for Japan to respond to anything less provocative than a full Chinese carrier deployment. The Japanese ships would take low-level mischief off the table, giving Japan eyes and response capabilities across a region China would prefer to keep murky and remote for the time being. China would have a much harder time blocking Japanese civilian vessels from accessing disputed islands.

From a psychological standpoint, the notion of Japan putting aircraft carriers at sea again has significance across Asia that might be difficult for Westerners to appreciate, especially when looking at comparisons between the Izumo and USS Nimitz, for example. Asia is not really over World War II and technically World War II is not really over, as can be seen from Japan's reaction to new Russian military bases on disputed islands whose disposition has prevented those two nations from signing a full peace treaty for 70 years.

U.S. approval for Japan's ten-year defense plan is important and the Trump administration will surely be pleased with Japan's plans to buy dozens of F-35 jets and other American military hardware. The Wall Street Journal noted on Tuesday that "Tokyo's decision to spend more on U.S. military equipment comes as Mr. Trump has called for Japan to spend 'massive amounts' on American defense products to lower its trade surplus with the U.S." The F-35s will cost around \$10 billion, while Japan's defense buildup will cost a total of \$242 billion over the next five years, a substantial increase over the \$218 billion spent over the previous five years. This represents a record high in military spending by modern Japan, with a great deal of funding allocated for missile defense and cyber security in addition to air and naval upgrades.

Breitbart News article by John Hayward

NAVY LOOKING TO FLY P-8s FROM COLD WAR-ERA BASE (Breaking Defense 12/14):

The Navy may begin deploying submarine-hunting P-8 Poseidon aircraft to a small airstrip hundreds of miles off the Alaskan coast, signaling a new emphasis on keeping watch over Russian and Chinese moves in the Arctic. The remote runway sits on the island of Adak in the Aleutian island chain, and it's the westernmost airfield that can handle passenger aircraft in the United States — in fact, it currently handles Air Alaska flights two days a week.

Formally known as Naval Air Facility Adak, the small airport has been operating commercially since the Navy moved out in 1997, but increasing Russian and Chinese activity in the Arctic has the Navy looking at new patrols as it searches for ways to keep a closer watch on the far north. Navy officials previously estimated that reopening the base would cost around \$1.3 billion, but Navy Secretary

Richard Spencer indicated Wednesday at a joint hearing of the Senate subcommittees on sea power and readiness & management that he isn't looking to reopen the entire facility.

"The airstrip is in great shape," Spencer said after the hearing when I asked about flying aircraft from the island. The Navy would likely have to pay to clean up one of the hangers, but the airport "has a fuel farm up there that Air Alaska is using to fuel its planes, it has de-icing platforms that we could use for fresh water washdowns for the P-8. They have lodging up there that is supposedly coming forward to us on a rental availability, so it really isn't a big bill."

In recent years the US has spent millions of dollars to fix up another Cold War-era airfield, Naval Air Station Keflavik in Iceland, to accommodate P-8s watching for Russian submarine activity in the North Atlantic between Greenland, Iceland, and the United Kingdom. These waterways, dubbed the GIUK Gap, are the primary outlet for Russian subs moving from their northern ports into the Atlantic.

The Pentagon has grown increasingly concerned over ceding ground to Russia and China in the Arctic, as both countries are outpacing the US in building icebreakers to help move ships and supplies to far-flung outposts as the region's ice disappears due to global warming. Spencer told lawmakers "our Russian friends are warming up five airstrips and 10,000 Spetsnaz troops [in the Arctic] for quote unquote search and rescue.

The Chinese are up there. Everybody is up there." "Everybody but us," retorted Alaska Sen. Dan Sullivan. "We are up there under the sea and in the air," Spencer said, adding that the Navy is working with the Coast Guard to devise ways to conduct more training missions in the far north and identify ports that could accommodate Navy ships. "If I had a at blank check for everything, it would be terrific to ice-harden ships but with the demand we have right now it is unaffordable," Spencer told lawmakers. But "we need to get up there. I can commit to the fact that we're trying to figure out how we do that."

The Navy isn't the only service looking to beef up its presence in Alaska. The Air Force suggested recently it is looking to move some of the F-22s made homeless after Hurricane Michael battered Tyndall Air Base in Florida to Alaska's Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. During an August visit to the state, Defense Secretary James Mattis pledged "America has got to up its game in the Arctic" given the melting of the polar ice caps and the rush to find long-hidden natural resources in the region.

In many ways, the Navy is already on the move. In November, the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier cruised above the Arctic Circle, the first time an American carrier moved that far north since the Cold War. The carrier strike group was taking part in NATO's Trident Juncture exercise, which saw ships and sailors get battered by the rough, cold seas.

"We've been operating in the Persian Gulf, where it's like a lake, and it's really hot, whereas now we're operating up off the coast of Norway, where it's blowing a gale, the decks are moving around, the ships are getting beat up, and the people are getting beat up," said Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis, commander of the Navy's newly reconstituted 2nd Fleet, last month. Lewis' command will focus on operations in the Atlantic, where Russia has been more active as it expands and modernizes its force. "We're not used to being out on the flight deck for long periods of time where it's really cold," Lewis added.

Adak, a 3-hour flight west from Anchorage deep in the Bering Sea, would allow US aircraft to not only push deeper and more consistently into the Arctic, but give US spy planes a new base from which to keep an eye on Russia's Pacific Fleet and the increasing number of Chinese subs prowling the

Pacific. The potential new deployments come as the US is actively shifting its gaze to the Pacific after two decades of grinding conflict in the Middle East.

Washington's allies in the region are also snapping up US-made surveillance planes to track increased Chinese activity, as well. In September, The State Department approved the \$2.6 billion sale of six P-8A Poseidon aircraft to South Korea, and the \$3.1 billion sale of nine E-2D Advanced Hawkeye Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft to Japan.

Breaking Defense article by Paul McLeary

US MILITARY WILL USE GENETIC ENGINEERING TO DETECT SUBS (Breitbart News 12/4):

The Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) wants to use common sea life as a biological tripwire to detect the movement of submarines. The NRL is seeking to engineer aquatic microorganisms to react to changes in the water left by submarines' exhaust, divers, or even the mere presence of certain metals. One distinct possibility is having the microorganisms release some of their electrons in response.

At a November event put on by the Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Lab, NRL researcher Sarah Glaven explained: "In an engineered context, we might take the ability of the microbes to give up electrons, then use [those electrons] to talk to something like an autonomous vehicle. Then you can start imagining that you can create an electrical signal when the bacteria encounters some molecule in their environment."

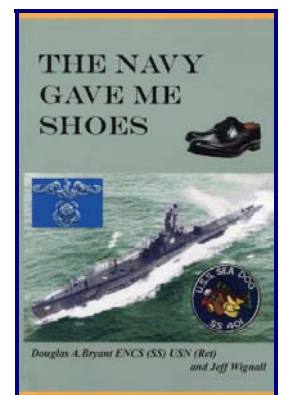
And while it may sound like something out of science fiction, Glaven believes they are very close. "The reason we think we can accomplish this is because we have this vast database of info we've collected from growing these natural systems," she said. "So after experiments where we look at switching gene potential, gene expression, regulatory networks, we are finding these sensors." According to Defense One, the project is part of a push to use microbial life to create "living camouflage that reacts to its surroundings to better avoid detection," and "new drugs and medicines to help deployed forces survive in harsh conditions," among other things.

The Applied Research for the Advancement of Science and Technology Priorities Program has already invested \$45 million into harnessing the genetics of living organisms for military use. "We want to move synthetic biology from the laboratory to the field. That's a big thrust of ours and so there's a lot of tool development in order to do that," U.S. Army Research Laboratory's Dimitra Stratis-Cullum said.

Breitbart News article by Nate Church

RECOMMENDED READING:

Here's an interesting book that I recently bought because I heard the author, a 94 year old WW2 veteran, being interviewed on a Boston AM radio station one afternoon as I was driving home from work. "The Navy Gave Me Shoes" is the true story of a Massachusetts resident who served on board submarines from 1943 to 1967 and retired as a Senior Chief Engineman. It's a good read and provides some interesting background about the other side of the ASW equation. You can pick it up at www.amazon.com or through any decent bookstore.



ON THE INTERNET:

There are fairly active groups on the popular social media web site Facebook for VP-92, NAS South Weymouth, and NAS Brunswick. You can check them out at www.facebook.com. You may also find Nevins Frankel's VP Navy web site at www.vpnavy.com very interesting too.

MONTHLY MEETING:

Members who can do so are welcome to join us for lunch on the second Thursday of every month at Warren's Place in South Weymouth, MA (in the Whole Foods Plaza off Route 18) from 11:30 to 13:30

PARTING SHOT:



ABOVE: VP-92 ordnancemen loading a live Rockeye cluster bomb on the port wing of a P-3 at Naval Station Sigonella Sicily for Operation Sharpguard during an annual training deployment in 1994 or 1995. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.



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

