



# 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 69**

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

**SEPT 2017**

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](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com).

## **RECCO:**



**ABOVE:** VP-92 SP-2H Neptune LY02 on the West Mat at NAS South Weymouth in the early 1970s. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at [marc\\_frattasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com).

## **FINAL FLIGHTS:**

Sadly, we lost members Robert Jones, Bernard Moore, Henry Thurlow, and Mike Willocks in recent months. Robert, Bernard, and Mike were in VP-92 while Henry was in VP-911.

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

VP-92's Pete Kempf is undergoing chemotherapy. His e-mail address is [gonavy@umich.edu](mailto:gonavy@umich.edu).

## **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 extend a big "thank you" to Raymond Guerin for his recent donation to the VP Association 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](mailto: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:**

Please inform George Driscoll at [gnddriscoll@gmail.com](mailto:gnddriscoll@gmail.com) when your home or e-mail address changes so we can update our database. Anybody have a current mailing address for Donald Ball?

## **NEW MEMBERS:**

Mike Rush	James Schissel
<a href="mailto:flyguy_17860@yahoo.com">flyguy_17860@yahoo.com</a>	<a href="mailto:jcschissel@comcast.net">jcschissel@comcast.net</a>
VP-92 and VP-MAU	VP-92

## **A NOTE FROM JIM FITZGERALD ABOUT BOB ALLEN:**



I had the privilege to be invited to be part of a Memorial Day service at the Boston Postal Facility. The most impressive part was the key note speaker, former VP-92 Minuteman AEC (AW/NAC) Retired, Bob Allen. Bob is also the maintenance manager for the 1.3 million square foot facility. Bob gave a heart felt presentation about the history of Memorial Day and the flag presentation. After listening to Bob's presentation, there is no doubt that he is a proud veteran and true patriot. Well done Chief Allen...Well done!

## **A NOTE FROM LINDA BLESSING:**

Thank you for the great newsletter, so much fun to read the latest happenings. Just a correction to the previous edition. The picture of the woman in the blue maintenance coveralls on page #11 is AO1 Laurie Miller, our Ordnance Supervisor, not a mechanic. I think Laurie retired as an AOCS. She and I are still Facebook friends.

## **A NOTE AND SOME PHOTOS FROM JERRY LACH:**

I thought I would drop you a line about this year's Maritime Patrol Association ([www.maritimepatrolassociation.org](http://www.maritimepatrolassociation.org)) symposium at NAS JAX. It started out with VP Heritage presentations by three VP veterans of the Second World War. The first two presenters were AMM3/c Merrill Churchhill and LCDR Ed Lafontaine, who both flew Consolidated PB4Y-1 Liberators and PB4Y-2 Privateers. The two men were followed by LCDR Louis Conter, who was a Second Class Quartermaster on the deck of the USS Arizona during the December 7th attack on Pearl Harbor. He was a Navy diver who participated in the underwater search for bodies after the attack. LCDR Conter went on to become an enlisted Naval Aviation Pilot (NAP) and flew PBY Catalinas. He was shot down twice during the Second World War and flew 29 combat missions in Korea. He later established the Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) programs for the military. Truly a fascinating career. He was enrolled in the MPA Hall of Fame during this year's MPA Heritage dinner



We had the privilege of having breakfast with LCDR Center. I enclosed a group picture taken of him during breakfast (shown above). The guys in the photo are left to right Bob Booth, Bob Park, Jerry Lach, LCDR Louis Contor, Chris Ramsden, and Rich Heimerle (MPA leadership).

The MPA event also included a Tech Expo, P-3/P-8 Tours, a Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton, P-8 Simulator tours (I got to land the P-8 Simulator), MPA Heritage Dinner, Scramble format golf Tournament (our team came in with the worst score, but had fun). It was wrapped up with the Friday night Flight Suit Social. All in all a good Navy time indeed.

Prior to MPA Bob Park and I visited the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola. A special treat was both the Blue Angles and Thunderbirds gave practice demo flights on the same day. A sad note, during a tour of the 'back lot' flight line, we discovered that the YP-3A (BuNo 148276) has been scrapped. While the VF and VA community may believe, this aircraft was of no historical significance, it was the 'mother' of all P-3's. While I understand the expense and difficulty storing large aircraft (it had significant corrosion), I believe she deserved a better fate. Here is a photo of her I took last year.



### **A SHORT NOTE FROM BOB MANDEVILLE:**

I was listening to a radio quiz show this morning [Sunday July 23<sup>rd</sup>] and one of the questions was true or false, during WWII, did the US Navy ever capture a Japanese submarine using potatoes? The answer is “true” and it was done by the destroyer USS O'Bannon. Check out the paragraphs under “1943” on the ship’s Wikipedia entry at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS\\_O%27Bannon\\_\(DD-450\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_O%27Bannon_(DD-450)).

### **VP-92 BURGEE DONATED TO SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM**



Sheila Tallent recently donated VP-92’s burgee and command pennant, which has been very nicely framed, and a G1 type leather flight jacket to the ANA Patriot Squadron’s Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth in memory of her late husband, Herb Tallent. Herb was an AD who served in VP-92 and its predecessor VP-911. He was a member of the ANA Patriot Squadron and a founding member of the VP Association. With help from Sheila, Herb produced the newsletter and organized annual reunions for many years. In this photo Sheila is shown presenting the framed flag display to Faith Frattasio.

### **CHARLES SYLVIA DONATES MODEL AIRPLANES TO AMA FOUNDATION:**

Member Charlie Sylvia, who was in VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth, was featured in the March issue of Academy of Model Aeronautics Model Aviation Magazine for donating a large collection of radio controlled model aircraft to the AMA Foundation. You can read about Charlie’s donation on-line at <http://amablog.modelaircraft.org/amafoundation/2016/11/01/ama-foundation-accepts-donation-from-charles-sylvia/>

### **SEAN REID HAS RETIRED FROM THE USNR:**



Captain Sean Reid, who was formerly an NFO with VP-92 at South Weymouth and Brunswick, took advantage of the squadron’s recent 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion to retire from the Navy Reserve on old NAS Brunswick on Saturday August 26<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony was held inside the old base chapel, which is presently the home of the Brunswick Naval Museum and Memorial Gardens. Sean put thirty years into the reserve. Among the many people present at the retirement ceremony (seated at right) was VADM Tom Reck, who was a VP-92 pilot and commanding officer.

## **VP-92 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY REUNION:**

During the weekend of August 25-27 a squadron reunion event was held at the Brunswick Naval Museum and Memorial Gardens on old NAS Brunswick to commemorate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disestablishment of VP-92. Nearly 200 VP-92 alums and their guests turned out for this event, which was help in conjunction with a performance by the Blue Angels at the Great State of Maine Air Show on the old base. This was a really terrific event that was put together by Scott Savelle and Scott Bailey, with the assistance of several others of course. Here are a few photos that were taken at this event. To see more, go to the VP-92 Alumni group on Facebook at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).



**ABOVE:** Many people went to the Portland Seadogs game on Friday but the main event of the reunion was held on Saturday under a big tent set up in the former base chapel's parking lot. The old base chapel now serves as the headquarters of the Brunswick Naval Museum and Memorial Gardens, an organization dedicated to preserving the military heritage of NAS Brunswick. Check them out at [www.brunswicknavalmuseum.org](http://www.brunswicknavalmuseum.org). Consider becoming a member and donating funds and/or memorabilia to them. **RIGHT:** Former Minutemen on the chow line.





**ABOVE:** Minutemen and guests chowing down on BBQ food inside the tent while many others wait their turn in the chow line behind them. **LEFT:** Sean Coffee and his wife plus Matt Sharpe, A. J. Bucci, John MacLellan, and Steve O'Donoghue sampling some Flight Deck Brewing Company beer.



**ABOVE LEFT:** Royce Stegman and “Doc” Gerald Hayes. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Julie Timreck and Fred Cantu. **BELOW:** Jeremy Hodge, Tom Burke, Thomas Jackson, and Kate Roberts.





**ABOVE:** Scott Savelle and daughter, Eva and Tom Reck. **BELOW LEFT:** Marty McCormack and Darrell Davis. **BELOW RIGHT:** Tom and Pete Gamble, Mark Courtemanche, and Mark Hausler.





*ABOVE: Group photo showing all (we hope) of the former Minutemen who attended the reunion.*

### **BALL CAPS AND POLO SHIRTS:**

Many people approached your newsletter editor at the squadron reunion to ask where they can obtain official command ball caps and VP-92 polo shirts. The last batches of command ball caps were made for VP-92 by Global Military Supply. These have a head-on view of a P-3 Orion on them. The company still has the original embroidery files and will cheerfully sell you one cap or one thousand. Contact "Scott G" at [GLOBALMIL@aol.com](mailto:GLOBALMIL@aol.com). For VP-92 polo shirts, contact Larry Daly of Eastern Embroidery at [easternemb@msn.com](mailto:easternemb@msn.com). Larry was in VP-92, is a VP Association member, and operates a custom embroidery shop in North Carolina. He has several different VP-92 designs that he can provide on polo shirts, ball caps, aprons, golf towels, you name it. He'll take very good care of you and can also customize whatever you order with your name, wings, rate, rank insignia, etc.

### **NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY REUNION:**

OK, the VP-92 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion is now a thing of the past. However, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closing of NAS South Weymouth is coming up on Saturday September 30<sup>th</sup>. A special event that includes guest speakers, a presentation on the history of the base, and a meal will be held in Randolph, Massachusetts on that date. Its not too late to go to this event. The cutoff date for reservations has been extended to Friday September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The original reunion "package", which expired on August 1<sup>st</sup>, included a special commemorative polo shirt. Unfortunately, we can't offer the polo shirt to latecomers, but the cost of admission has been reduced accordingly. The organizer of this event (your newsletter editor) will continue to accept reservations through September 22<sup>nd</sup> or until 230 reservations are received, whichever comes first. All proceeds over the cost of organizing this event will be donated to the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth. For more information including the event schedule and to obtain the revised reservation form go to [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org). As of today we have close to 160 people coming to this event, which will include people from nearly every Navy and Marine Corps unit that was ever on old NAS South Weymouth over the years. Don't miss out on what will be a really fun time.

### **SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM TEMPORARILY CLOSED:**

The Shea Naval Aviation Museum on old NAS South Weymouth, which is operated by a local affiliate of the Association of Naval Aviation called the ANA Patriot Squadron, has been temporarily closed due to heavy construction activity at the Union Point development on the old base. Basically, the road that goes past the museum has been closed to all vehicular and pedestrian traffic while a large sports complex is built. The museum may reopen as early as November, but this will depend upon the status of the construction activity in that area at that time. Be assured though that the museum

will definitely reopen. The master developer for the old base, LStar Ventures, has been a very good friend to the museum and has been quite supportive during this difficult time. For more information and updates, go to [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org).

### **COLUMBIAN DRUG SMUGGLERS CAUGHT USING ELECTRIC SUBMARINE (Breitbart 7/30):**

Colombian military forces seized an electrical submarine that was being outfitted to smuggle more than four tons of cocaine by drug lords in that country. Smugglers built the submarine with naval steel and designed it to run entirely on batteries. This allows drug smugglers to move while submerged. Officials called it a first of its kind, Argentina's Infobae reported. More than 100 batteries had been outfitted into the submarine. This feature allows the crew to remain submerged during the entire voyage.

Colombian officials made the seizure in an area where the San Juan and the Baudo rivers meet. The submarine was outfitted to hold more than four tons of cocaine for drug cartels cells linked to the ELN guerrilla. After the seizure, ELN forces tried to use force to keep military forces from taking the submarine out of the river.

Officials estimated the approximate cost of the submarine to be \$1.5 million. It took between five and six months to build. Smugglers designed the submarine with four fins, radar, and a navigation camera. The usage of the batteries does not produce exhaust gases making it difficult for authorities to detect, Infobae reported. The use of submarines by Colombian drug dealers is a long standing practice to move their cocaine shipments from their labs in the jungle to other countries further north and eventually to Mexico or the United States, Breitbart News reported.

*Breitbart News article by Ildfonso Ortiz*

### **CHINESE PUBLIC "DETEST" AMERICA, WANTED US PLANE SHOT DOWN (Breitbart 7/26):**

The Chinese state propaganda outlet Global Times has published an incendiary column claiming that the Chinese public "really detest US reconnaissance" in Asia and "actually wanted" China to shoot down a U.S. reconnaissance plane dangerously intercepted over the weekend. The Global Times called the Pentagon's objection to the outrageous aerial move "ridiculous" and demanded the United States cease all intelligence operations in the region.

On Sunday, two Chinese fighter jets gave chase to an American reconnaissance aircraft over the international waters of the East China Sea, forcing the American plane to maneuver away from them rapidly. American officials with knowledge of the situation described the Chinese jets' behavior as "unsafe," while the Pentagon clarified that the American plane was conducting a "routine" mission. "The 'righteousness' of the Pentagon is ridiculous," the Times complained. "US military reconnaissance threatens China's national security and an intercept by the Chinese navy is justified."

The article goes on to praise the Chinese military for its "restraint," suggesting that the will of the Chinese people would have been to see the incident turn deadly. "The public actually wanted the US reconnaissance plane to be shot down directly," the article claims. "Of course the PLA would not do it, but the Chinese people really detest US reconnaissance, which is bound to have an impact on the response of the Chinese military." The article goes on to call the American intelligence mission a "robber act" and laments that the Chinese military has not attempted to conduct similar operations near San Diego.

The People's Daily, another Chinese propaganda newspaper that often prints military news while taking a less belligerent tone on the day's news than the Global Times, has not attacked the United States in such a manner. What it has done is print an article claiming that the reconnaissance plane

was “flying over China’s Exclusive Economic Zone in the East China Sea” and not international waters. The EEZs of countries begin within 12 nautical miles of the shore. The American government has made clear that its aircraft was flying within international waters. The Chinese Defense Ministry, meanwhile, claimed that the interception of the American plane was “legitimate, necessary and professional” and called on America to stop its own allegedly “unsafe, unprofessional and unfriendly” moves in the region.

The Foreign Ministry, meanwhile, refused to discuss details, though spokesman Lu Kang told reporters, “China is always committed to safeguarding overflight order and security over the sea and establishing military mutual trust with other countries to properly handle disputes. However, US military vessels and planes have long been carrying out frequent surveillance activities close to China’s coastal waters which poses a grave threat to China’s maritime and airspace security.”

The incident on Sunday is far from the only such move by Chinese military pilots in the region. In May, the Pentagon decried another “unprofessional” intercept of a U.S. Navy WC-135 Constant Phoenix aircraft in the East China Sea, with one Chinese plane doing a “barrel roll over the top of the American plane.” Last year, a Chinese fighter jet intercepted another American plane at a “high rate of speed as it closed in.” In that case, however, the Obama administration dismissed the incident as “a case of improper airmanship” and not a deliberate threatening move.

*Breitbart article by Frances Martel*

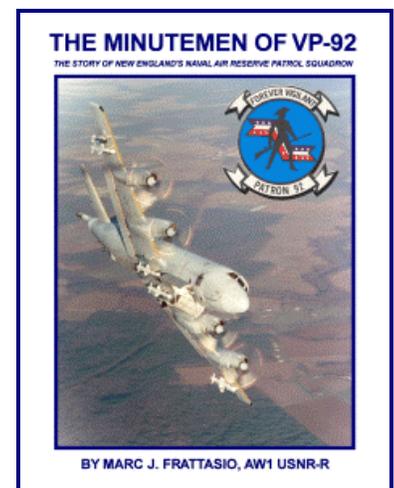
### **CHINESE JETS INTERCEPT US SURVEILLANCE PLANE (Reuters 7/24)**

Two Chinese fighter jets intercepted a U.S. Navy surveillance plane over the East China Sea over the weekend, with one coming within about 300 feet (91 meters) of the American aircraft, two U.S. officials told Reuters on Monday. The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said initial reports showed one of the Chinese J-10 aircraft came close to the U.S. EP-3 plane on Sunday, causing the American aircraft to change direction.

*Reuters article by Idrees Ali and Jeffrey Benkoe*

### **RECOMMENDED READING:**

If you weren’t able to make it to the VP-92 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion on old NAS Brunswick you might console yourself by picking up a copy of the “The Minutemen of VP-92”. This is the official story of the squadron and its predecessor units. The book is available in both hardcover and softcover versions and you can purchase it via a link on the “geedunk” page of our web site at [www.vpassociation.org](http://www.vpassociation.org). While you are there, check out the books that your newsletter editor also put together about NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth. Together, these books present a comprehensive illustrated history of the Naval Air Reserve in New England.



### **ON THE INTERNET:**

George Driscoll suggests that you check out this on-line petition to change the age the reserve retirees start receiving military retirement benefits from the present 60 years old down to 55. See <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/modify-reserve-retirement-age-60-55> for more information.

Bob Mandeville suggests that you check out the video "Stories From The Boneyard" at <http://www.chonday.com/Videos/avibaozona5> and be sure to watch out for the P-3 Orions.

**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. **Please note the new date and new location, which is close to old NAS South Weymouth.**

**PARTING SHOT:**



**ABOVE:** VP-92's Ron Clemments clowning around on annual training with CAC10 in 2000. Who is Ellen? Geoff Such photo. Got something similar to share with your old shipmates? Contact Marc Frattasio at [marc\\_frattasio@yahoo.com](mailto:marc_frattasio@yahoo.com).



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

