



# 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 58**

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

**DEC 2014**

Welcome to another edition of the VP Association newsletter. Until further notice please direct all VP Association-related inquiries or correspondence to Marc Frattasio, PO Box 30, Pembroke MA 02339, 781-294-4491, [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com).

## **RECCO:**



**ABOVE:** VP-MAU P-3C over the Maine coast. The VP-MAU was a USNR Squadron Augmentation Unit or "SAU" that operated from NAS Brunswick, ME between 1983 and 1991. A second VP-MAU was later established at NAS Moffett Field, CA. Mike Keany collection. If you have similar things to share contact Marc J. Frattasio at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com).

## **FINAL FLIGHTS:**

Fran Creny, Christopher "Buck" Giedlin, Joe Kinnard, Ed Mucha, and Jon White all passed away recently. Fran, who retired as an MCPO, was in VP-92 and a number of other reserve units at NAS South Weymouth and other bases. Christopher was a pilot with the VP-MAU, Joe was an AW with the VP-MAU, Ed was a pilot with VP-92, and Jon was an AW with VP-92.

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

Bill Hanigan, who was formerly in VP-911, VP-63Z1, and VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth and is a founding member and the president of the VP Association, suffered a severe stroke during late October. He is presently being treated at Wingate at Silver Lake, Skilled Care Unit Room 7, 17 Chipman Way, Kingston, MA 02364. If you visit Bill, and he'd love to have visitors, please be aware that he is paralyzed on one side and has aphasia. He's trying hard to speak but can't do so at this time. Send e-mail messages to billhanagan@icloud.com. In addition, Dana Larsen, who was also in VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth, has severe Alzheimer's disease and is at the VA Hospital at 940 Belmont Street, Brockton, MA 02301. Please keep both shipmates in your thoughts and prayers.

**THE 2014 ANNUAL REUNION:**

It goes without saying that everybody who went to the 2014 annual reunion on Saturday September 20<sup>th</sup> had a great time. We're changing the month next year so mark your calendars for Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>. We're going to have the reunion at the Weymouth Elks Hall again and we'll make arrangements to have the ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum open from 9 AM to noon to accommodate VP Association visitors. A few photos taken at the reunion follow.



***ABOVE:*** Bob Mandeville, Joe Mortland, and Ken Sherman are chowing down on the chow line. This year the reunion's buffet featured stuffed chicken breast and roast beef.



**ABOVE:** *Runion attendees.* **BELOW:** *Guest speaker Tommy H. Thomason.*





**ABOVE:** VP-92 AKs Faith Frattasio, Susan Zimmerman, and Gerald Brown.

If you weren't able to make it to the reunion this year, there's always next year. Remember, next year we're changing the date to Saturday October 24<sup>th</sup>. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend

**THE ADMIN FUND:**

The VP Association has no dues but contributions are always welcome to help defray the cost of web hosting, postage, and other administrative expenses. Due to Bill Hanigan's recent illness we do not have a current donor list. However, we do appreciate every recent donation. Thanks to all who did.

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

If you have an e-mail address and have been getting a hard-copy in the mail then we do not have an e-mail address for you. If this is your situation, please contact Marc Frattasio at [vpassociation2@gmail.com](mailto:vpassociation2@gmail.com) so we can send the newsletter to you by e-mail. Remember, this group does not charge dues and we operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. Please note that we may have to suspend mailings due to Bill Hanigan's illness.

**LOST CONTACT:**

Please be sure to let Marc Frattasio know whenever your street or e-mail address changes so we can update our files. We are looking for current contact information for Jim Dimare (formerly Onset, MA)

and Dexter Morrison (formerly Readville, MA). Please note new e-mail addresses for Linda Blessing at lfb51058@aol.com, James Boling at jamesboling@sbcglobal.net, Warren Bovarnick at warrenboy@comcast.net, Ed Callahan at irishejc@aol.com, Peter Carpenter at pfcatty@comcast.net, Suzanne Carpenter at gindwmy@gmail.com, Vin Carvelli at vinnycarvelli@aol.com, Anthony Delmonico at lcgflight@gmail.com, Thomas Reck at usffreserveco@yahoo.com, Ray Schutz at ncb55@hotmail.com, Tom Shannon at thomasmshannonp3@gmail.com, and Kevin Sinnett at kdsinnett@yahoo.com. Also, Mark Holbrook is now residing at 651 Plymouth Street, Whitman MA 02382, Richard Lowe is at 35 Christy's Place, Brockton MA 02301, and Ned Rogerson is at PO Box 80, Silver Lake NH 03875.

**NEW MEMBERS:**

Bob Comeau  
35 Joel Circle  
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William (Bill) Metzger  
15243 Holleyside Drive  
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P-3C Pilot, VP-48

**THE WALTER "OKIE" O'CONNELL MEMORIAL LOBSTER BAKE:**



***ABOVE:*** Every year at the end of the summer a number of former VP-92 people meet to have a traditional New England lobster bake at the Fourth Cliff recreation area in Scituate, MA in honor of the late Walter "Okie" O'Connell. "Okie" was a former Minuteman from the NAS South Weymouth era and one of the founding members of the VP Association. It rained all day but the lobster bake went on as planned on Wednesday August 13th. Here are some of the participants enjoying their lobsters.

**RADM TOM RECK:**



Its now official. One of our own is now a Rear Admiral. Here's RADM Tom Reck, a former patrol plane commander and commanding officer of VP-92, speaking on the deck of the USS Constitution in Boston Harbor shortly after he was presented with his new shoulder boards and cap. Shown below is the VP-92 delegation that turned up for the promotion ceremony. We're all proud of Tom. The Navy couldn't have picked a nicer or more capable guy.



## **A NEW ERA IN ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

China and Russia's submarine forces are flexing their prowess in the undersea domain by operating further from their respective country's homeport – in some cases within striking distance of the United States. Given the expansion in operations, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) platforms on both coasts of the United States will be required to monitor and defend the nation more frequently.

Foreign submarine operations near the homeland are not necessarily immediate threats, but do require careful thought as the Navy prepares to execute future ASW missions. As budget and naval policymakers continue to plan for the future, ASW must remain a high priority for either homeland or overseas defense. The good news is that the U.S. Navy has new platforms and technology coming online that can provide a significant advantage in the undersea domain.

### **China**

Adm. Sam Locklear, Commander, Pacific Command, earlier this year stated, "China's advance in submarine capabilities is significant. They possess a large and increasingly capable submarine force." China has expanded their undersea reach as evident in this year's deployment of a Chinese nuclear submarine to the Indian Ocean. The deployment demonstrates extended submarine operations and the capability for China to deploy nuclear submarines within ballistic missile launch range of the United States, within the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), or potentially closer to territorial waters. As China continues sustained undersea operations, proficiency will likely improve with time as well.

The expansion of China's nuclear submarine fleet will also allow operations further from the Asia Pacific region in the coming years. China is in the process of building four new improved variants of the Shang class nuclear submarine and working on a robust diesel submarine fleet. Given China's submarine capability to transit and operate in the Indian Ocean and with continued submarine growth, a future nuclear submarine deployment off the West Coast of the United States may occur in the next five years or possibly sooner.

The purpose of future submarine deployments may serve as a deterrence, presence or collection mission against the United States – creating an increased requirement for naval assets to monitor and ensure security for the nation. This development should not come as a surprise to those in the national security community. Senior policymakers and naval leaders should develop an operational and strategic plan in how to deal with Chinese submarine operations closer to the United States.

### **Russia**

As China increases their submarine role in maritime operations, Russia is simultaneously increasing their Navy's importance. "The navy, for our country, is her pride, strength and dignity," Russia's President Vladimir Putin last month said. "The power and strength of the Russian navy will only grow." The Russian submarine force is also set to grow.

In the next two years, Russia will begin construction on nine submarines. Russia has already commissioned two Borei class nuclear submarines and plans to build six more. This new submarine is a notable threat carrying sixteen SS-NX-32 Bulava intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and six SS-N-15 cruise missiles. In addition, the Russian navy plans to add seven Severodvinsk class nuclear attack submarines by 2020 with intentions for reaching a total of sixteen.

With Russia's construction of new submarines and leadership touting naval strength, more submarine operations near the United States are possible. Since the end of the Cold War, Russia for the most

part has been non-existent in operating nuclear submarines near the United States, but that may change. In 2012, a Sierra class nuclear submarine operated off the east coast of the U.S. – a trend that could continue in the future. In addition, Russia recently increased rhetoric against possible U.S. submarine operations. Russia publicly stated an IL-38 ASW aircraft chased away a U.S. nuclear submarine that was operating in the Barents Sea – a claim U.S. naval leaders quickly rebuked.

### American ASW

A future increase in submarine construction and operations by both countries are not the only development of concern in the undersea domain. Internationally, the development and use of unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) for military, education, and commercial use are expanding. In the military realm, developed countries are exploring UUV deployment from submarines that will create a new dynamic in the undersea domain. As autonomous technology becomes more mature, UUVs will also operate independently in areas of potential crisis or strategic importance. With a future increase in UUV operations, the ability to track UUVs in the undersea will be equally difficult and require improved sensor and processing capability.

To meet expanded foreign submarine operations and UUV technological advancements, the U.S. surface naval force employs state of the art ASW technology aboard numerous Arleigh Burke class destroyers. The SQQ-89A(V)15 Combat System, which will be aboard 64 destroyers by 2020, and the new Multi-Functional Towed Array (MFTA) are game changers in ASW operations. The combined capabilities alter how the surface navy searches and tracks submarines. With enhanced sensor capability and data processing, the surface naval forces have an increased role in integrated ASW operations. ASW surface ships can remain longer on station in comparison to aircraft and also provide real time command and control capability beyond that of a submarine.

In stride with the surface navy's technological advancements, the aviation community has new platforms to meet the ASW mission. The MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter and the P-8A Poseidon aircraft are to be fully integrated in the fleet by 2020. The new platforms are already providing an improved ASW capability in fleet operations. The MH-60R has been forward deployed in Japan and operating in the Asia Pacific region since 2012. Additionally, the rotary aircraft has an enhanced active dipping sonar advertised to increase detection ranges from three to seven times compared to legacy systems.

Earlier this month six P-8A aircraft completed an inaugural and successful deployment to the Asia Pacific. The P-8A adds an improved sensor search capability by utilizing a multi-static active coherent (MAC) system, which is comprised of sonobuoys (source and receiver) and advanced processing. In addition to the new platforms and technological advancements, all ASW ships and aircraft in the future will employ the Mk 54 lightweight torpedo, which integrates several years of weapons technology. By 2020, these new improvements collectively in the surface and aviation communities will create a powerful ASW capability. However, the Navy must further improve requisite training to meet the new capabilities, and foster a culture that prioritizes the ASW mission.

The CNO's Sailing Directions offers, "The Navy will continue to dominate the undersea domain using a network of sensors and platforms." The navy is building a fleet (sensors and platforms) with enormous ASW capability that will create an integrated ASW machine. Additionally, the CNO has articulated that warfighting is the Navy's primary mission and people are the Navy's foundation. To ensure the U.S. Navy succeeds in ASW, a focus on warfighting and people must occur in tandem.

### Training

ASW is a complicated warfare area, and proficiency can only develop through extensive textbook and practical training, at both the officer and enlisted levels. In his book, *Destroyer Captain*, Adm. Jim Stavridis (retired) described that “submarines are like steel sharks – quiet, silent, and deadly. They are designed to hunt and kill. Occasionally, it becomes necessary to find and destroy them – to keep open sea-lanes of communication, to sweep an area and make it safe for Allied shipping. Destroying a submarine is the hardest task in naval warfare.” Learning ASW takes time, training, and experience to fully understand how to plan and execute ASW operations. Of all the topics associated with ASW, oceanography (undersea environment) is the most difficult to grasp and essential in dominating the undersea domain.

When comparing the undersea with other warfare area such as anti-air warfare, the science and understanding of the ASW operating environment is a more complex tactical problem. Given the complexity of ASW, training personnel in mastering oceanography and anti-submarine operations must remain a high priority. For the last twenty years or more, ASW has not been a significant operational requirement as a result of the Cold War ending and a decade of fighting in the war on terrorism. A culture change from a primarily air warfare centric navy to an emphasis more in ASW must occur to improve proficiency among naval personnel at all ranks. This culture change must occur from the top down led by the Navy’s senior officers afloat and ashore.

Today and in the future, ASW will be required to deter and deny future foreign submarine operations against U.S. national interests at home and abroad. Combatant and Fleet Commanders must carefully balance the allocation of naval forces in both these areas to sustain undersea dominance. The navy’s new platforms and technologies in the surface and aviation communities increase the ability to detect, localize, and track submarines. These new platforms and technologies have established a new era of ASW operations from the days of the Cold War. As the U.S. Navy moves forward, officers and enlisted personnel must have the necessary training to operate the improved platforms and sensors given the potential rise in foreign submarine operations as well as unknown UUV technological advancements.

*Naval Institute article by LCDR Jeff W. Benson (08/27/2014)*

### **CHINESE CARRIER’S PURPORTED AIR WING DEEMED PLAUSIBLE BUT LIMITED:**

New details have emerged on the aircraft lineup for the new carrier Liaoning, which analysts say is a “plausible” mix of foreign-designed fighter jets and various helicopters, yet limited due to its lack of other necessary aircraft. According to the Aug. 28 edition of the Chinese-language Shanghai Morning Post, the carrier will house 36 aircraft, including:

- 24 Shenyang J-15 Flying Shark fighters.
- 6 Changhe Z-18F anti-submarine warfare (ASW) helicopters.
- 4 Changhe Z-18J airborne early warning helicopters.
- 2 Harbin Z-9C rescue helicopters.

The article was based on quotes from Cao Dongwei, senior colonel and researcher at the People’s Liberation Army Naval Research Institute. The Liaoning is a refurbished Soviet-era Varyag aircraft carrier procured in 1998 by China and commissioned in 2012.

“The overall lineup certainly looks plausible, as the mix of helicopters and fighters is similar to how the Russians outfit their example of this carrier,” said Roger Cliff, senior fellow with the Asia Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council. “The striking thing about this carrier and aircraft lineup is that every single item is based on a foreign system. The Liaoning is a Russian-built ship fitted out with Chinese

systems. The helicopters are based on Eurocopter designs and the J-15 fighters are based on the Russian Su-33 design.”

China’s first carrier air wing reflects a balance between combat and support aircraft seen in the Liaoning’s Russian counterpart, said Richard Fisher, a senior fellow with the International Assessment and Strategy Center. “The Soviets intended their carrier to provide a defensive extension for their pro-nuclear ballistic missile submarine ‘anti-access’ missile forces carried by their nuclear submarines, large surface combatants and land-based strike bombers. The Liaoning can perform that mission for the Chinese Navy as well as form the centerpiece for a carrier battle group that could overwhelm most Asian navies, but would still require extensive land-based support to oppose a US Navy carrier battle group.”

According to Chinese defense industry brochures acquired at air shows around Asia, the Z-9 and Z-18 helicopters have numerous configurations for both civilian and military use in China. The Z-9 configuration is based on the Eurocopter SA365/AS365 Dauphin 2 and built by the Harbin Aviation Industry Group. According to Harbin brochures, the “C” search variant can be equipped with an electronic flight instrument system and ZLC-1 surface search radar. Harbin also makes the “EC” ASW variant equipped with a dipping sonar, torpedo and surface search radar. Two Arriel 2C turbo-shaft engines power both. The WZ8D engine might also power some of these aircraft, which is a copy of the Arriel 2B1A turboshaft engine. The WZ8 powers the Z-11W light attack helicopter.

Liaoning’s other rotary airframe, the Z-18, is built by the Changhe Aircraft Industries Corp. and comes in only the “F” and “J” military series. The Z-18 and Avicopter’s AC313 civilian variant are based on the Changhe Z-8. The Z-8, in turn, is a copy of the Aerospatiale SA-321 Super Frelon. It is a medium tri-turbine helicopter powered by a Pratt & Whitney PT6B-67A engine for its civilian variant and possibly an improved variant of the WZ6 engine based on an older WZ6 used in the Z-8.

On Aug. 12, the Chinese-language Qianjiang Evening News reported the Z-18F ASW variant had four eight-tube sonobuoy launchers, along with four Yu-7K anti-submarine torpedoes or four YJ-91 (Kh-31P) anti-ship cruise missiles. The Z-18F would also be assigned to the new Type 071 Yuzhao-class amphibious transport docks, which are capable of storing four Z-18 or Z-8 helicopters in the hangar.

“I find it implausible that the Z-18 could carry four YJ-91s. That is a big missile — each one weighs 600 [kilograms],” Cliff said. “Something like the C-701 [117 kilograms] seems more plausible. I doubt if the Z-18 can carry 32 sonobuoys, four anti-submarine torpedoes, and four [anti-ship cruise missiles] all at the same time.” Other problems include the lack of long-range radar and anti-submarine fixed-wing aircraft, Fisher said.

James Bussert, co-author of the book, “People’s Liberation Army Navy: Combat Systems Technology,” said Liaoning will need to add shore-based maritime patrol aircraft, such as the Tupolev Tu-154 ASW aircraft and the Shaanxi Y-8 airborne early warning and control aircraft, “because they are within range of most carrier operation areas and provide unique capabilities not on the carrier’s aircraft, such as long loiter time, extreme range and room for several sensors, communications and weapons not available to helicopters.” He also said the lack of a carrier onboard delivery aircraft, such as the US Navy’s C-2 Greyhound, limits the carrier’s logistics capability.

Fisher said these deficiencies will likely be corrected with future aircraft carriers, which are expected to be larger and use flat conventional takeoff decks and catapult launch for heavier fighters, plus fixed-wing radar and anti-submarine patrol aircraft. Fisher said that in the South China Sea, Liaoning’s carrier air wing could assist China’s imposition of gradual military control of the area.

Along with supporting naval forces, Liaoning could deter attacks from Vietnam or dominate the lightly armed Philippine Navy, Fisher said. "It could also complement combat aircraft deployed to Woody Island in the Paracel Group to counter future US air and naval forces deployed to Philippine bases.", he said.

*Defense News article by Wendell Winnick (09/07/2014)*

### **US NAVY WANTS TO ADAPT ITS TRAINING FOR MILLENNIAL SAILORS:**

The US Navy is looking for ways to adapt its training for millennials, young people raised in a child-centric culture who want and expect nurturing relationships with their bosses, the commanding officer of the submarine school in Groton said Friday. Captain Andrew Jarrett, a self-described member of Generation X, said that as commander of the submarine school he has made it a priority to focus on mentoring.

"For millennials, it's very important for them to have a relationship with their boss, just like they had with their parents", Jarrett said during a talk with a submarine veterans' group. "They don't want to be friends, but they want you to care about them and give them feedback". While some see the craving for feedback as a weakness, Jarrett said it could be a benefit if the Navy embraces it. He said the chief of naval operations has indicated his office is reviewing changes that could help tailor training for the new generation of sailors and officers.

A 1989 graduate of the US Naval Academy, Jarrett is a career submarine officer who assumed command in July 2013 at the Naval Submarine School, which has a staff of 400 people and about 1,500 students enrolled on a given day. He served previously for four years at the academy in Annapolis, Md where he became deputy commandant of midshipmen. At the sub school, many of the students are enlisted sailors who arrive in their late teens and early 20s. Jarrett said many come from backgrounds with strong family support, and when they arrive in Groton, there is a sense of "where's my Navy mom and dad?"

"That's where we as a submarine force are struggling a bit," said Jarrett, who added that some junior officers have had a hard time adjusting to Navy ways. More broadly, Jarrett said he has focused on emphasizing ethics at the sub school. In presentations to students, he said he reviews the cases of disgraced officers, including Commander Michael P. Ward II, the former commander of a Connecticut-based attack submarine who faked his own death to end an extramarital affair. "We don't give our kids clear enough messages about right and wrong", he said.

*Boston Globe article by Michael Melia (09/27/2014)*

### **JOE BIDEN'S SON HUNTER DISCHARGED FROM NAVY AFTER POSITIVE COCAINE TEST:**

Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden was discharged from the Navy in February after testing positive for cocaine, a person familiar with the case confirmed to ABC News. The person said Biden had failed a urinalysis test administered in June 2013 before he was discharged from the Navy.

"It was the honor of my life to serve in the U.S. Navy, and I deeply regret and am embarrassed that my actions led to my administrative discharge," Hunter Biden said in a statement distributed through his lawyer. "I respect the Navy's decision. With the love and support of my family, I'm moving forward." The person familiar with the case said he "was treated no different than any other sailor."

Biden, 44, had needed an age waiver to join the Reserves because of his age as well as a second waiver because of a drug-related incident while a young man. Separately, a Navy spokesman

confirmed that Biden had been discharged from the Navy, but because of Privacy Act restrictions could not detail why he had been discharged.

"Ensign Hunter Biden was selected for commission through the Direct Commission Officer Program in 2012," Cmdr. Ryan Perry said. "In May, 2013 he was assigned to the Navy Public Supports Element East in Norfolk, Virginia. He was discharged from the Navy Reserve in February, 2014. Like other junior officers, the details of Ensign Biden's discharge are not releasable under the Privacy Act."

*World News article by Luis Martinez and Arlette Saenz (10/16/2014)*

### **SWEDEN CONTINUES SEARCH FOR SUSPECTED RUSSIAN SUBMARINE:**

Sweden stepped up its efforts to locate a suspected Russian submarine off the waters near Stockholm three days after intercepting what it says was a distress call. Officially, the Swedish military has described searching for "foreign underwater activity," but intelligence briefings suggest it believes a Russian submarine has suffered mechanical problems.

The operation began on Friday after a radio transmission was intercepted between an object in the Stockholm archipelago -- an area that contains some 30,000 islands and inlets -- to Kaliningrad, a Russian enclave between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic Sea. "At the moment we are conducting an intelligence operation in the archipelago of Stockholm with optical reconnaissance as well as with naval vessels equipped with qualified underwater sensors," said Erik Lagersten, communications director for the Swedish Armed Forces. "The units activated are from all branches of the Swedish Armed Forces, the Navy, the Army and the Air Force."

A distressed underwater vessel would need support from another vessel, and Swedish military have been eyeing the Russian-owned oil tanker NS Concord, which has been circling near Stockholm in international waters. "We still consider the information we received as very trustworthy," Captain Jonas Wikström told reporters Sunday. "I, as head of operations, have therefore decided to increase the number of units in the area."

Russia has denied any emergency incidents involving its naval vessels. A defense ministry spokesman said all its submarines and ships are "fulfilling their tasks in the worlds oceans... according to plan." "There has been no irregular situation, let alone emergency situation, involving Russian navy vessels," the spokesman said.

But Baltic nations are highly suspicious of Russian activity after a series of tense interactions in recent weeks. In September, Sweden scrambled jets after two Russian Su-24 attack fighters reportedly violated Swedish airspace. And last week, Finland said an environmental research ship in international waters had been harassed by the Russian navy, ordered to change course and followed by a helicopter and submarine.

*United Press International article by Gabrielle Levy (10/20/2014)*

### **HISTORY OF NAVY CHOW:**

More often than not, the complaints came after the second helping of roast beef, mashed potatoes, green peas, chef's salad and apple pie a la mode. In today's Navy, the occasions when such complaints have some foundation are far outweighed by the many other meals consumed, but in the sea service of 200 years ago if a sailor complained about the food, he would probably have had good reason. Sea duty in those days meant sleeping in hammocks, steering by the stars and eating food sometimes moldy, sometimes rancid, sometimes overage, sometimes all three.

Uncle Sam's early Navy was a career for strong men and it needed strong men with hearty appetites to relish the diet common to life at sea in the days of sail. Food issued to the American Revolutionary sailor might consist of ship's biscuits that were as hard as rocks and often inhabited by weevils, a portion of salt pork, some dried peas and water.

By the early 19th century a permanent federal Navy had been established, but the chow had not yet improved substantially. A ration law outlining the amount, kind and the days on which certain foods were to be served had been approved by Congress. Owing to a lack of preservatives other than salt and brine, and a paucity of funds, only a limited variety of foods was authorized. Those foods were generally bland and somewhat unpalatable. A seaman's typical daily ration consisted of 1 lb. of hard bread, 1 1/2 pounds of salt pork or beef, 1/2 pound of dried beans or rice and a quart of beer or a half-pint of rum. On Fridays he received salt fish instead of beef and Wednesdays were meatless days with two ounces of cheese as a substitute. Vegetables deteriorated quickly at sea, but when they were available, the ration included a few potatoes or turnips on Tuesdays.

In those days, the crew was divided into groups of 20 men, each called "berth deck messes". Each mess elected its own cook-culinary expertise seldom determined the outcome of elections. The Job required no particular cooking skills but did entail washing dishes after each meal. Dirty dishes were dunked in a bucket of cold, greasy seawater and left on the open deck to air-dry. In spite of the limited variety of food and the poor preparation facilities-usually a sandbox holding hot coals and an iron kettle-the old-time cooks were quite skillful in creating edible meals. One favorite treat at sea was called "cracker hash". It was made from broken-up hard bread, any vegetables that could be cumshawed, and salt pork. Another favorite, "plum duff", consisted of flour, molasses, and raisins (raisins helped hide the weevils in old flour) - ingredients seldom available.

When the first ration bill passed in 1794, Congress didn't foresee the establishment of a permanent Navy. They had authorized the building of six ships to combat Algerian pirates attacking American merchant ships off North Africa. They authorized 28 cents per day for the purchase of food for each sailor. By 1801, the pirates had been subdued, but the sea service was not demobilized: instead, it was reduced to a peacetime establishment. A ration was established which substantially reduced the allowance of bread and meat. Friday, for example, became a day of short rations, called Banyan Day after the Hindu caste which abstains from meat. It was not until 1818 that a new ration was authorized. This ration still lacked variety and continued to specify days on which certain foods could be served. In 1842, the ideas of a fixed allowance for each day was discarded and a more flexible allotment of specified items and substitutes was authorized. The rum and beer rations were taken away from commissioned officers and midshipmen, but continued for the crew; those underage 21 and unable to drink received a few pennies additional in their pay.

In Sept 1862 the spirit ration was discontinued for all and in its place the men received a stipend equal to five cents per day. This legislation prompted the old refrain, "THEY RAISED OUR PAY-FIVE CENTS A DAY-AND TOOK AWAY-OUR GROG FOREVER". The Civil War brought other changes to the Navy but the rations remained unchanged until 1906. At that time, a special ration was provided-forerunner of midrats-for all night watch-standers. Other major changes included the abolition of the berth-messing arrangement and the of the general messing system. The feeding of the entire crew in a common mess was introduced and this change led to better food and improved morale along with distinctly more healthful conditions at mealtime. Combining ration funds made it possible to vary the Navy diet, basically unchanged since the 18th century. For the first time, veal, lamb, sausage and fresh vegetables were authorized aboard ship. With centralized cooking and serving came joint-effort cleaning of the messing areas. Grease film or food particles on utensils and dishes became unacceptable due to tighter cleanliness regulations.

The first standard Navy cookbook was written by a Navy paymaster (forerunner of the supply officer) and replaced an old guide used by all services. The old cookbook contained such advice as; "The presence of wormholes in coffee should not occasion its rejection....since they generally indicate age, weigh nothing and disappear when the coffee is ground". Due to early 20th century discoveries of better ways to preserve food and modern means to freeze it, food quality aboard ship improved greatly. Between WWI and WWII, there was a strong demand by sailors for a diet consisting of more vegetables, fruits, and milk.

In 1942 additional sources of vitamins were added to the Navy ration without any revision of the ration bill. Vegetables and fruit juices - fresh, canned and concentrated - flour enriched with vitamin B1, niacin and iron, and enriched yeast were added to the daily menu. Combat rations, survival rations and other special type subsistence designed to feed fighting men under extreme conditions also were introduced during this period. As the war became a long-range proposition both in terms of distance and duration, the Navy strove to provide nourishing foods to keep sailors well fed and at the same time, eliminate the need for frequent underway replenishments.

Between 1945 and 1960, technological advances in all areas of naval operations were tremendous. Sophisticated electronic equipment and highly complicated weapons systems demanding constant alertness and longer span of attention prompted nutritionists to devise better diets and test recipes for all foods served in Navy dining facilities. The foods had to sustain personnel under strenuous and often tedious operational environments. The Navy turned its attention to developments in food preparation, handling and processing as never before. Many new types of food-processed in ways never before tried-helped alleviate crowded storage conditions and greater emphasis was placed on developing better ration-dense foods. These staples consisted of concentrated, dehydrated, compressed, precooked and frozen foods. All bones, pits, peelings and trimmings are pruned before storage aboard so that only edible portions remain. Galleys and sculleries were modernized. In the scullery, mechanical dishwashers, sterilizers and other sanitation equipment replaced the old "dunk and dry" system forever.

The Navy Food Service Systems Office, which falls under the Naval Supply Systems Command in today's Navy hierarchy, experimented with revolutionary ideas for food preparation and preservation. Military service research led to development of space age freeze-dried foods for consumption by shipboard diners as well as astronauts. From 1960 to the present, the Navy has continued its efforts into better ways to produce, package, store and prepare food served in its dining facilities.

The Armed Forces Recipe Service (a joint service recipe supplier) now provides the sea service with ideas for more than 1300 recipes guaranteed to please the palate of any salt. In addition to food research, the services recognized the correlation between good groceries eaten in pleasant surroundings and increased job efficiency. Consequently, they are constantly looking for ways to improve the atmosphere of the dining area. The drab-colored, austere dining areas of the pre-Vietnam era have disappeared. Today one usually dines in an area that has piped-in background music, carpets, murals, paneled bulkheads, and a touch of home-tablecloths. In many facilities, civilian mess attendants clear away dishes, further enhancing a restaurant-like atmosphere.

Food choices have been expanded to cater to contemporary lifestyles. Many shore facilities have added speed-lines for those preferring short-order items to standard meals. Aboard ship, cookouts are often held on the fantail. These usually feature baked beans, barbecued chicken or hot dogs and hamburgers- all served in a relaxing atmosphere. Other foods seldom seen in the galleys of the "Old Navy", but reflecting the younger generation's tastes, are appearing more frequently - fish and chips, chicken in a basket, pizza, etc. Many sailors are introduced to expertly prepared ethnic foods; on special nights the evening chow features foods of minority groups such as taco on Mexican Night,

lasagna on Italian Night and chitterlings on Soul Night. On these occasions the dining facility is often decorated in an appropriate motif. No longer does chow go down at the regularly appointed time on weekends or holidays. Today most bases and ships serve brunch from early morning to lunchtime. Still the early birds can get their ham and eggs and a wholesome lunch as on other days.

Navy food has come a long way since the days of cracker hash and salt pork; the Navy is striving to be the best feeder in the volunteer force and the emphasis is on habitability. Ideas for improvements are welcomed and most messes have suggestion boxes to solicit constructive comments. Today's modern ideas about food service are due in large part to input from the fleet. Chow has progressed from hard tack and beef jerky to hot rolls and sirloin steak, yet this is not the end of improvements.

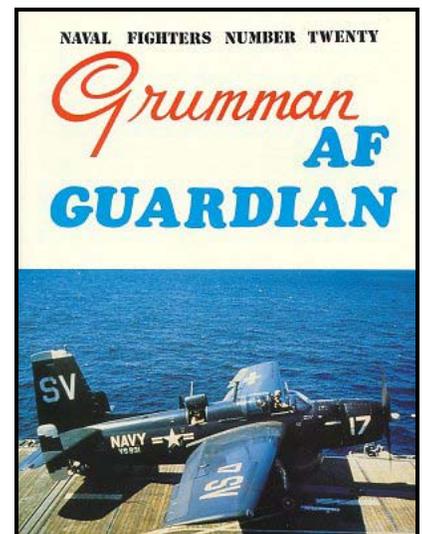
*All Hands article by MSC Joseph D. Hollinger (10/1975)*

### **NAVAL WAR COLLEGE STAFF MEMBER TO SPEAK AT SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM:**

The ANA Patriot Squadron's Shea Naval Aviation Museum at 495 Shea Memorial Drive on old NAS South Weymouth in Weymouth, MA will host a lecture by Naval War College staff member CAPT Richard LaBranche on Saturday January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015. CAPT LaBranche is a naval aviator who flew F-14s, F-18s, and A-6s in combat over Iraq and Afghanistan. In recent years CAPT LaBranche was the CAG on board the aircraft carrier USS. Carl Vinson. The lecture will begin at noon and will last about an hour. A question and answer session will follow. Admission is free and all are invited. See [www.anapatriotsquadron.org](http://www.anapatriotsquadron.org) for more details.

### **RECOMMENDED READING:**

Looking for something interesting to read? Then check out "Grumman AF Guardian" (ISBN 0-942612-20-5) by Robert J. Kowalski. The Guardian was the largest single-engine propeller driven aircraft to operate off aircraft carriers. It was also the first operational aircraft intended specifically for ASW (although it was derived from an unsuccessful prototype composite piston and jet powered aircraft that was intended to replace the Grumman Avenger torpedo bomber). Guardians came in two models, the AF-2W equipped with search sensors and the AF-2S equipped with localization sensors and weapons. The two types of AFs were intended to be operated in "hunter-killer" teams to find and destroy submarines. AFs were flown by the VS squadrons assigned to NAS South Weymouth between 1954 and 1956, when they were replaced by the Grumman S2F Tracker. You can order copies of this 80 page book for \$16.95 plus shipping directly from the publisher at [www.ginterbooks.com](http://www.ginterbooks.com).



### **ON THE INTERNET:**

A friendly reminder that there are groups on Facebook that you can join for VP-92, NAS South Weymouth, and NAS Brunswick. Go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) to check them out and register. Another great patrol squadron related resource is Nevins Frankel's VP Navy web site at [www.vpnavy.org](http://www.vpnavy.org). This web site has individual sections for every regular Navy and reserve VP squadron and also for many VS squadrons and naval air stations too. Its well worth checking out.

### **MONTHLY MEETING:**

Please note that we will be meeting 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 instead of at the Hanscom Field club until further notice. Apparently the Hanscom Field Club has stopped serving food again. Please join us if you can. The pub is just outside the Hanscom Field Hartwell gate.

**PARTING SHOTS:**



**ABOVE:** AW2 Marc Courtemache and unidentified colleague relaxing in the galley of a VP-92 P-3A or P-3B. **BELOW:** YN2 LaForge and VP-92 Admin Department colleagues at NAS South Weymouth.



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

