



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!

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[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: The first Lockheed Neptunes at NAS South Weymouth were not operated by the reserve patrol squadrons on the base, but by an unusual regular Navy command called the Naval Air Development Unit. NADU provided aircraft and crews to flight test experimental systems developed by the MIT Lincoln Laboratory and other defense contractors. Here's an early NADU P2V-3W over southeastern Massachusetts around 1954. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

FINAL FLIGHTS: We lost Bill Horsch of Rockland, MA in early November. Bill, who retired from the Navy as an ATCS in 1962, was a Second World War veteran who served as an active duty stationkeeper (what later became known as a "TAR") at NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth during the postwar era. He played a key role in the aircraft electronics training program on both

bases and trained many reserve radar operators in VP-92 predecessors VP-ML-69 and VP-91. In later years Bill was involved in the NAS Squantum/NAS South Weymouth Old Timers Association and he was a founding member of the NAS South Weymouth museum group, the ANA Patriot Squadron.

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 Ken Atkins, Tom Carroll, and Sean O'Neil for their recent generous contributions to the "admin fund". Thanks guys!

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.

A NOTE AND PHOTO FROM GEORGE DRISCOLL:



The Driscolls had a little "Happy Hour" with the Hanigans at their home in Duxbury, MA on the evening of Wednesday September 23rd. A good time was had by all. Shown in the photo presented above are Bill Hanigan, Dorothy Driscoll, and Barbara Hanigan.

A PHOTO AND NOTE FROM JIM FITZGERALD:

I hosted a little VP-92/NAS SoWey CPO get together at my condo in Plymouth, Massachusetts on September 18th. Here I am with AEC Bob Allen and BMC Bob Porter just before Bob Allen moved back to Jacksonville, Florida. We had dinner, drinks, and desert. We also killed the bottle of Sheridan's shown here while telling sea stories.



ANOTHER PHOTO AND NOTE FROM JIM FITZGERALD:



Today, we paid our last respects and said our final farewell to shipmate ADC Dick Norris. Dickie's funeral was held on September 1st at St. Theresa's Church in Trumbull CT. Throughout his Navy career, Dick touched the hearts of and mentored many a sailor. He will be missed by all, especially by his wife Julie and his daughter Laura. Dick retired from the Navy on March 17, 1991 and left a lasting impression on his former shipmates. The photo above shows some of Dickie's former VP-92 shipmates at the funeral. Julie requested that shipmates serve as his pallbearers. From left to right

are AT1 Dave Childers, Capt. Eric Lekberg (former VP-92 CO), AFCEM Jim FitzGerald, AECS Glen Howard, AEC Bob Allen, AMCS Rick Cahoon, AWC Brian Clougher, and LCDR Jay White

A NOTE FROM SEAN O'NEIL, FORMER VP-92 CO:

Hope all are doing well and have had a great summer...Coronavirus and all. The O'Neils are fine. Retired and living permanently on Cape Cod (Hyannis Port). We still have one of our Naval Aviators in the business. Conor, our youngest son, is now an LCDR, starting his department head tour in a VF squadron in LeMoore CA. Conor has been VF since the day he first saw top gun. He is now career which is a good thing seeing that all of his friends in the airlines are out of work and trying to drill extra in the Reserves. Our oldest son Patrick was a P-3 driver. He stayed in the Reserves for a time with the Korea Unit out of Newport, RI. He enjoyed it, made LCDR, but had to get out when the Navy was giving all P-3 Aviators one year recalls to Africa to work with the Seals and the P-3/P-8s. That would not work with a young family and a job with Fidelity! It's too bad as he would now be at the sixteen-year mark and honing in on twenty...

BRUNSWICK NAVAL MUSEUM MEMORIAL BRICK PROJECT:

The Brunswick Naval Museum on old NAS Brunswick, ME is selling memorial bricks as a fund-raiser. The bricks, which cost \$150 each, can be used to memorialize your service on that base. The bricks will be placed in a "Wall of Honor" that will be erected on the old base. To order a brick, or for more information about the bricks or the museum, go to www.bnuseum.org.

THE NAVY'S NEXT MISSION: DETECT SUBS FROM THE SKY (Popular Mechanics 11/19):

The U.S. Navy, in a break with traditional submarine detection, is working to replace sonar and magnetic detection with radar. The AN/APS-154 Advanced Airborne Sensor (AAS) will spot the invisible wakes left by submarines underwater, telltale clues that something large is lurking beneath the waves. The AAS will be carried by the P-8 Poseidon aircraft (shown above), which can then engage submarines with air-dropped anti-submarine torpedoes.

According to Forbes, the downward-mounted pod features an advanced electronically scanning array (AESA) radar. Unlike traditional dish radars that use one large, powerful radar module, AESA radars use many smaller modules. These modules can collectively operate over multiple frequencies, which means they can overcome jamming or broaden or focus their field of detection, especially against small objects and those invisible to the human eye.

One such object is the wake created by a submerged submarine on the surface of the ocean. Subs create wakes as they displace water in their path, which are barely visible on the surface. A radar like the AAS can pick out these wakes from the pattern of regular ocean waves, betraying a submarine's location.

Once a submarine is detected, a P-8 can drop a Mk. 54 lightweight anti-submarine torpedo to give chase. The Mk. 54, delivered by parachute, will enter the water, turn on its onboard sonar system, and start searching for the enemy sub. When the torpedo finds the sub, it moves to intercept, detonating a 100-pound warhead against the submarine's hull.

The AAS appears likely to replace older submarine detection systems. Aircraft like the Navy's P-3C Orion would often drop sonobuoys in waters suspected of harboring enemy submarines. The sonobuoys, pinging away with sonar, transmit their data to the circling P-3C. Another system, Magnetic Anomaly Detection, detects the disturbance in Earth's magnetic field created by a large, steel-hulled submarine.

The P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft is fairly new in U.S. Navy service. Unlike older planes, it retains the ability to drop sonobuoys, but wasn't built with a telltale MAD boom, suggesting the Navy is confident radar submarine detection will work.

Popular Mechanics article by Kyle Mizokami

A note from your newsletter editor regarding the above article. The Navy has been working on airborne submarine wake detection since the late 1940s, with apparently little to no success. NAS South Weymouth was heavily involved in one such effort, which was known as "Project Clinker". The old Naval Air Development Unit that operated from NAS South Weymouth between 1954 and 1961 assigned a ZPG2 type blimp to Project Clinker. The blimp was fitted with a sensor that was supposed to be able to detect a submarine's wake by means of the difference in temperature between the wake and the surrounding seawater. As far as I know, Project Clinker never resulted in an actual operational sensor. Despite this, very little information is available about Project Clinker today. The project reports have either been lost to time or remain classified. I've been trying to research this effort for many years, and despite the fact that it was active from about 1948 up until at least the middle of the 1960s, all I can find out about it are bits and pieces.

US NAVY SUB HUNTERS RETURN TO BERMUDA (Royal Gazette 11/18):

Bermuda is back on the front line of the United States Navy's efforts to combat Russian submarines prowling the depths of the Atlantic, The Royal Gazette can reveal. A USN detachment and two hi-tech P-8 Poseidon submarine hunter aircraft has been deployed to the island and will conduct reconnaissance operations from the airport – a former US Naval Air Station that closed down 25 years ago.

Lieutenant Marycate Walsh, of the US 2nd Fleet, confirmed: "A P-8 Poseidon detachment arrived in Bermuda on October 30 to support operational requirements in conjunction with other US naval assets in the Atlantic Ocean. "The detachment is scheduled to operate out of Bermuda for the next several months." She added: "The Navy frequently conducts exercises and operations in the Atlantic Ocean to maintain readiness, refine tactics, and support homeland defence." Lieutenant Walsh said up to 40 USN personnel would be based on the island.

The P-8 is a military version of the Boeing 737 passenger plane armed with torpedoes, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, and other weapons and can drop and monitor sonobuoys designed to detect submarines. It was introduced as a replacement for the ageing Lockheed P-3 Orion fleet as the service's main anti-submarine warfare aircraft in 2013. Lieutenant Walsh said: "The P-8 Poseidon aircraft is a versatile, multi-mission maritime aircraft and is one of many US Navy platforms operating in the Atlantic Ocean, at any given time."

The USN 2nd Fleet, based in Norfolk, Virginia, was re-established in 2018 to counter increased Russian activity in the North Atlantic. The fleet, which operated at the height of the Cold War with the former Soviet Union, was abolished in 2011 because it was thought the threat from Russia had diminished. The 2nd Fleet is responsible for ships, aircraft and landing forces on the East Coast of the United States and the North Atlantic, up to the Arctic.

Vice Admiral Andrew Lewis, the 2nd Fleet commander, warned earlier this year that the East Coast of the US was no longer "uncontested" or a "safe haven" for Nato ships and submarines. He told a forum organised by the US Naval Institute and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies: "We have seen an ever-increasing number of Russian submarines deployed in the Atlantic and these submarines are more capable than ever, deploying for longer periods of time, with more lethal

weapons systems. “Our sailors have the mindset that they are no longer uncontested and to expect to operate alongside our competitors each and every underway.”

The US Naval Air Station, now a civilian airport, operated several squadrons of P-3 aircraft at its height and was run down after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, decommissioned in 1995 and later handed back to the Government. It began service in 1940 as part of the bases for destroyers deal which helped Britain to survive in the Second World War and was operated first as a US Air Force base and then as a Naval Air Station from 1970 until its closure in 1995.

Lee Rizzuto, the US Consul General, said last night: “The US Consulate thanks the Government of Bermuda for their support and cooperation of the US Navy as they conduct a series of exercises over the next several weeks. “The opportunity to operate out of Bermuda will improve multi-domain cooperation while furthering the special bilateral relationship between the United States and Bermuda.”

Royal Gazette article by Sarah Lagan

FIVE NATO SPY PLANES CONVERGE AS USAF B-52s SPRING INTEL TRAP (Forbes 9/23):

The six U.S. Air Force B-52s that deployed from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota to the Royal Air Force base at Fairford back in August have set another intelligence trap for Russian forces in the Black Sea region—possibly their biggest yet. On Wednesday, one of the eight-engine bombers—call sign “Hero 31”—winged over the Black Sea near the Ukrainian and Romanian coasts, briefly joining up with Ukrainian air force MiG-29 and Su-27 fighters. The bomber reportedly made a mock attack run on the Ukrainian city of Odessa before turning toward Romania. “Our team from @TeamMinot has been busy!” U.S. Strategic Command tweeted on Wednesday.

At the same time the bomber was approaching, no fewer than five high-tech NATO spy planes converged in international waters over the Black Sea, undoubtedly monitoring Russian air-defenses and other forces as the Russians went on alert. The spy planes included two RC-135Ws—one each from the U.S. Air Force and Royal Air Force—plus a USAF RC-135U, a U.S. Navy P-8 and an RAF Sentinel. The surveillance planes all broadcast their positions using radio transponders that anyone can track on a variety of civilian websites.

The intel planes together possess a host of capabilities. The RC-135s with their sensitive electronic receivers monitor and register radars and other electronics. The P-8 is a maritime patrol plane with powerful onboard sensors plus the ability to carry a special underslung radar for tracking moving ships and vehicles on the surface. The Sentinel duplicates that capability with its own high-tech, movement-tracking radar. Working together, the five intel aircraft could spot Russian vehicles, pinpoint air-defense systems and listen in on radio communications.

It’s unclear how the Kremlin responded to the Wednesday bomber flight. Hero 31 apparently stayed inside Ukrainian and Romanian air space throughout its mission. During previous NATO intel traps involving the Fairford B-52s, the Russian military switched on its powerful over-the-horizon radars, sortied fighters from Crimea and even sent in a radio-relay plane from Moscow. Two armed Russian Su-27 fighters flew so close to one B-52 that their afterburners rocked the bomber. “The measures taken by the main command of the Russian aerospace forces made it possible to timely reveal the activities of strategic bombers of the U.S. Air Force and NATO countries’ air forces, as well as to organize effective countermeasures,” the Russian defense ministry stated, citing Gen. Sergei Vladimirovich Surovikin, commander of the aerospace forces.

The NATO air operations are unusual in their intensity—but they’re hardly unprovoked. Russia in recent weeks has staged large-scale exercises, including mock amphibious assaults in the Arctic, in addition to deploying forces near the Russian border with Belarus, where popular protests continue more than a month after long-time leader Alexander Lukashenko apparently rigged his re-election. And Russian air force bombers have tried to match the American bombers’ operations. On Sept. 16, two Tu-22M3 bombers flew thousands of miles from their base—Olenegorsk, apparently—and crossed over the Black Sea. It’s unclear whether Russian spy planes were waiting nearby, hoping to capture NATO signals.

Forbes article by David Axe

GERMANY WARY ABOUT JAPAN'S PARTICIPATION IN MPA PROJECT (The Japan Times 9/7):

The German government is increasingly cautious about allowing Japan to take part in a joint project with France to develop marine patrol aircraft, sources familiar with the matter said Monday. As part of its efforts to boost defense-related exports, Japan has been seeking to offer technologies from its P-1 patrol aircraft for the project. But concerns are mounting in Germany that the P-1 may not be able to acquire necessary certification for military aircraft at an early date, the sources said. Germany had been more positive than France about Japan's participation and had been showing interest in the P-1. Berlin's change of attitude puts Japan at a disadvantage in a competition with rivals including U.S. aerospace giant Boeing Co.

The P-1 was developed by the Defense Ministry and Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd. as the first Japan-made patrol aircraft. It has been used by the Maritime Self-Defense Force since 2013 to monitor submarines and other vessels. In the past, Japan tried to sell the P-1 to the U.K. and New Zealand, but the aircraft lost to Boeing's P-8 Poseidon. Germany and France plan to jointly introduce next-generation patrol aircraft in 2035, when their current models are to retire.

In June, the German Defense Ministry decided to end the use of the current P-3C Orion built by Lockheed Martin Corp. in 2025, ahead of the initial schedule of 2035, due to high repair costs. It plans to procure stopgap patrol planes and use them until 2035. The German ministry has listed several candidates, including the P-8, as the stopgap planes, but Japan's P-1 was not on the list, according to the sources.

The German side believes that it would take over five years for the P-1 to acquire type certification, questioning whether the aircraft could be ready by 2025, according to an official familiar with the matter. It is possible that Germany and France will use the aircraft to be selected as a stopgap solution even after 2035, because it is unprofitable to change patrol planes, usually used for several decades, after only 10 years.

The P-1, which was developed specifically for use as patrol aircraft, has advantages in low-altitude and low-speed flights, important when patrolling the ocean. It is costly, however, compared with the P-8, which was developed based on passenger aircraft.

Japan Times Article by Japan Times Staff

HARS DISPLAYS ORION 753 THAT SEARCHED FOR MH-370 (Australian Aviation 9/4):

HARS Aviation Museum in NSW will conduct engine runs on three of its maritime patrol aircraft next weekend, including a restored RAAF Orion “753” that searched the Indian Ocean for the missing MH-370. The NSW attraction will also showcase its Neptune 273 and 566 on 11–13 September as part of its monthly Tarmac Days tour, which takes place over three consecutive days starting on the second Friday of each month.

HARS became the world's first museum in the world to fly the P-3C Orion after volunteer engineers and pilots spend two years restoring it. After being retired from RAAF service in December 2016, the Orion "753" was placed in storage at Shellharbour Airport at Albion Park Rail until it was formally handed over to HARS by Air Force Chief Air Marshal Leo Davies in November 2017. In its RAAF service, the aircraft completed 16,500 flight hours.

HARS president Bob De La Hunty added that the museum's Neptune P2V-7 "273" is the only one of its type in the world still flying. It joined the museum 32 years ago and remains in RAAF livery, celebrating its service with No 10 Squadron in Townsville from 1962 to 1977. Meanwhile, the 566 served with the French Marine (Navy) and operated in the Pacific during atomic bomb tests in the 1980s before it was acquired by HARS in 1989 and flown to Australia.

"These three aircraft are a living tribute to all who flew and maintained these types in their years of long-range maritime reconnaissance service," De La Hunty said. Visitors to Tarmac Days can also view the almost 50 aircraft on display at the museum located at Shellharbour Airport just off the Princes Highway.

Australian Aviation article by Adam Thorne

NAS WHIDBEY READY TO SUPPORT UNMANNED AIRCRAFT (South Whidbey Record 9/18):

The commanding officer of Naval Air Station Whidbey Island told the Oak Harbor business community about the base's capacity to support the future of aviation, the unmanned MQ-4C Triton, and other efforts that may change the Navy's footprint on the island in the next 15 years. Capt. Matthew Arny updated the Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce on the station's efforts to support the new technology, in addition to several other upcoming construction projects, during a meeting held over Zoom Thursday. Arny detailed population growth projections at the base, planned construction projects on the base, upcoming noise monitoring projects and some of the Navy's environmental impacts.

There are currently about 8,600 service members on the base, and 2,100 civilians/full-time contractors, Arny said. Arny added he expects the base to top out at 9,000 service members in 2022. Incoming personnel is linked to the increase in EA-18 Growler operations, but is offset by a decrease in population due to the transition from P-3 Orion aircraft to P-8 Poseidon. The only squadron still using the Orions is a reserve squadron; the other six squadrons have already transitioned.

The station is also now prepared to support the MQ-4C Triton, an unmanned aerial surveillance aircraft, he said. The base was awarded the Tritons in 2017 and the mission control station for the Triton is complete. "We will, some time in the next few years, start running that platform from Whidbey Island, however, it will not land here. It is unmanned it will run from California or Guam and we'll run that mission from here," Arny said. It will take over a lot of the work the EP-3E Aries does now, he added. Though the Triton mission control building is complete, there are still several construction projects in the works.

Multiple buildings to support the increase in Growler presence are planned; Navy officials plan for 36 additional Growlers in all. Three projects could tighten the base's footprint in the next 15 years, he said. Whidbey Apartments, a complex of about 70 living units near Ault Field, will be torn down and moved to the Seaplane Base. A new clinic oriented to the flight line would take some of the burden off of the main one; the main clinic would also be moved to the Seaplane Base in the future. Clover Valley Elementary, home of the Hand-in-Hand Learning Center, will also be recapitalized. The federal government has already committed 80 percent of the funding, Arny said. The school sits on federal property. "If those three things, separately or coincidentally, are recapitalized out of that area,

then we can restore our pattern a little bit tighter,” Arny said. It would “bring some of the noise even more onto the installation and off of the north end of Oak Harbor,” he added.

Arny also updated the business community about the Navy’s upcoming noise monitoring program. The Navy will soon begin to gather noise data from several sites near OLF Coupeville and Ault Field, he said. Data will be collected four times a year during a one-week period. It will be done when OLF Coupeville is active, he said, and the data will be available to the public. Noise monitoring will happen soon and the Navy is working with community leaders to determine where the sites will be, though he did not say when monitoring will occur.

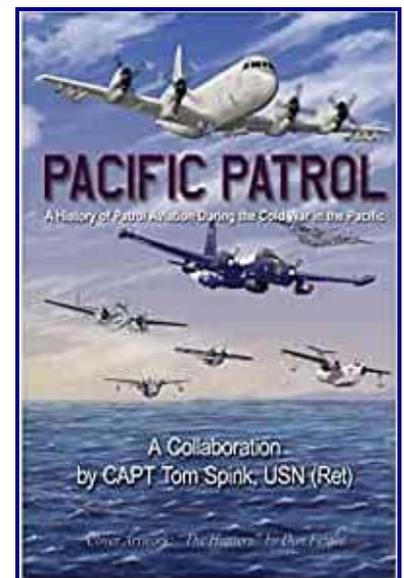
The captain also spoke about some of the Navy’s environmental impacts above and below ground. The Navy is waiting for a record of decision that will come at the end of October about its plan to continue and increase some of its underwater activities. It needed to supply a supplement to the environmental impact study completed in 2015 about the impact of its underwater activities on marine life in order to be permitted to continue them and add a few new ones. Arny reminded the audience that Navy researchers contributed \$2.5 million to research on southern resident killer whales and more than a \$1 million to studying salmon and other fish that the whales depend on. “This job, for me, has been very enlightening,” said Arny of the passion of both Navy researchers and community partners for the environment.

He also updated the audience about the Navy’s work with contaminated wells in both Coupeville and Oak Harbor with a group of chemicals known as PFAS. Several wells have tested positive for the chemicals used by the Navy. The water treatment facility for the contaminated Coupeville wells is complete, and some residents have been taken off the old wells, according to Arny. A few more remain to be completed. Several contaminated wells on Goldie Road in Oak Harbor and two others close to Ault Field will also be hooked up to city water, except for one that will receive a new well.

South Whidbey Record article by Emily Gilbert

RECOMMENDED READING:

“Pacific Patrol” by retired Navy captain Tom Spink (ISBN 979-8670690829) is a brand-new book (published October 2020) about the history of patrol aviation in the Pacific. It is basically a collection of short stories by Navy veterans who served in various west coast VP squadrons from the 1950s to the 1980s. Spink was an NFO who served as a P-3 navigator and TACCO in VP-46, VP-31, and VP-91. As far as I know his book is only available from www.amazon.com. It is well worth reading. Check it out!



ON THE INTERNET:

George Driscoll suggests that you check this P-3 spoof video out - www.avgeekery.com/watch-the-screaming-eagles-crush-top-gun-with-prop-gun/

PARTING SHOTS:



ABOVE: Sean O'Neil re-enlisting an unidentified VP-92 squadron member on board a P-3C Orion in flight sometime during the squadron's time at NAS Brunswick, ME. **BELOW:** Unidentified VP-92 maintainer at an unknown location sometime during the 1990s.





ABOVE: VP-92 maintenance personnel at NAS Roosevelt Roads in Puerto Rico during an annual training period sometime during the late 1990s. **BELOW:** VP-92 plane handlers at Roosevelt Roads.





ABOVE: Acoustic sensor operators Brian Cabral and Pat Kelly on a VP-92 P-3C about 1995. If you have something similar to share please 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”.

