

2021
MARCH

THE VP-45 ASSOCIATION'S
Pelican Post

Newsletter

www.vp45association.org



**Member in The Spotlight:
CDR Jack Barry, USN (ret)**

**Ensign Tepuni
Scores First U-Boat Kill!
Awarded DFC! (pg. 23)**

In This Issue

Cover: "CERTSUB!"

Cover Artwork and Design by Bill Hobgood;
ENS Tepuni attacks German U-Boat with depth bombs.
See the story by Jack Keane on page 23

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From Jack Keane, the Editor:



In this issue of the Pelican Post, we highlight the early days of land-based maritime patrol aviation with the sinking of *U-656* by Ensign William Tepuni as well as Gene Graham’s adventures flying Connies in support of the airborne DEW line over the Atlantic. We would like to thank Stephen Barry, son of the late Jack Barry, for contributing to the “Member in the Spotlight” section of the Pelican Post.

Should you need to for any reason, you can contact us via the website or by sending an email to either of the email addresses listed in the “Contact Information” section just above.”



YOUR ASSOCIATION OFFICERS (2020 - 2022)



Click on pictures below for more biographical info



President

Doug Mitchell was elected to this office in 2012. He was in VP-45 from 1972 to 1975 as an FE. He retired from the Navy in 1994, after 30 years service, as an LDO LCDR. He calls both Florida and Georgia home.

Vice President

Previously Treasurer, Spence Cunningham became VP in 2018. He served as an AW aircrew member in the Squadron from 1982-1987 and retired in 2013 as a Master Chief. He lives in Orange Park, FL.



Secretary

Jack Keane has been our Secretary since 2012. A VMI grad and retired LCDR, he completed his Navy career in 1995 and is recently retired from Johns Hopkins. He was a TACCO in VP-45 from 1982-1985.

Treasurer

Michael Riley assumed Treasurer duties in 2021. He was an Ordnanceman in VP-45 during the 80s and retired as a Chief Petty Officer. He is currently in the process of moving from Florida to Michigan.



WebMaster

Bill Hobgood built the new Association website in 2011 and was elected WebMaster in 2012. He was also a TACCO (Crew 13) and was in VP-45 from 1971 to 1974. A retired CDR, he resides in Lantana, Texas.

“... as a reminder, if you or your loved one get sick, let me know as we have Association Get Well Cards! And please let us know if we lose anyone...we have Association Sympathy Cards too!”

From the Desk of...

Doug Mitchell

President's Report



Well here we are....March 2021, and I'm still your President - of the Greatest Association in the United States Navy! I want to offer a special thanks to all of you who contacted me in the past six months to say hello or just to

let us know how you were doing during the worst Pandemic in over 100 years! And as a reminder, if you or your loved one get sick, let me know as we have Association Get Well Cards! And please let us know if we lose anyone...we have Association Sympathy Cards too!

Since the COVID Vaccine is slowly being administered and we have so many unknowns at this time, I am sorry to say we were not able to get the Jacksonville Reunion back on the schedule in 2021. At the present time, we have a signed contract with the DoubleTree Riverfront by Hilton hotel in downtown Jacksonville for October 2022. Spence Cunningham, VP and Reunion Coordinator, will provide more information as we have

it. So please stay healthy, hang in there with us...and we will have another great reunion as soon as we can!

If you haven't looked at our Association Website lately, check out our new Treasurer [HERE!](#) When Joe Oglesby agreed to replace Spence Cunningham as our Treasurer at the Pensacola Reunion in 2018, he signed on for two years to the next reunion. And as you know, we had to cancel the 2020 Jacksonville Reunion! Michael Riley volunteered to step up as Treasurer, and IAW our By-Laws, I appointed Michael the Treasurer on 29 January at the Jacksonville Vystar Credit Union (see photo below). On behalf of the entire Association, thank you Joe for your service as Treasurer and welcome aboard Michael!

Our Active-Duty Squadron had a very challenging 2020 starting with coming home late after completion of an eight-month



Limu, Emu, and Doug at Treasurer Turnover Meeting.

deployment due to COVID, a shortened at home training plan, and responding to their operational requirements as the Ready Squadron.

During this time however, all their scheduled flights, evaluations, and inspections were completed in the usual Pelican Style with high scores and praise from their evaluators. And most significantly, during 2020 the Squadron qualified many aircrew in their respective positions, advanced a large number of Officer and Enlisted personnel to the next grade, and pinned six Chief Petty Officers on 29 January 2021! Congratulations to all of you!

Once again, please take care of yourselves and please feel free to call or email me at any time!

Sincerely,

Doug "Pooh Bear" Mitchell
678-650-7500 or
poohbearmit@aol.com

FROM THE VP

by: Spence Cunningham



Hello Fellow, Pelicans!

Here we are almost one year into this Pandemic and there are encouraging signs that we are tracking towards having a 2022 Reunion! Specific dates are still being worked out, but we are tracking, nonetheless. The fact that vaccinations are happening, and COVID-19 statistics are showing a downward trend adds to my optimism. Of course, we will continue to monitor as the year progresses and decide if we are a go/no-go for 2022.

That said, I will begin my planning in January. My

intention is to use what I had set up for 2019. To recap, I had a Mayport trip including a ship tour, a day trip to Amelia Island/Fernandina Beach, a Squadron visit including lunch at the Officer's Club and a dinner and a show at the Alhambra Dinner Theatre. There are other activities nearby for those wanting an "on-your-own" plan ... like the St. Johns River Taxi, the Museum of Science and History and the Shops in San Marco by way of a city trolley that stops at the hotel to name a few!

I am grateful to see membership renewals happening! I appreciate you all keeping the faith and maintaining your memberships in the finest Veteran Association out there! Thank you all so much!

Along with that, could I ask a favor? Please try and recruit another Pelican to join! Just one is all I am asking! That would be fantastic if we could make that happen!! Just one!! More would be better, but one would make an awesome difference! Let us know who you are and who you recruit, so we can publicly thank you both! Help us grow! It is vital that we do!

Keep looking to our website [HERE](#) for Reunion updates! Contact me or any of the Officers if there are places to go or things to do that you think our fellow Pelicans would enjoy as events during the Reunion!! I am open to any suggestions you all have! Seriously...let me hear from you!!

That is about all I have! I sincerely pray that you all have had no major health issues with this virus and that you and your families are in great spirits and health! To fellow Pelicans that may have faced challenges, I hope they were not overwhelming, and that all is well. Stay safe, stay healthy and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Jacksonville 2022!

Warmest regards,

Spence Cunningham
VP/Reunion Coordinator
awcmspence@comcast.net

NAVY TRIVIA

“NAVY Coffee”

By: Bill Hobgood

What would we have done during our Navy Years without a hot cup of coffee; or a warm one...or a cold one? Any coffee was always better than none.

Originally, this “Trivia” article was supposed to be something about Navy coffee; but my research really didn’t turn up much that was that particularly entertaining or educational so I decided to present a few of my personal Navy memories that involved coffee. Here we go.

I recall when I was on an admiral’s staff aboard the USS *Independence* in 1977. I was a pretty junior staff officer, so it seemed I got

more than my share of the awful watches...Mid, Morning or one of the Dog watches. Mid-watch (2400-0400) was, for me, the worst and upon manning the TAO or Force Weapon Coordinator’s chair, a hot cup of “joe” was required for a true kickstart. After turnover with the previous guy (or before), I’d head over to that giant ten quart coffee maker in CIC, put my mug under the spigot, pull it down.....and.....NOTHING.



Typical shipboard coffee pot.

Crap! Again?

Directing someone to brew some new coffee was out of the question...would take way too long and I needed coffee now. So, a lot of you will recall doing this, I tilted the giant pot toward me and let the thick, black, old residue, that had been sitting the bottom, sludge itself into my mug. It tasted terrible but contained about four times the caffeine of a regular cup and, so, got the job done.

Another memory about coffee occurred in 1983; I was OpsO in VP-6 and deployed to Cubi Point. One morning, the Commodore (CTF-72) was in town

and I was to brief him on current ASW and surveillance ops in the South China Sea. The skipper was doing the introduction and I was seated next to the XO. All of a sudden the XO lifted his left elbow and caught the bottom of my new, hot styrofoam cup of coffee...drenching my pristine khaki uniform in that steaming liquid from chin to knees.

As an aside, I had been lobbying for a position on the Commodore’s staff in Atsugi and there were two or three other squadron department heads who also wanted the job.

So there I was, with a burned neck and a drenched uniform standing up and turning to address the Commodore and his staff.

The Commodore raised his hand to stop me from talking and said: “Bill, coffee may be the most important meal of the day but wearing it is a bit much. That said, I think you have no “grounds” not to continue with the brief and, besides, I’d like to see how you “expresso” yourself.”

By the way, I did get that job the next tour at CTF-72 and the commodore, CAPT Bobby Farar, never let me forget that incident.

And finally...coffee inflight. As most of you recall, right after setting Condition Three, especially on a zero-dark-thirty flight, the first order of business was getting a hot cup of coffee. On our crew, one of the sensor operators would have the duty to provide coffee to the flight station and the TC and NAV...who were generally pretty busy shortly after departure.

Anyway, in a sea story on our website, I noted that severe turbulence can do strange, and usually awful, things with a cup of joe. If you are interested in reading about this phenomenon, click [HERE](#).

MORNING,
COMMODORE, CARE
FOR SOME COFFEE?



Not the best way to start a VIP briefing.

FROM THE WEBMASTER

By: Bill Hobgood



Wow! What a wild six months it has been since our last Newsletter! And who would have thought this pandemic diaster would last over a year!

Becky and I have fared fairly well and strictly complied with social distancing and masking-up procedures. As a result we haven't been anywhere except the doctor and the grocery...with an occassional trip the the package store. We got our first COVID shot on January 22nd.

We had to cancel a planned trip to Cabo with three other VP-45 Association member couples and, as you all know, we had to cancel the 2020 VP-45 Association reunion in Jacksonville.

Since our first reunion in 1990, thirty years ago, this is the first one we have missed. What a shame.

Keep your fingers crossed that the pandemic is history by October 2022 and that the next reunion (in Jax) is the best ever! We are pretty sure the squadron will not be deployed at that time.

Please note that we have an "Alumni News" section each issue. That section is for you to tell us what YOU are doing; even if you haven't been able to do much due to COVID. Even if you think it would not be interesting, send us a report and send pictures. Do that by clicking on any email link - like the one I have included right below...easy-peesy and quick.

Have any questions for me? Please shoot me an email to: hobgood.bill@gmail.com.



SECRETARY'S PODIUM

By: Jack Keane



Greetings fellow Pelicans! As you are all aware, the 2020 Reunion has been postponed until October 2022 due to the stymied roll-out of the vaccine and coronavirus mutations that just keep coming one after another. Several of our members have experienced COVID-19 firsthand and, luckily, all have made it through the ordeal, albeit some suffer from residual effects and health issues. Let's keep each other in our prayers and reach out to those we haven't heard from in a while, even if by email.

As COVID-19 surged over the holidays, we've all been subjected to domestic travel restrictions ... either self-imposed or by state restrictions. I, for one, am climbing the walls! This is the first year since returning from the Gulf War in 1991 that I have missed a trip to the Lake Tahoe Basin with my "ski klatch".

Many organizations such as ours have suffered significant declines in membership, likely attributable to the fact that they had to cancel their reunions or symposia, events that drive membership. The VP-45 Association has been fortunate in that our membership remains relatively stable. However, I still would like to encourage you all to reach out to former Pelicans who are not members and strongly urge them to join - especially squadron members from the 1990s to the present. Let's all try to bring in at least one new member in time for them to join us in Jacksonville in October 2022. And for those of you who are members, don't forget to renew your dues by the end of June and provide us with your birthdates so that we can verify lifetime membership when the time comes.

We're always looking for your comments on how we can make the "Pelican Post" better. Just send your comments to me and I'll ensure they're included in the "Mail Bag" section. Stay safe, and stay negative!

Comment for the "Mail Bag" section? Click [HERE](#)

SEA STORIES

A Selection From Our Website "Sea Story" Page

A Career P-3 Pilot Remembers His First (non-VP) Tour

By: CAPT Gene Graham

I am a VP guy! And while I did three operational tours in VP, including a department head tour with the Pelicans and a command tour in JAX, my first flying tour, right out of flight training was in a VW squadron. Not the "hurricane hunters" VW but the "airborne early warning" VW. VW-11 to be exact. Our squadron tail letters were MIKE JULIETT.

When I reported aboard as a young LTJG, VW-11 was flying aircraft that the Navy designated WV-2s...better known as the Constellation or "Connie;" and they were permanently deployed out of Argentina, Newfoundland. The WV2 was a big aircraft carrying a crew of 22 and had a total of 11 bunks; so if you were not flying you could catch up on some sack time. The galley area had a convection oven that was



A beautiful aircraft, here is a VW-11 "Connie" in an alternate paint scheme.

large enough to fit a turkey in. It was the only Navy plane I flew that had actually been designed with crew comfort in mind.

You had to have a minimum of 2000 hours pilot time and a green card to be qualified as PPC for an operational mission. This was 1960, so almost all the PPCs were WW-II experienced pilots. When I arrived in June of that year, there were more 05s than there were 01s with a total of 165 officers. There were so many officers, I was the ninth Assistant Schedules Officer.



The author as a young flight student circa 1959.

So what did VW-11 do? We flew the "Barrier Force" missions. We were flying the seaward extension of the Distant Early Warning or DEW line. 24 hours a day, seven days a week...a Connie took off out of Argentina every three hours and would head six hours towards the Azores, turn around and fly back to Newfoundland. This was serious Cold War stuff. The mission was to detect Russian bombers coming over the North Pole to attack the US. Every aircraft we detected that did not have an IFF code displayed was reported via Flash precedence traffic to NORAD. The Atlantic Fleet had a total of three VW squadrons with a total of 36 aircraft to meet this mission. There was only one squadron like us in the west coast Navy, but it was huge (400+ officers) and based out of Barbers Point.

By its mere existence, the Atlantic Barrier served as a deterrent against hostile attack by eliminating the element of surprise from any potential aggressor's

plans of attack.

At some point, it was determined that we could cover the same mission with fewer airplanes (2 squadrons vice 3) and maintain the same detection probability



Not a small aircraft, the WV-2 sports some serious radar and other electronic hardware.

by moving the operation further north. So, on July 1, 1961, Keflavik Air Force Base became Naval Air Station, Keflavik and that is where VW-11 deployed. Our rotation was two weeks in Kef and six weeks in Argentina. During the two weeks in Kef, you would fly eight or nine 12 hour missions before going home.

So there I was...now a copilot on a crew with a PPC, co-pilot and three other pilots (3P, 4P and 5P). Our crew was scheduled to spend the Christmas and New Year holidays in Kef and we were scheduled to fly December 23, taking off about 2330. During the brief we were told that a major front was scheduled to arrive in Kef around noon and we would probably be called home early so that we would be on the ground right before it arrived. We took off with a full fuel load (about 18 hours) and 300 feet up we entered the soup. Worse, we immediately starting picking up ice. With all the anti-icing boots operating, we climbed to altitude and started our racetrack pattern still in the clouds and occasionally in and out of light to moderate turbulence. Additionally, we had St Elmo's Fire dancing around on the windshield.

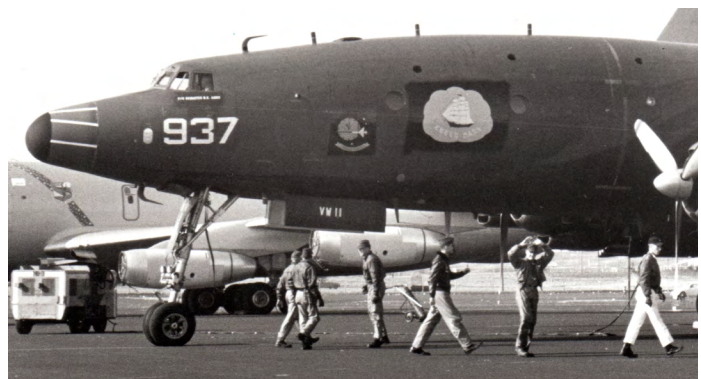
As expected, we were radioed to return to Kef early. When we arrived overhead, we were told not to descend because the front had already arrived and it was snowing so hard they could not keep the runway clear. We asked for and received clearance to our alternate, which was Prestwick, Scotland. We

turned southeast and descended to FL055 (5500ft). That probably seems low for a transit but with a full-bag of fuel, crew, a ton of heavy radar and other electronic equipment, and all the drag hanging out in the breeze, the WV-2 was limited to about FL095.

On this SE heading we were flying parallel with the front. The turbulence increased to moderate; St Elmo's Fire was building up so bad it was almost impossible to use the radios and the anti-icing was on continually. After ten minutes, the Navigator (the 3P) came running to the cockpit and said we had a head wind of 130 knots and our ground speed had accordingly dropped to 85 knots. At that ground speed, we did not have enough fuel to get us to the Shetland Islands, much less, Prestwick. The PPC ran back to the NAV table to recompute and confirm and the 3P got in the left seat.

When the 3P sat down next to me, I told him to call Iceland Airways and get us a higher altitude. The turbulence had now increased to severe and it was so bad he could not hold the mike to his mouth to get the request out. Frustration mounting, I reached to find my mike but when I looked back at the attitude indicator, we were rolling starboard thru 60 degrees. So I dropped my mike and went back to flying. Later, we finally had about fifteen seconds where the turbulence wasn't so bad and he was able to get the request for a higher altitude out before we were back in severe turbulence. Iceland airways came back with clearance to FL095. When we leveled out after the climb, the turbulence was still pretty bad but our ground speed had increased to 130knots. With that improvement we could make it Prestwick.

We descended in the soup, broke out at about 1000ft over the field and landed with no further problems.



VW-11 crewmembers manning up for a mission. LT Gene Graham is third from the left.

Total time airborne was 12.4 hours and, as we were taxing in, I noted we had only 30 minutes fuel remaining. Whew!

After that flight, whenever anyone came up to me to describe a rough flight they had flown, and wanted to know if it was severe turbulence, my answer was always, "if it is severe, you won't have to ask anyone, YOU WILL KNOW!"

Since we had landed further east, it was now Sunday, 1630 local time on Christmas Eve. The officers mess was closed, the enlisted dining facility was closed and everything in town was closed. It was cold and dreary both outside and inside. The steam heat in the rooms was not working well, so we raided the gedunk machine and, finding extra covers, we went to sleep.



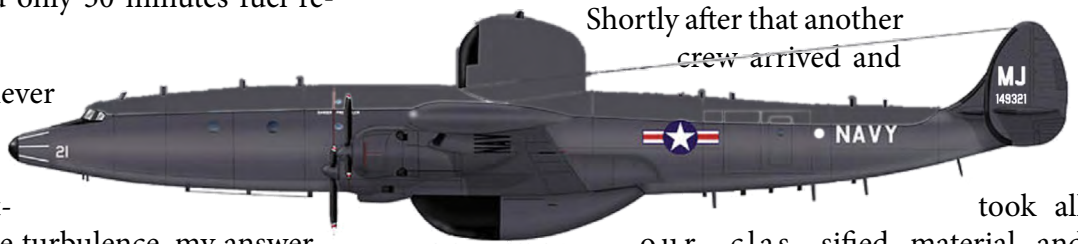
LT Graham, and his crew, land back at Agentia.

About 2130 I was awakened for a phone call. Because Kef was still closed due

of the storm, the squadron wanted us airborne at 0800 local time for a mission. After informing base ops of our takeoff time, we were told nothing would be opened at that hour, it being Christmas Day. We made arrangements for a 0500 wake up call and went back to sleep. The next morning the flight galley was able to come up with several dozen eggs, stale bread and cans of potatoes. With that we were back in air at 0800 local.

First things first. All 22 of us were ravenously hungry so we immediately started to cook-up eggs, potatoes and toast with the cabin heat increased so that we could thaw out. The mission back was operational but the front had moved further east so we flew most of the flight in the soup - but with only light turbulence. We had been the last plane to take off before the storm and were the first to land. We landed back in Kef after 12.7 hours flight time about 1830 local time on Christmas Day; dirty, still hungry and not in a very good mood. There was no transportation waiting so the PPC and I loudly chewed out the Duty Officer; so bad, I guess, that the CDO had to be

called to get us under control.



took all our classified material and crypto to turn in, they put our aircraft to bed and we were put in transportation and taken away, bitching the whole time. They took us to the enlisted dining facility where we were met by all the chiefs and warrant officers of the EDF who had a full hot Christmas dinner waiting. They had heard about our crew and the last 36 hours and volunteered to wait for us. You never know when or where your next blessing will come from, just be thankful!

After a full meal, a hot shower, I went to bed and slept for 15 hours.



About the author of this Sea Story:

CAPT Gene Graham received his wings in *Airborne Early Warning Squadron* February 1960. After *ELEVEN* logo the events in this story, he was ordered to VP-18. Later he was the Operations Officer in VP-45 in the early to mid-70's, commanded VP-24 and finished his career as Executive Assistant and Senior Naval Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management). He was also President of the VP-45 Association 2006-2008. He currently lives in Fairhope, Alabama with his wife Jerry.



CAPT Gene Graham is awarded the Legion of Merit Medal shortly before his retirement from the Navy.



ASSOCIATION MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT



CDR M. “Jack” Barry, USN (ret)

The son of Laura Gourley Barry, Jack Barry was born November 10th, 1929...right at the beginning of the Great Depression. They lived in Nashua, New Hampshire where his mother was a Registered Nurse working in both the Nashua Hospital and local nursing home

Jack graduated from Nashua High School in 1947. He played “Ward Ball” for Ward 6, which was a community league baseball organization named for different wards in the city. He also played on the high school tennis team.



Young Jack Barry as an Ensign just after finishing flight training in 1955.

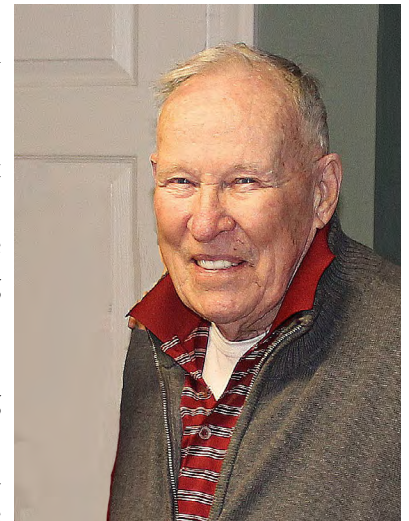
His mother and grandmother had a cottage at Beaver Lake near Derry, NH. and they would go there in the summer; and he would hang out at the YMCA where he became proficient at both ping pong and pool.

He had several summer jobs growing up including being an usher for two movie theaters in Nashua. While there, he befriended Don Newcombe and Roy Campanella of the Brooklyn Dodgers. The Dodgers were playing games in Nashua to gauge

fan reaction to African-American players joining the Major Leagues. They were staying nearby at the Laton Hotel and he would let them in the theater for free as they claimed to not have the money to pay admission.

He also lifeguarded at a natural swimming hole called Fields Grove, installed rooftop antennas for Jerry’s Television and trimmed leather heels in a shoe factory for \$.01 per heel - and that job pretty much convinced him to go to college.

He went to Northeastern University in Boston, MA and majored in Political Science; it was here he met his future wife, Joyce Marie Kelley of Cambridge, MA. He initially desired a career in education, as a teacher, but later decided to join the Navy. OCS and NAVCAD flight training followed and he was commissioned an Ensign, designated a Naval Aviator and awarded his “Wings of Gold” in February of 1955. Jack and Joyce married that same month and they proceeded to the Panama Canal Zone for two years where Jack’s first squadron assignment was at Coco Solo Naval Air Station flying the new P5M “Marlin” Seaplanes with the Pelicans of VP-45.



CDR Jack Barry, USN (ret) in 2015.



ENS Barry with his new bride, Joyce, circa 1955.



Jack gives a "thumb's up" after returning from his first Navy solo flight.

It was while in Coco Solo that VP-45 set the endurance record for the longest flight in a P5M. It was an amazingly 21.8 flight hours and was completed on Jan 12th, 1956. Along with Jack, one of our Association's founders, CAPT Charlie Caldwell was also on that record breaking flight crew (see below).



Top Row LtoR: LTJG Bob Chase, LTJG Charlie Caldwell and LTJG Jack Barry. Others unknown.

The Squadron later changed homeport from Panama to Bermuda where they lived for a year and Jack and Joyce's first son, Stephen, was born. Since the squadron had recently moved and was busy with new assignments, there had not been much time to socialize and celebrate. With Steve's birth, an impromptu celebration took place for the entire squadron and was deemed such a "success" that the Skipper, CDR Pollard, gave Jack's crew liberty for the entire next day!

It was also during this tour that Jack earned the nickname "Zero-Zero Barry" for a no visibility landing in the fog in Willoughby Bay, NAS Norfolk. Jack and his co-pilot, Phil Yosway, were to fly a sick P5M to Norfolk for some engine work. The entire East Coast was socked in with fog and after several radar approaches were attempted in Norfolk, without making a visual on the seadrome, an attempt was made at Elizabeth City. But there, at 200ft, they realized the lights below were not the green lights of the seadrome but lights from cars on a highway!

Lacking confidence in another ASR approach there, they returned to NAS Norfolk with low fuel and, with radar bearings from the tower, proceeded to land dead center in Willoughby Bay. It took 30 minutes for the crash boat to find them in the fog. Once back on shore, there were two OD's on duty



LT Barry returns to active duty.

that night. One wanted to write them up for recklessness and the other wanted to cite them for heroism. They agreed to do neither and the flight was simply recorded as another successful landing.

After that tour, Jack left the Navy for three years and flew for Eastern Airlines and then, with his family, including a second son, Mark, he decided he missed the challenge and excitement of Naval Aviation and returned to active duty in 1961.

He was sent to Pensacola for a shore tour and assigned to US Naval Pre-Flight School, as an instructor. Following Pensacola, he was assigned to Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, MD and VP-44 flying what turned out to be, his favorite plane, the brand new P3 Lockheed Orion. About this time, Joyce and Jack added daughter Liane in 1964.



Jack and Joyce with children (L-R) Steve, Liane and Mark, circa 1965.

The following years he attended Marine Corps Command and Staff College at

Quantico, VA and Anti-Submarine Warfare Atlantic School in Norfolk before becoming the Communications Officer on the USS *Essex*, CVS-9. While on tour aboard the aircraft carrier, the "Fightin'est Ship in the Fleet" was decommissioned, and Jack logged the 145,315th and final landing on *Essex* in a C-1A on February 1, 1969.



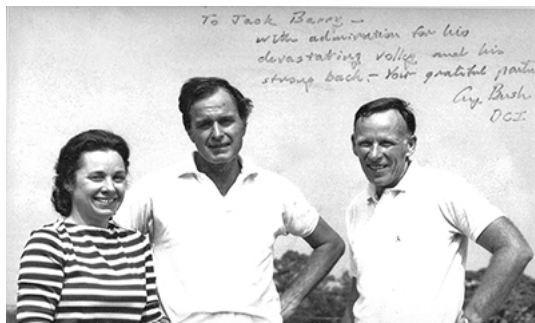
The USS Essex (CVS-9). this photo taken in the late 1960s while Jack was aboard.

This was followed by assignment to the Chief of Naval Air Advanced Training in Corpus Christi, Texas as Public Affairs Officer. Later, returning to Norfolk, Jack served as Public Affairs Officer for Commander Naval Air Force Atlantic. Jack's final Navy tour before retirement, was Deputy Public Affairs Officer for the Supreme Allied Command, Atlantic.

Over his career, Jack had been certified as a single engine and multi-engine land and sea pilot flying nineteen types of military and civilian aircraft.

After retiring from the U.S. Navy in 1980, Jack was the Operations Manager at the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce as well as being the Director of the International Azalea Festival for five years. In 1985, he became Director of Marketing at DePaul Hospital until retiring in 1990.

As a member of the Association of Naval Aviation, Jack served on the Activities Committee for the First Annual Convention in 1976 and held in Virginia Beach. He invited CIA director and WWII US Naval Aviator, George HW Bush to be the Keynote Speaker. Bush played tennis so Jack set up a tennis tour-



Joyce and Jack with, then CIA Director, George Bush.

ament at the Virginia Beach Racquet Club. Bush asked Jack to be his doubles partner and they ended up winning the tournament.

Jack became a member of the Navy League of the

United States serving as President of the Hampton Roads Council, Virginia State President and Mid-Atlantic Regional President. He also served as a National Director for over twenty years and in 2006 was inducted into the Navy League National Hall of Fame.

His interest in history, particularly the role of the U.S. Navy in Hampton Roads, prompted his joining the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation where he was a charter member. This Foundation is a support organization for the Hampton Roads Naval Mu-



Joyce & Jack at Pensacola Beach August 2001.

seum. For over twenty years he served in various positions on the Board of Directors including serving as President for two years. As part of his role here, he was instrumental in securing artifacts from the USS Essex and donating them to the Naval Air Museum in Pensacola where they are still on display.

“... it was the Navy and his first squadron, VP-45, that Jack held dearest from his career. He loved to share his stories and right up until his passing could still recall and recite the take-off check-list for his P5M.”

In 1996, Jack and Joyce organized and led the VP-45 Reunion Committee that brought the reunion to the Virginia Beach Convention Center. It was a huge success, highlighted by eight former CO's and members from 38 states in attendance. And despite a minor traffic accident with a trolley and a USMC vehicle, all the events went off as planned. This clearly was a labor of love and they talked about it for years.

Jack served as President of his neighborhood Civic League and had been a member of the historic Old Donation Episcopal Church for over fifty years, serving on the Vestry as well as Senior Warden.

Jack enjoyed life to the fullest with a particular zest



2012: Joyce and Jack with their three kids - (L-R) Liane, Mark and Steve.

for tennis and golf. Most of all he enjoyed being with his devoted wife Joyce and with their three children and their families. Jack and Joyce spent many years of retirement traveling around our country enjoying the National Parks and various communities on their trips. Participating in the Elderhostel Programs throughout the country was educational and exciting while making new friends.

But it was the Navy and his first squadron, VP-45 that Jack held dearest from his career. He kept regular contact with many of his shipmates and visited many when he could. He loved to share his stories and right up until his passing could still recall and recite the take-off procedures for his P5M.



Jack with daughter Liane in 2017.

Editor's Note: Jack passed away last August. Please see Jack's Obituary in the "In Memoriam" section.

The Editors also wish to thank and credit Stephen Barry in the creation of this "Member In The Spotlight" article. He was assisted in this outstanding effort by his brother Mark Barry and his sister, Liane Long (Barry) and their respective families.



A Special Report This Just In

Later this year, The Blue Angels will start flying F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet fighters, replacing the legacy F/A-18 Hornet fighter jets that the flight demonstration team has flown for 34 years. Think about that! 34 YEARS! The move to the Super Hornet will mark the first time the elite Navy and Marine Corps demonstration team has changed aircraft since it moved from the cute little A-4F Skyhawk II to the macho Hornet back in 1986.



The Navy made the decision to transition the Blue Angels to the Super Hornet in 2018 and all 18 jets for the team will be very early production models that are some of the oldest in the fleet.

In addition to being the Super Hornet's first show season with the team, 2021 will mark the Blue Angels' 75th anniversary. Since its formation, the team has flown in front of more than 500 million spectators around the world as "ambassadors of goodwill."

The Blue Angels plan to kick off their first air show in 2021 at Lakeland, Florida, as part of the Sun 'n Fun Aerospace Expo April 13-18, and are scheduled to finish out the season at the NAS Pensacola Homecoming Air Show in November. Altogether, the Blue Angels are slated to appear at a total of 30 locations in 2021 for their 75th season.

The "Super" Hornet looks like the original F-18 but is 20% larger, heavier, can carry more fuel and, as a result, has greater endurance and range, and can carry a more potent weapons loadout. It also comes in both single seat and tandem seat versions.

Check out this video of the Blues flying their new Super Hornets. Copy to your browser: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tjql5Whzer4>

ALUMNI NEWS

This section can contain just about anything that deals with our members and their activities by themselves or with other members. The Editor might choose to publish your input in the "Mailbag" instead of here. Regardless, tell us what you are doing and include pictures!! Ed.

Joe and Bonnie Brundage were recently married in Florida. Congratulations!!



Joe and Bonnie Brundage



Jack McCourt with the Monterey Gang circa '84.
See text top right.

Jack McCourt provided some entertainment with a photo of he and some buddies back in 1984 while students in the Operations Research curriculum at the Naval Postgraduate School. Tell me, with that mustache, does he remind you of anyone infamous during the '80s?

Tom Rau provided the below pics of his new "baby"



- both of the beautiful exterior and full digital interior displays. Tom and Peg report all is well in St Augustine, although they lost family members due to COVID.

Hey, Doc!!

Your Pelican Buddies want to know what the heck you've been up to!

Tell 'em by shooting an email to the Newsletter editor. All ya gotta do is...

CLICK HERE

SQUADRON & COMMUNITY NEWS

UK's Poseidon MRA1 Tracks Russian Patrol Vessel In 1st Operation Mission

By: Xavier Vasseur, www.navalnews.com

In August 2020, a P-8A Poseidon from 120 Squadron based at Kinloss Barracks demonstrated its speed and readiness by completing a prolonged overwatch



RAF P-8A Poseidon and Typhoon overfly Vasily Bykov over the North Sea. RAF picture

of the Russian patrol vessel, *Vasily Bykov*, as it passed through the North Sea. It did so with support from Typhoon fighters, based at RAF Lossiemouth and the VIP Voyager refueling aircraft, stationed at RAF Brize Norton.

The Poseidon's operational debut follows shortly after the Prime Minister's visit to Kinloss Barracks last month and heralds a significant development in the UK's Maritime offensive and defensive capabilities. The P-8 offers a potent blend of tracking options and associated weapons able to find surface and sub-surface vessels, once more allowing the RAF to complete effective joint maritime operations with the Royal Navy.

Admiral Discusses Locating Submarine Search Squadron in Iceland

By: Iona Rangeley-Wilson, www.grapevine.is

Robert Burke, Admiral and Commander of the US Navy in Europe and Africa, discussed in an interview the possibility of locating a submarine search squadron in Iceland.

The purpose of the squadron would be to monitor the activities of Russian submarines in the North Atlantic, and it would consist of P-8A Poseidons. It could also be used to participate in port construction for search and rescue in East Iceland.

Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir has previously ruled out the possibility of US troops being permanently located in Iceland, and there has been no permanent US force in Iceland since 2006.

However, an increase in Russian activity in the North Sea seems to have raised US interest in Iceland. "The capabilities of the Russian submarine fleet have become very high," said Burke. "Within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, this is an urgent issue."

Fourth new P-8 Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft Named

By: George Allison, UK Defence Journal

The fourth Royal Air Force Poseidon MRA1 maritime patrol aircraft has been named 'Spirit of Reykjavik' in honor of the role played by the Icelandic capital and its people in enabling the Allied victory

during the Battle of the Atlantic. The aircraft arrived in Lossiemouth in early November 2020. The first three Poseidon aircraft have been named “Pride of Moray”, “City of Elgin” and “Terence Bulloch DSO DFC”.

US Navy Sub Hunters to be Based in Bermuda 25 Years After the NAS Shut Down

By: Sarah Lagan, The Royal Gazette, 18 November 2020

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.”

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 organized by the US Naval Institute and the Center 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.”

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.

VP-45 Succeeding Through Adversity

By VP-45 Public Affairs

When the “World Famous Pelicans” of VP-45, stationed in NAS Jacksonville, FL, returned home in



Maintainers of VP-45, replace an engine on a P-8A.

June 2020 from an eight-and-a-half-month deployment, they found themselves in a new environment, one primarily dominated by COVID-19 restrictions. Life had changed dramatically from when VP-45 left in October 2019. Yet despite the new challenges and work environment due to COVID-19, the Pelicans, led by Commanding Officer Charles A. Larwood III, have found a way to not only get the job done but set new milestones along the way.

It has been an all hands effort from everyone within the squadron particularly the medical team, maintenance crews, and aircrew that help the operations and missions run smoothly. No group has been more crucial to that success than the Pelican medical team. They have been the backbone of the squadron, ensuring everyone is healthy and prepared when called upon to execute their job.

VP-45 Flight Surgeon Robert Crutcher was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal for his meritorious service and help in not only keeping the sailors of VP-45 healthy while on deployment but also assuring a safe return home. Day to day operations continue to run efficiently due to his ongoing effort.

Since returning from deployment in June, the maintenance team has hit the ground running. As of September 2020, they have logged over 7,350 maintenance hours and completed over 4,105 maintenance actions. Some of these actions include replacing an entire engine, 13 tire changes, 75 technical directives, and several SMI's. The hard work of the maintenance team has allowed the Pelicans to maximize training flights and operate on station at the highest level.

Along with the high performance of the maintenance team, the aircrew training has been nothing short of inspiring. Just in the last two months alone, the Pilot, Naval Flight Officer and Aircrew training track have completed over 214 upgrading events combined. This is 11% more than the targeted goal of 193. Along with the upgrading events, the Pelicans have flown well over 1000 hours since their return from deployment. The sky is truly the limit for the Pelicans of VP-45.

VP-45 Sidney Smith Award Recipient

By: VP-45 Public Affairs

Patrol Squadron FOUR FIVE, stationed at NAS Jacksonville, FL, awarded AME1 Jamichael Semien the Sidney Smith Award, for his outstanding embodiment of leadership and mentorship to those within the squadron.

The award is in honor of AWCS Sidney L. Smith Jr., a former Senior Chief at VP-45. Senior Chief Smith was born on 10 March 1972 in Lafayette, LA. His naval career started at NTC Orlando Recruit Training September 1990. From there he became an Aviation Warfare Systems Operator and joined the VP community. His 18 years of faithful service ended in August 2008. Senior Chief Smith was a talented leader,

trainer, and mentor to all Sailors. His impact will be felt throughout the VP community for many years to come.

The VP-45 CPO Mess desired to provide a lasting memorial to his leadership and established the AWCS Sidney L. Smith Jr. Leadership Award. This award is presented annually to an E-6 and below Sailor who exhibits the leadership and mentoring traits exhibited by Senior Chief Smith during his Naval career.



CDR Charles A. Larwood, Commanding Officer of Patrol Squadron (VP) 45, presents AME1 Jamichael Semien of VP-45, with the Sidney Smith Award.

AME1 Semien is from Beaumont, TX and checked into VP-45 in February of 2018. He began his time in the squadron as the Lead Petty Officer (LPO) for the Aviation Structural Mechanics. Shortly thereafter, AME1 Semien transitioned to maintenance control, where he earned his Safe-for Flight qualification. Then, last fall he checked into the line division where he currently works daily to help service, launch, and recover aircraft.

Fellow sailor AM2 Martin said, "AME1 Semien's leadership is very constructive. He is a hard charger who leads from the front. Every day he is out on the line supporting his junior Sailors leading by example."

Prior to his time at VP-45, AME1 Semien was stationed at NAS Pensacola and worked with the Navy's Blue Angels. AME1 Semien stated his future goals are to be selected for Chief Petty Officer, become P-8A Engine Turn Qualified, and become a full systems Quality Assurance Representative, while continuing to mentor and mold sailors along the way!

TREASURER'S TWO CENTS

By: Joe Olgesby



Fellow Pelicans; by the time you read this I will have turned over my duties as your Treasurer to Michael Riley after serving for just over two years.

And, I just wanted to take a moment to express my admiration for my fellow Officers that are your Association Leaders. You could not ask for a more dedicated group of professionals that have unselfishly volunteered their time to serve you.

I believe our association is a model for all Navy Associations due to our exceptional leadership. It is so regrettable that we were not able to have our normal biennial reunion in 2020 due to the

Pandemic. But, I remain hopeful that we will be able to schedule one in the near future. I certainly plan to be there when we do have one, and I hope to see you all there as well.

It was a pleasure to serve as your Treasurer and I am confident that Michael will do an exceptional job for you in the future.

As you can see in the numbers, we had more money going out this period than we did coming in. Therefore, we had a negative net income figure and a reduced total cash assets number. That situation will improve next period as we receive dues payments for 2020. I hope to see you all soon.

And Introducing Your New Treasurer:

Michael Riley!

It's an honor to be your new Treasurer!

For those of you know don't know me, I was an AOAN when I checked aboard VP-45 and an AO1 when I left. I can tell you my years in VP-45 were some of the best in my life. I met friends that are still as close as brothers today.

I've been to reunions and talked with some who were in VP-45 when I was a youngster not even in grade school, and even before I was born. However, after hearing their stories, it was quite clear regardless of when we served, the bond is strong because we served in VP-45 and the United States Navy...and belong to this great Association. We are brothers and sisters and it is an absolute pleasure to be selected as VP-45 Treasurer.

I will strive to be as good as those who have come before me! Thank you, Joe. I'm sure I will have questions.

I look forward to meeting everyone and am excited about the 2022 reunion.

Michael Riley, VP-45 Association Treasurer



PATRON FOUR FIVE ASSOCIATION TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

All Funds	30 June 2020	\$29,475.09
Income:		
Dues	\$262.69	
Interest	14.23	
Misc/Refunds	0.00	
Total Income	\$276.92	
Expenses:		
Printing/Postage	\$1,360.00	
2020 Reunion Exp	500.00	
Taxes/Corp Fees	235.00	
Website Fees	0.00	
Total Expenses	\$2,095.00	
Net Income		-\$1,818.00
Total Cash Assets	31 Dec 2020	<u>\$27,657.01</u>

MAILBAG

Hey Jack!
Another gorgeous effort! Launch it!
Scott Kelly

Hey Jack!
Very nice job with this newsletter! You are doing a great job keeping all of us linked.
Gary Moore

Hey Jack!
Just realized after looking at today's copy of another GREAT Pelican Post that I had neglected to send my change of address. We moved up to Durham, NC into a CCRC last year. Hope this finds you well on the road to recovery and you and your family healthy. Keep up the wonderful work on our great VP-45 organization and thanks much for all your hard work.
Don Hill, Pilot, 61 to 64

Hey Jack!
Fantastic newsletter!
Mike Riley

Hey Jack!
Great issue! This gets saved!
Randy Hotton

Hey Jack!
As usual, it is Outstanding!! I certainly appreciate ALL that you do for the Association!!



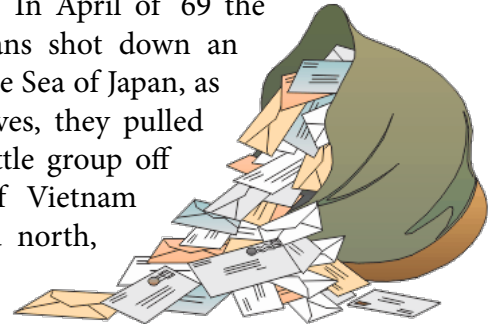
Cover of our last Newsletter.
(Click it to read it).

Thanks for all,
Dick Gray

Hey Jack!
First, thank you for the publicity, excellent Pelican Post (was around when they tried to change it to Red Darters) oh well.

The Market Time article brought back many

memories. Did get to fly with Skipper Sanders a couple of times, flew the P-3 to its absolute limits most of the time, he was PPC when we spotted two Foxtrots off the coast of Vietnam. (Story goes with that experience). I too had mini det to Guam, but for a different reason than the one in the Post. In April of '69 the North Koreans shot down an EC-121 in the Sea of Japan, as memory serves, they pulled an entire battle group off the coast of Vietnam and steamed north, we flew outer screen ASW for that transit.



So many stories, so little time, do remember being Ready 1 in Sangley, getting launched to Clark to pick up one or more Admirals, taking on a full load and heading to an Air Base just outside of Seoul, seemed like the middle of winter, we were in Summer Flight suits, had a snow ball fight on the ramp while refueling and was off to Japan before returning to Sangley.

Have emailed Jim Compton and never heard back, do hope he is doing well.

Thank you for all you do!
Dick Fickling

Hey Jack!
13 October 2020. Last year my oldest brother C.H. Amme III ("Skip") texted me and said he was contacted by an old friend who returned a watch to him.

My brother was given the watch by my dad many years ago, but he seemed to have no interest in it, and it was in a box of stuff he was going to throw away. A friend was over and Skip said he could have anything he wanted out of the box and he took the watch, simply because it was gold and he did not think it should be thrown away.

Over 40 years later this person tracked down Skip

and returned it. Skip showed me the watch and when I saw the inscription, I was awestruck. My dad was presented the watch by the personnel of



The watch given to the first CO of VP-45 by the squadron. We wonder if anyone went to captain's mast for misspelling the engraved word "personnel."

VP 45 on October 13th, 1943, the 168th anniversary of the USN, exactly 77 years ago today and the day before his birthday (tomorrow would have been his 107th birthday).

This would have been on Attu during the height of the Aleutian Campaign. Subsequently, my brother gave me the watch. I just wanted to share this with you as a bit of VP-45 history. I treasure this artifact of history and believe it or not, it still works all these years later. I am going to try and get an original wrist band to restore it a bit more.

I was so surprised when I saw the watch there was actual physical documentation about my father being the Commander of VP-45. I remember thinking it odd on why they gave it to him inscribed the day before his birthday, but it became clear only today when I saw a posting on the 245th Anniversary of the USN and the date "clicked in my head" and I pulled the watch out and double-checked the date.

Now it makes more sense.

I am extremely proud of his service and the gesture of the personnel of VP-45 to present him the watch on the anniversary of the USN in 1943.

Best,
Brian Amme

Hey Jack!

11 September 2020: I just came in and turned on my laptop while Victoria is getting the table ready for a snack. John's Daughter emailed me with a photo of John (see pic below right)...she got to see him today for the first time since March!

Also, Claire Ingber says she loves the Pelican Post! And when she is finished reading it, she takes it to her local American Legion so "the boys" can read the nice articles.

Doug Mitchell

Hey Jack (et al)!

Many thanks to each of you men individually and collectively for the superb work on our Newsletter & Roster, again. It's beautiful and I truly appreciate your labors of love.

Thank you,
Jay Thomas

Hey Jack!

Wanted to share a couple of sea stories with you.

In September 1965, LN-6 and Crew 6 had been on patrol out of Adak, Alaska and was returning to base at about 18,000 feet. The returning flight started out with a beautiful and exciting view of the Aurora Borealis, but within an hour the weather changed and we were flying in a severe thunderstorm.

The weather was highly charged and St. Elmo's Fire



John Bollinger

appeared on the center portion of the windshield. At some point, the plane was struck by lightning, the sky lit up like daytime, and the aircraft shuttered. There was no apparent damage to the aircraft, but we reduced the power levers to reduce airspeed as a precautionary move.

Upon arriving at Adak, we inspected the aircraft. The radome lightning arrester, built in the radome, had performed its job perfectly. It had dissipated the lightning charge, but in the process the radome had split from top to bottom, but had enough strength to stay together. No other damage was found on the aircraft. Since no spare radomes were available in Adak, radomes were used from other aircraft to keep the plane operational until a new one arrived.

The second tale also happened in Adak in late 1965.

Crew 6 was the duty crew and for some reason LN-6 had to be relocated on the parking ramp. I was the plane director, with brake rider and all positions covered. The tractor used to move the aircraft had four-wheel steering with an enclosed cab to keep the driver out of the weather. In the process of parking

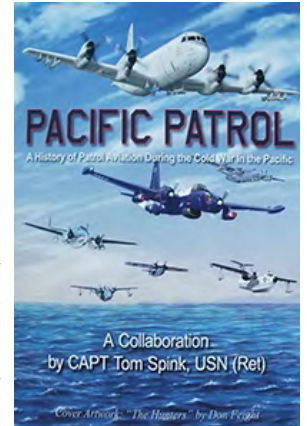
the aircraft in the proper location the driver made a couple of back-and-forth adjustments.

The driver managed to position the tractor in such a way that the cab crushed the right side of the radome. The four-wheel steering had allowed the tractor cab to be placed in an unusual angle and cause the damage. This was the second radome to be destroyed while installed on LN-6.

Carl Sandlin
ADRC-FE, LN-6

Hey Jack!

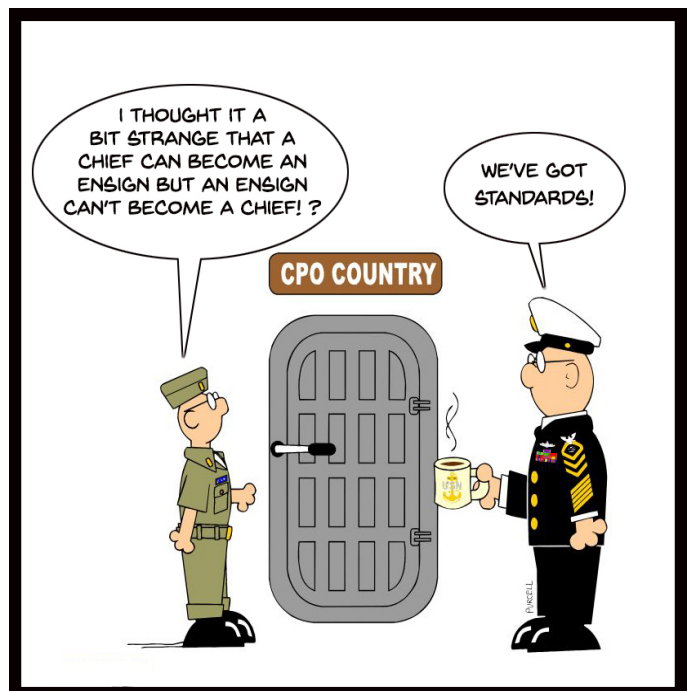
Just a quick note to tell you about a book that Tom Spink, of Moffett Museum fame, has published entitled "Pacific Patrol", available on Amazon. The book is almost 500 pages and has over 400 photos.



This is the best book I have seen containing in-depth stories by 18 key VP leaders and I thought our Association membership should be aware of his new book which is hot off the press.

Regards,
Don Stanton

Click Here to Send a "Mail Bag" Letter to:
"Hey Jack!"



BACK IN THE DAY

William Tepuni and the Sinking of U-656

by: Jack Keane

The bulk of this story of William Tepuni in this *Pelican Post* is confined to his success in the early part of 1942 when the war news was bleak and America in search of a hero. I initially researched Tepuni to understand who he was and why VP-30 named Tepuni Hall after him, a building in which many of us attended classes.

Tepuni was born in San Francisco, CA on 30 October 1915. On 31 July 1939, he and his older brother, Thomas, quit college and enlisted in the Naval Aviation Cadet program at Alameda, CA. From there, they went to Pensacola, FL and in 1940, commissioned Ensigns in the Naval Reserve and awarded



P2Y3 Ranger Similar to the One Tepuni Flew with VP-44

their wings. Graduating first in his class, William was assigned to VP-44 at Sand Island, WA flying the P2Y3 Ranger. In January 1941, the squadron was redesignated VP-61 and transferred to Alameda. In April, the squadron relocated to Pensacola where aircrew qualified in four different variants of the PBV Catalina. Three months later, now in Norfolk, the squadron was redesignated VP-82 and sent to Floyd Bennett Field, NY for training in anti-submarine warfare tactics.

In the autumn of 1941, the squadron accepted twenty aircraft originally destined for British Lend Lease and underwent training in the Lockheed PBO-1 Hudson. Previously, the Navy was only allowed to operate flying boats, float planes, and carrier-based aircraft. This decision made VP-82 the Navy's first

land-based patrol squadron and started Lockheed on its path of being the Navy's primary source of maritime patrol aircraft.



Typical German Type VIIC U-Boat

On 17 September 1941, the German Type VIIC U-boat, *U-656*, was commissioned under the command of Kapitänleutnant Ernst Kröning who, over the next three months, ran his 44-man crew through work-ups in the Baltic. Germany declared war on the United States on 11 December, and Konteradmiral Karl Dönitz executed plans to send U-boats to the Eastern Seaboard while the United States was still unprepared for war. Between 18 and 27 December, five long-range Type IX U-boats departed Lorient, France with orders not to attack shipping less than 10,000 GRT while enroute to their patrol areas. Reinhard Hardegan, in *U-123*,

scored first blood when he sank the 9,000 GRT *Cyclops* on 12 January. Operation *Paukenschlag* (Drumbeat), the German assault on the American East Coast, was underway.

Three days later, *U-656* departed Kiel, Germany on her first war patrol with orders to assume station in the Northwest Approaches

to intercept Allied convoys attempting to enter the Irish Sea enroute Liverpool and Glasgow. On 24 January, fueled by the success of Operation Drumbeat, Dönitz recalled his units to the north and west of England to bases in France, intending to rearm and refuel them before sending them to the US. By this time, four of the five Drumbeat boats had sunk 15 ships and damaged one, totaling 101,610 GRT and accounting for 37% of the entire shipping lost to U-boats in the Atlantic/North Sea area for the entire month of January 1942. Four days later, *U-656* arrived at Brest, France.

By this time, VP-82 had established a twelve-plane detachment at Argentia, Newfoundland with the primary objective of providing protection to local and trans-Atlantic convoys. The base was still under construction and squadron personnel were

berthed in the tenders USS *George E. Badger* (AVD-3) and USS *Prairie* (AD-15). Any major aircraft maintenance was conducted at Quonset Point, RI.

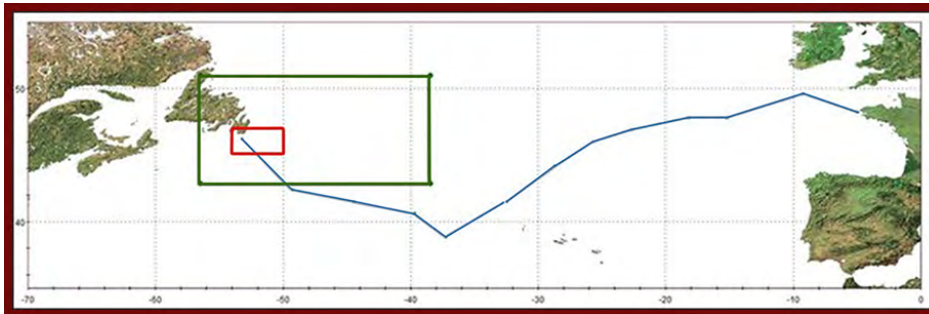


Ensign William Tepuni, USNR

The aircrew were forced to confront challenging meteorological conditions in this target-rich environment. On 29 January, the day after *U-656* arrived in Brest, Tepuni and his crew were on patrol when a severe snowstorm shut down all airfields in Newfoundland. Three hours later, running low on fuel and with no end to the inclement weather in sight, Tepuni jettisoned his MK XVII depth bombs

over water, and executed a successful crash landing on a small frozen lake. Though the aircraft partially burned, no injuries were sustained and local fishermen aided the crew in their return to base.

U-656 sortied from the sub pens at Brest on her second war patrol on 4 February with orders to rendezvous with the German blockade runner *Osorno*, which departed Kobe, Japan on 24 December



Track of *U-656*. Tepuni's crew assigned search area in red, *U-656* assigned patrol area in green.

enroute Bordeaux, France with 6,796 tons of cargo. The 13 February rendezvous never occurred, and *Osorno* arrived in Bordeaux on 19 March after missing a second rendezvous with *U-162* between 6 and 10 March. *U-656* continued enroute to her assigned patrol area off Newfoundland making its last report to U-boat headquarters in Lorient, France on 24 February.

Meanwhile, on 1 March, Ensign Tepuni and his crew consisting of co-pilot Ensign A.P. Spencer, USNR, mechanic AMM2c T.S. Hawley, USN, and radioman ARM2c L.E. Griffin, USN took off in VP-82 Hudson 82-P-8 at 1100 (all times local) and arrived in their assigned patrol area immediately after take-off. For the next two hours, the crew conducted a visual search until at 1330, while return-

"The crew immediately descended from 600' to an attack altitude of 50', and armed both MK XVII depth bombs set to a depth of 50 feet." - ENS Tepuni

ing to base, they spotted *U-656* on the surface 15 nm ahead cruising in an easterly direction roughly 30 nm south of Cape Race, Newfoundland. The crew immediately descended from 600' to an attack altitude of 50', and armed both MK XVII depth bombs set at a depth of 50'. Attacking from the south, they crossed the submarine's starboard bow and deployed both depth bombs – only the U-boat's bow was submerged at the time of attack. The crew observed detonations on both sides of the U-boat. Oil began to rise within five minutes of the attack and the aircrew departed station at 1440.

At 1530, Tepuni and his crew were back on station with two other squadron Hudsons. When the aircraft arrived on station, they determined that the oil slick was slowly moving eastward. Each aircraft dropped a depth bomb ahead of the moving oil slick. When oil was noticed to be increasing on the surface, Tepuni and one other Hudson deployed their second depth bomb at 1830 with no noticeable change. The squadron maintained daily observations until sunset on 6 March with oil still observed to be slowly rising.

On 7 March, Dönitz recorded the following in his war diary: "No reply from *U-656* in area south east of Newfoundland, after 5 calls to report position and weather. As there are no known proofs of a submarine sinking it is possible that *U-656* is at the time unable to transmit, or unable to get through on account of bad radio conditions. Loss of the boat is however, not out of the question." It was not until 1 April that *U-656* was recorded as a combat



Tepuni returns 82-P-8 to Argentia for fuel and more bombs.

loss. Not known to have ever launched a torpedo in anger, all 45 crew members perished in the US Navy's first U-boat sinking of WWII.

Three days after *U-656* was written off by the Kriegsmarine, in a 4 April ceremony in the hangar at NAS Argentia, VADM Arthur L. Bristol, Commander, Support Force, US Atlantic Fleet awarded Tepuni the Distinguished Flying Cross and the remaining three crew members Letters of Commendation. Bristol suffered a fatal heart attack three weeks later. Within days of his award, Tepuni became an international hero with newspapers as far away as Australia reporting his success.

One might ask why Tepuni was the only crew member to receive the DFC. The crew all played active roles in the sinking: Tepuni at the controls and deploying the depth bombs; Spencer arming the bombs and standing by as secondary weapon release; Griffin on lookout with binoculars; and Hawley on lookout and photographing the results of the attack. It appears that all played major roles until one explores the Hudson in a little more depth.

It is possible that Tepuni received the DFC because he was the patrol plane commander. However, the PBO-1 Hudson cockpit was a single control set-up – there was only one control column and Tepuni was flying the aircraft and deploying the weapons at the time of the attack. One can only assume that had Spencer been in the seat at the time of the attack, the awards might have been different.



PBO-1 Hudson Cockpit.

Suspecting that the origin of the name was Maori, I contacted a friend in Wellington, NZ, Gábor Tóth, archivist at the Wellington City Libraries. He confirmed the origin and stated William's great-great-



The DFC Medal

In the course of this research, I stumbled upon a passengers' manifest for the SS *Ventura*, during her voyage from Sydney, Australia to San Francisco in 1913 that included Tepuni's parents, Thomas H. and Annie Te Puni.

grandfather was Hōniana Te Puni, a Maori warrior who welcomed the barque *Tory* carrying representatives of the British New Zealand Land Company to Wellington Harbor in 1839. Upon his death in 1870, a memorial was erected in Petone, New Zealand in his honor. William is not the only Te Puni to have been memorialized for his warrior spirit.

On 21 March 1945 while flying a PV-1 Ventura with VPB-128 (the current VP-1), squadron executive officer LCDR Tepuni, was shot down while leading a rocket strike against Japanese mini-sub pier side in Cebu City, Philippines. He is buried in the Manila American Cemetery administered by the American Battle



Tepuni Memorial NZ.

Monuments Commission (ABMC). An article from the 17 December 1945 *San Francisco Chronicle* stated his mother posthumously accepted the Soviet Order of Glory, 3rd Class. A VMI friend, Colonel Jim Hickey, USA (Ret.) (who captured Saddam Hussein and is a collector of military memorabilia) told me that it was a rarity for the Soviets to recognize junior officers and foreigners with such an award. Further research revealed two translated Soviet Embassy documents from 1945 and 1946 that confirmed William was one of 217 American sea service personnel awarded Soviet medals for action in the Atlantic (19 going to Maritime Patrol aviators). Mike Knapp, a VMI classmate at the ABMC, and Jerry Lefler, a former shipmate from the Gulf War who manages the cemetery in Manila, have initiated efforts to correct William's recorded awards which include the DFC (two Gold Stars) and Air Medal (three Gold Stars), to reflect receipt of a posthumous Purple Heart and the Order of Glory, 3rd Class.

CAPT Rob Winneg, USN, (Ret.) and I continue to research the moving story of the Tepuni brothers. One of my closest friends for 40 years, Rob was the CO of VP-1 in the late 1990s. We plan more-detailed articles for the Association of Naval Aviation's *Wings of Gold* magazine and the Naval Institute's *Naval History* magazine.

This article would not have been possible without the assistance of ASCM(AW/SW) Paul A. Sandiford, USN, at Tepuni Hall aboard NAS Jacksonville.



Gordon Lewis Ackers, 86, of Lehigh Tannery, White Haven, passed away Dec. 18 at Smith Health Care, Wright Twp. He attended school in White Haven and, upon graduating, served his country during the Korean War in the U.S. Navy as an aircraft engineer. Upon discharge, he worked for both Wilmot Engineering and Weatherly Casting, retiring in 1995. On Nov. 8, 1958, he married Beverly Sterner. They recently celebrated 61 years of marriage.



Gordon Ackers

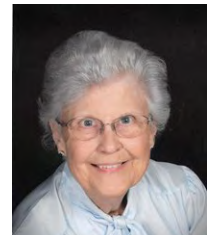
On Saturday, December 12, 2015, **Theresa J. Baird** unexpectedly but peacefully passed away. She was preceded in death by her husband Francis C. Baird and her daughter Melissa M. Sherwin. Survived by her family: sister, Dorothy Papesh; sons, Michael J. Baird and Mark F. Baird; daughter, Mary A. Rojas, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Commander John M. "Jack" Barry, USN, (Ret.) age 90, died on August 15, 2020 in Virginia Beach. A native of Lowell, MA and Nashua, NH, he had lived fifty-four years in Virginia Beach. Jack was predeceased by his loving wife, Joyce, of 62 years. Three children, Mr. & Mrs. Stephen R. Barry (Jean) of Virginia Beach, VA; Dr. & Mrs. J. Mark Barry (Kristy) of Mt. Pleasant, SC and Mrs. Liane Barry Long (Kevin) of Virginia Beach, VA; five grandsons and one "favorite" granddaughter: Mr. S. Scott Barry, Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Barry (Tina), Katelyn Barry, Mr. & Mrs. John M. Barry, Jr. (Rachael), Kyle Long and Ryan Long. He is also survived by his brother, Robert C. Barry and wife, Dorothy, their children, their grandchildren and many cousins.



CDR Jack Barry

Minneapolis, Minn. She died on Feb. 13, 2018 and was preceded in death by her husband William E. Berg. She is survived by her siblings, her children, and seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild who will all miss her dearly.



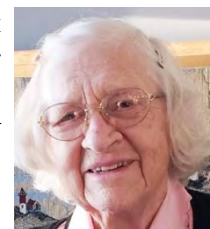
Geri Berg

LCDR James Albert Cooper. Born Sept. 30, 1933, in Marshalltown, Iowa, James passed away from non-COVID related respiratory failure at Sharp Coronado Hospital at 12:08 p.m. on Saturday Dec. 12, 2020. James "Jim" Cooper has been a Coronado resident since 1960. Aptly christened with the call sign "Wiseman II," Jim patriotically served our nation for 20 years as a Naval Aviator, including two tours in Vietnam flying scouting and reconnaissance missions in a Martin P-5M. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Patricia Roberta Cooper (nee Dawkins); his three sons James Kenneth (Cynthia) Cooper, Robert Glenn (Denise) Cooper, and Lt. Col Christopher John Cooper (USMC), his daughter Kathleen Elizabeth (Richard) Mellor; 20 living grandchildren; and 17 great grandchildren.



James Cooper

Isadora Luella (Clark) Delperuto, passed away from a short illness at Oswego Hospital on August 2nd of last year. She was predeceased by her parents and husband, John Michael Delperuto. She is survived by her daughter Michele Delperuto, of Syracuse; a son, John (Shirley) Delperuto of Leesburg, FL; granddaughters, Kristi Delperuto of Richmond, VA and Kimberly (Michael) Markin-



Isadora Delperuto

Geraldine (Geri) Berg was born on Feb. 21, 1936 in

son of Chittenango, NY; a sister-in-law, Edith Calisto; as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins.

Harlan E. Dinger was born on October 6, 1926 and passed away on Thursday, September 20, 2012. Mr. Dinger was a resident of La Mesa, California at the time of passing.



Harlan Dinger

David E. Ferrucci, was born on 2 July 1928. He passed away on 20 October 2019. A memorial service was held at Arlington National Cemetery on 19 February 2021.

Kathryn Vail Register Fortson of Jacksonville, Florida died peacefully on June 29, 2019. She was 96 years old and is survived by three sons CDR R. Malcolm Fortson, III, USN (Ret) (Martha Frances) of Portsmouth, Virginia; Richard C. Fortson (Mary Stuart) of Green Cove Springs, Florida and Alvin R. Fortson (Lee Ann) of Fayetteville, North Carolina; five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.



Kathryn Fortson

Margaret (Peggy) Camp Gorman born in Washington, D.C., October 23, 1924 to Rose White Camp and Ernest Wright Camp, passed away June 29th, 2020. Her careers included 25 years as a navy wife and mother, parish secretary for St. Luke Catholic Church in Great Falls, VA, and an accomplished artist. She is preceded in death by her husband, Navy Captain Henry Gorman, her brothers Ernest Wright Camp Jr., and Robert Henry Camp. She is survived by her loving children Henry, Jr., Carol Anne, Steven and Robert, her eight grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.



Margaret Gorman

Daniel Mathew Harper (Danny), retired Navy Master Chief, passed away quietly on August 9, 2020 in Orange Park at the age of 68 after waging a long and courageous battle with Small Cell Lung Cancer. He is survived by his beloved wife, Christie Harper; his children, Michelle Harper, Holly Ellis, and Joey Harper; his stepchildren Michael Collier and Paula Collier; five grandchildren, one great-grandchild, his stepfather Paul Gonyon; his brothers Michael Harper, Tony Harper-Gonyon (Sherrie), Eric Gonyon (Jennifer)



Daniel Harper

and his sister Tammy Lindley (Tom).

LeRoy G Honsinger, 82, Fleming Island, FL, passed away on March 23, 2020, in Orange Park, FL due to complications from COVID-19. Lee is survived by his wife, Carole Honsinger; son, Patrick; daughters, Barbara Ham, Patty Linge (John), and Debbie Rizer (Chris); seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; brother Bobby (Candy) Honsinger; sister-in-law, Doris Honsinger; a nephew and niece. Lee is predeceased by his first wife, Yvonne Honsinger, his grandson Derek Hatcher and his brother Eddie Honsinger.



LeRoy Honsinger



Patricia Knott

Patricia A. Knott, 81, beloved wife of the late Charles C. Knott, beloved mother of Brian (Marla) Knott, Catherine (Joe) Adlon, Nancy (Ron) Flamm and Dale (Christina) Knott. Beloved grandmother of Andie, Christian, Anna, Madison, Elizabeth, Joseph and Charlotte.

Captain Hardy Lee Merritt, Ret., 73, passed away Monday, May 22, 2017. He is survived by his wife, Billie Merritt of Columbia; sons, Jim Harris and Bray Merritt, both of California; five grandchildren; a brother, sister and brother-in-law. Hardy was a junior officer and TACCO in VP-45 during the early 1970's.



CAPT Hardy Merritt

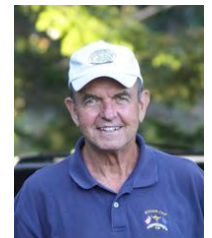
Jane Marie Ziegler Nupp, passed peacefully at the Carroll Hospice Dove House in Westminster, Maryland on October 2, 2019. She was born November 23, 1928 in Detroit, Michigan to the late Fred William Ziegler and Grace Edna Hilbert Ziegler. Jane was shortly preceded in death by her beloved husband, Ralph Edward Nupp, whom she married on August 7, 1948.



Jane Nupp

Ralph E. Nupp of Westminster, MD passed away in May 2019.

Robert Alan Palombo, passed away peacefully Oct 18, 2020. He is survived by his devoted wife Christina Clark of 60 years, and his three children and spouses, Richard and Gretchen Palombo, Joanne



Robert Palombo

Palombo-McCallie and John McCallie, Carolyn and Brian Clement, and his seven grandchildren.

George H. Stark passed away 25 September 2018.

Alston Martin Stevens, Jr., 89, died on August 26, 2019. He enlisted in the Navy at 17 and retired after 20 years as a Senior Chief. He served as airport manager and operator at South Norfolk Airport. The flight school that he started there was responsible for training countless pilots, many of whom became airline pilots. He was inducted into the Virginia Aviation Hall of Fame in 2009 for his dedication to the flying community. He is survived by four of his five sons; six grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Madelyn M. "Lyn" Thompson, passed away on April 13, 2012. She is survived by daughters, Alison Wright-Greer and Janice Specht (Steve); five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.



Madelyn Thompson

Thomas N. Thompson passed away July 23, 2019. He was born December 4, 1924 to Einer and Emelia (Nygard) Thompson in Luverne, North Dakota. He is predeceased by his wife of 62 years, Madelyn McQuaide Thompson. He is survived by daughters Alison Wright-Greer and Janice Specht (Steve), five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.



Thomas Thompson

Roger W. Tully, born 15 August 1930, passed away in Marana, Arizona in December 2016.

Xenia Lira Tully, born February 26, 1930, passed away on January 6, 2016 in Marana, Arizona.

Betty Jean (Anderson) West, 86, of Pensacola passed away July 20, 2020. She was born on June 24, 1934 in Nashville, TN. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband Gerald Marvin "Jerry" West of 34 years; and son Edward Noles "Bubba" West. Betty is survived by her two daughters, four grand-children, and six great-grandchildren, and her sweetheart Frank Wright.

Robert "Woody" Wittich, 71, of Hawk Point, MO, passed away at his home on September 2, 2020 surrounded by his loving family. He was born on August 29, 1949 in St. Louis County to Robert and Martha (Wagener) Wittich. Woody is survived



Robert Wittich

by his beloved wife of 44 years, Lucinda Wittich of Hawk Point; two sons; seven grandchildren; two sisters; four step-siblings, and many other nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Elaine E. Wolf, age 86, of Canton, passed away Friday, Nov. 30, 2007. Elaine worked for the family business (James Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Service) and Schmidt's Gifts. Preceded in death by her husband, Robert L. Wolf in 2001. Survived by three children; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews; and a sister.

Charles O. Womeldorf, U.S. Navy (Ret.), 93, of Palatka, passed away Sunday, March 1, 2020 at his daughter's residence in Hawthorne following an extended illness. Charles served honorably in the U.S. Navy, retiring in 1963 after 20 years of service as an Aircraft Structural Mechanic, Chief Petty Officer. He was a veteran of WW II and Korea. After retirement he served ten more years in the Fleet Reserve. After retirement he went to work for Jaxco Jetronics and later at K & I Plastics, both in Jacksonville. He was preceded in death by his first two wives, Maggie Belle Womeldorf and Josephine Dortch Womeldorf; seven brothers and sisters, and a daughter-in-law. Surviving are his wife of eight years, Louise Womeldorf of Palatka; a son; two daughters; a step-daughter; a step-son; 13 grandchildren; 22 great grandchildren; one great great grandson; and numerous nieces and nephews.



Charles Womeldorf

George "Randy" Dean, 88, of Mercer, formerly of Augusta, GA, passed away of natural causes on Feb. 7, 2021, at The Lakes at Jefferson. He was born on Oct. 2, 1932, in Portersville, PA, to the late Lillian (Leise) and John G. Dean.



George Dean

After graduation he joined the Navy. He eventually settled in Augusta, Ga., where he took courses at Augusta University. George was a Navy recruiter in Sharon after his military career, and began a long barber career after relocating to Georgia. George was awarded a Purple Heart from the Navy; he retired after 23-plus years of service. He flew Victor Willies to collect hurricane data.

George was preceded in death by his parents; his loving wife of 55 years, Christine Dean and a son, Jonathan "Scott" Dean. Burial was held at Arlington National Cemetery.

Collene Morrison Oakes, wife of 61 years to CAPT Glen Oakes, USN retired, of Fleming Island, FL, died peacefully at home on February 4, 2021 at age 81.



Collene Oakes

Born in 1939 to C.C. and Clarine in Jackson, Mississippi, Collene spent her early life in Linden, Alabama and moved to Marion as a teenager, a lucky move as it was there that Collene met the love of her life, Glen. Collene attended Perry County High School and graduated with an RN degree from Druid City School of Nursing. Collene and Glen were married for over 61 years. They raised their four children while Glen completed Navy tours that took the family from California to Maine, from Virginia to Belgium, and back to Alabama.

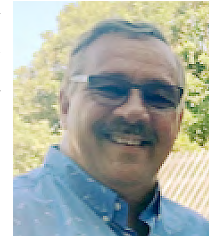
In addition to being Mom in Chief, Collene worked as a nurse for a local organization for adults with learning disabilities, Challenge Enterprises. She was also a skilled seamstress, the family (and neighborhood!) barber, and a hostess who could welcome and feed a crowd on short notice. She was the neighbor you sought out when your child had a temperature, the friend you dropped in on when you needed a glass of wine or just a good listener.

Despite a long battle with Parkinson's disease, Collene maintained her optimism, her loving outlook, and her sense of humor.

Collene is survived by her husband D. Glen Oakes and their large, loving family, including her son Michael and his partner Marie, Matt and his wife Ashley, Christian and his wife Rosemary, and Kimberly and her husband Steve. She was a loving, devoted and fun grandmother to Darby

and Adam, Peyton, Zeth and Nate.

Eric Binderim passed away after a brief battle with thyroid cancer on February 14, 2021. He is predeceased by his Father, Robert C. Binderim, his Mother, Georgia Rose Binderim, his Sister, Cynthia Drake, and his daughter, Erika (Rosie) Binderim.



Eric Binderim

He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Stacy Binderim, his son, Corey Binderim, his sister, Trisha Bazzell (David) and 5 granddaughters, (Sadie Rose Mack, his namesake, Bindy Rose Haydu, Chase Haydu, Bailey Binderim and Megan Binderim).

Eric enlisted in the Navy in July 1973 as an Aviation Structural Mechanic (AMSAN). Eric and Stacy moved to Millington, Tennessee in 1977, where Eric taught "A" school. Following the "A" school tour, Eric moved the family to Pensacola for a tour with the Navy's "Blue Angels" from 1980 – 1983. Again, making many lifelong friends who will unequivocally provide a true support system for Stacy.



Eric promoted through the enlisted ranks to Chief Petty Officer and was commissioned in 1987 as an Aviation Maintenance, Limited Duty Officer (LDO). He retired from the Navy after being XO of Technical Training Unit (CNATTU) in 2001.

In civilian life, Eric worked as a Contract Specialist for Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) at NAS Jacksonville, where he wrote government contracts

until he retired in December 2018.

Mr. Binderim will be interred in Jacksonville National Cemetery with full Military Honors.

THE PATRON FOUR FIVE ASSOCIATION

New Membership Registration Form

Please print off and complete this form and return it to the address below. The personal information you send will ONLY be used within the Association for inclusion in the Association Roster. Dues are \$10 per year, \$40 for 5 years or \$200 for life...payable to:

Mike Riley, Treasurer, Patron Four Five Association

6618 Blue Jay Way,

Charlotte, MI, 48813

517-980-6235; Email: mlriley@gmail.com

ROSTER INFORMATION

Name: First _____ MI _____ Last _____

Date of Birth: _____ Spouse's First Name; _____

Mailing Address: Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel (w/area code) _(_____) _____ Email Address _____

FORMER SQUADRON SERVICE/DUTIES

Squadron during your service (circle one): VP/VPB-205 (PBM) VP-45 (PBY) VP-45 (PBM)

VP-45 (P5M) VP-45(P-3A) VP-45 (P-3C) VP-45 (P-8)

Dates Served: From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____

If Aircrew, circle as appropriate: Pilot NFO Aircrew (Position): _____

Ground Duties/Division _____

How did you find out about the Association _____

If you have any "seas stories" or interesting recollections of your time in VP-45, consider sharing those with all the members. The easiest way to get your story or recollection listed and displayed on our website (www.vp45association.org) is to email it to the Association WebMaster or any Association officer. The email address for the current WebMaster and can be found at the website. If you have a photo that "accompanies" your story, please email it also and we'll include it with your story! Additionally, any other squadron photos, squadron rosters, papers, crew lists, etc. that you would like to share are invited. Welcome Aboard!