



THE PELICAN POST



Mort Eckhouse--President
Jay Thomas--Vice President
Dave Johnson--Treasurer
Chuck Caldwell--Secretary/Editor
(619) 445-5072

Newsletter and Roster #10

July 1992

This edition contains an up to date roster and information about the Reunion #2 to be held celebrating the 50th anniversary of the current VP-45, which originated in Norfolk on 1 November 1942 as VP-205. Please, *EVERYONE* complete the roster information sheet included in the last issue and send it to Kennedy Snow. If you need another contact him or the editor. Those who plan to attend the reunion in JAX, please return the REGISTRATION FORM to Dave Johnson as soon as possible. Many depend on that timely info to prepare the reunion plans and put things such as transportation and food on order. Your consideration will be appreciated. ☺

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MORT SEZ. . .



To say the least, things got a little zingy for a while due to our headquarters hotel suddenly going belly-up. Not to worry, we're back in business and better off than before. We do have a few more details to work out but don't anticipate real problems in doing so. Our new (literally) hotel, the *MARINA*, is super. I've just come back from a two day trip to JAX and am very enthused. The *MARINA* is on the south bank of the St. Johns River, a little east of the old place. The *MARINA* has arranged for discount water taxi fares. It's a great way to get to the downtown and shopping areas. The hotel is just completing an extensive floor-to-ceiling, basement-to-roof renovation. We have the top deck and as much of the next lower as we need up to our 175 reserved rooms. I've seen the rooms and you won't be disappointed. Wait 'till you see our *Ready Room!* I'm pleased that our menu and prices on our registration form remain the same. The opening reception and business meeting will be in the hotel while the banquet will be elsewhere. All in all, I believe we're better off than before.

As of today, 20 June, the hotel has over 30 reservation requests, well above average this early in the game. 'Nuff said. Speaking of hotel reservations, I've talked to the Jacksonville Hotel regarding reservations they have taken. I am assured (?) that those of us who made reservations with them have either had their cash/check reservations refunded by certified mail or, if by credit card, the charge not put through.

Our hard-working nominating committee will present the following slate of officers for your consideration:

President	Alan Jansen
Vice-Pres	Jay Thomas
Secretary	Chuck Caldwell
Treasurer	Dave Johnson

I'm most pleased with this slate. Jay, Dave and Chuck (who will continue to publish and edit *THE PELICAN POST*) have proven themselves by demonstrated ability and willingness to serve. Alan Jansen is an "old" shipmate of mine, a career Navy type, proven leader. Al was in the squadron when we transitioned from Boats to P-3s. John Chappell (904)456-3303 and his committee, Ken Cory (904)434-1259 and Bill Holtzclaw (904)932-9474 will take nominations until 1 October. Before nominating anyone, please ensure that the individual will accept the office.

Last word...Kennedy Snow tells me you have been very responsive to his biographical questionnaire. Let's make it 100%! Bill Rodriguez has really been strokin' it as *Our Man In Jax*. Remember, RE NION doesn't work without "U".

DIRECTIONS TO MARINA HOTEL FROM THE JACKSONVILLE AIRPORT

Take I-95 South. Go approximately 17 miles, cross the Fuller Warren Bridge. Immediately after crossing the bridge, take the first exit to the right, San Marco Boulevard. At the second traffic light, turn left onto San Marco Boulevard. Go across the railroad tracks and take the first right onto Prudential Drive. The *MARINA* hotel is approximately 4 blocks down on the left.

FROM I-10 WEST

I-10 West ends and becomes I-95 before the Fuller Warren Bridge. Follow the instructions above from the merging.

FROM THE SOUTH

Take I-95 North. As you come into the city, move to the right lanes of traffic. Take the Prudential Drive exit (it is the last exit before you cross the Fuller Warren Bridge), and stay in the far right lane to exit onto Prudential Drive. At the end of the ramp, take a right onto Prudential Drive. The *MARINA* Hotel is 4 blocks down on the left.

* ORIGIN OF THE PELICAN PATCH *

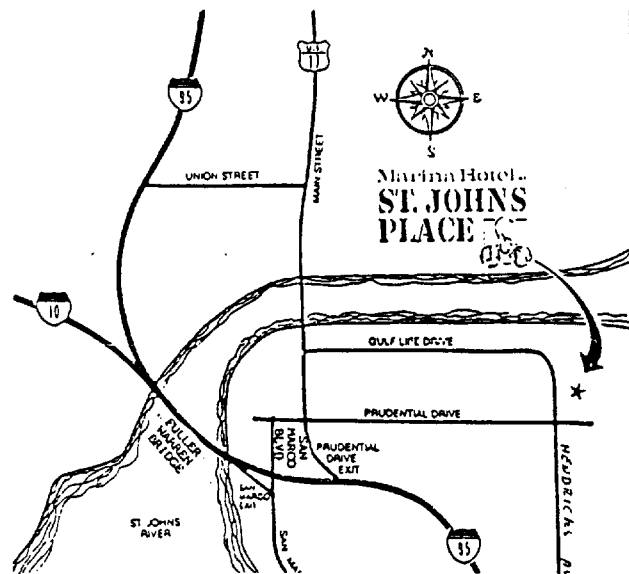
In the last issue we described how the *GOOFY* patch was designed by the PBV squadron in 1943 and sent to Disney for final design. But who knows where/how the *PELICAN* patch came into being? Nothing in the historical files of the Association contains anything about its origin ☹. We don't even have a really good black and white print of it to use for the letterhead. If someone can scan a copy and send it to the editor on disk it will be appreciated. Anyone with knowledge of the patch origin please send what information you have so we can get it in the next newsletter. We still need a color rendition of the *GOOFY* patch. Someone in our Association must have some data--please don't be shy about sending it in!

* VP-45 HISTORY * (1942 - 1947)

The current active VP-45, as most shipmates know by now, evolved from the original VP-205 which was commissioned at Norfolk fifty years ago on 1 November 1942. From then until 24 May 1943 the

Commanding Officer was LCDR Arthur S. Hill of New York, NY. He was followed in order by: LCDR Malcom C. McGrath of Norfolk, VA (to 1 October 1943); LCDR Robert S. Null of Rustin, LA, to 23 April 1944; LCDR George B. Cattermole of Hamburg, PA, to 9 October 1944; LCDR Herbert E. Hanset of Seattle, WA, to 17 November 1945; LCDR Norman K. Brady of Sanborn, IA, to after 1 January 1947.

During this period the squadron was very active, and moved from one war zone to another in both the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean areas. The chronology of transfers from one command to another tells the story. Until 1 February 1943 the squadron was assigned to Commander Transition Training Squadron, Atlantic, when it was transferred to Commander Fleet Air Wing Eleven and was located at NAS Trinidad from 2 June 1943 until 7 July 1944, when it was transferred to NAS Guantanamo, Cuba. On 19 September the squadron changed operational control to COMFAIRWING Five and moved to NAS Norfolk, but not for long. On 1 November it moved to NAAS Harvey Point, NC and on 28 November came under OPCON of COMFAIRWING Fourteen while it transferred across country to NAS San Diego, CA. On 1 December 1944 the new



location was NAS Alameda, CA under OPCON of COMFAIRWING Eight. Four days before Christmas, on 21 December 1944, the squadron flew to its new base at NAS Kaneohe, Oahu and reported to COMFAIRWING Two.

From 1 November 1942 to 1 February 1943 the squadron owned only two PBM-3's and one PBM-3C. The inventory doubled to six PBM-3C's while it was in training until 2 June 1943. From 2 June 1943 until 19 September 1944 the squadron averaged twelve PBM-3S's, and lost three to enemy action against submarines. From 17 October 1944 to 31 December 1944 fifteen PBM-5's were assigned and delivered to the squadron.

On 10 June 1943, eight days after arriving at NAS Trinidad, the squadron lost its first plane and crew to suspected enemy action. LTJG O. W. Haenal with two other officers and eight enlisted men took off from Trinidad on an assigned daylight mission, and was never heard from. Radio silence had been ordered; pursuant to such order, no "out" report was sent, and no other word was received from the plane. A three day search instituted when the plane failed to return at the expected time provided no

trace of the plane or crew, and no clue as to their fate.

The second plane lost was in charge of LTJG Clifford C. Cox, and carried three other officers and a crew of eight enlisted. On the night of August 2 the flight took off, and at 0025Q the following message from the plane was sent as it prepared to attack: "SIGHTED SUB. MAKING ATTACK POSITION 1133 5405 TIME 0025 QUEEN." That was the last contact with the plane. No trace of plane or crew was found, and it was presumed the plane had been shot down.

The third loss occurred on 6 August when LT Anthony R. Matuski, with two other officers and eight enlisted crew took off from Trinidad on an ASW sweep and made contact with the enemy. At 1320Q the base received a message that the plane was attacking a submarine, and five minutes later a second message gave his position as 12-54N 64-34W, stating that the sub was crippled with no damage to the plane. Twelve minutes later a message came in saying, "DAMAGED FIRE", which was the final word. Planes sent to the position sank the submarine, but no trace of the plane and crew that had drawn first blood from the sunken sub was ever found. Survivors from the sunken sub reported setting two aircraft on fire, one of which crashed within their view. The second plane (a VP-205 plane flown by PPC LT Crockett and crew from VP-204) was able to extinguish its fire and returned to join the action that sank the sub.

Just prior to this, on 31 July at 2126Q, LT H. B. Lawrence sighted a submarine on the surface at 09-35N 57-29 W and pressed home an attack in the face of heavy fire. The sub was forced to submerge, but surfaced an hour later, and again was engaged with an exchange of fire. After the final bomb drop by the plane, the anti-aircraft fire ceased abruptly. No other assessment of the attack is available, but it was believed the sub suffered some personnel casualties.

Patrol Squadron 205 returned to Norfolk on 19 September 1944, the planes retired from active service, and the personnel scattered for rehabilitation leave, and the squadron was redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron 205 (VPB-205). When the personnel returned, fifteen new PBM-5's were assigned and refresher training was the order of the day in preparation for transfer to the Pacific Fleet.

The squadron arrived in the Pacific too late to engage in any enemy action, but transferred to NAB Tanapag, Saipan on 1 April 1945 and was under the command of COMFAIRWING one for the transfer, then Task Unit 94.1.2 (CDR George S. James, CO USS CASTLE ROCK) operating under COMFAIRWING Eighteen. On 25 August the squadron moved from Saipan to Chimu Wan, Okinawa, where it was based aboard USS St. George, and attached to Task Unit 95.9.6 (CAPT Robert G. Armstrong, Commanding Officer USS St. George) operating under COMFAIRWING One. Since the war was over, flights were surveillance types along the coasts of China, Korea and Japan.

On 23 September, the squadron moved to Wakayama, Japan, still based aboard USS St. George and under COMFAIRWING One, and prepared to make the long trek back home. Before leaving Japan, though, one more plane and crew were lost to undetermined causes. On 2 October 1945 LT Gilbert Delos Lizer, with Ensign Kazimer Olenski as co-pilot, departed on a routine surveillance flight with passengers RADM W. D. Sample and CAPT Charles C. McDonald, and a crew of seven enlisted at 0702. At 0755 the plane was observed heading away from Kobe. That was the last contact with the plane. After eleven days of search all results were negative and it was called off. On 12 November 1945 the squadron departed Japan for Norfolk via Saipan, Ebeye, Majuro, Johnston Island, Kaneohe, Alameda, San Diego, Fort Worth, and Pensacola. It arrived at Norfolk on 13 December 1945.

Aircraft were overhauled, crews departed on leave--many were discharged--and

reorganization and training became the norm. On 12 April 1946 the home port was changed to NAF Bermuda under COMFAIRWING Five, and had 9 PBM-5's assigned to it. On 15 May the squadron was redesignated from VPB-205 to VP-205, and on 15 November 1946 from VP-205 to VP-MS-5 (the MS = Medium Seaplane). On 1 September 1948 the squadron was redesignated VP-45, and has remained so to this date.

The editor is greatly indebted to William "Bill" Silver, Historian of the Mariner/Marlin Association, for his kind assistance and for providing copies of the squadron history and war diary for the period 1942-1947. More history possibly is available from the Navy, and attempts are being made to secure copies of the official history from 1947 to the present.

* * *

In the last issue the history of the PBY squadron was given as told by two pilots who were in the squadron. Chris Finsness, who was also in the squadron, reports the squadron did not home port at NAF Bahia in Brazil in April of 1945, but stayed at Belem until May 27, 1945. He also promised some photos of PBYs in the Aleutians for us to view.

* NOTES FROM ALL OVER *



* TRINIDAD *

Both VP-45 (PBY) and VP-205 flew from Trinidad during World War II, and VP-34 was home ported there in the mid fifties before moving to Coco Solo. The Chaguaramas Military History & Aviation Museum, a division of the Military History, Model Engineers and Builders Society, whose address is Post Office Box 3126, Carenage, Trinidad & Tobago, West Indies, is constructing a military and

aviation museum on the original seaplane ramp which was commissioned in 1942. The society is planning a reunion of all military personnel who served in units that operated from Trinidad -- German, US., RN, TRNVR, etc., on 1 October 1992, and another tentatively scheduled for September 1993 that would commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the most fierce battles which saw the defeat of the U-boats. The reunion in 1992 is expected to draw about thirty U-boat survivors who are flying in from Germany, plus those mentioned who can journey there this year. For those who may consider attending either of the reunions, the society is able to arrange special hotel rates and air fares from Miami to Trinidad on BWIA. A chapel is planned for construction, and the names of the Mariners lost in the campaigns may be placed on a commemorative plaque and laid at a suitable ceremony. The society is eager to contact any organization connected to other military units that operated from Waller and Carlson fields, including USN Airship Squadron ZP-51. For further information contact Gaylord T. M. Kelshall, President, at the address above.

* JACKSONVILLE IN OCTOBER *

Bill Rodriguez reporting: Since the reunion is in late October you can expect almost anything. It is the end of the hurricane season. Average Temperature = 72°F (80° - 63° daily). Record High = 96°. Record Low = 37° (1989). Winds = Northerly 10 kts. Prospect of rain = 20 - 25%. A warm sweater or jacket may come in handy at night by the river.

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Oct 21 - Nov-1 = Greater Jacksonville Agricultural Fair at the Gator Bowl.

Oct 24 - 25 = 14th Annual Springfield Tour of Historical Homes (\$10).



DELTA AIR LINES

Delta has arranged special discounted fares for your travel (*certain restrictions apply*). For further details regarding these discounts, you or your travel agent may call Delta at 1-800-221-1212 and ask for Special Meeting Network. Your file reference number for this reunion, when/if you call, is I-40069. (Editor's note = Last reunion these discounts at Delta weren't all that good, and could be beaten elsewhere. Shop around for the best deal.)

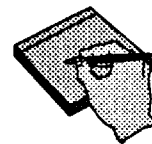
→ POSSIBLE REFUND ←

Anyone who bought a airline ticket from one of several airlines from 1Jan 88 to 30 June 92 may be eligible for a partial refund or voucher. Send a letter to Airline Antitrust Litigation, P. O. Box 209, Philadelphia PA 19107 to find out if you are eligible. Be prepared to furnish proof of purchase - such as a copy of the ticket or a checkbook stub.

* Statistics and Thank You *

The last newsletter/roster required 5,175 sheets of paper, and was sent to over 425 addresses. It took 20 man-hours just to fold/mail them all. A special **thank you** to my wife, Joan, and shipmate Tony Navarre, for a tremendous effort in getting the publication in the mail! And a big **thank you** also to those of you who sent in squadron historical pictures and papers for the archives. We are still in need of such information, so please keep the Association in mind.

* FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK *



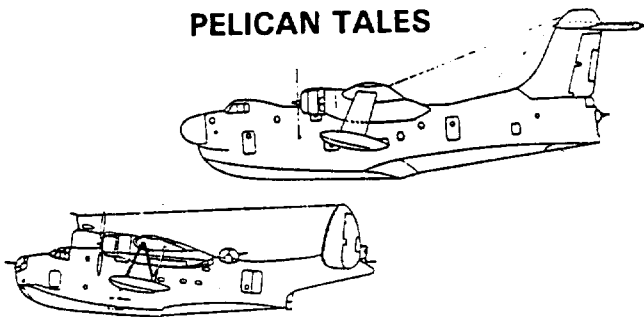
Plastic Plane Model Available

Bruce Barth, who is putting together a history of VP-40, passed along that there is a plastic model of the P5M-2 (SP5B) Marlin that has been available for some time and is still being sold. It is produced by a company called Hasegawa, and it should be available through your local hobby shop. If not, the editor has arranged for either Brookhurst Models at (714) 636-3580 in Garden Grove, CA, or The Model Emporium (619) 447-6662 in El Cajon, CA to take credit card orders at a price of \$29 (+ shipping and applicable tax) via UPS. Bob Comerford told me he has built two of them, and *they have the VP-45 decals and tail number LN-8, his old home away from home!*

* REUNION # 3 (?) *

The Association of Naval Aviation, Inc. holds an annual reunion at a different location each year. Many squadrons and associations such as ours hold their reunions in conjunction with the ANA. Several advantages are obtained by doing so: Special airline rates; special hotel rates; other special activities such as an Naval Aviation Ball, tours, and special group seating. The next one is scheduled to be held in New Orleans May 26 - 30, 1993, and no one has to be a member of ANA to "piggyback" a reunion and receive benefit of the special rates. The Symposium '93 Committee has invited us to join them in '93 in New Orleans. The subject will be brought up at our reunion, so please be thinking about your response, and your ideas for future reunions.

PELICAN TALES



If you have a sea story or an incident that you think others in the Association might like to read, we'll print it here if we possibly can. It doesn't have to be a first person story--just something you would like to share with others or a story that is a favourite of yours.

♣ Bob Comerford writes that we need to find an old aircrew ordnanceman to estimate how many cans of juice were launched from PDC dispensers onto the decks of those Russian freighters during the Cuban Missile Crisis while the Russian sailors mooned low flying P5Ms. He shudders at the thought that WW III could have been started by a can of tomato juice hitting one of those bare bottoms -- and he says that it's funny ☺ how a guy who couldn't get a PDC anywhere near a submarine could accomplish a pinpoint hit on a freighter with tomato juice. Crewmen always thought it was because a pilot wasn't calling the drop for the tomato juice!



📧 **Want to locate:** LCDR H. B. Stott, CO VP-45(PBY) 1944. Shipmate wants to contact. Please send any info to editor.

* TREASURER'S REPORT *



As of June 30 we have reservations for the reunion from 46 people and donations of \$245.00. we have expended \$694.87 and our balance is \$5745.14 (which includes payment for reunion registrations). Of the 46 reservations, 36 plan to attend the picnic on Thursday.

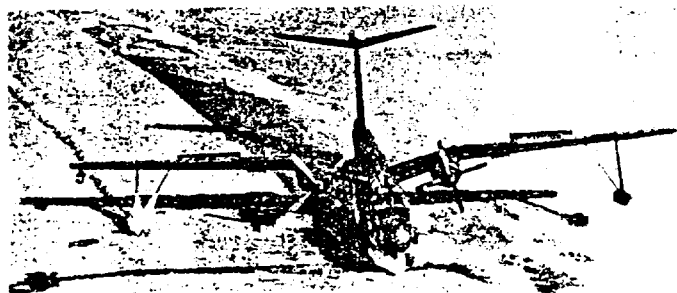
MARINA HOTEL →



Fair Skies...

Chuck

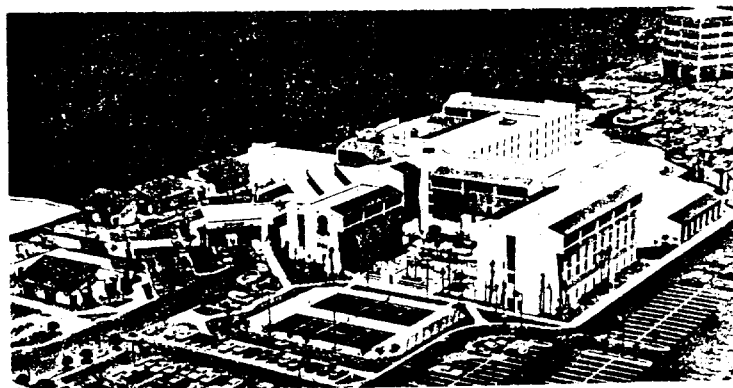
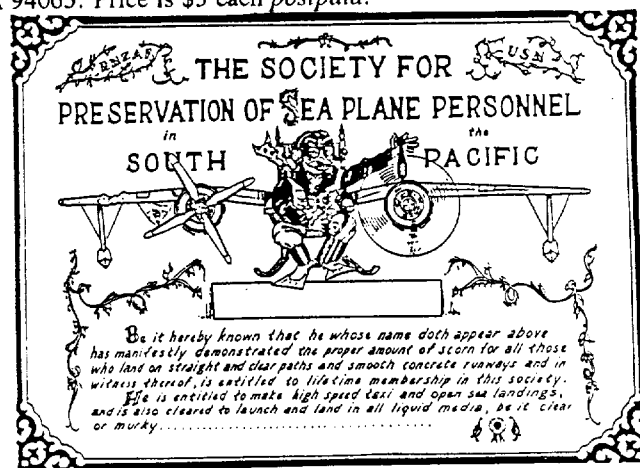
VP-45 SCORES A FIRST



ICEBOUND IN THE FROZEN waters of Willoughby Spit at Norfolk, this P5M of Patrol Squadron 45 required 48 hours for extraction. The big Martin Marlin was moored to a buoy in the northeast end of the bay when Norfolk recorded its worst weather in 25 years last winter. High winds and rough ice conditions made it impossible to bring the aircraft in the first day, so the crew of eight men remained aboard the aircraft, running the heater every 45 minutes. (From the May 1958 Naval Aviation News)

CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

The certificate below is a copy of an original that was drawn in the late 1950's by a P5M squadron artist for a friend and pilot at the time. If you would like a copy, on parchment paper, write to Bruce Barth (VP-40 Historian) at 457-H Cork Harbor Cr., Redwood City CA 94065. Price is \$3 each *postpaid*.





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Patron Four Five Association

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Newsletter and Roster #9

April 1992

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



MORT SEZ

First off, the BUZZ PHRASE for this newsletter is "The Big FIVE ZERO Anniversary Reunion/JAX '92." See you there!

Now to business. The reunion is really shaping up. I'm pleased with what you'll find waiting in JAX. We'll start out Thursday afternoon, 22 October, with a ALL HANDS picnic hosted by VP-45 at Sea King Park on board NAS Jacksonville (directions later). Friday evening we'll have our opening reception and cocktail party (pay-as-you-go bar) with very heavy hors d'oeuvres. The Saturday morning business meeting will run from 10 AM to Noon. The afternoon is free for you to enjoy the many amenities in walking distance of the hotel. Saturday evening is the Grand Banquet. Sunday should be a real treat. Following a breakfast buffet at the NAS Officers' Club, the squadron has arranged for an Open House at their hangar to include Static Aircraft Displays, from 11200 to 1300 (directions later). We're also working on a "windshield" tour of the Naval Air Station afterward. The Jacksonville Hotel has reserved 75 rooms for Thursday and Sunday, and 150 for Friday and Saturday. Our block of rooms will be held until 22 September but, from the enthusiastic comments I've heard, I'm going to make my reservation early.

Bill Rodriguez, our JAX man, is right on top of things. He does need some "warm bodies" to help during the reunion, particularly in the registration and ready room areas. Some of our JAX members are able to help, but he needs more. Please drop him a line or give him a call (904) 264-3375 to volunteer.

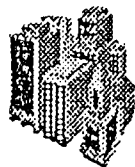
Seems to me that we have a unique opportunity as a reunion group of an active duty squadron to insure that we don't "self-destruct" and that's for us to involve the squadron as much as it wants to be involved with we of the past. Right off, members have been invited to our evening activities, many in uniform, I understand. A limited number will be our guests. The "Sailor of the Year" award (see last issue and below) consisting of a modest Scholarship Incentive Award is another example. At the banquet, Commander Bob Brannon, who assumes command this month, and Command Master Chief Petty Officer Gus Hagar will give us insight into today's Patrol Squadron from their respective perspectives.

I received sparse return on the questions I asked in the last *Pelican Post* but here are the results:

1. Everyone liked the Thursday picnic.
2. Las Vegas and Washington, DC were mentioned as possible locations for our next reunion.
3. Only two votes for a BDA jaunt; therefore, no action taken.
4. Folks seemed to like the idea to add "Alumni" to our name.
5. All comments regarding the Scholarship Incentive Award were favorable.

I plan to float #s 2, 4 and 5 at the business meeting along with some other items as well as election of officers. John Chappell has accepted chairmanship of the nominating committee with members Ken Cory and Bill Holtzclaw. I'm very pleased to say that except for myself, your current officers have agreed to serve again at your pleasure. Our Treasurer will give a complete report at the business meeting but I want to give you an idea of what's been going on. In addition to the information in the Treasurer's Report in this issue, the March and October '91 *Pelican Post* issues cost \$979.15. Postage has gone up since. 'Nuf said. Another \$84.45 was taken up by phone calls and travel, mostly mine. Chuck Caldwell was asked to become your Secretary in addition to his job as *Pelican Post* editor. Note the improvements he's made in the *PP*. He certainly has kept me on my toes! In my case, I wish to step down. I started working on this organization in 1985 with the idea to get a "few of the old hands together." WOW! You are great, individually and collectively and I've really enjoyed, but with seven years under my belt it's time to let new ideas take over. John and his committee are searching on their own but we are a large group. Your input is requested and needed. John would appreciate your nominations as soon as possible (904)456-3303. I'd like you to flood them with suggestions.

Last Word.... My personal and official thanks to Kennedy Snow. I draw your attention to Chuck's comments regarding Kennedy's contribution elsewhere in this issue.



See you in October

DIRECTIONS TO THE JACKSONVILLE HOTEL

From I-95 Southbound or I-10 East, cross the Fuller Warren Bridge. Take the first exit, San Marco Boulevard (get in the right lane on the bridge..the exit is at the East end of the bridge) and continue straight to the third stop light; turn left on Hendricks Avenue and continue around curve to Jacksonville Hotel, which is adjacent to the large Gulf Life Building.

DIRECTIONS TO SEA KING PARK (NAS)

NAS is on the East side of US 17, Roosevelt Boulevard, south of the city. Proceeding south on US 17, pass the Main Gate and turn left into the next gate, the Birmingham Gate. Sea King Park will be on your right inside the gate.

DIRECTIONS TO THE OFFICERS' CLUB

Enter the NAS either through the Main Gate, Yorktown Ave., or the Birmingham Gate, Birmingham Ave., proceed straight ahead until Mustin Road. Turn right. The Club will be on your left a few blocks. Parking lot on the right.

* ORIGIN OF THE "GOOFY" PATCH *

Research by the editor and submissions by shipmates are the primary ways we get historical information. The Goofy patch was sent to Jay some time ago by one or several members of the 1943-45 squadron, and it has been used on the letterhead since. A letter to the Walt Disney Archives resulted in a reply that the patch was in response to a drawing sent to them that the Disney

artists cleaned up a bit and made the "cowboy" in the original look more like their character "Goofy". The editor has a copy of the original drawing, and if anyone wants a copy of their own just send an SASE. The patch was sent to the then C. O., LCDR C. H. Amme, Jr., (deceased) on November 16, 1943. A line drawing and a color illustration were provided. If anyone has a color copy of the decal, the editor would like to reproduce it for the reunion.

* HOW MANY VP-45s *

There may have been as many as three separate and distinct VP-45s. The active duty one is descendant from VP-205 that, according to the Mariner Association, was redesignated VPB-205 on 1 Oct 1944, VP-205 again 15 May 1946, VP-MS-5 15 Nov 1946, and finally VP-45 on 1 Sep 1948. It has flown the PBM, PSM and P3 aircraft, and is now located in Jacksonville. Another squadron was commissioned VP-45 in Whidbey Island,

Washington on 21 April 1943 with LT Robert L. Donley the C. O.. The squadron departed NAS Sand Point, Seattle, in six PBYS, for duty with PATWING FOUR, Adak, Alaska. They arrived 2 May, and on 13 May departed for Massacre Bay on Attu, where USS CASCO *should* be at anchor. It took 11-12 hours of flight time (no NAVAIDS and bad WX) but all made it. William H. Maxwell and Erwin H. Johnson compiled the history as the editor has it, and it appears to be quite accurate and makes excellent reading. Occasionally a PBY couldn't find Massacre Bay at the flight's end, or weather was so bad a landing couldn't be attempted there, so an open sea landing was made and the crew had to wait for better conditions to get home. LCDR Carl H. Amme became the C. O. in June and the squadron was expanded to twelve PBYS. One plane lost an engine near the Komandorski Islands on 24 July 1943 and made an emergency landing in a Russian lake. To keep the crew from being interred by the Russians, another crew landed in the lake, rescued the crew and destroyed the PBY. Two crews made a 1800+ mile night flight to try to bomb Japan, also in July, but the weather was so bad the results are unknown...great for morale, tho! The Japanese abandoned Kiska and Attu in August, so the squadron flew sector searches and did what VP squadrons always do. Now a quote from the history... "On a rare, clear and beautiful day, word was received that Captain L. E. Gehres would arrive for his first visit and inspection at Attu. He landed at Alexia Point, where an airstrip had been built. We were there to greet him. After landing, he proceeded to bestow the Air Medal to his pilot and the Distinguished Flying Cross to himself for... 'hazardous and meritorious flying under extremely bad weather conditions.' No one was impressed. That night we prepared barbecued salmon for Gheres, his staff, and the

squadron. The only recognition we wanted was a survival 'ribbon'." The squadron returned to Sand Point in October and most of the PPCs were reassigned, the 1st pilots promoted to PPC, a new C.O., LCDR C. Atkinson, took over and the squadron built up to strength with PBY-5As. In March 1944, VP-45 moved via troop train to Norfolk, was outfitted with new PBY-5As and, in April, deployed to Belem, Brazil. The skipper and crew were lost shortly thereafter in the first fatal crash of a VP-45 aircraft. LCDR H. B. Stott became the new C. O. on 28 May 1944. In April 1945 the new duty station became NAF Bahia, San Salvador, Brazil. In two years the squadron had been flying in the ridiculous to the sublime. In May 1945 VP-45 was ordered to Norfolk, and was decommissioned 30 May 1945. (The first PBY, the XP3Y-1, had its initial flight in March 1935.)

An article by CAPT John Lacouture, The Life Of VADM R. M. Trapnell, in *Foundation* Fall 1991, indicates there may have been another VP-45 between 1938 and 1940 by stating Trapnell served a tour as C.O. of Patrol Squadron FORTY-FIVE during that time. That'll have to be verified though, because the article also states he was C.O. of VP-21 and VP-14 during that two year period. Anyone have any data on that?

•NOTES FROM ALL OVER•

- Robert Trauger, pilot and Squadron Navigator (VP-205) in '42-'43 wrote that the squadron lost three crews and aircraft to enemy sub action in '43.
- Al Raithe, sent the crew lists of the return from Springboard 56

- Miller Carmichael sent the names of officers and BuNos of aircraft 1959 and 1960.

- The William Badleys wrote about the two tours in the squadron, his being on the plane that crashed and burned in Adak while deploying to Vietnam, and settling in Lubbock, Texas.

- Bob Hoare sent the poem "THE STOOGE" (I'm the co-pilot I sit on the right, I'm not important just part of the flight....)

- Gordon "Jonesy" Jones sent several rosters of officers and enlisted, and group pictures, for the 1953-55 period.

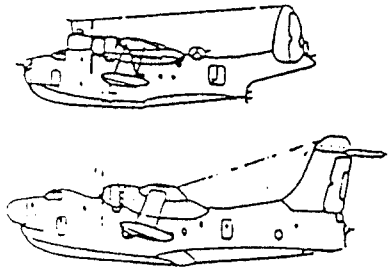
- Richard Shoup sent several pictures of several different aircraft.

*If anyone would like copies of any of the above, drop the editor a note with a SSAE. If you have rosters, pictures or other memorabilia, please consider sending a copy to the editor for the record. If you want it back, we'll make a copy and return. We need such memorabilia for the Ready Room at the reunion, too, so please seriously entertain the invitation.



PILOTS...Your flight training records *may* be available for the asking. Just write to Marjorie Bordelon, Aviation Records Clerk, CNATRA, Corpus Christi, Texas 78419. Include as much information as you can..old service number, designation date and location, full name, SS #, NAVCAD #, pilot number, etc. Expect a several month delay. (I tried it and was told my records were lost when all the records were transferred from X to Y...Sound familiar?).

PELICAN TALES



If you have a sea story or a incident that you think others in the Association might like to read, we'll print it here if we possibly can. It doesn't have to be a first person story—just something you would like to share with others or a story that is a favorite of yours.

♣ It was a very hot and humid day... VP-34, in Coco Solo, was the last Atlantic squadron to be deployed with the PBM Mariner. When it was decommissioned, many members of that squadron were transferred to VP-45. The planes flown to CONUS for final disposition were old and contained copious amounts of very sticky and dark preservative goop on almost everything. The customs inspectors in JAX were normally a congenial group, but occasionally there was an ornery "know-it-all" who nit-picked every declaration and thoroughly inspected the aircraft. One such approached the PPC of one of VP-34s last aircraft as it was pulled up the ramp, and sarcastically remarked that he hoped he wouldn't find anything illegal in the plane, to which the PPC in a worried voice replied that he sure hoped the inspector wouldn't find anything either. With a gleam in his eye and an "I'm gonna getcha" in his manner, the inspector spent over an hour in that HOT... HUMID... PRESERVED airplane before admitting HOT... HUMID... GRIMY... defeat. ☹

♣ In some respects the P5M was a step back in time. Instead of the

PBM's anchor windlass, the P5M had only a manila anchor line that required manual handling. Unlike the PBM's relatively soundproof bunkrooms, the P5M had open bunks in the afterstation in near proximity to the gas turbine APU. Many crews chose to sleep in the roomy cockpit or on the flight deck. One crew in VP-45 got so tired on a trip no one cared where they slept... They left BDA for Corpus Christi to take a APU to a AOCF plane, with a stop in JAX to drop off a passenger and get fuel. The PAX was to meet them for the trip back. The flight got to Corpus Christi, off loaded the APU and helped install it - which took considerable time, so the PPC requested a RON from Home Plate. No dice, came the reply--return at once. Without sleep, the crew set sail for JAX, which could have been overflowed had it not been for the passenger to be picked up. While refueling, the PPC got a note...the PAX had departed for Norfolk and would get to BDA via other means. Oh, Fudge! The trip to BDA was to be in excellent WX - warm, good winds, no thunder bumpers - what could be better for an exhausted crew. Everyone fell asleep after a couple of hours, including the PPC and Flight Engineer, wherever they sat, lay, or otherwise collapsed. No position reports were made, no fuel checks computed - no nothing. The old bird lumbered along on Iron Mike just as if it knew what it was doing. Something, he knows not what, woke the PPC, who looked over the nose to spy the clear and beautiful island of BDA - dead ahead and right on time! Wake the co-pilot, nudge the FE, get Radio back in the headset, go over the landing check list and make the buoy. Boy! Long flight, Skipper.



♦♦ IN MEMORIAM ♦♦

Norman K. Brady
Wesley J. Sage
Curtiss O. Wakeman

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

1. VP-205 VP-45 History.
2. Roster Addendum.
3. Notes From All Over.
4. Reunion Final Words.
5. Rental car rates in JAX.



ATTENTION ALL HANDS

Kennedy Snow has again volunteered to prepare a complete biography of all association roster members for the reunion. This one is a complete replacement for the one done for the '90 reunion, so *EVERYONE* is asked to complete and return the enclosed biography information sheet not later than 1 June 1992, whether you intend to attend the reunion or not. Compiling this biographical data and preparing the roster is a tremendous undertaking and we are indeed fortunate to have Kennedy's willingness to tackle the job. Your cooperation and consideration are sincerely needed to make it something everyone will treasure, so take time now to complete and return the form.

Thanks Jay and Shirley Thomas!



Although Jay and Shirley no longer edit the newsletter, they promise not

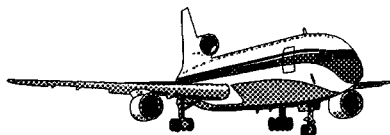
to be far away if their expert assistance is requested by the new editor ☺. Jay will continue as Association Vice President, but we all owe a salute to these two for getting this newsletter and Association off the ground. Back in the Fall of 1987, searching for shipmates they knew in VP-45, they wrote several members of the Mariner/Marlin Association who were listed in the roster as having been in VP-45. One of the first to respond was Bill King, along with Tony Testa, who encouraged Jay to try to organize a VP-45 reunion.

The first newsletter was handwritten and sent to about 20 folks in September 1988. Bolstered by the favorable responses received, their second newsletter was mailed in December '88. Mort Eckhouse called in January of '89 and told of his earlier plans to try for a reunion that for some reason had not taken place. An alliance was formed to "press on." In May Mort provided a list of 122 names and addresses from his earlier attempt, 109 of which were new to the growing roster. The third newsletter was *typed* and sent to about 250 roster entries in June '89.

The generous donations from members have provided the funds for newsletters number four through this issue, but Jay and Shirley did all the work to publish issues 1 through 8. Jay says this was "...a great fun period in my life...just being a part of re-uniting friends of time passed affords personal pleasure of great magnitude."

With their..and your..help, we'll try to maintain the very high standards they set for the newsletter. WELL DONE Jay and Shirley.

◆



DELTA AIR LINES

Delta has arranged special discounted fares for your travel (*certain restrictions apply*). For further details regarding these discounts, you or your travel agent may call Delta at 1-800-221-1212 and ask for Special Meeting Network. Your file reference number for this reunion, when/if you call, is I-40069. (Editor's note = Last reunion these discounts at Delta weren't all that good, and could be beaten elsewhere. Shop around for the best deal.)

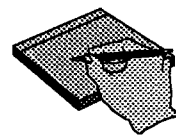
* TREASURER'S REPORT *



When all bills were paid and refunds were made, after the 1990 reunion, we had a balance in the association fund of \$4,603.61. Since then we have expended, for newsletters, postage and a very few long distance calls, a total of \$1,063.60. We have received donations of \$185.00. There is, as of March 10, 1992, a balance of \$3,725.01.

Note: Dave Johnson, our treasurer, has had the job of Treasurer since the plans for the reunion in 1990 began to generate some revenue transactions. He has collected the donations and reunion registration fees, and disbursed the funds necessary for the Association to pay its bills and operate efficiently. He is doing a GREAT JOB!."

* FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK *



Mariner/Marlin History Book

Turner Publishing Company expects to publish the most comprehensive detailed report of Martin seaplanes ever compiled. The Mariner/Marlin Association is actively involved in soliciting biographies from anyone associated with the aircraft, and has a committee helping with the book. It is important that every M/M veteran submit a biographical sketch and be a part of recorded history. You don't have to order a book in order to have your biography (and picture if you send one in) printed. However, the number of books printed will depend upon the number of orders submitted by the **DEADLINE DATE OF 31 May, 1992**. It is important that you act now. Price per copy, 1 \$48, 2-5 \$39, 6-12 \$34 (plus \$5 each if personalized plus shipping). There is **no charge** for 200 word bio's and "incident reports." If you were a part of Martin Seaplane History, this book is about your plane, squadron, shipmates, places and events.

► **Remember...**If you can help out at JAX, please let Bill Rodriguez know. Fill out and mail the career info sheet to Kennedy Snow. If you may want to rent a car, the next newsletter will have some prices (JAX is not known for its public transportation).



Fair Skies...
Chuck