



VPB-111/VP-21 VAGABOND NEWS

www.vp-21navy.org

John G. Esposito, Editor

SPRING 2014 EDITION

A MESSAGE FROM THE LEFT SEAT:

First a little background, then a quick preview of a session planned for our upcoming reunion.

A few years ago the Association received an email from a man who said he was flying one of our old airplanes and using it to fight forest fires. He said he was working for Neptune Aviation out of Missoula, Montana, his aircraft call sign was *Tanker 43*, and the logbooks showed that it once belonged to VP-21. Long story short, the aircraft he was flying was LH-8 (BuNo 145906).

Lots of people in our squadron worked on, crewed in or flew *Airmail 8* over the years, including me. But I thought, probably like many of you, that all of our old airplanes had taken their last flights out to the boneyard a long time ago. The idea that we're all retired while one of our old birds has had kind of a rebirth was a fascinating story, though, so the reunion committee renewed contact.

I'm very pleased now to be able to announce that Dan Snyder, Neptune's Chief Operating Officer, has agreed to come to our reunion next April and share some of his experiences operating eight P-2Vs and a BAE-146, all converted to air tanker roles and currently active in fighting wildfires. To meet demanding readiness and inspection requirements for the P-2s - still powered by R-3350s and J34s, by the way - the company also runs a depot-level maintenance shop in Missoula.

Dan says he'll bring lots of photos and videos to show us how a Navy P-2 gets converted into a slurry tanker, the mission it has to perform in that new role, and how the aircraft are currently used in fighting wildfires. We very much appreciate his willingness to spend the time with us and to field our questions. This should be a fascinating session and cap off a great three days of visits to activities in the Training Command (see reunion notes below). Hope you're planning to join us in Pensacola.

By now most of you have received a letter from me regarding the Brunswick Naval Museum. If you haven't, it's probably because your Association does not have your correct snail mail address. If that's the case, please provide me with your current address and phone number, and please include your name. I hope that all of you feel, as I do, that an organization that maintains the gardens, and by doing so, protects, preserves, and displays our squadron Memorial Plaque; and one that also manages the museum that will display our squadron artifacts and records, is deserving of our support - both from the Association and from each of us as individuals. I've been informed that many VPB-111/VP-21 members have already generously contributed. Although I don't know who you are, I do want to say thank you. If you have not yet joined your squadron mates in supporting this worthy cause, please consider doing so.

As always, we've lost track of some of our members since the last newsletter. If you have any idea where they might be, please let me know. James Page, Auburn, ME, Jerome Ostranski, East Aurora, NY, Daniel Ferreira, Raynham, MA, and Albert Tedder, Charlotte, NC.

It's obvious that our squadron has no shortage of literary talent. In our last issue I reported that Jack Sprouse (62-64) has written a book called "On Neptune Wings." Well, that's just the beginning. Jim Stark (64-67) has released a historical novel (his second book) called "Great Lakes Skipper." Information is available at www.jimstarknavy.com. And Russ Warnberg's (62-64) second novel "Edge of Redemption" is available at www.russellwarnberg.com or by going to Tate Publishing.

Fly safely.

Bill

DONATIONS RECEIVED:

Ed. L. Wilkinson, Wm. Y. Fulp, Richard Catterysse, Edward Ouellette, Wm. B. O'Connell, Jr., Mrs Robert L. Wolen, Gerald N. Punches

Submitted by: Leford, (Tiny) Leland

PLEASE NOTE: The VPB-111/VP-21 Veterans Association charges no dues. Our operations are totally supported by the generous contributions of our membership and by the sale of our squadron products. The association comes under section 501(C) 19, of the Internal Revenue Code as a “Not for Profit” organization. As such, contributions are legitimate tax deductions. Please make your contribution checks payable to the “VPB-111/VP-21 Veterans Association” and forward them to the Treasurer, Leland Ledford, at 127 Pete St., Waterloo, SC, 29384-4647.

TAPS:

It is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of our following shipmates:

Laura Misner: Passed away In July of 2012. She was the widow of Floyd Misner of VPB-111. He passed away in 1998.

Wm. Ross Connors: Passed away 12 January, 2014. He served in the US Navy and subsequently with the US Air Force for a total of 26 years. No other details are available.

Eldon (Ed) Edons: Passed away on 4 May, 2012 from melanoma cancer. No other details are available.

Henry Buczek: Lt.,VP-21, PPC. , 1958 to 1961. He passed away on 21 October, 2011. He lived in Woodstock, IL. No other details are available.

Norwood L. Sperry: Flew with crew 5 in VPB-111 in 1944. He was born in July ‘23. He passed away in April ‘14. He is survived by his wife of 69 years, their three children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He is as well remembered by his fellow crew members: H.H. Ashton, Lt. Jg., Sam Leonetti, AMM 2C, and F. K. “Bud” Hills, AOM 1C.

Robert. E. Brugger: AMM1C, VPB- 111. He passed away on 3 June, 2014. He died of natural causes.

Richard Moore: Served in VPB-111in ‘43 to ‘45. He passed away in 2007. No details are available.

John F. Rosfeld: 82, of Huber Heights, passed away on November 19, 2013 at Dayton VA Hospice. He was born on January 7, 1931 to Otto and Cordelia (Schneider) Rosfeld in Franklin County, IN. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Lou Rosfeld, his parents, and four siblings. John is survived by his three daughters, Ruth Harris, Jana Rosfeld, and Wanda Cline, two sons, John P. Rosfeld and Mark Rosfeld, a brother, Harold Rosfeld, grandchildren, Lee Harris, Steven Harris, Sydney Cline, and Jonathan Rosfeld. He is also survived by numerous family and friends.

AVCM, Joe Gherrity: ‘47 to ‘54: Passed away on 26 May 2014. He was an AL2 when he was in the squadron.

WELCOME (BACK) ABOARD:

Correction to the respective winter Newsletter: We would like to apologize for the misspelling of Peter Fjeld’s name. It was misspelled as Peter Field.

Reunion Notes – Pensacola, April 26-30, 2015

Main focus of the reunion will be social interaction, but also this will be a good opportunity to get an up-close look at the programs and equipment being used in the Training Command today to compare against memories from our early training days – two-plus generations ago. Current plans include the following optional activities. There are no costs for the military site visits, but we will need to pay for transportation.

MONDAY MORNING 4/27

1. Naval Air Technical Training Center (NATTC), NAS Pensacola: The Schools Command relocated here during the late ‘90s from NAS Memphis. Command briefing (org charts, pipelines, etc.); tour “Mega” building shops and training locations. Visit Carrier CIC and control tower simulators (separate building). 2 hrs on site; travel time 30 min. each way.

OR

2. Historic Pensacola Trolley Tour: Guided tour of Old Pensacola, first settled in 1559. Visit Pensacola Village, Seville Square, museums, Veterans’ Memorial Park and Wall South. Finish with a stop at Joe Patti’s and a scoop of gelato. 90 min. (Both groups meeting for lunch at McGuire’s Irish Pub is a possibility if that’s desirable.)

OR

3. Make your own plans and do as you please.

TUESDAY MORNING / AFTERNOON 4/28

4. Blue Angels Practice Session and Visit to Air Museum: Practice Session: view from bleachers behind the Air Museum. Air Museum Options: Main building exhibits, I-Max movie, Hangar One, Flight Line, the National Flight Academy.

OR

5. Make your own plans and do as you please.

WEDNESDAY MORNING 4/29

6. Training Wing Five, NAS Whiting Field: Primary flight training site for fixed wing and rotary wing pilots. Command briefing. Night vision demo, helicopter flight simulators, S. Whiting control tower, N. Whiting flight line for T-6B walk-around and briefing. Two hours on site; travel time 45 min. each way.

OR

7. Training Wing Six, Sherman Field, NAS Pensacola: Primary training site for all Naval Flight Officers (NFOs). Command briefing. Tour simulators, flight line walk-around and briefing on the T-6A & T-45 trainers. 90 min. on site; travel time 30 min. each way.

OR

8. Aviation Survival Training Center, NAS Pensacola: Aviation Physiology and Water Survival Training Dept. Tour low pressure chamber, first aid & ejection seat demos, “Helo Dunker” water survival training. Approx. 75 minutes on site; travel time 30 min. each way.

OR

9. Make your own plans and do as you please.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON 4/29 – ALL HANDS INVITED

10. Business Meeting (Ready Room) Reports, plans, etc. Approx. 15 min.

To be followed immediately by:

Presentation by Dan Snyder, Chief Operating Officer, Neptune Aviation Services: (Ready Room) Using photos & videos to describe how a Navy P-2V gets converted to slurry tanker, its mission requirements, and tactics used in fighting wildfires. (See Bill Locke’s comments, above.) Q&A follows. Approx. 70 min.

OR

11. Make your own plans and do as you please.

WEDNESDAY EVENING 4/29 – ALL HANDS INVITED

12. Banquet with Two-Bell Ceremony

Transportation provided.

OR

13. Make your own plans and do as you please.

Survey

To help us plan transportation we’ll need your feedback. Please take a few minutes to fill out and return the survey attached. Place one number in each box for the activity you and your spouse, separately, would be interested in attending and add any amplifying comments. (So if, for example, on Wednesday morning, you want to visit Whiting Field and your wife would prefer to carpool up to Wind Creek Casino in Atmore to gamble, you’d enter a 6 for yourself and a 9 for your spouse.) You can always choose to go off on your own to enjoy golf, beach time, or hang out at the hotel, but because of increased security requirements, all of the military facilities (Air Museum not included) have asked us to come as a group, travelling together on the bus.

If you received this by email, please copy the table below, paste it into a new email, fill in the blanks and return it to roconnor@gulftel.com; if it arrived by mail, copy or tear off the table, fill it in and mail it back to Bob O’Connor, 755 Wedgewood Dr., Gulf Shores, AL 36542.

Thanks,
Bob

Mon Morning 4/27 (Select #s 1, 2 or 3)		Tues 4/28 (Select #s 4 or 5)		Wed Morning 4/29 (Select #s 6,7,8 or 9)		Wed Afternoon 4/29 (Select #s 10 or 11)		Wed Evening 4/29 (select #s 12 or 13)	
Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse
Comments:									

VPB-111/VP-21 VETERANS ASSOCIATION
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JUNE 2014

VPB-111/VP-21 VETERANS ASSOCIATION

A non-profit, fraternal, and historical association devoted to the reestablishment of contact with shipmates of the past, to strengthen the camaraderie among its members, to record and preserve the memories and incidents of the Association, to preserve the memory of departed shipmates, and to promote the comfort and welfare of its members and survivors. No dues are assessed!

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