



VPB-111/VP-21 VAGABOND NEWS

www.vp-21navy.org

James L. Mattson, Editor

SPRING 2022 EDITION

A MESSAGE FROM THE LEFT SEAT:

My Fellow Black Jacks,

As I stated in our last newsletter, 2023 is going to be a busy year. Our squadron reunion is from 3-7 May and the NASB reunion is from 15-17 September. So, it's time to start making your plans.

You can now make your reservation online at our hotel's website by linking to: [VPB111/VP21 Veterans - Maine Brunswick - Holiday Inn Express & Suites Charleston Airport](https://www.vp-21navy.org/VPB111/VP21Veterans-MaineBrunswick-HolidayInnExpress&SuitesCharlestonAirport) or, by putting the following in your search block – <https://www.HolidayInnExpress&SuitesCharlestonArpt-ConvCtrArea>. Enter our Group Rate: VPB. Or you can call them at 843-554-2100. In either case, be sure to mention either VPB111/VP21 Veterans – Maine Brunswick or the booking code VPB to ensure that you receive the excellent room rate (\$139 per night) that Tiny has negotiated. The reunion events are still being developed and Tiny will let us know as soon as they are ready. Hope to see you there.

If anyone knows the current location of RADM Sam Under, formerly of Monterey, CA, please let me know.

I hope that you're all enjoying a beautiful summer (we certainly are here in Maine).

Stay well and
Fly safely,

Bill

A MESSAGE FROM THE STOREKEEPER:

When we conclude summer month vacation activities, your Association Storekeeper will be back home for business in September following Labor Day Weekend. Upon his return he will have access to the Storekeeper memorabilia supply locker to fill member mail-order requests. Therefore, for new orders members are encouraged to visit our VPB-111/VP-21 Website at www.vp-21navy.org and click on the Small Stores tool bar to bring up full color photos and instructions on how to place a mail order.

TAPS:

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

- ✎ Raymond H. Gaus, 27 July 2021, Stoneboro, PA, ADR2, VP-21 1956-1960
- ✎ Victor J Walters, 21 Dec 2021, San Diego, CA, AMM2, VPB-111 1943 - 1945

NOTE: Available obituaries are posted on the Association website under Biographies/Profiles, <http://www.vp-21navy.org/biographies/>

DONATIONS RECEIVED:

The following persons have generously contributed to the Association fund. The contributions are greatly appreciated.

- ✎ Wesley Bean
- ✎ Edward Ouellette
- ✎ Theodore A. Zotto

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.

FOUND:

No missing shipmates were found this quarter. Please let us know if you cross paths with a former shipmate.

NOTE: Lost and Found information is also posted on the Association website under ‘Lost&Found,’ <http://www.vp-21navy.org/id122.htm>

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR:

Thanks to Dan Dwyer for providing this input for the “As I Remember It” feature.

Reference: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VP-21>. Inputs for the next issue should reach me by early September at jmatts921@gmail.com. Please note that my email address has changed.

Patrol Squadron 21



VP-7F [P2Y-3](#) in 1936

Active	23 July 1929 - 18 April 1942
Country	United States of America
Branch	 United States Navy
Type	squadron
Role	Maritime patrol
Engagements	World War II

Aircraft flown

Patrol	NB-1 PM-1/PD-1 P2Y-3 PBY-1/2/3/4/5
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The OTHER VP-21...

VP-21 was a **Patrol Squadron** of the [U.S. Navy](#). The squadron was established as **Patrol Squadron 7-B (VP-7B)** on 23 July 1929, redesignated **Patrol Squadron 7-F (VP-7F)** on 1 July 1931, redesignated **Patrol Squadron 7 (VP-7)** on 1 October 1937, redesignated **Patrol Squadron 11 (VP-11)** on 1 July 1939, redesignated **Patrol Squadron 21 (VP-21)** on 1 February 1941 and disestablished on 18 April 1942, with the squadron assets merged with [VP-101](#). It was the third squadron to be designated VP-21, the [first VP-21](#) was redesignated VP-45 on 1 July 1939 and the [second VP-21](#) was redesignated VP-1 on 30 July 1940.

Assigned aircraft, effective on the dates shown:

- [NB-1](#) - 1929
- [PD-1](#) - January 1930
- PM-1 - 1933
- [P2Y-3](#) - 1935
- [PBY1/2](#) - December 1937
- PBY-3 - April 1938
- PBY-4 - 1940
- PBY-5 - March 1942

Assigned home ports, effective on the dates shown:

- [NAS San Diego](#), California - 7 January 1930
- [NAS Pearl Harbor](#), Hawaii - 15 December 1940
- Adelaide, Australia - 3 April 1942

Operational history (edited for brevity):

- 23 July 1929: Patrol Squadron 7-B was established at [NAS San Diego](#), California, with six [NB-1](#) floatplanes from the assets of the disestablished squadron VN-7D11. VP-7B came under the operational command of the Battle Fleet. Tender support was provided at that time by [USS Aroostook](#). [PD-1](#) aircraft soon replaced the NB-1s. Training of flight crews continued through February 1930.
- 26 June 1930: The squadron set a flight endurance record for the PD-1, remaining in the air for 18 hours.
- 1 July 1931: VP-7B was redesignated VP-7F as a result of a 1 December 1930 reorganization that placed the squadron under the operational command of the Base Force.
- 21 April 1934: VP-7F participated in a fleet exercise with VPs [2F](#), [3F](#), [5F](#) and [9F](#) to test the ability of the aircraft tenders to move with the fleet. The exercise concluded on 28 May 1934.
- 1 August 1934: VP-7F conducted an exercise with VP- 9F in Alaskan waters to test the ability of tenders to provide advance base support in cold weather conditions. Tenders participating in the exercise were [USS Wright](#), [USS Avocet](#), [USS Sandpiper](#) and [USS Swan](#).
- 22 April 1935: VPs 7F and 9F returned to operations off [Humboldt Bay](#) and [Sitka, Alaska](#).
- 1 October 1937: VP-7F came under the operational command of PatWing-1, following the establishment of the Patrol Wing concept.
- 17 March 1938: VPs 7, [9](#), [11](#), [12](#), [16](#), [17](#) and [19](#) participated in [Fleet Problem XIX](#) (Phase II) as part of White Force, operating against Black Force. Patrol sectors were covered at an extreme range of 600 miles (970 km) in the new [PBY-1](#) and PBY-2 aircraft, using for the first time long-distance radio bearings for navigation.
- 25 June 1938: VP-7 departed with the other elements of PatWing-1 (VPs 9, 11 and 12) for cold weather exercises in the area of Kodiak, Alaska.
- 15 January 1940: VP-11 participated in joint Army-Navy exercises in setting up advance bases in the San Francisco, California, area.
- 15 December 1940: VP-21 received orders to transfer to a new home base at [Ford Island](#), [Naval Base Pearl Harbor](#), Hawaii. The trans-Pacific flight of 12 PBY-3 and PBY-4 aircraft began on 31 December 1940 with all arriving safely on 1 January 1941.
- 15 November 1941: The squadron was assigned [Wake Island](#) as its wartime battle station. In mid-November the squadron packed up, publicly for “fleet exercises,” and headed for Wake with Midway Island as a stopping point. En route the squadron flew ASW patrols for [USS Enterprise](#) and [USS Lexington](#), which were carrying [United States Marine Corps](#) fighters and dive-bombers to Wake and Midway. The squadron arrived at Midway on 1 December 1941 and began operations.
- 7 December 1941: VP-21 was still based at Midway during the [Attack on Pearl Harbor](#). On 8 December 1941, the Konishi Midway Neutralization Force consisting of two Japanese destroyers approached Midway and began shelling the airfield. The Force’s assigned task was to screen for the retreating First Air Fleet after its attack on Pearl Harbor, and to destroy the patrol aircraft on Midway that might detect the Japanese fleet. One VP-21 Catalina was destroyed in its hangar and two others were damaged after hitting buoys during takeoffs without lights. Ensign John M. Eaton, Jr., was one of the ground officers of VP-21 who organized a crew of civilian workmen to remove the surviving Catalinas from the burning hangars and launch as many of them as possible while still under fire from the Japanese task force, he was later awarded the [Navy Cross](#) for his heroic actions during the attack. The squadron departed Midway for a return to Pearl Harbor on 13 December. Patrols and sector searches over the waters off Hawaii remained the order of the day until March 1942.
- 6 January 1942: A squadron aircraft claimed the sinking of an enemy submarine in the waters off Hawaii on this date, but postwar records show no Japanese submarine losses during that period.
- 2 March 1942: Replacement aircraft began arriving in significant numbers from the States. VP-21 was refitted with new PBY-5 seaplanes, equipped with the latest navigation and radio equipment.
- 28 March 1942: After a brief shakedown period for the new aircraft, VP-21 was transferred south to Australia in four divisions.
- 3 April 1942: After arriving at Adelaide, Australia, the squadron was split into two detachments: Detachment One operating from the bay at [Crawley](#), and Detachment Two at [Albany](#). The squadron was under the operational control of PatWing-10.
- 18 April 1942: The two detachments returned to Adelaide, and VP-21 was disestablished. The entire assets of the squadron—aircraft, aircrews, supplies and ground crews—were merged with the remains of VP-101.

VPB-111/VP-21 VETERANS ASSOCIATION
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April – June 2022

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!

Directors:

- *Dwyer, Dan, Online Coordinator/Director, #6 Sarah Liberty Lane, Scarborough, ME 04074*
- *Jabbusch, Jim, Webmaster/Director, 909 Poland Spring Rd., Casco, ME 04015*
- *La Fontaine, Edward, Museum Director, 405 Wilkinson Blvd. - #818, Frankfort, KY 40601*
- *Ledford, Leland, Treasurer/Director, 127 Pete St., Waterloo, SC 29384-4647*
- *Locke, William, Chairman, 255 Mere Point Rd., Brunswick, ME 04011*
- *Mattson, James, Newsletter Editor/Director, 3316 Colfax Ct., Gastonia, NC 28056-7850*
- *Novay, Ron, Director, 7775 Lake Hardeman Rd., Saulsburry, TN 38067*
- *Nute, Carter, Storekeeper/Director, 7605 NW 50th ST., Gainesville, FL 32653-1137*
- *(Vacant) Historian/Director*

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