

VP-1 REUNION COMMITTEE
c/o RICH HUNT
P O BOX 342
BELLINGHAM, WA 98227-0342

4 February 1997

Hi Out There! --

Mark your calendars! Air out your luggage! Make your travel plans! We're going to have a reunion.

Some of you out there have previously been contacted by phone, some haven't. Whichever, here is the latest word. We are having a reunion of all those who were with Patrol Squadron ONE during the early P-3 years (1969 through 1973).

The reunion will be held in Bellingham, Washington, on July 5th, 1997, (a Saturday). We have scheduled an all-day, all-evening, picnic affair at Rich Hunt's 10-acre spread on the outskirts of Bellingham. The cookout is planned to commence about 1000 and go till dusk (about 2200 in this neck-of-the-woods), or maybe even later. All those who served with VP-1 in '69 through '73, and their spouses, are invited, nay, encouraged to attend.

Some background on how this all got started. Last summer, while the Morasch family was visiting the Hunts in Bellingham we had a get-together of ex VP-1 folks who reside here in the Northwest corner of the country. At that time it was decided to get together again this summer, only this time see how many of the old gang could be located, and invite everyone found to come and get reacquainted with old squadron-mates, rehash old times, tell sea stories, lies, whatever, or just relax and reminisce with old friends.

Our volunteer "reunion committee" currently consists of Rich & Ruth Hunt, "Shark" & Carolyn Morasch, Don & Sue Swendsen, Robroy Graham, Stu Stebbings, Don & Ellen Grove, and, via E-Mail from the East Coast, Dan Truax.

As of now, we have gathered more than 200 names and addresses of ex-VP-one-ers of the early P-3 era. Alphabetically, the roster runs from Jerry ADAIR through Mike ZINS. We are adding more names almost daily. "Shark" Morasch's wife, Carolyn, has been a super-sleuth at finding folks. If you have an address, or even just a phone number of someone who served in the squadron between '69 and '73 please let us know. If we already have them on our roster - nothing lost, but if we don't already have them, then hooray, we can contact another squadron-mate about the reunion.

Cost for the reunion picnic is \$10 per person. Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible so we can firm everything up. Make checks payable to "VP-1 ASSOCIATION". Please don't send cash.

Whether you can, or you can not make it to the reunion, if you would like a copy of our current roster of previous VP-1 people with their addresses, and also any future mailings concerning the old bunch, or possible future reunions, etc., please send \$5. This will keep you on our active mailing list. Sorry for the charge, but it costs money to locate folks, make long-distance calls, print and copy roster lists, do mass mailings, etc. Again, make out checks to "VP-1 ASSOCIATION".

For those who were never up in this part of the country, Bellingham is a medium sized city located on Bellingham Bay just north of Puget Sound. It is approximately 80 miles north of Seattle, and about 20 miles south of the Canadian border. The Interstate-5 highway runs past SeaTac airport, right through Seattle city center, up through Bellingham, and north to the border. Bellingham is about a 1½ hour drive from Oak Harbor, the home of NAS Whidbey Island, which is also the home of VP-1 now.

VP-1 has again changed its home port, this time back to NAS Whidbey Island from whence it came in 1970 (as many of us well remember). The squadron has been back here at Whidbey for a couple of years, and just recently completed a deployment to Diego Garcia, (with detachments all the way from northern WestPac to the Arabian desert).

For those who remember NAS Whidbey back '69 when VP-1 transitioned to the P-3, outside of some new hangars and a few other new buildings, you wouldn't notice a big change. The Ault Field main gate is still located at the same place, although there is now a

traffic light at the top of the hill. The Seaplane Base is still here, home to the exchange, commissary, Navy Lodge, and a few other things, but - alas - still no seaplanes. The clubs, officers - chiefs - enlisted, are all still at the same places. NAS Whidbey is currently the home of the Navy's electronic jammers, electronic intelligence gatherers, & Maritime Patrol Wing 10. At Whidbey there are 11 or 12 VAQ squadrons (EA-6B jammers), VQ-1 flying the EP-3E (ELINT) aircraft), 4 patrol squadrons (P-3C), (VPs 1, 40, 46, & 92, and VR-61 with C-9s.

Please return the enclosed form as soon as possible to the above address. You may send your check with the questionnaire, but it would be better for us on the committee if you would send your check via separate envelope to either of the following Oak Harbor addresses. Our bank account and financial folk are in Oak Harbor on beautiful Whidbey Island.

Don Grove
2024 Briarwood Dr.
Oak Harbor, WA 98277-8546

Don Swendsen
1595 W. McKinnon Dr.
Oak Harbor, WA 98277

More information concerning the reunion will be promulgated later, including the latest on things to do in the area. Stu Stebbings has volunteered to take some interested folks on a day cruise of Bellingham Bay & associated islands on his 46 foot ketch, there is a big fireworks show along the bay on Friday, July 4th. There are a couple of Indian gambling casinos within fifteen minutes of Bellingham. Plenty of restaurants and malls in the Bellingham area. Vancouver, British Columbia, is only a short drive to the north. Those who have been stationed at NAS Whidbey might enjoy visiting the base. There is a relatively new Naval Station at Everett, about 30 miles north of Seattle, a Trident submarine base at Bangor a few miles north of Bremerton, and the Naval Station and shipyard at Bremerton. There are now three aircraft carriers with their associated battle group ships in Puget Sound: the USS Vinson and USS Nimitz at Bremerton; and the USS Lincoln at Everett. But, more on all this later.

I must wrap it up now. Hope I've left enough room for Rich Hunt to put all his good information about lodging, flying in/out of Bellingham, the Bellingham-SeaTac shuttle bus, rental cars, etc. Hope to see you in July. - *DON GROVE* -

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