

# VP-1 POPs



## PatRon One P-3 Orion Pioneers

NEWSLETTER #14

AUGUST 2003

### P-3 WARTIME ACTION

*Compiled from Whidbey "News-Times" and NAS Whidbey Island "Crosswind" articles*

The VP-46 "Grey Knights" began their deployed operations while still relieving VP-1. A suspected arms smuggler from North Korea with a possible cargo of Scud missiles was heading toward the Gulf region. Aircrews from VP-1 and VP-46 tracked the ship as it made its way around India and headed north. A VP-46 P-3 was overhead when Spanish Navy Special Forces boarded the vessel and found the Scuds. Orion aircrews also discovered several oil smuggling ships in the Arabian Gulf, some while they were actively transferring their illegal cargo. On the strength of information provided by P-3 aircrews the rogue ships were boarded and seized. The effect of these actions is estimated to have reduced illegal oil smuggling by over 30 percent.

When hostilities began in Iraq augmentation from sister squadrons VP-1, VP-40, and VP-47 provided the requisite aircraft, aircrews, and support to keep three P-3s airborne on-station with the ground forces as they pushed north in Iraq. Infrared and electro-optical imaging capabilities of the "AIP" P-3s helped prevent any surprises and allowed coalition battlefield commanders to choose the time and place of engagements. During major ground battles of the war one could almost guarantee there was a P-3C flying overhead in support.

VP-46's Lt. Matt Smith quietly went about his job during the Iraqi War. He piloted one of the squadrons P-3C Orions. He flew 24 combat missions over enemy territory helping clear the way for troops on the ground. It was the 32-year old pilot's first time flying the "eye-in-the-sky" AIP P-3 aircraft in combat.

"You just have to focus on the mission and the big picture and hope that you don't screw-up," he said. "The biggest thing is that you don't want to let them (the ground troops) down." His 11-person P-3 crew from NAS Whidbey flew air support for U. S. and coalition forces that were advancing toward Baghdad, relaying information to them about any approaching dangers on the ground. Although flying quite high, Smith said they were shot at regularly.

Their world consisted of flying 12 to 13 hours, sleeping when and where they could,

**Left. A VP-46 crew loads a Maverick missile onto one of their P-3 Orions during a desert dust storm.**



and taking-off again. (*Sound familiar?*) Armed with Maverick missiles and the latest AIP modifications, P-3 crews flew over Iraq 24-hours a day, seven days a week, providing critical time-sensitive intelligence directly to coalition ground forces. Simultaneously P-3's were airborne day and night over the Arabian Gulf providing armed surveillance support to the three carrier battle groups there. "We did the same thing everyone else did," Smith said. "Everyone was burning the candle at both ends." Assigned missions took P-3 crews throughout the Arabian Gulf region and over Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Iraq.

Shortly after Baghdad was captured, while hostilities were still raging in northern Iraq, VP-46 landed the first Navy aircraft at the recently captured Baghdad International Airport. This dangerous mission was made even more treacherous due to the lack of proper airport facilities at the battle-torn site. The active "runway" was actually a taxiway less than 100-feet wide. All of that airports runways had been destroyed. The crew, with Commanding Officer Steve Krotow in the left seat, landed "by the numbers". Their mission: deliver the U. S. Fifth Fleet Commander to a battle strategy conference with Gen. Tommy Franks and other coalition battle commanders.

**Below. A VP-46 P-3 Orion and its aircrew, at Baghdad International Airport in April of 2003. This was the first Navy aircraft to land at the newly captured field during the Iraqi War.**



### SPACE "A" TRAVEL

The Department of Defense now allows spouses to accompany their sponsors on space-available air travel within the continental United States. This is a one-year test program which ends on 31 March 2004. Previously Space-A travel for a spouse was authorized only outside of ConUS. Retirees may sign-up for travel 60-days in advance. For more info go on-line to [HTTP://AMCPUBLIC.SCOTT.AF.MIL/SPACEA/SPACEA.HTM](http://AMCPUBLIC.SCOTT.AF.MIL/SPACEA/SPACEA.HTM)

## ORIGINAL "TOUGH LOVE"

*submitted by Lt(jg) KEN SHERMAN*

Way back in the good old days, when I joined the Navy at South Weymouth, the Marines were also recruiting for their programs. The Navy went to college campuses attempting to recruit students (hazardous duty in 1967). The Marines had a different philosophy. One had to go to them -- at a military base where they had a presence. If you traveled to South Weymouth to talk to the Marine recruiters about maybe flying for the USMC after graduating, they required a "fam flight." The fam flight was preceded by a visit to



the base galley, where the unsuspecting youngster was fed a free lunch -- consisting of incandescent Mexican food, washed down with a large grape soda. The excited, burping kid was then led to a T-34, and off he went into the pretty blue sky with a Marine pilot. This military trained aviator then spent 20 or 30 minutes doing the most violent aerobatics permitted in the T-34. Our potential recruit promptly and repeatedly turned inside-out and barfed purple all over the inside of the front cockpit and, in many cases, spent most of the flight wishing he was dead. After landing, he would be required to clean the inside of the aircraft. If he subsequently came back for more rides, the Marines would consider him for their program. They were "tuff".

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## SEARCH & RESCUE

### *JO2 PHIL HASENKAMP Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs*

With his cell phone battery dead, John Stockton knew that his best chance to stay alive was to be seen, not heard. Luckily for him, help was on the way. The aircrew aboard a Navy P-3C Orion aircraft that took-off early that morning from Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe was determined to find him. They saved Stockton's life off the coast of Hawaii on that summer day, July 30, 2002, after Stockton had been adrift at sea in a kayak for more than two days. The VP-9 aircrew spotted Stockton 188 miles southeast of Honolulu and 100 miles west of Kona. From there they directed the rescue efforts of a Coast Guard C-130 and rescue helicopter which eventually pulled John Stockton to safety.

"We continued to orbit the site, as if to say: 'We're not going to leave you,'" said Navy Lt. Keith Demetriades, mission commander for the VP-9 P-3C Orion.

But, spotting a tiny kayak in a huge ocean is a very tall order. "I didn't know how to improve my chance for being seen. I didn't have flares or anything to shoot up to get their attention, but finally all of their hard work paid off and I was spotted. It was a miracle," Stockton said.

Aviation Warfare Technician 1st Class Gary Phillips and Aviation Warfare Technician 2nd Class Chad Lemerick spotted Stockton only after they were well into their search-and-rescue mission. "We were all very tired by the time we found him. We had been looking out the window at the water for about six hours and our eyes had begun to glaze over a bit, when suddenly -- there he was," Lemerick said.

A wave of relief washed over Stockton. "It was so encouraging to just see them flying over. By that time, I was excited about even the possibility of getting rescued," he said.

Once the aircrew made a positive identification, they dropped a smoke signal and continued to circle Stockton while they directed an incoming Coast Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft to his location.

The C-130 dropped a life raft and continued to circle the site as well.

At that point the P-3 crew moved to 1,300 feet and switched roles to scene-of-action commander, which included responsibility for directing the efforts of the rescue helicopter. The Coast Guard helo came in, pulled Stockton to safety, sank the kayak and life raft, and transported the survivor to the hospital.

"This is one of the greatest moments I've had as a pilot," Demetriades said. "We went out there early in the morning with a really focused mentality. The last we had heard was that Stockton had been calling for help from his cell phone two days prior, but that his cell phone had died. So by our calculations he had been in the water for over 50 hours and this was our best shot to find him," Demetriades continued.

Although Stockton was not seriously injured, his condition was beginning to deteriorate. Over the previous two days, he had capsized over 20 times in rough seas, and his body was beginning to show signs of exposure.

"It's the best mission in the world," Phillips said. "We do all kinds of neat stuff. We track foreign submarines, we shoot missiles. But of the missions that we do, this is what really matters. Somebody can go home to their family, that, if we hadn't been there, wouldn't."

Although the rescue was a significant event, the VP-9 aircrews based at Kaneohe are no strangers to search-and-rescue missions. In fact, P-3C Orion aircraft are the bailiwick of maritime patrol and reconnaissance. If you want to find something, ask a P-3 crew to help.

"SAR is part of our bag of tricks. Living on this island, we are aware that we're an asset for many SAR operations. Even when we go on deployment, we're put on many, many SAR missions," Demetriades said. "It's hard to tell your aircrew that you're going out to look at water for nine hours. But we're always vigilant, because if we were in Stockton's shoes, we would definitely want someone out there looking for us. It boils down to compassion and the fact that this is our job," he continued.

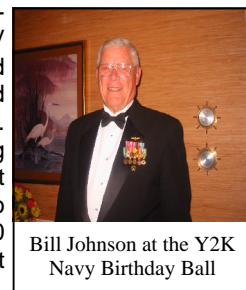
"When I saw the Navy plane circling above, I just knew that America's finest were up there and that if anyone was going to find me, it would be them. They deserve all the credit they get because they really do work their tails off. Everything they do, all the training and hard work paid off big time for me. That's why I'm here today. So I'm very appreciative to them and of all their hard work and training," Stockton said.

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## ANOTHER LOBSTER STORY

*Submitted by Cdr Bill Johnson, VP-1 C. O.*

I did get to fly the PB4Y-2 at Hutchinson, Kansas, in the mid-1950s. This was the Navy version of the Army Air Force's World War Two, four-engine, B-24. Many Navy VP squadrons were equipped with the PB4Y-2 "Privateer" during the 1940's and early 1950's. After P2V training the multi-engine training command at "Hutch" put us in the Privateer so we'd know how to fly and land that big bird. Then we'd fly our long navigation training flights in it as copilot -- when we weren't at the nav table. I remember one nav flight to NAS Quonset Point, RI. We picked up 300 live lobsters for a big party scheduled at



Bill Johnson at the Y2K Navy Birthday Ball

"Hutch". (Of course, we NAVCADS weren't invited). We stowed those lobsters in the bomb bay and I remember walking along the catwalk through the center of the bomb bay with those flimsy roll-up bomb bay doors rattling away, and 600 lobster eyes staring at me. While taxiing out at Quonset we sprung a serious fuel (Av/Gas) leak in our starboard wing tank. After taxiing back-in we four NAVCADS were tasked to go in town, sell the lobsters, and get our money back. We did. Two days later, after the fuel leak was fixed, we again bought live lobsters. This time the Privateer got us and the lobsters back to "Hutch" safely.

## SQUADRONMATES HEARD

*some of these are a little stale due to the computer death of our March newsletter*



**Cindy & AX1 Neal ADAMS** – Living in Mechanicsville, PA, and currently employed as a heating and air conditioning technician. Retired from the Navy December 1992 as an ATC (no more AX's). After VP-1 I went to AIMD at Barbers Point; VP-17; ASW Test Directorate, Pax River; VXN-8; and Naval Air Maintenance Office, Pax River, where I retired.



Adams

**Harriet & AW2 Bob AMES** (11/20) – I left VP-1 in September of '70 right after the Iwakuni deployment. Went to Albany, Oregon, and attended Linn-Benton Community College. Bill Monroe (AW1) was in the area also, and I see he's listed on our VP-1 POPs roster as a member-in-good-standing. Harriet and I were married in '73, and AT2 Dave Bevan from the squadron's Electronics Shop was my best man. Shortly thereafter, I was best man at his wedding. I went on to get my BS and MS in Plant Pathology at Oregon State, then to UC Berkeley and also Colorado State University where I received my PhD. I worked for the USDA in California for a few years, then became manager of research and development at a private laboratory in Kingston, WA. That company folded in 1991 and I needed to find something so we could keep our property in Washington State, so we started a specialty mushroom farm growing shiitake, oyster, and several other species. We sold mushrooms at the famous Pike Place Market in Seattle, and to local wholesalers, restaurants, and so forth, in the Seattle area for 10 years, producing about 2500 pounds per month. That was a lot of hard work and we never really got ahead of production costs, so we sold the property in early 2002. In Feb, 2002, I accepted a job with a company in Texas that produces microbiological products for agriculture. I'm the senior staff scientist overseeing laboratory operations and quality control. I also perform education functions for field staff and our distributors around the country. Looking forward to the next VP-1 POPs gathering in Memphis and exchanging memories of the 'good old days'.



Bob & Harriet

**Lt. Charlie BUDENZ** (10/8) – Howdy, Don. Really enjoyed reading the latest VP-1 Newsletter! Great way to catch up on everyone. Especially appreciated the history lesson from CDR Bill Johnson. Really made me feel especially fortunate to have served in VP-1 prior to the transition from the SP-2H's ("two turning' & two burnin'!") to P-3B aircraft. I still owe you an article regarding the circumstances of Lt. Bill Sears death in 1976 — I do promise to finish it up. Bill was a good friend to many in VP-1 and his tragic crash left a hero's tale that should be remembered. Don, I can't thank you enough for keeping this organiza-

tion together through your marvelous efforts. Great job!

**Teri & Lt. John BYCZEK** (10/10) – Looking forward to September in Memphis.

**Edna & AT2 Ken CARRON** (12/17) -- Aloha all. After my three years in VP-1 ('73—'76) I transferred to NAS Fallon. Then back to the Point and VP-17; on to Adak; the USS Blue Ridge; Atsugi, Japan; the USS Lewis B. Puller; and finally the Naval Supply Center Det Long Beach. I retired from the Navy as a Lieutenant in May of 1993.



Ken 1973

**AW3 Doug DEVINEY** (5/17) – Finally! I'm sending in the dues to reinstate my membership — and my Member Information Form. I found the form under a sofa cushion! Most every day when driving to work and passing the local VFW I'd think about my dues for membership in VP-1 POPs. It just didn't come to mind at home. My heart specialist says I'm good to go for awhile longer. I survived the treadmill and they liked the echo. The stint works!

**Fennina & AWC Fred FINK** (2/7) – Hello to all. I want to thank all of you for the emails, cards, phone calls, and other encouragement while I was recently under-the-weather. For those who'd like more information, I'll try and give you a better picture of what happened. For those not so interested skip on down to the next entry. As some of you knew, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer last October. Prior to surgery I was given shots to shrink the tumor and kill some of the cancer cells. The actual operation took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. My prostate gland was removed. I spent a week in the hospital re-learning how to walk, and how to eat solid food again. I went home on the 1st of February. I had some unexpected swelling and had to return to the hospital emergency room for relief. More medication and back home that night. I've been told that I'm now cancer free. Again, many thanks for the support.

**Connie & AW2 Todd Gilbert** (5/14) – I know I'm behind in my dues. Enclosed is a check to get my membership reinstated. (Editor -- Todd's check paid their dues for both the 2002-03 and the 2004-05 bienniums).

**Mary & ADR2 Ken HORNE** (5/20) – I was a P2V Plane Captain in VP-1 from January 1968 to July 1969. I married my wife the day I got out of the service. After VP-1 and the Navy I worked for the same outfit here in the Northwest for 31 years; then retired. (somewhere under that ball cap and behind the sunglasses and whiskers is the Ken Horne of today. And thanks, Ken, for your generous contribution to the VP-1 P-3 Orion Pioneers).



**Lcdr Paul HOUTCHENS** (10/18) - Aloha Don. The last operation I had, on 29 July, was for taking samples all down in the hip to see if the staph infection was finally gone. The conclusion was that it was all gone and I am now making an appointment to see the surgeon for scheduling the 6<sup>th</sup>, and final (I hope), operation to put all the hip "stuff" back in. I figure that if I'm lucky I can have the surgery somewhere around Xmas time. I did receive the October newsletter, and the e-mail list you just sent. I can use all you guy's prayers for this next operation. Would appreciate that greatly.

**Alice & AEC Jim McCREADY** (2/18) – I've finally signed on as a member. Don Grove said he's been looking for me since 1997. My son found info about VP-1 POPs at the VPNAVY site on the internet and I contacted Don. I left VP-1 for duty at Andrews AFB in late 1970 after my wife, Vivian, was med-evaced from Tripler to Bethesda Naval Hospital. She passed away shortly afterward due to cancer. I retired from the Navy after my tour at Andrews, and then married my current wife, Alice. I went to work for Bendix as a

Quality Assurance Supervisor working on a project for NASA. I later worked as a Q. A. Engineer for Baxter Laboratories. Still later I became director of the evening division at a private post-secondary technical school. I retired from there in 1995. After "retirement" I wrote training courses for N.I.H., GE, Bethlehem Steel, and Otis Elevator, and also taught adult education part-time at a vocational-technical high school here in Delaware. I've been fully retired since 2000 (finally!). We hope to see everyone at the Memphis Muster in September. We've both had some recent health problems, but we'll do our darndest to make muster.



Alice & Jim

**Lt. Peter OLSSON (6/21)** — Hello. To catch you all up - - I'm still in San Antonio - - still very single (at 55½ years) - - still flying the Airbus 330 to Europe for U S Airways. Having loads of fun. On various trips I've seen the Italian Open, the French Open, and plan to catch Wimbledon and the British Open (golf). I've met many friends while on their vacations to Europe. A summer cruise is on my agenda aboard the "Silversea" from Barcelona, via Casablanca, to Lisbon. Hope y'all are having a great summer. I enjoyed our Pensacola reunion and am looking forward to the Memphis gathering.



Steve — 2002

**Eloise & AW2 Steve ORRELL (1/18)** — Duty assignments after my tour in VP-1 were CV-62; CPW-11; VP-19; ComPatWingsPac; and VP-19 again. I retired in November of 1988 as an AWCS. I'm currently getting people up-to-speed with global positioning systems as director of sales for Trimble Navigation.

**Jane & Lcdr Vic PESCE (11/2)** — Don, thanks for forwarding on Charlie Budenz' email. Enjoyed hearing he's still in contact. We crossed paths several times after we both left VP-1. As for Jane and I, we're aging well. I'm still with Lockheed-Martin. Don't know if this ever was told before, but in 1975 Gary Etheridge, Jerry Adair, Dave Blasko and I started up a little project based out of the Lockheed Skunk Works in Burbank. Thanks to the fact that the aircrew detailer at the time, Jim Carter, decided to join our little band, I benefited from his robbing both P-3 fleets of the best people coming available for this project before he left B-Pers to join us. We had a great couple of years, and after knocking around the Navy for another 13 years, I ended up back here with the Skunk Works as a "systems engineer". However, the old adage about never being able to go back turned out to be right. Instead of coming back to a small special P-3 project with enough clout to cut corners and get things done, I'm now working with the Air Force, on a strike weapon system project, the F-117, and in a very structured white world of bureaucracy. Take care and thanks for being a comm link for us.

**Sherie SEARS-BUDENZ (11/9)** — When Bill (Sears) and I left VP-1 in July of 1972 we went to VT-28 at Corpus Christi. Then, in 1974, we moved to Santa Rosa, CA, and Bill flew fire-fighting tanker aircraft for the California Division of Forestry. In June of 1976 Bill lost his life in an aircraft accident while fighting a forest fire using an S-2G aircraft. I married Charlie Budenz in 1978, but we subsequently divorced 17 years later in 1995. I moved to Palo Alto in 1997. I'm currently employed at Stanford University as an oncology research nurse. I'm honored to be a part of the VP-1 P-3 Orion Pioneers. The time Bill and I spent with VP-1 was the best. What a great group of people!



Sherie

**Lt(jg) Ken SHERMAN (10/12)** — Hi, Don: Just a note to let our VP-1 POPs people know that I cover the Navy/P-3 community for **The Journal of Electronic Defense**. We publish each month, but also have a complete web site at [WWW.JEDONLINE.COM](http://WWW.JEDONLINE.COM). Anyone interested can log on. Just pick a user name and password, and then do a subject search for "P-3", "Orion," or author "Sherman." Good job on the VP-1 POPs newsletter, as usual. My email address is [ASA66@CHARTER.NET](mailto:ASA66@CHARTER.NET). Regards, Ken "KB" Sherman, VP-1, '69 -- '72.

**Lt. Gary WEBER (12/9)** — After the Navy I worked for the U. S. Post office in Colorado for 8 years. Then as a home builder in Hawaii for 12 years. My next stint was 8 years at Chicago with United Airlines. Then 4 years in Colorado with Ski Resorts. I currently reside in Longmont, CO, and do options trading.

**Joyce & ADJ1 Dave WITT (10/3)** — I'm still working as an aircraft mechanic for Raytheon Aerospace at NAS Whiting Field in Milton, FL. I'll be having heart by-pass surgery tomorrow, Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Have had some irregular heart beats for the past several years, on and off, but since August they won't stay away. I feel good, except those darn skipped beats. Had a stress test and an echogram and they found two blocked arteries on the outside of the heart going to the lower chamber. One is 60% blocked, and the other is 50%. I was with the surgeon this morning; he had an opening tomorrow; so, here we go. Set condition 5! Thanks again for all the info and the outstanding work you do with the VP1 POPS organization. Go Orion's!

**Gloria & ADR1 Bill YUSCHALK (5-20)** — After returning to Whidbey from VP-1's last P2V deployment in early 1969 I swapped duty with an ADR1 in VP-42. At the time I was working on my paper work to marry Gloria, a Filipina, who has now been my wife for the past 34 years. So, I wanted to get back to Sangley as quickly as possible. Two days before VP-42 was to deploy to Sangley to relieve VP-2 the squadron was shut down. When VP-2 & -42 were subsequently disestablished at Whidbey in September 1969 I received orders to Sangley Point, via Moffett Field for P-3 training. At Sangley I ran the AIMD Prop Shop till the base closed in 1971. I next went to NAS Lemoore, where I retired from the Navy in June 1973. I worked for the Post Office in Bellingham and Ferndale, WA, for a year, then started my 20-year career with the Mobil refinery in Ferndale. I was given early retirement from there after I inhaled a lot of HF acid from a major leak. It should have killed my partner and I, but the mixture was too rich to ignite. But, it did cost me a 65% breathing loss, among some other things. So, I'm fortunate to be here joining the group. My most memorable flight as "Tex" Coleman's Plane Captain was a 6½ hour run with one recip feathered. We were heading for Hawaii and deployment, but had to return to Alameda from just west of Ocean Station November with only one R3350 operating. I'll bet "Tex" remembers that one — it was a nail biter. I won't be able to make the reunion at Memphis due to health conditions — can't travel much. But I'll sure show up if y'all have another one up here in the Northwest.



Bill & Gloria—married 1969



Bill & Gloria—2003

## VP- 1 P- 3 ORI ON PI ONEERS' OFFI CERS

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**WELCOME ABOARD NEW MEMBERS** — Since our last newsletter the following folks have joined-up and become members-in-good-standing of our group: **MARY & ADR2 KEN HORNE; GLORIA & ADR1 BILL YUSCHALK; BARBETT & LT. BOB WOOD.**

**WELCOME BACK REINSTATED MEMBERS** — Also, during this period the following have reinstated their memberships in VP-1 POPs: **AW2 DOUG DEVINEY; CONNIE & AW2 TODD GILBERT; KAREN & AMS2 WALT MORSE.**

We hope to see all of your smiling faces at the all-hands Memphis Muster in September.

### BINNACLE LIST

The last word we had from his sister, Lt. **JEFF STINSON** was undergoing a second round of chemo therapy for lymphatic cancer.

**JANE PIERCE**, AT1 Greg's wife, recently had to change some travel plans to undergo a shoulder operation. She says she'll be up and ready for the *Memphis Muster* in September, though.

PN1 **QUENT HENDERSON** made an unexpected run to the hospital for a double by-pass. He's back up and about again and he and Glenice also plan to make it to our Memphis rendezvous.

AMHC **BOB GIDDINGS** made a trip to the hospital emergency room in the wee hours a few weeks ago. His back gave out on him again. A ruptured disc. Bob was suffering severe pain and couldn't move. Jan had to call 911. Bob's back home now after a two-day hospital stay. He's navigating around, but very gingerly.

Received word that **DOROTHY KAUAHI**, AT1 C. K.'s wife, has been ill. Understand that she suffered a couple minor strokes, and is now in need of some corrective surgery. Our prayers are with her.

**ELLEN GROVE** also had a minor stroke which caused numbness in her left hand and her face. She's undergone numerous medical tests and no cause was determined nor was any permanent damage noted. The medical folks think it was a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack). Currently she too plans to be at our September reunion enjoying the festivities.

How's this for a rugged trio? From L to R, "Shark" Morasch, Bob Giddings, and Don Grove. The photo was taken this spring at Oak Harbor, WA, by none other than Shark's grandson! Lucky they didn't break the camera. What a crew! Still smilin' for the birdie.

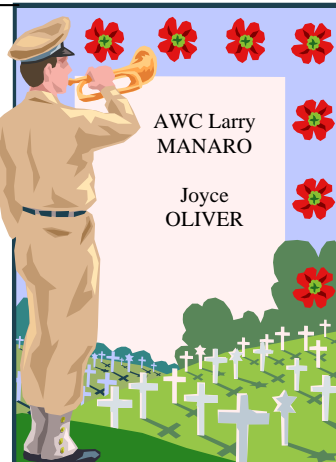


I must report that two of our members have passed away since the last issue of our newsletter.

**LARRY MANARO** died at his home in Burlington, WA, after a very lengthy battle with cancer.

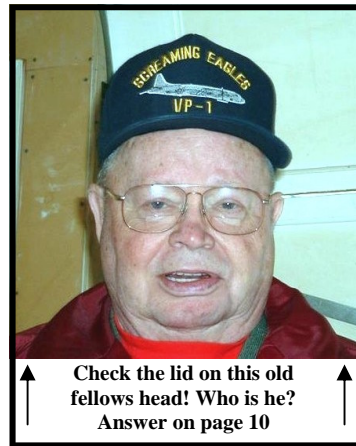
**JOYCE OLIVER**, wife of AX1 Bobby Oliver succumbed to a massive heart attack while visiting family in Kentucky over the recent Independence Day weekend.

Our condolences go out to their families. They'll be missed.



AW2 **LON UNGERMAN** has surfaced — after a long period of silence. I recently received an e-mail in which he said, "Don, thanks for sticking with me. The last few years have been rough but I still like to hear about the best outfit in my career. I'll send dues as soon as I can. Lon". If you'd like to drop him a line, his e-mail address is DADDYBEAR5050@YAHOO.COM. Lon's wife passed away back in 1999.

Naval Aviation officials are investigating the cause of serious interior corrosion problems found on two P-3C Orions. Maintenance personnel found the high levels of corrosion during regular maintenance checks. The corrosion was located inside the wing fuel tanks. Both aircraft were repairable. Officials are unsure as to what caused this high level of corrosion, but it's been speculated that it may have resulted from microbes contained in a special foam used to seal the fuel tanks.



Gene & Carol Poole at a recent "Old Fogies" birthday breakfast





## PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

### CDR DON HANSON

You haven't heard much from me because I believe that when you assign someone a task, you give them the chance to do it. At our last reunion Mike Taylor said he'd lead the pack, and he's doing it. He and his committee have arranged a great reunion for us at Memphis.

But, there is something he needs help on. Mike needs to have a good feeling on attendance numbers for making the contracts with our host facilities. Now, you may have decided to go to the reunion a long time ago, but you have to tell Mike. And, those of you on the fence need to look in the mirror and say something like, "I'll bet Pete Drees looks older than that", or, "I wonder if Captain Coleman still remembers my Captains Mast.", or, "Will both the Wagner brothers be there?" You won't know if you don't come.

One of the many highlights of our reunion in Pensacola was the presentation of the previous squadron skippers. I hope they can all make it to Memphis. By the way, at Pensacola Tex Coleman lost a bet that he was oldest person attending the Y2K reunion. Gene Poole (AVCM) beat him out. ID cards were checked and verified. Gene probably looks younger than Pete Drees also.

So, make your plans. Send in your paperwork. Make it to the **Memphis Muster**.

May I add a side note. The VP-2 Association is still working on the memorial to Whidbey P2V squadron airmen. It's to be dedicated to those that flew, maintained, and supported the P2V *Neptune*, especially to those who lost their lives in P2V operations. Think about it -- if the project jells they'll be coming to you for support.



DON

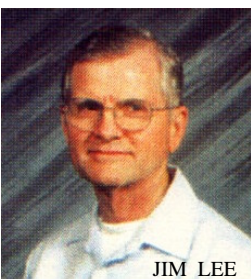
## AGING EP- 3E INTELLIGENCE AIRCRAFT

FROM THE AEROSPACE DAILY (May 19, 2003)

Submitted by ADJC JIMMY LEE

The U.S. Navy's fleet of aging heavily used EP-3 signals intelligence (SIGINT) aircraft soon may face a "crisis" because they are wearing out, according to a congressional panel.

The Navy has just 12 EP-3s, which have been flying for an average of 29 years. Demand for the SIGINT aircraft always has been high and has intensified since the war on terrorism began in 2001. The Senate Armed Services Committee wrote in a recent report accompanying its version of the fiscal 2004 defense authorization bill that test results show that more than half the aircraft have exceeded their fatigue life. The speed and maneuvering envelope of some EP-3s has already been restricted.



JIM LEE

"The fatigue test results indicate there is a potential near-term crisis in the operational availability of these scarce intelligence assets," the report says. "The committee believes that this situation merits senior-level review to ensure that the capability being provided by EP-3 aircraft is not precipitously lost."

The committee added \$4.8 million to the Navy's FY '04 budget request so the service can determine how long the EP-3s can keep flying. The committee also is calling on the undersecretaries of defense for intelligence and acquisition to provide a report on how the Defense Department plans to sustain the EP-3 fleet until a successor becomes available. The Navy plans to replace the EP-3 with the Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA), (*the P-3C replacement aircraft*), but that new aircraft is not expected to be fielded for years.

### — SQUADRON HISTORY —

*This article, by Sgt. Dennis Lindsey, appeared in the TORII TELLER, the MCAS Iwakuni base newspaper on 17 April 1970.*

## CREW- 6 AND THE COLUMBIA EAGLE

A flight crew from Iwakuni-based VP-1 played a prominent role in the recent mutiny incident aboard the Columbia Eagle

Laden with 34,000 tons of explosives for the U. S. war effort in Vietnam in its aging hull, the U. S. merchant ship Columbia Eagle lumbered through international waters making its way toward Thailand. There her cargo would be offloaded and transported to U. S. Air Force and Navy operating airfields in Thailand.

The ship had departed San Francisco Bay in late February, passing under the Golden Gate Bridge with her deadly cargo of 500 and 700 pound bombs. But, on Friday evening, March 13, 1970, her rudder would chart a course to one of the most bizarre incidents in the annals of the sea – an incident which would also involve a flight crew from Iwakuni-based Patrol Squadron One.

An announcement over the Eagle's P. A. system alerted the crew of a "bomb scare", and 24 of the ships 36 personnel boarded lifeboats after a false "abandon ship" order from the pilot house. These sailors drifted, without any food, water, or communications, watching the Columbia Eagle sail off toward Cambodian territorial waters. Their ship had been commanded by mutineers.

VP-1's crew-6, operating in the area, was directed to conduct a search mission early on March 14<sup>th</sup> due to the peculiar behavior of the Columbia Eagle during the previous night. After the greater portion of the Eagle's crew had left the ship she had maintained radio silence on into the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup>. VP-1's P-3B Orion arrived on scene at approximately 1030 hours on the 14<sup>th</sup>, and for the next 10 hours kept the vessel under surveillance. Attempts to divert the ship from its course were unsuccessful, since it was necessary to not provoke the mutineers which could endanger any innocent crew members still aboard.

Lcdr Fred Scalf, the aircraft commander, stated that on the first pass over the Columbia Eagle, "only one man was observed, which is highly unusual. Because of this we decided to investigate further and determine exactly what was going on."

Lt. John Berger, crew-6's Tactical Coordinator, added, "On our second pass over the Columbia Eagle she altered course toward Cambodian waters. It became obvious to us that a mutiny had taken place."

After crew-6 had tried all available means of changing the ships intentions, the aircraft returned to its detached operating field at Utapao, Thailand. The Columbia Eagle continued on her course and docked Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, in the Cambodian port of Sihanoukville.

*(continued on page 8)*



## MEMPHIS MUSTER

### THE LATEST AND STRAIGHTEST

**AMCS MIKE TUCKER** — Reunion Chairman

Gail and I spent an enjoyable day at the Memphis zoo on Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, with three-year-old Tyler “The Energetic” as our guide. A “cold” front had moved through Friday night and the temperature was all the way “down” to the low nineties. A great day to spend some time at the zoo.

For those of you who were stationed here many years ago you’d be amazed at the world class zoo here at Memphis now. Of course the two giant pandas on loan from China add icing to one’s experience. This is but one of many interesting attractions that await you at our *Memphis Muster* in September. Even the city of Memphis has joined in the game with a large billboard located on Highway 51 proclaiming, “MEMPHIS, THE PLACE TO BE IN 2003”. Of course free drinks and reduced buffet prices (*usually costing me two or three hundred dollars when I visit the Tunica, MS, casino testing my luck*) make the zoo seem pretty tame.

Don’t forget world famous *Beale Street* in Memphis, the home of the blues and all night entertainment. Also *Graceland*, the home of “*The King*” here at Memphis. Jerry Lee Lewis and another of his messy divorces has been splashed across our papers recently. Maybe that bit of trivia will still be on-going during your stay here.

We’ve been deeply saddened and shocked by the recent passing of Joyce Oliver, Bobby Oliver’s wife of many, many years. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Bob and the family. Joyce was the leader of our reunion’s Saturday afternoon picnic crew. Joyce was a person in whom I had complete faith and confidence that an assignment would be completed in an outstanding manner. I regret that I was out of town and could not attend her final services. Joyce had a very large, upbeat, service at the family church here, along with visitation, and a final burial service in Kentucky.

I recently received a phone call from a former XO of the Memphis Naval Air Technical Training Center (67-69), who was also a former Maintenance Officer (52-53) of VP-1 — retired Cdr. William “Jeff” Jeffers. He mentioned that he was at Hutchinson, Kansas, in the mid-1950s when VP-1 flew through on the final leg of their around the world flight with twelve P2V Neptunes. If any one attending our reunion has family that might have served with the squadron during that era he would like to visit with you while you’re here. William Jeffers local phone number is 901-358-8315.

I also received a phone call from retired Capt. E L Wilkinson, a former CO of NAS Memphis. He retired in the local area in 1979. He’s interested in possibly locating some former roommates and/or shipmates. He has some good “dirt” concerning both Tex Coleman and Cliff Freund. His local phone number is 901-872-3575.

I’m a bit disappointed concerning the number of reunion registrations received so far. As of this writing we have 137 folks registered for our Memphis Muster. A goodly number so far, but some of those we expected to see here have not yet sent in their fee and registration form. We’re on the downwind leg folks. The time is rapidly approaching. We need to hear from you, and soon. Very shortly I’ll have to provide firm numbers to the club so they know how much food to prepare for our Friday night banquet — and for our Sunday morning brunch. Our picnic crew needs to know how many people they’ll be feeding, so they know how much food to

procure and prepare). We’re going to do all we can to ensure that you have a pleasant, enjoyable time here in sunny Tennessee. So, y’all get up off those checkbooks and get your registration form in to Bill Howard as soon as possible. We’re printing another registration form in this newsletter (page 9) in case the previous one was misplaced.

We’ve noted a discrepancy concerning the number of people who’ve registered for the reunion and the number of people who have reserved rooms. We’re working to clear that up. Besides sending your registration form and reunion fee to Chief Howard, you’ll need to reserve a place to stay. As stated in our previous newsletter, most of our reunion folks will be staying at the **Navy Inn** aboard the Navy Support Activity Mid-South here in Millington, TN. Room rates there are **\$41.65 per night** for two persons. Due to fire regulations only two persons may occupy a room. If you have more than two folks that need to remain together you can reserve a unit at the Navy Lodge. Their units rent for \$45 per night and each unit can handle five persons. Our reunion hospitality room (“duty office”) will be located at the **Navy Inn**. The toll-free phone number for reservations at the **Navy Inn** is **1-877-628-9466** (1-877-NAVY INN). The RV facility at Navy Lake is open for those with campers and motor homes. They don’t take advance reservations, though. It’s first come — first served.

One thing I’d like to mention is that there will be quite a few new faces at this gathering. These are folks from the VP-1 family of our era that most of us haven’t seen in decades. Many who haven’t yet attended one of our VP-1 P-3 Orion Pioneers’ reunions have decided to join-in this time. Great news!

Your reunion committee has spent many hours on a shirt and jacket project, and we expect to have samples for you to examine while you’re here. If you’d like to place an order for a shirt or jacket we’ll have them manufactured to your size specifications and shipped directly to you. The shirt design has our squadron logo over the left breast of a blue polo-type shirt with khaki trim. The jacket is described as an Augusta jacket, also blue and khaki. Cost of the shirt will be around \$20 -- the jacket approximately \$60.

We will also provide a special reunion souvenir to every former squadronmate or former spouse that gets their reunion registration form and fees sent-in in time to arrive at Chief Howard’s abode not later than August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

VP-1 P-3 Orion Pioneers’ ball caps, the same as those that sold-out so quickly at the Pensacola reunion, will again be available for purchase at the *Memphis Muster*. A new stock is being manufactured as I write. For those who haven’t yet seen one, it’s a blue ball cap with VP-1’s “screaming eagle” on the front in gold, with “VP-1 POPS” in gold letters. The caps are lightweight, “one size fits all”. These caps will sell for \$7 each. And, the ever popular VP-1 POPS key chain will again be available for \$2 each.

Our *Memphis Mafia* has ‘done good’ for you. So come on down and relax with us. The town of Munford, where our reunion treasurer Bill Howard resides, has even changed its annual community celebration to a later date so as not to conflict with our get-together. We couldn’t get Millington’s *Goat Days* rescheduled, though. They’ll still be chunking goat pills during our reunion. Germantown, TN, where “Diamond Jim” Wooten hangs his hat, is also having its town fiesta on ‘our’ reunion weekend. That’s a pretty big deal too.

**VP-1 POPS REUNION — 12, 13, & 14 SEPTEMBER**

**BE THERE OR BE SQUARE**

Patrol Squadron One's Crew-6 had operated in a very delicate situation, one which could have easily turned into an international incident. For their outstanding performance of duty they were commended by RAdm W. T. Rapp, Commander, Patrol Force, Seventh Fleet. Members of VP-1's Crew-6 are: LCdr F. L. Scalf; Lt. J. H. Berger; Lt. R. M. Skoge; Lt(jg) A. A. Crabtree; Lt(jg) R. F. Farina; ADR1 C. Hensen; AW1 P. A. Aubertine; ATR2 R. E. Hamill; AE2 L. D. Boggs; AW2 F. T. Conkle; AO2 L. C. Prince; and AW3 D. E. Turbeville.



## MORE ON OUR MEMPHIS MUSTER

**WHEN** — The 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> of this coming September.

**WHERE** — Naval Support Activity Mid-South, Millington, TN. Just a bit north of Memphis on Highway 51.

**WHO** — Anyone who was attached to VP-1 anytime between the beginning of 1969 and the end of 1974. This includes all officers, enlisted men, their spouses, ex-spouses, widows, tech reps, persons closely involved with the *Fleet's Finest*, and their invited guests. Many of the *Neptune* guys from the squadron's last P2V deployment in 1969 will be in attendance.

Arrive early — meet and mingle with friends and ex-squadronmates. Tour the local area - play golf - see the sights.

**Casual dress** is the appropriate attire for all group events.

### SCHEDULED GROUP EVENTS ARE:

**1. Friday evening banquet**, followed by festivities. Casual hour at 1800, followed at 1900 by a dinner of salad, roast beef, new potatoes, green beans almandine, rolls, butter, iced tea and coffee. Cost of the banquet is \$12 per person. Be sure to have your photo taken by the photographer at the Friday banquet or else your smiling face won't appear in our reunion memory booklet. You don't have to purchase a reunion memory booklet, but those of us that do would like to see a picture of everyone that attended the *Memphis Muster* included in the booklet.

**2. Saturday afternoon fish-fry and southern BBQ** starting at noon at Navy Lake. Cost for attending this scrumptious cook-out is \$10 per person. This includes all you can eat and drink (soft drinks and cold beer).

**3. Sunday morning brunch** — we'll sit down at 1000 for a meal of juice, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage patties, hash browns, grits (ya gotta have grits in Southern Tennessee), bis-

cuits and gravy, and plenty of hot coffee.

After brunch our guest speaker will entertain us with a few inspired words, then it's on to our business meeting.

After President Hanson bangs the gavel we'll need to elect new officers for our association. A president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. Lou Tafoya is our nominating committee and is working on coming-up with a slate of qualified persons willing to serve VP-1 POPs by holding office. If you'd like to hold a position and help steer our organization to bigger and better things please contact Lou.

Once a new president is elected he will need to appoint his committee persons — Chaplain; Finance committee; Newsletter Editor/Publisher; Membership committee; Reunion Committee; Internet Information Coordinator; and so forth. Be prepared to stand up and be counted on to help our fine organization. It doesn't run by itself.

We'll need to ratify our association By-Laws. These rules, that have been drafted by your current officers, are guidelines for the operation of our organization. Copies will be available for members to peruse before attending the meeting.

And, we'll need to select a place, and date, for our next reunion. If you'd like to hold the next reunion at your locale this is the time to make it known. Members and their spouses at the meeting will vote to decide when and where the next reunion will be held. How about at a P-3 site like Brunswick; Jacksonville; Whidbey Island; or Oahu? We have VP-1 POPs members living in all these locales. But these are just my thoughts — don't let me sway you.

To attend the reunion you'll —

—> **Need to send in the registration form** either from your April VP-1 POPs newsletter, or the form on page 9 of this newsletter. Mark the group functions you plan to attend and compute your cost. Be sure to include your \$3 per person registration fee. Then mail the form and your check to Bill Howard as indicated on the registration form.

—> **Need to have a place to stay.** Most of the reunion attendees will be staying at the Navy Inn aboard the Navy Support Activity. That's where our hospitality room (duty office) will be located. But, of course, you may stay wherever you desire.

Rooms at the Navy Inn are \$41.65 per night. Only two people may occupy one of these rooms due to fire regulations. The toll-free number for reserving a room at the Navy Inn is **877-628-9466**.

If you have more than two people who need to stay together you may rent a unit at NSA's Navy Lodge. There five people may occupy one unit. The Navy Lodge units rent for \$45 per night.

For those coming with a motor home or camper there is an RV parking facility at Navy Lake. You may choose a full hookup, water and electricity only, or electricity only for \$12, \$10, or \$6 per night respectively. They don't take reservations — first come first served.

The time to act is now. Get your forms in and reserve your rooms. Our reunion chairman, Mike Taylor, needs to provide the club and picnic crew firm numbers for our group events by August 22<sup>nd</sup>. They need to determine how much staff will be needed, how to set things up, and how much food to procure and prepare.

Have questions? Call or e-mail Mike Taylor, our man-on-the-spot. His phone number and e-mail address are listed on page 5 of this newsletter.

# VP-1 P-3 ORION PIONEERS

MEMPHIS MUSTER, 12, 13, 14 September 2003

PLEASE RETURN THIS REGISTRATION FORM WITH YOUR PAYMENT TO

C. W. Howard, 214 Muriel Lane, Munford, TN 38058

Phone: 901-837-0335

E-mail: CHARLESHOWARD@HOTMAIL.COM

Make checks and money orders payable to "VP-1 POPS REUNION"

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse and/or Guest Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee is \$3 per person: \$3.00 \* number attending \_\_\_\_\_ = Total amount to remit for registration fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Friday night dinner @ \$12 per person \* number attending \_\_\_\_\_ = Total amount to remit for dinner \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday afternoon fish fry & bbq @ \$10 per person \* number attending \_\_\_\_\_ = Total amount to remit \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday brunch @ \$10 per person \* number attending \_\_\_\_\_ = Total amount to remit for brunch \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Meals for children under 12 are half the above costs.**

Number of kids attending & what events \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount remitted for children's meals \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT SUBMITTED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

are you be interested in: Golfing \_\_\_\_\_ Tunica (Casino) Trip \_\_\_\_\_ Graceland Visit \_\_\_\_\_

## PLEASE COPY OR CLIP- OUT THE ABOVE VP- 1 POPs REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill in the requested information and mail the registration form to C. W. "Bill" Howard at the address on the form. Make your check or money order payable to "VP- 1 POPS REUNION". Please don't send cash. We'd appreciate it if you would mail the registration form and your payment in AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so our reunion committee members have firm numbers to work with and can have each event/meal organized well in advance. The committee is working hard to ensure everything is ready for you to enjoy a wonderful gathering.



**FLASH** — This just in from **KEN SHERMAN** via e-mail. “As you may have already heard, the Navy has decided to decommission all Reserve P-3 squadrons between now and 2007”.

As you probably know, the photo of the old fellow wearing the VP-1 ball cap on page 5 is none other than your secretary, treasurer, and newsletter editor/publisher, **DON GROVE** — me. That’s an official VP-1 ball cap, circa 1997. I purchased it during our initial reunion that year when we toured a VP-1 P-3C aboard NAS Whidbey Island. They now have different caps. **BILL YUSCHALK** (ADR1) recently obtained one from the squadron, and Bill’s is different from mine. How fast time flies by and things change. I’ll be starting my 70<sup>th</sup> year here on earth shortly after our reunion. Seems like only a few years ago that we were closing-up Sangley Point and opening the era of patrol squadron aviation at Cubi Point. NAS Cubi Point has now been closed for a number of years.

Speaking of change — this is the last newsletter I’ll be publishing. I’m resigning my VP-1 POPs offices and duties as of our business meeting at Memphis on September 14<sup>th</sup>. Some folks don’t seem to believe me, but it’s true. I’ve been performing my these tasks for over six years, and I’m burned out. This old timer needs some time out-to-pasture to get reinvigorated. If no one comes forward to accept the positions I’m vacating — well, ??? So please be thinking concerning new officers. There’s no indispensable person. We learned that in the Navy, over and over again. I notified our association president and vice president of my decision well over a year ago, providing ample time to line-up a successor.

VP-1 POPs currently has 245 paid-up members-in-good-standing. That’s more than we thought we’d ever have when we started out back in 1997. We were jumping with joy when we hit 100 mem-

bers. Sadly, though, we now also have 71 of our previous squadronmates on the deceased list. And the grim reaper seems to come calling more and more often. Those dog-gone calendar pages keep falling off the wall and fluttering to the floor.

I think we’ve barely scratched the surface concerning stories from our VP-1 days. I can’t begin to thank everyone for their inputs, but a few who’ve gone out of their way contributing interesting items for our newsletter are Bill (Cdr) Johnson, Chief “Willie” Williams, “Foots” Huston, Bob Giddings, Ken Sherman and Rich Hunt. Thanks to them and to all the others who have assisted in making this newsletter interesting for our members. Those who still have tales to tell please get them roughed-up. They don’t have to be written professionally — all smoothed-up ready for printing. Our next editor/publisher can handle that.

I intended to have more pictures in this issue than are included. But, this is just about the end. No more room. Here’s one for you, though. Recognize this beautiful idyllic setting out in the middle of no-where? This is a picture of lonesome Midway Island out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It was taken by AMH3 **CARSON HUNT** from an airborne P-3B back in 1975.

THE END



VP-1 POPs  
C/o Don Grove  
2024 Briarwood Dr.  
Oak Harbor WA 98277



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