

Edited by JO2 E. Blake Towler



Ted Carlson

Awards

On 16 December 1997 *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) received the **1996 Admiral Flatley Memorial Award** for Naval Aviation Safety. The award is presented annually to the aircraft carrier with the best safety record. In 1996, *Carl Vinson* accumulated over 30,000 flight

Talk about crew coordination! SH-60B *Seahawks* from HSLs 41, 43, 45, 47 and 49, NAS North Island, Calif., strut their stuff, commemorating the 15th anniversary of the LAMPS MK III system's fleet introduction.

hours and 14,000 arrested landings during 207 days at sea.

Thirty-six years after pinning on the bars of a second lieu-

tenant, Lt. Gen. Jefferson D. Howell, Jr., COMMARFORPAC, was awarded the **Marine Corps Aviation Association's Silver Hawk Award** during the annual MCAA award ceremony on 27 September 1997. The award honors the active duty Marine aviator or Naval Flight Officer holding the earliest date of designation as a Naval Aviator.



PHS Jeffrey Sewell

Carl Vinson (CVN 70) transits the Pacific Ocean in May 1996.

The Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum named Naval Aviation analyst Norman Polmar to the museum's **DeWitt C. Ramsey Chair for Naval Aviation History**. The Ramsey fellowship was created by Adm. and Mrs. Ramsey to increase the diffusion of knowledge pertaining to U.S. naval flight history. During the yearlong fellowship, Polmar plans to revise and update his book, *Aircraft Carriers: A History of*

Carrier Aviation and Its Influence on World Events.

Charles H. Kaman, rotary wing aviation pioneer and chairman of Kaman Corp., received the **Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy** on 12 December 1997. Kaman was presented the trophy before 850 industry colleagues and friends at a formal dinner hosted by the Aero Club of Washington, D.C. The award was established in 1948 to honor the memory of both Orville and Wilbur Wright, and is awarded annually to an individual for significant public service of enduring value to aviation in the United States.

The *Blue Diamonds* of VFA-146 won the Commander Strike Fighter Wing, Pacific **1997 Scott F. Kirby Award for Ordnance Excellence**. Nine strike fighter squadrons based at NAS Lemoore, Calif., competed for this prestigious award honoring weapons handling and delivery capability.

Corrections to Nov–Dec 1997

VP-66, not VP-65, earned first place in the undersea warfare competition during the International Maritime Patrol Aircraft Symposium.

Special Records

Several units marked **safe flying milestones**:

Unit	Hours	Years
VFA-125	100,000	5
HSL-44	85,000	8
HSL-41	80,000	15
HSL-45	60,000	8
HC-11	43,000	5
HS-10	20,000	
VAQ-136	18,000	10
VR-48	10,000	

Rescues

What started out as a routine medical evacuation turned into an abandon ship evolution for a flight crew from **HSL-44 Det 1** aboard

Scott (DDG 995), 90 miles west of Jamiaca. The ship received a distress call in the pre-dawn hours of 2 January stating a sailor aboard the oil derrick *Rigmar*, under tow by the Russian seagoing tug *Umka*, had suffered a partial amputation of his hand when he was struck by a piece of sheet metal knocked loose by high winds and heavy seas. While the crew of the SH-60 *Seahawk* prepared for launch, *Scott* turned toward *Rigmar* and requested Coast Guard assistance to pinpoint its location. The helo launched shortly after sunrise, crewed by LCDr. Jeffery Bocchicchio, Lt. Jack Barry, AW1 Mike Mellema and AW3 Ferdinand Hollis, and was directed to *Rigmar* by a Coast Guard C-130 *Hercules* that had arrived in the area to assist in the rescue. Once on scene, Hollis was lowered to the rig’s pitching deck, where he prepared the injured man for hoist and transport. As the helo departed for the hospital at Montego Bay, Jamaica, *Rigmar* requested the evacuation of the oil derrick’s remaining seven crew members. The tug’s crew feared that the tow lines would snap and the rig, which had already sustained great damage and was pitching up to 25 degrees, would become unseaworthy and sink. Upon delivering the injured sailor to the hospital, the *Seahawk* crew refueled their helo, then returned to *Rigmar* to retrieve the remaining crewmen via rescue hoist. They were then transported to *Scott*, and delivered to Montego Bay that evening.

A medevac call to *Reuben James* (FFG 57) on 28 November 1997 sent the ship and **HSL-37 Det 4** on a 1,200-mile trip to the



The “ordies” of VFA-146 (l–r), bottom row: AO3 Aaron E. Conrad, AOAN Clyde A. Berry, AO3 Nova Adams and AOAN Talmadge L. Whiting. Middle row: AOC Kelly McDonald, AO2 Earl F. Battle, AO3 Stephen M. Arnold, AO2 Stephen W. Montgomery, AO1s Daniel W. Wright, Randy Minke and Scott A. Randall, and CWO2 Michael E. Parks. Back row: AOAN Bernard M. Somers, AO2 Jeffrey A. Campbell, AO3 Jason G. Koenig, AO3s Marc S. Barney and Normand E. LaFleur, AOAN Jesse D. Whallen and AO2 Daniel B. Beyer.



Brian P. Washburn

This HH-60J *Jayhawk* from Coast Guard Air Station, Cape Cod, Mass., prepares to relocate a 5,600-pound buoy that lost its mooring and “beached” itself south of Martha’s Vineyard.

research vessel USNS *Victorious* to save a crewman who had developed a life-threatening imbalance in blood sugar and glucose levels. After closing for two days, *Reuben James* was able to launch one of HSL-37’s SH-60 *Seahawks*. The aircrew—LCdr. Tom Graziano, Ltjg. Rich Weeden, AW3 Matt McComber and AW3 Dominic Bernardy—departed the frigate and arrived over *Victorious* during strong winds and heavy seas. Since the research vessel did not have a helo pad, McComber had to be lowered to its deck via rescue hoist while Graziano kept the *Seahawk* in a hover overhead. Once onboard, McComber checked on the patient and prepared him for transport. After the patient and McComber were hoisted back aboard the waiting helo, the helo returned to *Reuben James*. There, the ship’s medical staff stabilized the victim for the 200-mile flight to Midway Island in the central Pacific, where he received further medical treatment.

While flying a routine training mission, the crew of a P-3C *Orion* from VP-1 helped save the lives of three North Korean fisherman. Cdr. Brian Burlingame was piloting his plane over the

Sea of Japan when he noticed an irregularity in the way the waves were breaking in the waters below. On closer inspection, Burlingame spotted an overturned vessel and directed his crew to begin searching for survivors.

Burlingame used cockpit instruments to determine the wind bearing and headed in that direction. Soon afterwards, one of his aircrewmen saw three fishermen floating together, waving their arms at the plane. Burlingame flashed his lights and dipped the plane’s wings to let them know they had been spotted, then called on ships in the area to rescue the survivors. They were eventually picked up by the freighter *Cornucopia* about 85 miles northwest of the Oki Islands off western Japan.

It’s not a normal month unless the **NAS Fallon Search and Rescue** team is saving somebody. In 1997, the “Longhorns” responded to 25 requests for assistance and were involved in the medical evacuation of 27 individuals. So far in 1998, they have participated in a number of rescues. On 17 January, the team transported rescue personnel to a

light plane crash at 9,500 feet in the Sierra Nevada mountains, about five miles west of Walker, Calif. After the rescuers treated and stabilized the sole survivor of the crash, the victim was brought aboard the helo and flown to Carson City, Nev., to awaiting medical personnel. Another rescue call, on 2 February, involved a lost cross-country skier in Mammoth Lakes, Calif. After locating the skier, the helo crew directed the operator of a nearby snow-grooming machine to the lost skier, who rode the machine out of the area.

Scan Pattern

Through a unique joint venture between **HT-8** and the USCG Polar Operations Flight Division, students at Hobbs Middle School and S. S. Dixon Elementary School in Pensacola, Fla., will embark on a trip that will take them, figuratively, to the top and bottom of the earth. Lt. Troy Beshears, HT-8’s Adopt-A-School coordinator, and Lt. Claudia McKnight, USCG Polar Operations aviation maintenance officer, have developed a program in which the schools interact, via e-mail and on-line chats, with the crews of two USCG polar icebreakers during their journeys to Antarctica and the Arctic Circle. The students will use the gathered information to study biology, geography and math, as well as scientific issues such as carbon

Retired VAdm. Donald Engen, center, director of the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum, received a *Blue Angels* print for recounting his 36 years of Navy flying before a U.S. Naval Academy crowd in January 1998. Right (l-r), VAdm. Jerry Unruh, Ret.; Capt. Warren Vosseler, Ret.; Engen; Midshipman Jeffrey McQuillan; and LCdr. David Myre.



Pamela Wamken

monoxide pollutants and ozone depletion.

The Navy formally turned over the DoD logistical support responsibilities of the **U.S. Antarctic Program** to the Air Force in a 20 February ceremony in Christchurch, New Zealand. A second ceremony will be held 12 March at Naval Construction Battalion Center, Port Hueneme, Calif., to disestablish the U.S. Naval Support Force, Antarctica, after 42 years of providing expeditionary and logistical support on the world's most southern continent.

After an active 36-year life, **NAS Meridian, Miss.**, is getting a face-lift with the help of \$30 million from the Navy to finance at least 43 construction projects. Some of the projects

include building and renovations of bachelor quarters and Sailors barracks and installing new lights on the station's south runway to represent the dimensions of a *Nimitz*-class carrier. The base was built in 1961 for \$60 million. Comparable construction today would cost over \$135 million.

In the early morning hours on 2 December 1997, members of the Naval Academy Flying Club conducted an unusual aviation strike mission. Under the leadership of Midshipman 1/C Jillene Bushnell, club president, a strike on the Army's West Point campus was planned and executed. Bushnell and the strike team—Midn. Timothy Heisey, Midn. 2/C Jason Mendenhall, LCdr. Michael Ross and visiting professor John Burks—

met at Lee Airport in Edgewater, Md. After prepping their planes, the team launched in two T-41 *Mescaleros*, each armed with a deadly payload: 500 blue Nerf footballs embossed with the words, "Go Navy, Beat Army" in gold lettering. Flying low to evade enemy radar en route to the target, strike team aircraft one, piloted by Bushnell, reached West Point at noon as the Army cadets were standing outside in formation. Bushnell delivered her "ordnance" with pinpoint accuracy and departed the area to the outraged shouts of the battered cadets. Fifteen minutes later, strike team aircraft two, with Mendenhall at the controls, arrived on site and dropped the second load. Reports from ground spotters claimed the mission was a resounding success.

Change of Command

AIRPAC: VAdm. Michael L. Bowman relieved VAdm. Brent Bennett, 16 Jan.

CCG-6: RAdm. R. E. Suggs relieved RAdm. T. M. Bucchi, 8 Dec 97.

CNATRA: RAdm. T. M. Bucchi relieved VAdm. Michael L. Bowman, 15 Dec 97.

Constellation (CV 64): Capt. Donald Bullard relieved Capt. Rocklun Deal, Jan.

CVW-1: Capt. C. T. Cuninghame relieved Capt. J. D. Stufflebeem, 31 Dec 97.

CVW-9: Capt. Mark T. Emerson relieved Capt. Thomas N. Vaughn, 5 Dec 97.

HS-75: Cdr. W. Wilton Holmes relieved Cdr. Stanley P. Hudson, 15 Nov 97.

HSL-37: Cdr. Patrick D. Smith relieved Cdr. Karl E. Kolesnikoff, 5 Mar.

HSL-43: Cdr. Steven Litwiller relieved Cdr. Earl Gay, 29 Jan.

HSL-44: Cdr. Steven W. Wright relieved Cdr. Wayne A. Tunick, 23 Jan.

John F. Kennedy (CV 67): Capt. Robin Y. Yeber relieved Capt. Edward J. Fahy, 9 Dec 97.

RESPATWINGLANT: Capt. Riley Gladden relieved Capt. Fred S. Gay, 10 Jan.

TACRON 1194: Cdr. O. William Ott relieved Cdr. William E. Tillerson, Jr., Dec 97.

Tarawa (LHA 1): Capt. James Bray relieved Capt. Christopher Ames, Dec 97.

VAQ-131: Cdr. Terry B. Kraft relieved Cdr. Danny E. Mason, 6 Feb.

VAQ-139: Cdr. Jay M. Smith relieved Cdr. Donald P. Quinn, 14 Nov 97.

VAQ-209: Cdr. Richard A. Montanio relieved Cdr. Mark L. Crook, Jan.

VAW-126: Cdr. David A. Newland relieved Cdr. John E. Laughlin, 15 Jan.

VFA-34: Cdr. Chip Miller relieved Cdr. Tom Hills, 17 Dec 97.

VFA-87: Cdr. Martin Paulaitis relieved Cdr. Steve Dallaire, 4 Dec 97.

VFA-113: Cdr. Jonathan Hults relieved Cdr. Andy McCawley, 14 Dec 97.

VFA-131: Cdr. Kevin Donegan relieved Cdr. Dave Mercer, 11 Dec 97.

VFA-134: Cdr. Mike Hamele relieved Cdr. Dan Cloyd, 19 Dec 97.

VFA-137: Cdr. Stephen Smith relieved Cdr. John McCloskey, 18 Dec 97.

VFA-147: Cdr. Dennis FitzPatrick relieved Cdr. Charles Wright, 4 Dec 97.

VMFA-323: Lt. Col. James R. Keadle relieved Lt. Col. Raymond Priest, 18 Dec 97.

VR-57: Cdr. Mark Vaughn relieved Cdr. George Farmer, Jan.

VS-21: Cdr. Robert R. Sterling relieved Cdr. Donald W. Aiken, Jr., 4 Dec 97.

VS-29: Cdr. Bradley Johanson relieved Cdr. Steven Luce, 19 Dec 97.

VS-30: Cdr. Gregory R. Nowak relieved Cdr. Theodore P. Algire, 16 Jan.

VS-38: Cdr. Robert A. Hornbeck relieved Cdr. Richard V. Stockton, 17 Dec 97.

VS-41: Cdr. James Kelly relieved Cdr. Lee Pontes, 26 Nov 97.

VT-19: Cdr. Devon G. Goldsmith relieved Cdr. Kenneth D. Coburn, 5 Dec 97.

VT-27: Cdr. James H. Holt, Jr., relieved Cdr. Paul R. Doyle, 30 Jan.