

est. 1 July 74

VAW-117
1974



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

IN REPLY REFER TO:

PAO:RBE:jcb

5750

Ser# 8

4 MAR 1975

From: Commanding Officer, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05D2)
Subj: Command History (OPNAV Report 5750-1)
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B
Encl: (1) OPNAV Report 5750-1

1. Pursuant to the provisions of reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

M. J. AHRENSTEIN

Copy to:
Director of Naval History (OP-09B9)
CINCPACFLT

CARAEWRON ONE ONE SEVEN

SQUADRON HISTORY

1974

Enclosure (1)

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MISSION

CARRIER AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING SQUADRON
ONE ONE SEVEN

Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE ONE SEVEN was established on 1 July 1974 in accordance with Chief of Naval Operations message 032008Z MAY 1974, under the administrative and operational control of the Commander, Fighter/Airborne Early Warning Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

The squadron consists of approximately one hundred twenty (120) enlisted personnel and ~~twentyone~~ (21) officers assigned to maintain at peak efficiency and operate four (4) E-2B "Hawkeye" aircraft. The Grumman built E-2B "Hawkeye" is an all-weather, carrier based airborne early warning/command and control aircraft that patrols defense perimeters to provide early warning of approaching enemy aircraft and to vector interceptors into attack position. In addition to this primary AEW mission, the E-2B can also provide strike and traffic control, area surveillance, search and rescue coordination, navigational assistance, and communications relay.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

JUL

- 01 Establishment of VAW-117
- 03 Squadron Callsign selections submitted to CNO for approval
- 31 Commanding Officer represented COMNAVAIRPAC at a COMNAVAIRLANT Conference

AUG

- 24 Commanding Officer hosted a Squadron Enlisted Wives Orientation Brief

SEP

- 04 Squadron Callsign approved by CNO
- 08 Squadron Insignia design submitted to CNO for approval

OCT

- 15 E-2B BUNO 151713 delivered by CARAEWRON ONE ONE FOUR, NAS North Island
- 16 Command designated by NAVAIRSYSCOM to implement a pilot Tool Control Program for the E-2B Community
- 17 Squadron Insignia design approved by CNO

NOV

- 18 Command nominee honored by San Diego Chamber of Commerce
- 22 Command logged its first flight hours
- 29 E-2B BUNO 149819 delivered by CARAEWRON ONE TWO SIX, NAS Norfolk

DEC

- 02 E-2B BUNO 151713 departed for AIMS Test Program at NAS Patuxent River, Maryland
- 06 E-2B BUNO 151713 returned from NAS Patuxent River, Maryland
- 16 Plank Owner Certificates awarded at morning quarters

BASIC NARRATIVE

JUL

On 1 July 1974 at 1400, Commander Monroe J. AHRENSTEIN assumed command of the newly established Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN (VAW-117), in ceremonies held at Hangar 310 on board Naval Air Station North Island. Vice Admiral Robert B. BALDWIN, USN, Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet was the guest speaker. Following the ceremonies a reception was held at the Naval Amphibious Base Officer's Club.

As a newly established squadron, the command consisted of seventy-two enlisted personnel and twenty-one officers with many of those on hand for the ceremony still assigned to RVAW-110 and undergoing some phase of training in preparation for their tour with the squadron.

On 3 July 1974, the Operations Department submitted three Squadron Callsign selections to the Chief of Naval Operations for his approval.

Prior to its actual establishment, squadron insignia designs were solicited from all interested personnel. On Friday, 5 July, the accumulation of written suggestions and "artistic" portrayals numbered about thirty. Several suggestions were taken under consideration and a composite design idea was formulated. A final design was selected and presented to an artist to design the Squadron insignia for submission to the Chief of Naval Operations for approval, based upon an original submission by LTJG R. ELLIS.

Commander AHRENSTEIN departed for NAS Norfolk, Virginia on 30 July 1974, having been selected by the Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet to represent the West Coast AEW Squadrons at a conference hosted by the Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, concerning the improvement of various capabilities of the E-2 aircraft.

AUG

An all hands athletic field day was scheduled at 1300 on 18 August 1974 at Stroop Field, NAS North Island. This event was well received by all hands as it gave the officers and enlisted personnel an opportunity to meet in an informal environment and discuss the bright prospects for the new squadron. The athletic activities were launched after a meal, featuring fried chicken, hamburgers and beer or coke, with the squadron's officers taking on the enlisted personnel in a softball game.

On 24 August Commander AHRENSTEIN hosted a Squadron Enlisted Wives Orientation meeting at the Firebird Auditorium, RVAW-110, NAS North Island. Various topics were discussed, including the squadron's mission, service benefits and entitlements and the location of various organizations serving dependent needs. The meeting was concluded with a tour of squadron spaces and the aircraft systems trainers adjacent to the hangar. The trainers were manned by two squadron officers to provide the wives an insight into the complexity of the aircraft maintained and flown by their husbands.

SEP

SEP

Lieutenant Bob HOSKINS, Lieutenant (junior grade) Geoffrey DUNDAS and Lieutenant (junior grade) Fred PARKS departed for Las Vegas on 07 September 1974 for three days to represent the new squadron at the annual Tailhook Convention.

The squadron received notification from the Chief of Naval Operations on 04 SEP that its first choice for a squadron callsign, submitted in July, was approved.

Having received the artist's drawing of the squadron insignia design, a red and white gamecock overlaid on two gold ovals depicting electron orbits on a blue background, the Commanding Officer accepted the design on 08 SEP and it was forwarded to the Chief of Naval Operations for approval.

On 21 SEP an all hands family picnic was held at Admiral BAKER field, Mission Gorge Recreation Center, San Diego. The Facilities at the center were enjoyed by all, beginning with a noon picnic meal and followed by a round of athletic endeavors in the warm California sun.

OCT

On 15 October E-2B BUNO 151713 was pulled across the ramp from VAW-114 to Hangar 310. The squadron took delivery of its first aircraft, embarking on an extensive acceptance inspection.

The Naval Air Systems Command, in view of our recent establishment selected the squadron to implement a Tool Control Pilot Program for the E-2 community on 16 OCT 1974. The program is designed to implement quick inventory and accountability of all tools used on the E-2. The purpose of the program was to prevent the dangerous situation which occurs when maintenance tools are inadvertently lost or misplaced in Naval aircraft.

On 17 October approval of the Squadron Insignia design was received from the Chief of Naval Operations. The Squadron Insignia is no longer a "design"; VAW-117 officially became the new Gamecocks of the Aerodrome Barnyard.

NOV

Commander AHRENSTEIN conducted an inspection of all personnel on board on 11 NOV 1974. Following the inspection he addressed the command and noted that the acceptance of an aircraft was underway and that the arrival of the aircraft was our first major step towards becoming a fully operational squadron.

Boatswains Mate First Class Hector CASTANEDA was honored at a luncheon sponsored by the San Diego Chamber of Commerce. Nominated by the command, BML CASTANEDA was singled out from other highly qualified personnel because of his exceptionally favorable participation in community oriented projects. Selected by COMNAVAIRPAC, he was among approximately one hundred enlisted men and women honored for their professional performance and leadership.

After some 1500 maintenance hours, following acceptance inspection, E-2B BUNO 151713 was certified ready for a functional test hop. The event marked a milestone in the squadron's growth. On 22 NOV 1974 at 1145, fully manned (Commander BAKER, Executive Officer; Lieutenant McCARTHY, Safety Officer, Lieutenant CONNELL; AT1 SMITH; AT2 TAYLOR) E-2B BUNO 151713 was "wheels in the well" and off for a 2.5 hour functional test of the aircraft.

Subsequent to the first flight of a squadron aircraft, an officers and wives cocktail party was held at the Amphibious Base Officers Club, Coronado, California. The success of the test flight prompted a jubilant mood and was the main topic of discussion at the party.

Of Friday, 29 NOV E-2B BUNO 149819 was ferried to NAS North Island by a crew from CARAEWRON ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-SIX, NAS Norfolk, Virginia.

DEC

PN1 M. A. GRAY was chosen as this command's "Sailor-of-the-Month". As the first "Sailor-of-the-Month" selected it was noted in awarding the honor that PN1 GRAY justly deserved this distinction in view of his services prior to, during and following the establishment of the squadron.

On 2 December E-2B BUNO 151713 departed on a cross country to NAS Patuxent River, Maryland. Manned by Commander M. J. AHRENSTEIN, Lieutenant R. A. HOSKINS, Lieutenant (junior grade) R. B. ELLIS, AT2 T. C. SMITH, and AN R. J. LA HOLT, the aircraft was flown to NAS Patuxent River at the request of the Naval Air Systems Command to participate in the testing of a proposed engineering design change involving the AIMS transponder data readout. The crew departed on 2 December and arrived at NAS Patuxent River on 3 December. Thereafter, two full days of tests were accomplished and the results of the tests were submitted to Naval Air Systems Command. Following the completion of sight testing on 5 DEC the full crew manned up and were homeward bound, arriving at North Island the evening of 6 DEC.

On 13 December the Squadron's officers and their ladies attended the Annual Airborne Early Warning Community Christmas Ball. The squadron was well represented at this annual gala occasion on the eve of the Christmas Holidays.

Those long awaited Plank Owner's Certificates were finally printed and received, on 16 December they were distributed at morning quarters to those deserving individuals who were on hand for our establishment this past 1 July.

The Enlisted Recreation Committee sponsored an all-hands and family buffet dinner on the 27th of December. This was a significant social gathering held at the Petty Officers Club, Naval Station San Diego in that it closed out the year in which the new squadron was formed and signalled the bright future of the squadron in the coming year.

PLANK OWNERS

The following personnel were entitled to Plank Owner's Certificates:

CDR M. J. AHRENSTEIN
CDR E. S. BAKER
LCDR C. W. CURREY
LCDR R. L. E. PRATH
LCDR G. W. CALLAHAN
LT J. R. McCARTHY
LT R. E. WAUSON
LT R. A. HOSKINS
LT S. H. MILLER
LT R. W. CONNELL
LTJG S. S. GARBER
LTJG R. B. ELLIS
LTJG C. C. REEVES
LTJG G. W. DUNDAS
LTJG K. F. HIESSER
LTJG R. F. PARKS
ENS P. NMN RUPUTZ
ENS R. M. McRAE
ENS S. E. MYERS
ENS P. S. NOGA
ENS A. G. PICO

ATCS D. E. WILSON
ATCS K. A. WILLIAMS
ADJC J. R. HARRISON
AMH1 J. H. TORRES
AEL V. E. HOLYBEE
AMH1 R. L. J. SMITH
AK1 R. J. WENTZELL
AT1 G. MADDOX
BM1 H. CASTANEDA
AEL J. W. BRAMEL
PN1 M. A. GRAY
AT2 R. C. BALLOU
AT2 J. F. HANSON
AT2 C. A. JORGENSEN
AT2 T. R. WILLIAMS
AT2 D. E. GOOD
AT2 D. F. TAYLOR
ADJ2 C. E. BOYD
AE2 G. F. FARR
AE2 D. D. DIEHL
HM3 A. T. O'BRIEN
ADJ3 R. A. SKINNER
AME3 S. M. BONSHAK
AT3 J. F. FARMERIE
SD3 C. D. GABRIEL

AT3 L. L. CLANCY
AT3 R. L. TRAVIS
AK3 R. N. JACKSON
AT3 J. W. KENNEDY
ATAN D. L. BUCK
AMHAN R. F. ANSPACH
AN M. K. LANE
AN R. L. BRIGGS
ADJAN A. CHAVERA
SDSN R. R. LAXAMANA
ADJAN K. D. BAKKO
ADJAN B. E. CUMMINGS
ATAN M. B. BADER
AN K. R. HUNT
AEAN J. M. SHERWOOD
AN G. JORDAN
AN R. J. LA HOLT
ADJAN C. E. NEWBERRY
PNSN T. A. DOCKERY
ADJAN M. D. WINICK
CSSN L. B. AGUSTIN
ADJAA R. R. BANGERTER
ADJAA T. J. CHAVEZ
AMSAA V. Z. DIAZ
AMSAA R. P. SPITZENGEL
AMHAA J. W. VERMAAS
PRAA J. C. MAGGIORE
AMHAA M. R. ROBINSON
AKAA K. E. BECKENBACH
AA R. O. SANDERS
YNSA J. E. BINGHAM
SA A. C. HOWARD
AMSAA E. L. TRASK
ADJAA D. R. POBUDA
ADJAA J. E. SPICER
AA C. P. THEODORE
AMSAA L. V. TRIPP
AMSAA R. A. WIELIN
PRAA J. C. LEKOUSSES
AMEAA J. D. McCOWN
AMHAA R. D. SCOTT
ATAA J. E. CASSIBBA
AEAA K. D. KOSCHEKA
ATAA D. W. SWINFORD
AA J. A. VAN STECHELMAN
ADJAA D. R. DAVIS

AIRCRAFT ON BOARD as of 31 DEC 1974

E-2B BUNO 151713

E-2B BUNO 149819

FLIGHT HOURS

<u>NOV</u>	HOURS SCHED	<u>31.5</u>	HOURS FLOWN	<u>10.3</u>
	FLIGHTS	LANDINGS	A/C FLIGHT TIME	
DAY	6	19	10.3	
NIGHT	0	0	0.0	
TO TOTALS	6	19	10.3	

<u>DEC</u>	HOURS SCHED	<u>73.5</u>	HOURS FLOWN	<u>72.0</u>
	FLIGHTS	LANDINGS	A/C FLIGHT TIME	
DAY	22	127	64.8	
NIGHT	2	7	7.2	
TOTALS	24	134	72.0	

TOTALS as of 31 DEC 1974

	HOURS SCHED	<u>105.0</u>	HOURS FLOWN	<u>82.3</u>
	FLIGHTS	LANDINGS	A/C FLIGHT TIME	
DAY	28	146	75.1	75.1
NIGHT	2	7	7.2	7.2
TOTALS	30	153	82.3	