NAVAL AVIATION
NEWS

SPECIAL

An Officer: His Life-and His Squadron

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NAVAL AVIATION NEWS

Vice Admiral Thomas F. Connolly
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air)

Rear Admiral G. E. Miller
Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air)

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Ltjg. John Covin, a navigator in VXN-8, discusses his views on the changing Navy, his squadron and his place in the complex system. He has some interesting ideas on leadership and retention.

This is No Drill! 26

The cryptic message sent at Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, opens a review of WW II and the ultimate surrender of Japan aboard USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

The Man from Shangri-La 28

Hank Miller was a Ltjg. when he was tagged for the job of training a group of Army Air Corps pilots to fly B-17's off an aircraft carrier. Subsequent events, leading to Doolittle's Tokyo raids, took him "halfway around the world on nothing more than a telephone call." The Admiral tells the story as he remembers it — through Japan's surrender.

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COVERS

JOC James Johnston shot thi
month's cover while working on the
lead feature at VXN-8, NATC Patux
ent River, Md. The buddies on the
back cover were photographed by a
member of Captain Edward Steich
en's photo team during WW II

GUAM (Lends Peru a Hand)

'. . .the Peruvian Government and its people have already provided their grateful acknowledgment of the superb assistance of Guam and all embarked units. Your record of helicopter support, medical care and evacuation. . .has contributed significantly to the overall disaster relief support provided by the U.S.' – General George R. Mather, USA, USCinCSO

Letters

AAA

Your splendid magazine has been kind enough in the past to remark that the Fleet Air Arm has, in certain areas, shown the way.

I was surprised to see in your March 1970 edition, where you feature Gramps' First Accident, that we are still in the lead. I enclose a copy of the foreword of the Royal Navy's Monthly Aircraft Accident Summary of October 1969 to prove my point.

> Having signed last month's Notes in the "Monthly Accident Summary" the AAA [Gramp's British counterpart] secured his desk, convinced that he had done his best to cut down accidents, and set off for home. Five minutes later, driving in a sober and careful manner, he was involved in his biggest (ZZ) prang ever.
>
> However blameless are the tractor driver, the pilot, the maintainer, the seagull or even the AAA when they are involved in an accident, there is a possibility that if they had been more alert, more aware of the dangers they were standing into, they might have avoided the crunch.

Captain A. J. Leahy, MBE, DSC, Royal Navy
Adviser on Aircraft Accidents to
the Admiralty Board
Ministry of Defence (Navy)
Whitehall, London SW1, England

Old Aircraft

In the June issue of *Naval Aviation News*, ADR2 Elliott deplored the fact that our military forces do not maintain at least one each of their historic aircraft types in flying condition (as do the British) and have still more "examples for people to look at."

The general problem of our military aviation museums today is shortage of space and operating funds — not of exhibit material or motivation. We would all like larger display facilities, well stocked with significant aircraft and other memorabilia, in order to better portray this historic heritage to an interested public. But there is neither present nor prospective appropriated funding available to do this.

So it is encouraging to report that the Naval Aviation Museum Association, an organization of prominent and influential civilian friends of Naval Aviation, is now undertaking a fund drive for a new museum building. From the roster of its present officers and trustees (which reads like a condensation of *Who's Who*), it would seem this project could be nothing short of successful within a few years.

We already have a sizable inventory of aircraft and other items (in storage for lack of display space) and will presumably have a "call" on currently operational naval aircraft types which may hereafter complete their service lives. In addition, a very cooperative National Air and Space Museum administration has indicated willingness to lend us some of its naval aircraft as soon as we have suitable display area.

So, take heart, Mr. Elliott, better things are ahead, However, I doubt we would ever restore and fly any of our significant, one-of-a-kind aircraft. For if one were to "buy the farm," all we would have left would be a big basket full of insignificant, many-of-a-kind bits and pieces!

William R. Davenport
Assistant Curator
Naval Aviation Museum
NAS Pensacola, Fla. 32508

¶ More about the fund drive for the Naval Aviation Museum may be found on page 4.

Aircraft Series

I have read your May 1970 edition of *Naval Aviation News* with the announcement of coming features on naval aircraft.

I flew at the end of the war with VPB-120 based at Shemya in the Aleutians and patrolling the Kuriles.

We were fortunate to have the PB4Y-2 *Privateer* with the latest GCA equipment. I realize that this was not one of the models of which there were a large number, but those of us who flew them regard them with affection and would like it very much if you could feature this plane.

R. G. Green

ASW

I read with interest the ASW aircraft article written by LCdr. Paul Mullane in the May 1970 edition of *Naval Aviation News*. I found the article interesting, informative and accurate, except that I was disappointed in not reading of VP-84, the top ASW squadron of U.S. history. This squadron, operating from bases in Iceland, was credited with six known kills and 31 class "A" attacks on German submarines.

Your article seemed to reaffirm the statement about VP-84 that they were the FBI of Iceland (Forgotten Bastards of Iceland). This squadron received the Presidential Unit Citation for being one of the top ASW squadrons of WW II.

Charles A. Carr, Cdr.
Naval Air Technical Center
NAS Memphis (62)
Millington, Tenn. 38054

Naval Aviation Films

The Great Flight, the story of the NC-4's 1919 voyage that put the U.S. Navy first in aerial trans-Atlantic crossing, and the 1969 50th anniversary celebration of the flight, is among the most recently released motion picture films. *The Great Flight* is a 14.5-minute documentary featuring contemporary color cinematography techniques interestingly combined with black-and-white historic footage of the flight.

Also on the release listing from the Film Distribution Division, U.S. Naval Photographic Center, is *Here There Are Tigers*, a 55-minute, unclassified training film on escape and evasion in Southeast Asia. The film shows the escape and rescue of an Air Force officer from a North Vietnam jungle and the dangers encountered after parachuting into enemy territory and discusses the intensive interrogation and demands made by the enemy.

The Great Flight is **MN-10845** and *Here There Are Tigers* is **MV-10624B**. Other recently released films of general and Naval Aviation interest are:

MD-6962GK (unclassified) Armed Forces Information Film No. 192 - *The Changing Face of Communism - Eastern Europe*. Deals with the relationship between the Soviet Union and the satellite states of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia since the end of World War II. Explains how the "new look" is, in reality, the "old line" tailored to the wants and needs of Mother Russia (25 minutes).

MN-10419A (unclassified) *Cleared for a Takeoff*. A U.S. Naval Reserve VR squadron, on two weeks' active duty, performs an important logistic task in support of U.S. naval efforts in South Vietnam (14 minutes).

MN-10598B (unclassified) *Aircraft Parachute Flares - The MK 45 Mod 0*. Discusses the components and sequence of operation of the MK 45 (5.5 minutes).

MN-10600 (unclassified) *Airborne Radarscope Interpretation*. Shows radarscope presentations, target types and target interpretation (21 minutes).

MN-10671 (unclassified) *Home From the Sea*. USS *John F. Kennedy* (CVA-67) docks at Norfolk after a cruise (14.5 minutes).

MN-10747 (unclassified) *Target Caribbean - The AFWR Story*. The operations and capabilities of the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range (26 minutes).

Instructions for obtaining prints of newly released films are contained in OpNav Instruction 1551.1E.

We inadvertently deleted the credit and cutline for last month's cover. Grumman photographer Bob Settles took the picture of Apollo 13 commander, Captain James Lovell, at the Grumman Bethpage plant.

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1911 1970

USS Inchon Joins Fleet Last of Iwo Jima Class

NORFOLK, Va. USS *Inchon* (LPH-12) has assumed her place in the Atlantic Fleet Amphibious Force after a June 20 commissioning at the Norfolk Naval Ship Yard.

Inchon, last of the *Iwo Jima* class amphibious assault ships, joins USS *Guadalcanal* (LPH-7) and USS *Guam* (LPH-9) in the Atlantic. USS *Iwo Jima* (LPH-2), USS *Tripoli* (LPH-10) and USS *New Orleans* (LPH-11) are in the Pacific Fleet.

Amphibious assault ships are designed to deploy U.S. Marines by helicopter. *Inchon's* crew is made up of 50 officers and 500 enlisted men.

Captain Arthur H. Cummings, Jr., a 1945 Naval Academy graduate, is the ship's commanding officer.

Coast Guard Ice Patrol Moves Operations

SUMMERSIDE, Canada – The International Ice Patrol, operated by the U.S. Coast Guard under an international agreement, has begun operations from Canadian Forces Base Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

The move resulted from the closure of the U.S. Naval Station Argentia, Newfoundland. The ice patrol uses C-130's to track drifting icebergs which could move into shipping lanes east of Newfoundland.

Satellite Communications Between Aircraft and Floating Base Conducted

WASHINGTON, D.C. In a tri-service test under NavAirSysCom sponsorship, a Navy A-6A *Intruder* from NATC Patuxent River, Md., recently remained in communication with its floating base via satellite while flying against a simulated target.

The test, conducted aboard USS *Independence* (CVA-62) off the Carolina Capes, utilized the *Les VI* satellite which was orbiting above the equator during the tests. Ultra high frequency, less subject to atmospheric conditions than very high frequency, was used. UHF is limited to line-of-sight communications – restricting its utilization since transmissions cannot be sent over the horizon.

With a signal sent via satellite, UHF communications would be possible over half the surface of the earth regardless of the satellite's orbit.

Les VI was launched under the Tactical Satellite Communications Program, a tri-service project, in August 1968. The Navy is developing a compact, 40-pound receiver-transmitter for satellite-relayed communications.

The recent test was monitored at several distant points, including the Naval Electronics Lab, San Diego, Calif.

Nearly interference-free communications in tactical situations could improve target selection and weapon utilization and make recall or post-strike reporting more liable.

Atmosphere Research Rocket Launched

WHITE SANDS, N. M. – Initial launchings of an entirely new upper atmosphere research rocket, the *Astrobee-D*, were successful according to project officials.

Two of the meteorological rockets, developed by Aerojet-General, were tested to confirm flight characteristics. The 40-pound payloads were packages of diagnostic instruments complete with telemetry systems.

The single-stage, solid propellant, dual-thrust rockets, fired from portable launchers near the Navy blockhouse, carried payloads to altitudes of more than 40 miles. Range sponsor for the test was the Naval Ordnance Missile Test Facility at White Sands.

Plans are being made to send much heavier payloads to higher altitudes with more powerful *Astrobee E* and *F* models, plus two-stage combinations of various models.

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First Intruder B/N Logs 2,000 Hours

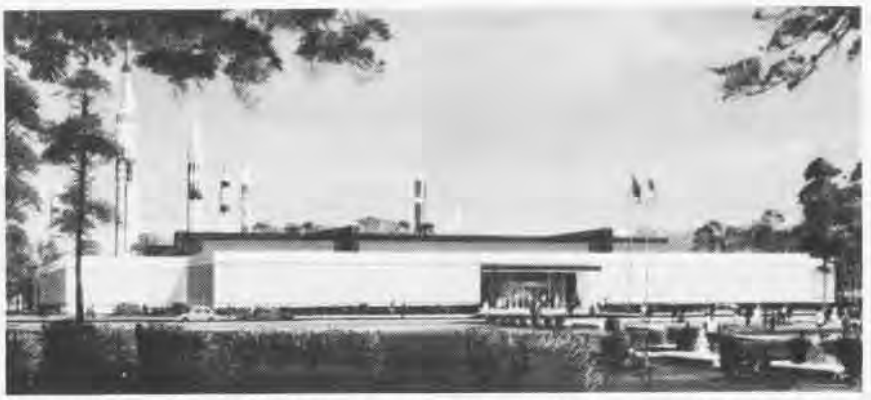
BETHPAGE, N.Y. – In a ceremony at the Grumman Aerospace Corp., here, LCdr. Roger Smith was cited as the first bombadier/navigator to log 2,000 hours in the A-6 *Intruder*. He is reportedly the second crewman to reach this milestone. Captain Robert Mandeville, Naval Air Systems Command A-6/EA-6 program manager, was the first. He was in Bethpage to present the 2,000-hour plaque to NFO Smith.

LCdr. Smith, a pioneer in the A-6 program, was a member of the initial group of NFO's to train in *Intruder* techniques. His first operational assignment in the A-6 was to VA-42, the first replacement air group squadron, where he was a B/N instructor. He also has served with VA's 75, 65 and 196, completing combat deployments to Southeast Asia with all three and logging more than 150 missions over North Vietnam.

VAH-123 Driving Instructors Honored for Traffic Safety

WHIDBEY ISLAND, Wash. – Three VAH-123 defensive driving instructors have been cited by the National Safety Council "in appreciation of exceptional service to the cause of adult driver education and traffic safety."

AT1 Philip R. Hulse, AO1 Herbert A. Terrill and AE1 Carl W. Scholle were presented plaques for their efforts. Scholle has taught 400 students while Terrill and Hulse have each taught more than 100 students in the squadron's safe driving program.



AN ARCHITECT'S RENDITION *of the Naval Aviation Museum at NAS Pensacola gives an idea of what the $4 million complex will look like. Porter F. Bedell, Vice President of the Bank of the South in Pensacola, recently presented a bank donation of $1,500 to Vice Admiral Bernard M. Strean, Chief of Naval Air Training. The bank's donation raised the museum fund to about $1.5 million. Museum officials estimate construction can begin in 1973 if the present rate of contribution continues. The new Naval Aviation Museum will provide 120,000 square feet of exhibit space compared to the present 8,500 square feet. Donations may be mailed to Naval Aviation Museum Assn., NAS Pensacola, Fla. 32508.*

Navy Studies Computer Able to Respond to Spoken Commands

WASHINGTON, D. C. – The Navy is studying the possibility of a computer with the ability to sense its surroundings and respond intelligently to spoken commands.

The robot-type computer could be trained to assist naval personnel in the control of complex engineering systems and could be operated without requiring special technical training. The study is under the direction of Dr. Charles Hendrix at Telluron, Santa Monica, Calif., under a contract with the Office of Naval Research.

The system is not the conventional digital computer, which basically adds up numbers at great speeds in a sequential process, but rather utilizes a parallel process patterned after the brain. This means this type of machine can perform several different procedures simultaneously – just like the human brain.

Design of the computer is based on the living nervous system, which is composed of neurons or nerve cells. The machine uses artificial neurons – "neuromines." The neuromines are electronic circuits that can mimic or duplicate – to some extent – the information processes of neurons. When interconnected into a network, they form the rudimentary brain of the computer, also called an "operant-conditionable" machine. The term means that the machine can be trained by modifying its responses through "punishment" or "reward" signals.

When a message is given to the network, some of the neuromines fire in response to the message. If the response is incorrect or one not desired by the trainer, he can "punish" the neuromines by suppressing or preventing them from firing. This "punishment" induces the network to try a new way to solve the problem. At the same time, the group of neuromines which respond favorably are encouraged or "rewarded" by having the trainer strengthen their signals. This process is repeated until the desired response is obtained.

Once trained to perform various tasks, the machine would execute them faithfully when given the appro-

priate command. Aboard ship it could be used to help in a variety of tasks from navigating to preparing meals. It could assist a pilot in the operation of his aircraft by handling complicated procedures as he directs. The computer could not only perform in response to vocal commands, instructions and other types of inputs, but could also answer the operator by voice.

Preliminary tests with a network of only 16 neuromines have given encouraging results. The present effort is aimed at finding ways to produce a great number of artificial neurons and to devise schemes to connect them into a simple computer brain. The current study is intended to produce a design of a complete prototype system consisting of 3,000 neuromines that will be both workable and economical to manufacture.

NANews Offices Relocated Munitions/Main Navy Come Tumbling Down

ARLINGTON, Va. – If you're planning to visit, write or call the *Naval Aviation News* offices, please note our new address and telephone numbers.

In early July, just before they swung the big steel ball through the eighth wing of the historic Munitions Building on Constitution Avenue, (where *NANews* has been housed for more than a decade) we bailed out for our new and considerably more spacious offices in Arlington.

Now located on the eleventh floor in one of three relatively new high-rise office buildings, our new address is:

Naval Aviation News
Room 1132 Ballston Tower #2
801 N. Randolph Street
Arlington, Va. 22203

The telephone numbers are Oxford 2-4817, -4818 and -4819. Aviation History is situated in Room 1134, in the same building, with telephone extension 4820. Our Autovon code, 22 plus five digits, remains the same.

A-7E Corsair II Praised for Accuracy in Combat

DALLAS, Texas – The A-7E *Corsair II* attack aircraft has entered combat in Southeast Asia with "devastating accuracy," according to a Navy report sent to A-7 manufacturer, LTV.

The A-7E went into combat just 18 months after its first flight, the report said: two squadrons equipped with the Navy's newest aircraft are operating from USS *America* (CVA-66). The *Corsair II*, capable of carrying 20,000 pounds of ordnance, is the first U.S. military aircraft to enter combat with a new digital weapons delivery and navigation computer. The computer and its head-up display system were designed to double the bombing and strafing accuracy.

Ltjg. Dave Lichtermann, VA-146, is reported to be the first pilot launched into combat in an A-7E. He and his flight leader, Cdr. Wayne L. Stephens, "delivered their ordnance with devastating accuracy using the A-7E's digital weapons computer."

The A-7E is the third version of the *Corsair II* to fly with the U.S. Navy. It is powered by a 15,000-pound thrust, Allison/Rolls Royce engine.

149 Navy Men Complete First AV 'A' Class at NATTC Memphis

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – The first 149 avionics technicians to graduate from the 20-week AV "A" school at the Naval Air Technical Training Command are in the fleet.

LCdr. Richard A. Dunstan, AV A training officer, said the expanded course includes material on analog and digital computers, test equipment, and 40 hours on technical publications. The school anticipates training more than 7,000 students annually.

The AV A school is designed to train students to think electronics. The course introduces the basic vocabulary, equipment and skills that give a foundation on which to build with practical work experience and ship operations.

Depending on input requirements, graduates from the school become strikers in the aviation radar electronics technician (ATR), aviation navigational electronics technician (ATN), aviation antisubmarine warfare technician (AX), aviation bomb director fire control technician (AQB), or aviation fire control technician (AQF) ratings.

Some continue at NATTC Memphis in the tradevman school but are not designated strikers.

Upon arrival in the fleet, most AV A graduates work at the organizational maintenance level.

The former course, still known to some fleet sailors as avionics fundamentals (AFU "A") was 16 weeks long. Last year, following a fundamentals graduate study by CNO, the curriculum for an 18-week course was approved and soon expanded into the current 20-week course.

VAL-4 Wins MUC for Delta Action

BINH THUY, RVN – Light Attack Squadron Four has been awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for its interdiction efforts in the Mekong Delta from March 26, 1969, to September 3, 1969.

Operating OV-10A *Broncos*, VAL-4 is the only propeller-driven attack squadron in the Navy. Commissioned to provide fixed-wing close air support for the Riverine Forces, the heavily armed and highly maneuverable squadron fills the performance void between jets and helicopters. *Broncos* also provide observation reconnaissance and artillery spotting.

GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Bum Steer

The first tour lieutenant joined his reconnaissance attack squadron which was deployed aboard the CVA in the forward area. During his first month on board he accumulated seven landings in the RA-5C *Vigilante* while becoming familiar with the routine of deployed carrier ops.

His first night recovery was scheduled as a "pinky"; however, conditions didn't turn out that way. It was a night navigation mission with a day launch and a night recovery. The two divert fields were covered carefully in the prelaunch briefing, and the mission was flown without incident, except that the radar attack navigator lost his radar presentation on the way out.

A Tacan penetration was commenced to the carrier deck some 40 minutes past sunset. Although the lieutenant's passes were relatively steady and not at all hairy, he succeeded in boltering four times and was subsequently diverted to the #2 alternate airfield given by departure control at 110 degrees, 220 miles. The duty tanker, a KA-3 *Skywarrior*, was assigned as escort and, after rendezvous, the *Vigilante* took on 2,000 lbs. of fuel. Upon completion of inflight refueling and at the request of departure control, the tanker turned back toward the ship. The pilot informed the A-5 that the divert field now bore 088 degrees at 88 miles. Within a minute or so, the *Vigilante's* lieutenant radar attack navigator (RAN) advised that he couldn't receive the field's Tacan station, so the A-3 turned back to rendezvous. A cloud layer soon separated the two airplanes, and they were never able to get together again.

The RA-5 pilot took up a heading of 090 degrees based on the tanker's steer and, upon reaching his DR estimate of arrival over the field with

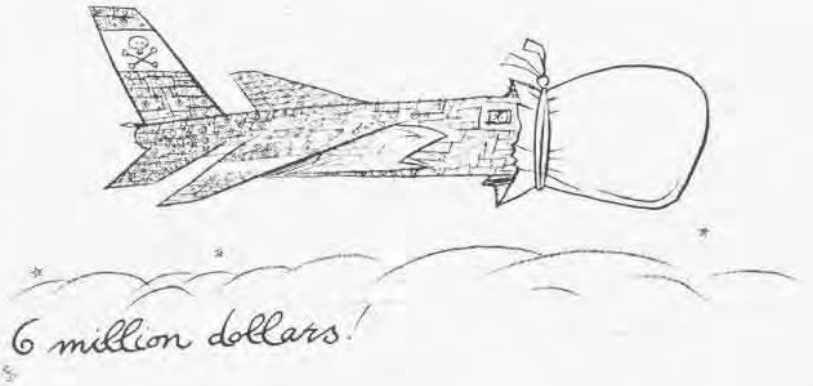
nothing in sight, commenced a port orbit. He was unsuccessful in contacting the tower or approach control on UHF. He declared an emergency on guard channel and stated he was lost.

The *Vigilante* crew eventually received a DF indication of 300 degrees to the KA-3 orbiting the divert field. Later they were advised by an Air Force air evac flight that they were in the vicinity of the field. A strange radar site also came up on the radio and attempted to get radar contact. By this time the thirsty *Vig* had only 2,500 lbs. of fuel remaining. The RAN rechecked their ADF bearing to the tanker on another frequency. It was still 300 degrees, so they decided to head NW and start a letdown. Several minutes later, lights were sighted through a hole in the overcast, and the descent was continued to arrive at 10,000 feet over the island.

The tanker had advised that he was orbiting the divert field but was nowhere to be seen. The airfield could not be sighted after a Cook's tour and, by this time, they were "low state." Unfortunately it was the wrong island.

Charlie Control, the radar station, advised that they were in radar contact and to steer 300 degrees. After turning in that direction and seeing nothing but black ocean, the lieutenant turned back toward land. He picked the largest town he could find, orbited it three times at 1,500 feet to attract attention and, with only 400 lbs. of fuel remaining, headed back to sea, climbing to 5,000 feet. As the engines flamed out, he advised the world they were ejecting, and out they went as the aircraft was in level flight at 220 knots.

The survival episode is a story in itself, but the crew was picked up, spent the night in a local hospital and returned to the carrier the next day.



Illustrated by Osborn

Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great Balls of Fire! Chalk up another six million bucks down the drain. Regardless of how you cut it or who the fickle finger points at, *Command* must do something to stop this intolerable drain on our resources. The accident board sed this one was caused by the failure of an inexperienced carrier pilot to follow established procedures and to utilize reasonable judgment. They knew he was inexperienced. Why wasn't he escorted all the way by the tanker? Why wasn't positive radar control exercised by the ship, under the circumstances? Although the RA-5 passed within 35 miles of its destination, it ended up over 120 miles NNE of the field. How do the cards stack up? (1) Loss of the aircraft radar, (2) unreliable aircraft IFF equipment, (3) weak UHF radio equipment, (4) malfunctioning heading indicator (compass), (5) undependable aircraft navigation equipment, including Tacan, and (6) unreliable and erroneous divert-field Tacan facility. The poor guys hardly had a chance. Course I'll admit, there is also a good possibility that there was a certain amount of fog in the cockpit of that *Vigilante* that night.

The Last to Know

The junior lieutenant and his bombardier/navigator (B/N) ate a hurried lunch in the wardroom of the CVA and joined the rest of the A-6 *Intruder* crews in the ready room for a thorough briefing of the forthcoming carqual buildup period. It was the carrier and air wing's shakedown cruise prior to deployment. The air plan called for three planes to make four arrested landings each, then hot refuel and "hot seat" with another crew.

Preflight of their aircraft showed a good plane and the Ltjg. B/N verified the 37,000 lbs. gross weight inscribed on the side of the aircraft for catapult setting. After the engines were started, he reconfirmed the fuel load at 9,000 lbs. and gave a "thumbs up" signal to the catapult weight checker on the port side.

As the *Intruder* was tensioned on #4 catapult, another A-6 was taxied toward the port bow cat and directed to spread its wings. No one noticed that one overlapped the flight path of the plane on #4 cat. As the catapult officer gave the fire signal, he suddenly became aware of the fouled launch path and immediately suspended. It was too late. The unlucky plane was launched, striking the wing of the other craft.

The pilot encountered no control difficulties, and an inflight check revealed no visible damage. The *Intruder* landed back aboard shortly and an inspection of the wing showed only surface scratches.

They were held on deck and not advised of what was planned. The lieutenant was having some communications problems and was unable to transmit on UHF. His B/N could, however, so they continued to stand by. When the flight deck fueling crew began signaling to them, they finally understood that they should activate the refueling switch and assumed their plane was to be topped off to its previous 9,000-lb. load.

Some 15 minutes later, after completing refueling, they were unexpectedly unchocked and taxied toward the bow catapults. As it became apparent that they were about to be launched, the takeoff checklist was begun. Upon inquiry from primary fly as to gross weight, the B/N advised 37,000 lbs. and also Rogered the same to the catapult weight checker. The checklist was quickly completed, the pilot hurriedly checking the fuel gauges and confirming the B/N's evaluation of a 9,000-lb. fuel load.

Tensioning on the cat and the launch proceeded normally until the *Intruder* reached the bow where it began to settle rapidly. Twenty-five feet above the water, both crew members ejected while the aircraft climbed slightly, then dove into the sea. The plane guard helicopter rescued the men who had only minor injuries.

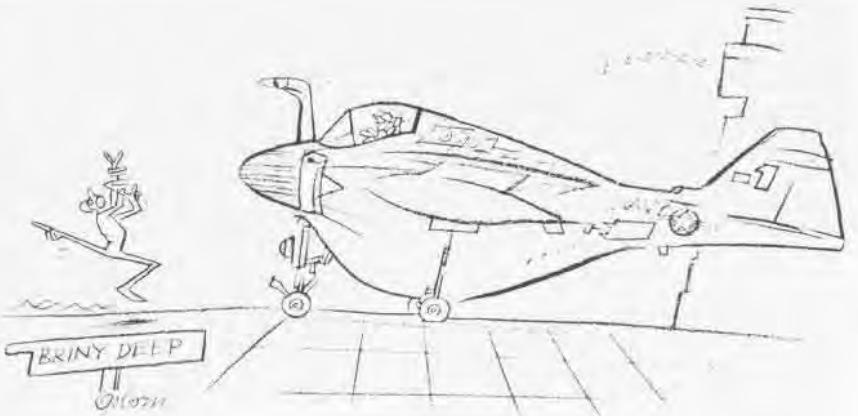
Grampaw Pettibone says:

Blub! Blub! Blub! (If ya wonder what that sound is, I'm cryin' in m' beer 'n who likes diluted draught.) What in thunderation is going on here. No wonder the bird wouldn't fly. They loaded that plane with 20,000 lbs. of JP-5 – not 9,000 lbs. Looks like too many people, includin' the crew, not talkin' to each other.

To start with, the pilot shuda' downed the plane for not having adequate radio gear. Kinda' looks like he put too much blind faith in his B/N and the people runnin' the show on that consarned ship. Sure and it's the pilot's fault, but blamin' him don't prevent accidents. That durn carrier set him up fer it like the beer bottle on the fence post. There's just no excuse in the world for that nugget lieutenant not being advised of his changed mission and changed fuel load.

I've sed it before, and I'll say it again. Fer nearly every pilot-factor accident there's at least one supervisory senior who erred more than the pilot. Seniors must continually consider their weakest link in the chain and plan for human error, misjudgment, immaturity, lack of training, et al, in everything they do.

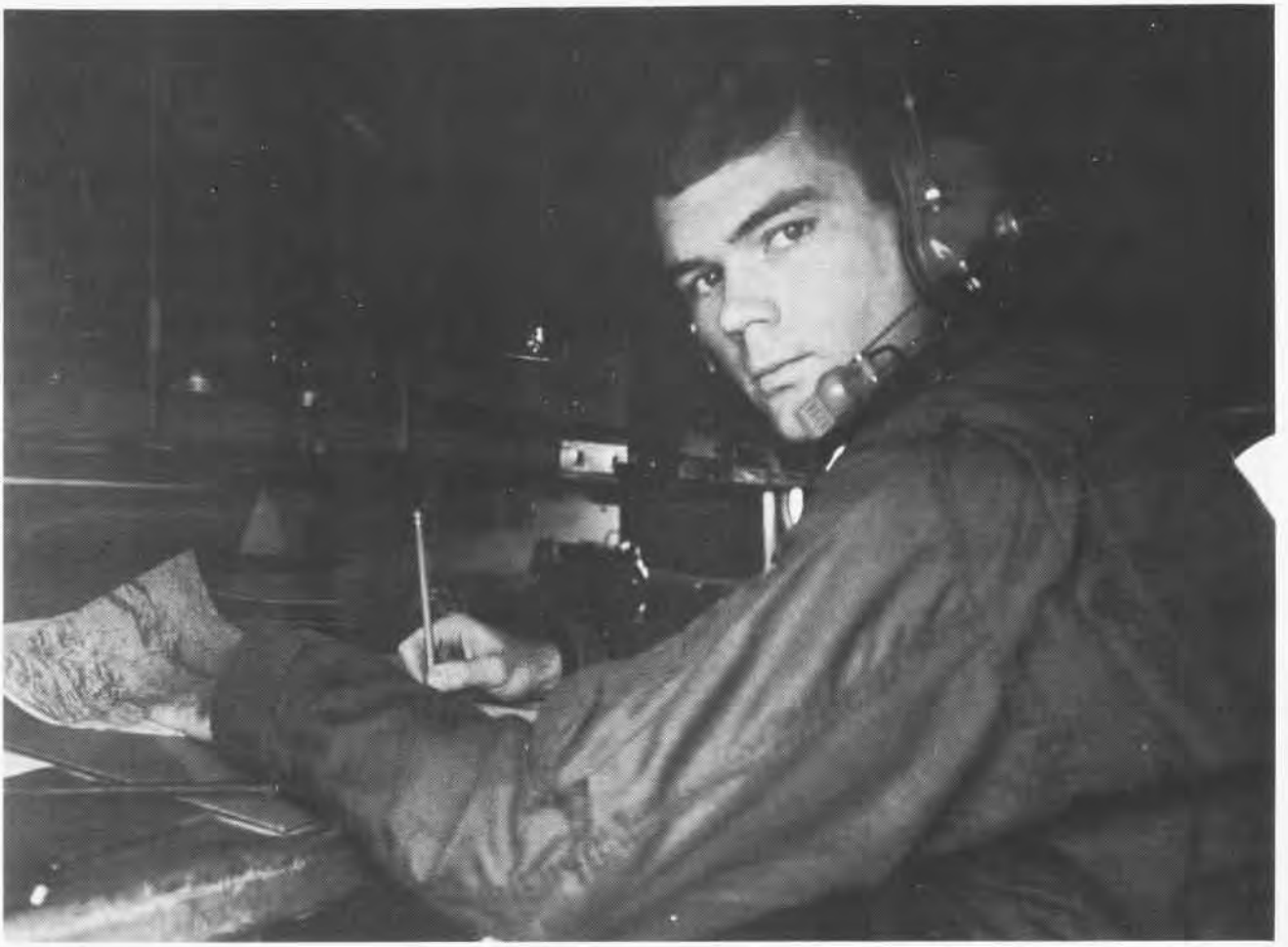
'The primary cause of this accident is Administrative. I should have never been graduated from flight school.'



An Officer: His Life and His Squadron

John Covin is a Texan, but he doesn't flaunt it. Only his drawl gently reminds you. The Lone Star flag hanging from his apartment window is another clue.

He's also a Naval Flight Officer – a navigator – with an individual outlook in an admittedly regimented organization. Ltjg. John Covin, not yet 25, is where he wants to be at this point in



By JOC James Johnston

his life. He calls it luck, but it is more than that.

A casual observer's first impression of Covin might be one of cool arrogance, but only because he is shy around strangers. A closer look into the life and personality of this young naval officer reveals a confident, outgoing man with considerable insight and very definite ideas about his individuality.

He is assigned to Oceanographic Development Squadron Eight (VXN-8) at NATC Patuxent River, Md., and that suits him fine. That is exactly what he asked for when he finished flight training at Corpus Christi in June 1969.

"Before I joined the Navy I had no conception of how the military was structured," he said. "I thought you marched everywhere, scrubbed floors, polished shoes and lived in a barracks all the time."

It didn't take him long to discover the truth. Now, he has an apartment near the base, where his individuality asserts itself. His living room is wildly decorated in the flamboyant style of youth: mod posters, bigger-than-life pictures of Glen Campbell and Paul McCartney, scenic pictures he has taken, a moderate array of stereo components, his officer's sword and ensign's shoulder boards, and a sign that says "Christ died for me."

None of it is presumptuous or hoaky when John Covin is in the middle of it. His idea of a good time is an evening of reading and listening to his stereo through earphones, as evidenced by the mountains of magazines and books that surround his ample record collection.

He teaches Sunday School on the base and counsels a Christian youth group, mostly dependents, on the air station. He would like to be a school teacher and feels the youth group is at an age where they need guidance and answers. He hopes to supply them with some of each.

Covin was raised in Hurst, Texas, a small town near NAS Dallas where his father was a Naval Aviator. He graduated from Bell High School and went to East Texas State University where he was recruited for the Aviation Officer Candidate (AOC) program.

"I knew you had to be an officer to fly and my main interest was to be a pilot. Once I began talking to the on-campus recruiter, I became more interested and finally it became a matter of going into the service after graduation or going on to teach – which I really wanted to do and which I felt God wanted me to do."

He graduated in May 1968 with a BS in earth sciences, a minor in math and a teacher's certificate. Two weeks later he was an AOC at Pensacola.

Music is among the young Texan's hobbies. He has a moderate array of stereo equipment in his living room.

'I suppose, as all junior officers in training, I became disheartened about midway through training because my goals were too distant, but I stayed on, thinking that perhaps it would get better. It did.'

As far as selecting one of the service branches, there was never any choice because I had always had the highest esteem for all naval officers. I always felt they were the elite of the services," he remembers.

During his qualifying physical, Covin learned that his eyes were not good enough to qualify him for pilot training. He was let down. But the recruiters explained the navigation phase program of flying to him, and he became interested in it.

While in officer candidate school, he learned his eyes were, in fact, good enough for him to be a pilot but, by that time, he had become so wrapped up in the notion of becoming a navigator that he turned pilot training down in favor of becoming a Naval Flight Officer.

"Officers school was probably the biggest challenge of my life. I had never really been tested, and I accepted it as a personal challenge. My goal became: Do everything the Marine drill instructors set before you," he recalls. "I was fairly satisfied with my accomplishments and felt that all of it was very good training for later naval officer-type jobs."

As an avionics branch officer, Ltjg. Covin spends a certain amount of his time conferring with his petty officers.

One of the first jobs after a flight is getting navigation charts updated and prepared for review. VXN-8 aircrews were instrumental in tracking ice floes and charting the route for the SS Manhattan's journey through the Northwest Passage.

On a trip around the VXN-8 area at NATC Patuxent River, Covin stops by one of the Super Constellations to talk to mechanics on the job.

But it was not all roses for John Covin, the just-graduated, would-be navigator. He became discouraged.

"I suppose, as all junior officers in training, I became disheartened about midway through training because my goals were too distant, but I stayed on, thinking that perhaps it would get better. It did."

Today, with 12 weeks of AOC school, four weeks of flight prep, 16 weeks of basic navigation in VT-10, and 12 weeks of advanced training in VT-29 behind him, Covin is navigating four-engined *Super Constellations* and a C-54 *Skymaster* in one of the Navy's most unique squadrons.

"I asked for VXN-8 because of its variety of missions and because I wanted to travel which, incidentally, was one of the main reasons I decided to enter the Navy before going on to teach. More specifically, this experience, with all the travel and meeting different people, will better prepare me to teach."

In VXN-8 he has learned what it means to be a naval officer and what it means to be in charge of a group of men. He says it is more responsibility than he has ever had before.

John Covin, the college graduate who three years ago made one of the

His Texas license plate reflects squadron loyalty, while his apartment unquestionably reflects his Texas background. There's also a 'Fly Navy' sticker on his door.

A neighbor's dog, lazily basking i the late afternoon sun, get some spontaneous attention

'Professionally, I feel the people in my squadron are above average compared to the civilian world. We are much more competent. Most of my contemporaries in the squadron are very much above what the average in college would be...in whatever job they go to... they will be more proficient than the average college graduate without their experience.'

most important decisions of his life, has learned, and he has travelled: Hawaii, Wake, Guam, Okinawa, Midway, Vietnam, the Azores, Bermuda, and across the United States six times.

"On every trip I learn something new about people and circumstances in different parts of the world. For example, in the Azores, where I recently visited, the culture is essentially the same as it is in Portugal but still not touched by American-style commercialism. This difference allows one to really *see* a foreign land."

However, the travel and learning about new people and places are incidental to the task of being a VXN-8 navigator.

"The scientific nature of the squadron – the Magnetic Survey; Project *Birdseye* (Arctic ice surveillance); and the Antisubmarine Warfare Environmental Prediction Services (ASWEPS–tracking of the Gulf Stream) – has something to offer that I didn't learn in college."

Although his primary aircrew duty is that of navigator, Covin's scientific interests are stimulated by his close association with the Office of Oceanography scientists who conduct experiments on the flights.

"The overall missions, the magnetic surveys, are divided into two areas," he explained. "One is magnetic Alpha which is a local survey, and the other is Bravo which is a worldwide survey."

Alpha survey is a close "grain" or track on which tracks are flown at 15-mile intervals. Its purpose is to gather data on the magnetic design of the earth's crust – information which will be helpful in ASW. Bravo survey, basically the same theory, is flown on a worldwide basis along predetermined tracks.

"Birdseye is a Naval Oceanographic project involving ice surveillance. Scientists can 'read' the ice and determine from its color and development – ice floes, glaciations, icebergs and various other aspects – the ice age in the Arctic."

ASWEPS, although primarily antisubmarine warfare research, has several branches for gathering varied information. The main project is tracking the Gulf Stream off the Atlantic Coast.

"This is done by temperature sensors beneath the plane with an indicator in the cockpit. When the pilot sees a fluctuation in the temperature, he flies back to stay on the boundary of the Gulf Stream. Since it changes so much, we navigators take fixes every minute to determine our position. With each fix, the position is replotted to find the exact geographic location of the temperature," Covin explained.

ASWEPS projects also include wave survey and photography, taking water temperatures at different depths and the study of oceanic layers. All of the data collected relates to ASW.

Another VXN-8 project, *Jenny*, in Vietnam, is one Covin has not flown on. The detachment and its mission are far removed from the scientific field, indicating the versatility of the squadron. Project *Jenny* aircraft orbit above South Vietnam, fully equipped to transmit radio and television broadcasts in Vietnamese, to keep the people informed and entertained *(NANews,* April 1967).

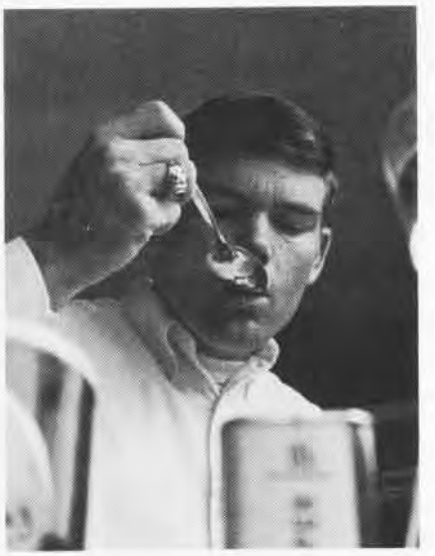
John Covin, the individualist, feels a certain amount of camaraderie in his squadron, yet carefully chooses his associates and maintains his personal convictions.

"The guys in our squadron – because we are all fliers and because we are all in the Navy – have similar, yet varied, backgrounds. There is a close tie, sure. When we deploy for three, four, even one week, we live together day after day. I get to know the guys, get to see them under emergency and decision-making pressures. . .all of this goes toward showing you the real guy.

"Professionally, I feel the people in my squadron are above average compared to the civilian world. We are much more competent. Most of my contemporaries in the squadron are very much above what the average in college would be. If any of them decide not to stay in the Navy, I think, in whatever job they go to outside the Navy, they will be more proficient than the average college graduate without their experience."

John Covin, the young officer still learning about himself and his capabilities, recalled a school he attended after joining the squadron: Survival, Escape, Resistance and Evasion.

"SERE school was probably my biggest challenge since officers school. I learned a lot about myself and a lot about how other people operate under stress. Escape and evasion training was



The young officer is still learning the ways of survival for a young bachelor. Although still not sure of himself in the kitchen, he's learned to cook well enough to suit himself. And sometimes, ummmm, it even tastes pretty good!

one of my most beneficial experiences," he remembers.

John Covin, the aspiring teacher and self-appointed researcher, looks on the Navy as something of a proving ground.

"Because of the very nature of the military, the thinking man has to be flexible. The Navy is such a big animal – and I say that with affection – that it tends to rule your whole existence and becomes your entire life. Because of this, you must become responsive to what it dictates; your job within the Navy actually demands it. And you find it brings out your strengths and weaknesses. I think the training I've received would be a tremendous help to anyone in any field. . .which comes right back to my personal reasons for joining – to test myself and learn if I will make a good teacher."

He approaches the subject of dissenters cautiously, but with an open mind. "I feel a lot of guys who are dissenting are trying to find an easy way out. They don't see the military as I have seen it and as my contemporaries have seen it: a place where you can learn more than what college offers, and it does benefit you – there are so many benefits that you don't

realize all of them. I've often wondered why I came into the Navy and why a lot of my friends from high school and college did not.

"I think they didn't want to take four years out of their lives – this causes me to think they overlooked the advantages."

Ltjg. John Covin, suddenly and somewhat shockingly, has been awakened to the fact that a lot of people "just don't care about my wearing a uniform. They don't care if I'm an officer, they don't care if I'm in the Navy. . .I'm just another sucker, perhaps, to them.

"I don't know if my feelings stem from patriotism – I have a smidge of patriotism – but I've always respected a man in uniform. So did most other people when I was growing up. Now, lately, it seems that popular opinion of the military is not what it used to be. What's happened? How come I'm different from the dissenters you read about?

"Basically, I think a lot of those guys are being misled and misinformed to begin with. In a way, you can't blame them when they knock it – not when you consider the lack of information involved."

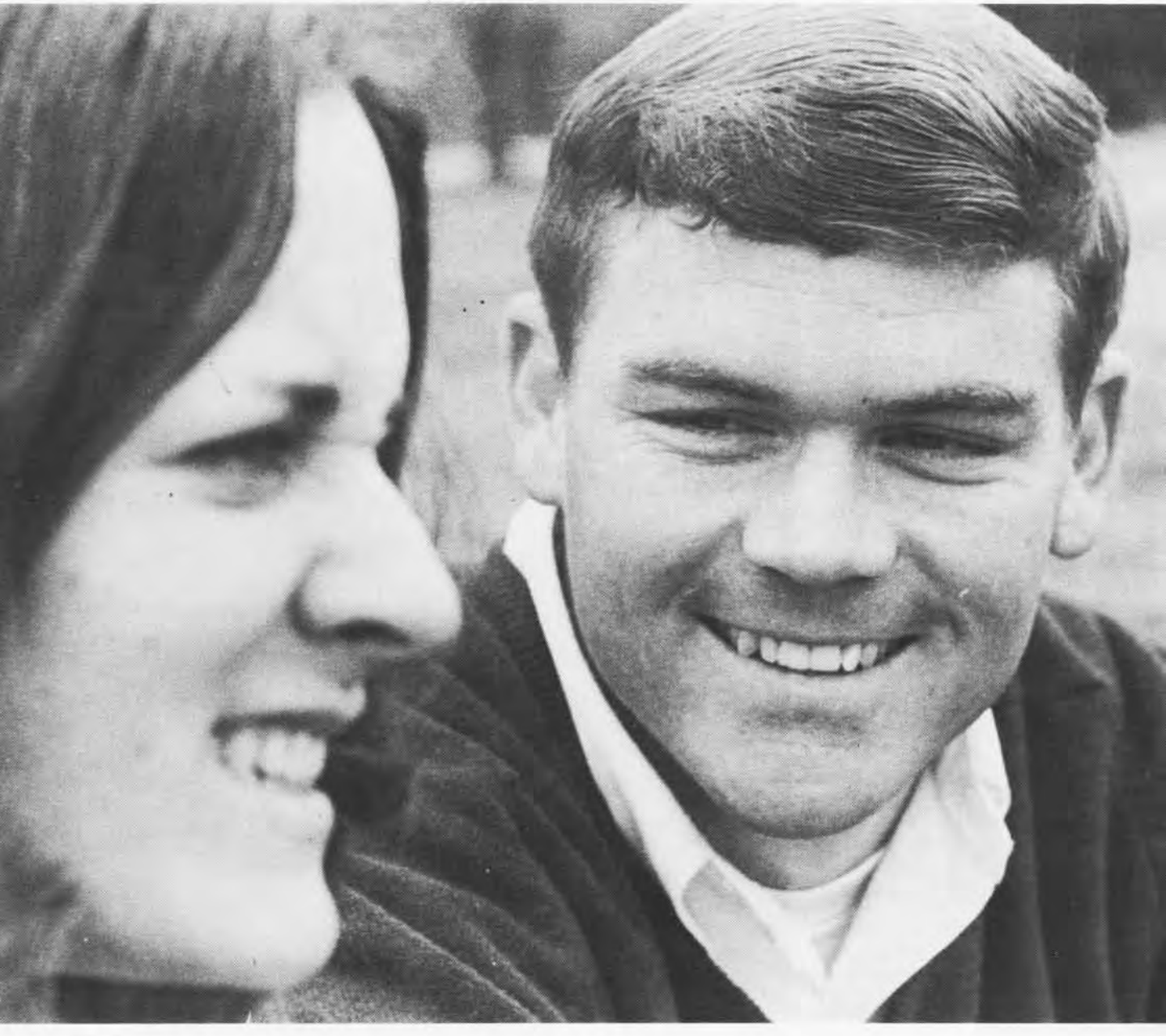
Covin had not planned to be a career officer and will candidly tell anyone ,who asks that he still wants to teach. He feels an increasingly personal attachment to the Navy and is beginning to see ways to apply his avocation within the service. This centers around his concern with trends he sees in retention.

"Retention rates are going down. As a result there is a gap between the career men and the first tourers. Once these career people retire, we are going to be left with relatively inexperienced men in their places, holding down crucial positions. So, I've wondered why more of the young men in the lower grades and rates don't stay in.

"It's not the money; most of us are making more now than we could else-

He takes advantage of an afternoon shopping trip to the base exchange to stop by the camera department for a look at new items to use in his favorite hobby.

'I've always held a high esteem for all military men and I don't know if this is from my patriotism – I have a smidge of patriotism....A lot of people just don't care about my wearing a uniform....I'm just another sucker, perhaps, to them.'



Jeni Swem is a new acquaintance who gets part of the young officer's attention. And he tries to get in a game of tennis or basketball daily to stay in shape.

'Perhaps, in the Navy, we are not taking into consideration the feelings of all our men; perhaps we're not giving them enough credit. If they are not getting that feeling of belonging, they get out. The short-timer may complain about "mickey mouse regulations," but I think the real problem is lack of communication.'

where. We have more benefits. Essentially it's a good life. And I can't really say it's the current image of the uniform. No, I think it's something else. Lack of identification? appreciation?

"Look, the men are young and they are coming out of schools and colleges that have a different *atmosphere* than when I was there not too long ago. I know this different atmosphere cannot help but put them in a frame of mind unlike my own. So, what happens, and what do we do about it?

"It's hard to put a finger on one thing and say that if the Navy were to

Photo by PH2 Gary Mann

As counselor for a base Christian youth group, Covin gives his total attention to a current project. He meets with the group weekly in addition to teaching a Sunday School class in the base chapel.

change it there would be no retention problem. Actually, most of the people getting out realize that many of the problems they may have in the Navy are similar to those in other organizations. They readily admit this.

"I think, perhaps the existing gap between the top and the bottom influences their decision to quit. 'Why don't people listen to us when we talk?' some Navy men are asking. And that's what the students are saying. The students grow their hair long and do a lot of other things as a way of saying 'Listen to us.' They're left feeling that nobody cares. Perhaps, then, in the Navy, we are not taking into consideration the feelings of all our men; perhaps we're not giving them enough credit. If they are not getting that feeling of *belonging*, they get out. The short-timer may complain about 'mickey-mouse regulations,' but I think the real problem is lack of communication.

"You know, I was recruited for aviation and all I saw was the glamor, the airplane. I didn't discover until I was in officers school that flying would be less than ten percent of my duties. And it wasn't until lately that I began to realize that I was actually working with *people* – doing just what I was trained to do in college – as a teacher. I see now a parallel between what I can do for the men in my shop and what I had wanted to do for students in a classroom.

"If the Navy is making a new appraisal of what it is offering to these guys coming up under the current atmosphere – the climate that seems to call for closer communication – it might do well to re-emphasize, at the recruiting, training and squadron stages, that ours is a *people* business and not just hardware. Involved is a man-to-man *responsibility*. We must talk to each other."

John Covin, Texan, Navigator, Individual, is a member of a team. He grapples with a changing society and notes its effect on his world, his Navy, his life. He knows where he is going and feels better for it. So does the Navy.

More About VXN-8

Last September, right in the middle of one of our periodic NANews critiques – the usual session where the editors mull over story lines and search for better items of broader interest – we were approached with an idea: do a piece on VXN-8, the "Navy's most unusual squadron." It sounded great.

Here was a little-known outfit with an unusual mission that would not fit into one of our standing features. At the same time, we wanted to tell our non-aviator readers how Navy men apply their educational backgrounds to Navy occupations. Predominantly scientific VXN-8 was the perfect vehicle.

Its three major projects, ASWEPS, Birdseye and Magnet, are distinctly scientific in nature. Further, VXN-8 is the first Naval Aviation unit specifically organized to conduct oceanographic survey flights. Then there is Project Jenny, televising information in Vietnam, and the mission of training pilots and aircrewmen for C-121 duty in the Atlantic Fleet.

We began gathering information for a story – all the time with the idea of making it a different squadron story – talking to the squadron public affairs people, the C.O., the exec. It began to emerge as a pretty good piece, but still not what we had in mind.

Then we met Ltjg. John Covin. He's typical, yet atypical. Typical in his age group, professional competence, dedication to duty; but atypical, we feel, in his candidness and approach. So, the editors began slowly working the story around him – the idea being to zero in on one who, through his background and training, could represent many.

But from the very beginning, it was not an easy task. With VXN-8 some 70 miles from Washington and with its heavy deployment schedule to all points of the world, our schedules did not correspond. Only this spring, many months after the original idea, was the article finished.

After that length of time, the article had taken on another aspect. In 1969, for example, the retention percentage for Navy pilots was 31%, NFO s 35%, and first tour Group IX enlisted, 15.1%. Through February of this year the percentages are, respectively, 25, 27 and 7.2.

Covin has some ideas about this. He would like to see the military man walking taller in the public eye. He wishes that more of the country's youth had a better understanding and appreciation of the organization to which he belongs. So do we.

With disagreement rampant, it is hoped that this small article about an unusual squadron and one of the men who help to make it function will provide some respite.

The Editors

PULL THE CORD!

By 1st Lt. Barney Halloran, USMC

When a Marine ground unit is cut off and the bullets and beans have both run out, mud crusted faces can only look to heaven for help. Over two years ago, the entire world waited to learn the fate of the besieged Marines at Khe Sanh. Only occasional aircraft could land as the winter monsoons and North Vietnamese gunfire lashed the base. Aircraft landed only to deliver the most urgent supplies and remove the most seriously wounded. Then the effective air traffic into the isolated base ground to a halt.

The seldom seen Marines, who get the gear to isolated units when the workhorse CH-46 *Sea Knights* and CH-53 *Sea Stallions* can't make it, are the men of the Air Delivery Platoon. The task for these men, during the siege of Khe Sanh, was prodigious; yet, over a million pounds of cargo were air delivered, and the outpost survived.

An air delivery platoon is a sub-unit of a Marine force service regiment's support company. Its mission is to provide logistic support to a Marine expeditionary force, including isolated units and components operating independently. The platoon is trained to provide rapid aerial logistic support to units in the field. Sore backs and long hours are the order of the day for the men who prepare and package supplies, repair and rig the high nylon parachutes, and load the cargo aboard Navy, Marine or Air Force aircraft. Even then the job isn't done. Aboard Navy and Marine aircraft, members of the platoon act as cargo masters and aircrewmen, ejecting their cargo from the aircraft over the drop zone.

Despite its job, the organization is small. At full strength, a unit consists of one officer and 63 enlisted men, subdivided into two operating sections, each of which is capable of supporting the delivery of 500 tons of general cargo. One section is required to deliver the 6,000 pounds of general cargo, trucks, jeeps and howitzers that can be used by a Marine division in one day.

The specialized talents of an organization such as an air delivery platoon require the most comprehensive training. Each man is a qualified parachutist, trained at the Army Jump School, Fort Benning, Ga. Following jump training, he is assigned to the Army Quartermaster School at Fort Lee, Va., where each air deliveryman learns the techniques of parachute packing, repair, and the sophisticated techniques of cargo packing for all types of air delivery drops. Prior to duty with the platoon, a Marine may have been a trained equipment operator, electrician, combat engineer or supply clerk – all required skills in the unit. His job rapidly takes on additional interest and responsibility. He is trained to rig, repair, dry and salvage parachutes; understand assembly line procedures for packing and loading; know the characteristics of aircraft and their loading capabilities; and be proficient in methods of ejecting loads from aircraft. As often as not, the long suffering air deliveryman will step out and follow his load down to earth to help the ground unit unpack and to recover his nylon umbrellas.

In actual air delivery operations, many other units come into play. The load prepared for aerial delivery by the platoon is transported to the airhead to be loaded on Navy, Marine or Air Force fixed wing aircraft or Marine helicopters. Once airborne and in the vicinity of the drop zone, the aircraft commander is contacted by the ground unit's forward air controller, a Marine Aviator assigned to the ground unit for the direction of air strikes and operations of just this nature. The ideal drop zone area is 800 yards long and 300 yards wide, but often is no larger than a baseball infield. The aircraft commander then makes his initial run on the drop zone and flies parallel

to the unit's lines. The deliverymen in the aircraft stand by, the cargo master gives the signal, the payload is given the old heave-ho and is on its way. As the load floats to the ground, Marines of the logistic support units scramble to collect and move the drop to issue points safe from enemy observation and fire. Geronimo! And the last chute into the zone is the air deliveryman!

The aerial resupply of Khe Sanh was probably the largest operation of its type to be conducted since WW II, including the French effort to resupply the fortress of Dien Bien Phu during April and May of 1954. It is true that no airborne forces were dropped into Khe Sanh (as were more than 1,800 volunteers into Dien Bien Phu) but Marine air deliverymen, in teams of five, parachuted into Khe Sanh every third day during the height of the seven-week siege. Five loads of ammunition and other supplies were air delivered each day and, once a week, an additional drop of rations was made to the besieged Marines. For seven weeks, fresh food, including hot bread, cold milk and 1,400 pounds of fresh eggs, made the 700-foot descent on the Saturday grocery run. Less than five percent of the 9,800 pounds of eggs dropped were lost.

Coincident with the siege of Khe Sanh, the air delivery platoon of the force logistic command was working in support of all III MAF and Army Special Forces operations in I Corps. During this same period, 150 tons of supplies were air-delivered each day. For 32 long days, at a sustained rate, more than 40,000 pounds of supplies were packed, rigged and dropped, setting a Marine Corps record for aerial delivery operations. Working from Da Nang airfield, Marine air deliverymen supplied to special forces' outposts some of their most unusual requirements: live ducks, chickens, pigs and, at one time, suspended from two parachutes, a live cow - all needed to feed indigenous personnel. The proximity of special forces camps to the enemy made the dawn and pre-dawn drops more hazardous than usual. It became necessary for the aircraft commanders to forego the usual dummy run over the target areas and, on the first pass, all cargo, followed by a team of five to seven air deliverymen, was sent earthward into drop zones.

NEARING *the drop zone, cargo is about to be pushed off the ramp of a C-130. Cargo away, an air deliveryman jumps from the rear of a CH-53 over Camp Lejeune, N.C.*

Air delivery has proven itself an essential part of military operations and its importance is re-emphasized as newer weapons compel greater separation of combat and supporting units, and as the speed and mobility of advance combat elements increase. When the gear has to be delivered, even in the most hazardous of circumstances, the Marines of Air Delivery can "pack the gear and pull the cord" to see that it arrives when and where it is needed.

at Sea with the Carriers

PACIFIC FLEET

Bon Homme Richard (CVA-31)

Captain Frank T. Hemler took command of *Bon Homme Richard* in flight deck ceremonies at Subic Bay, R.P. He relieved Captain D.W. Alderton, who will report to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington, D.C.

Capt. Hemler assumed his post as the 43,000-ton warship prepared for combat operations off the coast of Vietnam. *Bonnie Dick* is the Navy's first attack aircraft carrier to make six combat deployments to the Western Pacific since the outbreak of hostilities in Vietnam. His previous assignments included air operations officer and executive officer aboard *Oriskany*. Before coming to *Bon Homme Richard*, he was C.O. of *Union* (LKA-106).

Ranger (CVA-61)

Commander Jesse E. McKnight relieved Captain Allen E. "Boot" Hill as Commander, Attack Carrier Air Wing Two during ceremonies held aboard *Ranger* while she was moored at Subic Bay, R.P.

Speaking at the command change was Captain Joe P. Moore, *Ranger's* commanding officer, who praised Air Wing Two's performance during the last deployment, noting its outstanding professional competence, excellent safety record, and strong and effective leadership.

Commander McKnight comes to Air Wing Two from the Naval War College at Newport, R.I. Capt. Hill assumed duties as operations officer on the staff of Commander Seventh Fleet Attack Carrier Striking Force.

Ticonderoga (CVS-14)

Rear Admiral James C. Longino recently relieved Rear Admiral Norman C. Gillette, Jr., as Commander, Antisubmarine Warfare Group Three at ceremonies held while CVS-14 was tied up at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

ASW Group Three changed homeport from Long Beach to NAS North Island in July. *Ticonderoga* is also making the switch.

CVS-14 has been at Long Beach undergoing overhaul and conversion to an ASW carrier.

Admiral Longino is also Commander Fleet Air, San Diego.

Hancock (CVA-19)

Hancock received her 23rd commanding officer recently in ceremonies at the San Francisco Naval Shipyard.

Captain Theodore L. Johnson relieved Captain Newton P. Foss, who commanded the ship through her fifth WestPac combat cruise. He reported to Commander Fleet Air Alameda for temporary duty.

Capt. Johnson came to *Hancock* from USS *Rigel*. He previously had been Commander, Carrier Air Wing One and had also served as a military assistant to the Director of Defense Research and Engineering in the Department of Defense.

CVA-19, the oldest attack carrier in the Navy recently won the Battle E and will return to WestPac this fall.

ATLANTIC FLEET

America (CVA-66)

Captain Thomas B. Hayward, commanding officer of CVA-66 has been selected for promotion to Rear Admiral.

The message was received upon *America's* arrival at Subic Bay, R.P., after the ship completed a 15,069-nautical-mile journey from her Norfolk, Va., homeport and became the flagship for Seventh Fleet Attack Carrier Striking Force.

America relieved *Constellation* and became headquarters for the staff of Vice Admiral Frederick A. Bardsher, Commander Attack Carrier Striking Force, Seventh Fleet.

Preparing for a WestPac deployment, *America* and CVW-9 left Norfolk in April for an ORI in the Caribbean. En route to the South China Sea, the 77,000-ton carrier anchored at Rio de Janeiro for a three-day, rest and refueling visit, and then crossed the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans to reach the Seventh Fleet.

John F. Kennedy (CVA-67)

Because ABH3 Stephen Landfield, a *JFK* plane handler, passed through Chicago's O'Hare Airport and noticed a display relating USS *O'Hare* to O'Hare Airport, a similar display now exists relating the carrier *Kennedy* and New York's Kennedy Airport.

After noticing the O'Hare display, Landfield talked with the ship's public affairs officer, asking if an exhibit, relating one of the world's busiest airports afloat to one of the world's busiest airports ashore, could be established.

A few phone calls were made and Captain Julian Lake, commanding officer of *JFK*, presented Mr. Morris Sloan, general manager of John F. Kennedy International Airport, with a color photo of the ship, a *JFK* plaque and a proclamation commemorating the event.

Intrepid (CVS-11)

Was it a carrier pigeon looking for a home, or a homing pigeon looking for a carrier? What we're talking about is the pigeon found by AN Glenn Prove on *Intrepid's* bow.

The bird was perched on a compass trying to find his bearings when Prove, with the help of a shipmate, attached a note to its leg giving his name, his ship and the request: "Please write."

Being a "Navy" bird with an obvious passion for "bird farms," the pigeon arrived several hours later on board *Saratoga*, 40 miles away.

Prove's efforts were rewarded when Captain Isham Linder, C.O., handed him a message from *Saratoga:*

"The pigeon landed aboard on number three wire with O.K. pass. Unable to determine whether navaid failure, or casual approach to carrier recognition. Consider pigeon's judgment superb in selection of place to receive TLC. Due to fatigue and general rundown condition, pigeon admitted to sick bay. Will refuel and induct into AIMD for maintenance check prior to launching after arrival in port."

Guam's Mission of Mercy

USS *Guam* (LPH-9), commanded by Captain Richard R. Renaldi, spent ten days in June providing emergency assistance to the victims of the May 31 Peruvian earthquake. Her 14 helicopters, normally used to carry combat Marines during amphibious operations, completed 800 emergency sorties to remote mountain areas and transported 1,500 passengers, most of whom were members of international medical teams who went to the aid of the survivors. *Guam* also served as a hospital ship.

During the last two days of assistance at Chimbote, the CH-46's delivered over 55 tons of food, petroleum and shelter items to the towns and villages still cut off from normal outside help.

Prior to her departure, members of her crew spent two days in the Peruvian capital, at the invitation of a grateful government.

Photos by PHC Wade Davis.

THE SELECTED AIR RESERVE

Students 'Wash-in' at Andrews

Sixty students from Fort Hunt High School, Alexandria, Va., held a peaceful demonstration at NARTU Andrews recently.

Clad in cut-off jeans and shorts, sweat shirts, tennis shoes or barefoot, the youngsters engulfed three of the unit's planes for a "wash-in." The first to be cleaned was an S-2E *Tracker*, the second an F-8 *Crusader* and, finally, another S-2E.

The brushes, soap and water were broken out for action at 0830 and by 1045 the planes were on the ramp drying in the sunlight.

Following the wash down, the students visited the Navy's galley for lunch and then departed for home.

All are members of the Hi-Y and Tri-Hi-Y clubs which are affiliated with the local YMCA. This was the third consecutive year that the group has washed planes at the Naval Air Reserve Unit to express their support of the military.

Dallas Conducts Aerospace Seminar

The Naval Air Systems Reserve Unit at NAS Dallas has successfully completed the initial run of a new training seminar for technically oriented Reserve officers assigned to the Naval Air Systems Command.

The Aerospace Design Seminar was developed and presented by officers of NASRU D-1, commanded by Commander Arthur R. Loomer.

The seminar is an outgrowth of an engineering graduate course, originally held at Southern Methodist University, tailored to meet the specific needs of the Naval Air Reserve. The curriculum contains a series of lectures prepared and presented by top aerospace scientists and engineers and designed to inform naval officers of the current state of the art in aircraft and space vehicle development.

Realizing the need for such a seminar in training its Ready Reservists, NavAirSysCom named the Dallas unit to give the course as a special project. In completing the project, which culminated in the recent seminar, the unit took full advantage of both the academic and aerospace experience available in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, calling upon local industry and universities to assist.

Field trips and lectures were used to illustrate theory and enliven interest. Both LTV's aeronautics and missiles and space plants were visited, as well as General Dynamics in Fort Worth and Bell Helicopter in Hurst. A special tour of the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston provided the latest information available on the *Apollo* program.

The seminar attracted 27 Naval Reserve Officers from California to Massachusetts who, in civilian life, hold senior technical and management positions with companies in the aerospace field. Officers, attending the course as their annual two-week-training duty, hold ready reserve mobilization assignments with the Naval Air Systems Command.

Due to the need for such a technically oriented active duty program and the favorable comments received from this year's participants, NASRU D-1 is recommending continuance of the course every other year.

Air Barons and National Model Meet

The Air Barons, the official Naval Air Reserve Tactical Flight Demonstration Team, will perform their first show at home on August 2 at NAS Glenview. Formed in February 1969, the team has appeared before four million spectators at air shows across the country. Commander J. Edward Mahoney, an insurance executive, heads the team of six Weekend Warriors and two active duty Reservists.

The air show will climax the week-long National Model Airplane Championships hosted by the air station. Glenview will be open to the public from 7:15 a.m. to 7 p.m., July 27 through August 2.

Contestants from around the world will compete for prizes with gliders, rubber-band-driven planes and radio-controlled models. Full-size aircraft, including those based at Glenview, and numerous antique and experimental aircraft will be on display. A two-hour demonstration by model contestants will be a part of the air show.

Lakehurst Change of Command

Captain Ralph A. Beverly recently relieved Captain John F. Sanders as commanding officer of NARTU Lakehurst, N. J.

After the traditional "I relieve you, sir," the two captains inspected the unit's 205-man active-duty staff. Captain Sanders was then piped ashore, ending his two-year assignment at NARTU.

The 11th commanding officer in the unit's 23-year history, Capt. Beverly will direct the training of more than 1,000 Naval Air Reservists and assume responsibility for maintaining 13 Weekend Warrior units as a force-in-being for the nation's defense.

TSC: The Missing Link

By LCdr. H. Halpin and AWCS H. Wilson
NATC Patuxent River

The potential enemy submarine threat predicted for the 1970 to 1980 time frame will be composed of fast, deep-diving, quiet nuclear submarines with cruise and ballistic missile firing capabilities. These submarines may be used in a wide range of operations: from all-out strategic attack and direct opposition against U.S. forces to covert surveillance and merchant shipping interdiction. Submarines can be expected to be utilized against the interests of the United States wherever their major tactical asset of concealment can be exploited. To cope with the growing threat of more sophisticated submarines, ASW operations and techniques must also keep abreast.

The present ashore and afloat facilities which support air antisubmarine warfare operations grew out of the rudimentary practices of World War II. Today, as then, ASW support functions are accomplished by clerical-manual methods; operating procedures evolve from necessity or expediency. Due to the limitations inherent in the present support facilities, timely analysis of tactical and sensor information acquired by today's air ASW weapons systems is precluded, and the situation could worsen. Future weapons systems with on-board computer integrated avionics will acquire tactical data in quantities and formats unknown to the fleet at the present time. Without an improvement in supporting facilities, the total operational effectiveness of the new generation weapons systems cannot be realized, and timely, accurate and effective response to command authority cannot be accomplished.

The need for an improved ASW support center for patrol aircraft has become increasingly apparent with the development of such advanced ASW aircraft as the P-3C and S-3A.

These aircraft, which are designed to more effectively combat the fast, deep-diving submarine threat of the future, have greatly improved data acquisition and handling capabilities, automatic sensor processing, and digital communications. Maximum capabilities of these weapons platforms, and others under development, will be realized only when they are coordinated and supported by advanced, integrated tactical data processing systems.

The Tactical Support Center (TSC), designed to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding ASW field, is located at the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Md. It will serve as the prototype for a network of centers to be operated at locations both within and outside the continental United States.

The highly automated TSC provides a direct link with the remote aircraft data source and the operational commander. It is fully compatible with the digital data processing capabilities of the P-3C and can also handle ASW data collected and compiled by the older P3A/B's.

The center will extract, process, store, retrieve and correlate data as it is received from the aircraft. Other features include: the automatic display of vital operational data and real-time direction of ASW aircraft via digital data link communication systems; rapid computer controlled reconstruction of aircraft sorties; correlation of intelligence data and analytical processing of sensor data.

TSC, joining with higher and lateral commands for information exchange to support flight operations, will provide timely, reliable, concise information to the decision-making process. It will also be used as a training device for patrol plane crews – furnishing fast and accurate replay of individual ASW flights.

Then a totally integrated ASW force will become a reality.

NEWS LOOKS BACK

...THIS IS NO DRILL!

Daybreak was clear, bright and peaceful. It was Sunday morning. The sun rose red from behind the mountains. Its rays flooded down the slopes and across the sugar cane fields. The island was bathed in light. Borne by the tradewinds, an occasional cloud scudded over the harbor and the fleet lying at anchor and moored along the docks.

At 0755, morning colors were being prepared on board the ships and stations, men were rising, eating breakfast, preparing for a routine day that never came. It was December 7, 1941. Pearl Harbor.

Flying down the passes from the north, across the Waianae and Koolau Mountains, the Japanese aircraft swept toward their targets.

The Sunday calm was violently shattered by the roar of bomb explosions, by shrill sirens, by the harsh bark of answering antiaircraft guns. The air was filled with the thick black smoke of burning ships and aircraft, the groans of men, and the shrill scream of diving aircraft.

The air filled with radio transmissions: "Air Raid Pearl Harbor — This is no drill — To all units . . . planes headed for Pearl Harbor number unknown — All hands, Kaneohe . . . being attacked by 15 Japanese planes — Enemy planes coming over Pearl Harbor. Fire at will — Parachute troops landing at Barbers Point — The *California* is on fire . . . two tugs with fire equipment could save her."

The attack was swift, deadly and complete: in less than two hours, over 2,000 Americans died, the Pacific Fleet lay in shambles, and the Island's air arm was sorely damaged. The nation was stunned. Without warning, America's precarious neutrality had been violated; she had embarked on the first of 1,364 days of war — December 7, 1941,to September 2, 1945.

By Michael G. McDonell

THE MAN FROM

Rear Admiral Henry L. Miller

SHANGRI-LA

In the days that followed, the shock and the grief turned to anger.

But partial retribution was only a few months away: "Tokyo Bombed – Doolittle Does It!" blared the headlines across the country. Sixteen B-25's led by Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy Doolittle, USAAF, had bombed Tokyo, Nagoya and Kobe on April 18, 1942.

President Roosevelt announced to the nation that the raid had been launched from "Shangri-La," that miraculous, mysterious Tibetan city of James Hilton's *Lost Horizon*. Americans loved the joke. U.S. morale was lifted. Japan had proven vulnerable. The burden of war seemed lighter.

At the time of the President's announcement, ships of Task Force 16 were sailing across the Pacific toward home. With the task force was the floating Shangri-La, the aircraft carrier *Hornet* (CV-8), from which the attack had been launched.

On board was Lt. "Hank" Miller who had traveled halfway around the world – from Eglin Field, Fla., to within 668 miles of Tokyo – on a telephone call. At 0824 on the day of the raid, he watched the last B-25 rise up from the *Hornet's* deck over the green water breaking on the carrier's ramp.

Like every man on board, he had sweated, prayed and urged each bomber up and away.

But Lt. Miller's concern was more personal. He had trained Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle and his *Tokyo Raiders* in the precise, but perilous, art of taking off in an overloaded B-25 from the deck of an aircraft carrier.

His strong hands folded atop a log book, his lieutenant's bars replaced by twin stars, the Commander of the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Md., Rear Admiral Henry L. Miller, reflected upon the events of 28 years ago: "I was selected for the job by Commander Wendell G. Switzer who was then the assistant superintendent of aviation training at Pensacola where I was an instructor. He knew me and my fighter experience. I had been assigned to Fighting Squadron Three when he was C.O. of Fighting Squadron Four."

In the days before the war, there had been intense rivalry between the two squadrons. In a gunnery shoot, "Hank" Miller, the Alaskan "sourdough," had beaten VF-4's famed "Jumpin' Joe" Clifton by one bullet to win the title of Top Gun – 63 hits out of 144 shots.

When word came to Cdr. Switzer that an instructor was needed for a top secret assignment, he remembered the aggressive young Alaskan.

"The first word that I received of the assignment was on Saturday, February 28, 1942. I was told to go down to Eglin Field and train a B-25 detachment (commanded by Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle) to take off from an aircraft carrier," the Admiral related. "I had never seen a B-25 and, at that time, I did not know that the Navy had launched two of them from a carrier off Norfolk to see if it could be done."

On March 1, 1942, Lt. Miller was assigned TAD to train the Army Air Force pilots. He was still in the dark about the purpose of the training when he arrived at Eglin Field. "At that time, the mission of the group was top secret, and very few people knew about it."

Training began immediately. Takeoff procedures were formulated based upon a number of factors: the characteristics and performance of the B-25; the assumption that a maximum number of bombers would be taken aboard the carrier; that the maximum allowable takeoff distance would be 350 feet in a 40-knot wind; and that each aircraft would be loaded to 31,000 pounds, 2,000 pounds over the maximum designed load.

"A field was set aside for the exclusive use of the B-25 detachment, and no other planes could use the field. The runways were painted with a yellow stripe down the middle so that

THE MAN FROM SHANGRI-LA

the pilots could practice holding the nose wheel on the yellow line throughout the run." Flags were set out along the runway at 250 and 400 feet and then 50-foot intervals, up to the 700-foot mark.

"On the first day . . . with about 27,000 pounds, Capt. Davy Jones, USAAF, pilot, and I, as copilot, took off in the first B-25." After experimenting with different flap, stabilizer and power settings, the procedures were set.

During the preliminary training phase, the Army crews learned procedures. They then progressed to flying under the standard procedures with a greater load and then with the maximum mission load.

Stationed behind the pilot, Lt. Miller recorded the airspeed and observed the pilot's technique throughout the takeoff. Each pilot received a thorough critique and instruction.

Fifteen days had been allotted for the training but, because of fog, takeoff training was conducted on only ten days.

On March 24, the B-25's took off from Eglin Field for the last time and headed for California. "I flew with Doolittle. We took the planes to the Army depot at Sacramento, where they were put in check prior to going on board the *Hornet*.

"While at Sacramento, I spent the last two days, the 30th and 31st of March, giving the pilots refresher takeoffs at Willows, Calif. On the 1st, we flew into Alameda and, during that evening and early morning, we taxied the planes to the *Hornet* at the dock in Alameda and had them hoisted aboard."

Very few on board the *Hornet* knew the ship's destination or mission, but when the ship's fighter pilots saw that Hank Miller was with the Army, the word spread: "We're going to Alaska!" But no one could guess why.

On April 1, all 16 planes were aboard and, on April 2, the *Hornet*, accompanied by two cruisers, four destroyers and a fleet oiler, steamed past the San Francisco skyline and headed for Japan.

To show the Army Air Force pilots and crews that it could be done, Lt. Miller was scheduled to take off in a B-25 when the ship was 100 miles out from San Francisco. He would return the plane to the AAF at Columbia, S.C., and then return to Pensacola.

On the morning of the scheduled flight, Miller and Doolittle looked out over the flight deck. "This deck sure looks small to me," said the Colonel. Miller looked at Doolittle: "Colonel, this is a breeze. I'll have 495 feet for takeoff and your people have been taught to take off in 250 and 300 feet in a 40-knot wind."

The two pilots climbed into the cockpit of a B-25. Miller pointed toward a distant object: "Colonel, do you see where that tool kit is way up the deck by the bow? That's where I used to take off in fighters."

Doolittle stared down the deck at the distant tool kit, then turned to the young lieutenant: "Hank, what's the word that you use in the Navy for 'bulloney'?"

But it was up to Jimmy Doolittle and the raiders to prove that the B-25 could fly from a carrier's deck. Lt. Miller's takeoff never came. In the afternoon of their first day at sea, the *Hornet's* commanding officer, Captain Marc Mitscher, called the lieutenant to the bridge and informed him that they would be unable to turn up 40 knots of wind for Miller's takeoff. Miller said that he wouldn't need it and told the captain of his conversation with Doolittle. With that, Capt. Mitscher said, "Miller, did you bring along an extra pair of pants?" Miller replied that he had all his personal gear aboard to fly nonstop to Columbia, S.C., whereupon, Mitscher said, "We will take all 16 planes."

A take-off distance of 460 feet was available for the 16 planes. It was more than enough.

Lt. Miller had counted on one of the B-25's for two reasons: to prove that it could be flown from a carrier's deck and to get back to Pensacola. "My original orders were terminated

on March 15 and I was traveling on a phone call. However, I was thrilled to death to have the opportunity to be there at the takeoff. It was a matter of professional pride. But with the opportunity to get a wee bit of levity into the act, I said, 'Captain, would you please drop me off at the next mail buoy. I will be traveling halfway around the world via a telephone call, and I don't want to report back to Pensacola as a Ltjg.' "

Does the Admiral wish that he could have flown on the raid?

"I told Admiral Eddie O'Neil (Ret.), who was then a lieutenant commander and executive officer of VF-8 aboard the *Hornet*, that if I, by chance, had an opportunity to go with one of those crews, to send all my belongings to my wife at Pensacola." He paused reflectively, "But I didn't get a chance to go. We had extra crews who were fighting to get into the cockpit of that 16th plane."

Looking back on the raid, Admiral Miller recalls, "It was a tremendous accomplishment. At the hour of takeoff every officer and man on the *Hornet* would have pinned every medal in the world on them. We felt they didn't have a Chinaman's chance of coming back because we had to launch them early – we had been spotted by Japanese fishing boats."

Along with the rest of the men of the Task Force, Hank Miller anxiously awaited the outcome. The Japanese themselves made the announcement: "At some time between five and ten minutes after one, Tokyo Radio went off the air. When it came back on, the announcer was very excited and said that enemy bombers had bombed the city. He then went off the air. But he had let the cat out of the bag. It meant that the mission was successful."

The end result of the raid: "It was a tremendous shot in the arm for the U.S.A. It provided the impetus to get the needed war effort going. It also had an impact on Japan – it showed them we could reach them. It was only a prelude of things to come."

Hank Miller took part in those "things to come." From Baker Island to Buka and Rabaul, to Palau, Hollandia, Okinawa and, finally, to the Japanese home islands, as a squadron commander and air group commanding officer, Lt. Henry L. Miller, honorary *Tokyo Raider*, made it the long way, but he got there, too.

NEWS LOOKS BACK

WW-II Album...

SB2U-3 Vindicator scout bombers return to their carrier somewhere in the Atlantic (October 1942). A tightly packed deck was normal for WW II carriers. Aboard USS Takanis Bay, flight deck crewmen preflight Avengers. An unidentified pilot with his nicknamed FM-2 aboard USS Gambier Bay.

Silhouetted by a low sun, seaplane tender sailors work on a PBM. And at left, flight directors in a carrier's combat information center plot positions.

Ordnancemen aboard USS Santee (AVD-29) arm an SBD. During the Battle of Coral Sea, antiaircraft fire blankets the sky. Ltjg. A. W. Magee, Jr., walks the wing, away from his flaming Hellcat, while fire fighters aboard USS Cowpens (CVL-25) move in. There were no injuries from the fire.

...the war drags on

Then, the hard-to-believe realization...

"The war is over!" It was hard to believe. Reactions to the news varied with the individual and his circumstances. Some were joyous - jubilant. Others, silent - stunned. During the long years of global warfare, peace had been the objective - the distant memory; now it had been attained.

Much of the world lay in rubble, and the task of rebuilding lay ahead. But, for a moment, or for the entire period from August 14 to September 2, 1945, the end of WW II was celebrated by each individual in his own way.

Twenty-five years have passed and, for many, the memories still linger.

For **Vice Admiral Thomas F. Connolly**, DCNO(Air), the news of V-J Day overshadowed another celebration:

"I was at the Officers Club with a group of fresh caught commanders (on duty in Flight Test at Patuxent River) who were giving a wetting-down party celebrating their promotions. Although it was a stag affair, one woman was present, Lt. Laurette Ryan, Flight Test Administrative Officer. It was 1730, September 2, 1945. The station duty officer rushed into the party and said: 'Hear this, everyone, hear this! The Japanese have surrendered; the war is over!'

"A tremendous calm and quiet came over the party. Glasses first hoisted were lowered and placed on the nearest table. Friend turned to friend, shook hands and said, 'Thank God!' Then, one by one, each of the 40 men went to Lt. Ryan, took her hand - kissed her - and went out of the room, down the stairs to their cars . . . and home."

Rear Admiral Henry L. Miller recalls August 14, 1945. Lieutenant Hank Miller, C.O. of Air Group Six, was leading the aircraft of his carrier task group toward the distant coastline of Japan. The heavy bombs they carried were earmarked for an electronics plant 40 miles southeast of Tokyo. As they neared Japan, Hank Miller received a call from the flagship. "99 Jamboree . . . . this is Christopher. Have all planes drop their bombs in the water and return to base. Recall all fighter sweeps in the Tokyo area and tell them not to strafe or bomb. Watch for Jap fighters in the air!"

'The voice of the flagship was Lt. John Connolly, later to become Secretary of the Navy and governor of Texas.

"I relayed the instructions and everyone began singing, 'When the war is over, we'll all go USN.' " When the air cleared, Lt. Miller received another call: "Hank, this is Neff. There are five

There were no more outer islands to take – the final objective was now the Japanese home islands. The Allies steeled themselves for an invasion that all foresaw as the most terrible of the war. But then the news of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Atom Bomb arrived. Japan surrendered soon after. We had won! It was over! Clockwise, aircraft of the 3rd Fleet stage a flyover celebration. Yokohama, VJ-Day. American POW's cheer a low pass. Tokyo, looking northeast from the Imperial Palace on September 2, 1945.

Photos courtesy of LCdr. Morrow J. Allen

it was over!

Japs above me. It looks like they are going to attack. What should I do?"

"I thought about it. I didn't want to start WW III but I also didn't want any of my kids to get hurt, so I said, 'If it looks like they're going to attack, shoot them down–gently.'

"He got four of the five in about 15 seconds. We returned to base."

Reporting for duty at NAAF Westerly, R. I., on August 6, 1945, ARM 2/c **Irwin Patch, Jr.**, now a commander, arrived from the Pacific with Air Group 53 just in time.

"Exuberance and celebration erupted on the afternoon of August 15. A period of relaxation and recreation continued until after Labor Day. That August around Watch Hill was gay and exciting. The pride, comradeship and joyous appreciation shown us by the New Englanders were impressive and memorable. Americans don't like war, and they don't like defeat. The end of the war gave our country a chance to celebrate – with prayers of thanksgiving. For me, it was the greatest moment for our country in my lifetime."

Lt. James A. Riner, USNR, remembers the twilight period of that August. "The pilots and rear-seat gunners in Bombing Squadron 83 aboard USS *Essex* (CV-9) were engaged in so-called reconnaissance flights in the Tokyo area. The Japanese had been ordered to mark and identify all of their prisoner-of-war camps and to remove the propellers from all flyable aircraft. We were to locate the POW camps and the camp identification markings which had been ordered and to reconnoiter the airfields to ensure that the propellers had been removed. These were low altitude and slow speed missions – to afford the 'best look.' Roofs of buildings in the POW camps often bore cryptic messages. Some identified the military unit, others conveyed the prisoners' needs . . 'milk,' 'cigarettes,' 'come get us.' Often the pilots or crewmen would sight the name of a shipmate or friend who had been reported missing in action. Once we located these camps, we rounded up donations of goods from squadron mates and added whatever food and clothing we could get from the ship's stores.

We were the cautious, but

The formal surrender, September 2, 1945: The Men, at Tokyo Bay; the Ship, the USS Missouri, now at rest at Bremerton, Wash.

relieved victors

Packed into parachute bags, these packages were then rigged with chutes for low altitude drops to the POW's from the bomb bays of our SB2C-4 *Helldivers*. These missions brought a great deal of satisfaction."

"On August 14, 1945 (August 15, stateside), I was at general quarters on board USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CV-31)," recalls **LCdr. Morrow J. Allen** of NATTU Pensacola. "The ship was on station with the 3rd Fleet, engaged in operations against the mainland of Japan. I was then a chief warrant officer (photographer).

"Captain Adrian O. Rule's voice came on the circuit. The crew was tired. GQ's were interminable; K rations hard to force down. 'This is the captain speaking. I have just received word to recall our last strike and to cancel the remainder.' It took time for the full significance to soak in. I can't remember how much time elapsed before the captain passed the official word that Japan had surrendered. There was no celebration. It was too hard to believe. In fact, it was a couple of weeks before we could believe it.

"The carrier task forces remained at sea off Japan until the surrender was actually signed. During that period, several 'refuse-to-surrender' kamikaze pilots made attacks, but they were intercepted. We remained at 'darken ship' for a week or so. (The first time word was passed, 'Do not darken ship,' we felt like a bunch of fish in a bowl!) The routine was practically the same as before.

"The day the surrender was signed aboard USS *Missouri* (BB-63), the carrier task forces launched every flyable aircraft. The sky, as far as you could see, seemed full of angry hornets. It was an impressive sight."

The end of the war made an impression on a young battleship sailor who is now a civilian with NavAirSysCom.

Mr. Kent Linkins remembers:

"I was a Ltjg. 5-inch-gun director officer aboard USS *Iowa* (BB-61), a part of Task Force 38. Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey was in command. During the previous week or two, we had completed several air strikes and 16-inch gunnery bombardments and were steaming about 100 miles off the Japanese home islands.

"The usual dawn alert started the day, a slightly overcast, hazy, yet bright, day. Rumors of the war's end ran through the ship like wildfire. Even the battle command phone circuits were used to relay the latest hot tip. The best one was that the signalmen were looking for the biggest U.S. flag we had on board. This rumor really took on significance when the signalmen hoisted a bound-up U.S. flag to the two block and assigned a rated man to the downhaul, so that one yank on it by him would break the flag on the fly. Finally, the captain announced that the war's end might be imminent and the signal for it would be the breaking of the U.S. flag over on the flagship.

"Operations continued – everyone on battle stations. The carriers prepared and launched a strike against targets on the home islands. Shortly after the aircraft disappeared from view, the flagship broke her flag. Ours broke almost simultaneously, and it was beautiful – some 20 feet long.

"For about 30 seconds, pandemonium broke loose. All we could do was yell. And yell we did: Down on the open decks, sailors reacted with varying attitudes. Some were jumping all over anyone they met. Others were waving their arms and yelling. And, strangely, some just stood perfectly still. The most general comment, one to another, was 'We made it – we won't be shot up now.'

"FAdm. Halsey sent a plain language transmission to the aircraft. I cannot remember the exact text but it went something like this: 'All aircraft. The war is over. Cease present operation and return to base. Jettison all bombs and rockets in the sea prior to landing. Treat all Japanese aircraft as friendly but, if they seem aggressive or threatening, shoot them down in a friendly fashion.' "

EDITOR'S CORNER

RIVER RATS hold reunion at San Antonio, Texas. How's that? Well, it turns out that there is an organization of Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force men who call themselves the *River Rats*. Led by their new CinC Rat, Brigadier General Robin Olds, the group is continuing the followship that developed between air crews who fought in the air war over the Red River Valley in North Vietnam. Membership is extended to those who flew at least one mission in *Route Package VI* over the Valley – at that time the most heavily defended piece of real estate in the world.

A strong interest concerning POW/MIA affairs is maintained. The *Rats* sponsor a growing scholarship fund for children of POW/MIA *River Rats*. In addition, personnel at a number of air stations have formed local *River Rat* Forces (with their own CinC Rats) to organize personal assistance for the POW/MIA wives and dependents: picnics, "man-type" house repairs, camping, family outings and other social events.

Membership applications may be obtained by writing: River Rats, P.O. Box 9736, Nellis AFB, Nev. 89110.

Old McDonald had a farm, but MAG-11, Da Nang, has a duck pond – and the ducks to go with it. The pond is an irregular oval roughly 15 feet long, 6 feet wide and about 3 feet deep, complete with launching ramp at one end.

"I remember the pond very well," says GySgt. Dan A. Coleman, a MABS-11 aerology man. "I almost fell into it in 1965. In those days the pond was surrounded by barbed wire and hidden by heavy brush. Later the area was cleared and the pond lined with concrete."

The pond's population includes 12 ducklings, six ducks and some fish.

"About a month ago a bench was added to the pond. When the eggs were hatching, everyone used to come over and watch," Coleman continues. "Later, the troops helped hatch the eggs by breaking the shells so the young ducklings could climb out."

MABS-11 personnel fed the young ducklings dried shrimp. At night, dispensary and dental corpsmen took them inside until they were old enough to defend themselves against predators.

"I experimented to see what they'd like to eat," Coleman stated. "They like crackers and strips of bologna. They probably think the bologna strips are worms."

AND THE C.O. OF HC-7 at Atsugi, Japan, is crying "Foul." It seems that a family of birds has taken up residence in the wall of Commander D. C. Gregory's office. The release we received doesn't identify the birds, but it does say, "The commander now conducts his meetings and conferences to the musical accompaniment of a nest of chirping birds. Each time the mother returns with a mouthful of worms, her hungry offspring let loose with a volley of excited chirping."

WOULD YOU *like to swing on a star, or a helicopter? That is what this 1st Marine Division recon team did as a Marble Mountain HMM-263 CH-46, piloted by Maj. Bruce L. Shapiro, lifted them to a secure zone southwest of An Hoa. Two, no, make that one and a half Skyhawks, line up at Barbers Point. Actually, VC-1 was testing its hangar sprinkler system and towed the aircraft outside to keep them dry.*

SQUADRON INSIGNIA

Established in 1967, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Training Squadron 120 is responsible for the training of pilots, NFO's, aircrewmen and maintenance personnel for the East Coast VAW community. Flying E-1B's and E-2's, the Norfolk-based squadron is led by Cdr. R. A. Pettigrew who will be relieved this month by Cdr. D. G. Terry.

NAVAL AVIATION
NEWS

NANews Looks Back

They had made it. The sounds of warfare subsided, they looked forward to an era of hopeful peace. But they remembered and were cautious—remembering the beginning and how it had ended. From Pearl Harbor to Tokyo Bay, NANews looks back on 1,364 days of war on pp. 26-39.