

NAVAL AVIATION

# NEWS



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# NAVAL AVIATION NEWS

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Vice Admiral Frederick C. Turner  
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air Warfare)

Vice Admiral F. S. Petersen  
Commander, Naval Air Systems Command

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*COVERS — Front, PHCS(AC) Bob Lawson filmed VF-43 Lieutenants "Wheels" Lyon (inside) and "Gabby" Gabriel (in lead aircraft) climbing for altitude in their T-38As on ACM mission with CVW-6 aircraft at MCAS Yuma, Ariz., last January. Back, PH1(AC) Art LeGare photographed a VS-28 ordnance crew loading a rocket pod on a squadron S-3 during the same Yuma deployment. (Story begins on page 8.) Here, AE3 Terry Neuman and AD1 Lonnie Kinderman of HC-3 (see pages 30 and 31) inspect tail rotor on squadron Sea Knight at NAS North Island, Calif. Scott Day took the picture.*

# CAG Speaks

A speech by Commander "Bear" Taylor, Commander, Carrier Air Group Three, to Attack Squadron 75, in January 1977.

I remember the first CAG I ever saw. He was talking to the Captain on the bridge of Michener's fictitious carrier in the movie version of *The Bridges of Toko-Ri*. The Hollywood version of the CAG was the usual grizzled, square-jawed hero type dressed in wrinkled khakis and a well patched leather flying jacket. But it wasn't so much what the CAG looked like as it was what he said that stands out in that early memory. At that point in the movie the air group had had a full share of bad luck both in operations against the enemy in Korea and around the deck of the carrier. Michener's golden pen gave Hollywood all it needed to make the tailhook profession come across as one of the most hazardous and demanding, as well as glamorous, occupations a man could pursue. So it was easy to understand the CAG when he asked an unanswered question of the Captain, "Where do we get such men?" It is a question that predates my Navy career, now at 22 years, and one for which I have been molding an answer since I heard it in 1955.

"Where do we get such men?" I have asked myself the question repeatedly as I watched squadron mates and shipmates hit the ramp, fail to survive cold cat shots, and run the gauntlet of flak, Sams and MiGs to hit targets in the heartland of North Vietnam, some never to return, others to survive six or seven years of incarceration. I have also asked the question whenever I have observed the countless other tests of human desire and ability to survive in the face of the danger inherent in this occupation and of the depths of courage required to press on where other men would shy away or turn back. It is the question I have asked whenever I have seen men refuse to fear as they pushed on.

I remember most vividly one evening on *Enterprise* at Yankee Station 10 years ago this month. I passed through IOIC, or CVIC as we know it today, at about 8 p.m. to pick up some charts of the Ninh Binh area in Route Package 6. I was to lead a

division to that fairly well defended area at dawn the next day. I knew the weather was rotten and I'd for sure be going on another milky-radar drop south of the DMZ, but IOIC was chock full of VA-35 A-6 crews. I intruded on the *Intruders* and got a rubberneck look at a briefing chart Cdr. Glenn Kollman (the X. O.) was preparing in order to show the on-board Admiral where the night's 12 A-6 strikers were going. Twelve strips of narrow colored tape were laid out to show the different routes planned to take the 12 aircraft across the night's targets and back to *Enterprise*. I was awed by the directness of the routes and by the destination targets. All but a few were aimed straight at the heartland of North Vietnam—Hanoi, Hai Duong and Haiphong. These brave A-6 shipmates were preparing for a task more demanding and more hazardous than any I'd ever seen. I was going on a milky and these guys were going to the heartland, again and again, every night. I stepped clear of the *Intruder* chart makers and in total awe and admiration asked again, "Where do we get such men?"

For years the Naval Aviation prima donnas were the fighter pilots. I remember the signs in the F-8 era that said "Gangway, Fighter Pilot." But the courage, skill and success of the *Intruder* crews who penetrated the toughest gauntlet of opposition in the history of aerial warfare every night, who made two combat cruises and flew the hundreds of missions, who carried the war when all others were grounded by weather, and who met and killed the enemy, changed all that. The *Intruder* crews became the prima donnas, and when the shooting begins again they will be in the van and they will once again be the ones that will have to muster the courage, skill and determination to press on and defeat the enemy. Gone are the Gangway, Fighter Pilot signs, and if they ever hang new ones they must say Gangway, *Intruder* Crews. For they are the men who will go first, endure more, and suffer most greatly when we are called to do our duty. They, more than any others, must therefore develop and maintain a reservoir of courage that will sustain them in the execution of their vital duty. It will be the kind of courage that General George Patton held came largely out

of habit and self-confidence.

My study of military history has led me to the conclusion that every military effort in the past has been spearheaded by an elite force of courageous, skilled, disciplined and loyal fighters imbued with the spirit of attack. *Intruder* crews are the elite among the elite. That's you, *Sunday Punchers*. You will ride *Saratoga* into harm's way and she could very well be the first on the scene. You will be the elite that will spearhead *Saratoga's* effort. You can count on it, and you will have to be able to dig down in your brave hearts and find the courage, the skill, the discipline and the loyalty to fight with the spirit of attack. I have no doubt that you will find in your hearts these vital qualities and that you will succeed. Just as the *Intruder* crews did in Vietnam.

You are "such men" and I know where you come from. You are the cream of the nation's manhood, men who have combined a career and service to your country. Men who have elected to participate, of your own choice, in a death-defying profession. Men who can at any time say, "That is enough" and leave the service, to do well at some other profession I have no doubt. Men who along with me suffer the fantastic disease of the pounding heart, who know the exhilaration of running on pure adrenalin. Men who willingly trade the freedoms of a democratic society for the restrictions of a military order knowing that in the exchange comes an equalizing ticket to the unequalled freedom of the skies.

And you—you have a tradition to uphold. One that Cdr. Kollman and Lt. John Griffith typify. Cdr. Kollman died at the controls of his A-6 toward the end of his second combat deployment a few days after he said, "To me, my duty here is as natural and normal as accepting the responsibility of caring for my wife and children. It is my job and I'm going to do it. I would not ask someone else to do my job." And the bravest of the brave, John Griffith who died with Skipper Kollman, "This is my job, I believe in what I am doing. I can do it well and I will." (*NA News*, August 1968, page 9)

Where do we get such men? Out there in our society. Where are such men? Right here: among the *Sunday Punchers*.

# did you know?

## Visit by SecNav and CNO

During a two-day tour of naval units in the Norfolk area in March, Secretary of the Navy W. Graham Claytor, Jr., and Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James L. Holloway III visited *Iwo Jima* (LPH-2). While aboard the amphibious assault ship, they witnessed a demonstration of simulated amphibious assault operations by a Navy/Marine Corps team in which *Harriers* and



three types of helicopters were used. An underway replenishment was also conducted involving *Iwo Jima* and *USS Milwaukee* (AOR-2).

In the photo the Secretary of the Navy (right) talks with Captain Phil R. Hawkins, C.O. of *Iwo Jima*.

**Harmon Trophy** - A Marine Corps pilot is the first Marine winner of the Harmon International Aviation Trophy. He is Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Fix, operations officer of MAG-24, 1st Marine Brigade, MCAS Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii.

He has been awarded the 1976 Harmon Trophy for his service as C.O. of HMH-463 during the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Saigon in 1975. More than 5,000 American and Vietnamese civilians, foreign nationals and Marines were airlifted to safety by the squadron. Lt. Col. Fix was personally responsible for saving two survivors of a SAR mission conducted by another unit whose aircraft had crashed at sea.

The Harmon Trophy was established in 1926 by the late Colonel Clifford Harmon, pioneer American balloonist and aviator. Harmon achieved international fame by becoming the first pilot to fly nonstop across Long Island Sound in the decade following the first flights of the Wright Brothers.

Other U.S. winners of the trophy have included Amelia Earhart, Charles Lindbergh, Howard Hughes, General James Doolittle and Colonel Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin.

## Camera Pod Recovered

An airtight camera pod has been recovered after floating in the ocean for nearly two years. It was found by the Dominican Navy drifting off Isla Saona, southwest of the Dominican Republic. The all-aluminum pod was designed and built by the Pacific Missile Test Center's Photo Instrumentation Division.

The pod, which encased a camera, was last used in a *Standard* missile project in March 1975 off the coast of Puerto Rico to photograph missiles from a *Septar* target boat. Attached to a stanchion of the *Septar*, it was re-

## did you know?

leased automatically when a missile hit the boat.

The pods are designed with heat and salt water sensors, explains Phil Richardson, division head, which trigger explosive ordnance if the boat is burning or sinking. This releases the camera and pod for possible recovery.

The returned pod was intact although the camera apparently was destroyed on impact. Losses of camera pods have been less than five percent since they were introduced into the fleet in 1974.

### T-44A Trainer

The first of a new fleet of Navy trainers, a T-44A, arrived at the Naval Air Training Command, NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, on April 5. The twin engine turboprop will replace the TS-2A *Tracker* used by Corpus Christi training squadrons since the early Sixties.

It will be flown in advanced multi-engine instrument training. The stand-



ard version has a seating configuration which includes seats for the pilot, copilot, a forward-facing observer and two passengers. The crew for training missions will consist of one instructor pilot and two student pilots.

A total of 61 T-44As are scheduled for delivery to Training Air Wing Four over the next three years. They will be flown by VTs 28 and 31.

### Go Navy

The Navy Recruiting Command has begun a "Go Navy" campaign that brings together all the promotional efforts aimed at reaching the One Navy recruiting enlisted goals. The high goal months are June, July and August, the time when many high school seniors are making their career decisions.

The Recruiting Command solicits the support of other Navy commands, publications, and Navy-oriented organizations. Promotional efforts include T-shirt appliques for field use, bumper stickers, patches, pens, billboards, band tours, etc.

Anyone interested in obtaining any of the material should contact the



Recruiting Advertising Department (Code 40) which is responsible for the overall coordination of the campaign. Ltjg. S. L. Geiselman is the point of contact (autovon 222-4726 or commercial 202-692-4726).

#### **RPV Research**

A new development in remotely piloted vehicle recovery technology was demonstrated in Venice, Fla., in February by Paraflite, Inc., Pennsauken, N.J. The company, manufacturer of advanced gliding parachutes, launched and landed a 140-pound RPV with a 12-foot wingspan, using a pre-deployed, steerable fabric wing (paraplane). The RPV was repeatedly maneuvered through data collection patterns to determine control accuracy and feasibility of shipboard recovery. The fabric wing would remain stowed for RPV launch and mission operations. Deployment of the wing at the end of the mission may enable a low speed, accurate recovery to be made on small ships. The project is sponsored by the Naval Air Development Center.





# grampaw pettibone

## Head Up, Wing Down

A flight of four RF-8As were briefed by the flight leader for individual departures through a low overcast. They were to continue individually for entry into the mirror landing practice pattern at the auxiliary field. Vertigo and generator failure were discussed as well as other emergency procedures. All aircraft were fueled to 5,800 pounds and it was planned to shoot heavy passes from the estimated initial MLP weight of about 4,000 pounds until reaching maximum gross touchdown weight.

At about 30 miles out, our victim called for the current field altimeter and at 15 miles he received confirmation of the scheduled Charlie time. Approaching the break, the pilot shifted to paddles frequency which he had previously set on the manual position. Unable to contact paddles, the pilot switched back to tower and was cleared to break and contact paddles downwind.

The break was executed at 1,500 feet and 300 knots. He reduced the power to 82 percent, extended the speed brakes and rolled into 60 degrees of bank. After 90 degrees of turn and at 220 knots, the pilot lowered the landing gear, shallowed the bank to 30 degrees and turned his attention back to the field. Glancing back in the cockpit after 90 degrees of turn, the pilot noted the airspeed approaching 170 knots. At this point he added power to 90 percent and again looked back to the field.

Shortly thereafter, the aircraft began to roll and pitch up mildly. The pilot attempted to level his wings with opposite rudder, noting the airspeed to be 130 knots and angle of attack at 22-25 units.

At this time he was experiencing disorientation and *thought* the aircraft rolled to about 60 degrees right



wing down. Passing 500 feet, he pulled the curtain and ejected successfully, landing in soft dirt.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

Great balls of fire! If this fiasco don't wilt the lily, nothin' will.

Here's a case of just plain doping off. Old Gramps has been out there at night and bewildered at times, but never enough to forget all the fundamentals of flying that bird in the dark. You've got to put that wing up for landing, Bub, or you darn well better have enough airspeed to stay airborne. Can't beat that checkoff list to keep you out of trouble — and alive. Not

usin' that flip-top wing on the *Crusader* is like walkin' in the rain with a closed umbrella. (May 1966)

## Danger Areas

An SBD pilot, flying at 4,000 feet about three miles off the Atlantic coast, suddenly heard "a noise similar to a loud clap of the hands." Inspection in the air failed to show anything wrong. Upon returning to base, the pilot discovered a jagged hole about three inches long and an inch wide in the leading edge of the wing.

When the wing was removed, an unexploded 20mm high-explosive incendiary projectile was found on top of the auxiliary gas tank. The nose fuse of the shell had been sheared off when it entered the wing. It was believed that a serious accident was prevented only because the shell had reached its maximum range and was tumbling when it hit.

The Trouble Board reported that the accident proved to the pilots of this squadron that firing notices must be studied while on the ground and danger areas given a wide berth in the air. In order to make it easy for the pilots to do this, the squadron has now adopted the old Navy custom of having all local danger areas plotted on a large map. The map is kept up-to-date by the navigator and is hung in the ready room where pilots can take a good look at it before each flight.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

You don't get the Purple Heart for getting wounded on a friendly firing range!

Firing notices are issued for your protection. Believe what they say — and don't wait to do so until somebody in the squadron gets hit. (July 1944)



## Neither Rain Nor Snow . . .

A section of A-4s was returning to base on an IFR flight plan. Prior to takeoff for the flight home, forecast weather was 300 feet broken and one mile visibility. Single pilot minimums at home plate were 200 feet and one-half mile. The flight failed to update the destination weather forecast en route with metro. Each pilot had adequate fuel to attempt an approach and proceed to a suitable alternate.

Upon arrival at the base, the flight was split up for individual approaches. When aircraft #1 commenced, existing weather was 300 feet and one-half mile visibility in rain and fog. Ten miles from the airport, #1 elected to turn out and proceed to his alternate airport. Aircraft #2 was passing 2,500 feet in its approach when GCA advised the pilot existing weather was now indefinite, 300 feet obscured, one-eighth of a

mile visibility.

The pilot of #2 was also advised that #1 had diverted to an alternate airfield. Aircraft #2 elected to continue to home plate. During the GCA portion of the approach, he was consistently below glide path. At decision height, the pilot was warned to use "caution" since he was below glide path. He was then told he was "well below" and if the runway was not in sight, to execute a missed approach.

About this time the pilot sighted the high intensity lights, followed shortly by the green threshold lights. The radar altimeter, set at 150 feet, sounded an aural warning. The pilot felt comfortable and continued, transitioning to a VFR approach.

Only immediately prior to ground impact did the pilot realize the extreme danger. Then it was too late. The aircraft touched down approximately 450 feet short of the runway

threshold on centerline. The nose gear collapsed and the aircraft slid straight ahead coming to rest 320 feet down the runway. The pilot secured the engine during the slide and was assisted from the aircraft by crash crew personnel. He suffered only minor scratches.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

A classic case of get-homeitis! This one corners the market on poor judgment. This aerial jockey was warned about the poor weather, pressed a below-glide-path approach and tried to land VFR with only line-up information as a visual clue. The rain and fog eliminated any depth cue that might have assisted him.

Great horned toadies! This mishap could'a been prevented if the pilot had accepted the fact that the weather was below minimums, executed a missed approach and proceeded to an alternate. Sometimes the obvious escapes us. . . .



# CVW-6



*A-7E from VA-87 heads for the bombing range while another flight waits its turn. East Coast-based CVW-6 used Yuma weapons targets and air-to-air training area to help prepare for Atlantic and Mediterranean deployments aboard America.*



# On The Wing

When Carrier Air Wing Six deployed to Yuma in January, VF-43 and a pair of Navy photographers joined them. VF-43 brought along T-38s for air combat maneuvering work with the wing. PHCS(AC) Bob Lawson and PH1(AC) Art LeGare combined their cameras and their talents to pictorially record highlights of this important training time.

According to MCAS Yuma records, CVW-6's 50 aircraft and nearly 1,000 enlisted men and officers comprised the largest detachment to ever deploy there. They certainly acted like it. In the two-week period, the wing flew more than 100 sorties daily, dropped 6,100 practice and live bombs, fired 34,000 rounds of 20mm ammo and launched close to 1,000 2.75-inch rockets.

While support troops labored to keep the planes in the air, the flying crews stayed busy preparing for the forthcoming marriage of CVW-6 and CV-66. Captain R. B. Fuller, Skipper of America, visited Yuma to observe operations.

Squadrons flew air-to-ground weapons delivery, close air support and coordinated strike missions. They fired missiles, practiced search and rescue

techniques and ACM. They also completed numerous competitive exercises. VAW-124 Hawkeyes and VAQ-137 Prowlers handled communications and coordination of air traffic and various electronic warfare tasks.

CVW-6 returned from a Mediterranean deployment last October. A quick turn-around was required. So Commander Clarence E. "Skip" Armstrong, Air Wing Commander, took his forces to Yuma where there is a good supply of raked targets, an air-to-air gunnery range, an instrumented air combat maneuvering range and an impact area for live ordnance.

Wing units include: VFs 142 and 143 with their Tomcats; Corsair IIs from VAs 15 and 87; A-6E and KA-6D Intruders from VA-176; VAQ-137 and its EA-68 Prowlers; S-3A Vikings from VS-28; E-2C Hawkeyes from VAW-124; SH-3H Sea Kings from HS-15 and RF-8G Crusaders from VFP-63 Det 5.

Commander R. F. Ball was on hand at Yuma, taking a careful look at all the training activities. He's the new Commander, CVW-6, which has now joined America in the fleet.



*En route to the range with practice bombs and rockets aboard is a trio of VS-28 Vikings, right. VF-142 ground crewman eyes the action, below, while others from VA-15 muscle an ACMR probe onto squadron Corsair. Probe helps in recording air-to-air maneuvers for post-flight evaluation of tactics.*





# ACM

By Lt. Bill Young

The last simian adversary of American fighter planes is the cinematic King Kong. But there's a new one. He was the leader of VF-43's adversary detachment which provided simulated enemy fighter aircraft for training the aircrews of Carrier Air Wing Six at Yuma in January. LCdr. Bob "Gorilla" Brich headed the Det of *Challengers*.

Noteworthy is the fact that the VF-43 Det, home-based at NAS Oceana, Va., inaugurated the Fighter Wing One Fleet Fighter ACM Readiness Program (FFARP).

FFARP was developed by the ACM-adversary section of VF-43 under the direction of operations officer LCdr. Charlie Brun. This was in response to the request by Commander, Fighter Wing One in order to concentrate training and enhance readiness of deploying fleet F-4 and F-14 squadrons.

In the past, much air combat maneuvering training, with its accompanying classroom work, was obtained on a catch-as-catch-can basis between stand-downs, carquals, instrument school and other instructional evaluations.

VF-43's contingent consisted of three Northrop T-38A *Talons*, wear-

ing gray camouflage, four adversary pilots—all veterans of fleet tours in F-4 squadrons—as well as Northrop maintenance technicians. The schedule called for 10 flights per day for 10 days. As it turned out, the *Talons* held up beautifully and successfully met the schedule requirements.

The first stage of FFARP consisted of 14 lectures on fighter employment, lessons learned previously, energy/maneuverability and opposition capabilities. Face-to-face briefs were conducted and included the fight as well as the safety aspects of the air combat environment.

The first sorties were slated as one good guy versus one adversary, with pre-briefed offensive and defensive setups. These were followed by 2 vs 1 and 1 vs 2—good guy/adversary, respectively—in which visual identification prior to any simulated weapons employment was required. Then section versus section flights were introduced and also refined basic section fighter tactics. Reaction to the FFARP flight syllabus was very favorable.

The graduation exercise did not take place until after the return to Oceana. This involved a one-versus-many exercise, in which eight aircraft, four adversaries and four fighters launched at predetermined intervals into the East Coast Air Combat Maneuvering Range off the North Carolina coast.

All aircraft participating carry ACMR telemetry pods which facilitate electronic recording of the flight for later study. After all players have

landed, a verbal debrief is held. "I got you with a *Winder* as you were going up." "No, you didn't, I had too much angle-off!" Differences of opinion are aired. All hands adjourn to the ACMR trailer, where the *real* debrief, using the ACMR's computer facilities, tapes and visual displays of the entire flight, takes place.

The ACMR has greatly enhanced the debriefing of VF-43 adversary flights. The near-real-time feature of a taped, permanent record of a fight permits rapid "reflying" of the action. Who really got whom is clearly and unequivocally demonstrated by the computer.

The VF-43 adversary program is now a full-fledged institution. The *Challengers*, skippered by Commander Pete Midgarden, have for years been the instrument training squadron at NAS Oceana and instrument training still accounts for nearly two-thirds of the 6,000 annual flight hours accumulated training replacement and fleet pilots and NFOs.

The adversary program, begun in 1972, got into high gear in 1975. Four *Talons* were used and proved realistic air-to-air targets because of their small size and supersonic speed. Four F-5E *Tiger IIs* and an A-4F have now joined the *Talons*.

The VF-43 adversaries have deployed against Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force opponents at places as diverse as Nellis AFB, Nev., and Roosevelt Roads, P.R. This program and that of instrument training provide a superb package of aerial survival training for combat aircrews.



Top left, VA-176 Intruder taxis for takeoff at Yuma. Above, pilot of VA-15 Corsair waves at the cameras on the way to launch. Left, VF-142 Tomcats over the parched earth of the southwestern U.S.

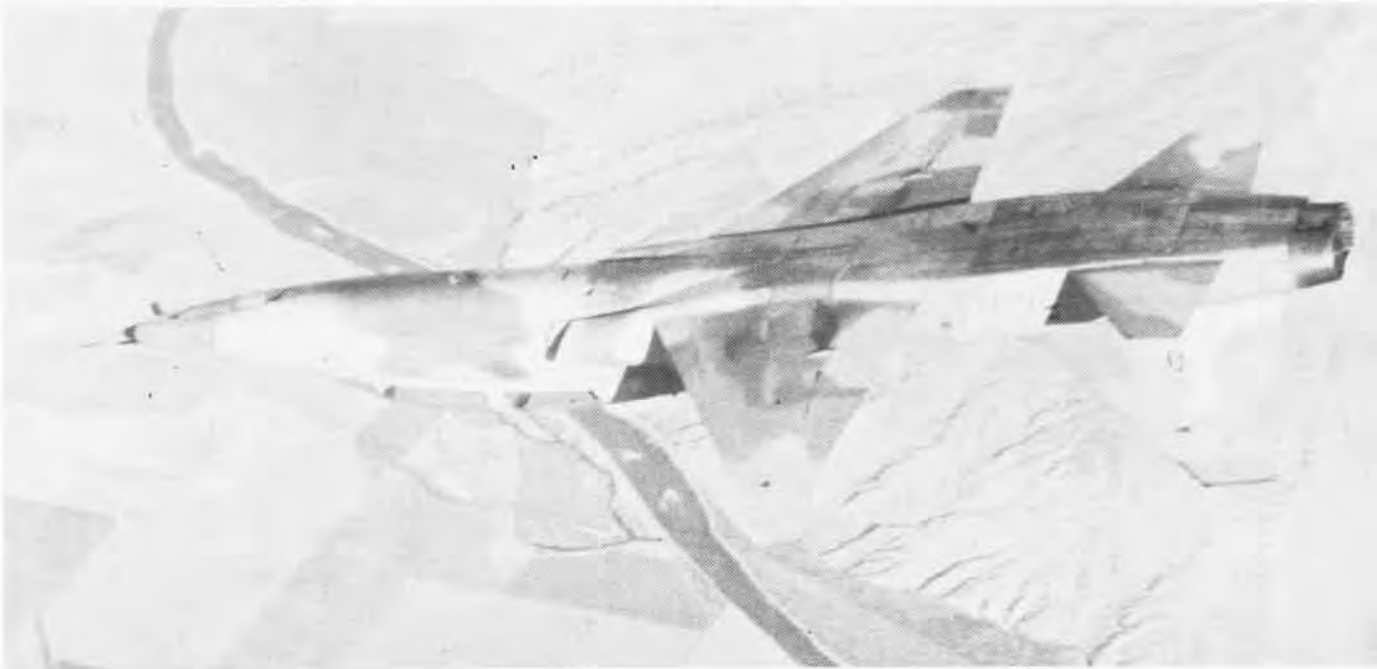


*Back from the sky and action in their F-14As, crew members from VFs 142 and 143 enjoy a light moment on the way to the ready room, above. Right, ordnance gang from VS-28 hoists rocket pod onto pylon of Viking. Note massive wing-fold mechanism of S-3A.*





*Left, T-38s from VF-43 at the break following an ACM mission. Below, Talon from the same unit, inverted. Lethal looking, even on the ground, a VAQ-137 Prowler awaits its crew, bottom.*





**VF-143 F-14 tracks T-38 during air-to-air exercise, above. Left, briefings are vital before and after ACM flights. VF-43 Lieutenants D. W. "Wheels" Lyon, gesturing, and A. W. "Gabey" Gabriel "re-fly" hop with VF-43 aircrew, seated. Opposite, VS-28 flyers retreat to the hangar after work in the sky.**

Ed's Note: NANews will feature more on defensive and offensive air combat maneuvering in the August 1977 issue.





# S-3A Tanker

Tanking, by necessity, is near and dear to the heart of all carrier-based aviators. In October 1976, VS-41, the S-3A fleet replacement squadron, received a tanker-configured S-3A for evaluation. One of the general objectives of the evaluation was to assess the reliability, maintainability, availability, compatibility and supportability of the tanker's peculiar components, including the adequacy and accuracy of documentation to support its operation and maintenance. A specific objective was to assess the compatibility of various fleet aircraft with the tanker-configured S-3.

The aircraft chosen for this mod was BuNo 157996. It was initially built as a system test aircraft which included provisions for demonstration of S-3A tanker aircraft feasibility. It is carrier suitable, has the standard TF34-GE-40 engines and, although lacking the ASW systems, it does maintain a limited weapons delivery capability. The philosophy behind the redesign of this aircraft was tanker conversion with minimum cost and modification to a basic S-3A airframe. BuNo 157996 is not representative of an S-3A tanker prototype, but inflight refueling characteristics demonstrated are envisioned to be similar.

The refueling package in 157996 is a Sargent Fletcher FR 400A unit with minor modifications and is installed in the LH aft fuselage compartment.

The S-3A demonstration fuel system contains two internal feed tanks, two internal transfer tanks and has the capability of carrying two AERO 1-D external tanks. This tanker version incorporates two internal bomb-bay tanks. Total fuel capacity for this aircraft is 19,940 pounds of JP-5 of which 16,450 pounds are transferrable.

Useable/ transferrable Tanks	Fuel Chart	
	Gallons	Pounds (JP-5)
Feed	353 /	2,400 /
Transfer	1,580 / 1,433	10,740 / 9,740
External	470 / 470	3,200 / 3,200
Bomb-bay	530 / 530	3,600 / 3,600
Total	2,933 / 2,433	19,940 / 16,540*

\* NavAirSysCom is reviewing alternative S-3 tanker designs that could provide up to approximately 28,000 pounds of transferrable fuel.

By LCdr. J. L. Olson,  
VS-41 Operations Officer

The hose reel is hydraulically driven, extending the drogue 49 feet at full trail position. The hose itself is marked at 10-foot intervals with a refueling range of from 2 to 25 feet from full trail. The drogue is an MA-2 reception coupling containing a fuel pressure regulator and a wind-driven generator that provides for night illumination. The hose can be guillotined by an electrically actuated pyrotechnic, controlled from the cockpit.

NavAirSysCom authorized VS-41 to conduct aerial refueling with the KA-3, A-4, A-6, F-4 and S-3A. Restrictions placed on the tanking evolution generally centered around speed ranges. With the hose extended, maximum aircraft speed is 300 kias/.7 inn, refueling range is 220 to 300 kias. Altitude authorized was between 5,000 and 35,000 feet.

Initial evaluation of the tanker began on October 26, 1976, with participating units including VF-124, VSs 21, 38 and 33, in addition to VS-41 and its fleet replacement pilots and instructors.

The *Viking* provides an extremely stable platform for inflight refueling. The drogue hangs low enough under the tanker so that at no time does it enter excessive high energy air from the engine exhausts. Therefore, it exhibits only minor drogue oscillations. Also, the receiver aircraft is not forced into any disturbed air which might cause control problems. With both a flat bottom and a flat wing, the S-3A provides a perfect horizon for the receiver aircraft to fly formation on. It is well lighted for night tanking and, because the external lights are in a horizontal line, it also

provides a stable nighttime horizon.

On January 20 and 21, the tanker was flown overhead USS *Constellation* (CV-64) in support of inflight refueling operations with Carrier Air Wing Nine. The purpose of the two flights was to solicit additional fleet pilot comments on the performance of the S-3A tanker package.

A summary of the results are:

Aircraft	Number Plugged	Plugs (wet/dry)
F-14	3	11/0
F-8	2	5/1
A-7	1	8/0
A-6	3	14/1
EA-6	1	10/0
S-3	4	20/0
	14	68/2

Latch rate for the two-day evolution was 100 percent. The S-3 was used on a limited basis for fuel transfer due to the presence of three other air wing tankers in the area.

All pilots who tanked felt that the S-3 was the most stable, smoothest platform they have seen in the fleet (compared with the KA-6, KA-3 and A-7). Without exception, the pilots debriefed were very satisfied with all aspects of the evolution. The drogue was extremely stable with little or no burble.

An F-14 pilot thought it was the "easiest one so far." An A-6 driver commented that "the basket was more stable than the KA-6." A KA-6 pilot related it was "... real smooth. Drogue doesn't circle much in a turn." "Easier than the KA-6 or A-7," commented one *Corsair* pilot. "No problem at all."

The general consensus is that the S-3A is a good tanker. Without exception, the pilots of CVW-9 who plugged the S-3A thought that it was by far the easiest and most stable platform they had seen.

This brief exposure is by no means conclusive, but gives a good indication that the Navy may have found another use for the versatile S-3A.



# Turtle The Moves



The *Truculent Turtle* was the third P2V *Neptune* constructed by Lockheed Aircraft Company. The grand old aircraft made the longest nonstop, nonrefueled flight in history. On October 1, 1946, it completed an 11,236-mile flight from Perth, Australia to Columbus, Ohio, which had taken 55 hours and 17 minutes. Commander T. D. Davies, pilot, was assisted by Commander E. P. Rankin, copilot; LCdr. R. A. Tabeling, radio officer; and Commander W. S. Reid, navigator. The skill and endurance of men and machine earned the nickname *Truculent*. And by the time the hard-won record was so nonchalantly broken in 1962 by an Air Force B-52, the *Neptune* was indeed a "turtle"—it took the newer plane only 22 hours to fly farther.

Due to a heavy fuel load, the only cargo on the historic flight was a gift from the people of Australia to the people of the U.S.—a 25-pound, nine-month-old kangaroo named Joey.

After retirement, the *Turtle* was installed at the corner of Granby Street and Taussig Boulevard in Norfolk, Va., where it stood for some

15 years until the spot was claimed by expansion of an interstate highway. It was moved in May 1968 to the dividing line between the Naval Station and the Naval Air Station.

On March 2, 1977, the *Truculent Turtle* was removed from its pedestal and towed to the transit area at NAS Norfolk. The final voyage took it 1,000 miles by sea barge to a permanent home at the Naval Aviation Museum, Pensacola, Fla.

Lifting it from the pedestal required the services of a 30-ton crane, and this was pressing the crane to its maximum. Carrying straps were slung around nose and belly, just behind the wing. To prevent possible damage by the straps, a spreader bar was used to keep the straps from being pulled together as the aircraft was lifted into the air. The *Turtle* was in such fine condition that every conceivable problem was researched and preventive measures taken to ensure no physical harm befell it.

Once on the ground, a towing bar was attached to its nose gear and it was pulled to the transit area for disassembly. Because it was necessary

to remove the wings for the long transit by barge, a wooden cradle was constructed for safety and support. Due to the lighter weight of the wing, as compared to the complete aircraft, a much smaller crane was used. The crane lifted the cradle until it was supporting the wing's weight and the bolts could be removed.

As the last bolt was removed, a small pry bar was used to separate the wing from its base. As it swung free, it was carefully lowered to the awaiting trailer bed for transport to the barge at Pier 12, Naval Base, Norfolk. The port wing was removed in a like manner and the job was finished at the naval air station.

Upon arrival at the Naval Aviation Museum, the *Turtle* was reassembled and placed in a berth more suitable to its historic heritage. It is surrounded by such notables as a replica of the A-1 *Triad*, the Navy's first aircraft, and NC-4, the Navy's first aircraft to cross the Atlantic, which sits right alongside the *Apollo* space capsule in which the all-Navy crew of Captains Pete Conrad, Dick Weitz and Joe Kerwin shuttled to *Skylab*.

# Reunion



A half century of Naval Aviation history and tradition came together for a weekend in March when the *Red Rippers* of VF-11 held their 50th anniversary reunion at NAS Oceana, Va.

I was invited to the reunion as a representative of the Aviation History Office. Not being an aviator and being a stranger to life on a military installation, I was apprehensive when I arrived at Oceana. Frankly, I did not know how to take my first step in a world so different from my own. My fears were dashed immediately when Lt. Phillip "Mad Dog" Tomlinson met me at the door of the squadron hangar with a warm welcome which broke the ice and removed any uneasiness.

The festivities were to begin that evening with a cocktail party at the Officers Club. I had a few hours to fill, so I went to my motel room and contemplated how I would approach the guests. I knew little about flying, so I couldn't directly relate to their experiences although I'd read of many aerial exploits in Naval Aviation. My fears were unwarranted. There were no barriers that night nor at any other time during the weekend.

The guests began arriving at 6:30 p.m. By seven, the room was filled with *Red Rippers* from as far back as 1927. LCdr. Ike Schlossbach was there. He is the original *Red Ripper* and the squadron's first commanding officer. Rear Admiral John G. Crommelin (1927-29) came, as did George

H. Moffett (1931-33) and Rear Admiral Edward L. Feightner (1955-57). Old acquaintances were renewed, new ones begun. And the stories from bygone years flowed.

George Moffett, whose father, Naval Aviation pioneer Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, was killed in the crash of USS *Akron*, recalled a night in 1931 when VF-5B and VT-1 had to make a dusk/night landing aboard *Lexington*. (*Lexington* and *Saratoga* were conducting exercises off the coast of Panama.) Captain Ernie King, skipper of *Lexington*, had ordered an afternoon attack by his air wings and established a rendezvous point for the carriers and the returning aircraft. When the two squadrons arrived at the rendezvous shortly before sundown, there was no *Lexington*. They executed a search pattern, but soon prepared to ditch because of their dwindling fuel states. However, as dusk settled, they caught a glimpse of searchlights in the distance. They flew to the lights, found *Lexington* and recovered safely, although several were running out of gas. Moffett was among them.

It was easy to be drawn into the spirit that enveloped this gathering of eagles. These were men who, at different periods throughout five decades, had flown together. Together, they share a bond of camaraderie which somehow transcends the average daily relationships of most people.

The memories, happy and poignant, were resurrected well into the night.

Next day, at the squadron hangar, many *Red Rippers* and friends were examining the aircraft displayed for the occasion. An F4F *Wildcat*, an F8F *Bearcat* and an F-4J *Phantom II* were on view, types which *Red Rippers* have flown through the years.

The sight of these planes evoked another series of remembrances. RAdm. Crommelin recalled the time he won the Navy Pursuit Race at the National Air Races, Mines Field, Los Angeles, in 1928. His average speed was 148 miles per hour. He was flying one of the squadron's F2B-1s. He described how he won the race.

He had mastered the technique of executing turns by gradually gaining altitude to about 200 feet above the pylons and then diving down toward them in the approach to his turn. This enabled him to make tighter turns without losing airspeed. It was after this race that Charles Lindbergh shook Crommelin's hand and congratulated him for performing some of the best racing turns Lindbergh had seen.

VF-11 personnel had made sure that memorabilia would be available for the *Red Rippers*. On hand were cruise books and histories—all pertaining to the illustrious past of the squadron. There were always a half dozen or so older veterans intently perusing these items.

Tales continued. Cdr. Schlossbach recalled a summer day in 1927. While preparing for a flight, he decided not to wear his heavier flight



By Wes Pryce,  
Assistant Naval Aviation  
Historian

Left, the original Red Rippers in 1927. Ike Schlossbach chats with Cdr. Stoops, below left, and, below, the old and the new, an F8F Bearcat alongside VF-11's latest aircraft, an F-4J Phantom II.



clothing because of the heat. Aloft, he flipped to the inverted position. Unfortunately he had forgotten to secure his seat belt. Had he been wearing his bulkier flight gear, he would have been held more snugly in his seat. So, it was a shock when he slid out of the airplane until he was hanging by his toes! He wore a parachute but it was tangled around his neck. He quickly remembered what he had been told once about this plane. It would automatically right itself if there was sufficient altitude. Afraid to use his chute, he decided to stay with the aircraft, hoping it would come around. Happily, it did. He was able to slide back into his seat and land. Was he scared? "No," he answered, "but I was certainly embarrassed."

At a banquet that night, the *Red Rippers* honored all former squadron mates. But before the dining began, there was one last opportunity for the oldtimers to re-live a part of history they had all helped to write.

George Harris and Brad Hovey, who had served together as *Rippers* in '44 and '45, reminisced. Hovey recalled, "When Allied forces pushed across the Pacific and moved closer to the Japanese homeland, there was

greater need for fighter pilots. One night, when I was with VB-4, the C.O. asked me how I would like to be a fighter pilot. The next day, I was with VF-4, thus becoming a *Red Ripper*, where I stayed until the end of the war."

Harris served with the *Rippers* throughout the war. He saw action in the Atlantic and Pacific. He talked of the squadron's participation in Operation *Torch*, the Allied invasion of North Africa. "There were 16 of us who became embroiled in many one-on-one dogfights with Vichy French fighters," he said. "I came away from that conflict with a healthy respect for the French pilots. The irony was that the French were flying American-built P-36s against us."

There was a solemn moment during the evening when an invocation was dedicated to those who had given their lives for their country as *Red Rippers*.

After dinner, the current skipper of VF-11, Commander Ron Stoops, introduced Vice Admiral William Houser, former DCNO (Air Warfare), who was guest speaker. Adm. Houser touched on the many highlights of the *Red Rippers'* past. Cdr.

Stoops then presented the admiral a plaque designating him an honorary *Red Ripper*.

The C.O. gave exclusive recognition to Cdr. Schlossbach as the squadron's first commanding officer, presenting him a special lithograph depicting the squadron's first and current aircraft.

One *Ripper*, who had served with the squadron in the mid-Thirties, stepped forward to publicly thank the younger men for remembering squadron mates from the past. The bond that brought all of these men from Naval Aviation together was as strong as ever.

The 50th anniversary celebration finally ended and next morning, rain pelted down. I reflected on the events of the past two days. Why was there a reunion and why would these men, after all these years, come from as far away as Hawaii to share in it? What struck me most, as a historian, was the depth to which the squadron had, through the years, documented its existence. After 50 years, the *Red Ripper* tradition is alive and thriving—with style. These men had served with other squadrons and other commands throughout their careers, but in the end, they remain *Red Rippers*.

The build-up in aircraft production which preceded U.S. entry into WW II resulted in the ordering of a large number of designs into production either prior to flight testing of prototypes, or after the testing of an experimental model designed to specifications that were drawn up before WW II began in Europe. Some of these proved to be effective combat aircraft; others did not. Considerable changes were made to produce combat-worthy aircraft based on experience gained in actual air combat.

The Curtiss SO3C was among the few which were finally rejected as unsuitable, even after a great many improvements were incorporated in the later models of the 800 production aircraft delivered. The SO3C story began with two competitive prototypes designed to succeed the SOC (NANews, June 1975) as a capital ship scout plane, complementing the OS2U (NANews, February 1977) with longer range and higher speed. Like these, the new prototypes were to be convertible, operable as either catapult seaplanes or as landplanes.

Both the Vought XSO2U-1 and the Curtiss XSO3C-1 were ordered in the spring of 1938, and both used the Ranger V-770 air-cooled inverted V-12 engine of 550 horsepower which the Navy had sponsored.

Following Anacostia tests, and after the initially clean Curtiss design had grown some rather ungainly appendages to its wing and tail surfaces, 300 SO3C-1s were ordered in September 1940. Production was transferred to the new Columbus plant in 1941 and, after a slow start, production of *Seagulls* reached full stride by late summer 1942. Additional aircraft were ordered from Ryan as the SOR-1. The production aircraft incorporated many improvements including combat survivability features, and a 600-horsepower-rated V-770 engine, offsetting to some degree the effect of the increased weight. The addition of ASB radar and further improvements resulted in the SO3C-2, and modification for carrier operations from the jeep carriers in the 2C. In addition to Navy production, 250 were built for the British under lend-lease. As the *Seagulls* went into operation with the fleet, it became obvious that the requirement to operate the engine at high power settings due to higher airplane weight combined with basic power plant problems was resulting in an excessively high rate of engine failures. Ryan production was cancelled.

By spring 1943 extensive modifications were being introduced, and production shifted to the SO3C-3 using an improved V-770-8 engine. The overall suitability was still in question, resulting in reducing orders for 400 SO3C-3s to 200 in September; initiation of conversion of many to target drones in October; withdrawal from shipboard units in December and from all operating units in February 1944, shortly after the last SO3C-3s had been delivered. Conversion to drones continued during 1944. Some of these also went to the British; however, in August drone conversions were ordered stopped with 125 converted. The remaining SO3Cs were phased out of flight status, although many of them continued to be used for ground instruction. The OS2Us and SOCs (also called *Seagulls*) carried on until replaced by the new *Seahawks* (NANews, August 1975).



## Seagull





SO3C

<b>Span</b>			
XSO3-1			38'1"
SO3C			38'0"
<b>Length</b>			
XSO3-1	landplane		34'3"
	seaplane		36'0"
SO3C	landplane		33'1"
	seaplane		35'8"
<b>Height</b>			
XSO3-1	landplane		14'0"
	seaplane		15'3"
SO3C	landplane		13'2"
	seaplane		14'2"

(Length and height on ground)

**Power plant**

XSO3C-1	Ranger XV-770-6	520 hp.
SO3C-1, -2	V-770-6	530 hp.
SO3C-1	V-770-8	550 hp.

**Maximum speed (typical)**

landplane	182 mph
seaplane	168 mph

**Service ceiling**

XSO3C-1	landplane	19,600'
	seaplane	18,800'
SO3C	landplane	18,000'
	seaplane	16,000'

**Maximum range**

XSO3C-1	landplane	900 miles
	seaplane	825 miles
SO3C	landplane	1,150 miles
	seaplane	940 miles

**Crew: pilot and radioman/gunner**

**Armament**

- 1 fixed synchronized .30 machine gun
- 1 flexible .30 machine gun
- 2 100-lb. bombs on wing stations, XSO3C-1
- 2 bombs on wing stations, up to 325-lb. depth bombs, all SO3Cs
- 1 bomb on fuselage, up to 500 lbs., SO3C-2C

SO3-1

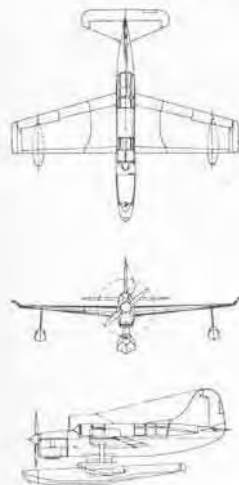


SO3C-3

SO3C-2C



XSO3C-1





## PEOPLE PLANES AND PLACES

For the first time at HS-75, non-aviation personnel have earned aircrewmembers' wings. The recipients are YN1 Jerry Hogan and HM1 Dennis Dorsman. The presentations culminated six months of arduous, off-duty training including becoming a qualified plane captain, accumulating 50 hours flight time, successfully passing the Natops exam, qualifying as a first class swimmer and becoming familiar enough with the aircraft to be a good troubleshooter. All was accomplished on the men's own time.

Since 1974 when HCT-16 began flying the HH-46A *Sea Knight*, the squadron has flown 12,930 accident-free hours (more than 6,000 sorties), completed 30 rescues and 174 medical evacuations. Cdr. J. R. Walker is C.O.

LCdr. Tim Hayes, OinC of Det 4, HSL-34, assigned to USS *Biddle* (CG-34), flies #34 and was recently awarded the Com-SecondFlt plaque for having the best overall Lamps Det in *Caribex 77*.

Another PacFlt aviation era ended recently when the C-118B flight simulator, Device 2F43, at FASOTraGruPac Det, Barbers Point was piloted to its final simulated landing. The VR-21 flight crew were Ltjg. Dennis Pillinger, Lt. Jim Brown and ADR1 Clint Miller. In its 20-year career, the simulator logged many thousands of hours. It was used to teach preflight checks, starting, run-up and takeoff procedures, fuel management, cruise control and landing procedures. Additionally, ground crew personnel were instructed in maintenance turn-up procedures.

For the third time within a year the VF-33 *Starfighters* have earned the Golden Tailhook Award. The award was presented to squadron C. O., Cdr. T. E. Davis, by *Independence* C. O., Capt. James Service,

Lt. John Everett, an F-4 instructor with VF-101, recently logged his 200th landing aboard *Saratoga*.

VFR-31 has made its first ferry delivery of an F-14A. The plane was ferried from VF-124 at NAS Miramar to NARF Norfolk.

Lt. Bennie Bunn, Ltjg. Bob Marshburn and PO1 Jerry Mitchell, all graduates of the same high school in North Carolina, are now attached to VP-16. Bunn is a P-3C commander, Marshburn a copilot and Mitchell an aviation ordnanceman.

CTW-6 celebrated its fifth anniversary March 1. Commanded by Capt. J. L. Finney, the wing consists of the staff at NAS Pensacola; VTs 4, 10, 86 and HCT-16; and phase one of the LSO School. CTW-6 administers, coordinates and supervises the training of aviators and NFOs and provides command liaison between local units and CNATra.

Reverend T. M. Hesburgh, President of the University of Notre Dame (left in photo), is shown with Cdr. David Hoffman (right) after receiving a ride in the F-14 at a recent air show in South Bend,



Ind. Hoffman was a POW in North Vietnam for 16 months. Hoffman and Lt. Michael Lyle (center) are stationed at NAS Oceana.

On January 20, VP-40 celebrated its 26th anniversary. Commanded by Cdr. T. J. Leshko, the *Fighting Marlins* fly the P-3C *Orion*.



The first E-2B *Hawkeye* for the Naval Air Reserves has been received by the C.O. of VAW-88, Cdr. W. F. Knobloch, at NAS North Island.

VP-56, commanded by Cdr. R. F. Donoedo, has been visited by three British crews at NAF Sigonella. The *Dragons* have been hosting their British counterparts in Maritime Patrol Aviation and enjoying return R and R trips to British facilities on Gibraltar. Both squadrons are in the same NATO command and have a mission of keeping track of Soviet and Communist Bloc warships in the Mediterranean area.

Lt. Judy Neuffer of VXN-8 recently earned the title of aircraft/mission commander in the RP-3 *Orion*. She is now qualified to command single plane detachments at most military or civilian air bases in the world.

The *Blue Dragons* of VP-50 have returned to Moffett Field from a six-month deployment in Misawa, Japan. During the first month of deployment the *Blue Dragons* logged 689 hours in 10 days in support of Seventh Fleet operations. VP-50 has completed over 10 years, more than 76,000 hours, of accident-free operations.

Members of MARDT Yuma and VMFAs 101 and 321 trained for two weeks recently at MCAS Yuma with 35 members of the Canadian 433rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, home-based 180 miles north of Quebec. The training segment included air-to-air combat maneuvering and pitted the Marine F-4s against the Canadian F-5 *Freedom Fighters*.

AZ2 Mary Ellen Prouhet is an instructor with NAMD-3021 at NAS Norfolk. She is qualified to teach aviation logs and records and maintenance administrative courses. She is one of 1,200 instructors providing the fleet with aviation maintenance men at 25 different sites.

VF-194, commanded by Cdr. Jon S. Bertrand and currently attached to CVW-15 aboard *Coral Sea*, celebrated its 35th anniversary in March.



Matthew Marquardt is 17 and almost in the Navy. He has been a member of the Navy League Sea Cadet program for three years. Sea Cadets are youngsters between 14 and 17 who attend monthly weekend meetings and two-week annual cruises. Marquardt decided he liked aviation and, because of his enthusiasm, VF-201 has asked him to be a permanent part of their squadron when he is aboard NAS Dallas for training. In the photo Marquardt signals a VF-201 *Phantom* pilot that the ground crew is ready to start engines. Marquardt has applied for the Naval Academy and NROTC at Texas A&M.

Travis and Debbie Crutchfield are husband and wife and both are in the Navy as MN1 and PN2, respectively. They both moonlight — as officers.

They are Sea Cadet instructors and serve as ensigns in the NAS Miramar-based group. Sponsored by the Navy League, the Sea Cadet Program is basically a prep school for high school students, 14-17, planning to join the Navy.





*FDR* steams toward her berth at Mayport, Fla., from her 20th and final Mediterranean deployment. She is scheduled for decommissioning this fall. Commanded by Capt. R. P. Bordone, *Roosevelt* celebrated her 31st birthday October 27, while deployed. In 1946, first U. S. jet aircraft takeoffs and landings were made from her decks and, in 1976, she became the first carrier, to deploy with V/STOL aircraft. She has been home-ported in Mayport since 1956.

Also returning with *Roosevelt* is CVW-19. The air wing included VMA-213; VAs 153, 155 and 215; VFs 51 and 111; RVAW-110 Det 4; and HC-1 Det 3.

NANews appreciates receiving photographs it can share with its readers, whether newsworthy or just pleasing to view. Here are two such photos received



recently and we hope you keep them coming.

The VF-211 *Tomcat* was photographed by Lt. R. E. Alvarez during *RimPac 77*. Lt. R. L. McLane of VFP-63, flying an RF-8G, photographed the *Corsair* silhouetted against the late afternoon sun and high cirrus clouds during a NATO exercise in the North Sea.

The *Dragonslayers* of HS-11 have flown 20,000 accident-free flight hours. Deployed aboard *JFK*, the aircrew logging the record hour was Lt. R. A. Young, Ltjg. M. A. Allison, AW3 E. B. Savelli and AWAN J. E. Winters.

The GCA unit at Corpus Christi recently logged its 450,000th ground-controlled approach. AC2 Gary Dycus guided Ens. Karl Lampe, a T-28 student, down the glide slope as instructor Ltjg. Rick Greyson rode shotgun. This tally capped 31 years of GCA operations.

VAW-126 is the first E-2C squadron to deploy to WestPac. Part of Norfolk-based CAEW-12, the squadron is deployed on a seven-month cruise in *Constellation*. Cdr. R. E. Kordalski is C.O.

On April 1, VX-1 celebrated its 34th anniversary. It was initially commissioned as Air Antisubmarine Development Detachment of the Tenth Fleet. VX-1 is currently based at Patuxent River and has tested hundreds of CNO-assigned projects, flying a variety of airplanes, helicopters and even blimps. Skipper is Capt. M. R. Byington.

HC-3 Det 112 with its CH-46Ds recently completed a seven-week deployment aboard *Enterprise* in the Indian Ocean, providing vertical on board delivery to *Enterprise* and the task force. The Det flew 180 hours while moving 1,466,000 pounds of cargo, 48,000 pounds of mail and over 800 passengers to various locations. LCdr. J. W. Sturges is OinC.

The Honorable Lucy Wilson Benson, Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, received an F-14 briefing from test pilot Lt. Kevin Dwyer at NATC Patux-



ent River. Mrs. Benson was also briefed on the P-3C *Orion*, E-2C *Hawkeye*, A-7E *Corsair* and several missile systems.

VF-14 *Tophatters*, embarked in *JFK*, recently achieving centurion status are C.O. Cdr. F. J. Dougherty and Ltjg. David Newman. Double centurions include Lieutenant Commanders Jay Campbell and Dave Baker, and Lieutenants Lynn Rigg, Bob Coleman, Mark Johnson, John Ferry and Mike Bucchi.

AT1 R. E. Jones, an E-2B flight technician with VAW-115, has become a double centurion aboard *Midway*. Jones has a total of 2,400 hours and 555 arrested landings in the VAW community.

The largest change of command ceremony in the history of MAG-31 took place recently at MCAS Beaufort. Involved were four MCAS squadrons and three staff reassignments within MAG-31, in-

cluding VMFAs 122, 251, 333, MABS-31 and MAG-31's executive, S-3 operations and S-4 logistics officers.

The interesting thing was that nobody "new" assumed command and while the commanding officers are swapping hats, hold on to yours, because the breakdown goes like this:

Maj. S. E. Sheaffer, former X.O. of MABS-31, moved up and took command.

Lt. Col. D. C. Escalera, outgoing C.O. of MABS-31, moved across the field to pilot VMFA-122.

Lt. Col. M. W. Allinder, former C.O. of VMFA-122, isn't out of a job. He's now the skipper of VMFA-251.

Lt. Col. J. B. Wuertz left the cockpit of VMFA-251 to become the new X.O. of MAG-31.

Lt. Col. C. M. LaCroix, former MAG-31 X.O., filled the MAG-31 S-3 billet.

Lt. Col. G. E. Lindgren, former X.O. of VMFA-333, is now top tiger at VMFA-251.

And Lt. Col. F. H. Menning, who top-hooked VMFA-333 in the Med, is hanging his flight suit at MAG-31's S-4 shop.

#### Changes of command:

VA-35: Cdr. George D. O'Brien relieved Cdr. Brian K. Bryans.

VA-85: Cdr. C. R. Bubick relieved Cdr. R. C. Allen.

VC-12: Cdr. James L. Karg relieved Cdr. Donald A. Gregg.

VF-143: Cdr. James B. Lusk relieved Cdr. Reuben W. Schaffer.

VP-8: Cdr. William E. Jackson relieved Cdr. Paul L. Lawrence.

VP-9: Cdr. Delbert A. Ritchhart relieved Cdr. Daniel M. Truax.

VP-47: Cdr. G. A. Wells relieved Cdr. D. T. Graff.

VR-30: Cdr. J. V. Cuddy relieved Cdr. H. B. Bartels.

VS-30: Cdr. Jon G. Wolynies relieved Cdr. Russel N. Blatt.

HS-7: Cdr. William G. Barnes relieved Cdr. Harold R. Price.

HMH-461: Maj. E. R. Seiffert relieved Lt. Col. H. M. Bartel.

HSL-30: Cdr. Jerry M. Hatcher relieved Cdr. Bradley A. Butcher.

VAW-122: Cdr. Lawrence F. Permenter relieved Cdr. Kenneth C. Petroske.

RVAW-120: Cdr. Carleton J. King, Jr., relieved Cdr. Harold J. Bernsen.

ComNavCruitCom: RAdm. Edward S. Briggs relieved RAdm. Robert B. McClinton.

*Independence*: Capt. George M. Furlong relieved Capt. James E. Service.



## touch and go

### Whiting ACs Have Tough Job

Training Naval Aviators involves a lot of people working at a lot of different jobs, each one important. One job, however, serves as the nerve center for the airfield—that of the air traffic controller.

Not many people have experienced the pressures an air traffic controller is confronted with every day. Imagine yourself suddenly directing 5, 10 or 15 automobiles at one time. You can tell each one where to go, when to stop and start, how fast to go and, at the same time, keep yourself

and the autos informed of different road conditions and other traffic in the area.

It would be a mind-boggling experience. The air traffic controller faces it every day—only with aircraft.

There are 43 people in the air traffic control division at NAS Whiting Field, Fla. They operate two control towers, a ground control approach unit and the flight clearance office. The division averages 20,000 takeoffs and landings per month and a normal 21-hour workday from 4 a.m.

until 1 a.m. The control towers cannot operate with less than three people to fill the key positions of ground controller, flight data and local control. There is usually a tower supervisor on hand.

The personnel in the three key positions rotate jobs and must take a break every hour or hour and one-half.

Unlike many other aviation ratings in the Navy, the air traffic controller must be certified by FAA in addition to meeting Navy standards.

JO3 Ray Oosterman



### Pelicans Return from Unitas

*Unitas* began in 1960 and was designed to refine hemispheric defense procedures and build professional cooperation and goodwill between the navies of South America and the United States. The 17th annual exercise, held in 1976, featured coordinated training operations between U.S. and naval forces of each participating South American country.

Surface warships, submarines and aircraft from Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina,

Chile, Peru, Colombia and Venezuela operated in conjunction with Task Force 138, commanded by RAdm. J. A. Sagerholm, Commander, South Atlantic Forces, Atlantic Fleet. U.S. participants included NAS Jacksonville-based VP-45, commanded by Cdr. Stephen F. Loftus, and three ships of DesRon-14. ASW training played a very large part in *Unitas XVII*, and the VP-45 P-3C *Orions* were instrumental in providing ASW air support for the training.

The VP-45 *Pelicans* operated from Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico; Recife, Salvador and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Montevideo, Uruguay; Bahia Blanca, Argentina; Santiago, Chile; Lima, Peru; Cartagena, Colombia; and Caracas, Venezuela. The P-3Cs of VP-45 crisscrossed the towering, snowcapped Andes Mountains and the endless jungles of the Amazon River to carry out their airborne ASW mission.

The primary ASW aircraft in the South American in-

ventories are the P-2 *Neptune* and the S-2 *Tracker*.

Training exercises with the Argentine Navy called for VP-45's *Orions* to be based at NAS Comandante Espora in Bahía Blanca, Argentina, which is the sister city of Jacksonville, Fla. LCdr. Frank P. Pagano

was officer-in-charge of the VP-45 Det.

*Unitas XVII* was considered a highly successful operation and served to strengthen the bonds of professional and personal friendships between the Navy men of two continents. Ltjg. Alan M. Harms



## P-2s at Roosevelt Roads

The P-2 *Neptune* patrol bomber, designed for anti-submarine warfare, has been manufactured by Lockheed Aircraft for the Navy since 1944.

The Navy began phasing out P-2s in the early '60s.

Today two are still active at NS Roosevelt Roads, P.R. One is reputed to be the oldest P-2 in the Navy inventory, built in 1953. This VC-8 *Neptune* is used for search and rescue missions and launching aerial targets

at the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility. It recently supported *Caribbean Ready Exercise 1-77*, a multinational fleet readiness exercise involving Allied navies, which is held yearly in the Caribbean.



## Caribbean Ready Exercise

*Guadalcanal* (LPH-7) was one of 22 Atlantic Fleet ships that recently completed a multinational exercise in Caribbean waters. The ships and embarked Marine forces joined units from the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Canada and Brazil.

The purpose of *Caribbean Ready Exercise 1-77* was to evaluate the response and readiness of various Navy and Marine staff and operational elements. The training areas were the Island of Vieques and adjacent waters.

D-day was at 0700, February 1. Preparations began hours before. Aircraft had

to be spotted, and troops and equipment staged. Aggressor and reconnaissance units had been inserted by helicopter the previous day. For the third consecutive day, reveille was at 0400 and general quarters at 0530. As *Guadalcanal* steamed into the wind, aircraft laden with troops and equipment were launched and arrived at the landing zone at 0700 plus 12 seconds.

As the Marines conducted war games ashore, *Guadalcanal* returned to a normal routine with emphasis on training. For many departments it was a 20-hour workday, supporting the

helicopter lifeline to the Marines ashore. (Helicopters are used for all logistics support including medical evacuations while the Marines are on war maneuvers.) During this period of increased tempo of flight operations, *Guadalcanal* recorded her 72,000th helicopter landing.

According to Brig. Gen. A. M. Gray, Commanding General of the Fourth Marine Amphibious Brigade, "the mission was executed with flawless precision by a superb Allied Navy/Marine team. It's the best I've seen in the 10 operations I've witnessed."

JOSN Dean R. Sprague

# THE AVIATION FIRE



**AQAN Dave Peery, VF-101, inspects electronic component compartments on an F-14. Opposite, data display is readied for removal by AQ2 Al Fiesi and AQ3 Mike Craig.**

Everything about a Navy combat plane, its performance, its sophistication and the skill of its pilot are fundamental to one essential role — the accurate firing of weapons. Fire control systems are the very heart of Naval Aviation and it is the man who maintains these systems who helps make the mission successful.

He is the Aviation Fire Control Technician, abbreviated AQ. His rating was established in 1954. The AQ can probably best be described as a combat aircraft heart specialist who checks and repairs all the electronic, electrical and mechanical components which make up the fire control system. Because the system only performs as well as its components, the AQ's talents are indispensable.

The AQ initiates an ongoing inspection program and discovers early what needs cleaning, lubricating and adjusting.

He is basically a troubleshooter with electronic test equipment like voltmeters, ohmmeters and oscilloscopes. He seeks out problems in target search, tracking and lock-on systems, in weapon control computers, firing equipment and guided missile control systems.

At planeside, in repair shops, on carriers or at naval air stations, the AQ must be ready to adjust all the equipment needed to bring destructive power to the enemy.

When aircraft speeds were slow and targets were attacked at short range, the accuracy of the weapons system depended more on the operator. But as aircraft altitudes increased and speeds reached the supersonic regions, the ability of attacking aircraft shifted to the systems approach.

Today's aircraft are designed and built as completely integrated machines. Each separate system becomes a subsystem interconnected with and dependent on others. A skeletal explanation might be that the navigation system is connected to the radar system . . . the automatic flight control system is connected to the computer

## ENLISTED RATING SERIES

# CONTROL TECHNICIAN

. . . which is connected to the radar and navigation systems . . . etc . . .

Fire control systems are often called intercept systems. If they have missile capabilities they are called missile control systems. There are basically two types: visual and all-weather. A visual might be used on a surface target while an airborne target might require an all-weather attack using long-range radar detection to lock on and track.

Search radars are employed to detect targets and determine their position, range, direction, altitude and elevation. When the weapons direction-finding systems locate a hostile target, the selection and tracking console displays its true bearing and slant range.

Computing circuits on the tracking channels track continuously so the enemy's rate of movement appears as letter symbols on a cathode ray tube scope superimposed on each target. The computer evaluates the tactical situation and decides which target should be engaged by guns, which by missiles, and assigns priorities. Then as fire control-radar tracks the target, weapons are prepared for firing at the proper time and in the proper direction.

All these units, or systems components, are the primary responsibility of the AQ. In a squadron's avionics division, he works on routine maintenance and minor repair and may even serve as a plane captain. In the maintenance department of a naval air station or on an aircraft carrier with an aircraft intermediate maintenance department, he would accomplish intermediate maintenance on aircraft weapons systems components.

Later in his career, he might be assigned to the Naval Air Technical Training Center, Millington, Tenn., as an instructor in one of the avionics courses taught there. Or, after a period of indoctrination at the Naval Air Maintenance Training Group, at Millington, he might be assigned to instructor duty with a naval air mainte-

nance training detachment at a shore station on the East or West Coast.

The AQ rating draws most of its school candidates from an advanced electronics field program where training includes basic courses in mathematics, algebra, trigonometry, electricity and electronics.

Advanced rating courses introduce the AQ student to the optics and hydraulics of armament control, bomb-

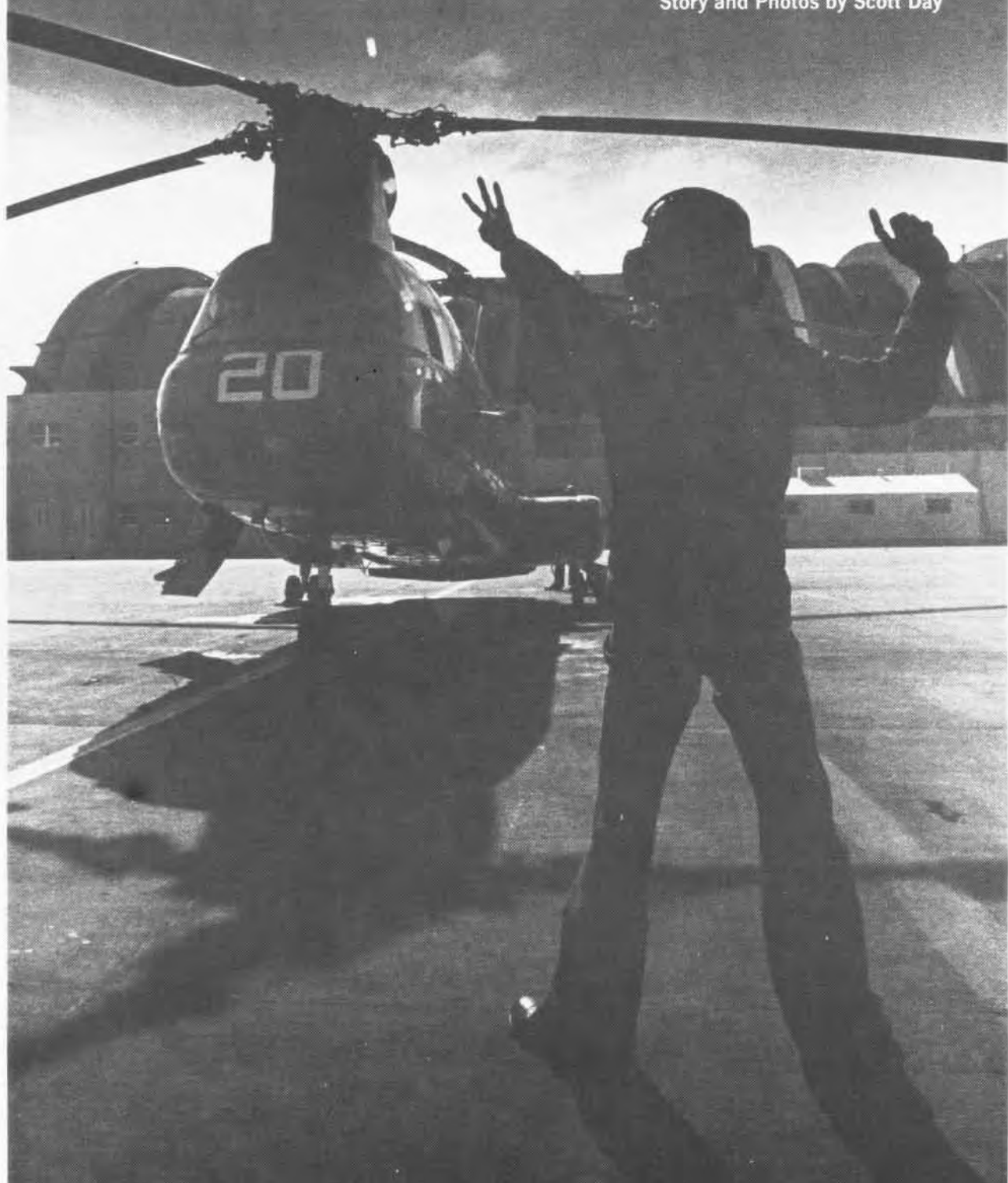
ing systems, fire control and bombing radar. Finally, the trainees become familiar with all the various kinds of AQ test equipment before joining the ranks of this highly-skilled rating.

Years of experience and training stand behind today's aerial mission, but the key moment—the heart of the mission—largely depends on how well the Aviation Fire Control Technician has done his job.



# Packrats *Can* Fly

Story and Photos by Scott Day





Zoologists might disagree, but the men of Helicopter Combat Support Squadron Three (HC-3) know—they're flying *Packrats*. The NAS North Island-based squadron has 500 men and 29 *Sea Knights*.

"I've always wanted to fly an H-46," says Lt. Jerry Kavale. "I think it's a fine machine. It always seemed that the H-46 pilots were doing a job that needed to be done."

The *Sea Knight*, workhorse of Navy logistics, transfers supplies, equipment and people. The only tandem-rotor helicopter the Navy flies, it can carry 20 passengers and has a speed of about 145 knots. This makes it well suited for HC-3's main mission: transfer of supplies to ships at sea.

Superb helos, however, are no better than their pilots. In HC-3's training program, 300 flight hours are required before a pilot is qualified to be a helicopter aircraft commander, the pilot in charge, responsible for the safety and well-being of both the helicopter and the crew.

"The H-46 is a really versatile helicopter," pilot Ltjg. John Dailey says. "You can do a lot of things with it—accelerate quickly, stop quickly, fly sideways and backwards—with and without a load."

In addition to their main mission of providing logistics support, pilots also fly passenger transfer missions, sea-air-land-team para-drops, over-water rescues and disaster relief missions.

HC-3's detachments are its life blood. Anywhere from two to six

dets will be deployed simultaneously.

A typical det consists of six officers, 20 enlisted men and two aircraft, brought together 60 days before deployment. For two months, the 26 men make preparations for their prolonged period away from home base, usually six or seven months.

AD1 Lonnie Kinderman oversees helicopter maintenance in one of the squadron's detachments which will soon deploy.

"Basically," he says, "the way I look at it is that I fly in the *Sea Knight*, and if I don't take care of it, it won't take care of me. That's why I take pride in the helicopter."

AD2 John Weitz adds, "I work most of the time in phase crew, pulling all the phase maintenance. I get to understand the aircraft better." (Phase maintenance is regularly scheduled maintenance.)

There are no magic ingredients in the friendships formed between crewmen of the det. They all have two things in common: a love of flying, and pride.

"Flying in the *Sea Knight* doesn't bother me at all," AE3 Terry Neuman says. "It's different. In fixed-wing aircraft you're up there about 30,000 feet and you can't really see anything. In an H-46 you can look right out the door, you're a lot closer to the ground."

Kinderman agrees. "You can't really enjoy yourself in a fixed-wing aircraft. Blink your eyes and you're there. The *Sea Knight* is slow and cumbersome; however, you can see the countryside at low altitudes."

It was also the love of flying that brought pilot Lt. Christopher Hollands into the Navy. "Being up in a commercial jet got me interested in flying," he says. "I really liked take-offs and landings. Before I got in the Navy I took one of those helicopter joy rides. I thought that was neat because of what you could see."

Hollands had his most rewarding experience while deployed with an HC-3 Det. "At the completion of about a seven-hour vertical replenishment," he says, "we were all pretty exhausted, but we'd moved a heck of a lot of gear—a lot of tons."

"I think dets are great concepts," he continues. "They are tight-knit outfits. The entire unit takes quite a bit of pride in its performance. People tend to look out for each other. The difference between being home in the squadron and out on a det is amazing because of the camaraderie."

When a deployment is completed, the detachment spends another 30 days back at the squadron preparing its helos for a final post-deployment inspection.

Inspection completed, the detachment disbands, but the memories linger.

"When I joined the service in 1964," AM1 Thomas Brown says, "I was 18 and inexperienced. Over the past 12 years I've grown with the men, my knowledge has grown, and aviation mechanics is my career now."

"I like to fly. I'm qualified in several different types of aircraft and, even if the money weren't there, I'd fly."



By JO1 Mike Kaiser

## Evolution of an Air Field

# SAUFLEY



Now, don't forget," the flight instructor warned the student, "besides the usual hazards, you'll have to watch out for those darned pigs and potholes. We killed a pig and damaged a plane yesterday." That may sound like the Keystone Cops but it was actually part of the early history of NAS Saufley Field, Fla.

As early as 1933, Felton's Farm Field was listed as an outlying field of NAS Pensacola. The Navy leased it from Mrs. Ada Gerson. Students used it for bouncing, practicing landings and takeoffs away from the normal flight pattern of mainside. It probably got its name from Mrs. Lillian D. Felton who used part of the land as a pecan grove.

The Navy was thinking of a base at Felton's Farm Field as early as March 1934 when a plan for acquisition was drawn up by the air station's public works officer, parceling off the land by lot and number. The plan closely followed the present boundaries of Saufley Field.

The threat of war in 1939 sent the Navy into action. On August 16, 1939, just two weeks before Hitler invaded Poland, the Navy purchased 10 tracts amounting to 866.62 acres near NAS Pensacola. The price was \$26,200.

One of the eight people who owned property on the site was Walter F. Holden. He and his wife were in their eighties and the Navy allowed them to retain their house and a small portion of land. A special gate, opening to the country road, was built for them. Holden died in 1943 and his



*Clockwise from left, SNJ trainers; Holden home; Saufley's first tower near pecan grove; pigs roam runways while mechanics check Yellow Perils.*

wife continued to live in the house until shortly before her death in 1948. "The Navy furnished her with medical care," reminisces the station's retired fire chief, Hoyt S. Williamson. "On holidays the base invited her to the galley or carried food over to her. They even kept her house in good repair."

The base was initially referred to as Felton Field but the name was soon changed to Saufley in honor of Ltjg. Richard C. Saufley, a pioneer of Naval Aviation. (Designated Naval Aviator No. 14, Saufley was instrumental in setting up the rudiments of naval flight training. He was killed in a crash on Santa Rosa Island, Fla., in 1916 while attempting to break an endurance record of 8 hours and 43 minutes set by himself in a pusher-type aircraft. At the time of the crash he had been aloft for 8 hours and 51 minutes.)

By August 26, 1940, when Saufley opened for flight operations as an auxiliary airfield of NAS Pensacola, many buildings had already been completed. Construction continued during the early Forties as various phases of flight training were conducted. Before completion of the first enlisted galley, personnel were served in tents in front of the barracks. Food was carried over from the air station.

In September, an instrument flying school was transferred to Saufley. It had about 50 SNJ *Texans* and 35 Link trainers. Two months later, the first primary training squadron was based there.

It was during this period that the

pigs became a problem. The former owner of one of the tracts, Sam Clipper, had some on his farm near the station dump. The pigs would make their way through the flimsy fence and feast on the raw garbage at the dump. When that was gone, they would often wander onto the runways. This resulted in hectic moments for students and instructors — and an occasional crash. The problem was finally solved when the Navy began to sell the garbage to local farmers.

There were other difficulties, however. The field was plagued with gophers and gopher holes. A plane hitting the holes would sometimes lose its undercarriage. Exterminators and constant vigilance were needed until the runways were finally paved.

The outbreak of war in December 1941 brought increased numbers of students. Soon the base was swarming with sailors and flying went on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Liberty was at a premium. After eight days of hard work, a sailor would get one day off. Pensacola was hard pressed to provide adequate entertainment for the 400 to 500 sailors from the many fields who were on liberty each day.

To help keep up morale the commanding officer held an all-hands party each quarter. Beer trucks were set up in the middle of the field. Everyone drank beer and played baseball as long as he wanted to. The next morning all hands would hold a walk-down of the runways to pick up the litter before they returned to the hectic schedule of 300 hops a day.

The importance of Saufley grew as the tempo of flying increased. On March 1, 1943, it was commissioned a naval auxiliary air station, providing every phase of flight training except preflight. Soon students from Allied nations as well as those from the U.S. received their instruction there.

Early in 1944 the need for replacement pilots began to decrease and a general reduction in the flight training program began. By September 1945, soon after the war's end, demobilization was in full swing.

In November 1945, carrier qualification training unit VN-6 came aboard from NAS Glenview. The following summer VR-3 Det of the Naval Air Transport Service was established at Saufley. Its primary mission was to refuel NATS planes and help with the transporting of passengers en route between San Diego, Corpus Christi and Washington, D.C.

In 1946 the Navy announced the closing of numerous bases, among them most of the auxiliary airfields in the Pensacola area. Many were partially deactivated. Saufley, however, remained open and full operations were continued for tactical and carrier qualification training.

By 1952 NAAS Saufley Field was the only airfield in the Pensacola area with an all-weather designation. It was a terminal for the Military Air Transport Service and the Fleet Logistic Support Wing, Atlantic Fleet. It was also the basic tactical and combat flying unit of the Naval Air Basic Training Command.

At ground school, students learned

civil air regulations, navigation, communications and engineering. Basic Training Unit Two taught aerial teamwork, two- and four-plane formation flying and night and cross-country flying. There were two training programs, one with the SNJ *Texan* and the other with the newer, high performance T-28 *Trojan* which was being phased into the tactics syllabus.

In 1956 primary training moved to Saufley with the transfer of 236 T-34 *Mentors* from Whiting Field. The station's SNJs and T-28s moved to Whiting, marking the end of Saufley's tactics training syllabus.

In May 1960, VTs 1 and 5 were commissioned and designated tenant commands. Saufley's mission was revised to provide support for the two training squadrons. In December of the following year it was tasked with the academic training of VT-1's flight students. The squadron, using T-34Bs, provided primary training for pilots, flight officers and flight surgeons. VT-1 also conducted indoctrination flights for NROTCs and Naval Academy midshipmen, and primary flight instruction for students from Allied nations.

VT-5, with its T-28s, provided carrier qualification training. In 1974 the squadron transitioned to T-34s and primary flight training. This marked

the end of instruction in basic carrier qualifications and the beginning of parallel primary flight training at Saufley.

During the height of the Vietnam War, on July 31, 1968, Saufley Field became a full-fledged naval air station.

By 1976 cutbacks were directed and the Navy consolidated flight instruction at fewer bases. On September 27, 1976, the last T-34B *Mentor* left Saufley. It was followed the next day by the last station aircraft, a T-28 *Trojan*. Thus, primary training was transferred to NAS Whiting Field.

The Navy's implementation of the new Navy Integrated Flight Training System took place in late 1976. The need for squadrons at Saufley was eliminated. Thus, VTs 1 and 5 were decommissioned.

Saufley was disestablished as a naval air station on December 1. Tenant activities at Ellyson Field (Ellyson had been declared excess) were moved to Saufley. The base now begins a new era as the Training Management Center, home of the Naval Education and Training Program Development Center.



Above, Blue Angel flyby at Saufley in September 1976, honoring Training Squadrons 1 and 5. Below left, Yellow Peril lands on Felton's Farm Field. Right, naval flight students during WW II. Bottom, the last T-34B to leave Saufley belonged to VT-1.



**The last assigned aircraft to leave Saufley was this T-28, left. Aerial view of Saufley in 1940.**



Hoyt Williamson,  
retired fire chief,  
remembers . . .

## The way it was

I first arrived aboard Saufley Field in January 1943 for a tour of duty as an apprentice seaman. There were no military types at the main gate at all.

I brought a Ford fire truck over from Pensacola and housed it in a building they were just finishing, which is now the power house. During the day the civilians in public works manned the truck. When they left at night, after a 16-hour shift, the military covered the next eight hours. I slept in the firehouse and manned the truck during that time period.

Since Building 801, which became the galley and enlisted barracks, was still being built, chow was hauled over from mainside and we were fed in tents where the tennis courts are now. Building 803, now the administration building, had seamen security guards on the second deck in 1943 and anytime the fire alarm went off, they'd answer it.

The Coast Guard had dogs in Building 850 and they would answer the alarm along with the guards. The fire department punched fire boxes at 15-minute intervals. If the watch was two minutes off in punching them, an alarm would go off. The guards and Coast Guard people with their dogs would break out and the security officer would stand ready with the fire department. We had a lot of false alarms. The Coast Guard men and their dogs also patrolled outside the gate at all times.

We had a few N3Ns left over which were being replaced by SNVs. There were no crash trucks on the outlying fields. A pilot would go up in an N3N and circle all the time, watching the outlying fields. If anything happened, he'd call it in and the crew would go out. There was no wheels watch, just an instructor. I've seen planes take off and leave their landing gear on the ground. Then they'd have to go to mainside and land in the bay because, back in those days, we didn't have foam to cover the runways.

One night, while I was asleep in the power house, a boiler in the next room blew up. It almost put the field out of commission since we had only one boiler operating at that time. Emergency work crews came in from NAS Pensacola, Bronson Field, Barin and Corry, and they got the boiler back in service so that we didn't lose any flying time. We were flying around the clock then, cloudy weather, rain and all. If we found a blue spot, the planes went up. The squadron commander would walk outside his office and look up. If he saw a patch of blue he'd say, "Put 'em in it," and we'd fly.

We stayed real busy. We were having a crash about every 12 hours, but not too many deaths. The first man to die was in an N3N right out in front of the admin building. The plane was covered with cloth, so that by the time the truck was cranked, the plane had burned. The second

crash was an SNV, almost in the same place. It caught fire. We made a fine effort to put out the blaze but we lost two men.

The firehouse began to get regular military people then. I ended up with the fire department because I had had a little previous experience before being picked up out of the reserves. The duty section would man the truck at night. We got an old Mack truck and 100 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>, and we added to it until we had 1,000 pounds. Then the Navy sent one man from each field out to California to look at some spraying trucks. The Navy bought a bunch of them to use as crash trucks and they stayed with us through two or three versions until the MB-5 series in operation today.

Saufley manned nearby fields like Lyons, Cantonment, Sites 4 to 8, Mayfair, Kings. They were our bounce fields. We'd take a crew out and leave the men there all day with a cadet who was waiting his chance to get into the program. There'd be one fireman in a jeep with a 50-pound CO<sub>2</sub> bottle and a litter in the back. The safety officer had a Piper Cub with rescue gear and he'd land that thing in the fields. They had a lot of flop-over crashes. A plane would hit a hole and tumble over. The safety officer would be the first man on the scene. Someone else would see it and call in to the tower, which would dispatch the ambulance.

We were getting 300 airplanes up

a day. When we went from the SNV to the SNJ we thought things were getting real good because it had retractable landing gear. We started getting better crash equipment. Students were staying longer in training and getting in more hours. World War II was turning in our favor.

From SNJs we went to SBDs, which were dive bombers. That was when Saufley came alive. We had many Waves on the flight line who did nothing but service the SBDs. They used three-wheel scooters to run up and down the runways to change fire bottles. Waves stood the alarm watches too but none ever caught a truck. Women's lib hadn't caught hold back then. But they did a big job.

We used to take the SBDs to the old gunnery range, tie them down, set up the guns and shoot into a bank. Weren't too many civilians living back there then, so gunnery practice went on all day. They'd run the engines up, time the guns with the prop and shoot through the prop. There were times when we'd see props with holes in them. When those planes dived, they'd sound like a whistle without a ball in it.

PBY-5As also came aboard. There was a ramp where they cycled their landing gear. Holes were cut into the concrete and the PBYs would go between the ramps, sit down and cycle their landing gear. They'd fly from here over to Pensacola Bay and then go on up to the Tennessee River, make a cross-country bounce and come back.

Some SNBs were stationed here with a photo squadron during the SBD days. They had a blister up in front so that people attending air photo school could take pictures from them. Later on, after the war, they were replaced by photo jets, the F-9s, which were brand new, the only jets in the Pensacola area. There were crowds all the time, up and down Saufley Field Road, watching the jets take off and land. At that time they were sort of secret airplanes and no one could touch them except those qualified to do so. A few more jets came in later, Lockheeds. The *Blue Angels* arrived just after them, flying F-9s. The *Blues* were going to put on a show. We'd take a fire hose, put

the water in the tip tanks and then pour in the cake coloring—blue, red, yellow, whatever they wanted. After landing they would go down to the fuel farms. We'd furnish the water and the crew would scrub the planes down by a fire hydrant.

Back in the old SNV days, we had an officers club on one side of the drainage ditch and an enlisted mens club on the other side. Perdido Bay wasn't polluted then and we had about 16 flat-bottomed boats and two deep-sea fishing boats for rent. The road leading down to the boats in the bay was built by men who had been to captains mast. Three to four sailors from one department might be working on the road. Sometimes there were so many crash crewmen working there that the chief master-at-arms would have to pull some back to have enough men on duty. Sailors would be put on report for having sleeves rolled up, dirty uniforms, unshined shoes or needing haircuts. You can't get by with that now, but back then that's how the road going to the beach was built.

The tower on top of the admin building today is the third version.

In the early days, we operated three towers where there were spotters who would report the squadron planes as they landed and took off.

Tires were hard to come by. Once, when I went to a crash, I ran over something and two tires blew out. I went to Birmingham on leave right after that and while I was there, I was ordered all the way back to Saufley because the commanding officer wanted to see me about the punctured tires. A lot of paper work was needed to get a new tire, and crash trucks had to have tires.

There were only two private cars on Saufley. One was the exec's. The other belonged to the chief master-at-arms. I remember that one officer came here on a motorcycle, parked it at the main gate and then had to see the admiral over at mainside because the admiral felt it was below the dignity of a Navy man to own a motorcycle.

That's how it was in the old days.

*Hoyt S. Williamson was stationed at Saufley from 1943 to 1945, when he was discharged from the Navy as a Specialist (F) Second Class.*



*Specialist Second Class Hoyt S. Williamson and shipmate demonstrate the foam nozzle they designed in 1944. Aircraft of VT-1 lined up at NAAS Saufley Field in 1964.*



# NEW CORSAIR



**T**he TA-7C *Corsair II* is a two-seat A-7, converted from earlier model A-7s and designed as a combat crew and instrument trainer.

It is carrier-suitable and could be adapted for combat operations from either aircraft carriers or land.

Vought Corporation, a subsidiary of LTV is converting 65 of the early model aircraft — the A-7B and A-7C — into TA-7Cs. During 1977-80, these aircraft will be delivered to pilot training centers at Cecil Field, Fla., and Lemoore, Calif. Replacement pilots for the 30 light attack squadrons flying the *Corsair II* will train in them.

Prior to the first TA-7C, a prototype, partially company-funded and designated first as the YA-7H and later the YA-7E, proved the feasibility of the conversion. The YA-7E made hundreds of demonstration flights.

The TA-7C retains most of the physical characteristics of the A-7. However, it is 34 inches longer to accommodate the second seat, and four inches higher at the tail. The rear seat is elevated for better instructor/pilot visibility. The added length consists of a new 16-inch section in the forward part of the fuselage and a stretch of about 18 inches at the trailing edge of the wing. The aft fuselage was modified by an upward

cant of a little more than one degree, thus allowing approach and landing attitudes identical to the A-7E despite the lengthened fuselage.

The six wing and two fuselage weapons stations have been retained. The M61 20mm Gatling gun, with 500 rounds of ammunition, provides full weapons system training capability. The TA-7C incorporates the same computerized navigation and weapons delivery system, and has the same accuracy as the A-7E.

Despite the addition of the second cockpit, it retains all of the internal fuel capacity (about 1,500 gallons) of the A-7E, giving it unusually long range without external tanks. The TA-7C also has an aerial refueling capability identical to the A-7E.

One side-opening canopy covers both cockpits. Each cockpit has all controls, communications, navigation equipment and displays necessary for instruction. Head-up displays in each TA-7C cockpit present information simultaneously to both flyers.

Powered by one P&W TF30-P408 non-afterburning turbofan jet engine, the TA-7C has the same performance qualities as other *Corsair IIs*. A para-brake is installed for short field landings.

The two-seat A-7 should enhance training in the attack community and result in substantial monetary savings.



**AMOs**

I have just read the article "Aviation Medical Officer" on page 28 of the February issue of *Naval Aviation News*. There are two errors in the article which I believe should be clarified lest they lead your readers astray.

Billets for flight surgeons have been reduced 33.3 percent from a high of 488 in June 1971 to today's count of 325. This number is still decreasing.

The AMO should *not* be involved in aviation accident investigation as he or she is not trained to do so in the four-week AMO course at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute.

The AMO is able to provide health care for aviation personnel based on increased awareness and understanding of their unique occupational environment and duties. Under circumstances where no flight surgeon is readily available, the AMO is able to perform routine aeromedical clearance evaluation, perform flying physical examinations on aircrew personnel and air traffic con-

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trollers in accordance with established standards, and identify aeromedical problems which are beyond his competence and experience to manage, and refer them for appropriate consultative service.

W. W. Simmons, Capt., MC  
 Head, Aerospace Medicine  
 Operations Branch  
 BuMed

**Out of . . .**

After a recent tour of VP-16 and the P-3C *Orion*, the following letter was submitted by a sixth grader from a local Jacksonville elementary school. The re-

visions to Natops are noteworthy and should be of interest to many in the VP community.

W. E. Johnson, Lt., USNR  
 VP-16 PAO

Shane Mouton

NAS JAX

The Orion is a big plane that goes up to 30,000 knots. The propellers are 12 feet around. It goes 35,000 feet in the air and is pressurized. The man showed us the cockpit the two sits on the left and the navigator on the right. He showed us the kitchen and the lavatory. Plus we saw where missiles were launched and those clamps can hold missiles and bombs. The plane had 4 computer banks the have this thing called garbage in garbage out. It means if you put bad questions in you get bad answers out.

**SOS**

On August 30, 1942, I was on the American ship SS *West Lashaway* when it was torpedoed by a German U-boat. Our position was approximately 500 miles east of Trinidad. I was 11 years old at the time.

Following the sinking, the 17 survivors drifted for 20 days. We were rescued on September 18 by HMS *Vimy* near Barbados. *Vimy* was escorting convoy TN 10 bound for Gibraltar.

On Sunday, September 13, about 5 p.m., a U.S. aircraft sighted us and dropped provisions. The provisions included ham sandwiches (consumed by sharks), two packages containing pemmican, malted milk tablets, chocolate, and a third package wrapped in a life jacket. It contained one can of Spam, one can of corned beef and four cans of condensed milk. The following day, a U.S. destroyer passed in sight of us without taking notice.

I am interested in collecting data about my experience. I wonder if any of your readers could provide answers to questions I have about the plane that sighted us.

What type of plane was it? To what squadron and station was it assigned? Would I be able to purchase a picture of it? Is part of its flight log regarding sighting us available? Who was the pilot that day? Is he still living? His address?

I shall never forget that Sunday evening! The roar of the plane's engines was music to our ears!

Robert W. Bell  
 Box 149  
 Stony Brook, N.Y. 11790

**VR Support**

A timely and effective response to fleet needs is always a key item in completing the mission. As a member of the fleet support C-130 community, I would also like to point out several items of interest that portray the constant need for that support.

First, an incident at Alghero, Italy, is cited. Within minutes after five divert aircraft from USS *Saratoga* were safely on the ground at a small, northern Sardinian field, Air Surface Coordinator Mediterranean was notified. All feasible means to support those aircraft and crews were to be used to get them back to operational readiness onboard *Sara*. The flight crews of VR-24 Det, Rota, Spain, were tasked to respond. By early



morning, a VR-24 Det *Hercules* had been deployed to the site with the necessary ground support equipment required to fuel and start the downed aircraft. Unfortunately the small field did not stock fuel and it had to be ordered in by truck from a distant location. En route the truck broke down, so no fuel was available.

Coordination efforts between the downed crews, the C-130 crew and the aircraft intermediate maintenance department at Rota proved successful. To circumnavigate their problem, they fabricated a fuel hose which connected the downed aircraft refueling ports to the C-130 defueling port. Fuel was then provided by the C-130, acting as a ground tanker. Approximately 15,000 pounds of gas were shuttled in from Sigonella, Sicily. The unique buddy tanker system worked well.

A second example occurred during the Paris Air Show where an F-14 *Tomcat* was on exhibit. Again, VR-24 Det was in the support role, supplying the

essential parts needed for successful flight demonstrations.

Many a support effort is accomplished daily by squadrons like VR-24 throughout the Navy. It sometimes seems there is a gradual decrease of this type of support because of a lack of assets. The support planes are getting older. The people who man them are becoming fewer in number. Part of the workload has been shifted to other services.

The VRs are fast and versatile in their support role. They do not require lengthy advance notice for any support they provide. They are always on standby, ready to serve, as are the carrier task force and their squadrons and units.

Achieving the goal of fleet support is an often thankless, yet most necessary, job. No medals are awarded to those who fly mail, passengers and cargo. But without them, there will be no winners to wear the medals.

I have been exposed to many involved in the field of aviation, but to none finer than those involved in Naval Aviation. The fleet support squadrons are as much an integral part of the Navy as the carrier task force. It is a team effort that makes the Navy a traditional winner, and I am proud to be a member of the team furnishing logistic support.

Louis A. Serafin, Jr., Ltjg., USNR  
VR-24 Det  
FPO New York 09540

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## Mr. Attack Aviation

Mr. Ed Heinemann, designer of the A-1 *Skyraider* and many, many more aircraft, is compiling material for a book about his life in aviation. He is too modest to ask all those who knew and worked with him to offer their reflections about his life and times in the Golden Age of Aviation.

However, Mr. Attack Aviation, as he's known in Naval Air, deserves our help. So, as a friend of Ed, I'd like to ask any readers of *Naval Aviation News*, who can recount some aspect of the human interest side of Ed, to drop me a note. Any experiences dealing with Ed, professionally or socially, would be most useful.

Thanks in advance for your help.

Robert F. Canaday  
Director, Government Marketing  
Douglas Aircraft Company  
3855 Lakewood Boulevard  
Long Beach, Calif. 90846

## EW/Attack Symposium

The EA-6B/A-6 *Prowler*/*Intruder* communities will hold the first annual joint *Prowler*/*Intruder* symposium at NAS Whidbey Island June 15-16. The theme of this year's symposium is War-at-Sea: A Coordinated Tactical Effort.

For details contact LCDr. D. J. Dewar, Jr., autovon 820-2793, commercial 207-257-2793 or Lt. R. Neuman, autovon 820-2756, commercial 206-257-2756.

# Lion Cubs, Frogs, and Buckeyes...

Training Squadron 19 was commissioned as a basic jet training squadron at Naval Air Station, Meridian on August 2, 1971.

It is tasked with instructing future Naval and Marine Aviators in basic jet familiarization, radio instruments, precision aerobatics, formation and night flying and air-to-air gunnery. The squadron has 20 T-2C *Buckeyes*, about 26 officers and 110 enlisted personnel to support approximately 120 training flights per week.

In 1976, VT-19 earned both the Chief of Naval Operations Annual Aviation Safety and the Chief of Naval Air Training Accident-Free Year Awards. It has flown 12,000 accident-free flight hours this year

and more than 67,000 accident-free flight hours throughout four consecutive years.

The squadron's first insignia, used until 1975, depicted a lion cub growling over the top of the shield. Such an animal figured in the heritage of another VT-19, a torpedo squadron which flew *Avengers* through major Pacific campaigns of WW II (see Walt Disney insignia, opposite, right in photo). A comedian named Bob Burns had given the cub to the squadron where it remained as a mascot until the torpedo unit was decommissioned. Interestingly, the two VT-19s share a carrier experience. They both have landed aboard the same carrier, USS *Lexington* — the

first during wartime, the current unit as part of carquals in the Gulf of Mexico on CVT-16.

Also in the 1971-75 insignia was a frog, symbolizing an aggressive esprit de corps along with a division of jets winging by a flattop.

Approved in 1976, VT-19's current emblem features a jaunty frog in the cockpit of a *Buckeye*, signaling thumb's up. A tall tale once circulated that after heavy rain the Meridian airfield was populated by a sprawling multitude of leaping amphibians.

VT-19's Skipper, Barry E. Kunkel, chuckles at that. "The real significance of our frog in the cockpit," he says, "is simply that we get more hops!" Compiled by Ens. J. K. VanderWaal





WARNING  
DO NOT REMOVE BEFORE FIRING