

## Super Hornet Conducts Sea Trials

On 24 January, the Navy's newest aircraft, the F/A-18F *Super Hornet*, completed initial sea trials on the Navy's newest carrier, *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74), off the coast of North Carolina. The trials, scheduled to take two weeks, were accomplished after only five days.

During the tests, "F1" performed 64 arrested carrier landings and launches, and 54 touch-and-gos. The trials revealed that the *Super Hornet's* approach speed is 10 knots slower than the F/A-18C/D, increasing the pilot's margin of safety.

The *Super Hornet* is one-third of the way through the flight test program. After F1 completes weapons testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md., it will resume sea trials in 1998.

Flight tests had been temporarily suspended in late November 1996 when a compressor stall damaged an engine during supersonic flight. Fatigue cracks in the stator vanes were found to be the culprit, and all flight test aircraft were scheduled to be retrofitted with stator vanes with thicker trailing edges.

Right, Cdr. Tom Gurney records the *Super Hornet's* first cat shot. Below, Lt. Frank Morley brings "F1" aboard for the *Super Hornet's* first carrier landing.



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## Boeing/McDonnell Douglas Merger

On 15 December 1996, the Boeing Company rocked the aerospace industry when it announced plans to acquire the McDonnell Douglas Corporation in a \$13.3 billion deal. The acquisition will make Boeing the largest commercial and military aircraft manufacturer in the world. Because of the size of the merger, the Federal Trade

Commission and the Department of Justice must review the proposed merger to investigate antitrust concerns before it can become official.

## NSAWC Tests Scud Finding Capability

In January 1997 the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center (NSAWC), NAS Fallon, Nev., began a series of tests of the Navy's ability to locate Scud missile launchers after they

have launched a missile—a problem revealed during the 1991 Gulf War. By using the system currently employed in the fleet to inform fighter pilots of a missile launch, NSAWC established a baseline for evaluating proposed solutions. To ensure realistic scenarios, NSAWC built simulated Scud missile launchers, "defended" by ground-based systems. F/A-18A/B *Hornet* and F-14A *Tomcat* pilots attempted to locate the launchers during both day





McDonnell Douglas Corp.

and night tests, some using a forward-looking infrared system. Future tests will include other technologies such as LANTIRN (low altitude navigation and targeting infrared for night).

## Hughes Wins AIM-9X Competition

On 13 December 1996 Hughes Missile Systems defeated Raytheon in the AIM-9X competition. Hughes will supply the Navy and the Air Force with up to 10,000 new air-to-air missiles to replace existing AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles under a contract valued at up to \$3 billion over the next 20 years. The weapon is slated to enter production in 2002.

## F-14 DFCS Sea Trials

Initial sea trials of the F-14 *Tomcat* Digital Flight Control System (DFCS) were conducted aboard *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74) in November 1996. The DFCS will improve the aircraft's handling during high-G maneuvering and carrier approach, and improves a pilot's chances of recovering from a flat spin. The system will continue flight testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md.; the first DFCS will be installed in a fleet aircraft in 1998.

## Pentagon Supports UAVs

The Pentagon has budgeted an additional \$300 million in its long-

term spending plan for the military's unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) programs. The *Pioneer* and *Predator* tactical UAVs will benefit from the budget, as will the Tactical Control System, a common ground control station being developed so all tactical UAVs can use the same operations system. Both the *Pioneer* and the *Predator* have been employed by troops in Bosnia.

## Passive Targeting Pylon Tested

On 29 October 1996, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Calif., was the site of a successful test of a new precision radar direction-finding system for the F/A-18 *Hornet*. The Targeting Avionics

Below, the Targeting Avionics System is loaded on an F/A-18 and, right, is used to fire a high-speed anti-radiation missile during testing.



## Flight Deck Hazard Pay Revised

A completely revised flight deck hazardous duty incentive pay program took effect on 12 December 1996 and makes approximately 500 more billets eligible for the pay. Quotas are now based on a new ratio of launch personnel per embarked aircraft load, allowing the air wing commander to determine exact quotas. In addition, Landing Signal Officer (LSO) quotas have been increased to include LSOs under instruction. The revised instruction and a PC-based software tracking program, which replaces the cum-



System (TAS) is designed to be installed in the multipurpose pylon of the F/A-18, and will allow an AGM-88 high-speed antiradiation missile to be launched in "range known" targeting mode. After this successful demonstration, the TAS was selected for a one-year fleet evaluation, possibly to include a carrier deployment.

## HSL-94 Gets Magic Lantern

Reserve Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron Light (HSL) 94, NAS JRB Willow Grove, Pa., took delivery of its first two SH-2G *Seasprites* with the Kaman Aerospace Magic Lantern airborne laser mine detection system on 7 December 1996. The system uses a laser and camera array to scan to a depth greater than the keel of any U.S. warship, day or night, and locates mines precisely using the Global Positioning System. Mine contacts detected during a mission are stored on a disk for post-mis-

sion review. HSL-94 will receive a third Magic Lantern in December 1997, and six squadron *Seasprites* will be capable of carrying the system.

## Pax Tests Tiger II

NAS Patuxent River, Md., became the temporary home of an F-5E *Tiger II* adversary training aircraft as it underwent fuselage strain survey flight tests in January 1997. The *Tiger II* was outfitted with gauges to measure the amount of strain during high-G maneuvers with various gross weights. The data will be evaluated by the Naval Air Systems Command to determine the aircraft's lifespan in hopes of keeping the *Tiger II* flying past the turn of the century.



This *Tiger II* was instrumented for structural flight tests at NAS Patuxent River, Md.

bersome tracking paper form (OPNAV 7720/2), are available for download from the BUPERS Access on-line database. NAVADMIN 295/96 describes the program

HSL-94 received two Magic Lantern mine detection systems in December.



changes and new quotas, and how to download the revised instruction.

## Senate Loosens Tailhook Notification

The Senate Armed Services Committee simplified the nomination process for naval officers who were present at the Tailhook '91 convention. The committee must still be notified of nominated officers who were potentially implicated by a post-Tailhook investigation, but further certification is no longer necessary for subsequent nominations. No certification is needed for officers who were not yet on active duty in September 1991. Officers who are subject to Tailhook certification but not in line for an appointment by the Senate Armed Services Committee may review all information held by the Department of the Navy relating to their activities during Tailhook '91, and submit information on their behalf.

## Contact Lens Policy Changed

If you're a Naval Flight Officer or SEAL (sea-air-land team member), and your commanding officer says you need contact lenses instead of glasses on the job, the Navy will now pay for them. This new policy became effective on 1 January 1997. Eligibility for contact lenses must be documented in writing by the member's commanding officer to the supporting military treatment facility, where fitting and follow-up care will be provided.

## Gulf War Illness Report Available

The *Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses: Final Report* is now available through the Government Printing Office. The publication costs \$20 and can be ordered by phone (202-512-1800, 0900 to 1600 EST weekdays), fax (202-512-2250, 24 hours a day) or mail. All orders must cite stock number 040-000-



**On 25 September 1996, the Navy accepted delivery of the final Light Airborne Multi-Purpose System (LAMPS) MK III production SH-60B Seahawk from Lockheed Martin Federal Systems, Owego, N.Y. The first LAMPS aircraft was delivered in 1983, and the system saw its first operational deployment in**

00683-4. Phone and fax orders may be paid by MasterCard, Visa or Discover. Mail orders must include either credit card information or a check payable to Superintendent of Documents, sent to P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954.

## Mishaps

An HSL-46 SH-60B *Seahawk*, operating from *Nicholson* (DD 982), crashed in the Gulf of Aden, north of Somalia, on 8 January. Lt. Glen Estrada, Ltjg. Daniel Haller and PO2 Everett Houghton were rescued by *Halyburton* (FFG 40).

An S-3B *Viking* of VS-22 crashed off the coast of Israel on 4 February while operating from *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71). Search and rescue units recovered some debris with squadron markings, but no survivors.

**When the VA-75 *Sunday Punchers* A-6 *Intruders* departed *Enterprise* after their last deployment, it marked the end of an era.**



Robert F. Dorr

LCdr. Mark Ehlers, Lts. Mark Eyre and Mike Weems and AW3 Wendy Potter were killed.

On 9 February a Marine Corps F/A-18D *Hornet* of VMFA(AW)-121, MCAS Iwakuni, Japan, crashed into the Yellow Sea 60 miles southwest of Korea. Capt. Mark R. Nickles and Maj. Danny A. D'Eredita were missing and presumed dead.

## Intruders Return for Good

The last deployment of the A-6 *Intruder* ended on 19 December 1996 when the *Sunday Punchers* of Attack Squadron (VA) 75 returned to NAS Oceana, Va., from a Mediterranean deployment on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65).

The rain clouds that marked the day were a fitting tribute to an aircraft designed to attack surface targets in any weather. The last A-6 to launch from *Enterprise* was manned by Carrier Air Wing 17's deputy commander Capt. Bud Jewett and VA-75's CO, Cdr. Jim Gigliotti, and was shot skyward by another A-6 veteran, retired VAdm. Richard C. Allen, former Commander Naval Air Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. While a band played, the *Sunday Punchers* aircraft landed and taxied smartly to their hangar, welcomed by squadron families and by Congressman Owen Pickett and Virginia Beach Mayor Meyera Oberndorf. One of the *Intruders* was painted in the gull gray and white scheme that the squadron wore when it became the fleet's first operational A-6 squadron in 1963.

## Disestablished

### VA-52 Knightriders

A 17 March 1995 ceremony at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., marked the disestablishment (officially 31 March) of Attack Squadron (VA) 52 after more than 45 years of service. Cdr. C. Rivers Cleveland was the last CO of the *Knightriders*.

VA-52 was originally established as reserve Fighter Squadron (VF) 884 at NAS Olathe, Kans., on 1 November 1949, training on the F8F-1 *Bearcat*. Soon after the North Korean invasion of South Korea, VF-884 was called to active duty on 20 July 1950 and equipped with F4U-4 *Corsair* fighters at NAS San Diego, Calif. The squadron deployed twice to the Korean war zone with Carrier Air Group (CVG) 101, first on board *Boxer* (CV 21) and later aboard *Kearsarge* (CVA 33). VF-884 lost its first and third COs, LCdrs. G. F. Carmichael and F. W. Bowen, respectively, to enemy ground fire during the war. The squadron also lost one of the few Navy aircraft to be downed by enemy MiG-15 jet fighters.

On 4 February 1953, VF-884 was redesignated VF-144 and moved to NAS Miramar, Calif., the following month. In April, the squadron began transition to the F9F-5 *Panther* jet fighter. From 1954 through 1957, the *Bitter Birds* deployed three times with CVG-14, first to the Mediterranean on board *Randolph* (CVA 15), and then twice to the western Pacific (WESTPAC) aboard *Boxer* and *Hornet* (CVA 12), the last with F9F-8B *Cougars*. VF-144 rode *Ranger* (CVA 61) around Cape Horn in 1958 when the new carrier joined the Pacific Fleet.

In 1958, VF-144 traded its jets for propeller-driven AD-5/6/7 *Skyraider* attack aircraft, and on

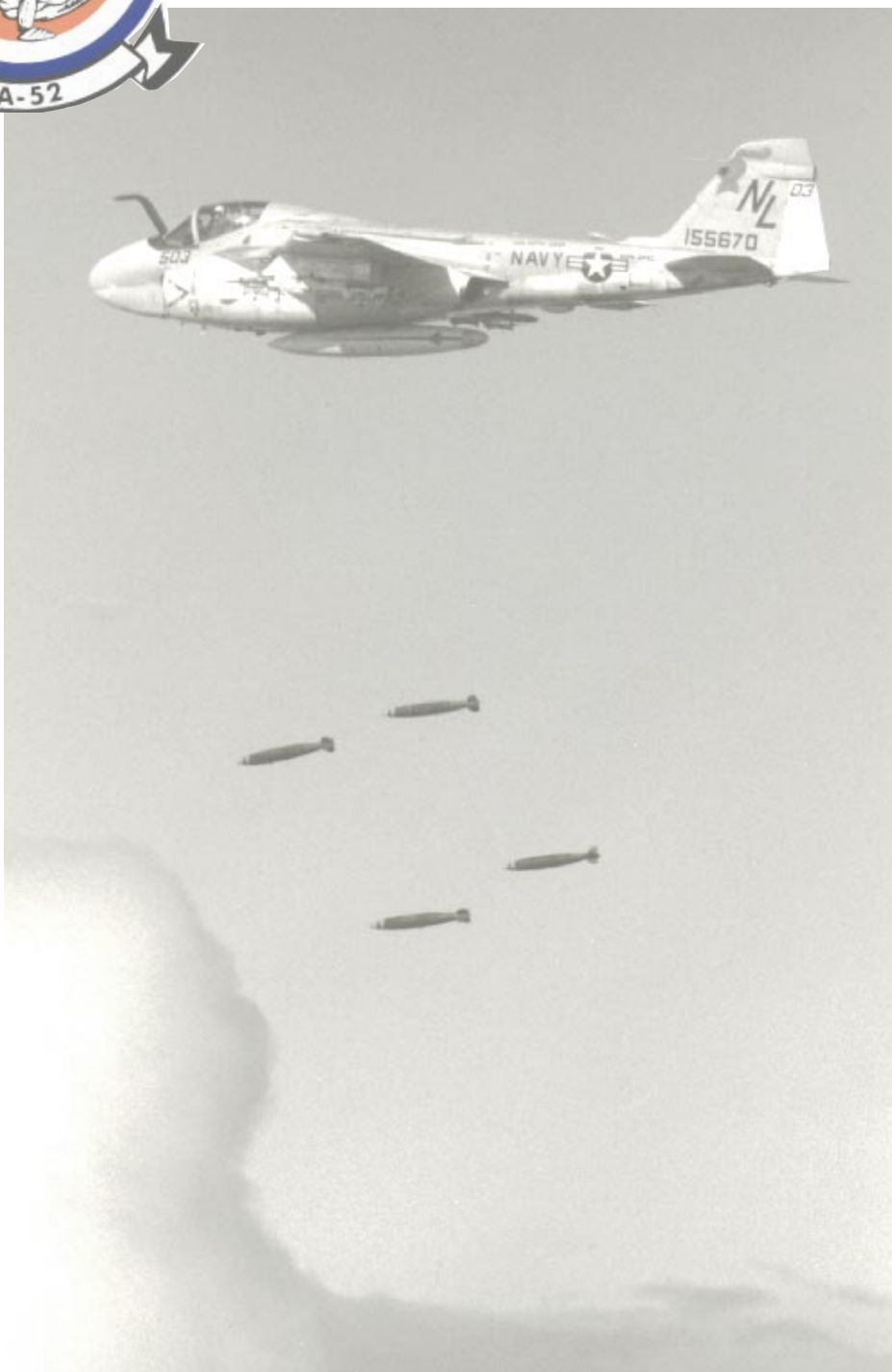
23 February 1959 was redesignated VA-52. In January 1962, the squadron moved to NAS Moffett Field, Calif., briefly before relocating to NAS Alameda, Calif., in August 1963. From 1960 through

1967, VA-52 made six WESTPAC deployments on

board *Ticonderoga* (CVA 14), five with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 and one with CVW-19. The squadron's A-1H/J *Skyriders* flew missions during the 1964 Tonkin Gulf incident, and bombed targets in North Vietnam during the 5 August 1964 Pierce Arrow retaliatory strike. During the two intensive Vietnam



A VA-52 *Knightrider* pilot demonstrates the awesome strike capability of the A-6 *Intruder* during a bombing exercise on 26 January 1982.



War deployments, VA-52 flew hundreds of missions over Vietnam and Laos, losing four A-1s to enemy action, as well as one of its COs, Cdr. J. C. Mape.

Upon return from deployment in 1967, VA-52 moved to NAS Whidbey Island and returned to jets, acquiring the A-6A *Intruder*. VA-52 returned to the Vietnam War three more times, first with CVW-15 on board *Coral Sea* (CVA 43), and twice with CVW-11 aboard *Kitty Hawk* (CVA 63), adding A-6Bs equipped with Standard anti-radiation missiles in its last two cruises and the KA-6D tanker on the final cruise. The 1972 deployment took the *Knightriders* into intensive combat during the Linebacker I offensive, including the Operation Pocket Money mining of Haiphong harbor. The squadron lost two A-6s and four A-6 crewmen during these cruises.

VA-52 made one more WEST-PAC cruise with A-6As, entering the Indian Ocean during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. In July 1974, the squadron returned home and switched to the A-6E version, taking it to WESTPAC in 1975. VA-52 made two more WESTPAC/Indian Ocean cruises on board *Kitty Hawk* with CVW-15, including an emergency sortie to the Arabian Sea in response to the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis. During this deployment, CO Cdr. W. D. Williams was lost in a mishap.

In 1982, VA-52 upgraded to the Target Recognition Attack Multisensor version of the A-6E and began a long association with *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70), cruising through the Atlantic, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and Pacific during the carrier's 1983 shift to the Pacific Fleet.

From 1984 through 1990, the squadron made five deployments on board *Carl Vinson*, operating in the northern and western Pacific and in the Indian Ocean. In 1987, another squadron CO, Cdr. Lloyd D. Sledge, was lost in a mishap. The 1988 cruise saw the *Knightriders* flying missions over the Persian Gulf in support of Operation Earnest Will, the escort of oil tankers through the

gulf during the Iran-Iraq War.

VA-52 upgraded to the System Weapons Improvement Package (SWIP) version of the A-6E in March 1989. In 1991, the squadron received SWIP versions with new composite-material wings, and became the first West Coast A-6 squadron to be equipped with night-vision goggles. VA-52 returned to *Kitty Hawk* in 1991, riding the refurbished carrier around Cape Horn as it returned to the Pacific Fleet. The squadron's last two deployments took it to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf in support of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and Operation Southern Watch over Iraq. On 19 January 1993, VA-52's *Intruders* saw combat one more time, striking targets in Iraq in retaliation for Iraqi antiaircraft fire. During the 1994 deployment, VA-52 operated off Korea in response to tensions between the two Koreas, the same unresolved conflict that brought the squadron to active duty 44 years earlier.

### VAW-114 Hormel Hawgs

A 16 February 1995 ceremony at NAS Miramar, Calif., marked the disestablishment (officially 31

March) of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 114 after almost 28 years of service. Cdr. C. W. "Bill" McKown was the last CO of the *Hormel Hawgs*.

VAW-114 was established on 20 April 1967 as part of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 11 on board *Kitty Hawk* (CVA 63) off the coast of Vietnam. It was formed from Detachment C of VAW-11, a large squadron that was dissolved to form several deploying squadrons. VAW-114 operated the E-2A *Hawkeye* early warning aircraft, protecting the naval forces in the Tonkin Gulf and the aircraft striking targets in Vietnam. VAW-114 was based at NAS North Island, Calif.

After a second deployment to Vietnam, VAW-114 upgraded to the E-2B version in 1970 and made two more deployments to the war zone, including the intensive 1972 Linebacker I operations over Vietnam. After the war, the squadron made two more deployments on board *Kitty Hawk* before joining CVW-15 on board *Coral Sea* (CV 43) for a 1977 western Pacific deployment. By 1976, the squadron had moved to NAS Miramar.

VAW-114 upgraded to the E-2C version in 1978 and rejoined *Kitty Hawk* with CVW-15, making two deployments to the western Pacific and Indian oceans. The first of these had the squadron operating over the Arabian Sea in response to the Iranian hostage crisis. In 1982,



The *Hormel Hawgs* flew the E-2C *Hawkeye* for 17 years.



VAW-114 joined *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) and made six deployments by 1990, the first being the ship's inter-fleet transfer through the Mediterranean Sea and Indian and Pacific oceans. The *Hornet Hawks* became the first fleet squadron to operate the Advanced Radar Processing System/Passive Detection System version of the E-2C. During the next five deployments, the squadron operated over the northern and western Pacific and Indian oceans. In 1988, the squadron supported Operation Earnest Will, the escort of oil tankers through the Persian Gulf during the

and Operation Southern Watch over Iraq. On 19 January 1993, VAW-114 supported CVW-15 aircraft as they struck targets in Iraq in retaliation for Iraqi anti-aircraft fire. During the 1994 deployment, VAW-114 operated off Korea in response to tensions between the two Koreas.

### VS-37 Sawbucks

A 17 February 1995 ceremony at NAS North Island, Calif., marked the disestablishment (officially 31 March) of Sea Control Squadron

**A VS-37 S-2G *Tracker* prepares to launch on an antisubmarine warfare hop from *Hornet* (CVS 12). The *Sawbucks* traded the venerable *Tracker* for S-3 *Vikings* in 1976.**



#### Iran-Iraq War.

In 1990 and 1991, VAW-114 upgraded to the E-2C Plus version and made two drug interdiction deployments to Howard Air Base, Panama. The squadron returned to *Kitty Hawk* in 1991 for the newly refurbished carrier's transit around Cape Horn on its return to NAS North Island. The squadron's last two deployments took it to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf in support of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia

(VS) 37 after almost 49 years of active service. The *Sawbucks* were part of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 15, which was cut as part of the post-cold war drawdown of forces.

VS-37 was established in 1946 at NAS Oakland, Calif., as reserve Attack Squadron (VA) 76E. In 1948, the squadron was redesignated Composite Squadron (VC) 871, and in 1949 was redesignated Air Antisubmarine Squadron (VS) 871. On 1 May 1951, the squadron was

called to active duty in the Korean War and based at NAS Los Alamitos, Calif., with TBM-3S/3W *Avengers*. The squadron deployed to the Korean war zone in October 1952 on board *Bataan* (CVL 29), returning in February 1953 aboard *Badoeng Strait* (CVE 116).

On 24 June 1953, VS-871 was redesignated VS-37 and during the next month was equipped with the AF-2S/2W *Guardian*, moving the following year to NAS North Island. VS-37 made one deployment to the

western Pacific (WESTPAC) on board *Princeton* (CVS 37) in 1954–1955, helping cover the evacuation of Nationalist Chinese forces from Tachen Island. Upon return, VS-37 switched to the S2F-1 *Tracker* twin-engine antisubmarine aircraft. The squadron took its new aircraft

to WESTPAC on board *Philippine Sea* (CVS 47) in 1957 and returned in 1958 aboard *Yorktown* (CVS 10) with S2F-1/2 versions. In 1957, the squadron was based again at NAS Los Alamitos.

In May 1960, with S2F-1/1S aircraft, VS-37 began a long association with *Hornet* (CVS 12), making six deployments to WESTPAC through 1969. After the first, the squadron was split in half, forming VS-35 as a sister squadron, and in 1961 moved back to NAS North Island, becoming the Navy's first West Coast squadron to receive the S2F-3 version. VS-37 made two cruises with S2F-3 (S-2D) versions and three Vietnam War cruises with S-2E versions during which the squadron flew patrol and gunfire-spotting missions off the coast of Vietnam. From 1969 through 1972, VS-37 operated from *Ticonderoga* (CVS 14), including a deployment to the Indian Ocean in 1971. In 1972, during intensive Vietnam operations, the squadron sent personnel to NAS Cubi Point, R.P., to augment Fleet Logistics Support

Squadron 50 in carrier-onboard delivery (COD) services with C-1A *Traders*.

In 1972, VS-37 took delivery of the Pacific Fleet's first S-2G versions, and in 1973 was assigned to Carrier Air Wing 11 on board *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) as part of the new CV concept, which based antisubmarine aircraft with an attack carrier air wing. VS-37 made two WESTPAC deployments on board *Kitty Hawk*, the first including an excursion into the Indian Ocean during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. VS-37 moved back to NAS North Island in December 1975. In 1976, the squadron assisted Republic of Korea navy crews in transition to the S-2G. In August 1976, VS-37 retired the S-2 *Tracker* from Navy service as an active antisubmarine aircraft, and commenced transition to the S-3A *Viking* jet antisubmarine aircraft.

VS-37 operated its S-3As on three deployments that took it to the northern and western Pacific and Indian oceans: in 1978 with CVW-9 on board *Constellation* (CV 64), which included operation of the US-3A COD aircraft; in 1980 with CVW-2 aboard *Ranger* (CV 61); and in 1982 with CVW-11 on board *Enterprise* (CVN 65). The next three deployments to WESTPAC and the Indian Ocean were with CVW-14 aboard *Constellation*, including support of Operation Earnest Will, the escort of oil tankers during the Iran-Iraq War in 1987. These deployments were interspersed with operations in the northern Pacific.

In 1990, VS-37 moved with CVW-14 to *Independence* (CV 62) for a WESTPAC deployment that found it responding to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait that August. VS-37 became a significant part of Operation Desert Shield, enforcing the United Nations embargo against Iraq with maritime interdiction patrols and aerial refueling missions. The squadron joined CVW-15 and returned to *Kitty Hawk* in 1991 for the newly refurbished carrier's transit around Cape Horn on its return to NAS North Island.

In 1992, VS-37 upgraded to the

S-3B version, which dramatically expanded and improved the squadron's capability to conduct antisubmarine and antisurface missions. The squadron's last two deployments took it to the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf in support of Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and Operation Southern Watch over Iraq. On 19 January 1993, VS-37 supported CVW-15 aircraft as they struck targets in Iraq in retaliation for Iraqi anti-aircraft fire. During the 1994 deployment, VS-37 operated off Korea in response to tensions between the two Koreas.



### HM-18 Norsemen

Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 18 was disestablished in a ceremony at NAS Norfolk, Va., on 4 March 1995. The reserve squadron merged with active squadron HM-14 to form a joint active/reserve squadron, HM-14. Cdr. J. M. Haas was the last CO of the HM-18 *Norsemen*.

HM-18 was established at NAS Norfolk on 1 October 1986. It received its first RH-53D *Sea Stallion* helicopter in December 1986, and sent out its first detachment in August 1987. In addition to performing its mine countermeasures role, HM-18 sent vertical replenishment detachments to Florida and the Bahamas.

Transferring its last RH-53D in August 1993, HM-18 upgraded to the MH-53E *Sea Dragon* version, the same flown by HM-14.



### VR-60 Volunteer Express

A March 1995 ceremony at NAS Memphis, Tenn., marked the disestablishment (officially 1 April) of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 60 after more than 12 years of service. Cdr. Richard L. Smith was the last CO of the *Volunteer Express*.

VR-60 was a reserve squadron established at Memphis on 3 October 1982, succeeding VR-53 which was disestablished with its old C-118Bs the previous day. Equipped with former Australian Ansett airline DC-9-31s similar to the C-9Bs flown by other VR squadrons, VR-60 flew logistics missions in support of fleet operations within North America and the Caribbean area.

In 1991, the squadron received two former Iberia Airlines DC-9-33s, which were modified with cargo doors. These aircraft allowed the squadron to operate detachments in the Mediterranean and western Pacific. When Hurricane Andrew devastated southern Florida in 1992, VR-60 flew 23,000 pounds of relief supplies to the stricken areas.

VR-60 sustained a mishap-free record, flying over 37,000 hours. VR-60's demise came about as part of the restructuring of the Naval Air Reserve logistics force and the closure of NAS Memphis.

Special thanks to Rick Burgess for his contributions to "Airscoop."