

Edited by JOE E. Blake Towler



On 18 April, *Wasp* (LHD 1) rendered emergency aid to a merchant vessel on fire approximately 85 miles west of Crete. The Marshall Island-flagged vessel, *Sea-Land Mariner*, initially reported two fires out of control aft in the ship, one crew member in the water and one injured. The cargo vessel, with a crew of 23, was carrying phosphorus, barium and oxygen-acetylene. *Wasp* dispatched helicopters with an 18-person emergency firefighting team to *Sea-Land Mariner* to assist in controlling the blaze and to bring the injured on board for medical treatment. One merchant crewman suffered first- and second-degree burns to the face and upper body and the second victim had facial lacerations and contusions. Due to the quick response of *Wasp*'s firefighting team, the fires aboard the merchant vessel were quickly contained. But there was another problem: 15 steel truck-sized cargo containers were blown overboard in the initial explosion, posing a hazard to navigation. Two AH-1W *Cobra* attack helicopters from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked on *Wasp* were launched and blasted away at the containers with their 20 mm cannons, sinking all 15.



Top, rescue swimmer AE3 (NAC) James S. Carter II in a CH-46 prepares to rescue injured crewmen from the *Sea-Land Mariner*. Above, *Wasp* (LHD 1) maneuvers into position to render further aid to the burning vessel. Left, Marines from the combat cargo platoon rush an injured *Sea-Land Mariner* sailor to the medical department aboard *Wasp*. Below, a 12-person firefighting team from *Wasp* assists in controlling the blaze aboard the merchant vessel. Photos by PHAN Daniel D. Stokes



Awards

The following squadrons/units were winners of the coveted **1997 Battle "E" Award**, recognizing superior readiness and performance:

AIRLANT: *George Washington* (CVN 73), VF-14, VFA-86, VAQ-137, VAW-123, HS-11, VS-32, HC-6, HM-14, HSL-48, VP-8, VCs 6 and 8, VQ-6 and VPU-1.

AIRPAC: *Independence* (CV 62), VF-2, VFA-146, VAQs 138 and 133, VAW-112, HS-2, VS-33, HC-11, HSL-43, VP-4 and VQ-3.

NAVAIRES (Noel Davis Award): HS-75, HCS-5, HSL-84, VAQ-209, VF-201, VFC-13, VPs 64 and 65, and VRs 48, 61 and 62.

HSL-37 received its second consecutive **HSLWINGPAC Top Torpedo Award** for which six West Coast HSL squadrons compete annually through torpedo exercises and inspections.

The **1997 Grampaw Pettibone Award**, which recognizes the individual and unit that has contributed the most toward aviation safety awareness through publications, was presented to LCdr. Richard Finnegan, HSL-42 (individual), and VAW-117 (unit).

Capt. James Lovell, former astronaut and Navy test pilot, will be one of the four newest members to be enshrined in the **National Aviation Hall of Fame** on 18 July. Lovell was one of the astronauts selected to take part in NASA's first space exploration in the 1960s, the Gemini program, and is author of the book *Lost Moon* upon which the movie *Apollo 13* was based.

The Naval Aviation Museum Foundation presented two prestigious awards during a banquet on 8 May:

The **1998 R. G. Smith Award for Excellence in Naval Aviation Art** was presented to retired Capt. Robert L.



Capt. Robert L. Rasmussen, USN (Ret.)



Capt. Richard C. Knott, USN (Ret.)

Rasmussen. A career Naval Aviator and prolific artist, Rasmussen has created over 100 Naval Aviation paintings, and designed the *Spirit of Naval Aviation* bronze sculpture displayed at the front entrance of the National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, Fla.

The **1998 Adm. Arthur W. Radford Award for Excellence in Naval Aviation History and Literature** went to retired Capt. Richard C. Knott. A Naval Aviator with more than 30 years of active service, Knott is a highly respected historian and writer whose work has added immeasurably to public awareness of Naval Aviation and its proud heritage. Capt. Knott was also the winner of the U.S. Navy League's **1998 Alfred Thayer Mahan Award for Literacy Achievement**.

CG Fourth MAW won the **1997 CNO Readiness Through Safety Award** and the Daedalian's **Adm. James Russell Naval Aviation Flight Safety Award** for its outstanding safety record and aggressive safety program.

The following units won **1997 CNO Aviation Safety Awards** [numbers in brackets denote consecutive years]:

AIRLANT: HCs 2 and 8; HS-11; HSL-44 [2]; VAW-123; VFs 2 and 102 [3]; VFA-37 [2]; VP-16; VS-32 and VX-1 [4].

AIRPAC: HS-14; HSL-51; VAQs 129, 134 [2], 138 and 141; VAW-112; VFA-27; VP-40; VQ-3; VRC-30; VS-33 and VX-9 [2].

MARFORLANT: HMMs 162 [2], 261 and 365 [2]; HMT-204; VMFAs 122 and 312 [2]; VMGRT-253 and VMR-1.

MARFORPAC: HMH-363; HMLA-369 [3]; HMMs 161, 265 [4] and 268 [4]; HMT-303; VMA-513; VMFAs 232 and 323; and VMFA(AW)-242 [2].

AIRRESFOR: HC-85 [4]; HCS-4 [2]; HSL-94 [3]; VFC-13; VAQ-209; VPs 64, 66 [2] and 69; and VRs 61 [2] and 62.

CG Fourth MAW: HMLA-775

Easy does it . . .



An H-3 *Sea King* from Battle "E" winning squadron VC-8 recovers a BQM-74 target drone.

During the **Association of Naval Aviation's Annual Symposium**, held 29 April–2 May in Norfolk, Va., the following units/individuals were recognized:

CNO Fleet Squadron Awards

RAdm. Joseph C. Clifton	VF-14
RAdm. C. Wade McClusky	VFA-146
Adm. J. S. "Jimmy" Thatch	HS-11
Adm. Arthur W. Radford	VAQ-138
Capt. Michael Estocin	VFA-146
AEW Excellence	VAW-112
LCdr. Michael G. Hoff	PAC: LCdr. Jeff Rocha, VFA-137
	LANT: LCdr. Robert Fogg, VFA-83
Capt. Arnold J. Isbell Trophy	PAC: VP-40, VS-35, HS-8 and HSL-51
	LANT: VP-10, VS-32, HS-11 and HSL-42
Pilot of the Year	PAC: LCdr. Yarema Sos, VF-154
	LANT: Lt. Scott Guimond, VF-102
NFO of the Year	PAC: Lt. Kevin Quarderer, VS-35
	LANT: Lt. Thomas O'Dowd, VF-14
LSO of the Year	PAC: LCdr. Ron Graft, CVW-9
	LANT: Lt. Steve Hartung, VFA-15
Instructor Pilot of the Year	Capt. Andrew Dingee, USMC, TRAWING-2
Instructor NFO of the Year	Lt. Darron Thompson, 562nd Flying Training Wing



An F/A-18C Hornet from the VFA-83 Rampagers.

ANA Outstanding Achievement Awards

Tactical Aviation	LCdr. Jeffrey Davis, VAW-124
Fleet Support/Special Mission	Lt. William T. Miller, VFC-13
Maritime Patrol	LCdr. James W. Landers, VP-30
Helicopter Aviation	HMT-302
Enlisted Aviation Maintenance	AMS1 Kevin Mawhinney, CGAS San Francisco, Calif.
Aviation Chief Petty Officer	ABHC Dayl C. Carlson, Bataan (LHD 5)
Navigator of the Year	Lt. Brian Gilk, VP-62
Naval Aviation Writing Award	Cdr. Bud Warfield

[2] and VMGR-234.

CNATRA: HT-8; and VTs 3, 10 [3], 19 and 27 [4].

AIRSYSCOM: COMNAVAIR-SYSCOM, Patuxent River, Md.

requesting medical assistance for two sailors—one suffering from acute abdominal pain and the other an irregular heartbeat. An **HC-6 Det 3** CH-46 *Sea Knight* was launched

from the amphib carrier to pick up and medevac the patients to *Guam* for evaluation and treatment. Because of the design of the Croatian ship, the helicopter was

Special Records

Several units marked **safe flying milestones:**

Unit	Hours	Years
VMFA(AW)-332	70,000	19
VMFA-122	50,000	11
HS-6	33,000	9
HC-6	10,000	2
HS-14	9,000	3

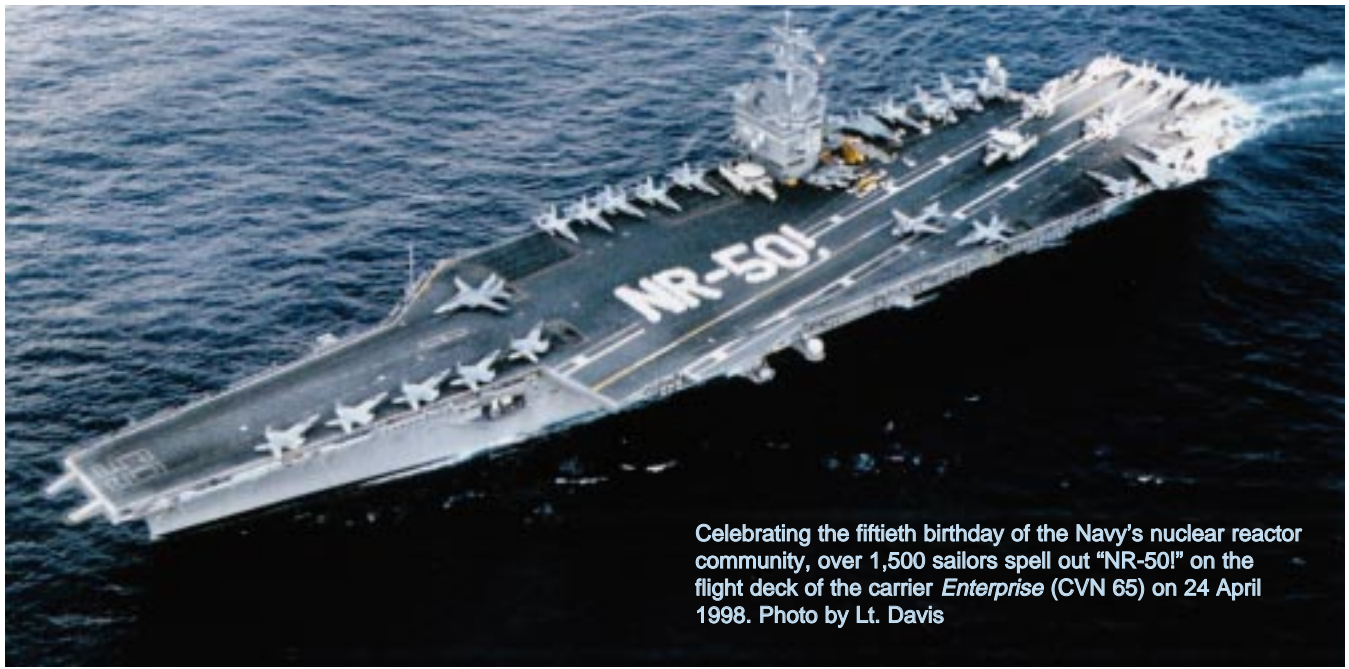
Rescues

As **Guam (LPH 9)** crossed the Atlantic Ocean heading home to Norfolk on 25 March, it received a distress call from a Croatian ship

Say cheese . . .

While operating near NAS Sigonella, Sicily, AW2 Kerry King of VP-45 photographs targets from a P-3C *Orion* using a 70 mm Agiflite aerial camera. Photo by PH3 Erin E. O'Neill





Celebrating the fiftieth birthday of the Navy's nuclear reactor community, over 1,500 sailors spell out "NR-50!" on the flight deck of the carrier *Enterprise* (CVN 65) on 24 April 1998. Photo by Lt. Davis

forced to hover 75 feet above its deck while AE3 Kurt Violette was lowered to prepare the patients for lift and transport. Then, both patients were hoisted aboard the helo and returned to *Guam* for further medical treatment.

Scan Pattern

A team of reservists from **NR NADEP Unit Jacksonville, Fla.**, and **NR NADEP Unit Cherry Point, N.C.**, conducted a maintenance study on the aging A-4 *Skyhawks* used in ground training by the Naval Air Technical Training Center. No longer flown by the active fleet, the aircraft help train the Navy's newest aviation electrician's mates in troubleshooting electrical systems. Over time, the aircraft had shown excessive wear and replacement parts were becoming scarce. The team was able to review the aircrafts' maintenance requirements, decide what support was needed, and identify possible parts sources and logistics support. Their expertise will save the training command an estimated \$1.6 million over five years in estimated lost training and readiness.

NAS Patuxent River, Md., played host to an exclusive association

when the **Golden Eagles** held their annual reunion at the base on 16 April. The Golden Eagles are an elite, invitation-only group of Naval Aviation pioneers whose members include 19 fighter aces, five Medal of Honor winners and eight holders of world records. The Golden Eagles took a tour of the air station, where many once were test pilots, and saw the only new development aircraft currently being tested by the Navy—the F/A-18E/F *Super Hornet* and the V-22 *Osprey* tilt-rotor aircraft.

Two Marine KC-130s and 34 Marines from **VMGR-352** and **Joint Task Force (JTF) Kenya** completed Operation Noble Response, during which over two million pounds of food were delivered to Kenyans who were devastated by unseasonable rains and flooding. The Marine-led JTF Kenya supported ongoing humanitarian relief efforts coordinated by the government of Kenya and the United Nations World Food Program. Although the KC-130's primary mission is air refueling, one KC-130 can deliver enough food to supply 4,600 people for 15 days. At the completion of the operation, the KC-130s had flown 51 sorties and a total of 144 flight hours, while off-loading 802 metric tons of food.

Naval Aviation mourns two of its finest. Retired **Cdr. George W. Hoover**, 82, died on 12 March. A U.S. space program pioneer and the innovator behind numerous avionics devices, Hoover was instrumental in the development of head-up displays and cathode-ray tube instruments. He is credited with coining the term "human engineering" and helped bring the British-developed ejection seat to the U.S. Also, retired **RAdm. John G. Wissler** died on 14 March at age 71. A former test pilot and CO of the Naval Air Test Center, Wissler logged over 5,000 hours in over 100 different models of aircraft and helicopters. He also served as CO of VF-31, CVW-3 and NAS Cubi Point, Philippines.

Change of Command

HMM-164: Lt. Col. Kevin P. Spillers relieved Lt. Col. Patrick M. O'Donogue, 3 Apr.

HS-7: Cdr. Jeffrey A. Hesterman relieved Cdr. Howard C. Keese, 2 Apr.

HS-15: Cdr. Kevin B. Lynch relieved Cdr. Bruce L. Anderson, 8 Mar.

HSL-40: Cdr. Stephen M. Bagby

relieved Cdr. John D. Furness, 27 Mar.

HSL-42: Cdr. Thomas Dargan relieved Cdr. Robert Presler, 21 May.

HSL-48: Cdr. William K. Lescher relieved Cdr. Brent H. Barrow, 3 Apr.

HSLWL: Capt. Gregory W. Hoffman relieved Capt. David W. Willmann, 17 Apr.

NADEP Cherry Point, NC: Col. Robert N. Leavitt relieved Col. William F. Scott, 30 Apr.

NAS Jacksonville, Fla.: Capt. Stephen A. Turcotte relieved Capt. Robert D. Whitmire, 8 Apr.

NAS North Island, Calif.: Capt. David R. O'Brien relieved Capt.

Donald F. Steuer, 17 Apr.

NAVFORAIRTESTRON: Cdr. Walter M. Skinner relieved Cdr. Bruce D. Remick, 19 Mar.

NB Jacksonville, Fla.: RAdm. Kenneth C. Belisle relieved RAdm. Kevin F. Delaney, 8 May.

TACRON 11: Cdr. David Buckey relieved Cdr. Paul Ziegler, Apr.

VAQ-135: Cdr. Mike Stahl relieved Cdr. Jerry McWithey, 16 Apr.

VFA-97: Cdr. John A. McCandlish relieved Cdr. David C. Dykhoff, 17 Apr.

VFA-81: Cdr. Jack Holt relieved Cdr. K. C. Albright, 8 Mar.

VFA-86: Cdr. William Sizemore relieved Cdr. Robert Harrington, 1

May.

VFA-136: Cdr. Matt Leiden relieved Cdr. Win Everett, 28 Mar.

VFA-146: Cdr. Stephen J. Laukaitis relieved Cdr. Richard R. Taylor, 30 Apr.

VP-4: Cdr. Scott Jasper relieved Cdr. Dean Kiyohara, 3 Apr.

VP-8: Cdr. Ray Para relieved Cdr. William Harrison, Jr., 3 Apr.

VPU-2: Cdr. Jeffrey S. Locke relieved Cdr. Richard Heimerle, 20 Mar.

VS-22: Cdr. Mike Reed relieved Paul Hoban, 3 Apr.

Orion Journal

The Final Entry for BuNo 152728

When the Navy accepted me in February 1966, many of you were not born yet, and some of you may have been in grade school. Through my 29 years and four months of service life, I have been transferred to seven different patrol squadrons and accumulated 17,800.9 flight hours. I've performed a variety of missions—from antisubmarine and surface warfare, maritime surveillance, regional sea control and coastal security to fisheries patrol, search and rescue, humanitarian aid, multinational operations and post-deployment leave flights. My pilots skillfully accumulated 21,063 safe landings aboard me, many in countries that others only dream about. I've gone through six standard depot-level maintenance inductions, 59 phase inspections, 763 aircraft washes and countless repairables and consumable parts to keep me in full mission-capable status.

On Tuesday, 17 March 1998, I took my last flight to my final resting place, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. The day was like any other: the plane captain sampled my internal fluids and checked for contamination; the mechanics performed their daily inspections covering every square foot from my nose to tail, wingtip to wingtip. Shortly after the morning passdown, the maintenance chief certified that I was safe for flight, and the pilot and his crew came to review discrepancies for the past 10 flights. The crew exercised my flight controls to ensure proper movement. My navigation systems were fired up, and the heater started to



The last flight crew of BuNo 152728, beside their autographed P-3C Orion: (standing) LCdr. Pete Tomascak, Lt. Corey Shearn, ADC Darrell Scent and Lt. Paul Fisher; (kneeling) AT2 Daryl Blackstock and AMS3 Jennifer Moliter.

warm the interior of my fuselage in preparation for flight. I was fueled to give me the strength for a cross-country flight over the Midwest.

My last landing was as smooth as the first. After I was chocked into my final resting place with all my plugs and covers in place, I was finally content that I had served my country proudly. I will have many fond memories of all the aircrews who exercised my capabilities on every mission. I will recount all the stories of the Sailors I have transported to and from distant deployments . . . safely.

I bid all my shipmates farewell, and thank you for keeping the air flowing over my wings.

Submitted by the public affairs office of VPU-1, NAS Brunswick, Maine.