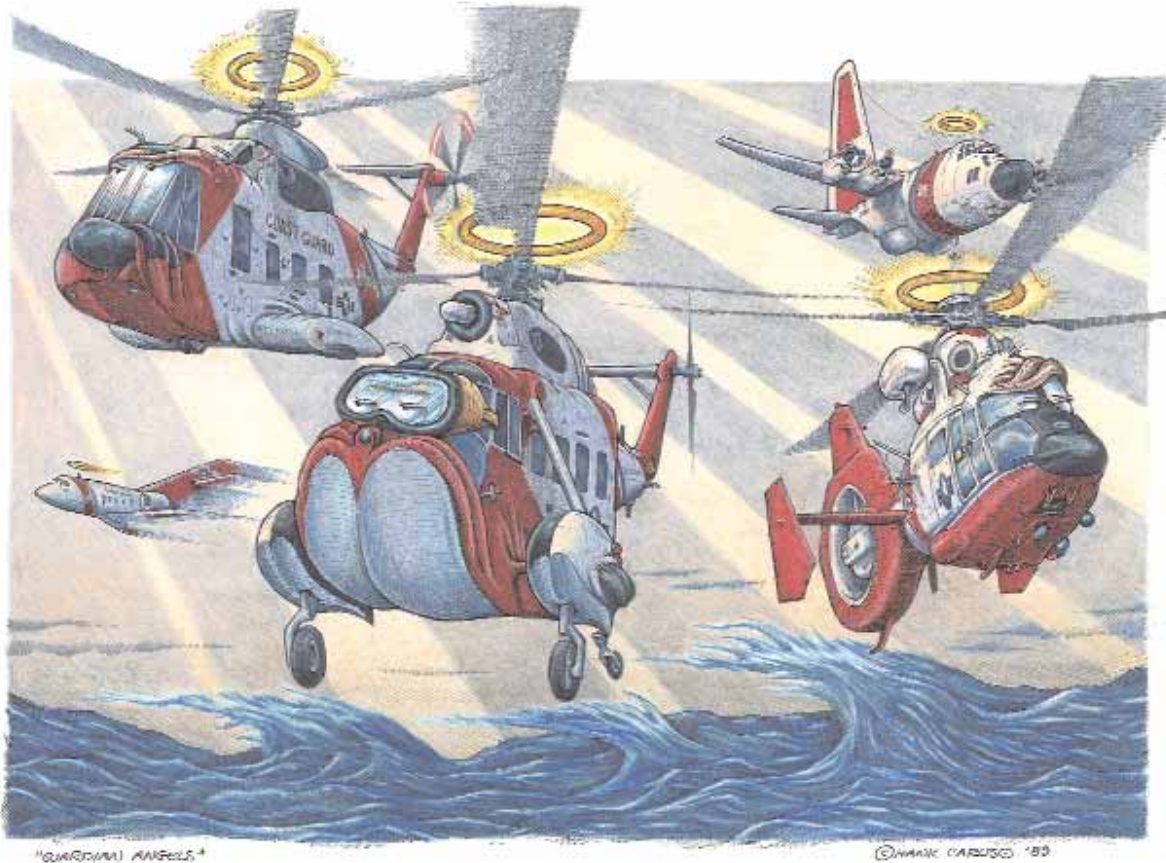


Hank Caruso's Aerocatures™ Sketchbook:

# Mercy & Muscle . . . U.S. Coast Guard Aviation

Illustrations and Text © Hank Caruso

*The U. S. Coast Guard has an early association with aviation. It was Surfman J. T. Daniels from the Kill Devil Hill Lifeboat Station, N.C., who clicked the shutter for a photograph of the Wright brothers' first flight on 17 December 1903. In 1916, the first Coast Guard personnel were sent for Naval Aviation training in Pensacola, Fla. Since then, Coast Guard Aviation has never faltered in its dedication to saving lives and defending United States territory, both at home and abroad.*



**Guardian Angels.** The 1980s served as a transitional decade for Coast Guard Aviation. Flying a mixed stable of aircraft, the service's guardian angels provided rays of hope for those in distress at sea. Fixed- and rotary-wing airborne mounts from the 1960s and 1970s flew side by side with newer technology jet- and turbine-powered aircraft, as shown here. Clockwise from top left are the Sikorsky HH-3F Pelican, Lockheed (now Lockheed Martin) HC-130H Hercules, Aérospatiale HH-65A Dolphin, Sikorsky HH-52 Sea Guardian and Dassault HU-25A Guardian.



**Last of the Amphibians.** The HH-3F Pelican has undoubtedly saved more lives than any other Coast Guard helicopter. Its unique combination of amphibious design, power and internal capacity gave it capabilities that many Pelican drivers still believe are superior to its successors. During its nearly 26 years of service (1968–1994), the venerable helicopter rescued more than 23,665 people.

**How the West Was Won.**

The stalwart HC-130H Hercules, in service with the Coast Guard since 1968, is using upgraded technology to perform its lifesaving missions in a wider range of adverse conditions than ever before. The aircraft shown here is delivering an air-droppable pump to a sinking fishing trawler. The Hercules also sports the CASPER (C-130 Airborne Sensor Pallet for Electronic Reconnaissance) system, which includes a chin-mounted turret with infrared and low-light electro-optical sensors. This Aerocature™ was commissioned by Coast Guard Air Station Sacramento, Calif. The distinctive facial hair and hat are derived from Warner Brothers’ Yosemite Sam, who is featured on the squadron’s patch.

