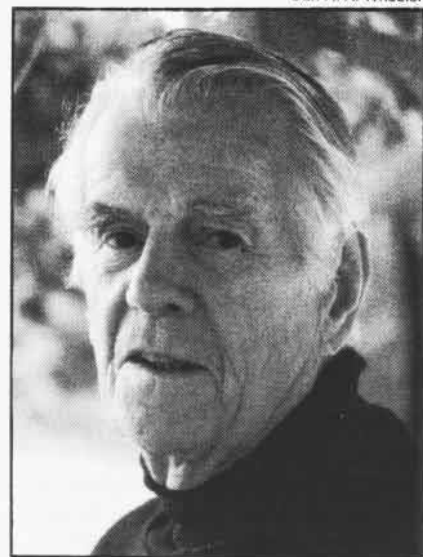




Grampaw Pettibone Artist Dies

Cdr. H. A. Wheeler



Bob Osborn in 1985.

January 1943 issue of the *BUAER News Letter* (our predecessor)—Grampaw Pettibone and *Naval Aviation News* have become synonymous.

Bob shared the character's creation with Commander Seth Warner, with whom he worked in the Bureau of Aeronautics' Training Division during WW II. Through his artwork, Bob brought to life a character they envisioned as a cantankerous old Naval Aviator railing against present-day flyers whose unsafe actions cause aircraft accidents. Osborn also created more than 2,000 of the famed "Dilbert the Pilot" and "Spoiler the Mechanic" safety posters, which were liberally displayed in hangars and aboard ships. In addition, his "Sense" pamphlets taught common sense safety rules on topics such as "Carrier Sense."

Osborn thought of himself primarily as a "drawer" and an artist with moral convictions. For more than 50 years, his sardonic and sometimes savage drawings in books and magazines engaged readers with their images of bloated power, violence and death. At the same time, he could be wittily ironic about society's pretensions—spoofing subjects like psychiatry, suburbanites and social climbing. He drew for *Harper's*, *Fortune*, *Life* and *Look*, to name a few, and became a regular contributor to *The New Republic*. He wrote and illustrated many books—including his 1982 autobiography, *Osborn on Osborn*—and, in a lighter vein, wrote a trilogy of books about catching trout, and shooting quail and ducks. His work is in the collections of the Beinecke Library at Yale, Library of Congress and Smithsonian Institution.

Robert C. Osborn, well-known caricaturist, cartoonist and satiric commentator, died of bone cancer at his home in Salisbury, Conn., on 20 December 1994. He was 90.

Known in Navy circles as the original illustrator of "Grampaw Pettibone," Osborn retired from drawing the Gramps column in the May–June 1994 issue of *Naval Aviation News*. Our tribute to Osborn appeared in July–August 1994—along with his "Swan Song" farewell drawing (above). Captain Ted Wilbur, USNR (Ret.), took over as illustrator of the Gramps column in the September–October issue. The magazine had celebrated Osborn's "50 Years of Gramps," in its January–February 1993 edition. Since the "sage of safety" cartoon first appeared—in the 15

Through the years, Osborn continued to publish his cartoons in *Naval Aviation News*. The Navy occupied a special place in his heart—and the feeling was mutual. In 1958, he received the Navy Distinguished Public Service Award, and in 1977 he was designated Honorary Naval Aviator No. 14, an honor he cherished. A 1989 exhibition of his artwork in the Navy Museum, part of the Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C., heralded his lifelong contributions to Naval Aviation.

Since 1947, Osborn lived in Salisbury with his wife, Elodie, who died in January 1994. He is survived by sons Nic and Eliot of Taconic, Conn., and two granddaughters.

Bob Osborn's legacy to Naval Aviation rests with naval flyers. His drawings and Gramps' pithy remarks remain in the hearts and minds of aviators, who extol countless times when the old-timer's safety messages saved them from flight accidents.

Bob was an extraordinary person and a treasured friend of *Naval Aviation News*. We share the great loss with his family and friends. ■