



VP-68 Hawk's Nest



Volume No. 48

VP-68 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

November 2015

The Hawk's Nest is the official newsletter of the VP-68 Alumni Association, chartered in 1998 in the state of Maryland for the sole purpose of uniting in a central organization all former "Blackhawks" of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68), it's parent and supporting Navy squadrons, and those interested in preserving the name and history of VP-68.

45-year Reunion 06-07-08 NOV 2015 Special Edition

THANK YOU

A special and heartfelt thank you goes out to Wyman Bailey and the Reunion Committee for a fun-filled 45-Year Reunion.



Wyman went well above and beyond the call of duty. First he made the arrangements at the Hampton Inn and The River's Edge Conference Center on base.

Then he contacted VX-1 at NAS Pax and arranged for our Alumni Association to tour the P-8 Poseidon and get an INSIDE tour of the aircraft

Wyman also secured our guest speaker Mr. Rick Campbell, author of the novel "The Trident Deception" and arranged to have an autographed copy by Rick for each member attending.

And if that all wasn't enough, for every member attending, Wyman had a CD produced containing every Hawk's Nest Newsletter that was published from 1999 to 2013.

Wyman's goal was that everybody attending the reunion had a great and relaxing time together. *Mission Accomplished!*

The only complaint heard was that the weekend was too short...only proving that time flies when you are having fun!!!!

Again.....thank you Wyman.

Blackhawk 45-year Reunion

On 6-7-8 NOV 2015, the VP-68 Alumni Association held our 45-year Reunion at NAS Patuxent River, MD. The reunion weekend started on Friday afternoon and concluded noon on Sunday.

Almost 100 Blackhawks and their guests attended. The Blackhawks came from Montana, Maryland, Florida, Maine, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Tennessee, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, New Jersey and the District of Colombia.

2016 Spring Fling NAS Pax River 21 May 2016

Hampton Inn Lexington Park, MD

Wyman negotiated special weekend room rates at the Hampton Inn at Lexington Park, MD across from Gate 1 of NAS Pax and we Blackhawks nearly filled the motel. The Hampton Inn facilities were excellent and the staff was exceptional and catered to all of our needs. Their complimentary breakfast buffet each morning was fantastic and it became the gathering place for the Blackhawks. (see pages 19 & 20)

The Hampton Inn provided us with a hospitality room which we converted to the "VP-68 Ready Room" and it became our command post for the weekend.

Blackhawk "Ready Room"

Special thanks to all who brought Squadron memorabilia and displayed them around the room. Carrie Blazek brought the original quarterdeck display boards, the metal Blackhawk sign from the side of our last hanger and other Squadron mementos. Awards, photos, certificates, trophies, banners and more were displayed.

The Ready Room, although too small to hold all of our squadron souvenirs and the people who gave meaning to them, was packed with VP-68 memorabilia from our time in the squadron.

(continued on page 2)

These items brought back many memories and to be able to touch these reassured everyone that our history was not simply a dream. The pictures of the good times, and the trophies signifying all of the hard work and dedication necessary to win them, and gave meaning to the time we all spent together as squadron mates

(see pages 4 to 5 for photos)

Pax Naval Aviation Museum

The VP-68 Alumni Association has donated our original oil painting of planes flown by VP-68 and parent squadrons to the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum. We feel that this is most appropriate as VP-68 was established at, and based at NAS Patuxent River from 1970 until 1985.

On Saturday afternoon, Wyman Bailey, Fred Haynes and Jim Rozycki presented the framed painting and also a framed informational Squadron history to the Museum.

The painting and history will be displayed in the soon-to-open Museum building adjacent to Gate 1 of NAS Pax River.

As an Association with our roots at Patuxent River, we are excited to see the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum prosper and look forward to visiting the new building when it opens.

Through this painting and history, the memory and the contributions of VP-68 will be forever displayed to the public.

(see pages 21 to 24 for photos and details)

P-8 Poseidon Tour

A very special *Thank You* goes out to the VX-1 "Pioneers" at NAS Pax River for our tour of the P-8 Poseidon.

Wyman arranged with VX-1 for a tour of the aircraft at 1100 on Saturday morning. The rain didn't dampen our spirits as we were treated to an inside and outside tour of the aircraft.

The P-8 staircase was in place for easy access and our hosts and guides did an outstanding job of showing the plane and explaining the various systems though not activated.

This was a most impressive bridge from the past to the present, although it did remind us how old we are, how technology has really advanced ASW capabilities and techniques, and how archaic our methods seemed in light of the new equipment.

So many questions we had: Wow, no Flight Engineers, Navigator, Communicator, or Ordinance in the new crews!

So, who gets the coffee pot going, fuels the airplane, takes off the engine covers, and keeps the pilots from playing with the power levers or pulling the E-handles in the cockpit?

Who ensures that the aircraft NAV systems are in fact accurate and carries the navigation charts for use to identify "those islands below" when there is supposed to be nothing but water?

Who encodes the messages, tunes in WWV for a time hack and the BBC on HF-3 for the crew to listen to during transit? Who provides aft observer duties, cooks, ensures the coffee pot is never empty, loads the sonobuoys, and lifts heavy luggage up the ladder?

None the less, it was gratifying to see the flight and maintenance crews of today were not much different from what we were 30 years ago. Their enthusiasm for the mission and their love of the aircraft is exactly the same, but they are just not quite as good looking as we were! ;-~ (Fred Haynes)

(see pages 6 to 8 for photos)

Guest Speaker

Our Guest Speaker was Rick Campbell, author of the novel **"The Trident Deception"**. Rick attended the U.S. Naval Academy and is a retired Navy Commander who spent more than thirty years on multiple submarine tours, finishing his career with tours with the Naval Operations staff in the Pentagon and in the Washington Navy Yard.



On his last submarine tour, he was one of two men whose permission is required to launch the submarine's 24 nuclear warhead-tipped missiles.

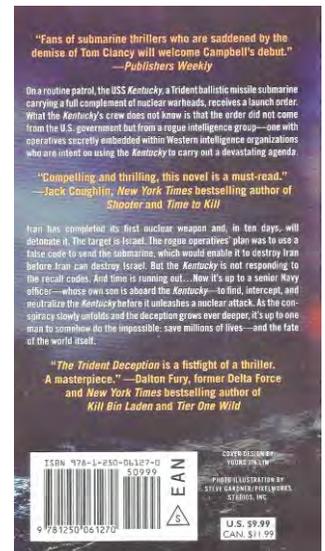
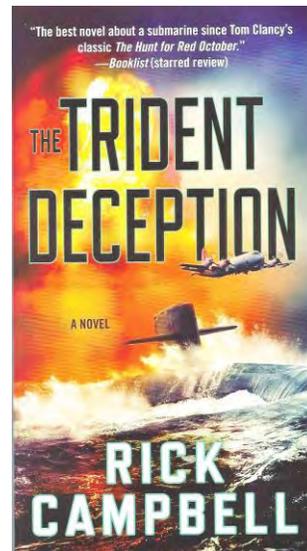
Prior to and after his talk, Rick gave each of us a copy of his book and he personally autographed each copy.

During his talk, Rick gave us great background and insight to the make-up of a submarine crew, both professionally and psychologically. He told us of the mindset of the crews knowing that if they launch their missiles, if and when they returned home, the world would be a different place. That is of course, if home even existed anymore.

Then, without spoiling the read, Rick gave us some background about key characters and scenarios in the book. Like a good author should, he teased us with some information but stopped short of telling us the outcome.

The P-3C shown on the cover plays a role in the story and in us, Rick had a captive audience that could all relate. His talk gave us good insight into the below the waves part of our ASW experience that we never saw or knew little about.

After his talk, Rick entertained some question from our attendees. We very much enjoyed his talk and have already or are currently digesting our copy of **"The Trident Deception"**.



Learn more about Rick and his novels on his website: <http://www.rickcampbellauthor.com/Contact-Rick.html>

or on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/rickcampbellauthor>

Also check-out Rick's sequel to **"The Trident Deception"**, **"Empire Rising"**

Business Meeting

In accordance to Association By-Laws, we conducted a General Business Meeting at 1600 for all members..

Unfortunately, the small "Ready Room" set-up did not lend itself to a business meeting with space for all members. Thus, the absence of some of the members from the meeting was understandable. The time for the meeting was also somewhat truncated because there was so much going on at the reunion.

Salient points of the meeting are:

- The Alumni Association's financial status is sound and Life Membership is up to 180 members. This is a significant increase since the Life Member dues were reduced from a \$100 to a \$25 one-time payment.
- The Reunion was designed to be a revenue-neutral event and it appeared that we were on track to achieve this end.
- Elections of Officers will be in NOV 2016. The current Association Officers are on their second, consecutive tour and volunteers are needed to step up to assume these positions in 2017. Without these volunteers, the Association is in jeopardy of shutting down. Serving as an Officer does not require much time or action, but it will enrich your membership by engaging you in planning and carrying out the future of the Association
- We had some discussion about By-Laws modifications regarding the fate of the funds and memorabilia should the Association close down. This will be discussed further at the Spring Fling.
- Discussion of Spring Fling being 21May2016, and the possibility of adding Friday to the activities to allow more time to socialize.
- Communication: we discussed the need of a newsletter, our webpage, post cards or a better way to get the word out to our members. Better communication may have made our reunion attendance better. We encourage somebody to please step up and do our newsletter.

**SEND THOUGHTS / COMMENTS / SUGGESTIONS TO:
baileymod@msn.com**

Dinner Reception

The dinner reception was held Saturday evening on NAS Pax River at the River's Edge Conference Center near the base marina overlooking the river. Cocktail Hour was 1900-2000 followed by dinner.

The River's Edge Conferenced Center on NAS Pax was very fitting for the event. The banquet room arrangement was nicely done, the drinks were very reasonably priced and the meals were fantastic. Fred Haynes did our invocation and ended humorously invoking "Devine Intervention" in nominations for new Association Officers in next year's elections.

Our guest speaker, Mr. Rick Campbell added an element of suspense to the affair; and being able to receive a copy of his book "*The Trident Deception*" as a gift and doing following reading to supplement his presentation is a real plus to the evening's success. Also receiving a gift Hawk's Nest CD was another very nice surprise orchestrated by Wyman.

The reunion was a huge success. Again, our appreciation and kudos go out to Wyman Bailey for all his planning, logistics, contracting, executing, and uncountable details that he was able to keep in line to pull this off.

(see pages 9 to 19 for photos)

President's Message

Wyman Bailey

How do you thank the so many people who came out to support VP-68's Alumni Association's 45th annual reunion?

I tried to get around to all the tables while at the same time making sure, with the assistance of your Alumni Association Officers, Nancy Frey, Kathy Wright and Fred Haynes that the needs and enjoyment of everyone were given top priority.

The success of the evening was captured through the beautiful photograph of John Benton and Jacque LaValle.

The catering staff put together an excellent group of servers to handle the 100 plus attendees. And what can I say about the kitchen's handling, so effectively, the many different meals requested. Excellent!

Our guest speaker / author Rick Campbell was busy signing his first successful novel "The Trident Deception" for the squadron alumni members followed by a very informative presentation on the thrust of the novel's story line.

The dinner music provided by Erick Moore was both soothing and relaxing throughout the evening. It allowed everyone to have a chance to socialize with one another in a warm setting.

We had our first successful silent auction with the items donated by members of the alumni association. We also had a new shipment of VP-68 ball caps and challenge coins available for purchase.

A major event was realized and made available for everyone. Yes, we finally got to go aboard the Poseidon P-8 hosted by VX-1. Everyone came away with a greater understanding of the P-8 capabilities. The tour guides were able to answer all the questions we ex P-3ers put to them. Thanks VX-1!

Lastly our host hotel set up the Ready Room for everyone to gather in and share many, many stories and to eulogize some of our departed crewmembers.

Thanks to the following people for their contribution to a successful reunion: Lou Abbott, Carrie Blazek, Dale Grimes, Vicki Garman, Joe Odenthal, Richard Perkins, Jim Rozycki, and Ed Stanfield.

Our next Reunion will be the 50th in 2020. More importantly our 2016 Spring Fling will be May 21st at the Beach House at NAS Pax River.

Let's keep the fellowship going strong by making each of us available to each other. We have a lot invested in one another as we are a support system to each other.

I wish you all Happy Holidays and hope to see you in May.

The Year 1970 in History....

- Monday Night Football debuts on ABC, with Howard Cosell, Frank Gifford, and Don Meredith giving play-by-play.
- U.S. troops invade Cambodia.
- Four students at Kent State University in Ohio slain by National Guardsmen at demonstration protesting incursion into Cambodia.
- Senate repeals Gulf of Tonkin resolution.
- The Beatles break up. By the end of the year, each member had released a solo album.
- Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin both die drug-related deaths at age 27.
- Navy Patrol Squadron Six-Eight (VP-68) is established.



photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



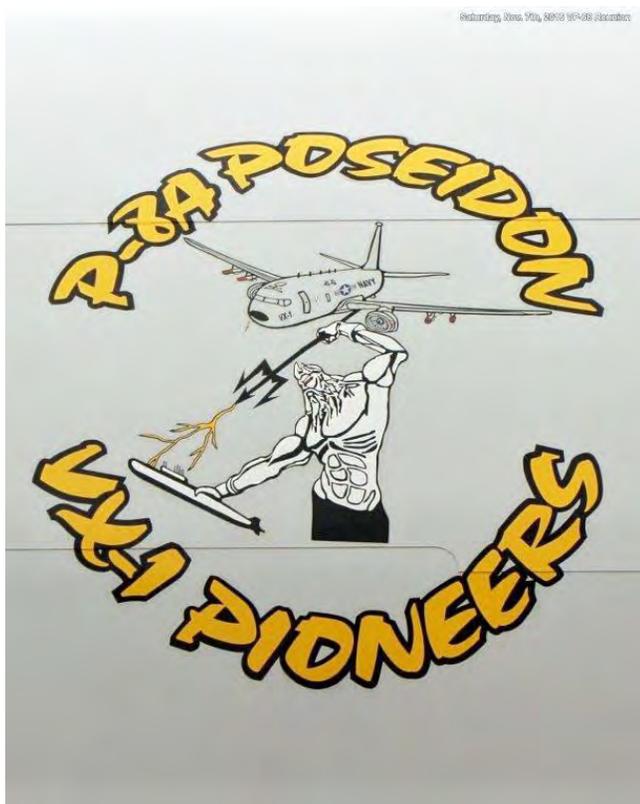
photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



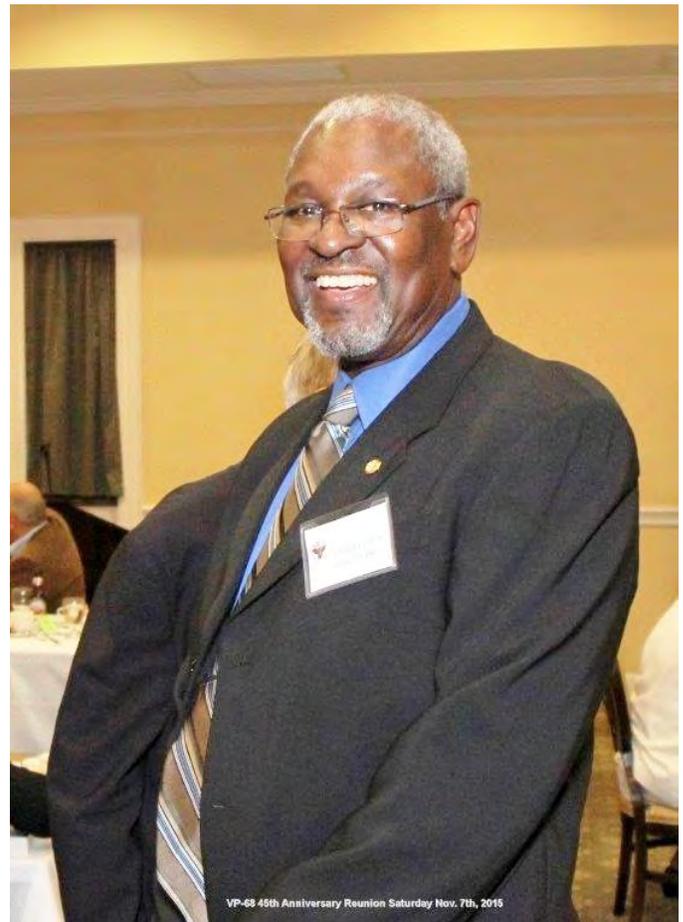
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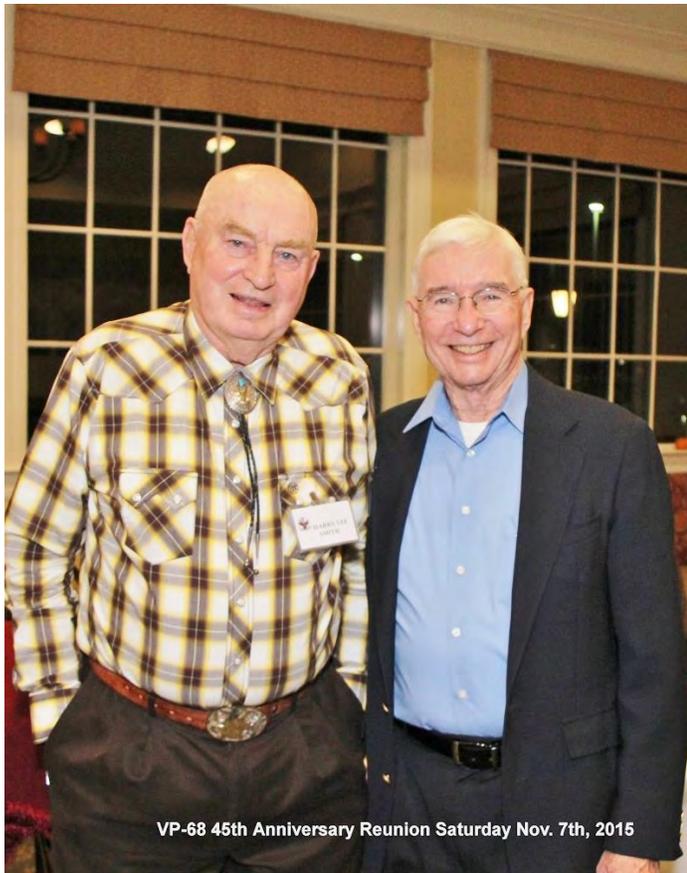


photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



VP-68 45th Anniversary Reunion Saturday Nov. 7th, 2015

photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



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photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



photos courtesy of John Benton & Jacque LaValle



Happy Holidays



The Officers and Staff of the VP-68 Alumni Association wish you and your families a very warm, safe, blessed and Happy Holidays



[The Patuxent River Naval Air Museum](#)

Learn more about the Museum and Association at.....

<http://paxmuseum.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/paxmuseum/?fref=ts>

The Officers, Board of Directors and Members of the VP-68 Alumni Association voted to donate our original oil painting (shown below) of planes flown by VP-68 and parent squadrons to the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum. We feel that this is most appropriate as VP-68 was established at, and based at NAS Patuxent River from 1970 until 1985.

This painting was done in 1995 by VP-68 Alumni (AW1 ret.) Morgan Ian Wilbur, Naval Historical Center Art Director with Naval Aviation News Magazine. It features the various aircraft flown by VP-68 and its parent squadrons VP-661, VP-662 and VP-663 all later designated as VP-68A1 and VP-68A2 then ultimately VP-68.

The painting is mounted behind glass in a beautiful gold frame and measures 36" x 26" and is accompanied by an informational history in a gold 8-1/2"x11" frame. The history document is shown on page 22.

As an Association with our roots at Patuxent River, we are excited to see the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum prosper and look forward to visiting the new building when it opens.

Through this painting and history, the memory and the contributions of VP-68 will be forever displayed to the public.



PBY-5A Catalina

PV-2 Harpoon

P2V-7 Neptune

P-3C Orion



U.S. Navy Patrol Squadron Six-Eight

VP-68 “Blackhawks”

Call Sign: Lima Whiskey (LW)

This painting was done in 1995 by VP-68 Alumni (AW1 ret.) Morgan Ian Wilbur, Naval Historical Center Art Director with Naval Aviation News Magazine. It features the various aircraft flown by VP-68 and its parent squadrons VP-661, VP-662 and VP-663 all later designated as VP-68A1 and VP-68A2 then ultimately VP-68.

Shown upper left to lower right are the Consolidated PBY-5A Catalina, Lockheed PV-2 Harpoon, Lockheed P2V-7 Neptune and the Lockheed P-3C Orion.

Navy Patrol Squadron Six-Eight (VP-68) was established on 01 November 1970 and was stationed at the Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD from 1970 until 1985. It was then transferred to Naval Air Facility Washington DC until it was disestablished on 02 November 1996 totaling 26 years and 107,000 mishap-free flight hours.

VP-68 was the first east coast Naval Air Reserve Squadron to fly the Lockheed P-3A Orion. It eventually flew the P-3B TACNAVMOD, and the P-3C Update I and Update II.5 models. VP-68's primary mission was anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and open ocean patrol in support of the U.S. Navy and national defense.

This painting is a tribute to the men and women “Blackhawks” of VP-68. Although VP-68's story has ended, it is important to remember that hardware alone did not make this squadron great...it was the people.

Our collective memories of long patrol flights, long hours for the “wrench-turners” to perform pre-flights on the planes, us dragging seabags across hanger floors for deployments and our pride in all of our accomplishments keep the spirit of VP-68 alive.

Awards won by VP-68 include:

CNO Safety Award in 1971, 1974, 1981, 1982 and 1984.

RESPATCOM “Liberty Bell” Trophy for best ASW tactical crew in 1976, 1980, 1985, 1987, 1988 and 1995.

Noel Davis Trophy for Battle Efficiency (Battle “E”) in 1982, 1988 and 1990.

COMRESPATWINGLANT “Blood Hound” Torpedo Delivery Excellence Award in 1983

U.S. Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Award for counter-drug operations 1985 to 1986.

COMSIXFLT “Hook ‘em Award” for ASW Excellence in 1988.

COMNAVAIRESFOR AAVCM Donald M. Neal “Golden Wrench” Maintenance Excellence Award in 1991.

Deployments by VP-68 include:

NAF Lajes, Azores, Portugal * NS Rota, Spain * NAS Bermuda * NS Keflavik, Iceland * NAS Sigonella, Sicily * NS Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico and others per the needs of the U.S. Navy.

VP-68 Alumni Association

The VP-68 Alumni Association was chartered in 1998 in the state of Maryland for the sole purpose of uniting in a central organization all former "Blackhawks" of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68) and its parent and supporting Navy squadrons, and those interested in preserving the name and history of VP-68.

The Association sponsors yearly Spring and Fall picnics and events on NAS Patuxent River and in the area and welcomes new members.

For information about the VP-68 Alumni Association please visit: www.vp68.org

The Patuxent River Naval Air museum has initiated a modest admission fee is desired under an honor system to help defray operational costs.

THE PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR MUSEUM,

a community supported museum,

is open and available. The museum is adjacent to the site where construction of the new Museum building has resumed.

22156 Three Notch Road, Lexington Park, Maryland 20653

Phone: 301-863-1900

E-mail: association@paxmuseum.com

The museum celebrates the past, present and future of the Research, Development Test and Evaluation of Naval Aircraft.

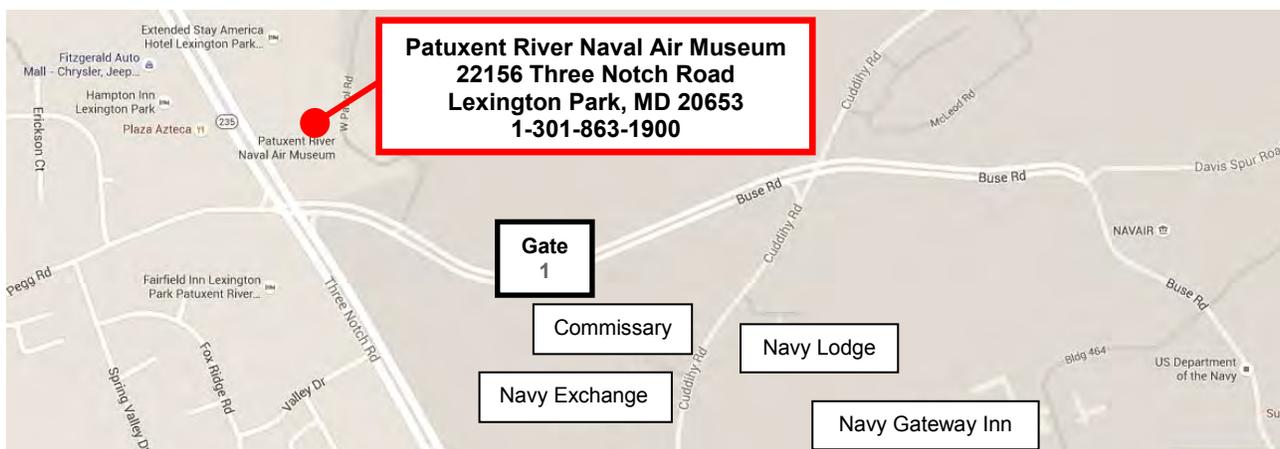
We are open 10 AM until 5 PM, Tuesday through Saturday - Noon to 5 PM on Sundays. We will be closed on Easter Sunday.

Closed on Mondays, including Federal Holidays. Also closed on July 4, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Day.

We charge a modest admission fee on the honor system. Something for all age groups.

The Museum Association is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization. Your membership and any donations are fully tax deductible. Individual membership is only \$50 and has benefits, including priority in our Mach Combat Flight Simulators.

Visit us on Facebook





artist's rendering

Join Us in Preserving Patuxent River's Technological Heritage!

I want to **JOIN/RENEW** membership in the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum Association.

Individual/Family: ___ \$50/year Individual ___ \$100/year Family/Dual ___ \$500 Lifetime

Corporate: ___ \$250/year Regular ___ \$1000/year Gold ___ \$5000/year Platinum

I want to become a **VOLUNTEER** for the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum Association.

Name/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ (Home) (Cell) (Work)? Fax: _____

Email: _____

*Return this form with
your check or money
order to:*

**Patuxent River Naval Air
Museum Association, Inc.**
22156 Three Notch Road
Patuxent River, MD 20670

301-863-1900
association@paxmuseum.com
www.facebook.com/paxmuseum

2015 & 2016 Association Officers

- President Wyman Bailey
baileymod@msn.com
- Vice-President Nancy Frey
monroviadame@yahoo.com
- Secretary Kathy Wright
kywright32@gmail.com
- Treasurer Fred Haynes
cruzintogogether@earthlink.net
- Historian Ed Stanfield
edwin.stanfield@gmail.com

From the Secretary

Kathy Wright

If you move and change your mailing address please let me know as that is the only way we can keep track of you. Send your address information to:

Email me at: kywright32@gmail.com

Call me at: 1-703-867-8604

Mail to me at: VP-68 Alumni Association
4924 25th Street S
Arlington, VA 22206

From the Treasurer

Fred Haynes

NOTICE:

**Life Membership
now only \$25 one-time fee**

As of 01JAN2015, the VP-68 Alumni Association voted to eliminate the Annual \$10 membership and replace it with a one-time \$25 Life Membership for ALL members.

Members who have not renewed their past yearly dues can now convert to Life Member for \$25.

Please consider becoming a Life Member and never have to write us another check.

Make checks payable to:
VP-68 Alumni Association

Mail all dues payments & financial matters to:

VP-68 Alumni Association
80 Falling Leaf Drive
Youngsville, NC 27596

Email me at: cruzintogogether@earthlink.net

Call me at: 1-919-761-8845

Membership Committee

Dick Perkins

The Membership Committee is still searching for former Blackhawks who are not yet members of the VP-68 Alumni Association. If you know of anybody please forward their names and contact info to Dick via e-mail at:

vp68co@gmail.com

Nancy Frey and Terry Gibson have also offered to help recruit former and new members. They have an old listing of all squadron personnel and will start trying to locate as many as they can contact through Facebook or whatever social media is available. Contact them if you can help them.

When you are calling or sending emails to your Blackhawk friends, ask them if they are members in the VP-68 Alumni Association. If not...please ask them to join!

Applications may be downloaded from our website:

www.vp68.org

OR

use the one on the last page of this issue

Hawk's Nest Editor:

(**CURRENTLY VACANT**)

Please contact President Wyman Bailey if you can help.

If you can use the computer, have a sincere affection for VP-68, like to tell and hear sea-stories, laugh, and keep posted on Association activities...then you are qualified. It is not much harder than sending all those emails we see daily.

Please consider helping us keep the Hawk's Nest. If you would like more information contact Wyman Bailey at:

410-960-2008 or baileymod@msn.com

Color Copies of Hawk's Nest

Color copies of all Hawk's Nest newsletters may be downloaded and printed in pdf format from our website:

www.vp68.org

Did you know.....?

When you view issues of the Hawk's Nest on our website and see links to other websites or folks email addresses these are actually hyperlinks and all you have to do is "click" on them and you will go to that site directly rather than have to type it all over yourself...TRY IT!!

**SEE YOU AT THE
2016 SPRING FLING**

21 MAY 2016

**NAS PATUXENT RIVER
LEXINGTON PARK, MD**

**VP-68 Alumni Association
80 Falling Leaf Drive
Youngsville, NC 27596
1-919-761-8845**

www.vp68.org

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
(as of 01 JAN 2015)
(please print)**

name: _____

address: _____

city: _____

state: _____ zip code: _____

home phone: _____

work phone: _____ (optional)

e-mail #1: _____

e-mail #2: _____

when in VP-68?: _____

rank / rate / dept: _____

1) I hereby submit my membership:

\$25 = Life Membership (one-time fee)

NOTE: Make checks payable to: "VP-68 Alumni Association",
mail check and completed membership application to above address.

2) I would be interested in serving on the following committee(s):

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Nom. & Elections | <input type="checkbox"/> Audit / Budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Reunions | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Constitution & By-Laws | | |

The VP-68 Alumni Association was chartered in 1998 in the state of Maryland for the sole purpose of uniting in a central organization all former members of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68), it's parent and supporting Navy squadrons, and those interested in preserving the name and history of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68).

The Alumni Association shall conduct programs to perpetuate the memory of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68) and to provide social and recreational activities for its membership. Life & Regular Membership includes: voting privileges; quarterly "Hawks Nest" newsletter; attendance at annual events; reunions and other functions.

Privacy Statement: The VP-68 Alumni Association holds membership information confidential and does not sell, disburse or distribute this information and uses it solely for Association purposes.

signed: _____

date: _____