



VP-68 Hawk's Nest

Volume No. 6

VP68 Alumni Association

June 2001

SPRING FLING 2001

The Spring Fling was held at NAS Patuxent River Maryland on May 5th. Once again Lou Abbott did an outstanding job of making all the arrangements. The weather ended up perfect; the food and friends were plentiful and a good time was had by all.



With Bob Gath anchoring the center, the group posed for the third annual picture. Everyone that came had many chances to reminisce with some folks we hadn't seen for a long time, including some new members to the Alumni Association.



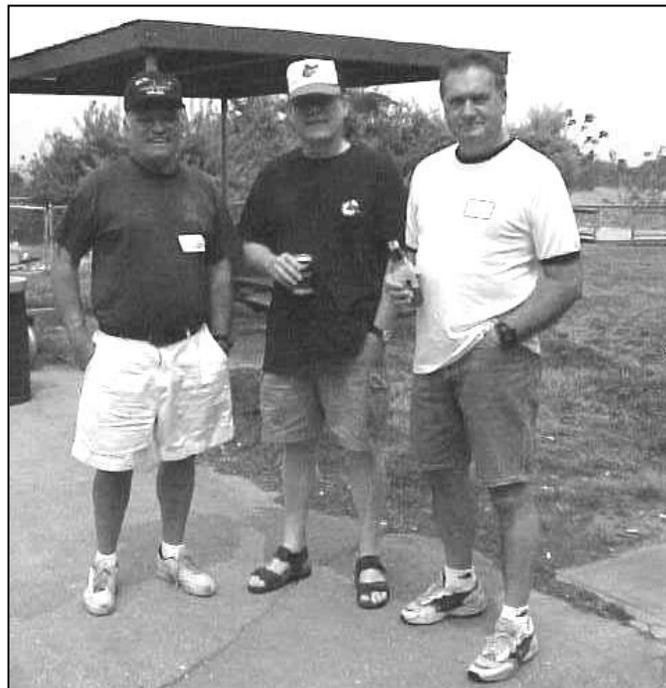
Friends gathered in the picnic area awaiting Lou's expertise at the grill. Burgers and Dogs were the order of the day, the charcoal was hot, the breeze was cool

and the cook got busy feeding the alumni.

A couple of alumni and their significant others were hanging out and enjoying old times. Strip and 'Odie' were remembering the good ole days when life in VP-68



and road trips with CAC-2 offered some interesting maintenance challenges.



A couple of the alumni took time out for a picture, including Vic Kraft who we owe a special thanks, he supplied a lot of the pictures in this newsletter.



Once word got out that the food and fluid was flowing, the crowd gathered to continue there renewal of old times. Seen in the background is Lew cooking at the Beach House grill.

Was good to see some folks that hadn't been around in a long while and those that came back from the Reunion in November. Your support of these activities is all that keep them going.



Seen here is an alumnus of long past, Charlie Watson joined us from Richmond, VA and is receiving some SS-3 training from Wy-

man Bailey and supervised by John Carr.



Pete Richard joined us all the way from the Seattle area in Washington State and told us tall stories - just after the latest earthquake.

President's Corner

The 2001 Spring Fling was a great success. Many well deserved thanks to Lou Abbott for another in the series of 'well done's'. I had the pleasure of visiting with several Blackhawks whom I had not seen in some time; the fresh sea stories and new jokes were most appreciated.

We are beginning to plan an inside event for the fall. The Coral Sea room may be undergoing remodeling during the period that we would normally get together so the executive board is working on an alternative. Suggestions and invitations are always welcome. The phrase "too bad the Barn burned down" has been heard more than once.

One of the most interesting topics of conversation at the, "Spring Fling", was just how wrong most of us have been. I realized that I have been guilty of incorrectly and unjustly criticizing the "new Navy".

It seems that when we engage two or more P3 sailors from a given crew, work center or even the same decade of service in a conversation, the topic quite often turns to "the good old days". I have heard the paint was shinier and the power trains smoother on the original "A's" and how a "B MOD" with a good crew (speakers crew) can whoop up an the newest Charlie with a bunch of "newbies" any day.

All of the old P3 talk is interesting because as a pup flying in P2s I was advised that the P3 could never be a successful maritime patrol platform; The P3 lacks a good forward observers station and has a pressurized cabin. How can one open the after station windows (to throw things out) if the cabin is pressurized?

After all of the hardware debates subside, a lack of training, experience, discipline and general aptitude are just about always determined to be the problems with the "new Navy".

Well Blackhawks, I stand corrected. A twenty something Lieutenant, a Salty ADSC and a crew of "newbies" just out flew and performed anything that I can remember ever doing. The more that I am informed of what actually transpired aboard the infamous EP-3 during its 15 minutes of fame, the more that I am awed and amazed. What a spectacular display of airmanship. Once on the ground and guests of the Chinese, the crew's military bearing, discipline and professionalism showed them to be excellent representatives of the US Armed Forces.

Yes America, I stand corrected.

VQ-1 RAC One, on behalf of the VP-68 Alumni Association, WELL DONE!

On the way out I overheard one of the discussion groups. . . "Now that the EP-3 crew is home safely I can ask, did any of you notice that they were flying an older airframe and it wasn't pressurized".

Say goodbye to the oldies, but goodies, because the good old days weren't always good and tomorrow ain't as bad as it seems.

■ Billy Joel

Happenings

The Fall muster is in the planning stages for the Andrews AFB area. Stay tuned for details. Be watching your e-mails, check the website, keep a weekend in early Fall open.



Official Business

Commander Reserve Patrol Wing (CRPW) and Commodore Sinibaldi's Change-of-Command will be at 1300, 21 July in the VR-56 hangar at NS Norfolk. CAPT Dave Montgomery will be relieving the Commodore and all VP-68 alumni are cordially invited to attend. Anyone interested in coming can RSVP by phone by calling the CRPW admin shop, (757) 444-995/3994/2562, DSN 564- Dress is summer white for military guests and equivalent attire for civilians.

At the fall business meeting, there will be a special election to fill the vacant Vice President's position. Anyone interested in being a candidate, please let the secretary know by 01 Sep 01. There are also several changes to the by-laws proposed and will be brought before the members during the business meeting. Please plan to attend and support the alumni.

Reminders



VP-68 Lithograph

A limited edition, beautiful lithograph reproduction of Morgan Wilbur's exclusive painting for the VP-68 Alumni Association is still available. This litho shows the aircraft from the P-3 to the PBY that were flown by VP-68 and it's parent squadrons. Each litho is numbered and signed by the artist, Morgan Wilbur . . . a true collector's piece . . . limited supply. The cost is \$37.00 each, which includes a protective shipping tube and postage. (\$35/ea cash/carry at all VP-68 Alumni Association functions.) Make checks payable to **VP-68 Alumni Association** and send them to:

VP-68 Alumni Association
2414 Rolling Farms Road
Glenshaw, PA 15116

"The Planes We Flew" Rubber Stamps

Decorate your letters, envelopes, etc. with these highly detailed rubber stamps of the P-2V Neptune and P-3C Orion. The cost is \$7.00 /ea which includes package and postage (\$6/ea cash/carry at all VP-68 Alumni Association functions.)

Please allow two weeks for delivery and mail your checks to the above address.

From the Secretary's Corner

How many Navy Sea Stories can your spouse take in one day?? Well I am sure we tested the patience of many a spouse at the Spring Fling this May. Former Blackhawks enjoyed the day meeting and greeting former shipmates and trading the always truthful "sea stories". During the day we had everyone

review the master mailing list to ensure we had correct home and email addresses. Please get in touch with me if you move or change email addresses, it is the only way we can keep track of you. Send your information to me by email - wright_kathleen@bah.com or snail mail - 4773 W. Braddock Road, Apt 204, Alexandria, VA 22311.

By popular demand here are some Navy web addresses that might be of some interest: Keep watching here, we will add more information in the next newsletter.

Naval Reserves

<http://www.navres.navy.mil/>

This site is the central gateway for online resources for the Navy Reserve

Naval Reserve Personnel Center

<http://www.nrpcweb.nola.navy.mil/Index.htm>

Have any questions regarding reserve personnel records, retirement point accreditation, commissary cards etc? This is your place.

Winner!

Winner of the 50/50 Raffle at the Spring Fling was Sue Blackwelder. She won \$58.00 big ones!

Your Secretary is on Team USA!! (in a very strange sport!) If you are in Philadelphia early August come see the Dragons on the Schuylkill. The 4th IDBF World Dragon Boat Racing Championship 2001 will be held 1-5 August at Fairmount Park on the Schuylkill River. As some of you know I have taken up paddling "Dragon Boats" in the last 5 years. My team, the DC Dragons, have combined with some ladies in the Big Apple (NY) and we were selected to be one of two USA Senior Women's Team. The senior's (read old ladies) will be racing on Saturday and Sunday. Come cheer on Team USA!!! Here is a web site to checkout one of the strangest sports you will ever see!

<http://www.seadragonamericas.com/>

See you at the Fall Fling in late September.

Newsletter Inputs

Your inputs for the newsletter should be sent to Dick Fickling, p3css1@aol.com for inclusion in the quarterly mailing. The cutoff for the next addition is Sept 30, 2001. Need items of interest, retirements and other Alumni news.

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