VW-1 All Hands Alumni Association
August 2015



VW-1 TRACKER

TE00 - TE1 - TE2 - TE3 - TE4 - TE5 - TE6 - TE7 - TE8 - TE9 - TE10 - TE11 - TE12

NAS BARBERS POINT, HAWAII NAS AGANA, GUAM, NS SANGLEY POINT, PHILIPPINES NAS ATSUGI, JAPAN OKINAWA, JAPAN, CHU LAI, VIETNAM

Branson Yours to Explore

Your "reunion planner" just returned from Branson and everything looks good. In this newsletter I want to share with you some interesting things to do there that are NOT going to be group activities, but certainly worth your time during your visit.

Having been to Branson in 2011, we will not be repeating any of the events that we did that time around, but they are worth mentioning. The SIX show was great; the Riverboat dinner cruise was fun and the Yakow comedy show was hilarious. I know, our beloved Pete wanted to see that again and since it is a 10 a.m. show I'm sure he can fit it in. If he wants company I'm sure there will be plenty of takers, myself included.

Having been to Branson about a dozen times, I have never had an interest in the Titanic Tour. However, several people had recommended it so I gave it a try. It actually was great – not for a group, but as individuals that can wander through at their own pace and enjoy the mass of information; and personal insight about passengers and a good deal of detail about the ship itself, both the construction and engineering that was state of the art at the time. A unique feature is that you get a "boarding pass" with a passenger's name on it and, at the end of the tour, you find out what happened to that particular passenger. It should take two to four hours depending on how much time you want to linger over all there is to see.

Many of the country stars that originally developed the Branson area are gone and a great many of the shows are "tribute" shows and although many of the performers are excellent, they are still not the "real thing". If you have a love for a particular artist, it is enjoyable to hear their most popular songs and enjoy thoughts of the time that was.

Branson is not all about country/western. Shoji Trabuchi, a violinist has both a morning and an early evening show that is great. There really is something for everyone…. magicians, comedy, Spirit of the Dance, plus things like the Butterfly House. For you shoppers there are endless alternatives. My favorite is right on the main street and it is a small shop that offers gift type items from all over the world … first class stuff …. Expensive, but beautiful.

The highlight of this trip for me was that I rode a Segway. It was on my bucket list and I highly recommend it. There is a place where you rent them and they instruct you in detail. They have a course you ride around and you buy in for a certain number of minutes. I bought in for 15 minutes and that was just right for me as I was beginning to feel the unused muscles in my legs complaining just a bit by quitting time. It was rather "doggie" and when I complained the guy in charge said they had it on the lowest speed so he upped it for me and then it was really fun to go over the speed bumps. In a burst of enthusiasm I jumped off it as soon as the ride ended, in spite of all the signs that said "do not get off" without help. Yup, you guessed it …. I went head over heels and met with concrete. Fortunately I have more bounce to the ounce than most and didn't even get a bruise. It is really and fun …. And safe if you just follow orders.

The reunion calendar will be registration Monday, short meeting at 6 p.m. then free time. Tuesday will be a day trip, evening free; Wednesday will be free all day with a show in the evening; Thursday will be free until about 4 p.m. when we will have our business meeting, followed by dinner and the auction. So there will be time for you to pick your own pleasures and I highly recommend coming a bit early and/or staying a bit late so you can enjoy it to the max.

(continued on page 6)

SCUTTLEBUTT from your PRESIDENT

Greeting Shipmates,

Time goes by fast when you're having fun, as the old saying goes. And unfortunately time takes a toll on all of us much too fast. So let's put some time aside and look forward to getting together for another great reunion in Branson May 9th to the 13th, 2016. Sally has put together another fantastic experience for all of us next year. The Clarion Hotel will again be our host, our great friend Joe Cuno (ex jarhead) will again take great care of us and provide our food and beverage service along with great fellowship. The one show Jane and I are much looking forward to is; "Moses" at the Sight and Sound Theater. Our friends and relatives said Sight and Sound is a don't miss event when in Branson and Sally has booked us for this show.

To me the reunion is not about the location or the entertainment, it's about the VW-1 family enjoying each other's company and reinforcing our concerns and affection for one another. I've had so many people tell me they can't wait until the next reunion and are so reluctant to leave when it's over. You only have that relationship with family or close friends. We are truly a "Band of Brothers" and"Sisters".

On to an important part of the reunion is the "Golf" day outing. My game is waning but my enthusiasm for it has not. I'll make my usual contribution to the "pot" with little expectation on winning. Branson has several fine courses and I have set up our play day at Branson Hills Golf Club. They have given us an afternoon veteran's rate of $58.21 per person with golf cart. We will plan on Wednesday after an early lunch at their Magnolia Grille and tee off starting at 1200 hours. Please let me know as early as you can so we have an accurate count of golfers. The sign up will be listed on the registration form that Chris will mail out or email with the early 2016 newsletter. We will try and have 2016 reunion and registration information on the website as soon as possible.

Chris Seal, our newsletter publisher is doing a fine job on the newsletter. I personally like the format and especially getting it by email. All members could really help the association if you are able and willing to receive it via email. This will save several hundred dollars in printing and mailing cost. If you need help with receiving PDF format (Adobe provides the software program free), Chris will publish how you can download the program and install it. Again this would be a great help to your association.

Don't forget the auction on Thursday; bring anything you can live without. This is a highlight event and we always have a raucous time with it. We will again ask Jack Gergel to be our auctioneer, he stutters so convincingly.

Jane and I are looking forward to attending the VW-1 Vanguard reunion in San Antonio next month (Sept.). Dan Ragan, their leader has made us welcome to attend. I'll report on our visit in the next newsletter Scuttlebutt. I also have been in touch with Bob Fuller, President of the VW-1 Association (officer group) and extended an invitation for him and other members to attend our reunion.

Best wishes for good health and happiness,
Ralph

VW-1 Did Have Guns...once

On 13 May 1953 a special projects unit flying the P4M-1Q aircraft was assigned to VW-1, for administrative purposes, as Detachment Alpha or Det. "A". This detachment operated mostly out of the Philippine Islands, Okinawa or Japan. On 01 June 1954 VW-1 Det. "A" was assigned to VW-3 Then on 01 June 1955 VQ-1 was established.

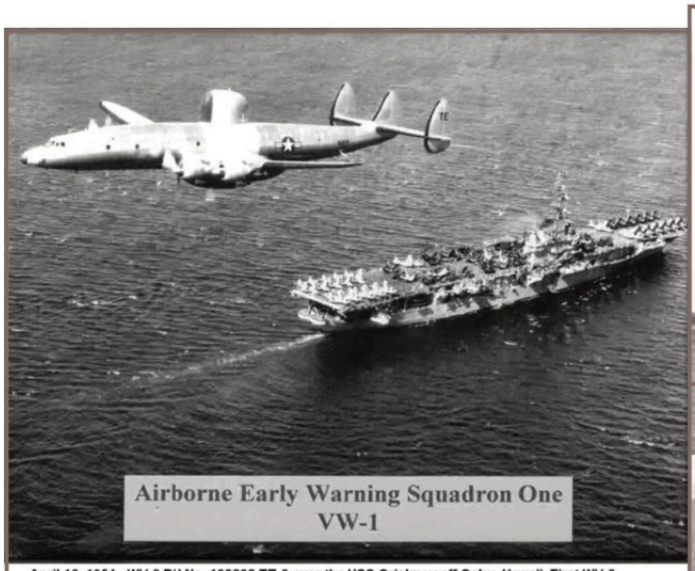


Martin P4M-1Q Mercator

Then there was the Willy Victor..



The EARLY YEARS



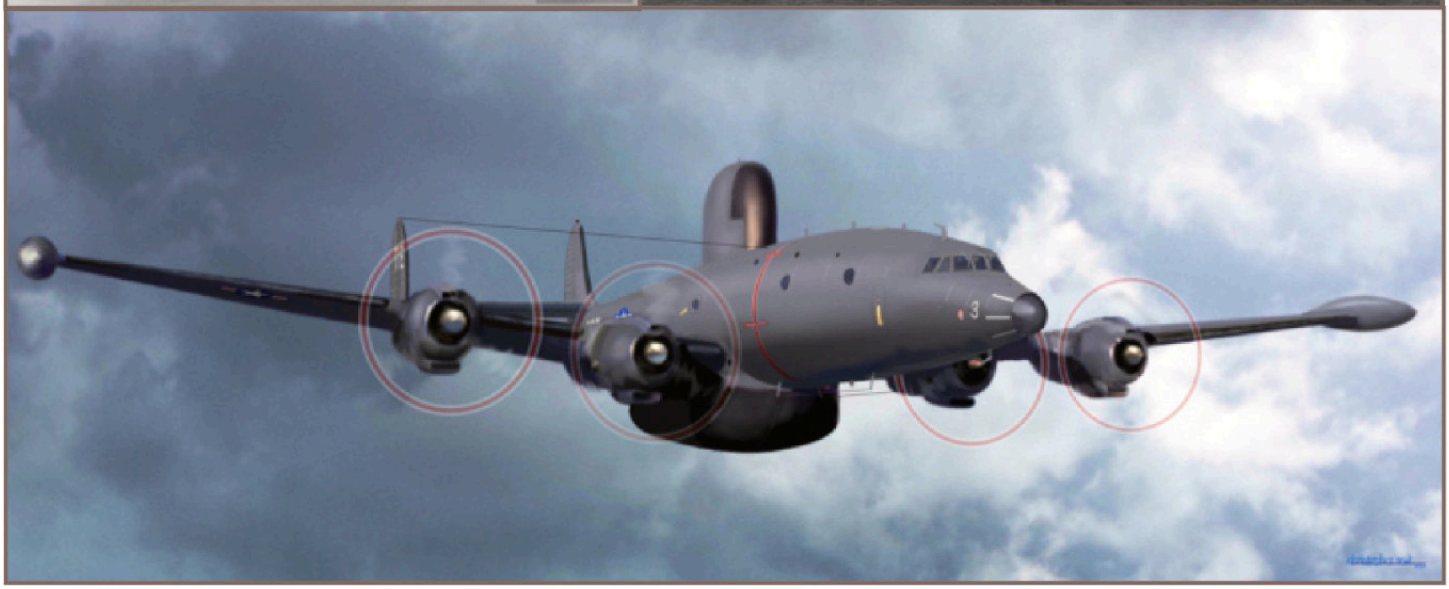
April 16, 1954 - WV-2 BU No. 128323 TE-2 over the USS Oriskney off Oahu, Hawaii. First WV-2 assigned to VW-1

Courtesy Bill Green ATW3 65-66 TE-6









It is the official 10 year anniversary of VW-1 produced by the squadron in 1962. I found it to be an excellent read and interesting from point of view in 1962. I snagged this off of the Willy Victor Site at (http://www.willyvictor.com/history/vw-1/vw1_hist.html) .I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. – Chris Seal, USN Ret. Editor



H. B Kenton, CDR, USN
Commanding Officer
1961-1962

The History of Airborne Early Warning Squadron ONE

FLEET GUARDIAN: AEWRON ONE



Richard (n) Gaibler, CDR, USN
Executive Officer
1961-1962

"Eternal vigilance is the price of Liberty" said John P. Curran, an Irish statesman in 1808. The suicidal attacks on Okinawa in WW II caused the U.S.Navy grave concern for improving its vigilance. The low flying Japanese planes were able to come close to the fleet before the shipboard radar units could detect them and alert the Combat Information Centers. These centers then tried to communicate with their own fighters in an attempt to vector them in to destroy the enemy planes. Since radar works on line-of-sight principle, the logical method of raising the antenna to increase detection range for fleet coverage was accomplished by placing radar in an aircraft. This airborne radar platform could then patrol the skies far out from the fleet. with experienced radar operators aboard, approaching aircraft could be quickly evaluated. In addition to radioing this early warning to the ships, the radar operators could fur ther communicate with our protecting fighter planes and steer them to an air-to-air intercept. In short, to solve the problem of high speed warfare the Navy hoped to extend its defensive perimeter through the use of an airborne CIC (Combat Information Center)crew, which would provide Airborne Early Warning.

The Problems confronting these early workers were staggering. However, they fortunately received strong encouragement from the "top brass," who recognized the potentialities of AEW. consequently, the original project Cadillac II, which was initiated toward the war's end, was kept alive in late 1945 and 1946. Among the problems to be solved was developing a radar compact enough to be placed in an aircraft and sturdy enough to withstand the vibration received in rough air and on landings. This radar had to be complex enough to furnish the vital information concerning speeds, heights, and distances to the Combat Information Center; which needed excellent radio and telephone equipment for communication, both inside the aircraft and to other ships and aircraft.

The aircraft, in turn, had to be large enough to house the radar, the multiple radar scopes, and the CIC team. Furthermore, it had to be capable of patrolling for many hours, the longer the better! Cadillac II workers turned to the old reliable B-17 bomber for these requirements. The Navy dubbed them PB-lW's. The first squadron to experiment with AEW was Experimental squadron Four (VX-4) operating out of Norfolk.

VX-4 participated in two "firsts" in 1946. It flew the first Navy radar weather reconnaissance flight on a hurricane in the Atlantic. It also participated in the first operational AEW mission. Admiral Marc Mitscher had zigzagged his fleet from the Caribbean to New York, where he was handed a complete and accurate track of his voyage, courtesy of VX-. 4's airborne radar coverage.

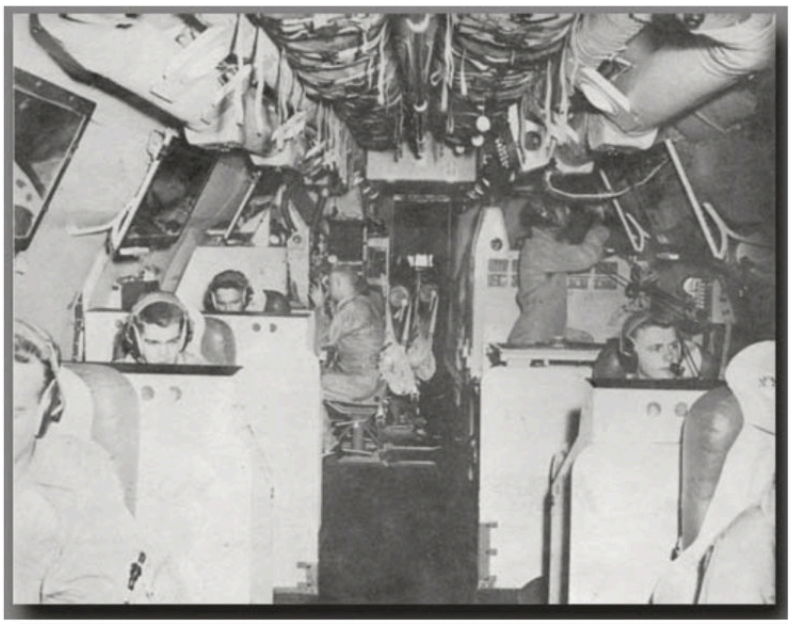
The first AEW type squadron was VPW-1 which operated on the East Coast. AEWRON ONE evolved from aVC-l1 (now VAW-11) detachment, which was a west Coast outgrowth of VPW-1. This unit was commissioned Airborne Early warning squadron ONE (VW-l) on 18 June 1952 at NAS Barber's Point, Hawaii, making it the first landbased AEW squadron in the pacific. The squadron had only a few of the old PB-lw's, adaptations of the Air Force B-17.

The PB-lw's crossed the Pacific in February of 1953 when VW-1 deployed to Korea for a brief taste of combat patrolling. in October 1954, the squadron received its first WV-2 Warning Star, the Navy's radar configured version of Lockheed's Super Constellation airliners with the famed triple-tail trademark of Lockheed. Easily distinguishable is the "fin" atop the fuselage which houses the height-finding radar gear, and

the large “bubble” underneath which contains the distance-measuring radar. This bubble has led some people to dub the aircraft “careless Connie.” VW-l has its own club, “The Order of the Pregnant Geese,” which accepts crew members who have accumulate 200 flight hours in our beloved “pregnant goose.”

Regardless of her name, VW-1 has had astounding success with the WV-2, logging over 70,000 accident-free flying hours with this remarkable aircraft. For you statisticians, that's the equivalent of 11 million nautical miles traveled, 440 times around the earth at the equator, or for you astronautically minded people, 22 round trips to the moon. That is quite a bit of traveling for a squadron that has never had over 12 aircraft at any one time.

VW-1 and its WV-2's were an immediate success operationally. Fleet units around Hawaii were pleased with the performance of our radar which could sweep an area of over 100,000 square miles six times a minute in its search for enemies or weather. VW-1 was called upon to provide a permanent detachment for exercises with the 7th Fleet in WestPac. This detachment operated out of Sangley Pt., Cubi Pt., Naha and Atsugi. Our aircraft participated in the Tachan evacuation in 1955 and Taiwan straits patrol through 1957. At the same time the highly important barrier line stretching across the northern pacific from Hawaii to Alaska was started. VW-1 initially trained these crews. VW-1's new sister squadrons were called up on to provide 24 hour coverage for this segment of the far flung DEW (Distant Early warning) Line which stretches entirely around the USA and Canada from the Pacific through the Arctic to the North Atlantic. In 1957, VW-1 was ordered to NAS Agana, Guam to provide closer support to the powerful 7th Fleet. The commanding officer of VW-1 has traditionally been Commander Fleet Air Detachment (CFAD) Guam and designated Commander Task Group 70.3. Administrative control has rested with Commander Fleet Air Southwest pacific (ComFairSowestPac). From 1957 to 1960 NAS Agana was a beehive of activity with the squadrons of VW-1 and VW-3 fully manned and frequently deploying on AEW missions, operating out of advance bases in the Philippines, Okinawa, and Japan. VW-1 and VW-3 each had 12 aircraft, approximately 120 officers, and 600 enlisted men. On 1 July 1960 VW-3 was deactivated. Its planes were sent to Arizona for mothballing; and most of the personnel rotated to other assignments; quite a few officers and men were absorbed into VW-1. VW-1 was told to begin training for the additional mission of weather reconnaissance. On 1 July 1961 the primary mission of the squadron became weather reconnaissance, though we retained much of our AEW commitments to the 7th Fleet. By this time the squadron had received and begun to train 6 flight aerologists and 18 enlisted aerographers. Meteorological equipment was installed in all the aircraft. consequently, the squadron was prepared for the many weather reconnaissance requests which came from Fleet weather Central/Joint Typhoon Warning Center located on Nimitz Hill. Its first typhoon season found VW-1 flying 114 missions including 85 critical fixes on tropical storms and typhoons. A total of 854 flight hours were logged on weather reconnaissance from 1 July to 31 December 1961, as we earned the title of “Typhoon Trackers,” thereby joining our sister squadron,VW-4, known as the Atlantic's “Hurricane Hunters.” The WV-2 proved equally versatile as either an airborne weather office or CIC platform. Guam also proved an ideal base for weather reconnaissance as most of the storms originated in this region before moving west and/or north-westward.



VW-1 looks forward to its 10th anniversary on 18 June 1962 with increased confidence. we have been reduced to 6 operational aircraft, 61 officers and 395 enlisted men, but our dual mission of AEW coverage for the 7th Fleet and weather reconnaissance for the entire western Pacific gives us a very strong operational base. Our squadron symbol, **Paul Revere mounted on the white horse, Pegasus, riding to warn of the approaching enemy** will undoubtedly remain both familiar and appropriate to the people in WestPac for years to come as we continue to provide early warning of possible typhoons and enemy aircraft.

MAIL CALL

Membership in the VW-1 All Hands Association cost only $15, that's less than I pay for one meal with my wife at Crackle Barrel or Denny's and the only tips we ask for is your good opinion. Much work goes into keep our members list current by Sally and she has supplied a list of those members that membership has elapsed and are now in the inactive status. Please renew your membership by sending it to Sally Metzger at:

VW-1 TREASURER
% SALLY METZGER
Address Removed
INVERNESS Address Removed
PHONE Phone Removed



Remember to RENEW & Mail in Your Check



COMMUNICATION SITREP ON ADC Rick Hall

I am Rick's oldest daughter, Karen.
I don't normally do the reply all but I just want to thank all of you for your service to our country. I am sure my dad would appreciate a call from any of you that want to talk about the old days with the Connie or what you have done since your time with her. I grew up hearing about how much he loved his time in the U.S. Navy and stories from his days with the Connie. Please if you have the time and desire to talk about those times (or anything really since Dad loves to talk) give him a call. Not being able to see and communicate via email has been very difficult for him and taking a break from listening to the tv would do him a lot of good. On a side note if any of you have any stories you would like to share about my dad I would love to hear them! I am working on making digital copies of all the slides Dad has from the '50's through the 70's and having stories to go into a scrapbook would be so amazing!
Chief Hall phone # Phone Removed

Jim Galinsky got a call from the daughter of ADC Rick Hall requesting that anyone who served with Chief Hall call him. Jim call him and great chat. He would truly enjoy receiving a phone call knowing from those who know him from his Engineer days flying Connies.

Chaplin Asking for Information

Please contact our Association Chaplin, Andy Dunn, when you know about an illness or loss of one of our Squadron Mates. Andy would be glad to call and send a card to any of our members or their families. You can contact Andy at Email Removed or Phone Removed

(continued from page 1)

For those of you who attended the 2011 reunion, I'm happy to tell you that Joe Cuno is still in charge of food services at the Clarion. For those of you who are first timers at the Clarion, you have a delightful experience ahead with Joe around. He is the gentleman that did CD's of our VW-1 group and gave one to every veteran attendee. An ex-marine, he goes all out for his veteran groups and his very involvement brings a special aura to the proceedings. It also guarantees things will go smoothly, as he cares deeply and makes it happen right.

May 9th arrival; May 13th departure for the reunion. The Branson airport is very small, which can be problematic. Personally, I'm flying into Springfield and renting a car. The ride south to Branson isn't that long and it is very beautiful, especially if you are unfamiliar with the Ozarks.

Fly, drive, or hitchhike, but come and join the VW-1 festivities. As I have said before, they are the finest group of folks it has ever been my pleasure to be a part of and just being around them guarantees a good time.

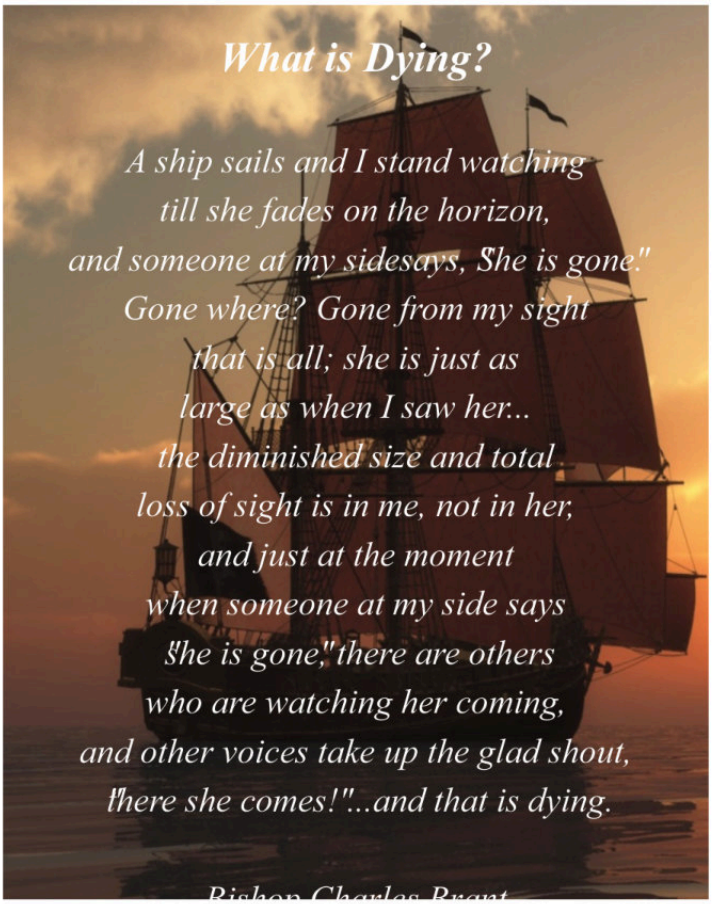
As the reunion dates get closer, the complete details will be in the Newsletter. A mailing with the reunion registration form will go out in late March and the timing makes it reasonable to include the annual dues notice at that time. Information will also be on the web site as it becomes available.
If you have any questions regarding the reunion, please don't hesitate to give me a call. My number is still 352-726-4943. Be sure and leave a message if no one answers and I will get back to you. For any newcomers, the "me" is Sally Metzger, the struggling reunion planner!



Our Departed Shipmates

Richard (Rick) Allen Shifferly 1946 - 2015

Richard (Rick) Allen Shifferly, 68, died July 1, 2015. Rick achieved his dream of moving back to Texas. The Navy was his life for 20 years, where he served in Vietnam, Guam, Maryland, Virginia, Washington, California, and Texas. Rick logged many hours as part of flight crews on EC-121's and C-130's. Upon retirement, Rick worked with the Navy training planes in Kingsville, Texas and Meridian, Mississippi. Another adventure for Rick was to own a semi and flatbed trailer. He leased on with Landstar and saw a lot of the country. Farming with his Grandpa and Dad in Ohio gave Rick a lifelong love of the land. Rick enjoyed fixing and repairing. Rick's Florida family and friends were a treat, especially his hotel family and Sanctuary neighbors. Friends dropped by with challenges. “Ya gotta be smarter than what you're working on” was a teasing reply.
Family was first in Rick's heart. Rick and Carol have three daughters: Barbie (Tim Piper), Christy (Omar Gonzales), and Jenny. His precious grandchildren were the joy of Rick's soul: Ayla and Chloe Gonzales, Knox Sloan, and Ryan Tapee. Rick will always be loved by Beverly Yurchiak (sister), Terry (Debbie) Shifferly (brother), Sarah Tapee and Kevin (Kirsten) Tapee.
A lovely, kind, smart and beautiful man who will remain in our hearts always. Love You Mr. Rick!
Taken from the Trevi̇̃no Funeral Home



ADR3 Norman Hemerick Passed Away December 2014 Wife NEEDS Help

Norman Hemerick, ADR3, VW-1 June 1970-April 1972, passed away last December from Prostate cancer complications. His widow is trying to substantiate that he was in country and therefore exposed to Agent Orange. She cannot find any orders or paperwork to prove such. I told her that she may only have to prove that he was on Guam..since the Agent Orange was stored there. If any of you were in VW-1 during the 1970-72 time frame and remember him please get back to me. Bob Fulller Email Removed

12th VW-1 skipper. Captain Charles A. Barton died in July 2014

We just found out that Captain Charles A. Barton, Commanding Officer of VW-1 1965 to 1966 died in July 2014. He is survived by his daughter Stephanie Barton and son Charles Barton. We are short on some details but his Memorial Service was at St James Episcopal Church, Munkton, MD on 27 August 2014.

Strangest Storm Ever....

We were out bound from Wake Island on a heading of two five zero bound for Agana, Guam. Due to an engine change we were all listening intently to the engines. They were perfectly synchronized, purring like four contented cats, when we received a radio message JTWC (Joint Typhoon Warning Center) to investigate a new storm system about 400 miles south of us. Everyone groaned, we had spent the last two weeks chasing a typhoon across the Pacific, and changing an engine, nobody had clean underwear and we were getting ripe.

An hour later we caught it on radar and it looked bizarre, not the circular mass of a typhoon but a massive dense irregular line across the scope, one edge of the scope to the other edge, with nothing behind it. The CIC Officer told our ECC, John Moehlenkamp, to check out the systems, thinking that the weird display was a problem with the radar system. John and I quickly determined that nothing was wrong, the APS-20 radar was working perfectly. We fired up the APS-45 and confirmed that the display we were getting on the APS-20 was accurate but the massive return was over forty thousand feet high. The CIC Officer relayed the info to the Plane Commander. When the PC answered it was with a whispered, "Son of a bitch."

I walk up to the flight deck and stopped and starred with disbelief at what the pilots were seeing. I was a storm like I had never seen or heard of before. I was circular but vertically surrounded on each side of us by massive thunder heads. It was a bluish-green gray and slowly rotating around a core that look like a tunnel with a soft bluish light at the end. The pilots were suddenly busy, the PC shouted that we were leaving ASAP and ask the CICO for safe heading out of there. The answer chilled everyone, "No safe egress, thunder heads formed after we passed and now we're surround. Lost all communication with JTWC."

The Radioman responded that he could not raise anybody under any frequency, including CW.

With only one flight path left to us the Plane Commander ordered everyone to strap in and say prayer.

We flew into the tunnel.

It grew very dark and lightening was flashing continuously, angry clouds were above, below, and all around us and we were expecting to be ripped apart, but surprisingly the air was smooth. This lasted a short while, maybe two three minutes, suddenly we were in the clear.

I was looking out the port window in the galley and was speechless, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. No one talked for at least a minute. Below us was New York, I mean the New York of the 1930's. I was looking at a dirigible, a zeppelin airship, I later found her to be the USS Los Angeles. We all were dumbfounded then at that moment the pilot pulled a maximum turning bank to starboard and that is when he saw the storm and headed for it. Someone came over the ICS and said, "uh, it's nice and calm here why are we going back into the storm?"

"We don't belong here, we belong on the other side, now everyone stay buckled up." After that he said nothing, just pushed the throttles forward.

We entered the tunnel and it became dark, lightening flashing two, three time a second, but smooth, very smooth. Suddenly we were out and… no storm, no thunderstorms, just a sunny day over the Pacific. The radios worked, navigation worked, it was like it never happened. We reported it but no one believed us and we were ordered not to talk about this…ever! Everyone complied, no one wanted to be thought of as bat shit crazy and I have stayed quiet ever since ...until I found this photo in the archives of the New York Times.



By Chris Seal, ATCS, USN Ret