

Pelican Poop Sheet

Volume 24

September 1, 2012



New on the Roster: Bill Sepuch, AMHCS, USN(ret) (AMH2 1959); Barney "Beach Chief" Kane, AEC, USN(ret) (AEC 1966-1968); Gary Marcoullier (AME2 1967-1968); Phil Purkiser (1957-1960); Charles Zilch, CDR USN(ret) (LTJG 1951-1953); Jim Wojcik (AW3 1985-1987); Kirby D. Jones (1978-1982); John Hanson (AT3 1953-1955); William (Bill) Schwartz (LT 1963-1966); Rev David Evans (LTJG 1971-1972); William Tucker (ADJ3 1964-1966); Robert Hogan (1950-1954) AVCM, USN(ret); Don Cope (ADJ3 1968-1971)

Regained Contact: Bob Bradberry

Lost Contact: Doug Canfield (AE2 1975-1980); Gilbert Tarrett (AT 1968-1971); Harry Steele AXC, USN(ret) (AX1 1959-1962)

Taps: Fran Englehardt (AMH3 1952-1953); AMCS Ted Kobziak, USN(ret) (1973-1976); CDR Champ Thompson, USN(ret) (CO 1958); Thomas Peter Dauteuil (SN 1962-1965)

Story of our Patches

Black Cat Patch

Gene,

The black cat patch came when we were designated a black cat squadron and one of our pilots, *think it was Don Davis that designed it and it was approved by LCDR Gerard S. Bogart and we had it painted on all our aircraft, this was in August, September of 1944. Those are my best recollection. Also we had them on all our flight jackets. The Indian patch was after my time.*

Dick Watson (AMM3c 1942-1944)

Pelican Patch

DON WELLS PELICAN PATCH

Soon after the 1961-2 Sigonella deployment VP-44 started prepping for the newly minted P3 aircraft. At that time we had the King Neptune patch. It was felt with the advent of this new and modern aircraft a new patch was also appropriate for our squadron. Both Captain Serrell and Cdr. Ball were in agreement with the idea but needed a talented person to work on the design. LT Don Wells was asked to make a stab at designing and producing the new patch. It wasn't long after that the prototype was shown. Everyone was enthusiastic with the results and especially pleased with the cigar in the mouth of that Pelican bird. Well, the patch was approved by the Wing but erased the cigar saying it was not

appropriate. Of course everyone was disappointed with that omission but the squadron carried on dutifully in spite of that. So the pelican patch (sans cigar) carried on until the mid 1984 where the Golden Pelican known effectually as the Golden Pterodactyl was changed. This newer patch lasted only till 1988 and for reasons known only to squadron members at that time were put back to the previous patch with the pelican, bomb and periscope. This patch has remained to this day. May it live forever in our history.
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Gene,

That's mostly correct but let me provide a slightly different context and you may use it as you see fit.

First of all, I dislike that title -- it may be my design but, by God, it's OUR patch!

Along that line, check out the cover of the attached Naval Aviation News from the Golden Pelicans site. I just noticed it the other day -- see that silhouetted pelican on the tail? I developed that design at the request of the '44 Maintenance Officer who wanted his crew to feel they were part of the Pelican family, too! Suddenly, that little silhouette was stenciled on the tail of every aircraft!

Yeah-Bo, you're right -- we had esprit in those days!

Second of all, when I left the squadron in Pax River and moved to NYC in November '62, I left several alternative insignia designs behind (explanation below) and each incorporated a cigar-puffing pelican. Those designs were all hand-drawn -- pencil on paper. I assume that once the bomb-thrower was selected, a commercial artist was retained to make a color copy for submission to the Wing, CNO, whomever, for official approval.

I have no idea who was involved or in charge of any of that so, unless Andy remembers how the events went down, we can only speculate. One thing that means, though, is it's most likely the only cigar-puffing pelican patch that ever existed was the one submitted for approval. My guess is, the cigar-smoking pelican went up the chain of command for approval and came back without a cigar.

Well, let's rewind the tape to the beginning. The roots of the insignia go back to the original Pelican Poopsheet, the squadron newsletter that PIO, Gary Lloyd, developed when '44 reached Sigonella in, what, 1961? Gary had a lot of ideas but only one yeoman and a mimeograph machine to implement them, so he called on me for assistance as illustrator, proofreader and coffee wrangler.

The Poopsheet's covers were original drawings depicting a pelican in leather flight helmet and goggles engaged in some activity related to the squadron's exercises, the season, etc. Hopefully (and mercifully) none of those covers exist today -- they were pretty rough, having been cut into a mimeo stencil with a crude stylus, then printed on a machine with an unreliable ink flow. But, with practice, quality improved -- somewhat!

And, as you note, at that time, the squadron insignia was one of Bobby Pierce's inspirations -- Queen Neptune, according to the wags down in Maintenance. And, that's a convoluted one -- you need to understand Morse Code to get it. Queen is the old phonetic for 'Q' and Q in Morse is da-da-dit-da which, when heard, sounds like "no balls at all". Now take a look at the Neptune patch -- no balls at all! Hence, Queen Neptune!

Couldn't resist, Gene, that's what usta pass for humor in the old days when Dick Slusser was around!

Anyway, Pierce was relieved, Andy and Jim Ball ascended to their respective perches as CO and XO and it became official that '44 was to get the P3V. I read somewhere recently that '44 was the second squadron to get the P3V but I'm sure we were the first in AirLant!

Anyway, Jim Ball asked me to prepare some ideas for a new squadron insignia to go with the new aircraft. I suggested that a pelican would be an appropriate motif because it was the generic name for

patrol aircraft as well as the squadron call sign -- plus, I had all manner of ideas from my tour on the Poopsheet. Ball agreed, with one stipulation -- the pelican had to be smoking a cigar!

I loved it! I knew that both he and Andy enjoyed a good stogie, like all good former boat pilots did, and I saw this as a personification of the insignia like we see in the squadron insignias that came out of WWII -- no namby-pamby abstract designs here! This VP-44 insignia was gonna have a personality and a soul (and balls)!

Now, when I left the squadron, the word was there was to be a contest for the insignia. I don't recall if I ever heard the details because I was headed for the bright lights of NYC to groove on that new kid, Bob Dylan, singin' at the Bitter End in the Village and that trio -- Peter, Paul and Mary -- at the Blue Angel and Ahmed Jamal and... and... and!

I did leave several designs with Ball -- each incorporating a bomb throwing, cigar-chomping pelican in a different pose, as viewed through a periscope lens. The official winner was my favorite because it was the simplest design that would tolerate reduction without loss of detail.

I'm not certain when I heard that my design had become the new insignia -- seems to me it was spring. I was invited to an Open House at Pax River to celebrate. I recall Jim Ball congratulating me and telling someone to get me a couple of boxes of VP-44 lighters. I perked up with visions of giving all my friends Zippos with my insignia on the side as gifts -- wow!

What I received was two boxes of matchbooks -- blue, oversized matchbooks with the new squadron insignia on the flap and a drawing of the P3V on the back.

Now that's memorabilia! Have you ever seen one of those matchbooks, Gene?

There's a potentially sticky wicket here and it deals with "the contest". As I said, I don't know the details or even if there was a contest. Ball told me that the P3V drawing on the matchbook was the runner-up in the contest and was done by an enlisted fellow whose name I don't recall. But, I think the whole deal was an inside job, pulled off by Andy and Ball -- they knew more or less what they wanted and they ran with it.

That's how Pierce had sprung his Queen Neptune on us. There was a big difference, though -- everyone really liked the bomb-throwing pelican, cigar or no!

That's about it, Gene. Now, I'll give you permission to quote me as liberally as you like or not at all, as you see fit -- so long as you stop addressing me as LT Wells!

Don Wells (LT 1960-1962)

Golden Pterodactyl Patch

Gene I was with VP- 44 when the Pterodactyl went on the tails of 44s birds. It was the brainchild of "Golden Pelican Arnold" who was CO at the time. VP-23 had just changed their traditional Seahawk to a more modern version of the Seahawk. They followed suit to a West Coast squadron I believe it was either VP 9 or 19 who had updated their tail feathers with a similar design. Arnold loved 23s new bird and the Pterodactyl was his brainchild. No one in the squadron liked it but Arnold was the CO so up it went. While CO Lichwalla and XO Spearman were in command the change back to the Budman came about, this was during the 1988 time frame after the Rota/Lajes deployment.

Anonymous CPO

Anybody know the story on the Marlin or King Neptune Patch?

Pelican Shop

We have new items in our Pelican Shop for the first time you can get the pilot wings on the front of the hat just under VP-44 in gold. We now have 7/8 inch lapel pins with the pelican logo and finally the **Pelican patch with a cigar in its beak.** (See story about patch from LT Don Wells on page three) Check us out at: http://www.vp44goldenpelicans.com/pelican_shop2.htm or give me a call and I will send you a picture of the item before you buy.

Seeking CDR Champ Thompson

In our search for CDR Champ Thompson or a family member to return the chafing dish the association has for over 5 years now, we've learn a few lessons I would like to pass on for any future searches. All sites will not give out any information for whom ever you may be seeking, which is as it should be. The problem is they will not forward on your request to whomever and let them contact you? I went through Navy Locator in Millington, TN and there records only go back to 1995. I tried NPRC in St Louis, MO and got the "can't give out any information," called them and they don't have current information anyway. You might have a chance if you next of kin. I then tried the American Legion and they want a membership number to do anything. I then called a friend of mine in Indianapolis with connections at the Legion and bingo, got birth and death date, last residence and even the SSN.

The below paragraph I got from Captain Ed Avis from our Committee and found all kinds of information about CDR Champ Thompson since I had something to work with. This site works and it's free so if you are retired military and in the DEERS system try it out.

"Any active duty, reserve or retired Navy personnel can get free access to the Library Edition of Ancestry.com (and lots of other goodies) via the Navy Knowledge Online website. Go to <https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil/portal/home/> and register as a new user. I guess they bounce the registration against the DEERS database during registration to validate users. Once you're on the site look under Reference / Navy e-Library and then select the Genealogy section."

At the present time we are still looking for any family member and will keep trying till we find somebody.

Bio for CDR Charles Zilch USN(ret)

Bio info: My wife Lyn and I own and operate the "Flying Z Farm" near 1600 N Cedar Lake RD, Stanton, MI 48888.

I was in VP-44 from early 1951 until 1953. Made PPC as an Ensign! (Promotions were slow in those days.)

Helped make 4 training movies for the P5Ms after attending the Glen L. Martin School in Baltimore, MD and qualifying as PPC in #1 "boat."

Was released to inactive duty in May 1953 to return to college as a LTJG, attending Michigan State University.

Became an instrument instructor in the Naval Air Reserve and qualified as a Light Attack Pilot flying the AD Skyraiders for the next 6 years.

Deployed twice to the Western Pacific and ended up at the Navy Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

Shipboard tours quickly followed plus three tours in Antarctica.

Commanded Fleet Weather Facility, Keflavik, Iceland.

Ended my Navy career as Assistant Director Meteorology/Oceanography, U.S. Atlantic Fleet and CINCLANT (NATO.)

Wrote extensively for the U. S. Naval Safety Center's APPROACH Magazine.
Email: Zlyn@aol.com

P2V Patch

Gene

If you would put a picture of the patch and my email address bneu57@gmail.com in your squadron news letter that would be great. I've had a couple other squadrons do that and I've got quite a few orders from their P2V veterans. I now have both P2V and P2 patches, the patch measures 4.4" x 12." They are identical except for the plane designation. I charge \$28.00+ \$2.00 shipping for one patch or \$50.00 and no shipping charge for two patches.

If I ever start showing a profit I intend to send it to the VP-2 charity that is helping fund the P2V Neptune "Turtle" project.

Bob Neu AMS2 VP-18 veteran



Data Base & Newsletter

I know this is old stuff to those that have been around awhile but I have a lot of new members on the roster and trying to keep everybody updated at least once a year.

I have almost 750 email addresses in the data base that I use to mail out the newsletter plus another 95 that I send via snail mail. Please keep me updated as to any changes to your important information. For those that are new to the newsletter I have my addresses broke into groups of no more than 30 and they run from LM1 through LM25. This pleases the AOL Spam gods and it helps me track the email's that kick back. If you would rather not receive the newsletter please let me know and I will remove you from the mailing list.

I run into contact problems every time I send out the newsletter when your email address changes and you don't let me know. If I have a mailing address I will send a hard copy with a request to update your email change. I'm missing a lot of contact information on some of you so please check the roster to see if your information is up to date. I can either send you the current roster (\$10.00 for printing and mailing as it is 62 pages long) or check with me and I will give you the pass word to access it off the home page.

Hull Number Roster

I recently picked up four new Shipmates on our roster from the Hullnumber web site www.hullnumber.com. Their web master place our reunion notice on the VP-44 link and there are over 30 Pelican Shipmates I do not have on our roster, check it out and place your name.

P3 Weather Vane

30 years ago I built a smaller version of a P-3 and it hung in maintenance control of VP-60 at NAS Glenview, IL. I've always wanted a weather vane of my deck so I decided to build one but didn't know what theme I should use. I decided to make another P-3 but on a larger scale and with painted details so as to protect the model from the weather.

For the base material I used rolled brass, 8.0" wide x 0.060" thick. A combination of brass brazing rod, brass screws and liquid metal was used to attach and seal the fuselage.

Deciding what color scheme to use was a problem so I decided to use an all grey base color and the "C" model equipment exterior. The props are the only store bought items on the model.

I was a member of VP-44, 1973-1974 and worked in airframes. I recently built a sheet brass P-3 model weather vane which is painted with VP-44 on one side and VP-60 (1979-1989) on the other.

Steve Harvey AMS2



PBY Website

Welcome to the PBY Catalina Foundation website. www.pbycat.org We have finally launched the new website and hope you enjoy the content. Over time, we will be adding material and adding Facebook. We look forward to your comments. Floats Up!

Allen L. James
President
PBY Catalina Foundation

Pelican's in Pensacola

We are about two months out from our reunion and getting very busy. Once again I'm looking for numbers to make sure I have enough rooms blocked and the meeting room is big enough. You can really help me with either an email or call saying you may be coming (if you have not do so already,) or book a room to help with the planning. The block of rooms are help till November 1, 2012, after that the rooms not booked go back into inventory.

At the present I have 75 rooms blocked (added 25 Suites) at the Navy Gateway Inn & Suites on base, the prices are **\$57.00** for a standard room and **\$66.00** for a Suite. **NOTE CHANGE WE HAD A BLDG CHANGE DUE TO RENOVATION: The suites are on decks one & two and the standard rooms are on deck three the BLDG has no elevator.** You can start reserving rooms any time, tell them it's for the VP-44 Reunion or group # 30760104543. The direct phone line to reservations is 850-452-3625. If you think you are coming and going to stay on base, please book your room as soon as possible. You can cancel it anytime if something comes up till 1600 the day before the group arrives (November 7, 2012.) This will also help me plan the Meet and Greet as I need numbers for that also. I already signed for all Navy Veterans and non veterans without a military ID to stay at the Navy Gateway Inn & Suites.

The Meet & Greet will be held Friday November 9, 2012 at the Mustin Beach Club (formally the Officer's Club) , just down the road from the Naval Air Museum and only a short distance from the Navy Inn & Suites. The Naval Museum closes at 1700 so I plan on a start time for the Meet & Greet of 1700 till 2100. We will have plenty to eat and a cash bar will be set up, you also have access to the Mustin Ready Room and it stays open as long as there are people there. The caterer is reserved and has the recommendation of the Mustin Club, if there is something special you would like let me know and I will check into it. The Meet & Greet will be the only function for this reunion, that way Shipmates from different time frames can plan their own events the rest of the weekend. There will be more updated information coming to those who are registered so mark your calendars now for the reunion dates of November 8-11, 2012 and "please" get your room reservations in or let me know you are coming and staying elsewhere. **The cutoff for final registration is October 15 for planning purposes, please have your information and check in by then. This will be the last newsletter before the reunion.**

I will be providing base security with a roster of those attending 7 to 10 days out (November 1, 2012) so all hands will have access to the base, although it is an open base, you still need a picture ID.

Any questions or comments please let me know.

"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure."

-Colin Powell

VP-44 Pensacola Reunion November 8-11, 2012

Visit Your VP-44 Reunion 2012 Website and Pelican Shop:

<http://www.vp44goldenpelicans.com>

This registration does not include the hotel reservation. Make your hotel reservations by contacting: Navy Gateway Inns & Suites at NAS Pensacola Switchboard 850-912-3000 Reservations 850-452-3625. When making reservations mention that you are with the VP-44 2012 Reunion or Group number 30760104543.

Name _____ Spouse/Guest _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

*Dates with VP44 and Rate & Rank, Veteran, Active or Retired _____

**Reunion Fee: I will be attending and bringing ___ guests @ \$35.00 per person \$ _____

Donation to VP44 Reunion Fund (funds to stock Pelican Shop & future events) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Fees must be paid by October 15, 2012 for accurate numbers to the Meet & Greet and base security roster.

*If your information is up to date on the roster just put "On File"

**Reunion Fee includes registration and Meet & Greet party

The enclosed check is to be payable to: "VP-44 Reunion Fund." Please return this completed Form and check to:

Gene Toffolo

1016 Egret Way

Lake Park, GA 31636-2759

Gene Toffolo

Reunion Chairman & Administrative Chief

Email genejanjay@aol.com

Home 229-559-7959 Cell 317-201-4261

