

VP44 Summer 2007 Newsletter



HOME PAGE - GUEST BOOK & FORUM INFORMATION

This is from Ray Beck, our web master, and a good way to find missing shipmates.

“I was just about to send you some info for the Newsletters that I just discovered should be included. We have a guestbook at the bottom of the homepage and I do not believe many people are using it. I may have to place it at the top of the page. On the next newsletter, please place a reminder for people to check the guest book.”

I have moved the Guestbook and Forum to the top of the homepage - www.vp44goldenpelicans.com . Hopefully more people will use them as they provide a good vehicle for staying in contact, especially for those who change addresses. This will make it easier on the Chairman. This will be a good item for the Newsletter.



Ray Beck
VP-44 Reunion Webmaster
www.vp44goldenpelicans.com

VP-44 REUNION WEBMASTER ALTERNATE

Gene,

One note we need to be considering is the website. I will keep it going to help with the reunions; however, we need to have a backup plan for the future. I plan on bringing a memory disk with the website info on it. Included will be a document in word format that will provide the USER and PW for entering our website information on GO Daddy (the is our website host) & also Bravenet (the host for the guestbook, forum, and counter). It would be wise to have an alternate who is qualified or can become qualified as webmaster.

You will be receiving my registration shortly.

By the way, you have done an excellent job as Reunion Chairman.

Ray Beck

WEB SITES OF INDIANAPOLIS

Here are a few web sites to check out if your coming to Indianapolis:

www.indy.org -- Information about the city.

www.brickyard.com -- Information about the Indianapolis 500 track.

<http://www.oreillyracewaypark.com/> -- Information about the Summer Nationals on Labor Day weekend.

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/inddt-indianapolis-marriott-east> -- Marriott Hotel

<http://www.lq.com/lq/properties/propertyProfile.do?ident=LQ224&propId=224> -- LaQuinta Hotel

<http://www.campindiana.com/> -- Indiana RV/Campground information

www.in.gov/iwm -- Information on the Indiana War Memorials

VP-44 HISTORY FROM *BILL STUPKA*

Ray

A lot of email flew back and forth between VP-44 shipmates and VPNavY last October about the VP-44 Azores crash in Nov 1956 and the claim, in VP-44's Mishaps section, (later proven true) that the plane was, supposedly a VP-56 aircraft. The (VPNavY's) historian found the crash report and showed that, in fact, the crew was from VP-44 and the aircraft was VP-56. However, we never found out the why of those strange circumstances.



We still haven't found out the why, but a good friend of mine that lives in Norfolk, and is an alumni of FASRON 102 in the early '50's and NAS Norfolk's O and R facility as a civilian, has provided us with quite a bit more detail about the incident. My friend went the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot Newspaper and searched their archives for an article about the crash, and he found it. The article that he found is attached to this email , in acrobat

format. [http://vp44goldenpelicans.com/VP44 Crash Article 111356 052907.pdf](http://vp44goldenpelicans.com/VP44%20Crash%20Article%20111356%20052907.pdf)

There is quite a bit of detail about the crash and the circumstances. The article clearly states that a VP-44 crew was deployed to the Med to fly the VP-56 aircraft back to Norfolk. To actually answer the lingering question of why a VP-44 crew was sent to fly the plane back will probably take an input from a surviving crewmember.

I thought you might like to have a copy of this old article for your squadron history section.

The other VP-44 alumni, besides myself, that have been involved in the investigation of this crash are Jim McKearney and Jerry Harrar. In October of last year Jim McKearney took exception to an entry in the VP-44 Mishap section of the VPNavY website, that claimed that the aircraft that crashed in the Azores belonged to VP-56 and sent some emails about the apparent discrepancy.

The three of us kicked the details of the around and dug for info on the net. Ultimately, Nevins Frankel (VPNavY) had his Historian check into it. The Historian determined, from a crash report, that the crew, was from VP-44 and the aircraft (BUNO 135518) did belong to VP-56 (proving that the mishap entry in VPNavY was correct). Later I found similar info on the web. But that is all that we could find. Of course, now we were puzzled about the reason for sending a VP-44 crew to fly a VP-56 a/c home.

I contacted an old Navy buddy that lives in Norfolk, and was in FASRON 102 (which serviced both VP-44 and VP-56 in the '50's) during the period, and asked that he check the Norfolk (the home base of VP-44 at that time) newspaper archives for more detail. Just recently he found the article that I sent to you. The article confirmed everything that we had previously discovered and added more detail. It now appears that we have gone as far as we can. The question of why the VP-44 crew was sent to fly the VP-56 P5M home is still a mystery. More information on that point would likely come from a surviving crew member. Carl Klinger is a likely candidate, but no one has been able to contact him.

That is a brief background of why the three of us (McKearney, Harrar and Stupka) were digging into this crash.

Thank you for a fine site.

Best regards.

Bill Stupka email address: wrstupka@gate.net
VP-44 1953-1956

FIRST P3A LOSS

Gentlemen,

I have uploaded a picture of VP-8 P3A LC-2 along with a short write-up and listing of the men who lost their lives on January 30, 1963. LT John O'conner of VP-44 was on that aircraft. The picture is on the Home & History pages and gives the names of the crewmembers. Many on that crew were friends of many in VP-44.



THE FIRST P3A MISHAP
P3A VP-8 LC-2 149672

Ray

THANKS RAY BECK

I want to give a special thanks to Ray Beck our Web Master for the pictures in this newsletter. I know I cannot do this type stuff without messing it up and it sure dresses the paper up. Super job Ray.

HELP PUT NAMES TO FACES

Ralph Cook <rcook@integrityplastics.com> wrote:

These should go on the website. Maybe you guys can identify some of the lost faces.

Ralph

Morgan pictures uploaded to the bottom of Photo P5M & Photo P2V pages. If you know the men in the pictures, identify them by picture and I will label them.

Ray

MESSAGE FROM CHAIRMAN

If you are coming to the reunion in Indianapolis please include the following information on your registration form:

- The unit you were attached to: VP-44, VPB204, VP204, VPMS4
- The years you were with the above unit
- Your rate & rank while with the squadron
- If you retired from the military, what was your rate & rank

I'm trying to add a little something extra to the reunion book for those attending. I can't let you go without a plug for our Pelican Shop for those VP-44 items, check us out at www.vp44goldenpelicans.com If you don't have access to the web I can answer your questions if you will give me a call I'll be glad to help you.

Gene

Gene R. Toffolo VP-44 December 18, 1965-April 22, 1969, Crew Five & Six
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VP-44 2007 REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
VISIT YOUR VP-44 REUNION 2007 WEBSITE AND PELICAN SHOP:
<http://www.vp44goldenpelicans.com>

This registration does not include the hotel reservation. Make your hotel reservations by contacting: Marriott Center 317 352-1231, or LaQuinta 317 359-1021 both hotels are side by side in 7200 East 21 Street area. When making reservations mention that you are with the VP-44 Golden Pelicans Group.

Name _____ Spouse/Guest _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Dates with VP44, VPB204, VP204, VPMS4 and Rate & Rank _____

Registration Fee after June 1, 2007 ___ guests @ \$20.00 \$ _____

Banquet Cost: \$40.00 Each (includes buffet & door prize tickets) \$ _____

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

The enclosed check is to be payable to: “*VP-44 Reunion Fund.*” Please return this completed Form and check to: Chairmen Gene Toffolo
4334 Downes Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46235-1144

Reunion information request

Your preferred drink in the Ready Room _____

Would you like a group bus trip to the Indianapolis 500 or the downtown area
comments/requests _____

Would you like a professional group photo at the reunion? _____

Would you like music (band or DJ) at the banquet? _____

Additional comments for a better reunion: _____

Gene Toffolo
VP44 2007 Reunion Chairmen
Email addresses:
Genejanjay@aol.com or VP44Paxmd@aol.com

TENTATIVE POD REUNION 2007

Friday, August 31, 2007

Setup of Chief Val Ready Room, Quarter Deck, Pelican Shop, and Memorabilia Spaces in Suites 160 and 164. Early arrivals welcome but check with the hotels.

OFFICAL 2007 INDIANAPOLIS REUNION

Saturday, September 1, 2007

1400 Hotel check-in, hotel lobby.

All Reunion functions will be in suites 160 and 164 at the Marriott unless other wise noted.

0800 Reunion check-in at the Quarter Deck, get badges and information packets.

Bring in your memorabilia and place on tables provided in the Chief Val Ready room.

0800 - ??? Chief Val Ready Room

0800 Pelican (merchandise) Shop open till 1700 or as requested.

1700 First Grip and Grin, meet new and old shipmates and plan the next day activities (sighting, shopping, etc). I will be available all weekend with maps, directions, and suggestions.

1800 Supper on your own.

Sunday, September 2, 2007

0900-1000 Second Grip and Grin, form car pools, (possible bus tour) to various sites in the city.

0900-1200 Pelican (merchandise) Shop open. Also opened as needed.

0900-???? Chief Val Ready Room open

1800 Supper on your own

Monday September 3, 2007

0900-1100 Business Meeting, all hands and spouses at the Marriott (room depends on numbers attending)

1100-1300 Pelican (merchandise) Shop open

1100-1600 Chief Val Ready Room open, closes at 1600 due to banquet.

1630-1730 Cocktails at the Marriott.

1730 Group Photo

1800-1900 Buffet Dinner, Invocation by Chaplain Dick Nevela.

1915 Introductions; Drawing for door prizes, 50/50 raffle, and recognitions.

2000-2300 Dancing to DJ music (and not the young stuff).

Tuesday September 4, 2007

Check out. See you in 2009 at the next reunion-TBA.

Have a save trip back home and hope you enjoyed your stay.