

ATKRON 12



NEWSLETTER

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2008 Reunion News

The 2008 Ubangi Reunion is on track and promises to be a memorable event. With the excellent assistance of Bill and Lynn Heck we are in for a really good time. Below is our proposed itinerary.

Thursday May 22, 6 p.m. Ice breaker

Gather at our Hotel Hospitality room for drinks, snacks, & catching up. Please B.Y.O.B. and any old photos or memorabilia that you wish to share.

Friday May 23, Daytime Free time for visiting local sites. No planned activities.

7:00 p.m. We will have dinner at the Big River Restaurant, a local watering hole with a good reputation.

Saturday May 24, Noon-4 p.m. The World Famous Chattanooga Aquarium tour.

7:00 p.m. Memphis Bell Dinner Cruise

Sunday May 25 Departure. Travel day, no events planned.

VA12 Website

Terry Nies has been updating our website and installing a new guest book. It is an ongoing battle to avoid all of the spammers out there, but Terry is staying one step ahead of them. If you have not already done so, check it out. And tell any of your old shipmates that may not have visited yet.

va12.com

Keep up the good work Terry.

VA12 Association Members

Joined our ranks since the last newsletter.

Ltjg. Jack Swann	56-57
	65-68

2008 Reunion Attendee List

Kurt Akerstorm	72-75 ?
Dennis Arnold	66-69 & Guest
Bob Brooks	68-71 & Melaine Crysler
Norman Cooper	72-76 Patricia Cooper
Claude Crocker	72-75 & Nell Crocker
Chuck Dickey	70-73 Priscilla Dickey
Rod Dunlap	72-76 & Sara Dunlap
Ed Fennell	66-69 & Nancy Fennell
Richard Forristal	66-69 & Rhonda Forristal
Robert Fossum	68-70
Frank Giaccone	67-71 & Robbie Giaccone
Lonnie Guyton	72-76 & Debra Guyton
Eric Harvie	66-69
Bill Heck	66-69 & Lynn Heck
George Hinds	56-59
Bob Hunsinger	72-74 & Pam Hunsinger
Bob Kaplan	66-69 & Dottie Kaplan
Rich Kichline	67-71 & Carol Kichline
Dale Kinder	65-68
Joe Kyle	66-68 & Kathy Kyle
Mike Landers	66-67
John Larch	76-79
Joe McFadden	56-58
Terry Nies	67-69 & Joan Nies
James Renfroe	57-58
Johnie Rogers	66-68
Bob Ruddell	70-73
Jerry Schwartz	66-68
Ray Spencer	63-66 & Marilyn Spencer
Jon Sutherland	66-67 & Carol Sutherland
Jack Swann	56-57 & 65-68 & Guests
Ed Thomas	66-69
J.P. Thomas	63-68 & Linda Thomas
Harmon Winborn	66-68 & Denease Winborn

IF YOUR NAME IS NOT LISTED, AND YOU ARE COMING TO THE REUNION, PLEASE CONTACT ME. OR IF YOUR GUESTS INFORMATION IS INCORRECT PLEASE CONTACT ME.

The Word From The West

RECOLLECTIONS OF ACTIVE DUTY IN THE NAVY RESERVE

While living in Southern Oregon in 1980-81, I decided to rekindle a bit of the old Navy spirit by enlisting in the Navy Reserves.

I was released from active duty about 18 months before and was living and working in Klamath Falls, about 90 miles away from the nearest Navy Reserve facility in Medford. So I made the drive one weekend a month. I was not married at the time.

The Reserve site in Medford was not well equipped in any case but remarkably ill-suited for an airdale who had spent 4 years steaming around on aircraft carriers and working AIMD-level maintenance on A-7E Corsairs. Weekend drills were spent searching for some general-purpose Navy manual I could read. The facility had no modern gear or equipment of any kind. They had a bank of radio equipment that dated back to the post-WW2 era, and that's about it. They did have a library of Navy Regs, and training manuals, and could get more for any rate. But getting airdale manuals took a while to arrange and accomplish.

So drill weekends were pretty boring for me. One time we were wearing white uniforms and for a choice of underwear I had unthinkingly worn white boxer shorts with a dark design (non-Navy issue of course), which shone through the thin white uniform pants. This was pointed out to me by a few of the wiseacres, to my chagrin, so part of that drill day was dedicated to me hiding out wherever I could to avoid a scene, and trouble, until I could change at lunch time.

Basically our drills consisted of sitting around drinking coffee, smoking (remember, this was 1981) and reading Navy manuals until we needed a break. Then we'd sit around drinking coffee and smoking and telling sea stories, until it was time to sit around drinking

coffee, smoking and tell jokes.

I was itching for the experience of the old days when I was hands-on with the gear and terrific kicks were there to be had figuring out why some blankety-blank dad-blasted system on an A-7E didn't work right. So when the time came to think about 2 weeks of active duty, I filled out a request designed to get me to a Naval Air Station. Where they had A-7Es. Additionally, I set it up for mid-April which was convenient for me at the time.

The request came back and - in a stunning turn of events - I had gotten approval for my first choice, NAS Alameda. This was 1981. I was to serve with the VA-304 Firebirds for 2 weeks right there at the Naval Air Station. About 2 months before I was to report, however, it dawned on me that Easter was on the 19th of April that year, right in the middle of my 2 weeks of active duty. Well I found out from the Reserve center that it was still a "GO" as far as the Navy was concerned but my folks were upset that I would miss the Easter Holiday celebrations with most of the family (they all lived around Medford, where I was performing my weekend drills). I decided not to call off the "Acdutra" event, theorizing that I might not get an assignment as close by as NAS Alameda if I were to try again. So we developed a penciled-in plan for my parents to drive down to the Bay Area, visit me there, and have some sort of holiday event, if I could get an evening liberty one day or another. No one would know if that was possible until after I reported in and got clued in on my duties.

Well, April rolled around and I drove down to and checked into the base, and VA-304. After all of these years, much of the 2 weeks I spent there is a blur of foggy memories. But I do have a few recollections.

BARRACKS

I was a Second Class Petty Officer at the time. At one point the first day I was sent over to an office in one of the barracks for a rack assignment. I was assigned to an empty 2-man barracks room in a wing of a large

barracks. It turned out to be relatively close to the Enlisted Mess. I also found out quickly that it was filled mostly with "Uncle Sams Misguided Children", marines. VERY rowdy. VERY noisy. I spent one rough night in that room and the next day, at my first opportunity, I decided to see if the Barracks Petty Officer could assign me to another room. This was a different man than the day before, he was surprised that I had been assigned a room in the USMC wing. He found me another barracks room, which to my good fortune turned out to be another empty 2-man room. It was quieter and I never got a roommate, I spent the entire 2 weeks as the only occupant.

HENRY'S BEER

A brewery in Oregon was making a product called HENRY WEINHARD'S PRIVATE RESERVE beer and they advertised it as an exclusive and tasty beverage. Their ads on TV and elsewhere hawked the quality and care they took to preserve the beverage. For instance they wouldn't ever descend so low as to even put it in a can. Why, how... common! Unthinkable! Disgusting! I enjoyed Henry's on the odd occasion when I'd have a cold beer.

So I think on my first evening in the second room, the quiet one, I decided to wander around this big complex of barracks wings, and I found a recreation center. There were a few arcade games, and various snack and cold beverage machines. I went over to a pop machine and right there in front of my eyes, next to the cans of Pepsi, Mountain Dew, Dr. Pepper, and canned beers like Budweiser and a few other brands, was Henry Weinhard's Private Reserve beer. In a can.

The stinkers! Hoisted on their own petard! I was stunned and shocked by this discovery of the brewers treachery but decided to sample the canned version anyway. Turned out to be a tempest in a teapot I guess, because it was regular old Henry's in any

case. Just in a can and not the usual brown glass bottle.

Then I noted that every beverage in every machine came in a can. So I wondered if it had something to do with a new Navy regulation, or maybe California law. I had no idea then and still don't to this day.

SQUADRON DUTIES

At the squadron, I would muster in every day and basically work the typical Monday through Friday, from 8 AM until 5 PM. However, this was disrupted by the presence of the upcoming Holiday and I recall that there were some days when the squadron was secured for the most part, outside of the weekend. There were very few people mustering along side me. I was told at one point that much of the squadron was away on leave because of the Easter Holidays. I was assigned to the "AQ" shop and spent most of my time reading manuals again. Part of this was because they had a good set of them, and another part was that the shop didn't have enough senior, qualified men left to supervise me while I might be working on the actual aircraft systems. A reservist would not touch their aircraft without supervision.

There were 2 aircraft in the hangar and I did get some hands-on work on them but it was sort of rare. Most of my time was spent with the manuals in the shop itself.

I got off at 5 PM most every day that I did work. The way it all fell out, I think out of 14 days active duty, I had 8 days of work. I did have to perform 2 different watch-stander assignments, both being midnight watches at the squadron hangar. I think one of them was on Easter Eve.

I got to smell the smells, wear the uniforms, salute the officers, and eat the chow of an active duty sailor. But it was still pretty disappointing because so few people were left at the under-manned squadron that I had a hard time trying to do any real work.

OFF DUTY

I had a lot of off-duty time and managed to

keep myself busy.

I wandered around the base some. If I recall correctly, I waited to do this until I could dress in civvies because I didn't want to fail to salute some officer while I was gawking at things.

I had my car with me and drove over to San Francisco a few times. Didn't manage to do anything very important. Right after my original discharge from active duty in 1979, I got a job in the city with the telephone company. This lasted about 5 months before I quit and moved back to Oregon. But during this 1981 visit I toured some of the old neighborhoods where I had been installing telephones for a brief spell.

I found my way to Oakland one day and rode the BART line over to the city, and then later in the day back to Oakland.

In 2003 or 2004 I was profoundly shocked to find that I had a cousin living in the city all this time. We had not been in contact since we were children, around 1959 or 1960. When living there during my brief stint in 1979, and then during my visit in 1981, I could have reestablished contact but I didn't know that at the time.

FAMILY VISIT

I don't recall exactly what happened on Easter itself. But my folks were able to come down to the Bay Area.

One highlight of this is that I was able to get them each a Visitors Pass and we went on a driving tour around the base. During this period, CV-65 Enterprise was home-ported there at the Alameda naval base and it was in-port at the time. So we stopped and parked nearby and strolled the length of whichever pier it was moored at. Flight deck personnel were using the high-pressure air hoses to clean off the flight deck and this made it very noisy. But otherwise there was not much commotion or activity alongside, and so we got a view of the starboard side of Enterprise. This was the first time either of them had viewed an aircraft carrier in person, although

my Dad had served in the Navy as an aerographer during WW2 on relatively small vessels. We just walked alongside and I pointed out what things were and what was going on, having served on active duty with a squadron that was embarked on CV-62 Independence and CV-69 Dwight D. Eisenhower.

I know they were both impressed by the sights and sounds and the sheer size of the ship while standing alongside.

.... John Larch 76-79

Treasury Report

Carry over from 2007	\$576.28	
Dues & Reunion payment	2805.50	
Sub Total		\$3381.78
Printing (*estimated)	180.93	
Postage	71.78	
Reunion Admin Cost	356.92	
Decals	198.75	
Dinner Cruise Deposit	500.00	
Flight Jackets	732.00	
Current expenses		- \$2040.38
New Balance		\$1341.40

In Memoriam

Captain Chuck Pendleton, VA12 Skipper in 1958 passed away last June.

George Robert Davis, of Manassas, Va., died on Sunday, June 10, 2007

Dinner Cruise

I just wanted to let the Reunion attendees know that the Dinner Cruise is our calmnating event this year. Normally we have a banquet, but we decided to change that up and do the cruise instead. I mention this because an unusal large number of folks have not signed up for it. I would like to encourage you to do so. There is still time, but that time is running out. So if you change your mind before April 22 please send me a check and or call me. It is part of the planned events and I am sure that you will find it worthwhile. Joe Kyle

WesPac 1970 The next two pages are from the 1970 VA-12 Newsletter.

LINE DIVISION

The Line Division consists of about twenty men, twelve of which are designated as Plane Captains for our Douglas A4C Skyhawks. During flight operations, these twelve men work longer hours than any other division in the squadron.

The Line Division has the highly skilled job of inspecting, servicing, and cleaning the planes. Inspections are conducted daily, before each flight, and upon completion of each flight.

Cleaning the airplanes can sometimes be a real drag, especially when we can usually expect the ship's stack gas to nullify our efforts. It seems that every time there is a spare moment, someone says, "OK, let's get washing those airplanes". But after all the grumbling and crying, everyone is on his plane, washing away.

Lt(jg) JACK ("Schuffles") KENNERLY is the Line Division Officer. He constantly bores fellow officers (or anyone who will listen, for that matter) with tales of how great his home state of North Carolina is. But this Tarheel's ability to fly the "meatball" in on his carrier landings on the Feb. ORI cruise was second to none.

Chief BOBBY HART has just returned to the Line CPO billet after a year in charge of the check crew. ADJ2 JOE CASSEL is our new line petty officer, having been assigned to the "Kiss of Death" Squadron from VA-64. He is ably assisted in this capacity by ADJ3 JOHN COOK, a Westpac Veteran from VA-106.

We also have some new arrivals from the various shops, which were necessary to bring us back up to our required complement. ADJ3 BILL WADE transferred in from the Power Plants Division, and AMH3 ROGER LINDEMUTH and AMS3 DALE LAGINESS came to us from Airframes.

AMS3 JOHN O'CONNELL is an old hand as plane captain of aircraft 400. Another second-cruise man, our favorite, is LOU ("Armfoed") ARMSTRONG, P/C of 401. On aircraft 402 we have JERRY WOODRUFF. Our little Drummer Boy, BOB FORTIN, has the responsibilities for aircraft 403.



Then there's GEORGE DAVIS on 404, a two-time winner of "P/C of the Month" award. CECIL ("Willie") WILLIAMS, "The Kentuckian", has 406. These two own a set of weights, and Willie seems set on gaining all the pounds that George is losing. We wish them luck.

The biggest on the line is MIKE CECCARELLI, P/C of 405. He's always in the middle of any monkey shines going on. "Ratso" RIZZO, on aircraft 407, is our little New York boy. Then there's PHIL ERFF, the real heavyweight of the line division, who does a commendable job on 410.

Now we come to our little Californian, NICK SEARCH, in charge of 411. (He's our friendly scapegoat.) The two Georgia peaches (?) are STEVE SCARBOROUGH and JOE TURNER. Steve takes care of 412, while Joe has the grimy job of refilling the oil reservoirs in the planes when they return from a hop.

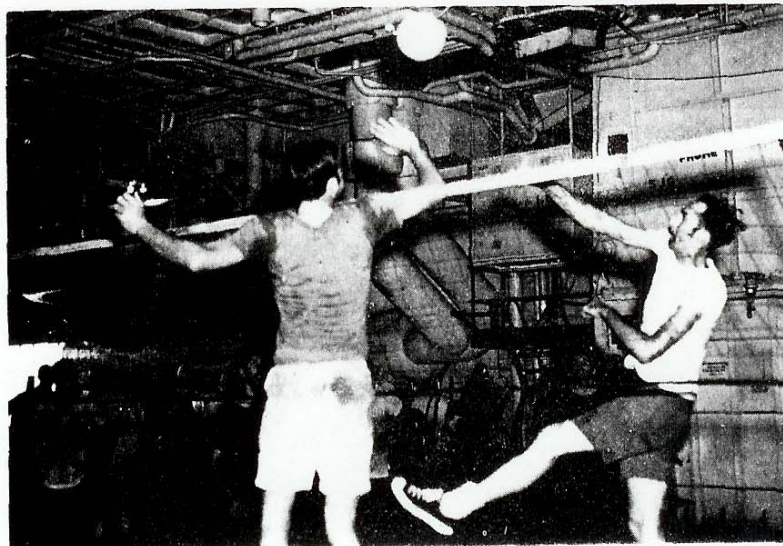
Last but not least are the two Okies, ATR3 ELKINS and ADJ3 CLOWERS, who help to run the whole show during night flight ops.

SPORTS



VOLLEY BALL CHAMPS

The VA-12 Volley Ball Team won the Shangri-la Championship for the second time in a row. How 'bout those guys, sports fans? Kneeling: Mike FORT, John FILOSE, Tom LANNOM. Standing: Don HISSAM, Dick TOLOTTI, J. J. MCBRIDE, Joe UHRIG, and Paul NAROTSKI.



HISSAM in action

Newsletter

I apologize for the briefness of this issue. For those that have been receiving it for awhile you know that we have attempted almost everything to solicit your contributions. In the beginning we seem to have a lot of Sea Stories, and Bios from you guys, but in the last couple of years we have almost had to make things up to keep this going. I have said before, that I will continue this as long as there are things to print, but that may be coming to an end sooner that I had hoped. So again, those of you that have never submitted a bio, or a sea story please put pen to paper and fire something off to me for one

of the future newsletter. Old photos are great too, if you have any to share. Those new comers will have to view our archived newsletters on the VA12 web page to see what I am talking about. Joe Kyle 66-68

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THE 2006 REUNION

