



Atkron 12 Newsletter



Volume IV, Issue 1

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Ubangi

Newsletter

Remember to let me know if your mailing address or email address changes. You may notice a different aircraft picture above. That is the F2H-2 Banshee, flown by our pilots in the mid 50's. I am going to try to find good photos of each type of plane that the squadron has flown over the years, and use a different one for each issue. If anyone has a better Banshee, in color with the Kiss of Death emblem showing clearly, please contact me.

Pins

The enclosed Kiss of Death Pins are a special gift from Ed Thomas. Ed found a guy that did a pretty good job I think. We will continue to include one for each new member that signs on for the Newsletter. And if any of you guys want to contribute, our next project will be decals. Like the pins, they run about 3.50 each when you buy a hundred or so.

Ed's email address is elvta12@hotmail.com in case you want to send him a thank you note.

The Word From The West

"GRIN WHEN YOU SAY THAT!"

Ok, so, I admit it. I'm stupid. But that doesn't explain it all. Not by a long shot! Explain what you ask? OK, here goes... and maybe there's a lesson in this...

THE IDEA: I've always wondered how a small nucleus of my Navy buddies was doing after we all got out. Sound familiar? I thought about them every so often, especially when a Navy-theme

Ubetcha

show appeared on Discovery Channel, or History Channel. "Great Ships - Aircraft Carriers" or similar! A visit to the Military History section of the bookstore. Navy Books. Recruiting commercials on TV. Lots of different mentions of the Navy tend to jog my thinking about my shipmates. But I never actually did anything about it.

THE TOOLS: Then, what with the advent of the INFORMATION AGE, and the Internet services we can find available, and web sites like "Classmates", it got profoundly easier to reach out to them. You've got your White Pages in almost every single Web Browser. So all you need is an idea of the correct name and hometown, and you might actually get something out of it.

THE NEED TO KNOW: So it seemed like all that was lacking was the urge! The drive and enthusiasm! I got that from the collective group of you all, back in the days when we started to get REAL serious about that Reunion in 2002. I got this real hunger to know what had become of a select few of the guys.

THE RESULTS: I had a short list of 3 guys to contact and I must say I have managed to get all 3.

"*North Carolina*" is a guy who now - 23+ years later - finds himself extremely busy, 100% of the time, and barely has a moment free on any day. Always has an activity going. I hope it's all important stuff... while he's hale and hearty and healthy enough to get away with it...

Just contrast & compare that to me: Boy it's nice to have a lot of interests, I could never stand being bored, there's going to be enough going on that I'll always have something to look forward

to when I get close to retiring, I can relax here in this chair, this is like "RETIREMENT PRACTICE" and if I sorta just nod off to sleep, well it's not such.... a great ... not such a.... not a bad.... Zzzzzzz

But North Carolina gets busier as the months and years pass on and I don't think he's going to have the time to attend his own funeral. Hoo-eee!

"**Missouri**" is a sailor who had tried out for the Seals, and right then got both knees pretty well ruined as a result. Lets add in a broken back, and 14 shoulder dislocations. After 12-14 years regular Navy he's out on a disability retirement. So he just tries to avoid problems with his body. After all this time, he's apparently real close to needing both of them replaced with artificial joints. But he does manage to be a good dad and still get some fishing done, and the rest of the world can just go take a flying leap.... Sorta like the opposite of North Carolina?

But then we get to "**Florida**". I finally got a number and called, and instantly recognized the voice - on the voice mail message. The next day I did get a call back from him, and immediately I get the vibe that this guy is pretty upset, very nervous and "distracted" about calling back, because... because, well, I didn't know why at first.

He didn't know who I was!!! Did not have the first clue. No memory of me whatsoever. Nada. Nothing. Zero. We chatted a while, I described some 1976-77-78 Jacksonville events like Monday Night Football over at his place (still nothing), working in AIMD Shop 3 with A and B and C (nope), I scanned in and then sent a photo of me with him in the background (Zilch. Score 1-Nil.)

A total blank. So after 2 or 3 conversations I just decided to sign off nicely - for the duration - because he was still real nervous about talking to someone he does not remember from Adam. He's got my name, number and e-mail and if a knock on the noggin releases a memory or two, then he knows what to do!

It's not like I married his sister and he still forgot me, we are on opposite sides of the country and

have not written or spoken in 24 years. But nothing? There's a word for this and I may have stumbled on to it: CHAGRIN, "*A keen feeling of mental unease, as of annoyance or embarrassment, caused by failure, disappointment, or a disconcerting event*".

John Larch 76-78

VA12 History (continued from Vol. I No. 2)

Hope this does not offend anyone

I that served in the Squadron prior to 8/1/55, but I am only going to list information regarding ATTACK Squadron Status.

Chronology of events.

1 Aug 1955: With the redesignation of VF-12 to VA-12 and the acquisition of a new type of aircraft in December 1955, the F7U Cutlass, the squadron's mission changed from jet intercept to special weapons attack.

14-27 Nov 1960: VA-12 embarked in *Shangri-La* (CVA 38), was part of the task force ordered to the coast of Central America to counter the infiltration of Cubans not Guatemala and Nicaragua.

21-27 Nov 1961: VA-12, embarked in *Franklin D. Roosevelt* (CVA 42), operated off the coast of the Dominican Republic to support the newly established democratic government.

Apr 1962: VA-12 was selected by CNO to conduct "Operation Trap" a test firing of Bullpup missiles to evaluate their usefulness to the Navy.

The test firings took place while the squadron was based at their home port of NAS Cecil Field.

Jul-Aug 1963: A-4C detachments from the squadron operated aboard *Essex* (CVS 9) and *Intrepid* (CVS 11) as fighter support for antisubmarine exercises. The operations were also used to help develop and evaluate ASW tactics and doctrine.

8-29 Aug 1964: Franklin D. Roosevelt and her air wing were ordered to operate in the vicinity of Cyprus after fighting escalated between Turkish and Greek forces on the island.

Aug 1966: VA-12 flew its first combat sortie since its establishment. The squadron completed its Vietnam deployment in December 1966

without sustaining any combat damage to its aircraft.

12 Nov 1966: VA-12's Commanding Officer, Commander Robert C. Frosio and Ensign James Jones were lost at sea during flight operations from the *FDR*.

14 Dec 1966: Commander Barnett, commanding officer of VA-12, led a 42 plane strike against a heavily defended target in North Vietnam for which he was awarded the Silver Star.

Oct-Dec 1973: Independence (CVA62) and VA12 took station southeast of Crete after the outbreak of war between Israel, Egypt and Syria on 6 October 1973. During this period of operations the squadron conducted surveillance flights against a large Soviet fleet that had sortied from the Black Sea.

Aug. 1974: As a result of the crisis on Cyprus, Independence, with VA12 aboard was stationed off the coast of Crete. Tensions increased significantly on 19 August when the American Ambassador to Cyprus, Roger Davies, was killed by a Cypriot mob. The squadron prepared for possible assistance in the evacuation of American nationals. It flew surveillance of Greek, Turkish and Soviet naval and merchant activity in the area.

7 Sep 1974: The squadron participated in the search for victims of a TWA airliner crash in the Ionian Sea. No survivors were located.

15 Apr 1980: VA12 deployed aboard Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN69) to the Indian Ocean in response to the Iran-American Embassy hostage situation. The squadron was at sea for 254 days with only one port call during the entire eight and one-half month deployment.

Jun, Aug, Sep 1983: VA12 operated from Dwight D. Eisenhower while on station off the coast of Lebanon. The squadron flew in support of the multinational peacekeeping force stationed in Beirut.

23 Oct 1983: Dwight D. Eisenhower and her air wing returned to the coast of Beirut after 241 Marines died in a terrorist-suicide attack there.

1 Oct 1986: VA12 was disestablished, bringing to a close the long history of the squadron and its

motto "Kiss of Death"

more next issue.....

Bios

Steve Short

Originally from Roanoke, Virginia, I enlisted into the Air Force (a very big and very stupid mistake) and was assigned to Little Rock Air Force Base. My career field was 55150 (ground maintenance specialist). I cut grass for my military duty. Spent most of the 3 years, 8 months, and 7 days (not that I was counting) on the base golf course. When my enlistment was up, in 1974, I got out and went to work on various golf courses. When that got old, I decided to enlist in the Navy, only after being guaranteed an aviation career field. My first assignment was to HS-1 at NAS Jacksonville, FL. I was assigned to the AE Shop as designated striker, AEAN. I was transferred TAD to the Corrosion Control shop and it was then that I decided to change my designation to AMS. I was sent to AMS A school and subsequently to VA-12. Upon finishing A school I was assigned to VA-12 in April 1976. I never made a cruise while attached to VA-12 from April 1976-November 1978. I made the work ups for the last Indy cruise and was sent TAD to VA-174 of the entire cruise. I got out of the Navy just before VA-12 went on the first IKE cruise. I was discharge on Thursday and on Friday I enlisted into the Naval Reserves as a TAR(active duty reserve). My first TAR duty station was VA-203, there at Cecil Field. I was there from November 1978-September 1982. The next duty station was to VA-204, in New Orleans, LA from September 1982 - December 1986. My last duty assignment took me to VFA-305 at Point Mugu, CA. I was medically retired in May 1991, due to asthma. My ex-wife and I returned to Arkansas to be near the grandchildren. I didn't make the transition to civilian life very well. I had eight jobs in two years. Something had to change and since I was rated by the VA at 60%, I qualified for the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation program. I stared back to college in March of 1993 and

graduated with a B.S. in Psychology in July of 1996. I started working for the State of Arkansas, in various agencies, in October 1996. I currently work for the Arkansas Employment Security Department in North Little Rock as the Veterans' Program Manager. I provide guidance, technical assistance and training to the State's Veteran Employment Representatives. I'm engaged to be married to Dianna, who is retired from the Air Force,...go figure. We are planning a March 2003

Wedding. **Steve Short 76-78**

Mick Lumby

I wasn't in VA-12 very long, but it was great. I was transferred to Pensacola Training Command and spent time at Baron Field and NAS Pensacola, where I was discharged 12/59. I've since spent 20 years in sales for Beechcraft, Cassna, and Piper. My last adventure was manufacturing paint sprayers which I sold to Groco in 1993 and retired. **Mick Lumby 56-57**

George Hinds

I can't tell you how excited I was in receiving a letter from RJ Parrish last week. I was in VA12 from Jun 56 till I got out in Aug 59 and it would certainly be great seeing some of the ole (not old) gang again. I've only been in contact with one of my shipmates in all these years and we had been talking about trying to get a reunion together.

I was born & Raised in Grand Caymen, Caymen Islands and moved to Miami, FL when I was 13 yrs old. After graduation from high school I joined the Navy in Aug 55. I spent 4 very enjoyable years and out as an AM2. We were one of the first squadrons to receive the A4D₁, Skyhook and later received the A4D₂. After I got out I joined Metro-Dade County Fire Dept. in Miami and retired as a Captain after serving 33^{1/2} years.

Being from Grand Caymen I was most interested in Bill Simon's letter in the Nov02 Newsletter, where he tossed the 20mm ammo can with a letter off the "Ind" and received a letter from a lady in the Caymen, that her father had found it. If he still has her name I'd be interested in

hearing who it was, maybe I know her. Looking forward to more newsletters and the 04 reunion
George Hinds 56-59

VA12 Reunion Members

Here are names of those that have joined our ranks since the last newsletter.

Patrick Hedican	55, 55	Bill Simon	73, 77
Ted Huzak	55, 57	Steve Short	75, 78
Otto Greiner	55, 58	Keith Harrop	80, 83
Dennis Dallape'	55, 58		
William Doody	55, 58		
Marion Lumby	56, 57		
Alfred Freed	56, 58		
George Hinds	56, 59		
James Light	56, 59		
Robert Parker	56, 59		
Larry Marose	56, 60		
Raymond Daniels	57, 58		
Chester Langlois	61, 63		
Donn Inmon	63, 68		
Dusty Addison	65, 67		
Randy Fleming	65, 68		
Mike Landers	66, 67		
Jerry Schwartz	66, 67		
Rich Fontaine	66, 68		
John Creaturo	66, 68		
Robert Kaplan	66, 69		
Eric Harvie	66, 69		
Gary Hall	66, 69		
Bill Heck	66, 69		
Ed Fennell	66, 69		
Doug Popoloski	67, 70		
Eddie Annibale	67, 70		
Bob Brooks	68, 71		
Gary Venema	68, 71		
Steve Carroll	68, 71		
Wayne Scarborough	69, 70		
Alan Hertz	69, 73		
StewartBaker	73, 76		
James Elias	74-77,		

Sea Stories

Well having served in VA-12 from 1963 - 1968, some may say, why so long in one squadron... Well I'll tell you, some say it was a family, or extended family, but I call it a " family "

I shipped over after being in the squadron already for (2) years and my wife was expecting our third child in about two weeks after the squadron pulled out for a "" ten "" month cruise on the Rosie, that was how long med cruise's use to be back then. The skipper,, I'm almost sure of was Cdr.Frosio

" not sure of the spelling " but he was a father also and told me to take my reenlistment leave a week before we sailed, so I could be home to see this one born. And I could meet the ship in Naples,, "" real nice skipper""

Well I did, the ship sailed, my wife gave birth, I still had 3 weeks leave to go

Oh ! we had a " boy " my third son. Two weeks after his birth he died from s.i.d's..

The next day the " family " was at the house, the family you ask, wasn't the ship gone? Yes but the wife's club,, enlisted and officer's,, were there to help. From helping with a shoulder to cry on, to making calls, all the planning they did it all and I swear I didn't know how they did it. It was a beautiful service at the base chapel, huge meal at my home afterwards which I didn't even know where all the food came from. That was family skipper's wife gave me my orders the next week, she said the skipper was sending me t. a.d. to VA. - 15 who were getting A4 's and I was to help them out until the squadron returned. So I missed one med cruise. When they returned I thanked the skipper by telling him I wanted to stay with the squadron and go on the next cruise with them, as a way of paying back all that was done for me. he pulled some more strings and I stayed in my "" squadron "" family until 1968 those were six hard years,, but I had all our family helping me"""""""" VA. Twelve a good squadron, """""""" you betch ya """"""""

J. P. Jerry Thomas

USS Independence – 1977 Med Cruise

After graduating from Great Lakes Boot Camp I was assigned to VA12 at Cecil Field, Florida. When I arrived for duty I had just turned 18 and the ship was out for sea trials. I was assigned to the Line as a trainee Plane Captain. I had no idea what that meant or what I was in for. The ship deployed to the Med in 1977 and when VA12 arrived at the ship I was taken up to the deck while still in Norfolk by Petty Officer 2nd Class, Howard Cantrell (I was curious why a guy with 20 years in was an E5) anyway he proceeded to inform me of two very important things. The first was that I would most likely die on the deck. This of course scared the hell out of me because he seemed very serious. The second thing he informed of was that there was a Pad Eye (the little round holes with the steel cross in it) that were all over the deck had my name in it. I inquired but he just told me I'll find sooner or later. So it is safe to say I was scared, excited and completely confused. I was assigned to a Plane Captain by the name of James Burke. He was a curious little guy that in my opinion would get me killed, but I decided that I wouldn't let that happen and chose to learn as much as I could as quickly as I could. For those of you that remember, we set off and I think we where out about 4 or 5 days, maybe less when we headed directly into the infamous storm. Well we were in the middle of flight operations when the storm hit and my bird was in the air. No one was sure which planes bingo'd to the beach wherever the heck that was because in my mind we were a million miles from nowhere. As Burke and I waited, our plane was called on approach and I couldn't imagine how anything could land on the ship with the pitching and rolling but it was coming and that was a fact. Of course being a trainee I had to carry the chains and Burke was to lead the way. The wind and the rain made it very difficult to see and as the plane hit the deck I noticed my Plane Captain was gone. We later found out he decided it was too dangerous and left, so I proceeded to help get the pilot out and climbed into the cockpit.

The Blue Shirt hooked up his tractor and to my surprise we where headed for the bow. Howard's words rang in my brain because I was

absolutely sure I was going to die. The plane was towed to the first spot on the port bow. As I watched the tractor try and position the plane I noticed it was sliding towards the bow about 5 feet away and then back as the ship pitched forward and back. The Blue Shirt and I made eye contact and it was clear that he was as scared as I was so we decided to lock it down right there. I managed to get out of the cockpit by climbing down the ladder, which the wind kept me pinned to the plane and I made it to the inboard wheel well. The Blue Shirt crawled into the well with me and we started to try and get the chains on that wheel. As we tightened the chains in two directions we noticed that every time we got them tight they went slack. After a few more attempts I looked under the plane and noticed that the outboard wheel was lifting off the deck due to the wind. I didn't know what to do but decided that we needed to get away before the plane flipped on its side. The Blue Shirt made for the port side catwalk, shielded by the plane and I made the horrible mistake of trying to get to the starboard side of the ship. Well once I cleared the plane the wind hit me like a truck and I went flying head over heels down the center of the deck until I hit a tractor that was sitting between Cat 1 & 2 by the blast deflectors. There I was, pinned to the tractor facing the bow and plowing through waves that were crashing over the bow. I didn't know what to do; I thought that I was dead before my first week at sea was over. As I hung on to the tractor, on the verge of crying I decided I had no choice but to get to the starboard catwalk. The only problem was that I was too scared to move. I looked under the tractor to see how far I had to go and to my ultimate amazement I saw a multi colored line, a human chain creeping and crawling to me. The first guy got to me and told me to wrap a chain around my waist and these people literally pulled me back to the catwalk and into the line shack.

There are no words to describe what I felt. I was in a state of shock at the fact that these people risked their lives for me. When the CO of the ship and the CO of VA12 (Commander Mau,

I think) came to the line shack a little while later, they asked me how I felt and all I could say was that I wanted to go home. He just looked at me and said that I had shown courage and I had every right to be shaken up but that I was now a real sailor with a real story to tell. They allowed me a shot of Brandy which is strictly reserved for "man overboard" but I guess they figured I swallowed the same amount of water. If you look closely at the photos of that storm very carefully you will see the A7E from VA12 on the port bow on its side. Somehow the VA12 line crew went back out and fully secured it during the storm and it stayed that way until we arrived in Naples. I learned some very important things from that



experience, I learned what fear really is and I learned that Mother Nature can be a real Bitch when she's pissed off. Joe D'Albert

Reunion Planning

Beginning in April, I will actively start the process of finding a location for the 2004 reunion. The majority of votes suggested Jacksonville, FL as the site. I believe the weekend of 4/23-4/25 is a good place to start. If any of you have long term plans for that weekend let me know now, and we will move it to the following or next available weekend.

Our Connection

The following item was sent to me by AOCM Chester Langonois Ret. He served in VA12 61-63. It is an email that was passed on to him, written by CMD Hubbard the CO of VFA 151 currently onboard the Constellation. I think it shows us that we are all connected in spirit. That we served in the same Navy in which he serves and we can be proud of our patriotism and knowing men like him.

If you are wondering about the name "Sandra Teague" on 301 here's the story. I have recently become friends with one of our Intelligence Officers on the staff out here. His name is LTjg Frank Huffman and he volunteered to join our CVW-2 team just before work-ups started this past summer. He was formerly the Public Affairs Officer at the Pentagon and was assigned there during 911. On the morning of September 11th he put his lovely fiancée Sandra Teague on United Flight 77 to head back to her home as they were preparing to be married that next month in October. He watched her depart as many of us have watched loved ones depart from that lonely glass window along side the United Flight she boarded. He remembers enjoying the last kiss, the hug, and the imagining wonderful thoughts of seeing her dressed in white as he would patiently wait in the front of the Church that they were to be married in just a few weeks. Unfortunately, before Frank would make it back to work, her flight would crash in to the Pentagon killing all on board and many that worked within the reinforced concrete walls. At the beginning of cruise Frank asked me if I would take a photo of Sandra with me during one of my flights. Since our arrival here in the Gulf I have flown with her picture just inside my pilot kneeboard on every flight so that she will have a first hand look at the great work we are doing here. I know she actually has an even better seat than that as she is looking over each of our shoulders with all of the victims of 911. I have adopted her as my silent Co-Pilot and Guardian Angel for our deployment and this is why I painted her name along side mine on my aircraft

301. This is just one of the many reasons I enjoy working 20 hour days, seven days a week for 6 or more months at a time or longer if required... Though I hate being away from my wife and children as you do, and its sometimes hard to get out of bed after a long day, and the weather is sometimes poor and not what I would choose to fly in, I still have the luxury to be among us.... Sandra and many with her that day were robbed of that right to live long lives, in a free country, and enjoy everything that comes with being a Proud American. Terrorists hate this and they want to take it away from us.... Yes, I'm talking about freedom. You all are a part of this War on Terrorism.... Each and every one of you! Some of you may think that your job isn't important but I assure you that it is. If you are in question about that come see me and I will personally rally with you to reinsure that you are.. I couldn't do what I do without you. We're an awesome team and we have just arrived at the "Super Bowl Game for Warriors", and when called upon we will win! I greatly appreciate the efforts and sacrifices that each of you are making... I'm proud to serve with you as your skipper. Its truly an Honor! Cdr. M.A. Hubbard
CDR Mark A. "Mutha" Hubbard CVW-2, USS Constellation CV-64 E-mail;
hubbardm2@constellation.navy.mil

Treasury Report

Our current balance is \$183.09.
Total Dues collected to date are \$510.41 Expenses were:

Stamps	156.70	Cartridges	
	132.80	Paper	25.40
Seals	6.35	Envelopes	5.82
Total	\$327.32		

Old Newsletters

The following page is copied from Newsletter printed in 1966. We only have room for one page each this time, but I thought that some of you might get a kick out of seeing it. If others out there have old newsletters, I'd love to have copies.