

ATKRON TWELVE NEWSLETTER

SQUADRON LINEAGE

1946 VBF-4
1946 VF-2A
1948 VF-12
1955 VA-12

VA-12

Published by the
VA-12 REUNION ASSOCIATION
See Contact Information on Page 8

ALL ARE WELCOME TO VISIT

AT OUR WEBSITE WWW.VA12.COM



The Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum, located at the Pueblo Municipal Airport, Pueblo, CO.

Coronavirus vs 2020 Reunion

I guess the Virus has won round one. We are postponing the Reunion till October 4-8. The latest models predict that it could last 18 months, but being an optimist I am hoping for 6 months or less. If we still can't have it in October this year, then someone else will need to step forward for any future reunions. If anyone has made a reservation already at the Cherrytree Resort, please call them and change your dates. .

My Resignation

For those of you that were not able to attend or may have forgotten these are the Reunions held by the VA12 Reunion Association.

2000 Roanoke, VA

2002 Norfolk, VA

2004 Jacksonville, FL

2006 Pensacola Beach, FL

2008 Chattanooga, TN

2010 Washington, DC

2012 Charleston, SC

2015 Cocoa Beach, FL

2017 Portland, OR

2019 Caribbean Cruise from Fort Lauderdale, FL

It has been my extreme pleasure to have been a part of these Reunions and I sincerely hope that someone will take up the mantle to continue these events. As I have already stated I intend to resign my duties effective in June of this year. I will of course be available for consultation and/or advice to whomever takes over the Reunion portion of our Association. If no one steps forward I will attempt to continue in an administrative role, which will mainly be as a contact person, I do not intend to continue publishing a bi-annual Newsletter, but if enough news is available then I may occasionally put one out. Therefore we will have no need for members to pay dues. If a future newsletter is released it will only be digitally.

Additionally if things occur please go to our webpage. In the absence of a Newsletter info can be found there.

Joe Kyle 66-68

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IN MEMORIAM



O'Brien, Austin C. Jr. Captain, USN (RET) passed away on March 6, 2020 in Augusta, Georgia. Born in Belmont, MA. Son of Austin and Mary (Cullen) O'Brien, he attended Belmont schools and graduated High School in 1946. He enlisted in the Navy and served 2 years and was transferred to the Naval Reserves as Petty Officer Third Class, Aviation. He then attended Merrimack College, graduating in 1952 with Bachelor degree in Philosophy. At the outbreak of the Korean War he was recalled to active service, sent to Officer Candidate School, commissioned Ensign and ordered to Flight Training which he completed in March 1954 and was designated a Naval Aviator. For the next 16 years he served with 5 squadrons and as assistant Naval Attaché' at the US Embassy, Tehran, Iran. He became commanding officer of Attack Squadron Twelve in November 1967, while attached to Carrier Air Wing One, on board The USS Roosevelt, in port in Malta, and went to become the Air Officer the

Carrier FD Roosevelt. He was then sent to the US National War College studying National Security

Affairs and graduated in 1971. For another 10 years he served: On the President's Foreign Intelligence Board as Executive assistant to the Chairman of the Board. Again at sea on 2 more Carriers on Battle Groups Staffs, the Pentagon with the Defense Intelligence agency and the Office of the Secretary of the Navy's Personal Review Boards. He retired from Naval Service in April of 1981 and moved to Titusville, Fl where he resided from April 1981 until October 2015. He then moved to Lincolnton, Georgia. Captain O'Brien married Ann Izorah Martin March 1957 and they had 5 children: Karen, Lisa, Nancy, Hugh and Michael. He is also survived by 13 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. During his Naval Service Captain O'Brien received personal awards: The Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Meritorious Medal, Air Medal, Honor Medal from the Government of Iran, and other awards for campaigns and military service. He will be interred with his late wife, Ann, at the family plot, Oaklawn Cemetery, Titusville, Fl. Please leave your condolences for the family at www.northbrevardfuneralhome.com

Obie

As many have said already, it was my extreme honor to have served with this American Hero. He was our Commanding Officer not to mention one of the best men I ever knew. Obie or "Skipper" as we called him was a great inspiration and encouragement when our VA12 Association began. He attended two of our Reunions and we marveled at his recall of names and events that were many years past. He also assisted in the restoration of one of our A7's in Titusville, FL. at the Valiant Air Command Museum. I believe he will be missed by all that knew him and will stay in our hearts till we meet again.

IN MEMORIAM

We also learned of the passing of another Ubangi in April of 2019. Frank M. Smith. Frank had been ill for a number of years. He attended the first reunion in 2000. Frank served in VA12 from 66-68 more details are available at our website.

BARCELONA LIBERTY

CV-62 Independence made a Med Cruise that began in October 1975 and one of the liberty ports was Barcelona. I joined up with the squadron after that liberty call (at another liberty port, Genoa Italy). This cruise ended in May 1976.

Another Med Cruise came up and started in March 1977. Some of the squadron members for this cruise were veterans of the '75-'76 cruise and by then I knew some of them had their favorite liberty ports. In particular, at AIMD shop IM-3 where I was working, there was one short-timer named Greg S. who was particularly anxious to get liberty in Barcelona again. He was hoping to visit a specific place before shipping out back to the US to muster out.

Well, the stars were in alignment for long enough to make his wish come true, and we got liberty there while he was still attached to the Ubangis. He wanted to find a specific restaurant called Los Caracoles, where he and some shipmates had eaten a nice meal during the '75-'76 cruise. Most of the guys had other plans, and were not up for it, but I had none and looked forward to trying some Spanish cuisine. So we two buddied up.

The trip from ship to shore at Barcelona is a loooonng utility boat ride, but we made it to Fleet Landing. I always got a touch queasy on the utility boats but that passed soon enough once we started walking.

So, where to next? Greg had an idea where the general neighborhood this restaurant was located in but did not recall exactly where it was. (I thought later that his memory might have been dimmed by the consumption of too much alcohol the last time in Barcelona, but he never owned up to that.) He specifically knew that the restaurant sat at an intersection of very narrow streets and at their corner the walls did not meet at a 90° angle - the corner was set at a 45° angle and there was a vertical rotisserie where they were constantly cooking meat and chickens on rotating spits.

We found the place after maybe an hour and a half, and caught a whiff of chickens and other meats revolving slowly on the spits. Whoa, this might be turn into a red-letter day! We had no reservation but decided to go inside and try to find

a maitre'd. We found a door and went inside. We were in the kitchen, with about 12-15 chefs and cooks, huge stovetops with great bubbling pots of aromatic things. And of course everybody cooking food of every description. HOT? Holy moly. The door closing behind me made enough of a noise that most of the chefs looked our way. Some where annoyed, some smiling at a couple of obvious Yanks in the wrong place. Well, this didn't stop Greg from thinking there has to be a way to find the dining room from here, which we did. Someone in the dining room took pity on us and found us a seat. We asked for sangria and after a bit that arrived with menus. I had no idea what to order, and since I didn't speak or read Spanish I thought I'd end up making my best guess and point to something. the waiter came back after a bit, we made our orders understood, and asked for another pitcher of sangria, the first one having been dented pretty heavily by then. I had never had sangria before but came to enjoy it immensely.

While we waited for the food to arrive, we looked about the room and saw the walls adorned with pictures and portraits of famous movie stars, personalities, and politicians from many eras, and memorabilia of every sort. Laurence Olivier, John Wayne, Richard Burton, Sophia Loren. Bogie. A couple of idiot sailors in a very famous restaurant, who snuck in the back door by accident, and got seated anyway.

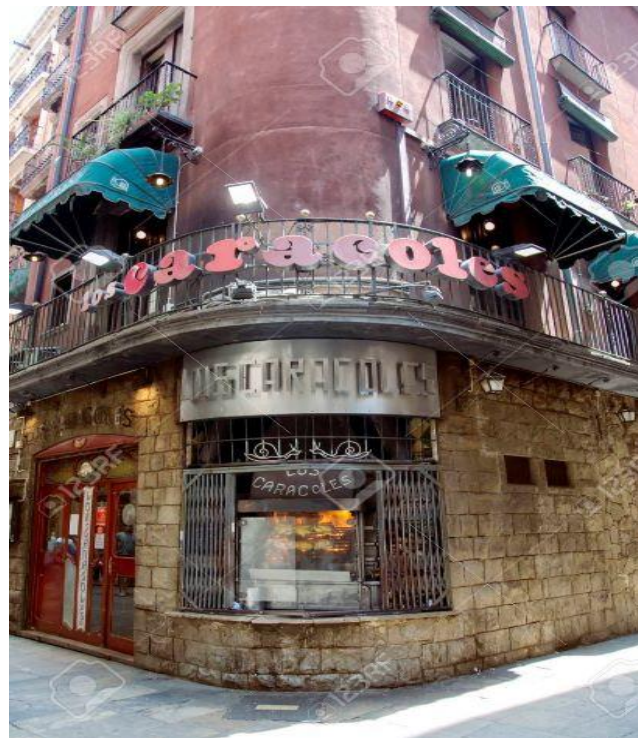
The food arrived, we ate, and some of it being shellfish I didn't find to be a highlight, but I enjoyed everything else. We held off drinking too much more. remember how, but we found out what the total bill was and scrambled up enough of them to pay the bill

In that day the Spanish currency was still pasetas which we referred to a "puh-tay-tahs". I can't.

We meandered our way back to Fleet Landing without incident, got on a utility boat and made it back to the Indy without losing dinner. Barely, in my case.

Thus began a convention that I held to during my remaining Navy years: during a liberty call, at the very least try to find a place to find good local food that doesn't come from the chow line on 2nd deck.

John Larch 75-79



TREASURY REPORT

Previous Balance	\$990.97
Dues & Reunion Sales	120.00
Acct Interest	3.30
SUB TOTAL	\$1114.27
Printing	109.66
Postage	14.95
CURRENT EXPENSES	\$124.61
NEW BALANCE	\$989.66

VA-12

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Here is our newest member since the last newsletter.

Dave Rushton	73-75

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