

VC-12 VOICE

Volume 5 Issue 4

August 2003

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR VC-12/NAV-12 & SISTER SQUADRONS



Special Points of Interest

- Don't miss Jack Sauter's story about the long hours of flying radar planes, watching out for TF 77.
- Ed Seykowski has a message on page three. See what he has planned for you at the reunion. Don't miss it!
- WELCOME MAT on page three has forty-five new names for the association. Welcome aboard.
- Does anyone remember the Fudd Flare experience described by J.J. McBride in MAIL CALL on page four?
- More info on the VC-12 patch comes from Don Stephens on page four.
- Ed Seykowski tells a story of assisting the Armed Forces Emergency Services with helping a Marine wife travel to see her injured husband. The story is on page four.

VC-12'S EARLY WARNING TEAM ON BOARD LAKE CHAMPLAIN

The following is a portion of the letter sent to ML&RS, Inc. by Jack Sauter of the Lake Champlain Association, Inc. Following the letter is the article of which he speaks.

Dear Larry,

Enclosed is an article I recently had published in NAVAL AVIATION NEWS. It concerns VC-12's Early Warning team onboard LAKE CHAMPLAIN from June to October 1953 in Korean waters. The original article mentioned the names of the air crewmen and pilots, but NAN didn't publish them.

Those I recall were LCDR Joralman, LTs Williams, Fenn, Wilson, Huff, and Haskell. We had among the aircrewmen/aircontrollers, "Switchy" Bellmore, Chiefs Hebert and La Point, AT1, 2 & 3s Allan, Walls, Ott, Woods and myself.

Unfortunately, I won't be able to join you in Baltimore in September, as I'll be in Europe at the time. I wish you a wonderful and successful reunion and many more.

Best wishes
Jack Sauter, former AT1 CAC '51-54

FLYING EARLY WARNING FOR TASK FORCE 77

By Jack Sauter

We were wiped out. It was June 1953 and our flight was nearly over. For four long hours, the two of us had sat immobile, tightly jammed into the cramped confines of an AD-4W Skyraider's rear compartment. Gazing intently at a five-inch radar scope, straining to pick out air targets as sweep followed endless sweep, our eyeballs were ready for overhaul and repair. Once airborne, there was no stretching or standing. We were literally locked in, unable to shift position.

It seemed as if every bone ached. The constant weight of a crash helmet, .38 revolver and the ubiquitous "Mae West" with myriad ornaments pulled on our necks and shoulders like yokes on beasts of burden. Headaches came with the territory—

(Continued on page 2)

the roar of the nearly 3,000-horsepower engine and its accompanying vibration took a toll.

We had launched in the predawn darkness at 0500. Now, at 0840, the sun had come up, but our curtains concealed the light. Our radar clearly showed the main body of Task Force (TF) 77 steaming below: *Princeton* (CVA 37), *Boxer* (CVA 21), *Philippine Sea* (CVA 47) and our own home away from home, *Lake Champlain* (CVA 39). The only illumination was the faint reflection from the scopes, bathing us in an eerie gray glow. Soon, we would secure the radar and prepare to land on board *Champ* in the Sea of Japan, with one more airborne early warning (AEW) flight to enter in our logbooks.

Flying from the carriers of TF 77, a few radar planes were all that stood between security and surprise from the air. For every day of that 37-month "Forgotten War," AEW was the fleet's first line of defense. The vital need for carrier-borne AEW became evident during WWII. Waves of Japanese kamikazes, flying just above the water, would often overwhelm the picket destroyers designed to warn the fleet, and then hit the carriers before fighters could be launched. Shipborne radar had little effect against low-flying aircraft.

In the 1940s, General Electric developed APS-20, a relatively long-range airborne radar that the Navy first mounted in TBM Avengers. Later, the AD-3W and AD-4W took over this mission when composite squadrons, VC-22 on the West Coast and VC-12 on the East Coast, were entrusted with the important role. Neither of these squadrons went to sea as a unit; they sent teams to every fleet carrier. VC-12 embarked AEW units aboard *Leyte* (CVA 32), *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA 31) and *Lake Champlain*, each comprised of 3 Ads, about 5 pilots and 30 men. What made the units unique was the nearly exclusive use of enlisted aircrewmen to interpret the radar and then vector the combat air patrol (CAP) aircraft to intercept the target. All of these

controllers were aviation electronics technicians.

If it appeared unusual to employ enlisted personnel for such a critical task, there was a simple reason. Carrier-based AEW was developed at a time of great military austerity just after WWII, and there weren't enough officers either available or interested in the program. The responsibility thrust on these aircrewmen was tremendous, but as they had done in the past, all rose to the challenge.

At the time, carriers were considered at great risk when operating within the range of land-based bombers. The Korean littoral proved the urgent necessity of airborne early warning. Starting with *Valley Forge* (CV 45) in July 1950, up to the later norm of four *Essex*-class CVs on the line, the AD-4Ws were invaluable. Since this modified version of the Skyraider had two crewmen seats in the rear compartment, and we often flew with only one operator in order to save our eyes, sometimes this meant carrying a passenger. Generally, it was one of our pilots or chiefs becoming familiarized with the radar, but in some instances it was a high-ranking officer getting in his flight time.

On one mission I had the Chief of Staff to Commander Carrier Division I, a four-striper. That day consisted of flying a 50-mile circle around the task force perimeter and plotting all air and surface targets. The captain was very inquisitive. Had I ever picked up any bandits? No. Did I find it difficult to interpret this five-inch screen, hour after hour with no relief? You bet! Then he turned to me and said with great seriousness, "I came along today to see for myself just how good our AEW was. I've always been uneasy about the Chinese. Ever since they surprised (General Douglas) MacArthur in November 1950 and nearly threw us into the sea, I have had the feeling that they might pull another surprise attack—this one on Task Force 77. If that happens, you and a few other radarmen could be the most important people in this whole fleet."

I don't consider myself a top controller (I was primarily a technician, but we all doubled up), but if the Chinese ever sent a large force of bombers against us, I figured even I could track that.

The possibility of a bomber attack on TF 77 was often a topic of conversation in the ready room. The Chinese planes were of WWII vintage, but then so were our ships and many of our aircraft. I often think that Korea should be called the "Secondhand War." *Lake Champlain*, just out of mothballs, had come over from Norfolk, VA, with F3D-2 Skynight jets, but they were ruining the flight deck. They were replaced by F4U-5N Corsairs, which were more practical for the war being fought in Korea.

An interesting theory was bandied about. Since the introduction of MiG fighters into the air war, our planes could chase them to the Yalu border but not further. Those were the current rules of engagement laid down to avoid expanding the conflict, but this stricture was very unpopular with our fighter pilots. However, many of the officers felt that perhaps it was this very limitation that had kept the Chinese from launching an attack on us. Their MiGs enjoyed a "Manchurian sanctuary"—perhaps the Sea of Japan was ours. Considering the havoc our air groups were wreaking on enemy supply lines and installations, one could imagine the pressure being brought to bear in Peking to seriously damage that capability. Fortunately for us, TF 77 was left undisturbed.

To be continued in the November issue.

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Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have To

SHIPMATES! PACK YOUR BAGS AND MEET ME IN BALTIMORE!

I hope we will see you at our September 11-14 Reunion. The group voted to have this Reunion on the East Coast, which is rich with Naval Tradition things to see and do. We had hoped to be centered in Annapolis but the costs were a bit pricey for our pocketbooks. Baltimore is less than one hour away and more economically priced. Normally ML&RS plans and implements all of our Reunion activities. However, this year I convinced them that a VIP Tour and lunch with the Midshipmen should be organized by me because I'm a Blue & Gold Officer with the Naval Academy. The BGO's are involved in evaluating local candidates for USNA. A couple of my Midshipmen, from NW Indiana, said they would like to organize a special 2-hour tour of the "Yard" for my shipmates. We also have a special treat to lunch in Kings Hall at 1210 with the Midshipmen.

After lunch we can take a short walk (4 blocks out the back gate) into downtown Annapolis' City Dock for sightseeing and shopping. Annapolis is rich with history: first nation's capital, capital of Maryland, and a Revolution port. I especially enjoy having a beer at one of the dockside bars overlooking Chesapeake Bay and the sailboats. We will bus back to the hotel in time to freshen up for our evening meal. I hope you will feel that the Annapolis trip is the highlight of our Reunion activities.

Ed Seykowski, CWO4 USNR, Ret.
VC-12/VAW-12 Chair

TRY GEORGE KOPPMAN'S
WEB SITE AT:

[HTTP://WWW.CAEW.INFO/](http://WWW.CAEW.INFO/)

WELCOME MAT



The following shipmates were just located. Welcome aboard. If we missed anyone, please accept our apology. Let us know and you'll be listed in the next issue. We want to urge you to become a contributing member of the group and hope to see you at the next reunion.

If you see a familiar name and would like the address, please let us know here at ML&RS and we will send it to you. Our address is on page two.

Edward Stuart LT 1960
Robert Nettles ADR-2/E-5 (1955-61)
Tom Blanchard
Peter Peterson ENS 1958
Lee Edmonston
William Haskell Lt(jg) 1951-54
Roger Harper AT3 1950
LT James Holland
Dwight DeCamp Capt. 1958-60
Stanley Stookey Lt(jg) 1960-61
James Schneider Lt 1961-63
Ken Petroske CDR
Allan Smith 1951-55
Bill Kennan Lt 1966-68
Robert Campbell
J.B. McCann LT(jg) 1956
Stuart Reynolds CDR 1964-65
Charles Murrin, Jr. LT(jg) 1958
Stephen Loftus LT(jg) 1957
Richard Lecropane 1964-66
G.F. MacCormack LT(jg) 1958
Rodney Kincaid LCDR 1963-65
Irvin Heilman LT
Allen Karst
M.L. Hofflers LT(jg) 1958
Sam Frank 1962-65
Robert Sage CDR 1963-65
Ernest Carlburg CDR 1961-64
James Kemp AT2
Dennis Little LT(jg) 1958
Edward Molloy 1958
Robert Dube ADR3
VADM Allen Shinn CO 1966-70
Sigfried Fink CDR
Anthony LiCalsi
Sidney Johnson LT

William Webb 1954-56
Norton Hall LT(jg) 1956
Robert Duckett LT(jg)
Edward Carroll LT(jg) 1957-60
David Nass AT3
Patrick Delgado
Edward Day LT
Robert Catone CDR 1965-69
Richard Juda

TAPS



The Voice has learned of the following shipmates' deaths since the last newsletter. Not all deaths are recent, but they were just learned of. Our deepest sympathy goes to the families and friends of the deceased. Anyone who knows or learns of a shipmate's death, you are requested to notify the newsletter so that person can be listed in TAPS.

Charlie Ward Capt. 1961
Died December 27, 2002

Douglas Goss LT(jg) 1956
Died December 2002

Robert Bollenbacher
LCDR 1956-58
Died May 22, 2002

CORRECTION

Capt. Stephen Swick is not deceased, as printed in the last issue under TAPS. He has moved to an assisted living center in Chester, VA, and is alive and well.

**VC-12/VAW-12 &
SISTER SQUADRONS
2003 REUNION
SEPT. 11-14
BALTIMORE, MD
HOLIDAY INN BWI**



MAIL CALL

VC-12 Voice,

I received the newsletter today and read it from start to finish. Really a great newsletter. Don Stephens thoughts on the Iraq war and our current leadership and loose cannon opposition was really great. He expressed how I feel about the current state of the union. Please thank him for his beautiful piece of common sense and deep feelings.

Wonderful stories from others about their experiences. I hope you continue to get more. I have a quick one.

USS Independence and VAW-12, Det 62, first East Coast carrier to Vietnam, summer 1965. A6 and A4 bombers had used all the night flares and CAG concerned with wait for more. Enter Willy Fudd O-in-C. "We understand there are flares on board but not compatible with attack aircraft bomb racks. We can deliver those flares over the target so the bombers can work at night." Our resourceful leaders plan was quite simple. Young lieutenant J.J. McBride had doubts. We would carry four box-like, long flares in the back of our Fudd, tie the igniter lanyards to something solid near the door. When over the target, one of the radar operators would push the door open and jettisons the flares, two for each run over the targets. Being the doubting one, I was on the first launch, to orbit just north, in the Iron Triangle, 15 minutes flight time at full power and off we go. The orbiting bombers, were ready to leave the area and head back to the ship when the Flare Fudd arrived, driving a full speed across the target area. Two flares were jettisoned and we made a sharp 180 degree bank for the second run and the remaining two flares. Two flares duds, igniters

came out when they were jettisoned. One flare actually lit off, giving some illumination for the attacking aircraft. But the fourth, we can only guess, ignited at impact with the ground, which so happened to be at a fuel storage area. Now we had some real target information in the form of a big fireball and the bombers had a great opportunity to do some serious damage. CAG was pleasantly surprised at the results and the Fudds were assigned for another mission the following night. I really was very lucky and the mission the next night, led by our O-in-C, resulted with four dud flares and the bombers having to jettison their bombs over the Gulf returning to the carrier. Fortunately for all, the next day the real flares came to the Indy during an UNREP. I do not think there was any official report on this daring Fudd Flare experience.

J. J. McBride

VC-12 Voice,

Ed Seydowski need wonder about the story behind our VC-12 patch no more, cause I've got the skinny on it. It happened while Detachment 17 was on a Med Cruise in the fall of 1955. We had several stellar characters with us on that cruise, which included AT2 Evans and AT1 Gilroy. Evans decided we needed a "detachment patch," which seemed like a pretty good idea to the rest of us. As I remember, I was the Recreation and Moral Officer at the time, so Gilroy and Evans came to me with the idea and they had already done their homework. They had located a place, (in Italy, as I remember) which would make a minimum of so many patches to our specifications for a certain amount of money. All they needed was a design from us, so we set up a small cash prize to be paid out of our recreation funds for the winning design. Several of us bought extra patches to fill out the required amount for the minimum order. I seem to remember the price as being about \$3.50 per patch.

We had an AD1 named Burfield with us, who was an outstanding artist and illustrator. Burfield had the design sketched out and colored on a piece of poster board within a few hours and we all thought it was so good that the guys working on other designs scuttled them. It won the vote, hands down, and off went the order for the patches. The patch I flew with was still on my flight jacket when I turned it in leaving active duty, but I still have the extra one that I purchased at the same time from the original batch that we ordered. Larry Martin was dead on in his assessment of what the different things on the patch stood for. Burfield also did outstanding nose art on our aircraft for us.

Don Stephens, LCDR, USNR (Ret)

A DIFFERENT TWIST WITH AFES

Here's a story with a different twist on the current fighting in Iraq. Most of us know that the American Red Cross notifies service personnel when there is a death or sickness in their family. For the past 3 years, I have been coordinating the Armed Forces Emergency Services (AFES) in Northwest Indiana. Most of what I do is an hour presentation to the local Reserves and National Guardsmen called "Get To Know Us Before You Need Us".

A week after the shooting began in the Iraq Freedom; I received a phone call from the local Red Cross Chapter asking me for some assistance with a Marine Officer. While on security patrol in southern Iraq, the Lieutenant's Humvee overturned crushing a bunch of his bones and his laxis. A trecimony was performed at the Field Hospital in Kuwait and he was airlifted to a hospital in Germany. The Lieutenant's spouse was informed of her husband's injuries and she was able to call him at the military hospital in Germany to talk with him...one way...he could only tap for "yes" or "no".

The Marine's spouse wanted to

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

get some financial assistance from the Red Cross so she could rush to meet her husband when he was flown back to the States for recovery at Walter Reed Hospital in Virginia. Because of the short timeframe, the local Red Cross could not get the National ARC Headquarters authorization for financial assistance for her. We ended up passing the hat to give her \$300 to drive to Washington D.C, the next morning to meet her husband's plane later that weekend. She really needed \$700 but that was all that our small local Red Cross volunteers could collect on short notice.

Upon further research the following week, I discovered that the local Veteran's of Foreign Wars and the American Legion would have covered the entire \$700 of the Marine spouse's expenses. Now I know what to do in the future when the Red Cross gets notified of a local service person injured in a battle zone. We must also get a written release from the family to pass their names to the local VFW or American Legion for financial assistance. One of the local Commanders told me very proudly, "Our job is to support the active duty personnel and their families when ever we can".

P.S. The Lieutenant and his spouse are now at his home in Jacksonville recovering from his injuries. He was one of the injured servicemen President Bush visited at Walter Reed Hospital in April.

Ed Seykowski, CWO4 USNR, Ret.

TREASURER'S REPORT

A complete treasurer's report will be given at the reunion by treasurer Roger Smith.

GETTING A MEDAL

Military service medals are issued by the appropriate branch. Inquiries should be sent to the branch of service as follows:

Navy, Marines and Coast Guard veterans contact:

Navy Liaison Office National Personnel Records, Room 3475
9700 Page Ave
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

Army veterans contact:

U.S. Reserve Personnel Center
Attn: ARPC-VFE
National Personnel Records
9700 Page Ave
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

Air Force veterans contact:

U. S. Air Force
National Personnel Records
9700 Page Ave
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

The request should include the following:

- Veterans full name, printed or typed.
- Veteran's signature or that of the veteran's next of kin, if the veteran is deceased.
- Branch of service.
- Veteran's service number or Social Security number.
- Dates of service, or a close approximation.
- A photocopy of the veteran's discharge papers.

Anyone interested can also call the Veterans Administration at 1-800-827-1000, 8 am to 4:15 pm weekdays, and request Form 180, called the "Request Pertaining to Military Records." Complete the form and send it to the appropriate military branch.

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The VC-12 VOICE is the official publication of the VC-12/VAW-12 Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in February, May, August and November, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the VC-12/VAW-12. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the Newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

Military Locator & Reunion Service is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the submitter to research each article.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations and grammar.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family, by submitting your stories and suggestions.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The cost of this issue is \$398.85

Dues of \$10.00 used for funding the newsletter should now be sent to your treasurer at:

**Roger Smith, MD
256 SE 2nd Ave.
Hillsboro, OR 97123**

ABOUT HISTORIC BALTIMORE

Baltimore was founded on August 8, 1729. Baltimore is the 12th largest city in the United States with a population of approximately 645,500 (in 2000), down from approximately 736,000 in 1990. Following are just a few of the "Baltimore-firsts".

- 1773 - First US stage coach route - Baltimore to Philadelphia
- 1792 - The first monument to Columbus in the U.S.
- 1796 - First sugar refinery in the U.S. founded by Garts and Leypoldt
- 1797 - First US war ship to capture an enemy vessel - "Constellation"
- 1814 - Birthplace of "Star Spangled Banner" -written by Francis Scott Key at Fort McHenry
- 1815 - The first permanent monument to George Washington
- 1816 - First city to illuminate streets with hydrogen gas
- 1828 - First railroad for commercial transportation of passengers and freight—B & O railroad
- 1830 - First operating railroad depot in the US - Mt. Clare Station
- 1837 - Baltimore Sun began publication
- 1840 - First steam boating company in the US - Baltimore Steam Packet Co.
- 1844 - World's first telegraph line established between Baltimore and Washington
- 1859 - First YMCA - Pratt and Schroeder Streets
- 1875 - The first monument to Edgar Allen Poe
- 1876 - Johns Hopkins University founded
- 1879 - First synthetic sweetening agent -Saccharine, developed at Johns Hopkins University
- 1885 - First commercial electric street car line -Baltimore to Hampden
- 1886 - First public Library System with branches - Enoch Pratt

- Free Library
- 1890 - First steam tanker built in America "The Maverick" by W.T. Malster
- 1891 - First commercial stomach antacid seltzer - Bromo-Seltzer, made by Captain Isaac E. Emerson
- 1892 - First Ouija board - invented and patented by Isaac and William Fuld
- 1897 - First practical submarine in the US - "Argonaut," invented by Simon Lake
- 1904 - Downtown Baltimore destroyed by fire -The Great Baltimore Fire.

As evidenced above, Baltimore abounds in history, which no attempt will be made to recount here. This modern city offers many attractions, to the extent that is not possible to visit them all in the short duration of the reunion. Baltimore was a city of ethnic neighborhoods, many of which still have their own unique traditions. Babe Ruth and Edgar Allan Poe were born here and their homes are still preserved as museums. The famous Inner Harbor area is an attraction in itself. Here you can find dozens of restaurants ranging from the modern "Hooters" to the ancient seafood places that have operated in the same family for years.

The National Aquarium, the Maryland Science Center, Camden Yards, home of the Baltimore Orioles are all within a few hundred yards of each other. Of special interest is the USS CONSTELLATION, the last all sail ship built by the US Navy. "The Connie" is anchored in the harbor and is now a museum ship. It is the only Civil War era vessel still afloat.

The World War II Liberty Ship John Brown, also a museum ship is also located in the Harbor area.

Baltimore is home to the Orioles major league baseball team and pro football's recently dethroned Superbowl Champion, the Ravens.

The B & O Railroad Museum and Fort McHenry National Monument are two other major attrac-

tions, but not within walking distance of anything.

Within a short distance of Baltimore is Annapolis, a quaint little Seacoast village, and also home of the United States Naval Academy.

PLEASE COME SEE FOR YOURSELF WHAT BALITMORE HAS TO OFFER AT THE 2003 RE-UNION!

HONOR OUR NATION'S HEROES

We received the following letter, with a request to publish it for your information. You may be interested in signing up for the Navy Log.

Washington, D.C., July, 2003

The United States Navy Memorial Foundation in Washington, D.C. has established the "Navy Log" in an effort to honor all naval veterans that have served, or that are currently serving, our country. The Navy Log includes Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Merchant Mariners.

The Navy Log has thus far collected the names, service information and photographs of over a quarter of a million service personnel. All enrollments form a part of America's enduring naval heritage, a permanent and publicly accessible video register available for reviewing at the Naval Heritage Center next to the Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Avenue, midway between the White House and the Capitol, or on the Memorial's Internet web site, <http://www.lonesailor.org/>.

Write:

U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation,
Attn: Navy Log
701 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 123
Washington, D.C. 20004-2608

Or call: 1-800-821-8892 Ext. 730

Media Contact:

David J. Michael, NCCM (SW), USN (Ret.)

Director, Navy Log