

VP-44 Summer III Newsletter



P2V-7 Neptune Interior Photographs

Where did the P2V's go? For those of you who have often wondered it's in the Arizona desert, static displays on various military bases and a few in air museums around the country. Most have been recycled.

In early 2002, I learned there was a group of P2V's in Missoula, MT being used to fight forest fires. I made an appointment to visit Neptune Aviation and found an aircraft they decided not to convert to a water bomber. It sat in the Arizona desert for decades and had been flown to Missoula a few months prior to my visit.

What I found was BuNo # 147695. When active in the Navy it was assigned to VP-31. Other than having had the removal of many cockpit instruments and radios, and the obvious deterioration, it had most of the electronic boxes intact. The after station hatch had been left open and some critter had been making a bed in one of the flight deck seats for a long time. In 2006, the interior pictures were retaken for technical reasons. Then, location was made of a restored nose section of a P2V-7 close by, done by the VP-2 Restoration group. That came from BuNo # 147951 and served with VP-23, 24, 56, 7, 45 and 66. Pictures were taken of the Bow, MAD station, and Cockpit, both Pilot and Co-Pilot positions.

The pictures of these two efforts have just been published into a calendar. It can be previewed by logging onto www.TheLightCatchers.com. You can now see some authentic pictures that have been circulating in your thoughts for years. Here's your chance to re-live some experiences of when you were in your 20's and bulletproof. By selecting "Samples" at the top, you can then select "P2V-7 Neptune 2008 Calendar" and preview each calendar page by scrolling through pages 1-4 at the lower left of the screen. You can order the calendar on-line by clicking Order Books at the top and following instructions. If you do not want to order on-line, then email me with your name and phone number and I'll call you at a convenient time with additional ordering information.

Bob Self
Bob.Self@comcast.net
425.357.0905

I have two of these for door prizes at the banquet during the reunion.

P2V Calendar Now Available



**2008 Calendar with
Bow to tail interior photographs for each month.**

**Log onto www.TheLightCatchers.com to preview
And order on-line @ \$19.99, plus S&H.**

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13005 27th Dr. SE # B
Everett, WA 98208
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WANTED CHAIRPERSON FOR 2009

We are still looking for somebody to chair the 2009 reunion, the city is your choice. If you have any ideas please let me know and I will bring it up at the business meeting. You will not have to go this alone, I will be glad to carry on with the newsletter if the members so desire. I can add anything you wish in the newsletter and we have plenty of past chairmen to help you out.

Passing of a fellow Shipmate

Gene - I just wanted to let you know that my father - Gerald Pochyla - passed away on June 23, 2007. He had been fighting cancer since November 2005. You can visit his memorial website at www.lifestorynet.com and search life stories and type "Pochyla" in. He was cremated and his ashes interred at Ft. Custer Military Cemetery in Battle Creek Michigan.

Becky Pochyla Klose email address: glpochyla@sbcglobal.net

Flying Boats and more

I put out this email to our reunion committee and found out all I needed to know:

Gentlemen,

Somebody needs to help this old "Dirt Sailor" out. I need help on the differences between the PBY, PBM, PBY-5 and P5M?

P3 Airdale only,

gene

Perhaps I can offer a few comments. The listings are in U.S. Navy terminology.

Note: All are "*Flying Boats*", having a Flying Boat hull and NOT pontoons.

VP-44 had the distinction of flying them all, in successive order. All were twin-engine.

The PBY. "*PB*" stands for "*Patrol Bomber*" "*Y*" stands for the manufacturer - in this case, Consolidated Aircraft Company - a San Diego firm from the 1930's to the late 1950's. Popular name: "*Catalina*", originated by the British, who built many under U.S. license. The PBY is a straight seaplane. The PBY-5 was the 5th model of this aircraft. The PBY-5A is an amphibian, the "*A*" stands for amphibian, meaning it has retractable wheels for land operation.

The PBM was a Patrol Bomber with straight flying boat hull built by {M} the Glenn L. Martin Company of Baltimore, MD, starting in 1940. It was to be the successor to the PBY and was called the "Mariner", originated by the British. Only 36 were built as amphibians (PBM-5A) but, to my knowledge, did not achieve the operational capability enjoyed by the PBY-5A.

The follow-on P5M, a multi-mission flying boat, was also manufactured by Martin, in the 1950's and was the last seaplane employed by the U.S. Navy. Popular name: "Marlin", no amphibious models were built.

I'll bet you'll hear all of the above birds extolled at the Indy reunion.

Captain Andy and Bev Serrell (Additions made by Bruce Barth)

Maybe this will help.

PBY Catalina - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PBY_Catalina

This has a table that tells the differences between the different versions of PBYs. All upgrade to the PBY-5 basically included a more powerful engine. The PBY-5A had hydraulically-actuated, retractable tricycle landing gear for amphibious operation. Introduced tail gun position, replaced bow single gun position with bow "eyeball" turret equipped with twin .30 machine guns (some later units), improved armor, self-sealing fuel tanks.

PBM Mariner replacement for PBY- (PDF file attached) - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PBM_Mariner

P5M Marlin Replaced PBM - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P5M_Marlin#Versions

Hope this helps, Ray Beck our Web Master

PBY = Catalina patrol aircraft common in WWII Atlantic/Pacific Operations

PBY-5A = Amphibious version of the Catalina

PBM = Martin Mariner patrol aircraft common in WWII Atlantic/Pacific Operations

PBM-5A = Amphibious version of the Mariner

P5M = Marlin, Martin Company's last production seaplane. Used by VP-44 from 1952 to the early 60's

Thanks to our President Ralph Cook (Additions made by Bruce Barth)

Pelican Shop

Don't forget to visit our Pelican Shop at www.vp44goldenpelicans.com and buy something to help the reunion fund in years to come. We will have some new items after the reunion on Labor Day Weekend for you to check out so keep checking the home page.

Traffic Report for Indianapolis

Indiana passed a law July 1, 2007, speeding in a construction zone 1st offense is \$500.00 fine. Please maintain the posted speed and let the idiots go on past, sooner or later they will get caught.

I will try and help all of you driving in to get to the hotels without too much trouble, both hotels our just East of 21st and Shadeland on the East side of town. As in any city this

time of year we have construction and the Interstate 70 section from the East side of town to the downtown area is under going major work. Everything we be okay except when you are coming East bound on Interstate 70, exit # 89 (Shadeland Exit) may be closed till November. You go past that exit to exit # 91 (Post Road Exit) take a right on Post Road to the bottom of the hill, turn right at the light (21 Street) after you go under the Interstate bridges you will see the hotels on your right. If you need any help coming to Indianapolis please call me (cell # 317 201-4261, hotel # 317 322-3716 Room 160 or 164) and I will do everything I can to make your trip pleasant.

Pictures from Bill Stupka

Bill Stupka <wrstupka@gate.net> wrote:

Ray

Attached is a photo that was probably taken in early 1956 or maybe 1955. It shows part of my crew sitting on the port nacelle of our P5M-2, which, at the time, was on the buoy in San Juan, P.R. harbor. We were there for the annual war games. The crew is probably CC-9 or possibly CC-10, but I can't put a name to any of the faces, and that is driving me nuts.

If anyone out there recognizes any of these crew members please drop me an email.

Bill Stupka AT2

VP-44 1953-1956

wrstupka@gate.net

PS This photo (slide) sat for decades because it was so badly underexposed that it was not useable. Not too long ago Adobe Photoshop brought it back from the dead. It is still pretty bad but at least all the people are now recognizable.

Bill,

This is a good picture. I placed a note at the bottom of the picture and uploaded it to the Photo P5M page. It is the last picture on the page. I will forward this to Gene Toffolo, Ralph Cook, and Bob Minnerly. Someone may recognize these men.

Thanks,

Ray

More Home page update

Gene,

I placed a link on the Home page regarding the USS Saratoga Museum Foundation. They are going to make the Saratoga a museum.

I was deployed onboard the Saratoga with VAQ-136 in 1978-79 - my last Navy cruise. I signed the guestbook and referenced the history of VP-44 with a link to our site. If our personnel served

aboard the "Fighting Cock," they may want to sign the guestbook.

Ray

Ray Beck, ATC USN RET
VP-44 Golden Pelicans Webmaster
www.vp44goldenpelicans.com

*From Victory at Midway to the End of the Cold War
We served with PRIDE - 1939 to 1991!
GO NAVY!*

Last minute registration

If you still might come to the reunion and have not registered yet, I will take all comers during the reunion weekend. I just ask that you "**please**" give me as much advance notice as possible so I can have your reunion packet and names tags ready when you arrive. I will have a few extra but will not be ready for a huge turnout on Saturday morning and it may take some time to get caught up. Just give me a call and let me know there's a good chance you will come and I'll be ready for you. If you need a copy of the registration form please let me know and I will send it your way.

Bring then if you got them

Some of us may be wearing our uniform at the banquet and it looks like "chokers" with either ribbons or medals so bring both if you wish. Its nice to get in the uniform once in awhile, just for old time sake if nothing else.

SQUADRON HISTORY WANTED

Naval Aviation Historian seeking a copy of the Official VP/VPB-204 Squadron History as published by the squadron from 1942 to 1945, if anyone can help please contact Bruce Barth at (512) 288-9824 or bbarth1@austin.rr.com.

I also have one of the below CD's as a door prize for the banquet.

The Martin P5M Marlin

"the end of an era in naval seaplane aviation"

by Bruce D. Barth

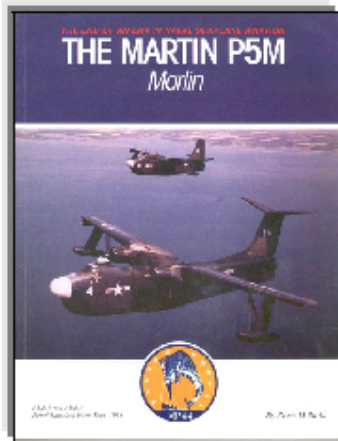


✂ The Complete History of the Last U.S. Navy Flying Boat ✂

- Preface on the history of the Martin PBM "Mariner" series from 1937 to 1949
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- Comprehensive Appendix section includes production and performance data, post-war squadron development, seaplane tenders and more -
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*** NOW AVAILABLE ON CD-ROM ***

Released in 1994 as a Limited Edition of 2,000 copies, *The Martin P5M Marlin* is the first book published on this historic naval flying boat. The P5M *Marlin* was the last in a long line of military seaplanes produced by the Glenn L. Martin Aircraft Company between 1909 and 1960. Designed in 1946 to replace the venerable Martin PBM *Mariner*, the P5M-1 was the first U.S. Navy aircraft built specifically for ASW use. Entering service in 1952, the *Marlin* came too late to see action in the Korean War, but nonetheless served with a growing number of post-war patrol squadrons throughout the U.S., the Pacific, and the Caribbean. Incorporating the latest concepts in ASW electronics and seaplane technology, the P5M played a pioneering role in developing new anti-submarine warfare tactics. The P5M-2 was introduced in 1954, but the days of the naval seaplane were clearly numbered. Although many new designs were considered throughout the 1950s, the P5M-2 was the last production flying boat used by the U.S. Navy. By 1965, only three Navy seaplane squadrons remained in operation, VP-40, 48, 50. During the Vietnam conflict, the SP-5B was called into action and played a significant role as part of *Operation Market Time*, between 1964 and 1967. In 1967 the Navy retired the *Marlin*, officially ending 57 years of Naval Seaplane Aviation. Only one example survives today.



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