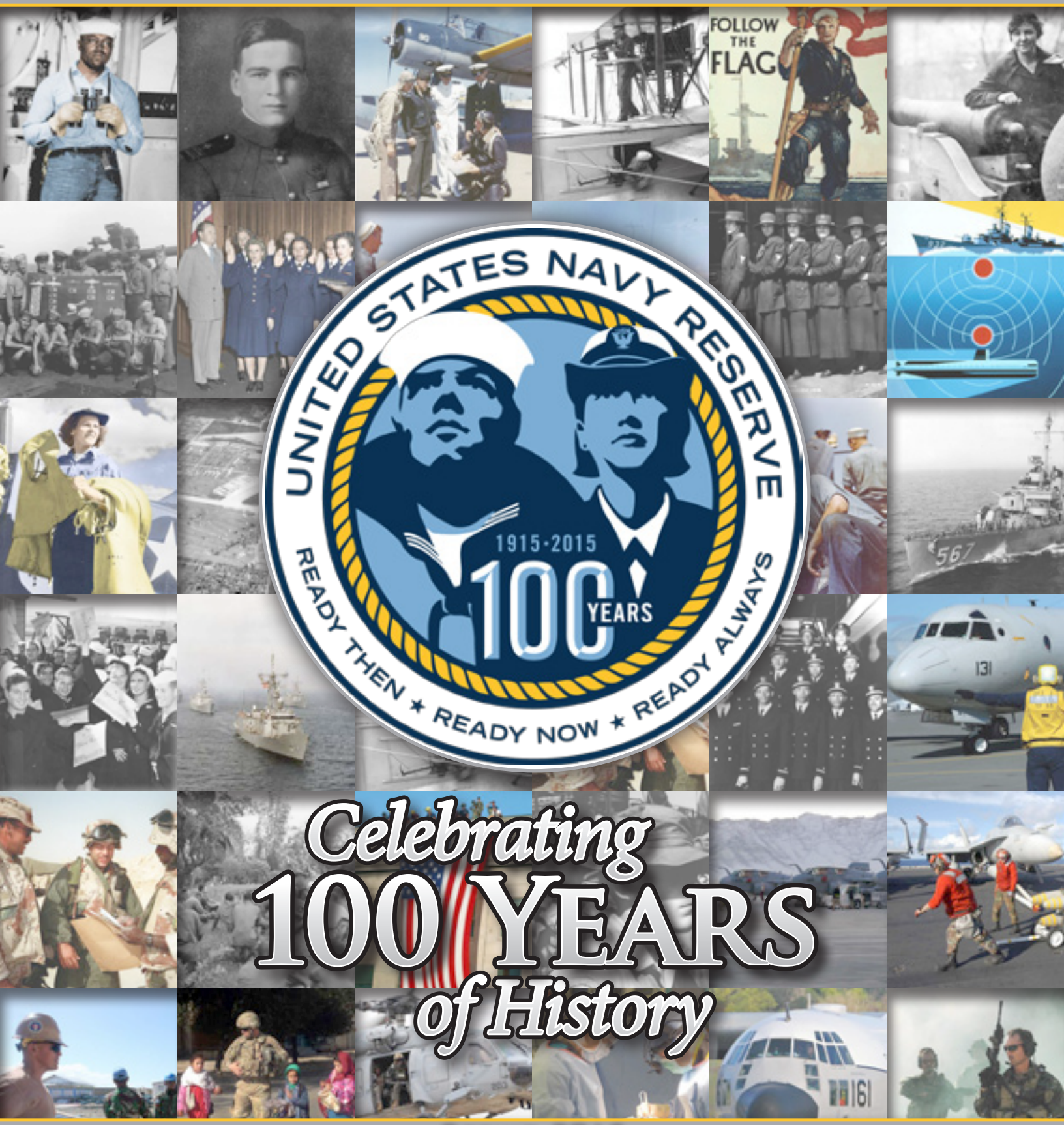
Naval Aviation News

The Flagship Publication of Naval Aviation



Celebrating 100 Years of History

Spring 2015

Sailors assigned to Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 3, the amphibious transport dock ship USS Anchorage (LPD 23), Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group One, Fleet Combat Camera Pacific, and Fleet Weather Center San Diego are in the Pacific Ocean supporting Orion crew module recovery operations. Anchorage is conducting the first exploration flight test (EFT-1) for the NASA Orion Program. EFT-1 is the fifth at-sea testing of the Orion crew module using a Navy well deck recovery method. ***To read more about HSC-8's involvement with this historical event, turn to page 30.***

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Corey Green

NAVAL AVIATION NEWS

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ON THE COVER

The U.S. Navy Reserve is celebrating 100 years of history, dating back to March 3, 1915, when the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916 established a United States Naval Reserve. For a century, these service members have answered the call of duty, serving side by side with active-duty counterparts. Today, Reservists are a vital asset and true force multiplier to our Navy. They are prepared, accessible, versatile and willing to go wherever needed. Inside this issue, we highlight the Reserve in two feature articles: How Two Men Impacted the U.S. Navy Reserve (page 14) and a Reserve Squadron Spotlight (page 18) on the VR-62's Airlifting "Nomads." Visit http://navyreservecentennial.com to learn more on how Reservists were "ready then," are "ready now" and will continue to be "ready always."

***On the Back Cover**: An EA-6B Prowler, assigned to the "Patriots" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 140, prepares for an aerial refueling with an Air Force KC-135R Stratotanker during combat missions.*

The U.S. Navy's Oldest Periodical, Established 1917

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U.S. Navy Photo

AWF3 Thomas McIntyre, from VR-62, directing unloading at NAF Misawa, Japan. ***To read more about VR-62's missions, turn to page 18.***

Flightline

The Way Ahead: Current and Future Readiness and our Future Training Environment

By Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, Commander, Naval Air Forces; Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

In late January, I had the privilege to follow Vice Adm. Dave Buss as your new Air Boss, and I couldn't be more honored and humbled by the opportunity to "fleet up" from Naval Air Force Atlantic and step in as the next leader of Naval Aviation.

Working closely with Dave for the last 18 months, I gained a solid understanding of our business and the readiness challenges we face, and I learned an awful lot watching him lead our community through some very challenging times.

I'd like to thank Dave and his wife Donna for an absolutely superb Air Boss tour and remarkable career in Naval Aviation. Dave was a true steward of our profession, leading with humility and integrity, and expertly managing change and transitions. His Naval Aviation Vision 2025 will continue to be our guidepost as we work to build and shape our future force. Dave and Donna leave behind a lasting legacy of leadership and service to our aviation forces, and nowhere was that more evident than at the end of his change of command/retirement ceremony when their son, Lt. j.g. Matt Buss—waiting to start pilot training at Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 106—read "The Watch," relieved his father, and then received his dad's sword to symbolize the passing of the aviation torch—for at least one more generation. Thank you, Dave and Donna. All of Naval Aviation joins me in wishing you both continued success and happiness as you transition to the next chapter of your lives.

We continue to live in a turbulent and unsettled world. Those of us in uniform know all too well the insatiable demand for naval forces, Naval Aviation in particular, which we continue to see from our combatant commanders around the world.

Those commanders clearly value the strategic options and flexibility our carrier strike groups and other expeditionary aviation forces bring to their areas of responsibility. The challenge that lies ahead of us now is how we continue to sustain the capacity to generate those forces and ensure they're going forward with the right capabilities to operate where needed—all in a fiscal environment characterized by ever-increasing uncertainty. A tall order indeed, with lots of tough choices and trade-offs ahead.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Kenneth Abbate

I'm committed to continuing Dave's superb work as our Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) lead and will partner closely with the leadership triad that includes Vice Adm. David Dunaway, Commander, Naval Air Systems Command; Lt. Gen. Jon Davis, Deputy Commandant for Aviation, Headquarters Marine Corps; and the rest of the NAE cross-functional team as we strive to maintain the wholeness and readiness of our aviation fleet. As always, we'll rely heavily on Rear Adm. Michael Manazir, director, Air Warfare (OPNAV N98), and his N98 team's aviation requirements and programming expertise.

As we move forward, I'll focus our priorities in three areas—current readiness, future readiness and our future training environment. From a current readiness perspective, we must maintain the wholeness of our existing aviation forces, ensuring we have sufficient aircraft assigned to squadrons to meet their flight line readiness goals for each phase of the Fleet Response Plan; that we have spare parts (new or repaired) readily available to keep those aircraft flying; and that the Sailors who maintain those aircraft receive quality training en route to their squadrons, and whenever possible, are assigned to platforms where they already have experience.

Our deployed and next-to-deploy commands have generally received the resources they need, but we've struggled recently to meet flight line aircraft requirements for squadrons in maintenance and basic phase, and in some of our fleet replacement squadrons for both Navy and Marine Corps. I can assure you the NAE is fully engaged and diligently working to manage our inventory and the processes that generate flyable aircraft for the fleet, and our efforts will gradually reverse these trends.

For future readiness, Naval Aviation has successfully followed our Naval Aviation Vision 2025 as we've moved out of legacy aircraft and into new, more capable platforms in nearly every community. As we navigate the

uncertain fiscal environment ahead, we need to keep these transitions on track. We must also develop and deliver the advanced capabilities (weapons, sensors and networks) that will allow us to pace the threat and maintain our warfighting advantages. These new capabilities will be delivered to outfit our forward-deployed forces first, eventually adding additional capacity when budgets permit.

Finally, as these new platforms and capabilities enter the fleet, we have to effectively practice and train to the new tactics that are already evolving. We're currently stressed in terms of available airspace and use of the electromagnetic spectrum at our premiere training facility at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada. We need to transition more of that high-end training to the virtual and constructive world, and eventually integrate with live forces. That critical integration must also occur in our aviation fleet concentration areas, as we develop and refine distributed training solutions, linking both air and surface platforms across the force. This future training roadmap is a key enabler for us as we work to optimize the proficiency of our aircrew and make the best use of precious flying-hour dollars.

So as we move ahead in these three areas, I'll always remember that the NAE works for you—our commodores, carrier air wings, and carrier commanding officers, and your subordinate squadron leadership teams, who make great things happen every day on our flight lines and on the flight decks of our aircraft carriers. Our top goal is to ensure you have the resources you need to focus on warfighting first, to be ready to operate forward and to be successful when you sail or fly in harm's way!

For commanders at every level, I couldn't be more proud of the way you lead our forces, and the way you and your amazing Sailors continue to perform with quiet professionalism and excellence at sea and ashore. Our Sailors and their families truly are our number one resource, and we can never forget that as we work through the increasingly difficult readiness challenges ahead. My commitment to you is to work tirelessly to ensure our Naval Aviation forces remain the preeminent fighting force for our nation.

Fly! Fight! Win!

U.S. Navy photo

Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, of St. Petersburg, Florida, graduated with honors from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science degree in systems engineering and was designated a naval aviator in July 1984.

Shoemaker's operational assignments include tours with Light Attack Squadron (VA) 105, USS Forrestal (CV 59); Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3, USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67); Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 105, USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CV 69), USS Enterprise (CVN 65) and USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75); CVW-17, USS George Washington (CVN 73); Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 9, USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72); and CSG 3, USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74). Shoemaker commanded VFA-105, VFA-106 (F/A-18 Fleet Replacement Squadron), CVW 17, CSG 9 and CSG 3.

His shore assignments include VA-174 and instructor duty with VA-122 and VFA-106. He also served as aide to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations and Commander, U.S. Pacific Command; was assigned to Navy Personnel Command (head of Aviation Officer Placement - PERS-433); and was the executive assistant to Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet. As a flag officer, he served as assistant commander, Navy Personnel Command for Career Management (PERS-4) and later as commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, from June 2013 to January 2015. He has completed the Naval War College Non-Resident Program and is a graduate of the Joint Forces Staff College.

Shoemaker has accumulated more than 4,400 flight hours, primarily in the A-7E Corsair and the F/A-18C Hornet and has 1,066 carrier-arrested landings. His personal decorations include the Legion of Merit (6), Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (3), Air Medal (3) (one individual award with combat "V" and two strike/flight awards) and other personal, campaign and service ribbons.

Shoemaker became Naval Aviation's 7th "Air Boss" in January 2015.

Grampaw Pettibone

Gramps from Yesteryear

Illustration by Ted Wilbur

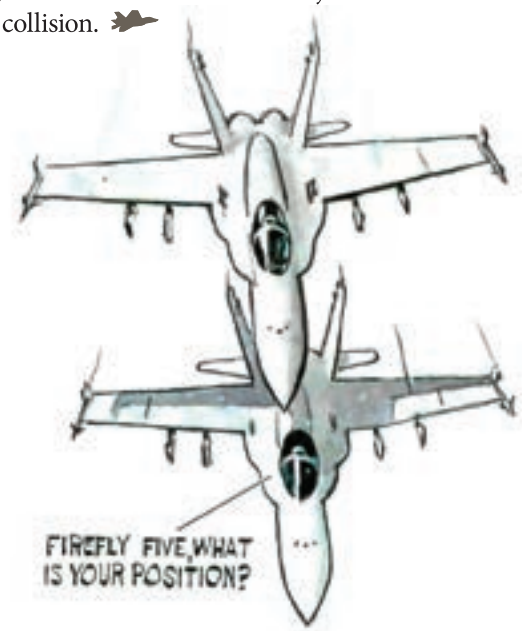
Two Leads Don't Make a Wingman

Two F/A-18 Hornets from the same squadron launched off the carrier in the evening as part of a larger strike package. Their briefed plan was to rendezvous overhead and proceed to the tanker as a section. Air-to-air tactical air navigation (TACAN) was neither briefed nor used within the section. After tanking, they would join the rest of the strike package and proceed on the mission. The flight joined with goggles, and the wingman took goggle spread on the left side of the formation.

As they approached the tanker track, the flight established themselves in a 3-mile trail of another division of fighters also assigned to their tanker. Because of the number of tanker tracks in the area and a large number of aircraft trying to find their assigned tanker, the mishap section was spending an inordinate amount of time heads down on their radars. The wingman was spending more than half of his time monitoring traffic visually and with his radar.

The lead initiated a slow right turn to try to fix the intercept geometry with the tanker, but the turn brought another section of fighters to their nose at a range of four miles. The lead began a 60-degree angle of bank descending turn back to the left but, his wingman only used a 35-degree angle of bank. Both aircraft rolled wings level with a 21-degree heading differential and the wingman 300 feet above his lead. With 3,000 feet of lateral separation and a 200-knot closure rate, the wingman, who was by now task saturated, did not recognize the rapidly increasing size of the lead and lack of any bearing change.

The lead initiated an easy right turn and the wingman continued a shallow descent. The two aircraft collided. The wingman ejected and sustained minor injuries. The lead was killed by the collision.



Grampaw Pettibone Says …

Sometimes when ol' Gramps hears a story he jumps up and down and raises a ruckus to make a point. But when I hear stories like this, I just have to sit down, rub my old noggin and ponder the loss of yet another of our greatest treasures. It's enough to make an old salt weep. Y'all know it torches my trousers when one of you bends some metal, but goldurnit, I hate these stories with a tragic ending!

From our first day in orange and whites, we are taught simple but oh-so-important rules. Rules to live by. Rules that may save your life. Our building block approach to teaching means that each flight brings something harder to the mix, but you can't forget those blocks that make up the foundation of what the Instructor Pilots are learnin' you. How to fly a good instrument approach; how to handle a problem with your air machine; how to be a good wingman and the like.

Problem with these fellas was that two people were doing the lead's job, and no one was doing the wingman's. You kids know the first and most important priority of any wingman is to keep lead insight and maintain safe aircraft separation, it mighta helped if these two had used their yardstick, but if we take it to the most basic level, the wingman has got to keep lead in sight and keep the two jets from tryin' to get into the same piece of sky.

Gather round kids and let's learn a lesson. *Do the little things well, and the big things will fall into place.* A good wingman always knows where lead is, no matter what else is going on. Now you kids need to pay attention to this stuff,

I DON'T WANT THIS TO HAPPEN AGAIN!

Shoot, I raised my voice and don't like to do that—but good grief, ol' Gramps' heart just can't get ripped up like this much more! Now you kids quit skylarking and get back to work. Gramps has something in his eye he needs to take care of.

FORWARD ENGAGED READY

By Navy Chief of Information Office

New Plan Emphasizes Operating Forward, Engaging Global Partners

The sea services released a new maritime strategy, a plan that describes how the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard will design, organize and employ naval forces in support of national security interests and homeland security objectives March 13.

The new strategy titled *A Cooperative Strategy for the 21st Century: Forward, Engaged, Ready* accounts for changes in the global security environment, new strategic guidance and a changed fiscal environment.

The essential functions of the maritime strategy released in 2007 were adjusted to include a new function called "all domain access," which underscores the challenges forces face in accessing and operating in contested environments.

The new plan emphasizes operating forward and engaging partners across the globe, especially in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

Within the 48-page document, the strategy calls for increasing the Navy's forward presence to 120 ships by 2020, up from about 97 ships today. This includes forward-basing four ballistic-missile-defense destroyers in Spain and stationing another attack submarine in Guam by the end of 2015. The Navy is scheduled to increase presence in Middle East from 30 ships today to 40 by 2020.

The plan reinforces the continued need to strengthen partnerships and alliances by stressing the importance of operating in NATO maritime groups and participating in international training exercises.

Additionally, the strategy outlines the need to maintain readiness by implementing the Navy's Optimized Fleet Response Plan, which improves readiness and leads to a predictable cycle for maintaining, training and deploying carrier strike groups (CSG) and amphibious ships.

To view the full version of the new strategy document, visit http://www.navy.mil/maritime.

U.S. Navy photo by IC3 Joseph Newman

FORWARD ENGAGED READY

What Sailors Need to Know

By Navy Chief of Information Office

1 The strategy was updated to account for changes in global security, new strategic guidance and the fiscal environment. Since the last strategy was released in 2007, many geopolitical and military changes have also developed, which demand cooperative relationships with our global partners. We will continue operating in NATO maritime groups, participating in a number of international training exercises and conducting goodwill engagements.

2 A function called "all domain access" was introduced, which focuses on gaining access to areas—whether it is land, air, sea, space, cyberspace or the electromagnetic spectrum—and operating freely in those areas to complete our mission. Today's strategy emphasizes operating forward and engaging partners across the globe, especially in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

> *"The centerpieces of naval capability remain the Carrier Strike Group and Amphibious Ready Group … These ships, aircraft, Sailors and Marines have deterred and defeated aggression since World War II and will continue to do so well into the future."*
>
> –Adm. Jonathan Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations

3 The strategy calls for increasing the Navy's forward presence to 120 ships by 2020, up from about 97 ships today. This includes forward-basing four ballistic-missile-defense destroyers in Spain and stationing another attack submarine in Guam by the end of 2015. Sailors can expect to see an increase in forward-basing of forces abroad, which reduces costly rotations and deployments.

Implementing a new strategy would be impossible without you, the Sailor. The Navy's personnel are its greatest asset and understanding your role in the new strategy will help complete the mission.

Naval Aviation Highlights

The following bullets were extracted from A Cooperative Strategy for the 21st Century: Forward, Engaged, Ready

Emphasizing Warfighting First

- We will ensure a dominant Navy and Marine Corps team as compared to potential adversaries and challengers. This means the capability to exert sea control when and where needed, to sustain operations in these areas indefinitely, to support and influence operations on land, and to ensure freedom of movement for our nation's forces. It also means the capability to do high-performance tactical-air operations; high-tempo submarine operations; large-scale amphibious operations; and power projection from the sea with precision strike and joint and combined operations. To enhance conventional deterrence options from the sea, the Navy will field its next generation of aircraft carriers, ships, submarines and aircraft capable of long-range precision strike, as well as improve the operational access of our future expeditionary forces.

Being Where it Matters, When it Matters

- When the president of the United States needed immediate options to curb the advance of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq last fall, the USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) Carrier Strike Group (CSG) was on-station and ready within 30 hours of being tasked. It remained there for 54 days, as the only viable U.S. strike and power projection option, until the order was given to conduct air and tomahawk strikes.
- By 2020, approximately 60 percent of Navy ships and aircraft will be based in the Asia-Pacific region.

Continuing to Strengthen Alliances and Partnerships

- One way we strengthen relationships with our allies is to conduct integrated operations at sea. USS Harry S. Truman

US Navy Photo by MC3 Karl Anderson

F/A-18C Hornets, assigned to the "Checkerboards" of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 312, prepare to be transported from the aircraft elevator to the hangar bay aboard aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75).

(CVN 75) CSG conducted five weeks of combined carrier operations with the FS Charles De Gaulle (R 91) and French Navy Task Force 473. We practiced combined flight operations—landing our aircraft on the French carrier and vice versa—combat search and rescue operations, and personnel exchanges in the 5th Fleet area of operations this winter. In addition, the French performed the first jet engine swap-out onboard Truman, representing a huge step in working toward the ability to operate a French squadron on a U.S. carrier.

- Advance the global network of navies concept by deepening security cooperation with allies and partners. This involves expanding the cooperative deployment construct that integrates allied and partner forces into Carrier Strike Group and Amphibious Ready Group pre-deployment training, readiness exercises and deployments.
- A great example of the global network of navies concept in action is the November 2013 international relief effort following one of the deadliest tropical cyclones to ever hit the Philippines: Typhon Haiyan. It involved more than 35 nations, including 66 U.S. military aircraft, 12 U.S. naval vessels and nearly 1,000 U.S. military personnel. Our involvement in Haiyan relief efforts strengthened support for enhanced U.S.-Philippine military cooperation and contributed to the signing of an Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

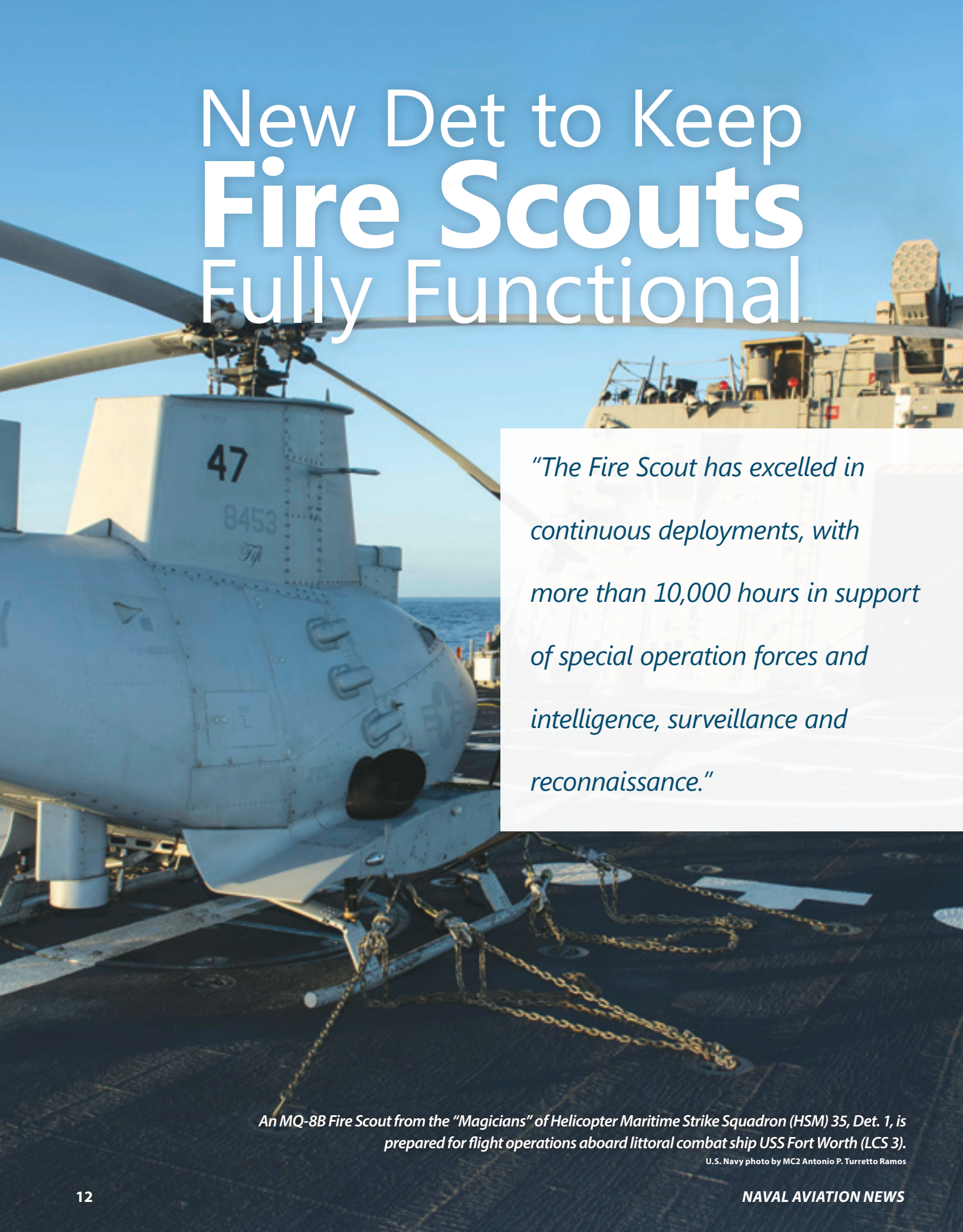
Assure Global Access

- Evolving anti-access/area denial capabilities by potential adversaries drive the need to orient our warfighting capability toward greater integration and interoperability of platforms, sensors, weapons and systems. These initiatives are being built around emerging capabilities such as the Naval Integrated Fire Control–Counter Air (NIFCCA) program for defense against enemy aircraft and missiles. This program integrates reconnaissance, fighters, and shipboard fire control systems to defeat threats at long range.
- We will field and employ unmanned systems that operate beyond the limits of human endurance in highly contested, high-threat environments, like the MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Aerial System. The aircraft can fly up to 24 hours at a time, at altitudes higher than 10 miles, allowing for coverage of 1 million square nautical miles of ocean, in a single mission. MQ-4C Triton has a range of 2,000 nautical miles—roughly the distance between Washington, D.C., and San Diego—and will provide a continuous surveillance capability that complements and enhances the effectiveness of other aviation platforms like the new P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft that is currently replacing our fleet of P-3C Orions.

Forward Presence and Partnership

- The Navy's current budget submission will provide for more than 300 ships and a forward presence of about 120 ships by 2020, up from an average of 97 in 2014, to be "where it matters, when it matters." This includes forward-based naval forces overseas in places like Guam, Japan and Spain; forward-operating forces deploying from overseas locations such as Singapore; and rotationally deployed forces from the United States.

New Det to Keep **Fire Scouts** Fully Functional



"The Fire Scout has excelled in continuous deployments, with more than 10,000 hours in support of special operation forces and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance."

An MQ-8B Fire Scout from the "Magicians" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 35, Det. 1, is prepared for flight operations aboard littoral combat ship USS Fort Worth (LCS 3).

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Antonio P. Turretto Ramos

By Lt. Jonathan LaQuay

The Navy's first functional UAS-only activity maintenance detachment achieved its "safe for flight" status Jan. 16, allowing the unit to conduct its initial functional check flight with the MQ-8B Fire Scout unmanned air system just six days later.

Established in March 2014, the Helicopter Sea Combat Wing (HSCWP), U.S. Pacific Fleet, Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (VTUAV) Maintenance Detachment is based at Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), Point Mugu, California, where it stores and maintains MQ-8B unmanned helicopters, bringing them to fully functional status before allocation to the fleet.

"The Fire Scout has excelled in continuous deployments, with more than 10,000 hours in support of special operation forces and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance," said Capt. Larry Vincent, commodore of HSCWP, "but this support placed an unplanned burden on the [air vehicles]. Working closely with the Fire Scout program office (PMA-266), HSCWP continues to address these challenges as it ramps up to support to littoral combat ship deployments."

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Conor Minto

An MQ-8B Fire Scout prepares to land on the flight deck of littoral combat ship USS Fort Worth (LCS 3).

Currently, the detachment coordinates the maintenance of four MQ-8B air vehicles and will provide all MQ-8B maintenance support for future West Coast deployments.

After deployments, air vehicles will return to Point Mugu for repair and depart the base in a flyable and fully "up" status for operational use. The team has already successfully returned one Fire Scout back to flying status and is in the process of grooming another for fleet operations.

HSCWP VTUAV will also eventually act as the organizational-level storage and maintenance facility for the larger MQ-8C variant, which is still undergoing test and evaluation at NBVC Point Mugu. An upgrade to the MQ-8B, the Navy's newer unmanned helicopter will provide longer endurance, extended range and altitude, and a heavier payload capacity.

"Standing up any unit presents challenges," Vincent said. "HSCWP VTUAV was no exception and the unique aspect of UAS exhibited new ones."

One example Vincent provided was about designating airspace for the UAS. "The HSCWP contract logistics support detachment wrestled with new territory implementing sustained flight operations with UAS flights in national and special-use airspace," he said. "The combined effort of NBVC Point Mugu and the HSCWP VTUAV maintenance detachment has accepted this challenge in stride and welcomes the arrival of UAS."

From maintenance material support to air operations support, NBVC Point Mugu has ensured the smooth integration of the HSCWP VTUAV Maintenance Detachment onto the base. Situated along the coast, about 60 miles west of Los Angeles, with a 36,000-square-mile sea test range and very moderate climate, NBVC Point Mugu serves as an ideal flying location. NBVC Point Mugu was the first naval base to obtain a Class Delta Airspace Certificate of Waiver or Authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration, which permits a UAS to operate in the national airspace.

Once fully staffed in July, the detachment will be composed of 14 military personnel and 24 contractors. Navy personnel will oversee contract support and serve as UAS operators, and Kay and Associates will provide aircraft maintenance.

Lt. Jonathan LaQuay is the HSCWP VTUAV Maintenance Detachment officer in charge.

Celebrating 100 Years of History

How Two Men Impacted the U.S. Navy Reserve

By Lt. Theron Verdon

U.S. Navy Reserve Sailors have always answered our nation's call in times of war and peace. From communities across America, young men and women left their homes and jobs while trading out civilian clothes for Navy uniforms. Two individuals in particular, Frederick Trubee Davison and David Sinton Ingalls, are early examples of Navy Reserve aviators who were ready to deliver their skills and capabilities to the Navy on demand.

Although there were citizen-sailors, there was not a formal U.S. Navy Reserve organization until the Naval Appropriations Act of 1916, signed March 3, 1915, established the reserve force. The so-called "Big Navy Act" stated, "The Naval Reserve shall be organized under the Bureau of Navigation and shall be governed by the Articles for the Government of the Navy and by the Naval Regulations and Instructions." Another responsibility of the Big Navy was to rely on reserve officers to be a majority of the Navy's pilots, thus founding the Naval Air Reserve in 1916.

To help with the war effort, universities formed volunteer aviation units around the country. One of these groups was the First Yale Unit started by student F. Trubee Davison, the son of Henry Pomeroy Davison, a banker and chair of the war council of the American Red Cross. The unit, considered the first Naval Air Reserve unit, was an innovation in Naval Aviation.

Davison, who was a forward thinker, recognized the possibility of U.S. involvement in World War I and the need to be prepared, especially regarding aviation. He formed the First Yale Unit to provide training for pilots in support of the potential war. He and 12 Yale classmates began preparing on Long Island, New York.

To help with the war effort, universities formed volunteer aviation units around the country. One of these groups was the First Yale Unit started by student F. Trubee Davison.

Highlights from the EARLY YEARS *of USNR History*

1915. *The Naval Appropriations Act of 1916, dated March 3, 1915, established a United States Naval Reserve.*

1916. *The Naval Reserve Flying Corps was established.*

1916

Photo from F. Trubee Davison Papers, Yale University

The First Yale Unit's early training in 1916 took place around New York's Long Island, with help from unit organizer F. Trubee Davison's father who provided monetary backing and even a landing spot for the unit's seaplanes at the family compound at Peacock Point.

Davison fought to have the unit recognized by the U.S. Navy. When not training, Davison spent his time lobbying various key individuals in government to gain official recognition for the unit. When the Naval Reserve Appropriations Act of 1916 was signed, the entire unit—which had grown to include 26 men—was sworn into the Naval Reserve Force. Within weeks, the United States entered World War I. Davison, however, never earned his wings nor did he see combat. During training, he sustained serious injuries when he crashed his plane into the sea. Nevertheless, Davison's broken back and spinal cord injury did not stop his continuing support of U.S. efforts in World War I.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt called many of the First Yale Unit members back to active service at the beginning of World War II. Davison decided to join the Army, serving as assistant chief of staff of the Army Air Corps in charge of personnel. On June 3, 1945, Davison was promoted to brigadier general. He eventually received the Distinguished Service Medal and the Navy Cross.

Each year after World War I, Davison coordinated a reunion for the unit in New York City. At the 50th anniversary of the Naval Air Reserve gathering, Davison was awarded the Wings of Gold he failed to receive during flight training. He would go on to become the assistant secretary of war for aviation, the president of the American Museum of Natural History and the first director of personnel for the Central Intelligence Agency.

David Sinton Ingalls, another member of the First Yale Unit, at age 19 became the Navy's only flying ace of World War I. Ingalls was the son of Albert S. Ingalls and Jane Taft, a niece of President William Howard Taft. After joining the First Yale Unit, he became a member of the Naval Reserve Flying Corps. Ingalls completed his

1917. *Chief Yeoman (F) Loretta P. Walsh was the first woman enrolled in the Naval Reserve Force (USNRF).*

1918. *Sailors proudly man a surrendered German U-boat near the end of World War I.*

1918. *Naval Training Camp Gulfport, Miss., Supply Department. Naval Reserve men and women serve alongside regular Navy Sailors during World War I.*

1917 1918

Nine of the original 12 members of the First Yale Unit are shown with their instructor at their Florida training facility in 1917-18. Back row, left to right: John M. Vorys, Artemus L. Gates, Albert J. Ditman, Allen W. Ames, instructor David McCullough, F. Trubee Davison, Robert A. Lovett, and Erl C.B. Gould. Front row: Wellesley Laud-Brown, and Henry P. Davison Jr.

Photo from F. Trubee Davison Papers, Yale University

David Sinton Ingalls, another member of the First Yale Unit, at age 19 became the Navy's only flying ace of World War I. He ultimately became a member of the Naval Reserve Flying Corps.

training and transitioned to Europe, where he served with the 213 Squadron of the Royal Air Force in 1918.

During World War I, airplanes were primarily used for reconnaissance. However, when the United States entered the war, both sides discovered the importance of aerial combat and these new tactics affected the design and performance of aircraft. Aircraft became faster and more agile, allowing pilots to make more daring attacks on the enemy.

One such attack happened on the night of Aug. 13, 1918, when Ingalls flew over the German airdrome at Varsenaere. He conducted a low-level attack, flying so low that his Sopwith Camel biplane fighter nearly touched the ground. From this vantage point, the aviator stitched machinegun fire into the facility and dropped four bombs onto hangars below. He went on to conduct a similar strike on a different facility, as well as bringing down six enemy aircraft during various flying missions, earning him ace status.

1919. *Naval Reserve women serving at Norfolk Naval Shipyard as telephone operators. Naval Reserve women were commonly known as "Yeomanettes."*

1919. *Storekeeper First Class Petty Officer wearing a World War 1-era dress blue uniform.*

1918 1919 1920

After World War I, Ingalls went on to become assistant secretary of the Navy (AIR). He returned in the mid-1930s as a reserve officer, and then he served on active duty during World War II as commander of Naval Station Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. He earned the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star Medal during the war and retired as a rear admiral in the Naval Reserve. Ingalls would later serve as vice president of Pan American Airways in charge of its overseas operations. In 1954, he became president and publisher of The Cincinnati Times-Star newspaper and vice chairman of the Taft Broadcasting Company.

Adm. William S. Sims, who commanded U.S. Naval Forces in Europe during World War I, summarized the First Yale Unit's reputation: "Whenever the French and English asked us to send a couple of our crack men to reinforce a squadron, I would say, 'Let's get some of the Yale gang.' We never made a mistake when we did this."

The Navy Air Reserve continues this tradition of excellence by providing medium airlift capabilities, tactical air, combat search and rescue and special operations support in times of war and peace.

A commissioned officer in the Navy Reserve, Lt. Verdon serves as a public affairs officer assigned to U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Command at Naval Station Norfolk in Norfolk, Virginia.

… Highlights from Early Years to Present

1926. *Naval Reserve Officer Training units first established at six colleges: Harvard, Yale, Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Washington, University of California and Northwestern University.*

1942. *Navy Department announced April 7 that African-American males would be accepted for enlistment in the reserve component.*

1942. *The Women's Reserve was established on July 30. During World War II, 100,000 WAVES, Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, served on active duty.*

1944. *The famous "Golden Thirteen" were the first African-American servicemen to complete officer training in the Naval Reserve.*

1944. *91,000 women were serving in the Naval Reserve by the end of World War II.*

1945. *84 percent of the Sailors serving in the Navy during World War II (3,000,000) were Naval Reserve Sailors.*

1946. *Within a year after Victory over Japan Day (V-J day), 3,000,000 Naval Reserve Sailors were demobilized and given honorable discharges.*

1948. *WAVES join ranks of the regular Navy. Naval Reserve women were first authorized to transfer to the regular Navy.*

1958. *Four destroyer escorts were transferred to the Naval Reserve as training platforms. Within a year, 30 destroyer escorts and six destroyers were given this designation.*

1961. *Berlin Crisis resulted in 8,000 Naval Reserve Sailors recalled to active duty for a year.*

1965. *USS Trepang (AGSS 412) was designated a Naval Reserve Training submarine. At that time, the Navy had 23 reserve subs designated as training platforms. After the '70s, this diesel model was phased out in favor of nuclear subs.*

1968. *Naval Mobile Construction Battalions 12 and 22 deployed to South Vietnam. Seabees built aircraft-support facilities, roads and bridges.*

1969. *Naval Reserve Sailors served in the "Brown Water Navy" in Vietnam. The Navy benefited from the draftwhen many Sailors joined the Naval Reserve.*

1970. *Patrol Squadron (VP) 69 was established. Crews used their two-week annual training time conducting anti-submarine missions from Midway Island.*

1972. *USS Gallant (MSO 489) joined Mine Division 52 in San Francisco, California, as a Naval Reserve Force ship. Naval Reserve training ships were placed under direct control of fleet commanders as a means for improving operational training. The manning of the ships remained the responsibility of Commander, Naval Surface Reserve Force.*

1988. *The Naval Reserve Force (NRF) ships were upgraded to 15 FFG-7 class and nine FF-1052 class frigates. All the World War II-era NRF destroyers were decommissioned.*

1991. *During Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Reserve Component had major roles in cargo handling, medical and religious support, combat construction, control of shipping and air logistics.*

1993. *A number of U.S. presidents who served in the Navy Reserve: John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and George H. W. Bush.*

1999. *Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 209, a reserve EA-6B Prowler squadron, deployed for multiple years supporting electronic combat missions over Kosovo in Operation Allied Force and again over Afghanistan and Iraq in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.*

2000. *Naval Coastal Warfare Inshore Boat Units were activated to the Arabian Gulf immediately after the attack on USS Cole (DDG 67) to provide security for ports and facilities used by 5th Fleet assets.*

2001. *The attacks on 9/11 sparked the global war on terrorism and the mobilization of the reserve components of the U.S. Armed Forces.*

2003. *Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 201 is assigned to USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). VFA-201's deployment marked the first time since the Korean War that an entire Naval Reserve tactical aviation squadron served aboard an aircraft carrier.*

2005. *Adm. Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations, redesignated the reserve component from "Naval Reserve" to "Navy Reserve." He also directed that all Sailors, active and reserve, be referred to as U.S. Navy Sailors. This shared title would further enhance integration of both components.*

2006. *Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 84 provided combat lift and rescue support to Navy Sea, Air, Land (SEAL) and Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewman Teams in Iraq. HSC-84 conducted the longest sustained combat deployment of U.S. Navy helicopters in history.*

2010. *Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 53, a C-130T squadron, based out of Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., flew relief supplies to Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The base served as a logistics hub for supplies and personnel transiting to Haiti in support of Operation Unified Response.*

Source: navyreservecentennial.com

Reserve Squadron Spotlight

VR-62's Airlifting 'Nomads'

By AWFCS (ret) Michael Wendelin

U.S. Navy photo

There is no typical day for the Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 62 "Nomads." VR-62, one of five Navy Reserve C-130T Hercules logistics squadrons, works in conjunction with several combatant commands around the globe. The squadron must be ready for operations ranging from Operation Tomodachi, the relief mission after the Sendai earthquake in 2011, to rescuing a crew of mariners off the coast of Chuuk Island, Micronesia, in 2013.

"Each mission is unique, with a different set of constraints, but we plan and execute every mission with precision," said VR-62 Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Bryon "BT" Smith. "We can be called to airlift just about anything to anywhere on the globe, and we do it with pride and professionalism."

The Nomads follow in the footsteps of previous VR squadrons like VR-6 and VR-8 that participated in the Berlin Airlift, and proved the Navy Unique Fleet Essential Airlift (NUFEA) concept. NUFEA means that the Navy is in control of its own airlift. The Nomads are part of the Fleet Logistics Support Wing (FLSW) and can respond to Navy requests for airlift at a moment's notice.

There are two groups of FLSW personnel, Full-time Support (FTS) and Selected Reservists (SELRES). FTS officers and enlisted are full-time, active reserve personnel tasked with training SELRES officers and enlisted personnel and adding day-to-day continuity to squadron operations. SELRES are traditional reservists serving one weekend a month and a two-week annual training period.

"We operate as a reserve community, but we are anything but weekend warriors," said Master Chief Aviation Maintenance Administrationman (AZCM) Karen Quinn, VR-62 Operations Master Chief. Quinn said FLSW is supporting a wide variety of units including air, surface, sub-surface and flying missions around the globe.

Based at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, the Nomads flew 3,209 hours in fiscal year 2013 and beat that record in fiscal year 2014 flying 3,545 hours. Of those hours, 97 percent were flown on airlift missions. The Nomads have an average of 200 personnel with about 30 percent of those serving as reservists. There are usually 30 pilots, 10 flight engineers and 23 loadmasters. Additionally, there are flight engineer and loadmaster trainees. The Nomads are constantly training the next cadre of C-130T aircrew.

Training is always a priority at

"We operate as a reserve community, but we are anything but weekend warriors."

U.S. Navy photo

Top, A C-130T Hercules from VR-62 makes a stop at McChord Air Force Base, Washington, in December 2013. The Nomads support three detachments: Central Command, European Command and Pacific Command.

Lt. Cmdr. David Tambelini of VR-62 makes a radio call while flying over the Pacific in a C-130T Hercules.

U.S. Navy photo

VR-62's Nomads push a cargo container into place at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Japan. The Navy Reserve squadron provides fleet logistics support around the globe.

AD3 Alyssa LeMay of VR-62 reviews technical publications on her laptop while ADAN Jada Wilson performs a turbine inspection. The Reserve squadron is based at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida.

U.S. Navy photo

AD1 Bryan Wright from VR-62 checks the status on the tool check-out log in February 2014. The Nomads flew 3,209 hours in fiscal year 2013 and beat that record in fiscal year 2014 flying 3,545 hours.

VR-62. There is a constant pipeline of enlisted aircrew and pilots preparing for the airlift mission. The Nomads have eight pilot instructors, three flight engineer instructors and four loadmaster instructors. There is a similar pipeline of maintainers arriving from the fleet and schoolhouse to keep aircraft ready for the squadron's high operations tempo.

Established at Naval Air Facility Detroit, Michigan, July 1, 1985, as the "Motowners," VR-62 began flight operations with the McDonnell Douglas C-9B Skytrain II aircraft in February 1988. When NAF Detroit closed, VR-62 moved to Naval Air Station South Weymouth, Massachusetts, and was renamed "Mass Transport" on April 1, 1994.

The real magic happened when VR-62 became a C-130 squadron. In January 1995, the Nomads received the first of five C-130T aircraft. The upgrades and in-flight refueling capability in the T model made it an extremely versatile asset. The standard crew for the C-130T is two pilots and one flight engineer in the flight station and two loadmasters in the cargo compartment.

On June 1, 1996, VR-62 again changed homeports, this time to Naval Air Station Brunswick, Maine, as the "Nor'easters." When NAS Brunswick closed, VR-62 relocated to NAS Jacksonville, this time as the Nomads on Sept. 1, 2009.

"The moniker Nomads fits perfectly when you see our history, four home ports in 20 years," said Nomads Command Master Chief Freddy Pacheco.

The annual operations plan is much the same year to year. There are three detachments: Central Command, European Command and Pacific Command. The operations average 90 days and then another VR squadron assumes duties in theater. The detachments include one aircraft, a team of maintainers and two sets of aircrew. While one aircraft is on detachment, the remaining squadron aircraft are available for Navy Air Logistics Office (NALO) missions and maintenance.

"We can be called upon to deliver the most urgent cargo in the Navy," Smith said. "The Nomads take pride that we are entrusted with airlifting extremely high priority cargo for the Navy's most important missions."

AWFCS (ret) Michael Wendelin was a loadmaster with VR-62 from 2002-2014.

U.S. Navy photo

"The Nomads take pride that we are entrusted with airlifting extremely high priority cargo for the Navy's most important missions."

VR-62 Operations Highlights

- Set flight hour records in fiscal years 2013 and 2014 with 3,209 hours in FY13 and 3,545 hours in FY14
- Supported Operation Tomodachi: The VR-62 Nomads delivered 127 tons of relief materials during the Japanese Relief operation after the Sendai earthquake
- Supported rescue mission: In 2013, a crew from VR-62 Nomads rescued five lost mariners off the coast of Chuuk Island, Micronesia
- Earned the 2013 Battle "E" Noel Davis Award, the Golden Anchor and the Golden Wrench
- Operated 29 years and 81,000 hours accident-free

U.S. Navy photo

Naval Aviation Enterprise Tackles Readiness Challenges

By Naval Aviation Enterprise Public Affairs

Lance Cpl. Melisa Bacott and Chief Petty Officer Duane Monroe are on a mission, and they recognize that it will take every member of the Naval Aviation community to accomplish it. Their mission: help Naval Aviation achieve required levels of readiness as efficiently as possible.

Bacott and Monroe are participants in the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE), a partnership of Naval Aviation stakeholders—Sailors, Marines, civilians and contractors—working together to advance readiness at an affordable cost. From the deck plates and flight lines up to the top levels of Naval Aviation leadership, members of the enterprise focus on ways to identify warfighting degraders and remove them so that Naval Aviation continues to be a relevant, effective and affordable warfighting force.

At every level within the NAE, people of every rank and rate identify barriers, determine how to remove them and how best to spend every dollar budgeted in order to complete the everyday tasks and processes involved in making aircraft and their flight crews ready to fly. It's not easy, it takes work and the rewards aren't always immediate.

"Over time, I've realized that [the NAE] is about finding ways to get the mission accomplished while saving money," said Bacott, site core member, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 29 Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) Office. "It was actually very challenging to get started with, but the more I get into it, the more rewarding I find that challenge to be."

A former aircraft mechanic, Bacott now enjoys teaching and leading other Marines as they improve their own maintenance or supply processes to better achieve readiness. She has seen how identifying and removing unnecessary or excess steps can make it easier for Marines to do their jobs.

"The majority of the projects that I see work best

An F/A-18C Hornet from Marine Strike Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 251 prepares to launch from the flight deck of aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) Jan. 15, 2015, over the Atlantic Ocean.

U.S. Navy photo by MC Anthony Hopkins II

are workflow projects," Bacott said, "where we are able to cut out unnecessary travel and movement—and with that you see such an improvement in productivity. We can see something that would take seven days go down to just one or two days."

Monroe, a chief aircraft structural mechanic, agrees with the value of breaking down and improving processes. He currently serves aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) as the CPI AIRSpeed leading chief petty officer.

"Everyday tasks lead to completing the mission as a whole," he said. "It could be something as simple as improving our process for chow lines, or something more complicated like dealing with technical directives. It's about a better way of doing things."

In the beginning

For more than 10 years, Naval Aviation stakeholders have been collaborating as an enterprise, finding better ways of doing business. In 2004, Naval Aviation leadership saw the need for a different, more effective way of addressing readiness and resources. Their efforts became the Naval Aviation Enterprise, a partnership of Naval Aviation leaders, with a shared goal: "deliver the right force, with the right readiness, at the right cost, at the right time—today and in the future."

The concept traces back to the late 1990s with the start of several initiatives such as: the Naval Aviation Pilot Production Improvement Program, the Aviation Maintenance and Supply Readiness Group and the Naval Aviation Readiness Integrated Improvement Program. Facing a wide range of readiness issues and a need to control the rising costs of operating while sustaining aging aircraft and equipment, leaders realized the need for a holistic, collaborative approach to solving complex problems. Initially focused solely on the Navy aspect of aviation readiness, the enterprise concept expanded to include Marine Corps aviation in 2007.

"While the NAE membership and methods have evolved over the years, the primary focus has remained: delivering Naval Aviation warfighting readiness."

Today

Since 2004, the enterprise approach has evolved and expanded as the concept gained traction. From the beginning, NAE efforts have centered on the various types of aircraft communities—referred to as type/model/series (TMS) teams. Initially focused on just a handful of TMS teams, the enterprise approach now includes more than 20 TMS teams as well as a team focused on aircraft carrier readiness. The NAE has also expanded in terms of Naval Aviation leadership; enterprise efforts are now led and supported by a wide range of Navy and Marine Corps senior leaders involved in manning, training and equipping Naval Aviation forces.

NAE leadership has established strategic goals and objectives for the enterprise—most recently focusing on cost-wise current and future readiness, and creating a collaborative environment. Using an enterprise approach focused on data-driven decision-making, TMS teams now conduct "deep-dive" analyses into their operating and support costs—identifying barriers that leadership can help resolve and potential opportunities to reduce costs over time. Current leaders are committed to ensuring enterprise efforts target the most impactful readiness degraders and cost drivers.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Ryan C. Mains

Landing support specialists attach a load of tires Feb. 6, 2015, to a UH-1Y Huey from Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 262 during a helicopter support team exercise aboard USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6).

While the NAE membership and methods have evolved over the years, the primary focus has remained: delivering Naval Aviation warfighting readiness.

"Naval Aviation leaders continue to focus on warfighting first and on generating the necessary readiness in an efficient and cost-effective way," said Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF)/Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CNAP) and NAE co-leader. "The enterprise construct promotes collaboration across commands and service branches and enables us to work together to find solutions to Navy and Marine Corps' toughest readiness challenges."

The enterprise construct is based on a triad with three key elements: fleet requirements, providers and resource sponsors. (*See Figure 1: Naval Aviation Enterprise Diagram*). At each triad end point, there are senior leaders with overarching responsibilities within Naval Aviation. Fleet requirements are set by Shoemaker, whose position is often referred to as "Air Boss," and Marine Lt. Gen. Jon Davis, deputy commandant for Aviation. Although there are many providers, the primary provider is NAVAIR, led by Vice Adm. David Dunaway, commander, Naval Air Systems Command. Finally, the fleet requirements are funded by the resource sponsors that include multiple organizations within the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and Headquarters Marine Corps.

"The strength of the enterprise is based upon its unity of effort," Shoemaker said. "If there is a problem in the fleet, and the operators raise that issue to NAE leaders, we can have a direct dialogue with the resource providers or sponsors who can work the solution."

Leaders see this teamwork in action through the NAE briefing cycle, in which representatives from each aircraft community brief the Air Board—an NAE leadership body composed of Naval Aviation flag and general officers and senior executive service civilians.

"During 2014 alone, we had 21 different teams highlight 81 major readiness degraders," said Russ Scott, director of the NAE Current Readiness Cross-Functional Team. "Sharing this information as an enterprise helps Naval Aviation leadership understand what is currently being done to solve problems and also helps identify barriers that need to be escalated up the chain of command for resolution."

Through the enterprise partnership, Navy and Marine Corps leaders have worked together to resolve or lessen the negative impact of some of Naval Aviation's toughest problems. These challenges span the full continuum, and nothing is off the table. Examples include:

- Reducing the time to reliably replenish a key part
- Ensuring the right people with the right Navy enlisted classification are assigned to the right squadron
- Reducing the cost per flight hour for a TMS
- Increasing the throughput of a Fleet Readiness Center with added artisans and engineers
- Investing in initiatives that have a high return on investment in the future
- Strengthening performance-based logistics contracts to maximize availability at the best cost
- Maximizing flight hours available for training

"A lot of the work we do is focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the processes that drive TMS teams' readiness in the form of personnel,

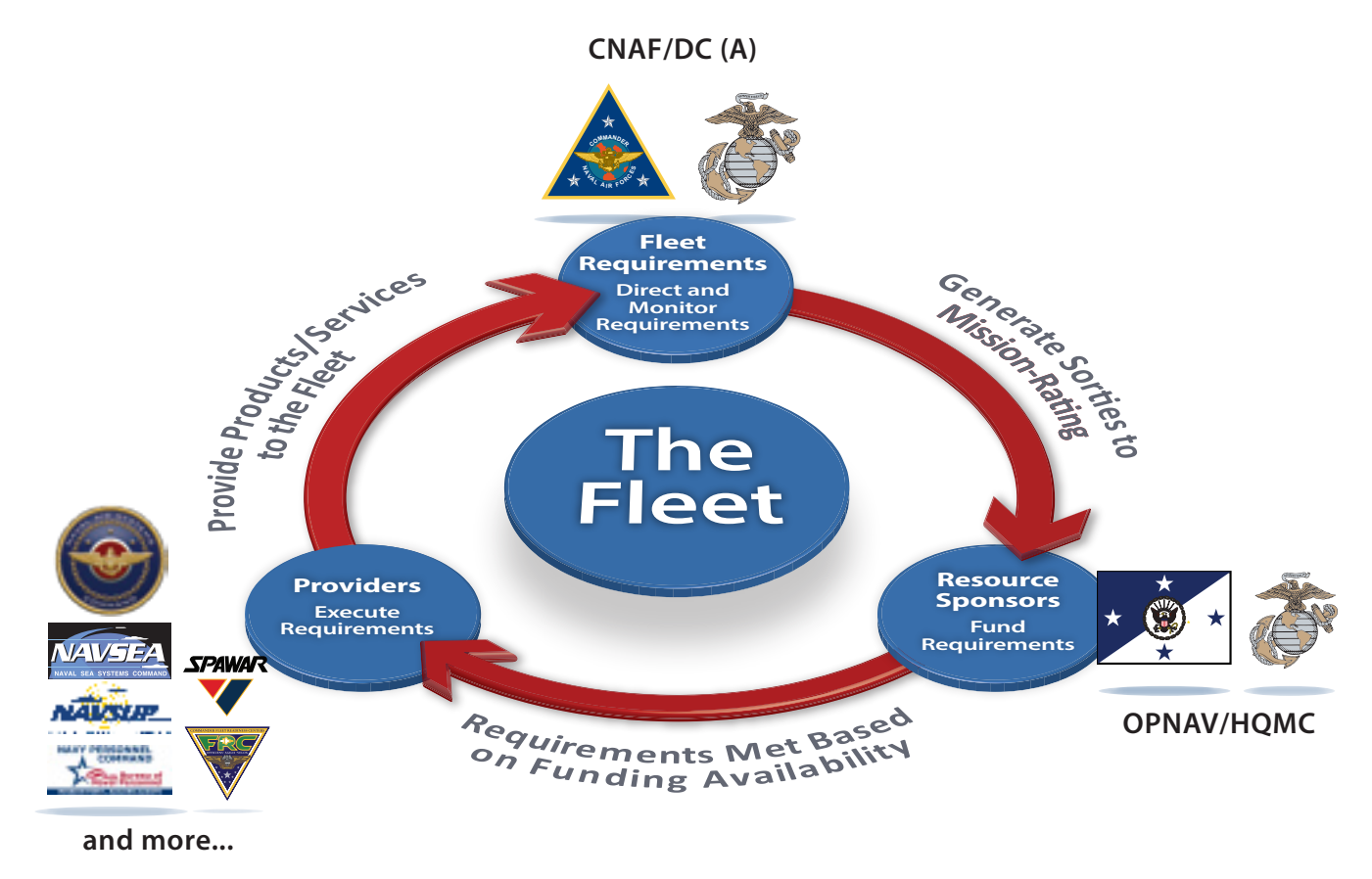


Figure 1: Naval Aviation Enterprise Diagram

equipment, supplies, training and ordnance readiness resources," Scott said, "and then working with stakeholders from across Naval Aviation to figure out how to move the right 'levers' and get readiness levels where they need to be."

The NAE is hands-on as they tackle problems. Leaders get a first-hand look at challenges and CPI/AIRSpeed successes during "Boots" events. These leadership site visits, named "Boots on Deck" when held aboard ships or "Boots on the Ground" when held at shore-based locations, are opportunities for leaders to hear directly from Sailors, Marines, civilians and contractors. During each event, personnel from the host unit present issues—sometimes referred to as "head-hurters"—that require greater leadership engagement or assistance. These head-hurters can span a variety of readiness issues, from parts and supplies to training to proper manning. Through an enterprise approach, the highlighted issues become action items that leaders from across Naval Aviation commit to resolving.

Integrating Change

Looking forward, the NAE's continued success depends largely on the active participation of Naval Aviation stakeholders at every level. From the flight line and deck plate levels up to the flag and general officer levels, it is a team effort to identify, target and fix the most impactful readiness degraders and cost drivers.

Monroe and Bacott believe that more people should join in the efforts to achieve the NAE mission, and they have some advice for stakeholders just getting involved in CPI and enterprise efforts:

"I used to be a squadron organizational-level guy, and this was all new to me," Monroe said. "I had to readjust how I thought and look at the big picture. I tell people: 'Don't make judgments immediately. Allow the process to happen. Embrace it, and you might be surprised with the outcome.'"

"The best thing we can do is make sure everyone is properly educated and get more people hands-on in the process," Bacott said. "Once everyone is truly educated about the Naval Aviation Enterprise, there's not going to be any stopping what we can achieve."

To find out more about the NAE, visit www.public.navy.mil/airfor/nae.

The Olmsted Scholar Program

Training that Takes you Places

By Lt. Cmdr. Jared Wilhelm

If you're a naval aviator interested in immersing yourself in a foreign country, learning a new language and studying abroad to enhance your leadership skills, the Olmsted Scholar Program may be just the opportunity for you.

The program, set up by The George and Carol Olmsted Foundation in 1959, offers financial grants to active-duty military officers for two years of graduate studies in a foreign university.

After spending time in China during World War II, Maj. Gen. George H. Olmsted believed military leaders are more effective when they're exposed to foreign cultures.

Now more than 50 years later, the program endures and is even more relevant in today's global society. To date, there are more than 600 military officers studying at more than 200 universities in 41 different languages spread across 59 different countries. More than 40 Olmsted scholars have reached flag rank and many recent Naval Aviation scholars have achieved squadron-level command and beyond.

Officers interested in becoming an Olmsted

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey

Then-U.S. Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta talks with U.S. Navy Capt. W. Scott Butler, commander of Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy, and Olmsted Scholar Class of 1997, during Panetta's visit there to thank international troops for their service, Oct. 7, 2011.

In their own words: Naval Aviator Olmsted Scholars

Capt. Scott Butler, F-14 & F/A-18 NFO, Class of 1997, Prague, Czech Republic
Current Assignment: Commandant of the NATO School, Oberammergau, Germany

I was an F-14D Tomcat instructor at the Replacement Air Group (RAG) in Naval Air Station Miramar, California, when I was selected as an Olmsted Scholar. Although I had been through Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN) and loved everything about flying fighters off the decks of aircraft carriers, I knew that I wanted the chance to deeply experience life in another culture, and the Olmsted Scholarship provided that opportunity.

After my executive officer notified me that I'd been selected, he advised me that it would be a career-ender and that I should reconsider accepting the offer. Interestingly enough, he ended up being the officer that called to notify me I'd been selected for F-14 squadron command. As he said then, "I guess I was wrong … Congratulations, Skipper!"

The time I spent as an Olmsted Scholar in Prague was, in itself, an incredible experience, and dramatically changed the course of my career and my life.

Scholar must apply and compete for nomination through their respective personnel headquarters. Specific requirements are set forth annually in a NAVADMIN for the Navy and the Career-Level Education Board MARADMIN for Marines.

The application package includes a nomination letter, a personal essay, completion of the Defense Language

Photo courtesy Lt. Cmdr. Jared Wilhelm

Lt. Cmdr Jared Wilhelm (left), Olmsted Scholar Class of 2014, and Lt. Cmdr. Maxi Fenley, Argentine Navy, discuss an upcoming training flight in the flight station of an Argentine P-3B Orion, in Patagonia, Argentina, November 2014.

In their own words …

Lt. Olivia Degenkolb, E-2C Hawkeye, NFO, Class of 2013, Beijing, China
Current Assignment: Olmsted Scholar
Other Favorite Assignments: Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 112, Aide to Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

The Olmsted Scholarship has given me the chance to see the world from an alternate perspective—the Chinese perspective. Besides offering a fantastic opportunity to expand my academic, cultural and linguistic exposure, it has given me the freedom to travel the region and spend time with my family. I am not sure what my Olmsted tour will mean with regards to my aviation career, but it has been an incredible experience thus far, and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Photo courtesy Lt. Olivia Degenkolb

Lt. Olivia Degenkolb scales the Great Wall of China during her Olmsted Scholar tour, Class of 2013.

Although I remained "on track" with my flying, completing department head and commanding officer tours in F-14s and FA/18s, the jobs I held during my shore rotations were directly attributable to my time as an Olmsteder. Thanks to a "By Name Request" (from another Olmsteder), I served my joint tour in the Plans and Policy Branch at U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany.

Following squadron command, I served a year as a legislative fellow in Sen. John McCain's office, where I worked international political military issues. I then served as the operations officer of U.S. 7th Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan. These orders were the result of a "By Name Request" from the commander at the time, an Olmsteder who wanted an officer with proven overseas experience.

After being selected for major command, I was assigned to command one of the Navy's overseas bases: Naval Air Station Sigonella (NASSIG), Italy. I commanded NASSIG during Operations Odyssey Dawn and Unified Protector, when thousands of coalition forces from eight different nations operated from my base. The time I spent in the international environment was the best preparation I could have had to succeed in this multinational role.

I am currently the commandant of the NATO School, Oberammergau. Despite thousands of hours flying the Navy's greatest jets, I continue to feel as if my entire career uniquely prepared me for my current assignment. I lead a staff of military and civilians from 23 nations providing education to more than 10,000 students each year. The language skills, cultural awareness and ability to be successful outside the "norm" I developed as an 'Olmsteder' have proven to be a great asset here in Bavaria, Germany.

No doubt about it; being selected as a scholar was among the greatest moments of my life. I encourage ANY officer to pursue the exceptional professional and personal opportunities that are a part of the Olmsted Scholar experience!

Aptitude Battery (DLAB) and the civilian Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Applicants also submit a "dream sheet" of different cities in the world where they would like to live and study while taking a hiatus from military flying.

A service board selects finalists, and the Olmsted Foundation names a class of 15-20 joint-service scholars per year. Each class contains up to five Navy officers and up to three Marines. The foundation pays graduate school tuition and an annual travel grant, while the individual services continue to provide regular pay and benefits.

For more information, visit the foundation's website at www.olmstedfoundation.org.

Detailed information on the Navy application process can be found on the Navy College website at www.navycollege.navy.mil under the Officer Programs tab.

Lt. Cmdr. Jared Wilhelm is attending the University of Cuyo in Mendoza, Argentina, as part of the Olmsted Scholar Class of 2014. He was previously a P-3C instructor pilot at Patrol Squadron (VP) 30 in Jacksonville, Fla.

In their own words . . .

Cmdr. Michael "BC" Nordeen, F/A-18F, Class of 2005, St. Petersburg, Russia
Current assignment: Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 211, Executive officer (PXO)
Other favorite assignments: VF-31 (F-14D), aide to Commander, U.S. Central Command

The proven path to squadron command in Naval Aviation is through a Fleet Replacement Squadron, Test Pilot School or a weapons school. The Olmsted Scholar Program path provides a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth to those who aspire to senior operational leadership roles and are willing to work hard to regain their warfighting skill set after their in-country experience. My experience in Russia provided a great deal of insight from learning a new language, immersing myself in a foreign culture and attempting to bring the best of our inclusive-and-opportunity-driven American culture to a sometimes skeptical Russian audience. One never knows when the insights gained from a global experience will benefit the Navy, but since our Navy operates forward, we know global experience is an invaluable advantage.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I choose where I want to go?

During the application process, each candidate submits a list of up to 10 countries with no more than two cities/universities per country where he/she wants to live and study. Today there are scholars in Florianopolis, Brazil, and Kunming, China, as well as in countries that are more turbulent like Jerusalem, Israel, Kiev, Ukraine and St. Petersburg, Russia.

Do I have to have a background with foreign languages?

Even though the essential aspect of the program is communications in a foreign language, you don't need a background in languages, just the will and study skills to learn one. If selected as a scholar, you'll have one year to arrive at language competency to fulfill graduate course requirements at a foreign university. To assess your capacity to learn a language, DoD uses the DLAB.

Can my spouse and kids come along?

Yes, and it is even encouraged. Scholars are selected without regard to marital or family status. However, if they are married or have dependent children, the foundation encourages potential scholars be accompanied throughout the program, including language training.

This all sounds too good to be true. What's the catch?

For each year spent living and traveling overseas as a scholar, you will owe the Navy three years of service. That means after completing 24 months of studying in a graduate program in a foreign language, you will return to serve six more years in your respective service. Also, while attending graduate school far from any base, you will take a break from flying.

How will it affect my career?

The Navy contends that the Olmsted Scholar Program aligns with the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative and fits with the CNO's "Operate Forward" tenant. Nevertheless, Navy candidates are required to submit a letter from their detailer stating the detailer has "advised the applicant of the potential career impact of this program." Unlike other communities with more built-in time for educational programs, Navy and

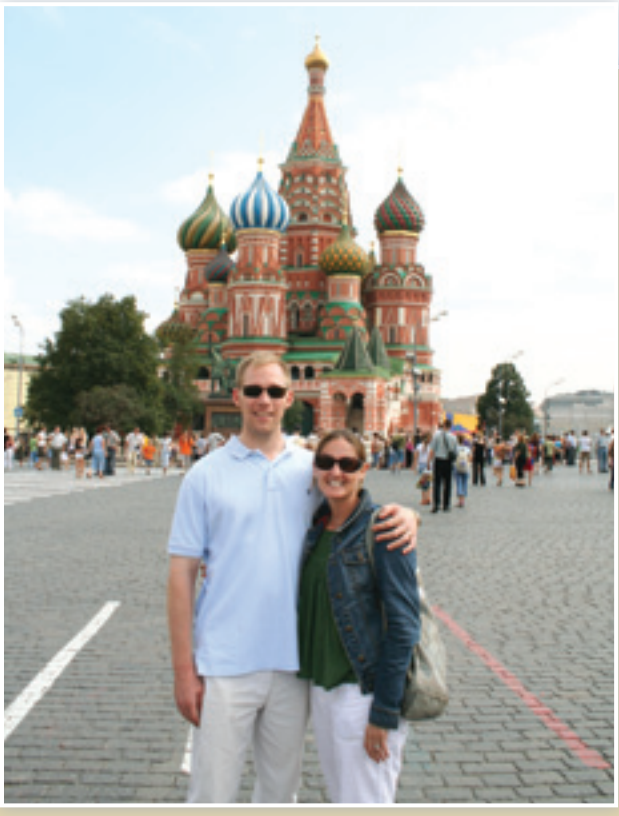


Photo courtesy Cmdr. Michael Nordeen

Cmdr. Michael Nordeen and wife, Sally, visit St. Petersburg, Russia, during his Olmsted tour in 2005.

Marine aviators generally do not have as much career flexibility to leave the cockpit for 2-3 years.

Despite certain obstacles and as illustrated in the testimonials, it's clear that today's active duty naval aviators have worked hard to ensure that Gen. Olmsted's expected outcome—future career leadership and implementation of cultural fluency—continue to be met.

What's the next step if I'm interested?

Visit www.olmstedfoundation.org, read the NAVADMIN and see if you meet the basic qualifications. Then contact current and past scholars from your community. Every aviator's timing and path to the scholarship is unique, including the different language training requirements and options, so talking to those who have gone before is instrumental.

In their own words …

Photo courtesy Lt. Col. John Baseel

Lt. Col. John Baseel and his family enjoy an outing in the "family car" during his 2007 Olmsted tour in Thailand.

Lt. Col. John "Bam Bam" Baseel, F/A-18D WSO, Class of 2007, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Current Assignment: Officer in charge, U.S. Pacific Command, Coordination, Liaison, Assessment and Training Team, Marine Corps Security Cooperation Group, Fort Story, Virginia

Other favorite assignments: Aircraft Maintenance Officer, Marine All-Weather Fighter-Attack Squadron (VMFA(AW)) 242, Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 12 Future Operations

The Olmsted Program was an unbelievable experience for my family and me. There is no other program that equips its participants with such a wealth of regional and cultural skills. Having the opportunity to be an Olmsted Scholar directly helped me engage with our security cooperation partners, striking the right balance between advancing U.S. goals while tactfully keeping our allies' interests and cultural context in mind.

Back in the cockpit from 2009-2013, I was able to apply my knowledge of Thai military culture to incrementally advance the Cobra Gold exercise to include more tactical night flying, more live ordnance training, and far greater air-ground integration. All these things transformed the aviation aspect of the training and were crucial to sustaining the combat readiness of Marine Corps squadrons and joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) elements stationed in Japan, where a lack of quality ranges precludes high-level training at home plate.

Additionally, in my operations tour at MAG-12, I was charged with the interesting but demanding job of planning bilateral and multilateral exercises with seven diverse partner nations.

Without the experience I had during my Olmsted tour in Thailand, I would not have had the cross-cultural skills to successfully engage with our foreign military counterparts. I also would not have had the regional knowledge to be able to advise my MAG commanding officer and Wing commander air group (CAG) on operational matters with the same level of expertise.

Photo courtesy of NASA by James Blair

Members from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8 "Eightballers" stand with members from NASA's Orion recovery team in front of the recovered Orion crew module Dec. 7 in the well deck of USS Anchorage (LPD 23). The module, weighing 19,000 pounds at splash down, returned to Earth Dec. 5.

Navy Helicopter Squadron Teams with NASA for Spaceflight Test

By Cmdr. William H. Shipp

After five detachments and more than a year of planning, training and execution, the Sailors of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8 reached the culmination of their efforts when they helped recover NASA's Orion spacecraft's crew module after its first spaceflight test.

With the goal of reinvigorating its human space flight program, NASA test-launched the Orion in December, marking an important milestone for deep space exploration—one destination being Mars.

The U.S. Navy became involved when NASA's Orion air operations and capsule parachute assembly system (CPAS) teams requested U.S. Navy sea-based helicopter support to complete the extensive testing requirements to certify the crew module (CM) for manned space missions and ensure their safe recovery upon re-entry.

Built on the Apollo-era crew module, Orion's CM requires a water landing when it returns to Earth. Helicopters were needed to provide aerial tracking, as well as carry two teams of NASA photographers, videographers, air operations personnel and CPAS members to document testing and the Orion's inaugural flight.

The Navy's MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter was able to satisfy NASA's unique requirements. Equipped with a suite of advanced sensors—the Multi-Spectral Targeting System (MTS) and Remotely Oriented Video Enhanced Receiver (ROVER) system—the footage and data captured by aircrew could instantly stream to NASA engineers aboard any surface vessel, and, via satellite uplink, be relayed to the Mission Control Center in Houston, Texas. The Knighthawk's large cabin and lift capacity satisfied transport requirements, enabling aerial analysis of the CM. This capability to observe and rapidly deliver integrated data was a critical enabler to the success of the mission.

Prior to the inaugural flight of the Orion Space Capsule, dubbed Expeditionary Flight Test 1 (EFT-1), the HSC-8 "Eightballers" participated in four detachments to prepare for the actual launch. This included two CM drop tests at the Army's Yuma Proving Grounds in Arizona, in which the capsule was released from an Air Force C-17 at 35,000 feet. Following two land drops, NASA conducted two Underway Readiness Test (URT) events near San Clemente Island, off the coast of southern California. One URT event was conducted from USS San Diego (LPD 22) and the other onboard USS Anchorage (LPD 23).

Combining lessons learned from these detachments and trajectory data from thousands of CM re-entry simulations, NASA engineers and HSC-8 pilots formulated a plan that would precisely position two airborne MH-60S helicopters during the actual recovery event. Both helicopters and their embarked teams were positioned to detect the CM entering the atmosphere and track it using the MTS' Forward Looking Infrared and Day TV camera lens as it progressed through its re-entry sequence.

One of many unique opportunities

this mission presented involved coordination with members of the rotary wing test community, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (HX) 21, at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland. The Eightballers operated in close communication with Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) to accommodate any aircraft configurations and certify installed equipment as safe for flight. NAVAIR rapidly approved flight clearances for the NASA mission, including specialized photography, videography and GPS equipment coupled to onboard computers for tracking the CM re-entry.

During the descent, NASA required the tracking of 22 separate items, from the CM itself to the forward bay cover, parachutes, multiple parachute lids and sabots. Those items falling from above the helicopters had the potential to damage the aircraft. In order to ensure the highest level of safety throughout the evolution, NASA elicited HX-21's assistance during the planning and flight phases, deriving optimal standoff ranges based on module trajectories and developed an ideal flow of events with contingencies for a multitude of off-ramp scenarios.

On Dec. 1, 2014, the Eightballer team embarked aboard Anchorage with three MH-60S helicopters to begin the 600-mile trek southwest to the planned EFT-1 recovery area in the Pacific Ocean. Leading up to the test event, the NASA and Navy teams worked hand in hand to refine the recovery plan and conduct a full dress rehearsal the day prior to EFT-1's launch. The combined efforts of NASA, Anchorage, Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and HSC-8 resulted in a streamlined plan for coordinated operations between air operations and the water recovery team for the CM and CPAS equipment.

During coordination meetings, the HSC-8 maintenance team worked to ensure all three embarked aircraft would be ready. They quickly corrected discrepancies in the ROVER system identified during the dress rehearsal, and in the end, provided fully mission-capable aircraft that streamed seamless video from the helicopters to NASA engineers aboard Anchorage.

On Dec. 5, the Orion Space Capsule took to the skies aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta IV Heavy Rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida. After completing two orbits around the Earth, farther than any spacecraft designed for astronauts has been in more than 40 years, the Orion crew module commenced its re-entry sequence.

Using the MTS, Eightballer pilots acquired the CM exactly when and where NASA engineers and imagery experts predicted, and Day TV imagery was fed from HSC-8 aircraft to NASA engineers. From that point on, the NASA teams aboard the helicopters obtained video and photos of the entire re-entry sequence, including CPAS deployment and capsule splashdown.

Following CM entry into the Pacific, helicopter-based NASA engineers steered Eightballer pilots to intercept essential articles in the water for retrieval by Anchorage and EOD boat teams while avoiding the descending debris. Although the sea claimed some CM equipment, the air operations team's goals and objectives were exceeded and the mission accomplished.

The video footage and data gathered by the Eightballers was ultimately disseminated to millions of people around the world. From the video, NASA engineers gathered vital design and performance data about the CM and CPAS, which will lead to the safe, successful recovery of future NASA modules.

"Throughout the test event, HSC-8 members were humbled, honored and proud to have teamed with NASA for the historic event," said Cmdr. William H. Shipp, HSC-8 Commanding Officer. "The MH-60S proved once again that it is Naval Aviation's contingency platform of choice, able to be adapted to deliver mission effects whether over land, or afloat, in support of anti-surface warfare, personnel recovery, Special Operations Forces support, logistics, search and rescue, or intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance."

Cmdr. William H. Shipp is the Commanding Officer of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8.

Photo courtesy of NASA

An MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8 sits aboard amphibious transport dock ship USS Anchorage (LPD 23) Dec. 5 while underway in support of NASA's testing of the Orion crew module. HCS-8 detached three helicopters to help NASA engineers locate and recover the module in the Pacific Ocean.

Professional Reading

By Cmdr. Peter Mersky, USNR (Ret.)

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Martin L. Carey

Chief of Navy Reserve Vice Adm. Robin Braun delivers remarks during the centennial birthday celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the U.S. Navy Reserve in the Capitol building.

Ready Then. Ready Now. Ready Always. More Than a Century of Service by Citizen-Sailors

Cmdr. David F. Winkler, USNR (Ret).
Navy Reserve Centennial Book Committee, Washington, D.C., 2015.
208 pp. Ill. $34.95.

One hundred years ago, the war that began in Europe brought forth a number of new weapons and organizations to use them. One of these groups was the U.S. Naval Reserve, a product of the loosely defined state militias that evolved from the American Revolution in the establishment of American independence from Great Britain.

To coincide with the Navy Reserve's 100th anniversary, a team from the Association of the United States Navy, formerly the Naval Reserve Association, and the Navy Memorial Foundation have produced this book. It is an impressive album of photos and text, for a reasonable price, that many Reservists, both current members and retirees, will appreciate. A century ago there were militias composed of "citizen-sailors" or soldiers. The fabled "Minutemen" of Lexington and Concord were, in their special way, reservists. Their organization was informal, consisting of their own equipment, piecemealed uniforms and financed with the money they had.

By the turn of the 20th century, America had increased international responsibilities and required greater military capability and organization. World War I was the first opportunity for the naval militias to display their new muscle, including that of the Naval Air Reserve, which will celebrate its own centennial in 2016.

The author is a surface warfare officer with experience on various staffs. He has done a credible job of pulling together a lot of information. Several other Reservists assisted him in areas including gathering excellent photos and graphics, and lending their expertise in various aspects of the publication. In addition to a nice spread of historical and current photos, graphics show off the uniforms of different periods, aircraft, ships and, of course, the people who made up and continue to form the soul of the Navy Reserve.

The early chapters describe the beginnings of the reserve militias after The Revolution, followed by the first use of these units during the Barbary

Coast engagements of the early 1800s and the War of 1812. The last part of the 19th century saw an ebb and flow of military groups, but by the 1890s, several states resuscitated these militias, including the naval militias. By 1897, more than 4,100 men were members, fortified by interest from President Theodore Roosevelt.

The formation of early reserve aviation units began in 1916 with the well-known Yale Units that eventually went overseas and flew many combat sorties with the British and then on their own. Indeed, the Navy's only World War I ace was a reserve aviator and member of the First Yale Unit. After the war, Lt. David S. Ingalls enjoyed a career in government and also served during World War II, rising to the rank of rear admiral. *Ready Then* does a good job recounting the early days of reserve aviation and features a sidebar on Ingalls.

The ups and downs of federal support of militias and auxiliaries between the world wars made it something of a miracle that anything approaching a viable force was available for mobilization in the dark December days of 1942. (My father enlisted in the Navy on Nov. 8, 1942, and was immediately assigned to the Brooklyn Navy Yard, without going through boot camp, as a reserve seaman attached to the Armed Guard. There was no time for such preliminary training.)

Perhaps the greatest example of the importance and use of the Naval Reserve remains World War II. Pearl Harbor brought an almost instantaneous recall and increase of reserve personnel and their units from all services. Throughout the next three years, most servicemen and women were Reservists with only graduates from Annapolis and West Point producing "regular" officers. The author's account of the Naval Reserve in the conflict does an excellent job of detailing this complicated and patriotic story, and forms one of the core sections of the narrative.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Jennifer A. Villalovos

Sailors reenlist at the 95th Navy Reserve Anniversary and Reenlistment ceremony at the Kennedy Caucus Room in the Russell Senate Office Building. During the ceremony 95 Navy Reservists reenlisted.

By June 1945, 84 percent of the Navy's manpower came from the Naval Reserve, 278,363 out of 328,402 officers, and 2,584,608 out of 3,388,553 enlisted. Various programs catered to reserve production and maintenance and many racial and gender barriers were broken. However, it would take many post-war years to re-establish and cement these social advances.

The book continues with post-war Naval Reserve programs and history, including Korea and Vietnam. The Korean War was largely a Reservist's war, and Vietnam drew on many Reservists as well. During the long, bloody, confusing war in Vietnam, the seizing of an American intelligence ship, the USS Pueblo (AGER 2), in January 1968 by North Korea generated the call-up of many Naval Air Reserve squadrons and personnel. While still the subject of articles and books, the incident unfortunately highlighted the lack of readiness of certain aspects of the Naval Air Reserve to respond to mobilization with fleet-ready crews and aircraft. There were reasons for the poor showing of the Crusader and Skyhawk reserve squadrons, but the result was a complete reorganization of the air reserve, much to the betterment of the entire program. *Ready Then* describes the Pueblo Crisis as well as other events that have made it a modern and viable force. Post-World War II and post-Vietnam intelligence programs included the establishment of new enlisted ratings like photo intelligenceman (PT) and Intelligence Specialist (IS) in 1957 and 1975, respectively.

The Navy Reserve we know today stems from the unexpected war in the

Persian Gulf known as Desert Storm. The invasion of neighboring Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990 resulted in a large coalition of countries not seen since World War II. America supplied a large amount of personnel and material all aimed at successfully evicting Iraq from Kuwait. Reservists participated in support and combat operations. The Naval Reserve contributed an important number of intelligence Reservists, and their performance in subsequent national emergencies in Southwest Asia has been outstanding. The great mobilization of reserve forces following the horrific attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, in all areas including aviation, intelligence and specialized communities like medicine have certainly highlighted their value. Post 9/11 intelligence Reservists have filled large voids in intel coverage.

Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, the demand for reserve intelligence officers and enlisted specialists jumped. By 2005, 45 percent of intelligence Reservists had been mobilized. It was an impressive response that resulted in an equally impressive product. There is an excellent full-page sidebar on the value and accomplishments of Naval Reserve intelligence that provides a nutshell assessment of the subject.

Another interesting sidebar is a biography of John F. Lehman, President Ronald Reagan's colorful, energetic Secretary of the Navy for six trendsetting, news-making years. As a reserve naval aviator and A-6 bombardier/navigator (BN), he brought a highly-publicized image of who the Naval Reserve was and what it meant to serve in that capacity.

There are omissions that perhaps are understandable in producing such a large and all-encompassing work. For me, the most glaring was no mention of the Navy's Aviation Officer Candidate School, which from 1955 to 2007 produced some 55,000 reserve ensigns for duty in aviation units. It was a highly successful program that augmented the Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, Rhode Island, and helped ease manning problems in squadrons, especially during the Vietnam War. As a graduate of AOCS in May 1968, I remember the 200-man summer Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) classes pounding their way around the cross-country course, their 400 boots made the air thunder as they hit the ground. With such a high production rate, it seems worthy of mention in a book like this.

Going through the book, I find friends I knew in younger days who rose to important policy-making positions, showing what can be done by dedicated individuals. I could go on and on, but I think I've made my point. There is something for everyone in this book, especially those thousands of veterans and potential readers who served as Reservists whether as far back as World War II or those just coming off active duty in Southwest Asia. It's a book to show friends and family, how Reservists contributed to the Navy uniform. Several books of varying lengths and formats have appeared over the last 60 years on the Navy Reserve, but this new volume is the best, and I highly recommend it.

Ready Then, Ready Now can be ordered from the site: upress.qg.com/book.

U.S. Navy Photo

Douglas AD-2 Skyraider attack plane of Attack Squadron (VA) 702 over the Japanese islands, after being launched on a routine flight from USS Boxer (CV 21) in September 1951. The ship was then en route to the Korean combat area.

Douglas AD/A-1 Skyraider, Part One and Part Two

Steve Ginter, Simi Valley, CA. 2014. 257 pp. Ill. $52.95.

Numbers 98 and 99 in the Naval Fighters series on one of Naval Aviation's most enduring aircraft, these photo extravaganzas will satisfy anyone from the armchair historian to the former driver and crewmen, and, of course, the modeler. Part One covers Skyraider design and development, testing, variants and various squadrons—but not all of them—and Part Two details U.S. Navy squadrons. These large volumes have well-established Ginter layout of NATOPS pages and include close-ups of interiors, specific areas like armament, and passenger seating, as well as the histories of many squadrons accompanied by photos of each squadron's aircraft. The color photos on the front and back outside covers are quite unique. There's a lot of research evident, to include finding the sources and obtaining permission to use them. There's more to come in Part Three, which will feature U.S. Marine Corps Skyraiders and its squadrons.

Squadron Spotlight

Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 131 'Wildcats'

Founded: Oct. 2, 1983

Based: Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia

Current Commanding Officer: Cmdr. Matthew A. Barker

Mission: *To strike enemy targets, from the sea, in support of national objectives*

Brief History: The VFA-131 Wildcats were commissioned Oct. 2, 1983, at Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore, California, and received its first F/A-18A Hornet in May 1984.

In January 1984, the squadron moved to NAS Cecil Field, Florida, becoming Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic's (AIRLANT) first F/A-18 squadron, earning the motto "AIRLANT's First and Finest."

As part of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 13, the squadron deployed to the Mediterranean Sea aboard USS Coral Sea (CV 43) before participating in Freedom of Navigation exercises in the Gulf of Sidra. In April 1986, VFA-131 provided air-to-surface Shrike missile and high-speed anti-radiation missile (HARM) strikes against Libyan surface-to-air missile sites in Benghazi, the first use of the F/A-18 Hornet in combat.

In October 1988, the Wildcats transferred from CVW 13 to CVW 7, and they deployed in August 1990 aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) to the Arabian Gulf as part of Operation Desert Shield. Upon return, the squadron transitioned to the F/A-18C Night Strike Hornet before redeploying in support of Operation Desert Storm.

From 1994 to 1998, the Wildcats continued to deploy to the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Southern Watch and Operation Vigilant Warrior.

In December 1998, the squadron relocated to NAS Oceana becoming the first F/A-18 Hornet squadron based there.

During the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, VFA-131 was aboard USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67) off the Virginia Capes. Within hours of the attack, Wildcat F/A-18 Hornets were conducting air patrols over Washington, D.C., and New York City as part of Operation Noble Eagle. From February 2002 through July 2013, the squadron deployed seven times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, including back-to-back tours in 2012 and 2013.

In 2014, the squadron received their fourth Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic Battle "E" award for their outstanding performance during consecutive deployments in 2012-2013. The Wildcats transferred from CVW 7 to CVW 3 in November 2014.

Currently, the Wildcats have more than 112,000 Class "A" mishap-free flight hours, a 27-year milestone in work since December 1987.

Aircraft flown: F/A-18A/C Hornet

Number of people in unit: 204

Significant Accomplishments:

- Transferred from NAS Lemoore to NAS Cecil Field to become AIRLANT's first F/A-18 Hornet squadron
- First use of F/A-18 in combat conducting HARM strikes against Libyan surface-to-air missile sites
- Reassigned from CVW 13 to CVW 7
- Deployed aboard Eisenhower in support of Desert Shield and Desert Storm
- Transitioned from F/A-18A Hornets to F/A-18C Night Strike Hornets
- Back-to-back deployments aboard Eisenhower in 2012-2013
- Achieved 110,000 class "A" mishap-free hours Feb. 21, 2014
- Reassigned from CVW 7 to CVW 3

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Alysia Hernandez

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