

# VQ NEWSLETTER



## *THE PREZ SEZ*

Greetings fellow VQ Association Members. I hope your summer is going well and that you and your families are enjoying everything our great country has to offer, including the camaraderie of the association's members. I wanted to give you a few updates from my perspective since the last newsletter.

Brenda and I are really looking forward to our upcoming association reunion in San Antonio, TX. October should be the perfect time of year in the Alamo City. We get a little sentimental about San Antonio since I am a native Texan and we spent two of our Navy tours in San Antonio. Usually when I tell people we had a couple of tours in San Antonio, they get that deer in the headlights look and ask, "weren't you in the Navy? What's a Navy guy doing in San Antonio?" To that I reply, "why I was in the San Antonio River Patrol, of course." That usually gets a pretty good laugh. Actually, I served at the same command both times. It has been known by several different names over the years – Joint Electronic Warfare Center (JEWEC), Joint Command and Control Warfare Center (JC2WC) and most recently Joint Information Operations Warfare Center (JIOWC). They do some really interesting work there especially if you have an electronic warfare background. If you have never been to San Antonio before you are in for a real treat. Our hotel and some of our activities will be right on the River Walk. There are many things to see and do, but if you have time I highly recommend a visit to the Alamo which is lovingly cared for by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Clint Epley is leading the group setting up for this year's reunion so I'm sure they'll set up a nice gathering for us.

There have been lots of things happening with the Active Duty Navy programs. The Navy continues to refine what they are calling the family of systems approach to information warfare, eventually replacing the capabilities of our venerable EP-3E. We will continue to give you updates on the progress in future editions of the newsletter, but in the meantime companies like Boeing are coming in with their own ideas for EP-3 replacement. The good news is the Navy and Congress understand the value that the EP-3 crews bring and because of

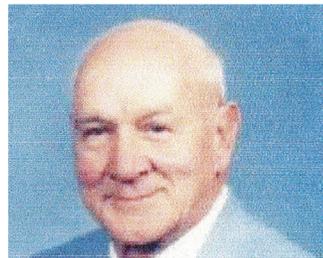
this, so far the funding for these kinds of programs has not taken a significant budget hit unlike many other Defense Department programs.

On the personnel side, I attended the VQ-1 change of command earlier this year in Whidbey Island, WA. The outgoing Skipper was CDR Dave "Rico" Suave and the incoming Skipper is CDR Tim Brosnan, both of whom were my junior officers in VQ-2. The squadron could not be in better hands. We had Skipper Suave set to be our guest speaker our last reunion in San Diego, but when I called a few days before the event to confirm, it wasn't his yeoman who answered the phone, but the Skipper himself. He explained that he had just about every Sailor deployed and he wasn't going to be able to attend. That is evidence of how important the commanders believe the EP-3 is to our forward deployed forces. EP-3 crews save lives. While I was there, I had the chance to go aboard one of the EP-3s. Some junior officers and enlisted aircrew were on hand to give us a tour. It quickly became obvious how much they love that aircraft. The system is reliable and effective (with a capital E). They love to fly and operate it. I believe the program is in the best shape it has ever been in throughout the history of our community. I have already asked Skipper Brosnan if he, XO Canfield and/or Command Master Chief Richard to join us for the San Antonio reunion. The Skipper has tentatively accepted. Let's hope their deployment schedule allows them to attend. You can view their bios and other squadron info at [www.vq1.navy.mil](http://www.vq1.navy.mil).

Speaking of history, Putt Prevette has been leading the effort to update our website, [www.vqassociation.org](http://www.vqassociation.org). He has been working with our webmaster to upload our vast collection of historical images. We still have a long way to go, but if you haven't been to our website recently, I encourage you to do so. As always, we appreciate your comments and suggestions. Also, we'd ultimately like to have our pictures labeled with the names of those in the photos, so if you can identify people in the photo that would be helpful.

Finally, I'd like to say thanks to those who have generously donated to the JD Meyers commemorative plaque. I am working with the U.S. Navy Memorial Staff to design the plaque so our Board of Directors can approve the final design. Please visit the U.S. Navy Memorial online at [www.navymemorial.org](http://www.navymemorial.org). Near the top, hover your mouse over EXHIBITS then choose PLAQUE WALL to get an idea of the types of plaques already on the wall. This will be a

fitting and lasting tribute to a gentleman who did so much for the VQ community, the VQ Association as its founder and Board President for the first 13 years and as a friend and mentor to so many people. The plaque will also commemorate the association he founded and the VQ community.  
Respectfully, Keith W. May, President



### **Commander Al Holt 1924-2013**

Al Holt was born on January 15, 1924 in Raymondville, MO. He graduated from Rolla, MO High School in 1941, entered the US Navy in 1942 and was commissioned and received his Navy Wings of Gold in December 1944. He served on active duty for 27 years, retiring as a Commander in 1969.

During his distinguished career, he amassed many flying hours flying several different aircraft. Initially, he served as a fighter pilot flying the Grumman F6F Hellcat off Sixth Fleet carriers. In the Korean War, he trained as a Combat Air Control officer and served as Air Operations Officer on the USS Valley Forge. He then transitioned to multi-engine aircraft and became an accomplished aircraft commander in Transport Squadron Seven (VR-7), flying the Lockheed Super Constellation. This led him to be selected to serve as Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One (VQ-1) at Naval Air Station Atsugi, Japan (1963-1964). In the early 1960's, VQ-1 was providing Airborne Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) collection in support of Navy and National requirements. The aircraft used to accomplish this mission were the EC-121M Lockheed Constellation and the EA-3B Douglas Skywarrior. Flights were conducted offshore along the Pacific coastline from Russia to South Vietnam.

As the war in Southeast Asia grew, so did the role of VQ-1. In addition to gathering strategic electronic intelligence, VQ -1 was tasked to provide tactical support to the strike aircraft flying from Danang AFB and Seventh Fleet aircraft carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin (Yankee Station). In his role as XO/CO, Al Holt was instrumental in implementing this effort. In early 1964,

*Continued on back page*

**From V. P. Dick McClellan**

Hello shipmates and all our ladies. Well, another fine reunion is about to happen in San Antonio hosted by Clint and Linda Epley and crew. This will be our 2nd reunion here. You'll find a reunion sign-up sheet and other reunion info elsewhere in this newsletter. Note two (2) cut-off dates: 9/3/13 for hotel reservations and 9/20/13 for reunion activities. Also note another addition to reunion sign-up sheet – a small per person charge for reunion set-up and ready room expenses that are incurred. We ask all attending reunion to be mindful of contributing the very popular \$1.00 per beverage at the ready room bar area. Includes all beer, mixed drinks, sodas/waters and each cup of wine that are 'partaken' of!!

If you are not attending reunion note the top part of the reunion form that can be cut off to pay dues or to update address, e-mail, etc. Dues for all are \$20.00 a year or \$30.00 for 2 years. Note the two number digits next to your name on newsletter address label. This is the year you are presently paid through. All dues, reunion sign-up sheets and checks are sent to association secretary Mike Chickvera.

The president, myself and other association officers would like to thank all that have contributed generously towards the \$3000 required for the "J.D." Meyer engraved memorial plaque to be mounted on the Commemorative Plaque Wall in the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C. We are still somewhat shy of the required funds to conclude this effort. Any further donations would be most welcome. Send donations individually to association treasurer Sandy McClellan, 773 Woodcock Rd, Henrico, NC 27842 with JD Meyer memorial noted in memo section of your check. I'm sure president Keith May has more to say about this in his note to us.

Next subject!! It's time for some of you association "O"s "zero's" to step up for positions in the association leadership. Many of the offices are filled by tired old "CPO's". Give us a break!! See any association officer if you're interested. Also, Patti Brosh may like some help with newsletter twice per year. She especially welcomes sea stories, photos, and other items of interest about your VQ experiences to print. Dig into your archives and resurrect some photos or memories that will be of interest to all. Some of you VQ-1 ladies of the 60's & 70's era are sure to have some stories of living on the economy (Tsuruma/Minami Rinkin) while us guys were deployed.

Thanks for allowing this worn out old CPO to be your V.P. Again thanks and we'll see many of you in San Antonio this fall.

Dick McClellan

***BITS & PIECES***

**VQ & A-3 Members,**

A little known fact but for a couple years, VQ-1 operated the RA-3Bs out of Guam leftover from VAP-61 when Vietnam was winding down. Of course some will remember operating a UA-3B 144834 with VQ-2 for several years; that jet was formerly with VAP-61 as an RA-3B. The A-3 Association has been working with Castle Air Museum for the last three years and we raised \$9,300 to move and restore 144843. The RA-3B will be displayed as a VAP-61 bird in honor of that squadron which suffered the highest A-3 combat losses due to enemy fire. On May 8th 2013 the Castle Air Museum had an open cockpit day and dedicated the 56th bird on display at Castle, the A-3 Skywarrior.

If you are interested in visiting Castle Air Museum it is located at 5050 Santa Fe Dr., Atwater, CA 95301.

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**Reunion 2014**

Dick & Sandy McClellan have graciously volunteered to host the 2014 Reunion and have checked out Wilmington, North Carolina. There will be a vote taken on this selection or other inputs at the members' meeting on Sunday. A riverboat dinner cruise has been suggested and the Wilmington Hilton has been tentatively reserved for some time in September, 2014.

*From historic buildings to noteworthy churches, movie locations to Civil War scenes, river walks to ghost walks, Wilmington, NC is a city full of surprises and diversity. It has a charm and style all its own – befitting a historic port city with roots that go back almost three centuries and the energy of a thriving destination.*

*Every corner you turn reveals something unexpected: a WWII battleship, a thriving movie production studio, brick streets with horse-drawn carriages, elegant restaurants, splendid gardens, unique crafts and shops, music festivals, theatrical performances and much, much more. Wilmington And Beaches.com*



## OUCH!

This is a photo of Wilbur Duncan, airframes, VQ-2 62-65. He says he had just been run over by the nose wheel of an A3. Thanks to timely first aid by Mowery on the right, he was able to stand mid-watch that evening. He forgot the name of the man kneeling, but his wife called him "Buns". Mercifully, they were never apprised as to her reason. "Need to know" and all that. He never did thank the A3 driver for not backing over him as well.

## LIBERTY BARS

### Chapter One

Our favorite liberty bars were unlike no other watering holes or dens of iniquity inhabited by seagoing men and women. They had to meet strict standards to be in compliance with the acceptable requirement for a sailor beer-swilling dump. The first and foremost requirement was a crusty old gal serving suds. She had to be able to wrestle King Kong to parade rest. Be able to balance a tray with one hand, knock blue-jackets out of the way with the other hand, skillfully navigate through a roomful of milling around drunks. On slow nights, she had to be the kind of gal who would give you a back scratch with a fly swatter handle or put her foot on the table so you could admire her new ankle bracelet some "mook" brought her back from a Hong Kong liberty. A good barmaid had to be able to whisper sweet nothings in your ear like, "Sailor, your thirteen button flap is twelve buttons short of a green board." and, "Buy a pack of Clorets and chew up the whole thing before you get within heaving range of any gal you ever want to see again." And, "Hey animals, I know we have a crowd tonight, but if any of you guys find the head



floor drain, you're gonna find yourself scrubbing the deck with your white hats!" They had to be able to admire great tattoos, look at pictures of ugly bucktooth kids and smile. Be able to help haul drunks to cabs and comfort 19 year-olds who had lost someone close to them. They could look at your ship's identification shoulder tab and tell you the names of the Skippers back to the time you were a Cub Scout. If you came in after a late night maintenance problem and fell asleep with a half eaten Slim-Jim in your hand, they tucked your peacoat around you, put out the cigarette you left burning in the ashtray and replaced the warm draft you left sitting on the table with a cold one when you woke up. Why? Simply because they were one of the few people on the face of the earth that knew what you did, and appreciated what you were doing. And if you treated them like a decent human being and didn't drive 'em nuts by playing songs they hated on the juke box, they would lean over the back of the booth and park their soft warm breasts on your neck when they sat two Rolling Rocks in front of you.

*Note: This is the first of a three part series submitted by a salty sailor who needs to give us his name.*



## *Welcome to San Antonio 3-6 Oct 2013*

The 2013 Reunion is returning to San Antonio, TX home of the iconic River Walk and so much more. We will be staying in the Crowne Plaza Riverwalk located on the Riverwalk within walking distance of the many museums, shops, restaurants, and historic sites. For those not up to walking the trolley bus stops outside the hotel and the River barges [www.RioSanAntonio.com](http://www.RioSanAntonio.com) stop at the hotel as well. The Trolley [www.grandtrolleytours.com](http://www.grandtrolleytours.com) will take you on a tour of the city and has an optional hop on hop off fare to allow you to see special sights like the Mexican Square Mercado [www.mar-ketsquaresa.com](http://www.mar-ketsquaresa.com), Hemisfair Park, Tower of America, Missions National Monument, King William District and much more. The Alamo is just down the Riverwalk and the River Center Mall with its IMAX Theater is next to the Alamo for the heavy shoppers among you. La Villita is the old town of San Antonio with shops and venues right on the Riverwalk and will be the site of our Sunday Mexican Brunch [www.lavillita.com](http://www.lavillita.com). The Majestic Theater is two blocks away and is interesting to look at or take in a show. Plans are to have the Ready Room up and running Thursday the 3rd of Oct with an official opening date being the 4th. No events are planned for the 4th so that friends can enjoy the Riverwalk and the many excellent restaurant choices it offers. Saturday will be our traditional Golf match being organized by Basil Foy and a day for non golfers to enjoy the hundreds of things to do in San Antonio or the area around it. Suggestions might be for those with vehicles the Zoo [www.sazoo-AO.org](http://www.sazoo-AO.org) the Witte Museum [www.wittemuseum.org](http://www.wittemuseum.org), a trip to one of the three Major Bases, Randolph AFB, Lackland AFB or Ft Sam Houston all with large exchanges, and a unique stop at the San Antonio Shoe (SAS) Factory [www.sasshoes.com/main/about\\_general\\_store.php](http://www.sasshoes.com/main/about_general_store.php).

More outside of the city could include a visit to Austin, 50 miles away, San Marcos and its huge Outlet Mall, Fredericksburg, about 60 miles away with a shopping street vintage 1890's with hundreds of unique shops and great German Food as well as the Nimitz and Bush WWII museums. See [www.visitortips.com/tig/sanantonio](http://www.visitortips.com/tig/sanantonio) for more attraction info.

Back to the schedule, we will be having our normal Saturday night dinner banquet at the Crowne Plaza with a plated dinner; \$40 per person with a choice of beef or chicken (*see registration form*). The hotel price for our group is \$119 per night and includes a full breakfast for two. Each individual guest must make their own reservations by calling 888-623-2800 or by going on line at <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/VOAssn2013Reunion> before **the designated cut-off date, 09/03/2013**. They must identify themselves as members of the group. All reservations must be guaranteed and accompanied by a first night room deposit or guaranteed by a major credit card. The hotel will attempt to honor reservations made after that cutoff date. The rate will be honored for three days before and three days after the reunion dates if desired. **Note: there is a \$10 per day charge for the parking garage if you bring a vehicle.** A tunnel connects the hotel and garage. The hotel doesn't have a shuttle from the airport but there are shuttles available as well as taxis. Parking is expensive in town but you will be in the heart of the city within walking distance of the events so no car is required but it is up to you. Come early stay late; lots to do in the area and it should be another in a long line of great reunions. See you all there.

### ***DO YOU RECOGNIZE THIS?***



This was a much viewed pattern in the hotel in San Diego. If you recognize this, e-mail Patti Brosh or mail to 2221 Cottonwood Ct., Midlothian, TX 76065 or you can bring your answer on a sheet of paper and give to Patti Brosh at the San Antonio Reunion, Friday night. All correct responses will be put in a container and Dick McClellan will draw the winner. The winner will receive a prize selected by Dick from the Small Stores.

## VQ ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please use this form for changes to your personal info and/or to pay dues. Mail this form with your check to:

**Mike Chicvara, 17615 N. 131<sup>st</sup> Dr., Sun City West, AZ 85375** and please *print legibly!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Sig. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Military Rank (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Present work Status \_\_\_\_\_ (Active, Retired, Civilian)

Squadron Service (VQ-1,2,5,6 or Support only) briefly describe duties.

Squadron: \_\_\_\_\_ Years: \_\_\_\_\_ Base: \_\_\_\_\_ Duties \_\_\_\_\_

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VQ Association membership is \$20/year or \$30/two years. Total Dues Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

### REUNION SIGN-UP SAN ANTONIO, TX October 4-6, 2013

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Sig Other \_\_\_\_\_

Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we will play Golf: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Number Playing \_\_\_ X \$50.00 Total Golf \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I/we will attend the Sat. dinner: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Total Number \_\_\_ X \$40.00 Total Dinner \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Select preferred meat entree: Grilled Club Steak # \_\_\_ Tortilla Crusted Chicken Breast # \_\_\_

I/we will attend Sunday picnic: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Total number \_\_\_ X \$16.00 Total Picnic \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Reunion Set Up at \$10.00/person: Number Attending \_\_\_ X \$10.00 Total Set up \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent name tag at \$5.00 each. Total Number \_\_\_ X \$5.00 Total tags \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Reunion \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in name tag as you would like it.

Most people put name, squadron/s and years

Make checks payable to VQ Association, send to Sec'y Mike Chicvara, 17615 N. 131<sup>st</sup> Dr., Sun City West, AZ 85375.

Cancellations will be accepted until Sept 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013. After that there is no guarantee of a refund.

The Hotel is the **Crowne Plaza Riverwalk** and each individual guest must make their own reservations by calling 888-623-2800 or by going on line at <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/VQAssn2013Reunion> before the designated cut-off date, 09/03/2013. They must identify themselves as members of the group to receive the group rate of \$119/day (two breakfasts included). All reservations must be guaranteed and accompanied by a first night room deposit or guaranteed by a major credit card. The hotel will attempt to honor reservations made after that cutoff date. The rate will be honored for three days before and three days after the reunion dates if desired. *Note there is a \$10 per day charge for the parking garage if you bring a vehicle.*



he began providing EC-121 and EA3 Detachments to Danang Air Force Base and Yankee Station carriers. In addition to providing a timely assessment of the enemy's radar environment, these aircraft issued warnings of MIG activity and ground-to-air missile (SAM) targeting/launch information. From 1965-1966, he continued to play an active role in VQ-1 operations as the Electronic Warfare Officer of the Seventh Fleet Staff. The following is an excerpt from a historical document "United States Naval Operations Vietnam, Highlights; May 1966"

"Five EA-3B aircraft operating from NAS Cubi Pt. and CTF 77 carriers, and 2 VQ-1 EC-121M(Big Look) aircraft based at Danang Air Base continued to provide SAM/MIG alert warnings to PACOM strike/recce aircraft and furnished Task Force Commanders with tactical EOB. 141 SAM warnings and 38 MIG warnings were broadcast to strike/recce pilots by VQ-1 EA-3B and EC-121M (Big Look) aircraft."

All of the crews that flew with Al were impressed with his expertise in flying the Constellation and the leadership he provided on many of the missions he flew with them. As a CO, he was the greatest. He knew his people, their strengths and weaknesses, their families and always displayed a positive approach to the challenges of command. As he put it to one of his department heads, he spent a lot of time "sorting the fly specks from the black pepper".

The size of the squadron had grown from 430 in 1960 to 575 in 1965. He and his lovely wife, Jean, operated as a dynamic team dealing with the many details of helping squadron families adjust to life in Japan. Their likeability and social graces kept the squadron at a high level of Morale Readiness in spite of the many deployments.

His last tour of duty was at NAS Pt. Mugu, CA. As the Electronic Warfare Operations Director, he continued working with many ex-VQ friends evaluating enemy avionics equipment and systems.

After retirement, Al and Jean moved to a farm on the Big Piney River near Rolla, MO, built a home and raised cattle. Square Dancing became their favorite pastime both in Rolla and in their "Winter Home" in the Rio Grande Valley.

**Our thoughts and prayers go to Jean and Family.**

VQ Association Web Site: [vqassociation.com](http://vqassociation.com)

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Patti Brosh

