

December 2014

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Officers

President –
Greg Kelley

1st VP –
Dino Vlahakis

2nd VP –
Jim Welch

Director –
Vic Gulliver

Director –
Nick Niccum

Director –
Floyd Palmer

**Secretary/
Treasurer**
Bob Behrend



VP-2 THE NEPTUNE

A Message from the President

I am back to reality in Houston after a marvelous reunion in Charleston. What a great time it was for all who were able to attend.

First, I want to thank all of you who were in Charleston and honored me by making me your president. I welcome the opportunity to serve you and to try and continue the excellent work of Floyd Palmer and his Executive Board over the past fourteen years. I was especially pleased that Floyd agreed to serve on the Executive Board and continue to lend his expertise to this wonderful organization. Doug Donohue has asked to be relieved of his responsibilities as Secretary/Treasurer and Webmaster. We are fortunate to have Bob Behrend take over as Secretary/Treasurer. Doug has agreed to continue as Webmaster until we have a replacement. I am asking all of you to think about this, and if you have any experience in this area, please consider stepping up to fill this position.

As a NROTC midshipman, active duty and as a reservist, I spent over thirty years in the Navy. With all of the assignments, VP-2 has meant the most to me. It provided experience, friendships and values that have served me well in my civilian life. I felt fortunate serving in the squadron but equally fortunate to find the VP-2 Association. It just took too long. Surfing the web one evening around 2008, looking at P2V, VP, VP-2, suddenly the association popped up on the screen. Meeting old shipmates and finding new ones has been great. We need to share this with others who have not found us. Please think of people you know or run into who served in VP-2, try to find them and get them to join us. Bob Champoux, our Membership Chairman can help with the joining part once you find them. Bob can also help with an Internet search for veterans with unusual names. Let Bob help in the search for your friends.

We agreed to hold the 2016 reunion in the Whidbey/Seattle area, probably in the summer. We have several volunteers already starting to work on the planning.

Enjoy the holidays and the coming winter. Sue and I look forward to seeing you in 2016.

Greg Kelley, President, Patrol Squadron Two Association

FORMER PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fifty years ago I left VP-2 and Oak Harbor wondering what I would do with the rest of my life, and not yet realizing that I had just finished a training period that would prepare me for the rest of my life. VP-2 was good for me and good to me. With some excellent supervision, I learned a skill and put it to use to earn a living in the civilian world. I've never forgotten the opportunities given to me in VP-2, and for that I've long wanted to repay the debt I owed to the squadron and those in it.

Fourteen years ago, at the Oak Harbor reunion, I ran for the office of president of the VP-2 Association. I never thought I could win the election, but nobody else volunteered to run for the job, so I got it. And then I found out that running the VP-2 Association is a whole lot different than running a bus company. With some arm twisting involved, I got some good people to join me on the executive board, and they started getting things done. Bob Champoux put together a Membership Committee that has searched for, contacted and signed up hundreds of new members. We put on a drive to bring more people into the Association, and we're now at 601 members... (more than triple the size of fourteen years ago) with the addition of our newest member, Ken Price.

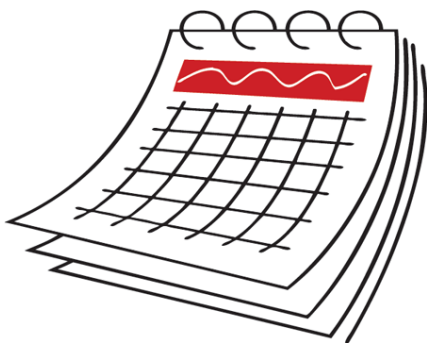
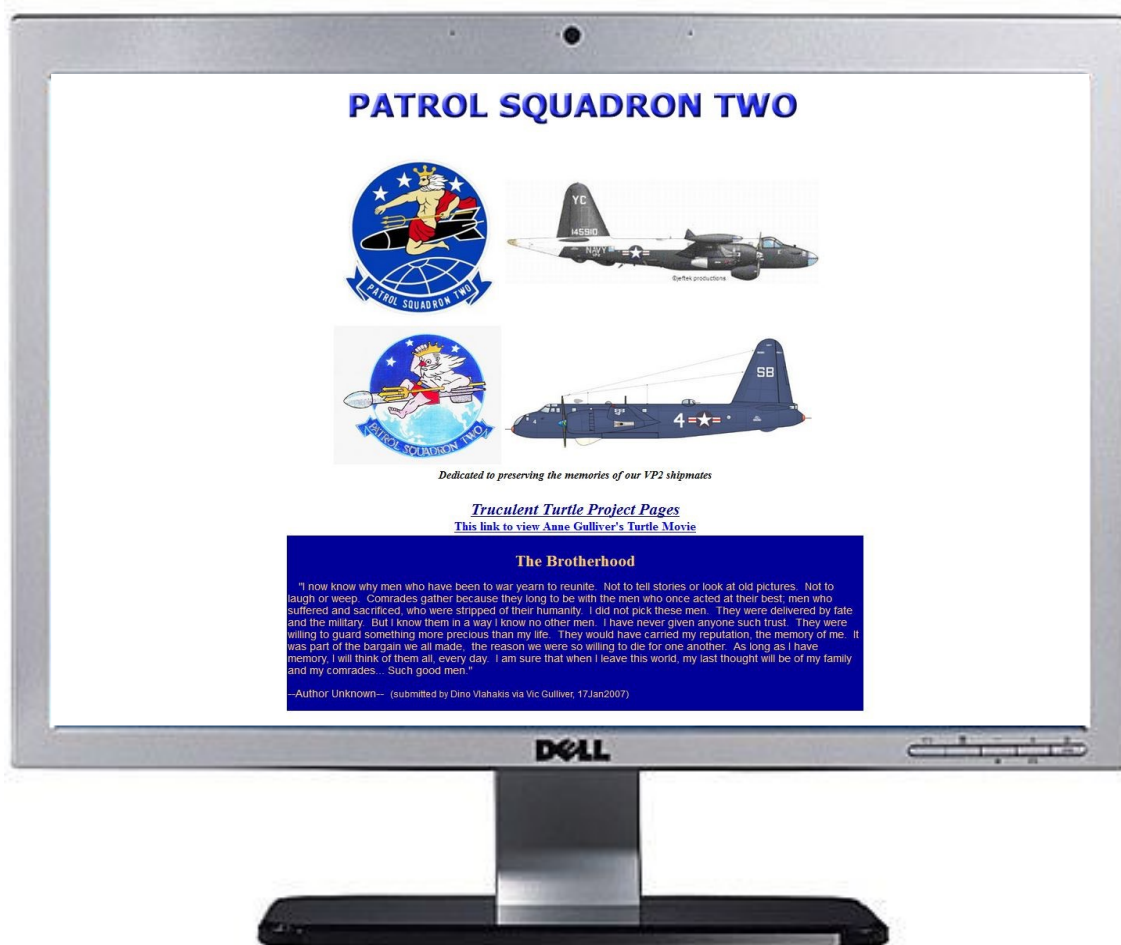
We thought about buying a P2V-7 and moving it to the main gate at Ault Field to show everyone what the real Navy was all about in the '50's and '60's. After a lot of work on that project by a big committee led by Don Hanson, the aftermath of the tragedy of 9/11/2001 changed the security attitudes on the base. Not only could we not put an aircraft at the gate, but most of our members were no longer able to gain access to the base. Our P2V-7 project evolved into the Whidbey Patrol Squadron Memorial which now has a prominent place in Oak Harbor's Veterans' Memorial Park. In particular, Dave Bowen, Don Grove, Vic Gulliver, Al Hall and Bob Wolf played major roles in getting the WPSM built. The WPSM is a work of art for which our entire Association should be proud. I was skeptical that our Association would be able to raise the funds necessary to build a memorial with a statue and elaborate granite artwork. Not only did the committee raise the money, but we wound up with money left over.

We combined the leftover WPSM funds with money from our own treasury to contribute \$50,000 to fund two continuing college scholarships in the Military Officers Association of America scholarship program for students of military families. We are the proud sponsors of two perpetual college student scholarships that forever and annually award each student with a \$500 grant and a \$5000 low interest loan.

Then we went to Pensacola for the 2010 reunion and saw the sorry shape of the Truculent Turtle sitting on the flight line with flat tires and peeling paint. The Turtle was the most famous patrol plane ever, and one that would have been flown in VP-2 if it hadn't been pulled off the production line for its record setting flight. Our members rallied for two years to raise the funds necessary to refurbish the Turtle and to maintain it in its rightful place in the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola. \$50,000 was presented to the museum at our Fort Worth reunion, and a plaque in the museum credits the VP-2 Association with sponsorship of the Turtle.

So, it has been a fun and eventful fourteen years as Association president. I thank you all for your great cooperation and support over those years. Whatever we accomplished, it was the whole group that did it. I know that you'll give Greg Kelley the same level of support as we move forward with the best squadron association in existence. Lois and I look forward to the next fourteen years and way beyond.

Floyd Palmer, Former President of the VP-2 Association.

CHECK OUT THE VP2 WEBSITE**[HTTP://PATRON2.COM/](http://PATRON2.COM/)**

**Mark Your Calendars for our
2016 reunion to be held
in the Whidbey/Seattle area!**

CHARLESTON REUNION REPORT

By Vic Gulliver and Jim Welch

A whopping (and whooping) 142 people (including guests) showed up for the Charleston reunion from October 30th through November 2nd, 2014. That's not a bad gathering for a group whose squadron shut down some 45 years ago. We were honored to have RADM Jim Summitt among our group, as well as two former Commanding Officers of VP-2 in attendance: Captain Bruce Campbell brought his daughter and son-in-law, and Captain Bert Howard was joined by his wife Mary Anne, two grandsons and a grand-daughter-in-law, and Nick Aguilar, formerly of VP-2. It was noted that some of our reunion regulars didn't make it this year, but we hope to see many of them in 2016. Three of our longest (not oldest) serving members were on hand: Rick and Sue Dombrowski (Member #25), Dan and Juanita Davy (Member #32) and Mike Moreno (Member #28) all joined the Association on the same day in 1986. Our newest members (Bill and Myrna Schneider (#599) and David Brougham (#600) were welcomed at the reunion.

We had excellent rooms and facilities at the North Charleston Crowne Plaza hotel. We had originally contracted for 50 rooms, not knowing how many members would attend this reunion. We wound up using 75 rooms. Our Ready Room was spacious and was used to serve breakfast each morning and for casual gathering with friends all day.

Thursday was check-in day, and we had a welcome cocktail hour and full buffet dinner that evening. Then on Friday morning, the ladies took over a separate meeting room and had their own private Meet and Greet. This meeting served to accommodate the wives who maybe hadn't been to a reunion before or who met their husbands after their VP-2 service and didn't know the other wives. They had fun swapping stories and getting acquainted and sharing Halloween candies.

At the conclusion of the ladies' meeting, they rejoined the husbands for the Association business meeting where plans were discussed for the 2016 reunion, and a slate of officers was elected to serve on the Association Executive Board for the next four years. There is more on that elsewhere in this Newsletter. We also received briefings about the state of the Treasury from Doug Donohue, and the closing of the Ship's Store by Vic Gulliver. During the meeting, Floyd Palmer gave his outgoing remarks after 14 years as our president, and Greg Kelley spoke briefly on his thoughts for the future as our incoming president.

For the rest of Friday, most of the members availed themselves of an interesting and informative privately guided tour of historic Charleston with a tour of the Heyward-Washington House, built in 1772,, and a stop at the Citadel to witness the cadets' afternoon dress parade. Many of the members remarked that the Citadel visit was a highlight of the tour. On Saturday, a large group spent the day touring the huge and stately Boone Hall plantation. Plans to follow that with a visit to Fort Sumter by boat had to be curtailed due to bad weather in the harbor. On Sunday, a hearty group visited the Patriot's Point Maritime Museum, which includes the carrier U.S.S. Yorktown and an array of aircraft on display, plus a tour of the first ever submarine to sink a ship, the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley.

Sunday evening saw the closing banquet with good food, abundant wine, and a disk jockey for our musical entertainment. A beautiful plaque was presented to Floyd Palmer showing the Association's appreciation for his fourteen years as our Association president and celebrating all that the VP-2 Association has accomplished under Floyd's time in office. A similar plaque was presented to Vic Gulliver for his many years of work on the executive board. In the many reunions we've attended, I don't think I've seen a more gregarious, fun-loving group on the dance floor as we saw on Sunday night. Finally, Greg Kelley wished us all a safe trip home from the reunion with the hope that we would see each other again in 2016 in the Pacific Northwest.

We do want to give thanks to the many Association members and hotel staff members who pitched in and helped with the running of this reunion. One or two reunion hosts can't do it all. We always need volunteers to help out in many areas. Let's do it all again in 2016.



Left:
Fay Hanson and
Meryl Dando



Right:
Bruce Campbell and
Doug Donohue



Left:
Rick Dombrowski and
Floyd Palmer



Right:
Jim and Pat Welch



Left:
Anne and Ernest Hand
Fay Hanson



Right:
Lynda Porterfield,
Linda Niccum,
Connie Bowen and
Pat Gulliver



Left:
Mary Jo Walker



Just for laughs

POLITICAL APHORISMS

If God wanted us to vote, he would have given us candidates.

- Jay Leno

The problem with political jokes is they get elected.

- Henry Cate

We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office. — Aesop

Politicians are the same all over. They promise to build a bridge even where there is no river. — Nikita Khrushchev

When I was a boy, I was told that anybody could become President. I'm beginning to believe it. —Clarence Darrow

Why pay money to have your family tree traced; go into politics and your opponents will do it for you. — Author unknown.

Election of Officers

At our reunion business meeting, the members in attendance voted in a slate of officers to serve a four year term on the Association Executive Board. That slate showed a new Executive Board consisting of Greg Kelley as president, Dino Vlahakis as 1st Vice President, Jim Welch as 2nd Vice president, Bob Behrend as Secretary/Treasurer, and Milt DeBuhr, Floyd Palmer and Vic Gulliver as Directors. But, in a late-breaking development, Milt DeBuhr stepped down from the Board and was replaced by Nick Niccum, who has also volunteered to work on the reunion planning for 2016. We thank these volunteers who will manage the Association's business for the next four years. And we heap great thanks on Doug Donohue, Milt DeBuhr, and Arley Hamilton who are being replaced on the Board for their years of service to the Association. Note that we are still seeking a replacement for Doug Donohue as the Association's website coordinator. The website is an important feature of our Association's ability to communicate with our members. An enthusiastic volunteer is needed to fill this position.



Dave Bowen reports that Wing Ten at NAS Whidbey Island sponsored a cleanup of Veterans Memorial park in Oak Harbor. Several volunteers helped to clean the Whidbey Patrol Squadron Memorial. Shown above is about as far as Dave gets off the ground these days. The Memorial really looks great eight years after it was turned over to the city.



Treasurer's Notes

By Doug Donohue

TAKE NOTE.....

The Ship's Store Closing By Vic Gulliver

As of the close of the Charleston reunion, the VP-2 Ship's Store is out of business.

We opened the store ten years ago at the San Antonio reunion. We sold over a thousand dollars' worth of merchandise at that reunion, but with so few new members in recent years, we've had very few customers.

With the announcement in the June Newsletter of the store's closing, we did some brisk business, selling out of the remaining ball caps and Zippo lighters. I took the last remaining products to Charleston and sold most of it.

We had some squadron patches left, which will likely be made available at the next reunion. Many of our members bought the Ship's Store products, and I don't recall anyone ever wanting their money back. It was a successful venture while it lasted

Reminder - Dues donations of \$20 are due every even-numbered year. Dues donation status is shown on the label of the newsletter and on the roster page of the website. The number shown is the year for which dues have NOT YET BEEN RECEIVED. If the year shown is before 2014, then more than \$20 is owed. Check out the label on this Newsletter. If you owe current or back dues, please send a check made out to VP-2 Association to Bob Behrend. Note that widows of VP-2 veterans have their dues waived by order of our by-laws.

The association's treasury continues to be in good shape due to the support of our members; particularly so through their in-kind donations.

The association's scholarship recipients for this year are Marissa Mueller, who is majoring in Biology at Appalachian State University, and Sidney Sanial, who is majoring in Accounting at the University of Maryland. The scholarship support consists of a \$500 grant and a \$5000 loan.

Important --- Members should please maintain current contact information with the association. Call or email address, phone or email address changes to the new treasurer whose contact info is found elsewhere in this newsletter.

Just for laughs

POLITICAL APHORISMS

Politicians are people who, when they see a light at the end of the tunnel, go out and buy some more tunnel.

-John Quinton

Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich by promising to protect each from the other.

- Oscar Ameringer

A politician is a fellow who will lay down your life for your country.

- Tex Guinan

Instead of giving a politician the keys to the city, it might be better to change the locks.

- Doug Larson

A Letter From One of Our Scholarship Students

September 29, 2014

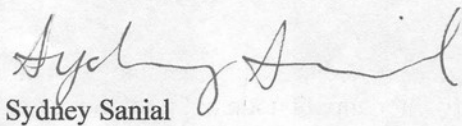
Dear Whidbey Patrol Squadron Memorial

I am writing to thank you for the generous donation that your foundation has made to the Educational Assistance Program of the Military Officer's Association of America. Your grant has helped to alleviate the financial burden of my college education at the University of Maryland. This scholarship will make the financial stress of college a little but lighter on both my family and me and allow me to enjoy my university experience even more.

This fall I began my sophomore year at the University of Maryland where I am working on a Bachelor of Science in Accounting as part of the prestigious Robert H. Smith School of Business. Being a part of the Smith School and being located close to Washington D.C. has provided me with internships and other work experience that will be invaluable when it comes to searching for a job upon graduation. My dream is to be able to apply my degree in accounting in the entertainment industry, hopefully working with live music. I am confident that by the time I graduate I will be positioned to become an important member of the work force doing something I love.

Accepting this scholarship has played a large impact on financing my college experience, so know that your generosity has not gone unnoticed. I think it's amazing that your foundation makes donations like these to students in need. I hope that you continue to make these donations so that other worthy students get the opportunity to accept scholarships like these that have made such an impact in making college more affordable.

Thank You,


Sydney Sanial

Happy Holidays



Who is Sheila Opsal By Vic Gulliver

Here is a hint. Sheila Opsal has been one of the most important people to our Association for many years, but only one member of our Association has ever laid eyes on her.

Sheila is the giant force behind our famous VP-2 newsletter. Sheila is the one who gets it done. I gather articles for the newsletter and I occasionally write one. But I send it all to Sheila who organizes my mess and turns it into a first-rate newsletter twice a year. She's been doing that as a favor to her friend, Floyd Palmer, for many, many years. She not only publishes the newsletter, but she gets it to the printer and then gets it into the mail.

Through the years, we've had a lot of favorable comments from our members about the newsletter. It keeps us all informed over those long stretches between reunions. I've visited a lot of squadron websites for active, reserve and disestablished squadrons. I've seen their newsletters. Ours is beyond anything else I've seen. We owe it all to Sheila and we send her our deepest and most sincere thanks.

This is a good place to tell you that I'm turning over the gathering of newsletter stuff to our new president, Greg Kelley. Sheila will continue to publish the newsletter for us on the same schedule as in the past. I'm sure it will remain the "best in the business."

This is Sheila Opsal receiving a check and certificate of appreciation from Floyd.



**In Memoriam**

We have learned of the loss of the following Association members since our June 14 newsletter:

Ted McPherson
(squadron 53-56)
(Feb 13)

George A. Porter
(squadron 52-55)
(Mar 14)

Alfred W. Smith
(squadron 59-61)
(Sep 14)

John C. Brown
(squadron 56-57)
(Sep 14)

Bernie Seng - Associate Member (husband in squadron 59-62)

Ginny Dietrich – wife of Larry Dietrich
(squadron 61-64) (July 14)

William C. Gowney
(Squadron '55-'57)
(September 2014)

If you know of the passing of any of our former VP-2 personnel, please advise our new Secretary/Treasurer, Bob Behrend

Chaplain's Corner *by Doug Millar*

Recently my wife and I were at a social event and wound up being seated for dinner with three other guests whom we did not know. One of the three was a single woman, about 50 years old, who I will call Jane (not her real name). Jane was quite attractive. She was intelligent, well employed, well dressed, and lived in one of the nicest locations in America. She drove a beautiful new sports car and seemed to have almost everything that the "good life" offers. But as we talked it became evident that she was not happy. She admitted that fact to us, and she went on to say that she had been married as a young woman and had been rejected and left by her husband after only two years. She confessed that she attended this function in hopes that she might meet a good man - one who would love her and fulfill her desires for happiness. She went on to describe the superficial society in which she lived, and to say that she yearned for the way she believed things used to be - with people making commitments to each other and then keeping them for life. She was tired of constantly pursuing happiness and joy - and always coming up short. As we listened to Jane it became clear that she was seeking her joy in the wrong places - through thrills and excitement, entertainment, fun and games, money and things. There's nothing wrong with any of these, but they ultimately will not bring happiness and joy, or a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Do you ever sense that there is something missing in your own life, that somehow there is more to life than what you are experiencing?

The Bible teaches us that God has created us in His own image, and that **"All things were created through Him (referring to Jesus) and FOR Him."** (Ephesians 1:16) If we have been created *for* God it makes no sense to think that we can be fulfilled if we don't have any relationship with Him. We have a "built-in" need for God, and to deny it is just to fool ourselves. No thing, no amount of money, no amount of power, no amount of pleasure, nor any amount of the offerings of this world will ultimately satisfy the need that we have for a relationship with God. The Bible also teaches that the only way we can have a relationship with God is through Jesus Christ, His son. Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except through me."** (John 14:6) If you have never invited Jesus Christ into your life I would encourage you to do so today. He said, **"I stand at the door and knock. If any man opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."** (Revelations 3:20) Once that relationship is established, we need to nourish it and tend it just as we would any other good relationship that we experience. How? Read God's word - the Bible; fill your mind with good teaching from a good church or some other form of media; strengthen your walk with God by associating with other believers; pray to Him. You will not be disappointed.

This is the Christmas season and Christ is the reason for the season.

Have a wonderful Christmas and may God richly bless you in the year to come!

VP-2 Association Officers & Appointments

President	Greg Kelley 274 Plantation Rd. Houston, TX 77024 713-419-5799 gregnsue@sbcglobal.net
1st Vice President	Dino Vlahakis 54 Westview Lane, Lebanon, NH 03766 603-448-3729 cg601@comcast.net
2nd Vice President	Jim Welch 8601 Terrell Dr., North Richland Hills, TX 76182 817-788-2204 japwelch751@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer	Robert Behrend 98-1820 Kaahumanu St. Apt P, Pearl City, HI 96782 803-455-7670 behrendr001@hawaii.rr.com
Director	Vic Gulliver 1900 Franklin Drive, Glenview, IL 60026 847-296-6907 vicgulliver@comcast.net
Director	Nick Niccum 18821 185th Ave. NE, Woodinville, WA 98077 425-788-9834 nicknaccum@hotmail.com
Director	Floyd D. Palmer 213 Woodhill Ct., Mankato, MN 56001 507-327-6761 floydp@palmerbusservice.com
Website Coordinator	Doug Donohue PO Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410 775-781-3737 nvsoar@charter.net
Association Chaplain	Doug Millar 12515 Maple Street, Leavenworth, WA 98826 509-888-1910 dna@dnamillar.com
Association Historian	Skip Forseth 2319 Brewster, Redwood City, CA 94062 650-365-2806 p2flyer@pacbell.net
Association Parliamentarian	Bob Bender 197 Mill Pond Drive, Middleville, MI 49333 616-450-6790 bobender@yahoo.com
Membership Chairman	Bob Champoux 286 145 th Place SE, Bellevue, WA 98007 425-502-9883 rchampoux@comcast.net

**LOOKING TO SHARE
INFORMATION
IN THE
VP 2 NEPTUNE
NEWSLETTER?**



If any of our members would
like to contribute news,
thoughts,
experiences, etc.,

Email:
Greg Kelley
gregnsue@sbcglobal.net

WHERE TO IN 2016?

At the reunion business meeting, Jim Welch led a discussion of where to hold our 2016 reunion. We had previously invited members to suggest their preferred reunion sites via an email survey. The leading cities from that survey were presented to the members in attendance along with some thoughts on what there might be to see and do in each city. Jim presented information on the potential for reunions in the Whidbey Island/Seattle area, San Diego and Branson, MO, which topped the suggestions from the email survey. Jim also briefed the group on the failure of the reunion planning group, Military Reunion Planners, to satisfy our needs in planning for the Charleston reunion. After some discussion, the group voted to hold the 2016 reunion in the Whidbey/Seattle area and to seek an event planner in that area to assist with the detailed arrangements. A summertime reunion was suggested to seek the best weather.

Patrol Squadron Two Association
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Pearl City HI 96782-1882



We're on the Web

<http://www.patron2.com/>