

# VP-2 The Neptune

Volume 1, Issue 21

June 2011

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Here we are, right in the middle of the centennial of naval aviation. It all started a hundred years ago with the first take-off of a civilian aircraft from a navy ship in November 1910. The real beginning of naval aviation, however, came when the navy ordered its own first aircraft in May of 1911. In those early years of aviation, any number of important events contributed to where we are today. The beginnings of patrol aviation can be traced to fleet exercises in 1913 where naval aircraft were first used to spot submarines under the surface and to detect practice mines floating on the surface. The first use of naval aviation in hostilities, and the real start of the patrol squadron reconnaissance mission, was in 1914 when naval aircraft were used to reconnoiter enemy troop concentrations in the trenches of Veracruz, Mexico.

What could be a better time than right now for the VP-2 Association to take on the sponsorship of the Navy's most famous airplane? We mentioned it for the first time in the last Newsletter, but now the Truculent Turtle fund-raising drive is in full swing. Bob Champoux has taken the lead as the head of the Truculent Turtle Committee, and we are nearly half-way to meeting our goal of raising \$50,000 to be the sole sponsor of the Truculent Turtle in the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola. I hope you will read through the information about the Truculent Turtle in this newsletter and on our website, and make a donation to this great cause if you can. Also, since many of you had tours in more than one VP squadron, I hope you'll spread the word among the whole VP community about what we're trying to do to preserve the Truculent Turtle.

Some of our members have already done this, and we're now seeing donations from outside of the VP-2 Association.

Our Dallas/Ft. Worth reunion is still more than a year away, but the dates are set and our reunion committee is already hard at work. Jim and Pat Welch and Bob and Marilyn Satterwhite have volunteered to co-host the reunion, which is now officially scheduled for October 25-29, 2012. Save those dates in 2012, and talk up the reunion with your old friends from VP-2. The more folks who attend, the better time we all have. Getting together with old friends is what it's all about. We'll have more details about the reunion in the December issue of the newsletter.

Since our last newsletter, we have been joined by several new members. We welcome them to our Association and look forward to seeing them at future reunions:

- Member #583: Ralph L. Ledford, Jr. (61-64)
- Member #584: Richard and Stella Cook (58-59)
- Member #585: Rob Morrison (67-69)
- Member #586: Dick Francis (68-69)
- Member #587: Dal and Shirley Thompson (53-55)
- Member #588: William P. Kirby (50-54)
- Member #589: George and Shirley Will (66-69)

Finally, we need to remember and thank all those who serve in our nation's military all over the world. We are especially grateful for their dedicated service in these difficult times. Lois and I send our regards to all.

Floyd Palmer  
President, Patrol Squadron Two Association



### Officers:

*President – Floyd D. Palmer*

*1<sup>st</sup> VP – Dino Vlahakis*

*2<sup>nd</sup> VP – Jim Welch*

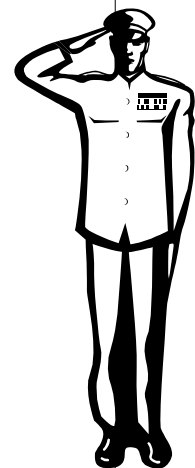
*Director – Vic Gulliver*

*Director – Milt DeBuhr*

*Director – Arley Hamilton*

*Secretary/Treasurer –*

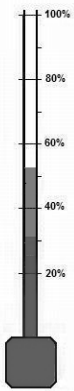
*Doug Donohue*



## The Flight of the Truculent Turtle

In November 2010, on the 100<sup>th</sup> birth date of naval aviation, our VP-2 Association informed the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, FL of our intention to sponsor in perpetuity the most famous and historic naval aircraft ever flown... The Truculent Turtle.

Pledged  
In Hand



Thanks to about 60 donations thus far from individuals and some sister organizations, we are halfway to our goal of raising the \$50,000 needed for full sponsorship, but there is still a long way to go. ***If you haven't already done so, please make a donation and help pass the word about this project to your other friends in naval aviation.*** Send your check made out to the VP-2 Association to Doug Donohue at P.O. Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410. For donations by credit card, please go to the donation page of the National Naval Aviation Museum website at [www.navalaviationmuseum.org](http://www.navalaviationmuseum.org) and fill in the information requested. In the drop down "Designation" box click on "Exhibits", and then in the "Comments" box insert "VP-2 Truculent Turtle". After submission, the museum will provide a receipt; please forward a copy to Doug Donohue at [nvsoar@charter.net](mailto:nvsoar@charter.net) to assure donation tracking and appropriate acknowledgment.

For those not familiar with the Truculent Turtle and its role in shaping and securing the navy's patrol and reconnaissance mission, you are invited to read the full story on our squadron's website at [www.patron2.com](http://www.patron2.com). There is much to that story, which is too lengthy to be repeated in this Newsletter. A shorter, less detailed version is provided below for those who don't have access to the Internet. Another longer version is available in the 2011 Spring issue of the Wings of Gold magazine published by the Association of Naval Aviation.

In a nutshell, the Truculent Turtle's crew set a long-standing world record for non-stop, unrefueled flight by flying from Perth, Australia to Columbus, Ohio... a distance of 11,236 miles over a span of 55 hours and 17 minutes. They did it in 1946, without GPS, without computers, without inertial navigation systems, without satellite communications.

### Before the Flight...



*The Truculent Turtle in Pensacola before restoration.*

At the close of World War II, the Navy was left with several types of aircraft that were doing duty in the patrol, reconnaissance and surveillance roles. All of those aircraft were designed prior to WWII. During World War II, the Army Air Forces proved to the world that land-based aviation in the form of long-range bombers was a strategic necessity for success in wartime. The strategic bombing role that the AAF undertook in Europe brought Germany to its knees, although our losses of AAF crews and aircraft were tragic and previously unimaginable. At the end of the war, the AAF's new B-29, which was the fastest and highest flying bomber of WWII, was noted for delivering the first and only nuclear weapons used in wartime when it dropped its devastating bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Soon after the war, there was a move underway to make the Army Air Forces a separate military service. The AAF wanted its independence from the Army and wanted separate-service status with its own Department and Secretary like the Army and Navy. There was also an effort by the Army Air Forces to enlarge its scope of responsibility by attempting to take over the Navy and Marine Corps air arms. The AAF had so proved its worth in WWII that it gained political support for taking control of all U.S. military air resources including those of the Navy and the Marine Corps. The AAF aspired to be the U.S. Air Force with ownership and control over all assets that flew. They would allow the Navy to have its aircraft carriers, but they wanted the carrier airplanes to be Air Force airplanes.

In 1946, there was a tremendous down-sizing of our military forces. All of the services were required to reduce their personnel and equipment to peacetime levels. Ships, squadrons, and battalions of troops were disestablished. Money to be spent on defense became scarce, and the services began to compete for available dollars. There began a "roles and missions" squabble among the services, with each service staking out its perceived role in warfare and seeking the funds necessary to support that role with people and weapons. It soon became clear that a battle was underway between the Navy and the Army Air Forces to determine which service should have the role of maritime air patrol. The AAF was touting its B-29 as the longest range, most capable aircraft to do that job. The Navy was waiting for its new patrol aircraft to come off the production lines... the P2V.



In June of 1946, Lockheed began delivery of its new P2V-1 aircraft. Since the cost of the P2V's represented a sizeable portion of the Navy's budget, and owing to pressures from the AAF to take over the role of maritime air operations, the Navy's Chief of Naval Operations, Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz wrote a memo to Secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal. Nimitz suggested the following:

*The Turtle in Perth lined up for take-off.*

*"For the purpose of investigating means of extension of present patrol aircraft ranges, physiological limitations*

*on patrol plane crew endurance and long-range navigation by pressure pattern methods, it is proposed to make a nonstop flight of a P2V-1 aircraft from Perth, Australia to Washington, D.C. with the possibility, weather permitting, of extending the flight to Bermuda."*

Left unsaid in Admiral Nimitz's memo was the fact that the intended route would exceed the distance record set the year before in which a B-29 had flown non-stop from Guam to Washington, D.C... a little over 7500 nautical miles. There were also rumors that the AAF was planning a more ambitious record-setting flight across the North Pole from Hawaii to Cairo, Egypt, a trip of some 9,000 nautical miles.

### Preparing to Set a Record...

Despite its many performance attributes, the P2V-1 aircraft were not capable of the flight proposed by Admiral Nimitz. Much work needed to be done to a P2V to enhance its long-range endurance before the record-setting flight could be attempted. One of the first P2V-1's was diverted from its intended assignment with VP-ML-2, a forerunner of VP-2. Bureau Number 89082 was pulled off the Lockheed, Burbank production line and converted to make the flight. Aircraft weight was a driving factor and anything that wasn't needed for the flight was removed to make room and weight for added fuel. Off came the turrets, guns, the main oxygen system, cabin heaters, some radio equipment, and the anti-icing and deicing systems.

Extra fuel tanks were installed in the nose, in the aft fuselage and in the bomb bay. Tip tanks were mounted on the wings. Extra fuel cells were installed in voids in the outer wings. In total, the plane could hold 8,592 gallons of fuel... more than 5,000 gallons beyond that of a production P2V. For the long-range flight, an additional oil tank was installed below the cockpit for the two Wright Cyclone engines, each of which already had its own 90 gallon oil tank. As planned for the record attempt, the plane would be nearly 13 tons over its normal maximum takeoff weight. The plane was named "The Turtle," after the Lockheed project to study the extension of the P2V-1's range... Operation Turtle. It didn't take long for "The Turtle" to become known as "The Truculent Turtle."



*The Turtle after landing in Columbus, Ohio.*

By late summer of 1946, all planning and modifications had been completed. Navy crews and Lockheed personnel repositioned from Burbank to Perth, Australia, hoping to take advantage of summer's prevailing tailwinds for the record-breaking attempt. Perth's Pearce Aerodrome, with its 6,000 foot runway, would be the takeoff point. With favorable weather forecasts, the decision to go was made on September 29th.

### The Flight of the Turtle

The Turtle would fly with only four men aboard. CDR Thomas D. Davies would be the pilot in command with CDR Eugene P. Rankin as his copilot. CDR Walter S. Reid and LCDR Roy A. Tabeing acted as relief pilots as well as handling navigation and the radios. A last minute addition to the "crew" was a 35 pound, nine-month old gray kangaroo, which was to be a gift from Australia to the Washington, D.C. zoo.



*The Turtle crew in Perth; IL to R, CDR Thomas Davis, CDR Eugene Rankin, CDR*

CDR Tom Davies held the brakes as the throttles were pushed forward to maximum power. At the other end of the mile-long runway he could make out the many news reporters and photographers. In sight of the runway were hundreds of picnickers who came to witness the spectacle of a jet-assisted take-off (JATO), and who stood when they heard the roar of the engines being advanced to maximum power. Tom Davies and Gene Rankin scanned the engine instruments, which all showed normal settings. Davies released the brakes and the Turtle reluctantly began to roll. On this day, September 29, 1946, the Turtle was a veritable winged gas tank that was more than thirteen tons over maximum gross weight.

The Turtle rumbled and bounced on its tires that had been over-inflated to handle the heavy load. Slowly it began to pick up speed. As each 1,000-foot sign went by, Rankin called out the speed and compared it to predicted figures on a clipboard in his lap. When the quivering airspeed needle touched 105 knots, Davies punched a button wired to his yoke, and the four JATO bottles fired from their attachment points aft on the fuselage. The crew could hear the roar of the JATO bottles and feel their push. For a critical ten seconds, they provided the thrust of a third engine. The 4,000 foot sign and 115 knots came up at the same time, and Davies pulled the nose wheel off. There were some long seconds while the main landing gear continued to rumble on the last of the runway. Then the rumbling stopped as the main landing gear left the runway and the full load of the aircraft shifted to the wings.

As soon as they were certain that they were airborne, but still only a few feet above the ground, Davies called "gear up." Departing the Aerodrome boundary on a southwesterly course, the Turtle flew out over the waters of the Indian Ocean. With agonizing slowness, the altimeter and airspeed crept upward... not so much because they were climbing, but because the ground below was sloping from the 500 foot elevation of the runway down to the sea level of the ocean. CDR Walt Reid jettisoned the empty JATO bottles. At 125 knots... stall speed with the flaps up... CDR Rankin started bringing the flaps up in small increments. At 165 knots, with the flaps fully retracted, CDR Davies made his first power reduction back to the maximum continuous setting. The sun was going down and the lights of the city were blinking on as the Turtle circled back over Perth at 3,000 feet and headed out across the 1,800 miles of the central desert of Australia. On this record-breaking night, one record had already been broken. Never before had two engines carried so much weight into the air.

The plan was to stay fairly low... about 3,500 feet... for the first few hundred miles, burning off fuel and reducing weight so the eventual climb to a higher cruising altitude would require less gas. But the southwest wind, burbling and eddying across the hills northeast of Perth, brought turbulence that shook and rattled the overloaded Turtle, threatening the integrity of the wings themselves. Davies took the Turtle up to 6,500 feet where the air was smoother, reluctantly accepting the sacrifice of enough fuel to fly an extra couple of hundred miles at the other end of the flight.

They crossed over Alice Springs at Australia's center at midnight, and over Cooktown on the northeast coast at dawn. Then it was out over the Coral Sea where, only a few years before, the Lexington (CV-2) and Yorktown (CV-5) had put down the Japanese ship Shoho and turned back Shokuku and Zuikaku to win the first carrier battle in history and prevent the cutoff and isolation of Australia. Within twenty-four hours and almost 5,000 miles, the Turtle would pass near the site of the Battle of Midway, which changed the course of World War II in the Pacific only a month after the Battle of the Coral Sea.



*The Crew after landing in Columbus, OH: L to R, LCDR Roy Tabeling, CDR Walter Reid, CDR Eugene Rankin, CDR Thomas Davies*



*Loading up the provisions in Perth.*

At noon on the second day, the Turtle was over southern New Guinea, and in mid-afternoon detoured around a mass of boiling thunderheads over Bougainville in the Solomons. As the sun set for the second time since takeoff, the Turtle headed out across the vast Pacific Ocean, and the crew began to establish their "at sea" routine. They stood two-man four-hour watches, washing, shaving, and changing to clean clothes each morning, and eating regular meals cooked on a hot plate. With the engines running smoothly, the crew's only worry was Joey the kangaroo, who hunched unhappily in her crate and refused to eat or drink.

By morning of the third day, they were between Oahu and Midway Island and out of radio range of either. Their flight path was drifting south of their intended course due to stronger northerly winds. Instead of correcting their course with a more northerly heading, which would have increased their headwind component, CDR Davies decided to allow their path to cross the U.S. coastline in northern California instead of Washington state. But now as the second full day in the air began to darken, the Pacific sky, gently clear and blue for so long, turned rough and hostile. An hour before landfall, the Turtle encountered increasing cloud cover and heavy turbulence. The plane bounced and vibrated. Ice crusted on the wings. Static blanked out radio transmissions and reception. It was midnight before Roy Tabeling succeeded in making contact with the ground, requesting an instrument clearance eastward from California. That radio contact was their first in nearly twenty-four hours.

They experienced hours of St. Elmo's fire that was annoying but not dangerous. Now came a serious threat to the mission. The tachometer for the left engine began oscillating, indicating a failure of the engine. In the jarring, crackling night sky somewhere over Nevada, CDR Davies suddenly had much to ponder. Navy and civil flight regulations and common sense required an immediate landing at the nearest available field in the event of engine failure. But, where was that? Probably Reno... but would that field be open, or did the present foul weather extend all the way to the deck? And what about the mission record? The Turtle was 9,000 miles from Perth, but was that good enough? The Neptune was light enough for single engine flight, but how much farther could it go on one engine? Before an attempt to shut down the engine, they determined that only the tachometer had failed. The left engine was as good as ever.

Somewhere near Ogden, Utah weather became a serious factor. Freezing rain, snow and ice froze on the wings and fuselage, forcing the crew to increase power to stay airborne. The aircraft picked up a headwind and an estimated 1,000 pounds of ice, which was problematic since the plane's deicing and anti-icing equipment had been removed as a weight-saving measure. The three hours of higher power settings and increased fuel use at 13,000 feet was estimated to have cut about 500 miles of distance from the flight.



*A bit of a celebration after the record-breaking flight. L to R, LCDR Roy Tabeling, CDR Eugene Rankin, CDR Walter Reid,*

The weather finally broke with the dawn of the Turtle's third day in the air. All morning CDR Davies tracked their progress eastward over Nebraska, Iowa, and the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. To the north, the haze of Chicago was in sight. But now, not surprisingly, fuel was becoming a problem. The wingtip tanks had long ago been emptied and jettisoned over the Pacific. The bomb bay tank, the nose tank and the aft fuselage tanks were empty. The fuel gauges for the wing tanks showed little remaining fuel. CDR Davies and his crew consulted, calculated and recalculated their remaining fuel, and cursed the gauges on which one-eighth of an inch represented 200 gallons... more than an hour's flight. At noon they concluded that they could not safely stretch the flight all the way to Washington, D.C., and certainly not to the island of Bermuda. CDR Davies chose the Naval Air Station at Columbus, Ohio to be their final destination.



*Planning the route of flight. L to R, LCDR Tabeling, CDR Davies, CDR Rankin, CDR Reid.*

At quarter past one that afternoon the runways and hangars of the Columbus airport were in sight. The Turtle's crew were clean-shaven and in uniform. And the fuel gauges all read empty. With the landing checklist completed and wheels and flaps down, Davies turned the Turtle onto final approach. As the plane leveled out on final, the left engine popped, sputtered and cut out, but the right engine continued to provide power. The left engine caught again and continued to run. At 1325 on October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Neptune's wheels once more touched the earth... touched it hard... with tires that had been overinflated in Perth, 11,236 miles and 55 hours and 17 minutes from where they had taken off.

Before the day was over, the Turtle's crew were awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses by Secretary Forrestal and were scheduled to meet with President Harry S. Truman in the White House the following day. And Joey, relieved to be back on solid earth, had been installed in luxurious quarters in the Washington zoo. The record established by CDR Tom Davies and the crew of the Truculent Turtle stood not just for a year or two or three, but for decades. The distance record for all aircraft was broken in 1962 by a jet-powered B-52. The Truculent Turtle's record for piston-engine/propeller driven aircraft was broken by Burt Rutan's Voyager, a lightweight carbon-fiber aircraft, which made its historic around the world non-stop flight in 1986... more than 40 years after the Turtle landed in Columbus, Ohio.

There is little doubt that the flight of the Truculent Turtle convinced those in Congress that the Navy not only had a very capable long-range patrol aircraft, but that the Navy should retain the role of maritime surveillance and patrol rather than turning it over to the Air Force.

After a well-earned publicity tour, the Truculent Turtle was used by the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Maryland as a flying test bed for advanced avionics systems before it was retired with honors in 1953 and put on display in Norfolk, Virginia, where it was repositioned in 1968 to the high visibility post at the main gate of Naval Air Station Norfolk. In 1977, the Truculent Turtle was transported to the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Florida where it now holds forth in a place of honor in the museum's Hangar Bay One display area. The nose art on this famous P2V-1 still says "The Turtle" with its Disney-created pipe-smoking naval-aviator-turtle peddling a whirling propeller.



*The Turtle in flight without wingtip tanks.*



*CDR Davies (center) discussing the preparations in Perth.*



*Loading up the provisions in Perth.*



*The Disney-inspired nose art of the Turtle.*

## More Turtle Photos



*The crew just before the flight: L to R, CDR Rankin, CDR Davies, CDR Reid, LCDR Tabeing.*



# 2012 VP-2 Reunion

- **What??** The 2012 VP-2 Association Reunion.
- **When??** Arriving Thursday, October 25, 2012 and departing Monday, October 29, 2012.
- **Where??** The Doubletree Inn, 4441 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063. We have very good rates from the hotel (\$85 single, \$95 double, including a full breakfast buffet). The hotel has free parking and offers shuttle service to/from both DFW and Love Field airports.
- **Why??** To have the opportunity to visit with shipmates and their families, have some good food (maybe Texas BBQ?), do some sightseeing, and have fun!
- **Who??** You and who else? Talk it up with your old friends from the squadron.

Your reunion committee (Jim and Pat Welch, Bob and Marilyn Sattewhite) is beginning to work on activities for you while at the reunion. The folks in Pensacola did such a great job in 2010 that we have our work cut out for us. We'll discuss all the activities in the next (December) newsletter. We will also have detailed info in the December newsletter regarding how to register for the reunion and with the hotel, but keep the dates open and plan to attend.



## USN or USAF

by Bob Norris

The following was contributed by several members. George Jenista sent it in first:

Bob Norris is a former naval aviator who also did a 3 year exchange tour flying the F-15 Eagle. He is an accomplished author of entertaining books about naval aviation, including "Check Six." In response to a letter from an aspiring fighter pilot on which military academy to attend, Bob replied with the following:

Young Man,

Congratulations on your selection to both the Naval and Air Force Academies. Your goal of becoming a fighter pilot is impressive and a fine way to serve your country. As you requested, I'd be happy to share my views on which service would be the best choice. Each service has a distinctly different culture. You need to ask yourself, "Which one am I more likely to fit in?"

**USAF Snapshot:** The USAF is exceptionally well organized and well run. Their training programs are excellent. All pilots are groomed to meet high standards for knowledge and professionalism. Their aircraft are extremely well maintained. Their facilities are excellent. Their enlisted personnel are the brightest and best trained. The USAF is homogeneous and macro. No matter where you go, you'll know what will be expected of you, and you'll be given the training and tools you need to meet those expectations. You will never be put in a situation over your head. Over a 20 year career, you will be home for most important family events. Your Mom would want you to be an Air Force pilot... so would your wife. Your Dad would want your sister to marry one.

**Navy Snapshot:** Aviators are part of the Navy, but so are Black Shoes (surface warfare) and Bubbleheads (submariners). Furthermore, the Navy is split into two distinctly different Fleets (West and East Coast). The Navy is heterogeneous and micro. Your squadron is your home; it may be great, average or awful, and can go from one extreme to the other before you know it. You will spend months preparing for cruises, and spend months on cruises. The quality of the aircraft varies directly with the availability of parts. Senior Navy enlisted personnel are the salt of the earth; you'll be proud if you earn their respect. Junior enlisted vary from terrific to the troubled who were made to join the service. You will be given the opportunity to lead these people during your career; you will be humbled and get your hands dirty. The quality of your training will vary and sometimes you will be over your head. You will miss many important family events. There will be long stretches of tedious duty aboard ship. You will operate in bad weather and/or at night and you will be scared many times. You will fly with legends in the Navy and they will kick your ass until you become a lethal force. And some days - when scheduling has smiled upon you - your jet will catapult into a glorious morning over a far-away sea and you will be slack-jawed that someone would pay you to do it. The hottest girl in the bar wants to meet the naval aviator. That bar is in Singapore.

Bottom line, son, if you gotta ask... pack warm and good luck in Colorado.

**Don Barthel** offers the following definitions:

**Pilots:** People who drive airplanes.

**Naval Aviators:** Cold, steely eyed, weapons systems managers who kill bad people and break things. However, they can also be very charming and personable. The average Naval Aviator, despite sometimes having a swaggering exterior, is very much capable of such feelings as love, affection, intimacy and caring. These feelings just don't involve anyone else.



## Treasurer's Notes

By Doug Donohue



Thanks to all those who continue to support the association through their kind generosity. Association outlays are very low, and in-kind donations pick up what would be significant expenses. A member's dues donation status can be found on the website roster page, and on the label of this newsletter. Membership cards and association rosters are available on request. It is not difficult to tailor a roster list that is restricted to those VP-2 service years desired.

Please remember to maintain current contact information, including email address.

By the way - the Ship's Store has recently replenished its stock of hats after a large order cleaned out the warehouse.

All the best from the Carson Valley, where the deep blue iris are about to bloom, Doug

### We Need EMAIL Addresses

We've lost track of the email addresses of some of our members.

If your name appears below, or if you did not receive an email from Bob Champoux about the Truculent Turtle, please send an email to [vicgulliver@comcast.net](mailto:vicgulliver@comcast.net) advising us of your current email address.

Herbert Banister	Ralph Leford	Verna Beam	Jim Luttrull
Bob Bugay	Rob Morrison	Jack Bowden	Carol Nason
Ken DeBoer	Charles Nuanes	Bob Carleton	Chuck Peterson
George Dill	Bob Parks	Rosemary Demich	Vivian Preston
Gayle Emele	Lee Politica	Mary Ellzey	Bernard Rice
Patricia Farwell	Larry Radics	Hubert Estep	Allen Rogstad
Marilyn Fuller	Margi Riebe	Harry Ferrier	Jim Stackhouse
Bill Harker	Irene Sprague	Bernie Galvin	Ronnie Terry
Joe Huerta	Joyce Stassel	Lee Holliston	Dick Whipple
Shirley Kuczek	John Wallenburg		



## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

BY DOUG MILLAR

Recently I had the delight of taking a private field trip with my son, daughter-in-law, and my 14 year-old granddaughter to the Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania. My granddaughter is being home schooled at present and this trip from California was part of her curriculum. Long ago my father, who was a real Civil War buff, took me to the same place. At the time I was a child and don't remember much about it - except for seeing a few cannon that were around the battlefield, and a large topographical map that was on display in the small and somewhat crude visitor center of that day. This map had little red lights installed throughout its surface and as the ranger would describe the various parts of the three day battle he would cause the appropriate lights to come on or off - such as a light at Little Round Top, Big Round Top, Culps Hill, or various other fields where the battle was fought. The whole event made quite an impression on me, but the truth is - I was just too young to have any real appreciation of the horrendous sacrifices made by the men on either side of the fight. During the three days of Gettysburg there were approximately 51,000 casualties, of whom approximately 7000 were killed or missing. I find these numbers almost beyond comprehension. I doubt that a single one of those soldiers went into the battle wanting to die, or wanting to sacrifice his own life for someone else. But that is what happened. Many of those killed spared the lives of others who were moving near them.

It is hard to stand on the battlefield and not ask the question, "Why would these men charge directly into the mouths of cannons, bayonets, swords, and other instruments of death?" Most historians and psy-

chologists, at least the ones that I have read on the subject, say that the willingness to make this kind of suicidal charge is usually the result of one, two, or three things - and usually a combination of the three: (1) a strong sense of duty; (2) a strong sense of honor; and/or (3) a strong sense of camaraderie - with camaraderie often being the most powerful element. We've seen this in all of our wars - from fighting Indians at Jamestown Island to present day fighting in Afghanistan. To not let one's brothers down - is a strong motivator. And to die for such a cause brings high praise!

Have you ever given any serious thought to the personal sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalves? This is something that we consider and talk about at Easter. But have we seriously considered it? In the New Testament, Romans chapter 5 verses 7-10 we read,

*"Now, no one is likely to die for a good person, though someone might be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, He will certainly save us from God's judgment. For since we have been restored to friendship with God by the death of His Son while we were still His enemies, we will certainly be delivered from eternal punishment by His life."*

These verses were written to Christian believers who had accepted the sacrificial death of Christ for their own forgiveness and restoration to God. This gift from God is available to each of us - if we will accept it! In Hebrews chapter 2 verse 3 we read,

*"What makes us think that we can escape - if we are indifferent to this great salvation that was announced by the Lord Jesus himself?"*

Please reconsider your position, if you have failed to accept this gift from God in the past. God wants the death of His son to be accepted by you, no matter how you may have lived your life in the past. We all have a "past." The Lord is offering us a future!

Have a wonderful spring and summer.

### In Memoriam

We have learned of the loss of the following association members since the last newsletter:

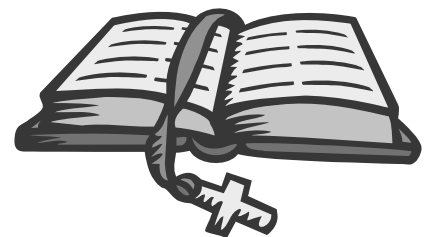
James B. Wilson ('59-'63)  
September 2010

Robert Earl Phelps ('62-'64)  
October 3, 2010

John J. Juarez ('57-'59)  
November 2010

Harlan R. Purdy ('63-'65)  
February 11, 2011

If you know of the passing of any of our former VP-2 personnel, please advise Doug Donohue by email at [nvsoar@charter.net](mailto:nvsoar@charter.net)





## VP-2 Association Officers *and Appointments*



<b>President</b>	Floyd D. Palmer 213 Woodhill Court, Mankato, MN 56001 507-327-6761, 507-388-2059 (Fax) floyd@palmerbusservice.com
<b>1st Vice President</b>	Dino Vlahakis 54 Westview Lane, Lebanon, NH 03766 603-448-3729      cgv601@comcast.net
<b>2nd Vice President</b>	Jim Welch 8601 Terrell Dr., North Richland Hills, TX 76182 817-788-2204 japwelch@sbcglobal.net
<b>Secretary/Treasurer</b>	Doug Donohue PO Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410 775-265-3861      nvsoar@charter.net
<b>Director/Ship's Store</b>	Vic Gulliver 1900 Franklin Drive, Glenview, IL 60026 847-296-6907      vicgulliver@comcast.net
<b>Director</b>	Milt DeBuhr 171 Humbug Road, Yreka, CA 96097 530-841-0805      miltdebuhr@snowcrest.com
<b>Director</b>	Arley Hamilton 101 Burgess Avenue, Rochester, MA 02770 508-763-8434 hamilton.arley3@verizon.net
<b>Association Chaplain</b>	Doug Millar, 12515 Maple Street, Leavenworth, WA 98826 509-548-3154      dna@dnamillar.com
<b>Association Historian</b>	Skip Forseth, 2319 Brewster, Redwood City, CA 94062 650-365-2806      p2flyer@pacbell.net
<b>Association Parliamentarian</b>	Bob Bender, 197 Mill Pond Drive, Middleville, MI 49333 616-450-6790      bobender@yahoo.com
<b>Membership Chairman</b> <b>Truculent Turtle Committee Chairman:</b>	Bob Champoux, 286 145 <sup>th</sup> Place SE, Bellevue, WA 98007 425-502-9883      rchampoux@comcast.net
<b>Website Director</b> <b>www.patron2.com</b>	Douglas Donohue PO Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410-2894 775-265-3861      nvsoar@charter.net
<b>2012 Reunion Co-Chairmen</b>	
Jim and Pat Welch	817-788-2204 japwelch@sbcglobal.net
Bob and Marilyn Satterwhite	817-279-9616 bstex@charter.net



Looking to Share Information  
in the  
VP 2 Neptune Newsletter?

If any of our members  
would like to contribute  
news, thoughts,  
experiences, etc.,  
please email:  
Floyd D. Palmer at:

[Floyddp@palmerbusservice.com](mailto:Floyddp@palmerbusservice.com)

**Patrol Squadron Two Association**  
**PO Box 2894**  
**Gardnerville, NV 89410**



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