



ANA PATRIOT SQUADRON - SHEA NAVAL AVIATION MUSEUM QUARTERLY MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the latest edition of the ANA Patriot Squadron and Shea Naval Aviation Museum Quarterly Members' Newsletter. This newsletter is distributed via e-mail on or about the first day of March, June, September, and December. The purpose of the newsletter is to help familiarize members who can't attend our monthly meetings with what's happening within the squadron and at the museum and perhaps inspire everyone to take a more active role in this organization.

RECENT NEWS:

On Saturday December 1st the Navy's newest Arleigh Burke class destroyer, the USS Thomas Hudner, was commissioned at the Black Falcon Pier in South Boston. This ship is named after Captain Thomas Hudner, USN, a Massachusetts resident who was awarded the Medal of Honor during the Korean War for purposely crash-landing his Corsair fighter-bomber behind enemy lines in an effort to rescue a squadron mate, Ensign Jesse Brown, who had been shot down and was trapped in the wreckage of his aircraft. For more details about this heroic action, read the book "Devotion" by author Adam Makos, which you can obtain via www.amazon.com or through any good book shop. Captain Hudner, who passed away last year, was a member of the ANA Patriot Squadron and until recent years would show up at meetings from time-to-time. Several Patriot Squadron members including Bart Cilento, Doug Folsom, Faith Frattasio, Marc Frattasio, and Robert Michaelski attended the commissioning ceremony in Captain Hudner's honor.

On Saturday December 8th 22 Patriot Squadron members and guests met at noon at the Abington Ale House restaurant on Route 18 in Abington for our annual holiday luncheon. As usual, we secured

several long tables arranged in parallel at the end of the main dining hall adjacent to the fireplace. It was a very good time.

On Friday December 14th members Faith Frattasio, Marc Frattasio, Peter Jardim, John Margie, Robert Michaelski, Joseph Muise, and Bill Sargent met with Weymouth mayor Robert Hedlund, state senator Patrick O'Connor, and Weymouth veterans agent George Pontes at the mayor's office in the Weymouth town hall. The purpose of the meeting was to familiarize Mayor Hedlund, Senator O'Connor, and Mr. Pontes with the Patriot Squadron and the Shea Naval Aviation Museum. Basically, we wanted to ensure that they are aware that there's a local group of veterans and other interested people, some of whom are Weymouth residents, who are trying to ensure that Naval Air Station South Weymouth is not forgotten as the old base is transformed into Union Point.

As some of you may know, the Southfield Redevelopment Authority voted in late February to terminate its land disposition and development agreement with Union Point master developer LStar. LStar has about a month to respond to this decision. At this time it is too early to tell what this action will mean for the Patriot Squadron and the Shea Naval Aviation Museum, but it appears that there's a good chance that we'll be dealing with yet another master developer. It also appears certain that the museum's relocation to a new facility will be further delayed. Regarding LStar's continued involvement with Union Point, it looks like there are three possibilities:

1. LStar somehow manages to continue as the master developer at Union Point going forward.
2. Certain local LStar officials buy-out LStar's interest in the project.
3. LStar leaves the project and is replaced by a totally different company.

It is also possible that LStar could be removed from the project and decide to fight the decision in court. If this happens, then progress at Union Point and the status of our museum may remain in limbo for many years.

We should have a better idea of which direction this matter is taking by the end of March. We strongly recommend that all interested members monitor the situation by checking the Quincy Patriot Ledger on-line on a regular basis over the next few months. This newspaper appears to be on top of all the latest developments at Union Point. Until this situation settles out, please try to remain optimistic. Perhaps some good will come from this situation once its behind us.

Until further notice we will continue to meet from 11 AM to noon on the last Saturday of the month in the South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation meeting room in what was formerly the NAS South Weymouth base housing office at Union Point. This is the small white building located next to the Shea Memorial Grove and is, in fact, the last structure built by the Navy on the old base. If you live in the local area we strongly suggest that you attend our monthly meetings, especially while the museum is in this period of transition from where it was to where it is going to be.

COMING UP:

Weymouth's 400th anniversary is coming up and for the next four years there will be activities scheduled to celebrate the town's history. The town is going to be focusing on 20th Century history during 2019. Your newsletter editor, Marc Frattasio, was approached by the town's historical committee to give a public lecture on the history of NAS South Weymouth. This will be presented at the Fairing Way community at Union Point from 7 to 8:30 PM on Thursday May 9th. All are welcome to attend up to the maximum capacity of the Fairing Way function room. More information will be provided as this date approaches.

HELP WANTED:

As we've stated previously, with the Shea Naval Aviation Museum closed and our collection in storage, the most important thing that you can do to help the ANA Patriot Squadron at this time is to remain engaged, interested, and enthusiastic. If you live in the Boston area, please try to attend our monthly meetings.

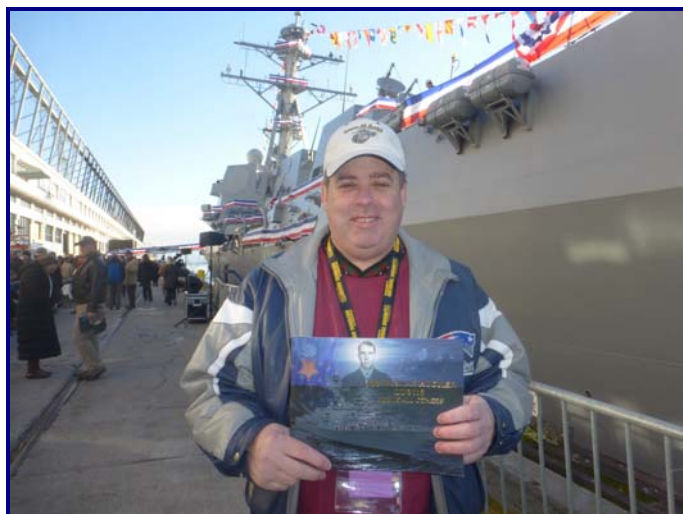
We may need some help after the spring arrives performing some restoration work on the signage at the Shea Memorial Grove. All the larger signs are in need of repainting and at least one sign may require some woodworking to address some rot. If this is something that you can help with, please talk to Bill Sargent at one of our monthly meetings.

DID YOU KNOW?:

At one time there were six USNR carrier anti-submarine or "VS" squadrons drilling at NAS South Weymouth, some of which were transferred from NAS Squantum in December 1953. These squadrons first flew TBM Avengers, then Grumman AF Guardians, and finally Grumman S2 Trackers. The last two VS squadrons at NAS South Weymouth were disestablished in 1970 with most of the reservists being transferred into VP-92.



SOME RECENT PHOTOS:



Top Left: Bart Cilento and Faith Frattasio at the USS Hudner commissioning ceremony. **Top Right:** Doug Folsom standing next to the ship. **Middle Left:** The Hudner's crew "brings the ship to life". **Middle Right:** Patriot Squadron members meeting with Weymouth mayor Robert Hedlund, state senator Patrick O'Connor, and veteran's agent George Pontes. **Bottom Left and Right:** Our annual holiday luncheon at the Abington Ale House restaurant.

A WINDOW INTO THE PAST:



Various model TBM Avengers were based at NAS Squantum during the post-WW2 period for use by the Naval Air Reserve VA, VC, and VS squadrons on the base. All of the Avengers based at NAS Squantum were Eastern-built TBMs, not the more famous Grumman-built TBFs. A number of TBMs moved from NAS Squantum to NAS South Weymouth in December 1953. They were replaced by Grumman AF Guardians in 1955. This image shows a radar-equipped TBM-3E unfolding its wings at NAS Squantum on a drill weekend in 1949. Note the “ZA” on the tail. This was a short-lived marking scheme for reserve aircraft used during the late 1940s. The first letter was the base identification code, and “Z” stood for NAS Squantum. The second letter was the aircraft type identification code, and “A” stood for “attack”. Thus, the code “ZA” meant an attack aircraft based at NAS Squantum.

