



## **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:**

Members Steve Cohn, Wally Massenbug, and Frank Ward returned to the USS Salem museum ship at the old Quincy Shipyard on Saturday November 18<sup>th</sup> and brought back more artifacts associated with NAS Squantum or NAS South Weymouth. The items that they gathered have been placed in storage with the rest of the Shea Naval Aviation Museum's collection in Building 140 at Union Point.

The Brunswick Naval Aviation Museum was forced to cancel its planned NAS Brunswick reunion, which had been scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup> through 17<sup>th</sup> on account of Hurricane Lee. Although the storm was forecast to pass several hundred miles off shore, the winds were expected to be much higher than the tent that the museum had rented for the occasion was rated to withstand. In addition to this, the VX-30 and German Navy P-3C Orions cancelled, and it seemed likely going into the weekend that the Canadian CP-140 Aurora and VP-8 P-8A Poseidon would have to cancel their appearances too. Thus, the proper course of action was to cancel the event. The Brunswick Naval Aviation Museum intends to try again in 2024, and is tentatively planning for the weekend of September 13<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars now if you think you might

want to go. With another year for planning, perhaps next year's event will be even better than the one that was supposed to happen this year.

On Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup> several Patriot Squadron members attended the annual lobster bake organized by the Boston chapter of the Marine Corps Aviation Association at the Fourth Cliff Military Recreation Area in Marshfield, MA. The MCAA is very similar to the Association of Naval Aviation and has nearly identical goals and objectives, but is USMC oriented. The Boston chapter of this fine organization is composed mainly of veterans of the USMCR units that were based at NAS Squantum and NAS South Weymouth. A few photos taken at this event follow:



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Patriot Squadron members John Margie, Bob Michaelski and Mark Danckert, Faith Frattasio, and Doug Folsom at the MCAA lobster bake. Please note that John, Mark, and Doug are also members of the Marine Corps Aviation Association.

In recent weeks some progress has been made regarding the possibility of using the former Coast Guard building at Union Point as a temporary or permanent venue for the Shea Naval Aviation Museum. Members Wally Massenburg, Bill Sargent, and Frank Ward, and possibly other Patriot Squadron members too, have toured this building with SRA personnel in recent weeks. At some point soon Patriot Squadron members will meet with the SRA to discuss the possible terms and

conditions associated with occupying this facility. There is still much to consider regarding this course of action. For example:

- Terms of occupancy
- Rental costs, if any
- Cost of heat, electricity, water, sewage, trash disposal, insurance, etc.
- Permits
- Repairs or updates required
- Compliance issues (i.e., Americans with Disabilities Act)
- Ongoing maintenance

Another thing to consider is, if we occupy the Coast Guard building, would this completely satisfy the BRAC requirement for the developers of the property to provide a venue for the museum? In other words, if the Patriot Squadron moves into the Coast Guard building, would that remove any further legal obligations on the part of the SRA and/or developers to help with the museum going forward?

Weymouth City Counsel member John Abbot recently provided the forms to apply for community preservation funding to assist with repainting the A-4B Skyhawk and restoring/replacing the large blue & gold signs at the Shea Memorial Grove park. Your newsletter editor has made a first pass through filling out these forms. Our intent is to ask for enough money to bridge the gap between what we raised through our own fund-raising efforts and the responses we received for the aircraft and sign RFPs. We received one response for each RFP, one for the aircraft and one for the signs. What we need to go forward with the application are letters of support from Weymouth residents. We need as many of these letters as possible. If you live in Weymouth, please write a letter of support addressed to "To Whom it May Concern" and either send it to the PO Box address on the newsletter's masthead or bring it with you to one of our monthly meetings. We would like to submit the application by the end of February 2024. If successful, we would like to have the work done this coming summer.

### **COMING UP:**

As in previous years, we have suspended monthly meetings for the holiday season. Our next meeting will be held at the SRA meeting room at Union Point, and via Zoom for remote attendees, on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup> 2024 starting at 11 AM EST.

We will hold our annual holiday luncheon at the Abington Ale House restaurant on Route 18 in Abington, MA on Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> between noon and 3 PM. There is no need to RSVP. If you want to come, just show up on that date at noon prepared to order something off the menu and tell whoever is at the front of the restaurant that you are with the ANA Patriot Squadron. All members and their guests are welcome. Please note that the Abington Ale House is the same place that we have been holding the holiday luncheon for the past several years.

Membership dues are payable at this time, if your Patriot Squadron membership is about to expire. If you are coming to the annual holiday luncheon you can pay membership director Wally Massenburg in person at this event. Please note that the Patriot Squadron is the Boston area chapter of a national organization called the Association of Naval Aviation. Although we do not require Patriot Squadron members to join the national organization, we do highly encourage it. Among other things, membership in the Association of Naval Aviation will bring you four issues of their quarterly magazine, "Wings of Gold". You can check out the Association of Naval Aviation and join on-line at [www.anahq.org](http://www.anahq.org).

The Navy will commission a new nuclear attack submarine, the USS Massachusetts, in Boston Harbor during 2025. We'll be watching this situation very carefully and if there's an opportunity for members to attend the commissioning ceremony, we'll let you know. The last time this happened was in 2018 with the commissioning of the destroyer USS Thomas Hudner at the Black Falcon Pier in South Boston. Several members attended the commissioning ceremony, and it was a good time.

The city of Weymouth intends to establish a veteran's memorial museum in the old VFW building at 601 Broad Street. We have been asked to participate in this project. We'll report more on this as the situation progresses. This is something that literally just came up within the past few days and we are in the process of evaluating the situation. One important thing to consider regarding this opportunity is that the person who reached out to us to ask if we'd like to participate, Harrison Carter, is the assistant grant coordinator for Weymouth. Harrison Carter and Leilani Dalpi, who are both associated with this effort, are expected to show up at the upcoming holiday luncheon. If they are unable to make it, they will come to the next Patriot Squadron meeting on Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **HELP WANTED:**

As of now, the only major leadership role in this organization that needs to be filled is the public relations officer, which will be vacated at the end of December. This is an important role that should be filled. Among other things, the PAO

- Produces this newsletter four times per year (March, June, September, December)
- Produces articles for Wings of Gold magazine four times per year on their editorial schedule
- Maintains the Patriot Squadron web site and handles the relationship with web service provider GoDaddy.Com
- Handles all public correspondence

The PAO does other things too, but the tasks in the list presented above are the primary responsibilities. If anybody out there would like to take this role on, please speak up during any of our monthly meetings.

We've got a missing pulley on the flagpole at the Shea Memorial Grove. It has to be replaced, but the SRA will not allow us to put a ladder on the flagpole due to safety concerns. We have to use something that's self-supporting, such as a scaffold or a cherry picker. If anybody in the Weymouth area has something that could be used to replace the pulley on the flagpole please reach out to us via e-mail at [inquiries@anapatriotquadron.org](mailto:inquiries@anapatriotquadron.org) or talk to any of our directors at an upcoming meeting.

## DID YOU KNOW?



Grumman F6F Hellcats disappeared from NAS Squantum in 1949 but then re-appeared for a brief time during the Korean War. What happened was the USNR and USMCR fighter squadron training programs on the base re-equipped with Grumman F4U and Eastern FG Corsairs that year and the Hellcats were sent off on what was assumed to be a one-way trip to the boneyard. Then, the Korean War started the following year.

Suddenly Corsairs went from being considered obsolete and suitable only for reserve training purposes to high demand for use as ground attack aircraft in the war zone. For a while the Navy and the Marine Corps were able to pull them out of the naval aircraft boneyard at NAS Litchfield Park, AZ and return them to service, but eventually the supply of stored Corsairs ran dry.

In 1952 the Navy took Corsairs away from reserve training bases across the country and transferred them to the regular Navy and Marine Corps. The former reserve Corsairs were retained in the United States to train activated reserve pilots and those who were transitioning from other aircraft types.

By this time Hellcats were nearly gone from the regular Navy. Although they were considered obsolete for most purposes, they were considered “good enough” for the reserve. Since there were plenty of Hellcats stored at NAS Litchfield Park, some got a temporary reprieve to replace reserve Corsairs. The first of these Hellcats arrived at NAS Squantum in June 1952 and by August there were 18 on the base. They did not last long, being replaced by FG-1D Corsairs in January 1953.

A WINDOW INTO THE PAST:



During the Second World War all the buildings at NAS Squantum received a coat of gray camouflage paint. This photo shows the base operations building/control tower, the crash barn, and an administrative building a few years after the war ended by still in wartime camouflage gray. During the base's final few years many buildings were repainted white and the control tower received a high-visibility red-and-white "checkerboard" pattern color scheme so it could be more easily seen by pilots who might have to take instructions from the air controllers via blinker light signal.

