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100 Years of Progress and Achievement

CENTENNIAL

of Naval Aviation



“Pilot Talk”

North Island

Lighter-Than-Air Goes to War
All-Weather Corsairs





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COVER: “PILOT TALK”, Oil on canvas; 1996 (Navy Art Collection 96-93-B) . The original artwork was painted by artist and retired Naval Aviator Capt. Ted Wilbur. The scene depicts a T-2 Buckeye instructor debriefing a student following a training flight. (Courtesy of NHHC)

Word From the 'Air Boss'



**Vice Adm.
Al Myers
Commander, Naval Air Forces**

Our centennial commemoration is off to a great start! Under sunny, clear blue skies on February 12, more than 70,000 visitors came to Naval Air Station North Island to see the best of Naval Aviation with a flight line display of more than 75 aircraft proudly representing Naval Aviation from a working model of the A-1 Triad to a static display of the X-47B. But the highlight, by far, was the Parade of Flight!

The San Diego event is just the beginning of what promises to be a signature year in Naval Aviation as we boldly show the world what our naval forces bring to the fight. Already this year our Navy and Marine Corps team is making a difference in real-world operations in Libya, the Horn of Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan and in providing critical relief to the people of Japan.

Our Sailors and Marines are serving on the front lines and continuing the proud heritage of Naval Aviation that we celebrate this year. I could not be prouder!

Fight to fly, fly to fight, fight to win!

From the Editor

And we're off! February 12, 2011, the Centennial of Naval Aviation was kicked off in grand fashion with San Diego's 100th Anniversary Parade of Flight and NAS North Island Open House. It was truly an exceptional weekend here in Naval Aviation's birth town. Hundreds of aircraft, tens of thousands of people and some of the best weather you could imagine made this an event for the ages. The rest of 2011 promises to be just as exciting. Whether active duty or not, I urge you to get out and participate in events near you. In this edition of Centennial, you'll see photographs from the event, plus a thumbnail overview of the "retro" aircraft. Be sure to download our special collector's edition, tentatively set for May, describing the Heritage Paint Project in detail.



- Capt. Richard Dann

Centennial Force Leadership



**VADM Allen G. Myers
USN
Commander, Naval
Air Forces**



**LtGen Terry Robling
USMC
Deputy Commandant for
Aviation**



**RADM Pat McGrath
USN
Deputy Commander, Na-
val Air Forces**



**CAPT Mike Emerson
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Chief of Aviation**

The Navy Blimp Goes to War

Courtesy of the Naval Airship Association

As the Axis powers built up their submarine fleets in the early stages of World War II, the U. S. Navy had only one modern series of Lighter Than Air (LTA) airship available, the “K” airship. By the start of American involvement in World War II in December 1941, only six of these were available, and none featured modern submarine detection equipment. These formed the basis for ZP-12, the first airship squadron on the Atlantic coast based at Lakehurst, N.J. In addition, the Navy commandeered Goodyear advertizing blimps and former Army airships which formed the first West Coast squadron, Moffett Field’s ZP-32.

While few in number, the “K-ships” were repeatedly noted by German U-boats. Airship K-6’s depth charge attack on surfacing German *Kriegsmarine* submarine U-94 in March 1942 was the first air Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) action on the American coast, after which U-94 turned for home. As new K-ships came off the production line, they were fitted with Radar and Magnetic Anomaly Detection (MAD) sets, as both new bases formed squadrons, ZP-11 and ZP-14. Innovative airshipmen overcame a lack of materials and support to perform a variety of services from convoy escort to Search and Rescue (SAR). At the height of Germany’s “battle of tonnage,” U-boats recorded several airship attacks; and are credited three with incidents of probable damage to enemy submarines. June 3, 1942, K-3’s crew witnessed a distant torpedoing and in response, attacked and immobilized U-432, preventing further attacks on a convoy.

Shocked by ship losses, the U.S. Congress authorized “200 airships of any type” in June 1942. Nonetheless saddled with the lowest priority for war materials, K-ship production slowly ramped up to outfit ten major airship bases around the American coasts. New hangars constructed of timber to preserve steel were built at bases in Richmond, Florida; Brunswick, Georgia; Hitchcock, Texas; Houma, Louisiana; Tillamook, Oregon, and Santa Ana, California.

K-ships were first flown to, then later erected on the West Coast for Squadrons ZP-31 and ZP-33. Operating in a variety of weather conditions, fatal accidents were few. (One commandeered L-ship, L-8, even returned without its crew, a mystery to this day.)

Additional airship squadrons ZP-15, ZP-21, ZP-22, and ZP-23 were formed. These squadrons broadened the operational footprint of the airship fleet.

No merchantmen were sunk when an airship was in escort. Only one submariner was bold enough to launch a torpedo attack (unsuccessfully) after spotting “active airship protection.” Counterattacking in an August 25, 1943 encounter, the K-34 drove off the U-107. Only one airship was ever destroyed by U-boat: on the night of July 18/19, 1943, K-74 from ZP-21 was patrolling the Florida coastline. Using radar, she located the surfaced submarine. K-74 made her attack run but the U-boat opened fire first. K-74’s depth charges did not release as she crossed the U-boat and the K-74 received serious damage, losing gas pressure and an engine but landing in the water without loss of life. The crew was rescued by patrol boats in the morn-

ing, but one crewman, Aviation Machinist’s Mate Second Class Isadore Stessel, died from a shark attack. U-134, was slightly damaged and the next day or so was attacked by aircraft sustaining damage that forced it to return to base. It was finally sunk August 24, 1943 by a British Vickers Wellington near Vigo, Spain.

Patrol Groups became Wings as K-ships were deployed in the Caribbean and Central America, also protecting both ends of the Panama Canal. Just as the German “Enigma” codes were broken, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox declined vectoring airships directly to intel-derived submarine locations. Codebreaking steered convoys around U-boats, further reducing escorting blimp’s likelihood of encountering a U-boat. Equipped with radio detection-homing gear, blimps achieved inadvertent success keeping radar-detecting U-boats immobilized underwater simply by performing long duration patrols while using their radar.

Airshipmen established a base on Trinidad with ZP-51 and crossed the Equator to Brazil, with squadrons ZP-41 and ZP-42. In Santa Cruz, the former German Hindenburg hangar was commandeered for K-ship maintenance.

Deployed to Europe in 1944, crews made the first non-rigid airship crossing of the Atlantic via the Azores, then later via Bermuda. ZP-14 established a nighttime magnetic barrier across the Straits of Gibraltar, which no U-boat penetrated. In the U.S., resourceful airshipmen developed and employed airborne rescue equipment, demonstrated carrier operations and refined radio navigation. Topside rigging and engine changes were completed as the ships swung on the mast at remote sites.

In response to the threat of U-boats approaching the coast to launch V-1 “Buzz Bombs,” K-ships were finally equipped with advanced ASW equipment late in the war. K-ship crews met the last U-boat offensive with sonobouys and homing torpedoes. Evidence suggests that K-72 used them successfully against a submarine April 18, 1945. The final hits on the last U-boat in American waters were delivered in May 1945. Though all but the one combat was classified for 50 years, WWII established the record of the airship as the submarine’s only natural enemy.



Two U.S. Navy “K-ship” airships at their mooring masts in Southern France, June 13, 1945. Airships played a key role in the Battle of the Atlantic. (NHHC)

Warrior Ethos

By 2nd Lt. Sivasubramaniam Ambikapathi, USMC History Division

Stephen W. Pless graduated from Georgia Military Academy, College Park, Georgia, in 1957. While there, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve September 6, 1956, and served with the 1st Motor Transport Battalion, USMCR in Atlanta, Ga. He was later accepted to flight school in Pensacola, Fla., and was commissioned a Marine Corps Second Lieutenant September 16, 1959. Pless entered flight training as the youngest Marine Student Naval Aviator, and when later promoted to O-4 was the youngest Major in the Marine Corps at the time. Promoted to First Lieutenant March 16, 1960, Pless became a Naval Aviator upon graduation from flight training April 20, 1960.

1st Lt. Pless gained valuable flight experience as a squadron pilot with HMR(L)-262, Marine Aircraft Group 26 and then with HMR(L)-264 aboard the USS Boxer (LHD 4) and aboard the USS Wasp (LHD 1). He returned to HMR(L)-262 as Assistant Administrative Officer aboard the USS Shadwell (LSD 15), and then served as Squadron Adjutant of HMM-162, Marine Aircraft Group 26. He confronted the communist Pathet Lao forces as Assistant Administrative Officer of HMM-162, MAG-16, beginning in June 1962, during a posting in Thailand and at Da Nang, in the Republic of Vietnam. Upon his return to the United States in June 1963, he reported to the NAS Pensacola, Fla., and served as basic flight instructor, and later as Officer in Charge, Aviation Officer Candidate School. He was promoted to Captain, July 1, 1964.

After his detachment in April 1966, Capt. Pless served as Brigade Platoon Commander, 1st Anglico Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe, Hawaii. In August 1966, he became Officer in Charge, Republic of Korea (ROK) Detachment, and later, Brigade Air Officer, 1st Anglico, Sub-Unit 1, with the 2nd Brigade Korean Marine Corps, at Chu Lai, in the Republic of Vietnam. For his service in his first tour to Vietnam, he was awarded a Bronze Star Medal and the Korean Order of Military Merit.

His courage and determination was exemplified in combat action from June 2-4, 1967 with Marine Observation Squadron 6. He and his crew battled for three days to provide airborne tactical air control and covering fire for an U.S. Special Forces platoon on the ground. A numerically superior enemy besieged the Special Forces unit and brought down several aircraft during the action. Refusing to be covered by the demise of other crews and aircraft, Capt. Pless and his crew made repeated attack runs to keep the enemy forces from overwhelming the unit. He was awarded the Silver Star for this action.

The heroics that earned the previous medal yet again overshadowed by his actions on August 19, 1967 near Duc Pho, Vietnam. After providing covering fire for an evacuation of wounded from an operation, Capt. Pless was in route escorting a returning Medevac mission in his Bell UH-1E "Huey" gunship. A distress signal from a U.S. Army



From left to right; GySgt Leroy Poulson, LCpl John Phelps, Capt. Rupert Fairfield and Capt. Stephen W. Pless were the crew of UH-1E (BuNo 154760) August 19, 1967. (Official U.S. Marine Corps Photo)

Boeing/Vertol CH-47 Chinook loaded with wounded, came over his communications channel. The pilot of the Army CH-47 had to execute an emergency take off, leaving four crewmembers on a beach where they were attempting to provide a security perimeter. Pless polled his crew if they were willing to answer the call, and noted the heavy fire in the situation. Their response was an emphatic and unanimous, "go." When he arrived, the four soldiers lay on the ground where the Viet Cong were bayoneting and stripping them of their gear. There were other unarmed UH-1E Army helicopters on the scene as Capt. Pless took offensive action. He swept in so low that fragments of his own rounds and rockets ricocheted and pelted his helicopter. Although Pless killed or drove off most of the immediate attackers, crew members GySgt. Leroy N. Poulson and LCpl. John G. Phelps encountered fierce enemy fire from a tree line near the beach. After the crew sprayed the Viet Cong on the open beach with the hatch mounted .50 caliber machine gun. Pless noticed one of the wounded Americans on the ground was still alive when the soldier gestured to the helicopter. He landed his helicopter in between the Viet Cong and the troops on the ground while the co-pilot Capt. Rupert E. Fairfield, Jr. joined Poulson and Phelps as they pulled the wounded to the helicopter. Pless sprayed the tree line with the fuselage-mounted machine guns. Once the crew and rescued soldiers were on board, the overloaded helicopter skipped along the ocean swells as they desperately threw out items to lighten the weight of the Huey. After Pless jettisoned the rocket pods, the aircraft rose to safe altitude and proceeded to Chu Lai. For the brave rescue, he was awarded the Medal of Honor, while Capt. Fairfield, GySgt. Poulson, and LCpl Phelps received the Navy Cross.

Upon his return to the United States, Pless assumed duties as Administrative Assistant, Officer Candidate School, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida. While serving in that capacity, he was promoted to Major November 7, 1967. Capt. Pless posted to the continental United States, but often stated "I'd go back tonight if they would let me, but they feel I can do more here talking to the peaceniks and youth groups than getting myself killed in a

Centennial of Naval Aviation

North Island Open House a Huge Success



The Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron “Blue Angels” pass over USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN 74) and USS PELELIU (LHD 6) to kick off the Centennial of Naval Aviation “Parade of Flight, February 12, 2011. Over 70,000 people came on the base while it is estimated another 140,000 observed from downtown San Diego. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Roland A. Franklin/Released)

A “Parade of Flight” including more than 190 vintage and modern era aircraft took to the skies above San Diego Feb. 12, 2011 as the highlight of the Centennial of Naval Aviation (CoNA) celebration at Naval Air Station North Island (NASNI), Calif. The Parade of Flight, featuring aircraft ranging from pre-World War II to the modern day jet era, was the capstone event in a day-long Open House at NASNI that was open to the general public.

The weather couldn’t have been better. Calm winds and very little wave activity made for a great backdrop for the day’s events. Temperatures were mild and the skies were clear and blue.

At approximately 9:30 a.m. the San Diego Air and Space Museum’s Curtiss A-1 Triad replica was lowered into San Diego Bay via the last remaining seaplane ramp at North Island, last used by a Navy aircraft in the late 1960s. Seaplane pilot Michael Steel was selected to pilot the craft. After two days of familiarizing himself with the operation of the Triad, Mr. Steel taxied up and down San Diego Bay in front of a crowd of approximately 77,000 people that braved Coronado Bay Bridge traffic to attend the event. While not cleared to conduct flight operations, the Triad briefly became airborne during one of its runs before splashing back down. Present to witness this event was the only surviving daughter of the Navy’s first aviator, Lt. Theodore “Spuds” Ellyson. 89-year old Elizabeth Gordon Ellyson Charmichael and 12 other members of the Ellyson family were on hand for the Open House.

Along with the Parade of Flight, more than 75 vintage and

modern day aircraft were on static display, including 19 of the specially marked CoNA “retro” aircraft. In addition, nearly 100 vintage automobiles were brought in for the crowd to enjoy.

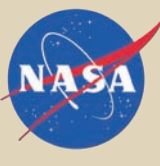
The “Metal Mulisha” motorcycle stunt team was on hand to perform amazing stunts for all to see, and many vendors and special interest groups attended with booths and demonstrations.

Photographers, both amateurs and professionals, took thousands of photos of the aircraft both in the air and on display. A media day Friday, Feb. 11, allowed for unobstructed access to photograph the

Continued on Page 12



The San Diego Air & Space Museum Curtiss A-1 Triad replica managed a short flight from San Diego Bay on February 12, 2011 with seaplane pilot Mike Steel at the controls. (Capt. Rich Dann)



2011 Blue Angels Schedule:

March

12 NAF El Centro, CA
19-20 Keesler AFB, MS
26-27 NAS Meridian, MS

April

2-3 Sun-N-Fun, Lakeland, FL
9-10 NAS Corpus Christi, TX
16-17 Fort Worth JRB, TX
30 MCAS Beaufort, SC

May

1 MCAS Beaufort, SC
3-4 NAS Pensacola, FL
7-8 NAS New Orleans, LA
8 Flight Academy Fly-over, Pensacola, FL
14-15 Indianapolis, IN
21-22 Lynchburg, VA
25 & 27 USNA show and graduation fly-over
28-29 Millville, NJ

June

4-5 Rockford, IL
11-12 Evansville, IN
18-19 Davenport, IA
25-26 North Kingstown, RI

July

2-3 Battle Creek, MI
9 Pensacola Beach, FL
16-17 Rochester, NY
23-24 Ypsilanti, MI
30-31 Great Falls, MT

August

6-7 Seattle, WA
13-14 Fargo, ND
27-28 Brunswick, ME

September

3-5 NAS Patuxent River, MD
10-11 Lincoln, NE
17-18 Millington, TN
24-25 NAS Oceana, VA

October

1-2 MCAS Miramar, CA
8-9 San Francisco, CA
15-16 NAS Lemoore, CA
22-23 El Paso, TX
29-30 San Antonio, TX

November

5-6 NAS Jacksonville, FL
11-12 NAS Pensacola, FL

Warrior Ethos

Continued from pg. 5

plane.” Unfortunately, at the age of 29, while stationed in Pensacola Fla., Maj. Pless was killed in a motorcycle accident, July 20, 1969. While crossing the drawbridge leading from Pensacola to Pensacola Beach, he failed to notice that the bridge’s center span was open. He was unable to stop in time and his motorcycle went off the bridge and into Pensacola Bay. Pless was survived by his pregnant wife and three children at the time of his death.

In addition to the Medal of Honor Pless also received the Silver Star Medal; Distinguished Flying Cross; Bronze Star Medal; the Air Medal with seven Silver Stars and two Gold Stars in lieu of second through 38 awards; Navy Commendation Medal with Combat “V”; Purple Heart; Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Korean Order of Military Merit; Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Vietnam Service Medal; and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. When interviewed for a news article, Captain Pless exclaimed, “*Who’s going to risk his life for a piece of brass with a pretty ribbon around it... you just think about the guys in trouble.*”

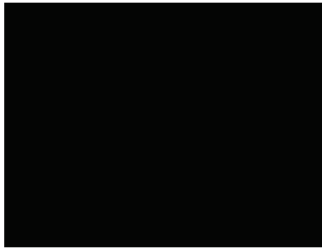
The UH-1E (BuNo 154760) helicopter hanging above the Legacy Walk at National Museum of the United States Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., is the aircraft in which Pless and his crew rescued the crew of the Army CH-47. He flew 780 combat missions in Vietnam. He is memorialized in the USNS MAJ. STEPHEN W PLESS, a 821 ft. roll-on-roll-off prepositioning cargo ship named in honor of him.

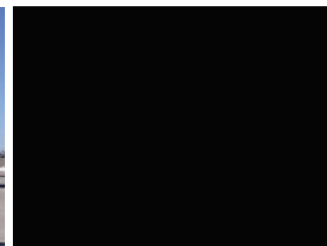
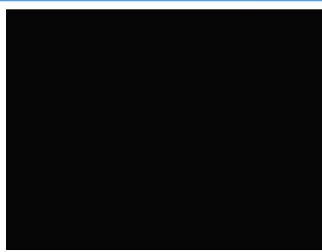
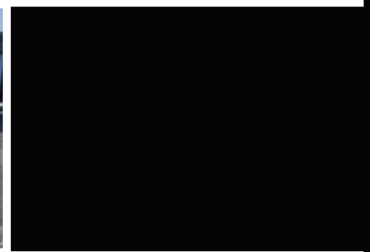
As part of the Centennial Heritage Paint Project, UH-1N (BuNo 158270) has received a “retro” scheme in the markings of Pless’s Medal of Honor aircraft. It is stationed at Camp Pendleton with HMLAT-303. The aircraft was featured in a 12-aircraft flyby March 18, 2011 at Camp Pendleton. The UH-1N is being phased out of service and will be replaced by the UH-1Y. By June of this year, all UH-1Ns will be transferred to squadrons on the East Coast.



Bell UH-1N “Huey” (BuNo 158270) in a Centennial “retro” paint scheme. This aircraft is painted in the colors of the UH-1E Huey flown by Maj. Stephen W. Pless and his crew in which he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on August 19, 1967. (LtCol Brian Kennedy, CO, HMLAT-303)

A GLANCE AT THE PAST - THE HERITAGE PAINT PROJECT IN REVIEW





Centennial of Naval Aviation

The All-Weather Corsair

By Mr. Alan Carey

Three months into the Korean War, it became obvious that the Korean Conflict would extend into the winter of 1950 and beyond. The winter temperatures in the northern areas of Korea, averaged 15 degrees Fahrenheit, with snow, ice, and poor visibility being typical operating conditions. In September 1950, Chance Vought based in Dallas, Tex. received a request from the Bureau of Aeronautics requesting detailed information on the feasibility of equipping the F4U-5N Corsair with de-icing equipment for the aircraft's wings, tail surfaces, propeller, and windshield. Chance Vought accepted the request and announced a target delivery date for the first all-weather Corsair of December 31, 1950.

Henry Tereshkow, Chance Vought's project engineer, telephoned the B.F. Goodrich Rubber Company and asked what Goodrich could do in providing de-icing boots to meet his company's need. Three days after the initial request, he flew to Akron, Ohio to meet with Goodrich and discuss locations for the de-icing boots; Goodrich said it could handle the rubber material requirement while the Eclipse Pioneer division of the Bendix Corporation would provide the driving mechanism for the boots. To allow for extreme cold weather operations, wing and empennage de-icing was accomplished by the installation of rubber de-icing boots on the leading edge of the airfoil surfaces. By flexing the boots by means of pneumatic pressure and suction from an engine-driven air pump ice buildup would be reduced or eliminated. Propeller and windshield de-icing consisted of applying boots cemented along the blades leading edges and an alcohol feeding system. For the propeller, alcohol pressured fed into a cup at each blade shank and was forced centrifugally out along troughs in the boots resulted in a fairly regular flow pattern along the entire length of the blades.

Providing enough heat to keep the pilot warm inside the cockpit during freezing conditions presented a challenge to the design team. A system with an external air scoop and a heater of

50,000 B.T.U. provide enough heat to defog and defrost the canopy but it had the potential, at times to become to almost unbearable for the pilot. To solve a potential icing issue on the aircraft's windshield a nozzle system allowed the pilot to spray alcohol when needed. The use of alcohol delivered by nozzles produced crazing of the canopy that reduced pilot visibility. The solution involved the application of a protective coating along the edges of the canopy in areas where the alcohol was likely to collect.

Following the delivery of the first planes, cold weather testing began at NAS Argentia, Newfoundland with test flights beginning in mid January and ending in mid February 1951. By March 2, 1951, F4U-5NLs were in Japan, some seven months after Chance-Vought received the Navy's request for an all-weather Corsair. It appeared too late to see action over Korea during the winter of 1950-51, when the all weather version would have allowed Navy and Marine units to conduct additional sorties against Chinese and North Korean forces during the breakout at the Chosen Reservoir. During the two winters that followed, the F4U-5NL aided in a continuous air umbrella for UN troops.



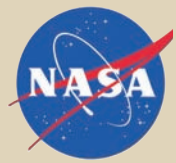
F4U-5NL (BuNo 124511) of Composite Squadron FOUR (VC-4) prepares for launch. De-icer boots are plainly visible on the wing leading edges. (Vought Heritage Group)



The Vought F4U-5NL was specifically configured for cold weather operations. This restored example is owned and operated by the Collings Foundation. (U.S. Navy Photo)

News and Notes

- HM-12 will have a 40-year anniversary celebration on April 15 and 16, 2011 at NAS Oceana, Va.
- A Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force reunion took place in Jacksonville, Fla., April 4-7, 2011. Vice Adm. Allen G. Myers, Commander, Naval Air Forces was the featured speaker.
- The Marine Corps' newest attack helicopter, the AH-1Z Cobra, achieved Initial Operating Capability ahead of schedule in February.
- Final assembly has begun on the first production P-8A Poseidon at Boeing's Renton, Wash. factory. Initial Operating Capability is expected in 2013.



Centennial 2011 "Tier 1" Events Schedule

This year, the Sea Services will partner with and execute 32 "Tier 1" Centennial of Naval Aviation events across the country, plus two gala events. These events will include extensive Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard involvement, in conjunction with existing Fleet Weeks, Navy Weeks, Marine Corps Weeks, Blue Angels' Air Shows, and other significant aviation events during the Centennial year.

Join us across the country this year as we celebrate 100 years of progress and achievement during the Centennial of Naval Aviation.



Centennial Kickoff & Aerial Review/Open House, San Diego CA.	09-Feb	-	12-Feb
Mississippi Navy Week, (NAS Meridian & Keesler AFB air shows), MS.	19-Mar	-	27-Mar
NAS Corpus Christi Salute to 100 Years of Naval Aviation, TX.	09-Apr	-	10-Apr
Dallas Navy Week & NAS Fort Worth JRB Air Power Expo, TX.	10-Apr	-	17-Apr
MCAS Beaufort Air Show, SC.	30-Apr	-	01-May
Centennial of Naval Aviation Week Pensacola, FL.	03-May	-	09-May
New Orleans Navy Week & 'Nawlins Air Show, LA.	05-May	-	11-May
MCAS New River Air Show, NC.	13-May	-	15-May
DoD Joint Services Open House, Andrews AFB, MD.	20-May	-	22-May
New York Fleet Week & Jones Beach Air Show, NY.	22-May	-	02-Jun
Philadelphia Navy Week & Millville AAF Show, PA.	23-May	-	29-May
Rockford AirFest 2011, IL.	04-Jun	-	05-Jun
Evansville Freedom Festival, IN.. . . .	11-Jun	-	12-Jun
Davenport Navy Week & Quad Cities Air Show, IA.	16-Jun	-	22-Jun
Marine Week St. Louis, MO.	20-Jun	-	26-Jun
National Guard Association of Rhode Island Open House & Air Show, RI.	25-Jun	-	26-Jun
Rochester Navy Week & ESL International Airshow, NY.	11-Jul	-	17-Jul
Detroit Navy Week & Thunder over Michigan Airshow, MI.	18-Jul	-	24-Jul
EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, WI.	25-Jul	-	01-Aug
Seattle Fleet Week & SeaFair, WA.	31-Jul	-	08-Aug
Fargo Navy Week and Air Show, ND.	08-Aug	-	14-Aug
The Great State of Maine Air Show, ME.. . . .	26-Aug	-	27-Aug
NAS Patuxent River Air Expo '11, MD.	03-Sep	-	04-Sep
Omaha Navy Week & Guardians of Freedom Air Show, NE.	06-Sep	-	11-Sep
National Championship Air Races, Reno Nevada, NV.	14-Sep	-	18-Sep
Memphis AirFest, TN.	17-Sep	-	18-Sep
NAS Oceana Air Show & AIAA Centennial Convention,VA.	20-Sep	-	25-Sep
San Diego Fleet Week & MCAS Miramar Air Show,CA.	19-Sep	-	02-Oct
San Francisco Fleet Week, CA.	08-Oct	-	09-Oct
NAS Lemoore Air Show, CA.	15-Oct	-	16-Oct
El Paso Navy Week & Amigo Air Show, TX.	17-Oct	-	23-Oct
NAS Jacksonville, Birthplace of the Blue Angels Air Show, FL.	05-Nov	-	06-Nov
Pensacola Blue Angels Homecoming, FL.	11-Nov	-	12-Nov
Centennial Closing Gala, Washington DC.	03-Dec		

Centennial of Naval Aviation

North Island

Continued from Page 6



Commander, Naval Air Forces, Vice Adm. Al Myers and 13 family members of the U.S. Navy's first aviator, Theodore "Spuds" Ellyson. Immediately to the left of Vice Adm. Myers is Elizabeth Gordon Ellyson Charmichael, the daughter of Navy's first aviator. (Capt. Rich Dann)

aircraft on hand.

At 1:00 p.m., the Parade of Flight began with the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron "Blue Angels" Delta formation. Following the Blue Angels, a number of historically significant vintage aircraft proceeded north up San Diego Bay, exiting out the channel at Point Loma. Aircraft from 1930 to the Vietnam Period participated, including fighters, patrol bombers, trainers and other famous aircraft of the Navy's past. Spectacular Marine and Coast Guard demonstrations took place, as well as flybys of current aircraft.

The highlight of the Parade of Flight was a mass flyover by Carrier Air Wing NINE (CVW-9). 36 aircraft from the air wing flew directly over North Island in an impressive display of Naval airpower.

Commemorating 100 years of progress and achievement in naval aviation, CoNA is a year-long tribute to the scope of all naval aviation activities including aircraft, people, ships, innovations and significant milestones.

The success of the NAS North Island Open House and Parade of flight have set the tone for the rest of the year. With 31 events remaining, there is plenty of opportunity all across the country to become part of the Centennial of Naval Aviation.



An aviation boatswain's mate assigned to USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) directs an F/A-18+ Hornet piloted by Lt. Jack Stewart, assigned to the River Rattlers of VFA-204, down the flight line at NAS North Island in preparation for the Centennial of Naval Aviation Open House and Parade of Flight held Feb. 12, 2011. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Trevor Welsh)



Personnel of the First Yale Unit of the United States Navy Air Reserve during aviation training in West Palm Beach, Fla. Many of these motivated young men would take high positions within the Navy and War Departments, including Robert A. Lovett, who would go on to become Secretary of Defense under President Harry S. Truman. (F. Trubee Davison Pps Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University)

When Naval Aviation Took Wing

By Marc Wortman, PhD.

In the summer of 1916 a dozen young men, ten of them Yale College students, decided they needed to learn to fly. The greatest and most violent war up to that point in history was raging across the Atlantic Ocean. The U.S. remained neutral and had done little to prepare for war. But the group's leader, Yale sophomore F. Trubee Davison, knew that an entirely new battlefield had opened in the sky. He and his young friends intended to lead America into the new age of air warfare.

Using their prominent families' wealth, the young men learned to fly over the Long Island Sound. Davison asked the Navy if his "Millionaires' Unit," as the press dubbed it, could become a reserve unit, but military leaders understood little about the value of aircraft. On the brink of war in the spring of 1917, the Navy finally realized it needed an air service and called upon the Yale Aero Club, grown to 29 members. They enlisted as the First Yale Unit, the founding squadron of the Naval Air Reserve. All the Unit pilots were among the first 100 navy fliers to win the Wings of Gold (custom-made by Tiffany's in their case)—with the tragic exception of their leader. Davison crashed during his flight examination, resulting in a lifelong disabling injury.

In August 1917, the Unit members went to war. Those who remained stateside helped build air stations, design aircraft, engines and weapons, and train desperately needed pilots, observers, mechanics and navigators. Those who first shipped "over

there" formed an American vanguard, serving with the British, Italian and French forces. Unit members served as executive officers in the first overseas U.S. stations. Several of the Yale fliers flew convoy protection operations and U-boat patrols. The dangers of war proved quickly all too real. Albert Sturtevant, famed Yale crew team captain and Harvard Law School student, became America's first-ever uniformed serviceman killed in air combat. Two more Unit members also made the supreme sacrifice.

Unit men filled out the leadership ranks; several flew pioneering offensive missions. David S. Ingalls set the pace as the Navy's first and only Ace of the war. Robert A. Lovett, a future Secretary of Defense, was the first American in uniform to fly in bombing runs and architect of the nation's first strategic bombing campaign. At age 23, he commanded its night bomber wing.

After the war, the commander of naval forces in Europe, Rear Admiral William S. Sims, lauded the First Yale Unit as "the romantic beginnings" of U.S. Naval Aviation from which the Navy's 40,000-man force grew. In World War II, the Unit's members returned as leaders in the creation of the victorious naval and army air forces.

To learn more about the First Yale Unit, read Marc Wortman, *The Millionaires' Unit: The Aristocratic Fly Boys Who Fought the Great War and Invented American Air Power*, or go to marcwortmanbooks.com and millionairesunit.org

Centennial of Naval Aviation

Marine Corps Aviators Fight the Nazis



This Grumman F6F-5N Hellcat carries two “Tiny Tim” rockets. Had Project DANNY been realized, U.S. Marine Corps aircraft would have been used to destroy German V-1 “Buzz Bomb” launch sites on the Continental European coast. (Gary Verver Collection)

Dr. Tom Baugh, U.S. Marine Corps History Division

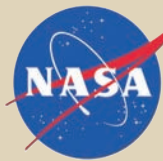
The Marine Corps aviators were exclusively relegated to fight the Japanese in the Pacific during World War II, except for? Ground U.S. Marine forces jointly defended Iceland, and that is usually considered part of Europe. Marines trained Army troops for amphibious landings in Europe, and from the decks of their ships in the Atlantic Marines assisted Navy Catalina PBY aircraft to spot German submarines. Otherwise, General George C. Marshall made good on his pledge that “As long as I’m in charge of our Armed Forces, there’ll never be a Marine in Europe.” Nevertheless, Marine Fighter Squadrons 511, 512, 513, and 514 of Marine Aircraft Group 51 almost proved the exception to General Marshall’s mandate, thanks to a Nazi super-weapon.

The greatest terror weapons in Europe during World War II were the German V-1 and V-2 missiles. Their speed and unconventional pulse jet and rocket propulsion left the inhabitants of Southern England defenseless and in constant suspense as to where they would deliver their destruction. The actual casualties from these Nazi terror weapons were not proportionate to the massive bombing raids of Luftwaffe bombers, but the lack of early warning and uncertainty of their trajectories disproportionately struck more fear in the populace. To counter the threat, four Marine Fighter squadrons trained, primarily in Chance-Vought F4U “Corsairs,” equipped with the biggest air-to-ground rocket developed to date, the 11.75-inch “Tiny Tim.” Aircraft machine guns proved ineffective in shooting down the V-1 pulse jet engine missiles, but the 150 pound high explosive warhead of the 10 foot long Tiny Tim packed the punch of a 2,000 pound bomb. The Marine aviators

were to defend England using Tiny Tim rockets to destroy the hardened launch sites. Operation DANNY trained Marine pilots at Cherry Point, North Carolina, for deployment on escort carriers in the North Atlantic. The use of rockets proved effective against hardened Japanese bunkers carved out of mountain terrain at Peleliu Island in the Pacific. The trained and equipped squadrons were within days of sailing when the briefing in Washington D.C. evoked General Marshall’s opposition, “as long as I’m in charge of our Armed Forces, there’ll never be a Marine in Europe,” whereupon the mission was cancelled. Three of the squadrons did make important contributions to Marine Corps aviation history as the first of their kind to deploy on escort carriers. This was also a controversial development, but proved to be a significant step in determining a distinct mission for Marine Corps aviation and the development of air-ground teams that deployed as dedicated units in conflicts around the world.



A “Tiny Tim” 11.75-inch rocket installed on the centerline rack of an F4U-1D Corsair. (Gary Verver Collection)



TBD Devastator Located



Douglas TBD-1 Devastator of Torpedo Squadron FIVE (VT-5), assigned to the USS YORKTOWN Air Group. TBD-1, (BuNo 0377) has been located underwater off the coast of San Diego and efforts are underway to recover the aircraft. There are no TBD Devastators on display anywhere in the world. (Fred Prouty via Tailhook)

Capt. Rich Dann

A Navy aircraft with major historical significance has been found in the waters off San Diego, and an effort is under way to raise it from the ocean floor. The Douglas TBD-1 Devastator, America's primary shipboard torpedo bomber at the beginning of World War II, is between 3 and 12 miles from shore and under 600 feet of water. Exact details of its location are undisclosed.

Introduced into Navy service in 1937, the TBD was a major step forward in aircraft technology and performance. It was the first all-metal, retractable landing gear torpedo bomber acquired by the Navy. Just four years later, the Devastator would be hopelessly outclassed by more modern designs, but was still in squadron use when World War II began. Its first combat use in the Marshall and Gilbert Islands in January and February 1942 went well, but at the battle of Midway in June, 38 of 41 TBDs launched to attack the Imperial Japanese Fleet were shot down. One squadron, Torpedo THREE lost every aircraft and had a single survivor, Ens. George Gay, who watch the battle unfold from his life raft.

"It had to fly at a low, slow and straight," said Ed Ellis of the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola, Fla, which is what made it so vulnerable to defending Japanese fighter aircraft. While this took place, SBD Dauntless dive bombers came in from high altitude unmolested and sank the Japanese carriers AKAGI, KAGA, SORYU and later HIRYU, the entire carrier strike force committed to the Midway operation. Immediately after Midway, the Devastator was taken out of front line service and replaced by the Grumman TBF Avenger.

Douglas TBD-1, Bureau Number 0377 is one of four TBDs known to exist, all resting on the ocean bottom. Another is located

off of Miami, while two more are located in the Marshall Islands.

March 4, 1941, Lt. j. g. W.A.H. Howland, Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd Class (AOM2c) R. Rogers and Aviation Machinist's Mate 3rd Class (AMM3c) O.A. Carter were conducting bombing training near the coast of San Diego in TBD-1 0377 when the first signs of engine trouble appeared.

In his accident report, pilot Lt. j. g. W.A.H Howland stated, "I had completed the bombing run at 12,000 feet and was beginning to let down when at about 11,000 feet the engine started missing." All attempts to resume proper engine operation failed and at 400 feet, Howland cut the engine and then ditched the aircraft, adding, "I landed in the water with the wheels up and the flaps down. I tried to level off about 10 to 15 feet, but I believe a wave hit my left wing and I landed without stalling." Inflating the life raft he continued, "The waves were breaking over the plane and after about fifteen minutes, the right wing [flotation] bag was torn off, apparently by the force of the waves and the plane sank."

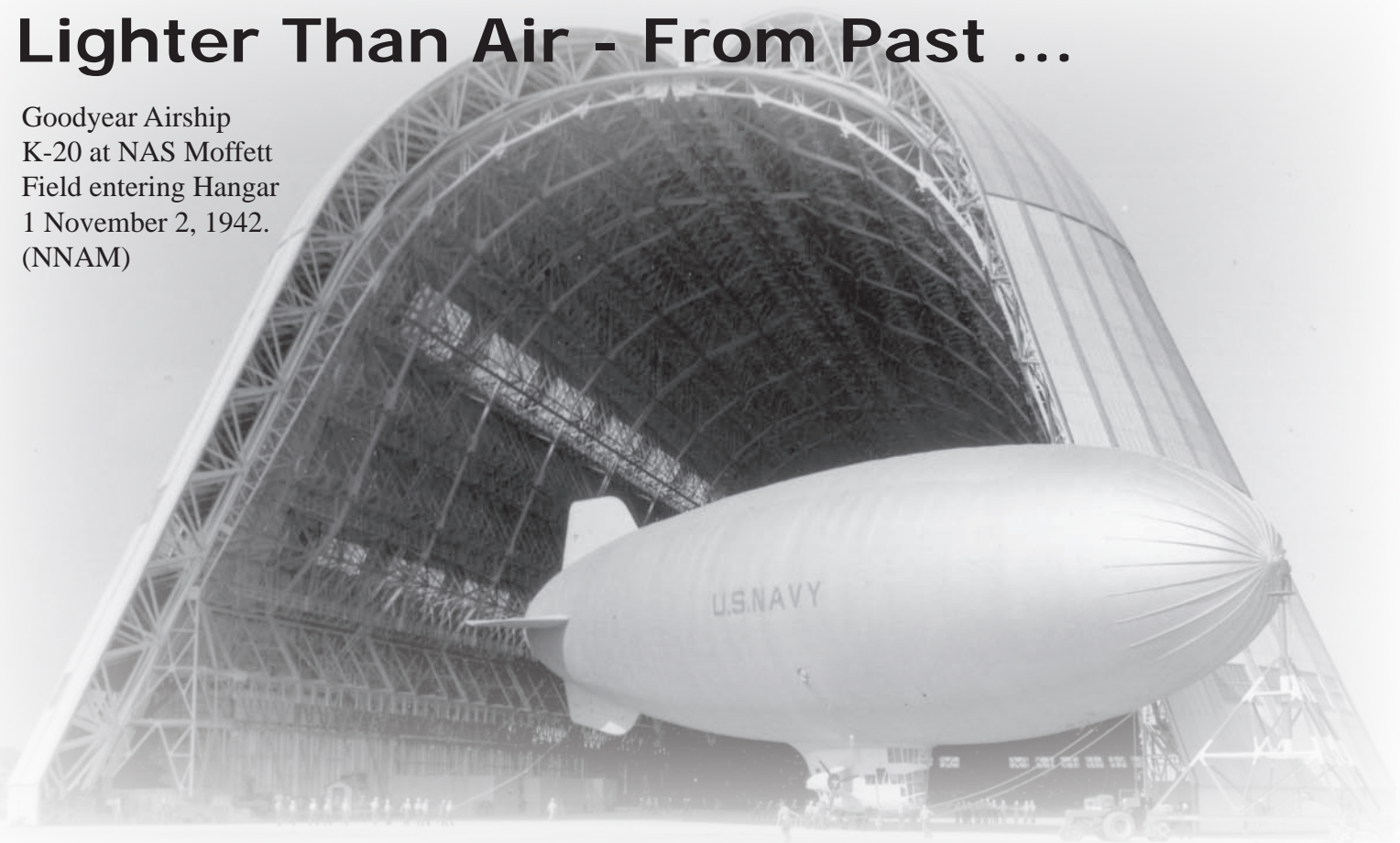
After about 30 minutes in the water, Howland and his crew were recovered by the destroyer USS WILLIAMSON. All injuries were minor.

A & T Recovery, a salvage company out of the Chicago area used sonar to locate the craft and a dive confirmed with video footage it was a Devastator.

August 2010 a Curtiss SB2C-4 Helldiver was recovered from Lower Otay Lake near San Diego. However, the undertaking for the Devastator will be tougher and more expensive. The museum is searching for sponsors to help with the \$300,000 needed to raise the plane.

Lighter Than Air - From Past ...

Goodyear Airship
K-20 at NAS Moffett
Field entering Hangar
1 November 2, 1942.
(NNAM)



Scientific Development Squadron ONE (VXS-1) currently operates the Navy's only lighter-than-air aircraft. The American Blimp Corporation MZ-3A (BuNo 167811) is 178 feet long and holds 178,000 cubic feet of helium and air. (U.S. Navy Photo)

... To Present