

4649 Bonner Drive,
Corpus Christi, Texas
26 January, 1972

Captain A. E. Monahan, USN (Ret)
4365 Allen School Road,
Bonita, California.

Dear Al,

Thank you and the members of the Navy Helicopter Association Awards Committee for honoring me with the nomination for a special award. This recognition means a great deal to me because of my long association with the Navy as indicated in the enclosed biographical sketch. This sketch is too long, but I am sending it, as is, so you can pick out those items that you would like to use.

Are you aware that one of the first Naval Officers to solo the Sikorsky HNS lives in Coronado? He is VADM Paul Ramsey (Ret), who was Director Flight Test when I delivered the first HNS to NATC, Patuxent River, Md. on 23 March, 1944. The Assistant Director was CDR C. T. "Tommy" Booth, who retired as a VADM and is now living at Hilton Head, South Carolina. Tommy soloed the XR-4 at the Sikorsky Plant in Bridgeport, Conn. on 15 June, 1943, but had to leave before completing the course, because Flight Test was being moved from NAS, Anacostia to NATC Patuxent. He came back to Bridgeport in October after we had taken delivery on the first Navy HNS in order to build up flight time. However, since they were too busy at Patuxent for him to take enough time off for the Joint U.S.-British Helicopter Shipboard Trials on the M.V. DAGESTAN, I checked out LCDR Johnny Miller USNR for the trials. Later Tommy check out Paul Ramsey in the HNS, I delivered to Pax River; but I don't think either one was ever officially designated as a Navy Helicopter Pilot. The Navy did not start issuing helo pilot designations until after Bill Knapp had completed the course at Floyd Bennett Field.

I believe Ramsey has the distinction of being the first Naval Aviator to fly a jet - the Bell P-59, which was tested at Pax River. He was later C. O. of the jeep carrier ATTU. (My brother Harold E. Erickson, who was then a LCDR, was the ATTU's Chief Engineer). After Paul made flag rank, he was Commander NATC, Patuxent. Later he served a tour of duty as DCNO for Air. You may already be aware of his part in the Navy Helo Program, but I thought I would mention it because the records are far from complete on the test program at Pax River during WW II.

Betty and I postponed our trip to Rockville, Md for a couple of months, so we could drive to San Diego for the Convention. But in the meantime, we have run into new complications, which include the resumption of a fight to rezone a section of our community for apartments and a summons for jury duty. Since it may be hard to get away for more than a couple of days, I have asked CAPT Abe Siemens, CO of the CGAS, San Diego to stand in for me. He said he would be pleased to substitute for me. CAPT Tom Carter, C.O. CGAS, Corpus will try to arrange a training ^{to} San Diego. So it is possible I might fly out for a day or two with some helo pilots from Corpus. However such a flight will depend on current operational requirements and HQ's approval.

Sincerely yours,


Frank Erickson