



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:

Although the museum remains closed due to the continued heavy construction activity in the area, we've had no trouble finding ways to get together and remain active, as you will see when you read further on in this issue. Remember, until further notice we will be meeting on Union Point (old NAS South Weymouth) from 11 AM to noon on the last Saturday of the month in the former base housing office, which is the white building on Shea Memorial Drive directly across from the Shea Memorial Grove. After the meeting we go out to lunch at Warren's Place, just as we did when we were meeting at the museum.

We'd like to welcome new members Sandy Lombardo and Janet Estes aboard the Patriot Squadron. Sandy was a Navy dental technician who was with the MED-DEN unit at NAS South Weymouth for many years. Janet's father Donald Venton was a blimp pilot with ZP-11 at NAS South Weymouth during the Second World War. She recently put together a book about her father's experiences as a wartime blimp pilot at South Weymouth and elsewhere. You can find a link to this very nice book on the "geedunk" page of our web site at www.anapatriotsquadron.org. We highly recommend it.

On Thursday September 7th Bob Mandeville tidied up the memorial bricks at the Shea Memorial Grove. This is actually something that anybody can do at any time. The bricks can always use a little TLC to keep them looking presentable going forward. They will tend to settle into the ground over time and will periodically need to be brought back into true. We will also need to pull weeds from around the bricks, put insecticide on anthills, renew the polymeric sand, and clean the surface of the bricks from time-to-time. Once again, anybody can do this and you don't need to make arrangements with anybody in advance to go out there. If you feel like cleaning up the bricks, just go out to the Shea Memorial Grove when you have some time on your hands and do it. You can literally spend as much or as little time on this as you want. Be sure to let us know what you've done afterwards so we can at least thank you for doing the work.

On Sunday September 10th Steve Cohn, Charlie Collins, and Marc Frattasio touched up the markings on both sides of the Douglas A-4B Skyhawk at the Shea Memorial Grove with help from Bill Sargent and Frank Ward. The jet was last repainted in 2007 and it really needs to be repainted again sometime soon. More information about this follows. Keep reading.

On Saturday September 16th Steve Cohn, Charlie Collins, Marc Frattasio, Vincent Gallagher, Dan Haff, Peter Harrington, Peter Jardim, and Bill Sargent sanded and re-stained the wooden parts on all the park benches at the Shea Memorial Grove. Marc Frattasio came back to the park on Sunday September 17th and touched up the worst of the worn areas on the metal parts of the benches with black Rustoleum paint.

In recent weeks Frank Ward began repainting the blue and white signs at the Shea Memorial Grove. Also, Faith and Marc Frattasio donated a set of American, Navy Department, and POW/MIA flags to replace the worn ones on the large flagpole at the park.

NAS South Weymouth was closed on September 30th 1997. Twenty years to the day, on Saturday September 30th 2017, a reunion event was held at the Elks Hall in Randolph, Massachusetts to commemorate the old base. Since 2017 also marked the 25th anniversary of the deactivation of Marine Reserve attack squadron VMA-322 on NAS South Weymouth on June 30th 1992, special recognition was given to this squadron in the form of a commemorative polo shirt, two guest speakers who had served as the squadron's commanding officers, and various VMA-322 souvenir items that were raffled off. About 200 people came to this event, which was organized in part to raise money for the Shea Naval Aviation Museum. Nearly \$4,200 was raised at this event for the museum.

In addition to much needed funds, we were also presented with several new artifacts for the museum by some of the people who came to the reunion. Joyce Hoisington, who was in VP-92 at NAS South Weymouth during the base's final years, donated a VP-92 Ordnance Shop patch. Apparently this is an extremely rare item as Joyce believes that only 25 were made up for squadron AOs. Brian Cleveland, who served with USNR units NARDIV-Z1 and NAS Brunswick 4291 on the base, donated a number of items including an NAS South Weymouth E6 Association key chain. Janet Estes, whose father was a blimp pilot with ZP-11 during WW2, donated a set of four souvenir postcards from the Service Center that was operated on Central Street by the people of South Weymouth to entertain enlisted personnel from the base during the Second World War. Janet is an author who recently published a book about her late father's wartime service at NAS South Weymouth and elsewhere. We have a copy of this fine book in the museum's library but if you'd like a copy of your own, you can pick one up on-line at <http://airshiphistory.com/wp/book-store>.

One of our newer members, Union Point resident Vincent Gallagher, commissioned Lego artist Cody Wells to create a model of NAS South Weymouth's steel blimp hangar, LTA Hangar One for the museum. The hangar and everything associated with it are made entirely out of Lego plastic

construction pieces. Vincent and Cody introduced the model at the NAS South Weymouth 20th anniversary reunion. This is a remarkable piece of artwork or sculpture that should prove to be very popular with younger visitors to the museum. The model is being stored by Vincent at his home until the museum is back in business. If you haven't already done so, please check out the many images of the blimp hangar model that we put up on the museum's Facebook page at www.facebook.com. The Lego blimp hangar was a big hit at the reunion and is a terrific addition to the museum's collection. For the record, Cody is a professional and his work tends to be expensive (I don't want to embarrass Vincent by disclosing what the model cost him but a Lego portrait of Lucile Ball that Cody made RENTS for \$500 per week). We're really lucky to have a one-of-a-kind piece designed and built by him. To see the kinds of things that Cody has made for various clients, go out to the Internet and do a keyword search on "Cody Wells Lego" and check out his web site at www.c3brix.com.



For the benefit of those of you who do not live in the local area, the image presented above shows why we had to close the Shea Naval Aviation Museum. As you can see, the ground surrounding the Shea Fitness Center building, which is where the museum has been, has been torn up for new construction. In addition, Shea Memorial Drive has been completely obliterated in this area. The area around the Shea Fitness Center is going to be transformed into a huge sports complex in a project that may take two years to complete. As part of this effort, the Shea Fitness Center is going to be completely restored and returned to its original purpose, as a gymnasium. The Shea Fitness Center may actually turn out to be one of the few Navy building retained at Union Point going forward.

The next few months may prove to be major turning points on the old base as about fifteen old military structures are scheduled to be demolished over this time. As of this writing, there are trees coming down all around the old gatehouse on White Street. This may be one of the first of the fifteen military structures to come down.

Now, some very exciting news follows. During our regular monthly member's meeting on Saturday October 28th LStar Ventures vice president Tom Berkley briefed us on his company's latest plans for the ANA Patriot Squadron and the Shea Naval Aviation Museum. As those of us who have been closest to the situation at Union Point have long suspected, we will not be reopening the museum in

the Shea Fitness Center. LStar Ventures is going to rehabilitate the Shea Fitness Center for gymnasium purposes, which makes perfect sense of course, and they intend to give us the Union Point Welcome Center building for the museum. This is the red barn-like building that is presently located across from the Shea Memorial Grove park. Ironically, this was pretty much the original plan for the museum going all the way back to the earliest days of the base redevelopment effort under the TTDC and LNR. What's different is this. LStar plans to move the Shea Memorial Grove park and the Welcome Center building to a new location near the main entrance to Union Point off Route 18. Basically, we are going to be where the old base pass office used to be. This is extremely good for us from a number of perspectives. It puts the museum and the park (which has the A-4B Skyhawk aircraft in the center) together in the same location. It makes the museum (and park) literally the front door to Union Point. This provides us with a great deal of visibility, not only because we'll be at the main entrance but also because we'll have frontage along Route 18 and be at the beginning of a long hiking trail they intend to build. The Welcome Center building will also provide more than enough space to display the artifacts that we've acquired up to this point and allow for future expansion. As part of the Shea Memorial Grove move, LStar will repaint the A-4B Skyhawk, so we won't have to worry about this (it really needs to be done). All the memorial bricks will be moved too, and the move will give us the opportunity to 1) have the bricks laid down professionally and 2) figure out a much better way of displaying them (perhaps as part of a walkway or the pedestal around the A-4B for example). LStar would like us to pack our stuff up and get it out of the museum by the middle of December if possible. For planning purposes, they hope to have everything set up for us in time to have a public re-opening ceremony on July 4th 2018. A few board members met with LStar on November 13th to discuss the logistics of the move and we've already purchased enough packing materials to at least get started. We're supposed to get a presentation from LStar's architect at some point in the near future and we've got to talk to them about the terms of our occupancy in the new building. Stay tuned for more information as the situation progresses.

The Dwyer Home, which is a nursing home associated with the Fairing Way over-55 community at Union Point, asked the Patriot Squadron to provide a speaker to give a military history related presentation on November 11th as part of a special Memorial Day event for residents who are veterans. So, Marc and Faith Frattasio gave a presentation about the history of NAS South Weymouth during the Second World War. This was the exact same presentation that Marc gave at the recent NAS South Weymouth 20th anniversary event. About thirty Dwyer Home residents attended the presentation, among them a former WAC who is 101 years old. There was also several visiting family members and Fairing Way residents in attendance. Patriot Squadron members Vincent Gallagher and Mary Jean Hickey, who live at Union Point, came too. We have several members who can give illustrated Power Point presentations about the history of NAS South Weymouth or its Quincy predecessor NAS Squantum. If you belong to an organization in the Boston area that would like a presentation, contact a member of our board of directors at one of our monthly meetings. We'll do our best to accommodate you.

On Sunday November 12th Patriot Squadron members James Crone, Peter Crone, John Falvey, Faith Frattasio, Marc Frattasio, Vincent Gallagher, Peter Harrington, Robert Muise, and Leo Salermi attended a ceremony organized by the Holbrook Historical Commission to dedicate a memorial at the intersection of Weymouth, Sycamore, and Pine streets to honor LT Walter Heins, USNR. LT Heins was a pilot in NAS South Weymouth's VA-912 who was killed on October 4th 1967 when he heroically crashed his malfunctioning A-4 Skyhawk jet into a wooded area in Holbrook instead of immediately ejecting in order to avoid harming civilians on the ground. Marc Frattasio's recent book about NAS South Weymouth, "NAS South Weymouth: Defender of Freedom", has a section about the crash. An autographed copy of the book was presented to the Holbrook Historical Commission on behalf of the Patriot Squadron to give to LT Heins' widow. She lives out of state and could not attend the event.

COMING UP:

We're going to hold our annual holiday luncheon at the Abington Ale House restaurant on Saturday December 9th. This is the same place that we've been holding this event for the past couple of years. If you want to come, just show up at the restaurant at noon and be prepared to order something from the menu. The holiday luncheon will probably run until 2 or 3 PM. For our newer members, the Abington Ale House is located about two miles south of the old base on Route 18. Feel free to bring guests with you.

Please note that there will be no ANA Patriot Squadron meeting in December, except for the holiday luncheon. Our next meeting will be held on Saturday January 27th 2018.

As indicated in the previous section, LStar would like us to vacate the Shea Fitness Center by the middle of December if possible. We'll be looking for help packing up the museum's collection and bringing it to wherever we are going to store it. At this time we really don't know where we will store the collection until such time that the Welcome Center building is ready for us so we will probably pack up everything first and then move it later. Some of the things that we will need to pack away are fragile (the plastic models for example) so this is something that will have to be done with great care. We'll send out announcements out via e-mail once we determine when we're going to begin to do this. We probably won't want to get too big a crowd involved in this effort, at least at first, since we have limited space and don't want to have people stepping over each other. We have no real idea what lever of effort will be required or how many people we'll need to help out, and probably won't know until we start doing it. This may end up taking several weeks to do. We had hoped to begin packing during the weekend of November 19th and 20th but had to call it off on Friday the 18th so LStar's contractors could start paving in the area around the gymnasium. By the time you read this we hope to have a better idea when we might be able to get into the building and start packing up.

HELP WANTED:

Can somebody out there fabricate a cover to protect the Lego blimp hangar model? The model is 41.5 inches square by 18 inches high. The cover should have transparent glass or Plexiglas on the sides and top so the model can be seen. This could be as simple as a removable cover that can be placed over the model as it sits on a table or it could be a more complicated stand-alone display case. We'll leave the design up to the builder. Please note that the Lego blimp hangar model is relatively fragile and it will definitely be a target for children. I personally witnessed a young visitor grab a plastic model airplane sitting on a shelf in the museum and throw it across the room, destroying it. We don't want the Lego blimp hangar model to suffer a similar fate. So, we really need to get it under a protective cover before the museum reopens to the public. If this is something that you want to do for us, please contact Vincent Gallagher directly at vgallagh@icloud.com. He will have custody of the model until it can go into the museum and can provide you with the exact dimensions, images, etc. Remember, you can write-off expenditures made for the Patriot Squadron as charitable deductions on your income taxes...

We've constantly made the case for help in running this organization and in tending the museum and helping to maintain the Shea Memorial Grove. In the past the museum has been a makeshift operation that a relatively small number of people have managed to hold together with the equivalent of tape and string. Once we get into the Welcome Center building, we're going to need a greater level of commitment from people. There will be greater responsibilities, but also greater opportunities too. We've been very limited in terms of what we have been able to do in the space available to us in the Shea Fitness Center. We'll be able to do a lot more in the Welcome Center. We hope that more of you who live in the local area will be able to take the time to volunteer to help us out once we get

into our new quarters. If you'd like to help, please talk to any director at one of our monthly meetings. Fairly comprehensive descriptions of the kinds of things we need help with have been published over and over again in previous issues of this newsletter. You can check out all the issues that have been produced to date on line on our web site at www.anapatriotsquadron.org.

We are always looking for military artifacts such as cruisebooks, squadron patches, command ball caps, photographs, films, command coffee mugs, base newspapers, uniform items, geedunk of any kind featuring command or base insignias, etc., pertaining to NAS Squantum or NAS South Weymouth to display in the museum. Photos, slides, and films can be copied and returned to you if you don't want to give them up. The museum can basically use anything associated with the military history of NAS Squantum or NAS South Weymouth. Remember, the ANA Patriot Squadron/Shea Naval Aviation Museum is a 501c3 non-profit educational organization so the cash value of anything that you donate should be tax-deductible.

The museum can always use cash donations too. As indicated above, we are a 501c3 non-profit educational organization and cash donations can be written off on your income taxes as charitable contributions. The museum operates on a shoestring budget and can use any financial help that it can get. Your \$15 per year annual membership dues and the little money that we get from the museum's donation jars and sales of memorabilia is stretched very thin. Remember too that with the museum closed to the public since June we've been cut off from our primary source of revenue. There is no telling at this point how much longer it will be until we can open the museum again. If you're looking for a tax write-off, please consider the Patriot Squadron.

Note, due to some recent military uniform donations we now need more manikins and display torsos. For a while there we thought we had enough of these things, but now we can use more of them. If you happen to see a clothing store or department store that's closing, please go in and ask the store manager if he or she has any manikins that they can donate to the museum. We mainly need male manikins and display torsos, but we can use a few female ones too.

We are always looking for new members and help in getting them. We can also use help in publicizing the ANA Patriot Squadron and Shea Naval Aviation Museum. A link to a flyer that you can download, print, and post on public bulletin boards is presented on our web site in PDF format. Good places to post these flyers include your post offices, libraries, grocery stores, VFWs, American Legion halls, and civil airports. These places normally have a public bulletin board where you can put a flyer.

We need help promoting our guest speakers and other special events. We will send flyers to all members with e-mail addresses in PDF format a few weeks before these events and put a link to the flyer on our web site at www.anapatriotsquadron.org. If you can do so, please print a few flyers after they appear via e-mail or on the web site and post them locally where people can see them. Civilian airports, libraries, grocery stores, and post offices usually have public bulletin boards. Places that veterans frequent such as the VFW or American Legion are good places too.

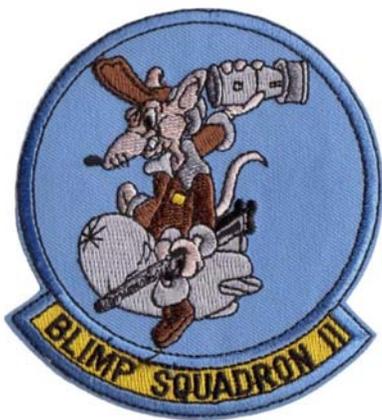
Never assume that people know about the ANA Patriot Squadron or Shea Naval Aviation Museum. If you have friends who were associated with NAS South Weymouth or NAS Squantum or know anybody who is interested in military history or aviation please tell them about us. In order for this group to continue we need to attract new members, especially those who want to take an active role. If you've been away from the ANA Patriot Squadron for a while, come visit the museum during one of our open houses and check out what we've been doing while you've been away. You will be pleasantly surprised with what we've accomplished. A few months ago we had business cards printed up with the museum's hours of operation and our web site's URL. Stick some in your wallet

and hand them out when the opportunity presents itself. Remember, this is OUR group and its up to all of us to pitch in and make it what we want it to be.

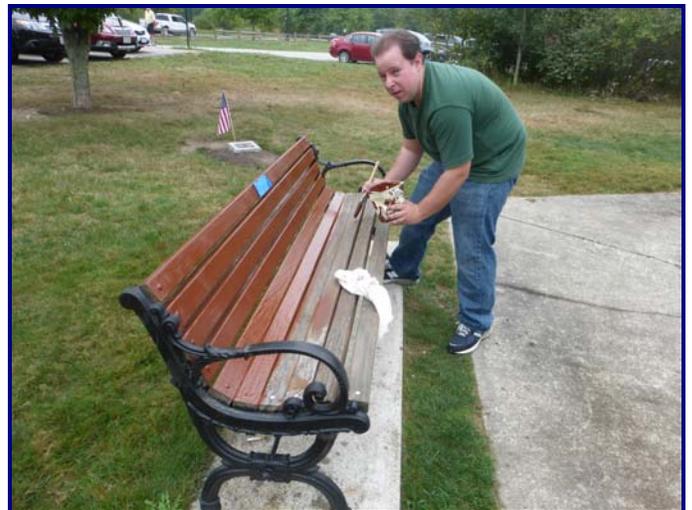
DID YOU KNOW?:

Three blimp squadrons operated from NAS South Weymouth during the Second World War. These were ZP-11, ZJ-1, and ZP-12. ZP-11 was a blimp patrol squadron that flew anti-submarine patrol and escort missions from NAS South Weymouth starting in June 1942. The squadron also operated occasional detachments at NAS Brunswick and NAF Bar Harbor, ME. ZJ-1 was the Navy's only blimp utility squadron. The squadron was actually based at Key West, FL but in February 1944 established a permanent detachment at NAS South Weymouth called ZJ-1-1. The ZJ-1 detachment's purpose was to fly various types of utility missions in support of commands and research establishments across the First Naval District. For example, ZJ-1 blimps spotted test torpedoes for the Naval Torpedo Station at Newport, RI, took aerial photographs of new ships built at Quincy and Hingham for ship recognition manuals, served as targets to calibrate shore based and shipboard radio direction finding and radar systems, and provided flight testing services for scientific projects associated with the MIT Radiation Laboratory, the Harvard Radio Laboratory, and the Underwater Explosion Research Laboratory at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. ZP-12, which was a blimp patrol squadron based at NAS Lakehurst, NJ, operated a detachment at NAS/NAF South Weymouth for a few months starting in May 1945. The main purpose of the ZP-12 detachment was to fly utility missions and provide search & rescue support for troop ships bringing military personnel back from Europe to the port of Boston after ZP-11 and the ZJ-1 detachment were disestablished at NAS South Weymouth in June 1945. The ZP-12 detachment was itself disbanded in late September or early October 1945. This action ended regular airship operations from the base until the Naval Air Development Unit moved there from NAS Quonset Point, RI in late 1953.

Here are the insignias of the three wartime airship units that operated from NAS South Weymouth during the war. Note that ZP-11 had two different insignia. The one shown here appears to have been the later insignia. An earlier insignia featured a lobster with the body of a K-type blimp holding depth bombs in its claws over a German submarine with cartoon characters of Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo covering in the conning tower!



SOME RECENT PHOTOS:



Top Left: Bill Sargent and Charlie Collins masking off the side number on the A-4's nose. **Top Right:** Steve Cohn touching up the A-4's "Navy-Marine" markings. **Middle Left:** Peter Harrington sanding a bench. **Middle Right:** Peter Jardim applies Oak Brown stain. **Bottom Left:** Marc Frattasio, Joe Ravino, Faith Frattasio, and Susan Zimmerman at the check-in desk for the NAS South Weymouth reunion. **Bottom Right:** Cody Wells and Vincent Gallagher with the Lego blimp hangar.

SOME RECENT PHOTOS (2):



Top Left: Marc Frattasio presenting at the Dwyer Home. **Top Right:** Faith Frattasio and Mary Jean Hickey running the PowerPoint slides. **Middle Left:** The LT Walter Heins memorial ceremony. **Middle Right:** Peter Crone at the ceremony. **Bottom Left:** Judy and Leo Salmeri, Faith Frattasio, John and Carol Falvey at the ceremony. **Bottom Right:** Bob Muise and his family at the ceremony.

A WINDOW INTO THE PAST:



ZJ-1 detachment ZNN-G type blimp being ground-handled on a mooring mast at NAS South Weymouth on June 13, 1944. ZJ-1 typically used the G type blimps for most utility missions but on occasion they used the larger K type blimps too.

