



THE RED SHIRT



PEACE THROUGH POWER - WE ARE THE "ARMS" OF THE FLEET

Newsletter No. 38

August 1990

AVIATION ORDNANCEMAN OF THE YEAR



AO1 (AW/NAC) Frank E. THOMAS

AO1 (AW/NAC) Thomas from Patrol Squadron 19 was selected as the Aviation Ordnanceman of the Year from among 92 Ordnancemen that were nominated by their commands. The competition was keen with so many highly qualified, outstanding candidates. First Runner-Up honors go to AO1 (AW) Ernest Ashford from Attack Squadron 115.

The selection committee wishes to congratulate each and every one of the nominees as they represent "The Best of the Best".

Editor

From The President

The 1990 convention has been recorded in history and again it was an outstanding success, due to Frank Thill and his committee. Our guest speaker, Captain L.R. Canepa, gave a very informative speech and slide presentation on modern day weapons and their use in today's Navy. The Captain and his wife, Patty, were well received by all and he stated he had "a greater respect for all Ordnancemen after attending the convention". Thanks to all the committee chairmen and their committees for their hard work; as always a lot was accomplished.

The John W. Finn, Association of Aviation Ordnanceman of the year selectee was AO1 (AW/NAC) Frank E. Thomas, USN, assigned to VP-19 homeported at NAS Moffet Field, CA. The first runner-up was AO1 (AW) Ernest B. Ashford, USN, assigned to VA-115, aboard USS Midway, (CV-41). The Robert L. Crow scholarship award-dees were Shane A. Birch, brother of AO2 Scott Birch assigned to VA-185; Mark Lemieux, son of LCDR Al Lemieux (Ret) of Virginia Beach, VA and Barbara Williamson, daughter of CWO3 Connie Williamson (Ret) of Fallon NV.

The 1991 Convention will be at John Ascuga's Nugget in Sparks, NV. For reservations contact Jim Thomas of The Travel and Tour Company of San Diego Inc. (619) 463-3030 call collect - mention AO Association. The 1992 convention chairman is Frank Thill. The 1993 Convention Committee is Chapter 21, Fallon NV; a chairman

(See PRESIDENT Page 2)

ASSOCIATION OF AVIATION ORDNANCEMEN NEWSLETTER

Editor:

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PRESIDENT . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

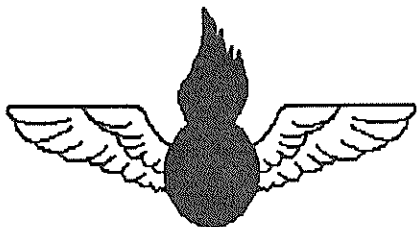
will be announced at a later date. I'm looking for a chairman/committee for the 1994 Convention, if you are interested please contact me.

Congratulations to CDR Bob Ashworth (Ret) on his selection as new National Secretary/Treasurer. AOCS Gary L. Buse and Dave Michel as new members of the National Board of Directors. Now is the time to start thinking about a new President, Chaplain and two Board of Directors. Again, it is your association, so be a part of it.

For members who couldn't attend, you missed a great convention, but hope to see you all at the Nugget 12 - 16 June 1991. I would like to give my heart felt thanks and appreciation to Gerry and Kathy Gannon for the superb job they have done as National Secretary/Treasurer, they have done more for this association than can be put into words. THANKS FOR EVERYTHING!

If you have a change of address let the National Secretary/Treasurer CDR Bob Ashworth (Ret) know at 133 H. L. Sudduth DR, Panama City, FL 32404, (904) 871-1943.

LCDR Charles R. Onken
President



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

I am pleased to see the formation of Chapter 21 at Fallon and the re-establishment of Chapter 4 in the Tidewater, VA area. We should also soon see a chapter at El Centro and one at Willow Grove, PA. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

It has come to my attention that some chapters are electing officers for their chapter whose dues in the parent organization are not current. Also, some chapters have members who haven't paid their dues. Chapter Officers are encouraged and requested to check your records and take appropriate action to correct these discrepancies.

I notice that some members who are buying lifetime memberships on our installment payment plan are not completing their payments. Please

try to do so - it is to your advantage.

On 1 June 1989 the Association of Aviation Ordnancemen had 1656 members. From 1 June 1989 to 1 June 1990 we lost 355 members for various reasons, but, in the same period of time we gained 459 new members for a total of 1760 members as of 1 June 1990. We gained 104 members during the last 12 month period, but it is the 355 that we lost that bothers me.

Each and every one of YOU AO's are on my membership committee. I CHALLENGE YOU THIS COMING YEAR TO EITHER GET A NEW MEMBER OR CONVINCE A CURRENT MEMBER TO RENEW HIS MEMBERSHIP.

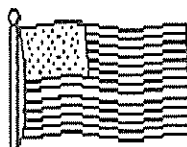
Hope to see you all in Sparks, NV in June of 1991.

Thomas D. Robins
Membership Committee Chairman

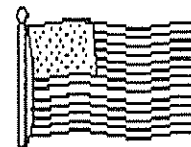
From The Desk of Outgoing Secretary/Treasurer

It has been Kathy's and my distinct pleasure to serve you and the Association as your Secretary/Treasurer team for the past six years. However, the time has come for some fresh faces to be installed in this position. We both feel confident that Bob and Elaine Ashworth will serve you well as the new Secretary/Treasurer team. Kathy and I both will have many memories of the past six years. We're happy that you allowed us to be part of the team that has accomplished membership growth, improvement in policies and accomplishment of the Associations goals. We look forward to seeing you at the 1991 convention.

Gerald F. Gannon



TAPS



CWO3 KENNETH D. GIRKEY USN, RET
AOC HARRY E. HANEY USN, RET
AOC R.V. DASHNER USN, RET
AOC DONALD C. VONADA USN, RET
AO1 ROTH E. WEIMER USN, RET
CDR JUDSON J. HENDRICKS USN, RET
LT KEVIN MCKINNEY USN, ACTIVE

Association of Aviation Ordnancemen 1990 Convention Highlights

The 1990 Association convention/symposium was held at the Imperial Palace Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, 14 thru 17 June 1990. There was a good turn out for the convention this year, as was evidenced by 290 plus people in attendance Friday night for the social and dancing affair, close to 90 members for the General Business Meeting on Saturday 16 June and 240 people for the Saturday night banquet.

It was a busy convention this year starting with the Board of Directors, Committee Chairman and Chapter Presidents meeting on Thursday the 14th. Registration also commenced on Thursday 14 June. Friday the 15th of June the convention moved into high gear, registration continued and the various committees convened; Scholarship Committee chaired by Bob Underwood, John W. Finn AVORDY selection Committee chaired by Digger O'Dell and the By-Laws Committee chaired by Dick Wales. The Safety Committee chaired by Joe Manley, met and held their annual Safety related discussions.

Friday evening a no host cocktail gathering with a wide selection of hors d'oeuvres and musical entertainment was arranged by this year's Convention Chairman Frank Thill. It was a thoroughly enjoyable event and the sea stories really flew along with the feet of the many dancers.

Saturday morning bright and early the General Business meeting convened. There were in excess of 90 members in attendance. It's hard to get an accurate count because quite a few of the members wander in and out without registering. The meeting commenced with President, LCDR Charles R. Onken, leading the general membership in the pledge of allegiance followed by the Chaplain, Jim Irving, AOCSM/Ret, leading the membership in prayer. The President then made some general comments concerning this year's Convention. The Secretary/Treasurer read a synopsis of the 1989 General Business meeting minutes, (complete sets of minutes were disseminated to the membership in attendance). After

the reading of the synopsis of the 1989 General Business meeting minutes, a motion was made and approved to accept the minutes as distributed.

Committee Chairmen gave their reports; Scholarship by Bob Underwood, Safety by Joe Manley, Frank Thill gave the 1990 Convention report, Vice-President Tom Robins gave the membership report. He stated that renewals are still a problem. Tom also challenged every member to recruit one new member and re-sign a previous member who has let their dues lapse. Dick Wales reported on the By-Laws Committee actions and gave an updated overview of the committee's activities. Dick stated the committee's goals were to do a complete and thorough re-write of all the By-Laws in an attempt to alleviate the problems that seem to keep reappearing with some of the verbiage of individual By-Laws. Dick also stated that the complete rewrite of the By-Laws would be published in an upcoming newsletter to afford members the opportunity to read the revisions prior to being voted on at the 1991 General Business Meeting. LT Mike Taylor presented the status of the 1989 calendar sales. Digger O'Dell reported on the John W. Finn Ordnanceman of the Year. Digger stated there was over 300 years of Aviation Ordnance experience on the Board this year. The President reported on the Association's Hall of Fame award. Chuck said the guidelines that will govern this award had been reviewed. At the present time the Board of Directors comments were being incorporated, and they would be redistributed for another review by the Board of Directors. LT Jeff Sassone, Newsletter Editor, gave the Newsletter report. The President took this opportunity to thank the previous Newsletter Editor AOCS Ed Hammond and Chapter Three for their efforts over the last 2 1/2 years. Chapter reports were then given by Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 21, 41, 65, 68, 70, and "S-87". It was announced that certificates had been re-designed for the Honorary members as well as new certificates for Scholarship awards, AVORDY and AVORDY First Runner-Up being established.

Under new business; A report on the status of registering the Association's Logo and Trademark was provided by the Secretary/Treasurer. The President announced that the Board of Directors had established a policy that in event of death of a member of the Association whose dues were in

good standing, the surviving spouse would be offered Honorary Lifetime membership in the Association. He also announced that the Board of Directors had authorized the amount of two hundred dollars to be transferred from the Association's General account to the Association's Scholarship account in the name of Lester B. Tucker, CWO4/Ret, for his contributions to the Association. The Scholarship Committee Chairman announced that a total of \$450.00 had been donated to the Scholarship fund in memory of the late Arthur M. Meekins, AO/Ret.

Elections were then held for the office of Secretary/Treasurer and two positions on the Board of Directors. Newly elected Officers: Robert A. Ashworth, CDR/Ret, as Secretary/Treasurer in place of outgoing Jerry Gannon, Dave Michel, AOCM/Ret, for outgoing Board of Director member Ralph "Digger" O'Dell and AOCS Gary Buse for outgoing Board of Director member Wayne Beasley. A standing ovation for all outgoing Officers was given.

It was announced that George Adams, CWO4/Ret, had selected John Ascuga's Nugget in Sparks, Nevada as the 1991 convention site.

Saturday evening Two-Hundred-Forty members and guests enjoyed a Prime Rib buffet dinner. After dinner, Captain Louis Robert Canepa, Chief of Staff, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, gave a very interesting and well received presentation of "Operation Praying Mantis". This operation was conducted while Captain Canepa was "Super CAG" of Airwing 11 onboard the USS Enterprise. The presentation covered quite a few of the new weapons in the Navy Air Arsenal. Weapons that quite a few of the members in attendance were not familiar with.

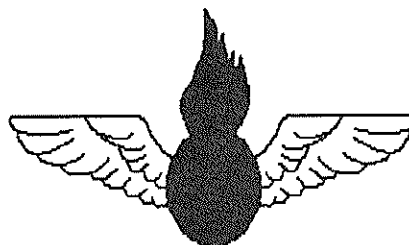
Captain Canepa then announced the winners of this year's Robert L. Crow Scholarship awards. They were; Shane D. Birch, brother of AO2 Scott A. Birch, Mark A. Lemieux, son of LCDR Alidor J. Lemieux and Barbara J. Williamson, daughter of Connie Williamson, CWO3/Ret.

Captain Canepa announced the winner of this year's John W. Finn Aviation Ordnanceman of the Year as AO1 (AW/NAC) Frank E. Thomas, attached to Patrol Squadron Nineteen. The First Runner-Up was AO1 (AW) Ernest B. Ashford attached to Attack Squadron One One Five onboard USS Midway (CV-41). A well deserved

round of applause was given for all of this years Scholarship award recipients, Ordnanceman of the Year and First Runner-Up.

That's it for this year's convention news. For you that could not attend, we are looking forward to seeing you at the Nugget Hotel in Sparks, Nevada 13-16 June 1991.

Gerald F. Gannon
Outgoing Secretary/Treasurer



Chapter 3

Whidbey Island, Washington. Fun was had by all who attended the convention in Las Vegas. We are all looking forward to Sparks, Nevada next year.

Our annual picnic is August 18th at Rocky Point and we're hoping to have a real good turn out.

Congratulations to Dave Michel who was elected to the Board of Directors. At our July 12 meeting we welcomed aboard Lester Tucker from Montana. He briefed us on his trip to Memphis, TN for the Aviation Ordnance Museum dedication. Our next meeting is at the V.F.W., September 12, 1990 at 1930. All ordies are invited to attend.

David "Snuffy" Smith
President, Chapter 3

Chapter 9

Jacksonville, Florida. Greetings from Chapter Nine. Things are looking up, the membership and attendance is getting better by the month, with 32 members at our last meeting. We encourage any and all ordies in the Jacksonville area to attend our meetings on the third Thursday of each month, 1900 at the Fleet Reserve Branch 91 on Collins Road. We would really like to see you.

Aviation Ordnancemen have lost a dear shipmate and a true patriarch of our rate. CDR Jud Hendricks passed away and our sympathy goes out to Jud's family, we'll miss him. It was requested that donations be made to the Chesa-

peake Rescue Squad.

Tony Gonzales and Billy Harkins attended the convention from Chapter Nine and as usual the report was "a good time was had by all".

The last meeting was great with the large turn-out that we had. We were able to get a "How Goes It" from Kings Bay, NAS Cecil, Mayport and NAS Jacksonville. With a lot of interest and insight given on many topics.

That's about it from Jacksonville. We'll be working a booth at the NAS Jacksonville 50th Anniversary Air Show 12-14 October 1990. Be sure to stop by and say hello.

Gary Laun

Chapter 12

Greetings from an "afloat" Chapter 12. Afloat, because of 56 inches of rainfall to date this year here in the P.I., most of it coming in June and July. Big "Do-ins" over here lately! We changed chapter presidents, saying good-bye to CDR Del Oakes and electing an old two star shipmate, (and we do mean old) AOCM Tony Zonkel of VC-5. Tony is working hard to beef up our membership and participation - lots of new ideas.

On 11 July we hosted CDR Oakes at a farewell supper at the golf course's Greenview Inn. Wouldn't you know it - he only wanted Ham Hocks & Beans and Cornbread with lots of San Miguel beer to chase it down. CDR Oakes reported to the chapter on his visit to the 1990 AO Reunion in Las Vegas and as his last official act he presented the chapter with the \$150.00 donation from Chapter 8, which is earmarked for support of the International Children's Advocate Program. "Bravo Zulu" and a special thanks to Chapter 8. God will bless you all for your generous help to the children.

CDR Oakes also briefed us on the Aviation Ordnance Museum in Millington, talking mostly about the superb job that everyone concerned did to make it happen - especially the role of William B. Naylor, AOCM, USN, RET. Without his drive, enthusiasm, expertise and dedication, the museum would not exist. Well Done W.B. Naylor! We will never forget your and your efforts and the

theme at the next Chapter 12 party will be "AOCM W.B. Naylor Appreciation Day" - banner and all. We will certainly miss the "Big Guy", CDR Del Oakes! He has done an awful lot of good for the chapter, the local area and AO community in general. CDR Oakes reports to the Naval Safety Center, Norfolk VA in September. He has been directed to attend an "Ordie Farewell" at "Jim Bob's" in the Barrio Barreto in his honor on July 21, 1990. "Say what?" Hope to see all you sea-goers at the pier. Mabuhay!

Gary Husman
Secretary/Treasurer
Chapter 12

Chapter 21

Hello from 'ORDNANCETOWN USA' Fallon, NV. We held our first meeting on January 25, 1990 to elect officers and petition the National Association for permission to establish a local chapter.

Officers and Board of Directors are as follows:

Officers	Board of Directors
Joe Manly - President	John Cruz
Randy Burson - V. P.	Lori Thompson
John Hill - Sec/Treas	Jim Rupert
	John Ako

We received our authorization to become Chapter 21 'ORDNANCETOWN USA' on 30 March 1990 via a letter from the President of the Association of Aviation Ordnancemen, Charles R. Onken.

Our current membership is over 50 with a lot of support from our local retired community. We have adopted the local Fallon Convalescent Center and are working to raise funds to buy a VHS recorder/player for their use.

We would like to give our heartiest thanks to CDR Warren Seal and AO1 Dan Snyder for all the hard work they put into helping establish Chapter 21. Warren has transferred to NWC China Lake and Dan to CVW-5 USS Midway.

From the Desert Oasis
LCDR Joe Manley
President, Chapter 21
Mayor ORDNANCETOWN USA

ORDIES ARE WINNERS

All hands who attended the 1990 Convention in Las Vegas came away a winner! At least that was the consensus of the nightly cleanup crew at the Imperial Palace Hotel, our Convention Headquarters. They claimed the registration and bar areas had to be policed several times a day for Sea Story FOD. They also reported numerous drinks were spilled by flailing hands and arms, as the sea stories became more animated in the heat of battle.

Yes, if you missed the 15th Anniversary celebration, you missed a most enjoyable time. Not only was the Friday Night Cocktail Party attended by all hands to enjoy drinks, hors d'oeuvres, dancing and more sea stories, the Saturday Night Banquet crowd thoroughly enjoyed an excellent buffet and an outstanding & stimulating talk by our guest speaker, Captain Lou Canepa.

What's in store for next year? More of the same? Absolutely, but in Reno.

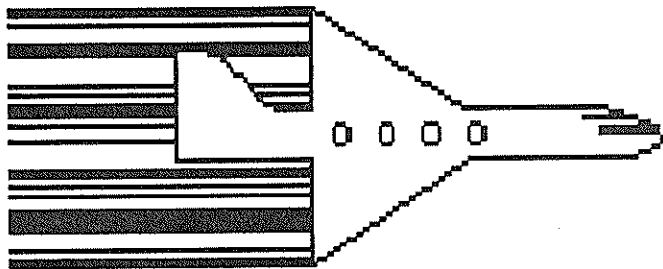
Start making your plans now to attend the **1991 Ordie Convention** at John Ascuga's **Nugget**, **June 12 - 16, 1991**. The Board of Directors decided to select two (2) airlines as the Association's official carriers for 1991, thus offering the membership a choice. Both carriers will offer discounted fares into Reno, through The Travel & Tour Company of San Diego.

The airlines, and car rental company, will be selected and announced in the November Newsletter. Also, check the next issue of the Red Shirt for Jim Thomas's suggestions on how to stretch your travel dollars....not only for the Convention, but for all travel!

(619) 463-3030

1-800-733-1268

Jim Thomas



Aviation Ordnancemen of Note

In August 1942, at Nazan Bay Aleutians, the

Japanese submarine RO61 torpedoed the USS Casco, the PBY tender. Fuel oil and AVGAS spread over the bay. A Franklin Buoy with automatic pyro flare was floating in the much. AOM J. Cobean dove over the side in water of about 40 degrees, swam to the buoy and held it under water until the flare was exhausted, then swam back to the ship to the cheers of the crew. The sub was severely damaged by a PBY and finished off by the USS Reid.

Ref: 'The Thousand Mile War', by Brian Garfield, published by Doubleday Inc.

I have found a lot of knowledgeable people who did not know that we operated an airfield at Attu, the western most island of the Aleutian chain, only 670 miles from the Japanese Islands. The PV Vega Ventura twin engine bombers, were used to bomb, rocket, strafe, and photo recon the base at Parimushiro and on down the island. The ordnancemen in the crew normally operated the top turret and the ASD-1 RADAR, which was immediately beneath the turret. It is believed that these ordnancemen shot down 17 enemy fighters. It is recorded that AOM2 Floyd Jacobsen shot down three in one flight. One squadron had all AO navigators and they were considered top professionals. Another squadron had the peculiar primary mission of flying fighter cover for the B24 and B25 bombers flown by the Army Air Corps, also stationed on Attu.

Ref: 'Ventura in Action', by Charles L. Sorivner and Captain W.E. Scarborough USN Ret, published by Squadron/Signals Publications and line Ordnance Chief Doug Weaver ACOM serving in VPB-131, VB-136, VB-135 and VPB-139.

Submitted by:

LCDR Doug Weaver USN/RET

THANK YOU

To the Association of Aviation Ordnancemen for honoring me with an Honorary Membership in the Association.

These are not my words, but they express how I feel:

"I want to thank all of you, not just for what you did, which was wonderful, but for the way you did it. For the smiles and the warmth and the caring you put into it. You are all very special people, thanks for making me feel special too."

Kathy Gannon



VA-196 A-6B being loaded to support operation "Desert Shield"

Photo by PHAA Dietrich

When the 'balloon' goes up somewhere in the world, as it has this last month, and the United States is forced to flex its muscle, part of that muscle will inevitably take shape in the form of "Red Shirts" with hernia bars. I apologize for this newsletter being late, but I was truly 'overcome by events'.

From the USS Independence.

Jeff Sassone
Editor

ASSOCIATION OF AVIATION ORDNANCEMEN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Membership \$10.00 Per Year		MAIL TO: Robert A. Ashworth 133 H.L. Sudduth DR Panama City, FL 32404	
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Member: Check Three USN _____ ACTIVE _____ USNR _____ RETIRED _____ USMC _____ EX-AO _____ USMCR _____ RANK _____ RATE _____		Associate Member: (Optional for member) Employer _____ Address _____ Occupation _____ Position _____	
Dates Served: _____ to _____			
<u>Under the Freedom of Information Act:</u> I do / do not authorize release of my name, address and telephone number to other members or prospective members of the Association of Aviation Ordnancemen.			
_____ (Sponsor)		_____ (Signed)	

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