

100 Years of Progress and Achievement

CENTENNIAL

of Naval Aviation



Centennial Uniform Patch Unveiled!

**NAS Whiting Field
Welcomes T-6B**

**Naval Air Forces
 Official Publication
 Vol. 2, Issue 1**

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Departments

Glance at the Past..... 6
 Around the Services..... 8
 Blues Angels Schedule 9, 11

Highlights

A Word from the 'Air Boss' 3
 The Saga of the Kavieng Cat 5
 Hellcat Recovered 4
 USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) 12



'Fat Albert's' Last JATO Flight 8



Centennial Patch 10



Marine Aviation Pioneer 9
 USMC Col. Thomas C. Turner

COVER: Inside the cockpit of the new T6B Texan II as seen from the perspective of a student pilot. Photo by Greg Davis.

Word From the 'Air Boss'



Vice Admiral Tom Kilcline Commander, Naval Air Forces

Welcome to the 3rd edition of our Centennial of Naval Aviation Newsletter! Much has been accomplished in the past quarter and our momentum is quickly building. My Centennial staff's attendance at the recent International Council of Airshows proved to be a very positive experience, thanks to the wonderful professionals of the air show community. I applaud everyone for their efforts, diligence and continued support in what will be a celebration of history as well as a historic Naval Aviation celebration. A special thanks to the Centennial coordinators in each region across the United States for taking lead on the planning and execution of events as we march to 2011. Although it is a team effort for all of Naval Aviation to ensure we meet our goal, the regional Centennial representatives are the driving force in giving their local communities a chance to celebrate 100 years of progress and achievement. Again, thank you to all who are making the commemoration of Naval Aviation's 100 years of flight possible.

- VADM Tom "Killer" Kilcline, USN

From the Editor

The previous issue of our newsletter has brought us up to a new standard of excellence! Thanks to the efforts of our staff, we were able to reformat and expand to 12 pages, and we hope you'll find the content of this issue as interesting as the last.

We're now just 11 months away from the beginning of the Centennial year. Detailed event planning is underway.

The Blue Angels released their 2010/2011 performance schedules in December 2009, and their switch to a two-year schedule is a welcomed change, at least in the Centennial office.

One other major event is the release of the flight suit "patch" design, which you will see later in this issue.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and you'll be hearing more from us as the year progresses.

- CAPT Richard Dann



Centennial Force Leadership



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Combat F6F Recovered From Lake Michigan



Grumman F6F-3 (BuNo 25910) immediately after being pulled from the waters of Lake Michigan on 30 November 2009. US Navy Photo

The waters of Lake Michigan have yielded another historic Navy aircraft for the National Naval Aviation Museum's collection. Pulled from the depths in late-November, the F6F-3 Hellcat (Bureau Number 25910) arrived at the museum on December 3rd, where it will be restored for eventual public display. The aircraft took its plunge into the lake waters on January 5, 1945, with Lieutenant (junior grade) Walter B. Elcock at the controls. According to the accident summary, he had made a normal approach to the training carrier USS Sable (IX 81), but after receiving the "cut" signal from the Landing Signal Officer, he allowed the starboard wing to drop a bit. Thus, the fighter hit the deck at an angle and headed towards the catwalk on the starboard edge of the flight deck. The plane's tailhook had caught the Number 4 arresting wire, which held it momentarily, but then "the wire slipped off the hook and the plane fell into Lake Michigan, striking the water in an inverted position."

Elcock survived his dip in the frigid waters—Sable's ship's log reported that

she had to clear an ice field 14 miles from shore earlier in the day—telling reporters recently that when hanging over the side of the ship and staring at Lake Michigan, he strapped himself in feeling like "something was going to give." When the plane fell in the water, he recalled being submerged for a time before unstrapping his seatbelt and parachute and swimming to the surface.

Hunter Brawley, Elcock's grandson, was present pier side when the plane touched dry land for the first time in nearly 65 years, and got the opportunity to sit in the pilot seat last sat in by his grandfather. Elcock, who celebrated his 89th birthday in August 2009, lives in his hometown of Atlanta, Georgia.

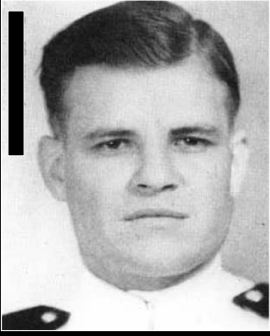
The path to recovery of this particular airplane began when it was first located in 1990, its wings damaged and vertical stabilizer and rudder torn away as a result of the crash. Since that time various species of mussels had infested Lake Michigan, covering the airplane and making its restoration more challenging.

This particular F6F-3, the recovery of which was sponsored by Mr. Andy Taylor, Chief Executive Officer of Enterprise-Rent-A-Car, in honor of his father Jack Taylor, a World War II Hellcat pilot in the Pacific Theater, entered service in July 1943 and was assigned to Fighting Squadron (VF) 38. A rarity in that it was one of the few land-based Navy squadrons to see combat in the South Pacific, VF-38 operated from Guadalcanal, New Georgia, and Bougainville and was credited with shooting down 22 Japanese aircraft. The nature of Bureau Number 25910's combat action is unknown, but by 1944 the airplane had returned to the United States. Assigned to the Carrier Qualification Training Unit at Naval Air Station (NAS) Glenview, Illinois, in December 1944, it was operational in training new carrier pilots for only a matter of days before its loss in Lake Michigan.

The F6F-3 is the third airplane recovered from Lake Michigan this year, the previous two being SBD Dauntless dive-bombers.

The Saga of the Kavieng Cat

Story by Tom Phillips



By February 1944, the allies had fought their way up the Solomon Islands to Bougainville and to the doorstep of the Bismarck Archipelago - comprised of the large islands of New Britain, New Ireland and others (roughly 1000 miles northeast of Australia). New Britain was the site of the Japanese bastion of Rabaul; too tough a nut

to be worth the price to crack. In addition to Rabaul, another major Japanese base was located at Kavieng, at the northwest tip of New Ireland. Allied invasion plans were to bypass Rabaul and Kavieng, and instead neutralize the air power there; thus rendering the bases ineffective. To stage for the air attack, the seaplane tender USS San Pablo, was moved forward to Langemak Bay, and sat anchored off Finschafen to mother the PBVs of VPB-34. From there VPB-34 could support USAAF raids on Rabaul and Kavieng, aiding GEN Mac Arthur's progress up the coast of New Guinea to the west.

On Feb. 15, 1944, a large B-25 daylight raid was flown against Kavieng. LTJG Nathan Gordon of VPB-34 was assigned to provide air-sea rescue support. His PBV, dubbed "Arkansas Traveler" in honor of his home state, positioned near the target and orbited, awaiting a Mayday call.

The USAAF raid was hotly opposed by the Japanese defenders and the fighting heavy. Gordon's crew was alerted of a downed plane about 40 miles from Kavieng. Finding no sign of wreckage nor survivors, they received word of a second aircraft down in Kavieng Harbor, about a mile offshore. Approaching the harbor, Gordon's crew spotted dye markers in the water and partially inflated rafts, but couldn't see any survivors.

GORDON: "It is extremely difficult to locate objects in the sea. But we knew someone had been shot down at this spot because of the dye marker and rafts. Since landing and taking off from the open sea under the best of conditions is hazardous, we were reluctant to land unnecessarily."

Knowing a human head bobbing in the water can be easily missed from the air, Gordon had no choice except to land for a closer look. Gordon approached for a full stall landing, but the heavy ocean swells caused the PBV to land hard, popping hull rivets. With no survivors spotted, Gordon's PBV soon departed the area.

While lifting off, they got a message from an escort fighter involved in the bombing raid. Another B-25 was down, this was located even closer to the hostile town of Kavieng. While inbound, the B-25's escorting fighters reported having the Arkansas Traveler in sight and offered to fly over the survivors, marking their position. Gordon was apprehensive knowing the downed fliers were so close to the Japanese shore. Like clockwork, a Japanese boat pushed from the beach in a race to capture the downed fliers. The escorting

fighters strafed the Japanese craft and forced a tactical retreat. The Japanese defense, unable to reach the wreckage, opened fired at the raft and stranded aircrew from their beach positions. In the face of the streaming Japanese fire, Gordon made another full stall landing and taxied near the raft, throwing them a line. He planned to pull them aboard while moving, making himself a more difficult target. Unfortunately his crew at the blister could not reel in the raft. Part of the problem may have been the men hanging on the sides of the raft acting as sea anchors; another problem was the Army aviators were "banged up and not able to assist."

GORDON: "I finally realized that if we were going to get the men out, I would have to cut my engines. That of course, entailed some risks because sometimes the engines, under such conditions, simply wouldn't restart."

"Before making a final decision, I called my plane captain and said, 'Wiley, if we've got to stop the engines, can we get them started again?' He said he was pretty sure we could."

Based on "pretty sure" Gordon was willing to take a big risk in the face of shells falling around him, and also by stopping to become a stationary target.

Gordon again shut down both engines. His crew pulled the raft to the boat and lifted the six men into the plane. Fire from the shore battery increased in intensity and began to fall closer as Gordon readied to head home. The fickle engines started, the Arkansas Traveler labored through the swells and bounced into the air, leaving the shell splashes behind. Safely airborne and out of range of the enemy guns, Gordon received yet another report of men in the water from an escort fighter; who once again guided the PBV to a raft containing three stranded airmen. This raft was even closer to shore than the first.

Gordon repeated his rescue sequence, dropping a smoke bomb to mark the position and get the wind direction, then making a safe landing.

GORDON: "We were getting considerably more enemy fire, but somehow it didn't worry me. I had too many other things to think about."

Throwing the raft a line, he again had to shut down the engines for the crew to be able to pull the raft in. Fortunately Arkansas Traveler managed to take off again without incident, and headed for home with a total of 19 men out of harm's way.

They had flown 20 miles toward the safety of Finschafen, when they were hailed by a B-25 who had spotted a 5th survival raft in Kavieng harbor. By now, two of the four escorting fighters had left the scene with low fuel, reducing crucial protection for the ailing craft. When Arkansas Traveler returned to the hostile harbor, the crew saw six men clinging to a raft only 600 yards off shore. Knowing the wind direction, Gordon faced a new problem. In order to land on the heavy swells, it was necessary to fly over enemy territory to line up his approach for landing.

GORDON: "We couldn't approach from any other direction because, when making landings in heavy swells, you have to land along with the swells. Crosswise landings tend to make the nose dig in."

KAVIENG cont. on page 10

A Glance at the Past - Training Commands



A Naval Aircraft Factory N3N-3 water taxis, circa 1941. Photo provided by CAPT Rich Dann.

Student gets a thumbs up from the lineman to start up his SNJ-3 at NATC Corpus Christi in November 1942. Photo from National Archives (80-G-417661).



With a little help, the pilot of this Burgess N-9H (A-2371) prepares to man his plane at North Island on Jan. 15, 1919. Photo from San Diego Air & Space Museum.



A female operator gives pointers to an Aviation Cadet in a Link trainer at NATC Corpus Christi. May 20, 1943. Photo provided by the US National Archives



Identical twins LTJG Deborah, front, and Christa Kieszek in a TH-57 "Sea Ranger" training helicopter. U.S. Navy photo by Tom Thomas

Around the Services

'Fat Albert' Says Goodbye to Jet-Assisted Takeoffs

Story provided by Amy McCullough, *Military Times*

The Blue Angels' C-130T Hercules, affectionately known as Fat Albert, has performed its fiery jet-assisted takeoff at countless air shows since 1975, but the tradition will end Nov. 14 in Pensacola, Fla., when the team closes its 2009 season.

A Navy aircraft, Fat Albert has been manned by an all-Marine crew since it joined the legendary flight demonstration team in 1970. Its primary mission is to carry the Angels' 40-plus

will not change.

But Fat Albert's Jet-Assisted Take Off, or JATO — has been a popular part of the Angels' act for the past 34 years, wowing crowds at the outset of most shows with flames and smoke shooting out from beneath its wings as the lumbering aircraft lifts off the runway and lets out a deafening roar.

Its final JATO performance at Naval Air Station Pensacola, which all past Fat Albert aircrew members were invited to attend, will mark the end of an era.

"Everyone in the Fat Albert shop is



maintenance and support personnel, as well as the gear, spare parts and communications equipment necessary to pull off successful air shows. That

really sad," said Maj. Drew Hess, the Blue Angels' senior C-130 pilot. "It is a significant chapter [in the team's history] that unfortunately is being closed."

To execute a JATO, Fat Albert uses

eight solid-fuel rocket bottles, which supply enough momentum for the aircraft to leave the runway after traveling just 1,500 feet. Climbing at a 45-degree angle, it can reach 1,000 feet in just 15 seconds.

The rockets, which weigh about 150 pounds when full, were designed to thrust C-130s skyward in austere conditions where traditional runways are unavailable, said 1st Lt. Craig Thomas, a Marine spokesman at the Pentagon. But the Corps hasn't used JATO in combat since the Vietnam War, he said, and it's unlikely to do so again, as newer KC-130Js have engines built to exert the same thrust as C-130Ts outfitted with JATO capability.

The Blue Angels visit about 35 cities during a nine-month schedule, performing two shows per city, but a dwindling supply of rocket bottles — and a budget that doesn't allow for replacements — has forced the team to limit its JATO demonstrations to about 20 a year. This year it performed 13, Hess said.

In 1975, Fat Albert opened air shows with just a single JATO, but over the years more maneuvers, including multiple flybys, were added to its repertoire. So even though this crowd favorite is going away, Hess said the team will have plenty in store for air show goers next season.

F4U-4 Corsair Joins USS Midway Museum's Hangar Inventory

Story from *Port of San Diego.org*

Visitors to the USS Midway Museum can get a close-up view of a restored F4U-4 Corsair a rare signature fighter plane. The recently donated Corsair now joins 25 other aircraft on display at the aircraft carrier museum. During a Veteran's Day Ceremony, the 33-foot-long fighter plane transited San Diego Bay, traveling by barge from its North Island restoration facility to the USS Midway Museum along the North Embarcadero. A crane gently lifted the aircraft onto the bow of the flight deck.

"It didn't fly here," USS Midway Museum volunteer and safety officer Rudy Labastida said the day after its arrival as he

stood near the meticulously restored plane, answering questions for the many visitors drawn to the new display.

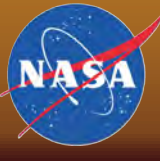
The restored Corsair has the markings of Marine Fighter Squadron (VMF-225) as it would have looked in 1952 for a deployment aboard the USS Midway.

The Corsair was in production longer than any other aircraft in World War II and was then considered the best fighter-based aircraft in the world. It was also used during the Korean Conflict.

"It was a very effective fighter and attack plane," said USS Midway Museum docent Dick Bradley, a retired U.S. Navy lieutenant and pilot who flew single-engine prop planes and anti-submarine warfare helicopters during the 1950s and 1960s.



An F4U-4 Corsair prepares to be craned from Naval Air Station North Island to the USS Midway Museum.



2010 Blue Angels Schedule:

March

13 NAF El Centro, CA
20-21 MacDill AFB, FL
27-28 NAS Kingsville, TX

April

10-11 NAS Key West, FL
17 Charleston AFB, SC
24-25 Vidalia, GA

May

1-2 St. Joseph, MO
8-9 Tuscaloosa, AL
15-16 Andrews AFB, MD
22-23 MCAS Cherry Point, NC
26 USNA, Annapolis, MD
28 USNA, Annapolis, MD (fly-over)
29-30 Jones Beach, NY

June

5-6 Eau Claire, WI
12-13 Milwaukee, WI
19-20 Cape Girardeau, MO
26-27 St. Cloud, MN

July

3-4 Traverse City, MI
10 Pensacola Beach, FL
17-18 Dayton, OH
24-25 Idaho Falls, ID
31 Anchorage, AK

August

1 Anchorage, AK
7-8 Seattle, WA
14-15 Chicago, IL
28-29 Portsmouth, NH

September

4-6 Cleveland, OH
11-12 Scott AFB, IL
18-19 NAS Oceana, VA
25-26 MCAS Kaneohe Bay, HI

October

1-3 MCAS Miramar, CA
9-10 San Francisco, CA
16-17 Dobbins AFB, GA
23-24 NAS Jacksonville, FL
30-31 Ft. Worth Alliance, TX

November

6-7 Homestead AFB, FL
13 NAS Pensacola, FL

USMC Pioneer Lost, Not Forgotten



Marine Corps Aviator Col. Thomas C. Turner devoted his off-duty time learning to fly before being assigned to flight training with the Army Signal Corps. USMC file photo.

Story by 2LT Molly Coulter, USMC

There is a general knowledge of the great personalities of Marine aviation-- Pappy Boyington, Joe Foss and John Glenn come to mind. Many of the pioneers of Marine aviation are not so well known. Thomas C. Turner was one. A native of Mare Island, California, he enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1901 and was commissioned the following year. Prior to aviation service, he served with ground troops in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Vera Cruz and commanded the San Diego Marine Barracks. In San Diego he learned to fly off-duty. He then was assigned to undergo flight training with the U.S. Army Signal Corps in California. He became officer-in-charge of aviation for the Army at Ellington Air Field, Texas throughout World War I. In 1919 he returned to the Marine Corps and again was assigned to command ground troops, this time in Haiti. Here he earned a Haitian medal of honor for serving as "an officer of remarkable

valor" against bandit operations. After returning to the U.S. he was placed as Officer-in-Charge of Marine aviation by Commandant, Major General John A. Lejeune. He focused his efforts on reorganizing the structure of Marine aviation; namely by establishing a table of organization. In 1921 Lieutenant Colonel Turner flew a record-breaking flight from Washington to Santo Domingo, the longest flight over land and water without an escort. Upon completion of his term as the leader of aviation, he commanded the First Marine Aviation Group in Quantico, Virginia and then deployed to China where he commanded Marine squadrons supporting a Marine brigade. In 1929 he was reappointed as Officer-in-Charge of Marine aviation. In October 1931 while in Haiti inspecting the Marine 4th Squadron, Col. Turner was struck by his aircraft's propeller. It cleanly severed the right side of his face. Although he was able to walk to the hospital, he died two days later.

Around the Services

Centennial Patch Unveiled

Story by Centennial of Naval Aviation Staff

The official patch of the Centennial of Naval Aviation was recently selected from a field of 38 entries. The patch, which will be worn on the right shoulder of the standard flight suit, was designed by Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 21's Maintenance and Material Control Officer LT Ian Espich, stationed at NAS North Island. LT Espich's patch best portrayed all the aspects of Naval Aviation that make up the 100 years of rich history.

The design of the patch captures a number of meanings.

The gold braid surrounding the logo represents the 236 years of seafaring tradition of the United States Sea services, with the founding of the Continental Navy on 13 October 1775, the formation of the Continental Marines a month later at Tun Tavern on 10 November 1775, and the founding of what would become the Coast Guard on 4 August 1790. The gold color was chosen as it one of the Navy's (and Marines) two colors. The Blue outer circumference denotes the Navy's other primary color, blue. This particular shade is the same as that carried on WWII Navy and Marine Corps aircraft.

The light blue inner circle - horizon and water represent sea and sky, the two mediums that we treasure as maritime aviators. Note the wake in the water, which is a retrospective look at where we have been in Naval Aviation.

The Golden wings represent the human aspect of Naval Aviation. We are the men and women of Naval Aviation, men and women who have all worked hard to earn our wings. We



The Centennial of Naval Aviation patch is approved for official wear on all Navy flight suits.

wear these wings with the great pride they deserve. The Naval Aviation Pilot wings were selected because they were the original naval aviation wings.

The A-1 Triad and F-35 Lightning II represent the old and new of Naval Aviation. The first and most recent aircraft purchased by the Sea Services.

The clouds in the sky symbolize that not everything in our profession is easy. What we do is hard and often times dangerous, and this represents those shared hardships.

KAVIENG cont. from page 4

Overburdened with nine extra people, gallons of water trapped in the bilges and hull damage from repeated hard water landings, Gordon knew this landing would be a squeaker - never mind the persistent annoyance of hostile fire. He made the approach, surprising the anti-aircraft gunners, as the big slow Cat swept low over the terrain.

One more time, Gordon challenged the odds, shutting down the unpredictable engines for the third time, as the raft was pulled alongside. Shell splashes from the shore batteries flowed closer and closer while the six men were hauled aboard as fast as possible. The astonishing engines



started up without protest and the leaking, damaged, waterlogged, overloaded Cat lumbered away. In one final effort, The Japanese threw everything they had at the black Cat to prevent its escape, but the laboring engines heaved the

sluggish plane into the air.

Once out of gun range, Gordon set the crew to bailing water from the bilges to lighten the load. ENS Jack Keeley, the most knowledgeable man aboard in administering first aid went to work on the several wounded survivors. They were still hours from base when fuel became a problem, so Gordon diverted to an Army OA-10 seaplane tender at Wewak, where he delivered 15 lucky, grateful airmen to the field hospital.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt later decided that this performance merited the Medal of Honor for Nathan Gordon and Silver Stars for the rest of his crew. Adm. Bill Halsey agreed, sending the following message: "Please pass my admiration to that saga-writing Kavieng Cat crew. X-ray. Halsey."



NAS Whiting Field Welcomes T-6B



New and old. A Raytheon T-6B Texan II flies formation with a T-34C Turbo Mentor off the coast of Florida. Photo by Greg Davis.

NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER, Md. — Inclement weather may have darkened the skies but failed to dim the enthusiasm of the more than 150 people attending the Aug. 27 Fly-In ceremony celebrating the arrival of the first two T-6B Texan trainer aircraft at Naval Air Station Whiting Field in North West Florida.

The arrival of the Texan signals the official start of the turnover from the T-34C Turbo Mentor, which has been in the fleet for more than 30 years, to the T-6B for primary flight training in the Navy.

“Delivery of the T-6B to Whiting Field is the culmination of a tremendous amount of effort from the T-6 IPT and Hawker Beechcraft,” said Capt. Andrew Hartigan, Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems Program Office (PMA-273) program manager here. Both government and industry personnel from Wichita, Kansas to Patuxent River and Wright Patterson have built a great program and kept it on track.”

The T-6B is a faster, stronger, more efficient aircraft that features an enhanced cockpit design and avionics that make it a good first step in teaching students before they

begin their fleet tours. According to Tracy Patrick, the Navy integrated product team lead for the T-6B at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, the heads-up display (HUD), the Flight Management System (FMS) and digital displays are impressive improvements in technology from the T-34C, which is scheduled to be phased out of service by 2014.

“The T-6B provides a significant aircraft upgrade to the Joint Primary Aircraft Training System,” said Patrick, who is also a member of PMA-273. “With the updated cockpit, the aircraft more closely replicates follow-on trainer and fleet aircraft, which increases training effectiveness and reduces life cycle cost.”

The two aircraft delivered to Whiting, according to Patrick, will undergo technical manual verification and validation and be used for maintenance and initial instructor pilot training, beginning this fall.

Follow-on deliveries of T-6B aircraft are scheduled to begin this winter, and Initial Operation Capability is planned for the spring of 2010 at NAS Whiting Field. “Meeting this date is essential to naval aviation training, as the T-34 fleet rapidly approaches the end of its fatigue life,” said Hartigan.

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 La Crosse, WI
21-22 Andrews AFB, MD (reunion show)
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 Kingston, RI

July

2-3 Muskegon, MI
9 Pensacola Beach, FL
16-17 Rochester, NY
23-24 Ypsilanti, MI
30-31 Kalispell, 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



From Past ...

USS Langely (CV 1) First Navy Aircraft Carrier

USS Jupiter (AC 3), a “collier” classified as a fuel ship, was converted into the first U.S. aircraft carrier at the Navy Yard, Norfolk, Va., for the purpose of conducting experiments in the new idea of seaborne aviation. On April 11, 1920, her name was changed to Langley in honor of Samuel Pierpont Langley an American astronomer, physicist, aeronautics pioneer and aircraft engineer, and she was given hull classification symbol CV 1. She recommissioned March 20, 1922, with CDR Kenneth Whiting in command.

Keel Laid for USS Gerald R. Ford

A keel-laying ceremony for the Navy’s first Ford-class aircraft carrier, Gerald R. Ford, (CVN 78) was held at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Newport News, Va. on Nov. 14, 2009.

Technological advances in the field of electromagnetics have led to the development of an electromagnetic aircraft launching system, and an advanced arresting gear. An integrated warfare system has been developed to support flexibility in adapting the infrastructure of the ship to future mission roles.

On Jan. 3, 2007 an announcement was made that CVN 78, the Navy’s newest aircraft carrier would be named after Gerald R. Ford, the 38th President of the United States. The ship is scheduled to enter the U.S. Naval Fleet in 2015.



... To Present