



PTEROGRAM

The Official Publication of the Coast Guard Aviation Association
The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl

Sitrep 3-07 Fall 2007

CGAA is a non profit association of active & retired USCG aviation personnel & associates

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Numbers. Important or not. Depends on your perspective. The 2007 roost was the 31st annual roost counting from 1977 when founders Horton, Wall, Thometz and Shrode started the whole thing with a gathering at Long Beach, California. Or should the count start with the following year's organizational meeting at San Francisco? No matter. This Sitrep is the 32nd Pterogram I have 'scribed' since inheriting the role from Gus Shrode. Even less significant. Of more historic significance are aviator numbers and the P numbers assigned to aircrew Pterodactyls. Elmer Stone, Aviator #1, who was also naval aviator #38, dates to 1916. The most recently designated CG aviator carries number 3,899 (see page 22). Among the pioneers at the '07 roost were founder Norm Horton (#187), W.C. Mitchell (#243) and Jerry Fenlon (#270). Now, there's some history. One number continuing to be of concern is the small number of volunteers stoking the fires of our association. We have grown a bunch since '77 and hopefully will keep on growing. With all that has been accomplished so far, we have a potential to do even more in every category of our objectives. Supporting active duty CG aviation; researching, preserving and displaying CG aviation history; and helping to educate the public about what Semper Paratus is all about. We need more than a few good men (and women) to help our committees. If you can offer even just a few volunteer hours, please contact any member of the Executive Board.

This Sitrep is longer than most. The first half here reports on the roost. There was so much about the roost that should be journalized, not only for posterity but for our many members not able to be present, that space limited the number of photographs that could be included. Hopefully, you will enjoy the ones that were squeezed in. Take advantage of access to many hundreds of other roost photos through our website. Here below are three shots just to get the ball rolling. Meanwhile, the second half of this issue offers very interesting material, and I want to thank all those who contributed. Oh, by the way, you'll find inside where the next roost will take place. Dates will be clear soon but 4-7 September is probable as we go to press. Watch for announcements and start thinking now about tentative travel plans.

Your Ancient Scribe (744)



*Ptero Steve Goldhammer,
Aviator 1207 registering
Elena and Sergei Sikorsky*



*914's Goat
See page 11*



*Three CGA '63 Pteros at the
Awards Banquet - Jeff Hartman (1128),
Harvey Orr (1157), Rudy Peschel (1146)*

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A Message from 1520 (CGAA/AOP President):

My dear colleagues:

I write to all of you who I believe want a stake in the objectives of our Ancient Order to capture, preserve and make available the history of CG aviation, while at the same time, actively supporting the men and women of today's Coast Guard Aviation:

First, there are many well deserved congratulations for a very productive Roost 2007 at Washington, D.C.! There were a lot of 'firsts,' including having the Commandant, Vice Commandant, Chief of Staff (Coast Guard Ancient Mariner) as well as our Ancient AI and Enlisted Ancient AI present and participating. As you will read in the roost report, the aviation COs' conference was connected to the week immediately preceding the Roost. We tried a special theme to engender more active duty involvement that morphed into a Professional Discourse Day, featuring panelists who vastly expanded our knowledge of the current world of CG aviation, culminating in a fascinating 2-hour session during which 7 aviators, young and old, described their most demanding missions in detail for a forensic evaluation by the audience.

The weather held "hot and dusty," and tours took off on schedule. We paid our respects to past Commandant, Admiral Owen W. Siler, a life member, who was buried with honors at Coast Guard Hill at Arlington. Our banquet was at times serious with applause for heroes in our midst, hilarious as the Ancient AI remonstrated in fine form, reverent as we honored our surviving founder nonagenarian CDR Norm Horton. CDR Stu Graham, CG Helicopter Pilot #2, checked in via videoconferencing from his 90th birthday party up north and shared a dialogue with Admiral Allen. One of my most exhilarating moments came when a rescue award recipient thanked me and said he would become a Pterodactyl and pledged to support our organization for life. Inducting ASMCM Farmer and ADC Berry into the CG Aviation Hall of Honor gave me special pleasure as well. I look forward to Roost 2008 in Astoria and thank both C.O.s (Astoria and Barbers Point) for their persuasive sales pitches.

I need to report that the changes to our ByLaws circulated and voted upon earlier in the year passed by an overwhelming margin so we're off and running on those guidelines.

My final thought is a plea: *we desperately need you to help with one of our 6 functional "lines of business."* I invite you to visit the website, fill out a volunteer form and help your volunteer staff guide the organization to new heights. *We're only asking for a couple of hours of your time per week. We really can't make this organization responsive to the interests of our members without you!*

Semper Paratus!

1520

Captain Mont Smith, USCG (Ret.)
Aviator 1520

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REPORT ON THE 2007 PTERODACTYL ROOST of The Coast Guard Aviation Association (The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl) Falls Church, Virginia, September 27-30



The roost of 2007 is history. By the time this recap hits your mailbox, the bills will have been paid, award recipients will have returned home, the talented and diligent people who made it all happen hopefully will have rested, and attention will have turned to other pre-roost projects as well as activities stemming from the roost including a focus on the 2008 roost pre-phlight checklist.

Each roost has its own unique personality depending on location, billeting arrangements, speakers, number of registrants, initiative of hosts, etc. This one around the theme "What a Capitol Idea" differed from past roosts in several ways. All air unit commanding officers were present [*A C.O.'s conference had been scheduled to about the roost calendar*]; a full day was devoted to interaction between active duty aviation personnel and retirees; 440 meals were served at the banquet which featured presentations by the Commandant of the Coast Guard, saw four active duty flag officers seated at the head table, and included an audio-visual hookup with Maine as well as special announcements and awards; and, in addition, two air station commands competed brilliantly for the privilege of hosting the next roost. Meanwhile, the roost was similar to others in other ways. Tours, golf, hospitality, business meeting and a picnic all went down as usual.

Read on for more details on what all went on, but first know that the hard working roost ground crew included the following Pteros and associates: Paul Russell, Ben & Anne Stoppe, Cathie Zimmerman, Steve Goldhammer, Eric Fagerholm, Jerry & Becky Surbey, Mike & Dottie O'Rourke, Chris Snyder, Jay Crouthers & Christine Hunt, Paul Milligan, Bill Meininger, Stu White, Les Smith, Brent Malcolm, LCDR Joe Deer, LCDR Scott Buttrick and Mont Smith.

Figuratively, of course, they all worked their butts off.

Thursday was arrival day. Upon checking in at headquarters for the weekend, participants found a huge well stocked and creatively decorated hospitality area right off the lobby of the Fairview Park Marriott. That's where registrants picked up a packet of roost materials, nametags, schedules, etc. along with refreshments and started their reunion encounters. Story telling went on well into the evening while those who had signed up for the scheduled evening illuminated tour of D.C. structures were shepherded aboard their bus for a great night out.

Friday morning was devoted to part I of a professional discourse day beginning with a continental breakfast outside a large meeting room ready for audio visual presentations. The program was given a kick start with a keynote address by Vice Admiral Vivien Crea, USCG Vice Commandant, Aviator 1820 and life member. The Admiral remarked on her earlier roost experiences which left her wishing to see more focus on active duty recognition and involvement along with the ever present "hangar stories." She expressed her appreciation for those that had paved the way in the past, and she complemented our new leadership on initiatives to bring about the professional interaction planned for the day ahead. [*Space limits our capability to provide many details of the outstanding presentations following VADM Crea, but we'll do our best to give a brief summary...Ed*]

Ptero Captain Mike Emerson, Aviator 2799, on the Commandant's staff as chief of aviation forces, spoke briefly about current and projected operational airframe programs and distribution. He was followed by Ptero Captain Joe Baker, Aviator 2511, the Commandant's staff mem-

ber heading up aeronautical engineering who presented information about aircraft availability, avionics changes, the new National Capitol Region Air Defense mission and satellite direction finding.

Next to land on the dais was Ptero Captain Jeff Pettit, Aviator 2188, aviator flight training CG Liaison Officer at NAS Pensacola. He touched on some of the costs of flight training, various training programs and, most important, the existing aviator deficit, i.e., the CG is short of pilots with "holes" to be filled in the authorized operational air unit billet structure. This presentation prompted an interactive exchange with those present regarding potential and on going use of the CG Auxiliary to provide flight training preparatory flight experiences for CGA cadets which can expedite their entrance into the Navy flight training program. Ptero Pettit also mentioned night vision goggle training and various impacts of [*Congressionally-mandated*] Joint Primary Aircraft Training.

Captain Matt Sisson, Aviator 2538, of the CG acquisition office, provided updates on aviation parts of the Deepwater program. He added some characteristics of the new C-144 twin engine CASA aircraft coming on line.

Now it was mid morning, and the Commandant's aviation safety chief, Commander Tom Farris, Aviator 2581, stepped up. He succinctly gave examples of the necessity for and success of an operational focus on risk assessment and risk management.

After this series of informative presentations on today's CG aviation and some glances to the future, Ptero Sergei Sikorsky, son of Igor Sikorsky and a favorite of Pteros everywhere, was introduced to take the assemblage back in time. Sergei narrated black and white historical still photos



and videos, keeping the eyes of everyone present glued to the screen and ears hanging on every word as the early days of helicopter development and Sergei's life with his father unfolded. Sergei interspersed his interesting commentary with humor, quoting sayings attributed to Igor. In recounting those early testing days of fixed and rotary wing craft when many flights were, let's say, unsuccessful, Igor would comment "pilots decide when to take off, the aircraft decides when to land," and with respect to the earliest vertical take off attempts, "we design the machine with no knowledge, then build it with no knowledge, then try to hover for the first time." Sergei also covered the pioneering accomplishments of our late Captain Frank Erickson, CG helicopter pilot 1 [*for whom the ATC Mobile simulator training building is named*] and his friend, Stu Graham, CG helicopter pilot 2 [*see page 7 for more on Graham*]. One famous image displays young Sergei suspended under an HNS in a first demonstration of the hoist developed by Erickson.

At precisely 1100 eastern time, the meeting paused for a moment of silence in tribute to the late Admiral Owen Siler, Aviator 515, former Commandant of the Coast Guard and charter Pterodactyl, who was at that moment being laid to rest at the Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors including a flyover of CG aircraft.

After a break for lunch, the afternoon session began with Ptero Paul Garrity, Captain, USCG (ret.), Aviator 1530, now an engineer with American Eurocopter, describing the evolution of HH-65 powerplants. With graphs and photos, he traced the Dolphin's re-engining from the original A model to the B and then to today's C model with its more powerful and more reliable engines. Citing various engineering tests and explaining terms, he outlined the successful enhancement of operational capability and safety of the HH-65C now in service throughout the Coast Guard.

He also mentioned a term new to many retirees present, MMCH, multi mission cutter helicopter.

The rest of this first ever [*at a roost*] professional discourse day was devoted to discussions of several particularly harrowing SAR cases. Ptero Dave Kunkel, Rear Admiral, CCGD7, Ancient Albatross, Aviator 1726 [*whew!*] introduced a panel of five retired CG aviators and two who are on active duty. One by one, in turn, each described personal recollections of a specific mission which presented unique challenges and decisions. Each presentation was followed by interaction with attendees as the pilot added to his commentary with answers to questions. The cases presented ranged from 1967 to 1999. These were all fascinating oral histories giving a word picture from the perspective of the pilot's seat in very dangerous, later highly decorated, life saving situations. Space precludes details here but the sessions were recorded so watch for announcements of availability of copies at a later date. The panelists in the order of their presentation were:

Bob Workman, Aviator 914
Tom Finnegan, Aviator 834
Tom "Tank" Vanek
Rich Hauschildt, Aviator 1505
Mont Smith, Aviator 1520
CDR Steve Torpe, Aviator 2912
CAPT Paul Ratte, Aviator 2539

During the afternoon, roost-ers who had registered for the tour of the Udvar-Hazy Center Smithsonian Air Museum at Chantilly visited that great facility filled with such historical craft as Enola Gay and which someday we hope will include a helicopter with CG markings.

The first full day of roost activities would be incomplete without the traditional evening social reception. Guys and gals mingled with air unit commanding officers and reunited with friends in a large, nicely appointed room with cash bars and tables of hors d'oeuvres all around the periphery. Sharings, fun, and lots of smiles were the order of the evening. The only program was a raffle mod-

erated by Ptero Ben Stoppe who, standing on a chair and holding up item after item to be given away, somehow garnered the vocal strength to announce the winning numbers over continuing conversations elsewhere in the space. One of the best 'prizes,' a wonderful piece of framed art, was taken away by happy Ptero Howie Thorsen, Aviator 776. The stories didn't end when the crowd at the reception thinned. Lies continued in the hospitality space beyond the earlier announced closing time of midnight. In other words, a good, long, time was had.

Some early Saturday risers were golfers, some seen grabbing a coffee and muffin near the lobby on their way to the links. Others spent the day in various other activities including the Mount Vernon and winery tours which had been arranged by the event planners. Still others spent much of the day around roost headquarters or its environs. Several volunteers occupied themselves with planning details in preparation for the awards banquet or 'manning' the hospitality space for those continuously gathering to exchange more 'lies.'

Even before the announced gathering time of 1830 for the awards banquet, the roost headquarters lobby and adjacent corridors began to fill, slowly at first, then with gathering momentum, with nicely dressed people, many women and men in Coast Guard Blues. Here a couple in civvies, jacket and tie, sharp pants outfit or dress. There a uniformed Coastie, officer or petty officer with a uniform chest displaying wings of gold and colorful ribbons quietly signaling effort, performance and heroism. Conversation amongst couples and groups raised the decibel level but not uncomfortably as individuals lined up at cash bars adjacent to the banquet hall.

On schedule, doors swung wide and all 440 found their previously arranged tables for the dinner and program. The head table guests and participants and the honored award re-



cipients were escorted to their seats. When all were reasonably well settled in with seat belts fastened [*not really*], Mont Smith, Aviator 1520, our association president, offered a brief welcome and introduced Ptero Vic Primeaux, Aviator 1508, who led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and offered a prayer of invocation. There were twelve at the head table. Joining president and Mrs. Mont Smith were Admiral Thad Allen, Commandant of the Coast Guard, Vice Admiral Vivien Crea, Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard, Vice Admiral Robert Papp, Coast Guard Chief of Staff, Mrs. Papp, Ancient Albatross David Kunkel and Mrs. Kunkel, Captain Mike Emerson, Coast Guard Chief of Aviation Resources, Mrs. Emerson, Enlisted Ancient Albatross Peter MacDougall and Ptero Primeaux.

When the main repast had been distributed and largely consumed, 1520 introduced the head table and asked Ancient Order founder, Ptero Norm Horton, retired Commander, Aviator 187, to stand. Upon doing so, Ptero Norm received enthusiastic and warm applause. The start of the awards presentation leg on this evening's memorable flight was then signalled, and Lieutenant Commander Joe Deer of the Comandant's staff, Aviator 3076B, took the yoke (or cyclic) and requested Commander Sean Mahoney, commanding officer, CGAS Houston, Aviator 2938, to come forward to accept the Chief Machinist Mate Oliver F. Berry Aviation Maintenance Award for AMT2 David Parker of CGAS Houston who was unable to be present. This Pterodactyl sponsored award has been given since 2003, but this was the first time for it to carry the recently approved official name of Chief Berry [*See next page for more about Berry*].

The annual aviation maintenance award was conceived by the association to recognize a Coast Guard enlisted aviation maintenance individual who through exceptional performance has enhanced the overall quality of CG aviation maintenance.

The honoree is selected by the staff of the Commandant from among nominations received from CG air units. The award consists of an association folio containing a description of the career of the late Chief Machinist Mate Oliver Berry and a congratulatory letter from the association president; a congratulatory letter from a flag officer on the staff of the Commandant; addition of the recipient's name to a permanent plaque on display at the Aviation Technical Training Center, Elizabeth City; a year of association membership; and recognition at the annual awards banquet. The fourteen other nominees for this award also receive a year of membership.

AMT2 Parker was cited for demonstrating superb leadership and professionalism while playing a key role in CGAS Houston's aeronautical engineering department as a helicopter maintenance technician, primary quality assurance inspector and watch captain. His technical skills and extensive knowledge of the HH-65C helicopter were invaluable in troubleshooting and correcting discrepancies resulting in completion of twelve flight control overhauls, six engine replacements and forty-eight time compliance technical orders. He had a substantial role in the development of a maintenance plan supporting more than 2,400 flight hours with an 86% availability rate and 96% dispatch rate. His devoted mentoring of junior technicians enhanced their preparation for service wide examinations, their cross-specialty training, study habits and technical knowledge.

The annual Captain Marion "Gus" Shrode Aviation Safety Award was next on the agenda. This award is sponsored by the association and has been given since 1998 to a unit flight safety officer or department to recognize exceptional performance providing outstanding contributions to aviation safety. The recipient is selected by the staff of the Commandant from among nominations submitted by aviation commands. The award con-

sists of an association folio containing a summary of the career of the late Captain Shrode, Aviator 527 and a congratulatory letter from the association president; a letter from a flag officer on the staff of the Commandant; addition of the recipient's name to a permanent plaque displayed at the Aviation Training Center, Mobile; and recognition at the annual awards banquet.

The CGAS Atlantic City Safety Department consisting of Lieutenant Brian Potter, Aviator 3539, and Lieutenant Frank Fusco, Aviator 3636A, was selected from among all nominations to receive this year's award. The department was cited for significant contributions to the outstanding safety record at CGAS Atlantic City during a unique and highly challenging period of rapid mission and asset expansion. Assigned to support the National Capitol Air Defense Mission, the unit's complement of HH-65 airframes doubled, its permanent personnel complement increased by more than seventy percent, and support for temporary duty personnel was required to integrate the new first-of-a-kind 24/7 alert mission safely with its attendant increase in operational risk. Organizing and training for the expansion of forces, maneuvers and new procedures and equipment and operation in the congested and heavily regulated airspace of the nation's capitol required a maximum effort to apply operational risk management principles to all operational and support issues involved. Unit safety department performance was integral to the overall unit success. LT Potter was present to receive the award.

Next up, the rescue awards. The rotary and fixed wing awards, sponsored by the association since 2000, are presented to an air crew selected by the staff of the Commandant for exceptional rescue performance in each category from nominations received from air stations. The awards consist of a personalized medallion set in an acrylic stand for each crew member; a congratulatory letter from



a flag officer on the Commandant's staff and recognition at the annual banquet.

This year's recipient for the Captain Frank A. Erickson Rotary Wing Rescue Award was the crew of HH-65B 6525 of CGAS Kodiak while deployed aboard the CG Cutter *MEL-LON*. Lieutenant Commander Joseph Carroll, Aviator 3185, Lieutenant Devin Townsend, Aviator 3627, AST1 Willard Milam and AET2 John Maghupoy were cited for extraordinary skill and courage in carrying out a rescue on February 9, 2007. While the crew was on a mid-patrol break at Dutch Harbor, they were alerted to the activation of a fishing vessel's emergency beacon signal from a location near Unalaska Island. Shortly after midnight, the helicopter departed, navigated around mountainous terrain in near zero visibility, high winds and moderate turbulence, and located four hypothermic fishermen in a life raft. Evaluating the situation as presenting extreme and imminent danger to the occupants of the raft, the crew pushed the limits of the B model helicopter by hoisting the four men on this single sortie and demonstrated true selflessness by forfeiting their own survival suits to the fishermen. In addition, their rescue swimmer was also hypothermic due to his leaking dry suit. With all aboard, the helicopter proceeded with a precariously low fuel level to Dutch Harbor where the four survivors and rescue swimmer were delivered to a waiting ambulance. The Commandant's message announcing this award stated "Their superior aeronautical abilities and sheer courage throughout the perilous mission were beyond heroic." LT Townsend, AST1 Milam and AET2 Maghupoy were present to receive the award in person.

Selected to receive the Commander Elmer F. Stone Fixed Wing Rescue Award for a mission carried out in May of 2005 was the crew of HC-130H 1502 of CGAS Elizabeth City, Lieutenant Paul Beavis, Aviator 3548, Lieutenant Edward Ahlstrand,

Aviator 3733, AMT1 Trey Jones, AET3 Jesse Bennett, AMT2 Stacey Sorenson, AET3 Ryan Cantu and AMT3 Casey Green. Enduring hurricane force wind gusts from a subtropical storm for many hours searching for two vessels reported in peril 220 miles southeast of Elizabeth City, the 1502 crew demonstrated exceptional aeronautical skill and diligence in locating a life raft with three people in towering waves 50 to 70 feet high. The weather and sea state were so extreme the raft could not be sighted on every low pass. The crew maintained their vigil and successfully vectored a rescue helicopter directly to the raft which saved the helicopter valuable fuel needed for the rescue which was ultimately successful. The second vessel and its occupants were not found despite a five day search by numerous aircraft and cutters in the stormy conditions, but the aeronautical skill, intense attention to operational risk management and comprehensive coordination by the crew of CG-1502 in the severe conditions resulted in the recovery of the three survivors from the first vessel.

Following those inspiring recognitions of superlative performance by men and women of today's Coast Guard, the pendulum of awards swung to honor an individual whose contribution to CG aviation history was very unique. Captain Harvey Orr, USCG (Ret.), Aviator 1157, was present to receive recognition for constructing furniture to display CG aviation history in a matchless setting at the Coast Guard Academy. Among furnishings he personally crafted and donated to the CG Academy Alumni Association for the Alumni Center, Captain Orr produced a large and impressive display cabinet and related viewing bench. The pieces, whose wonderful attributes are difficult to portray in photographs, are of museum quality and will be a treasure for all those who will view them, filled with examples and artifacts of CG aviation, over the years to come. Captain Orr's creative design capture

his vision of elements of the 1903 historic manned heavier-than-air Wright brothers' machine. These furnishings by a CG aviator will cause many a visitor to sigh at their quality and meaning. Captain Orr came forward and received from the association president a folio containing an image of his work and a letter thanking him and making him a life member of the association.

The award pendulum swung in yet another direction, this time toward the CG Aviation Hall of Honor, formerly titled the CG Aviation Hall of Fame.

President Mont Smith announced the induction into the Hall of Honor of the late Chief Oliver Berry whose name was recently approved to be associated with the association's CG aviation maintenance award. The process of naming this award involved considerable research and reflection and a recommendation by retired and active duty Pterodactyls with wide experience in CG aviation maintenance. Chief Berry surfaced quickly in the process and was officially approved for the naming of the award, as initially announced in Sitrep 2-07, for a variety of reasons hinged on his great career. Among many other aspects of Chief Berry's contributions to CG aviation in its early days which are recounted in each folio presented to recipients of the award and also displayed on the association's website, he is known as the very first military helicopter mechanic in the world. In a process separate from the naming of the aviation maintenance award, Chief Berry was nominated for and approved for induction to the Hall of Honor.

The pendulum swung again to point to impressive recent history in the annals of CG aviation. Ptero ASMSM Larry Farmer, USCG (Ret.), one of the initial managers of the CG rescue swimmer program, was invited to come forward to hear the announcement that he also had been selected for induction into the CG Aviation Hall of Honor.

President



Smith also announced that the actual induction ceremony for ASMSM Farmer would take place, as requested by the Master Chief, at a later date at ATC Mobile where the Hall of Honor is on display. However, to take advantage of this special moment in time, Commander Hugh O'Doherty, Aviator 1732, and Ken Coffland, from their vantage having participated in various stages of the early days of the highly successful and acclaimed rescue swimmer program, recounted Farmer's achievements and acknowledged his pivotal role in establishing the program and seeing that it was accepted and implemented throughout CG aviation. Among Master Chief Farmer's many accomplishments, he completed the demanding USN swimmer's school at age 36 before establishing and managing the first rescue swimmer standardization team and development of initial rescue swimmer operational and training standards.

In a brief acceptance address, the Master Chief expressed appreciation for the honor and said he accepted it on behalf of others who worked hard to establish the program and, in particular, all CG rescue swimmers.

Ancient Albatross Kunkel was then handed the mike to introduce the keynote speaker for the evening, Admiral Thad Allen, Commandant of the Coast Guard. To say that Ptero Dave's introduction was unique and entertaining is an understatement. Rather than actually introducing the crowd to ADM Allen, which was clearly unnecessary, the Ancient Al rather introduced ADM Allen to aviation personnel in a series of cleverly worded humorous verbal characterizations of rotary and fixed wing aviators and crewmen and "red raggers." The Commandant smiled broadly and chuckled along with everyone else during the dissertation which defies a more detailed description here. It was special. You shoulda been there.

Admiral Allen's address following his "introduction," was equally special. He cited mentors and acknowl-

edged some who were present. He touched on Katrina, articulating his pride in the response and performance of Coast Guard men and women to that challenge. He described one of his many CG helicopter "rides" in the wake of Katrina which included experiencing a rapid emergency descent to a landing in a "field of strawberries," and his appreciation of the skill of the air crew. On CG policy matters, he expressed his commitment to seeing various aviation maintenance management programs applied elsewhere throughout the service. The Commandant indicated that an infusion of aviation maintenance and inspection "DNA" to surface forces has already begun. He gave examples where inspections based on CG aviation systems had recently discovered correctable boat problems that would have otherwise gone unnoticed. He announced a special management award that had recently been received by the service from the Homeland Security Department. He also acknowledged an HH-65 helicopter milestone, one million flight hours, and accepted a presentation from the President of American Eurocopters in recognition of that achievement.

In the midst of his address, the Commandant gracefully permitted a special long distance interruption and then proceeded to carry on an audio visual conversation with Ptero Stu Graham, CG helicopter pilot #2 who was at that moment celebrating his 90th birthday in Maine. All present enjoyed watching and listening as Admiral Allen, with microphone in hand, spoke with Commander Graham whose voice was equally clear. Graham's live image at his party was somewhat less clear but was identifiable and projected on large screens. The Commandant expressed birthday greetings and well wishes and asked Ptero Stu to speak to the banquet. Stu commented on various aspects of his helicopter pioneering days, mentioning his friends Igor and Sergei Sikorsky and Captain Frank Erickson. He expressed that one of his favorite memories of the early times was fly-

ing a helicopter aboard ship for the Atlantic crossing during World War II, the first demonstration of helicopter shipboard operations. Additional commentary by Sergei Sikorsky and his wife Elena added to this memorable peek into an important chapter in CG aviation and Sikorsky history.

With all of that accomplished, the program was still not yet complete. The Commandant presented public service commendations to two very committed and diligent Pterodactyls who have labored to research and display CG aviation history.

Ptero John "Bear" Moseley, Aviator 743, was present and clearly surprised to be called front and center to stand with the Commandant as his citation was read. He was recognized for "countless hours" of research and documentation of CG aviation history, specifically the recognition and publication of combat rescue heroics by CG aviators in Southeast Asia in the 1960's, the compilation of more than 540 Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal Citations and the documentation of hundreds of pages of historical events not otherwise available to members of the service, the general public and researching authors.

Ptero Gilbert "Gib" Brown, Aviator 795, was not able to be present, but his citation was read and recognized his immense contribution to the preservation and accessibility of CG aviation history. Among many related and important achievements, he established and organized a history committee of dedicated Pteros who since 2003 have researched, collected and recorded countless documents and photographs, converting them to digital records; he established and maintains an extensive and comprehensive CG aviation history website with an extremely broad and global following; and he developed a close liaison with the office of the Historian at Coast Guard headquarters. Ptero Brown's vision, talents and dedication has resulted in an unparalleled and extremely valuable history



program destined to preserve and display the rich history of CG aviation well over the foreseeable horizon.

President Mont then asked Admiral Allen to stand with him for the reading of a proclamation making the Admiral an honorary member of the association and therefore an honorary Ptero. Admiral Allen was presented with a folio containing the proclamation along with other mementos.

Vice Commandant Vivien Crea announced having just received word during the evening that for the first time, CG Auxiliarists came out on top in a friendly international competition with counterparts in Canada.

This great evening program, brimming with inspiration, came to a close with the following Benediction adapted from Psalm 23 by Ptero Priemeaux.

THE LORD IS MY PILOT

The Lord is my Pilot, I shall not stray
off course or glide path.
He lighteth my way
across dark waters;
He steereth me
thru the stormy nights;
He keepeth my Flight Log;
He guideth me by His Star
of Holiness for His Name's sake.
Yea, though I fly midst the
thunders, lightning and turbulence of
Urgent SAR, I shall
fear no danger,
for Thou, O God, art with me.
Thou preparest a safe landing
before me in your
Homeland Security of Eternity. Thou
anointest the waves with oil, and my
hoist saves those in distress. Surely,
sunlight and starlight
shall favor me all the missions I fly,
And I will dwell securely in the
hangar of my Lord forever. AMEN
Much of the crowd then returned to
the hospitality space for more stories.

And then it was Sunday with two more legs of this roost mission to fly, business meeting and picnic.

At 0907 EDT, "1520," assuming takeoff clearance, pulled collective (or advanced the throttles) for the mandated business meeting where some 120 'dactyls had phlocked for the latest skinny. Here follows a summary of the session which will attempt to document the most important matters and decisions.

In the climb, Mont offered a welcome and brief remarks. He thanked Ben Stoppe and the rest of the roost 'committee' for all the labor planning and helping to execute the roost activities. He commented on the positives of the roost so far citing accolades from attendees about the professional discourse day and the banquet for 440 people, good feedback about the initiatives to enhance relevancy to the active duty community and the success this year at attracting corporate sponsors whose donations help us to carry out all our educational and other objectives. He reported that we received \$40,000 from sponsors this year, and he asked all present to help us extend sponsorship by reporting to us or engaging contacts in the corporate world who might wish to help us.

Leveling off, your ancient scribe published the names of members and other CG aviators and crew members who we have learned (and we always want to know) have flown 'cross the bar since the last roost:

Richard Butchka
Lawrence Carbonneau
Warren Dutton
Charles Howell
William Imle
Thomas Johnson, III
Richard "Satch" Lee
Warren "Rusty" Rast
Robert Rescola
Owen Siler
Robert Watterson
George Wittler, Jr.
Robert Fuerst
John Reid
Dick Martin
Walter Glenning
Donald "Doc" Luzius
Ben Baldwin

From the floor came the following additional names:

Larry Montali
Ernest Marsh

After a respectful moment of silence, it was restated that this longer-than-normal list included non members.

The Airman's Prayer was read by Ancient Albatross Dave Kunkel who then offered brief remarks from his perch. He described and showed images of a new Ancient Al coin he had had cast. He also reported on his pleasure during participation in ceremonies at Pensacola where new aviators received their wings of gold. He used the word "great" to describe this roost and expressed that he was pleased to see the association "moving forward in leaps and bounds."

Enlisted Ancient Al Pete MacDougall was next to address the meeting. He included in his always welcome and informative remarks a quick review of current CGAS Washington aircraft and a claim to bragging rights for having appeared in so many photographs with extremely high level government officials. *[Most of those photo ops he 'might' admit stem from his current profession as leading chief at CGAS Washington and not from revered title as the Coast Guard Enlisted Ancient Albatross...Ed]*

Still at cruise power, our diligent secretary, Ptero Cathie Zimmerman, presented her membership Sitrep as of 9/25/07. The roles showed: 1274 members (12 Honorary, 707 Life members, 1184 Regular and 78 Associates). Since the 2006 roost: 181 new members have joined (22 Life members) with 35 members converting to Life membership). 26 of 31 C. O.'s are members, 22 of those Life members. Since mid-June when the roost registration opened, 59 members renewed, 51 new members joined (6 as Life members) and 11 members converted to Life. Of the people registering for the Roost, 46 took advantage of online renewal and joined, renewed or converted to life. Not counting sponsors and guests (or non aviation HQ personnel) there were 31 retired or active duty aviators



registered for the Roost who are not current Pteros [*Hopefully, the roost will inspire their joining...Ed*]. Cathie closed with a plea for all to report any changes to email as well as postal addresses for obvious reasons.

1520 signalled time to orbit around money, so Ptero Ptreasurer Ben Stoppe phlew forward to render his report which confirmed solvency of the treasury. Net Worth as of 9/10/07 stood at \$166,636.24 including checking, roost monies in transition and \$87,129.35 in the USAA Income Fund. Ben withdrew the traditional petty cash jar from the old crown royal pouch, which appeared none the worse for wear, and read off the contents from assorted foreign coins to air line cocktail chits to Elizabeth City bus tokens, etc., and ending, of course, with the well known lock washer. In the interest of limiting reader exposure to eye strain, the entire contents will not be listed here [*If anyone's interested, he or she may refer to past Pterograms for the list as of a certain point in time...Ed*]. Ptero Jerry Mohlenbrok asked for and received permission to deposit several additional foreign coin thereby expanding by some unknown and no doubt nominal measure the value of petty cash on hand.

Ptreasurer Ben interrupted his own concise report with a plea for those present to hack away at the plentiful and attractive array of donuts in the room so he would not have to re-transport them after the meeting. At press time, your scribe is not aware of the final donut accounting.

Ben then, describing the need for additional monies for increasing expenses, including the cost of producing Sitreps, proposed that annual dues be raised from \$15 to \$20 and Life memberships from \$200 to \$250. These changes were put forth in the form of a motion which was duly seconded. The discussion which ensued was typical for groups, not just this one, and included questions, comments and suggestions, some good ones, amendments, etc., to do with timing and relevancy to active

duty personnel, but the unusually tolerable exchanges were ultimately resolved with a clearly reworded motion which easily passed. That was to raise the annual dues to \$20 for non active duty members and the Life membership dues to \$250 for all categories of membership as of 1 January 2008. So be it. Case Closed (for now).

The orbit waypoint relocated as volunteer Ancient Phistorian Bear Moseley came to the cockpit and picked up the microphone (sorry, no real cockpit, no real mike) to furnish a report for History Vice President Ptero Gib Brown who was not able to be present. Bear, with his obvious enthusiasm and devotion to the cause (as hinted later by observers) recounted the history of the history committee and described progress on a number of on going projects important to the preservation of CG aviation history. Here is a snapshot of his presentation.

For those new to us, Bear recalled that it was only early 2003 when seven Pteros, some from long distance, alighted at NAS Pensacola to organize methods of advancing the CG history cause. Four more were added later [*Names, each of them would quickly agree, are not important, but in the interest of historical accuracy, originals were Bob Johanson, Carl Swickley, Ray Copin, the now late Bob Watterson, former phistorian Tom Beard, Gib Brown and Bear Moseley...added to the committee soon thereafter were Pteros Bob Workman, Art Wagner, Chuck Hahn and Cathy Entman...Ed*]. Spurred by Ptero [*Hall of Honor*] Gib Brown with his computer/website skill and talent, a first objective was to create a digital archive and website.

The history website (www.uscgaviationhistory.aoptero.org) was established on March 1, 2003 and can be found directly or through a link from the association's home site (www.aoptero.org). The vast information on the history site is constantly expanding and is regularly visited by people from around the world. There is no better depository

of Coast Guard aviation history documents, photographs, stories, etc. Featured on the site are many subjects. Here are just a few of them:

An expanding Roll of Valor lists award citations from the Silver Life Saving Medal through the Navy Cross with more than 550 listed so far. There was no such compilation anywhere until this initiative by committee volunteers.

A developing CG Aviator Database is an ongoing project to obtain records of particularly early deceased pioneers in order to archive otherwise unavailable historical information.

"Hangar Flying" tales.

A Flight Log where CG air men and women can display without charge a sketch of their aviation career for posterity.

Memories of Memorable Characters.

A CG Aviation History Timeline still being completed already provides many hundreds of pages of information presented in periods of evolution. (Many present at the business meeting flew during the 1957 to 1976 period being expanded, and all are urged to read that section and submit suggestions for changes or additions.)

History committee research and persistence led to the recent presentation of a posthumous Legion of Merit for Captain Martin for his life saving actions following the Sabena DC-4 crash in Newfoundland in 1946 and also the initiative to justify creation of a non combat heroism award to rank with the Silver Star which the Commandant announced at the awards banquet has been approved conceptually.

In closing, Bear indicated that webmaster Brown will retire from this volunteer task a year from now so we need a replacement. He will train his successor and estimates a requirement for about ten hours a week to maintain the site, a bit more at times for future expansions. The association supports the site financially. Taking this on will enrich your knowledge and enhance your skills and give



you great personal satisfaction. As long as you have access to the internet and basic computer skill, location is not important.

Ptero Howie Thorsen, Aviator 776, added helpful comments from the perspective of the Foundation for Coast Guard History. The FCGH has annual awards for the best history programs at Coast Guard units to encourage the recording and display of unit accomplishments, to the general public as well as unit personnel. All air station commanding officers are asked along with other commands to take a personal interest in their unit history programs, making it something more than just a scrap book maintained by a junior member of the wardroom or crew. [Check out www.fcgh.org for information about the foundation, its projects and membership...Ed]

The orbit moved again, this time for Ptero Art Wagner, Aviator 769, to provide an update on the effort to support aviation commands with local 'chapters' fondly called "Detachments." Several detachments are organized as reported in previous Sitreps, but more are needed to bring to reality the idea of furnishing real help to commands on a regular basis. If you want to help get a detachment started or to join one in progress, let any Board member know, and you'll be given a steer. Ptero Art also brought up a suggestion that he and others had received during hospitality conversations, that newly designated aviators be given their year of membership [or more than a year as some heard the idea] upon making aircraft commander rather than upon receiving wings of gold. Discussion was generally favorable but began to generate variations so a consensus was

reached to pass the idea to the Executive Board for refinement and further consideration.

Brief presentations were then offered in order by Pteros Bob Johanson, Aviator 869 [in for Ptero Tom King, Aviator 1775], Gary Gamble, Aviator 1826, Jerry Mohlenbrok, Aviator 951 and Paul Russell, Aviator 943. Bob reported on the status of the project to renovate the HH-52 for hopefully eventual display in the Smithsonian, indicating renovation at Ecity has slowed but will be given a shot in the arm with Ptero Jim Thomas, Aviator 1950 volunteering to be our 'on scene coordinator.' Gary described various new secure methods of communicating through the association's home website which he manages as Vice President for Communications. Jerry briefed on the museum initiative at Sacramento which is supported financially by the association. Paul as our new VP for Annual Conventions (Roosts) offered praise to those who planned and worked this roost.

The meeting was then cleared to a higher altitude, not to save fuel, but to receive what turned out to be outstanding presentations from the two commanding officers 'competing' for the privilege of hosting the 2008 roost, Ptero Brad Bean, Aviator 2460 and Ptero Peter Troedsson, Aviator 2551. Captain Bean commands Barbers Point. Captain Troedsson Astoria. Prior to the roost each of these air stations had sent for inclusion in registrant packets excellent marketing pieces in the form of slick trifold flyers with color graphics and clever sayings obviously aimed at luring votes. Now it was time for them to make their pitches in person. Their presentations were extremely well

spoken and received so well that the eventual vote was, unbelievably, a tie. The voting members present having previously agreed to ask Ptero Founder Norm Horton, Aviator 187, to cast any tie breaking vote, however unlikely to be necessary, looked to Norm who said "Astoria." So, at a date to be determined next fall after Labor Day, we will phlock to the Oregon unit near the mouth of the Columbia River.

Following that decision, considerable discussion revolved around several points including the following possibilities: moving to a two or three year roost planning cycle; coming back to the D.C. area periodically; roosting in Hawaii in the future if not in 2009. On the later, Captain Bean offered that he was not in a position to invite a roost hosted by Barbers Point beyond 2008 because he will have moved on by then and understandably would not want to speak for his successor(s). Captain Bean may have lost the '08 roost, but he won the hearts and respect of everyone in the room with his terrific and exceedingly well delivered pitch. To close this leg, it was moved, seconded and approved to ask the Executive Board to consider transitioning to a roost planning cycle greater than one year and to soon begin planning a location for the 2009 roost.

Low on fuel, 1520 ordered an immediate penetration approach (or autorotation for rotor heads), and we parked at the gate just a few minutes late at 1115.

With the business meeting now in the books, a fine picnic at the CG communications station was the setting for some final stories and a few more hugs, before the phlock dispersed, having experienced the great roost of 2007.

We are most appreciative of the support we receive from these great sponsors who...

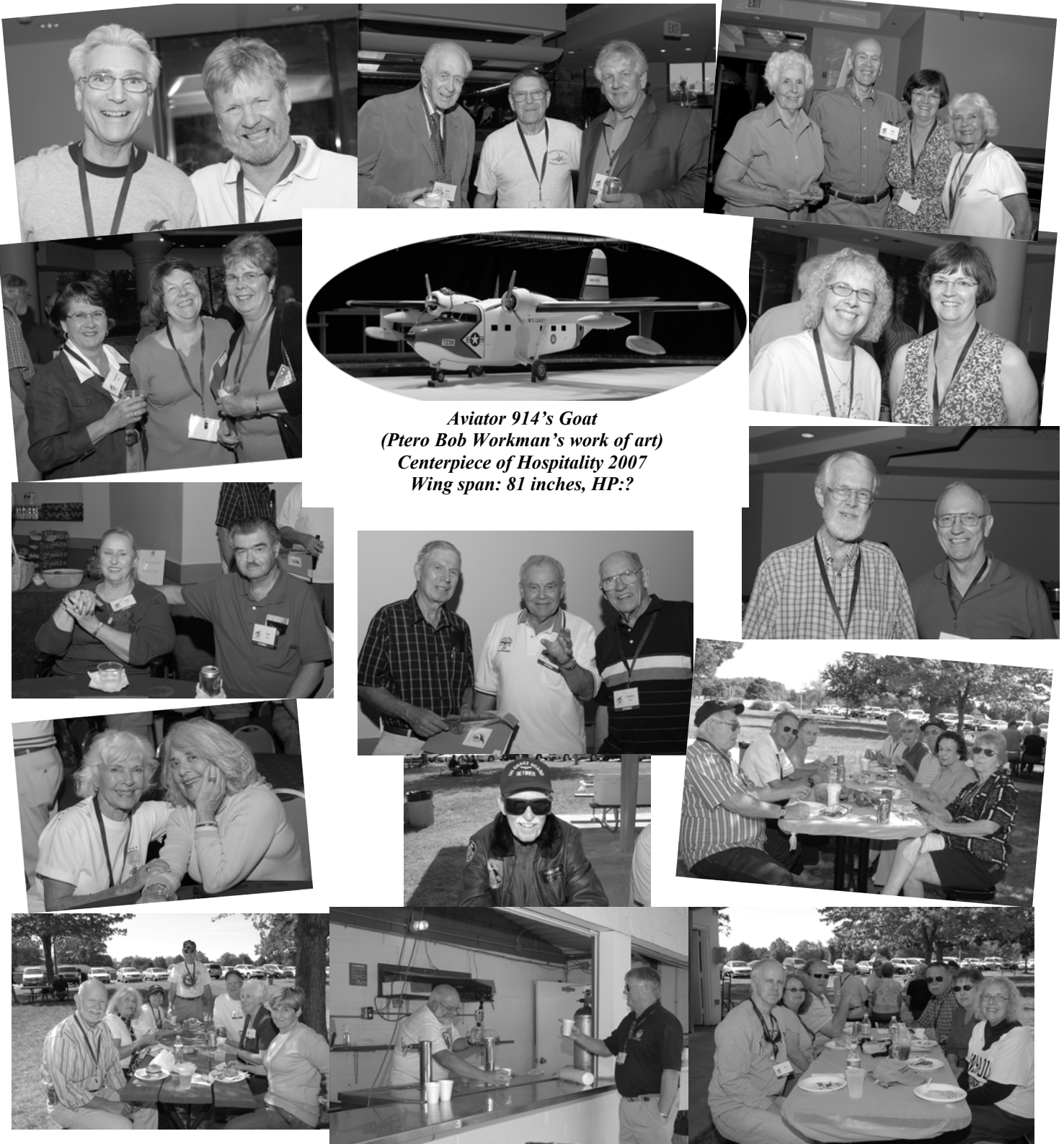


...help us preserve, protect and display the history of U.S. Coast Guard Aviation



HERE ARE JUST A FEW BLACK AND WHITES FROM HOSPITALITY AND THE PICNIC WHICH WERE SELECTED AT RANDOM. SEE THESE AND MANY OTHER PHOTOS IN COLOR ON THE PTERO ASSOCIATION WEBSITE WWW.AOPTERO.ORG

How many can you ID?



*Aviator 914's Goat
(Ptero Bob Workman's work of art)
Centerpiece of Hospitality 2007
Wing span: 81 inches, HP:?*

These photos and the ones on the following two pages and many more that will be posted on our website are by Christine Hunt, spouse of Ptero Jay Crouthers.

Contact Christine for photographic services (other than weddings) through www.imagesbychristine.com