



PTEROGRAM

The Official Publication of the Ancient Order of The Pterodactyl (AOP)

The AOP is a tax-exempt, non-profit association of active duty, retired, and other former U.S. Coast Guard aviation personnel & supporting associates

Sitrep 2-03

Summer 2003

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“Roger, phlocking to ECG...all Pteros, follow me...”



Here come de roost! See pages 3, 4 and 5 for details and for de form. Seems like each year we write something like “don’t miss this one,” or “this one will be really special.” Gals and fellas, we’re not sellin’ ‘cause we don’t have to. We know we’ll have a good turnout, but it really does seem there’s always somethin’ “really special” to look forward to. And that’s a really good thing.

So, what’s so special about what’s in store in the fall of 2003? A bunch. It’s a hundred year anniversary of manned flight for gosh sakes (yes, manned...who knows or cares exactly in ancient times when the very first pterodactyl soared and flapped above the beaches?). We’ll visit a historic city in its own right and a Coast Guard city. There’s a vibrant air station. A repair and supply center. A training facility. A memorial. All CG aviation. Not enough? North Carolina hospitality, reunions with friends, meeting new friends, saluting heroism and the flags of our nation and service...wow, strike up the band, I’m really getting excited! Hope you are, too.

Captain Bruce Drahos, commanding officer of the U.S. Coast Guard Aircraft Repair and Supply Center at Elizabeth City and supporters from other local CG commands and the community have a fine flight plan in mind for the roost. They all look forward to your early registration and presence in this Coast Guard Aviation Town.

- RJC



DUES STATUS? — Please CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL

Your mailing label INCLUDES THE DATE TO WHICH YOUR DUES IS PAID.
IF THE DATE READS 2003, YOU ARE PAID **ONLY** TO JUNE OF THIS YEAR.



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PTEROGRAM is published three times annually as the official publication of The Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl which perpetuates recognition of USCG aviation history and its personnel. Reproduction of Pterogram for further distribution is authorized and encouraged. Correspondence may be sent to:

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Notes From Ye Prez

A few short comments regarding recent activities of some our Pterodactyl brothers and sisters.

BRAVO ZULU to Ptero Bear Moseley for his efforts to get us our tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status. The approval has been given so it's my understanding that future donations and dues are tax deductibles. Check with your tax advisor or program to be sure, especially if you are sending us lots of money.

The CGAVHISTORY team continues to churn and burn (CD's, that is). See page 11 for a comprehensive update, and do check out the website if you're an internet user.

In April, our AOP Board meeting was scheduled on the day that Mr. Sergei Sikorsky, son of Igor himself and a pioneer in his own right, was visiting ATC Mobile. He spoke to the crew and gave a fascinating talk about the history of helo development in which he played a central role along with Hall of Famers Frank Erickson and Stew Graham. Following his presentation, ATC Chiefs, in a memorable ceremony, promoted Sergei to honorary CPO. Sergei has reportedly accepted an invitation to speak at the October roost banquet at Elizabeth City. *[see photo on page 12.]*

Ptero VADM Deese Thompson and I spent several days in May with our Navy and Marine Corps counterparts at the annual Naval Aviation Museum Symposium in Pensacola. A great show as always with 'moon walkers' and members of the Black Sheep Squadron. Interesting discussions with a bevy of active duty flag officers (including our own RADM Dave Belz, CG Aviator 1579) addressed various naval aviation issues. The annual awards luncheon featured Association of Naval Aviation awards in more than thirty categories. This year's awards included very special Coast Guard recognition. One could say the CG 'stole the show'.

AMTC Robert Nolan, currently at CGAS Houston, received the award for "Outstanding Achievement in Aviation by a Chief Petty Officer." This is the first time a Coastie Chief has walked in this circle which embraces all his counterparts in the USN, USMC and USCG. Chief Nolan's technical competence, leadership and accomplishments are too numerous and complex for me to relate here. Suffice it for now to say he set a very high standard, indeed, and on behalf of all Pteros, I salute him and his many contributions to our service and country *[see photo on page 12].*

Were that not enough, there's more, a lot more. The ANA "Outstanding Achievement in Helicopter Aviation Award" went to a CGAS Kodiak HH-60 crew for a rescue performed in extremely arduous conditions in Alaskan waters last October. This four person Jayhawk crew, all of whom were present at Pensacola to accept the award, received a standing ovation from the luncheon crowd of 500, the event's only 'standing O.' LCDR Melissa Rivera [CG Aviator 3251], LT Kendall Garran [CG Aviator 3396], AMT2 Michael Simone, and AST3 Jason Quinn were cited for their supreme airmanship, teamwork and overall performance in rescuing fishermen from a burning, exploding fishing vessel in horrendous sea conditions. You will probably 'hear' more about this great story of skill and courage *[see photo on page 15].*

This event is worth the trip every year, and I encourage Pteros to come to the symposium if you can, so you, too, can enjoy the information, ceremonies, parties and award presentations. Next year will bring more special Coast Guard surprises so please keep that in mind.

By the way, Chief Nolan graduated from class A school at ATTC Elizabeth City while I was privileged to command ATTC...seems like I'm getting older...ATTABOY, Chief.

See you at the October roost in ECG,

George





2003 ROOST OP PLAN

DATES: Friday, 10 October through Sunday, 12 October

LOCATION: Elizabeth City, North Carolina

MAIN SUPPORT FORCE: Local civilian and military residents coordinated by AR & SC.

HEADQUARTERS: Elizabeth City Quality Inn, 522 South Hughes Blvd., Elizabeth City, NC 27909. The Pterodactyl room rate for the weekend will be \$58 plus tax per night. Reservations may be made by telephone, U.S. postal mail or FAX. Phone the Inn at (252) 338-3951 and select O for Operator, NOT 193 for Reservations. Or mail a reservation request to the Inn asking for the Pterodactyl rate and providing the usual necessary information: name/address/phone number/number of persons/bed number and size/non smoking?/dates/credit card data. You can also FAX your request to the Inn at (252) 338-6225. **DON'T DELAY.** This information was previously published (Sitrep 1-03), and blocked rooms at this rate are rapidly filling. You must make your own room reservation. Registering for the roost is a separate step as described below.

ROOST REGISTRATION: Complete and mail the registration form (page 5) as soon as possible but no later than 1 September. Include a check for the amount due. Events on the form are keyed to the information which follows here. Tours by bus will have to be scheduled on a first come - first served basis so if you want to be sure to be included, don't delay.

HOSPITALITY: Hotel hospitality suites.

EVENT AND ACTIVITY PLAN:

Thursday, 9 October

Noon Hospitality suites open for early arrivals.

Friday, 10 October

0700 Hospitality suites open.

0830 GOLF TOURNAMENT

Shotgun start at a local course. \$60 per person. Transportation by private vehicles.

0900 TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Elizabeth City State University. \$15 per person. Transportation by private vehicles.

0900 - 1130 TOUR 'A' Tour USCG Elizabeth City support complex including the Air Station and the Aircraft Repair and Supply Center. Walk the production lines of the new AR & SC. See the newest addition to the fleet of CG aircraft, the HC-130J. Reflect at the Pterodactyl-sponsored United States Coast Guard Aviation Memorial Monument near the Chapel. Transportation by bus. There is no cost.



Friday, 10 October (cont'd)

1400 - 1630 TOUR 'B' Retrace the steps of Orville and Wilbur Wright in Elizabeth City as they made their annual pilgrimage to Kitty Hawk in search of the ideal conditions for man to learn to fly. This walking tour will take you through six Nationally Registered Historic Districts by two professional guides, staff members of the Museum of the Albemarle. Conclude your tour with the world famous Rose Buddies' Wine and Cheese Party on Mariner's Wharf with a rose for each lady. We will begin this tour at the Chamber of Commerce. \$10 per person.

1815 EVENING RECEPTION Enjoy the company of old friends and meet new ones at an open deck on the shore of the famous and mysterious (just kidding) Pasquotank River. Cocktail buffet (hunger will be satisfied), cash bar, great setting for photos. Transportation by bus, starting at 1815 at the hotel and beginning to return to the hotel at about 2100. \$25 per person.

Saturday, 11 October

0800 Hospitality suites open.

900- 1430 TOUR 'C' Journey to the sand dunes at Kitty Hawk where Orville and Wilbur changed the fate of the world. Beginning in 1900, the brothers traveled from Dayton, Ohio to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. There they built an encampment and tested their aerodynamic theories. On December 17, 1903, the first powered flight was performed. The Coast Guard was there! Celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of flight by visiting a re-creation of the Wright encampment and learning the story of those first days of aviation. Transportation by bus. Box lunches. \$30 per person. (don't even consider driving your own vehicle...traffic to and from the banks with the various 100 year events will be a nightmare).

0900 - 1430 TOUR 'D' Visit the Virginia Air and Space Center, official visitor facility for the NASA Langley Research Center, birthplace of our nation's space program. Enjoy an IMAX production "Straight Up: Helicopters in Action" which features a dramatic rescue as a U.S. Coast Guard demonstrates lifesaving skills through a nighttime rescue mission reenactment. Transportation by bus. Box lunches. \$30 per person.

1745 BANQUET Anticipate a festive dinner, award presentations, a talk by Mr. Sergei Sikorsky, surprises. Transportation by bus. Coat and tie or equivalent preferred. \$50 per person.

Sunday, 12 October

0800 Hospitality suites open.

0900 - 1100 BUSINESS MEETING Former Elizabeth City CG Officers Club, Building 35, second deck. \$5 per person.

Noon PICNIC A true NC pig-pickin' hosted by the "E City" Chief Petty Officers Association at the base pavilion. Transportation by private vehicle. \$15 per person.

IF YOU WANNA BRING LOCAL GUESTS TO ANY FUNCTION, PLEASE KNOW THEY ARE WELCOME SO LONG AS YOUR REGISTRATION FORM INCLUDES THEIR NUMBER, NAMES AND PAYMENT FOR THEM. WE ABSOLUTELY WELCOME GUESTS ON THAT BASIS!





TIME CRITICAL !! - - - - MAIL BEFORE 9/1/2003 !!



REGISTRATION ELIZ CITY ROOST OCT. 10-12, '03

NAMES (ALL Names for NAMETAGS Please)	
ADDRESS:	
CITY, STATE, ZIP	
PHONES	DAY: () - EVE: () -
EMAIL ADDRESS	

ACTIVITY	COST per PERSON	Number of PERSONS	TOTAL
Golf Tournament (Friday)	\$ 60		\$
Tennis Tournament (Friday)	\$ 15		\$
Tour A. (Friday)	\$ 0.00		\$ 0.00
Tour B. (Friday)	\$ 10		\$
Evening Reception (Friday)	\$ 25		\$
Tour C. (Saturday)	\$ 30		\$
Tour D. (Saturday)	\$ 30		\$
Evening Banquet (Saturday)	\$ 50	<input type="checkbox"/> Beef <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> Fish	\$
Business Meeting (Sunday)	\$ 5		\$
Picnic Lunch (Sunday)	\$ 15		\$
Registration Fee	\$10 (per registration, no charge for active duty)	Only one fee per registration form	\$ 10.00 (0.00 for active duty)
GRAND TOTAL DUE =			\$

Write your check to the Elizabeth City Chamber of Commerce

Mail your completed registration form and check to:

Elizabeth City Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 426

Elizabeth City, NC 27907-0426

ATTN: ROOST 03

Contact for questions:

Doris Creps

(252) 384-7265

dcreps@arsc.uscg.mil

CUT ALONG THIS LINE IF REMOVING PAGE INSTEAD OF COPYING



USCG HELICOPTER INTERDICTION SQUADRON (HITRON)

Jacksonville, Florida

by LT Craig Neubecker, CG Aviator 3388A

The United States Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON), Jacksonville, FL is America's first and only airborne law enforcement unit tasked with interdicting and stopping suspected drug-laden, high-speed vessels known as 'go-fasts.' HITRON staunchly patrols the front lines of America's war on drugs, flying specially equipped MH-68A helicopters to carry out their mission. These aircraft employ the latest radar and FLIR sensors as well as state-of-the-art Night Vision Goggles to pierce the night. HITRON arms these helicopters with M240 7.62mm machine guns for warning shots and self-protection, and the RC50 laser-sighted .50 caliber precision rifles to disable the engines of fleeing vessels.



The MH-68A is the newest helicopter in the U.S. military and is capable of cruise speeds of 140 knots. The MH-68A does not yet have an official nickname, but is referred to as the "Shark" by HITRON aircrews.

In 1998, the Coast Guard estimated that it was stopping less than ten percent of the drugs entering the United States via the sea. Spurred by these estimates, Admiral James Loy, then Commandant, directed the Coast Guard to develop a plan to counter the go-fast threat. This gave rise to the Helicopter Interdiction Tactical

Squadron, which was led by Commander Mark 'Roscoe' Torres. Starting in late 1998, he molded a group of ten original volunteers into a cohesive and effective team, and in just seven short months took ideas to reality as the squadron pioneered novel operating tactics and procedures and implemented the Commandant's decision to stop the drug-laden go-fasts.

During this early test and evaluation stage of the program, HITRON intercepted and stopped all five go-fasts they encountered, stopping 2,640 pounds of cocaine and 7,000 pounds of marijuana with a street value of over \$100 million, with all 17 suspects arrested. This five-for-five success rate represented a dramatic increase in go-fast seizures and resulted in a cultural change for Coast Guard aviation, setting the stage for enhanced future maritime drug interdiction efforts. Due to the success of the test and evaluation, the HITRON program was proven sound and was designated a permanent Coast Guard unit.

HITRON grew to 40 personnel to halt the rising tide of go-fast drug smugglers, and a requirement for eight helicopters was determined necessary to meet the cutter deployment cycles. Due to Federal contracting laws, a competitive bid was necessary to choose a permanent aircraft for the mission, and the proposal from Agusta Aircraft Corporation was selected as representing the best value. Therefore, in March 2000, Agusta was awarded a contract to provide eight A109E Power helicopters to replace the MD900 Enforcer helicopters that HITRON had been flying. The Agusta A109E Power was given the military designation MH-68A. Selection of this new helicopter forced HITRON to face many new challenges as the manufacturer delayed delivery of all eight aircraft, and once delivered, HITRON now had to take yet another untested civilian helicopter, and transform it into a proven, armed shipboard-deployable aircraft.

To make the aircraft shipboard com-

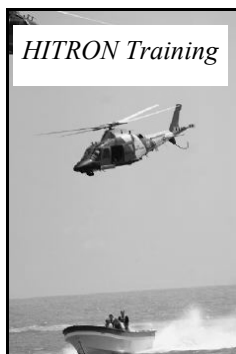
patible, several joint Coast Guard and U.S. Navy efforts were required. First, the U.S. Navy completed electromagnetic interference certification testing, and U.S. Navy Test Pilots established shipboard pitch and roll limitations. In addition, the M240 7.62mm machine gun weapon system, and the RC50 .50 caliber laser-sighted rifle was field fired and certified for aerial use by the U.S. Navy Surface Warfare Center. HITRON pilots then quickly validated day and night mission tactics, formation flying procedures, performed take-offs and landings from a Cutter and created initial flight training and aerial gunnery training syllabi to qualify the pilots and aircrew in the MH-68A.

Other shipboard related procedures such as removing the blades, traversing the aircraft into the cutter's hangar bay, and maintaining the aircraft in a salt-water environment were also addressed and successfully accomplished.

The squadron also pioneered the use of night vision goggles for night shipboard landings a first for the Coast Guard and a standard now being adopted Coast Guard wide. The unit also assisted in the evaluation of the latest generation of the ANVIS-9 night vision goggles integrated with the ANVIS-7 heads-up display system. Our crews were the first operators in the world to operate the latest generation of these night vision devices.

HITRON aircrews deploy aboard Coast Guard Cutters for 30-60 day deployments, and aircrews are typically deployed about 120 days a year total.

During these deployments, go-fasts are hunted not only by the MH-68A



HITRON Training



HITRON continued)

but also by maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) such as the HC-130H Hercules. If an MPA locates a go-fast, the HITRON crew launches from the cutter and proceeds to the go-fast intercept location. The crew then approaches the suspect vessel with weapons trained on the vessel solely for self-protection. Once over the suspect vessel, the helicopter crew confirms the nationality or lack of nation status and whether the vessel is, in fact, a suspect smuggling vessel. The aircrew then attempts to convince the boat crew to stop through the use of sirens, loud speakers, visual hand signals, and radio communication in both English and Spanish.

If the vessel stops during this phase, it is boarded and searched by the cutter's boat crew who has accompanied the chase in an over-the-horizon pursuit boat. If the vessel is found to be carrying drugs, the cutter crew takes appropriate law enforcement action.

If the suspect vessel fails to stop after these numerous visual and verbal warnings, the helicopter crew takes a firing position alongside the go-fast and fires warning shots across its bow to further compel the boat operators to stop.

If the warning shots do not convince the suspects to stop, the helicopter crew prepares to disable the vessel by shooting out the go-fast's engines. Using a precision, laser-sighted .50 caliber rifle, the helicopter is positioned alongside the fleeing go-fast for disabling shots. Most of the go-fasts have multiple engines, and the helo crew continues to shoot out these engines until the suspects stop or are forced to stop. Once stopped, the vessel is boarded by the Coast Guard pursuit boat crew, and the smugglers are taken into custody. Since switching to the MH-68A, HITRON has interdicted an additional 19 go-fasts carrying more than a billion dollars in illegal drugs.



On board CGC DILIGENCE, the HITRON helo crew following the first go-fast night interdiction. Left - Aircraft Commander LT Neubeck (author) holding the helmet with night vision goggles, Center - Aviation Gunner AVT1 William Greer holding the RC50 rifle, Right - CP LT Shawn Kock, CG Aviator 3381 holding a shot up engine flywheel. In front are the four shot engine covers, the M240 machine gun and ammo used for warning fire, and the several bales of the more than 6,000 pounds of pure cocaine which the previous night was the go-fast cargo.

HITRON is based at Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida, and is the only unit of its kind in the United States military flying armed helicopters to fight the war on drugs. Now led by Captain Walter Reger, CG Aviator 2182, HITRON has grown to 70 personnel to meet the growing threat to our country. The war on drugs has become even more important since September 11, 2001 as the sale of illegal drugs has been shown to be a major funding source employed by many terrorist organizations. Therefore, stopping illegal drugs not only protects our country directly by preventing drugs

from making it to our streets but also protects our country indirectly by removing a source of terrorist income.

To date, HITRON has successfully stopped every go-fast boat engaged since employing armed helicopters. Our actions have eclipsed illegal drugs with a street value of a billion and a half dollars. HITRON will continue to be at the forefront of our Nation's war on drugs and terrorism and will continue to help protect the shoreline of this great nation.



2003 MILESTONES

It's a rare bird that doesn't know this year marks 100 years since the Wright Brothers changed the world forever. Come to the roost at Elizabeth City, and visit the nearby very place where that momentous first flight took place. June 2003 also marks 60, count 'em, 60 years since our own pioneer and CG Aviation Hall of Famer Frank Erickson qualified in a rotary wing machine and thus became CG helicopter pilot number one. In October of '43, another CG Aviation Hall of Famer Stew Graham qualified making him CG helicopter pilot number two. Both pilots went on to set the bar higher and higher. 40 years ago the HH-52A entered the scene (see page 13). 25 years have slipped past the tail since CGAS Sacramento and ATTC Elizabeth City were commissioned. No doubt there are other notable milestone. Space and time (no pun) limit us for now. Perhaps this should be a regular feature. Thanks to Phistorian Tom Beard for these reminders.





USCG GROUP/AIR STATION HUMBOLDT BAY

by Captain Ted Le Feuvre, CG Aviator 1814



Coast Guard Air Station Humboldt Bay was originally commissioned as Coast Guard Air Station Arcata on 24 June 1977. Standing in the ranks at the commissioning ceremony was a young Ensign who had just earned his wings and completed the HH-52A transition course a few months prior. That Ensign was me. As a member of the commissioning detail I gained the designation of 'plank owner'. As a plank owner, I have joined the ranks of two other officers from that original commissioning detail that have enjoyed the privilege of returning as the Commanding Officer of Group/Air Station Humboldt Bay. Those other two officers were Captain Mike Stenger [CG Aviator 1255] ('83-'85) and Captain Scott Allen [CG Aviator 1802] ('94-'96).

Commissioning of the Air Station completed a long process begun by local residents desiring a year-round aviation search and rescue facility for Northern California. The establishment of the air station provided for an opportunity to relocate the Group Offices from Samoa to the Air Station's new \$3.5 million facility, enhancing command and control of Coast Guard assets in the area. Group/Air Station Humboldt Bay covers the 250 miles of rugged, sparsely populated coastline from the Mendocino/Sonoma County line north to the California/Oregon Border. 22 officers and over 170 enlisted personnel operate and support three HH-65A helicopters, two 87-foot coastal patrol boats, and four 47-foot motor lifeboats, in facilities located at Crescent City, McKinleyville, Samoa, Eureka, and Fort Bragg, California.

Air Station Humboldt Bay is located at the Arcata/Eureka airport in McKinleyville, California, the foggiest airport in the Continental United States. The primary mission of the air station is search



Names change on airframes, too.

and rescue. Cold Pacific currents, powerful Alaskan winter storms, a rough rock-strewn coastline, fog, and extremely dangerous entrance bar conditions combine to threaten commercial and recreational vessels operating in the area. Air Station Humboldt Bay operates the only hoist-equipped helicopters on the Northern California coast, thus Coast Guard aircrews are routinely called upon to respond to inland search and rescue in the surrounding mountains.

Air Station Humboldt Bay is further tasked with maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection, and fisheries regulation enforcement missions. The Air Station also provides logistical support for servicing aids to navigation including remote offshore facilities only accessible by helicopter.

In support of these missions, the crew and aircraft of Air Station Humboldt Bay fly nearly 2,000 hours per year.

The aircrews at Air Station Humboldt Bay fly the HH-65A helicopter, also known as the "Dolphin." The Dolphin is capable of airspeeds in excess of 165 knots, has a maximum fuel endurance of three hours, and is equipped with a state-of-the-art avionics and radar

package well suited to the demanding environmental conditions of the Northern California coast.

The men and women of Coast Guard Group/Air Station Humboldt Bay are proud to serve the citizens of Northern California and continue to live up to the motto of the United States Coast Guard — SEMPER PARATUS.



Ptero — Petro

Trivia = Unimportant. That which follows is for sure. But what the heck, I'll proceed. Every once in while, "Ptero" comes out "Petro" in mail, electronic or postal. It's always accepted/recognized as a simple typo (although on occasion one wonders about that when the same typo appears more than once in the same message...then it's assumed that it's just one of those aviator-aircrew things).

Anyway, as dictionaries define trivia, I thought I'd look up "petro." Lo, and behold, it's from Greek words... petra for a rock or petros for a stone...so eat your heart out Prudential, Pterodactyls are the rock as well as the salt of the earth.

— Scribe



USCG GROUP/AIR STATION ATLANTIC CITY

by Captain Robert Durfey, Jr. CG Aviator 2113

The events of September 11, 2001 redefined many things about the Coast Guard, including what our key missions are: Homeland Security (Port Security) is now equal to Search and Rescue as a #1 mission. As the only Coast Guard Air Station between New York City and Washington D.C., and having both cities in its area of responsibility (Philadelphia and Baltimore too), Air Station Atlantic City has played a prominent role in the nation's post-9/11 recovery.

One HH-65 crew was actually on a photo mission circling the twin towers on the morning of 9/11, just 30 minutes before the disaster. Two additional crews immediately responded following the attack. Quickly coordinating with the North American Defense Command, the two HH-65's were pre-positioned in New York to assist with anticipated casualties. As the nation watched in horror, air and surface assets from Atlantic City deployed to New York, in support of Operation Noble Eagle, to reassure the nation.

Atlantic City's HH-65 captured the world's first images of ground zero from the air. The deployed helicopter was instrumental in providing Public Affairs support for CNN and the New York Times. Through these media outlets, as well as ABC's Good Morning America, the Coast Guard gained worldwide exposure for their crucial roles and missions. That first night, only 15 non-combat aircraft were flying within the entire U.S. airspace system, three of them Atlantic City HH-65's responding to New York City.

Over the next few months, 80% of the Group's resource hours were dedicated to homeland security, patrolling daily in the major ports and waterways of the mid-Atlantic. In spite of the

massive effort in supporting Noble Eagle, Group-Air Station Atlantic City continued supporting the Coast Guard's traditional #1 role of Search and Rescue. During the next twelve months, over 1200 SAR cases were conducted, resulting in 70 lives saved, and nearly 1100 people assisted. This year the case load is down to 900 but the number of lives saved has doubled to 140. A 'snap shot' of the operational excellence of Air Station and Group personnel was seen in their ability to successfully handle 74 SAR cases on Coast Guard Day weekend in August 2002, without mishap, injury, or loss of life.

As you read this Pterogram, an HH-65B and crew from Atlantic City will have just returned from an almost six month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Air Station crew was able to pre-deploy that helicopter and supply a Helicopter Support Kit to the CG Cutter in less than five days from notification of the deploy-

ment. Homeland Security Secretary Ridge and President Bush personally thanked the unit and then visited our area of responsibility on 31 March to pass along thanks from the American people.

You, too, are welcome and encouraged to stop by and see your Coasties at work at the newest (5 years old) and largest Coast Guard Air Station-Group complex. We're just off the Atlantic City Expressway (exit 9) at the Atlantic City International Airport. Call ahead if you can (609-677-2225) so we can tell the FAA Tech Center security folks to let you in. We will be honored to host a Ptero anytime!



A briefing for the Commander-In-Chief. Author in foreground in pajamas, er, flight suit.

CG AVIATION MEMORIAL DATA

Ptero Sperry Storm reports that thanks to the research efforts of Ptero James Bunch [see page 13], a synopsis is now available for all but one of the accidents on the Elizabeth City memorial monument. Only the 21 September 1943 JRF-5 accident remains to have data developed to complete the listings in the memorial booklet. The booklet is now available on the new CG Aviation History website [see page 11].

THE LAST FLIGHT OF CHARLES T. THRUN, CG AVIATOR 3

by PACS Ken Freeze, USCG (Ret), Ptero P-2766

[Ptero Ken Freeze is a retired CG Photojournalist and Public Affairs Specialist with extensive CG aviation experience and interest. While on active duty, he flew on flight orders at many CG air stations. Ken has conducted significant research on and written of several fatal CG aircraft incidents. Some of his excellent work can be seen on the following website — ["http://www.check-six.com/lib/CoastGuardAviationCasualties.htm."](http://www.check-six.com/lib/CoastGuardAviationCasualties.htm) This is a condensed version of one of his stories.]

Charles T. Thrun joined the Coast Guard on May 5, 1916 at the age of 30. It's hard to say if Thrun gave flying a thought when he joined the Coast Guard. At that time, the Coast Guard had no aircraft to call its own. However, by luck or design, Thrun ended up being in the right place at the right time. For in March of 1917 he was to be in the first class of Coast Guard aviators to graduate from the Naval Air Station Pensacola, FL. The class was a mixture of six officers and twelve enlisted men. Chief Gunner's Mate Charles T. Thrun had become Coast Guard Aviator number 3.

By 1934 Thrun had had a full career and was beginning to make plans to retire with his family. In 17 years of flying, he had never had a serious aircraft mishap.

In the fall of 1934, there was great excitement at Coast Guard Air Station Cape May, NJ. The new Grumman JF-2 "Duck" seaplanes had begun to arrive. Before long there would be eight of them at Cape May.

The Duck was a state-of-the-art amphibian aircraft. With a single 775 hp engine and a range of over 750 miles it seemed to be perfect for the various missions the Coast Guard would use it for. By that December, Commander Elmer F. Stone had even set a speed record of just over 191 mph in a Duck. While the Duck was a rugged aircraft, it wasn't perfect. Landing in a crosswind could be a challenge and had to be practiced.

The Last Flight

January 19, 1935 probably started out like any other Saturday. Stone had broken the speed record a month earlier and there were still more records to be broken, plus everyone wanted to fly in the new aircraft.

That afternoon, Thrun was practicing touch and goes in the waters off Base Nine Aviation Station (in Cape May, NJ) in aircraft number V-136, one of the new Ducks. Also onboard the plane was Machinist's Mate Kermit H. Parker.

It was 3 p.m. and Thrun had already made three perfect landings. He was starting his run for his fourth take-off, when something happened. The wing pontoon caught on the surface, pulling the wing into the bay's waters, crumpling it and flipping the plane over. As the Duck turned over on its back, Parker was thrown clear of the plane and into the waters of Cape May Bay. Parker swam back to the surface and was almost immediately plucked from the waters by George Warner, who had witnessed the crash from his clamming boat. Parker immediately dove back into the water to try to rescue Thrun who was still in the overturned aircraft.

From a hangar on the shore nearby, the crash had also been witnessed by Lieutenant Richard Burke, commanding officer of the base, who had been preparing to conduct some practice flights of his own in one of the other Duck's. (A few months afterwards, Burke would have his own speed records to his credit.)

Burke and another witness, Lieutenant Edmund E. Fahey ran to the station's crash boat. As the boat sped to the crash site, both men tore off their uniforms. Within five minutes of the crash, the boat was on scene and several men were diving into the icy waters in an effort to release Thrun from the plane. At that point, Burke ordered Parker back aboard the boat for treatment of hypothermia and shock.

Finally one of the men was able to free Thrun from the wreckage. Thrun

was then brought aboard the boat where resuscitation efforts were begun.

Meanwhile onshore, another witness, J.J. Spencer, Jr, drove to the nearby city to pickup a lung motor from the fire department and take it back to the base along with a doctor. For over seven hours, Dr. Frank Hughes worked, trying to sustain a life. However, at 10:52 that evening, Thrun was pronounced dead. A man many in the Coast Guard aviation community lovingly referred to as "Daddy Thrun" and the Coast Guard's third pilot had become the service's first aviator fatality.

The Duck, badly twisted and damaged was towed to the base and placed in a hangar.



Burial at Arlington

It was a sunny but cold the day on January 24, 1935 when Charles T. Thrun was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. A small group of family, including his wife Mona, their 18-month-old daughter, friends and colleagues gathered to pay their last respects. Under a clear sky, with full military honors, surrounded by pure white snow, Thrun was put to rest in the hallowed grounds near our nation's capital.



MORE ON CG AVIATION HISTORY PRESERVATION

This is a status report on the project announced in the last Pterogram (page 7) about an initiative to preserve CG aviation history materials, including documents, photographs, and other scannable items which can be saved and/or displayed in a digital format. Pteros Tom Beard, Gib Brown, Bob Johanson, Bear Moseley, Carl Swickley, and Bob Watterson have been working hard, especially Gib, as hard as an AR & SC crew works to meet scheduling demands on a helicopter overhaul, or, nearly as hard as a diverted transient ferry crew looking for quarters.

Ptero Gib has designed a website (linked to the Ancient Order site) which is an impressive work-in-progress. Even though a lot of photos and writings obtained from various sources have been screened, scanned and included, only the first few steps have been taken in what will be a long journey. Why all the effort? In a nutshell, the Coast Guard has never had adequate people or funding to efficiently collect, organize, store and make accessible its history notwithstanding the diligence and expertise of the Office of the Historian at CG Headquarters. Much of the rich history of CG aviation is in air station files, files at the CG Historian's office, in museums and with the personal memorabilia of aviators and aircrewmembers. All this stuff is scattered and disorganized. Not much is accessible. As a result, current, and past, participants in Coast Guard aviation, as well as the public, are denied the rich history of this vibrant organization.

Ye Ancient Order is supporting these new efforts with encouragement, member participation and initial funding for equipment and website maintenance. Computing and scanning equipment has been purchased for the use of volunteers in the Washington, D.C. area who, in coordination with the office of the CG historian, will be working to digitize aviation history records now stored at Headquarters. Volunteers in the D.C. area are urgently needed to help with this project and are asked to contact Ptero Bob Johanson as soon as possible. He will describe how you can assist. Every bit of time will help. Please get in touch with Bob at robtjohanson@aol.com or at 616 Lakeland Rd. South, Severna Park, MD 21146 or at (410) 647-5272.

Elsewhere, we have been authorized by the Commandant's staff to contact air stations – two have been selected initially -- to screen and digitize materials 'in the field.' As these and similar efforts proceed, preparation is being made to present a detailed situation report to the members present at the 2003 gathering (roost) in Elizabeth City.

While much early work is focused on photos and other papers capable of being included on the website, other items of historical importance are sought as well. These might include flight equipment, log books, and other materials that should be preserved to help tell a CG aviation story that otherwise might not be told.

On-line members can check out the new website directly or by the link in the Pterodactyl site. [Www.AOPtero.org](http://www.AOPtero.org) is the Ptero site address, and <http://uscgaviationhistory.aoptero.org> is the aviation history site. The aviation history site includes advice on how to contribute materials to the project. Documents, photos and other items that can be emailed may be sent as attachments to email@aoptero.org. If email won't work for you, mail your documents to AOP, c/o CAPT R J Watterson USCG (Ret), 7272 Spring Lake Drive South. Mobile, AL 36695-3476. Also, use that address if you are mailing or shipping historical stuff other than documents. Please include with any mailing or shipment a letter addressed to the Ancient Order of the Pterodactyl listing the items sent and indicating whether or not you have any specific desires as to future ownership, custody or ultimate disposition of any of the items.

If you have any questions about the technical aspects of this project, i.e., the website, emailing contributions, etc., you may email gibbrown@ltlink.com. Of course, you may also direct written correspondence to the AOP, P.O. Box 9917, Mobile, AL 36691-9917. In doubt as to the historical significance of any item? Please contact us or just send it.

One other thing. There's plenty to do. Please let us know if you would like to contribute your talent and a little of your time to this exciting, important, satisfying endeavor.

Taps

The following Pterodactyls are reported to have flown their last flight.
Their names are listed here with reverence and respect for their service and comradeship.

Donald Dorini, CG Aviator 705

James "Greg" Montgomery, CG Aviator 1459

Wilfred Shaw, CG Aviator 662



BIGART TO BEARDSLEY ENLISTED ANCIENT ALBATROSS RELIEF

by Ptero Gerry Mohlenbrok, CG Aviator 961 and Gail Mohlenbrok

[The Ancient Albatross award is held by the CG officer on active duty with the earliest designation as CG aviator. The Enlisted Ancient Albatross Award similarly is held by the CG enlisted aircrew member with the earliest graduation date from a class 'A' school. The Ancient Order supports these awards by honoring them at annual AOP gatherings, by contributing to transition ceremonies with proclamations, plaques, Pterodactyl eggs and reception funding assistance for host commands].

Presided over by Ptero Rear Admiral James C. Olson, USCG, Ancient Albatross, and assisted by Ptero Captain Ray Copin, USCG (Ret) representing the Ancient Order, a ceremony conducted on April 11, 2003 at CGAS Sacramento saw the title and responsibilities of Enlisted Ancient Albatross pass from MCPO Mark Bigart to MCPO William Beardsley. Opening remarks by Ancient Al Olson noted the history of the Ancient Albatross designation and further indicated that the Coast Guard is the only service with such an award for its enlisted aircrewmembers. Following a short talk by MCPO Bigart regarding his tenure as the incumbent, the assembled gathering of over 200 people witnessed the traditional ceremony of transfer of the appropriate Ancient Albatross uniform essentials and the Albatross Egg. MCPO Beardsley accepted the accoutrements with pride and promised to faithfully carry out the duties of the reigning Enlisted Ancient Albatross.

After this portion of the proceedings, Captain Steve Delekat, CGAS Sacramento Commanding Officer, presented MCPO Bigart with the CG Commendation Medal. He was also presented a Certificate of Retirement, culminating a distinguished CG career of over thirty years. The Master Chief retirement plans include settling in Tyre, Oregon with his wife Nancy and son Tommy.

Enlisted Ancient Al Beardsley enlisted in the Coast Guard in 1973. After recruit training, he attended Aviation Electrician's Mate 'A' School in Jacksonville, Florida and then was assigned to CGAS Brooklyn. Subsequent aviation assignments included air stations Arcata, North Bend, Houston, Humboldt Bay, Kodiak for Alaskan patrols, and North Bend again as Group Command Master Chief. He currently serves at Kodiak as the Seventeenth District Western Command Master Chief.



Ancient Al Olson, Capt. Delikat, Enlisted Ancient Al Bigart (bidding farewell), MCPO Beardsley, Capt. Copin



Roster Enlisted Ancient Albatross

ADCM James T. Woltz	8/8/90
MCPO-CG Eric A. Trent	12/1/95
ADCS Gary Butler	6/30/98
AVTCM Douglas W. Farenc	12/2/99
AMTCM Bernard D. Irsik	7/14/00
AMTCM Mark T. Bigart	4/24/02



Finalists in the "Sergei Sikorsky Look Alike Contest" at ATC Mobile with the C.O. following the April meeting of the AOP Executive Board meeting.

Port to Starboard:

*Ptero Dick Butchka, CG Av 1238,
CDR Paul Francis, CG Av 2292,
Honorary Ptero Sergei Sikorsky,
CAPT Mike Moore, CG Av 2039*



"Once again, the name is Perry, with a P, as in pterodactyl."

Once again, our thanks to cartoonist Steve for this and his permission to use his work.



AMTC Robert Nolan, CGAS Houston, recognized in May at Pensacola by the Association of Naval Aviation with their coveted Chief Petty Officer Achievement Award, a first for the CG. (see page 2)



This year marks the 40th anniversary of the introduction of Sikorsky's HH-52A into CG service. During its years, this venerable craft accomplished so many missions, Arctic to Antarctic, and delivered so much search, rescue and other 'mail' that it seems appropriate to have a 52 deliver 2003 mail to Pteros.

'Dactyl Phistorian Tom Beard opines, "I believe [the H-52] did more to elevate and stabilize CG aviation than any other aircraft before or since; furthermore, there will be no other aircraft that could ever have the influence of the 52 on the organization or how the world viewed the helicopter as a tool for survival."

SALEM HISTORY

In conjunction with an oral history project, a Salem researcher wishes to contact all personnel assigned to CGAS Salem from 1935 to 1970.

This project, supported in part by Historic Salem, Inc., hopes to interview and record on tape the experiences of the many veterans of Air Station Salem in war and peace. Copies of these tapes will be sent to the American folk-life Center at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. One other copy will be donated to the archives of the Peabody/Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts.

Please contact:

Douglas Pl. Sabin
34 Northey St.
Salem, MA 01970
(978)745-2508
Dpsaabin@aol.com

CGA AVIATION CLUB

I enjoyed reading the last Pterogram very much. I am happy to report we are receiving two micro-sims (same ones used in flight school) this month and will have them on line the first week of June. I am still working with LCDR Mike Staier in G-AUX to get the proposed Aviation Club aircraft approved. I hope to have the proposal approved before I depart this summer to my next assignment, Air Station Astoria.

In the meantime, we have used some of the funds donated by the Pteros to share the cost with two Aviation Club cadets (1/c Mike Darrah and 1/c George Cottrell) taking flight lessons. I am happy to report they have both received their Private Pilots license.

LT Tiffany St. George is taking over for me as the Aviation Company Offi-

cer and advisor for the Aviation Club.

I want to thank The Ancient Order membership and Board for your support and financial help. You make my job of bringing the excitement of Coast Guard aviation to the cadets easier. I have seen continually increasing number of cadets interested in aviation including a 1000% increase in membership of the cadet Aviation Club in the last two years. Your support has allowed us to create exciting aviation opportunities for the cadets which contributes to this increase in cadet involvement.

LCDR Kevin Lyons, CG Aviator 3298

CG in "SEA CLASSICS"

...I don't know if you have seen, or heard about the...article...published in the June 2003 edition of SEA CLASSICS magazine...you might like to make comment of it in Pterogram.

Ptero James Bunch, P-2595

[Thanks, Master Chief, for alerting us to this comprehensive nine page article by Robin Jenks titled "100 years of Coast Guard Air/Sea Rescue" which I commend to all Pterogram readers.... Ptero Jim has also been extremely helpful with research to update and fill in gaps in Elizabeth City CG Aviation Memorial data....he was recently thanked by Ptero Sperry Storm for his valuable work on this project.]

CG in "FLIGHT JOURNAL"

I just reviewed the proof of a story I wrote that will appear in the August 2003 issue of Flight Journal magazine.

The title is "C-130:1 MiG-21:0," and subtitled "Hercules Refueler Outmaneuvers a Fishbed." This is a tale from the days that Ptero 'Casey' Quinn [CG Aviator 1091] spun on occasion... [about his flying in Vietnam with the USAF on exchange duty] ending with a monumental research effort where I discovered many things he was unaware of even years later that made his story even better. Pteros Butchka [CG Aviator 1238] and Frischmann [CG Aviator 1010] also provided photos that will appear in this story about CG aviators by CG aviators published in a national magazine.

Ptero Tom Beard, AOP Phistorian
CG Aviator 1104

[Hint: Casey apparently beat a MiG... quite a story....watch for it.]

STINSON (OY) PHOTO?

Bill Turner, Wilmington, NC seeks photos or information on the Stinson OY's AS Elizabeth City used on Alcohol Tax Unit duty. Arthur Percy's History of CG Aviation says we operated 4 OY's from '48 to '62. The book has a photo of OY-1 14870. Bill is a hobbyist, not-for-profit researcher/restorer. If anyone has something to share, please contact Bill at "cie3@bellsouth.net" or by phone at (910) 313-1809.

Ptero Deese Thompson, CG Av 683



BARBERS POINT HISTORY

[This first tour aviator has been asking by email for aterials to help him display CGAS Barbers Point.history.]

Thanks for all the help so far with the history project. I have a three cabinet display in the entryway to the AS Admin. Building. I am looking for items of all sorts. Aircraft related equipment like slide rules, manuals, uniform items, etc. Also photos that include you.

All items can be left here on permanent or temporary loan. I can make reprints and return original copies of documents you might have. If you want an item back but can put it here on loan for a year, I will document the items so they are returned. The display will be an evolving showcase of our history. We hope over time to have models of all eleven types of aircraft that have been assigned.

If you have something to send or want to check with me first, my email is "hgreene@D14.uscg.mil" and the postal address is:

Commanding Officer
U.S.C.G. Air Station
1 Coral Sea Road
Kapolei, HI 96707
ATTN: LTFG Greene

Ptero Harry Greene,
CG Aviator 3604



CG ACADEMY ALUMNI CENTER REVISITED

[Pteros Busick, Sickafoose and Winchester previously communicated in letters, in Pterogram and briefly at the 2002 Mobile roost business meeting their passion to see CG aviation prominent in a future Academy Alumni Center Building...toward that end, they have established a 'Ptero Fund' with the CGA Alumni Association...this is their personal initiative and not an 'official' Ancient Order project, but the endeavor aims at promoting CG aviation..]

Fellow Ptero,
I write to ask you to donate money. OK, that out of the way, what's this all about? The Coast Guard Academy Alumni Center...

Response to our previous letters, the article in last fall's Sitrep, and efforts at the Mobile gathering have not been overwhelming. If you'd like to see CG Aviation represented at the center, now is the time to make sure that happens. We are the self appointed committee of Pteros hoping to raise at least \$250,000 to get one of two meeting rooms or the lobby/reception area named for CG Aviation/Pterodactyls. Here's how that can happen: 20 or more donors in the \$5,000+ range, 50 or more in the \$2,000+ range, and 100 or more in the \$500 range. We have 6 donors already in the \$5,000 range but need more, and we've only broken the ice in the \$2,000 and smaller ranges with a ways to go.



If you can donate, please do it now. Here's how: Send your tax deductible check marked for "Ptero Fund" to: USCG Academy Alumni Center Fund, 47 Mohegan Ave., New London, CT 06320-8111.

You didn't attend the Academy? Consider that CG aviation presence in the Alumni Center will enlighten and potentially motivate future cadets and OCS candidates to become CG aviators who will advance, while remembering, the richness of Coast Guard Air.

Ptero Jerry Sickafoose, CG Av 1354
on behalf of
Ptero Paul Busick, CG Av 1341
Ptero Jim Dillian, CG Av 536
Ptero Don Winchester, CG Av 1352
Ptero Phil Volk, CG Av 1644



Air Det BERMUDA

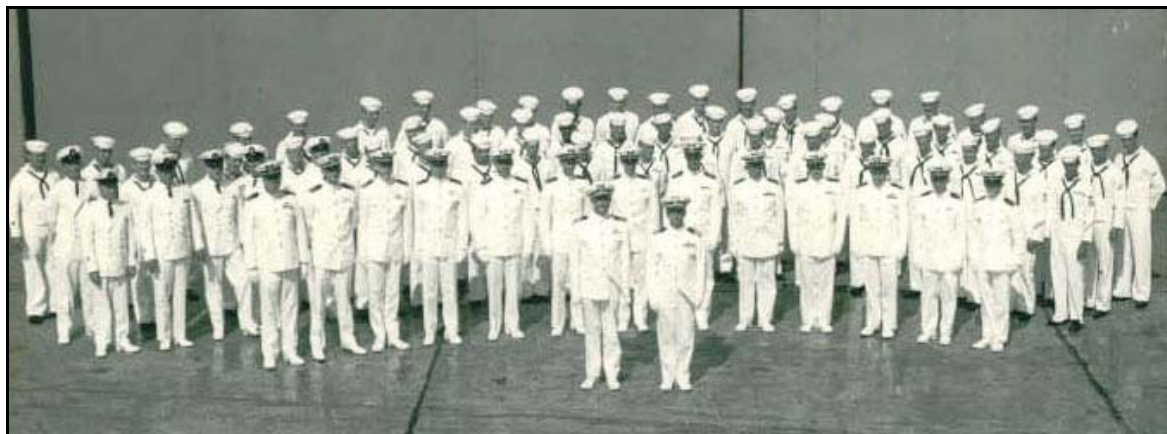
...this is a picture of the crew of Air Detachment Bermuda, taken in May of 1962. The Air Detachment was then located at the naval Operating Base in Bermuda. Of course, that was total water ops (we had no runways). CDR Wilco ([Wilfred] Gray was CO [CG Av 100!], LCDR Jim Durfee [CG Av 521] was XO, LCDR Harold French [CG Av 358] was OPS, and LT Lou Zumstein [CG Av 691] was the EO. Hope to see you in Ecity"

Ptero Dale Schmidt, CG Av 918

[Thanks, Dale. Space restricted the size of this image. Good luck to curious readers with super trifocals!]



CGAD Bermuda, 1962





NEWLY DESIGNATED AVIATORS

The following pilots have been designated as Coast Guard Aviators and have been provided with a first year dues-free membership in the Order. Welcome aboard, Pterodactyls!! We salute you and wish you safe flight. We envy the thrills, opportunities and satisfaction which are on and beyond your individual horizons. As you settle in at your initial and subsequent assignments and carve out future CG aviation history, we hope you will maintain your Pterodactyl membership and "stay tuned" to your rich heritage and your own history-in-the-making. Your modest annual dues will help to keep you informed and make possible a multitude of active duty awards, memorials and CG aviation history-preserving projects. **Happy Landings, and again, Welcome Aboard!!!**

CG Aviator Nr.

3657 Eric Purdue
3658 Michael Lachowicz
3659 Jason Morgan
3660 Timothy Holt

CG Aviator Nr.

3661 Robert Tucker
3662 Enrique Hipes
3663 Patrick Dill
3664 Julie Kuck



Kodiak Jayhawk Crew at Pensacola in May receiving the Helicopter Achievement Award from the Association of Naval Aviation for a heroic rescue mission accomplished with great skill and courage (see page 2).

Port to Starboard:

*Rescue Swimmer AST3 Jason Quinn;
Copilot LT Kendall Garran;
Aircraft Commander LCDR Melissa Rivera;
President of the Naval Aviation Museum Foundation
Admiral Leighton "Snuffy" Smith, USN (Ret);
Flight Mechanic AMT2 Michael Simone.*

Multi-mission Form:

Apply for or Renew Membership, Update Data or Order Stuff

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Update Information ☐ Ordering Item(s)

(Renewals need enter only corrections/additions — see mailing label on back)

Name _____ Rank/Rate _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Spouse: _____ ☐ Ph.(____) _____ - _____ ☐
Email _____ ☐

CHECK IF SPOUSE OR PHONE OR EMAIL NOT TO BE LISTED IN DIRECTORY

Sign me up for:

- ☐ Life Membership \$200 (includes a Ptero Coin)
- ☐ Annual Membership \$ 15
- ☐ Ptero Lapel Pin \$ 5
- ☐ Ptero Coin (5 for \$20) \$ 5
- ☐ St. Pete Disney Patch \$ 6
- ☐ AOP patch, modern logo \$ 8
- ☐ AOP patch, original logo \$ 10
- ☐ 25th anniversary cups (2) \$ 15

\$

Total Enclosed:

Please check as

- ☐ CG Active
 - ☐ CG Retired
 - ☐ CG Reserve
 - ☐ Former CG
 - ☐ Other _____
 -
 - ☐ CG Aviator
 - ☐ Aircrewman/Observer
 - ☐ Flight Surgeon
 - ☐ Exchange Pilot
- Dates Served CG:

MAIL TO:

**The Ancient Order of The Pterodactyl
P.O. Box 9917
Mobile, AL 36691-9917**

The Ancient Order of The Pterodactyl
P.O. Box 9917
Mobile, AL 36691-9917

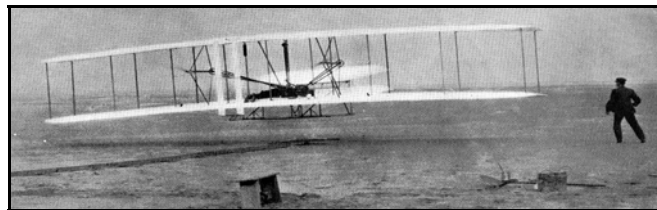
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SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT # 1441



"Once again, the name is Perry,
with a P, as in pterodactyl."

40
Yrs



REGISTRATION ELIZ CITY ROOST OCT. 10-12, '03



CG AVIATOR 3



**LOTS
AND LOTS
AND LOTS IN
THIS SITREP
AND MORE
AS USUAL...**



Helos, Guns & Drugs



...heroism & skill...

*...number one CPO
all sea services...*

...heritage...



...tradition...

