



ANA **GRAMPAW PETTIBONE**
SQUADRON INC.
1 AUGUST 2016
www.gpsana.org



Editor Hal McDonnel

The Grampaw Pettibone Squadron is a non-profit organization (IRS Sect. 501(C)(4) which, through meetings, discussions, speaker programs, and periodic field trips, serves to educate squadron members and the general public on the requirements of an adequate national defense, especially maritime aviation, which is essential to a free society, and to support the military professionals (active and reserve) responsible for many aspects of national defense. GPS also seeks to foster the strong pride, esprit, and fraternal bonds which exist among those associated with Naval Aviation.

THE GPS LUNCHEON MEETING

WILL BE HELD ON

THURSDAY, 11 AUGUST 2016

AT THE

GARDEN GROVE ELKS LODGE

LOCATED AT 11551 TRASK Ave., GARDEN GROVE

Hangar doors open at 1130, Luncheon is at 1200, secure at 1330.

Please make reservations before 9 PM on Monday 8 August 2016

COST IS \$15.00. FOR RESERVATIONS Please E-mail

RayLeCompte34@Gmail/com or by Phone: 562-287-4846



About our speaker's topic:

LOMITA FLIGHT STRIP GOES TO WAR

About our speaker;

CHARLES LOBB HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR

Zamperini Field, a.k.a. Torrance Municipal Airport, a.k.a. Lomita Flight Strip has an illustrious history, and nobody knows that history better than Chuck Lobb. Air Force Officer, engineer, pilot, and aerospace history authority, Chuck has compiled a wealth of historical data about Lomita Flight Strip. Of course, one of the most important historical roles played by

Lomita Flight Strip was its wartime service as the training field for the P-38 Lightning pilots. Many of the pilots who went on to help win the air conflict in WWII honed their craft in Torrance. At the time of World War II, Lomita Field was an ideal location to train P-38 Fighter Pilots. From June 1942 until April 1944 five squadrons of Lockheed P-38 Lightning fighters were based here, each with 40 officers, 200 enlisted men and 25 aircraft. As they fine-tuned their combat skills prior to deployment to bases in England. By mid



Lockheed P-38 Lightning

1944, Sixth Ferry Command at Long Beach took charge and field activity quickly grew to 2500-3500 movements per month as pilots checked out new war birds prior to delivery to points throughout the world. Brigadier General Robin Olds, famed ace of World War II, Korea and Vietnam, and later Air Force Academy Commandant of Cadet's began his career here as a fledgling P-38 pilot. Colonel Art Jeffrey, 8th Air Force ace with 14 aerial kills led "C" flight of the 434th Fighter Squadron from Lomita. Record setting Olympian Captain Louis Zamperini, a bombardier and Torrance native, returned from WW II to have the field named in his honor. It's a fascinating story, and Chuck will share some of that history with us, the same history that filled the pages of his highly acclaimed book, *Torrance Airport*.

About our July luncheon:



PAT MACHA AVIATION ARCHEOLOGIST

By Dick Fields
GPS PAO

Gramps was delighted to have Pat Macha return to tell us more about aviation errors that resulted in crashes and the crash sites. It was especially delightful to have him introduced by our OPS Cynthia Macha, Pat's sister.

Pat's interest in aviation archeology began during a trek in the mountains helping the Park Rangers when he came across a wrecked airplane, a C-47B. It had not been seen for many years and Pat found it by traveling a route that was not commonly used. The crash occurred in December of 1952 and had been painted with yellow "X" markings so that it would not be mistaken for a fresh crash. Thirteen people were killed and a rescue helicopter had also crashed with two aboard. High winds and a snowstorm caused the crash. Pat reached the site in the summer of 1963 before any trails had been cut on this region of 11,000 foot high Mount San Gorgonio. He found the parachutes and equipment of those who had perished still on the ground at the site. The aircraft was unburned. He sat on a large boulder for 30 minutes, stunned by what he saw. This was the beginning of his fascination and passion for aircraft wreck sites. He has been searching, exploring, documenting, preserving, investigating, writing books and presenting shows of these crashes ever since.

His presentation to Gramps this time included a new picture presentation and an emphasis on the judgement errors that caused almost all of the crashes presented. All the facts of each site were evaluated and the cause of each crash was analyzed. For us pilots it was quite disturbing to realize how many judgement errors alone had caused so many crashes and deaths.

One of the most fascinating crashes was the crash of a C-53 that left Van Nuys in marginal weather for the purpose of towing a Waco to Victorville over the mountains. The glider pulled the tail off the C-53 over Castaic. The glider crew bailed out and the C-53 crew made a hard landing. The wreck was found by a nine year old girl, Mary Lyn Winkler, who lived in the area. She was much appreciated and received personal thanks from General Hap Arnold.



Gramps; Cindy Macha thanks her brother Pat for his second time as a Gramps ' speaker.

Another interesting crash was that of a Beech Bonanza en route to Las Vegas with \$50,000 in cash aboard. Only \$19,000 was recovered? Along these lines, in the past airmail flight crews were required to stay with the crashed aircraft to protect

the mail cargo from such loss.

We are once again delighted to have Pat present his findings to us and give us the analysis of these crashes. Pat's books are also fascinating reading with extensive detail of each crash site. The approach to the judgmental cause of these crashes was especially fascinating. We look forward to seeing him in the future



CO'S COLUMN TIN BROWN

I will not be in town for the next two luncheon meetings so our Executive Officer, another Army guy, will be running the show. We have the Sailors of the Quarter awards this month. Again, I hope that we have a large, enthusiastic crowd on hand to show our

appreciation of their efforts. Cindy Macha, our Ops O has a great speaker lined up and I know that you will be sorry if you do not attend.

Just a reminder that we have our monthly Staff Officers meeting on the first Thursday of every month at the Garden Grove Elk's Lodge. We are nearer to the bar, if that help persuade some of you to attend. We would welcome your attendance. Just show up – no reservations required. We have our meeting right after we fold, mutilate and stuff the OP-Plan in the envelopes for mailing. That reminds me, if you do not absolutely need the OP-Plan to be mailed via USPS, please send me an email or call on our reservation line and tell me that. Saves us printing and postage costs. Thanks in advance.

FINALLY, TO THE UPCOMING EVENTS.



U.S. Navy Band at Huntington Beach band shell at 6:00 p.m. on 25 August.

Los Angeles/San Pedro / Long Beach FLEET WEEK 2 - 5 September.

USAF Thunderbirds perform over the beach at Huntington Beach on 22-23 October.

Wings Wheels & Rotors Expo at JFTB Los Alamitos on 23 October

(added attraction is that the Thunderbirds are staging out of Los Al so you can see them taxi out, take off and land while attending WWRE)! That is all.

SAN PEDRO EXCITED FOR INAUGURAL L.A. FLEET WEEK

The four-day event - Friday through Monday over the Labor Day weekend, Sept. 2-5 is expected to bring as many as 200,000 to 300,000 visitors to the Harbor Area for tours of active-duty Navy ships, military demonstrations and other attractions and activities. A free concert on the Iowa is planned for Saturday night, September 3rd, as part of the festivities. An aircraft carrier is expected to participate this year. The ships are scheduled to arrive Aug. 30 and leave September 6. Parking will be available at Berth 46 -- the outer harbor --- and at 22nd and Miner streets, with shuttles and trollies available. Details are on the web: www.LAFleetweek.com and www.LAFleetweek.org

SEAL BEACH WEAPONS STATION NEWS

By Tim Brown

We have a new Command Senior Chief at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach. His name is Command Senior Chief Kirby Lee. You will be seeing him at our SOQ Awards program. Please come and introduce yourself to him and welcome him aboard. Here is his bio:

Senior Chief Lee, a native of Bassfield, MS, enlisted in the United States Navy in July 1994. Following completion of basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, IL he reported to the Airman Apprenticeship School, also in Great Lakes.

Upon graduation he reported to Fighter Squadron VF-101 Det, located at Naval Air Station Miramar, CA. Upon disestablishment of VF-101 Det Miramar, he reported to Aviation Machinist Mate (AD) "A" school located in Millington, TN. After graduation, he was designated as an Aviation Machinist's Mate and reported to VAW-113 located at NAS Miramar, where he made multiple deployments on USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) and conducted a squadron homeport change to NAS Point Mugu, CA. In addition, Senior Chief Lee completed a joint service tour with the United States Marine Corps at HMT-303 located at Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton, CA from 2000 to 2003.

In 2004, he volunteered for flight duty as a P-3 Flight Engineer. Upon completion of Naval Aircrew Candidate School and P-3 Flight Engineer School, he reported for duty to Patrol Squadron VP-1 at NAS Whidbey Island, WA. His other flying assignments include Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron VQ-2, and Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron VQ-1, also at NAS Whidbey Island. He has logged over 5,500 flight hours completing missions in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM, NEW DAWN, ODYSSEY DAWN, and UNIFIED PROTECTOR.

Senior Chief Lee holds a Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in Aeronautics from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He is a graduate of the U.S. Navy Senior Enlisted Academy and Command Master Chief Course. He is qualified as an Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist (AW) and Naval Aircrew Warfare Specialist (NAWS).

He was selected for the Command Senior Chief program in February 2016, and reported to his current assignment at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach,

CA, in July 2016.

Senior Chief Lee's decorations include five Air Medals (Strike/Flight), the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (3 awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (6 awards), the NATO Medal, and various unit and campaign awards.

The GREAT GUYS

Here are some of the Great Guys who have made contributions to Gramps in July. These guys and the members who attend the monthly luncheons are the ones who make possible Gramps' Sailor of the Quarter program and the Mailing of the OP-Plan. Gramps and his staff thank them all and hope to see your name here. Members who do not attend the monthly luncheons should consider a contribution to cover the monthly 61 cent cost for each OP-Plan mailed to you. You can save Gramps money by getting the OP-Plan via email. Just email me at hmcddonnelz@yahoo.com to change to email.

VINCENT van den BRINK

TIM BROWN

DAVID FRANZEN

MARV GARRISON

RAY LECOMPTE

DON SEAPY



MEMBERSHIP

BY FRAN PIERI

Our next luncheon will be Thursday, September 8th. Try to get there around 1100 to get a good seat and table and to visit with friends. Which reminds me, try this time to

bring a friend. As you know, we need new members. Some have moved away and some have passed on. If you have some old aviation books that have become dust collectors, bring them along. Someone may have been looking for that book for a long time. Carpooling is a must for some of us who cannot drive. I'm sure they would appreciate a lift to the luncheon. See you there. FRAN

PLANES OF FAME

By Fran Pieri

Our next event at the museum will be on two different Saturdays. The first is Saturday August, 6th and the second is Saturday August 20th. On the 6th, they will be featuring the Vought F4U-1A Corsair. Some of you may have flown that great fighter. On the 20th, there will be a special presentation of World War One and other earlier aircraft. Hanger doors open at 0900am, with a presentation at 1000am. The event concludes with a flight demonstration of the featured aircraft (whenever possible). Come early to get a good seat, take some photos and visit with friends. The museum is located on the Chino Airport. 7000 Merrill Ave. #17, Chino, Calif. 91710. Corner of Merrill and Cal Aero Drive. There's a B-17 on display in front. I'm there every Saturday. I'll be looking for you. FRAN

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