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# Base Commanders Remember Pax NAS As A Special Place

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer



Capt. Stuart Fitrell

Stuart Fitrell, retired Navy captain and former commanding officer at Patuxent River Naval Air Station from 1986 to 1989 has fond memories of his time there.

Now a Hollywood resident, Fitrell remembers a much different base.

"When I was here it was a flight test place," said Fitrell, a veteran of three combat air tours during the Vietnam War. "Now it's mostly just paper work."

In his day, Fitrell remembered a place where developing and testing new aircraft for warfighters was the sole priority; it would be almost a decade before the base became part of a larger acquisition community in Big Navy.

"There was very much a strong navy presence, we had a lot of civilians but not what it's like today," Fitrell said. "I couldn't have asked for a better job. I could fly whatever I wanted, whenever I wanted."

Fitrell remembered flying an F-4 Phantom fighter jet over the base and as he was coming in for a landing he could look over to his commanding officer's quarters and see his wife on the beach in a red bikini.

"I thought, 'Life is good,'" he said. "That's all I ever wanted to do, fly fast airplanes."

With a strict focus on testing and evaluating aircraft ever in mind, Fitrell said his top accomplishment while base commander was runway maintenance.

"It was getting the runways fixed, all of them," Fitrell said. "We used them all the time."

The way he got the funding to do that was unconventional and even got him into trouble.

He talked to then Congressman Roy Dyson, who also served many years here as state senator for District 29, and had him take a visit to the base.

He drove down on the runway with Dyson, Fitrell said, showing him all the rocks and asphalt that had broken off the aging runways; foreign objects and debris (FOD) can destroy aircraft engines and ground them.

Dyson collected those rocks and showed them to committee members in Congress and was able to get the funding to the Navy, Fitrell said.

He fully admits he went outside the chain of command and got castigated by an admiral for his trouble, but he stayed in command.

"All the airfields are in competition for money," Fitrell said. "I did [buck the chain of command] and I got away with it."

Fitrell had his own style when it came to community relations.

He had a club built on base for enlisted men, he said, and if gate security stopped an incoming car full of ladies claiming they were on their way to the club he gave them orders to let them through.

"I had a great time everywhere in St. Mary's County," Fitrell said.

Even with all the changes that have occurred at the base over the years, Fitrell said it is still a facility of great importance.

"It's essential," he said. "It's absolutely essential for national defense."

The testing and evaluation facilities here are second to none.

"We've got the laboratories that no one else has," said Fitrell.

By the 1990s the mission and face of the base would change drastically as base realignment and closure decisions (BRAC) would bring in thousands of new employees and many new programs.

Capt. Elmer Standridge, base commander from 1995 to 1997, formed a team on base to make the transition as smooth as possible.

The BRAC would change not only the base but St. Mary's County as well.

"Certainly it was challenging," said Standridge, who now lives in Tennessee. "It was a big time of transformation."

The base would never be the same.

"We went from being a test flight facility just down in Southern Maryland to being a key element of the Navy's acquisition system for aircraft," Standridge said. "The mood on base was positive... but there were a lot of jitters about the impact it would have on the sedate atmosphere of the past."

The community had gotten used to the flights at the base, Standridge said, but the sheer number of new people moving down from Trenton, New Jersey and Warminster, PA. would bring many new jobs and new capabilities to the base.

It also meant infrastructure would have to be expanded and new homes constructed.

Standridge said the Navy and the county government were able to meet the challenge.

He viewed it as the most significant challenge of his tenure at Pax River NAS.

"I certainly enjoyed it," he said of his time here. "You don't really have time off in that job but I dealt with a lot of people I respected and thought highly of."

Capt. Glen Ives, commander from 2006 to 2008, had to deal with the challenges of the base being lumped in with many other facilities under the CNIC or Commander Naval Installations Command.

It took Pax River NAS from being a unique command with a vital mission to almost being just another Navy facility, Ives said.

"When we were just a NAVAIR command, everyone was on the same sheet of music," Ives said. "Now, we were fighting with everybody for every dollar."



Capt Glen Ives and the Blue Angels

"We had to keep the base running."

The change of supervision added another layer of bureaucracy.

"That extra layer of bureaucracy did not really understand our mission," Ives said.

A transition team Ives dubbed "the Pax Professionals" was able to make the transition as smooth as possible, he said, and he continued to administer all aspects of base life.

"I thought it was the best job in the Navy," Ives said. "It was the perfect balance between lots of responsibility to lots of opportunities."

On any given day he was overseeing the progress of programs to support warfighters and then looking at how MWR (Moral, Welfare and Recreation) made things better for base personnel.

On a more personal level, Ives was able to work with his wife Barbara Ives, also a Navy captain, to help create an organization to support the families of base personnel shipped out to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

These individual augmentees, who brought special skills and technical knowledge to the battlefield, often left behind family members who needed help for a long period of time.

"That was one of my best memories," Ives said. "Helping to start a program to help those families."



Capt. Heidi Fleming

Heidi Fleming, the only female Navy captain to command the base, said her best memories of working on the base were helping to ensure that all the many moving parts of the base ran smoothly.

"There was not any one day that was the same as another," Fleming said. "Our sailors and civilians were spread all over the base."

Making sure all their efforts bore fruit, no matter what the program or function was, took constant effort.

"It was a team effort," Fleming said. "I enjoyed my time most interacting with tenant commands and our community."

Once again repairing the runways, refurbishing the commander's office and

getting better performance ratings on handling ordnance were all successes her team was able to pull off during her command, Fleming said.

"It was an honor and a privilege to serve there," Fleming said. "It was all about the people and the partnerships."

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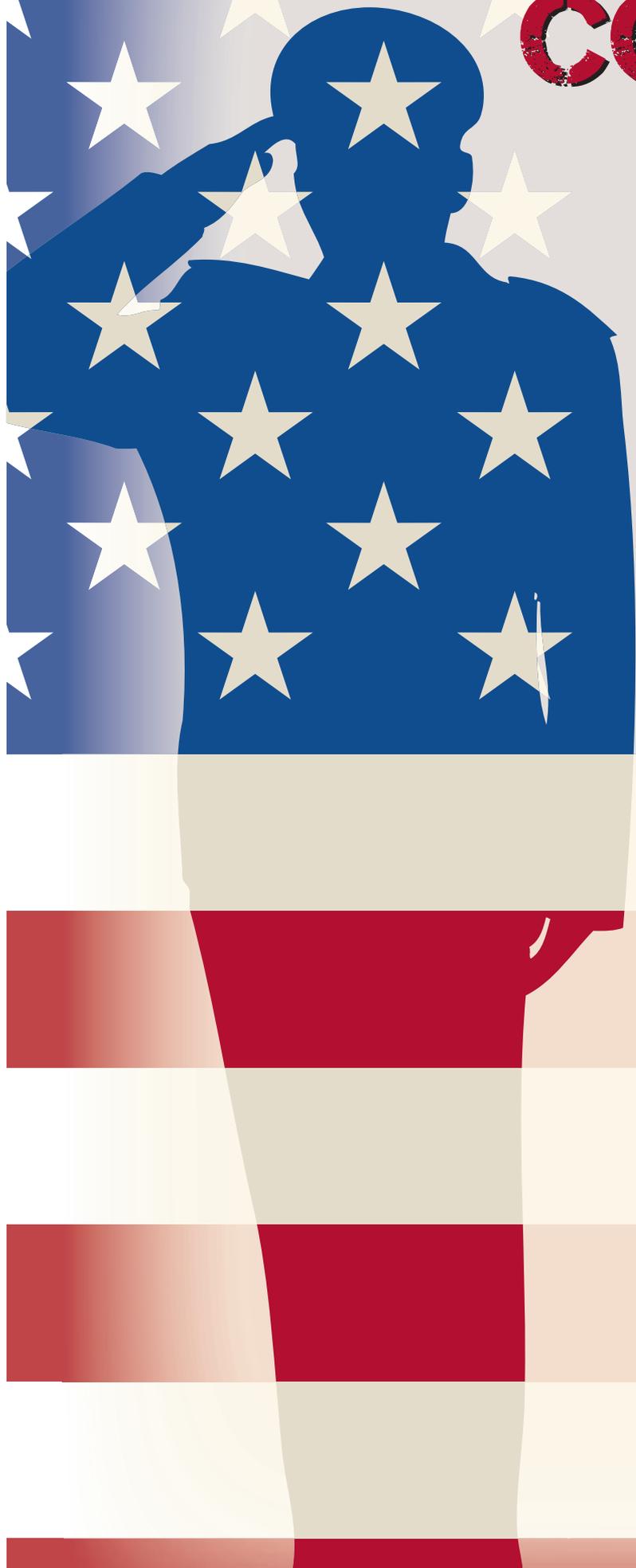
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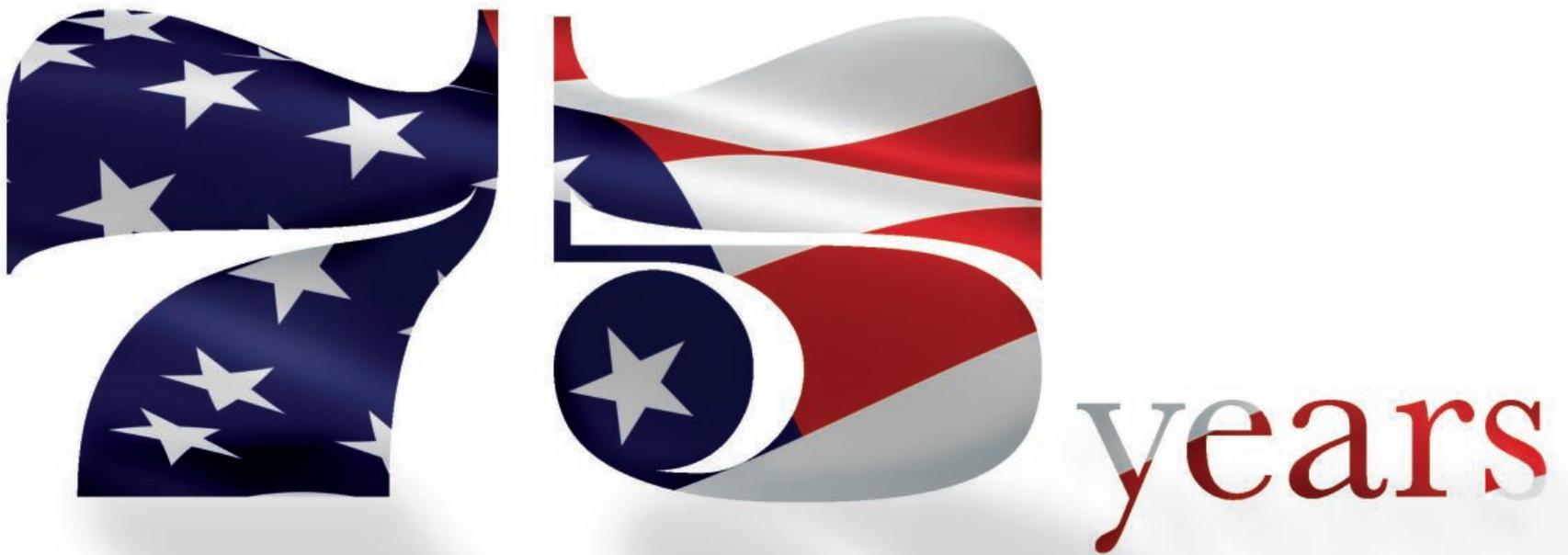
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CAPT. WILLIAM T. RASSIEUR	APRIL 1, 1943 - JAN. 10, 1944
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CAPT. EDWARD A. HANNEGAN	JUNE 15, 1945 - JULY 12, 1946
CAPT. AURELIUS B. VOSELLER	JULY 12, 1946 - AUG. 11, 1948
CAPT. THOMAS A. TURNER	AUG. 11, 1948 - JULY 27, 1950
CAPT. CHARLES L. LEE	JULY 27, 1950 - JULY 28, 1952
CAPT. JESSE S. MCCLURE	JULY 28, 1952 - JUNE 24, 1954
CAPT. THOMAS B. NEBLETT	SEPT. 28, 1954 - JUNE 12, 1957
CAPT. THOMAS W. SOUTH	JUNE 12, 1957 - OCT. 23, 1958
CAPT. WILLIAM P. WOODS	OCT. 23, 1958 - JAN. 31, 1961
CAPT. JAMES E. VOSE JR.	JAN. 31, 1961 - FEB. 8, 1963
CAPT. ROLAND W. SCHUMANN JR.	FEB. 8, 1963 - JUNE 17, 1965
CAPT. CHARLES L. LAMBING	JUNE 17, 1965 - OCT. 28, 1966
CAPT. VERNON P. O'NEIL	OCT. 28, 1966 - OCT. 29, 1968
CAPT. LEONARD G. GRANING JR.	OCT. 29, 1968 - OCT. 28, 1970
CAPT. WILLIAM CARRIER JR.	OCT. 28, 1970 - JULY 10, 1972
CAPT. THOMAS J. KILCLINE	AUG. 18, 1972 - MAY 1, 1974
CAPT. EDWARD V. LANEY JR.	MAY 1, 1974 - JUNE 18, 1976
CAPT. CHARLES R. GILLESPIE JR.	JUNE 18, 1976 - JULY 28, 1978
CAPT. VERIE W. KLEIN	JULY 28, 1978 - APRIL 18, 1980
CAPT. THOMAS N. FLANARY II	APRIL 18, 1980 - MAY 28, 1982
CAPT. ROBERT I. HEISNER JR.	MAY 28, 1982 - AUG. 20, 1984
CAPT. JOHN M. WELCH	AUG. 20, 1984 - JUNE 26, 1986
CAPT. STUART J. FITRELL	JUNE 26, 1986 - JUNE 28, 1989
CAPT. DONALD A. WRIGHT III	JUNE 28, 1989 - JUNE 30, 1992
CAPT. ROGER D. HILL	JUNE 30, 1992 - JAN. 18, 1995
CAPT. ELMER L. STANRIDGE	JAN. 18, 1995 - AUG. 1, 1997
CAPT. PAUL E. ROBERTS	AUG. 1, 1997 - JULY 27, 2000
CAPT. PATRICK J. HOVATTER	JULY 28, 2000 - AUG. 1, 2002
CAPT. DANE C. SWANSON	AUG. 1, 2002 - JULY 9, 2004
CAPT. ZACHARY A. HENRY	JULY 9, 2004 - JULY 20, 2006
CAPT. GLEN IVES	JULY 20, 2006 - MAY 16, 2008
CAPT. ANDREW T. MACYKO	MAY 16 2008 - MARCH 19, 2010
CAPT. STEPHEN A. SCHMEISER	MARCH 19, 2010 - NOV. 10, 2011
CAPT. TED MILLS	NOV. 10, 2011 - APRIL 4, 2013
CAPT. BENJAMIN A. SHEVCHUK	APRIL 4, 2013 - SEPT. 18, 2014
CAPT. HEIDI A. FLEMING	SEPT. 18, 2014 - APRIL 14, 2016
CAPT. SCOTT B. STARKEY	APRIL 14, 2016 - AUG. 31, 2017
CAPT. JASON G. HAMMOND	AUG. 31, 2017 - PRESENT

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# NAS Patuxent River to Hold 75th Anniversary Ceremony April 6, 2018



Construction of Naval Air Station Patuxent River began April 4, 1942



Cars enter the Pax River main gate house northeast in 1942

This year marks the 75th year of Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River; a tribute to 75 years of community partnership with our Southern Maryland neighbors. In honor of this momentous occasion, NAS Patuxent River will host a 75th Anniversary Ceremony Friday, April 6, 2018 at 10 a.m. on NAS Patuxent River's Parade Field across from the Administration Building (Bldg. 409).

This is a free event, open to those with base access.

Since its dedication in 1943 during World War II through today, the naval air station has grown to become a Center of Excellence for naval aviation and in research, development, test, and evaluation (RDT&E). The success of the Naval Air Station is fostered by the support of its surrounding communities.

This event will highlight the partnership Pax has with its neighbors and the people who have made the NAS Patuxent River what it is today. Their support of the men and women serving our nation, who are stationed aboard the NAS Pax River, and who live in the Tri-County area is what makes NAS Patuxent River's success possible.

*Patrick Gordon, Pax River NAS Public Affairs Officer*

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# Pax River: 75 Years of Test & Evaluation

Pax River's role in the Navy's aircraft test and evaluation process was established early in its life. The history of that role, including the history of the squadrons that have accomplished that mission, has been detailed in a new document penned by Bob Tourville, who is a volunteer researcher for the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum.

The document entitled "NAS Patuxent River – A Brief History of Its Operational and Test Squadrons" is expected to be serialized in the near future in the museum's newsletter, which is also available by signing up online at <http://paxmuseum.com/> For more about the museum see a separate story in this 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition.

Tourville begins his history with information about several operational squadrons, including Transport Squadrons and TACAMO, Special Mission Squadrons, Operational Airborne Early Warning (AEW) Squadrons, and Operational Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW) Squadrons. We pick up Tourville's reporting in more detail with the sections on test and evaluation.



Lockheed WV-2 Constellation, WV-15 aircraft (based at Pax), 1957

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# Pax River: The Early History

In addition to the US Naval Test Pilot School, five commissioned T&E squadrons are currently based at NAS Pax River today: VXS-1, VX-1, VX-20, VX-23, and HX-21. Of these groups, all but VXS-1 and VX-1 can trace their lineage directly to the first test units to be based at Pax.

Pax River's role as a T&E facility was established early. By 1939, the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics (BuAer) had realized the obvious: Naval Air Station Anacostia's 'Flight Test Section' and 'Aircraft Experimental & Development Squadron' had simply outgrown their base and its increasingly crowded airspace near the Nation's Capital. In November 1941, after a lengthy investigation, BuAer chose to host most of Anacostia's flight test group at a Southern MD site that would become NAS Patuxent River. Shortly after the new NAS Patuxent River was commissioned on 1 April 1943, the Anacostia test groups were transferred to Pax, along with VR-1, a fleet air transport squadron discussed earlier.

With that transfer, NAS Pax River became one of the largest T&E sites to support Naval Aviation in World War II. A large number of other Navy facilities also conducted flight testing in support of the war effort, including sites devoted to developing and testing anti-submarine warfare systems (ASDEVLANT moved from Anacostia to NAS Quonset Pt, RI), radar equipment (Special Project Unit 'Cast' in eastern MA), aircraft carrier catapult and arresting gear systems (NAS Norfolk, VA), and aviation weapons (NAF Dahlgren, VA and NAF Inyokern, CA).

After having started as just one of a great many Naval Aviation T&E sites, NAS Pax River somehow grew over the decades to become pre-eminent. The central role that Pax now plays in Naval Aviation development, acquisition, T&E, and life-cycle support was solidified in 1997, with the move of the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) headquarters to Pax. NAS Pax River became, and remains, the focal point for the development and life cycle support of all Navy and Marine Corps aircraft and associated systems, along with air-launched weapons, cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, carrier launch and arresting gear, training equipment, and other related systems.

Under NAVAIR's Naval Air Warfare Center (NAWC) construct, all Developmental Test and Evaluation of Naval Aviation products is managed from Pax River. (Operational Test and Evaluation is managed by the Commander, Operational Test and Evaluation Forces at NAS Norfolk, VA.) Today, Naval Aviation's T&E sites consist of only NAS Patuxent River and three other locations that are managed by the NAWC at Pax River: the land ranges of the Naval Air Weapons Station at China Lake, CA, the sea ranges of Naval Base Ventura County at Pt. Mugu, CA, and the Bob Tourville, author aircraft/ship integration facility at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ.

Of course, none of this was even envisioned back in 1944, a year or so after NAS Pax River opened. At that time, five functionally-aligned test units called the base home, in an organizational structure that would remain largely unchanged until 1960:



**Flight Test Division**

This group, which was moved to Pax from Anacostia, determined contractual conformance of new aircraft types, and performed tests required for fleet acceptance.



**Tactical Test Division**

This group developed fleet operational tactics and evaluated captured enemy aircraft during WWII.



**Radio Test Division**

(Redesignated Electronic Test Division in June 1945)

This group also originated at NAS Anacostia and was responsible for testing airborne electrical and electronic equipment.

## *Pax River: The Early History Continued*



Douglas AD-2 Skyraider with weapons, Armament Test Division aircraft, 1950

### **Armament Test Division**

This group came to Pax from NAS Norfolk in 1943, and conducted aircraft armament trials under flight conditions, and tested aerial targets.



Lockheed P2V-7 Neptune, Service Test Division aircraft, 1947

### **Advanced Field Service Test Unit**

(Redesignated Service Test Division in 1945)

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# Pax River NATC and T&E

In the beginning, leadership of these five Test Divisions was assigned to the Commander of the Naval Air Station itself. But in June of 1945, the test divisions were placed under the leadership of a newly-formed tenant Command, the Naval Air Test Center (NATC). NATC was established as an arm of the Bureau of Aeronautics (BuAer, later re-designated as NAVAIR), which was then headquartered in Washington, DC.

Over its history, NATC shared NAS Patuxent River with several Fleet Tenant commands, including the Fleet Logistics Air Wing (1949 - 1957), Heavy Attack Wing One (1951 - 1955), and the Airborne Early Warning Wing, Atlantic (1952 - 1965). Parts One through Four of this series discussed the operational squadrons that were assigned to these Fleet Commands.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, as Naval Aviation postured itself for the jet age, the Cold War, and a nuclear arms race, NATC was realigned several times. NATC's first substantial change was to disestablish its Tactical Test Division in 1953. Then, in 1960, the Electronic and Armament Test Divisions were both dissolved to form a new 'Weapons System Test Division'. From that point in 1960 until 1975, NATC comprised only three test divisions (Flight Test Division, Service Test Division, and Weapons Systems Test Division) which, as before, remained functionally aligned.

Through its history, NATC had been organized along functional lines. In practical terms, this meant that the process of fully testing a given aircraft was divided between as many as five divisions. Even after the 1960 reorganization, when test responsibilities were allocated to only three divisions, it remained true that no single test group was 'the' subject matter expert for a given type of aircraft.

This embedded flaw of NATC's organizational structure became increasingly unworkable as naval aircraft became more sophisticated. So, in 1975, NATC dissolved its three Test Divisions and completely re-organized itself, this time along aircraft platform lines. Three new Directorates were formed, with each expected to become the subject matter experts for their assigned aircraft:



Lockheed S-3A Viking, ASW Aircraft Test Directorate aircraft, 1982

**Antisubmarine Aircraft Test Directorate**  
(Redesignated Force Warfare Aircraft Test Directorate in 1986)

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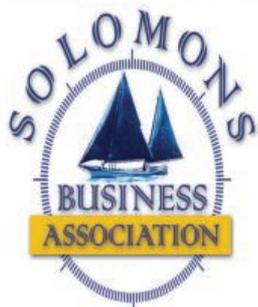
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## *Pax River NATC and T&E Continued*



Grumman A-6E Intruder, Strike Aircraft  
Test Directorate aircraft, ca. 1993

### Strike Aircraft Test Directorate



Bell UH-1N Iroquois, Rotary Wing Aircraft Test Directorate aircraft, ca. late-'70s

### Rotary Wing Aircraft Test Directorate

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# Pax River – The Recent Years

Fifteen years after this realignment, Pax River's T&E community underwent another significant change. In 1992, the nearly 50-year old Naval Air Test Center was disestablished, and all of Naval Aviation developmental T&E activities were placed within a new organizational structure called the Naval Air Warfare Center (NAWC).

Previously, NATC had managed only Patuxent River's T&E functions, with separate chains of command managing the developmental testing that was being conducted elsewhere; e.g., China Lake, CA, Lakehurst, NJ, etc. The new NAWC would now centrally manage all of naval aviation's developmental testing, wherever that work was done.

Pax River's developmental T&E operations were assigned to NAWC's Aircraft Division (which included sites in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Florida), and West Coast developmental test operations were placed under NAWC's Weapons Division.

When created in 1992, the NAWC was headquartered in Northern Virginia with its parent organization, the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR). But, in 1997, NAVAIR and the NAWC were moved to NAS Pax River, placing Pax in control of developmental T&E across the entirety of Naval Aviation.

Under AWC, Pax River's here Test Directorate became commissioned as official Navy squadrons in 1995.



## Naval Force Aircraft Test Squadron

(Redesignated VX-20 in 2002)

VX-20 operates a range of aircraft, including E2C/D Hawkeyes, P-8A Poseidons, MQ4C Tritons, E-6B Mercuries, C-2A Greyhounds, and KC-130 R/T/J Hercules.

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## *Pax River – The Recent Years Continued*



### **Naval Strike Aircraft Test Squadron**

(Redesigned VX-23 in 2002)

NAVAIR's largest flight test organization, VX-23's fleet includes F/A-18A-D Hornets, F/A18E/F Super Hornets, EA-18G Growlers, T-45A/C Goshawks, and F35B/C Lighting IIs.



### **Rotary Wing Aircraft Squadron**

(Redesignated HX-21 in 2002)

Assigned aircraft include V-22 Ospreys, UH-1Y Venoms, AH-1Z Vipers, CH-53K King Stallions, MH-60R/S Seahawks, and MQ-8C Fire Scouts.

This is the developmental T&E structure at NAS Pax River today, although it originated with the first test groups that migrated from NAS Anacostia back in 1943.

These squadrons support the development and acquisition of their assigned aircraft and systems by performing developmental testing and evaluation in areas that include flying qualities and performance, shipboard suitability, propulsion systems, mission systems, ordnance, flight control systems, and reliability and maintainability. The squadrons also provide Government Flight Representatives, test monitoring, chase aircraft support, and facilities for contractor demonstration, validation and development work involving tactical aircraft and associated systems.

There's much more to Pax River's story as a test base than what we've discussed so far, certainly more than we can discuss here. Suffice it to say that, over the last few decades, Pax became the home for a number of T&E organizations beyond those noted above. Some of these organizations remain here today, while others have departed. Here are some of the more notable T&E-related groups that are associated with NAS Pax River:



Vought YTF-8A Crusader, USN Test Pilot School aircraft, ca. early-'60s

**US Naval Test Pilot School**



Lockheed P2V-2 Neptune at South Pole for Operation Deep Freeze I, VX-6 aircraft, 1955

**VX-6**

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*Pax River – The Recent Years Continued*



Lockheed NP-3D Orion, VX-1 aircraft, 1990

**Naval Research Laboratory (NRL)  
Flight Support Detachment**



Sikorsky MH-60S Knighthawk, VX-1 aircraft, ca. 2012

**VX-1**



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AAI Corp. RQ-2B Pioneer, VC-6 Detachment aircraft, ca. 2005



VX-6 Detachment

*The County Times extends our sincerest gratitude to the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum and researcher Bob Tourville for supplying the text and pictures for this article.*

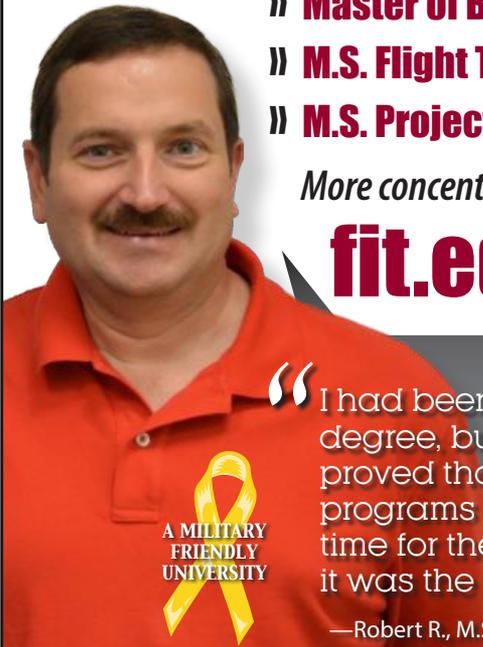
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# History's on Display at Patuxent River Naval Air Museum

By Dick Myers  
Editor

Looking for a perfect way to absorb Patuxent River Naval Air Station's 75-year history? Look no farther than just outside the base's Gate 1, where the new Patuxent River Naval Air Museum (PRNAM) sits proudly with a flightline of 22 aircraft just outside its doors.

The museum has been open in its new quarters along Route 235 for about 18 months. It's in front of the building that had previously housed the museum, and which is now being renovated for collections and other uses.

The museum is new in more than just the building. According to the museum's website, "It is no longer an official U.S. Navy museum following federal budget restructuring. The Museum is now a private, non-profit (501C(3)) organization working in conjunction with St Mary's County. With the recently completed construction of a multi-million dollar capital

project that transformed the Museum, it is now displaying the potential to become a premier cultural institution and economic driver for the county."

The museum, however, is not new. It is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, paralleling the base's landmark 75th birthday.

Exhibits inside the museum trace the base's timeline from before construction began, to the commissioning ceremony on April 1, 1943 to the present day.

So how is the museum different? According to their website: "When compared to other aviation-focused museums, PRNAM is unique in terms of its collections and mission. Whereas most aviation museums focus on operational aircraft and exhibits, PRNAM focuses on the research, development, test and evaluation environment. Ideas and concepts that were developed and introduced to the Fleet form the basis of its interpretive program. PRNAM also displays concepts

that never made it to the Fleet that makes the museum's collection all the more unique. Artifacts and simulators, films and books spanning the history of Naval Aviation topped off with a display of 22 one-of-a-kind aircraft."

The museum features an extensive collection of flight test and naval artifacts ranging from ejection seats and weapons to unmanned aerial vehicles and full-size aircraft.

The following aircraft are on display:

- McDonnell Douglas NA-4M Skyhawk
- North American RA-5C Vigilante
- Grumman NA-6E Intruder
- LTV NA-7A Corsair II
- McDonnell Douglas F-4J Phantom II
- Douglas NF-6A(F4D) Skyray
- Grumman F9F-8B Cougar
- Grumman F-14A Tomcat
- McDonnell Douglas NF/A-18A Hornet

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- Bell AH-1J Seacobra
- Bell TH-1L Iroquois
- Kaman SH-2G Seasprite
- Sikorsky CH-53A Sea Stallion
- Grumman S-2D (S2F-3) Tracker
- Lockheed S-3B Viking
- Beechcraft T-34B Turbo Mentor
- North American T-39D Sabreliner
- Boeing X-32B JSF STOVL Demonstrator
- Lockheed Martin X-35C JSF Carrier Demonstrator

The flight simulators are perhaps the museum's most popular feature, because it gives a real feel for what it's like in the cockpit. According to the museum, "Currently, two simulators are operating at the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum. They offer the museum customer an opportunity to experience flight in real F-14 cockpits as you take control of the airplane that you select. You see, once in the cockpit you can choose

between any one of several types of airplanes; such as an F-14 Tomcat, an F/A-18 Hornet, an A-10 Warthog, a P-51 Mustang, or how about a larger airplane like a C-130 Hercules, plus many more. The flight simulators utilize stationary cockpits, but the aircraft can fly in the same airspace so if you come with a buddy, you both can fly at the same time or even go against each other as you both make arcs and loops in the sky. Do you want to launch and land on an aircraft carrier? You can do that, too. These simulators are extremely popular among children and adults of all ages."

The Flightline Gift Shop, just inside the museum entrance is particularly popular for

visitors. It offers a wide variety of gifts and souvenirs with museum, NAS Pax River, Navy and Southern Maryland themes. And, did you know the profit from every purchase directly supports the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum Association?

The museum is at 22156 Three Notch Road, Lexington Pak, MD 20653. Museum hours are Tues.-Sat., 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The flight simulators are in operation Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and at other times by appointment.

Contact the museum at 301-863-1900 or go to their website at <http://paxmuseum.com>

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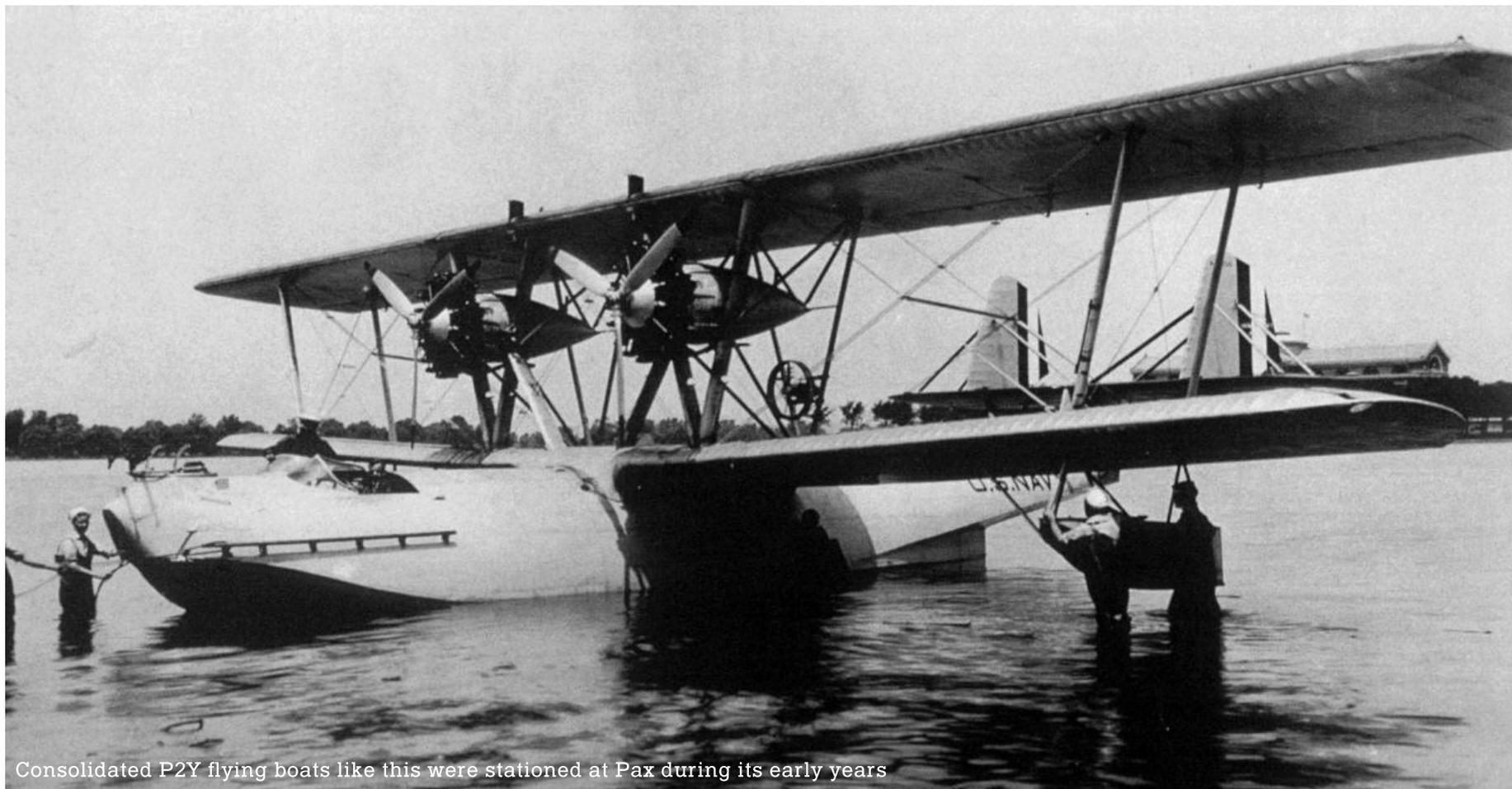


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Consolidated P2Y flying boats like this were stationed at Pax during its early years

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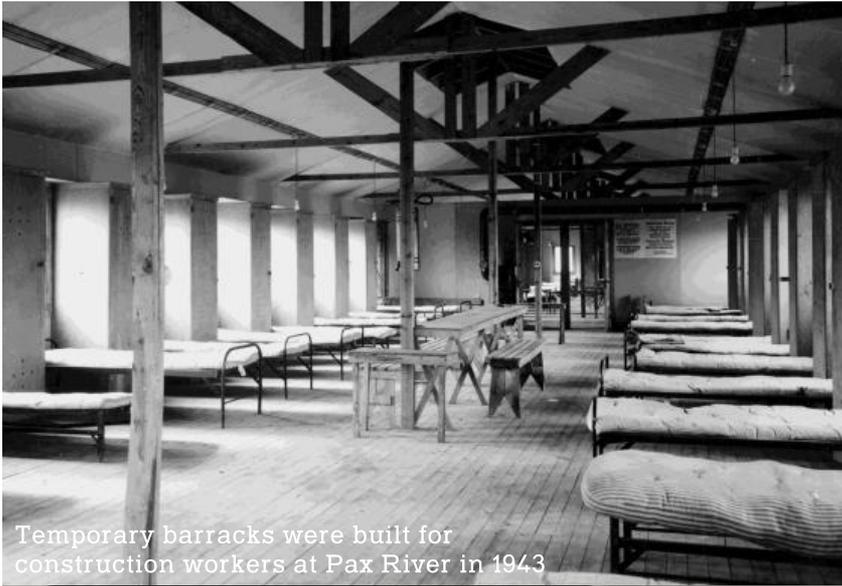


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Temporary barracks were built for construction workers at Pax River in 1943



A Grumman F6 *Hellcat* flies over Pax River



The first flight to NAS Pax River was in 1943



The U.S. government operated a railroad line from Brandywine to Pax River from 1944 to 1945



Contractors' repair facilities were built at NAS Patuxent River in 1943



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