16 Building Bombs

It all begins deep in the bowels of the USS Constellation (CV 64) where highly trained aviation ordnancemen bring together a few parts — the body, the tail and the fusing — and begin to assemble a bomb.

22 Safety, Dependability & Courtesy

It’s just another busy day for Aviation Machinist’s Mate 1st Class (AW/NAC) Michael Marsicano and the nearly 300 Sailors assigned to Fleet Logistic Support Squadron (VRC) 40 as they provide Carrier Onboard Delivery services to the Navy’s Atlantic Fleet.

15 Feel the Sting

The maintenance department of any aviation squadron is responsible for ensuring pilots’ safety by checking and rechecking the way everything is supposed to work. It’s these Sailors, on the flight line every day, who are responsible for $30 million jets and the lives of the pilots who fly them.

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34 Providing for the Fleet

Their mission includes everything from ferrying special forces to delivering mail to Sailors who are operating in the furthest reaches from American soil. Though rarely in the spotlight, the “Providers” of Helicopter Squadron (HC) 5 play a valuable role in the world’s most powerful fighting machine – the U.S. Navy.
The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) launches Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAM) at military targets in Iraq. Donald Cook is operating in the Red Sea in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.
A catapult crew member aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) communicates with flight deck personnel while preparing an EA-6B Prowler assigned to the "Yellowjackets" of Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron (VAQ) 138 for a steam catapult launch aboard the carrier.
Speaking with Sailors
Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
MCPON (SS/AW) Terry D. Scott

This is from an All Hands call on MCPON Scott’s recent visit to Mayport, Fla.

Q: How long do you expect the “Perform to Serve” program to be in effect? 
A: The Perform to Serve program is not just a quick fix to a temporary problem. I don’t see this program as one that we just implement when we need it — but one that will always make sure we have the right number of Sailors where we need them.

As long as there is a requirement to balance our force, ensuring we have the right number of Sailors in the areas where they’re needed most, the Perform to Serve program will be the system we will use to balance out rating shortfalls and over-manning.

Right now we have some ratings that are extremely over-manned, where Sailors have little or no advancement opportunity. Meanwhile other ratings need more people and can offer greater advancement potential. The message is if you want to stay — we want to keep you! But we need you in the right place. And if you’re in an over-manned rating, the right place may be in a different rating.

By centralizing reenlistment and extension authority, we will be able to shape the force by increasing the number of Sailors in undermanned ratings and reducing the number of Sailors in over-manned ratings. Sailors will benefit because of improved advancement opportunities in those currently over-manned ratings. And the Navy will benefit with a force that is better capable of fulfilling our mission.

If you are within a year and a half of the end of your first enlistment, now is the time to consider your career options. Perform to Serve will help us to keep quality Sailors by putting them in the right jobs. Talk with your LPO, Chief or command career counselor for more information.

Editor,
I’m a 15-year-old student from Gelsenkirchen, Germany. Last week, Lieutenant M. Amy Morrison (Assistant Public Affairs Officer of USSE Constellation) sent me the All Hands magazine from November 2002 and January 2003. Now I’m writing this E-mail to you, because I would like to tell you that these magazines are more than interesting. I like them very much! All the useful information... it’s fantastic!

Felix Haselmann
Longitude: 09° 34' 21'' E
Latitude: 53° 23' 07'' N

Editor
As the 2nd Division Leading Petty Officer on board USS Portland (LSD 35), I usually obtain a copy of All Hands from our PC2, and try to pass it around to my younger Sailors. I think All Hands is an excellent way of keeping them informed and up to date with their Navy surroundings. I thoroughly enjoy reading All Hands. I only have one complaint. It seems as though I rarely see anything about the amphibious Navy. It is almost as if the media believes the Navy is solely comprised of submarines and aircraft carriers. I spent the first three years of my enlistment on USS Enterprise (CVN 65), and had no idea what an amphibious ship was until I checked on board Portland. I would love to see an article about one of the amphibias, showing the rest of the Navy exactly what we bring to the table. We have been on deployment since the beginning of August 2002, with a 37-day stop in CONUS. During this time, we have done countless amphibious operations, many of which were with various South American navies, and off-loaded and off-loaded hundreds of thousands of pounds of USMC combat cargo.

We are also responsible for helicopter operations, anchoring, small boat operations, LCAC, LCU and AAV operations, underway replenishments and vertical replenishments with an extremely under-manned Deck Department.

I would like the Navy to be aware of the satisfaction that my four junior petty officers and four non-rated Seamen feel at the end of the day in the amphibious Navy.

EM2(SW) Jason Eliot Ogil USS Portland (LSD 37)

Editor’s Note: Thank you for your letter. I hope our story on LCAC’s, in the February magazine started us out on the right foot for 2003. We’ll look for other amphib-type stories as the year progresses.

Speaking with Sailors is a monthly column initiated by the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy as a way of reaching out to the men and women of the fleet, whether they are stationed just down the road or halfway around the world.
**A Tomahawk Land Attack Missile (TLAM) leaves the deck of the guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) this morning toward military targets in Iraq. Bunker Hill is currently forward deployed to the Arabian Gulf in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.**

"We know we’re out here for a true reason now, and we’re getting to do the job we came here to do," said Maldonado. "I e-mailed my sister today to tell her I was well; she told her about it."

Though coalition forces may have begun to wonder if the war was over, "We have not put down the hard hat," said Blunck. "I told him he is up for the challenge that lies ahead. In reference to the Gulf War of 1991, he stressed that action should be taken so we do not have to do it again 12 years from now."

"It gives me a good feeling," said Blunck. "I should give everyone here a good feeling."

Reflecting on America’s latest conflict, he spoke of how he read about wars in history books, and how his service now will be recorded in history books. "It makes me believe why all of the old people I know who served always loved to tell stories," he said. "They have a lot of pride in what they did for their country. When we get out of here, I’ll be proud, too."

"The young Sailor knew his mother was very worried back home. Blunck is one of two sons currently deployed on Abraham Lincoln. "I know there’s not a day that goes by that she doesn’t think about us," he said.

Though coalition forces may have missed their "leadership target" March 21, the battle had indeed begun.

For related news, visit www.news.navy.mil/local/cvn72.

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**Story courtesy of USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) personnel.**

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**Story courtesy of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and U.S. 5th Fleet Public Affairs.**

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**Story by JOSN David Poe who is assigned to the public affairs office, USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72).**

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**President Authorizes Two New Medals**

A presidential executive order signed March 12 authorized the Department of Defense to create two new military medals for service in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The GWOT Expeditionary Medal will recognize service in military operations to combat terrorism on or after Sept. 11, 2001. This is limited to those who deploy as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The GWOT Service Medal will recognize service in military operations to combat terrorism on or after Sept. 11, 2001. This is limited to Operation Noble Eagle and to those service members who provide support to the GWOT Expeditionary Medal, to units and personnel deployed within the theater of war.

Each service department will prescribe the appropriate regulation for processing and wearing of the medals. Additional information on the GWOT Service Medal, visit www.defense.gov/photos/awardsa new father in October 2002, provided superior support to more than 300 staff personnel daily. Fallas, as a military service clerk in the command’s administration supporting the GWOT Expeditionary Medal. Visit www.defense.gov/photos/awards/medals/awards_gwot_sm for more information on the GWOT Service Medal, visit www.defense.gov/photos/awards/medals/awards_gwot_sm

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**Around the Fleet**

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**U.S. Navy Ships Fire Tomahawks in Gulf**

By order of President George W. Bush, four ships and two submarines currently assigned to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet launched Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs) March 19, as Operation Iraqi Freedom began.

The four ships are USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) and USS Cowpens (CG 63) in the Red Sea, along with USS Kitty Hawk (CVN 63) and USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) in the Arabian Gulf.

USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) and USS Montpelier (SSN 765) were the submarines involved in the Tomahawk launches.

For related news, visit the Navy NewsStand online at www.news.navy.mil.

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**Yeoman 2nd Class (SW/AW) Darren J. Fallas was recently selected as Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) Staff Sailor of the Year (SOY) award for 2003. At NETC, Fallas serves as a military service clerk in the command’s administration office and was responsible for providing administrative support to more than 500 staff personnel daily. Fallas, who became a new father in October 2002, provided superior service to his command while working toward an associate’s degree in administrative management.**

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**Story courtesy of 00.**

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**Tarawa Participates in Opening Phase of the War**

Sailors and Marines aboard the San Diego-based amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 1) recently participated in the opening phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the North Arabian Gulf.

For the past several nights, AV-8B Harrier jump jets have been launching from Tarawa’s flight deck into the skies over Iraq. The Harriers have been providing air support to coalition ground forces, including the 15th Marine Expeditionary

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**S h i p m a t e s**

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**Y e o m a n 2 n d C l a s s (S W / A W )**

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**D e r r e n J . F a l l a s w a s r e c e n t l y s e l e c t e d a s N a v a l E d u c a t i o n a n d T r a i n i n g C o m m a n d (N E T C ) S t a f f S a l l o y o f t h e Y e a r ( S O Y ) a w d f o r 2 0 0 3 . A t N E T C , F a l l a s s e r v e s a s a m i l i t a r y s e r v i c e c l e r k i n t h e c o m m a n d ’ s a d m i n i s t r a t i o n o f f i c e a n d w a s r e s p o n s i b l e f o r p r o v i d i n g a d m i n i s t r a t i v e s u p p o r t t o m o r e t h a n 5 0 0 s t a f f p e r s o n n e l d a i l y . F a l l a s , w h o b e c a m e a n e w f a t h e r i n O c t o b e r 2 0 0 2 , p r o v i d e d s u p e r i o r s e r v i c e t o h i s c o m m a n d w h i l e w o r k i n g t o w a r d a n a s s o c i a t e ’ s d e g r e e i n a d m i n i s t r a t i v e m a n a g e m e n t .**

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**T a r a w a P a r t i c i p a t e s i n O p e n i n g P h a s e o f t h e W a r**

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For the past several nights, AV-8B Harrier jump jets have been launching from Tarawa’s flight deck into the skies over Iraq. The Harriers have been providing air support to coalition ground forces, including the 15th Marine Expeditionary
A flight deck “Shooter” signals to the pilot of an AV-8B Harrier as it launches from the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 4). As the command ship of Command Task Force (CTF) 51, Tarawa is in charge of the U.S. Navy amphibious forces in the region.

Ricky’s Tour

By JO2 Mike Jones

mikejones43@hotmail.com

A Flight deck “Shooter” signals to the pilot of an AV-8B Harrier as it launches from the flight deck of the amphibious assault ship USS Tarawa (LHA 4). As the command ship of Command Task Force (CTF) 51, Tarawa is in charge of the U.S. Navy amphibious forces in the region.

Commanding Officer CDR Chuck Norberg’s Task Force (CTF) 51, Tarawa is in charge of the U.S. Navy amphibious forces in the region.

But all the hours of training have paid off. I have ever seen.”

I have a very unique hobby. EMC Scott Slaughter and FCI Rusty Henry were treasure hunters. In the few years they spent hunting treasure, they have found more than 1,000 rings and 50,000 coins. Both of these men are members of the National Treasure Hunters League. In 1973 they managed to win the Indy Grand Treasure Hunt Award for “the longest distance traveled.”

Around the Fleet

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A MH-60S “Knighthawk” hovering over the deck of the Kitty Hawk. (U.S. Navy Photo by Victor Harris)
Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Kitty Hawk is the Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier and operates out of Yokosuka, Japan.

To find out more about USS Kitty Hawk, visit www.kittyhawk.navy.mil, or visit their Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/cv63.

Story by Jeff Williams who is assigned to the public affairs office, USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63).

Cryptologic Technician (Administrative) 1st Class (SW) Anita Thompson, assigned to Commander, Amphibious Group 3 (COMPHIBGRU 3), San Diego, was recently named Commanding 3 Shore Sailor of the Year. Thompson, a native of Cub Run, Ky., works as security clearance billet representative and is singularly responsible for ensuring the security clearance status of more than 12,000 personnel assigned to Amphibious Group 3 subordinate commands. She is also responsible for the management of all personnel assigned to Amphibious Group 3 subordinate commands. One of the survivors was identified as a U.S. Navy Sailor stationed at Naval Station Mayport, Fla. The four survivors, as well as the remains of the deceased, were flown by C-2A aircraft from USS George Washington (CVN 73) to medical facilities in Jacksonville, Fla. The C-2A aircraft, assigned to the Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40, is based at Naval Base Norfolk.

Survivors have confirmed that there were only five people on board the 25-foot, privately-owned fishing vessel Little Spray when it caught fire. The cause of the fire was unknown. The vessel is reported to have sunk approximately 60 miles east of St. Augustine, Fla. The survivors were reported by the 73 degrees F. water for approximately two hours. USS George Washington’s flight deck crewmen and personnel assigned to USS George Washington’s (CVN 73) medical department carry injured personnel across the ship’s flight deck after four civilian fishermen were rescued from the burning merchant fishing vessel Little Spray. The boat was off the coast of Jacksonville, Fla., at the time of the incident. Five victims were recovered from the water, with four survivors. Two SH-60F Sea Hawk helicopters assigned to Reserve Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron (HS) 75 conducted the search and rescue (SAR) operation. Operations when it responded to a call for help from the Coast Guard. After confirming the fire on board the Little Spray, two rescue helicopters from Reserve Helicopter Anti-submarine Squadron (HS) 75, were dispatched to rescue the victims. HS-75 was embarked aboard GW to provide search and rescue support. Upon their arrival on scene, search and rescue swimmers brought four of the victims into the hovering helicopters while the fifth was rescued by crew members of Whiskey Man, a private craft that also responded to the Coast Guard’s call for assistance. Shortly afterward, the victim was transferred to Diamond Shoals, and eventually to the GW by HS-75 crew members. For more news from Commander, Naval Air Force U.S. Atlantic Fleet, go to www.news.navy.mil/local/comnavairlant.

Flight deck crewmen and personnel assigned to USS George Washington’s (CVN 73) medical department carry injured personnel across the ship’s flight deck after four civilian fishermen were rescued from the burning merchant fishing vessel Little Spray. The four survivors, as well as the remains of the deceased, were flown by C-2A aircraft from USS George Washington (CVN 73) to medical facilities in Jacksonville, Fla. One of the survivors was identified as a U.S. Navy Sailor stationed at Naval Station Mayport, Fla. The four survivors, as well as the remains of the deceased, were flown by C-2A aircraft from USS George Washington (CVN 73) to medical facilities in Jacksonville, Fla. The C-2A aircraft, assigned to the Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40, is based at Naval Base Norfolk.
He soars above the clouds, feeling a rush that children dream of as they play with their toy jets; imaginations running wild. As he flies one of the Navy’s finest jets, he is confident in his abilities, with only the mission on his mind.

With the multiple missions and high-speed decisions that need to be made, the pilot of an F/A-18 Hornet doesn’t have room in his mind to worry about all the things that could go wrong with his equipment.

“It’s important to a pilot to have confidence in his airplane, not because of what kind of jet it is, but because of the people who are taking care of it,” said LT Ian Kibler, an F/A-18 pilot for the Wildcats of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 131, Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana, Va.

The maintenance department of any aviation squadron is responsible for ensuring the safety of pilots like Kibler, checking and rechecking that everything works the way it’s supposed to. The heart and soul of a squadron are the Sailors, on the flight line every day, who are responsible for $30 million jets and the lives of the pilots who fly them.

“It’s not just one rate, but airframers, avionics, electricians, all working together as a team,” said Aviation Machinist’s Mate 1st Class Robert Herman, supervisor of the Wildcats’ power plant shop.

“That’s the best part about being in a squadron sometimes, working together and knocking out problems.”

For the fleet to accomplish its mission, there are a number of small teams working together as one big team. The Atlantic Fleet can be a formidable force, with their combination of sea, air and submerged platforms. When these three teams work together for one common mission, they are truly a force to be reckoned with.

But, the reason the fleet is so effective is not because of the aircraft carrier that leads the battle group, nor the latest and greatest piece of combat equipment. It’s not about all the ships, and their precision weapons on board. All those things are of little use without the men and women who operate and maintain them.

That said, the U.S. Navy wouldn’t be as effective as it is, without modern military weaponry. Including the F/A-18 Hornet.

“The Hornet is a dual-role aircraft, both a fighter and an attack airplane,” said Kibler. “Originally, it was meant
Sailors assigned to the “Eagles” of VFA-115 perform a “42-day” maintenance inspection and cleaning on an F/A-18E Super Hornet on board USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). The Super Hornet is about 25 percent larger than its predecessor, the F/A–18C/D, but contains 42 percent fewer structural parts. The single-seat F/A-18/E flies greater ranges with heavier payloads, has a more powerful engine, and provides greater survivability.

The Hornet was designed for traditional strike applications such as interdiction and close-air support, without compromising its fighter capabilities. It’s capable of reaching and exceeding the speed of mach 1.7, and has about 20,000 pounds of static thrust per engine. The Super Hornet, a $57 million dollar aircraft, is bigger, faster and has all the state-of-the-art equipment necessary to do the job of every jet aircraft in the Navy. The Hornet also makes maintenance a little easier.

“F/A-18s are the cutting edge of aviation technology and makes maintenance a little easier on us. It gives us a little more versatility,” said Chief Aviation Electronics Technician Ronald Pinion, flight coordinator for VFA-83. His job is to make sure that everything on the flight line runs smoothly.

Safety is the first priority for the people who work on these sophisticated jets. They have more than a dozen pair of eyes making sure that the aircraft is safe to fly. At the same time, all those eyes are also watching out for each other, as their job on the flight deck is one of the most dangerous places in the world. Despite the dangers, these men and women have done an amazing job so far, Kibler said. “Through the years, it has become a safer and safer business, but that is a relative statement because overall what we do is dangerous. Our maintenance department makes our job more comfortable and that much more safe. Our squadron has 16 mishap-free years, and that is a testament to our maintenance department.” It is the maintenance department that sets the reputation for a squadron. Every squadron finds themselves in friendly competition with other squadrons. Kibler added, “The best thing about our air wing is that we are a team and we work well together. At the same time, everyone is competing to be the best.
All that does is make the air wing that much better. By trying to out-perform the other squadron, you bring a better performance to your own squadron and the air wing. “As the performance of the F/A-18 continues to improve, it becomes more and more essential to the Navy,” Kibler noted. “As a strike fighter, we go out to the aircraft carrier where, in most cases, the air wings will have three Hornet squadrons on board, out of total of four tactical squadrons.”

“What I like best is that we are the operational end of foreign policy,” Pinion said. “We are the ones who make it happen. I feel privileged to be working with cutting-edge technology, watching our birds take off and come back safely.”

Editor’s Note:
F/A-18s currently operate in 37 tactical squadrons and U.S. Navy’s Blue Angels Flight Demonstration Squadron proudly flies them as well. The Hornet also comprises the aviation strike force for Australia, Canada, Finland, Kuwait, Malaysia, Spain and Switzerland.
Aviation Machinist’s Mate 1st Class (AW/NAC) Michael Marsicano approaches the small group of passengers waiting to make their first trip to an aircraft carrier. They have already received a safety brief and are anxious about their first flight aboard a C-2A Greyhound, where they will experience a cable arrested landing aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), making them honorary “Tailhookers.”

Marsicano gives the group the once over, checking to make sure everyone has their float coats and cranials on correctly and their goggles down. As the crew chief, passenger safety is his responsibility. “Okay, we’re ready for you. Everyone grab your stuff. Let’s go!” Marsicano yells out the last words, trying to be heard through the roar of the aircraft engines and the cranial ear protection being worn by the group as he vectors them toward the waiting aircraft.

The small group of smiling people grab their bags and equipment and walk to the plane in single file. There is no checking luggage on this flight — everything is carry on, and the passengers do the carrying. They hoist their bags onto the ramp, step up into the back of the aircraft and pass their bags forward to the cargo hold. Then they take a seat facing backward and buckle the four-point quick-release harness.

The aircraft engines throttle up, the ramp closes and the aircraft taxis down the runway for its flight out to the carrier, which is conducting training evolutions off the coast of Virginia.

It’s just another busy day for Marsicano and the nearly 300 Sailors assigned to Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40. VRC-40, the Rawhides, provides Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD) services to the Navy’s Atlantic Fleet. The squadron is homeported at Norfolk.
Servicing the Fleet with Safety, Dependability & Courtesy

Naval Station and operates the C-2A Greyhound; their sister squadron, VRC-30, operates on the East Coast. VRC-40’s mission is the efficient transportation of passengers, mail and cargo to and from carriers at sea. Operations for VRC-40 extend as far north as Norway, down the eastern seaboard and Gulf Coast, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Their deployments take them to the Mediterranean, Red Sea, Arabian Gulf, and Indian Ocean.

The command’s 12 aircraft are maintained and flown by more than 300 enlisted personnel and 40 officers. VRC-40 is different from other fixed-wing squadrons in that the aircraft and people do not deploy as a single unit; instead, two aircraft deploy aboard each East Coast aircraft carrier to ensure fleet support.

The squadron is divided into six detachments, also known as Dets. Five are sea-going Dets, and the last holds down the fort at home, providing support to aircraft carriers conducting local training.

As an AD1 for the squadron, Waddell works on about 90 percent of an aircraft for his Det. — everything from hydraulics and electrical equipment to tires. “We’ll do whatever we have to do to complete the mission,” he said. “If we’re going to make a plane ready to handle cargo, we must also be able to make the changes needed to fly out passengers at a moment’s notice.”

“It’s not easy work,” said Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 1st Class Paul Matthews, of Warner Robins, Ga. “Constant maintenance goes into each aircraft. We put in at least 35 man-hours per every flight hour. All hands have to chip in to get the bird back in the air.”

Matthews is highly involved with many aspects of the squadron, including administrative tasks. He tracks inspections on the planes and records the number of catapult launches each aircraft makes. Additionally, he tracks flight hours, high-time components, initiates work orders and handles other correspondence.

“It’s hard work, but it needs to get done,” he said. “Our mission is an essential part of the fleet. It would be virtually impossible to have a deployment without VRC-40.”

But despite the hard work Matthews and the other Sailors at the squadron put in, they manage to have a great attitude, according to Yeoman 2nd Class Renee Chacon, of Rochester, N.Y. “We actually have a family-like atmosphere here,” she said. “Everyone gets along. Yes, we are extremely professional, but there’s always a great vibe around here.”

Chacon has been at the squadron for more than a year and has yet to deploy. She is looking forward to getting underway. As a yeoman at VRC-40, she updates service records, and manages retirements and awards, as well as other Det. duties. While she’s busy with multiple tasks, she said, she really enjoys the work. “I do more here than anywhere else I have ever been. It makes me feel like I’m doing my part on a job that really matters.”

One man who has witnessed the significance of the deployed Det. is C-2 Pilot LT Manny Tatavak, of Houston. In fact, Tatavak, was moved up in his deployment rotation by nine months to provide additional help while USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) was deployed supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

LT Sam Bryant serves as aircraft commander on a flight.

PH2 Dwain Willis

PH2 Dwain Willis
C-2 aircraft are capable of handling 8,600 pounds of cargo or 26 passengers at a time. During a typical six-month deployment, a C-2 detachment transports an average of 750,000 pounds of cargo and 3,000 passengers. While USS Theodore Roosevelt was deployed, Tatavak helped with the unprecedented 1.1 million pounds of cargo and 4,000 passengers who were transported to and from the carrier. “We shattered all records with that deployment,” he said. “We were forced come up with creative solutions to get the job done,” Tatavak said. “These creative solutions were paramount for the deployed Det. If anything were to break, we were in charge of fixing it.”

According to Tatavak, the C-2, with its 82-foot wingspan, is a challenge. “The landing area on a carrier is only about 90 feet wide, so realistically, we only have about four or five feet to play with. Not to mention, they are notoriously difficult to fly,” Tatavak smiled then adding, “But there’s a reason only 3 percent of naval aviators are C-2 pilots. We are systems savvy and we’ve got to be able to handle anything.”

The planes, with an average age of 15 years, have been flown constantly, usually making two flights daily, since VRC-40 replaced the C-2A Trader back in 1996. Along with COD maintenance, the deployed Det has other responsibilities. “An important aspect of COD flying is international diplomacy,” Tatavak said. “We do have the best of both worlds, though. We’re able to fly around the world, on to an aircraft carrier as well as spend time working in foreign countries for weeks at a time. It’s an important part of our job, because our demeanor is a reflection on the Navy everywhere we go.”

VRC-40 also transports distinguished visitors to carriers at sea. Senior leaders in business, government, and the entertainment industry travel to and from aircraft carriers in the Atlantic Fleet nearly every day that flight operations are conducted as part of the Navy’s community outreach efforts. Some well known distinguished visitors (DV) who have recently flown aboard VRC-40 aircraft to visit carriers include Senator John McCain, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, singers Jessica Simpson and Whitney Houston, actors Bruce Willis and Tom Selleck, entertainer Jay Leno and the Miami Dolphin Cheerleaders.

The Rawhides have provided thousands of successful missions since their commissioning in 1960, bringing supplies, passengers and mail to aircraft carriers at sea, and serving as a platform for airborne insertion of special warfare personnel. The direct influence VRC-40 has on the fleet is significant. According to Tatavak, “You can’t fight a war without us.”

So whether the COD is carrying out gear, mail or transporting Sailors and DVs, the men and women of VRC-40 are working continuously to “Service the fleet with safety, dependability and courtesy.”

Stamper is a journalist assigned to the public affairs office, USS Harry S Truman (CVN 75).
The Navy’s Joint Strike Fighter is on course and already flying from the deck of an aircraft carrier. Its success during development will determine whether the U.S. military continues to achieve significant change in the 21st century.

The F-35 is currently in the service test phase, already flying from the deck of USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), which is considered the DOD focal point for defining next generation strike aircraft and weapons systems for the military. The F-35 is capable of delivering more than 20,000 pounds of ordnance and has superior handling qualities at a low approach speed, and will be able to operate from carrier decks.

The Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) is an affordable, low-observable, multirole, single-seat, single-engine aircraft that will be produced for the Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. It is a sixth-generation platform that will allow for efficiencies and reduced crew sizes.

“The joint strike fighter is the new Super Hornet,” said Capt. Brad Hollars, VFA-115’s executive officer. Hollars is a Navy Super Hornet pilot who recently returned from Operation Southern Watch, where he flew as part of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 115 aboard USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), home ported in Everett, Wash. Hollars is VFA-115’s commanding officer and VFA-115 was the first carrier-based joint strike fighter squadron to deploy to the Persian Gulf. Hollars is also the current Sailor of the Year. “It’s like having a new car, very clean!” she exclaimed.

“Achieving IOC [initial operational capability] for VFA-115 is a significant milestone,” said Troy Lucero, an old pickup truck, the 60 is like a new Corvette. “An HC-60A would replace six CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters, which have been in service for over 30 years.” Lucero is the public affairs officer, Commander, Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, Calif. The MH-60R and MH-60S helicopters are being introduced to the fleet, and although still in the planning stages, technological advances could include electromagnetic catapults and aircraft recovery technology.

The MH-60R and MH-60S helicopters are being introduced as the service transitions to two multipurpose patrol squadrons and eventually, a new littoral operations and distribution system. Later in a new electrical distribution system will be made to enable pilot and co-pilot to share the workload, instrument displays complete with color monitors, a Global Positioning System, as well as nine other significant changes.

The MH-60R and MH-60S helicopters are being introduced as the service transitions to two multipurpose patrol squadrons and eventually, a new littoral operations and distribution system.

It’s our time to shine, very clean!” she exclaimed. “The potential of the 60 is far superior to anything we have used in the past,” said Lucero. “We can get 100 percent of our weapon load out and within the decade, the Navy will also see a significant change in the way it flies. It will be able to operate from carrier decks, and conduct air strikes to liberate the people of Iraq. They didn’t think about that back then, nor how they could operate from ship to ship, but we’re there now.

Naval aviation has come a long way since then, and the future looks even brighter. We are transitioning from the CV-4 to the CVN-21 concept, which is based on the idea of an aircraft carrier that is not dependent on the carrier’s ability to steam and not reliant on the aircraft’s need to be refueled from a carrier. The aircraft will be able to operate from an MH-60S helicopter flying sideways at more than 50 miles per hour. In addition, the MH-60S will also be able to conduct air strikes to liberate the people of Iraq. They didn’t think about that back then, nor how they could operate from ship to ship, but we’re there now.

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The MH-60R and MH-60S helicopters are being introduced as the service transitions to two multipurpose patrol squadrons and eventually, a new littoral operations and distribution system. This change will provide the service with cost savings in force structure, training and maintenance, while delivering an added punch with more capability than any other fleet.
**F-35C Joint Strike Fighter**

**The Next Stage in Tactical Aviation Modernization**

- **Length**: 51.36 ft
- **Wingspan**: 43 ft
- **Fuel capacity**: 19,000+ lb
- **Speed**: 1.6+ Mach
- **Maximum Weight**: 60,000-lb class
- **Total Weapons Load**: 19,000+ lb
- **Range**: 1,400 n.mi

- **Six External Stores**
- **Four Internal Stores**
- **20,000-lb Ordnance Capacity**
- **Supportable Stealth**
- **Concealed Tailhook**
- **Distributed Aperture System**
- **Integrated Electronic Warfare System**
- **Large Wing and Control Surfaces Optimized for Carrier Operations**
- **Advanced Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) Multifunction Radar**
- **Diverterless Inlet**
- **Advanced Engine Inlet**
- **Helmet-Mounted Display**
- **Advanced Multi-Function Display**
- **Pratt & Whitney F135 or General Electric F136 Thrust: 40,000 lb with Afterburner**
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Flying Into the Future: The Transformation of Naval Aviation

By CDR Hal Pittman

The Navy JSF is expected to be operating with the fleet in 2012. The Joint Strike Fighter is a fifth generation strike aircraft and weapons systems for the military. The JSF program is considered the DOD focal point for defining next generation air combat, and the JSF family comprises the F-35A for the Air Force, F-35B for the Marine Corps, and F-35C for the Navy. The JSF is estimated to replace about 3,000 aircraft in the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps inventories by 2040, with the JSF C model planned to replace the Super Hornet.

The F-35C Joint Strike Fighter is a multirole aircraft designed to replace the F/A-18 Super Hornet and Harrier II, while providing a common platform and core technologies for the two systems. The JSF is a fifth generation aircraft, which means it is designed to operate in a contested environment and to counter the threats posed by enemy stealth aircraft.

The JSF is a joint program involving the U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps, and it is being developed by Boeing, Lockheed Martin, and Northrop Grumman. The JSF is a low-cost aircraft, and it is designed to be more affordable than previous generation aircraft. The JSF is also designed to be more maintainable, and it is expected to have a lower operating cost than previous generation aircraft.

The JSF is a stealth aircraft, which means it is designed to evade detection by radar, infrared, and other sensors. The JSF is equipped with advanced avionics and weapons systems, and it is expected to be the most capable aircraft in the world.

US Navy CV-12

MH-60S Knighthawk
It all begins deep in the belly of the beast on USS Constellation (CV 64) - in weapons magazines that most people never see. The components are gathered and assembled by a highly-trained team of Sailors. The body, the tail and the fusing all come together to form this deadly tool. They are...
 Constellation’s ‘G-3’ division making its way up to the flight deck.

Normal daily bomb production depends on the load plan. “Basically, the ship tells us how many and what kinds of bombs they need, and we build it and get it up to the flight deck,” said Duncan.

With conflict ongoing, these guys know that they could be called upon to exercise their considerable skills and crank the floating bomb factory into high gear. Weapons department aboard “Connie” is broken down into several different divisions that handle the various tasks involved in getting the bombs and missiles built and up to the planes on the flight deck.

G-1F division runs the “Bomb Farm” up on the flight deck where weapons are staged before being turned over to the squadron AOs.

G-1H is tasked with maintaining all the skids and pallets needed to move the weaponry.

G-3 is the division that actually builds the bombs and breaks out the missiles to be used.

G-4 mans the weapons elevators that are used to deliver weapons from the magazines to the flight deck.

G-5 is ordnance control/ammo accounting where all inventory is tracked and weapons moves are plotted. Weapons department’s high-intensity training aboard Connie is the key to success for these “Ordies,” as AOs are commonly referred.

“We’re training all of the time, whether in port or at sea, keeping our qualifications up and expanding professional knowledge,” said Duncan.

“We’re training all of the time, whether in port or at sea, keeping our qualifications up and expanding professional knowledge,” said Duncan.

The reason for this higher level of performance is partly because these junior Sailors are put into positions of leadership and they need to be proficient at all aspects of the bomb-building evolution.

“The high level of training starts with our chain of command,” said AO2 (SW/A W) Hector Gonzalez.

From the most junior airman to the saltiest chief, these “Red Shirts” know their business inside and out.

“From the most junior airman to the saltiest chief, these “Red Shirts” know their business inside and out.”

As the order comes through to move more weapons, AO2(AW) Aaron Dilley of G-4 division mans the phones used to call the elevators to the transfer area.

“From the most junior airman to the saltiest chief, these “Red Shirts” know their business inside and out.”

This may be some of these Sailor’s first cruise, but due to the times we live in and the nature of what we’re doing out here, they are stepping up and performing at a higher level,” said Duncan.

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“The high level of training starts with our chain of command,” said AO2 (SW/A W) Hector Gonzalez.
a G-3 team leader/safety observer. “Our gunner is really big on training. Every Tuesday he’s right there with us doing the hands-on bomb builds, getting right into it,” Gonzalez continued.

Working with explosives is an inherently dangerous job. There’s no room for error. “Safety is key to it all,” said AO3(AW) Mark Kunze. Every evolution has a safety observer as well as a team leader. The safety observer isn’t an active participant in the bomb building process. His whole purpose is to make sure everyone else is doing their job right, wearing their protective equipment and ensuring everything proceeds in a safe manner.

The Ordies on Connie love what they’re doing and where they’re doing it. “As luck would have it, I landed in G-3 division for my first tour in the Navy, and I don’t think there’s a better division or department on the ship. I’m very glad to be where I am,” said Kunze.

The rate of aviation ordnanceman, established in 1926, is an extremely tight-knit community with its own association and yearly convention. “I think being an AO is the best rate in the Navy. It’s like a brotherhood, a fraternity,” said Gonzalez. “If there’s ever a problem, we all depend on and take care of each other. We’re all brothers.”

The dedication of these Red Shirts to their country and their families is nothing short of spectacular. “I feel great about being out here supporting my country,” said Gonzalez. “It’s important to be here doing this job myself, instead of depending on others to defend our freedoms. Too many people take those things for granted.”

When in full production, the magazines are a flurry of activity, with everyone doing their part to get the job done.

Training is an everyday thing down in the magazines. During a break in production, A(DW/SW) Clayton Duncan goes through the rate training manual with some of his junior Sailors.

Being deployed away from families and loved ones is difficult, but in the end, these guys know what they’re doing is making a difference. “It may be possible we may not be going home on time and I miss my family a lot,” said AO2 Brandon Peoples, “but when I talk to my little girl, I tell her daddy’s out here working and it’s a job that’s got to be done.”

Houlihan is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands.
PROVIDING for the FLEET

Forward-Deployed Helicopter Squadron Takes Care of the Sailors in Their Own Way.

It's plain and simple ... without these folks, everyone's mission is affected. Their mission includes everything from ferrying special forces to delivering mail to the Sailors who are operating in the furthest reaches from American soil. Although their efforts are rarely in the spotlight, the Helicopter Squadron (HC) 5 Providers take pride in their name and know they play a valuable role in the world's most powerful war fighting machine - the United States Navy.

As the sun sets on the island of Guam, maintenace crews push one of the birds onto the flightline for night operations.
Being the only forward-deployed unit of its kind in the Pacific, everyone in this unit is aware of their mission and willingly to step up to the plate when called upon. “I’m grateful to be a part of it,” said Chief Aviation Structural Mechanic (AW/NAC) Mikel Carr, crew chief. “Any sea-going command has the opportunity to be forward deployed and it’s nice to serve my country in this way.”

Homeported on the northern shores of Guam, it’s safe to say many fleet Sailors are aware of, and have been affected by the Providers’ mission while on deployment. “We provide everything to the fleet,” said Aviation Machinist’s Mate (AW) 3rd Class James Shields. “Without us, they wouldn’t have any food or ammo while in the Gulf.”

When the need for fresh produce is in high demand, the Providers are called upon. When parts are required to keep an aircraft in action, HC-5 gets the call. And when a ship needs underway replenishment or a shipmate goes overboard, this highly-qualified team is launched into action.

Nowadays, the bird that is primarily used by the Providers is the multi-faceted SH-60 Seahawk. This twin-engine helicopter has many missions, from search and rescue, cargo lifting, ferrying special forces, and conducting anti-submarine and ship warfare … many of which the Providers participate and train in on a daily basis.

The Navy’s version of the popular Black Hawk is replacing the older CH-46 Sea Knight as HC-5’s workhorse. “[The SH-60] is a lot cleaner and easier to work with,” said Shields. “They’re 110 percent better to work on. They are a mechs dream because everything on them is electronic.”

The change in aircraft, like many of the changes in today’s Navy, means job alter-
But, one thing that will never change is the pride that goes into even the smallest details of the squadron’s daily routine. “It makes me feel confident and proud knowing when I walk off a bird, I know the pilots and crew will be safe,” added Shields. “I like going home at night knowing I put everything I had into that day.”

For the troops at HC-5, that “give everything you have” mentality is contagious. Like many aircrews around the fleet, the Providers who fly every day are no different than their shipmates in the hangar. As a matter of fact, for this team in the Pacific, they know the importance of teamwork and keeping the lines of communication open to complete their mission.

“As an aircrewman, you need maintenance and they depend on a lot of input from the crew to do their job as well,” said AME2(AW/NAC) Lance Tanner, rescue swimmer.

“The maintenance folks are valuable in two very important aspects,” said Carr. “One, they will catch anything wrong with the aircraft before I get in it. And secondly, they are the meat-and-potatoes of the operation. Without them keeping the aircraft up, we couldn’t fly and do our mission.”

“I love working on the bird, too,” added Tanner, “mostly because I fly in it and it gives me that extra confidence.”

The ironic part is that because of the added safety measures and the advanced electronic features in today’s aircraft, the confidence levels of the crew and pilots are definitely on the rise while in flight, which strangely enough, can be detrimental to the mission.

“The only bad thing about the ‘60’ is that it can be too safe,” said Carr. “The aircrews are getting real comfortable in the aircraft. If they’re not careful, it could be easy to get...
With the change from the older SH-46 to the SH-60, the members of HC-5 must be retrained in many facets of their job. Here, ABH1(AW) Kelvin Kelly shows the landing signal enlisted class the proper techniques to use during a pad brief after practicing vertical replenishment on the flightline.

A deeper look at the operations in Guam would have the average onlooker notice that keeping heads on straight could be a little more difficult.

Being a member of the Providers’ aircrew can be a heavy job at times. There is a lot of responsibility involved, and more importantly, wherever they go, they are usually in charge of the situation.

“There’s not a lot of times in the Navy where you as a 2nd class have control over the SEALs or a flight deck,” said Tanner. “When you land on the deck, several people are standing by waiting for you to let them know what to do … what you need done.”

“When you go to the other ships, they see you,” Tanner added. “We get off the ship and have the exposure.”

Tanner was quick to point out though that even though they always seem to get the glory, the maintenance department too is always working their tails off. “Aircrew is the glamour side, but it’s important to let maintenance people know that without them, we wouldn’t be flying … this command wouldn’t be flying.”

So, whether it’s the crew chief in the back seat, or the maintenance chief in the office, the seaman pushing paperwork in the front office, or the airman turning wrenches on the front lines, it’s important to remember, the team at HC-5 takes pride that they are the “Providers” to the fleet and their shipmates. And when you’re reading that letter from back home or drinking fresh milk for breakfast, they probably played a key role in your quality of life while out to sea.

Keres is a photojournalist assigned to All Hands
On Duty On-the-Hour Every Hour

The job of an air traffic controller is widely considered one of the most stressful lines of work in the world. In civilian control towers, the lives of pilots, crewmembers and multi-million dollar aircraft are at stake during takeoffs and landings. Put that runway on top of a floating city and you’ve got the added pressure of a naval air traffic controller. But for some Sailors, the stress is like caffeine, keeping them operating at peak performance.

Young Sailors like Air Traffic Controller 3rd Class Michael Chapman of Cleveland, Ohio, who works in the Carrier Air Traffic Control Center (CATCC) aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), thrive in the high-tempo environment.

“‘It’s stressful, but it keeps you sharp and on your toes,’” Chapman said. “‘If it wasn’t stressful you’d get too laid back, which leads to complacency and that’s what we have to avoid.’

At the relatively young age of 24, Chapman knows he has a lot of responsibility. It’s his job to bring pilots back on board the ship at the end of their missions. “We are their eyes and ears at night or if the weather is bad,” he said. “We give them the information they need to get back safely.”

Although the aircraft Chapman and the other controllers are guiding in cost millions of dollars, he says this isn’t what motivates him to stay sharp. “It’s not the money that gets to you. It’s the lives. You know if you’re slacking off, people can die on your watch.”

The way Chapman keeps that from happening is by keeping the pilots informed as they approach the ship. From his station in the Final Control section of CATCC, he guides their final approach to Truman, letting them know if their elevation is too high or low, or if they are off course as they approach the flight deck.

“We get them all the way to three quarters of a mile and then the pilots ‘call the ball’ which means they have visual landing aids. At that point the landing safety officer takes over,” he explained.

Bringing the aircrew back safe after missions is vital to the combat readiness of any aircraft carrier. Chapman knows the importance of his role. “When these pilots go on a mission, they need to know they’re coming back safe. Once they hear our voices, they know they’re safe in our hands and that they’re going to make it back to the ship.”

The teams of USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) and Carrier Air Wing 3 stand ready to do whatever is necessary in the war on terrorism. Pilots and aircrew must be able to complete their missions and return to the ship safely, no matter what the future holds. Sailors like Chapman and the rest of CATCC are on watch to make sure they do.

Phillips is assigned to the public affairs office, USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75)
Eye on the Fleet

Eye on the Fleet is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Chief of Information Navy Visual News Service. We are looking for high impact, quality photography from Sailors in the fleet to showcase the American Sailor in action.

On a Solemn Note
MUCS Michael La Pean directs the Pacific Fleet Band during the Dec. 7th Commemoration ceremony. Hosted by Commander, Navy Region Hawaii, the ceremony featured Hawaii’s senior senator and Medal of Honor recipient, Sen. Daniel Inouye, as the guest speaker. The solemn commemoration marked the 61st anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor by Japan.

Photo by PH1 William Goodwin

Valians Away
Catapult Safety Observer, ABM2 Joseph Noriega moves out of position after launching an F/A-18C Hornet assigned to the “Valians” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 15 from one of four steam-driven catapults on USS Theodore Roosevelt’s (CVN 70) flight deck.

Photo by AN Christine Lessard

Drop’n the Hammer
On board USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), AM2 Jeremiah Graham breaks an aircraft tire’s seal from its rim with a sledge hammer in preparation for a disassembly and inspection in the ship’s Tire-Wheel Shop.

Photo by PHN Shane McCoy

Iraqi Freedom
The guided-missile destroyer USS Milius (DDG 69) launches a Tomahawk Land Attack Missile (TLAM) toward Iraq during the initial stages of the Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo PH1 Thomas Lynaugh

Smokin’
PHN Michael Pendergrass goes through gas mask training at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. During the five-day training exercise personnel honed their skills at combat documentation, land navigation and marksmanship.

Photo by PHN Shane McCoy

To be considered, forward your high resolution (5” x 7” at 300 dpi) images with full credit and cutline information, including full name, rank and duty station. Name all identifiable people within the photo and include important information about what is happening, where the photo was taken and the date. Commands with digital photo capability can send attached .jpg files to: navynewsphoto@hq.navy.mil

Mail your submissions to:
Navy Visual News Service • Naval Media Center
2713 Mitscher Rd., S.W., Anacostia Annex, D.C. 20373-5819


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Eye on History

Eye on History is a monthly photo feature sponsored by the Naval Historical Center. For more photos pertaining to naval history, go to www.history.navy.mil.
From the look of things in the world now, we are currently participating in the greatest era of aviation since the Wright brothers' first powered flight in December 1903. It didn't take much research for me to figure that out. All I needed to do was take a peek at a few of the airports in my local area. Even with the hit the aviation industry has taken since the events of 9/11, millions of Americans board flights bound for destinations throughout the United States and the world.

Militarily speaking, I remember learning in history classes from high school and college about all the missions and battles that have depended on warplanes since World War II. From the Battle of Midway in 1942 on through Operation Iraqi Freedom today, naval aviation has played a key role in every major military conflict in which this country has been involved for the last 60 years.

Then, I look at technology. Manned flight has certainly come a long way since the days of men jumping off cliffs with wings strapped to their arms. Just think about how far aviation has come in 100 years.

Therein lies my problem. I never, ever think about flight. The big roadblock for me is my little-known fear of flying. It pretty much prevents me from thinking, even semi-intelligently, about anything involving flight. I'd be hard-pressed to tell you the first step in the process of making an airplane fly. It'd be even tougher for me to begin describing anything about the experimental glider used by Orville and Wilbur Wright in October 1902 to get the ball rolling a century ago. But I had to find out.

My searching came to an end aboard USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) with LCDR Klas Ohman. That's because Ohman is one of the few people to have flown both the Wright brothers' ground-breaking glider and the state-of-the-art F/A-18C Hornet, one of the main weapons in the Navy's extensive flight arsenal.

Now before you start doing the math, quit worrying. I can tell you the Navy definitely does not have a 125-year-old aviator regularly taking to the skies. Ohman pulled off the feat by taking on a replica of the Wright brothers' glider as part of "Return to Kitty Hawk," a commemoration of the brothers' first powered flight in Kitty Hawk, N.C. For the event, Ohman, a graduate of The Citadel, who I assure you is only in his mid-30s, logged a total of 25 flights in the glider.

But Ohman didn't just jump into the glider immediately after touching down in Jockey's Ridge. To prepare for the event, he needed to adjust to the glider's technology, or, rather, the lack thereof. Instead of worrying about pushing buttons, feeling the thrust of the engines and handling a stick to get in the air, Ohman's flights required a nominal wind speed of 15 knots and four people running the vehicle up to a speed of five knots to take off.

That somewhat crude technology did lead to some remarkable advances in flight, however. The flight on Oct. 8, 1902, led to perfecting a system of mechanical control that is still in use on airliners today.

The flight on Dec. 17, 1903, was a far cry from flights today, which travel seemingly endless miles to countries all over the world. The aviation community's celebration of the Wright brothers' feats, including the "Return to Kitty Hawk" commemoration, is still underway. With the 100th anniversary of the first powered flight quickly approaching, Ohman and other military and civilian pilots are looking forward to retracing more of the Wrights' historic steps. Perhaps the biggest of those plans were revealed March 18, when a replica of the Wright Flyer was unveiled at Washington's Reagan National Airport. The 605-pound, seven-foot-tall glider was built primarily of wood, steel and muslin and will tour the country before flying the exact path of its predecessor on Dec. 17, the 100th anniversary of the first flight.

For an aviation dummy like myself, it's a good thing the 100th anniversary isn't happening until December. I still have a few months to learn a little more, and maybe even get over that fear of flying.