

VP-17 Patrol Squadron Commander Says He Lives Very Uneventful Life

By Miriam J. Angell

In our interviews we have talked with people of many and various interests and occupations. Each one, in his or her own way, has been interesting for particular reasons; the townspeople, because their lives and livelihoods, their memories of events long past in the rich and fascinating history of Kodiak, are outside the common experience and knowledge of we who are lately come to the island; or because they are prominent in the town's activities. The experiences of service people, with their widely diversified backgrounds and professions, trigger the imagination and stimulate manifold in-

terests. Sometimes they represent commands with which even other service people are nonconversant. As an important part of the life of the community of Kodiak, and important in the far reaching net of continental security, these commands deserve our attention and approbation.

One of the more quietly prominent commands aboard the Naval Station is the patrol squadrons whose tours are so rotated that rarely do townspeople become acquainted with its personnel as they do with members of the other base activities. The squadron currently in residence is VP-17, called also, Patron 17. We made an appointment with its busy skipper, CDR Clyde B. McKinney, and found him in his office on the second deck where one view overlooks the cavernous hangar interior and the other looks out on Woman's Bay.

We asked him first about the designations, Patron and VP-17. CDR McKinney told us that Patron is short for Patrol Squadron, that V means heavier than air, and P stands for Patrol. VP-17 flies the Navy Neptune, a dependable plane with auxiliary jets.

The Commander showed us an issue of Navy Times, dated Sep-

tember 7, 1960, in which a picture of 11 of the squadron crews appears, with this caption: "The patrol squadron scored eleven 'E's' for excellence in competitive exercises at the Naval Air Station, Whidbey Island, Washington. The high scores were made in air-to-ground rocketry and low altitude bombing. Squadron 17 has compiled a safety record of 30,585 accident-free hours over the past four years, flying 24 per cent of its total flight time under actual instrument conditions in high winds, icing, and fog of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands."

We commented that this was indeed a record to be proud of;



CDR CLYDE B. MCKINNEY

CDR McKinney's only answer was a proud smile, and he continued, "Our primary mission is anti-submarine warfare; our crews rotate their flying between Kodiak and Adak. These patrols are routine, along with ice reconnaissance flights.

"We have approximately 300 officers and men; none of our families is here. A few wives do come up sometimes but we don't have any with us this time. I know my whole family would like to be here but school and all the extra-curricular activities down there prevent this."

'Down there' is Whidbey Island, Washington, the home base of VP-17, where the families wait out the squadron's return.

CDR McKinney went on. "Of course, we would all be happier here if we had our families with us, but in the meantime, the men participate, as time permits, in fishing, bowling, basketball, volleyball, and the various athletic programs on the base. We haven't been up here long enough to get into some of the competing leagues, but a little later on basketball will be a big thing. Our men won a golf match at Whidbey; of course they can't play the game here. We have

Relatives Visit James Robinsons

Miss Ruth VanDeWalle and Miss Jeanette G. Robinson, retired high school teachers from Rochester, New York, and Mrs. Fanny Graham of Boston, Penn., are guests of Mr. and Mrs. James Y. Robinson of the Naval Station. Miss Robinson and Mrs. Graham are sisters of Mr. James Robinson.

The guests were aboard m/v Expansion on its last trip around the Island. Before leaving Alaska they will tour the mainland, following which they will visit points of interest in Vancouver, B.C., Washington, Oregon and California.

Miss VanDeWalle and Mrs. Graham will then visit relatives and friends in Calif., while Miss Robinson will be joined in Los Angeles by other friends from the East coast and they will fly to Hawaii for a fortnight.

New Druggist Here

Bud Duhamel, new druggist at Wodlinger Drugs, arrived in Kodiak Sunday.

He will assume management of the store during Larry Wodlinger's absence. The latter is still recuperating from his recent illness.

our own smokehouse where the men smoke salmon, and some men do their own canning. We also have one fellow who is a disk jockey during his off-duty time; YN-3 Nick Steele has a show on AFRTS radio, called Turntable Review."

CDR McKinney is here on his third tour and, probably because of this rather unusual circumstance, is known in some circles as Mukluk Mac. He is a quiet, genial and pleasant gentleman who is known also to favor Buskin on the Rocks (to those who may not have heard of the Buskin Lake Reservoir, this is just plain ice water) in preference to stronger drink.

We are reluctant to probe beyond the willingness of people to talk about themselves. The Commander, modest and self-effacing, told us these few things about himself, prefacing his remarks with, "I really don't know what to tell you; I've lived a very ordinary, unglamorous life.

"I was born in Jacksonville, Illinois, grew up there and attended Bradley University in Peoria, joined the Navy in 1942, and went right into flight training. I graduated from flight training in 1943 at Corpus Christi, Texas. My war duty was with a patrol squadron in the South Atlantic. Well, my other duty tours have included various squadrons and two tours of staff duty. I graduated from Armed Forces Staff College in 1957, but you don't want to list all the tours; that kind of thing really doesn't interest people. We were stationed in the Hawaiian Islands in VP-22, but although I've been to Japan, Europe and Bermuda, we've never been stationed in those places.

"My wife is an RN and an ex-airlines hostess and we have two boys, eleven and seven. No, the boys don't seem to be very excited about flying; it probably doesn't hold much attraction for them because they see it every day.

"I'm afraid I haven't done much; there is not much I do in the way of hobbies except a little bowling and fishing, nothing unusual. I love to fly and I like the Navy life, the moving around, and friends you meet at various places."

CDR McKinney concluded, "Fishing, hunting, and King Crab, and the friendliness of the local people are a few of the things which help to make life away from home for squadron personnel more enjoyable and pleasant."

'Safety Lady' In New TV Series Oct. 5



Popular Channel 8 TV star, Hy Stanton of Kodiak, will be returning with her puppets, Wolf and Lulu, for another winter series of safety shows, Wednesday, October 5. Appearance time will be announced in the published schedule prior to that time. Known as the Safety Lady, Mrs. Stanton made regular appearances last winter in a program designed to offer safety ideas for children. Program ideas have been worked out, many of them in cooperation with the Naval Station Safety Supervisor, P. D. Starbird. The program was first begun in October, 1959. Above, Hy Stanton is pictured with her own home audience of five children. Pictured are, left to right, Debbie and Lindy. Seated on the floor are her three boys, Jim, Jack and Joe (Smoke).

U. S. Navy photo

Life in Villages Described To BPW By Eudora Preston

The life in and history of the villages on Kodiak Island was the subject of a talk by Mrs. Eudora Preston, local artist. Mrs. Preston spoke at the first dinner meeting of the Kodiak Business and Professional Women's Club, Monday evening at the Island Fountain. The artist's informal talk was highlighted by her original, on the spot sketches, made while on her recent visit around Kodiak and Afognak Islands.

Thirty-four members and guests were in attendance at the meeting, which was presided over by the president, Mrs. Melanie Draper. Guests present were Margaret Gibbons, Dorothy Haag, Simone Talbott, Clara Hochberger, Audrey Kraft, Marian J. Angell, Norma Cluque, Evelyn Knudson, Ruth Breckberg, Bernice Gregory, and Sharon Van Buren. Miss Van Buren was the Kodiak BPW Scholarship award winner in 1959.

The public is invited.

Social Meeting Planned By Ladies

A social meeting is planned for Monday, September 26, by the Ladies Auxiliary to the V.F.W. The meeting is scheduled for 8 p.m. at the Post hall. A Chinese dinner will be served. All members are urged to attend.

Capping Services For Gray Ladies Monday Afternoon

Graduation services for a new class of Gray Ladies has been announced for Monday afternoon, Sept. 26, at 3 p.m. The services will be held at the Naval Station Chapel Annex.

Ten ladies from both the City of Kodiak and the Naval Station, will receive their caps, pins and certificates, during the formal ceremony. The Kodiak Chapter of the American Red Cross, sponsors of the class, will also present service stripes to ladies who have already given a year or more of service.

The public is invited.

Anchorage Couple Guests Of Smiths

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Abbott of Anchorage were house guests, last week of Mr. and Mrs. Wells Smith. The Abbotts and Smiths are old friends from Wenatchee, Wash.

The Abbotts arrived Monday, Sept. 12 and departed Sept. 19. While here the men went on a bear hunt. The Abbotts have lived in Anchorage for 12 years. Mr. Abbott is general foreman of Army supply, and is with the Army Engineers at Fort Richard-son.

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