

## VPB-105

### *Lineage*

Established as Patrol Squadron TEN (VP-10) on 29 May 1924.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron TWO D-15 (VP-2D15) on 21 September 1927.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron TWO-S (VP-2S) on 1 July 1931.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron TWO-F (VP-2F) on 17 July 1933.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron TWO (VP-2) on 1 October 1937.

Redesignated Patrol Squadron THIRTY ONE (VP-31) on 1 July 1939.

Redesignated Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIVE (VB-105) on 15 May 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIVE (VPB-105) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 27 June 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

The first squadron insignia appeared after its redesignation from VP-2D15 to a patrol squadron of the Scouting Fleet in 1931. It is possible the squadron may have used the insignia prior to 1931 and maybe even as far back as 1924. VP-2, in line with its function in the fleet, adopted the insignia of a patrolman chasing an unseen wrongdoer. Colors: hat, black with yellow badge and white band; face, shaded pink; eye, white



*The squadron's well-known insignia.*

outlined in black with a black pupil; hair, black; lips, red; hands, pink outlined in black; uniform, black with yellow stripes on sleeves, pants and buttons; white belt with yellow buckle; sleeves and pants outlined in white. The same insignia was used in successive changes of designation until the disestablishment of VPB-105 in 1945.

Nickname: Patrolmen, circa 1931–1945.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**29 May 1924:** Station aircraft supporting the Naval Base at Coco Solo, Panama, C.Z., were designated by CNO as VP-10. The squadron consisted of six flying boats (F-5Ls and H-16s). The new designation placed the squadron under the Naval Coast Defense Forces, Panama Canal Zone Region.

**20 May 1925:** VP-10 received new HS-2L flying boats to replace the WWI vintage F-5L and H-16



*An F-5L in flight.*



*An HS-2 in flight.*

squadron aircraft. The new equipment was tested in formation bombing on targets off the entrance to Colon, Panama, achieving “excellent patterns.”

**29 Sep 1925:** VP-10 tested new radio equipment in areas of the Gulf of San Blas area considered transmission dead spots.

**1 Feb 1926:** Two aircraft from VP-10 participated with Army aircraft in the Joint Army/Navy Problem No. I.

**21 Sep 1927:** VP-10 was redesignated VP-2D15, the D15 represented the 15th Naval District, Panama Canal Zone.

**8 Jan 1928:** Two T3M-2s and one SC-2 of VP-2D15 were converted to land gear-capable aircraft to provide an escort for Colonel Lindberg from Chiriqui, Panama, to the Canal Zone during his visit to the area.

**13 May 1928:** Two new Corsair O2U-1 seaplanes arrived aboard SS *Cristobal* and were assembled on station. The aircraft were used to make several flights to Haiti to transport vaccine and medical supplies for the Public Health Service in connection with an outbreak of meningitis.

**3 Jan 1931:** VP-2D15 received the first PM-1. Night flight training was conducted with the plane and squadron crew members praised the handling and ease of night landings in the new aircraft.

**3 Apr 1931:** Elements of VP-2D15 completed participation in Fleet Problem XII with Carrier Division One, while VP-8S and VP-10S held off the coast of Guantanamo, Cuba. VP-2D15 aircraft operated from the naval base, while VP-8S was supported by *Wright* (AV 1) and VP-10S had support from *Swann* (AM 34) and *Whitney* (AD 4). The squadron’s 700-mile return flight to Coco Solo, C.Z., took 8 hours and 5 minutes.



*A squadron PM-2 in flight, note the policeman insignia on the bow.*

**1 Jul 1931:** VP-2D15 was redesignated VP-2S, with the S representing the Scouting Fleet.

**13 Sep 1931:** VP-2S completed transition to new PM-2s after receiving a consignment of 20 aircraft from NAS Hampton Roads. The new seaplanes were flown to Coco Solo, C.Z., by squadron personnel, rather than shipping them and reassembling on station, saving the government approximately \$250,000.

**1 Feb 1932:** VPs 2S and 5S were transferred temporarily from the Panama Canal Zone Region to Base Force command, with headquarters at NAS San Diego, Calif.

**1 Apr 1933:** VP-2S was redesignated VP-2F, with the F representing the Base Force. A detachment of nine aircraft operated with *Wright* (AV 1), with remainder of squadron based at NAS San Diego.



*A formation of squadron PD-1s in flight, circa 1930.*

**7 Apr 1933:** VPs 2F and 5F returned to the Panama Canal Zone Region and its former base at FAB Coco Solo, C.Z.

**21 Apr–28 May 1934:** VPs 2F, 3F, 5F, 7F and 9F assembled at FAB Coco Solo, C.Z., to conduct a test flight of massed squadrons in support of fleet movements. Exercises extended through 28 May 1934, terminating at NAS San Diego.

**1 Jan–16 Feb 1935:** VP-2F conducted exercises with VPs 3F and 5F in the Caribbean to evaluate support provided by tenders *Wright* (AV 1), *Lapwing* (AM 1), *Teal* (AM 23) and *Gannet* (AM 41). Upon completion of the exercises on 16 February 1935 the squadron had covered approximately 4,000 miles and crossed the Caribbean for the third time in one year.

**1 Oct 1937:** VP-2F was redesignated VP-2 when the fleet structure was reorganized and Patrol Wings were established. VPs 2, 3 and 5 at FAB Coco Solo, C.Z., came under the cognizance of PatWing-3.

**20 Feb 1939:** VPs 2, 3 and 5 participated in Fleet Problem XX, with PatWing-3 aircraft serving under Black Force. Exercises against ships and aircraft of White Force in the Caribbean pointed out the extreme vulnerability of patrol aircraft to attack while at land bases, as compared to relative safety in dispersion using tender support. Results also indicated unacceptable loss rates of the slow-moving patrol aircraft in operations against antiaircraft fire from ships.

**14 Apr 1939:** VPs 2, 3 and 5 conducted photographic mapping of 1,076 miles of South American

coastline from Nicaragua to the Colombian border. The aerial photography was greatly impeded by bad weather conditions.

**9 Mar–1 Apr 1940:** VP-31 was assigned to Neutrality Patrols, operating in conjunction with VP-53 out of NAS Key West, Fla. After the invasion of Poland on 3 September 1939, President Roosevelt declared the neutrality of the United States and directed the Navy to begin a Neutrality Patrol in the Atlantic. It extended



*A squadron PBY-2 in flight.*



*A squadron PM-2 being refueled at Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands, 1937.*

from the high latitudes of the North Atlantic to the northeast coast of South America to 300 miles out from the coastline. VP-31 returned to PatWing-3 operational control on 1 April 1940.

**1 May 1940:** A three-plane detachment from VP-31 was sent to Key West, Fla.; three aircraft were sent to San Juan, P.R.; and a four-plane detachment remained at Coco Solo, C.Z.

**8 Jul 1941:** VP-31 pilots flew all of the squadron aircraft to NAS San Diego, Calif., for refitting with the newer PBV-5.

**1 Dec 1941:** Detachments of aircraft were maintained at Guantanamo, Antigua, Grand Exuma, St. Lucia, British Guiana and Trinidad.

**26 May 1942:** Lieutenant Edward G. Binning, operating from NAS St. Lucia, B.W.I., located a submarine on the surface at 2357 hours and dropped three

depth charges on it in two diving attacks. The submarine appeared to settle slowly in the water in a sinking condition. *Tarbell* (DD 142) was called to the scene and was also of the opinion that the submarine had been sunk. This attack deserved special notice because it was the first night attack carried out successfully in that area. Lieutenant Binning was subsequently awarded the Navy Cross for this action. Postwar examination of German Navy records, however, did not record any loss of a U-boat on that date.

**15 Aug 1942:** VP-31 operated out of NAS San Juan, P.R., and changed administrative control from PatWing-3, Panama Canal Zone, to PatWing-11.

**1 Oct 1942:** A VP-31 detachment was sent to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., to serve with the Narraganset Air Patrol off the northeastern United States. The remain-



*Squadron aviation machinist's mates work on the starboard engine of their PBY-5A, circa 1942, 80-G-K-15310.*



*Crew members in front of their PB4Y-1, Quonset Point, 17 June 1943, 80-G-383758 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).*

der of the squadron arrived at NAS Elizabeth City, N.C., for training in operation of the new PB4Y-5A.

**1 Jan 1943:** A VP-31 detachment was sent to Argentia, Newfoundland, serving under FAW-7's operational control.

**1 Feb 1943:** VP-31 detachments were maintained at Argentia, Newfoundland, on ASW patrols; MCAS Cherry Point, N.C.; and NAS Jacksonville, Fla.

**1 Apr 1943:** VP-31 detachments rejoin the squadron

at NAS Norfolk, Va., for refitting and familiarization training on the new Liberator PB4Y-1 land-based long-range bombers.

**15 May 1943:** VP-31 was redesignated VB-105 in preparation for its transition from patrol flying boats (VP) to land-based bombers (VB). Fifty percent of the squadron's assets, flight crews and ground support staff were supplemented by VP-52. During the four months of training detachments were sent to Kindley



*A squadron attack against a U-boat on 3 July 1943. The attack did not result in the sinking of the submarine, 80-G-451454a (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).*

Field, Bermuda, for operational long-range training flights.

**1 Aug 1943:** VB-105 aircraft were ferried by squadron aircrews to RAF St. Eval, Cornwall, England. The squadron, while nominally under the control of FAW-7, came under the operational control of 19 Group, RAF Coastal Command.

**24 Sep 1943:** The 19<sup>th</sup> USAAF squadron departed Dunkeswell, England, to join the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, followed by the 22<sup>nd</sup> USAAF on 28 September. Three Navy patrol squadrons (VBs 103, 110 and 105) took

over the ASW role previously assigned to the Army in England. The USAAF ASW squadrons were phased out and their equipment, similar to that on VB-105 aircraft, was turned over to the Navy. The USAAF flew its last ASW mission from Dunkeswell on 31 October 1943 and the 4<sup>th</sup> USAAF squadron departed on 6 November.

**12 Oct 1943:** VB-105 relocated to RAFB Dunkeswell, UK. Within a few months of the squadron's arrival, control of a portion of the airbase was turned over to the Navy and designated NAF Dunkeswell. Principal duties of the squadron were convoy escort and ASW patrols.

**10 Nov 1943:** VB-105 was a participant in one of the longest surface battles of aircraft against a U-boat in WWII. At 0800, a VB-105 aircraft piloted by Lieutenant L. E. Harmon, was alerted by an RAF aircraft of a radar contact near the coast of Spain. Harmon located the surfaced *U-966*, Oberleutenant Eckehard Wolf commanding and made two strafing attacks. Heavy AA fire damaged his aircraft and forced him to break off the attack. An RAF fighter then dove to attack the submarine. Harmon made a third strafing attack but had to break off afterwards due to a fuel shortage. Lieutenant K. L. Wright, of VB-103, located *U-966* near Ferrol at 1040 and delivered a strafing and depth charge attack. Intense AA fire drove him off and he had to depart the target due to lack of fuel. Lieutenant W. W. Parish and crew then arrived on the scene. A depth charge attack was conducted in cooperation with a rocket-firing RAF Liberator at 1230. The submarine was abandoned by its crew after running aground at Oritiguera, Spain, with eight of its crew of 49 killed in action. The German crewmen were quickly picked up by nearby Spanish fishing vessels and interned by the Spanish government.

*A PB4Y-1 flying over the English countryside en route to a mission over the Bay of Biscay, circa 1943, 80-G-K-14056.*



**26 Feb 1944:** One of the squadron aircraft was attacked by German Ju-88s and shot down, with the loss of all hands. A Ju-88C-6 Werk No. 750941 from 3/ZG1 piloted by Lieutenant H. Baldeweg was also shot down, with the loss of its crew.

**1 Jun 1944:** VB-105 participated in operations in support of the landings in France, maintaining 15 aircraft in an operational status for the duration of the landings.

**10 Aug 1944:** A squadron aircraft encountered a heavily armed twin-engine German DO-217. In the ensuing combat, the German aircraft was heavily damaged and turned for home.

**30 Aug 1944:** A squadron aircraft attacked a German U-boat in coastal waters off Brest. Sufficient evidence of the submarine's destruction was present to justify a claim of sunk by the squadron. Postwar German records indicate no U-boat losses on this date.

**17 May 1945:** Operational missions were reduced and sight-seeing tours for VIPs were conducted over the captured territories ranging from Normandy to Holland.

**4 Jun 1945:** VPB-105 was en route from England to continental United States to prepare for its disestablishment.

**27 Jun 1945:** VPB-105 was disestablished at NAS Norfolk, Va.

### Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Coco Solo, C.Z.	29 May 1924
NAS San Diego, Calif.	1 Feb 1932
FAB Coco Solo, C.Z.	7 Apr 1933
NAS San Juan, P.R.	15 Aug 1941
NAS Elizabeth City, N.C.	1 Oct 1942
NAS Norfolk, Va.	1 Apr 1943
RAFB St. Eval, England	1 Aug 1943
RAFB/NAF Dunkeswell, England*	12 Oct 1943
NAS Norfolk, Va.	Jun 1945

\* RAFB Dunkeswell came under U.S. Navy control and was redesignated NAF Dunkeswell on 23 March 1944.

### Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
Unknown	1924–1931
LT Harry F. Carlson	1 July 1931
LT Dolph C. Allen	1931
LCDR Ricco Botta	1932
LCDR D. P. Johnson	1935
LCDR B. E. Grow	1937
LCDR J. B. Dunn	1939
LCDR C. A. Bond	1940
LCDR A. Smith	Apr 1942

### Commanding Officers—Continued

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR F. E. Nuessle	1 Nov 1942
CDR D. Gay, Jr.	Nov 1943
CDR J. K. Sloatman, Jr. (actg.)	Sep 1944
CDR L. E. Harmon	18 Oct 1944
CDR J. K. Sloatman, Jr.	May 1945



*A squadron PBY being serviced by a tender.*

### Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
F-5L	May 1924
H-16	May 1924
HS-2L	May 1925
T3M-2	1927
SC-2	1927
O2U-1	May 1928
PD-1	1930



*A squadron PD-1 in flight with a formation of fighter aircraft in the upper part of the photo.*

*Aircraft Assignment—Continued*

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PM-1	July 1931
PM-1/PM-2	Sep 1931
PBY-2	1939

*Aircraft Assignment—Continued*

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PBY-5	July 1941
PBY-5A	Sep 1942
PB4Y-1	Apr 1943



*A squadron PBY-2 with the policeman insignia on the bow (Courtesy John M. Elliott Collection).*

*Major Overseas Deployments*

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
1 Jan 1935	16 Feb 1935	ScoFor	Key West	PM-2	Carib
9 Mar 1940	1 Apr 1940	PatWing-5	Key West	PBY-2	Carib
1 May 1940	8 Jul 1940	PatWing-5	Key West	PBY-2	Carib
1 May 1940	8 Jul 1940	PatWing-5	San Juan	PBY-2	Carib
1 Dec 1941	15 Aug 1941	PatWing-5	Multi. Islands	PBY-5	Carib
15 Aug 1942	1 Oct 1942	PatWing-11	San Juan	PBY-5	Carib
1 Jan 1943	1 Apr 1943	FAW-7	Argentia	PBY-5	NorLant
1 Aug 1943	12 Oct 1943	FAW-7	St. Eval	PB4Y-1	NorLant
12 Oct 1943	6 Jun 1945	FAW-7	Dunkeswell	PB4Y-1	NorLant





*A squadron PM-2 being refueled at Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands, March 1937, note the policeman insignia on the bow.*

### *Air Wing Assignments*

<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
Naval Coast Defense Forces, Panama Canal Zone Region		29 May 1924
Naval District, Panama Canal Zone		21 Sep 1927
Scouting Force, U.S. Fleet Air Base, Coco Solo		1 Jul 1931
Aircraft Squadrons, Base Force, U.S. Fleet		1 Apr 1933
PatWing-3		1 Oct 1937
Neutrality Patrol		9 Mar 1940
PatWing-3		1 Apr 1940
PatWing-11		15 Aug 1941

### *Air Wing Assignments—Continued*

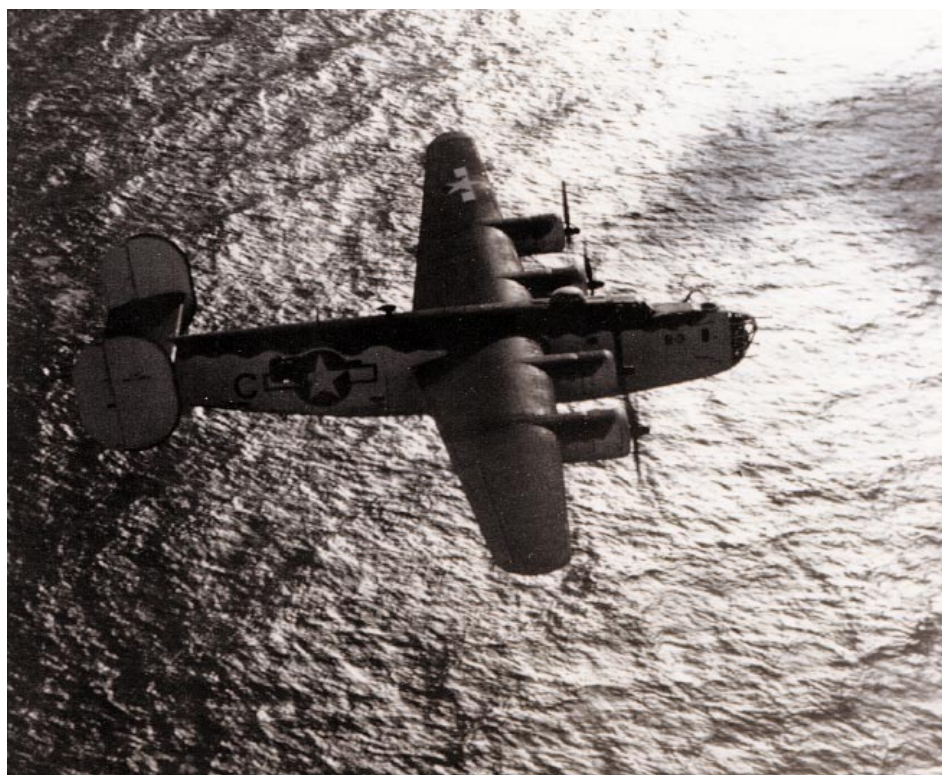
<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
PatWing-5/FAW-5†		30 Sep 1942
Group 19, RAF Coastal Command/FAW-7		1 Aug 1943
FAW-5		Jun 1945

† Patrol Wing 5 (PatWing-5) was redesignated Fleet Air Wing 5 (FAW-5) on 1 November 1942.

### *Unit Awards Received*

None on record.

*A PB4Y-1 heads out over the Bay of Biscay on an antisubmarine mission, circa 1943, 80-G-K-13687.*



## VPB-109

### *Lineage*

Established as Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED NINE (VB-109) on 2 August 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED NINE (VPB-109) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 12 October 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

None on record.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**2 Aug–30 Oct 1943:** VB-109 was established at NAS San Diego, Calif., as a heavy bombing squadron flying the PB4Y-1 Liberator and under the operational control of FAW-14. Fifteen aircraft were assigned to the squadron with 18 flight crews. During this training period emphasis was upon familiarization with the Liberator, instruments, navigation and night flying, with some gunnery and bombing. Training was completed on 30 October and preparations were begun for the transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii.

**4 Nov 1943:** VB-109 completed the transpac to NAS Kaneohe, coming under the operational control of FAW-2. The advanced combat phase of training was begun in conjunction with operational patrols over the approaches to the Hawaiian Islands.

**28 Dec 1943–13 Jan 1944:** The squadron was transferred to Apamama, Gilbert Islands and conducted its first combat patrol on 31 December 1943. On 1 January 1944, Lieutenant John F. Bundy made the squadron's first kill, sinking a 2,000-ton cargo vessel near Mille. The squadron's arrival was greeted the next evening by an enemy air raid that destroyed one aircraft, damaged two others and wounded three personnel. Throughout the month of January the squadron continued attacks on enemy shipping with good results; dropped mines at Maloelap Atoll, Wotje and Kwajalein; and served as fighter escort for photographic planes from VD-3 on low-level missions. On 13 January 1944, Lieutenant Samuel E. Coleman and his crew failed to return from a patrol.

**3–28 Feb 1944:** Numerous photographic missions were flown over the islands of Eniwetok and Wotje, some in conjunction with VD-3. Bombing missions were conducted over Wotje, Kusaie and Wake Island. On 13 February 1944, Lieutenant (jg) John H. Herron and his crew failed to return from patrol.

**7 Mar 1944:** VB-109 was relocated to a newly established base on Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands. From this location the squadron made attacks and photographic sorties on enemy installations at Ponape

and Pakin. Numerous successful masthead attacks were conducted on shipping throughout the patrol area.

**5–29 Apr 1944:** VB-109 was moved from Kwajalein to Eniwetok. From this location the squadron conducted several mining missions in the Truk Atoll. Attacks were conducted on enemy installations at Oroluk, Ponape and Puluwat.

**1–16 May 1944:** Attacks against surface shipping continued with good results, but after the middle of the month enemy shipping was no longer to be found. The emphasis was shifted to attacks on ground installations at Wake Island, Truk and Puluwat.

**16 May 1944:** On this date, Commander Norman M. Miller, the squadron's commanding officer and his crew took part in what must rank as one of the most successful and certainly most destructive single-plane raids in the squadron's history. During a long-range reconnaissance flight to Truk, Commander Miller spotted a 5,000-ton freighter anchored in the lagoon. He made a beam attack, releasing three bombs at masthead height, heavily damaging the vessel. Miller then spotted a 10,000-ton ship that immediately exploded after his bomb run, destroying a large portion of the vessel. He then proceeded on to Puluwat, arriving over the Japanese airfield at minimum altitude, surprised and strafed a formation of 30 enemy soldiers. In this attack he destroyed one truck, an aircraft revetment and dropped two bombs on a radio station. In his last bomb run on the radio station the Liberator was hit four times by AA fire, one exploding directly above the cockpit, wounding both Miller and his second pilot. Despite his wounds and damage to the aircraft, Commander Miller flew the Liberator 800 miles back to base for a safe landing. For his cool courage and flying skill, Commander Miller was awarded the Navy Cross.

**Jun 1944:** Most of the squadron's activities in June were spent flying patrols covering the task force moving to attack Saipan. Daily reconnaissance patrols were flown over Wake Island to ensure no enemy attacks would endanger the task force from that quarter. Low level photographic runs were made over Saipan and Tinian during the landings. Occasional bombing and strafing runs on Saipan were made in conjunction with naval vessels offshore.

**17 Jun 1944:** Lieutenant Bridgeman and crew sank the Japanese submarine *RO-117*, Lieutenant Commander Yasua Enomoto commanding, which had left Truk on 5 June bound for a position off Saipan. The sinking, originally claimed by the squadron as possible damaged, was confirmed as sunk by Japanese records after the war.

**12 Jul–10 Aug 1944:** An advanced echelon detachment was sent to operate from Isley Field, Saipan. A second detachment arrived on 29 July, remaining until 10 August.

**14 Jul 1944:** VB-109 made the first shore-based aircraft attack on Iwo Jima, damaging ships, airfields and parked aircraft. On 16 July the squadron's commanding officer flew Marine battalion commanders and intelligence officers over the proposed landing areas at Tinian, giving them an on-site view of the approaches and obstacles they would soon face on the ground.

**19 Jul 1944:** The squadron made the first land-based aircraft attacks on Chichi Jima and Haha Jima, destroying several ships, aircraft and damaging numerous shore installations.

**5 Aug 1944:** Lieutenant Elmer H. Kasperon and his crew failed to return from a night bombing mission over Chichi Jima.

**14 Aug–12 Sep 1944:** VB-109 departed Eniwetok and returned to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. On 23 August the squadron began the return to NAS San Diego, Calif., with the last crew arriving on 12 September 1944. All squadron aircraft were turned over to the HEDRON, FAW-14 and all personnel were given home leave.

**5 Oct 1944–Feb 1945:** VPB-109 was reformed at NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif., with 15 PB4Y-2 Privateer bombers and 18 crews. Training on the new aircraft was completed on 30 January 1945 and preparations

were begun for the transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. The ground echelon departed on 30 January for Pearl Harbor aboard *Fanshaw Bay* (CVE 70). Aircrews began their departures in elements of three on 11 February 1945, with the last aircraft arriving at Kaneohe on 20 February.

**11 Feb–18 Mar 1945:** As crews continued to arrive, the squadron was put into the training syllabus for combat patrols, bombing, gunnery and ground school. On 18 March, an RY-2 (the cargo version of the PB4Y-1) was assigned to the squadron's complement by HEDRON, FAW-2.

**1 Apr 1945:** VPB-109 was selected to employ the SWOD Mark 9 (Bat) guided bomb. The Bat guided missile was in essence a bomb with wings and control surfaces guided to its target by a mother ship. The Germans had successfully employed similar ordnance in the Mediterranean with great effect. The Bat offered the advantage of being a standoff weapon that allowed the bomber crew to remain out of effective AA range of a surface target while launching the winged bomb at the vessel. The Bat could guide itself to its target by means of target echoes of pulsed microwave radiation emitted by the missile's built-in radar system.



A PB4Y-2 at NAAS Camp Kerney, December 1944, 80-G-K-2678.

It could see its target under any condition of visibility. The weapon presented such a small cross-section that it was nearly impossible for AA fire to destroy it before impact. Unfortunately, the Bat suffered from problems relating to the high humidity of the tropics and the poor characteristics of electronic devices of that period. Three squadrons were equipped to handle the new weapon. Testing and training on its use continued through the end of the month.

**10–23 Apr 1945:** VPB-109 deployed to Puerto Princessa, Palawan, coming under the operational control of FAW-10. On 23 April 1945, Lieutenant Commander Hicks and Lieutenant Kennedy dropped the first Bat weapons employed on a combat mission against shipping in Balikpapan harbor. Both devices were defective and did not strike any targets. Conventional bombing missions by the rest of the squadron were carried out with great success against targets on Soebi-Ketjil, Tambelan, South Natoena, Djemadja, Mukah, Pandanseri Refinery and Cape Bila harbor.

**28 Apr 1945:** Two of the Bat-equipped Privateers flown by Lieutenant Commander Hicks and Lieutenant Chay again attacked shipping in Balikpapan harbor. Three Bats were released in an attempt to sink a large transport. Two of the Bats went to either side of the vessel, sinking two smaller freighters, while the third executed a sharp right turn to strike a large oil storage tank a quarter of a mile away in the Pandanseri Refinery.

**30 Apr 1945:** Enemy aircraft attacked Westbrooke Field AAFB, Puerto Princessa, at night damaging three squadron aircraft and injuring one enlisted crewman.

**1–6 May 1945:** Attacks against enemy targets in the area of Borneo and Celebes continued unabated with great success, sinking 45 vessels of all types and destroying numerous ground installations in one week.

**7–16 May 1945:** It soon became obvious that large ship targets justifying the expenditure of Bats were no longer available in the operational area of the squadron outside of Singapore, which was too far for the Bat-equipped bombers to fly and return. A base closer to the Japanese homeland was required, so VPB-109 was relocated to West Field, Tinian, under the operational control of FAW-1. Three days later, on 10 May, the squadron moved to Yontan Field, Okinawa Shima. Four days later, VPB-109 found out how close they were to the enemy homeland when they were greeted by the Japanese with a night bombing attack that damaged one squadron aircraft. A similar attack on 18 May destroyed one aircraft and damaged two others. The frequent enemy night forays precluded night patrols by the squadron, as the bombers could not be serviced or landed during alerts. It was also too dangerous to fly at night, because the fleet shot at anything with wings. The first Bat attack by the squadron while based at Okinawa

took place on 13 May with negative results. Attacks on shipping on the 15th and 16th with three Bats was also unsuccessful. The sensitive equipment in the devices was too prone to corrosion and warping in the tropical environment. No test equipment for the Bats had been sent forward with the squadron to permit diagnostics before they were used in combat.

**17 May 1945:** In a demonstration of the Privateer's survivability and heavy fire-power, Lieutenant Fairbanks and Lieutenant Warren's aircraft were attacked on patrol by 12 enemy interceptors. Two of the Japanese fighters were shot down with only minor damage to Lieutenant Fairbank's aircraft and two wounded crewmen.

**24 May 1945:** The Japanese considered the activities of the squadrons based at Yontan Field to be important enough to merit the expenditure of a specialized suicide attack force. The commandos were flown in under cover of darkness aboard three Ki-21 Sally medium bombers. Two were shot down in flames, along with five of their fighter escorts. The remaining Sally landed wheels up on the airstrip. The attackers quickly dispersed throughout the area, throwing satchel charges and grenades into parked aircraft and engaging the Marine perimeter defense forces in firefights. One VPB-109 aircraft was destroyed and another damaged beyond repair before the commandos were eliminated. Three squadron enlisted personnel were wounded in the crossfire or by shrapnel from the explosions.

**27 May 1945:** Lieutenant Leo E. Kennedy and his crew obtained honors for the squadron with the sinking of a Japanese destroyer in the first successful Bat attack on the open sea, blowing the entire bow off the vessel. In the same attack, using conventional bombs, Kennedy sank a 2,000-ton freighter and four small freighters and damaged two smaller vessels. For this record-setting action Lieutenant Kennedy was awarded the Navy Cross. Three days later Kennedy was killed by AA fire during a conventional bombing attack on shipping off the mouth of the Yangtze River.

**29 May 1945:** Lieutenants Turner and Warren received reports of large shipping near Shanghai. They dropped two defective Bats with no results on a 6,000-ton and a 4,000-ton freighter located at the mouth of the Yangtze River.

**31 May 1945:** VPB-109 was relocated to West Field, Tinian, with a detachment remaining at Yontan Field, Okinawa. In early July all of the squadron's SWOD personnel were transferred to CASU-7, Yontan Field, Okinawa. The new unit combined the SWOD functions previously performed by VPBs 109, 123 and 124.

**1–27 Jul 1945:** The squadron established a three-aircraft detachment at Central Field, Iwo Jima, joined by the entire squadron on 8 July. Primary missions assigned during this period involved barrier patrols between the U.S. Third Fleet and the Japanese home is-

lands and air-sea rescue missions for USAAF B-29 crews returning from bombing missions over Japan.

**28 Jul 1945:** VPB-109 returned to Yontan Field, Okinawa. Missions were assigned to conduct barrier patrols off the Shantung Peninsula and air-sea rescue patrols for downed aircrews.

**5 Aug 1945:** Lieutenant Keeling and crew were shot down with the loss of all hands during a strafing attack on a tanker while on patrol east of Korea.

**8 Aug 1945:** Lieutenants Vadrnais and Challis made negative Bat attacks on a large enemy tanker. This was probably the last such attack using this weapon in WWII. The last combat mission by the squadron occurred two days later when Lieutenant Chay and Lieutenant (jg) Moyer sank five small freighters with conventional weapons in the Tsushima Straits.

**15-24 Aug 1945:** Orders were received to cease attacks on the enemy. Armament was carried for defensive purposes only. On 24 August all patrol activity ceased, and the primary mission assigned to the squadron was that of weather reconnaissance for various elements of the fleet.

**Sep 1945:** VPB-109 returned to NAS San Diego, Calif., and was disestablished on 12 October 1945.

### Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS San Diego, Calif.	2 Aug 1943
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	4 Nov 1943
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Sep 1944
NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif.	5 Oct 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	11 Feb 1945
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Sep 1945

### Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Norman M. Miller	2 Aug 1943
LT(jg) Leland P. Russell	16 Sep 1944
LCDR George L. Hicks	6 Dec 1944

### Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB4Y-1	Aug 1943
PB4Y-2	Dec 1944
RY-2	Mar 1945

### Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
4 Nov 1943	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB4Y-1	EastPac
28 Dec 1943	*	FAW-1	Apamama	PB4Y-1	SoPac
7 Mar 1944	*	FAW-1	Kwajalein	PB4Y-1	SoPac
5 Apr 1944	*	FAW-1	Eniwetok	PB4Y-1	SoPac
12 Jul 1944	*	FAW-1	Saipan	PB4Y-1	SoPac
10 Aug 1944	14 Aug 1944	FAW-1	Eniwetok	PB4Y-1	SoPac
11 Feb 1945	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB4Y-2	EastPac
10 Apr 1945	*	FAW-10	Palawan	PB4Y-2	SoPac
10 May 1945	*	FAW-1	Okinawa	PB4Y-2	WestPac
31 May 1945	*	FAW-1	Tinian	PB4Y-2	SoPac
1 Jul 1945	*	FAW-1	Iwo Jima	PB4Y-2	WestPac
28 May 1945	Sep 1945	FAW-1	Okinawa	PB4Y-2	WestPac

\* Continued combat deployment in the Pacific, moving from base to base.

### Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		2 Aug 1943
FAW-2		4 Nov 1943
FAW-1		28 Dec 1943
FAW-2		14 Aug 1944
FAW-14		12 Sep 1944
FAW-2		11 Feb 1945
FAW-10		10 Apr 1945

### Wing Assignments—Continued

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-1		10 May 1945
FAW-14		Sep 1945

### Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>	
PUC	31 Dec 1943	14 Aug 1944



*The squadron used Bat missiles in the Pacific during the latter part of the war. This photo shows a Bat missile being placed in position on a PB4Y.*

## VPB-110

### *Lineage*

Established as Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED TEN (VB-110) on 18 July 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED TEN (VPB-110) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 1 September 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

The insignia for VPB-110 was approved by CNO on 3 February 1945. A fox holding a pair of binoculars in his left paw and a bomb in his right straddled a 50-cal-



*The squadron's cartoon design insignia.*

iber Browning machine gun. In the background was a winged V enclosed within a circle. The significance of the design was not stated in the records but since VPB-110 was a PB4Y-1 Liberator squadron stationed in England, it may be assumed that the V stood for Churchill's famous "V for Victory." The bomb and machine gun were the principal weapons of the PB4Y-1, while the binoculars were the primary device for spotting its prey, German U-boats. Colors: field, blue; circle, white; fox, rust with white ears and tail markings; wings, white; fox tongue, red; machine gun, black outlined in gray and white; bomb, green with yellow shading; binoculars, black with white lens.

Nicknames: None on record.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**18 Jul–9 Sep 1943:** VB-110 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., as a heavy bombing squadron flying the PB4Y-1 Liberator under the operational control of FAW-5. Most of the flight crews came from VP-203 and other PBM squadrons and required a thorough check-out in the Liberator aircraft. These check flights were completed at NAS Norfolk by 27 July. VB-110 moved from NAS Norfolk to NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C., on 1 August for its shakedown phase of training. On 4 August, the training was briefly interrupted while the squadron's aircraft were flown to NAS San Diego to have the new Erco nose turrets installed. At the end of the month, these aircraft were turned over to VB-105, because they were scheduled to depart for England on 1 September. VB-110's replacement aircraft were six Army B-24s with no radar or Erco nose turrets. Three of the modified PB4Y-1 aircraft were received on 9 September, equipped with APS-15 radar, LORAN, sonobuoys and provisions to carry the Mark 24 homing torpedo (nicknamed Fido and Zombie).

*A PB4Y-1 en route to a mission over the Bay of Biscay, circa 1943, 80-G-K-14057.*



**15 Sep–20 Oct 1943:** VB-110 departed for RAF St. Eval, Cornwall, England, becoming operational with 12 aircraft aboard on 15 October 1943. Ground personnel and support staff departed aboard the tender *Albemarle* (AV 5). The squadron joined VB-103 and 105 at this station, under the joint operational control of FAW-7 and 19 Group, RAF Coastal Command. The squadron flew its first mission in the Bay of Biscay on 20 October 1943. VB-110 was one of 20 squadrons, American and British, operating under the 19 Group, Coastal Command. Flights over the Bay of Biscay were called Barrier Patrols, running from Fastnet Rock in southern Ireland to Cape Finisterre, Spain, and back to Brest and Lands End. German FW-190 fighters from Brest or Bordeaux and Ju-88 interceptors from various French bases posed the greatest danger to the squadrons. These German aircraft were specifically assigned the mission of hunting for the Allied ASW aircraft that endangered the German U-boats.

**30 Oct 1943:** The 19<sup>th</sup> USAAF squadron departed Dunkeswell to join the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, followed by the 22<sup>nd</sup> USAAF on 28 September. Three Navy patrol squadrons (VBs 103, 110 and 105) were assigned the ASW role previously flown by the Army Air Force in England. The USAAF squadrons were phased out and their equipment, similar to that on the VB-110 aircraft, was turned over to the Navy. The USAAF flew its last ASW mission from Dunkeswell on 31 October 1943 and the 4<sup>th</sup> USAAF squadron departed on 6 November. VB-110 moved aboard RAF Dunkeswell, Devon, England, on 30 October 1943. The three squadrons at Dunkeswell came to be known by several names over the next year: Dunkeswell Air Group, Land Plane Air

Group and finally to Patrol Air Group One. Each squadron had the luxury of being assigned its own PATSU.

**8 Nov 1943:** Lieutenant W. E. Grumbles and crew failed to return from a mission over the Bay of Biscay. A message intercepted by another aircraft indicated that the crew was under attack, followed a while later by an SOS. Nothing further was ever learned about this crew and they were listed as missing in action. The next day, Lieutenant Joseph P. Kennedy and his crew were attacked by a pair of Me-210 aircraft but escaped into the clouds. The Germans were aware of the three Navy bombing squadrons and the threat they posed to the U-boats. When submarines were going out, special Me-210 and Ju-88 interceptor squadrons based in France would scour the skies ahead searching for the Navy patrol bombers.

**10 Nov 1943:** VB-110 was a participant in one of the longest surface battles of aircraft against a U-boat in WWII. At 0800, a VB-105 aircraft piloted by Lieutenant L. E. Harmon was alerted by an RAF aircraft of a radar contact near the coast of Spain. Harmon located the surfaced *U-966*, Oberleutenant Eckehard Wolf commanding, and made two strafing attacks. Heavy AA fire damaged his aircraft and forced him to break off the attack. An RAF fighter then dove to attack the submarine. Harmon made a third strafing attack but had to break off afterwards due to a fuel shortage. Lieutenant K. L. Wright, of VB-103, located *U-966* near Ferrol at 1040 and delivered a strafing and depth charge attack. Intense AA fire drove him off and he had to depart the target due to low fuel. Lieutenant W. W. Parish and crew from VB-110 then arrived on

*A PB4Y-1 flying over England en route to a patrol over the Bay of Biscay, November 1943, 80-G-407694 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).*





the scene. A depth charge attack was conducted in cooperation with a rocket-firing RAF Liberator at 1230. The submarine was abandoned by its crew after running aground at Oritiguera, Spain. The German crewmen were quickly picked up by nearby Spanish fishing vessels.

**24–28 Dec 1943:** A flotilla of 12 German destroyers attempted to provide cover for a blockade runner, *Alstereufer*. Several missions were run against the enemy ships over a period of five days. The blockade runner was sunk on 27 December by a Czech squadron, leaving the destroyers fleeing for port. The enemy lost three destroyers to British surface units but in the action shot up several squadron aircraft. While returning to base on 28 December after looking for targets, Lieutenant Commander Reedy encountered four He-177 aircraft. In the resultant melee, Reedy's crew managed to damage one of the enemy, sending it back towards France trailing smoke from a fire in its starboard engine. Postwar examination of German records indicated that He-177A3 Werk No. 5557 from 11/KG40, flown by Hauptman B. Eidhoff, was unable to return to base and crashed into the sea. Eidhoff and his crew of 5 were subsequently reported missing by the Luftwaffe. On the same mission, Lieutenant Parrish and his crew were killed when their aircraft crashed into high ground near Okehampton, Devon.

**26 Feb 1944:** Lieutenant J. L. Williams crashed into Great Skellig Rock off the coast of Ireland and the aircraft fell into the sea. All hands were lost.

**12 Mar 1944:** Lieutenant (jg) W. H. Ryan and crew became lost during foul weather conditions and failed to establish a fix from the H/F and D/F stations. Subsequent searches found nothing and the crew was listed as missing in the line of duty.

**23 Mar 1944:** RAF Dunkeswell came under Navy control. The facilities under the RAF had been extremely spartan but with the change of Dunkeswell to a Naval Air Facility, conditions improved dramatically.

**27 Mar 1944:** In one of the squadron's all-time close calls, Lieutenant (jg) R. B. Meihaus was preparing to land in very poor visibility and with only three engines after completing a mission near the Spanish coast. He hit telephone wires and a house on his approach, knocking out two more engines. He continued his landing approach for another two and a half miles on one engine, making a successful crash landing on the field with no injuries to any of his crew.

**31 Mar 1944:** Two squadron aircraft were attacked by German fighter interceptors within 30 minutes of each other in the same position in the Bay of Biscay. Lieutenant H. Barton and crew and Lieutenant (jg) O. R. Moore and crew were all listed as missing in action. Within the first six months of their arrival in England, VB-110 had lost one-third of its flight crews and one-half of its aircraft complement to a combination of enemy action and weather.

**6 Jun 1944:** During the Normandy invasions the squadron provided patrols over the southern entrance to the channel to prevent U-boats from approaching the invasion fleet. Aircraft patrolled the area at 30-minute intervals. The squadron flew 420 operational sorties during the months of June through August 1944. During patrols several small surface vessels were sunk, with only minimal damage from return gunfire. Eight attacks were made on suspected submarine targets with negative results, including one of which a very clear picture was taken of a schnorkel and periscope. The effectiveness of Allied air cover during the invasion was worthy of note. It was anticipated that the three Navy patrol squadrons might have several losses from enemy fighter interceptors during the Normandy coverage, but in fact very few enemy aircraft were sighted during the three-month period.

**12 Aug 1944:** Lieutenant Joseph P. Kennedy volunteered to serve as pilot aboard a worn-out PB4Y-1 loaded with explosives and equipped with terminal radio control systems. The concept was that the pilot and copilot would take off in the aircraft and place it on the correct heading toward the target. Once locked under positive radio control by an accompanying mothership, the pilot and copilot would bail out of the aircraft. The explosive-laden bomber would then be guided into its target by the accompanying plane. The target for this mission was one of the V-1 missile launching sites on the mainland. Halfway to the target the aircraft exploded, killing both Kennedy and his copilot. For his bravery in volunteering for such a dangerous mission, Lieutenant Kennedy was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross.

**24 Aug 1944:** Lieutenant (jg) J. G. Byrnes and crew were killed while on a routine night familiarization training flight after crashing into high ground near Breckon, South Wales.



*A PB4Y-1 being refueled for a mission, September 1944, 80-G-282241 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).*

**24 Dec 1944:** Submarine activity since the invasion of Normandy and capture of the submarine pens at Brest had decreased significantly. It was extremely frustrating for Lieutenant F. M. Nunnally and his crew when they obtained a positive sonobouy contact near the harbor of Alderney Island and were driven off by the harbor AA defenses before being able to make an attack!

**10 Jan 1945:** VPB-110 initiated its first searchlight patrols. The searchlights, or Leigh lights, named after their British inventor, had been used with some success by the RAF. By March, one patrol with a searchlight-equipped aircraft was being made each night. Only six of the crews had received training with this equipment.

**14 Jan 1945:** Lieutenant Ralph D. Spalding, Jr., and crew were killed in a crash near Igoudar while en route to Dakar for detached duty.

**9 May 1945:** With the surrender of Germany the U-boats at sea also began to surrender. Lieutenant F. L. Schaum and crew sighted and accepted the surrender of the first enemy U-boat to give up to the Allies. A

second U-boat surrendered on 13 May. Both submarines were escorted to the nearest port in the United Kingdom.

**1 Jun 1945:** VPB-110 received orders to report to NAS Norfolk, Va. Squadron aircraft were turned over to HEDRON-7 at NAF Dunkeswell as the squadron departed for the U.S. aboard the tender *Albemarle* (AV 5) on 4 June and arrived at Norfolk on 14 June 1945.

**25 Jun 1945:** VPB-110 was detached from NAS Norfolk and FAW-5 and ordered to report to NAS Seattle, Wash., under the operational control of FAW-6, with a 30-day delay in reporting.

**1 Sep 1945:** The squadron had been scheduled for reforming at NAS Seattle, Wash., as a PB4Y-2 Privateer squadron on 15 September. The cessation of hostilities and subsequent surrender of Japan ended the necessity for the continued existence of large numbers of Navy patrol squadrons. VPB-110 personnel were given new orders for either demobilization or extension of duty, and on 1 September 1945 the squadron was disestablished at NAS Seattle, Wash.



*A squadron PB4Y-1 on patrol, September 1944, 80-G-282243 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).*

**Home Port Assignments**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	18 Jul 1943
NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C.	1 Aug 1943
RAFB St. Eval, England	15 Sep 1943
RAFB/NAF Dunkeswell, England*	30 Oct 1943
NAS Norfolk, Va.	14 Jun 1945
NAS Seattle, Wash.	25 Jun 1945

\* RAFB Dunkeswell came under the control of the U.S. Navy and was designated an NAF on 23 March 1944.

**Commanding Officers**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR J. R. Reedy	18 Jul 1943
CDR Page Knight	28 Apr 1944
LCDR Duncan A. Campbell	12 Jan 1945

**Aircraft Assignment**

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB4Y-1	18 Jul 1943



An overhead view of NAF Dunkeswell, England, showing the hangars and several PB4Y-1s, June 1944, NH-96258.

**Major Overseas Deployments**

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
15 Sep 1943	30 Oct 1943	FAW-7	St. Eval	PB4Y-1	NorLant
30 Oct 1943	1 Jun 1945	FAW-7	Dunkeswell	PB4Y-1	NorLant



On 29 January 1944 Lt. N. H. Rudd and his PB4Y-1 crew attacked a U-boat in the Bay of Biscay. The attack was not successful, 80-G-286G (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).

### Wing Assignments

Wing	Tail Code	Assignment Date
FAW-5		18 Jul 1943
FAW-7/19 Group, RAF Coastal Command		15 Sep 1943
FAW-5		14 Jun 1945
FAW-6		25 Jun 1945

### Unit Awards Received

Unit Award	Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award
None on record.	



A PB4Y-1 on patrol, 80-G-K-5175.

## VPB-112

### *Lineage*

Established as Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWELVE (VB-112) on 8 August 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWELVE (VPB-112) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 1 September 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

None on record.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**8 Aug–2 Nov 1943:** VB-112 was established at NAS Norfolk, Va., under the operational control of FAW-5, as a heavy bombing squadron flying the PB4Y-1 Liberator. Personnel were given ground and flight training at NAAS Oceana, Va., through the end of

September. The squadron's first PB4Y-1 arrived on 2 October, with nine more arriving by 7 October. On 10 October flight crews were sent to NAS Quonset Point, R.I., for advanced ASW training. The crews returned to NAS Norfolk on 2 November.

**5 Nov 1943:** Orders were received to proceed to NAF Port Lyautey, F.M., via Morrison Field, Fla.; Borinque, P.R.; Waller Field, Trinidad; Belem and Natal, Brazil; and Dakar. The squadron departed Norfolk and arrived by elements at Port Lyautey on 25 November, coming under the operational control of FAW-15. The squadron was based at the former French airfield, Craw Field, with VPB-111, which had arrived two weeks earlier. The two squadrons were replacing an Army unit, the 472<sup>nd</sup> Bombardment Group. Patrols commenced immediately. Armor was stripped from the aircraft since the threat from enemy aircraft in the assigned patrol zones was judged minimal. The lessening of weight also made full-combat load takeoffs less dangerous in the dry, thin air of the desert. The primary mission of the squadron was safeguarding the supply routes for the invasion forces going into Italy.



*Crew members from VB-112 beside their PB4Y at Quonset Point, 20 October 1943, 80-G-383783 (Courtesy Captain Jerry Mason, USN).*

To do this effectively, the antisubmarine screen had to be established out beyond the Straits of Gibraltar and approximately 700 miles west of Port Lyautey. Unfortunately, neither squadron at Port Lyautey was equipped for operations at night with the Leigh searchlight. U-boat captains during this phase of combat made few daylight runs, doing most of their travel at night.

**30 Nov 1944:** The squadron had its first operational losses when Lieutenant R. L. Trum crashed after becoming lost off Faro, Portugal, during an antisubmarine patrol. Five crew members were killed. The survivors returned to base on 10 December. A second aircraft, piloted by Lieutenant (jg) John M. Hill, crashed on the same day five miles northwest of Port Lyautey after running out of fuel while trying to land in heavy fog. Six crew members, including the pilot, were killed in the crash.

**2 Mar 1944:** Three crews and one aircraft were detached and sent to FAW-7 in England, reducing the squadron complement to 10 aircraft and 15 flight crews.

**29 Apr 1944:** A six-aircraft detachment was sent to RAF Gibraltar. From this location aircraft only had to patrol a zone approximately 100 miles in circumference to cover the area used by German U-boats attempting a surface transit of the straits. Two aircraft were constantly on station and in communication with surface units below. This effectively “put the cork in the bottle” and kept all U-boats out of the Mediterranean. The following months resulted in little or no activity for the squadron since the U-boat threat had been contained.

**1 May 1944:** Four more crews were detached to FAW-7 in England.

**Oct 1944:** For the first time in months, German U-boat activity in the Mediterranean began to pick up. Very few sightings were made because a new device was being employed by U-boats, the schnorkel. This invention allowed U-boats to run submerged using their air-breathing diesel engines. Tests with the squadron’s radar against a “tame” British submarine fitted with a dummy schnorkel showed that it presented an almost invisible radar target. The schnorkel threat was seen as a greater problem for the ASW efforts in the waters around Britain. Vast quantities of shipping were arriving daily in preparation for the coming invasion set for June.

**9 Jan 1945:** VPB-112 received orders to cease operations and prepare to transfer from Port Lyautey to Upottery, Devon, England. Operations began from this base on 15 February. Upottery was a satellite field of NAF Dunkeswell, where VBs 103, 105 and 110 were based. VPB-107 later joined VPB-112 at Upottery after being transferred from Natal, Brazil. The airfield had been unoccupied since June 1944, and a detachment of SeaBees quickly made it habitable.

**27 Feb 1945:** Lieutenant O. B. Denison and crew spotted an oil slick and directed destroyer escorts to the location. Subsequent attacks by the combined force resulted in a claim for a confirmed kill. Postwar examination of German records does not indicate any U-boat losses at that locale or date.

**9–11 May 1945:** With the surrender of Germany the U-boats still at sea began to surrender to the Allies. On 9 May *U-249*, Kapitänleutnant Uwe Kock commanding, surrendered to Lieutenant D. P. Housh and crew. On 10 May *U-825*, Oberleutnant Gerhard Stoelker commanding, surrendered to Lieutenant J. A. Murch and crew. On 11 May *U-516*, Oberleutnant Friedrich Petran commanding, surrendered to Lieutenant S. T. Gillmor and crew.

**1 Jun 1945:** VPB-112 received orders to depart England and return to the United States. Squadron assets and aircraft were turned over to HEDRON-7. On 5 June all personnel boarded the tender *Albemarle* (AV 5), arriving at Norfolk, Va., on 14 June. All personnel were given orders to report to NAS Seattle, Wash., to reform the squadron after 30 days of leave.

**27 Jul 1945:** Squadron personnel arrived at NAS Ault Field, Whidbey Island, Wash., and VPB-112 began reforming in August. Conversion training to the PB4Y-2 Privateer was conducted for all hands. On 13 August, Lieutenant R. H. Barden and one other officer, a flight surgeon, were killed while he was attempting to land his crippled aircraft. Fourteen other crew members had bailed out and one of those was killed when his chute failed to open. With the cessation of hostilities in the Pacific in August and the subsequent surrender of Japan, there was no longer a need for the squadron. Formal disestablishment of the squadron took place at NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., on 1 September 1945.

### Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAS Norfolk, Va.	8 Aug 1943
NAF Port Lyautey, F.M.	Nov 1943
NAF Upottery, England	Jan 1945
NAS Whidbey Island, Wash.	Jun 1945

### Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Josef M. Gardiner	8 Aug 1943
LCDR A. Y. Parunak	17 Feb 1944
LCDR J. B. Wayne	4 Apr 1945

### Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB4Y-1	Oct 1942
PB4Y-2	Jul 1945

**Major Overseas Deployments**

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
5 Nov 1943	29 Apr 1944	FAW-15	Port Lyautey	PB4Y-1	Med
29 Apr 1944	9 Jan 1945	FAW-15	Gibraltar	PB4Y-1	Med
9 Jan 1945	1 Jun 1945	FAW-7	Devon	PB4Y-1	Lant

**Wing Assignments**

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		8 Aug 1943
FAW-15		5 Nov 1943
FAW-7		9 Jan 1945
FAW-6		14 Jun 1945

**Unit Awards Received**

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

## VPB-113

### *Lineage*

Established as Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN (VB-113) on 18 August 1943.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN (VPB-113) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 28 May 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

The insignia for the squadron was approved by CNO on 28 February 1944. The design featured a

frowning “flat hat” octopus with a depth charge under each tentacle. The depth charges represented the squadron’s ASW role, while the numerous tentacles typified its long reach. Colors: tentacles, blue with white and black highlights; hat and face, white; bombs, black; neckerchief, black.

Nickname: None on record.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**18 Aug–Dec 1943:** VB-113 was established at NAAS Oceana, Va., under the operational control of FAW-5, as a heavy bombing squadron flying the PB4Y-1 Liberator. During the squadron’s first few months of existence its personnel received ground training using



*The squadron's octopus insignia design.*



the Link trainer, gunnery instruction and radio basics. Flight training commenced on 5 November with the arrival of the squadron's first PB4Y-1. After shakedown, 12 aircraft were ferried to FAW-7, Dunkeswell, England. On 28 December one of the ferry crews of 12 personnel aboard were killed in a crash at St. Mawgan, England. The war-weary Liberator that crashed was being brought back to the U.S. for disposal.

**18 Jan 1944:** VB-113 was relocated from NAAS Oceana, Va., to NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C., and a detachment was sent to NAAS Boca Chica, Fla., for advanced ASW training.

**18 Mar 1944:** The squadron crews ferrying aircraft to England rejoined the squadron at NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C., after an absence of four months. They had not been aboard long when orders came to relocate to NAS Norfolk. VB-113 pulled up stakes once more and returned to Virginia, arriving on 1 April 1944.

**11 Apr 1944:** The squadron was ordered to transfer 14 more replacement crews to FAW-7. On 18 April one of the crews crashed at Waller Field, Trinidad, with the loss of all hands.

**8 May 1944:** VB-113 was relocated to NAAS Boca Chica, Fla. After 30 May most squadron personnel had been sent as replacement crews to other squadrons. The squadron's primary mission was changed from

fleet operations to training and maintenance. From this time until its disestablishment, VB-113 trained 145 replacement crews in antisubmarine warfare using aircraft assigned to the squadron.

**28 May 1945:** VPB-113 transferred its aircraft to HEDRON-5 and was disestablished at NAAS Boca Chica, Fla.

### *Home Port Assignments*

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAAS Oceana, Va.	18 Aug 1943
NAAS Elizabeth City, N.C.	18 Jan 1944
NAS Norfolk, Va.	1 Apr 1944
NAAS Boca Chica, Fla.	8 May 1944

### *Commanding Officers*

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR Louis W. Mang	18 Aug 1943
LCDR William R. Bailey	6 Jun 1944

### *Aircraft Assignment*

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB4Y-1	Nov 1943

### *Major Overseas Deployments*

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
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No overseas deployments.

### *Wing Assignments*

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-5		18 Aug 1943
FAW-12		8 May 1944

### *Unit Awards Received*

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
None on record.	

## VPB-117

### *Lineage*

Established as Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN (VB-117) on 1 February 1944.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN (VPB-117) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 15 November 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

The squadron utilized one of the Walt Disney designs for its insignia. After obtaining the copyright re-



*The squadron's Disney designed insignia.*

lease, the squadron forwarded the insignia to CNO, who approved the design on 14 August 1944. The insignia contained a caricature of a horse diving onto a ship. A silhouette of a tropical island appeared to the left of the horse and a huge bomb was in the background, in the shape of a triangle with rounded corners. Colors: background, light blue; bomb, yellow; horse and ship, black with white outlines; island, light green.

Nickname: Blue Raiders, 1943–1944.

Exterminators, 1945.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**1 Feb–Jul 1944:** VB-117 was established at NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif., under the operational control of FAW-14, as a heavy bombing squadron flying the PB4Y-1 Liberator. These aircraft were equipped with the latest AN/APQ-5 low-altitude radar bombing gear. Ground school and flight training continued through the end of July 1944. In August the squadron began preparations for its transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii. The training period was marred by the crash of Lieutenant (jg) Golden and crew at NAAS Camp Kearney. The aircraft crashed into the supply hut of VB-102, resulting in the death of nine VB-117 personnel and nine VB-102 personnel and injuries to 11 others. The destruction of VB-102's supplies set back the squadron's planned transpac by one month.

**11 Aug 1944:** VB-117 flew the transpac to NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, with the last aircraft arriving on 13 August. Upon arrival the squadron came under the operational control of FAW-2. After a period of six weeks training in ASW techniques and operational searches, the squadron received orders for deployment to the combat zone in the South Pacific.

**Sep 1944:** VB-117 transferred to North Field, Tinian, coming under the operational control of FAW-1. The squadron conducted operations from Tinian along with VBs 102, 116, 150 and 151. Operational patrol searches were flown southwest toward the Philippines, west toward the Nansei Shoto Islands and north along the Nanpo Shoto Islands, ranging out to 1,000 miles. Use of the night bombing low-altitude radar was discontinued due to the presence of friendly submarines in all search areas. Patrolling in the vicinity of Iwo Jima was done in two aircraft elements.

**12 Nov 1944:** The aircraft flown by Lieutenant Herbert G. Box and crew was severely damaged by AA fire from Muko Jima Retto. Lieutenant Box's crippled aircraft made it to within 30 miles of Tinian before being forced to ditch. Seven survivors were rescued the next morning.

**1 Dec 1944:** VPB-117 was transferred to Tacloban Air Strip, Leyte, Philippines, coming under the operational control of FAW-10. Unfortunately, most of the squadron's gear and personal effects were lost or damaged in the transfer from Tinian to Leyte. Search missions were conducted over Cebu, Negros Islands, French Indochina and Chinese ports. Considerable success was obtained during this one month. Claims were submitted for 22 enemy aircraft shot down and 14,750 tons of shipping sunk.

**10 Dec 1944:** Lieutenant Bradford M. Brooks and crew were attacked by four A6M Zeke fighters off Negros Island. During the ensuing engagement they shot down two Zekes but lost three of their engines and Brooks was forced to ditch. Although badly wounded, Brooks landed without flaps or right rudder

control. Seven of the crew of 12 were able to exit the aircraft and were later returned by guerilla forces operating in the area. For his courage under fire and superb skill in landing his badly damaged aircraft, Lieutenant Brooks was awarded the Navy Cross.

**31 Dec 1944:** Lieutenant Harold Stang ran out of gas while on his final approach to the runway. The aircraft crashed into the bay 300 yards from the strip and sank immediately. All of the crew except the copilot managed to exit the aircraft before it sank.

**1-28 Jan 1945:** During January search missions were deemed so crucial to fleet intelligence gathering that the squadron was not permitted to carry bombs in case any of its aircraft were lost in attacks on shipping or ground targets. On 28 January Lieutenant (jg) Robert E. White, Jr., and crew were shot down while on a patrol to Formosa and the China Coast. The copilot and five crew members survived the crash and remained prisoners-of-war until after V-J Day.

**29 Jan 1945:** Lieutenant Commander Harold M. McGaughey, squadron executive officer, conducted a successful raid along the coast of the Japanese mainland sinking five merchant ships and damaging five others. McGaughey and his crew were not content with only naval targets on their scorecard and proceeded inland to strafe and destroy numerous shore installations and supply dumps in the face of intense AA fire. For his courage under fire and aggressive pursuit of the enemy, Lieutenant Commander McGaughey was awarded the Navy Cross.

**Feb 1945:** The squadron was moved to McGuire Field, Mindoro, Philippines, under the operational control of FAW-17. From this location searches were conducted over the northwest coast of Borneo, the coastline of Indochina and the waters in between. The squadron was responsible for tracking enemy ships and task forces attempting to enter the search sectors. Close cooperation was maintained with the submarine forces during this period. Frequently, attacks by squadron aircraft would force enemy destroyers to break off depth charge attacks against U.S. submarines, permitting them to get on with their deadly work. On one occasion, an enemy battle group formed around the battleships *Ise* and *Hyugu* was tracked below the tip of Indochina and kept under surveillance both day and night until it reached a point north of Formosa. The enemy battle group had used a heavy weather front to cover its movements; however, this did not prevent the squadron from tracking the force using radar and the skill of its aircrews.

**17 Feb 1945:** Lieutenant Commander Harold W. McGaughey and crew were shot down over Puerto Princessa, Palawan Island, with the loss of all hands.

**25 Mar 1945:** Patrol restrictions the squadron had operated under were completely lifted during March and all patrols went forth fully armed. Shore installa-

tions, such as railroads, oil storage tanks, trains, vehicles and river shipping, were given special attention. Lieutenant Arthur J. Elder returned from one of these missions with his aircraft riddled, one crewman dead and five others injured. They had conducted an attack on shipping in Saigon Harbor, French Indochina, and sank three large merchant vessels. Two escort vessels and 20 small merchant vessels were also heavily strafed by intense AA fire thrown up by the escort vessels. Although Elder's aircraft was badly hit and several crewmen wounded, he managed to return to base, shooting down one enemy fighter on the way home. It was the third time this crew had returned with injuries, and it was decided to evacuate them back to the States. Lieutenant Elder was awarded the Navy Cross for his courage in pressing home the attack in the face of heavy enemy fire.

**Jun 1945:** Credible targets in the squadron's search sectors had dwindled to nothing. The squadron received its first PB4Y-2 Privateer during this period and gladly exchanged the beat-up PB4Y-1 Liberators for the more heavily armed bomber.

**14 Jun 1945:** Lieutenant (jg) J. P. Dougan and his crew of 11 failed to return from a mission. All 11 men were listed as missing in action.

**22 Jun 1945:** Lieutenant (jg) S. W. Sayre crashed into the sea shortly after takeoff for a patrol. All 12 crew members perished.

**1 Jul 1945:** Lieutenant (jg) Robert E. Hepting and crew were shot down while on a patrol. Three members of the crew survived the crash and remained prisoners of war until V-J Day.

**30 Jul 1945:** Aircraft Machinist's Mate Second Class (AMM2C) Frederick F. Thomas became the squadron's last combat casualty when he was killed by AA fire during a mission over French Indochina.

**11 Aug 1945:** VPB-117 aircraft flew their last combat mission of the war. Operations were suspended at McGuire Field, Mindoro, Philippines. Preparations were begun to ferry the squadron aircraft and personnel back to Tinian.

**16 Aug 1945:** VPB-117 was transferred to Tinian to provide weather flights for the fleet under the operational control of FAW-18. On 19 September a detachment of five crews and four aircraft was sent to Pelelieu, Palau Islands, for special weather flights. During its combat tour from September 1944 to August 1945 the squadron was credited with completing 1,617 combat missions, 58 enemy aircraft claimed (55 verified by postwar review of enemy records), 236 enemy ships of all sizes claimed sunk or damaged, and destruction of innumerable ground targets. VPB-117 had five of the eight U.S. Navy multiengine bomber crews that shot down five or more enemy aircraft from in the air: the crews for Lieutenant Commander Harold W. McGaughey, five; Lieutenant Dan Moore, five; Lieutenant Tom Hyland, six;

Lieutenant (jg) Jan Carter, six; and Lieutenant (jg) Sheldon Sutton, seven.

**Sep 1945:** VPB-117 was relieved at Tinian and returned to the United States.

**Oct–Nov 1945:** Squadron personnel were given orders for demobilization or extension of duty with other squadrons. On 15 November 1945 VPB-117 was officially disestablished.

### Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Everett O. Rigsbee, Jr.	1 Feb 1944
CDR Harold W. McDonald	25 Dec 1944
LCDR Thomas P. Mulvihill	25 Jan 1945
LCDR Roger J. Crowley, Jr.	8 Apr 1945
CDR Cole L. Windham	6 Sep 1945

### Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif.	1 Feb 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	11 Aug 1944
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Sep 1945

### Aircraft Assignment

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif.	1 Feb 1944		
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	11 Aug 1944	PB4Y-1	Mar 1944
NAS San Diego, Calif.	Sep 1945	PB4Y-2	Jun 1945

### Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
11 Aug 1944	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB4Y-1	WestPac
Sep 1944	*	FAW-1	Tinian	PB4Y-1	SoPac
1 Dec 1944	*	FAW-10	Tacloban	PB4Y-1	SoPac
Feb 1945	*	FAW-17	Mindoro	PB4Y-1/2	SoPac
16 Aug 1945	Sep 1945	FAW-18	Tinian	PB4Y-1/2	SoPac

\* Continued combat deployment in the Pacific, moving from base to base.

### Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		1 Feb 1944
FAW-2		11 Aug 1944
FAW-1		Sep 1944
FAW-10		1 Dec 1944
FAW-17		Feb 1945
FAW-18		16 Aug 1945

### Wing Assignments—Continued

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		Sep 1945

### Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>
PUC	4 Oct 1944      11 Aug 1945

## VPB-118

### *Lineage*

Established as Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN (VB-118) on 1 July 1944.

Redesignated Patrol Bombing Squadron ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEEN (VPB-118) on 1 October 1944.

Disestablished on 11 December 1945.

### *Squadron Insignia and Nickname*

None on record.

### *Chronology of Significant Events*

**1 Jul–15 Nov 1944:** VB-118 was established at NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif., as a heavy bombing squadron flying the PB4Y-1 Liberator under the operational control of FAW-14. After completing a four-week ground school and limited flight training on three weary PB4Y-1 Liberators, the squadron was relocated to NAAS Crows Landing, Calif., for advanced flight training. On 20 August, VB-118 began receiving its first PB4Y-2 Privateers. The squadron stood down from the training syllabus in mid-November to prepare for the upcoming transpac to Hawaii. On 15 November the ground support personnel boarded SS *General Howze* for transportation to Hawaii.

**20 Nov–Dec 1944:** VPB-118's aircraft departed California for NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii, arriving by 21 November. During the next month the squadron came under FAW-2 while undergoing further training in preparation for combat. On 10 December a detachment of aircraft was sent to Midway Island to conduct operational patrols, returning on 22 December.

**6 Jan–Apr 1945:** VPB-118 departed NAS Kaneohe for the combat zone, arriving at Tinian, Marianas Islands, on 10 January. Operational control of the squadron passed to FAW-1. Routine operational patrols continued from Tinian through mid-April. Squadron targets attacked included Truk, Iwo Jima, Yawata Shima and Okinawa.

**22 Apr 1945:** VPB-118 was transferred to Yontan Airfield, Okinawa Shima. Administrative headquarters staff of the squadron remained on Tinian. Patrols and antishipping sweeps commenced upon the squadron's arrival. Positioning the squadron on Okinawa had become necessary due to the lack of sufficient targets in the patrol sectors around Tinian.

**2 May 1945:** The squadron was taken off patrols to conduct a special attack on the airfield at Kanoya, in southern Japan. Third Fleet intelligence had indications that a large attack force of G4M-1 Betty bombers was being formed to transport Baka bombs in an attempt to wipe out U.S. combat vessels located off

Okinawa. The six remaining Privateers of VPB-118 were the only aircraft available on short notice. The strike caught the enemy totally by surprise. The damage inflicted on the airfield and assembled aircraft prevented the enemy's intended operation from being carried out.

**6 May 1945:** Lieutenants Montgomery and J. A. Lasater were patrolling an area off the southern coast of Korea when they encountered a number of enemy destroyers and a small tanker. In the attack, the tanker exploded just as Montgomery's Privateer was entering its bomb run. Twenty feet of the ship's hawser and the king post strap were imbedded in the starboard wing. Montgomery managed to return to Okinawa on three engines but Lasater elected to continue the patrol alone. He and his crew never returned and were listed as missing in action.

**7 May 1945:** Five aircraft were sent on a patrol off the coast of Korea. After shooting down one Japanese observation plane, Lieutenant Farwell and his crew attacked a 2,000-ton tanker. While completing a bomb run that finally sank the ship, Farwell's Privateer was struck repeatedly by heavy AA fire. He ditched the aircraft with no casualties. As their squadron mates flew air cover above, a PBM landed within 30 minutes and retrieved the crew. One of the other Privateers flown by Lieutenant Norman M. Keiser sank a 4,000-ton freighter despite fire from its two destroyer escorts. In the same action Keiser and his crew strafed a second vessel, forcing it to beach ashore. Later on the same patrol, Keiser and his crew strafed and set on fire a third vessel. For his courage under fire and determination at pressing home the attack, Lieutenant Keiser was awarded the Navy Cross.

**11 May 1945:** The pace of combat left the squadron with only three serviceable aircraft which were in need of major repairs. It became necessary for the squadron to return to Tinian for refit and maintenance of the aircraft and crew rest. The squadron remained at Yontan Airfield until mid-May when it was relieved by VPB-109. Prior to the squadron's departure it provided support to VPB-109 to familiarize them with mission requirements. In the first two days of VPB-109's stay on Okinawa, a VPB-118 Privateer accompanied them on patrol to familiarize them with the territory. On one of these missions, Lieutenant Lloyd's aircraft had an engine shot out and was pocked with 180 bullet holes.

**2 Jun 1945:** The squadron was ready to return to Okinawa from Tinian when disaster struck. One aircraft caught fire while undergoing last-minute maintenance, and one more was destroyed and two others damaged when a crippled B-29 crashed into the parking area. All the squadron welfare and recreation gear plus most of the personal baggage was lost. The aircraft were quickly replaced and after only a few days' delay, VPB-118 was back on Okinawa by 7 June 1945

continuing its antishipping patrols, conducting strikes on land targets and dropping mines in harbors throughout the Korean coastline and Kamine Shima.

**8 Aug 1945:** Lieutenant (jg) J. R. Park and crew were killed during an attack on an enemy freighter in the Tsushima Straits. The vessel had been set on fire by strafing, and when Park made his final bombing pass the ship's cargo detonated when the aircraft was directly above it. The ship apparently was carrying munitions and nothing remained of the ship or aircraft after the explosion.

**10 Aug 1945:** Offensive patrols ceased. Regular patrols continued but the aircraft still carried defensive armament and instructions "not to attack, unless attacked."

**1 Sep–Nov 1945:** VPB-118 was relocated to Yonabaru, Okinawa. Several aircrews were sent to Tinian for R&R. The airfields at Yonabaru were in such bad shape that the squadron was not able to resume patrols until 24 September. A sudden typhoon on 9 October compounded the miserable conditions. It was with great relief that VPB-118 received orders to report to Tinian on 24 October for aircraft overhaul and maintenance. The work at Tinian was completed on 3 November, and the squadron returned to Yonabaru.

**14 Nov–3 Dec 1945:** The squadron received orders to begin packing for the return to the States. VPB-118 began its journey homeward with departure on 18

November from Yonabaru bound for NAS Kaneohe. On 27 November the squadron boarded *Prince William* (AVG 19) en route to NAS San Diego, Calif., arriving on 3 December.

**11 Dec 1945:** VPB-118 was disestablished at NAS San Diego, Calif.

### Home Port Assignments

<i>Location</i>	<i>Date of Assignment</i>
NAAS Camp Kearney, Calif.	1 Jul 1944
NAAS Crows Landing, Calif.	Aug 1944
NAS Kaneohe, Hawaii	20 Nov 1944
NAS San Diego, Calif.	3 Dec 1945

### Commanding Officers

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR C. K. Harper	14 Jul 1944
LCDR Arthur F. Farwell, Jr.	11 May 1945
LCDR Carl W. Rinehart	25 Jul 1945

### Aircraft Assignment

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
PB4Y-2	Aug 1944

### Major Overseas Deployments

<i>Date of Departure</i>	<i>Date of Return</i>	<i>Wing</i>	<i>Base of Operations</i>	<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Area of Operations</i>
20 Nov 1944	*	FAW-2	Kaneohe	PB4Y-2	WestPac
6 Jan 1945	*	FAW-1	Tinian	PB4Y-2	SoPac
22 Apr 1945	*	FAW-1	Yontan	PB4Y-2	SoPac
11 May 1945	*	FAW-1	Tinian	PB4Y-2	SoPac
7 Jun 1945	*	FAW-1	Yontan	PB4Y-2	SoPac
1 Sep 1945	14 Nov 1945	FAW-1	Yonabaru	PB4Y-2	SoPac

\* Continued combat deployment in the Pacific, moving from base to base.

### Wing Assignments

<i>Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
FAW-14		1 Jul 1944
FAW-2		20 Nov 1944
FAW-1		6 Jan 1945
FAW-14		3 Dec 1945

### Unit Awards Received

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Date Covering Unit Award</i>	
PUC	26 Apr 1945	8 Aug 1945