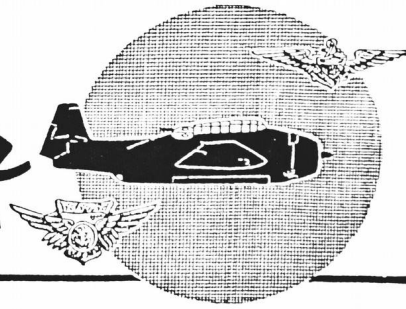


The Avenger

U.S. NAVAL AIR STATION - FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



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Educating . Preserving . Honoring the Heroes . National Register of Historic Places

Newsletter of the NAS Fort Lauderdale Museum Print Version February 2015

NASFL MUSEUM
4000 W. Perimeter Rd.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315

MEDIA MAIL

Dear NASFL Museum Members:

2014 was an eventful year for our organization. The Museum continues to develop with many new artifacts and features. We have a beautiful library, thanks to Eagle Scout Troop #190, and a new handicapped accessible restroom with water fountains, for which materials and work were donated by the following:

Gallo Herbert Architects (William J. Gallo)
JWR Construction Services, Inc. (Jerry Du Bois, Paul Novak)
Summers Fire Sprinklers, Inc. (Ray Laliberte)
C. Davis Electric Co. Inc. (Charles E. Davis Jr.)
Right Way Plumbing Co. (Charles D. Ermer)
AA Advance Air Inc. (Douglas M. Cady III)

Jordan's Permit Expediting Construction Services
Richard Haddad
Lotspeich Co. of Florida, Inc. (Mike Fee, Ricky Rivera)
Broward County Aviation Department
Broward County Building Dept. (Gary Kilbride)

Our deepest gratitude to all involved for their generosity and dedication. A special thanks to Mr. Paul Novak from JWR Construction Services, Inc., who spent countless hours preparing the way; and to museum member Richard Haddad, who did the heavy work of demolition and flooring. Also to Ray and his son Larry Rivera, who painted all the restrooms. Volunteerism has never been higher! Our Luncheons and Flight 19 Memorial Ceremony were blessed with outstanding speakers and attendance. 2014 will always be remembered as the year we lost our Founder and leader, Allan McElhiney. He fought the battle for years with Parkinson's disease until his passing November 9, on his 89th birthday. Each of us know, there would be no Museum, Memorial Ceremony—nothing preserved to remember our local military history and the memory of those who perished here in defense of our freedom. In spite of Allan's failing health, he insisted on traveling to Washington, D.C. on October 11 with Honor Flight South Florida. It was an honor for me to volunteer as his guardian. It was a trip he greatly enjoyed in the company of fellow WWII veterans—especially the enthusiastic greetings each step of the way! Things will never be the same without Allan. He often spoke of his concern for the future of NASFLHA and the Museum when he no longer would be with us. I truly believe that those fears were gone in his final days. As we go forward, all our members must do whatever they can collectively, to try and fill the huge void left without Allan.

Sincerely,
John D. Bloom, Jr., M.D
President, NAS Fort Lauderdale Museum

IN MEMORIAM

Our deepest condolences to the families of the following NASFL Museum members: Museum founder, Allan McElhiney, and members Gloria Epstein dear wife of David Epstein, Dolph Dumont, and Clay Drexler.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Chip LaMarca (Broward County Commissioner), Christopher Maholm (Dayton-Granger), Howard Rundell, Timothy Maloney NASFL WWII, Bruce Muntz, William Hardy, Capt. James Eng, Austin Meehan & Family, Bernard Welsh Vietnam, Dan Solt, and Veronica Brown.

MUSEUM BENEFACTORS 2014

Beneactors: Dayton-Granger (Christopher Maholm), Edward “Buddy” Galvin, Ken Steigelman, Miami Military Museum (Dr. Anthony Atwood), Chip LaMarca, Rudy Oetting, Jon F. Myhre, Jordán Morgan & Richard Haddad.

Donations: Timothy Maloney, Coley J. Bagocius, Derek Reese, Jennifer Marcroft, John Schwarz, Chevalier Charles Schaus, Gary Pirtle, Paul Buckley, Rudy Oetting, Dr. & Mrs. Perry, Robert Donigian, Virginia Montalvo, Margaret Ahner.

Artifact Donations: *we are still cataloging multiple artifacts, please forgive us if we forgot anyone else.* Frank Frezza, Howard Schneider (on loan), Henry Torres, Mrs. L. Thatcher, John Lolli, the family of Captain John Payne, James F. Lansdale, Gary Kilbride, Mary Babcock, Arturo Beuses, Tom Sheridan, Chevalier Charles Schaus & Philip Schreier, Debbie Hamilton, Robert Donigian & Jean Franki, Mike Seal, Karl Hop & Jon Lee Finnigan (Harvey Hop's daughter).

Businesses & Organizations: Boy Scouts Troop #190, Miami Marlins, Ken Kaye (Sun-Sentinel), Broward Navy Days (Mary Anne Gray), Thomason Pest Control (Toby Thomason), Sonitrol Fort Lauderdale (John Ray), Everglades Council League (Tom Melville), Gold Coast Women Veterans, Oil Spill Response USA, Inc. (Paul Schuler), Steel Fabricators LLC, and Bromley & Cook Engineering.

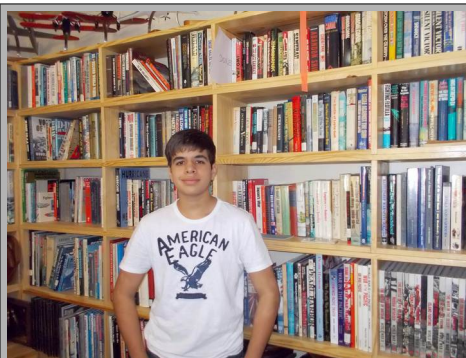
Navy Heritage Project: US Navy Reservist Unit VTU-0808G Miami, US Navy active duty LCS MCM DET 4 San Diego, and active duty navy personnel from USS Independence San Diego.

Museum Docents: Gary Adams, Debbie Hamilton, Gary Kilbride, David Epstein, Buddy Galvin, John & Minerva Bloom.

Volunteers: Ray & Larry Rivera, R. Haddad, Dorothy Riser, Matthew Bloom, Bobbie Kilbride, Arturo Beuses, Catherine Weidman, Lorrie White, McKenna & Patrick Sivore, Jordan & Leanna, Karl Bork, Angela Piraino, and John Schwarz.



Patrick & McKenna Sivore
St. Coleman's School and Cardinal Gibbons High



Arturo Beuses, West Boca High



Jordan & Leanna, North Andrews Elementary



Lorrie White & Bobbie Kilbride



CDR Rey Horta, CAPT Bruce Fuchs, VFW CDR Ray Rivera, CAPT Scott Hahn, CAPT Stephen Schaffer



Matthew J. Bloom & Buddy Galvin

Note: MEMBERSHIP DUES JANUARY 1st

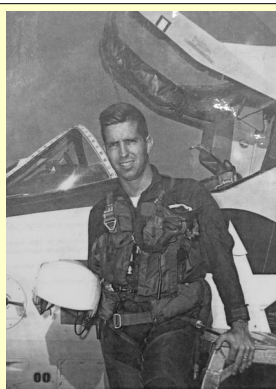
Friendly Reminder: DUES are due on January 1st. If you have not paid, please do so: Individual \$35 (1 yr), Family \$60 (1 yr), Corporate \$100 (1 yr), Student \$15 (1 yr), Lifetime \$300 (One time charge), \$1,000 (Benefactor). We are a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. All donations, memberships, NASFL merchandise, and/or event fees are tax deductible. All funds raised support your Museum. Receipt of Donation letter is available for any event, please ask anytime!

October 2014 LUNCHEON at LAUDERDALE YACHT CLUB

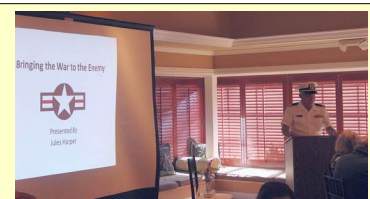
Excellent and very informative luncheon with our Guest Speaker, Julian “Jules” Harper, US Navy (Retired). Julian received his wings and commission in the US Navy on June 25, 1965, and was married to his wife, Sandy, the next day. He deployed for four months on board the USS Forrestal in the Mediterranean. He spent two nine month cruises from 1966 through 1968 on board the USS Kitty Hawk operating off the coast of Vietnam. During that time he flew 200 combat missions over Vietnam, amassed 332 carrier take offs and landings, and was awarded the following medals: the Distinguished Flying Cross; 21 Air Medals; Gold Star in lieu of his second Navy Commendation Medal with combat “V”; Gold Star in lieu of his second Navy Achievement Medal with combat “V”; Navy Presidential Unit Citation; National Defense Service Medal; Vietnam Service Medal; Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation; and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. Jules left the Navy after one tour of five years in December, 1968, to go to work for Continental Airlines where he spent 35 years as an airline pilot and logged over 33,000 flying hours. Jules has been a member of the Naval Air Station Historical Association since 1993. He served on the board of directors from 2001-2002. Currently, Jules is President of the Valencia Reserve Veteran's Club.



Julian Harper with Dr. & Mrs. Perry



Lt. Harper with A-4 Sky Hawk



Jules related his experience with attendees



69th Anniversary of Flight 19 Memorial Ceremony

Thank you to the following for their gracious help with the Memorial Ceremony

Jack Seiler, Mayor, City of Fort Lauderdale; Jim Naugle, retired Mayor, City of Fort Lauderdale; Chip LaMarca, Broward County Commissioner; George R. Moraitis, Jr., Florida House of Representatives; Broward County Aviation Dept, Deputy Director Douglas Webster; BCAD, Robert Pence Chief of Maintenance; Broward County Sheriff Dept., BCAD Chief Roy H. Liddicott; BSO, Sgt. Donald Prichard; Edgar "Buddy" Galvin USNR WWII; Commander Tom Melville USN (Ret); Dr. Anthony Atwood, Miami Military Museum; Karl Khan, Military Research Foundation.

VFW past Commander, Ray Rivera USNR WWII; Stranahan High School Marine Corps JROTC, Col. James A. Davidson; Frank Loonto, CountyLine TV; Chaplain Ron Perkins; David Plumb; Timothy Davis, Marvo Taitt, Odabashian Imports, Inc., Eddie Odabashian; Ron Lowther, Producer; Fort Lauderdale Florist, Jay Walsh; Gold Coast Amateur Radio Assoc.; David Baum, Photography; Ken Kaye, Sun-Sentinel.

Flight 19 Commission volunteers: John & Minerva Bloom; Sgt. Don Prichard; Ray & Larry Rivera; Debbie Hamilton; Dorothy Riser; Gary & Bobbie Kilbride; Catherine Weidman.



Photos by David Baum - [To see video and a slideshow of the ceremony please check our website](#)

MUSEUM NEWS

25 WWII veterans were aboard *Honor Flight South Florida* to Washington, D.C. on 11 October 2014, including NASFL Museum founder [Allan McElhiney](#) (USS Asheville, USNR WWII & Korea), and Museum's Sgt. at Arms [Ray Rivera](#) (USS Bunker Hill, USNR WWII & Korea). The veterans visited several memorials dedicated to honor their service.



Chip LaMarca, John Bloom & McElhiney



WWII Veterans & guardians at Iwo Jima Memorial



Ray Rivera with daughter Diane



NAVAL AIR STATION FORT LAUDERDALE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION INC (Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum) is a GuideStar Exchange Gold Participant

GuideStar Exchange for non-profits:

We are proud to announce the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum just became a GOLD Participant in the GuideStar Exchange for non-profit organizations committed to transparency! Feel free to [check on our organization's stats](#).



Donate to NASFL Museum when you shop at Amazon: if you, like many of us shop at Amazon—you can now donate to the Museum through AmazonSmile.Org! AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon. The AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organizations selected by customers. Simply go to amazonsmile.org, and if you are already an amazon member sign-in with your usual account then choose **Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Historical Association, Inc.**, from the charities that are available or go directly to: smile.amazon.com/ch/65-0353567 to sign-in. New to Amazon? you can create an account and start your shopping!



Flight 19 Group from Denmark: every December 5th since 1981, a group of friends and their children get together in Copenhagen to remember Flight 19. Dr. Bjørn Madsen a member of the Museum visited in 2012. For the past 2 years he has been sharing with us photos and anecdotes of their annual tradition: *"We get together with friends every year on December 5th for a little social gathering and a minute of silence in remembrance of the soldiers lost on the light 19 mission."* —Bjørn Madsen, Copenhagen.

[Denmark Group on our blog](#)



"Silent Witness to History" British Enfield rifle QM 1670 retrieved from the Normandy, France, D-Day landing beaches on June 1944. Presented to Chevalier Charles Schaus USNR WWII, in recognition of his service, bravery and devotion to duty, while serving on the USS BARTON DD-722. This Rifle was donated to the Museum and is on exhibit now.

[Read the story of this rifle on our blog](#)

Allan F. McElhiney, USNR MM2/c WWII & Korea - USS Asheville PF-1

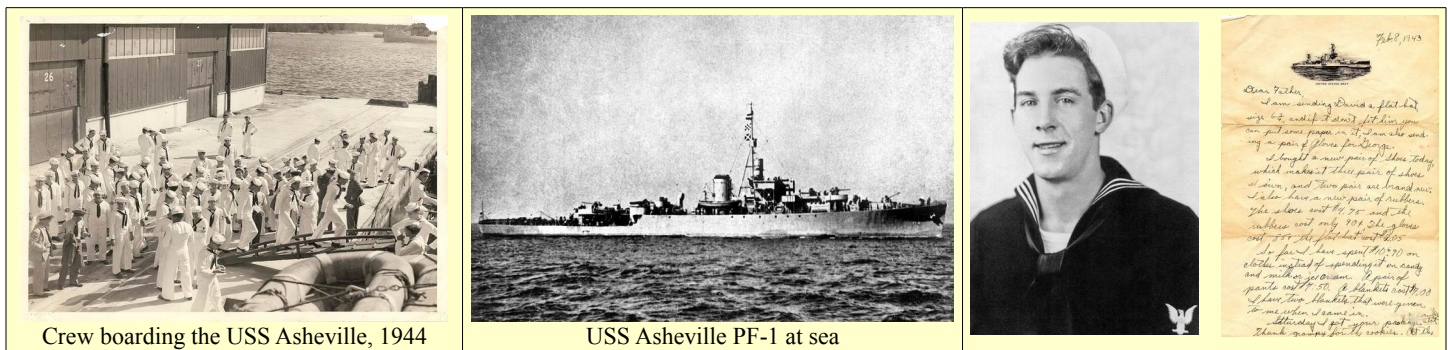


Allan McElhiney was born November 9, 1925, to Allan and Ruth McElhiney in Lynn, Massachusetts. His father was a Marine who served in World War I. Allan has three brothers, all of whom served in the military, and one sister. On Allan's 17th birthday, his parents signed his papers to join the Navy. Beginning in 1944, he served on convoy duty on the Patrol Frigate USS Asheville PF-1 based at Port Everglades. After World War II while in the Reserves, he was called to active duty for the Korean Conflict, back aboard the USS Asheville. After his discharge from the Navy, like many veterans who had spent time or heard stories of our area, Allan moved with his wife Carolyn and three children to Fort Lauderdale. They would later have two more children. He started a wall-covering business with contracts up and down the East Coast as well as the Bahamas. In the 1970's he joined the Navy League, and later became chairman of the Sea Cadet Program.

In 1979, Allan, along with military friends Ben Langley MCB7, Army Col. Robert Rawls, Chief Stephen Sedillo USCG, and a handful of history enthusiasts and supporters, established the 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Historical Association. Their main mission was to save from demolition at least one of the buildings from the former WWII Fort Lauderdale naval base. The group worked tirelessly for many years, and finally on May 20th of 1998, they were successful in registering Building #8 "The Link Trainer Building" on the National Register of Historic Places. In December 1999 after much work and preparation—and joining in their preservation cause—was Broward County Commissioner Lori Nance Parrish, whose father W. A. Nance, Jr. served in the Navy during WWII. Lori was able to locate a \$200,000 grant from the Transportation Department, and just in time, the building was officially saved and moved to its permanent location at 4000 West Perimeter Road. Restoration has continued since, to complete Allan's dream of a permanent place for the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum, to honor the service and sacrifices of those who trained here during World War II.

In the course of more than 30 years, McElhiney compiled a vast amount of documents, photographs, articles, and artifacts that are on display at the museum. He did all this without pay. This World War II collection continues to grow daily, thanks to the efforts of volunteers, museum members and benefactors. Beginning on December 5, 1989, Allan presided over the Flight 19 Memorial Ceremony—originally celebrated at Navy Park, and more recently in the museum building. This annual ceremony is open to the public. In December 2011, Allan McElhiney was inducted as a Broward County Pioneer, and was also awarded the Broward Navy Days Freedom Award for 2012. On December 5, 2013, he was honored with the Proclamation "*The Allan McElhiney Day in Broward County*" by Commissioner Chip LaMarca.

Over the past several years Allan's physical health deteriorated, limiting his activities however his keen mind and sharp wit remained. Having learned of the Honor Flight, he was invigorated by the opportunity to travel with other World War II veterans to visit the World War II, Korea, and Iwo Jima Memorials as well as the Arlington Cemetery in Washington, DC. It was obvious to his family and friends how very important this was to him. With the great help of volunteers from the non-profit organization Honor Flight South Florida, Allan made the trip of a lifetime on October 11, 2014. His joy was palpable, especially with the reception and celebration on their return that night to Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. On November 9, 2014, after a long battle with Parkinson's disease, Allan McElhiney passed away on his 89th birthday. [Allan's memorial service on our website.](#)



Crew boarding the USS Asheville, 1944

USS Asheville PF-1 at sea



NASFLHA founders: Steve Sedillo USCG, and Allan McElhiney USNR.



L to R: NASFLHA Co-founder Ben Langley, Bill Moffit, Allan, & Co-founder Bob Rawls.



President George H. W. Bush visits with McElhiney to sign aviation mural in 1992.



McElhiney presiding at one of his many Luncheons at the Lauderdale Yacht Club.



Unveiling a sign honoring Allan: Ray Rivera, Edwin Torres, Chuck Richter, and John Casey.



Lori Nance Parrish helped save the museum building from demolition in 1999 by securing a \$200,000 grant from the Transportation Dept.

A Sea Story — Re: Brother Al.

By Dick Boyce

"I was Officer-in-Charge at (former Naval Air Station) Ft Lauderdale Base from Sept 1988 until 19 July 1991. Al and I hit it off at our initial introduction and remained close throughout my tour. My new base was noticeably the biggest eyesore in the vicinity of the airport. The buildings were in disrepair with peeling paint and suffering from no maintenance program and no money to correct the problem. I felt more like a slum lord than a naval officer. My tightfisted seniors offered advice, but no funds.

Allan McElhiney asked me to provide space for him to start his museum. He discussed his plans to recreate a WWII flight student's bunk room as well as collect plaques from all ships visiting Ft Lauderdale. His long range plan included having a mural painted on a wall with President GHW Bush's plane included. I agreed to all of it with one condition... Al had to tell me that President Bush was coming for the dedication of the mural. Tongue in cheek, Al told me of his plan to have the President on site.

Over the next few weeks I signed a lot of bogus letters to a lot of ships asking for plaques for a museum that didn't exist, to be seen by a president that wasn't going to visit. I also officially notified my seniors that President Bush was going to participate in our ceremony. Paint and maintenance crews were flown into from Dahlgren, Virginia to "beautify" the facility. I provided weekly updates to seniors about the potential VIP visit and developed a formal program for the ceremony. I also helped Al unwrap many of the plaques he received and helped him write Thank-you notes.

Just prior to the big event, I passed the word up my chain of command that Jeb Bush would be standing in for his father. The list of attendees dropped significantly. What a happy ending! In the end my facilities looked new, Al had lots of souvenirs from the fleet, and neither of us spent a penny. Al was my kind of sailor. Our philosophies were similar. If it's good for the Navy, just do it. One senior eventually discovered the scam. He complimented me for "my ability to interact with the Navy League and civilian community in promoting a positive image of the Navy". In private he said Al and I were modern day Frank and Jesse James."

Dick Boyce

Floyd "Flip" O. Johnson WII US Navy – Korea & Vietnam USAF



1944, Floyd O. Johnson AOM 3/c USN
Turret Gunner TBF

Floyd "Flip" Johnson was born July 11, 1925 in Staples, Minnesota. He joined the US Navy at age 17, and served from 1943-1946, starting with Boot Camp in Farragut, Idaho and learning various skills along the way such as Gunnery, Ordnance, Aviation, and Torpedo training at different military bases across the US. After being discharged from the Navy on August

1946, Johnson would continue serving his country as a pilot in the Air Force from 1948-1974, flying bombers like the B-29, B-36 and the legendary B-52. Besides serving in World War II and Korea, he completed five tours of duty in the Vietnam War. After 30 years of service, Johnson retired from the Air Force on December 1, 1974 as Senior Master Sergeant.

His medals upon retiring include: The American Defense, Asiatic Pacific, Navy Good Conduct, World War II Victory and Navy Occupation, Navy Outstanding Unit, Air Force Longevity, Air Force Outstanding Unit, Air Force Good Conduct, Small Arms Expert, NCO Academy, Air Force Commendation (2), Air Medal (Republic of Vietnam), Vietnam Service Medal (5 stars), Presidential Unit Citation, and Airmans Medal.

USS Enterprise and Flight 19: Johnson would survive frequent suicide plane attacks by Japanese "Kamikaze" pilots while serving aboard the USS Enterprise, forcing its airmen to switch from the TBM Avenger (a torpedo bomber) to the F6F Hellcat, which was designed to achieve air superiority over Japan's infamous A6M Zero and was better able to counter Kamikaze attacks. The Enterprise was eventually damaged and forced to return to the States, along with Johnson, who returned to San Diego, then Kingsville, Texas, where he would receive additional training. On August 6, 1945, the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, and Johnson's training was terminated.

Still having a year left in his contract with the Navy, Johnson decided to relocate to NAS Fort Lauderdale, where he would continue flying and training. In December, 1945,

Johnson was preparing to leave for volunteer duty at Great Lakes Separation Service, when news reached him of the fate of Flight 19, which took off from NAS Fort Lauderdale and disappeared off the coast, launching a decades long mystery which has yet to be definitively solved. Johnson's good friend, Bob Harmon, was part of Flight 19 and disappeared along with it, despite the tireless efforts of the hundreds of men involved in the search afterwards.

Johnson, who trained heavily alongside Harmon, and was an experienced flier in all types of conditions, has a more pragmatic view of what happened to Flight 19, opposed to the many prevalent theories involving aliens, time travel, etc., *"My personal feelings about FLT 19 and what happened is simply this—The Flight Leader did not listen to some fairly experienced people who wanted to help him, both in the air and on the ground."*



Floyd O. Johnson AOM 3/c USN (right)
Turret Gunner TBF, 1944, with friend

From a letter written by Floyd O. Johnson to Allan McElhiney:

Howdy Allan, just a few notes to you about my times and memories of the Navy days with Bob Harmon during World War II.

I first met Bob Harmon (Flight 19) in Dec., 1944 at Barbers Point Naval Air Station, Hawaii. My crew [Richter and Radioman Rogue]

was returning from a short [tow] in the Admiralty Islands and were assigned to NACTU at Barbers Point. We had intense training there for three months in night flying and radar/nav work. Bob Harmon's crew was there at this time. We flew two and three times a day and had constant ground school classes.

From there we deployed to Guam and the fleet anchorage at Ulithi where we reported on board the Enterprise (CVG). Carrier duty was great but the Kamakaze attacks were intense so the complement of torpedo crews was reduced to make room for fighter planes.

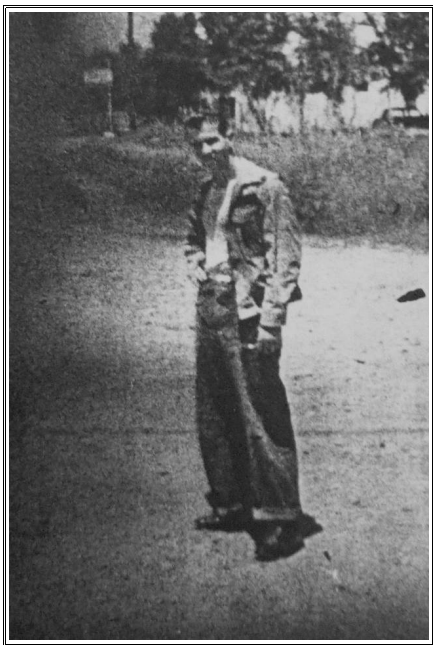
We, about 10 crews, were sent to Guam at [Onate] Air Base and then to Marpi Point on Saipan. We lived a fair island life and ["survival"] and sub patrol.

Jap souvenirs, like helmets, swords, and junk made good "trade items" for beer, booze, or cash (of course, there was no place to spend it). We ignored the rules against exploring caves and the jungle areas. We built our own windmill wash machine from parts stolen from [cases in parts areas]. Generally we were a polite bunch of "thieves" but no one knew it until it was "too late."

Our ranking officers (Lt. Moran and Lt. Morris) arranged to get leave orders for us from Saipan, an unheard of proposition, but we had to find our own way back to the States. We caught a Coronado (PB2Y) to [Kwo.], Johnston Island and then to Pearl Harbor. From there we [made] a Sub Tender to San Diego. We stood watch for them and they fed us "great." From San Diego after our "leave" we went to Kingsville, Texas for more night work in radar and new training. After a couple of weeks, they broke up the crews and sent the gunners out to [...ovious] station. On our way to Florida, Joe, Bob and I managed to get a "pullman sleeper" car and talked the [conductor] into a three day long over in New Orleans. That's a great town (nuff said!).

The war ended after we arrived in Florida but Bob and I were assigned new crews and flew for a couple months. On 5 Dec I was returning from the flight line and ran into Bob. He had changed back to his real name, George Devlin, but none of us called him anything but Bob.

There was a lot of confusion about his name changing so he didn't bother to try to explain it except on flight orders and official business. I loaned him my green "Sea Bee" hat to fly in that day and that was our last contact.



We searched for Flight 19 for a week but to no avail. We lost a lot of good comrades and one really great friend.

I left the Navy in 1946 and went in the Air Force in 1948. I flew as a gunner on B 29s, B 36s and B 52s. I was in the Strategic Air Command for 27 years and flew over 8,000 hours as a gunner. Many things happened over those thirty years but the mystery of Flight 19 was really "something else.

Yours in Service,

*SMSGT. Ret. Floyd O. Johnson (flip) USAF
P.S. thanks for your interest and dedication, Bob would be proud!"*

Notes: Johnson's wife Jackie, was the Family Services Coordinator for military families on base. She contributed 15,000 volunteer hours. Veteran Johnson was part of the 11th Bomb Wing selected to fly over President Harry Truman's inauguration on January 20th, 1949, and recalls what it was like to fly from Texas to Washington, D.C with 11 reporters on board.



**NAVAL AIR STATION
FORT LAUDERDALE MUSEUM**

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