The Golden Eagles Continuing History 2022

This Historical Summary was compiled by CAPT Bill Young, USN (Ret). Assisted by Web Master CAPT J. R. Davis, USN (Ret).

The Continuing Historical Summary covers the period from the Golden Eagles Reunion of 7 to 10 April 2022 held at the Lansdowne Resort, Leesburg, Virginia, until the Golden Eagles Reunion of 13 to 16 April 2023 at Westin San Antonio Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas.

Introduction:

The 60th annual reunion of the Early and Pioneer Naval Aviators Association (Golden Eagles) was held at the Lansdowne Resort in Leesburg, Virginia, with Board of Governors Meeting, New Member introductions, and Welcome Aboard Reception occurring on Thursday the 7th of April followed by the golf tournament, tour of the National Air & Space Museum, and the Memorial Service on Friday the 8th of April. On Saturday the 9th of April the General Membership met with Flight photographs followed by a winery tour and tasting ending in a formal reception and banquet that evening. The Northeast Flight sponsored the reunion and 283 members and guested attended.

New Members Introduced by Pilot on Thursday the 7th of April 2022:

Alfred E. Pellerin, CAPT, USN; Rex C. McMillian, LtGen, USMC; William G. Sizemore II, RDML, USN; J. Michael Welch, CAPT, USN; Michael H. Miller, VADM, USN; Robin Y. Weber, CAPT, USN; Robert F. Willard, ADM, USN; Patrick D. Moneymaker, RADM, USN; Dennis J. Sapp, CAPT, USN.

2022 Golden Eagles Memorial Service

The following departed Golden Eagles were eulogized on Friday the 8th of April 2022 at Ashburn Presbyterian Church in Leesburg, Virginia:

James L. Pearce, LT USN (5 Feb 2011); Ernest E. Tissot, RADM USN (3 May 2019); Michael D. Malone, VADM, USN (20 Jun 2019); David T. Williams, CDR, USN (7 Jul 2019); John K. Davis, Gen, USMC (31 Jul 2019); Donald B. Edge, CAPT, USN (28 Aug 2019); James D. Joyner, CAPT, USN (8 Sep 2019); Drury W. Wood Jr. Maj, USMC (9 Sep 2019); Robert B. Fuller, RADM, USN (4 Oct 2019); James Holloway III, ADM, USN (26 Nov 2019); Milton D. Beach, CAPT, USN (19 Dec 2019); Charles H. Pitman, LtGen, USMC (13 Feb 2020); Edward L. Feightner, RADM, USN (1 Apr 2020); Jerrold M. Zacharias, CAPT, USN (3 May 2020); Paul H. Engel, RADM, USN (10 May 2020); Thomas F. Brown III, RADM, USN (14 May 2020); Robert A. Johnson, CDR, USN (7 June 2020); Denis J. Kiely, Col, USMC (29 Oct 2020); Robert C. Johnson, Col, USMC (31 Oct 2020); J. D. Ward, CAPT, USN (8 Dec 2020); Allen E. Hill, RADM, USN (21 Dec 2020); William M. Gortney, CAPT, USN (24 Dec 2020); Richard L. Kiehl, CAPT, USN (31 Dec 2020); Ronald J. Hays, ADM, USN (11 Jan 2021); Robert J. Naughton, CAPT, USN (7 Feb 2021); Gordon H. Smith, RADM, USN (19 Feb 2021); Edward C. Waller III, VADM, USN (2 Mar 2021); Ernie C. Cunningham, Col, USMC (23 Mar 2021); Archie D. Simpson, Col, USMC (30 Mar 2021); Carl H. Dubac, LtCol, USMC (10 Apr 2021); James R. Foster, CAPT, USN (22 Jun 2021); Dale O. Snodgrass, CAPT, USN (14 Jul 2021); Edward F. Bronson, CAPT, USN (24 Aug 2021); Robert W. Miles, CAPT, USN (17 Oct 2021); Doniphan B. Shelton, RADM, USN (31 Oct 2021); Gary Elsten, Col, USMC (13 Nov

2021); George Webb Jr. CAPT, USN (1 Dec 2021); Ronald F. Moreau, CAPT, USN (21 Jan 2022); Bill McCamy, CAPT, USN (28 Jan 2022); Charles L. Tinker, CAPT, USN (7 Feb 2022); Thomas D. Hayward, ADM, USN (3 Mar 2022); David L. Althoff, LtCol, USMC (8 Mar 2022). Fair winds and following seas.

Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Membership Meeting:

Golden Eagles Annual Membership Meeting 9 Apr 2022 Lansdowne, VA

Meeting called to order by Pilot Campbell at 0900 EDT

Pilot Campbell led the Members in the Pledge of Allegiance

Pilot Remarks: RADM Jay Campbell

- I would like to thank the Flight Deck for their active participation in all the remote activities imposed during this past year by the pandemic. The assistance they provided me through editing NOTAMS, Special Notices and other correspondence proved invaluable.
- Special thanks to the Regional Flight Leaders for staying so close to their members, providing outlets for gatherings when allowed and communicating with me and the rest of the Flight Deck to keep us up to date.
- The responsiveness of the Board of Governors to short notice Zoom Meetings and other administrative duties were exceptional, especially during this year of enforced isolation.
- Pilot especially wanted to thank Co-Pilot Shadow Stalder for providing the Zoom technical expertise to enable all these Zoom meetings. Additionally, he recognized Denny Irelan for his short notice fill in as the executive assistant, learning on the job and not skipping a beat. He also recognized JR Davis for his continued excellent job as Web Master. BZ to all three.
- A final "Thank You" to all the Wingmen who have taken the responsibility to remain in close contact with our Emeritus Members. Volunteers to serve as Wingmen are solicited from the members.
- Thanks to all who joined today's member meeting.

Co-Pilot Remarks: LtGen Keith Stalder

- Thanks to the Pilot for keeping us all informed and providing details of membership changes in the quarterly reports.
- Added his thanks to Flight Leaders for keeping the Flight Deck up to speed on regional activities.
- Thanks to Gazelle for keeping the books in order, and to the Navigator and Engineer/Historian for flight deck coordination.
- Thanks to the Eulogist authors and speakers.
- Thanks to Matt and his team for coordinating this reunion.

Navigator's Report: VADM Marty Chanik

- Navigator Marty Chanik presented the minutes of the Members Meeting held on 1 May 2021 (a virtual/Zoom meeting). The minutes were posted on the web site a month ago for member review and comment. No changes were provided.
- A motion to approve was made, seconded, and the minutes were approved.
- The Golden Eagle Membership now includes:
 - -200 Regular members
 - —53 Emeritus members
 - —3 Honorary members
- During the year:
 - -Twenty-two members were accepted into the Golden Eagles
 - —Fourteen members (six Emeritus, seven Regular, one Selectee) made their Last Takeoff
 - -Fifteen members transferred to Emeritus
 - -Nine Golden Eagle Ladies passed away
 - —There were no resignations

Radio Officer's Report: Col Gary Van Gysel

The GE fiscal year runs from the first of April to the end of March each year. FY-22 started 1 Apr 2021; ended 31 Mar 2022.

• On 1 April 2022 I published the financial report to the flight deck and submitted taxes for FY-22. All numbers discussed for the FY-22 financial report are rounded to the nearest whole thousand:

- We started the FY with approximately **\$107K** in liquid assets; we ended FY-22 with approximately **\$114K** in liquid assets. Add to that number the net worth of **117** sets of miniature wings valued at **\$6K**, we have a total net worth of **\$120K**.
- In FY-22 our gross receipts were **\$42K**; our gross disbursements were **\$36K**. Our net change in operating funds was a positive **\$6K**.
- As I continue, you will hear me talk about flight escrow accounts. When we increased the dues to **\$100.00**, the BOG decided that **\$10K** of our **\$20K** annual dues would be held in escrow for use by the flights to cover reunion expenses; essentially passing that money in savings back to our members.

• Some highlight numbers for FY-22 were:

RECEIPTS:

- No capital campaign was conducted in FY-22. However, **\$10K** was contributed thru members donations and **\$10K** from an anonymous donor. The member donations were transferred to NE Flight for use at this reunion and the money from the anonymous donor is in our net worth.
- Membership dues and fees collected was **\$23K**.

DISBURSEMENTS:

- **\$2500** was given to the National Naval Aviation Museum in Pensacola.
- **\$2500** was given to the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society.
- **\$1500** was given to Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.
- We purchased the watch for the annual Tomlinson Award (Test Pilot of the Year) for **\$370.00**.
- I transferred \$15K that was provided by the Anonymous donor in FY-20 to Northeast Flight to defer costs for this reunion. \$2K was advanced from the Northeast Flight escrow account to pay for costs accrued prior to the reunion.

FY-23 WHAT'S AHEAD:

- Northeast Flight has **\$8K** remaining in their escrow account to help pay for unexpected expenses after the reunion.
- Central Flight will be advanced **\$10K** form the anonymous donor given in FY-22 to defer costs to our members for the 2023 reunion. No decision has been made on whether they will conduct a capital campaign.
- We will plan again to give **\$2500** each to the museum and NMCRS and **\$1500** to support CGMA, if approved by the BOG.

- We will support the Tomlinson Award by paying for the watch and engraving, if approved by the BOG.
- Mike Stortz will be my relief.

DUES:

• I collected dues again this year **using only email**. The last dues check was received on 8 March. I want to **thank the Flight Leaders** who were instrumental in getting the word out and then chasing down those that were delinquent.

Engineer Officer/Historian Report:

- Pilot Campbell made comments for CAPT Bill McCamy since Bill made his LTO several months earlier. His primary comment was that no GE is in jeopardy of missing 1 of 4 reunions this year (this is tracked by the Engineer Officer). There are several though that need to make next year's reunion to maintain their Regular status.
- Pilot Campbell also mentioned that Bill had done a great job in updating member's bios. Since Bill's passing, Dave Kunkel has been a great help in maintaining/generating new member bios, but we still have about 10 new members that need to complete their bios. Pilot requested some assistance with this tasking.

Nominating Committee Report: VADM John Mazach

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the Bylaws, the 2021 Golden Eagle Nominating Committee convened to develop lists of nominees for the Navigator, Radio Officer, Engineer/Historian, Board of Governors (4), and the Southeast Flight Leader billets. After due consideration of numerous candidates to include a desire to maintain a balance between Navy and Marine representation as well as equal representation from all flights on the Board of Governors, the following lists of Golden Eagle nominees are hereby submitted for consideration:

Board of Governor Recommended Slate:

Navigator: RADM Matt Moffit, USN (Ret)

Radio Officer: LtCol Mike Stortz, USMC (Ret)

Engineer/Historian: CAPT Bill Young, USN (Ret)

Board of Governors:

Northeast—MajGen Charles Bolden, USMC (Ret) Southeast—VADM Jim McArthur, USN (Ret) Central—LtGen Fred McCorkle, USMC (Ret) West—VADM Brent Bennett, USN (Ret)

Flight Leader: Southeast, CAPT Jeff Harrison, USN (Ret)

- A motion to approve the recommended slate for the Principal Officer positions, Board of Governors and Flight Leader was made, seconded, and approved
- Pilot Campbell mentioned that the Chief Pilot, RADM Bill Gureck, could not make the reunion due to his second bout with COVID—it's mild and the Chief Pilot is doing well, and conveys his welcome and regrets for not attending. The next Chief Pilot will be RADM Bad Fred Lewis.

2020 Tomlinson Award Presentation: RADM Don Boecker

 RADM Boecker explained that every year we provide a wristwatch to the Test Pilot of the year. The award is named after the original Navy test pilot, CAPT D. W. Tommy Tomlinson. The GEs have nothing to do with the selection of the winner, we present it. The award was presented by RADM Boecker on 6 Apr 2022. The Tommy Tomlinson Outstanding Test Pilot for 2021 is Lt Christopher W. Sheehan, USN, a P-8 test pilot. It was presented at the U.S. Navy Test Pilot School Auditorium where 4 or 5 watches were presented by various corporations and organizations to various individuals.

Normally, the ceremony was held in early February at the Officers Club which has been torn down, then the River's Edge All Hands Club that has been closed because of COVID. Finally with some pushing, the Test Wing Commander set it up for 6 April.

Pilot Campbell noted that Kent Rominger (GE member) is a former winner of this award.

Membership Selection Committee Report: RADM Fred Lewis

• RADM Lewis noted this is the third time he has been involved in the Membership selection process, and that it was an honor to be the Chairman this year. The process is tried and true, and second to the Memorial Service in importance at the annual reunion/meeting.

- RADM Lewis also noted that the MSC Secretary, RADM Don Weiss, holds the keys to the process, which is well described on the web site and the by-laws. Don is always available for any questions. He did note the flight skills are a primary consideration.
- This year there were 32 Navy, 13 USMC, and 2 USCG nominees from which 12 were selected, 9 Navy and 3 Marines. Those selectees were approved by the BOG on Thursday.
- A question from the members asked if we have an issue with age, with members being older. The Chairman and the Pilot both addressed the question, specifically noting that most of the new selectees had earned their wings in the 70s and 80s.

Membership Selection Committee Secretary Remarks: RADM Don Weiss

• RADM Weiss commented that write ups are generally very good. He noted that one of the nominators should have flown/observed the nominee in the air. He also said to call if any questions on the process.

Site Selection Committee Report: Col Dave Seder

 The 2022 Site Selection Committee met virtually on 2 February 2022 and again on the 15th. The committee discussed the 2023 Central Flight San Antonio, 2024 Southeast Flight Jacksonville and 2025 West Flight Coeur D'Alene reunions which are all on track. Signed hotel contracts are included for each. The committee agreed to defer discussion IRT NE Flight for the 2026 reunion until the 2022 event is concluded and we will discuss options for the 2026 reunion in the AAR for the upcoming event.

2022 Northeast Flight: The Lansdowne Resort, Leesburg, VA, 6-10 April

• Final details are in work. The only major outstanding issue will be meeting our room guaranty at the Lansdowne Resort. Although the current COVID trend is very positive, the impact of the past two years of pandemic will definitely affect attendance this year.

2023 Central Flight: The San Antonio River Walk Westin Hotel, San Antonio, TX 10-16 April

• Planning for the San Antonio reunion and all reunion activities and events is on schedule. A signed contract with the Westin Hotel is included as an enclosure to this report.

2024 Southeast Flight: The Jacksonville Hyatt Regency-Riverfront Hotel, Jacksonville, FL 24-30 April

• Planning for the Jacksonville reunion and all reunion activities and events is on schedule. A signed contract with the Hyatt Regency-Riverfront Hotel is included as an enclosure to this report.

2025 West Flight: The Coeur D'Alene Resort, ID, 22-26 April

• Planning for the Coeur D'Alene reunion and all reunion activities and events is on schedule. A signed contract with the Coeur D'Alene Resort is included as an enclosure to this report.

Committee Members:

Col Dave Seder, USMC (Ret) RADM Ernie Christensen, USN (Ret) CAPT Mike Coats, USN (Ret) CAPT Chuck Schroeder, USN (Ret)

Old Business:

First old business

 Pilot Campbell addressed the Emeritus Committee. This was established by the BOG last year to consider whether a selectee to the GEs could go direct to Emeritus status vice Regular if that individual was substantially older at induction. That was considered and determined NOT to be advisable, so that issue is closed. He also advised that the committee had expanded their tasking to address their concern on average age of GEs being too high. That issue is tabled for now, remains to be considered by the BOG and will come to next year's member meeting if necessary.

New Business:

• One member commented that having the new member welcome aboard introduction at the Thursday arrival reception was a great idea. We should continue to do that.

- Another member inquired about whether CD Chronologs were still being done. Answer is no, the Chronolog is now on the web site only.
- In response to another question on Directories, the new Directory is mailed in late June/early July of the year.
- Pilot Campbell commented that we are still challenged keeping contact with GE widows. He requested Flt Leaders to work on current lists for their flights and provide that list so a central list can be maintained to send Special Notices, Directories, etc. to those widows. It was also suggested that Wingmen could maintain contact with the widows.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved. The meeting adjourned at 0947 EDT.

FY 2022 Flight Leader Consolidated Reports: WEST FLIGHT:

April 2022 – March 2023

Following our successful annual reunion in Leesburg, VA it was a quiet social quarter in West Flight with attention on reestablishing a recent contact schedule with updates on our Emeritus members while also insuring a close contact with our widows.

On the 6th of October, we held a mini-reunion luncheon at the Coronado Yacht Club with 34 Eagles and wives/guests attending. This was an opportunity to check on the wellbeing of many of our West Flight members who have been unable to attend events over the past year.

We held our early spring mini-luncheon and social gathering on the 16th of February at the Coronado Yacht Club with 51 attending.

This luncheon offered us the opportunity to honor Royce Williams and to welcome Tanya Nelson following Brick's long medical fight and flight west.

GE's Roger Welsh and Shifty Peairs organized a life's celebration for Captain Robert 'Brick' Nelson USN (Ret.) This gathering was held at the NAS North Island

I-Bar the evening of 16 February. Brick had many friends and more than enough memorable experiences and stories in his distinguished career.

On the 20th of January, the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Carlos Del Toro presented the Navy Cross awarded to Captain Royce E. Williams USN (Ret.). The formal presentation conducted at the San Diego Air and Space Museum drew the attendance of dignitaries and friends honoring Royce for his outstanding flight

performance and great feat in Naval Aviation, and his dedicated service and patience for an award presented over seventy years following his amazing flight and carrier landing.

On the 26th of February, Royce was honored by the American Legion, San Dieguito Post, at the formal dinner attended by Congressman Darrell Issa offering remarks and congratulations for all.

A Memorial Service and a Celebration of Life was conducted in Lake Elsinore, CA on 10 March for COL Harry Sexton USMC (Ret.). The family, joined with friends, his Vietnam era wingman and four Golden Eagles gathered to honor him. Harry was the recipient of the Navy Cross. The West Flight Binnacle List was reviewed at each luncheon providing all the opportunity to initiate contact with the members unable to attend.

Central Flight 2022/2023 Summary of Activities

Many thanks to Jerry Unruh for organizing regular "Pensacola Mafia" gatherings with the dozen Golden Eagles in the Pensacola area during the last two years. Jerry and Dee are in the process of moving from the panhandle to the East Coast of Florida, and while SouthEast Flight is fortunate to gain his energy and enthusiasm, his outstanding leadership will be sorely missed by Central Flight. The primary activity of Central Flight in 2022 and 2023 was the planning and execution for the 2023 Golden Eagles Reunion. Central Flight's previous Flight Leader, Gary Elsten, had signed a contract in July of 2020 with the Westin Riverwalk Hotel in San Antonio. The first organizational meeting for the reunion began when Gary's successor, Mike Coats, gathered the Central Flight Members together at the Golden Eagles Lansdowne Reunion in April, 2022, and asked for volunteers to be Coordinator, Treasurer, and Event Leaders for the major 2023 Reunion events. Don "Buff" Beaufait stepped up to be the primary Reunion Coordinator, Dan "Gabby" Gabriel volunteered to be the Treasurer, and Jerry Unruh, Howard DeCastro, Jerry Breast, Jack Zerr, Dave "Hook" Denton, and Lonny McClung volunteered to be Event Leaders. Hook Denton was the only Golden Eagle living in the immediate San Antonio area, and together with his wife Anna Maria, their familiarity with golf courses and local historical sites was invaluable during our planning efforts. Buff and Hook met with the Westin Hotel staff in June, 2022, to tour the hotel and confirm suitability of the venues for all our Golden Eagle activities. The location of the Westin in downtown San Antonio on the Riverwalk was ideal since it was not only a beautiful hotel with excellent facilities but also within easy walking distance of numerous restaurants and shops. The reunion planning team devoted the next several months to developing a schedule of reunion events, including tours of the local missions and the "Nimitz" Museum in Fredericksburg, deciding on a golf course, and determining an appropriate location for the Memorial Service. We held a mini reunion with many of the Event

Leaders and spouses at the Westin Hotel in November of 2022 to finalize the schedule and decide on menus for the various events. Following the mini, we began a series of two monthly reunion planning Zoom conference calls, hosted by our Pilot, Keith "Shadow" Stalder. The hard work by Buff Beaufait, Gabby Gabriel, Hook Denton, and all the Event leaders resulted in a highly successful 2023 Golden Eagles Reunion from April 12-16. Molly Dey/Armed Forces Reunion Inc. was as thoroughly professional as always, the Westin Hotel was a most gracious and accommodating host, and the weather was beautiful for the entire week. Pilot Shadow Stalder has already hosted an initial Zoom call with the Central and SouthEast Flights to review lessons learned from the San Antonio Reunion in preparation for the 2024 Golden Eagles Reunion in Jacksonville. Central Flight is also currently in the process of identifying a suitable location for the 2027 Golden Eagles Reunion.

Southeast Flight 2022-2023 Summary

The Southeast Flight had a strong turnout at the (post covid) Lansdowne Reunion and came away with renewed energy and pride in the Golden Eagle organization. We, unfortunately, had to say farewell to three Great Americans from the Southeast Region at the Memorial Service but we were highly encouraged by the quality and enthusiasm of the new class. Northeast Flight is to be congratulated on an outstanding event which served to rejuvenate the entire membership.

After dodging a couple of hurricanes, the Southeast Flight put together a highly successful Mini-Reunion in late October. We had around 50 Golden Eagles and wives gather at the One Ocean Resort in Atlantic Beach, Florida. The resort turned out to be an outstanding venue for a regional event. Perfect weather, private beach, resort facilities and a golf outing highlighted our two-night gathering. Based on the success of the 2022 event, we have rescheduled One Ocean for another Mini-Reunion during the first week in November. In addition, small groups of Eagles in different locations continue to gather throughout the year for impromptu luncheons and dinners. This is an excellent way to keep the Golden Eagle spirit alive throughout the Region.

Following another superb reunion in San Antonio this April, the Southeast Flight has become fully engaged in the planning effort for the 2024 Reunion in Jacksonville. The dates are set for 24 to 28 April at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront. The hotel has been recently renovated and looks very elegant. The event coordinators at The Regency are very excited to have the opportunity to host an organization like The Golden Eagles. Several Southeast Eagles have volunteered or have been drafted into our planning cell and we anticipate strong support from the entire flight. Northeast Flight and Central Flight have done an exceptional job of putting together our last two reunions. Southeast Flight will do our best to meet those high standards.

Northeast Flight Continuing History: April 2022 – May 2023

The new year commenced with the continuing COVID Omicron surge. Luckily as Spring and the 2022 Reunion approached, the surge receded and restrictions eased. April was consumed by the reunion with the next social event, a luncheon conducted in August. Another lunchtime gathering was held in November. On April 17, Maggie Manning, wife of Golden Eagle John Manning unexpectedly passed away. Although John is not a member of NE Flight, he spends a portion of each year near the DMV and participates in many flight events including as an HPB at funerals for Golden Eagles. He is a friend to many of us and NE Flight shared in his sadness. Sadly, Claire Dunn, wife of VADM Bob Dunn, USN retired passed away November 7. Several NE Flight members attended her Service at the USNA Academy in December and shared in her remembrance with VADM Dunn.

- Funeral Service HPBs:
 - o RADM Thomas F. Brown III, USN retired, February 25, 2022, ANC
 - o CAPT Robert Miles, USN retired, April 7, 2022, ANC
 - ADM Tom Hayward, USN retired, May 31, 2022, USNA
 - o ADM Ronald Zlatoper, USN retired, August 29, 2022, ANC
 - o CAPT Robert Naughton, USN retired, September 26, 2022, ANC
 - o LtCol David Althoff, USMC retired October 5, 2022, ANC
 - o Colonel Ray Powell, USMC retired, January 5, 2023, ANC

Emeritus:

- RADM Joseph J. Barth, USN retired
- VADM James E. Dorsey, USN retired
- VADM Robert F. Dunn, USN retired
- RADM David N. Rogers, USN retired
- RADM William G. Sizemore, USN retired
- CAPT Robert E. Tucker Jr., USN retired

RADM Jay B. Yakeley, USN retired

New NE Flight Members:

James H. Ruliffson, CAPT., USN Retired. January 14, 2022 Patrick Driscoll, RADM., USN Retired, February 17, 2022 Stephen Callaghan, CDR., USN, Retired. March 26, 2022 Frank G. Wickersham III, Col USMC Retired, April 24, 2022 Robert A. Ffield, CAPT USN Retired, February 6, 202