



Gold Country Det. #885
Grass Valley, California

the Adjutant's Message

We all had to qualify every year and being stationed on a below sea level air station was no exception. The nearest range was a two hour ride in an LST to a small island that had a 200 yd. range. The 'barracks' had to have been built sometime before WWII. Beautiful cedar inside and out that had not seen paint, ever. Apparently the Division IG overlooked inspecting this facility on a regular basis. The Range Master was a Staff NCO of indeterminate rank. He never wore his rank on his utilities and I am pretty sure that when he left the Corps he immediately became the lead for Z-Z Top. His beard covered the top two buttons on his utility jacket, when he wore it. All in all it was a week away from loading and unloading cargo and passengers. As for me the instruction during the week was effective and I qualified Expert.

I was qualified to receive non-crew flight pay which meant an extra \$75 a month on top of the \$160 regular pay. All I had to do was fly for four hours a month. This led to some interesting rides. One month I hopped a ride on a Martin P5M. When I called the squadron they told me the flight would be six to eight hours; great, more than enough time.

When I arrived at the seaport the plane was still on the ramp. The crew-chief told me to climb aboard and pointed me to a seat. He handed me a headset and said, "You are going to need these." He showed me where to stow my sack lunch and where to plug in the headset. Then he disappeared. Within a few minutes they fired up the engines. They were every bit as loud as the ones on the R4Q's. We taxied down the ramp into the water with the aid of a cable to keep us from going too fast, I guess. The next thing I know there are two guys in the water in wet suits taking of the wheels that were attached to the side if the plane. After they were clear we taxied out to take off.

I don't know what I expected the sound of a seaplane taking off to be, but this was not it. I

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had heard them taking off from the outside but that is nothing like the sound when you are inside. Apparently the hull is not

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Taps for Larry Ransdell

Larry Ransdell of Nevada City died Wednesday, Sept. 14, 2011, in Grass Valley. He was 83.



Memorial services were conducted by Jim Edwards Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2011, at the Grass Valley Elks Lodge. Mr. Ransdell was born March 9, 1928, in

Ventura, Calif., to Raymond and Catherine (Rosseau) Ransdell. He graduated from Orange High School, and received a BA in psychology from USC. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1946 to 1948.

He married Joy McCoy on July 11, 1952, in Los Angeles, Calif. He worked for Union Oil in Los Angeles as a dispatch coordinator for 33 years, retiring in 1986. He was a member of the Marine Corps League, Grass Valley Elks, Natives Sons of the Golden West, and Meals on Wheels.

He is survived by his wife, Joy Ransdell of Nevada City; daughter, Laura Ransdell of Pioneertown, Calif.; and son, Jeffrey Ransdell of Danville, Calif.



Happy Birthday!!!

October:

- Rick Barringer
- Burt Duer
- Steve Hoss
- OK Steele
- Peter Waskowitz
- All Marines!!!

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that well insulated because the sound of the water drowned out the noise of the engines. Now I understood why the crew chief told me to wear the head set. I could barely hear the conversation of the crew over the noise. After we were in the air thing got a lot quieter.

Our mission that day was to certify a new pilot on this aircraft. We flew around a lot of little islands while going through simulations of various malfunctions of the aircraft. After lunch we spent a couple hours doing "touch and go's" on the water. What a lot of fun.

When I got back to the barracks the guys that had flown on the P5M before asked how I liked it. When I described what I had done all day they all said that maybe next time I won't wait until the end of the month to get my hours in. I never did.

Semper Fi,
Gary



pbm-5a mariner

Transport Squadron 21 (VR-21)

The PBM-5A is the last version of the Mariner built for the U.S. Navy by the Martin Company. The prototype was first built in 1937 and production continued until April 1949, when the last PBM-5A was completed. They were taken out of service in 1958. Originally the PBM-3 and PBM-5 were pure "flying boats", the -5A version of the Mariner introduced amphibious capability to the type and became the largest amphibian ever built. The PBM planes served through World War II and the Korean War as a long-range patrol bomber and rescue aircraft. Of the 1367 PBM Mariners of all models built, this is the last intact aircraft in existence. Only 36 PBM-5A's were manufactured and 4 PBM-5S were modified as PBM-5A's.



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