

# Heavy Photographic Squadron Histories (VAP)

## VAP-61 to VAP-62

### VAP-61

#### Lineage

Established as Patrol Squadron SIXTY ONE (VP-61) on 20 January 1951.

Redesignated Photographic Squadron SIXTY ONE (VJ-61) on 5 March 1952.

Redesignated Heavy Photographic Squadron SIXTY ONE (VAP-61) in April 1956.

Redesignated Composite Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron SIXTY ONE (VCP-61) on 1 July 1959.

Redesignated Heavy Photographic Squadron SIXTY ONE (VAP-61) on 1 July 1961.

Disestablished on 1 July 1971. The first squadron to be assigned the VAP-61 designation.

#### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's first insignia was approved by CNO on 2 October 1951. This insignia had been used by



*This insignia was used by a different squadron prior to its approval for use by VP-61. It continued in use following VP-61's redesignation to VJ-61, VAP-61 and then VCP-61.*

VC-61 before being approved for use by VP-61. Colors for the insignia were: a blue background; a gray and white goose with a pink foot, green eyes, yellow bill, and a red tongue; the pilot and gunner's uniforms were olive green with yellow life jackets, pink faces, brown gloves, boots were olive green and brown, red nose and green eyes; black and white pilot's helmet and red gunner's helmet; black gun with white highlights and a brown stock; gray camera with white sides, a black and white lens with a blue and white sight; the globe had blue water, yellow and white land areas and black longitude and latitude lines.

A new insignia was approved by CNO on 11 January 1961. Colors for this insignia were: a light sil-



*The squadron's second insignia was approved for use by the unit when it was designated VCP-61. The acronym in the scroll was for Photo Composite Squadron (VCP) 61.*



*When VCP-61 was redesignated VAP-61, for the second time, it retained the stylized aircraft and globe design and just changed the scroll designation from PHOTOCOMPRON-61 to VAP-61.*

ver-blue background outlined in a medium blue; light silver-blue scroll outlined in dark blue with dark blue lettering; silver stylized aircraft with silver viewing lines; the land masses on the globe were an olive tan, a white ocean and dark blue longitude and latitude lines. The scroll designation was changed to VAP-61 in 1962.

Nickname: World Recorders.

#### Chronology of Significant Events

**20 Jan 1951:** The squadron's mission was aerial photographic reconnaissance and cartographic mapping. It deployed detachments around the world.

**Mar 1951:** A squadron detachment was ordered to photograph the Mississippi Delta area and adjacent coastline.

**May 1951:** A squadron detachment was ordered to Alaska in connection with mapping Alaska for the U.S. Army Map Service.

**1 Jul 1959:** The squadron's mission was to provide aerial photographic intelligence for naval operations and cartographic mapping in the Pacific, providing detachments for deployment aboard carriers, as well as land facilities.

**May 1964:** Squadron detachments began flying photographic reconnaissance missions over Laos and South Vietnam as part of Yankee Team Operations. Missions were flown from carriers operating in the South China Sea.



*A squadron PB4Y-1P in 1951 (Courtesy Robert Lawson Collection).*

**2–5 Aug 1964:** Squadron detachments aboard carriers operating in the South China Sea provided photo reconnaissance support during the Tonkin Gulf Crisis involving North Vietnamese patrol boat attacks on American destroyers.

**1965:** Squadron detachments continued to operate from carriers in the South China Sea; providing photo reconnaissance support for Yankee Team Operations; as well as flying missions over North Vietnam, part of the Rolling Thunder Operations; and assisting in Market Time Operations, coastal and shipping surveillance along the coast of South Vietnam.

**7 Aug 1966:** The squadron flew its first night combat infrared reconnaissance mission over North Vietnam. This began the use of infrared devices on squadron aircraft for interdicting truck convoys at night.

**31 Jan 1970:** The squadron's participation in Yankee Team Operations came to an end after 68 months of providing day and night reconnaissance flights over hostile areas in Southeast Asia. Yankee Team missions were flown from carriers operating in the South China Sea as well as shore facilities in Southeast Asia.

**1 Jul 1971:** The squadron was disestablished. During its period of service the squadron conducted mapping and special photographic projects in the Mediterranean area, Alaska, Hawaii and numerous other Pacific Islands, Korea, Japan, Okinawa, Philippines, North and South Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, New Guinea, New Britain, Australia and numerous places in the continental United States.



*A squadron F8U-1P Crusader in flight, circa 1960 (Courtesy Robert Lawson Collection).*

**Home Port Assignments**

Location	Assignment Date
NAAS Miramar/NAS Miramar*	20 Jan 1951
NAS Agana	Jun 1956

\* NAAS Miramar was redesignated NAS Miramar on 1 April 1952.

**Commanding Officers**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Jesse L. Pennell	20 Jan 1951
CDR John S. Harris	19 Jul 1952
CDR Herbert L. Salyer	Jun 1953
CDR David L. Soper	May 1954
CDR Gilbert B. Jansen, Jr.	Jun 1955
CDR Sy E. Mendenhall	Nov 1956

**Commanding Officers—Continued**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR Jerry F. McDaniel	Sep 1958
CDR Ralph W. Spuhler	Dec 1959
CDR Jonathan J. Crowder	16 Sep 1960
CDR Donald B. Brady	09 Nov 1961
CDR Robert E. Morris	07 Nov 1962
CDR Hal B. Stewart	24 Oct 1963
CDR D. A. Woodard	06 Nov 1964
CDR George H. Lee	16 Nov 1965
CDR Horace B. Chambers	19 Nov 1966
CDR Archibald S. Thompson	14 Nov 1967
CDR Arthur R. Day	01 Nov 1968
CDR William E. Pippin	10 Nov 1969
CDR Robert L. Skillen	30 Nov 1970



*A couple of squadron AJ-2P Savages in flight, March 1953.*

**Aircraft Assignment**

Type of Aircraft	Date Type First Received
PB4Y-1P/P4Y-1P*	Jan 1951
AJ-2P	14 Sep 1952
F8U-1P	Aug 1959
A3D-2P/RA-3B†	Sep 1959

**Aircraft Assignment—Continued**

Type of Aircraft	Date Type First Received
KA-3B	26 Dec 1963

\* PB4Y-1Ps were redesignated P4Y-1Ps in 1951.  
 † The A3D-2P designation was changed to RA-3B in 1962.



*A squadron AJ-2P Savage over NAS Agana, Guam, April 1958.*

**Air Wing Assignments**

Air Wing	Tail Code	Assignment Date
FAW-14	EF/PB*	20 Jan 1951
COMFAIRSANDIEGO	PB	1955
COMHATWING-2	PB/SS†	Jul 1956
COMFAIRPHILIPPINES	SS	01 Jan 1959
COMFAIRSOWESTPAC	SS	1960

**Air Wing Assignments—Continued**

Air Wing	Tail Code	Assignment Date
COMFAIRWESTPAC	SS	15 Jan 1964

\* It is believed the squadron's tail code was changed from EF to PB in 1953.  
 † The tail code was changed from PB to SS in 1957. The effective date for this change was most likely the beginning of FY 58 (1 July 1957).



*A squadron RA-3B Skywarrior at NAS Agana, Guam, surrounded by a display of aerial cameras used for cartographic and reconnaissance photography taken by the squadron, circa 1965 or 1966.*

**Unit Awards Received**

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
MUC	02 Jun 1968	28 Feb 1970
NUC	01 Jun 1964	01 Jun 1968
	02 Aug 1964	05 Aug 1964

**Unit Awards Received—Continued**

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
AFEM	22 May 1961	04 Jun 1961
	13 Apr 1969	15 Jun 1969



*A camouflaged squadron RA-3B Skywarrior on the flight line at Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam, 1969.*

## VAP-62

### Lineage

Established as Photographic Squadron SIXTY TWO (VJ-62) on 10 April 1952.

Redesignated Heavy Photographic Squadron SIXTY TWO (VAP-62) on 2 July 1956.

Disestablished on 15 October 1969. The first squadron to be assigned the VAP-62 designation.



*This was the only insignia officially approved for use by the squadron.*



*CNO disapproved the use of the cartoon tiger insignia as the official squadron logo.*

### Squadron Insignia and Nickname

The squadron's insignia was approved by CNO on 3 August 1953. Colors for the insignia were: a red background outlined in yellow; the film strip had gray frames with white borders; yellow wings; blue eye with a white iris and a white beam emanating from the eye.

The squadron's request for a new insignia was disapproved by CNO on 20 October 1960. The tiger insignia was disapproved because cartoon portrayals were no longer acceptable under the insignia guidelines.

Nickname: Tigers, 1960–1969.

### Chronology of Significant Events

**Apr 1952:** The squadron's mission was aerial photographic intelligence for naval operations, deploying detachments in the Atlantic Ocean, Mediterranean Sea and other areas as required.

**1 Sep–19 Dec 1952:** A squadron detachment was deployed to Dhahran Air Force Base in Saudi Arabia.

**29 Jul 1960:** During a landing aboard *Saratoga* (CVA 60), the squadron's commanding officer, Commander C. T. Frohne, and two other squadron crewmembers, were lost when the tailhook of their A3D-2P Skywarrior separated and the aircraft plunged off the deck into the sea.

**Oct 1966:** The squadron transferred a detachment of aircraft and personnel to VAP-61 to augment that squadron's operations in Vietnam.

**15 Oct 1969:** The squadron was disestablished. During its period of service the squadron conducted mapping and special photographic projects in Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Italy, Spain, various countries in northern Europe, Greenland, Iceland, Labrador, various Central American and Caribbean countries, Morocco, the Mediterranean and Atlantic Ocean areas and numerous places in the United States.



*A formation of squadron PB4Y-1Ps (P4Y-1P), 1953 (Courtesy Robert Lawson Collection).*

### Home Port Assignments

Location	Assignment Date
NAS Jacksonville	10 Apr 1952
NAAS Sanford	20 Oct 1952
NAS Norfolk	Jul 1955
NAS Jacksonville	15 Aug 1957



*A formation of squadron AJ-2P Savages over Sanford, Florida, in 1953.*

**Commanding Officers**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
LCDR D. C. McNeil (acting)	10 Apr 1952
CDR J. Kennedy, Jr.	30 Apr 1952
CDR H. S. Klenk	Jun 1953
CDR J. A. Goodwin	Jul 1954
CDR E. B. Johnson, Jr.	Jan 1956
CDR Henry W. Drum	12 Jul 1957
CDR Charles W. Hollinshead	10 Nov 1958
CDR Charles T. Frohne	10 Nov 1959
CDR W. L. Berkey (acting)	Jul 1960

**Commanding Officers—Continued**

	<i>Date Assumed Command</i>
CDR John E. Cousins	09 Sep 1960
CDR Charles H. Boldt, Jr.	06 Oct 1961
CDR Robert F. Roemer	04 Sep 1962
CDR John D. Stuffiebeem	Jul 1963
CDR John P. Cullen	08 Aug 1964
CDR William E. Nowers	05 Jul 1965
CDR Harry F. Bryant	22 Apr 1966
CDR Frank S. Coleman	16 Jun 1967
CDR Burke E. Eakie	Jul 1968
CDR James E. Service	18 Jul 1969



*A squadron A3D-2P Skywarrior on the deck of Independence (CVA 62) after a successful landing, 1961.*

**Aircraft Assignment**

<i>Type of Aircraft</i>	<i>Date Type First Received</i>
P4Y-1P	May 1952
AJ-2P	Sep 1952
F7F-4N	May 1953
A3D-1P	14 Oct 1957
A3D-2P/RA-3B*	19 Oct 1959

\* The A3D-2P designation was changed to RA-3B in 1962.

**Air Wing Assignments**

<i>Air Wing</i>	<i>Tail Code</i>	<i>Assignment Date</i>
COMFAIRJACKSON-VILLE	TP	10 Apr 1952
COMFAIRNORFOLK	TP	Jul 1955
COMFAIRJACKSON-VILLE	TP/GB*	15 Aug 1957

\* The tail code was changed from TP to GB in 1957. The effective date for this change was most likely the beginning of FY 58 (1 July 1957).



*A squadron A3D-2P in flight, 1961.*

**Unit Awards Received**

<i>Unit Award</i>	<i>Inclusive Dates Covering Unit Award</i>	
NUC	18 Jan 1960	25 Oct 1962
AFEM	06 Jun 1964	13 Jul 1964



*A squadron A3D-2P Skywarrior on display at NS Mayport, Florida, in May 1961.*