

Panama (1954 - 1956) ...



VP-45 P5M in Panama
1956



Panama Cool
1954



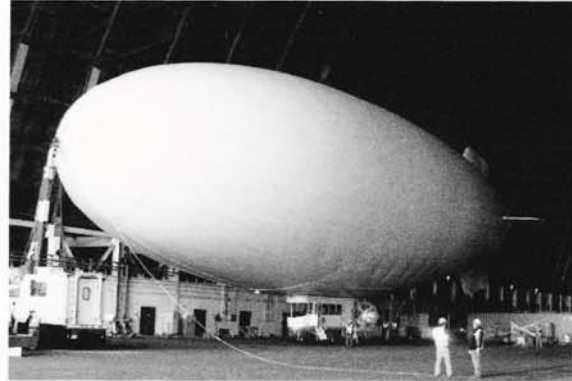
Sailors and Beer
Panama 1954



Captain's plane & crew
Panama 1956

... And Back to the Future

For the first time since 1962, the Navy has flown its own Lighter-Than-Air (LTA) aircraft. Here, Goodyear MZ-3A is shown in its hangar at NAS Lakehurst, New Jersey. The MZ-3A is 178 feet long and has a volume of 170,000 cubic feet of helium. The aircraft is operated by Scientific Development Squadron ONE (VXS-1) at NAES Lakehurst New Jersey. (US Navy Photo)



The United States Navy resurrected its Lighter-Than-Air (LTA) program on March 2, 2010. Under the banner of Scientific Development Squadron ONE (VXS-1), working in conjunction with its parent organization, the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), and Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), the MZ-3A airship took to the skies over Naval Air Engineering Station (NAES) Lakehurst, New Jersey, on a Functional Check Flight and training event for its pilots and ground crew. The operational events to be flown in the coming weeks and months will be the first LTA operations since the Navy decommissioned the last ZP (LTA Patrol) squadron in 1962. The MZ-3A - Bureau Number (BuNo) 167811 - is the first Navy airship to be purchased since 1960. Manufactured by American Blimp Corporation based in Hillsboro, Oregon, the MZ-3A is a Government Owned/Contractor Operated, commercial "off the shelf" asset that is a slightly modified version of the "Lightship" model seen hovering over sports stadiums and major outdoor events. The airship's dimensions reflect a much smaller platform than its ancestors with an overall length of 178 feet, a volume of 170,000 cubic feet of helium and air, and two Lycoming engines producing a top speed of 55 mph. However, the MZ-3A offers a 3000-lb payload capacity coupled with a fuel burn rate of approximately 10 gallons per hour at cruising speed and even less when holding station in "loiter" mode. It is an excellent platform for the missions supported by VXS-1 in the realm of airborne Science & Technology (S&T) research. Several Department of Defense (DoD) and industry entities have displayed interest in taking advantage of the capabilities manned airships bring to the

table. NRL and NAVAIR have already coordinated several MZ-3A Science & Technology projects ensuring the future value of this type of platform for the years to come. Through the diligent efforts of the squadron's Government Flight Representative, VXS-1 has trail-blazed the return of Navy airships to flight; this concerted effort has ensured the historical return of LTA to the U.S. Navy. NAVAIR is continuing to perform research into the development and procurement of future airship platforms. In the interim, VXS-

1 will continue to serve the DoD and Fleet with manned airship operations in support of S&T missions with the MZ-3A. Scientific Development Squadron ONE (VXS-1) provides airborne research platforms for the Naval Research Laboratory, the United States Navy, U.S. Government, and its contract agencies. VXS-1 – homeported at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, MD – maintains a fleet of three uniquely-configured, research-modified Lockheed NP-3D "Orion" aircraft, two RC-12s, one MZ-3A Lighter-Than-Air (LTA) airship, and over 200 unmanned aerial systems. Committed to safety, VXS-1 has logged over 64,000 flight hours and completed over 42 years of accident free flying. VXS-1 has been awarded the Chief of Naval Operations Aviation Safety Award.

How to Simulate Being in the Navy

1. Buy a dumpster, paint it gray inside and out, and live in it for six months.
 - 1a. Submarines - Black outside Pea Green inside
2. Run all the pipes and wires in your house exposed on the walls.
3. Repaint your entire house every month.
4. Renovate your bathroom. Build a wall across the middle of the bathtub and move the shower head to chest level. When you take showers, make sure you turn off the water while you soap down.
5. Put lube oil in your humidifier and set it on high.
6. Once a week, blow air up your chimney with a leaf blower and let the wind carry the soot onto your neighbor's house. Ignore his complaints.
7. Once a month, take all major appliances apart and reassemble them.
8. Raise the thresholds and lower the headers of your front and back doors so that you either trip or bang your head every time you pass through them.
9. Disassemble and inspect your lawnmower every week.
10. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, turn your water heater temperature up to 200 degrees. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, turn the water heater off. On Saturdays and Sundays tell your family they use too much water so no bathing will be allowed.
11. Raise your bed to within 6 inches of the ceiling so you can't turn over without getting out and then getting back in.
12. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your spouse whip open the curtain about 3 hours after you go to sleep, shine a flashlight in your eyes, and say "Sorry, wrong rack."
13. Make your family qualify to operate each appliance in your house - dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc. Re-qualify every 6 months.
14. Have your neighbor come over each day at 0500, blow a whistle so loud Helen Keller could hear it, and shout "Reveille, reveille, all hands heave out and trice up."
15. Have your mother-in-law write down everything she's going to do the following day, then have her make you stand in your back yard at 0600 while she reads it to you.
16. Submit a request chit to your father-in-law requesting permission to leave your house before 1500.
17. Empty all the garbage bins in your house and sweep the driveway three times a day, whether it needs it or not. "Now sweepers, sweepers, man your brooms, give the ship a clean sweep down fore and aft, empty all shit cans and butt kits!"
18. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every 5th item before delivering the rest.
19. Watch no TV except for movies played in the middle of the night. Have your family vote on which movie to watch, then show a different one 19 a. Show the same movie every night.