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Letter from Robert Feiten

Robert Feiten

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Dear Dewey,

Thank you so very much for the wonderful material that you sent about VPB-128 and the great pictures of Sieck, Sobul and Silver (we called him). After so many years I was slow to focus in on VPB-128 during our phone conversation, but after hanging up, it all came back clearly.

Yes, one of CO's of the several PV-1 squadrons forming at DeLand was named Westhofen. And I remember now the thinking in our squadron (131) regarding VPB-128, especially among the married, "Floyde Bennett for sea duty. That's not hard to swallow". Then a few months later, at San Juan I think, when we heard a sub shot down your XO and another crew, we all agreed even Floyd Bennett could have some drawbacks.

Mary Beth Coonan did a splendid job catching and reporting the feelings that exist among the survivors of squadrons like yours and mine. She is a sensitive reporter.

As you probably know, after the war a man named Dee Howard in San Antonio converted all the PV-1's he could find into fast, long range executive transports. He also had commissioned a great painting of three PV-1's flying off on a mission with snow capped mountains in the background--perfect setting for an Iceland squadron. If you do not already have a copy of that special painting, let me know. I would like to have mine color-copied for you. It is by far the best PV-1 picture that I know.

There was no Velma or Mrs. Frank Starr in the phone book so I tried a Frank Starr, III. This turned out to be Velma's son and she now lives with him. Because she was not available when I called, I gave the info to the son, who promised that his mother would return my call.

In our youth about here I think I would say something like, "You, sir, are an officer and a gentleman".

Bob