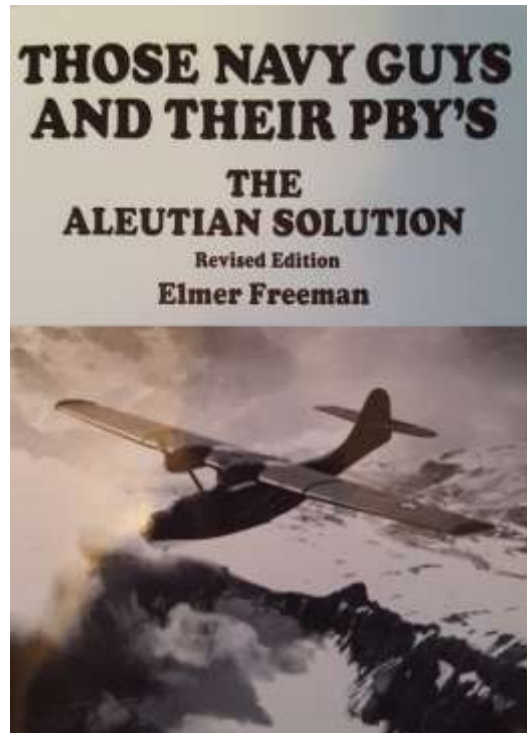


# Those Navy Guys and Their PBY's The Aleutian Solution



Elmer Freeman

Reviewed by D. Andrew McChesney

This is an informative, educational, and entertaining book. With candor, a bit of humor, and at times the right amount of self-depreciation, the author relates his wartime experiences in a relatively unknown operational area.

For most Americans, World War II was an “overseas” war, with little thought given to fighting on our own continent, yet early in the conflict, Japan attempted to establish a foothold on the North American continent. On the leading edge of a thinly spread defense, Navy patrol planes fought the enemy, operated from primitive bases, and endured some of the worst weather imaginable. With the Navy’s “can-do” attitude, American “know-how,” ingenuity, and personal courage, they succeeded.

*Those Navy Guys and Their PBY's* is Elmer Freeman’s personal accounting of the little known and often overlooked war in Alaska’s Aleutian Islands. Having enlisted in the Navy prior to America’s entry into the war, he went to school to become an Aviation Machinist Mate. Early on he was in the beaching crew that retrieved his squadron’s PBY seaplanes from the water. Gaining experience, he became part of a flight crew. During Freeman’s advancement to senior enlisted man (plane captain) aboard the aircraft, the United States became involved in World War II. Operations shifted from the Seattle area to the Aleutians to prevent Japanese forces from establishing a presence in North America. That effort was not entirely successful, as the enemy did for a time occupy two islands in the chain.

This is not only Freeman’s story, but that of all men of the Navy’s Patrol Plane Squadrons that took part in the campaign. It also pays tribute to Army and Army Air Force

personnel who played an equally important role.

*Those Navy Guys and Their PBY's* is richly illustrated with dozens photographs and maps, both from the author's collection and other accredited sources. Self-published, a second printing of the revised edition occurred in 2002. ISBN 0-9632463-1-3 sells for \$18.95 (plus \$3.00 shipping) and is available form Kedging Publishing Company, 1124 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Ave., Spokane, WA 99204