During WWII, the U.S. Navy solicited Grumman Corporation to design a larger and longer range version of the G-21 Goose. Grumman began design in April 1944 with the G-64 Albatross; an aircraft almost twice the size of the Goose.

The prototype first flew on Oct. 24, 1947, and went into production as the UF-1 utility aircraft for the U.S. Navy. The UF-1 had accommodations for a crew of four and 10 passengers, stretchers or 5000 lbs. of cargo. Although too late for service in World War II, the Albatross was used extensively in the Korean and Vietnam wars.



The U.S. Air Force, impressed with the potential of the Albatross for rescue operations ordered 305 planes assigning most to the Air Rescue Service of the Military Air Transport Service with the designation SA-16A.

In 1955 Grumman introduced a better version with a 16 1/2 foot increase in wingspan and larger tail surfaces improving range, ceiling and payload. The new models were designated UF-2 (Navy) and SA-16B (Air Force). Beginning in 1957, many early models underwent the same modifications and were redesignated UF-2 and SA-16Bs respectively.

In 1962 the Department of Defense unified all military aircraft designations under a common system. The designations were changed as follows: Air Force SA-16A and B to HU-16 A and B respectively; Navy UH-1 and 2 to HU-16 C and D respectively and Coast Guard UF-2G to HU-16E. Most were phased out of service with the Navy and Air Force in the 1970s but continued in service with the US Coast Guard into the early 1980s.

The HU-16D on display, Bureau No.137911 was accepted by the U.S. Navy on November 16, 1954 and assigned to the following locations. 15th Naval District, Naval Air Station (NAS) Coco Solo, Panama, Canal Zone 12/54-6/56. NAS Annapolis, 12/56-5/57. 6th Naval District, NAS Jacksonville,05/57-01/59. NAS Pensacola, Fl, 01/59-05/59. NAS Alameda, 09/59-12/59. 14th Naval District, NAS Midway Island, 12/59-01/62. Fleet Air Western Pacific Repair Activity

Naval Air Facility (FAWPRA) Atsugi, Japan 01/62-05/62. Pacific Missile Range Facility at NAS Kwajalein, Marshall Islands 05/62-03/64. NAS Agana, Guam 03/64-10/64. FAWPRA, Atsugi, Japan 10/64-02/65. NAS Agana, Guam 02/65-05/67. FAWPRA, Atsugi, Japan 05/67-09/67. Naval Air Warfare Development Center (NAWD) 09/67-11/67 and Naval Antarctic Support Unit (NASU) 11/67-01/70 at NAS Iwakuni, Japan. NAS North Island, CA, 01/70-02/70. Transferred to Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center, Tuscon, AZ 02/70 then stricken from Navy records May, 1970.

This aircraft was donated to the Cavanaugh Flight Museum in 2008.

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