

SHORT BURSTS

Air Force Gunners Association

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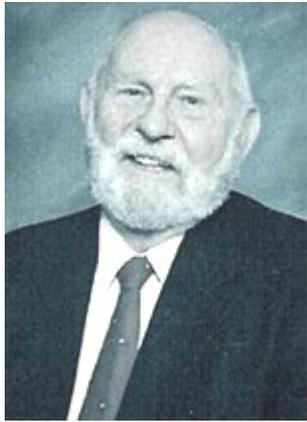
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I sure hope as you read this latest Short Bursts, your anticipation of the Nashville Reunion will soon be a reality. Doesn't seem like two years have now very quickly passed since we all met at the Peppermill world-class resort in Reno, Nevada. It would seem almost impossible to top the festivities and camaraderie of the Reno AFGA Reunion. With the three decades of planning experience and expertise of our AFGA leadership past and present, we have come to expect and enjoy a very unique occasion with priceless memories for life. The friendships, stories, and heroics of the World War II and Korean War aerial gunners once in abundance at the earlier reunions, take on a very special and precious memory. To be able to have heard their gunner experiences takes on a priceless privilege for those of us still here to continue in their legacy, attend the reunion, and honor their very special place in aerial gunnery warfare once held in the highest regard. There won't be many more reunions for us as our ranks diminish and fade into history. It will be a lifetime honor and privilege to meet and visit with you all again before we head west to join our departed gunner brothers on the other side of this long blue aerial gunner line.

FORMER AFGA ASSOCIATION OFFICERS



NEIL RICHARDS

PAUL SAVKO

ANDY ANDERSON

DON MURPHY



BOB MATHERLY

JIM HOKE

PARKER BLAKE

IGGY CRUZ



An Aft Compartment Commander (gunner) getting loaded up in a B-52D tail gunner position.

In the warmer climates, with the sun shining into the hot house during the heat of the day, the internal temperature in this compartment could easily reach 140 degrees.

AFGA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - JOHN STALLINGS



Hello Everybody,

I hope you are having a great summer.

The reunion is just around the corner. Just about all of the planning for the reunion is done. The only thing left is to provide the numbers for the tours to the tour company. Remember the dates for the reunion are from 31 August to 3 September at the Sheraton Music City Hotel. All the information can be found on our website or in the Short Bursts.

The hotel and reunion registration closes on 29 July, hope you got your registration in. These deadlines were set by the hotel and tour company. If you would like a room, call the hotel and get the AFGA rate, it is based on availability. If you are having a hard time getting a room, give me a call and I can see what I can do. The registration deadline was for the tour company not us and is subject to a \$10 late signup fee if you want to get in after 29 July. Once again contact me and I can see what I can do to avoid the late fee. If you need more information about the reunion, please visit our web page, refer to your Reunion Special Edition, or on the following pages of this Short Bursts.

For those of you who are flying in, the hotel has a complimentary shuttle to and from the hotel. Contact the hotel for more specifics.

A list of events will be handed out at the registration table on Thursday and will have all of the times for the tour events and dinner for Saturday and Sunday. Registration begins at 0900 Thursday in the lobby.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, 815-276-7067 or e-mail jstallings4269@hotmail.com or Dan Danish at daniel.danish@sbcglobal.net or 210-520-1517.

I hope to see you at the reunion.

John Stallings

Below is the latest reunion information:

Of the 947 post cards sent out to remind people of the reunion, I have received 59 post cards back that could not be forwarded (sent the cards to Chuck Dean so he can update his list/remove them).

18 post cards came back with a forwarding address which I addressed with the new address and sent out (will send them to Chuck so he can update his list).

According to Dan's latest numbers as of the end of June, we have 43 people who have sent in their registration form. This includes gunners, spouses, and friends.

The hotel has reserved 47 rooms. As of 27 June we have 213 room nights. We need 225 to meet our minimum commitment. This is the important number we must reach or we default on our forecast commitments.

On two of the tours, the tour company reduced our numbers we needed to meet based on the numbers we have so far. That is a good thing since we won't get charged with tour seats, meals, and tickets we couldn't fill.

This latest information may not seem so bad but it's not great either considering we have only a month left. For those gunners who want to sign up after the registration it might be a challenge but we'll try and make it happen.

AIR FORCE GUNNERS ASSOCIATION REUNION TOUR DESCRIPTIONS, September 1-3, 2017

MUSIC CITY TOUR - \$56

Friday September 1, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

An enlightening and entertaining narrative will include the downtown area with some of its colorful history and beautiful architecture. Also, a drive by the historic **Ryman Auditorium**, world famous **Tootsie's Orchid Lounge** on **Honky Tonk Row**, the original **Ernest Tubb Record Shop**, the **State Capitol** and more.

You'll learn about Tennessee's rich history with a drive through **Bi-Centennial Mall Park**, view **The Parthenon**, the world's only exact scale replica of The Parthenon from Athens, Greece, and view the **WWII Memorial**.

A drive through **Music Row** where you'll learn about the recording industry from songwriting to record production to famous recording studios and the performance rights organizations ASCAP and BMI that monitor airplay of songs all over the world, to get royalties for songwriters.

We'll stop at the **Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum** (admission included) where you can explore the many, ever changing exhibits telling the story of country music all the way up to today's contemporary artists.

A lunch stop will follow the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum tour.

GRAND OLE OPRY DINNER TOUR - \$91

Friday September 1, 4 - 10 pm

We'll start our evening with dinner at the **Santa Fe Cattle Company** then we're off to the world famous **Grand Ole Opry**. Since 1925, the longest running radio show in radio history celebrates its' 92nd Anniversary in 2017. Dedicated to honoring country music's rich history, the Grand Ole Opry showcases a mix of country legends and the contemporary chart-toppers that have followed in their footsteps. This is the premier show that made Nashville famous and *not to be missed*.

LADIES FONTANEL MANSION TOUR - \$51

Saturday September 2, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

It's labeled a "Ladies Tour", but men are also welcome. You'll enjoy a **guided tour of the Mansion at Fontanel**, a 33-thousand square foot log cabin and former home of country music legend and Hall of Fame member Barbara Mandrell. This is the only "home of the star" tour in Nashville that you can actually go inside! The Mansion boasts over twenty rooms, thirteen bathrooms, five fireplaces, two kitchens, an indoor pool, and even an indoor shooting range. The Mansion at Fontanel has been filled to the brim with photos, memorabilia, and personal items from the period when the Mandrell Family lived there. Additionally, the personal collections of current owners Dale Morris and Marc Oswald are featured, including one-of-a-kind items, personal photos, and keepsakes of the artists they currently manage – Alabama, Kenny Chesney, Big & Rich, Gretchen Wilson, and many others!

After touring the mansion you'll have free time on your own to explore **Natchez Hills Winery Tasting Room**, **Prichard's Distillery**, the **Stone House Gift Shop**, or have lunch at **Café Fontanella** all located on the property.

THE HERMITAGE, MEMORIAL SERVICE and LUNCH TOUR - \$65

Sunday September 3, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

We'll begin at **The Hermitage Church** for a memorial service. The church was constructed in 1823 from funds donated by Andrew Jackson and others. For generations, it has been a highly-sought, historic and intimate venue for special occasions. The hushed stillness of the quaint Hermitage Church will set the tone for the **Gunner Memorial Ceremony** and the simple brick structure is the perfect backdrop.

After the memorial you'll enjoy costumed guides on a **guided tour of The Hermitage**, beloved home of the seventh US President, Andrew Jackson, restored with hundreds of his well-preserved original belongings. Guides will share the stories, history, and lore of each of the rooms. Then at your leisure, you can explore the grounds, Jackson's tomb, and gardens.

Last stop is for **lunch** at **Hermitage House Smorgasbord** for a delicious buffet of southern fare.

AIR FORCE GUNNER ASSOCIATION NASHVILLE REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

August 31 - September 3, 2017 at the Sheraton Music City Hotel

PLEASE CHECK ALL APPROPRIATE BOXES

NAME:				NAME FOR BADGE:				
ADDRESS:				CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:	
TELEPHONE # ()				TYPE A/C FLOWN:				
E-MAIL :				DO YOU HAVE ANY DISABILITY OR DIETARY NEEDS THAT REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION? IF SO, PROVIDE COMMENTS ON BACK. YES <input type="checkbox"/>				
REGISTRATION & BANQUET/OPEN MIKE (SEE NOTE 1) <input type="checkbox"/>	BANQUET MENU CIRCLE ONE (CHOICES BELOW)	MUSIC CITY TOUR (FRIDAY AM) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	GRAND OLE OPERA TOUR (FRIDAY PM) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	LADIES FONTANEL MANSION TOUR (SATURDAY AM) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	THE HERMITAGE, MEMORIAL SERVICE & LUNCH TOUR (Sunday) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	ONLY ATTENDING BANQUET (SATURDAY PM) SEE NOTE 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	ONLY ATTENDING OPEN MIKE (SUNDAY PM) SEE NOTE 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	SUB TOTAL ACROSS
\$140.00	1 2 3 4	\$56.00	\$91.00	\$51.00	\$65.00	\$65.00	\$55.00	\$ _____

NAME:				NAME FOR BADGE:				
ADDRESS:				CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:	
TELEPHONE # ()				TYPE A/C FLOWN:				
E-MAIL :				DO YOU HAVE ANY DISABILITY OR DIETARY NEEDS THAT REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION? IF SO, PROVIDE COMMENTS ON BACK. YES <input type="checkbox"/>				
REGISTRATION & BANQUET/OPEN MIKE (See NOTE 1 below) <input type="checkbox"/>	BANQUET MENU CIRCLE ONE (CHOICES BELOW)	MUSIC CITY TOUR (FRIDAY AM) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	GRAND OLE OPERA TOUR (FRIDAY PM) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	LADIES FONTANEL MANSION TOUR (SATURDAY AM) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	THE HERMITAGE, MEMORIAL SERVICE & LUNCH TOUR (Sunday) SEE NOTE 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	ONLY ATTENDING BANQUET (SATURDAY PM) SEE NOTE 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	ONLY ATTENDING OPEN MIKE (SUNDAY PM) SEE NOTE 3 <input type="checkbox"/>	SUB TOTAL ACROSS
\$140.00	1 2 3 4	\$56.00	\$91.00	\$51.00	\$65.00	\$65.00	\$55.00	\$ _____

NOTE 1: Each person attending the Reunion is Expected to Register. Your fee of \$140 includes Banquet & Open Mike Meals and all associated costs of setting up Reunion.

NOTE 2: ALL TOURS MUST BE SELECTED BY 15 JULY. UNFORTUNATELY, ANY LATE TOUR REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ASSESSED A LATE FEE BY THE TOUR COMPANY.

NOTE 3: ONLY SELECT THIS OPTION IF YOU DO NOT PLAN ON ATTENDING THE ENTIRE REUNION AND JUST WANT TO ATTEND BANQUET OR OPEN MIKE.

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORM AND SEND CHECK MADE OUT TO AFGA
NO LATER THAN 15 JUL 2017 TO:

DAN DANISH
9550 HAVILAND CT
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78251
210-520-1517

GRAND TOTAL FROM BOXES ABOVE

\$ _____

BANQUET MEAL CHOICES

- 1 = PECAN CRUSTED CHICKEN
- 2 = SAUTÉED SAFFRON SALMON
- 3 = MAPLE PECAN CRUSTED PORK CHOPS
- 4 = VEGETARIAN CHEESE RAVIOLI

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BELOW THAT WE MAY NEED TO KNOW THAT WILL REQUIRE OUR SPECIAL ATTENTION IN REFERENCE TO YOUR DIETARY NEEDS OR DISABILITIES.

Air Force Gunners Association

Event date:
August 28 - September 4, 2017

Venue:
Sheraton Music City Hotel

Air Force Gunners Association

Group rate available until July 29, 2017. Subject to availability.

[BOOK A ROOM](#)



Sheraton Music City Hotel

777 McGavock Pike. Nashville, TN 37214, United States Phone: (1)(615) 885-2200 • [Contact Us](#) • [Announcements](#)



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[DRIVING DIRECTIONS](#)

Enjoy a warm, southern welcome at the Sheraton Music City Hotel.

Connect with the heart of downtown Nashville at the Country Music Hall of Fame or experience the awe of The Grand Ole Opry. Spend a relaxing day at one of Nashville's beautiful state parks, the Adventure Science Center, or the home of President Andrew Jackson – The Hermitage. The Nashville International Airport is also just minutes away.

Gather with friends for a relaxed conversation in our beautiful open-air courtyard. Or swim to your heart's content in our indoor and outdoor swimming pools. As evening falls, retreat to your spacious guest room or suite and step into the fresh air on your private balcony or patio.

Over 32,000 square feet of centralized and elegant meeting space invites groups of 20 to 1,300 for meetings, events, galas, and weddings. As the second largest freestanding convention hotel in Nashville, we are honored to be recognized with ten consecutive "Gold Key Awards" for meeting excellence from Meetings & Conventions Magazine.

Find all the comforts of home and spend time with loved ones at the Sheraton Music City Hotel.

The toll free reservations number for the Sheraton Music City Hotel is **888-627-7060**.

Ask for the Air Force Gunners Association Guestroom block rate when making reservations.

A personalized web site for Air Force Gunners Association Reunion reservations has been set up by the Sheraton Music City Hotel for the special rate for rooms occurring between August 28, - September 4, 2017.

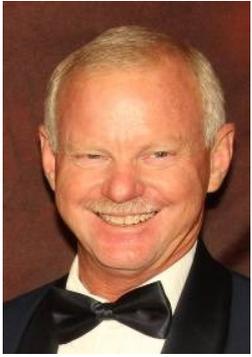
Guests can access the site to learn more about the event and to book, modify, or cancel a reservation from now to July 29, 2017.

Below you will find the appropriate link for participants to access the site:

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1606226912&key=1FB1DBB7>

(Copy and/or paste the link into your web browser on your smart phone or computer to access the Sheraton site displayed above to make your reservation on line or call the free reservation number **888-627-7060** to book direct)

AFGA VICE PRESIDENT - BOB ASHLEY



Hello Fellow Gunners,

Thinking back on past days before we were sent on our way to other career fields, we had the “Bulldog Bulletin – The Professional Journal of the B-52 Gunners”. Bulldog Bulletin #1 was penned by Norm Clinton of Ramey AFB. Norm wrote:

“Well here it is people. Gunnery’s own private journalistic enterprise. Complete with the finest editorial staff hat we could afford. What the hell, it is about time my kids started earning their allowance anyhow. The shipping department is giving me a little trouble though. If she would spend less time grumbling and more time licking those envelopes she would

have been back to her house work hours ago.

When we sent out the initial inquires about starting the “Bulletin”, I was apprehensive to say the least as to just what the replies would be, if any. I am happy to say my fears were groundless. Reception of the “Bulldog Bulletin” was gratifying. I have received replies from nine bases, which is more than I expected, for a starter. I feel confident that the rest of the squadrons will follow suit in due time. Ten (including Ramey) out of thirty isn’t bad for a start.

For the benefit of those who may not have received my initial letter, the purpose of the “Bulletin” is to form a link between all the gunners in SAC. If you did not receive a letter, I just happen to have 150 copies cluttering up the house and we’ll be glad to send you one free of charge. In fact my wife will send you the whole 150.

Signed, Norman E. Clinton, 103 Cliff Road, Ramey AFB”

Thus, in April of 1967, the Bulldog Bulletin was born. Many remember the articles from each Bomb Wing, Strategic Weapons School, GTU Gunner Training Unit, SAC Tactics School, and the SAC Gunner at Offutt AFB.

These were articles that kept us all informed on the pulse of our profession. The articles that seemed to be of utmost importance were specific information on individuals: who had made another stripe, who was moving on in life, young gunners who had just got married, who was going to Central Flight Instructor Course, or to fill the next gunner test flight position at Tinker. It was and still is an historic look into the lives and memories of those who flew the B-52 up and until the Fall of 1991.

In the farewell edition of the Bulldog Bulletin, “The End Of An Era,” the AFGA stated, “While the role of the active duty gunner has ended, our legendary friendship and camaraderie will continue to live on through the Air Force Gunners Association. So before we part to pursue our separate endeavors, be they in the Air Force or civilian sector, we invite you to join the AFGA. The AFGA is dedicated to preserve the history and spirit of the Aerial Gunner. Finally, we here at the AFGA wish you and yours the very best of luck!”

The AFGA began in 1985 with Chief Executive Officer Jim Zaengle. Our Short Bursts Magazine continues on with that same tradition as the Bulldog Bulletin. The AFGA had an AFGA Newsletter which passed on information on reunions, locator assistance, change of address, and similar information.

The last paragraph in the AFGA Newsletter No. 1 dated 4/10/89 says, “Okay Gunners, as flight crew members, we all know that teamwork is an important essential to accomplish any mission. We have done our best to make this next reunion even better than the last one. Now it’s up to you. If you haven’t sent in your registration form DO IT NOW! If you haven’t sent in your dues, DO IT NOW! If you haven’t joined, DO IT NOW! IN LOYALTY, THE OFFICERS OF THE AFGA, INC.

I BELIEVE THIS SAYS IT ALL. Hope to see you all in NASHVILLE! Thanks!

Bob Ashley

MEMBERSHIP CORNER - CHUCK DEAN



Greetings from the Membership Corner

Hope everyone had a great spring. By the time you are reading this, we will be getting really close to OUR Nashville reunion. John has put in a lot of time/effort planning this reunion. Hope we see a lot of new faces there.

If anyone is interested in playing golf, we will just get together early Thursday morning 31 August and go play. Call me at 864-907-3760 and I will see about tee times before that day.

We've had three (3) new members since our last SB issue and they are:

- David Wilcox B-52
- Robert Sprague B-52
- Dan Shimabuku B-52

For our annual members, when you receive your annual renewal invoice/letter please check it over and make any changes as needed. This invoice serves two purposes; first, your annual membership dues of \$15.00 is due, and second, your Short Burst subscription of \$15.00 is due.

Your subscription end date is listed on the invoice. Sometimes your subscription date will not be due for a few months. This DOES NOT mean your annual dues are not due. If you have any questions about this call me 864-907-3760 or send me an e-mail at a710jammer@gmail.com.

Keep up the good work notifying me of address changes.

When you send in a payment for dues or the Short Burst, please make your checks out to AFGA instead of a specific person. Also, include your membership number on your checks. Thanks.

Chuck Dean

HISTORIAN'S COMMENTS - RORY KOON



Greetings from the AFGA Historian,

I send my condolences to Pete Karjanis on the loss of his mother as well as the membership on the other losses this year.

As we get closer to the Nashville Reunion, I implore all of you to contact friends from years past to stimulate their interest in the upcoming reunion. As I get older, it seems as if each week that passes brings news of another friend or acquaintance's passing. Such is life. I hope to see many old friends at the reunion since I may not see them again to rehash old stories or vice ver-

sa.

I was contacted a few months back by Mike Sullivan. Many of you may remember Mike from Castle or Barksdale. Mike replaced me at the 62nd Bomb Squadron as the Squadron Gunner before he moved on to CEVG. Mike let me know he had been in an accident 3 ½ years ago and broke his neck. He is now a tetraplegic confined to a wheel chair. Mike still has the use of his arms with limited hand use and is able to run his woodworking shop with the help of close friends. He commented on being very lucky after dying and being resuscitated twice. He stated he got to visit the other side and isn't ready to stay there yet. Amen. Not many of us get that second or even third chance. Mike is still looking for old friends and can be contacted at mssullywood@gmail.com on e-mail. I'm sure he would appreciate hearing from anyone who knows him.

I will share a funny story that occurred with Mike and I. Probably funnier for him than me. We had managed to "acquire" some live .50 cal rounds and were planning on demilitarizing them so we could use them for "Gunner's Plaques" and such. (Yes, Sully, I am looking at my Barksdale Gunners plaque as I type this.) We met at my reloading shop behind my house and were able to separate the case from the bullet fairly easily and pour the powder out. The next step was to "kill" the primer by hitting it with a punch so it would go off harmlessly while the case was being secured by a vise. I had been reloading ammunition of all types since I was 14-years old and had no fear of primers of powder...until then. Some young munitions troops said it would work! Later we found them not to be as reliable as we hoped!!!

Sully was standing behind me as I hit the primer with a punch and hammer. Nothing happened so I hit it again harder. The second time, I struck the primer, there was a "VERY LOUD BANG" and "BRIGHT FLASH". The hammer and punch were no longer in my hand and I instinctively grabbed the thumb of my left hand with my fingers on that hand because my thumb hurt. My ears were ringing and as I looked up I could see the punch I had been holding was sticking in the ceiling of the shop, the hammer was across the room. As I looked over my shoulder, I could see a wide-eyed Sully looking at my hand. There was blood and you could not see the thumb since I had it rapped tightly in my fingers. I didn't know a man that big could move so fast. He said, "That's gotta hurt" and disappeared. Luckily when I opened my hand, the thumb was still attached. The primer had sliced a ¼-inch piece out of my thumb on its way up the punch as it traveled to the ceiling. Not my finest hour, no major harm was done other than wounding my ego. Sully returned a short time later to see if I was going to be OK and I was.

We did some real research after that and discovered there is enough explosive force in the primer of a military .50 cal round to propel the round out of the barrel if the powder doesn't ignite. That gave me a whole new understanding of .50 cal ammo. Sully and I did manage to "de-mil" the other rounds and many of them made it onto "Barksdale Gunners" plaques' crafted by him. Hope this finds you doing well Sully.

"C'EST LA VIE"

Rory



EDITOR'S COMMENTS - PETE KARJANIS



We are getting down to the wire in trying to make the Nashville Reunion work. By the time you get your August Short Bursts, we sure hope you have sent in your registration to Dan Danish so we can meet our Nashville Reunion tour suspenses and hotel commitments.

At our general membership business meeting for those present at this reunion, please be prepared to discuss a hot-topic issue that comes up at each reunion, whether or not to open the membership up to the air-to-ground gunners that perform duties on helicopters and gunships. Most of us air-to-air gunners have very little in common with these special operator gunners that have their own rescue and special operations reunions.

The 2017 Nashville Reunion will be the fifteenth reunion in thirty years since the first reunion in Orlando. At that very first reunion in 1987, every active duty gunner assigned at Fairchild that wasn't on alert was proudly in attendance. We were able to get with our tanker schedulers and have a tanker training flight scheduled to fly into MacDill from Spokane for that reunion weekend and then return to Fairchild when the reunion was over. We were also fortunate to get a crew bus at MacDill to transport the gunners to the reunion in Orlando and then back to the tanker at MacDill when the reunion was over for the return leg to Fairchild.

The Fairchild active duty gunners dressed up in their formal service dress uniforms for the big Saturday night banquet and that started the tradition of the formal dress for every reunion that followed. The recognition of the "Boys in Blue" forming up for the banquet in uniform picture has been a very exceptional tradition ever since.

Way back then, there were quite a few gunners that had their camouflage sport coats that still fit from their Bullet Shot and Arc Light days. In that traditional spirit, the Open Mike Night dinner grew into a wear any kind of gunner uniform, flight suit, jacket, shirt, or hat from your era. This has turned out to be a very fun, most memorable evening of great camaraderie in superb, unique gunner fashion, pun intended.

Another tradition was started in Orlando. We recognized the oldest and youngest gunner in attendance. At that time the youngest gunner was 18-year old A1C Robert Martinez and the oldest was an 87-year old veteran of World War II. The World War II and Korean War gunners easily outnumbered the jet-age gunners back then.



How quickly time passed since the first reunion. There were gunners back then going 24-hours, non-stop and something magical was happening in that huge, open-air atrium at the hotel. More importantly, listening to those World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam Era gunners and hearing those heroic stories first-hand was definitely priceless and a huge honor. Just to have met and made great friendships with these most decorated aviation legends of all time is now hard to even imagine just routinely taking place at each gunner reunion.

Most of those legendary aviators are no longer with us as time takes its' toll. Some still amongst our ranks are wanting to attend the reunions but are unable to travel as they lose their mobility with advanced age. We sure miss your lifelong friendships, great stories, and seeing each one of you there at the reunions as in the not-so-distant past. As Frank, our Sergeant-in-Arms reminds us at each reunion, REMEMBER!

For those unable to attend this Nashville Reunion, we are thinking about you. For those that attend, safe travels and we all look forward to visiting with you all once again. This reunion will be even more thrilling with the activities lined up in a very welcoming location with great food, refreshment, unmatched camaraderie, and enjoyment.

GUNNER PROFILES

Where they've gone from here...

Please enjoy reading about other outstanding gunners that definitely made the difference! Keep those historical gunner submissions coming in for our enjoyment, enlightenment, and to get them documented in print forever!

CMSgt (Retired) James Galambos

Jim Galambos was born in June 1958 and graduated from Crestwood High School in Mantura, Ohio. He enlisted in the Air Force in February 1977. After basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas, he attended technical training across the base at Camp Bullis as a Security Specialist.

As a base Security Specialist, his first Air Force assignment was a tour with the 3201st Security Police Squadron, Andersen AFB, Guam from June 1977 to November 1979. In November 1979, Buck Sergeant Galambos was assigned to the 43rd Security Police Squadron, Andersen AFB, Guam until February 1981. He made Staff Sergeant in his first year of eligibility.

Very sports oriented, Jim was selected for the Andersen AFB softball team and he competed in the PACAF command tournament held at Kadena AFB, Japan.

In February 1981, Jim retrained as a B-52 Defensive Aerial Gunner and attended training at Carswell AFB, Texas. After training, he was assigned to the 20th Bomb Squadron at Carswell as a B-52D and B-52H Stratofortress gunner.



GUNNER PROFILES, CMSgt (Ret) James Galambos



SSgt Galambos was honored in the 7th Bomb Wing as Gunner of the Year twice, he was a distinguished graduate at the NCO Academy, and a 19th Air Division nominee for the Twelve Outstanding Airmen of the Year. He was selected to attend the SAC Central Flight Instructor Course and later made Technical Sergeant.



From August 1986 to October 1990, Jim was assigned to the 328th Bomb Squadron, 329th Combat Crew Training Squadron, and the 93rd Bomb Wing at Castle AFB, California. He instructed and evaluated initial qualification for B-52G gunners.

He completed the Community College of the Air Force degree in Resource Management and Bachelor's of Science degree in Professional Aeronautics through Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, and earned his promotion to Master Sergeant.



In November 1990 MSgt Galambos was offered an opportunity to return to Carswell AFB, Texas as the Squadron Gunner of the 9th Bomb Squadron.

In September 1991, following Desert Storm, the B-52 was redesigned eliminating the gunner position. MSgt Galambos retrained as a Command and Control System Specialist and attended technical training at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. His assignments in the E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft included assignments in the 964th Airborne Air Control Squadron, 552nd Training Squadron, and the 552nd Air Control Wing. Later at Tinker, Jim upgraded to Battle Staff Technician, was awarded Senior NCO of the Quarter, earned the Air Control Wing Top Gun award and was promoted to Senior Master Sergeant.



In November 1997, Jim was assigned to Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas where he managed aircrew assignments for the Air Force just as CMSgt Timlake and CMSgt Kilgore had decades previously. While at Randolph, Jim completed a second CCAF degree in Air and Space Operations. Jim was cross-selected to attend the US Navy Senior Enlisted Academy where he earned the Excellence in Achievement award. At Randolph, Jim was selected and promoted to Chief Master Sergeant.

In June of 2004, CMSgt Galambos returned to Tinker AFB where he became the chief of the 963rd Airborne Air Control Squadron leading and managing the three-hundred assigned enlisted crewmembers aboard the AWACS aircraft. This included flight engineers, radio operators, communications technicians, computer display maintenance technicians, surveillance technicians, senior surveillance technicians, battle director technicians, enlisted weapons controllers, and airborne radar technicians. He also was responsible for the team of administration, flight records, intelligence, and life support airmen assigned to his squadron.



Later he was selected to be the Chief of the 552nd Airborne Air Control Group now responsible for seven AWACS squadrons and over 1,400 enlisted crewmembers and operations support personnel. He was the third former-gunner chief to be selected for this top enlisted ops group leadership position.



As the senior enlisted manager of AWACS operations, he led a deployment of one-hundred-fifty airmen as the superintendent of the 379th Expeditionary Operations Group in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom out of Al Udeid, Qatar in Southwest Asia in support of the Global War on Terrorism. As the senior functional manager of Battle Director Technicians, Jim managed and flew many of the continually airborne Noble Eagle command and control missions during that period in defense of the United States.

GUNNER PROFILES, CMSgt (Ret) James Galambos

Jim was only one of two chief master sergeants in Air Combat Command to be approved for a High Year of Tenure extension to serve 31-years in the Air Force.

Jim's decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with five oak leaf clusters, Aerial Achievement Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal, Combat Readiness Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Air Force Good Conduct medal with eight oak leaf clusters, National Defense Medal with star, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Kuwait Liberation Medal Saudi Arabia, Kuwait Liberation Medal Kuwait.



FOREVER ONBOARD: AIRMAN HONORED TO HAVE HIS NAME DISPLAYED ON TINKER B-52D



Chief Master Sergeant (Retired) Jim Galambos is more than happy to talk about his days as a gunner on the B-52D, but he's not quite sure how he feels about one of the aircraft he served on being on display at Maj. Charles B. Hall Memorial Airpark at Tinker AFB. "I don't know if it's good to have flown a plane in an airpark museum or not," he said laughing. "You wouldn't believe how many people come up and ask me if that is my grandfather or father's name up there on it."

Chief Galambos, former Operations Group chief, 552nd Air Control Wing, served as the gunner on the "Early Riser," from June 1981 until April 1982 and has many memories of the aircraft that now sits on static display just outside Tinker's gates along Interstate 40. He helped refurbish this B-52 when he was stationed at Tinker in the early 1990s and was able to get his name put on the side when they found out that he actually flew on this aircraft. "Not only did I fly it six times, but my very first flight was on this aircraft," he said. "Good memories in the tail of this plane."

He discovered his connection to this aircraft when he compared the tail number of the aircraft from his flight records to the one in the airpark while in-processing at Tinker in 1992. "I flew this on 5 June 1981 for my very first B-52 ride... talk about scary," he said, recalling how his instructor watched him during the preflight check and then left him alone to join the rest of the crew in the front of the plane.

Chief Galambos didn't start out as a gunner. In fact, he spent his first four years with security forces in Guam guarding the same type of aircraft he now speaks about so fondly. After graduating from very difficult training to become a gunner, the chief remembers many weeks spent on alert while he was assigned to the 20th Bomb Squadron at Carswell Air Force Base, Texas. "We pulled alert every third week for a whole week ... you couldn't leave base and you had to have your beeper on all the time," he said. "No matter where you were, when the klaxon went off you had to get there to get the plane ready to go. "You had to be airborne if the war order went down... this was back in the Cold War days when the planes were loaded with nukes. We never actually took off, thank goodness, but we had exercises that included engine starts and taxing along with the other alert aircraft."

GUNNER PROFILES, CMSgt (Ret) James Galambos

To get to his seat he would crawl through a small door at the back of the aircraft. “Our seat was prone and once we got in the seat, it popped up with the parachute and that’s where we’d stay for the entire duration of the mission,” Chief Galambos said. Strapped into the tail section, away from the rest of the crew up front, it offered very little room to move, with about a foot of space for his helmet and just enough room to almost put his elbows out at his sides. It also meant a very bumpy ride. “It was like a seven to one ratio...if the front end would go up two feet the back end would go down 14 feet,” he said. Gunners were expected to ride out the mission from take off to landing in their small confined space and many ended flights with broken helmets. The chief once suffered a shattered elbow. “It didn’t discourage me from flying, I was just ordered by the flight doctor to wear elbow pads,” he said.

If there was a severe problem the gunner could make his way through a very narrow crawlway and six or seven different little doors to get to the front of the aircraft, a path which Chief Galambos described as “treacherous.” The gunner’s job was to control a turret with four .50 caliber machine guns on the back of the aircraft and to keep watch from their position on the ground and in the air. “You were basically the aft eyes of the aircraft,” he said. “You can fly six hours in this plane and just be worn out because you’re flying low level five hundred feet off the ground, not knowing where you’re going, you just feel the plane turning and you’re watching out for fighters, knowing the whole crew has their own job, and mine was the defense of the aircraft.”



As the gunner, he was the only enlisted member of a six-man crew, but he said the demands of being on alert “one third of his life” and of carrying out their mission, quickly brought them together as a family. “The crew unity was unbelievable,” he said. “The six of us did everything together.” Those friendships continued through the years, with two of his former crew mates even traveling from California and Ohio to Randolph AFB, Texas, to be present when he received his promotion to chief. “We remain good close friends,” he said. Chief Galambos said it was a sad day for him and many others when after 27 years of service, the “Early Riser” and all other B-52D models were retired in 1983 after just going through a major structural and equipment modification.

The chief finished his days on the D model with more than 750 flight hours on this type of aircraft. He and other gunners were transferred to other B-52G and H models, but in September 1991 all gunners were taken off the B-52 flight crews. Like about forty other gunners, Chief Galambos took the opportunity they were offered to continue flying by joining E-3 Airborne Warning and Control Systems crews. “On AWACS you have a 19 to 40 man crew, to come from a six man crew, it’s quite a difference,” he said.

Although he leaves the E-3 much cleaner and less bounced around than when he would spend 10 to 12 hours in the tail section of a B-52, Chief Galambos still feels a deep connection to the planes where he started his flying career. “It was a great feeling to be stationed here, but those B-52 days were the prime years of my career. This is where I want to have my retirement,” he said as he stood beneath the tail section of “Early Riser.”



LAST GUNNER TO RETIRE?

There have been several articles written and reporting about the very last gunner to retire from the Air Force. It has been widely reported that on 12 May 2017, CMSgt Robbie Wellbaum was the U.S. Air Force's last B-52 Stratofortress (BUFF) aerial defensive gunner to retire marking the end of an era.

When Robbie joined the U.S. Air Force in 1987, he had no idea he would be the last of his kind. According to Robbie, it was his own desire to fly that encouraged him to join the Air Force.

"I went into the recruiter's office and asked them what jobs they had for enlisted members to fly," recalled Robbie. "My recruiter listed off loadmaster, boom operator, and B-52 defensive aerial gunner. The gunner job sounded like the coolest out of the three so that is what I applied for."

In December 1987 he started basic training to become a BUFF gunner. His first assignment took him to the 325th Bomb Squadron at Fairchild AFB in the B-52H. On 16 September 1991 General George Butler, then Strategic Air Command commander, announced the elimination of the gunner position two weeks later and the deactivation of the guns on the B-52H as a cost reducing initiative.

"We knew something was in the works but we weren't expecting to be cut," explained Wellbaum. "However, our squadron gunner took great care of us and found the narrow opening in several desirable flying AFSCs, one of which was flight engineer. I knew a couple other gunners that had successfully crossed trained into that career field earlier like Vinnie Budinger, so I saw it as a natural progression."

Robbie finished his first-term gunnery career at Fairchild AFB in the B-52H with the 325th Bomb Squadron. Over his 30-year career, Robbie logged over 6,500 flight hours with over 1,000 flight hours on the B-52, and earned his Chief Enlisted Aircrew Wings with toilet seat and star.

However Chief Master Sergeant Robbie Wellbaum apparently is not the last B-52 gunner to retire. In fact John Stallings, President of the Air Force Gunners Association and a reader of The Aviation Geek Club, told us that currently there are at least three former BUFF gunners who are still on active duty or in the Reserves/Guard including himself that are still serving and have not yet retired.

4017th revives tradition

SMSgt. James R. Crawford
4017th Gunnery Instructor

The U.S. Air Force has an old tradition of awarding wings to aircrew members when they have qualified for aircrew status by completing training.

The 4017th Combat Crew Training Squadron Academic Gunnery School has reestablished the custom by formally awarding the Aircrew Member's Badge ("wings") to graduates of the B-52 Defensive Aerial Gunnery Undergraduate Course.

Lt. Col. James F. Duffy, 4017th vice commander, awarded the wings to each student gunner at a recent formal ceremony.

In his opening address Colonel Duffy said; "Ever since the day when the Army Signal Corps started flying airplanes,

those men who fly our nation's military aircraft have been decorated with silver wings. These wings indicate your qualifications, your skills and the importance of your duties as a combat crew member.

"In becoming one of the men who wear these wings, you are joining a select group. There is contained within these wings your personal dedication and sacrifice; your promise to maintain the honor won by the men who have worn these wings and the indication to your fellow airmen that you are worthy to wear them. I congratulate you on this occasion of the award of these wings. May you wear them with the pride they deserve."

CMSgt. Roland F. Eskew,
NCOIC of the Academic

Gunnery School, said, "With this ceremony we have revived an old and time-honored tradition. It has been many years since such an award ceremony was held. We take great pride in resuming this tradition."

Recipients of the Aircrew Members' Badge were SSgt. Nels M. Reed, Sgt. Anthony J. Wujcik, A1C Anthony C. Freeborn, Ann. Michael C. McLaughlin, Ann. Ronald J. Plourde and A1C Kenneth A. Rigard.

Upon completion of the defensive Aerial Gunner's Undergraduate Course, the class entered the 4017th B-52 course, another required landmark on the way to their jobs as Strategic Air Command B-52 Gunners.



GUNNER TALES



SILVER WINGS — Students in the 4017th Combat Crew Training Squadron gather at graduation ceremony to receive their wings. At left is the NCOIC of the Academic Gunnery School, CMSgt. Roland F. Eskew. Lt. Col. James F. Duffy, 4017th Deputy Commander is next to Sergeant Eskew and the students from left are AIC Kenneth A. Rigard, Amn. Ronald J. Ploure, Amn. Michael G. McLaulin, Sgt. Anthony J. Wujcik, SSGt. Nels M. Reed, and AIC Antony C. Freeborn.



A more recent SMSgt (Retired) Ken (Bo) Rigard than in the Castle AFB picture above on his Service Special Road King and with Al Moore at the 2007 Omaha Reunion. Ken's father was a gunner, he's a son-of-a-gunner!

Mack's Re-telling of the Bomb Incident

2 April 1971...I was flying the gunner's position with a crew out of Dyess AFB, TX in place of their regular gunner who was absent that mission for some unremembered reason. We were flying over Vietnam or Laos, also can't recall the specific location that perfectly. I heard the bomb bay doors open. The stick of bombs went out; you can feel the bombs bump as they go out. Then I felt a sudden jar – on the turn; immediately after bomb run, a hard turn of 180 degrees is initiated to clear the area in case of enemy action coming from below. I looked out the compartment windows to see a single bomb wobbling as it fell – could not see the fins, which controls the stability and guidance of the bomb. Immediately called to the Navigator to 'mark this spot now' – Pilot, 'we just had a bomb go out – about 5 seconds after final stick went out, I looked and saw a single bomb depart the aircraft'. Made a note, then we flew back approximately 1 ½ hours to U Tapao air base in Thailand with no problems.

On the landing approach back at base the Pilot told the Co-pilot to make the landing and he made the normal Lieutenant Co-pilot landing --- two bounces and a bump. After landing, the Tower called and said 'the bomb doors were open'. This is not normal. As we got to the end of the runway the Tower said 'Pilot, you have a bomb hanging out' and directed us to a remote area and said 'abandon aircraft'.

I went to the gunner's escape hatch but had no stand or platform to exit (the ground is approximately 12 ft. straight down) so I went to the right wheel well which is the emergency exit. From there I jumped down off the wheel. I left my gear on board, and walked out from under the aircraft and saw a single 2nd Lt. standing under the bomb bay doors and also observed all the rest of my crew and other individuals standing away at a very safe distance. The Lt. was an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) man and was attempting to clear all the mess himself. I checked and approximately 24 bombs were hung on the one bomb that had initially jammed between the release shackle which is attached to the bomb at two points. The rear attach point for the 250 lb. bomb had failed to release. So, as you can see, we were six fortunate people – if any of those bombs, that were released and armed, had bounced out through the open bomb bay door and landed on its' nose, on that hard bumpy landing, the results would have been catastrophic. We had flown approximately 1 ½ hours back to home base with this bomb configuration. I asked the EOD Lt. where his help was and he said they'd be along shortly. Since he had no helpers I told him to get away and leave it alone since he didn't have any help or bomb loading/unloading equipment with him. (Note: when the shackle releases, the timer runs down almost immediately).

Each bomb, be it a 100 lb., 250 lb., 500 lb., or larger size bomb is attached to a rack in the bomb bay with the release shackle. When the radar man, or bombardier, releases the bomb(s), a few steps are set in motion. The bombs, in sequence, are released from the shackle attached to the bomb bay rack and the arming cycle in the bomb is triggered. Any impact on the nose of the bomb will complete the cycle and you have what was intended --- the massive explosion!

I walked over to my crew and asked what happened that they all decided to abandon the aircraft and leave me alone on the aircraft? Of course, they had no answer. I then told the senior ground crew member standing there to bring me a stand or vehicle so I could get back up in the gunner's compartment and get my gear (bag, pistol, helmet, etc.). They immediately brought the Fire Chief's vehicle up and sent someone up to get my gear by standing on top of the cab. They really didn't want to do that either since it had just been polished...The Pilot was quaking and worried that repercussions from this incident would ruin his career. I told him not to worry, just have the Colonel call me and I'd tell them what happened.

The EOD had to pin each of the 24 bombs with a safety pin to keep them from activating: – falling from the aircraft, hitting the nose, and blowing all of us and the aircraft to smithereens.

An interesting flight. *Mack Lee*



Mack's Re-telling of the Bomb Incident

2 April 1971

From: 307 Strat Wing U Tapao AFLD Thailand

1. 2 April 1971, 1739 hours (Golf) Day.
2. During Flight.
3. B-52 Serial No. 50069. Five (5) MK82 500 pound bombs with Mopre 2 Nose Fuses and M905 Tail Fuses.
4. SAC, 8AF 307th Strat Wing, U Tapao AFLD Thailand.
5. Explosive accident/aircraft incident. Right center lower door severely buckled and torn.
6. Crew Dye E-06. Pilot: Capt Robert D. Hennessy, No life support equipment used. Crew experience is not considered a factor. Experience records not available this station. Home base of crew: 96 SAW, Dyess AFB, TX.
7. CP: 1 LT John M. Durham
8. NB: Capt Donald R. Emmons
9. NN: Capt John E. Hughes
10. NE: Capt Anthony R. Tepedino
11. AG: CMSGT Mack Lee
12. Suspect during bombing run
13. Flight to target was normal. During bombing run indicator lights showed all A-6 had released. During turn to depart bombing area, that aircraft gunner saw a single bomb falling from aircraft. The bomb appeared to be minus the tail section. Bomb bay door closure was then completed and aircraft proceeded to return to base. The crew stated that they had no indications of any other problems. During landing roll they were notified by the tower that the bomb bay door was open. Before completion of the roll they were again called by the tower and informed that a bomb was hanging beside the door. The landing was completed without further incident. Check of the aircraft revealed that a bomb at station 36 had not released from shackle but forward end of shackle has de-mated from the bay assembly. One bomb was being supported by the tail fin which was wedged between the right outside grid and the bay assembly support beam. The third bomb was resting on the bomb at station 36. The nose extended approximately 2 inches below the outer edge of the opened bomb bay door. This bomb was also supported by the tail fin section which was wedged between the two other bombs. All A-6 had released armed.
14. Cloudy, not a factor.



The 37th Bombardment Squadron (L) Night Intruder Black Knights – Korea

Antonio G. Fucci

12 April 2017

This is a slice of history relating to the 37th Bomb Squadron, 17th Bomb Wing, N/I, Black Knights and its role during the Korean War. This history is being presented at the 100th Birthday of the 37th Bomb Squadron on the 11th and 12th of June 2017 at Ellsworth AFB. The following areas are some of our endeavors in Korea that I felt the present day 37th Bomb Squadron might find interesting.

Prelude:

It has been sixty-five years since the 37th Squadron was engaged flying combat missions in Korea and from that time I've had the feeling that Korea was being treated like a black hole in outer space where a war just happened to happen. The country and the war, still remain an opaque never-never-land.

For many years most of us that flew with the 37th during the Korean War have had to live with that period of time and our involvement in it, as simply "the Forgotten War" or the "War before Vietnam." History doesn't let us off the hook that easily. Mainly because no war ever really duplicates a previous war. The Korean War can be compared with the Vietnam War in broad terms at best. Granted, many of the challenges we faced between 1950 and 1953 in Korea were repeated in Southeast Asia, and more than just a few lessons had to be re-learned. But, in Korea we had to quickly refresh ourselves on practices that had been learned during WW II. From the standpoint of technology, the Vietnam War was light years ahead of Korea. To us the War is "not forgotten", we mourn for the loss of our Brethren and PRAISE the freedom that we helped attain to free a nation, from the enslavement of Communism, the Republic of Korea.

The ratio of casualties of the Korean War were greater (e.g. 3 years vs 10 years) than in Vietnam. This can be best be understood by the raw statistics of both wars. In three years (1950 -1953) the Korean War claimed as many American Casualties (36,000+), as did over ten years (1965-1975) of fighting in Vietnam, American Casualties (58,000+).

Korea was the last of the massive "Big Battalion" land battle conflicts. For any of us that happened to fly over the MLR (Main Line of Resistance) during a massive artillery duel between the two armies at night, It was an awesome sight and never to be forgotten. It was like a scene from Dante's Inferno as far as one could see in either direction. In Korea we flew and fought with equipment that was essentially the same as that used in WW II. For example; our airborne radar wasn't refined enough or available to allow us to conduct true all weather operations. For us, our war was still one where you had to somehow find the enemy in the dark, set up an attack, and then get it over with. The problem here is that if you can see them, they can see you. When that occurred sparks would fly and you earned your pay. Also, your adrenaline pump would shift into high gear.

One of the Crews have stated that they had never been in a foreign country and seen so little of it as in Korea. Most of us only saw whatever the moonlight or flares would illuminate. Understandably, we didn't waste any time getting out of that place, but not before getting a good glimpse of the countryside. It was a scene of utter desolation. The hills that once had contained dikes and terraces for the cultivation of rice no longer bore any semblance of having done so. From the air you could see that whatever topsoil existed on the hills prior to the war was being washed into the rivers by the monsoon rains and the rivers were being clogged with silt and debris. The clogged rivers were in turn causing massive flooding of the best food producing lowlands. In a country that even in the best of times could barely feed itself, this was catastrophic.

Had peace prevailed, and had Korea been the Garden of Eden, it still wouldn't have been the greatest place to be stationed to Western standards. There was the buffalo pulled "honey wagon," in which the peasants collected their own excrement for spreading on the fields. That stuff defies description. It possessed a smell so deep, pungent and penetrating, that it could literally stupefy a Westerner.

If you were to look at the Korean peninsula on a world globe it would remind you somewhat of the shape of Florida. In size its 160 miles wide and about 600 miles long and I have often wondered how we managed to get lost as many times as we did in Korea. True, it was night, and everything was blacked out, but the place wasn't very big. Heck, we had water on three sides of us, and if you even got near the Manchurian border the searchlights and radar directed flak guns would let you know you're in the wrong neighborhood.

Although Korea is at the same latitude as San Francisco and Philadelphia, the weather is harsh, especially in the north during the winters. Biting Siberian winds blow down from the Asian interior and the temperatures drop to a minus 40 F. Many of us can remember flying night missions in the north when the ambient temperature registered minus 60 F. Survival after a bailout in those conditions wasn't even worth thinking about. At times it was so cold that our gun heaters couldn't keep our wing guns operable. A 500-pound bomb would hardly make a crater in the frozen earth. Strafing is always a risky proposition; day or night, and with our .50 caliber slugs ricocheting off the frozen ground it was sheer lunacy.

Summers are hot and humid with a monsoon season that turned Korea's unpaved roads into quagmires. Temperatures reach 105 F. What our air base was like during the monsoon season is best summed up by a remark made by the Deputy Commander of the 5th AF, "It was a terrible airfield - the damned thing was practically under water."

The primary area for the 37th Bomb Squadron operations in Korea was the great north-south wall of mountains reaching down the eastern coast from the Yalu River in the north to Pusan in the south. The highest peaks were about 9,000 feet above sea level and were located in North Korea around the reservoirs. We did most of our train and truck busting to the south of the reservoir area; simply because that's where most of them seemed to be. Still, we had to prowl the northern mountains though, and as I recall, most of us didn't like to go up there. It was cold, lonely, dark and spooky. And if anything happened, it was a 550-mile walk back to home base.

We could fly within a few miles of the border that separates Korea from Russia (it's only a 20 mile strip, the rest was Manchuria) and look across Peter the Great Bay and see the glow of the lights of Vladivostok, Russia. At least that's what my navigator said they were. Smaller hills and ranges extended inland. The western coast consisted of broad, flat and muddy river plains. The 3rd Bomb Wing (our sister B-26 unit) operated on the western side of Korea. Occasionally we would cover some of their missions when they were weathered in, and they did the same for us. They were always amazed at our airfield and wondered how we managed to get in and out of the place without hitting something. We all wondered the same thing when we first landed there.

In line with this, I distinctly remember on several take-offs how severe the cross winds were. One time, as we just became airborne and upon approaching the end of the runway, we had a severe cross wind which veered us to the left. Instead of the green lights being below us, (pull up gear time) they were over to our far right and buildings were below us.

Lumbering down the runway with two 500 pound bombs under each wing with 3000 lbs. of bombs in the bomb bay, along with max ammo for the .50 caliber guns, three in each wing, two in each turret, one lower and one upper, for a total of ten. Some aircraft had an additional six or eight in the nose depending on the model. Along with this, fuel tanks were topped off. This was a difficult feat in normal weather conditions, let alone in severe cross winds. We lost crews that did not make it on take-off, they crashed on the beach or into the waters at the end of the runway.

Along with this, malfunctions did occur, engine failure was not prevalent, there was one item that did occur often. "The failure of the bomb shackles not to release". Two shackles suspended each bomb, and on occasion, only one shackle would release and you had a "hung bomb". This malfunction occurred to the shackles in both the bomb bay and the ones suspended from the wings. If the hung bomb was in the bomb bay, the Gunner crawled in the bomb bay, secured the hung shackle release lever with bungee cord and returned to the Gunners compartment. He then notified the Pilot that the task was performed and the Pilot would open the bomb bay doors and the Gunner would pull the cord and the bomb was released.

This situation also happened on the shackles suspended from the wings. In this case the Pilot would try maneuvers to shake the bomb loose. If the bomb would not release, you notified air control and you would be routed back to base over the water. Once back to base and on final approach, the aircraft was landed as gently as possible as not to have the bomb shaken loose. Once on the ground, you would taxi to the hot spot and the armament crew would handle the situation.

37th Assignment K-9:

The 37th Bombardment Squadron arrived in Korea 10 May 1952 via an envelope. It was a paper transfer as it replaced the 729th Bombardment Squadron at Pusan East Air Base (K-9). The 729th had been one of three squadrons of the 452nd Bombardment Wing flying out of K-9. The 452nd was an Air Force Reserve unit recalled on 10 August 1950, at the beginning of the Korean War, for 21 months of active duty service. The unit had been in combat since October 1950, and by May 1952, all the original reserve personnel had long been KIA, MIA, or rotated back to the ZI. Replacement personnel, some of which were recently recalled WW II retirees, or freshly minted Second Lieutenants, were staffing the organization.

On 10 May 1952, the 17th Bomb Wing replaced the 452nd Bomb Wing, which returned to reserve status. Nothing changed except the numerical unit designation. The 452nd's consecutively numbered squadrons (728th, 729th, and 730th), we the 17th had the 34th, 37th, and 95th squadrons.

The Airbase:

All airfields on the Korean Peninsula were given a "K" prefix. The 37th's airfield at Pusan, Korea was given the designation of K-9. We called it "Dog patch" (which was our call sign). K-9 was like a box canyon in many respects. The only open side was 100 yards from the shore of the Sea of Japan. There was only one runway, and loaded you took off toward the sea no matter what direction the wind was from. The only exception to this was our training flights, because of reduced ordnance loads the planes could clear the landward hills.

A person could write a book about the comments of aircrews when they first arrived at K-9. Some guys remarked about the short steel mat runway surrounded by a box canyon, later it was black-topped. The weather (rain, wind, cold, and fog) made the whole thing unreal and didn't help matters any.

Ice was another little tidbit that Mother Nature provided us with at K-9. Our B-26s were not equipped with de-icer boots so this became a concern at times, but we did have anti-icing capabilities for the props. Picking up ice in any amount during a night time instrument climb-out with a full load of bombs and 130-octane fuel left a crew feeling orgasmic.

Landing at K-9 also took some measure of a pilot's ability. After a night mission you still had to face landing on the slippery runway. Just the moisture from the morning dew made it as slick as polished glare ice. Bear in mind, this was before reversing propellers and anti-skid brake systems were available (we did have hydraulic brakes). Also, there was a wicked dike at the end of the runway. It was ran into more than once and claimed a few lives.

Although K-9 airfield was never under direct enemy attack, we were a prime candidate. A detachment of U.S. Army engineers working on improving our runway were ambushed and murdered at a gravel pit a short distance from the base during late 1952. Also, various electronic homing beacons in the area were attacked on several occasions.

The Mission:

Our primary mission in Korea was to deprive the enemy of the capability of staging a prolonged offensive by disrupting his supply lines. We flew Combat Interdiction. The relentless day and eventually night interdiction of the movement of the enemy's men and material, as well our delivery of effective front line support was a major factor in the restoration of personal freedom and national security for the long suffering people of the Republic of Korea. (Our Aircraft were painted black and the title "Black Knights" was born).

To be effective for our mission we flew at low levels. When we dropped the bombs, you could feel the percussion from the explosion of the bomb. The enemy strung cables across the mountain peaks, we lost several aircraft in this manner. If the cables were strung close to the MLR / bomb line, search lights from our side zeroed in on the cable attach points so we could see the cables. Missions were low level, below 500', many on final runs were at 100'. Low level was a necessity to identify any targets, all target acquisition was visual. On moonlit nights identifying a target was easier. Chasing a train was easy as the engine gave itself away with the smoke it exhausted. Convoys and troop movements were more difficult, it was all visual. We did not have IR (infra red). The enemy could hear us and when we shot a burst, we were totally visible.

Though we inflicted huge losses on the enemy they still managed to stage some very damaging offensives. Oriental manpower seemed to overtake western technology. Our ability to inflict damage was equaled by the enemy's ability to repair the damage. In effect, we pitted skilled crews, equipped with expensive and modern aircraft (WWII), against unskilled coolies armed with picks and shovels.

A good example of the situation that existed back then is this; in July of 1951 Communist ground forces fired only about 8,000 rounds of artillery and mortars against our positions, but in May 1952 they directed 102,000 rounds at our ground forces. General Ridgway, 8th Army Commander, stated at that time; "There's little doubt that Communist ground divisions have accumulated adequate supplies". The hostile forces opposing the Eighth Army have a substantially greater potential than at any time in the past. During this time Communist ground fire wrought increasing losses on the B-26s. By the summer of 1952, Colonel George Brown, 5th AF Director of Operations, could only report that, "We are trading B-26s for trucks in a most uneconomical manner."

As a crew, our goal was to perpetrate some mean things on the enemy and his transportation system, and then bring the aircraft back to home base in one piece and park it. To most of the flight crews, it all reduced down to a rather basic and simple equation; one crew and one airplane, versus the night, the terrain, and whatever the enemy had to take us down. This was like a big crap game, "a roll of the dice".

Sometimes, if you happened to have one of the last missions of the night, you'd still be on your way out of North Korea as the sun came up. As always, in desperate situations, there is consolation, looking over one wing you see a beautiful peaceful sunrise, and over the other wing you see the dark blackness of night and the horror that was left behind. It was an unbelievable sight.

Conclusion of our efforts and others is that we saved a nation from the enslavement of Communism and preserved peace, freedom and prosperity.

The Men:

One unique thing about the men who flew Night Intruder missions during the Korean War is that we hardly knew each other. To this day, many of the men don't know much about their fellow squadrons within the wing. In some cases we barely knew the other crews within our own squadron.

We always flew alone and at night. During the daytime we would try to sleep. Sometimes we would have daytime training missions to the Naktong or Mundo ranges for gunnery, bomb, and rocket practice. Briefing for the crews flying that night would take place at about 1500 hrs. Afterwards we would check out our aircraft, ammo, and bomb load, eat supper, and then try to sleep some more before take-off time. Take-off times would vary from 1800 to 0300 hrs. The whole thing was a "twilight zone" type of experience. Many combat crews flew an entire mission tour in four months, although I would guess that the majority of them took five months or more. As you can see, we spent a great amount of time in the air for such a short period. Time to socialize with your fellow airmen was rare.

The very nature of the Night Intruder business combined with our schedule didn't allow us much of a chance to bring the overall situation into focus very well. Our main strength and perhaps our closest loyalties as well seemed to be contained within us as an aircrew. It's difficult to explain this without encountering feelings that we had long ago. The majority of us had been together as crews since the beginning of combat crew training at Langley Field,

Virginia. We grew close to one another and learned to function as a team. We had to, in Korea the mountainous terrain and the enemy didn't let too many mistakes pass unnoticed. We lived, flew, and on occasion died together and it was always in the dark of the night, as a crew, alone. A strong bond developed within the crew. Years later it is still strong. Details of events back then have faded with time, but the feelings remain undiminished.

As far as personnel were concerned we had as diverse a group of men as could be found anywhere on earth, with the possible exception of the French Foreign Legion. A good number of our men were WW II combat veterans and Regular Air Force. Others were also WW II combat veterans but were recalled Reservists but understandably would have preferred to be someplace other than fighting in Korea. Still another element was the kids fresh out of school. It took all kinds. This combination of age and experience levels created some interesting situations. Sometimes a crew would have a freshly minted 2nd Lieutenant as a Pilot and Aircraft Commander, while the Navigator was a well seasoned Captain. A few hairy night missions in the north soon adjusted priorities and leveled personalities.

There cannot be enough said about the ground crews and maintenance personnel and their devotion to keep us flying. Before taking off on a mission, there was the Crew Chief waiting for us to assure us that the aircraft was in perfect running condition and waited there for us to return. Also he was willing to do "whatever it takes" to have a successful mission.

The Aircraft:

At one time or another during the Korean War we were allocated just about every type and version of the Douglas B-26 Invader that was ever built. Perhaps it should be said rebuilt, as they had been built during WW II and most had seen prior service. Generally, by the time we received them, they had been modified and updated. The nose wheel strut and support seemed to be the only structural weakness of the Invader, and even at that, it took a fair amount of abuse to collapse one.

Many of these same planes would be supplied to the French forces in Indo-China after we finished with them in Korea. Then, a decade later, we turned around and used them again in Vietnam. Age and long hard service finally caught up with the B-26 during the early part of that war and several were lost when in-flight structural failures occurred with the loss of crew and aircraft. Overall, the Douglas B-26 Invader was one tough airplane.

I don't think combat aircraft were meant to be comfortable, and our Invaders were no exception to the rule. Freezing in the winter, but we did have heated suits, boiling in the summer, leaky when it rained, and a gymnastic challenge to climb into, they probably were no better, or worse, than any of the other aircraft of that era.

The Douglas B-26, like the Martin B-26 is a good-looking airplane. Even painted black such as our planes were in Korea, they had class, - sort of like consorting with an expensive "Lady of the Night!"

Epilogue:

What did we do to aid in the effort to bring about the Armistice? I do not know the specifics of the 37th, but below is the information of the three B-26 wings that served in Korea, the 3rd, 17th and 452nd.

The information below is from WIKIPEDIA – probably as accurate as any that can be found.

“When the North Korean Army invaded the South on 25 June 1950, the USAF was critically short of flight bombers. The B-26 Invaders in Japan proved to be valuable in the night interdiction role and it fell to the B-26 to fly the first and last bombing missions of the Korean War. Their first mission was on 28 June 1950 when they attacked the railroads supplying the enemy forces over South Korea. Their first attack on North Korea was on 29 June, when they bombed the main airfield in Pyongyang. The Invaders of the 3rd, 17th and 452nd Bomb Wings flew some 60,000 sorties and were credited with the destruction of 38,500 vehicles, 3,700 railway cars and 406 locomotives. The B-26 had the honor of flying the last combat sortie of the Korean War, when, 24 minutes before the Armistice Agreement went into effect on 27 July 1953, a B-26 of the 3rd Bomb Wing dropped the last bombs of the Korean

War.”

As a note, the following is printed in the booklet “Within Limits”, entitled “The U.S. Air Force and the Korean War” by Wayne Thompson and Bernard C. Nalty, published by the Air Force History and Museum Program in 1956, “What is needed to improve effectiveness of interdiction was not more bombs dropped from high flying B-29s but low-altitude aircraft that could locate and destroy truck convoys and trains moving at night...., Air Force B-26s...” ref: Within Limits.

The Enemy:

Flying the type of missions we did, we got to know the enemy on an almost personal basis. At times they would seem about as familiar as some of our own people, they were more predictable anyway. Although we rarely, if ever saw enemy personnel in the dark, we learned to know and grudgingly respect them from their habits and perseverance.

Most missions were four to five hours long; with about half of that time spent prowling as close to the ground as you could get without becoming a statistic. Almost all of our flying was done over extremely rugged and hostile terrain and in narrow mountain valleys with winding roads. It was all very intimidating and don't recall ever really adjusting to it.

Flak traps were common and if you were caught "low and slow" in a valley it was bad news. There just wasn't much room to maneuver to evade the flak guns without getting smeared on a hillside. In modern day business jargon you could say, "Our options were extremely limited".

Sometimes we would encounter a coordinated series of flak traps. Each enemy gun crew would let the next one know you were coming their way. The reception we received was at times spectacular and after a night of that kind of activity it sometimes was difficult to relax or sleep after returning to home base.

Once the aircraft was parked and secured, a jeep drove us to HQ to be debrief by intelligence. To get ready for intell to debrief us, we were given "Old Methuselah" and when available “Seagram’s V.O.” medicinal liquid (debriefing booze). This was to relax us to respond to the intell’s questions. This sometimes helped. This happened after every mission as we were debriefed by intelligence.

FIGMO Ribbon:

The FIGMO Ribbon. 37th Squadron Tradition.

As history would say it always was. But to the best of today’s knowledge, which I can attested to, specifically from the 17th Bomb Wing (L) N/I, K-9, Korea, 34th, 37th and 95th Squadrons it is as follows: What is it?

The ribbon is approximately 10” long, and ¼” wide, gold in color with a black banding and is one of the most cherished ribbon to receive... Upon receipt of this ribbon, it is the authorization to PCS to the ZI (USA).

How it is earned? It is earned in two sequential stages.

1. Successfully complete the authorized number of sorties.
2. Upon completion of the last mission and during and after debriefing from intel, a medicinal liquid is presented to the FIGMO Ribbon recipient which has the FIGMO Ribbon attached from the distillery (Seagram’s V.O.). This was in lieu Old Methuselah.

Upon successfully dispensing of this medicinal liquid by the recipient and fellow crew members, the Ribbon is removed from the container holding this liquid and the Senior Officer presented it to the recipient with a gracious salute and handshake.

This ribbon is to be worn as part of their uniform until date of departure. The ribbon is placed on the zipper handle

on the upper left of the flight jacket.

Our FIGMO Mission was significant other than being your last mission. At debriefing instead of "Old Methuselah" to relax you during debriefing, you were honored with Seagram's V.O. which was shared with your crew and others on completion of the required missions. On the neck of the bottle was a Gold Ribbon with black edges. I still have mine on my flight jacket!



CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

SEP 06 2013

Dear Mr. Fucci:

First, thank you for your service to our Nation. The Airmen who fought in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam built the foundation of our great Air Force. The men and women who proudly serve today stand upon the shoulders of those whose sacrifice and dedication led the way.

Second, thank you for your letter and accompanying documentation. You, your fellow Airmen of the 37th Bomb Squadron, and all the B-26 wings did indeed play a vital role in Korea. The night interdiction missions you mentioned were essential to disrupting the flow of North Korean soldiers and supplies to the front line. Thank you for calling this to my attention.

I wish you all the best and thank you for your continued support of Airmen and our Air Force. Airpower!

Sincerely,


MARK A. WELSH III
General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Mr. Antonio Fucci
2700 Duval Road
Santa Rosa Valley, CA 93012

Antonio G. Fucci / FBI April 2017

Black Knight, 37th Bomb Squadron (L) Night Intruder K-9

This slice of history was prepared by me, Antonio Fucci and edited by my fellow Black Knights, Ted Baker, Don Eaton, Bob Reynolds, and Charles Tucker.

Depicted below is a copy of the painting “Night of the Invader” Commissioned by Black Knight Charles Tucker.

This painting explicitly depicts our missions.

“NIGHT OF THE INVADER”

“The B-26 Invader owned the night skies over Korea”



THUNDERBIRDS OVER KOREA



34TH BOMB SQUADRON (L)



MANY THANKS BOB!

GUNNER TALES



Oh yeah, I remember it well... It was in the early 1950s... Way before the 99th Recon Wing left for Westover AFB, Massachusetts. It was on the south end of the aircraft parking ramp at Fairchild AFB, Washington. It certainly didn't look like it belonged there, it was a definite hazard to taxiing aircraft, Charlie trucks, even POVs with flight line stickers... This monstrous paved hole surrounded by barricades and blinking lights during the hours of darkness, logically, did not belong there.



Come to find out, its' purpose was to provide a place to mount an RF-84 to the belly of an RB-36. A trapeze was lowered from the forward bomb bay and attached to the RF-84, which was then raised up tight to the '36's belly and its' landing gear retracted.

Once attached you would realize just how large the RB-36 was, crew of nineteen, 270 foot wingspan, six bunks in the aft cabin, photo compartment in the number one bombay, six recip, 4360s swinging a nineteen foot prop plus four jets, two on each wing...still plenty of clearance all around.

The idea was for the RF-84 to be launched from the RB-36 to proceed to the target area to be photographed. The mission could not otherwise be completed due to the RF-84's limited fuel supply...it also would keep the mother ship out of some peril of the mission...reminds me of the peril we encountered on a sniffer mission up around Wrangle Island.

I heard the project was scrapped because the RF-84 pilots did not like flying up between the numbers three and four engines and their props for the return trip to home plate. Therefore, maybe inflight refueling will never work... ya think???

Speaking of refueling, my crew flew from Fairchild to Japan and landed on Andersen AFB, Guam after 34 hours and 10 minutes flight time with the aid of a Tokyo tank in the bomb bay.

Cease Walker

GUNNER TALES

ATTEMPTS TO CARRY FIGHTER AIRCRAFT IN THE FOURTH BOMB BAY OF THE B-36 INTERCONTINENTAL BOMBER

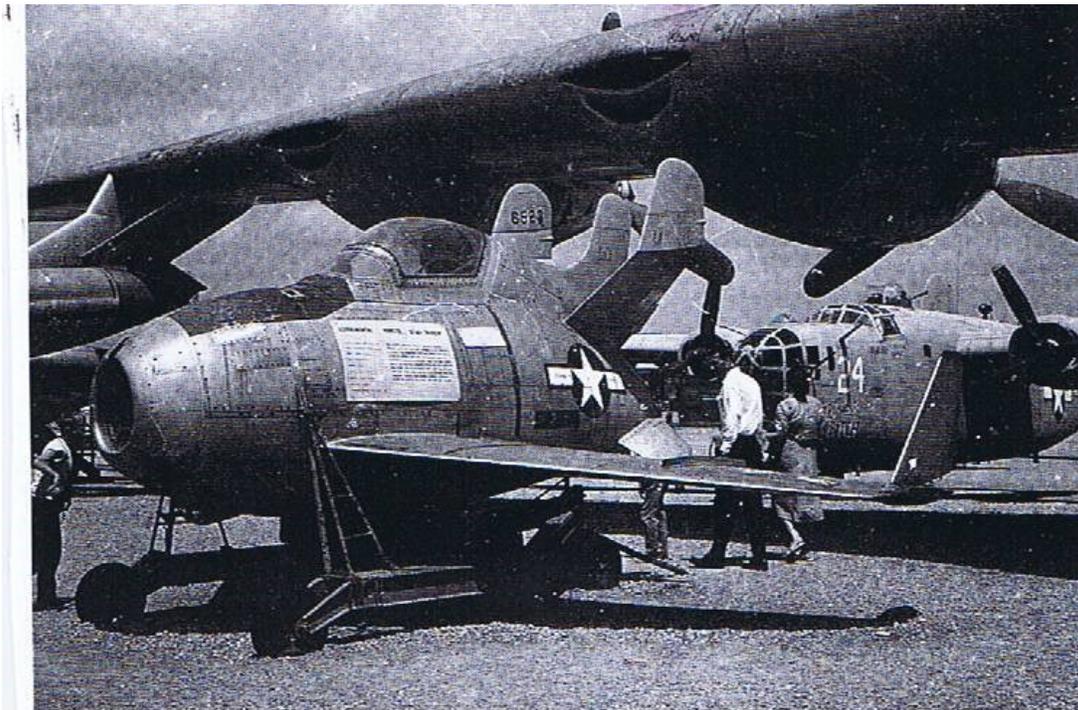
By
William M. Gaddes

PROLOGUE

The B-36 was vulnerable to jet interceptors when deployed in 1949. Commanders of the Strategic Air Command had experienced the tragedies over the skies of Germany in 1943 and 1944, prior to the availability of the P-51 escort fighter. Consequently, the Air Force funded the development of a small jet fighter called the F-85 "Goblin". After poor flight test results, the F-84F was modified for carry.

THE F-85 "GOBLIN"

The F-85 was designed to fit in the fourth bomb bay of the B-36. This tiny fighter, about 15 feet in length, was too unstable for the 'hook up' and recovery. Also, the Goblin suffered in performance with jet interceptors of the day. After several accidents, the program was terminated.



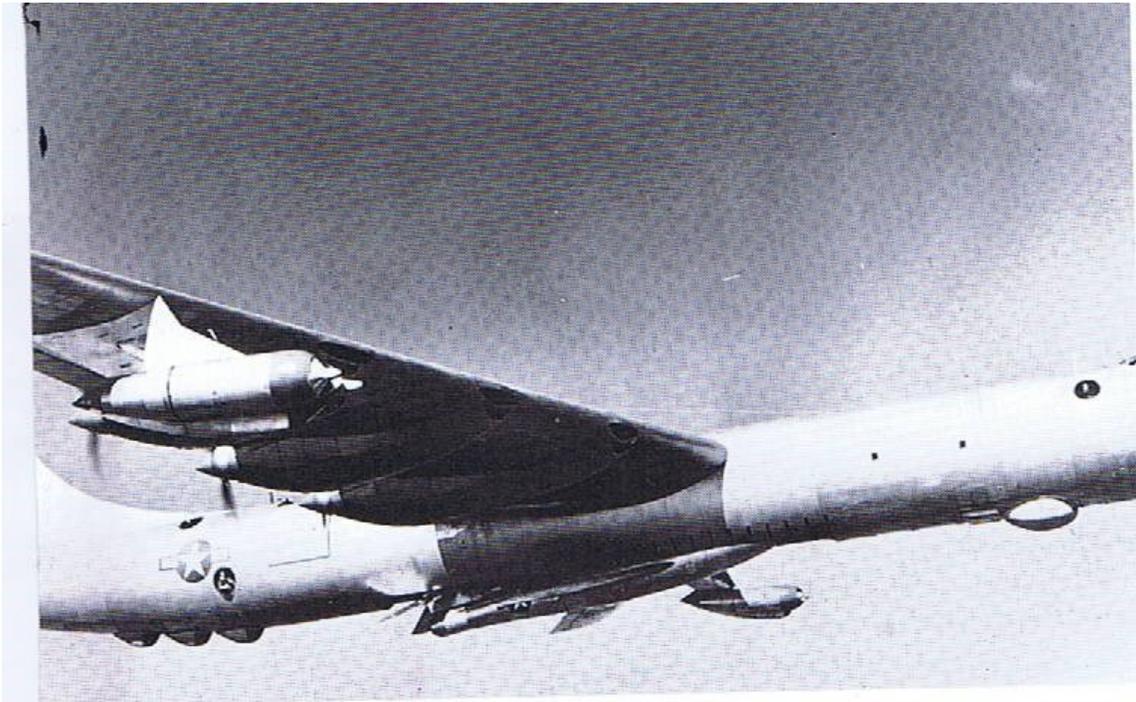
THE F-85 GOBLIN CAPTIVE FIGHTER

THE F-84F MODIFICATION TO THE RF-84K RECONNAISSANCE FIGHTER CARRIED BY THE GRB-36D

The AF ordered 15 RB-36 aircraft modified to carry 25 of the RF-84K reconnaissance fighters that were assigned to the 91st Recon Wing. The concept change was from parasite fighter to reconnaissance asset. The GRB-36Ds were assigned to the 99th Recon Wing. The system had a range of 12,000 miles, with the RF-84K used as a photo recon asset over heavily defended areas. The program was terminated after only one year of operation; as in-flight refueling, the RB-47, and the planned retirement of the B-36 in lieu of the B-52.

**ATTEMPTS TO CARRY FIGHTER AIRCRAFT IN THE FOURTH BOMB BAY
OF THE B-36 INTERCONTINENTAL BOMBER**

By
William M. Gaddes
(continued)



THE "FEATHERWEIGHT" GRB-36D AND THE RF-84K IN FLIGHT

ATTEMPTS AT RF-84 CARRY ON GRB-36D WING TIPS

There were flight tests attempting to carry two F-84 aircraft attached to B-36 wing tips. B-29 and F-84 wing tip hook ups were made sometime earlier. The extreme turbulence and vortices created by the B-36 made these attempts very dangerous. After several scary hook-ups, the attempts were abandoned.



GUNNER TALES

AERIAL GUNNER SERGEANT ANTHONY MARCHIONE, THE LAST AMERICAN DIRECT COMBAT DEATH DURING WW II

By
William M. Gaddes

US Army Sergeant Anthony Marchione was killed in action over Tokyo on 18 August 1945, three days after the Japanese Emperor declared an end to the war. Sergeant Marchione was aboard a B-32 DOMINATOR; an aircraft developed as a backup to the B-29.

Accompanied by another B-32, "Hobo Queen Two" was on a photo recon mission over Tokyo. Only two squadrons of B-32s ever saw very limited combat over Japan. All were scrapped; none survived.

Sergeant Marchione was a member of a B-24 crew that had been upgraded to the B-32. He had seen combat in the skies over the South Pacific.

"Hobo Queen Two" was attacked by 17 Japanese fighters; but managed to escape with the tragic loss of defensive aerial gunner Sergeant Marchione. The Japanese fighter pilots had violated their commander's orders to "stand down". They were furious that the B-32 was flying over the Royal Palace.

Tragically, Sergeant Marchione suffered the last direct combat death of WW II. The official surrender of Japan occurred on the USS Missouri (BB-63) on 02 September 1945.



The B-32 Dominator bomber 'Hobo Queen II' in May 1945 at Clark Field, Manila, Philippine Islands.



Sergeant Marchione is second from the right in the first row of this picture with a B-24 Liberator crew prior to being assigned to the crew that flew the "Hobo Queen Two" on August 18, 1945.



Author and Contributor Bill Gaddes

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

From: Harris
 Sent: Saturday, July 01, 2017 2:21 PM
 Subject: Memorial at Fairchild Air Force Base

This is dedicated to the crew members who died on 8 September 1958 when two B-52s collided over Airway Heights.

This memorial will be dedicated on 8 September 2017.

I plan on being there.

It was my crew. Gunner David Archer was flying for me with my crew on that day.



Harry Tolmich



A Memorial for Outcome 54 and Outcome 55.

The families of two of the airmen killed in the awful crash of two B-52 bombers are planning a memorial. It was a beautiful late summer day in 1958. Outcome 55, a nearly new B-52D assigned to the 327th Bomb Squadron was completing a Cold War training mission and had called the Fairchild tower, "Just completed touch and go, going around for a full stop. End of mission."

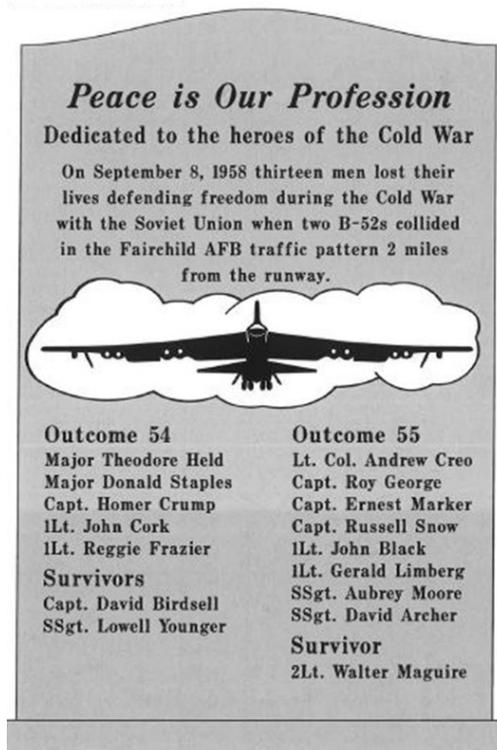
It's sister aircraft, Outcome 54, from the 325th Bomb Squadron of the 92nd Bomb Wing was making a simulated instrument approach. They never saw each other and collided over Airway Heights, two miles from the end of the runway. The 327th Commander was killed along with 12 other officers and airmen. Three men survived.

The families are planning a granite memorial to be placed in Memorial Park, Fairchild AFB, WA near the existing memorials for the 1994 accident and the Shell 77 crash.

If you have questions or comments or would like to offer financial support, you can contact the families at outcome54@outlook.com or by mail at:

Greg Staples
 4715 W Larchwood Ct
 Spokane, WA 99208

Anything helps. Thank you.



LETTERS AND E-MAILS

4-9-17

Hi Pete. - Hope not too late for this info?
 Great! job - all - have accomplished with "Short Bursts."
 I enjoy every word!

Spent some time (short), in 25's, 29's; then
 300 in B-36, then 500 in all, B-throw models.

Have fun during this time - but, how I wished
 had a camera when crew flew a 36 from Rapid, S.D.
 to the "Bone yard", as we flew below some of the
 Grand Canyon! my, just imagine the headlines
 today.

Yours,
 Don Harris

don652@earthlink.com

Ms. Allen T. Duncan

Pete: Hope this is in
 time for August.

I have more info on
 the B-36 but could not
 get it together at this time!
 Thanks for all you do.

Allen T. Duncan

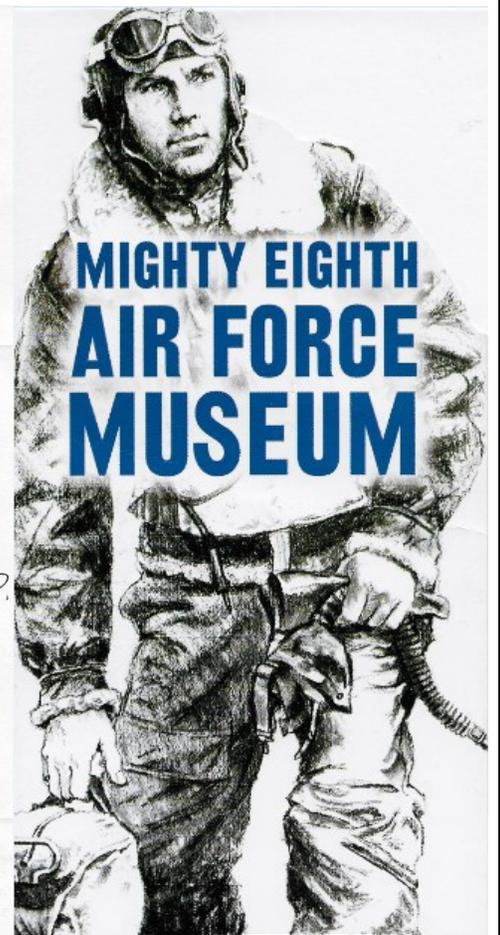
MSGT RET.

1950-1971

LOWER AFT LEFT GUNNER

AIR FORCE GUNNER'S

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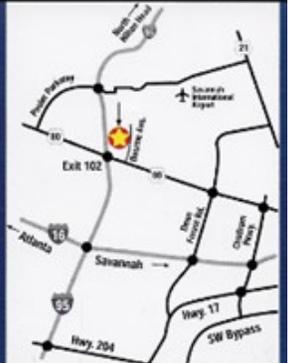
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LETTERS AND E-MAILS

To: Pete Karjanis

Editor of Short Bursts Magazine

Thanks to Harry Tolmich for the narrative on the disastrous loss of HIRAM 16 out of Westover AFB. In my new career in 1971 as Air Traffic Controller at Fort Worth Center, I was notified of the missing bomber out of Westover AFB and had a bad feeling it was Jerry. I called SAC Command post on the FAA Hot Line for the crew list and knew the next day that my buddy Jerry was gone.

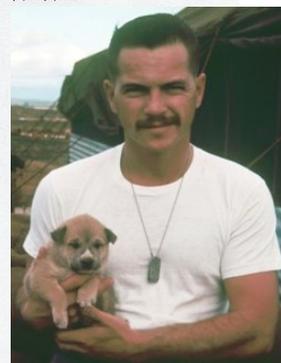
He had survived over 200 combat missions in Laos, Thailand, and Nam to wind up in a perfect good flying aircraft being flown into terrain and now rests 350ft. deep in Lake Michigan. Jerry was my friend and fellow Gunner on "Puff the Magic Dragon" (AC47D) at Plieku AFB, RVN for at least 50 missions. Both of us were SSgt just like most of the B52 Tail Gunners selected to head up this new concept of warfare with rapid firing weapon systems. We were called Baby Gunners by our state side Sergeants and described as "Ammo Loaders" by those Senior Sergeants that knew nothing about the Air Commando Mission. Those "Old Timers" knew how to go DNIF and also knew how to get there orders changed to non-combat so others could replace them for the combat tour. Truthfully, not all military were valiant when it came to a war deployment as seen at Guam with the Buff crews in Arc Lite.

Our orders came from SAC assigning us to Air Commando Combat Training for 8 weeks at Forbes AFB, KS. Company 'C' of the Army Special Forces from Fort Bragg, NC took us to the field for grenade, booby trap, demolition, and sapper training with some of the best and toughest soldiers they could provide. I can still crimp a non-electric blasting cap with my teeth for a block of 'C4' plastic explosives. SSgt. Jerry Achey breezed through it all and excelled in the 8 required training flights to keep 10 30 cal. M2 browning machine guns firing while arming Mark 20 flares for continuous illumination of the target. This GUNZ job on an C47 aircraft was the original multi-tasker job before the word was invented!

Jerry had the "Warrior Mentality" and was one of the bravest Air Commandoes I ever flew with and we always held our own with the Aussies at their Sergeants Club on days off. His beer drinking and fist fighting stories are legendary to the gunner/ commandoes when we were making history with a WW2 Aircraft and modern day "Gatling Guns".

Rest easy my friend, I lift a shot of Jim Beam in your honor.

Gary "Gunsy"



Blindsided by Operation Power Flite

I was stationed at Fairchild AFB, Washington, assigned to the 325th Bomb Squadron, 92nd Bomb Wing. The 92nd Bomb Wing was composed of the 325th, 326th, and 327th Bomb Squadrons. At this time the 99th Bomb Wing was also at Fairchild AFB. The flight line was full of B-36s. Orders came down and the 99th was transferred to Westover AFB, Massachusetts. That is when I met Michael Okeefe. He was with the 99th BW. That was the last time I saw him, but that is another story.



I was assigned to Lt Col Downs crew, my position on the B-36 aircraft was lower right position blister. On 18 January we briefed a mission that was non-stop, non-refueled, to fly the perimeter of the United States. Our route from Fairchild was west to Seattle, south to San Diego, east to Miami, north to Maine, and west back to Fairchild AFB at Spokane, Washington.

Upon landing, we had flown 42 hours and 10 minutes. We thought there might be a big write-up in the Spokesman Review newspaper, little did we know that Operation Power Flite was flown during this same time period. 15th Air Force commander Archie Olds had led a flight of three B-52s around the world with air-to-air refueling. Total flight time was 45 hours and 19 minutes.

Next day was the giant headlines in the Spokesman Review, "Three B-52s Fly Around the World". Blindsided by Operation Power Flite no one knew of our accomplishment. I was okay with that. I was on that B-36 that flew for 42 hours and 10 minutes. To this day, I have never read or heard of a B-36 flying that long unrefueled.

Sidelight story of an incident as a crewmember on a B-36, some of our missions were transition missions. A crew would fly a mission, land the aircraft, and not shut down the engines, and another crew would fly another mission. Ours was the first mission lasting 11 hours. When we landed, it was night time. The gunners exited at the rear hatch and walked to the front of the aircraft to the crew bus, walking along side of the fuselage with plenty of clearance from idling engine propellers number three and four. After 11 hours of flight, I was tired and not thinking too clearly. I had my A3 flight bag on my shoulder walking straight into engine number three idling propeller. MSgt Ray Benka who was flying the second mission was walking aft and I felt a big hand on my chest, and he said, "Where are you going?" My head had been down as I walked and when I looked up, there was number three propeller idling about six feet in front of me. There are Guardian Angels out there! Thank you Ray Benka.



Harris Tolmich

(That's Harry in these pictures)

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

From: Harris
 Sent: Friday, June 23, 2017 8:52 AM
 Subject: Fwd: The Peacemaker

I had 450 hours in this bird. I was 19 years old.
 One mission 42 hours 10 minutes no refueling!

Harry Tolmich

10	B-36	0	G	1	12:00
Oct					
16	B-36	0	G	1	18:00
23	B-36	0	G	7	14:55
Nov					
1	B-36	0	G	1	17:40
Dec					
11	B-36	0	G	1	14:00
Jan					
3	B-36	0	G	1	14:30
19	B-36	0	G	1	42:10

From: BG McMahon
 Date: June 22, 2017 at 23:39:11 PDT
 To: Harris
 Subject: The Peacemaker

Hey AF,

This big old Convair should take you back to a time before your favorite BUFF took its place. Some pretty amazing photography of its' takeoff filmed by a B-25 rolling right down the runway and climbing alongside the B-36. Enjoy!

SIX TURNIN AND FOUR BURNIN!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGjyH2ulsCk>

From: apollardflyboy
 Sent: Monday, June 12, 2017 12:30 PM
 To: karb52@cox.net
 Subject: Short Bursts Article



Hello Pete:

I was looking at my old emails, and I saw your request for an input to the Short Burst. I don't think I have done anything any one would like to read. I loved being in the Air Force. Flying on the B-66 and B-52 was the greatest, and to end my career working as an Air Force Management Consultant in the Leadership and Management Center at Maxwell was a perfect way to end a career of service.

Thank you for the request. Guys like you that I had the privilege of working with, made my Air Force career something I would do again. God bless you and yours.

Art Pollard



Time to dig out those special party suits one more time in time for the traditional Open Mike Night at the Nashville Reunion Sunday Night!



LETTERS AND E-MAILS

From: Joan Lee
Sent: Thursday, April 20, 2017 2:34 AM
To: Pete Karjanis
Subject: Info for the Short Bursts



I don't know if some of the retired folks know this:

We went out to the Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base (Old Carswell) last week to register and get decals for our new vehicle.

Went to Pass & ID - he said decals are not required on the vehicles anymore just show your ID to gain access to the base.

Then he asked to see our ID's and said they were out of date even though both of ours showed "indefinite" on them. He said we needed to go to the ID section and get new ones; that they were taking the social security numbers off and assigning a number known to the base.

There were many people waiting so I said to the lady monitoring the ID situation that I'd just use my existing ID to get on base and pick up our medications at the Pharmacy and come back another day to get our new ID's. She informed me that the gate guards would confiscate both our ID's if we used them.

We had no idea of these changes.

Pedo (Ray Carroll) was here last week and I told him about it and he said the same situation is at Tinker. We visited with Liz & Andy Anderson and they were not aware of the changes.

Hope all is well,

Joan Lee

The Reunion Open Mike Night on Sunday evening. One of the most fun, traditional highlights of the Reunion!



A B-52 pilot **improperly aborting takeoff**, along with a drag chute failure, caused the May 2016 mishap that destroyed the Stratofortress at Andersen AFB, Guam, the Air Force announced. At 8:32 a.m. on May 16, 2016, a B-52 assigned to the 69th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron at Andersen was taking off as part of a routine training mission. During takeoff, a pilot “analyzed bird activity and perceived cockpit indications as a loss of symmetric thrust” to the point where the pilot thought the B-52 could not safely take off. The pilot then began abort procedures, during which a drag chute failed, according to an Air Force Global Strike Command Accident Investigation Board report. During the aborted takeoff, the B-52 also exceeded brake energy limits. The aircraft overran the runway and caught fire. All seven aircrew members escaped, with one treated for minor injuries. The B-52 was a total loss, valued at \$112 million. The bomber was deployed from Minot AFB, N.D., and was part of a continuous bomber presence mission at Andersen.



ROYAL AIR FORCE FAIRFORD, United Kingdom (AFNS) -- B-52H Stratofortresses from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, and about 800 Airmen from Air Force Global Strike Command **deployed to Royal Air Force Fairford** to support a number of exercises with joint partners, and U.K. and NATO allies.

Training with allied nations and joint partners improves coordination between nations and enables the U.S. Air Force to build enduring relationships necessary to confront a broad range of global challenges. The strategic bomber deployment will support exercises Arctic Challenge, Saber Strike and Baltic Operations in the U.S. European Command area of responsibility throughout the month of June 2017.

The Arctic Challenge exercise, aimed at strengthening partnerships and increasing interoperability, includes participants from the U.S., Finland, Sweden, Norway, the U.K., Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, and the Netherlands, as well as representatives from NATO.

Loosened ROE, B-52 Presence Leads to **Huge Spike in Afghanistan Airstrikes**.

The new administration’s push to “annihilate” ISIS in Afghanistan, loosened rules of engagement, and support from B-52s have caused a massive spike in the number of US airstrikes inside Afghanistan this spring. As the number of strike sorties increase, the Air Force is considering once again basing tankers in the country.



OLD OR NEW

Both are capable of taking the enemy back to the stone age

No more EWO study! The **B-52s are being withdrawn from a key national nuclear bomb delivery strategy**. There have been several indications in recent years of a coming change. Military budget request for FY2018 only lists the B-2 as carrier of the strategic nuclear gravity bombs. U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM) apparently has not been assigning nuclear gravity bombs to B-52 bombers since at least 2010. Today, only the 20 B-2 stealth-bombers are tasked with strategic nuclear gravity bombs under the nuclear strike plans. The reason for the change appears to be that the B-52 is no longer considered survivable enough to slip through modern air-defenses and drop nuclear gravity bombs on enemy territory. The B-52 is still equipped to carry the nuclear-armed air-launched cruise missile (ALCM or AGM-86B), that can be launched from well outside the reach of air-defenses, and is scheduled to receive the new LRSO (Long Range Standoff Missile) by the late-20s. According to Boeing the aircraft celebrated 60 years in the air in 2014. A total of 744 were built in Seattle and Wichita, Kansas, based at 38 SAC bases and now only two bases exist and about 10 percent still fly. The B-52 cut the round-the-world speed record in half. In January 1962, it flew 12,500 miles nonstop from Japan to Spain without refueling. The jet broke 11 distance and speed records on that one historic flight alone. The B-52 saw active duty in the Vietnam War and was used in the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and over Afghanistan in 2001 and still today. The technology on the bombers is constantly being upgraded. Modern engineering analyses showed the B-52's expected lifespan extending way beyond 2040.

A Russian Su-27 **Flanker intercepted a B-52** during a flight over the Baltic Sea, marking the second time in a week a Russian fighter intercepted a Stratofortress. The intercept, which happened as reporters and photographers were flying on board a KC-135 over the B-52 as part of Exercise Baltic Operations, was completely safe and relatively ordinary, Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis. On June 6 a Su-27 intercepted another B-52 and escorted it away from the Russian border, the Russian ministry of defense said. Both intercepts happened over international waters. B-52H and B-1B bombers are in Europe to participate in joint exercises with NATO partner nations. Three Stratofortresses and 800 airmen from Air Force Global Strike Command arrived at RAF Fairford, U.K., on June 5 to participate in several exercises in the region. On June 8, an unspecified number of US Strategic Command B-1Bs from Ellsworth AFB, S.D., joined the B-52s for Saber Strike—a month-long US Army-Europe-led exercise held at locations in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland. The B-1s will also participate in BALTOPS, which demonstrates NATO's ability to defend the Baltic Sea region. Participating partners include Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. We deployed to Fairford in 1983 out of Robins in support of Reforger and Carbine Fortress. Fairford was known for having the only fire station in the Air Force to burn to the ground along with Concorde testing.

All three of the Air Force's bombers are deployed to Europe for "theater assurance and deterrence" in the region, marking "the first time in history all three of Air Force Global Strike Command's strategic bomber aircraft are simultaneously in the European Theatre," according to a release. Two B-2s touched down at RAF Fairford, England, on June 9, joining three B-52Hs and three B-1Bs already deployed to the area. The B-52s, from Barksdale AFB, La., and the B-1s, from Ellsworth AFB, S.D., are participating in exercises Saber Strike and BALTOPS across Europe. The B-2s are not flying in the exercises, but are "in support of recurring bomber assurance and deterrence operations," according to a US Air Forces in Europe release. "The bomber assurance and deterrence missions these three aircraft are supporting are key to reinforcing our commitment to our allies in NATO—in a very visible, very tangible way—that we stand shoulder to shoulder with them, no matter what," 322nd Air Expeditionary Group Commander Col. Jared Kentish said in the release.





A Russian Su-27 Flanker intercepted an Air Force RC-135 Rivet Joint in an unsafe manner over the Baltic Sea in June. The RC-135's aircraft commander reported the intercept as "unsafe" because of the jet's high rate of speed, poor control, and extremely close proximity, Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis said Tuesday. The Su-27 came within "a few feet" during the intercept, reported NBC News. While the "vast majority" of Russian intercepts in international airspace have been professional, this incident was an exception to that trend, Davis said.

WWII Airman's Remains to be Buried Near Iowa Hometown, Jun 30, 2017

PRIMGHAR, Iowa (AP) — The remains of a World War II airman have been returned for burial at his hometown in northwest Iowa. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency says the remains of Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Byron Nelson will be interred Saturday near Primghar (PRIHM'-gar). The Iowa National Guard will render full military honors at the Pleasant Hill Cemetery service. Nelson was the nose gunner aboard a B-24 bomber that was shot down over Italy on April 25, 1944. He was first buried near Fognini, Italy, and eventually moved to the Florence American Cemetery in 1949. The remains were disinterred in August 2015 and ultimately identified through a DNA match with a grandnephews and other analysis.

The recently restored World War II-era B-29 Superfortress, known as "**Doc,**" will make at least four stops on a short tour across the country this spring and summer. The B-29 held an open house at Yingling Aviation on April 22 in Wichita, Kansas; appeared at the Defenders of Liberty show at Barksdale AFB, La., on May 6-7; at the Wings Over Whiteman show at Whiteman AFB, Missouri, on June 10-11; and at EAA Air Venture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, from July 24-30. In addition to these shows, Doc's Friends Inc., which owns and operates the B-29, is in talks to appear at four other air shows later in the year. The crew working on the aircraft have completed a winter maintenance program, and expect to return Doc to flight in early April, according to a news release.



THUNDERBIRDS BLUE ANGELS

August 5 - 6	Boeing Seafair Air Show 2017	Seattle	WA	Blue Angels
August 12 - 13	Westfield Air Show 2017	Westfield ANGB	MA	Thunderbirds
August 19 - 20	Chicago Air & Water Show 2017	Chicago	IL	Blue Angels
August 19 - 20	Selfridge Air Show/Open House 2017	Selfridge ANG	MI	Thunderbirds
August 23	Thunder Over The Boardwalk 2017	Atlantic City	NJ	Thunderbirds
August 26 - 27	Great State of Maine Air Show 2017	Brunswick	ME	Blue Angels
August 26 - 27	Dover AFB Open House/Air Show 2017	Dover	DE	Thunderbirds
September 2 - 3	Thunder Over Michigan 2017	Ypsilanti	MI	Blue Angels
September 2 - 3	Cleveland National Air Show 2017	Cleveland	OH	Thunderbirds
September 9 - 10	Talladega Speedway Air Show 2017	Lincoln	AL	Blue Angels
September 9 - 10	Altus AFB Airshow 2017	Altus AFB	OK	Thunderbirds
September 16 - 17	NAS Oceana Air Show 2017	NAS Oceana	VA	Blue Angels
September 16 - 17	JB Andrews Air Show 2017	JB Andrews	MD	Thunderbirds
September 23 - 24	MCAS Miramar Air Show 2017	San Diego	CA	Blue Angels
September 23 - 24	Pikes Peak Regional Airshow 2017	Colorado Springs	CO	Thunderbirds
September 30 - 1	Huntington Beach Air Show 2017	Huntington Beach	CA	Blue Angels
October 7 - 8	Minden-Tahoe Air Show 2017	Minden	NV	Thunderbirds
October 6 - 8	Fleet Week Air Show 2017	San Francisco	CA	Blue Angels
October 21 - 22	Wings Over North Georgia 2017	Rome	GA	Blue Angels
October 21 - 22	Wings Over Houston Air Show 2017	Houston	TX	Thunderbirds
October 28 - 29	Bell Fort Worth Alliance Air Show 2017	Fort Worth	TX	Blue Angels
October 28 - 29	Moody Appreciation Day 2017	Moody	GA	Thunderbirds
November 4 - 5	JB Lackland-Kelly Air Show 2017	JB Lackland-Kelly	TX	Thunderbirds
November 4 - 5	Birth Place Blue Angels Air Show 2017	NAS Jacksonville	FL	Blue Angels
November 10 - 11	Blue Angels Homecoming 2017	NAS Pensacola	FL	Blue Angels
November 11 - 12	Aviation Nation Open House 2017	Nellis AFB	NV	Thunderbirds



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER - JOHN STANTON



Hello again from the California's great central valley. We have been blessed this year with a record amount of rain in the valley and snow in the mountains. All our reservoirs are over filled with the snow melt. This is causing flooding in all the rivers and streams throughout the valley.

Summer is here now and we just had eight straight days with temperatures exceeding 100 degrees Fahrenheit. We are experiencing a large number of serious forest fires because of the very hot temperatures, low humidity, and strong winds. On the positive side, it does look good against our five-year drought. The abundance of water is good for our agriculture industry.

This will be my last article for the Short Bursts as Chaplain of the Gunner Association. I have been diagnosed with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). I am beginning to feel the effects of the diagnosis. As such I will not be a candidate for any Gunners Association office at the meeting in Nashville. I will continue to support the Air Force Gunners Association and attend future reunions as long as I am physically able. I want to thank the officers and members of the Gunners Association for your help and support during the past two years.

I am looking forward to our reunion in Nashville, Tennessee. It is always great meeting and visiting with old friends and acquaintances. Until then may God Bless all our members and their families.

John Stanton



FINAL FLY-BY



CHARLES W. BLANEY 25 APRIL 1925 - 23 MARCH 2017

Charles Willard Blaney, Jr., passed away on March 23, 2017.

Chuck was born on April 25, 1925 in Blue Island, Illinois to Charles and Leota Blaney, both deceased.

After graduation from Morgan Park High School in Chicago, Chuck volunteered in the Army Air Force. He was trained as a Radio Operator, Turret Gunner, crewed up with crew 7178 and assigned to the 8th Air Force, 448th Bomb Group, 713th Bomb Squadron, in England.

Chuck attained the rank of Technical Sergeant and flew in the B-24 Liberator Bomber for 23 Combat Missions over Germany. He was shot down on his 23rd mission, crashed in Germany, and interned as a Prisoner of War in Stalag Luft One.

After being freed from POW Camp he was discharged and attended America University in Chicago. There he earned a BSEE Engineering Degree. He worked in the Aerospace Industry for 31 years with various Aerospace companies.

Chuck retired from Northrop Grumman as Manager, Product Marketing, after 23 years of service.

While working on the 1st NORAD Command Center at Ent AFB he met the love of his life, Friedericke. They were together for 55 joyous years. She passed away on October 10, 2013. She was the love and focus of Chuck's life.

Chuck was always deeply involved in computers and a 24-year member of the Colorado Springs Computer Society. He was also a life member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of EX-POWs, the American Disabled Veterans (DAV), and Flight 11 of the Order of Daedalians. He was also a devoted golfer.

Chuck is survived by his grandchildren: Chris and Lisa Turnbull; and his niece-in-law, Gabrielle Czeiner of Vienna, Austria.

Private family services and entombment took place at the Shrine of Remembrance Mausoleum, Gate of Heaven. Memorials in Chuck's name may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 66675.



LAURENCE E. CUMMINS 26 NOVEMBER 2016

Please be advised that Laurence E. Cummins passed away on November 26, 2016. He always enjoyed the AFGA reunions. Sincerely, Mrs. Laurence Cummins

Funeral service was Saturday, 3 December 2016 at Saint Patrick's Church in Huntington, New York.

(No further information could be found)

FINAL FLY-BY



DAYTON "LITTLEMAN" CARLSON 17 MAY 1929 - 19 APRIL 2017

RAPID CITY, Dayton "Littleman" Carlson, 87, died Wednesday, April 19, 2017, at Rapid City Regional Hospital.

He was born May 17, 1929, to Eben & Lillie Carlson in Vliets, Kansas. He graduated from the same town in 1947 and joined the USAF in July 1948. He did basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas. He went to Armament School at Lowry AFB, Denver, CO, and was then sent to Rapid City Air Force Base (Ellsworth) on March 4, 1949.

He was assigned to the 717th Squadron as a B-29 turret mechanic. When the B-36 arrived, he then cross trained and became a Chief Gunner. He flew over 300 hours before becoming a tail gunner on the B-52.

In 1949, while playing softball with Coach Sgt. "Tex" Joe Ostein, he was nicknamed "Littleman". Their team won 88 straight games between 1951-1952 and were runners-up for the state title.

During this time, you might have been served your favorite beverage at the American Legion, or Cherio Bar, where he worked for over five years. He retired in July 1968 where he recalled those 19 years, 4 months, 17 days as some of the best times of his life because of the wonderful people in Rapid City and the beautiful Black Hills.

He married Margaret (Cook) Daily in 1965. From this union two beautiful children, Monte and Tonya were born. After retiring, he tended bar at The Anchor, where he met the most wonderful local girl, Carla (Hagel) Miller. She became his "Bride" on June 11, 1971, and added three fine boys, Chuck, Steve, and Mike, to their family.

Then he opened Littleman's Pizza Den in Robinsdale and Downtown. After selling, he joined the team at Manor House as a salesman for 13 ½ years, traveling the Northern Hills, Dickinson, North Dakota, and Baker, Montana, and all the towns in between.

In 1985 he bought the original Murphy's Bar. They opened at the new (and now) location on Oct. 31, 1986. While there he enjoyed holding golf tournaments to raise money for the "Club for Boys." There were many great years of restaurant ownership in Rapid City, Keystone, and Hill City. The Chute Rooster was sold in 1999.

Littleman loved life, laughter, nature, golfing, baseball (Cubs), football (especially the Broncos), camping, and traveling with family and friends. Owning and loving the cabin in the Blue Wing Resort Community, he shared his love of fishing with many and entertained for holidays and fish fries with all.



From: Andy and Liz Anderson
Sent: Tuesday, May 30, 2017 7:36 AM
Subject: Dayton "Littleman" Carlson

Good morning Pete:

We received a call last night about the death of "Littleman" Carlson and were asked if we could make sure that his obituary be in the next Short Bursts. You can get his picture and story of his life from osheimschmidt.com which is the funeral home (in Rapid City, SD) that handled his service and burial.

Any Gunner who was ever stationed at Ellsworth will remember and would have known Littleman.

FINAL FLY-BY

We were one of the privileged to have known him – he was quite a character. He and Carla came to the Las Vegas reunion and also I believe the one at Denver. We last saw him at the Bomb Wing Reunion in Rapid City and also the Gunner's reunion held there.

Our age must be catching up with us as we keep getting these calls and requests for seeing that their obits are published in the Short Bursts, have to admit that we do seem to know so many of them.

Let me know if you can get the obituary. As usual we thank you for all you do.

Liz



THOMAS F. SCHRANTZ 29 OCTOBER 1930 - 15 APRIL 2017

Retired SMSgt Thomas F. Schrantz of Grove City, Pennsylvania, went to his final resting place on Saturday, April 15, 2017 at his residence.

Born in New Castle, PA on October 29, 1930, he was a son of Leo and Rose Young Schrantz.

Retiring after 26 years active duty in the USAF (SAC), where he served as a crew member on the B-36 and B-52, he and his family built their home in Grove City, PA.

He was then employed in corrections at the Mercer County Jail and was still called Captain by his friends. Thomas was a lifetime member of the Air Force Gunners Association, VFW, and American Legion.

In recent years, he enjoyed gardening, growing some of the best vegetables to share with his family and friends.

Tom enjoyed woodworking and was best known for his beautiful wooden bowls.

Thomas is survived by his wife of 64 years, the former Barbara Gibson; son, Thomas (Amy), a daughter, Pamela (Ken) Jordan, sons, Douglas (Jeanne), Gregory (Kayla), Jeff (Tanya), and Timothy (Carol); daughter-in-law Marilyn Schrantz and grandchildren and great grandchildren in Pennsylvania, Arizona, Nevada, Washington, and California. He is also survived by a brother, Leo; a sister, Louise (Charles) Hughes; and nieces and nephews in Pennsylvania. His loving family, military, and civilian friends fulfilled his life. Preceding him in death are his parents and a son, Mark.

Visitation was held on Thursday from 5-8 and on Friday from 12-1 at the R. Cunningham Funeral Home and Crematory, Inc., 2429 Wilmington Road, New Castle.

A funeral service was held on Friday at 1:00 immediately following visitation at the funeral home with Rev. John Yergan officiating. New Castle Area Honor Guard performed a full military ceremony. Burial was in Crestview Memorial Gardens, Grove City, PA.

Memorial contributions may be made in Thomas' name to either the American Heart Association, Box 16120, Chicago, IL 60693 or to Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, 501 Martindale Street, No. 670, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.

FINAL FLY-BY

From: Andy and Liz Anderson
Sent: Sun, Apr 16, 2017 5:55 am
Subject: Thomas Schrantz

We had a phone call from Doug Schrantz to tell us that Tom had passed away at his home in Grove City, Pa. Tom had surgery about 8 days ago to have a heart valve replacement and had come through the surgery and was allowed to go home in a couple of days. According to Doug, his dad had been watching TV and got up to go get something in the kitchen and when he returned to the living room to get back into his recliner, he simply passed out. Doug's wife Jeannie is a emergency nurse and tried to revive him (along with the local EMT) but to no avail.

Those of you who attended the Gunner's Reunion in Rapid City might remember that the entire Schrantz family were present since some of the children were born at Ellsworth AFB. They had six boys and one girl. We were stationed there with them from 1960 to 1966 so we have known them for many years. They are a great family with wonderful children.

Each year they had a big 4th celebration at their country home in Grove City and we have attended them on four different occasions and it was a celebration of how great the country is – great food, fireworks, bands, and always a salute to the American Flag and all it stands for.

I spoke with Barb for a few minutes and please keep this great family in your prayers as they go through this difficult time. A proud Gunner and man has gone home.

Andy and Liz



From: Bob Matherly
Sent: Sunday, April 30, 2017 5:52 PM
Subject: Duane Griffin Another one has departed us....

Just received the sad news that Duane Griffin passed away this AM...Many who flew with him in the 60 - 80 time frame will always remember him...he set the bar high for all of us.....our heartfelt condolences to the family.

Bob

(No further information could be found)



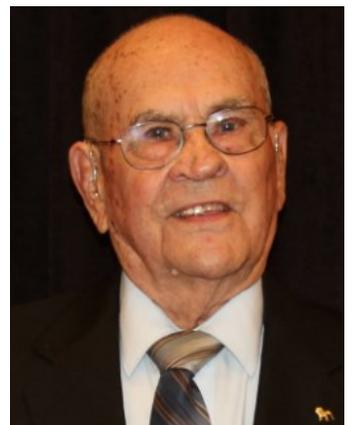
From: Jay Ingle
Sent: Sunday, June 18, 2017 2:40 PM
To: karb52@cox.net
Subject: [Bozeman Daily Chronicle] Joseph Lloyd Mallard

Pete,

This is Joseph Lloyd Mallard's obituary as it appeared in the Bozeman Chronicle. I was stationed with him at Denver Colorado and Ellsworth AFB South Dakota. He was a gunner and member of the Gunners Association.

Sincerely,

Jay Ingle



FINAL FLY-BY

JOSEPH L. MALLARD 12 AUG 1933 - 14 JUNE 2017

Joseph Lloyd Mallard, 83, of Bozeman, Montana, passed away 14 June 2017 of natural causes.

Lloyd was born to the late Charlie and Grace Mallard on 12 August 1933 in New Smyrna Beach, Florida. Lloyd graduated from New Smyrna Beach High School in 1951 and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1952.

While stationed at Lowry AFB near Denver in 1957, Lloyd met Carol Dolezal, and they were married in 1958 in Havre, Montana. Lloyd's Air Force career took them to several military installations in the United States and Germany through the years.

Lloyd began his Air Force career as an aircrew member on the B-29, B-36 and B-52 bombers.

In 1966, he changed career fields and became an air-traffic controller, which he remained until his retirement in 1979.

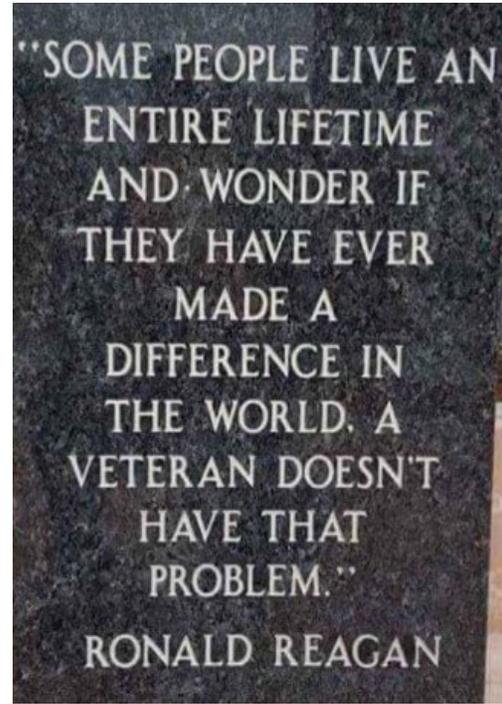
He was awarded a Bronze Star medal for meritorious service in Vietnam, plus several other medals that recognized his dedicated service.



Lloyd attained the rank of Chief Master Sergeant before retirement.

After retiring from the military, Lloyd worked at National General Supply in Great Falls for several years and then worked at Big R Supply, also in Great Falls, until fully retiring in 2006.

He enjoyed traveling and visited 29 countries throughout his military career and retirement. He and Carol volunteered for several years at the Great Falls Visitor Center, and he enjoyed golf in the summer.



Lloyd was a 50-year-plus member of San Jacinto Masonic Lodge in Amarillo, Texas; Great Falls Scottish Rite; Amarillo York Rite; Algeria Shrine Temple in Helena; and the Air Force Gunners Association.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years and two sons: Scott (Jenny) of Belgrade, Montana, and Mark (Pat) of Butte, Montana.

He is also survived by four grandchildren: Matt (Halle), Charlotte (Andrew), Jace (Sammi) and Alaina. He is also survived by two great-grandchildren: Finley and Kendall.

He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Charlie Ellis Mallard.

A private family service was held at a later date.

FINAL FLY-BY

**Day is done ... Gone the sun ... From the lakes From the hills ...
From the sky ... All is well .. Safely rest. God is nigh ...**

**Fading light ... Dims the sight .. And a star Gems the sky...
Gleaming bright ... From afar ... Drawing nigh Falls the night ..**

**Thanks and praise ... For our days ... Neath the sun. Neath the
stars... Neath the sky ... As we go ... This we know ... God is nigh ..**

I Flew

When the last checklist is run and the bag drag is over
I will reminisce of the days I once knew,
I will not remember the 3 AM alerts
But only that I flew!
I will not remember the crew rest in tents
Nor recall how cold Arctic winds blew,
And I'll try not to remember the times I got sick.
But only that I flew!
I will never forget when Nature came angry
And challenged my intrepid crew,
And I'll always remember the fear I felt
And the pride in knowing I flew!
I will remember the sights my mortal eyes have seen
Colored by multitudes of hues,
Those beautiful lights on cold winter nights
Seen only by those that flew.
God was extremely good to me
And let me touch His face,
He saw my crew through war and peace
And blessed us with his grace.
So when I stand at Saint Peter's Gate
And tell Him that I'm new
I know he'll smile and welcome me,
Because He knows I flew!

Brad Baker

AFGA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



NAME: _____ RANK: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

HOME PHONE: (____) _____ TODAY'S DATE: _____ DOB: _____

WIFE'S FIRST NAME: _____

I WAS A GUNNER ON: B _____ B _____ B _____ B _____

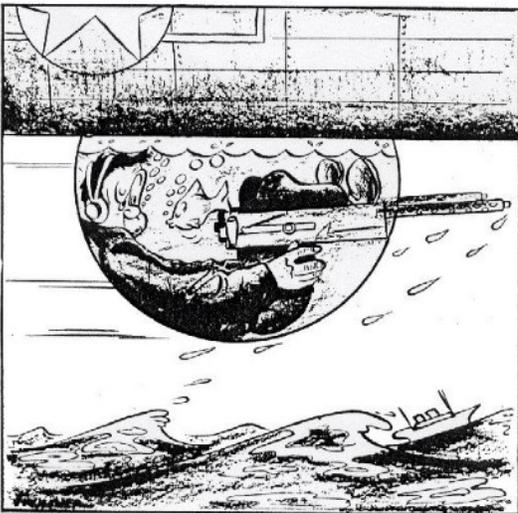
ARE YOU A NEW MEMBER? YES ___ NO ___ IF "NO" - CARD #: _____

ENCLOSED ARE MY DUES (CIRCLE ONE): LIFE: \$100.00 ANNUAL: \$15.00

SHORT BURSTS SUBSCRIPTION (SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED TO RECEIVE HARD COPY):
 ANNUAL \$15: _____ 3 YEARS \$45: _____

E-mail address: _____

MAIL TO: CHUCK DEAN, 473 McMAHAN MILL RD, PIEDMONT, SC 29673-9596
PHONE: (864) 947-4613



SEPTEMBER 1944

Dear Fellow AFGA Member,

Would you like to receive a **printed copy of the Short Bursts** in the mail?

If you would like to receive a printed copy of the Short Bursts Magazine, please send your subscription information to the address listed below.

Annual fee for postage and printing is \$15.00 for the three issues a year printed and in the mail in April, August, and December. Please send your mailing address and a check payable to AFGA to:

Chuck Dean
 AFGA Membership Chairman
 473 McMahan Mill Road
 Piedmont, SC 29673-4613

Phone: 864-907-3760
 E-Mail: a710jammer@gmail.com

AFGA BX OFFICER - BOB DICK Jr.

I'd like to thank the few who helped with the BX at our latest reunion in Reno, they helped make my first reunion as the BX officer a little less stressful and smoother running.

I'm hoping the next reunion will have a published schedule of when the BX will be open and be available to make purchases. I'd also like to find some volunteers that would be willing to work the BX for a couple hours here and there so that we can maximize the amount of time the BX can be open as well as the amount of sales achieved. The total deposit from the reunion sales and the donation from Crew Dawg Creations sales totaled: \$1,307.55, total shipping cost to and from Reno: \$633.11, leaving a total of \$674.44 in the black.



I'd like to have some new merchandise in for the Nashville reunion in 2017. If anybody has any ideas of what they'd like to see, please feel free to e-mail me with your ideas. Please keep in mind that most of the merchandise has a minimum to order as well as a set-up fee if it is the type of merchandise that has to be produced. I have had the request to have a "daughter of a gunner patch" produced. If this is of interest to you, please e-mail me and if I get enough responses, I can work on getting one produced. *Bob*

Red/white/blue B-52 cap - \$15 (ck availability with Bob D.) #36

The "Official" **2015 Gunner's Reunion** His & Her personalized coffee mugs are hot off the press. 15oz His mug \$17.99, 11oz Her mug \$14.99.

These can be ordered anytime
WWW.crewdawgcreations.com.



Customized 15oz coffee cup—contact Bob Dick Jr. at crewdawgcreations.com for \$\$\$ and how to order. You can put just about any AF patch, ribbon bar, photo, art that you desire. Seem to be dish washer and micro wave safe (I put mine in both with no issues) #45



Gunner Beer Mug—\$40— Large— price includes shipping #43



Magnetic Bumper Sticker \$9 (a few left yet (3-4) size: 8"X 3 7/8" #68

AFGA EXCHANGE

DESCRIPTION	QTY	PRICE	SHIPPING	TOTAL
Item #21 – Gunner's Bullet Wings.....2.75" Replica of original Gunner's bullet wings.		\$8.75		
Item #21 – Gunner's Patch Emblem Lapel Pin.....1" Gunner's patch emblem lapel pin		\$5.25		
DECALS				
Item #23 – Gunner's Patch Decal w/white background Outside application 8.25"x11" Gunner's patch decal w/white background. Outside application.		\$7.25		
Item #24 – Gunner's patch decal w/clear background Inside application 8.25"x11" Gunner's patch decal w/clear background Inside application		\$7.25		
Item #25 – Gunner's patch decal w/clear background Outside application 8.25"x11" Gunner's patch decal w/clear background outside application		\$7.25		
Item #26 – Gunner's Patch Decal - Clear back Inside 7.25"x8.25" 7.25"x8.25" Gunner's patch clear back decal. Inside application.		\$7.00		
Item #27 – AFGA 7.75" Round Decal Outside Application..... AFGA 7.75" Round Decal, blue with silver wings and lettering. Outside Application		\$7.25		
Item #28 – AFGA 7.75" Round Decal Inside Application..... AFGA 7.75" Round Decal, blue with silver wings and lettering. Inside Application		\$7.25		
Item #29 – Air Force Gunner's Association Lettered Decal..... This 17.25" Air Force Gunner's Association lettered decal is perfect for inside rear window application.		1.25		
Item #30 – "Son of a Gunner" gunner's patch decal – Large..... 6-1/2" Gunner's patch decal features the Large bulldog with the baby bulldog.		\$5.25		
Item #31 – "Son of a Gunner" gunner's patch decal – Small..... 4-1/2" Gunner's patch decal features the Large bulldog with the baby bulldog.		\$3.25		
Item #32 – Gunner's patch decal – 3 per order.....		3/\$1.25		
Item #54 – AFGA Biplane (Round).....		\$1.25		
Item #55 – USAF Enlisted Chevrons Decal (set of 4)..... Msgt, SMSgt, SMSgt - 1 st Sgt available.		\$1.25		
BALL CAPS				
Item #33 – Air Force Gunner's Association - Blue Ball Cap..... Air Force Gunner's Association - Blue Ball Cap w/silver lettering and bullet wings		\$15.25		
Item #34 – Air Force Gunner's Association - White Ball Cap..... (ONE REMAINING) Air Force Gunner's Association White ball cap with silver and blue lettering.		\$15.25		
Item #35 – B-52 Black Silhouette - Blue Hat..... This Blue hat features an embroidered black silhouette of a B-52		\$15.25		
Item #36 – B-52 B-52 Silver Silhouette - Red Hat..... This Red hat features a silver embroidered B-52 silhouette.		\$15.25		
Item #37 - B-52 Silver Silhouette Black Hat..... This black cap features a silver embroidered silhouette of a B-52.		\$15.25		
Item #38 - B-52 Silver Silhouette Blue Hat..... This Blue hat features an embroidered silver B-52 Silhouette.		\$15.25		
Item #39 - B-52 Gunner's patch emblem - C'est La Vie Ball cap..... Gunner's patch emblem sublimated C'est La Vie Ball cap has emblem in the middle, wording B-52 left side & gunner right side. Mesh back.		\$16.25		
Item #40 - Camouflaged B-52 - White Ball Cap.....		\$9.25		
Item #56 – Gunner's Patch Emblem - White Ball Cap..... White Ball Cap featuring the Gunner's Patch Emblem		\$13.25		

AFGA EXCHANGE

DESCRIPTION	QTY	PRICE	SHIPPING	TOTAL
Item #57 – B-52 Gunner - White Ball Cap..... White Ball Cap featuring a blue patch with silver silhouette of a B-52 and yellow lettering – B-52 Gunner		\$13.25		
BELT BUCKLES				
Item #41 – SAC Gunner's Patch Belt Buckle.....		\$12.25		
Item #42 – AFGA w/Biplane image Belt Buckle.....		\$12.25		
DRINKWARE				
Item #43- Gunner's Beer Stein..... 32oz Ceramic Stein w/ SAC emblem one side, Gunner's patch emblem opposite side (Priority Shipping included)		\$40.00	included	
Item #44 – Gunner 2015 Reunion 15oz Coffee Mug..... 15oz ceramic coffee mug featuring all bomber aircraft crewed with gunners throughout history Personalized w/name. Please include name with spelling desired when ordering.		\$17.99		
Item #45 – Gunner 2015 Reunion 11oz Coffee Mug..... 11oz ceramic coffee mug featuring all bomber aircraft crewed with gunners throughout history Personalized w/name. Please include name with spelling desired when ordering.		\$14.99		
CLOTHING				
Item #46 – Windbreaker Jacket – Navy..... Snap front, nylon, AFGA logo left breast XXL, XXXL Only!!!		\$12.25		
Item #47 – Golf Shirts.....AFGA Logo Left Breast				
White, Sizes Available – S, M, L, CLEARANCE		\$12.25		
Light Blue, Sizes Available – XL		\$27.25		
Royal Blue, Sizes Available – M, CLEARNCE		\$15.25		
Navy Blue, Sizes Available – M, XL		\$27.25		
Item #48 – Golf Wind-shirts.....AFGA Logo Left Breast		\$15.25		
Navy Blue, V-neck XL Only CLEARANCE				
Item #49 – Sweat Shirts.....AFGA Logo Left Breast				
Navy Blue, Sizes Available – S, M, XL, XXL, 3XL		\$26.25		
White, Sizes Available – S, M, L, XL, XXL CLEARANCE		\$20.25		
Item #50 – Sweat Shirts.....Camouflaged B-52		\$20.25		
Blue - Sizes Available – L or XL Natural (Tan) - Sizes Available – XL Only				
Item #51 – T-Shirt.....Navy, AFGA Logo Embroidered Left Breast		\$20.25		
Sizes Available – S, M, L, XXL				
Item #52 – Vest.....Navy, Polyester w/AFGA Logo		\$30.25		
Sizes Available – 40L, 42L, 48L, 3XL				
MISCELLANEOUS				
Item #53 – Mouse pad.....AFGA Logo		\$1.25		
Item #58 – Golf Ball/Sleeve.....		\$3.25		
3 Balls per sleeve featuring the AFGA Logo				
Item #58 – Magnet Proud to Have Served.....		\$9.25		
8"x4" Magnetic Car Decal, Full Color featuring the words, "Proud to Have Served, Freedom is Not Free" B-52 D w/SAC emblem B-52 w/SAC emblem B-52 w/Gunner Patch emblem				
Item #59 – SAC Gunner Patch Emblem Banner.....		\$25.25		
20"x24" Vinyl Indoor/Outdoor Full colored banner featuring the Gunner's patch emblem.				

AFGA EXCHANGE

DESCRIPTION	QTY	PRICE	SHIPPING	TOTAL
Item #60 – SAC Gunner Patch Emblem Sign.....		\$25.25		
20"x20", printed on 1/8" backboard w/sculptured edges				
SHIPPING PRICE GUIDELINE				
Jackets, Shirts, Mugs.....		\$11.00		
Each additional add		\$2.00		
Hats.....		\$6.00		
Each additional add		\$2.00		
Small Flat Goods.....		\$3.00		
Each additional add		\$1.00		
Wings, Pins, Patches, Decals, etc)				
Belt Buckles.....		\$6.00		
Each additional add		\$2.00		
"If in doubt for large orders, call or email for an estimate"				

We also have 2 Ft. Worth Memory Books remaining for sale—\$40 each includes the mailing—contact Bob Dick Jr. for info.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please include your phone # and email address. 2. Make all checks payable to AFGA. 3. Send all correspondence to: <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Bob Dick Jr. 2089 Sardis Rd Clarksburg, WV 26301-6581 304-844-0624 gunnersbx@gmail.com</p> </div>	<p>EMAIL ADDRESS:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>PHONE NUMBER:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Signature</i> <i>Date</i></p>
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As for ordering the NASHVILLE REUNION COFFEE CUP, members can go to the following link:

<http://crewdawgcreations.com/product-category/drinkware/page/2/>

to order online, placing their first name in customer notes. Please spell name correctly as it will be printed as shown.

They can also be ordered by phone: 304-844-0624 or by mail: 2089 Sardis Rd, Clarksburg WV 26301

