

SHORT BURSTS

Air Force Gunners Association

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THEY ANSWERED THE CALL - REMEMBER THEM ALL

AFGA NEWSREEL

LAST REUNION—DOOLITTLE RAIDERS

Three of the four surviving Doolittle Tokyo Raiders made their final toast to their deceased comrades during an invitation-only ceremony at the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. "Gentleman, I propose a toast to those we lost on the mission and those who have passed away since. Thank you very much, and may they rest in peace," said retired Lt. Col. Richard Cole, one of the three Doolittle Raiders present, in delivering the toast during the Nov. 9 event. Cole, retired Lt. Col. Edward Saylor, and retired SSgt. David Thatcher then drank from their silver goblets some of the 1896 cognac from the bottle that Cole had just opened. The Doolittle Raiders had saved that bottle for decades for the occasion of the final toast. Thereupon, the Raiders received a standing ovation from the hundreds gathered in the audience. Prior to the toast, there was the roll call of the crews of each of the 16 B-25s that took part in the Doolittle Raid, the daring bombing mission against Japan on April 18, 1942, just some four months after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Acting Air Force Secretary Eric Fanning and Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh spoke at the ceremony. CMSAF James Roy also participated. The fourth surviving Doolittle Raider, retired Lt. Col. Bob Hite, could not attend due to health issues, but held his own tribute to his deceased colleagues last week at his home in Nashville, Tenn., reported Associated Press. [Click here to continue to our full report.](#)

Doolittle Defined by Integrity

The one word to describe the late Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, Medal of Honor recipient, aviation pioneer, and famed World War II air commander, is integrity, said Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, his granddaughter. He led by example, didn't micromanage, and displayed an unwavering commitment to his airmen, she told AFA's Pacific Air & Space Symposium in Los Angeles on Nov. 22. Doolittle also had an insatiable thirst for knowledge and a love of truth that defined him, she said. "My grandfather never stopped learning," even into the years shortly before his death, she said. He died in 1993 at age 96. Doolittle was also very courageous, she said, noting that he was originally not meant to go on the famous bombing raid against Tokyo in April 1942 that carries his name, but he successfully pressed to accompany his men on the dangerous mission. After World War II, he chaired the board that found in favor of enlisted personnel who complained about unfair treatment during the war, she said, citing that as another example of his courage. When Doolittle received the Medal of Honor for the bombing raid, he accepted it on behalf of all the Raiders, said Hoppes.

SSgt David Thatcher

Lt Col. Richard Cole

Edward Saylor, Richard Cole, David Thatcher

Lt Col. Bob Hite

Lt Col. Ed Saylor

Lt Col. Bob Hite



James Doolittle's Tokyo raiders pose for a photo outside a mountainside shelter in China on April 22, 1943. The Doolittle Raider's daring raid on Japan

Hard to imagine the courage it took to volunteer for this mission...and then to fly it. America does have it's EAGLES, that's for sure.

AFGA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - LARRY LEWANDOWSKI



Hi Folks

This is quite the year. Usually I say something about the Cold Weather in the Frozen North, but it is winter all over the country! Hopefully everyone is coping with it. I am looking forward to sunshine and warm weather.

John Stallings and I are working on our 2015 Reunion plans for Reno Nevada. Suggestions on tours, entertainment, etc. are most welcome. For those of you who live in Reno Nevada or the surrounding areas let's hear from you.

We have implemented a credit card procedure to buy items from the PX store. Contact Neil Richards our PX Officer for more information. The Reunion book should be in the mail shortly. I think everyone who ordered one will really enjoy it. Bob Matherly our Short Burst Editor did a great job on this.

Wishing everyone a Happy Easter. Remember all of our Brothers in Arms especially on Memorial Day and celebrate the birthday of this Great Nation on the Fourth of July. We have much to be thankful for.

Have a great summer!

C'est La Vie

Larry

AFGA VICE-PRESIDENT - RICK SWAIN



Greetings from snowy, cold Ohio.

But then again several of the normally hot and sunny States in the South are having or have had some of the same this year.

I hope you all are following the recent issues in the United States Congress over veteran's benefits, active and retired military pay during the past few months. When I read about what was planned, I told my friends around here, "They won't pass that legislation because too many of us will write to them and tell them not to and why." Well you and I both saw how wrong I was about that.

When the vote was taken, I sat down and wrote both Senators from Ohio and my Representative from the district in which I live and told them how disappointed I was with their action.

Rep. Jim Jordon apologized for the action and informed me that he voted no but was working hard to reverse the issue and reinstate what was taken away.

Senator Rob Portman wrote back almost immediately stating that he was also working to have the issue reversed. He said that he voted for it based on the assurance from the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, the Chairman of the Budget Committee and others that they were willing to work to resolve the issues on military and retired pay and benefits. He also went on to say that he didn't think it was fair that we were singled out when others were not touched at all. "Those who sacrificed as much as members of the active military, retired military and disabled veterans should not be singled out for reductions when we are not dealing comprehensively with the deficit issue."

Senator Sherrod Brown did not have the decency to respond.

So keep your eyes on this from your home and let your representatives in Washington, DC where you stand and remind them that we are many and know how to organize, lead and we vote.

Keep calm and carry on.

Rick

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS - BOB MATHERLY



Well the time is sure flying by—as usual. Somehow I managed to get the Ft. Worth Memory Book out and to the printers by the 1st of February....they were able to print it, put it together and get it in the mail by mid-February or so. Hope all of you who ordered one liked it.

Getting the April SB out is another matter...after spending most of January working on the Memory Book I found it hard to get into the mood to turn right around and start working on the April Short Bursts....but I did finally get it out also since you are reading it now. There are a lot of various articles that I hope appeals to all of you in one area or another. Trying to keep the SB interesting and timely and not boring is really a challenge for me sometimes. Anyway, as you read through here you will find something for you, I'm sure.

The Final Fly by has a couple of old obituaries that I either missed or didn't know about until most recently. I have included them in this edition to catch up with the notifications. We are beginning to lose more and more of our friends as time goes by now. The WWII guys are still falling, the Korean veterans are beginning to pick up the pace and, more recently, we see a gunner from the 1960—1980 time frame begin to appear more and more. Guess we are all creeping up in age and that is just the way life is. All I can say is go out and enjoy what you have while you have it....no guarantees for tomorrow and none expected.

Want to thank Bill Gaddes for his many interesting articles that he continues to send me. I "sprinkle" them throughout the publication for all to read and enjoy. Cease Walker and Pete Karjanis are two others who regularly send emails to me. Pete continues to have his up-to-date articles in here and they help to inform us of more recent events going on with the USAF as far as bomber activity and personnel go. Thanks to both of you for these inputs, they are certainly needed. Cease recently informed us that he donated the painting that he won at the Ft. Worth reunion to the Castle Museum ("Coming Home"). I am sure they will find a significant place to hang that beautiful painting of the B-17 making it's way back to home after a bombing mission in WWII.

I am finding more and more interesting websites to list for those with a computer. You may have to copy them and paste them into your web browser address block to get them up but it is well worth you time to wander through them. I know not all have access to a computer but the world is at our finger tips for those of us who have one—and use it. I will continue to include them in the SB pages as I think there are many wonderful and interesting sites to visit at your desk.

Proud of the cover on this edition of the Short Bursts. The four remaining Doolittle veterans are showcased on it and they are so well deserving of all the accolades being given them. This does not diminish the accomplishments of all of those who have served throughout the times up to and including today's veterans and service men and women. They do deserve—and hopefully receive—many accolades and thanks for their efforts on behalf of our great country. Just think where we would be without them. **THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE—OR ARE—SERVING OUR COUNTRY!!**

I might mention a special effort that is being made by one of our newer (and younger) members to come up with a poster of all of the B-52 Bomb Squadrons that existed one time or another. Right now, and it is mid-February as I write this, he is missing only the 301st Bomb Squadron patch picture. The 301st BS was assigned to the 4135th Strat Wing at Eglin AFB from 1959 to 1963. It's complement of B-52Gs were eventually sent across numerous other squadrons when the squadron was inactivated in 1963. Anyone who has a picture of that Bomb Squadron patch, please contact John Bailey (B-52 Facebook) or myself as we would very much like to have a copy of it.

I continue to look for interesting articles to include in here—currently on the lookout for Gunner License Plates from across the US...5 are included in this issue. Maybe, if we get enough of them, we can make a poster that would include all 50 statesthat would certainly be a first. So if you have a unique license plate that is gunner oriented, send me a photo of it and the collection will begin!

No telling what I have forgotten to mention ...or include in this edition...but this is definitely a labor of love for me and I hope you all enjoy it....and we will be looking for the new Short Bursts Editor at the Reno reunion in 2015—waiting for someone to step forward to raise the bar on this publication even higher—CHANGE IS GOOD!

Keep the cards, letters and photos coming in because without your contributions to this endeavor it would, could not exist. Many, many thanks to those who contribute and who will contribute in the future. Enjoy the coming times ... it will too soon be time to start the August SB....until then.....Bob

Membership Corner – Chuck Dean



First of all, let me say, “Thank You to everyone who voted for me.” I am honored to be your Membership Officer. I know I have some big shoes to fill, replacing Jim. Jim, thank you for putting up with all my questions during the transition.

Winter finally made its way to the South in a very big way. We’ve had some really cold temps and snow/ice! We are getting our second round of snow/ice today. I’m ready for spring to arrive. Hope everyone enjoyed the Memory Book that Bob put together from the Ft Worth reunion. I thought it was wonderful, GREAT job Bob. The 2013 reunion was a lot of fun. I saw guys I hadn’t seen in 30 + years and got to meet some guys I had only known of by name. If you didn’t attend the Ft Worth reunion you missed out on a really good time! Start planning for the 2015 Reno reunion now.

Our membership continues to be around 1100 members with the majority being Life Members. I have one or two new members every month or so.

One thing that is important for OUR association to continue is to solicit new members. If you know of someone that was a gunner ask them if they are a member. If they are not, give them the Membership form out of your Short Bursts or have them get in touch with me. We need more of the younger gunners to join and attend OUR reunions.

Some of our membership issues are accurate address information. Please remember if you are planning on moving (or have recently moved) make sure you make a note to inform me of your new address info so we can continue to keep in touch with you. You can send me an email with the update or if you don’t have e-mail drop me a short note in the regular mail. Calling me directly is also an option.

The other issue is Short Bursts Subscriptions. **Please remember that the Subscription fees are in addition to your annual dues if you pay annually and are additional fees if you are a life member.** There still seems to be a little confusion on that point. If you have questions about the Subscription options give me or Bob a call or send me an email.

For Annual members, I will continue to send Membership renewal notices on a monthly basis. The renewal notices typically go out towards the last week of the month prior to your due date. Please review the information on the notice for accuracy and provide any changes needed. Then, please return lower portion of the notice along with your check in the provided envelope.

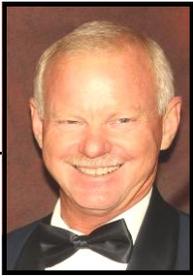
Please make sure you make your checks out to AFGA instead of a specific person.

In order to save on mailing expenses I only forward checks on to our Finance Chairman once or twice a month so if you have sent a check recently either for annual dues or for the Short Bursts Subscription please allow for this time delay if you see that your check has not been processed through your Bank.

Chuck

NEW MEMBERS

New Members			
Name	City & State	Aircraft	Card Number
Antonio Fucci	Santa Rosa Valley, CA	B26	L4038
Kevin Newman	San Antonio, TX	B52	L4039
Darryl Brown	Charleston, SC	B52	4045



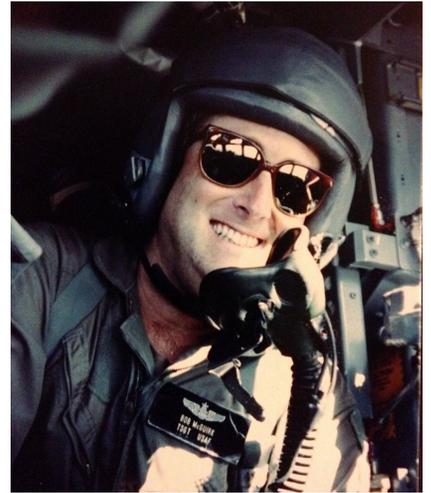
AFGA HISTORIAN - Bob Ashley

“Where have they gone from here”
Bob McGuirk

Not too exciting but here you go. When they fired us from bombers I cross trained to H-60 flight engineer. I was assigned to the 55th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field. One of the great things about it while traveling all over the world you always run into other B-52 gunners. I retired on 1 Jan 96. Came back home to Massachusetts to help take care of mom before she passed away. This is kind of a depressed area even during a good economy. I had a couple different jobs but for the last 10 years have been working at the local grocery store. Lucky to have a full time job. But anyway that's about it.

As a B-52 Gunner, Bob McGuirk was in Stan/Eval at Loring AFB after returning from the Gulf War. His B-52 flight hours totaled 3,079 (175 combat hrs). He cross-trained into the HELO FLIGHT ENGINEER 113X0B career field with a class start date of 15 Jun 92.

The **55th Special Operations Squadron (55 SOS)** most recently was part of the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Florida. It operated MH-60G Pave Hawk aircraft in support of special operations.



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AFGA WEBMASTER- NEIL RICHARDS

The AFGA web site is still being published in an austere content mode, Minimal information is included in its content, including Leadership info, Short Bursts access and BX info. NOTAMS and Guest Log are not available. Due to my recent hospitalization, I have not been able to work on the web site's improvement.

(Neil Richards) Webmaster@gunners.net

Hi Bob.

Noticed the new patch.

The origin of the term “Son of a Gun” or “Son of a Gunner” is as follows.

In the Royal Navy; like aboard HMS Victory in 1800; the families moved aboard when the ship was in “ordinary” or not active.

They lived on the gun decks. If a woman gave birth to a BOY, they loaded a powder charge in the nearest gun; and BOOM!

Therefore, the term “Son of a Gun” was born. Cheers, Bill



**2013 AFGA REUNION
FT. WORTH, TEXAS MEMORIES**



AFGA NEWSREEL

B-29 RESTORATION— “DOC”

By Molly McMillin
The Wichita Eagle



The Wichita-built vintage Boeing B-29 Superfortress under restoration inside a Boeing hangar may fly as soon as this summer, volunteers on the project say. The plan is to fly the historic plane to AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wis., in July, where the public can view it.

“I think it’s doable,” said T.J. Norman, the volunteer project manager. “I can’t promise we’ll make it, but we’re sure going to try.”

The plane will be one of only two restored B-29s in flying condition. The massive restoration project began in Wichita in 2000 but was on hiatus for a few years, the victim of a poor economy and lack of hangar space. Restoration restarted early this year after a group of business leaders and aviation enthusiasts formed a nonprofit organization, Doc’s Friends, and acquired the airplane from Tony Mazzolin.

About 50 to 60 volunteers, including a core group of about 30, have been working on the plane since the project restarted.

Boeing donated a military hangar on the east side of Oliver, providing a work space that would facilitate completion of the restoration.

“The biggest challenge is just getting everybody back in the groove of working ... and remembering where we were at three or four years ago when we stopped work,” Norman said.

Mazzolini rescued the B-29 from the Mojave Desert in California in 1998, where it had spent 42 years as a sanctuary for birds and other desert creatures.

It was trucked in pieces to Wichita in 2000.

The bomber, nicknamed “Doc,” was built in Wichita in 1944 inside Boeing Wichita’s Plant II. It was one of a squadron of eight airplanes named for Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Three phases

The B-29 project has been divided into three phases.

The first is to complete  the restoration and get the airplane flying. The second is to secure a permanent home for the plane, and the third is to operate it as a flying museum.

Volunteers have replaced every inch of wire, every cable, every pulley. They’ve changed wing spars, and many of the skin panels, which were corroded by salt and sand. They’ve painted the interior with anti-corrosive paint. Any damage was repaired. Corrosion was everywhere, volunteers say.

Four new engines, later versions of the original engines, are being installed.

Modern Garmin avionics also will be added so it can be flown.

Volunteers must also secure a modern hangar where the plane can have a permanent home – a place that is both accessible for the public and on an active runway.

When Friends of Doc was formed, members made a pact to keep the airplane in Wichita, said former Spirit AeroSystems CEO Jeff Turner, who is chairman of the Doc’s Friends board of directors.

That’s the big reason so much energy is behind the restoration here, Turner said.

Other communities have offered to build a hangar to house the B-29, Turner said.

But “the airplane was built in Wichita; the airplane was restored in Wichita,” he said. “This airplane needs to live here.”

It also must be kept indoors – in part because B-29s weren’t built to today’s standards.

The final phase of the project will be to use the B-29 as a touring museum so the public can view it and hear the stories of those who served on them. “A hailstorm would be catastrophic,” Turner said. “Keeping it inside in Kansas is a really, really, really good idea.”

AFGA NEWSREEL **B-29 RESTORATION— “DOC” (cont)**

“We want to connect people,” Turner said.

It will take an estimated \$7 million to \$9 million to finish the restoration, get the plane flying and secure a hangar, Turner said.

‘Ahead of their time’

The B-29 was the first bomber to have a pressurized crew compartment, remote-controlled guns and advanced radar for bombing and navigation.

The engines also were the most advanced engines of the time, said Scott Sarver, a volunteer on the project.

They were turbo supercharged, although initially they weren’t all that reliable.

“There was a bit of a problem keeping them running,” Sarver said. “They were tweaked and modified to be used at high altitudes. ... They were pushed ahead of their time.”

During World War II, B-29s flew with a crew of 10 to 11 people. Flying it in its restored status will require a minimum crew of six, volunteers say.

Originally, crew members used smoke charts as a guide to determine what was wrong if a B-29 developed problems. Ten illustrations in the flight manual depicted different colors of smoke coming from various parts of the plane and what to do, including when to bail out, Norman said.

“You could tell what was wrong with the airplane by the chart,” Norman said.

Before the B-29, bomber pilots, who flew at lower altitudes, didn’t know much about jet streams, especially the strong jet streams found over Japan in the winter, Sarver said.

“They didn’t understand the power of it, where it was stronger and weaker around the globe,” he said.

So when they released bombs from a high altitude, where they could fly because of the pressurized cabin, their bombs often did not hit the targets, he said.

Instead, they began doing night missions so they could fly at lower altitudes, Sarver said.

In the meantime, they learned about jet streams.

“It was something they learned because of the B-29,” Sarver said.

The crew also wore heated flight suits and boots that were plugged into electrical  outlets so they stayed warmer at the higher and colder altitudes.

The cabin wasn’t heated, Sarver said.

Since the restored plane won’t be pressurized, it will fly at lower altitudes.

Flying it lower will also allow more people to see it, Sarver said.

Skilled love needed

The project has been a labor of love.

As the Air Capital of the World, Wichita has the aviation expertise to see the project through, officials said.

“The aviation infrastructure here is very good,” Sarver said. “There’s a lot of talented people with the skills we need.”

Still, the project needs volunteers with specific skills, such as aircraft electricians, sheet metal mechanics, another inspector and those with radial engine experience.

“We want this thing perfect when it rolls out the doors,” Norman said.

Reach Molly McMillin at 316-269-6708 or mmcmillin@wichitaeagle.com. Follow her on Twitter: @mmcmillin.

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Read more here: <http://www.kansas.com/2014/01/01/v-print/3206432/hopes-high-that-restored-b-29.html#storylink=cpy>

Bob’s Bits

Very detailed and amazing pictures of the "Flying Fortress" B-17 named "Aluminum Overcast". Only about 15 are left flying from over 12,000 produced during WWII. If you scroll thru you will see the interior and the positions from which the gunners held off enemy planes. Really worthwhile going through the collection; never seen such detailed images of the interior of one before! http://home.comcast.net/~szee1a/Al_overcast/Al_overcast.html

AFGA NEWSREEL

Pete Karjanis' Inputs of Current News

B-52 Upgrade to Extend Smart Weapons Capacity

Boeing received a \$24.6 million contract from the Air Force to increase the B-52's smart weapons capacity by 50 percent, announced company officials. Under the terms of the contract, Boeing will produce three prototype launchers, with initial capability slated for March 2016. Upon completion of the first phase, the B-52 will be able to internally carry 24, 500-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions or 20, 2,000 pound JDAMs, states the release. Eventually, Boeing will upgrade the aircraft allowing it to carry the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile and its extended range variant, as well as Miniature Air Launched Decoy and its jammer variant. "This weapons capacity expansion joins the CONECT program, a comprehensive communication upgrade currently being installed on the aircraft, to give the warfighter even more flexibility," said Scot Oathout, B-52 program director.

Buff Headed Down Under

A lone B-52 bomber will participate in a short-term joint training exercise with the Royal Australian Air Force at RAAF Darwin, Australia, this week. "These rotations enhance U.S. ability to train, exercise, and operate with Australia and with other allies and partners across the region," PACAF stated in a Jan. 23 release. The B-52 is temporarily staged from Andersen AFB, Guam, as part of US Pacific Command's rotating strategic bomber presence in the Asia-Pacific region, officials said. B-52s from the 20th Bomb Squadron at Barksdale AFB, La., arrived on rotation to the Pacific late last summer. Buff last flew a joint training mission with the Australians from RAAF Darwin in 2012, making simulated weapon drops over the Delamere Training Range there.



Col. Paul Tibbets IV, grandson of the late retired Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets and Air Force Global Strike Command's deputy director of operations, qualified to fly the B-52H, making him one of a select few pilots trained to fly all three of the Air Force's bomber types. He flew the B-1B and B-2A during previous assignments, according to a service release. "This is not an accomplishment many achieve," said Lt. Col. James Morriss, commander of Air Force Reserve Command's 93rd Bomb Squadron. Tibbets earned the certification on Nov. 21 at Barksdale AFB, La., in a B-52 painted with *Red Gremlin II* nose art as a tribute to his grandfather. The latter Tibbets, best known for piloting the B-29 *Enola Gay* that dropped the first atomic bomb on Japan in August 1945, also flew the B-17 *Red Gremlin* against Nazi-occupied Europe. "My grandfather had a passion for aviation and most specifically, bombers," said Colonel Tibbets. "I am honored to play a small part in keeping his legacy alive," he said. (Barksdale report by MSgt. Greg Steele)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Greetings,

This morning I had the pleasure of listening to an A-6 Jock (KJ "Ken" Davis) telling about a database that was started several years ago Honoring the 58,000+ troops KIA, MIA and POWs in the Vietnam "Police Action." The DB was originally started by Richard Coffelt as a Tribute to the 38,000+ US Army troops who died in VN and later other gentlemen joined him in expanding the DB to include all service branches. The level of detail they are still capturing is extraordinary and this truly is a "work in process" all through the efforts of volunteers. They have digital copies of DD1300s, DA2496s, DD1330s, pictures of the individual and even grave markers... not for everyone of the 58K+ but they are working on it.

They have transcripts down to the unit level of what was happening the day the individual was killed or captured and in some cases can present within 100 meters of where the "event" happened. I encourage you to click on the "Details & Links" button to view the details

I have additional info and pictures I will send to them so that one day they can append them to the individual's page. Materials should be sent to: virtualwall@truvista.org

Here is the DB link: <http://www.coffeltdatabase.org/index.htm>

Received from Cease Walker....I checked the site out and found it most informative and worthwhile opening to view. Bob

BOB'S BITS

"CARRY ON, CARRY ON"

*It's easy to fight when everything's right,
And you're mad with the thrill and the glory;
It's easy to cheer when victory's near,
And wallow in fields that are gory.
It's a different song when everything's wrong.
When you're feeling infernally mortal;
When it's ten against one, and hope there is none,
Buck up, little soldier, and chortle:*

*Carry on! Carry on!
There isn't much punch in your blow.
You're glaring and staring and hitting out blind;
You're muddy and bloody, but never mind.
Carry on! Carry on!
You haven't the ghost of a show.
It's looking like death, but while you've a breath,
Carry on, my son! Carry on!*

*And so in the strife of the battle of life
It's easy to fight when you're winning;
It's easy to slave, and starve and be brave,
When the dawn of success is beginning.
But the man who can meet despair and defeat
With a cheer, there's a man of God's choosing;
The man who can fight to Heaven's own height
Is the man who can fight when he's losing.*

*Carry on! Carry on!
Things never were looming so black.
But show that you haven't a cowardly streak,
And though you're unlucky you never are weak.
Carry on! Carry on!
Brace up for another attack.
It's looking like hell, but – you never can tell;
Carry on, old man! Carry on!*

*There are some who drift out in the deserts of doubt,
And some who in brutishness wallow;
There are others, I know, who in piety go
Because of a Heaven to follow.
But to labor with zest, and to give of your best,
For the sweetness and joy of the giving;
To help folks along with a hand and a song;
Why, there's the real sunshine of living.*

*Carry on! Carry on!
Fight the good fight and true;
Believe in your mission, greet life with a cheer;
There's big work to do, and that's why you are here.
Carry on! Carry on!
Let the world be the better for you;
And at last when you die, let this be your cry:
Carry on, my soul! Carry on!*

*By Robert William Service
Posted in Military, Poetry*

LOOKING FOR COPY OF 301ST BOMB SQUADRON PATCH FROM EGLIN AFB ERA. We are currently trying to collect copies of all the SAC B-52 Bomb Squadron patches to make into some type of poster. Missing the 301st Bomb Squadron which had B-52G models assigned to the 4135 Strat Wing, 301st BS there between 1959—1963. Anyone with a patch or a copy of the patch who can supply a photo of it, please contact me (Bob Matherly,).

Retired Air Force One Settles at Castle Air Museum

The Castle Air Museum in Atwater, Calif., east of San Jose, welcomed its newest addition, a retired Air Force One airplane that once flew Presidents Reagan and Clinton and other dignitaries over its decades of service. The Douglas VC-9 touched down on Oct. 16 in Atwater to a waiting crowd of nearly 300 people, reported the *Merced Sun-Star*. "This is a great day, not only for the air museum but also for Merced, Atwater, Merced County, and the state of California," said Joe Pruzzo, the museum's chief executive officer. With the airplane in hand, the museum now hopes to raise \$10 million for construction of the Presidential Pavilion, a 100,000-square-foot building to house 24 of the museum's vintage military aircraft, according to the newspaper.

(Pete Karjanis' input)

Subject: B-26 INVADER LOWER TURRETS

Bob,

I read Len Johnson's article on page 09 of the August "Short Burst", where he mentioned that the lower turrets were removed prior to the Korean Conflict. His statement is not totally correct.

When the Korean Conflict started, the 3rd Bomb Wing was stationed in Japan and commenced flying missions into Korea with some aircraft with lower turrets. The 452nd Bomb Group (Reserves) was "called-up" in August 1950 and their aircraft had lower turrets (see attached pictures). Later the 17th Bomb Wing was reactivated and relieved the 452nd in March 1952. The 17th took over the aircraft and we still had lower turrets until the end of the Korean Conflict.

The attached pictures were aircraft belonging to the 728th BS. I have some pictures of lower turrets in the 729th BS, 730th BS. When the 17th BW took over the 452nd, we got those aircraft with lower turrets.

Lens comment is partially correct. At the end of WWII, B-26's coming down the Douglas Aircraft Plant production line were eliminating the lower turret on some aircraft for weight and balance, especially if a 125 gallon bomb bay fuel tank was being installed on an aircraft with an eight gun nose.

The B-26 Invader configuration was interchangeable from a six gun nose to an eight gun nose and back. The hard nose was interchangeable from hard nose to plexiglas nose with a Norden Bomb Sight. We had up to two gun pods under each wing with two fifties in each pod or three guns in the leading edge of the wings and two turrets (upr/lwr) or just an upper turret. We even had (rarely) two fifties on the lower right inside the plexiglas nose. They were being removed, as the muzzle flashes blinded the navigator at night. I only saw one of our aircraft that still had the two guns inside the plexiglas nose.

Also had aircraft with no turrets, as they had Shoran Electronics gear in place of turrets. A Shoran Operator then sat in the gunner's compartment. The gunner then flew in the right seat next to the pilot in the cockpit. I still have a certificate that qualified me to fly in the right seat to assist the pilot in cockpit duties or as directed by the pilot.

I believe I have other pictures with lower turrets.

Regards,
Bob Reynolds
17th BW, 34th BS (K-9 1952)

PS: It was nice to see you at the reunion.

PS II: When did Len Johnson fly B-26's in Korea with the 3rd BW??



Lower Turret Maintenance



More lower turrets can be seen



11_1

F-86 tucked in over N Korea



25 B-26 being washed—Korea - 1951

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Paul,

I am sending my sincere apologies for failing to get your brother's obituary into the December issue. I could give you a hundred excuses but none of them really matter. I will say that my computer disc crashed, went to the shop, came back, sort of worked ok but missing data here and there...crashed totally then and I had to have the disc replaced. I had copied the obit into the original issue, marked the envelope as being used and filed it...needless to say I then forgot about it and when I had to go back in and try to sort out the items I had used, I missed it in my files. This doesn't excuse the fact that I missed something important to you, just wanted you to know it was not a deliberate act and I will see that it does get into the April issue - late for sure but I believe worth the wait for all to see. Again, really sorry - I hate that when it happens, especially when it involves the Final Fly-by info....

My Sincere Apologies....Bob

Hi Bob! The misplaced Obit is completely understood by me in particular

I misplace so many things that Annette and I have a response between us that goes something like this: "A sweet little young bride was sitting at the table drinking her cup of coffee with her newspaper while waiting for her husband to greet him for the day as he arrived from up stairs. Well! Where is my cup of coffee? To which she replied, I couldn't find the axe. He replied with, What in the world has an axe got to do with it? She says, Nothing. But when you're not going to do something, one excuse is as good as another! Hope you can get at least a small bit of humor and even a chuckle or two!! Laughter is good for you so they say.

Murray, KY 42071

The Georgia Tail Gunner

Gatailgunner@yahoo.com

Website sent in by Dale Dillahunty and Cease Walker. (Don't know who Dan is who may have sent in the original article ...see message below:

I believe Elgin Garrison was a gunner on those B-29 raids. As I remember on one trip they got shot up pretty bad but made it to Iwo Jima. He told me that story about 52 years ago when we were on Birtciels crew.....Dan

Subject: Re: [26BombSq] Fw: The Last Bomb WWII

This is spectacular live footage of the 3,000 mile round trip air assault upon the Japanese mainland, with 3 bomber wings and a host of P-51's.

No matter what war footage you have ever seen before, this is the real deal and will keep your undivided attention.

The P-51 & B29 footage is remarkable. The strafing runs by the P-51 pilots were incredible.

There are several "breaks" as the film canisters are changed, just wait for the count down.

(View Full Screen/Sound On) Running time is 36 minutes but worth the watch...

Website address: <http://www.archive.org/details/TheLastBomb1945>

B-29/P-51 Actual WWII Footage

PLEASE CLICK: <http://www.archive.org/details/TheLastBomb1945>

Believe it or not, the ball turret was the MOST SURVIVABLE crew position in the 8th Air Force during WW II.

There were four or five versions of the ball turret built by different manufacturers. All could be entered and exited from inside the B-17/B-24. However, this required the turret to be slewed to a definite azimuth and elevation. If battle damage occurred, or the turret stuck; one could not exit. One could not wear a chute in the ball; only the harness. One had to exit, find one's chest pack, clip it on, and then bail out.

The LEAST SURVIVABLE crew position on B-17/B-24 aircraft was the Navigator position. Strange but true. Cheers, Bill Gaddes. p.s. I resent my B-29 and B-36 aircraft being called "Super Old" ! **Bill Gaddes**

Email was referring to the Old Aviation photos at this website:

<http://forum.bearhawkgroups.com/viewtopic.php?t=11259&sid=f94e2950a3eb4703ad1af06672b8d5d1>

KOREAN WAR VETERAN STORY

BILL GADES' STORIES

MY FIRST COMBAT MISSION UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF TECH SERGEANT WILCOX

TECHNICAL SERGEANT WILCOX, A WW II B-29 GUNNER, WAS MY INSTRUCTOR ON MY FIRST COMBAT MISSION OVER KOREA. I HAD NOT ATTENDED GUNNERY SCHOOL. I WAS AN ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN. I WAS ASKED IF I WANTED TO BE A TAIL GUNNER, AND I SAID "YES".

THE TAIL COMPARTMENT CAN ACCOMMODATE TWO STANDING PERSONS, SO WILCOX SPENT A LITTLE TIME WITH ME THERE, THE FLIGHT WAS UNEVENTFUL; LASTING 14 HOURS AND 30 MINUTES. WE RETURNED AT ABOUT 0300 HOURS ON A BEAUTIFUL MORNING. WILCOX WOULD NOW SHOW ME HOW TO CLEAR THE GUNS. NOT THAT I DID NOT REALLY KNOW HOW. WE ROLLED UP A STAND AS THE TAIL GUNS ARE ABOUT 10 FEET ABOVE THE RAMP. I CLIMBED UP AFTER HIM, AND LEANED AGAINST THE RAILING. WILCOX ZIPPED OPEN THE CANVAS SHROUD, AND TOLD ME THAT HE WAS GOING TO CLEAR THE LEFT GUN FACING FORWARD.

THE .50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS ARE CHARGED WITH 1500 POUNDS OF AIR PRESSURE. IF A ROUND FAILS, IT IS AUTOMATICALLY EJECTED. THERE ARE TWO HOLES ON THE TOP OF THE GUN CHARGER. ONE, NOT COVERED, WILL CHARGE THE GUN IF ONE PUTS IN A SCREW DRIVER AND PULLS FORWARD. THE PROCESS INVOLVES TAKING THE AMMO BELT OUT OF THE RECEIVER, AND THEN CLEARING THE GUN OF TWO REMAINING ROUNDS USING THIS TECHNIQUE. WILCOX TOOK THE BELT OUT OF THE RECEIVER; TALKING ALL THE WHILE. I LEANED AGAINST THE RAILING AND LISTENED. THERE IS A SECOND HOLE IN THE RECEIVER, WHICH HAS A PLUG; RESTRAINED BY A LITTLE CHAIN. APPARENTLY THIS PLUG WAS MISSING. WILCOX PUT HIS SCREWDRIVER IN THE WRONG HOLE, PUSHED IT THE WRONG WAY, AND FIRED TWO .50 CALIBER ROUNDS RIGHT BY MY LEFT LEG. IT HURT LIKE HELL, AND SCARED THE "HELL" OUT OF ME. I FELL OFF THE STAND, AND ON WAY DOWN, I SAW THIS RED TRACER GOING OUT ACROSS THE RUNWAY. I HIT THE CONCRETE PRETTY HARD. I HAD A SORE SHOULDER AND A KNOT ON THE SIDE OF MY HEAD.

WE DECIDED THAT WILCOX, SORT OF A BAD ALCOHOLIC, HAD TO GO. WE ALL GAVE HIM EXTRA MISSIONS, AND HE WAS THE FIRST TO ROTATE HOME AFTER 50 MISSIONS.

A BEAUTIFUL SHINY NEW B-29 COMES TO YOKOTA TO "WIN THE WAR"

ONE WARM LATE SPRING DAY IN 1952, WE WERE LOUNGING AROUND ONE OF OUR WB-29'S ON HARDSTAND NUMBER 2, WAITING FOR SOME OFFICERS TO ARRIVE SO WE COULD DO A TEST HOP. I NOTICED A SHINY NEW B-29 BOMBER LANDING ON THE RUNWAY. I KNEW THAT IT HAD JUST COME FROM THE STATES, AS IT HAD NO BOMB WING OR SQUADRON MARKINGS. IT TAXI'D TO HARDSTAND NUMBER 1, NEXT TO US. IT SAT THERE AT AN ODD ANGLE WITH ALL FOUR ENGINES TURNING FOR A WHILE.

ONE OF OUR GROUND CREW, IN COVERALLS WITH NO INSIGNIA OF RANK, AND A GREEN BASEBALL CAP PULLED DOWN AROUND HIS EARS, SAUNTERED OVER AND BEGAN GIVING TAXI HAND-SIGNALS. A B-29 COULD BE TURNED 180 DEGREES TO THE LEFT BY RUNNING UP NUMBER THREE AND FOUR ENGINES. IN THIS WAY THE AIRCRAFT COULD FACE THE TAXI STRIP WITHOUT USE OF A "TUG". ALSO TO THE RIGHT USING NUMBERS ONE AND TWO. I WAS SORT OF DOZING, WHEN I HEARD A VERY LOUD "CLANG", THEN A SECOND CLANG, FOLLOWED BY A LOUD "THUMP". THEN I HEARD A STACCATO THAT WENT "BRRRRRRPPPPPP". RAGS STARTED FLYING IN THE AIR. THE B-29 SHUT DOWN ALL ENGINES, AND I HEARD FIRE ENGINE SIRENS. WE THOUGHT THIS WAS THE FUNNIEST THING WE HAD SEEN IN A WHILE. TALK ABOUT GALLOWS HUMOR.

WHILE ATTEMPTING TO TURN, NUMBER FOUR PROPELLER HAD HIT A 55 GALLON OIL DRUM FULL OF RAGS. IT HAD A WOODEN LID. THE DRUM THEN WAS HIT BY NUMBER THREE PROPELLER, ALSO ROTATING AT A HIGH RPM. THE DRUM THEN HIT THE FUSELAGE WITH A LOUD "WHUMMMP". THE WOODEN LID WAS CHEWED UP, AND THE RAGS FLEW EVERYWHERE.

AFTER THE FIRE ENGINES CAME; SO DID SOME LT. COLONELS AND MAJORS, WHO RAN AROUND LIKE CHICKENS WITH THEIR HEADS CUT OFF. THE POOR RESERVE MAJOR WHO WAS THE PILOT, LOOKED STRICKEN. THE NON-DESCRIPT AIRMAN JUST SLOWLY WALKED AWAY FROM THE DISASTER.

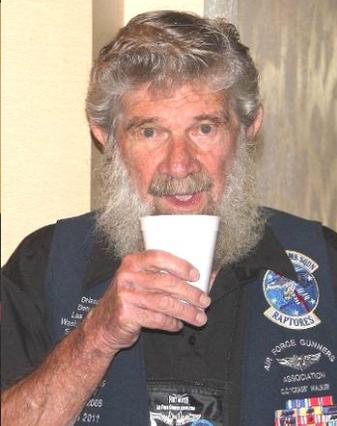
THEN THE INQUISITION BEGAN. WE WERE ASKED BY SEVERAL OFFICERS WHO THE MECHANIC WAS. WE ALL DENIED EVEN SEEING OR DIRECTING THE AIRCRAFT AS THE PILOT HAD CLAIMED.

THE AIRCRAFT WAS TOTALLED, AS THE FUSELAGE COULD NOT BE REPAIRED. THE B-29 THAT CAME OVER TO WIN THE WAR SUFFERED AN IGNOMINIOUS END BY RUNNING INTO A 55 GALLON OIL DRUM FULL OF RAGS.

THE DAMAGED B-29 SAT ALONG THE BASE MAINTENANCE HANGAR FOR QUITE A WHILE THAT IS ANOTHER STORY.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for sending in the stories, Bill...will use the rest of them as I have room...all interesting snippets of days gone by. Bob

**2013 AFGA REUNION
FT. WORTH, TEXAS MEMORIES**



AFGA NEWSREEL
Little Things Solve Big Maintenance Problems, .45?

The American Rifleman (November 2013) has interesting account of how a USAF pilot shot his own plane to correct a malfunction.

Excerpt: The tower control officer advised me that if I couldn't get rid of the tank or its contents, I should give them my location, eject and await pickup.

Well, pilots really hate to punch out of a perfectly flyable airplane and I figured I still had one option worth trying.

From the pages of the American Rifleman, November 2013.

On my first solo flight at K-13, Suwan, Korea, in June 1952, I took off in an F-80 Shooting Star. It was not a combat mission. All I had to do was go up and have fun boring holes in the sky for about an hour and a half.

Immediately after takeoff, I felt the left wing was heavy and determined that the left tip fuel tank was not feeding properly or not at all. Afraid it might fall off and rupture during landing, potentially melting asphalt on the runway, the tower would not let me land with the full tank. I was instructed to make a bomb run and drop the whole tank.

Arriving at the bomb range, I set up my bomb-release switches to release the tank. Flying over the impact area, I pushed the button but nothing happened. I tried a second time and again there was no response. On my next pass, I tried the manual release handle but to no avail. Making one final run, I used the button we called the "panic button" because it allegedly released everything hanging on the airplane. It worked as advertised and dumped everything, save my errant left tip tank.

The tower control officer advised me that if I couldn't get rid of the tank or its contents, I should give them my location, eject and await pickup.

Well, pilots really hate to punch out of a perfectly flyable airplane and I figured I still had one option worth trying.

The canopy of an F-80 can be opened in flight up to about 220 MPH. So I opened the canopy and unholstered my G.I. issue Colt M1911 .45 automatic.

Now, liquid fuel will not burn, at least not like vapors, so I aimed for the part of the tank I was sure would be full of liquid. Firing my first shot, I had no idea where the bullet went--perhaps airborne, high-speed physics were at work, or maybe just my nerves. But my next three shots punctured the tank, passing through the fuel and exiting cleanly out the far side of the 24" wide tank.

For the next thirty minutes, I flew with the left wing down in a series of circles to drain the fuel and slowly return to base. By the time I got to the airstrip the tank was empty. I made a routine landing. As far as I know, I am the only pilot in the Air Force who ever shot his own plane to correct a malfunction.

Thank goodness for my .45.

Lt.Col. A.J. D'Amario, USAF Ret. Florida

EDITOR'S NOTE: And then there is the story of the B-52 gunner who pulled out his S&W Combat Masterpiece .38 and accidentally shot his scope. Wonder what his AF Form 781 write up looked like?

Once the wings go on, they never come off whether they can be seen or not. It fuses to the soul through adversity, fear and adrenaline and no one who has ever worn them with pride, integrity and guts can ever sleep through the "call of the wild" that wafts through the bedroom windows in the deep of the night. When a good aircrewman leaves the "job" and retires, many are jealous, some are pleased and yet others, who may have already retired, wonder. We wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know. We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times. We know in the world of flying, there is a fellowship which lasts long after the flight suits are hung up in the back of the closet. We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life. We also know how the very bearing of a man speaks of what he was and in his heart still is. Because we flew, we envy no man on earth.

Author Unknown

Sent in by Joan Lee, Cease Walker and others (may have been in other Short Bursts but worth reflecting on again)

AFGA NEWSREEL

Pete Karjanis' Inputs of Current News

BUFF's Smart Big-Belly



Weapon-bay modifications are underway to nearly double the B-52's guided-weapon capacity, enabling internal carriage of JDAM, JASSM, Miniature Air Launched Decoy, and MALD Jammer. "With this modification, we're converting the bomb bay from dropping just gravity-type bombs to releasing precision-guided weapons," Boeing spokeswoman Jennifer Hogan said in a Jan. 8 USAF release. "When you combine that ability with the B-52's unlimited range with air refueling, you have an efficient and versatile weapon system that is valuable to warfighters," added Boeing's B-52 Program Director Scot Oathout. Under the \$24.6 million contract, Boeing will modify existing rotary-launchers to carry as many as two dozen 500 pound, or 20 2,000 pound JDAMs internally instead of on the wing pylons. Three prototype launchers will be tested with the intention of fielding an initial capability in March 2016, according to USAF. Work is being conducted at the

Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex at Tinker AFB, Okla.

Cheating at Malmstrom

Thirty-four missile launch officers with the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., cheated during a nuclear proficiency test, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James announced during a Jan. 15 Pentagon briefing. All the officers involved have had their nuclear certifications stripped, their security clearances suspended, and are now restricted from missile crew duty, said Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh during the same briefing. The cheating scandal came to light as officials with the Air Force Office of Special Investigations looked into a recent illegal drug case against 11 Air Force officers spanning six bases in the US and England. A missile launch officer at the 341st MW allegedly sent the answers to a nuclear proficiency test via text messages to 16 other missile launch officers last fall, said Welsh. "Some officers [cheated], others apparently knew about it, and ... did nothing or ... not enough to stop it, or to report it," said James. "This is absolutely unacceptable behavior." Additionally, the entire ICBM force has until the end of the day today to take another nuclear proficiency test, per US Strategic Command boss Adm. Cecil Haney's orders, said James. There are roughly 190 missile launch officers at Malmstrom, according to Welsh, and as far as he knows, this is the largest known cheating incident in the missile community, he said. **June L. Kim**



Last B-52G Falls to New START The last B-52G marked for destruction under New START is slated for execution today at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. While the Air Force currently operates the B-52H, retired B-52Gs stored at the boneyard still counted against the deployed nuclear delivery platforms allowed under treaty limits. "With the elimination of [serial number] 58-0224, 39 B-52Gs will have been eliminated as part of U.S. reductions in order to meet the treaty's central limits by Feb. 5, 2018," according to a 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group release. The aircraft was initially delivered to the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, Calif., from Boeing's plant

in Wichita, Kan., in January 1960. The bomber spent much of its career at Loring AFB, Maine, and flew strike missions from Guam during operations Arc Light and Linebacker II over Vietnam, according to USAF's Historical Research Center. A total of 97 B-52Gs "surgically cut" under both the START and New START agreements remain in storage at Davis-Monthan, 309th AMARG spokeswoman Teresa Pittman told the *Daily Report*. An additional 13 newer B-52Hs also are kept in storage intact, she added. — **Arie Church**

Tibbets Gets a Star

Col. Paul Tibbets IV, one of the few pilots qualified to fly all three of the Air Force's bomber types, was selected for the grade of brigadier general and to serve as deputy director of nuclear operations at US Strategic Command headquarters at Offutt AFB, Neb. Tibbets currently serves as deputy director of operations at Air Force Global Strike Command headquarters at Barksdale AFB, La.

Detached Component Doomed B-1

A major fuel leak caused by a displaced baffle cutting into the main fuel line of a B-1B bomber led to the aircraft's crash in a pasture near Broadus, Mont., during a training mission last August, announced Air Combat Command. The four crewmembers ejected safely, sustaining non-life-threatening injuries; the bomber was destroyed at a loss of some \$317.7 million, states ACC's Dec. 30 release, which cites the findings of the command's newly issued accident investigation board report. As the B-1 descended from approximately 20,000 feet in altitude to 10,000 feet, the pilot swept the aircraft's wings from the forward to the aft position. The wing sweep pushed the baffle—which had already become detached at one or more points, preventing it from folding—into the left overwing fairing cavity where it cut a hole in the main fuel line, states the release. Unbeknownst to the crew, approximately 7,000 pounds of fuel leaked into the aircraft. Fuel eventually ignited, causing a series of detonations that resulted in the complete and permanent loss of power to the crew compartment, according to the release. The B-1 and crew were assigned to the 34th Bomb Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

ODDS & ENDS WWII ODD FACTS



You might enjoy this from Col D. G. Swinford, USMC, Ret and history buff. You would really have to dig deep to get this kind of ringside seat to history:

1. The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940); The highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps.
2. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old: Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonorable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by act of Congress.
3. At the time of Pearl Harbor, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us'); The shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the swastika. Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.
4. More US servicemen died in the Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, an airman's chance of being killed was 71%.
5. Generally speaking, there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance, Japanese Ace Hiroyoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.
6. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a big mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.
7. When allied armies reached the Rhine, the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).
8. German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City , but they decided it wasn't worth the effort.
9. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.
10. Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.
11. Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 United States and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands . 21 troops were killed in the assault on the island..... It could have been worse if there had actually been any Japanese on the island.
12. The last marine killed in WW2 was killed by a can of spam. He was on the ground as a POW in Japan when rescue flights dropping food and supplies came over, the package came apart in the air and a stray can of spam hit him and killed him.

Bob's Bits

LAKE SUPERIOR FACTS: There is enough water in Lake Superior to cover all of North and South America with water one foot deep.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From: Bob Preising
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 2013 10:31 AM
To: Dick Kenen
Subject: Re: A Naval GIFT TO ARIZONA!

Dick,

A friend of mine, Arv Schultz, helped arrange this with Ken Bennet, our Secy of State. I met Ken at a presentation of a certificate of Appreciation for Korean war era vets. I wore one of my B-36 TEE shirts, and he asked about my war experience and I told him about the B-36. He was really interested and had not been to PIMA. Then again I talked with him at talk on the Battle of Midway at the capital. Bob P.

REPLY TO BOB PREISING from Dick Kenen:
Subject: Re: A Naval GIFT TO ARIZONA!

Bob-----I also copied Bob Matherly , Editor of The Air Force Gunners Assn, While the two guns in question were never mounted in aircraft, they certainly represent the ultimate gun on land, sea or air. They certainly stand tall, no-matter who fired them!! See you in Roswell in September.---
Dick

Editor's Note: Very interesting website to visit to see how the big gun off the Battleship Arizona made it to Arizona. Bob Preising is an AFGA Member and a former B-36 gunner who sent the initial email to Dick Kenen. Check out this interesting website at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dFIZX_RXuU&feature=youtu.be

HI TROOPS,
THE ARC LIGHT/ YOUNG TIGER REUNION FOR 2014 WAS ON THE CARNIVAL CRUISE SHIP "ELATION."
WE SAILED FROM NEW ORLEANS ON MONDAY 29JAN14, ON A HEADING OF 180 DEGREES UNTIL WE
REACHED PROGRESO, YUCATAN MEXICO ON WEDNESDAY, SOME OF THE TROOPS LEFT THE SHIP TO EXPLORE
SOME MAYAN RUINS.
I STAYED ON SHIP EXPLORING THE MANY BARS, EATING PLACES, BARS, SHOPS, BARS, POOLS, BARS, GYM
TYPE PLACES, CASINO, ETC .
REALLY I WAS GETTING A START ON A GREAT TAN, ON OUR BALCONY... YOU WOULDN'T CATCH THIS OLD
BODY IN THE MIDST OF ALL THOSE YOUNG FOLKS AT THE POOLS.
WE ARRIVED AT THE ISLAND OF COZUMEL THURSDAY THEN, THAT EVENING SAILED FOR HOME PORT AND
DISEMBARKED EARLY SATURDAY MORNING...
WHILE TANNING ON THE BALCONY, I WAS READING A BOOK, "THE HIGH ROAD TO HANOI" BY JAMES T.
LARKING. THE AUTHUR BEGAN HIS CREW DUTIES IN "H" MODELS AS A NAV JUST BEFORE THE CUBAN CRI-
SIS. HE REALLY NAILS IT. THE READ BRINGS BACK A LOT OF GREAT MEMORIES, ALSO SOME NOT SO GREAT .
SOME OF HIS TALES MAKE ME THINK HE MIGHT HAVE MADE A GOOD GUNNER... MY AUTOGRAPHED COPY IS
AVAILABLE, BUT ONLY ON A HAND RECEIPT.
I ALSO ENJOYED THE DRY & QUICK HUMOR OF ROD ROBINSON, THE ONLY OTHER GUNNER ON BOARD.
RENO IN "15" PROBABLE, NASHVILLE IN "17" REALLY PUSHING IT, BUT A GUNNERS CRUISE IN 2019??? EVEN
IF BILLIE HAS TO WHEEL ME AROUND, I'M ALL FOR IT.
I SAVED THE REUNION SCHEDULE TO PASS ON AND COMPARE WITH ALL THE WORK INVOLVED TO PLAN A
REUNION.THEY JUST USED ALL THE SHIPS ACTIVITIES WHICH WERE MANY...TILL WE MEET AGAIN,
CEASE, "PAST" VICE PRESIDENT...

Bob: Just received this obituary from Charlie's widow Pat Tidwell. I remember his being a B-36 tail gunner at Walker AFB and good friends with George E. Smith who passed earlier this year. Living in San Angelo, he and Pat took pictures of the 40th B.S. memorial for the deceased crew of Abbott 27 that crashed near there and sent them to us for our Roswell reunion. He had also been on a crew whose A/C had been William "Moose" Miller, subsequently former renown Ops. Officer for the 40th Bomb Squadron. I hope you can feature his obituary etc in the Last Fly- By portion of the Air Force Gunners Assn. publication. Thanks, Dick Kenen L2740 **EDITOR'S NOTE:** Thanks for sending the obit...it is in this edition. Bob

AFGA NEWSREEL
Items of Interest

Hollywood had it's share of gunners, Walter Matthau, B-24 gunner, Paul Newman, rear seat gunner on torpedo bomber, Charlton Heston, B-25 gunner, Brian Keith, Dauntless dive bomber gunner, Clark Gable, B-17 gunner, Charles Bronson, B-29 gunner, Norman Fell, tail gunner.

Probably more than these too....just keep an eye out for them and we'll collect the names as we go along.

Middle East Conflicts Wall Memorial
229 Main St., Marseilles, IL 61341

This is incredible! The heart of the American people, represented by a cellular company, who would have ever thought it would be like this and not our own government making this kind of thing happen across the country? Had no idea this was in existence. How many of you have ever seen or heard anything about this beautiful Memorial? God Bless America!!!

We can do things like this without the Government getting involved. Please send this on to all your friends especially Veterans and ask them if they knew about it. This seems a little like a commercial but it's not and they deserve the credit they're given. This is a story everyone needs to know; what and where it is! My hat is off to all the Motorcycle Jockeys that had a hand in bringing this to our attention.

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=WEPBQGu74oo&feature=player_embedded



Sent in by Cease Walker

On June 19th, 2004 a Granite Memorial Wall was dedicated commemorating the servicemen and women who have lost their lives in worldwide conflicts since 1979. The project was conceived by Jerry Kuczera and Tony Cutrano and built with donated material and labor and is the first of its kind, in the History of the United States, to give honor to our fallen by name while a conflict is ongoing. It took 20 years to Honor our Vietnam Veterans. Almost 60 years to Honor our World War II Veterans. The names on the wall represent our fallen heroes from such diverse locations as Panama, Lebanon, the Balkans, Grenada, Somalia, Haiti, USS Cole, USS Stark, Terrorist attacks in Italy, Greece, Scotland, and the current conflicts in the Middle East.

The Wall is located at 200 Riverfront Drive in Marseilles, Illinois.

The Purpose of the Illinois Motorcycle Freedom Run is to show Our Brave Servicemen and Women, and their Families, that we support them, and to Honor Fallen Heroes. The route is lined with Americans waving American Flags and paying tribute. In the past we have had 10's of thousands of participants. The money raised through your generous donations is used to update and maintain the Memorial, and to put this wonderful event together. The first Memorial we erected was in the small town of St Anne Illinois. the hometown of Capt. Ryan A. Beaupre, one of Illinois first casualties in the war against terror. We have donated Memorials to all of the Veteran Homes and Hospitals in The State of Illinois in Honor of all our Veterans, Past and Present. We Have assisted many of our Fallen Heroes Children, with funds for their education, in hopes that through education, they will learn to

Bob's Bits

LAKE SUPERIOR FACTS: *Lake Superior is, by surface area, the largest lake in the world.*

LEADERSHIP THAT INSPIRES EXCELLENCE

A Viet Nam Rescue

It was one of the most carefully planned missions of the Linebacker campaign. For days, with the help of the latest special intelligence-gathering techniques, we studied the routes, orbit points, formations, and tactics of the enemy. We selected 10 May 1972 to put to the test what we had learned. At 0500 hours, the 432d Tactical Fighter/Reconnaissance Wing briefing took place as it did every day, seven days a week. We then broke for individual flight briefings to review each detail of what was likely to occur during the next few hours as we prepared to launch for various destinations over North Vietnam.

I was number three, or deputy flight leader, of Oyster Flight. Oyster was the ingress flight led by Maj Bob Lodge, a friend, a fellow 1964 graduate of the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and one of my former students in the Air Force “Top Gun” school at Nellis Air Force Base (AFB), Nevada. Our McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantoms were the first four aircraft to penetrate North Vietnamese airspace, paving the way for the strike force to follow. Our mission was to intercept and defeat enemy fighters that would attempt to prevent our strike Phantoms from dropping their highly accurate laser-guided bombs.

After a brief delay for foul weather in the target area, the mission was a “go.” Following tanker rendezvous shortly after takeoff to top off our fuel tanks, Oyster Flight dropped to treetop level and proceeded inbound low enough to be under enemy radar surveillance. We employed radio silence procedures to reduce the chances of being detected. Reaching our planned orbit point some 25 to 30 miles west of Hanoi, we stayed below 300 feet as planned and continued radio silence. Using the latest, highly classified, high-technology equipment - available in only a few of our best airplanes—we electronically spotted a flight of four MiG-21s in orbit northwest of Hanoi. Intelligence had predicted this situation, and our plan was to wait until the MiGs departed their holding pattern to attack our strike force as it approached from the southwest. We would then “pop up” to meet the Soviet-built fighters head-on.

Our orbit was then below the effective altitude for surface-to-air missiles (SAM) and heavier antiaircraft artillery (AAA), so small arms fire and light AAA were the only nuisance as we waited.

Right on schedule, the MiG-21s departed orbit, and we rolled out on a northerly heading, pointing our radar sensors skyward to achieve full system radar lock-ons at 15 miles. Our adrenaline surged as the battle developed at a closing rate of more than 1,200 miles per hour. Visual engagement was only moments away. The computer for our Sparrow radar missiles flashed that we were in range, and, as briefed, our first two jets (Oyster One with Bob Lodge and Roger Locher and Oyster Two piloted by John Markle and Steve Eaves) fired head-on at seven miles.

Within seconds, fireballs and smoke trails filled the air, and debris was falling all around us. Two MiG-21s had been destroyed. Lodge and I, in Oyster One and Three, immediately turned our fighters as hard as possible to achieve rear-quarter positions on the remaining two MiGs. I locked on to the third MiG using the autoacquisition switch on the left throttle and fired two Sparrows at a range of 6,000 feet. The second missile exploded under the fuselage of the North Vietnamese fighter, and the pilot bailed out as his craft burst into flames at 15,000 feet above sea level.

Meanwhile Lodge and Locher were positioning for a shot at MiG number four. What a great day it was going to be - a perfectly planned, perfectly executed mission, resulting in four American victories. But it was too good to be true. As Oyster One, piloted by a crew with over 400 combat missions (a crew largely regarded as the best in Southeast Asia), was about to claim its second MiG of the day, an unanticipated obstacle appeared. A flight of four MiG-19s stormed in from above and behind.

“Oyster One—Break!—Break!” we screamed, “MiG-19s at six o’clock—Oyster One, Oyster One—Break! MiG-19s firing!”

But Lodge and Locher, concentrating on the MiG-21, missed our frantic calls, and 30-millimeter rounds from the MiG-19s peppered the wings and fuselage of the American F-4 fighter. Within seconds, the Phantom II burst into flames and rolled

“Bail out! Bail out!” I yelled. “Bail out!” At 7,000 feet, upside down and on fire, the Phantom was out of control. What began as a triumph was ending in tragedy. Two of America’s finest young officers, and two very close friends, were going down in flames, and Oyster Two, Three, and Four were being chased out by the remaining MiG-21 and the MiG-19s. It was not supposed to end that way.

Throughout the following week, we returned to the area and called on the radio, hoping that Lodge and Locher, who carried survival radios with extra batteries, had somehow managed to bail out—hoping that our calls would be returned by one, or even both. But our calls went unanswered. We finally resigned ourselves to the probability that they had been killed or captured (though their names never appeared on the list released by the North Vietnamese of those taken prisoner on or after 10 May), and we were ready to give up.

Then, 22 days later, on 1 June, our strike force was in the vicinity of Yen Bai Airfield, some 70 miles northwest of Hanoi. Momentary silence filled the air, then came a piercing call: “Any US aircraft—this is Oyster-Zero-One-Bravo—over.” We don’t have an Oyster call sign today, I thought, but my backseater, Chuck DeBellevue, shouted, “My God, that’s Roger Locher!” We answered, and Roger said, “Hey guys, I’ve been down here a long time. Any chance of picking me up?” “You bet—you bet there is!”

LEADERSHIP THAT INSPIRES EXCELLENCE ***A Viet Nam Rescue (continued)***

Back at Udorn Royal Thai Air Base we quickly planned and launched a rescue mission. It was one of the deepest, most difficult, and dangerous rescues ever attempted. There were numerous SAM sites and more than adequate AAA around Yen Bai, one of North Vietnam's most important airfields. And of all places, Roger Locher was only five miles off the south end of the runway. The ground fire was so intense the rescue effort had to be aborted, and Udorn was quiet that night. We knew Roger was alive. We knew that he had valiantly evaded the enemy for over three weeks. And now we could not get him out. We had failed, and what was worse, the North Vietnamese had been alerted. They knew Roger was in their jungle, and now they knew where to find him. Back at Udorn we were frustrated and discouraged. The next morning, Gen John Vogt, the four-star commander of Air Forces in Vietnam/Thailand, in an uncommon act of courageous leadership, canceled the entire strike mission to Hanoi and dedicated over 100 aircraft to the rescue of Roger Locher. Capt Ron Smith, as Sandy One, was the low-altitude, on-scene commander; and a 27-year-old captain named Dale Stovall commanded Jolly 30, the lead chopper that snatched Locher from the jungle as the enemy closed in.

In a brilliant display of total commitment and unparalleled excellence, a bitter defeat became a sweet, sweet victory. On that morning, the training, teamwork, discipline, and the dedication of hundreds of Americans and allies resulted in the successful return of Capt Roger Locher to friendly territory. During Locher's debriefing it was learned that, unfortunately, Bob Lodge did not make it out of the airplane. His remains were returned to the United States by the North Vietnamese government some years later. On learning the good news, General Vogt flew from Saigon to Udorn in time to be the first among hundreds of us to welcome Roger back as he stepped off the rescue helicopter after 23 days in the jungles of North Vietnam. It was an experience as moving as it was magnificent.

The flight surgeons rushed Locher off to the hospital but later agreed that he could come to the officers' club that night at 1900 hours for 30 minutes. The word spread and the club was packed. On time, washed, shaven, fed, and in his "party suit," Roger walked through the front door to applause that went on for 20 minutes. Hands were shaken. Tears were shed. The camaraderie and love that bound us together in time of war had come together that morning. Enormous resources and many lives had been risked.

Vince Lombardi used to tell his players, "Unless you believe in yourself and put everything you have into your pursuits—your mind, your body, your total dedication—what is life worth? The quality of life is in direct proportion to your commitment to excellence, no matter what your field of endeavor." The commitment to excellence, the total dedication, and the belief that we could succeed are what enabled us to rescue Roger Locher. And these are the same essential elements, the intrinsic ingredients, the keys that go into the success of anything we do in life. Retired Air Force general Jim Mullins wrote that "we must not shrink from the pursuit of excellence and quality, because our very survival depends on it." Adm Hyman Rickover, speaking on this subject, said, "Survival for America requires the revival of excellence. Internal mediocrity can destroy us just as surely as anything external."

The laws of success that govern our society—that keep America strong—are the same laws that care for and nurture our families, our businesses, and our spiritual and intellectual endeavors. If we are going to be the best that we can be, if we are going to realize our most profound dreams, we must be willing to be different in our quest for excellence, because it is a moving target that requires constant sight adjustment. Conformity and satisfaction with mediocrity kill the conscience and "deaden the soul of man." The spirit of the fighter pilot embodied in the "Top Gun" theme—and so important to the rescue of Roger Locher—is a spirit that is in no way limited to fighter pilots. It is the state of mind, a dedication to superior performance, achievement of a mission, excellence in a cause. Nothing less is acceptable if you want to do your very best, and if you want to be all that you can be. We have to make a choice. We can be meaningful, productive, creative, positive contributors to our professions or vocations or we can just go along for the ride, remain average, and be content to stagnate.

The first group of people is filled with creative discontent—they are people who want more out of life than the standard offering and are not afraid to raise the standards of excellence and to work for it harder. The second group is filled with people who figured out early on that they could get by—hack the program—by doing less than their best, satisfied with "good enough." What both groups have in common is the total freedom to choose. Born in the ghetto, or on Nob Hill, it makes no difference. Abraham Lincoln showed us that presidents can come from log cabins. The power of the mind is increased and finds its own reward when it is engaged and acted upon. Leo Rosten wrote, "I cannot believe that the purpose of life is merely to be happy. I think the purpose of life is to be useful, to be responsible, to be honorable, to be compassionate. It is, above all, to matter, to count, to stand for something, to have it make some difference that you lived at all." If we are going to make a difference, we are going to have to be different, and that is not easy. We have to decide if we have what it takes—as individuals, as flights, squadrons, wings, companies, schools, and organizations—to stand tall, - to be counted, to be proud,

LEADERSHIP THAT INSPIRES EXCELLENCE

A Viet Nam Rescue (continued)

to achieve, to be better than our competition. If we become big through the success of our efforts, that's okay—it's the way it should be. We deserve to be big if we produce better products at better prices, provide better services, and are devoted to the pursuit of excellence. And despite the critics of the 1960s and the lingering voices that remain, there is nothing wrong with being big. Big joined Small in building America, and as long as Big remains socially conscious, Big will help provide for America's future. Big in this regard is really a badge of excellence. Having had the good fortune to be involved in a wide variety of activities, civilian, military, and government—I am convinced that in most endeavors excellence cannot prevail without the right kind of leadership and inspiration. As General Patton said, "We win wars with people." General Patton won battles with people because he inspired them to win and led them to victory. A mediocre leader with the same people would have been less successful in battle, and a bad leader would have been defeated. I believe that people can and will reach for the stars when motivated by inspired leadership.

I have been more than fortunate to have worked for people like Carl Miller, Gordon Blood, Jerry O'Malley, Charlie Gabriel, and Jack Vessey. Today Carl Miller is the national administrator of the Civil Air Patrol; Gordon Blood was commander of the USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Center; Jerry O'Malley was commander of the Tactical Air Command before his tragic and untimely death in an aircraft accident; Charlie Gabriel was Chief of Staff of the Air Force; and Jack Vessey rose from an enlisted man to become chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the top military position in the world.

Why were these men so successful? Because they understood people. They knew exactly what Patton was talking about. War is won with people, and the ability to inspire in others a desire for excellence and passion for achievement is the key to successful leadership. Personally, I would have died for any one of these men—these great leaders. And I was not alone. My colleagues would have died for them, too, and some of them did.

Again the question is why? The answer is because we admired them. We respected them. We were devoted to them. We loved them. Never, ever, would we have done anything to disappoint them. Our loyalty was absolute, and what is more, that loyalty cut both ways. We knew how much they depended on us to help them achieve their missions. We knew that they genuinely cared about our needs, our hopes, and our dreams. We knew that we could count on them for support, for help when the chips were down, because they understood the real meaning of both leadership and followership.

Unfortunately, so many people in leadership and management positions, in all walks of life and particularly in the military, try to rule through a warped principle I call negative discipline.

Followers of this principle believe motivation is sparked by threat, fear, and intimidation. This principle is engaged by little minds that dare not stretch themselves through love, loyalty, caring, support, and encouragement. Negative discipline never has worked, and it never will.

Under the shadow of negative discipline, people react rather than proact. They run for shelter and hide from progress rather than stick their necks out and march forward. This is the antithesis of leadership excellence and quality.

Bill Danforth the founder of Ralston Purina, always challenged the people in his company to "stand tall, to think tall, to smile tall and to live tall." It is this understanding of what motivates people toward positive behavior that makes the difference between a great organization and a mediocre-or failing- organization

J. W. Marriott, founder of one of the finest and most successful hotel companies in the world, had a very simple philosophy: "We take care of our people, and they take care of our guests."

These two men echo the philosophy of George Patton, Carl Miller, Gordon Blood, Jerry O'Malley, Charlie Gabriel, Jack Vessey, Vince Lombardi, and all great leaders who know how to inspire people to achieve and excel. These people hold the key to the power of inspired attitude—the attitude that is so great it has literally raised nations—the attitude that is so simple it can be mastered by children. And what is it? Simply put, it is incentive and reward, good examples, mutual respect, shared beliefs, symbiotic loyalty, 415 and bottom-line values. Separately these components are powerful enough, but collectively they work miracles. The greatest miracle of all is that they are infectious. There is no other feeling as great as the feeling of accomplishment, of doing something worthwhile, of being productive, of turning defeat into victory. In the score for "Vagabond King," Rudolph Friml wrote, "Give me some men, stout-hearted men, and I'll soon give you ten thousand more." John Vogt gave the inspired order to rescue Roger Locher to "a few stout-hearted leaders," and soon there were hundreds who took leadership into their own hands, accomplished the mission, and rejoiced in its success.

At the opening of the Atlanta Marriott Marquis, widely regarded as one of the great architectural and engineering achievements in the world, the designer, John Portman Jr., noted that each speaker on the program had been preceded by a musical selection. He supposed that the "Impossible Dream," which was played as he came forward to speak, was an appropriate

LEADERSHIP THAT INSPIRES EXCELLENCE ***A Viet Nam Rescue (continued)***

choice because he had always been told: "You can't do this. You can't do that. There's no way. It's never been done. It won't work." He said. I guess the good Lord made me dumb enough not to believe in the possibility of failure, and dumb enough not to think in negative terms, and dumb enough to believe that it takes noble thoughts to produce noble deeds—yes, dumb enough to have faith, and believe that it can be done. We believe in what we do, and we seek excellence in everything we do. This hotel is about people, life-style, and hopefully it is a contribution to a feeling of human enhancement and well-being. This hotel is not elitist. It recognizes all people and their innate desires. It hopefully appeals to all of us, from the chairman of the board of the largest corporation to the most humble among us—for we are all part of the human family. This, I hope, responds to my desire of bringing people together in harmony and happiness.

Great leaders can make us feel like the author who wrote, "I love you not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you." They not only set marvelous examples for us to follow if we should want to, they inspire us to want to and to set our own examples of excellence for others to follow. Strong leadership inspires strong leadership.

Presented by Brig Gen Steve Ritchie (listen to his presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QvRcP4go-eg> — a good one to listen to if you have a computer—8:43 minutes long).

We fight wars with machinery, but we win wars with people. —Gen George S. Patton

This article was prepared especially for AU-24, Concepts for Air Force Leadership.

Brig Gen Steve Ritchie, The Air Force's only ace pilot of the Vietnam War and American's only MiG-21 ace, is a graduate of United States Air Force Academy. His tally record is five MiG-21s and his decorations include the Air Force Cross, four Silver Stars, 10 Distinguished Flying Crosses and 25 Air Medals.

Editor's comment: A long read but I thought it demonstrated the absolute resolve that we all had and believed in—that if shot down, they would come to rescue us if at all humanly possible. It takes a good leader to make the decisions that had to be made to make this all happened—and to hell with the politics of those above them. Not sure this philosophy is applied today...(sorry if this upsets anyone - my perspective only) Bob

AFGA NEWSREEL ***Pete Karjanis' Inputs of Current News***

Introducing the KC-46A Pegasus Orlando, Fla.—The KC-46A tanker has a new name—Pegasus, announced Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh on Thursday at AFA's Air Warfare Symposium here. Welsh said Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James approved the recommendation from Air Mobility Command boss Gen. Paul Selva earlier this week. "Air refueling is the lifeblood of strategic mobility," said Welsh in his State of the Air Force address. Welsh said he visited the first KC-46A on the assembly line at Boeing's Everett, Wash., facility just a few weeks ago. "It will be flying in June, it's a real thing now," Welsh said. The Air Force will buy 179 KC-46A Pegasus aircraft, the last of which will be delivered in 2028, to replace the Eisenhower-era KC-135 fleet. However, USAF will continue to maintain 200-plus KC-135s, which will be 65-years-old or older when the last Pegasus is delivered. As a result, the KC-Y and KC-Z follow on efforts have to be real programs, said Welsh. "And they have to get going now," he emphasized.

—**Marc V. Schanz**

FINAL FLY-BY ***(Late notice)***

Received the sad news that **NORM "BILL" LAKE** passed away on 20 February 2014. His wife, Lynn, sent the following notice out to Penny Blake who forwarded it to others. Norm was, indeed, a force among the gunners during the time that he served in the USAF. He will be remembered by all of his family and those he served with. **"Sadly, Bill passed away this morning around 10:00. He had a massive stroke on the 14th, rallied around the next day, then had another small stroke, rallied around the following day, and when we went in to see him last night he was in a coma, but peaceful. We stayed with him for several hours, visiting with him and around him, but he didn't respond much - except to indicate he could hear us and knew we were there. Then this morning he just peacefully passed away. Lynn."** Sent in by Penny Blake. More to follow in the August Short Bursts about his passing.

ROGER LOCHER RESCUE FROM THE GROUND PERSPECTIVE

On May 8, 1972, President Nixon authorized the mining of Haiphong and other North Vietnam ports, together with regular and frequent air strikes north of the 20th parallel. Operation Linebacker was on.

Two days later, the US Air Force launched 120 aircraft against targets in and around Hanoi. Oyster Flight, four F-4s from the 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron flying MiG-CAP, was led by Maj. Bob Lodge, an outstanding young combat leader. He and his backseater, Capt. Roger Locher, were veterans of the air war, both with previous tours in Southeast Asia. Also in Oyster Flight were Capts. Richard S. "Steve" Ritchie and Chuck DeBellevue, who were to become the Air Force's only F-4 "ace" team with five victories.

As Oyster Flight neared the Red River at a point about 75 miles northwest of Hanoi, they were alerted to the approach of MiGs. In the ensuing battle, Lodge and Locher shot down a MiG-21 and were positioning themselves to fire on another when they were hammered by 30-mm shells from two MiG-19s. The F-4's hydraulic system was knocked out, making the aircraft uncontrollable. A fire in the rear of the fuselage forced Captain Locher to punch out while the plane was inverted. Major Lodge did not eject. Since no one in the vicinity saw parachutes, it was assumed that both men had perished.

Captain Locher had, in fact, landed in trees near a MiG base at Yen Bai, north of the Red River, shaken but uninjured. He could not retrieve his parachute, which was caught in the trees, or his survival pack. After a brief radio call, he sought to put distance between himself and the parachute, which inevitably would attract a search party. (His radio signal was received by friendly aircraft, but, since there was no voice transmission, the signal probably was thought to be sent by a North Vietnamese using a captured radio.)

Within minutes, Captain Locher heard sounds of a search party. Taking cover in a brush pile, he took stock of his situation. It wasn't encouraging. He had the contents of his survival vest, including two pints of water and a couple of snacks. Rescue so deep in enemy territory--some 350 miles north of the DMZ--was unlikely.

His best chance of rescue was to cross the heavily cultivated Red River Valley, swim the river, and work his way to the sparsely inhabited mountains about 90 miles to the west. The river lay several miles away through forested, hilly terrain. He would travel only at first light and at dusk, living off the land.

The enemy's search resumed the next morning. At one point, searchers came within 30 feet of Captain Locher's hiding place. On the third day, there were no sounds of a search party, and Locher could move somewhat more freely, but living off the land proved to be a greater problem than he had anticipated. It was too early in the season for ripened fruit, nuts, or berries. He ate what he could find, gradually weakening as the days passed. Water was no problem. There were plenty of small streams. There were also plenty of mosquitoes and drenching rains as he inched along at less than a mile a day.

Captain Locher frequently tried for radio contact, with no success. Then, on June 1, three weeks after he was shot down, as he was contemplating leaving the forest for a dicey venture into the valley, a flight of F-4s passed directly over him on their way home from a strike and, he hoped, with radio frequencies open.

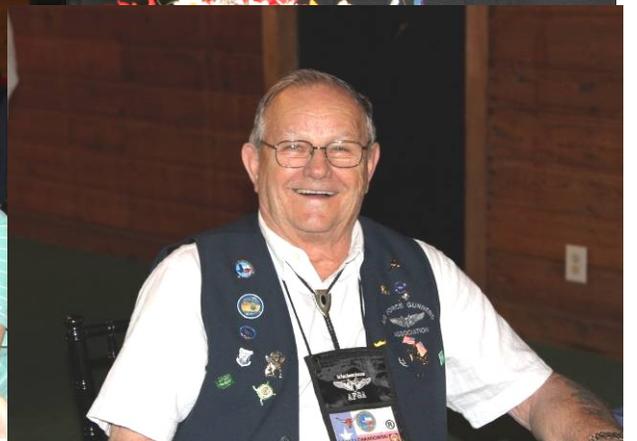
Locher's call was picked up. Within hours, a small search-and-rescue (SAR) force was on its way from Nakhon Phanom, Thailand. After the A-1 Sandys were satisfied that they were talking to Locher, an HH-53C SuperJolly helicopter, flown by Capt. Dale Stovall, started in for the pickup, but the SAR force was driven off by missiles and MiGs. Maybe rescue was not possible so far north of the DMZ, after all.

Seventh Air Force thought otherwise. On June 2, another SAR force, supported by fighters, bombers, Wild Weasels, tankers, and ECM aircraft, numbering more than 100 in all, fought its way in. Captain Stovall's HH-53 picked up Roger Locher and returned him to Ubon RTAFB.

It had been a record-setting show. Captain Locher had eluded capture in enemy territory for 23 days, setting a record for successful evasion in the Vietnam War. Captain Stovall had twice flown his rescue helicopter further into North Vietnam than had been done before, earning him the Air Force Cross. All the principals emerged as heroes, but there is more to the story. Combat crews who would be flying Linebacker strikes north of the Red River now knew that eluding capture in that inhospitable land and rescue from Hanoi's backyard were indeed possible. That was a good thought to sleep on.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Provided this additional look at the rescue of Roger Locher—one from his view as the flight went from good to bad and he had to bail out into enemy territory. His ability to avoid detection in the region where he went down is down right mystifying. He kept his head about him throughout the ordeal. He also believed that they would come and get him once he made contact - and he was right!

**2013 AFGA REUNION
FT. WORTH, TEXAS MEMORIES**

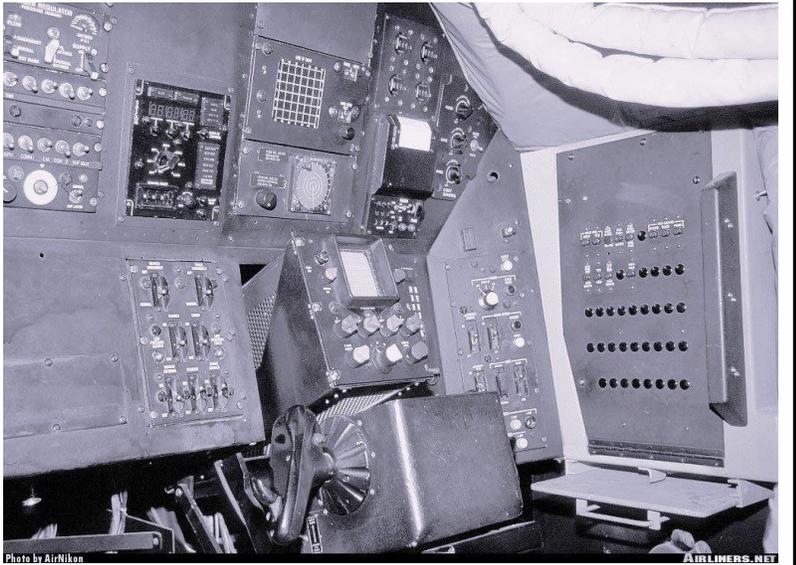


BOB'S BITS
Gunner Miscellaneous



GUNNER LICENSE PLATES
1ST of many we see—I hope!

Arc Light B-52 Organizations P=Provisional		
Andersen AFB, Guam		
1954-70	3rd Air Div	Hq for B-52 units at Andersen, U Tapao, and Kadena
1970-75	8th Air Force	Replaced 3rd Air Div as hq for Arc Light
1955-70	3960th Strategic Wg	SAC unit from pre-Vietnam period. Replaced by 43rd SW
1966-70	4133rd Bomb Wg (P)	Formed to receive rotational crews, inactivated 1970 when 43rd SW formed
1970-79	43rd Strategic Wg	Replaced 3960th SW when B-52 missions from Guam resumed in 1972, reported to 57th Air Div (P), continued as operating unit at Andersen until 1989
1972-73	57th Air Div (P)	Controlled both B-52 Arc Light wings on Guam
1972-73	72nd Strategic Wg (P)	Reported to 57th AD (P)
1972-73	303rd Consolidated Aircraft Maint Wg (P)	Reported to 57th AD (P)
U Tapao RTNAF, Thailand		
1966-70	4258th Strategic Wg	Reported to 3rd Air Div on Guam; in 1970, redesignated as 307th
1970-74	307th Strategic Wg	For last part of war, reported to 17th AD (P)
1972-74	17th Air Div (P)	Reported to 8th AF on Guam
1972-74	310th Strategic Wg (P)	Reported to 17th AD (P)
1972-74	340th Consolidated Aircraft Maint Wg (P)	Reported to 17th AD (P)
Kadena AB, Okinawa		
1965-70	4252nd Strategic Wg	
1970-74	376th Strategic Wg	Replaced 4252nd SW; did not fly Arc Light combat missions



B-52G GUNNER'S STATION— look familiar???
AFSATCOM installed.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER - IGGY CRUZ



Well, the “Big Day” is over and we are all attempting to get back to normal. Whatever normal means to you. For some of us, Christmas was not a very good time for celebrations and are glad that it is all over. We all know someone for whom this was the first Christmas after some significant loss, such as death, divorce or one of the many other ways be it for health, financial problems or just plain unpleasant events that seem to surface during Christmas time. Now is the time to get right with God, remember that he will not let you go thru anything that you cannot bear.

We need to keep the joy that Christmas brings alive. Let’s not get that **LET DOWN** feeling we tend to get when all the festivities are over. I know, it takes a lot of effort to keep that joy alive, especially when those nasty bills start coming in. Some of what we received and gave are all a thing of the past and stored in the closets or boxed out of sight. We need to keep that joy out in the open. Think of that excitement and joyful moments that were shared with the young ones free of the cares of the world, financial needs and health issues and seeing our sons and daughters all grown up starting their own families. Recollection of the past seems to always kick in after a good meal. Seeing the older folks trying to get a word or two in on the subject of old vs. new times. Being able to see all this action is a blessing.

And now, with the beginning of a new year it’s a good time to remember the resolutions and promises made to ourselves, God and other persons. May we all be faithful to our promises—each on our own way? **GOD BLESS YOU ALL.**

FINAL FLY BY

SPENCER L. GRIPPIN. of Springfield, died Thursday evening, Oct. 15, 2009, surrounded by family at the Leavitt Family Jewish Nursing Home in Longmeadow. Spencer, 11th child of the late Clifford and Edna (Wheeler) Grippin was born in Great Barrington, Mass. on Sept. 20, 1932. Raised in New England and New York State he resided on Bond Street in Binghamton, N.Y. and graduated from Binghamton North High School in 1951. He worked for a time in the shoe department at Fowler's Department Store in Binghamton before enlisting in the Air Force in 1953. In the USAF he joined the Strategic Air Command (SAC), flying as a gunner on B-52 aircraft. He loved flying. He was transferred to Westover AFB in Chicopee, Mass. in 1968, bought a home in Springfield and resided primarily in Springfield for the past 41 years. While stationed at Westover he saw several tours of combat duty in Thailand and Guam during the Vietnam War and received the Purple Heart, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and was twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, among other awards. He survived the crash of a B-52 damaged by enemy fire in December 1972, during Operation Linebacker. He retired from active duty in 1973 after 20 years of distinguished service.

Burial with Military Honors at the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Main Street, Agawam, Mass.

NOTE: Spencer Grippin passed away in 2009 but we never received word of it. I felt it necessary to post this old obituary about his passing as so many of us B-52 gunners knew him from the Arc Light days and served with him during his career. His name has been entered into our Memorial page also.

Just received a card from Pat Taylor. Her husband **Robert E. Taylor** passed away 11/07/13 (age 94). He lived in Leesburg, Florida. His card number is 0795. No other information available. Jim H.

Also **James E. Lemin**, February 13, 1929 - October 31, 2013, 84, of Buchanan, TX passed away as reported by his wife, Yvonne Lemin. Jim was an AFGA member. No other information available.

FINAL FLY BY

James J. Creedon, Jr., age 92, of North Utica and the Acacia Village, passed away on Saturday, November 10, 2012, with his loving family by his side. Jim was born on August 6, 1920, in New Hartford, NY, son of James Joseph and Bertha (Harwood) Creedon. He was raised and educated in North Utica, attending Horatio Seymour and UFA (1938). On August 7, 1948, at St. Peter's Church in North Utica, Jim married Dolores "Dee" Steele, the love of his life for over 55 years, who predeceased him on June 9, 2004. Jim was of the Roman Catholic faith. Jim was employed as a Base Civil Engineer at Griffiss Air Force Base (1947-1970) and later by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (1970-1980). He also worked in the private sector for several years in local textile mills, the Savage Arms Corporation, the Underwood Corporation and the New York Central Railroad. He was a World War II veteran, having served in the US Army Ordinance Dept. in the Pacific and then as an Army Air Force B26 tail gunner in the 9th Air Force in the skies over Western Europe. His memberships included over 60 years with the American Legion (Adrean Post and Utica Post 229), a VFW life member (Schuyler Post), the 386th Bomb Group Assn., 397th Bomb Group Assn., Air Force Gunners Assoc., B26 Marauder Historical Society and the Four Freshmen Society. Mr. Creedon is survived by his beloved children - son, James Gregory and wife, Diane, of Deerfield; son, William and wife, Lorraine, of Enfield, CT; and daughter, Kathleen and husband, Howard Mettelman, of Whitesboro. He is also survived by his adoring grandchildren as well as several beloved great-grandchildren. Jim enjoyed his years of retirement with his best friend and soulmate, wife Dee. They loved entertaining friends and family at home, especially their annual August celebration, and enjoyed many years of traveling together. Jim was proud to say he was from North Utica and was most grateful for the kindness and generosity of his neighbors and friends. Jim will long be remembered for his zest for life - his unquenchable thirst for knowledge, his great wit, love of music and the outdoors, pride in his Irish heritage, and the qualities that defined this greatest generation - loyalty, devotion to family, love of God and country. Entombment in Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum at Holy Trinity Cemetery, Yorkville. In lieu of flowers, kindly consider a donation to the Disabled American Veterans or a charity of your choice.

(Sent in by AFGA member Lewis H. Smith (did get this obit a year ago but filed it in error and just found it — apologize for the lateness of the obit. Bob)
 Published in The Observer-Dispatch from Nov. 12 to Nov. 13, 2012



ROGER M. GROMMESCH, age 85 a long time resident of Burnsville, MN passed away December 29, 2013. Roger was a member of the following organizations: American Legion, Knights of Columbus, VFW, Gunners Association, Burnsville Sno-mo-Kades. Roger also enjoyed deer hunting, fishing and being with his family. Roger was the president of Grommesch Construction since 1959 in Burnsville. Roger is preceded in death by his parents, and 8 siblings. He is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Josephine; children, David (Sandy), Pam (Allan) Factor, Al (Jackie), Marc, and Marcia (Marty) Rhein; 10 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren; sister, Marie Daigle; step-sister, Agnes Swiger; many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends; Mass of Christian Burial will take place 10:30 AM Monday, January 6, 2014 at the St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, 4625 W 125th St., Savage, MN. Interment, Fort Snelling National Cemetery.





In Loving Memory of:
Roger Matthew Grommesch
 Born: May 14, 1928 in New Prague, Minnesota
 Passed Away: December 29, 2013 in Burnsville, Minnesota
At the age of 85 years
Mass of Christian Burial:
 Monday, January 6, 2014 at 10:30 AM
 St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
 4625 W. 125th St., Savage, Minnesota
Mass Celebrant: Fr. Michael Tix
Preceded in Death by:
Parents: Cornelious & Elizabeth Grommesch
Siblings: Roman Radermacher, Ervin Radermacher,
 Wilmer Radermacher, Myron Radermacher,
 Harriet Betcher, Ruth Gehlbrock and Evelyn Wesely
Survived by:
Loving Wife of 63 Years: Josephine Grommesch
Children: David (Sandy) Grommesch, Pam (Allan) Factor,
 Al (Jackie) Grommesch, Marc Grommesch
 and Marcia (Marty) Rhein
10 Grandchildren and 8 Great-Grandchildren
Sister: Marie Daigle *Step-Sister:* Agnes Swiger
Also by many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends
Palbearers:
 Steve Grommesch, Michael Grommesch, Jason Grommesch
 Charlie Rhein, Kevin Rhein, Aaron Lahmann, Jason Watt
Interment:
 Fort Snelling National Cemetery, Minneapolis, Minnesota

*God saw he was getting tired
 And a cure was not to be,
 So He put His arms around him
 And whispered, "Come with Me,"*

*With tearful eyes we watched him suffer
 And saw him fade away,
 Although we loved him dearly
 We could not make him stay.*

*A golden heart stopped beating
 Hard working hands to rest.
 God broke our hearts to prove to us
 He only takes the best.*





Roger was special to us all— a good friend, loved his time in the Air Force, proud to have been a gunner— and most of all love his family dearly. He will be missed by all who knew him. Rest in Peace, Roger—you certainly have earned that right.

FINAL FLY BY



RAY K. GREBA—January 25, 1925 - February 7, 2014. He was born in Detroit, MI and passed away in Bossier City, LA. He served in the Army Air Corps and the U.S. Air Force as a gunner. He was a veteran of WWII and was a gunner on several combat missions.

He is survived by his wife, Wanda Walters Greba of Bossier City, LA; sons, Brad Greba and wife Amy of Devils Tower, WY, Brian Greba of Deadwood, SD; grandchildren, Erica Greba of Englewood, CO, Robin Weis and husband Barry of Rapid City, SD; sister, Rosemary Kowalewski and husband Ray of Taylor, MI; brother, Bill Greba and wife Judith of Clinton Township, MI; several nieces, nephews and special cousins and friends, Reba and Charlie Flynn.

A memorial service for Ray K. Greba, 89, will be 10 a.m. Thursday, February 13, 2014 at the chapel of the Northwest Louisiana Veterans Home, 3130 Arthur Ray Teague Parkway, Bossier City, LA, with USAF Honors. Officiating will be Rev. Ronnie Tarver and Chaplain Keith Adcock.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to the Wounded Warriors Project or Samaritan's Purse.

Although Ray Greba was not a member of the AFGA he was a WWII Veteran gunner—we honor his service to his country. Sent in by Jackie Merrell, Joan and Mack Lee. Bob

CHARLES CARROL TIDWELL age 82, went to be with his LORD on Dec. 23, 2013. Charlie was born Jan.



12, 1931, to Floyd C. Tidwell and Lois M. (Green) Tidwell in Granbury, Texas. He was preceded in death by his parents; sisters Willa Dean Morton and Jo Ann Christian; brother Ricky Tidwell; and daughter Debra Zan Tidwell. He is survived by his wife of 44 years, Patricia Ann Tidwell; sons Charles Michael Tidwell and wife Suzie of Cresson, David A. Tidwell and wife Trudy of Granbury and Greg N. Jackson and wife Laura of San Angelo; 11 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren; and many special relatives and lifelong friends. Charlie joined the USAF in 1948, becoming a member of SAC serving as tail gunner on the B-52, B-36 and B-29. He attained the rank of Msgt by the time of his retirement in 1968. While in the military, he received his GED and attended college in England and at the University of Texas at Austin. In 1971, he moved back to his home town of Granbury where he started CC Tidwell Stone and

built much of the rock landscape around Lake Granbury. He later moved to a remote part of Erath County near Mingus before settling in San Angelo in 2003. In 2011, he established his permanent residence in the kingdom of God when he trusted Jesus Christ for salvation. "Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God-through Jesus Christ our Lord!" There will be a celebration of Charlie's life at 1 p.m. Jan. 4, 2013, at the VFW in Granbury. A graveside service will be at 1 p.m. Jan. 12, 2013, in Miller Creek Cemetery on Hwy 290 near Johnson City. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to College Hills Baptist Church for "The Reagan Stephenson Fund", 2102 Johnson St, San Angelo, TX 76904



CARROL KIRK HANSEN - February 8, 1933 - January 20, 2014 Carrol Kirk Hansen, 80, was born February 8, 1933 in Paxton, Nebraska and left his earthly home January 20, 2014. CK (as he was known) was born and raised on a farm in Nebraska. He joined the Air Force in 1951, and married his high school sweetheart, Lila Derr, on June 21, 1953. The Air Force moved him to Castle Air Force Base in Atwater, California in 1955. He served as a tail gunner on B-52s and also was assigned as an instructor for young tail gunners. He retired in June 1973 as a Master Sergeant.

CK was always ambitious, and among other endeavors he opened Hansen's Furniture in downtown Atwater on December 1, 1972. After retirement, he devoted his time to building what would ultimately become a highly successful business.

CK was an avid hunter, loved fishing and spent years traveling with Lila exploring America in their motorhome. He loved the game of golf and was more than thrilled to pass that passion on to any of the grandchildren who were willing to put in the practice. He was also an accomplished poker player, with the perfect poker face.

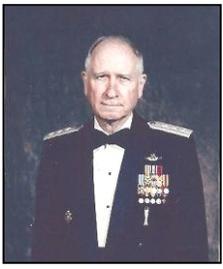
CK was an excellent businessman, a hard worker, full of integrity and extremely generous (especially with his passion to feed others grilled steak), but what he loved the most and gave his best to accomplish, was taking care of and providing for his family.

He is survived by his wife, Lila Hansen, his two sons: Randy (and wife Caroline), and Mike (and wife Teresa), his two daughters: Deborah (and husband Jeff Leis), and Barbara (and husband Geordie Calvert), and 11 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Friday, January 24, 2014 at 11:00 AM at Yosemite Church 2230 E. Yosemite Ave., Merced, CA. A lunch reception will follow.

Received this notice from many of CK's friends. He was known by many of the gunners. He will be missed by all of us.

FINAL FLY BY



Lt. General Ray B. Sitton, U.S. Air Force, Retired—a resident of Pensacola, FL died on Friday, August 16, 2013 in a local hospital at the age of 89. He was preceded in death by his wife, Maxine Kennedy Sitton, and his daughter, Deborah Susan Sitton. He was born in Calhoun, Ga., where he graduated from Sonoraville High School as valedictorian of the class of 1941. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in military science from the University of Maryland in 1954 and a master's degree in international affairs from The George Washington University in 1967.

He entered the Enlisted Reserve in August 1942 and was called to active duty in February 1943. Through the Army Air Corps aviation cadet program, he received his pilot wings and commission as a second lieutenant at Eagle Pass Army Air Field, Texas, in December 1943.

During World War II, he served as a basic flying instructor at Independence Army Air Field, Kan., and in February 1945 he went to the Southwest Pacific area where he was a pilot, adjutant and aide-de-camp with XI Army Corps and the Far East Air Forces.

From October 1947 to January 1950, he served in a variety of positions with the Air Proving Ground, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., including adjutant and group personnel officer, and during this period attended the Air Tactical School. He next attended the University of Colorado. In September 1950 he was assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force as chief of the Top Secret Branch in the Staff Message Division. He entered the Air Command and Staff School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., in January 1954.

He was transferred to Korea in August 1954 and assigned to the 5th Air Force where he served as air operations officer, chief of the Flight Section, and chief, Operations and Training Branch, 314th Air Division. He returned to the United States in August 1955, attended pilot aerial observer training at James Connally Air Force Base, Texas, and was awarded his navigator wings. He next was assigned to the B-47 pilot transition course at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan.

In August 1956 he went to Homestead Air Force Base, Fla., where he held a variety of positions, including B-47 aircraft commander, squadron operations officer, squadron commander, chief of the 379th Bombardment Wing training division and assistant deputy commander for operations for the wing. In November 1959 he was assigned to the 4137th Strategic Wing at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., where he served as commander of the 342d Bombardment Squadron; commander of the organizational maintenance squadron; and chief of the Operations and Training Division; assistant deputy commander for operations; and deputy commander for operations for the 4137th Wing.

He was assigned to Headquarters Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., in June 1963, first as chief of the Operations and Training Branch, Office of the Inspector General, and in July 1965 was named deputy director of information. He entered the National War College in Washington, D.C., in August 1966 and graduated in July 1967. He then joined the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., in the Operations Directorate, where he was assistant deputy director for operations for the National Military Command Center; then chief, Current Operations Branch; and lastly chief, Strategic Operations Division.

In June 1970 he assumed duties as commander of the 17th Bombardment Wing, SAC, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and in May 1971 was named commander of the 19th Air Division, SAC, with headquarters at Carswell Air Force Base, Texas. He was assigned duties as assistant deputy chief of staff for plans, Strategic Air Command, at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., in January 1972; became deputy chief of staff for plans in March 1973; and also duties as deputy chief of staff for operations in September 1973.

In July 1974 he was assigned as director of operations (J-3), Joint Staff, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C. He retired from the Air Force in July 1976.

After retirement from the Air Force, he worked as consultant for Boeing Defense, Space and Security for several years.

His military decorations and awards include the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award Ribbon.

He is survived by his brother Dr. Paul C. Sitton, PhD (Annette) of Murray, KY., and many nieces and nephews. A celebration of life was held at Azalea Trace on August 28th, 2013. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to The Heritage Fund at Azalea Trace 10100 Hillview Dr., Pensacola, FL. 32514, or a charity of your choice.

Obituary provided by his brother, Paul Sitton (AFGA Member). General Sitton was an Honorary Gunner and the AFGA's 1st Speaker at our reunion in Orlando, FL. (Note: I missed putting this into the December SB—oversight on my part)



Peggy Ann (Thompson) Yohn

BOSSIER CITY, LA - A memorial service to celebrate the life of Mrs. Peggy Ann (Thompson) Yohn will be held at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, December 3, 2013, at Hill Crest Memorial Funeral Home, officiated by Bro. Billy Pierce.

Peggy was born September 24, 1934, in Valera, TX and passed away on Sunday, December 1, 2013, at the age of 79 years. She was one of four children born to parents, Isham and Thura (Johnston) Thompson.

Peggy was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Coburn David Yohn, who passed away in August, 2013; brother, Benny Thompson; and her parents. Left to cherish her memory are her children, Jeffery D. Yohn and wife Tiffany of Kingwood, TX, William L. Yohn of Sidney, NE, and Alissa Yates and husband Tom of Shreveport, LA; brothers, Tommy

Tompson and Bill Thompson, both of California; seven grandchildren, David, Billy, Kevin, Lexie, Zac, Zoe, and Moselle Yohn; and six great-grandchildren.

Obituary provided by Joan and Mack Lee

FINAL FLY BY



PHILIP W. CARLSON, age 78, of Milford, passed away Wednesday, July 24, 2013, at his home in Milford. He was born on January 23, 1935, in Cherokee, Iowa, to Einer and Tressa (Smith) Carlson. After attending community schools in Aurelia and LeMars, Phillip served his country in the United States Air Force from April 1954-November 1957, where he was a gunner on a B-36. He later was assigned to the Aircraft Electrical Maintenance Section which directed him to a lifelong vocation. He married Verona Kay Peck on June 24, 1956. Phillip then attended DeVry University, Chicago, and graduated in 1958 with a degree in electronics.

Phillip worked for A&J TV service in Cherokee for approximately one year when the Cherokee Mental Health Institute offered him employment in their organization. He worked for CMHI the next 34 years, the first 17 in radio/television service and the last 17 years as their maintenance supervisor.

Phillip married Shirley Anne Trigger on November 24, 1990. They moved to Milford, Iowa, in 1995 where they spent the last 17 years of his life.

Phillip was very active in Ham Radio for 25 years and participated in countrywide Ham Radio Emergency Communication. He was honored for his service recognizing his contact with each of 3079 counties in the USA. Phillip was "Number 11" and his handle was WAØEVO.

Phillip loved to golf! He especially loved golfing with his buddies, Jack, Bill and Roger. Phillip was a big fan of the Chicago Bears. He also enjoyed listening to music, dancing, traveling and quite often, singing in the car during his many travels.

Phil's one wish before he died was that his body go to research so the medical community could learn more of the diseases of Emphysema & Histoplasmosis to further help others. His body was accepted into the medical education program at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN.

Phillip will be greatly missed by his two families. His grieving widow Shirley requests in lieu of flowers, donations be made to a memorial fund in Phillip's name through Schuchert Funeral Home.

Obituary provided by Iggy Cruz, AFGA Chaplain

FINAL FLY BY Remembered

DOD Identifies Remains of Vietnam-Era Airman

The Defense Department on Monday announced that the remains of Col. Francis J. McGouldrick Jr., who has been missing since Vietnam, have been identified and will be returned to his family. McGouldrick will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery on Dec. 13—exactly 45 years from the date his B-57E Canberra aircraft collided with another during a night strike mission over Laos, according to the Dec. 9 release. The Defense Department initially listed him as missing in action, but after the war a military review board changed his status to presumed killed in action. After more than a decade of attempting to locate the crash site, "a joint [US-Laos] team located a possible crash site near the village of Keng Keuk, Laos," in April 2007, states the release. Forensic scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Lab used mitochondrial DNA from McGouldrick's remains and were able to match it to his great nephew and niece.



Bryce Vinsel (1925 - 2014)

Bryce A. Vinsel, 88, of Zanesville, OH, passed away on Sunday, February 2, 2014, at Clay House. He was born July 4, 1925, to the late Glen and Laura McCormick Vinsel. Bryce graduated from Lash High School in 1943 where he was a member of the varsity football team. After graduation, he was inducted into the Army Air Force as a ball turret gunner on a B-17 Bomber, flying 30 combat missions over Germany. After his discharge from the service, he retired as Vice President of the Roekel Co. after 40 years of service. Bryce was a life member of St. John's Lutheran Church where he served as an usher and on church council. He was a member of Lafayette Lodge #79 for 60 years. He volunteered at Bethesda Hospital for many years after his retirement.



FINAL FLY BY Remembered



Members of the village of Helmdon and the 422nd Air Base Group at RAF Croughton, United Kingdom, recently honored the crew of the "Sharon Belle," a World War II bomber crew whose B-17 fatally crashed in 1943. On Nov. 30, 1943, residents of the village watched the aircraft crash and explode after barely missing the village. It wasn't until 2007 that the village learned more about the 327th Bombardment Squadron, VIII Bomber Command, from RAF Poddington, according to a US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa release. "I felt like I needed to find out about the people that were killed that day because I figured their family would like to know where those boys had died," said Derek Ratledge, who was 8 at the time of the crash and instrumental in discovering the crew's origins. On Nov. 2, 2013, nearly 70 years after the crash, the village and the 422nd ABG gathered in the Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Helmdon to honor the crew in a ceremony. The ceremony included an honor guard presentation and a memorial service. (501st CSW report)



Air Force and political leaders, former prisoners of war, and current service members paid their final respects to retired Brig. Gen. Robinson "Robbie" Risner, a Korean War fighter Ace and Vietnam prisoner of war, during a memorial service at Fort Myer in Arlington, Va., on Jan. 23. Risner, who died Oct. 22 at the age of 88, was interred at Arlington National Cemetery the same day. "To the people of this nation, he was a noble idea . . . a comforting thought . . . the reassuring knowledge that there will always be those willing to answer the bugle's call . . . to risk everything, to fight and die on their behalf," said Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Welsh during the memorial service. Also during the service, former independent Presidential candidate Ross Perot, a good friend of Risner's, told the story of how Risner defied his captors and gathered his fellow POWs at the infamous Hanoi Hilton prison for a church service. As Risner and two other POW leaders were hauled away to solitary confinement, the rest of the POWs started singing the "Star Spangled Banner." Risner once famously told Perot that he felt "nine feet tall" as the POWs belted out the song—words that are memorialized with a nine foot tall statue of Risner that now stands at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. Risner is survived by his wife Dorothy, six children and their spouses, and 14 grandchildren. (AFNS report)

FINAL FLY BY



Robert Warren Jones, age 85, died at Elizabeth House in Hendersonville, NC on November 12, 2013, after a sudden illness. Bob was born the only child of William Wolford Jones and Bertha Kraft Jones on December 3, 1927, in Louisville, KY. He attended Millersburg Military Academy for several years and graduated from Male High School in Lexington, Ky. He volunteered for the US Air Force and went through Air Gunnery School at Lowry AFB, Denver, CO. He flew 55 night interdiction combat missions as gunner in a B-26 Douglas Invader in Korea in the winter of 1951-1952. Bob met and married his lovely Carol Turpen (to whom he was married happily for fifty years until her death in 2001) while at Lowry AFB; they were the parents of 4 daughters. Barbara Rogers, Linda Moore; Karen Jones Squires



and Polly McCage—and Granddaddy to 10 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. After the war, he became a university professor and taught at Murray State University (KY) and Austin Peay University (TN). Bob was a patriot, a proud US Air Force combat veteran, and a devoted member of the AFGA.

Received this late notice from Stan Moore, Bob Jones' son-in-law. Our condolences to him and the family. Bob

TAPS

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 ..

A Story of War and a Hope for Peace

Ed Heiberger is a fellow Veteran who, at the age of 86, lives in retirement in Dubuque, IA. Not long ago, he contacted us to promote his book, a vivid collection of true tales from his many missions as a Central Fire Control – Top Gunner on the B-29 Superfortress in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

His was service of high adventure and

perilous situations. In his many missions he saw withering air combat attacks, witnessed comrades die and now he recounts the times he and his crew were grateful just to make it back to base alive, having suffered major damage to their plane.

In the years since the war, Heiberger has had time to reflect on these adventures and organize his experiences into



The young Sgt. Heiberger has grown older and wiser, and now puts pen to paper to leave a historical record and his reflections on those historic times.

a very personal yet comprehensive book about these final months of the Second World War. It is well worth the read.

His perspective is profound: "After the war and the completion of our 35 missions, I thought about my participation in the destruction of Japan. I feel remorse for the thousands of Americans who suffered mental and physical disabilities and lost their lives, and also for the incredible suffering of the Japanese people. I truly hope someday, somehow, there is peace in the world."

Comrade Heiberger received the Distinguished Flying Cross and Five Air Medals for his service. He has produced a book, complete with a large photo section, that will appeal to Veterans and military history buffs of all ages.

We recommend his book to one and all. Feel free to contact him at: Ed Heiberger, 3210 Asbury Road, Dubuque, IA 52001-8405. The book is \$19.99 plus \$3.99 for shipping and handling. (IA residents add 7% sales tax).

Sent in by Doug Caldwell



Some new pictures surfaced last evening on the Bally Bomber facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BallyBomber>) showing Jack Bally's incredible 1/3 scale B-17 replica fully assembled and sitting next to a Cessna 140. Wow! The mind is really tied up in a knot trying to process what's seen there... it looks like a model but sooo big - but then it looks like a real B-17 but sooo much smaller!

This project, coming to life in Dixon Illinois, has to rank as one of the most fascinating homebuilt aircraft projects of all time. It's the kind of idea that weird people like me dream up but rarely does anyone actually follow though. With an estimated 20,000 hours of labor required to build this cute little beast, it's understandable why. With a 34ft 7in wingspan, estimated 1,800 pound weight and four

60hp engines for a total of 240hp, the Bally Bomber is just pure awesome! Be sure to check out the hundreds of pix from the build process along with additional info at TheBallyBomber.com

Editor's note: This can be flown by a pilot inside the cockpit...WOW!! Imagine the work that went into this scale model.



WWII VETERAN'S STORY

Letter from Malcolm E. Wiley—B-24 Gunner

Dear Mr. Matherly, Editor:

Regarding the Waller Trainer as written in September (August 2013) "Short Bursts":

I graduated from Laredo gunnery school in the last class of 1943. I was nineteen – am 89 now. The Waller Trainer was used there and I have always hoped someone would write about it. It sure impressed me; I had no idea how complicated it was, and probably did not appreciate it at the time. It was a good training device and I remember the planes going across the screen and the "beeps" indicating hits. I believe I scored very well. I do not remember if it showed planes in a "pursuit curve". (I had a head start shooting ducks on the coast of Maine when I was twelve.) In thinking back on it now, it gave a realistic appearance of the size and the speed of a fighter plane at several hundred yards. How little time on the gun bearing phase of an attack.

After gunnery school I was sent to O.T.U. at March Field, and assigned to Lt. Newcomb's crew as assist. Radio operator and Ball turret gunner. I was six feet tall and it irritates me to always read that only small men could be in the ball turret. I was the only crew member from East of the Mississippi. The Assistant Engineer graduated from Laredo in the same class as me. The nose turret gunner graduated from Laredo in the class behind us. The engineer had been to gunnery school at Kingman. They had the Waller Trainer there. I do not know what gunnery schools the first Radio operator or the tail gunner attended.

After O.T.U. at March Field, early in May 1944, we went to the 7th AF at Hickam Field. The entire crew went to 4 weeks gunnery school there. Then to Kahuku Air Base to wait for combat assignment. On the 14th August of 1944 we were sent to Saipan 30th Bomb Group, 819th Bomb Sqdn. Flew our first mission Sept. 4, 1944 – the 40th and last mission from Saipan Feb. 17, 1945. Averaged 10 hrs per mission and no fighter escort. We had a very good crew and survived some hard missions. Our longest mission was 12 hr. 45mins. Both waist gunners were wounded on our 9th mission.

After completing our 40 missions we were sent to Guam to get transportation back to Hickam. While we were there several high-ranking officers came from Hickam and wanted an experienced enlisted crew to go on a mission with them. Our pilot protested, to no avail, but said "if my men have to fly, I will be their pilot". This was agreed on; we finished our tour with 41 missions.

The powers that be never let us forget we were still in the army. After returning to the states I drove a truck in the motor pool at Truax Field. In the summer of 1945 there were many forest fires in the Northwest; many of us air force returners were sent to Ft. Lewis, Washington and organized into fire fighting companies. I fought fires in Washington and Oregon. I was discharged at Ft. Lewis. My discharge is signed by a Lt. Col in the cavalry.

I had good training and the Waller Trainer was part of it. We had a good crew and really were "a band of brothers". Starting in 1976 we had a crew re-union every two years. Last one in 2006. Me and Eng. Ray Harding only two left. We stay in contact by letter and phone.

Sincerely,
Malcolm E. Wiley
207-372-6636

Editor's note: Really appreciated getting the 3 page hand written letter from Malcolm. I will try to forward this to the writer who was looking for this information

FINAL FLY BY



ROBERT EDWARD DANIELL - February 25, 1931 - January 17, 2014 - 82, passed away on Friday, January 17, 2014, in Warner Robins, GA. A memorial service will be held at 4:00 PM Tuesday, January 21, 2014, at All Saint's Episcopal Church with visitation to follow in the church fellowship hall. Burial will be private.

Mr. Daniell was born in Lakeland, FL. He was preceded in death by his parents Robert C. and Anna (Abbihl) Daniell, son Eric Daniell and a brother David Daniell. Mr. Daniell was a retired MSgt. with 26 years of service in the United States Air Force where he was a tail gunner on a B-52 during the Vietnam and Korea conflicts. He was a lifetime member of the VFW, a member of the Middle GA USBC, a volunteer at the Air Force Museum and a member of the Moose Club of Warner Robins. Mr. Daniell was also retired from Anchor Glass Company and a past usher at the All Saint's Episcopal Church where he was a longtime member. Survivors include his wife of 54 years, Janette Daniell of Warner Robins, son James E. "Jed" Daniell of Las Vegas, NV, daughter Alisa D. Lopez of Warner Robins, sisters, Nora Ann Webb and Roberta E. Jernigan, brothers Charles Herbert Daniell, Claude Daniell and Herbert Daniell all of Jacksonville, and Phillip Daniell of Conyers, GA, 7 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

WWII VETERAN'S STORY IMMORTALIZED LABEL OF BASTOGNE BEER



It took 65 years for Vincent Speranza to find out that his actions in Belgium during World War II had been immortalized — for his ingenuity with the beverage that the country is famous for producing.

The Auburn, Ill., native had buried the war — and the pain he endured — deep inside until his wife died four years ago and he began thinking about the past. Visiting his storied 501st Infantry Regiment earlier this month in Alaska to observe readiness training, he shared his rich combat experiences.

Speranza joined the Army in 1943 right after graduating from high school. He was assigned to Company H, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, as a replacement in November 1944 while the unit licked its wounds from the devastating failure of Operation Market-Garden.

Within weeks, Speranza would be in a foxhole in Bastogne, Belgium — cold, running short on supplies and ammo and surrounded by German troops.

“The first eight days we got pounded” by German artillery, he recalled. “But this was the 101st. They could not get past (us). They never set one foot in Bastogne.”

On the second day of the siege, a friend named Joe Willis was wounded with shrapnel in both legs and brought to a makeshift combat hospital in a blown-out church. When Speranza tracked him down, the fellow paratrooper asked him to get him something to drink.

Speranza explained they were surrounded and no supplies were coming in. The soldier asked him to check a devastated tavern nearby.

Speranza found a working beer tap there. He filled his helmet — the same one he had used as a foxhole toilet — and made two trips to the wounded in the church. He was caught by an angry major and told he would be shot if he did not stop, for fear he would kill the wounded.

Visiting Bastogne in 2009, Speranza found his foxhole still there, but Dutch and Belgian military officials told him that the legend of the soldier filling his helmet with beer for the wounded is still told — and had been immortalized on the label of Bastogne’s Airborne beer. The beer is typically consumed from a ceramic helmet.

So Lt. Col. Tobin Magsig, current commander of 1st Battalion — the only airborne battalion left in the 501st — had a few surprises up his sleeve for Speranza’s recent visit to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Troops showed him a Nazi banner hanging in the Battalion Headquarters that Speranza had signed more than 60 years ago but had never thought about since. They marveled with delight while a rush of names and memories flooded back to him.

Magsig also ordered ceramic helmets and Airborne beer for the regimental ball.

“Mr. Speranza’s visit has been rich and rewarding for every paratrooper in the battalion,” Magsig said. “You can see it on their faces and the way they carry themselves. After talking with him, they stand straighter and stick their chests out. Their faces beam with pride at the opportunity to serve in the 501st — in the shadow of men such as Vincent Speranza.”

The 88-year-old also got a tour of the weapons depot on base, which he called “interesting and informative.” The old machine-gunner beamed as he got to hold current weapons, including the M249 machine gun. He also witnessed four airborne jumps from the inside an Alaska National Guard UH-60 helicopter.

“I wanted to change places with them and do the jump, but they wouldn’t let me,” Speranza said. “They’ve opened up another chapter [in my life]... I feel like I’m home again.”

Much has changed since Speranza wore a uniform. The 501st has since separated from the 101st Airborne Division. Airborne jumps are now done out of helicopters and not just cumbersome transport planes. The enemy is harder to identify, melting into crowds of civilians and launching insider attacks.

Still, Speranza believes the spirit of the men who stood up to seven German divisions while surrounded in Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge endures in the soldiers of 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment.

“They sure haven’t let us down as far as the reputation of the 501st goes,” Speranza said. “They don’t wear the screaming eagle patch anymore but they certainly keep the eagle screaming.”

VIETNAM VETERAN'S STORY **B-52 FOUR ENGINE OUT LANDING**

FROM AN OLD BUFF DRIVER

I will tell you that all bomber pilots treasure these stories with the thought in mind, how well will my bird fare.

Big war birds sometimes can take a lot of damage, even the B-52, but we didn't know how much until Vietnam during Linebacker. Flying two waves of 150 sorties each day we took 30 hits with 15 kills, all but one by SA-2. (They wasted over 600 SAMS) Remarkably, every damaged bird was flyable and most were able to reach a safe area before bailout.

Here's a story about John Alward and his crew taken from "Charlie's Elephant Walk" (draft copy). Wish we had pictures.

John was my first student when I became an IP at Robins. In the spring of 1972 we deployed together to Guam. That April John and his six man crew managed to be in the wrong place at the wrong time after the NVA took a SAM battery as far south as possible in their annual attempt to bring down a Buff. They had just started their PTT with the doors still open when apparently the bad guys not relying on radar just salvoed a bunch of SAMs at a Bullet Shot wave of cells and got lucky.

A missile went off just below John's aircraft hitting it with considerable force. He said the old bird shuttered as if the wings came off. At 38,000 feet the decompression in the crew compartment brought visibility to near zero. The sound of rushing air mixed with years of accumulate dirt added to the visibility problem. Engines backfiring were probably the first clues they still had engines and were flying. When the dust settled, John and his copilot were able get the wings level in a moderate descent. The assessment of their aircraft was not encouraging.

Of the eight engines, four were on fire and others at reduced thrust. Many of the flight instruments were out or giving erratic readings. With known fuel leaks and fuel gauges reading zero, the copilot could not determine how much fuel they had left. They could see daylight all over the crew compartment yet, no one was injured. They had plenty of altitude and now were trading it for lack of thrust. The bomber was on a southerly heading as if it instinctively knew that was the only way to go. The crew decided to attempt a landing at Da Nang even though weather conditions were marginal.

This was a D model built in 1954, black with a tall tail. The gunner in the rear had experienced extensive damage to his small compartment just below the 45 foot vertical stabilizer. John suggested that he come forward, if possible, and join the rest of the crew. Before he left his position he reported the wings were peppered with holes, engine fires contained to the nacelles with fuel constantly streaming from both wings and fuselage. He said the crawl along the 105 foot, eight inch, catwalk leading from the tail gunner position to the forward crew compartment was one of the hardest things he ever did. He said he passed numerous holes, looking out at the wings and wind rushing by, one large enough to throw a cow out.

After making it to the forward crew compartment he went to the IP seat behind and between the two pilots who were working hard to fly the plane. To make himself useful, he grabbed a set of manuals and assisted running the emergency checklists. Nothing seemed to be working with the instruments and gauges needed for the pilots to fly, yet John and his copilot seemed to have things in control. To appreciate this one needs to view the B-52 cockpit.

With the speed at 250 kts IAS (450 TAS) in a gradual descent into Da Nang, the aircraft was controllable but John knew that the biggest killer for the B-52 would be something he would have to deal with in the approach to landing at lower airspeeds where countering the three engines out on the left would limit their ability to apply rudder....even if they had the strength to do so because the D model was like the B-17, brute pilot power with servo tabs. There were no hydraulics like modern planes.

In a word, the weather was shitty. The ILS Locked on and controllers were at their best as the crew found final, slowing to an approach speed they could not see with inoperative gauges. Only once had a crew landed a B-52 with three or four engines out on one side and no one had attempted a go around in that configuration and lived. So John knew it would be a one shot attempt but there was a problem he had to deal with that was unique to the B-52.

Landings are one of the only difficult things flying the Buff. You had to be on speed because of the tandem trucks at each end of the Bomb-bay. The plane had to be landed in a speed range between the speed slow enough for the aft trucks to touch first and the stalling speed. The margin was only about 15kts and the crew did not know what speed to fly since they had no fuel gauges and leaking everywhere.

At some point John's crew remembered Sweed Brown and his crew from Columbus who had attempted a flaps-up landing at DaNang and went off the end of the runway only to be blown up in an old French mine field. Without fuel gauges, they could only guess at the weight of the bomber to calculate their approach speed, so getting the rear truck to touch down first would be a matter of pure luck.

On touchdown they caught the front truck first with the predictable bounce and porpoise oscillation that occurred when landing high on airspeed. After the third or fourth bounce and with the end of the runway coming up, even the gunner, sitting in the IP, seat was calling for a go-around. John knew they were dead because a go-around was impossible with fuel likely near empty, the engines on one side, engines on fire on the other, and major asymmetric control problems he would encounter when the power came up. But since he had no other choice, he gritted his teeth and did something no one else has ever done with the B-52.

VIETNAM VETERAN'S STORY
B-52 FOUR ENGINE OUT LANDING (cont)

A week later John was telling me this story at the bar on The Rock. After bringing up the power for a go-around with full rudder and lateral control into the good engines, the plane became airborne again just before passing the end of the runway. John said he kept it low but had little directional control; on its own the plane did a slow stable turn with 20 to 30 degrees of bank into the dead engines. I asked what happened next, as if I didn't know, and he said that after 360 degrees they rolled back out on short final and this time he was determined not to bounce the aircraft because there would not be another go-around.

I gave John the best "You done good!" I could muster and he just smiled and said he had really done nothing compared to the guy who flew it back to U-Tapao because they didn't fix the plane. They counted 405 holes in it, some big enough to walk through. When I asked who flew it to U-Tapao he said, "Adam Mizinski," pointing to him sitting at the other end of the bar. We moved on down to join Adam and I bought him a drink, because as you know war stories take on a life of their own, doubly so in a bar, and he told us a great story about how they got all but two of the engines running and the Marines refused to give him more than 53,000 pounds of fuel because with all the holes and leaks he was wasting it all over the ramp. Adam showed them and flew it back to U-Tapao

I was fortunate to fly all the big Boeings except 777 and 786 and I have often wondered how well they would fare by comparison. I seriously doubt TWA 800 was brought down by a hand held missile.

The only other B-52 to land with three of four engines out on one side was in December, 1972 on the first wave from Guam, day one of Linebacker. It was the only crew out of 159 bombers that day to abort the mission. They recovered safely at Guam.

EDITOR'S note? Received this story from Cease Walker who forwarded from Bill Barrett (gunner). Thanks for sharing Cease...great story.

BOB'S BITS - CALIFORNIA CALVET

Sacramento, CA – The California Department of Veteran Affairs (CalVet) and the California State Library announce the opening of a new Veterans Resource Center at the Whittier Public Library on February 11, 2014. Veterans Resource Centers will also open in Sacramento, Fresno, Los Angeles, Riverside and Ventura libraries in the next month.

The centers, staffed by library volunteers trained by CalVet, will make it easier for veterans and their families to learn about the state and federal benefits they have earned through military service and how to claim them and about the local services available to them.

Recognizing the need to reach and serve more California veterans, in October 2012, the State Library, in coordination with CalVet, conducted a pilot project to create Veterans Resource Centers in public libraries. The project received grant funding from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to open veterans centers in Bakersfield, Redding and San Diego libraries. Those libraries, now open for over a year, have served more than 4,000 veterans and veteran families.

California is home to 1.8 million veterans. An additional 40,000 veterans are expected to return to the state every year for the next several years. State and federal benefits can help veterans and their families move successfully forward in civilian life. Veterans' benefits can help veterans begin or complete their education, care for their health, get job training, find employment, buy or improve their home, and live out their lives with the dignity and respect they deserve. Some veteran dependents qualify for benefits as well.

Unfortunately, many veterans are unaware of the benefits they are entitled to receive or how to claim them. The library Veterans Resource Centers have proven to be an effective way for veterans to get the information and assistance they need.

"Our partnership with the State Library furthers CalVet's mission to serve veterans and their families and gets us into the communities where they live," said CalVet Secretary Peter J. Gravett. "We're very happy with the results of the three-library pilot. That the project has received additional funding and is expanding to six more library sites in California speaks for itself."

"The positive results along with an increasing need to help returning veterans are the reasons that more centers are being funded," said Acting State Librarian, Gerald Maginnity. "We are proud to provide resources to the men and women in the military who have sacrificed so much for their country." In addition to Whittier Public Library, centers will be opened in Sacramento and Los Angeles as well as Ventura, Riverside, and Fresno Counties.

For a list of Veterans Resource Center library locations and opening dates, go to <http://caveterans.org/resources-for-veterans>. This project is supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

About CalVet: The California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) works to serve California veterans and their families by ensuring they get connected to the state and federal benefits and services they have earned through military service. For more information, visit www.calvet.ca.gov or call 877-741-8532 toll free.

**2013 AFGA REUNION
FT. WORTH, TEXAS MEMORIES**



**THIS AND THAT
MORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE WE PUT UP WITH**

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is 'UP.'

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP?

At a meeting, why does a topic come UP?

Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?

We call UP our friends.

And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver; we warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen.

We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car.

At other times the little word has real special meaning.

People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses.

To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.

A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP.

We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP!

To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary.

In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4th of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions.

If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used.

It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more.

When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP.

When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP.

When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.

When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry UP.

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP for now my time is UP,

So.....it is time to shut UP!

Editor's note: Received a few emails on the article in the December 2013 issue on the English language and thought some may find this funny and put UP with another one. Bob

Also had another heteronym sent in by Don Sutherland that he wrote to share with us:

"He went abroad "

" He went with a broad"

"She had a broad back"

"He came back from abroad with a broad who has a broad back" by Don Sutherland

***'LEST WE FORGET— WWII STORY
"THE GIRL WITH THE APPLE"***

THE GIRL WITH THE APPLES!

Please read this interesting story that is about to be into a movie. The girl with the apples. A true story of survival from the Holocaust and the mysterious ways of God that drew people together here in America after their lives had touched in the dark days of Hitler.

August 1942. Piotrkow, Poland

The sky was gloomy that morning as we waited anxiously. All the men, women and children of Piotrkow's Jewish ghetto had been herded into a square.

Word had gotten around that we were being moved. My father had only recently died from typhus, which had run rampant through the crowded ghetto. My greatest fear was that our family would be separated.

'Whatever you do,' Isidore, my eldest brother, whispered to me, 'don't tell them your age. Say you're sixteen.

'I was tall for a boy of 11, so I could pull it off. That way I might be deemed valuable as a worker.

An SS man approached me, boots clicking against the cobblestones. He looked me up and down, and then asked my age.

'Sixteen,' I said. He directed me to the left, where my three brothers and other healthy young men already stood.

My mother was motioned to the right with the other women, children, sick and elderly people.

I whispered to Isidore, 'Why?'

He didn't answer.

I ran to Mama's side and said I wanted to stay with her.

'No,' she said sternly.

'Get away. Don't be a nuisance. Go with your brothers.'

She had never spoken so harshly before. But I understood: She was protecting me. She loved me so much that, just this once, she pretended not to. It was the last I ever saw of her.

My brothers and I were transported in a cattle car to Germany.

We arrived at the Buchenwald concentration camp one night later and were led into a crowded barrack. The next day, we were issued uniforms and identification numbers.

'Don't call me Herman anymore.' I said to my brothers. 'Call me 94983.'

I was put to work in the camp's crematorium, loading the dead into a hand-cranked elevator.

I, too, felt dead. Hardened, I had become a number.

Soon, my brothers and I were sent to Schlieben, one of Buchenwald's sub-camps near Berlin.

One morning I thought I heard my mother's voice.

'Son,' she said softly but clearly, I am going to send you an angel.'

Then I woke up. Just a dream. A beautiful dream.

But in this place there could be no angels. There was only work. And hunger. And fear.

A couple of days later, I was walking around the camp, around the barracks, near the barbed wire fence where the guards could not easily see. I was alone.

On the other side of the fence, I spotted someone: a little girl with light, almost luminous curls. She was half-hidden behind a birch tree.

I glanced around to make sure no one saw me. I called to her softly in German. 'Do you have something to eat?'

She didn't understand.

I inched closer to the fence and repeated the question in Polish. She stepped forward. I was thin and gaunt, with rags wrapped around my feet, but the girl looked unafraid. In her eyes, I saw life.

She pulled an apple from her woolen jacket and threw it over the fence.

I grabbed the fruit and, as I started to run away, I heard her say faintly, 'I'll see you tomorrow.'

***'LEST WE FORGET— WWII STORY
"THE GIRL WITH THE APPLE" (cont)***

I returned to the same spot by the fence at the same time every day. She was always there with something for me to eat - a hunk of bread or, better yet, an apple.

We didn't dare speak or linger. To be caught would mean death for us both.

I didn't know anything about her, just a kind farm girl, except that she understood Polish. What was her name? Why was she risking her life for me?

Hope was in such short supply, and this girl on the other side of the fence gave me some, as nourishing in its way as the bread and apples.

Nearly seven months later, my brothers and I were crammed into a coal car and shipped to Theresienstadt camp in Czechoslovakia .

'Don't return,' I told the girl that day. 'We're leaving.'

I turned toward the barracks and didn't look back, didn't even say good-bye to the little girl whose name I'd never learned, the girl with the apples.

We were in Theresienstadt for three months. The war was winding down and Allied forces were closing in, yet my fate seemed sealed.

On May 10, 1945, I was scheduled to die in the gas chamber at 10:00 AM.

In the quiet of dawn, I tried to prepare myself. So many times death seemed ready to claim me, but somehow I'd survived. Now, it was over.

I thought of my parents. At least, I thought, we will be reunited.⁶

But at 8 a.m. there was a commotion. I heard shouts, and saw people running every which way through camp. I caught up with my brothers.

Russian troops had liberated the camp! The gates swung open. Everyone was running, so I did too. Amazingly, all of my brothers had survived;

I'm not sure how. But I knew that the girl with the apples had been the key to my survival.

In a place where evil seemed triumphant, one person's goodness had saved my life, had given me hope in a place where there was none.

My mother had promised to send me an angel, and the angel had come.

Eventually I made my way to England where I was sponsored by a Jewish charity, put up in a hostel with other boys who had survived the Holocaust and trained in electronics. Then I came to America, where my brother Sam had already moved. I served in the U. S. Army during the Korean War, and returned to New York City after two years.

By August 1957 I'd opened my own electronics repair shop. I was starting to settle in.

One day, my friend Sid who I knew from England called me.

'I've got a date. She's got a Polish friend. Let's double date.'

A blind date? Nah, that wasn't for me. But Sid kept pestering me, and a few days later we headed up to the Bronx to pick up his date and her friend Roma.

I had to admit, for a blind date this wasn't so bad. Roma was a nurse at a Bronx hospital. She was kind and smart. Beautiful, too, with swirling brown curls and green, almond-shaped eyes that sparkled with life.

The four of us drove out to Coney Island. Roma was easy to talk to, easy to be with. Turned out she was wary of blind dates too!

We were both just doing our friends a favor. We took a stroll on the boardwalk, enjoying the salty Atlantic breeze, and then had dinner by the shore. I couldn't remember having a better time.

We piled back into Sid's car, Roma and I sharing the backseat.

As European Jews who had survived the war, we were aware that much had been left unsaid between us. She broached the subject, 'Where were you,' she asked softly, 'during the war?'

'The camps,' I said. The terrible memories still vivid, the irreparable loss. I had tried to forget. But you can never forget.

'LEST WE FORGET— WWII STORY
"THE GIRL WITH THE APPLE" (cont)

She nodded. 'My family was hiding on a farm in Germany, not far from Berlin,' she told me. 'My father knew a priest, and he got us Aryan papers.'

I imagined how she must have suffered too, fear, a constant companion. And yet here we were both survivors, in a new world. 'There was a camp next to the farm.' Roma continued. 'I saw a boy there and I would throw him apples every day.'

What an amazing coincidence that she had helped some other boy. 'What did he look like?' I asked.

'He was tall, skinny, and hungry. I must have seen him every day for six months.'

My heart was racing. I couldn't believe it. This couldn't be.

'Did he tell you one day not to come back because he was leaving Schlieben?'

Roma looked at me in amazement. 'Yes!'

'That was me!'

I was ready to burst with joy and awe, flooded with emotions. I couldn't believe it! My angel.

'I'm not letting you go.' I said to Roma. And in the back of the car on that blind date, I proposed to her. I didn't want to wait.

'You're crazy!' she said. But she invited me to meet her parents for Shabbat dinner the following week.

There was so much I looked forward to learning about Roma, but the most important things I always knew: her steadfastness, her goodness. For many months, in the worst of circumstances, she had come to the fence and given me hope. Now that I'd found her again, I could never let her go.

That day, she said yes. And I kept my word. After nearly 50 years of marriage, two children and three grandchildren, I have never let her go.

Herman Rosenblat of Miami Beach , Florida

This story is being made into a movie called The Fence.

Editor's Note: Received this from a good friend of ours. Story has made the rounds on the internet several times but a lot of our members don't have the internet so thought I would share this "life takes many turns" story with all again. Well worth repeating... Bob

Bob's Bits

LAKE SUPERIOR FACTS:

Lake Superior contains ten percent of all the fresh water on the planet Earth.

It covers 82,000 square kilometers or 31,700 square miles.

The average depth is 147 meters or 483 feet.

There have been about 350 shipwrecks recorded in Lake Superior

Lake Superior is, by surface area, the largest lake in the world.

It contains as much water as all the other Great Lakes combined, plus three extra Lake Erie's !!

AFGA NEWSREEL
Welcomed Help?
TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS...SAME OUTCOME.

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. (AFNS) -- During a routine exercise over Alaska, a seven-man B-52H Stratofortress crew from here, call sign HAIL13, and a B-52H crew from Barksdale Air Force Base, call sign HAIL14, received a call for help from the Anchorage Air Traffic Control Center Nov. 13. The whereabouts of a small Cessna aircraft had become unknown after its pilot became disoriented while flying through bad weather.

Air traffic control was unable to communicate with him over the radio because the pilot dropped too low in altitude, leaving him completely alone in the Alaska sky.

"(Air traffic control) called and said they had a pilot over the radio squawking emergency and had completely lost contact with him," said Capt. Andrew J. DesOrmeaux, a 69th Bomb Squadron B-52H Stratofortress pilot. "They asked if we could try and find him and make contact. We didn't know if he was still airborne, or if we would find a crash site."

HAIL13 was approximately 200 miles away from the Cessna pilot's estimated location when they got the distress call. Before committing to help locate the pilot, both aircraft crews needed to ensure their own well-being.

"The first thing we did was calculate our fuel to make sure we had enough," said Capt. Joshua M. Middendorf, the 69th Bomb Squadron aircraft commander of HAIL13. "We also had to ensure our wingman, HAIL14, would have enough fuel to make it back to Barksdale (AFB)."

After ensuring they both had enough fuel to make the trip, HAIL13 and HAIL14 headed west in search of the Cessna pilot.

One hundred miles into their detour, HAIL13 was able to locate and make contact with the pilot. He was flying low to the ground through a valley surrounded by rugged Alaska terrain.

"Because we were so high up, we were able to relay messages between him and ATC," explained Middendorf. Communicating between air traffic control and the pilot, HAIL13 relayed the weather ahead of the pilot and his best shot at finding the nearest airport.

As the pilot approached Calhoun Memorial Airport in Tanana, Alaska, HAIL13 communicated over a common traffic advisory frequency to get the brightness of the airfield lights turned up, effectively guiding the pilot safely to the ground.

"It was in the middle of Alaska on a Sunday night, there was no one there," Middendorf said. "We were probably his only chance at communicating with anyone. After our flight ATC personnel contacted our base and from their perspective, we saved his life."

Although both crews flew hundreds of miles off course, they did not allow the detour to compromise their mission. "Something the 69th has been really mindful about is saving fuel," explained DesOrmeaux. "Because we were so diligent about being fuel efficient early on, it was no problem to go out there, fly back on course, and still make everything on time."

The fuel saved in the beginning stages of the mission by HAIL13 and HAIL14, allowed them to fly faster back to their original course, putting them back on schedule. In the end, HAIL13 and their wingman were able to complete every mission checkpoint, resulting in a successful mission.

JIM FALSEY account:

This account is highly inaccurate. I should know, I was the pilot of the Cessna 172. I was flying VFR at a low altitude to stay under the heavy overcast. I was not flying through bad weather, I was flying under the weather in adequate visual conditions. I started out flying strictly by pilotage, that is by visual reference to ground features without use of any radio navigational aids. The VOR at Galena, near my departure point was out of service, so no radio navigation was available at that point. As I neared my destination, Tanana, I was having difficulty identifying exactly where I was. I was NOT flying "through a valley surrounded by rugged Alaska terrain."

AFGA NEWSREEL
Welcomed Help?
TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS...SAME OUTCOME. (cont)

I was flying South of the Yukon River over relatively flat terrain. All of the mountains and mountain valleys are North of the River. I was never in any danger of crashing into mountains. As a precaution, I contacted Fairbanks Flight Service on their remote radio at Tanana and asked if they had a way to help me determine my location in relation to Tanana. (Twenty some years ago they were able triangulate one's radio transmission to determine your location. Apparently that is old technology that is no longer available.) Flight Service instructed me to squawk 7700. (that is the emergency transponder code.) I made the mistake of complying with their instructions. I should have refused to comply because I was not in an emergency situation. As stated in your article, I was not able to maintain radio contact with Fairbanks Flight Service. So I dialed in the Tanana VOR and began tracking the VOR toward Tanana. A few minutes later, I received the call from another aircraft offering assistance. (I presume that Fairbanks Flight Service had contacted ATC who, in turn, contacted the B52.) Several times I told the B52 crew member that I was alright, that I had been temporarily disoriented but that now I had the VOR dialed in and was headed toward Tanana. He continued to question me: was I IFR qualified, was the plane IFR capable, did I have DME or ADF? I repeated that I was tracking the VOR on the 240 degree radial and did not need further assistance. Hail 13 did NOT "relay(ed) the weather ahead of the pilot and his best shot at finding the nearest airport." I could see the weather, there was no need for anyone to tell me the weather. Nor did Hail 13 do anything to help me find the airport. Again, by the time they talked to me I was on a straight shot to the airport. As I approached the VOR (about 5 miles from the airport) I spotted the airport beacon. At that point I keyed my mike and the runway lights come on. Whether they came on as a result of me keying the mike or Hale 13 keying his mike, I don't know. They came on and I landed safely. I appreciate the crews of Hale 13 and Hale 14 for their attempt to assist me and for their concern. I would not, however, say that they saved my life. I found my own way to the airport. I regret that I followed Flight Service's instructions to squawk 7700 and I apologize to crews of Hale 14 and Hale 13 for the inconvenience I caused them.

Editor's comment: Guess you had to have been there....in the end, SAC guys stepped in to help and the outcome was good no matter which way the story gets slanted. You just never know who is watching over you...and the B-52 guys were there to provide assistance...I would have been very happy to have had it, had I been flying the small aircraft. Bob

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

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 ANNUAL \$15: _____ 3 YEARS \$45: _____

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PHONE: (864) 947-4613

AFGA EXCHANGE OFFICER - NEIL RICHARDS



Quarterly sales for the period Oct - Dec 2013 were \$634.75, expenses were \$153.76. \$263 worth of inventory were purchased this period.

The following new items have been added to the inventory, which are stocked by the BX. These are: Baseball caps with the front silhouette of a B-52 embroidered on the front of the cap. They are available in black with silver embroidery, red with black embroidery and blue with black embroidery. Only two blue with silver embroidery are left. The price for these caps is \$15.00.

Ceramic beer mug, German beer stein size with the C'est la Vie emblem on one side and SAC shield on the opposite side. The price for these mugs is tentatively \$35 plus shipping.

A new reproduction of a 80's - 90's style B-52 Gunner baseball cap has been ordered for sale in the BX. It is white mesh with blue bill and has a sewn in front panel with the Bulldog shield flanked on both sides with vertical red stripes and B-52/Gunner in red letters on a white background in each stripe. These caps will be available approximately in May 2014 and will be priced at \$16.00 Pre-orders will be accepted at \$15.00 each.

The BX is continuing a clearance sale of slow-selling items.

Snap front navy AFGA windbreaker jackets, 2X and 3X Only - reduced from \$26 to \$12

Pullover, V-neck navy AFGA wind shirt, XL Only - reduced from \$30 to \$15

White AFGA Golf Shirt, S,M, L - reduced from \$27 to \$12

Royal Blue AFGA Golf Shirt, M Only - reduced from \$27 to \$15

White AFGA Sweatshirt, S, M, L, XL, XXL - reduced from \$26 to \$20

White Baseball Cap, Camouflaged B-52 - Reduced from \$13 to \$9

Finally, we have two white and two light blue AFGA size small irregular AFGA golf shirts. Irregularity is AFGA letters embroidered too close to wings. Sale price \$9 each, Perfect size for ladies.

We are running out of stock of replica gunners wings, both standard size and miniature lapel varieties. None of our past vendors are currently carrying these items, The AFGA may have to commission a manufacturer to create these for us in the future. Please email or call me before ordering wings to ensure they are in stock.

We are temporarily out of Patch #1, Gunners "C'est La Vie" bulldog patch. They have been re-ordered and are expected in May.

Please, a reminder to all BX patrons, make all payments out to AFGA. Don't use names.

The BX is in the final stages of acceptance of MasterCard Credit/Debit without PIN for payment for BX Items. This should be available by the time this edition of Short Bursts is published. Check the AFGA web site and AFGA/B-52 Gunners on Facebook for updates.

Unfortunately, postage rates have increased and rates for most items will be increased by \$1.00 and \$2:00 - \$3:00 on larger items.

NEIL

NEW ITEMS

Gunner Ceramic Mug \$35



80's - 90's style B-52 Gunner baseball cap



Red B-52 cap - \$13

Son of a Gunner patch



AFGA EXCHANGE

ITEM #	SIZE/COLOR	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	QTY	POSTAGE	TOTAL \$
13		BASEBALL CAP – AFGA, Navy Blue, White (Note new price)	\$15.00			
14		BASEBALL CAP – White, Camouflaged B-52 CLEARANCE	\$9.00			
15		BASEBALL CAP – White, “C’est La Vie” emblem	\$13.00			
16		BASEBALL CAP – White, B-52 Gunner emblem	\$13.00			
		DECALS (circle choice)				
		<u>B-52 SAC Bulldog (3 per order)</u>	3/\$1.00			
		<u>AFGA “Biplane”</u>	\$1.00			
		<u>AIR FORCE GUNNERS ASSOCIATION”</u> inside rear window application - wide)	\$1.00			
17		<u>USAF Enlisted Chevrons</u> (set of 4 per sheet, Current USAF Style)				
		MSgt/SMSgt/SMSgt-1 st Sgt	\$1.00			
		<u>“Son of a Gunner” (NEW)</u>				
		Small – 4-1/2”	\$3.00			
		Large – 6-1/2”	\$5.00			
		LARGE DECALS – 8” x 10-1/2”				
		<u>B-52 SAC Bulldog</u>	ALL \$7.00			
		White Background Exterior				
		White Background Interior				
		Clear Background Exterior				
		<u>AFGA</u>	ALL \$7.00			
		White Background Exterior				
		White Background Interior				
18		REPLICA OF ORIGINAL GUNNER’S WINGS 2¾” wide	\$8.50			
19		MEMBERSHIP LAPEL PIN Miniature AFGA Gunner Wings	\$7.00			
20		GUNNER WINGS LAPEL PIN Same as #20 without AFGA Logo	\$7.00			
		PATCHES – Circle below				
		B-52 Gunner’s Patch (#1)				
		AFGA Patch (#2)				
21		Served with Distinction (#3)	\$5.00			
		End of Era--Aerial Gunner Patch (#4)				
		Air Force Gunner’s Association (#6)				
		B-36 patch (#7)				
		<u>B-52 Gunner’s Patch (#8)</u>				
		Son of a Gunner Patch	\$7.50			
		PATCHES:				
		200 Mission B-52D Vietnam	\$5.00			
22		100 Mission B-52 Vietnam (awaiting delivery)	\$9.00			
		Strategic Air Command, California, Louisiana., Texas	\$5.00			
		PATCHES:				
		10 th Air Force (WWII round)	\$5.00			

AFGA EXCHANGE

ITEM #	SIZE/COLOR	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	QTY	POSTAGE	TOTAL \$
23		15 th Air Force (WWII round)				
25		GOLF BALL/SLEEVE (3 balls per sleeve)	\$3.00			
27		COFFEE MUGS – B52D Design, plus: SAC Crest "Someone over 30 You Can Trust" "Peace The Old fashioned Way"	\$9.00			
28		Gunners Beer Mug , ceramic, 32oz. SAC Bulldog emblem one side, SAC emblem on reverse. (Priority Mail Included)	\$40.00		INCLUDED	
29		Magnetic Sticker – "PROUD TO HAVE SERVED – FREEDOM IS NOT FREE"	\$9.00			
30		BOOK – "C'est La Gar" by Pete Larsen	\$20.00			
31		KNEE/SEAT PAD – 1" foam rubber, Blue w/AFGA logo	\$2.50			
32		LAPEL PINS, PEWTER – Circle Choice B-17, B-24, B-25, B-52 (Max order one of each)				
		• Small (17.24.25.26 only)	\$4.00			
		• Large (including B-52)	\$7.00			
34		LAPEL PIN, AFGA Reunion (Circle Choice) 2003 (Tucson), 2005 (Charleston) 2009 (Spokane), 2011 (Orlando)	\$4.00			
35		SAC BULLDOG LAPEL PIN 1"	\$5.00			
36		LAPEL PIN, AFGA Round - ¾ inch Silver wings with blue background	\$4.00			
37		LAPEL PIN, AFGA-B-52 Gunner with aircraft silhouette and wings (1" wide by ¾" tall)	\$5.00			
38		AFGA "Biplane" Round 1-1/2" Pin	\$5.00			
39		LAPEL PIN, Bulldog "Angel"	\$7.00			
40		Audio Recording Disc – Linebacker II, Opal 03, 26 Dec, 1972 Specify DVD/MP3, CD/MP3 or CD Audio	\$7.00			
41		Gunners Wings License Plate	\$17.00			
42		SAC Bulldog Banner , vinyl, 20" x 24" with grommets at each corner	\$25.00			
43		SAC Bulldog Shield printed on 1/8" backboard , 20"x 20" Sculptured edges	\$25.00			

Jackets, Shirts, Mugs = \$11.00 ea
 Each additional Jacket, Shirt or mug= \$2.00 ea
 Hats = \$6.00, each additional \$2.00
 Small Flat Goods (Wings, Pins, Patches, Decals, etc) = \$3.00
 Belt Buckles = \$6.00 1st Item, plus \$2.00 each additional Item
 All other Goods = \$3.00 1st Item, plus \$1.00 each additional Item
 (if in doubt or with large orders, call/email for an estimate)

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(Priority Mail)
(1st Class Parcel)
(Priority Mail)

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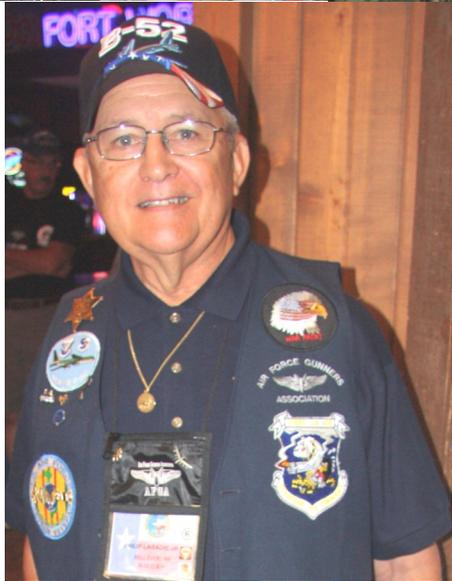
EMAIL ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

Signature

Date

**2013 AFGA REUNION
FT. WORTH, TEXAS MEMORIES**



HISTORY LESSON
A TECHNICAL AND LOGISTICS MIRACLE OF WORLD WAR II
A 2.4 BILLION DOLLAR GAMBLE: THE B-29 SUPERFORTRESS

The design, development, production, combat operation and logistics support of the B-29 Superfortress was the most expensive and risky gamble of World War II. The 2.4 Billion dollar gamble exceeded the Manhattan Project; the development of the atomic bomb in cost, technical risk, and commitment of valuable resources. Another Billion dollars was expended in B-29 operations and support facilities in the Marianas. This tremendous accomplishment, which brought about the end of WW II, and the consequent avoidance of more than one million US and Allied casualties and the likely deaths of several million Japanese military and civilians, is described herein.

1.0 DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT, COMMITMENT TO PRODUCTION

The B-29 requirement stated a range of 5,300 miles and airspeed of 400 MPH. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, Boeing received a contract for 250 of the aircraft, hardly out of the design stage. In fact, the Army ordered almost 1,700 B-29's before the first flight in December of 1942. The aircraft was a severe technical challenge, with the main problem centering on the R-3350 engine and the 19 foot propeller. The remote control gunnery system was also a severe technical challenge, as were aircraft design and subsystem issues relating to very high altitudes planned.

2.0 TRAINING IN KANSAS

By mid 1943, the 58th Bomb Wing was training in Kansas. Poor availability of aircraft and technical complexity of the B-29 was a severe challenge. As a result, the 58th Bomb Wing left Kansas about 10 months later, insufficiently trained. This included both ground and air crews. Political pressures had forced General Arnold's hand.

3.0 DEPLOYMENT TO CHINA

By mid May of 1944, there were 16 squadrons in China. Logistics and inadequate training would doom the operations from China. Results were extremely poor, and "Ice Man" LeMay, sent to fix things, had limited success. By mid January 1945, all China B-29's had landed in the Marianas. Of the 130 B-29s lost, only twenty nine were due to enemy action. The airmen had performed heroically, including the "AVGAS" flights over the Himalayas; but the net result was only a "pinprick" on the Japanese war machine.

4.0 COMBAT DEPLOYMENT IN THE MARIANAS

The Mariana Islands construction feats were spectacular. Tinian alone used more construction material than three Boulder Dams. From June 1944 through April of 1945, there were six runways and eleven miles of taxiways and hardstands for 450 Superfortresses. By August of 1945 there were facilities for 1,500 B-29s on Guam, Tinian and Saipan.

The first B-29 over Japan was an F-13, the photo reconnaissance version. It crossed Tokyo at 32,000 feet in mid November, 1944. The first bombing raid targeted Tokyo on 24 November, 1944; and was flown by 111 B-29's. Only a fraction of the bombs hit near the target from 32,000 feet. By the end of 1944, mission abort rates were close to 30 percent, fully twenty percent of the bombers failed to find even their tertiary targets, and no targets had been destroyed.

On Guam in mid January 1945, General Norstad informed Curt Lemay that he would assume command of all B-29s operating from the Marianas. Like his experience in the Eighth Air Force, he found training and discipline to be horrible. In spite of maintainer and aircrew training, LeMay's success rates in bombing from 27,000 feet were no better than his predecessor's, while the combat loss rate approached an unacceptable 6 percent. LeMay found, just as he had in the Eighth Air Force, very poor crew training. These events would influence his thinking when he assumed command of SAC in 1948. Bombing results were so poor, that he stated, "Pick out a couple of the stupidest RADAR operators...and Lord knows that's pretty stupid." He had the crews try to distinguish a prominent point on Guam, and they failed miserably. He then stood down the entire operation for training. We gunners should not feel too bad about LeMay's comments regarding OUR stupidity; when he later ordered turrets and guns removed.

Curt LeMay is credited with the idea of dropping incendiaries on the wooden structures of Japan's major cities. However, planning was in place for two years, with the production of large quantities of incendiary bombs and their transport to the Marianas. LeMay however, came up with the idea to strip down the B-29' to tail guns, and bomb from 5,000 to 10,000 foot altitudes. This was met with screams of anguish from the air crews, prompting LeMay to remark "They (gunners) are the dumbest sumbitches in the Air Force". The first such mission was flown on 25 February, 1945. LeMay's gamble would either succeed or result in the loss of thousands of B-29 crewmen's lives.

HISTORY LESSON
A TECHNICAL AND LOGISTICS MIRACLE OF WORLD WAR II (cont)

5.0 HELL ON EARTH

The US Marines presented Lemay's airmen with a gift. It was Iwo Jima. The island runways saved 22,000 B-29 airmen from ditching in the Pacific; an often tragic result as the B-29 did not ditch well because of the fragile bomb bay doors.

On 9 March, 1945, the first of 330 B-29's took off for Tokyo. Almost 1,800 tons of incendiaries were dropped on the city. The payloads were almost doubled by the removal of guns and turrets and the lower cruising and bombing altitudes. Sixteen square miles of the city were destroyed, with 84,000 killed and another 40,000 burned or wounded. The critical cottage industry that served the larger factories was being destroyed. Then the B-29s were diverted to attempt to destroy Kamakazi bases on Honshu .

By 01 May 1945, the XXI bomber Command was able to launch nearly 500 B-29s to Japan, with acceptable abort rates and good bombing results from altitudes of less than 20,000 feet. The Jet Stream 'bugaboo' was gone. On 23 May, LeMay dispatched a record 550 B-29s to Tokyo, with incendiaries and high explosives. Five square miles of the center of Tokyo were destroyed. The Imperial palace remained untouched. On 25 May the bombers destroyed another 17 square miles of the capital. However, in the two raids, forty three B-29' were lost, an unacceptable loss rate of 5.6 percent. Apparently, enemy fighter and flak were minimal.

The tragic thing was that only 50 percent of those who bailed out survived captivity. Bill Gaddes visited a park in Tokyo where seven B-29 crewmen were beheaded in a Bushido ceremony. He is sure that the commemorative sign was removed in 1963 when Japan regained its sovereignty.

By 31 May 1945, nearly 100 square miles of Japan's major urban areas had been destroyed. The "B-Ni-Ju-Ku" had devastated the empire. The build up of the B-29 force continued to accelerate. Japan's war lords decided to fight on, while LeMay was convinced that he could pound Japan into surrender with the B-29 alone.

At 0815 hours local time, "Dimples 82" dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The bomb killed at least 70,000 Japanese, about one third of them military. The next bomb drop occurred over Nagasaki on 9 August 1945. More powerful than the first bomb at 20 kilotons, the plutonium bomb resulted in the death of 20,000 Japanese. The War Lords hung on. Meanwhile, LeMay ordered 2,600 B-29 sorties from 01 through 13 May 1945. On 14 May, a record 750 B-29s were launched.

On 15 August 1945, the Emperor decided to override his war cabinet, and broadcast the end of the war. Not all of his warriors heeded it. On this day, seventeen B-29 crew members were beheaded by the army. No one was ever prosecuted.

6.0 THE LEGACY OF THE B-29 SUPERFORTRESS

While very junior in rank to have been selected to head the XXXI Bomb Wing and all B-29 operations against Japan, Major general Curt LeMay went on to head the Strategic Air Command as well as the United States Air Force. At least three of his subordinates during the raids on Japan became commanders of SAC.

The B-29 labored on during the Korean War and served as our Nation's sole nuclear deterrent from 1946 through 1949. By 1953 all B-29 variants were retired. The tremendous gamble in dollars, technology, and human resources paid off handsomely.

William Gaddes
B-29 Tail Gunner
Korean War

EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for taking the effort to provide some history on the B-29 and its subsequent impact on the war in the Pacific. Very well done. Bob

AN AVIATION HISTORY LESSON THE FIRST TEST PILOTS



Not long after ex-World War I aviator John Macready left his California ranch at the age of 54 to serve again in World War II, he was checked out in one of the B-17 bombers he'd soon be flying over North Africa. A young lieutenant, eager to tout the modern, high-altitude capability of the Flying Fortress, pointed out the supercharger that made such missions possible. "Know anything about these, sir?" he asked the veteran of the Great War. Today, Sally Macready Wallace chuckles at the irony: "Daddy just looked at him and said, 'Yes Lieutenant, I believe I do.'"

Twenty years earlier, as chief test pilot at McCook Field in Dayton, Ohio, John Macready had stunned the aviation world by flying a biplane fitted with the world's first operational supercharger to an astonishing altitude of 34,500 feet. At one point during the flight, nearly seven miles up, it was so cold in the

open cockpit that the pilot's oxygen tube clogged with ice from his own breath. Just another day's work at America's first flight laboratory.

Variable-pitch propellers. Guided missiles. An operational rotorcraft 10 years before Sikorsky. Landing lights and radio navigation. The first nonstop transcontinental flight. The Gerhardt Cycleplane, which collapsed in a heap. Around the world in an airplane—before anyone else. Higher, faster, farther.

Part Skunk Works and part research center, the R&D operation at McCook Field was the launch pad for much of 20th century aviation technology. More than 2,300 people worked there during the Roaring Twenties, in 70 buildings housing everything from wind tunnels to machine shops to offices. From 1917 to 1927, every pilot at McCook knew that his next experimental flight might represent a significant leap into aviation's brave, bold future—and that when he landed, the guy shaking his hand might be Orville Wright.

The Wright brothers, though, were ancient history. Aviation may have been born in Dayton, but by the start of World War I, America's early edge in flight had already slipped away. In 1912, the French had come to Chicago and walked away with the Gordon Bennett Trophy, after Jules Védrines piloted his Deperdussin racing monoplane at more than 100 mph. "No American competitor even flew against them," says former Air Force historian Richard Hallion.

On the day in 1917 when the United States entered the war, the total U.S. inventory of military aircraft numbered less than 250, and all were trainers or observation platforms. Commercial aircraft production lagged. Assumptions that airplane development would grow out of the burgeoning auto industry proved unfounded. "Aircraft production at the time of the first world war was more akin to building pianos," Hallion says. By the Armistice, the sole American-built airplane to see combat—the Dayton Wright Airplane Company's de Havilland DH.4—was actually designed Over There, constructed to British blueprints.

While war in Europe raged without American airplanes, the U.S. government fast-tracked the establishment of an Army Signal Corps aviation research and development facility in Dayton. The project was assigned national defense priority, and crews worked overtime building wooden hangars, test facilities, classrooms, and barracks. Occupying 250 acres adjacent to the business district, McCook Field—named for the Fighting McCooks, a family of Civil War heroes who owned the property—was the most urban airfield in the nation.

McCook's engineering division was charged with developing the technology to recapture American aviation's lost mojo. Though the base was run by the Signal Corps, most of the engineers and designers were civilians, and the vibe was only quasi-military. Army red tape was minimized; Colonel Thurman Bane, commandant in the early years, believed a good idea took precedence over rank. The tempestuous Brigadier General Billy Mitchell, then chief of training and operations for the Air Service in Washington, butted heads with a military establishment he accused of preparing for the last war instead of the next. The looser hierarchy at Dayton suited his temperament, and provided a laboratory for his then-controversial theories of air supremacy. "Mitchell got every foreign aircraft he could find and had them all brought to McCook," says Hallion. "Many were German, transferred to the U.S. as part of the terms of the Armistice." Dayton residents soon became accustomed to the sight of a Fokker D.VII, still emblazoned with the Kaiser's Iron Cross, wheeling alongside a British Sopwith Camel or a French-built Voisin 8 in the blue Ohio skies.

AN AVIATION HISTORY LESSON THE FIRST TEST PILOTS (cont)

“I want tomorrow’s airplane today,” Mitchell told McCook engineers. Behind closed hangar doors, the German airplanes were stripped to the frame to reverse-engineer their secrets. Engineers searched for the perfect mix-and-match magic, installing American engines in European aircraft and vice versa. In the culture of experimentation Bane encouraged, any novel idea was granted at least a fair hearing, whether from a major company or a lone backyard inventor. The most promising designs were handed off to a crew that built prototypes in the cavernous assembly building, which were then flight-tested.

Among the concepts brought to life by the engineering division was a 16-ton behemoth known as the Barling Bomber. Based on a wartime idea that gargantuan airplanes staging night bombing raids could help decide future conflicts, the enormous triplane featured a 10-wheel landing gear, five gun stations, and a 5,000-pound bomb capacity. Though it completed testing and even a promotional tour, its range, just 170 miles, combined with a maximum speed below 100 mph doomed the outsized airplane. En route to Washington, D.C., for a demo flight before legislators, the Barling failed to clear the Appalachian mountain range and had to turn back. Cost overruns, including the requirement for a \$700,000 hangar, were so big the project was cancelled.

McCook’s greatest invention, though, may have been the professional U.S. military test pilot. No longer would aeronautical researchers rely on daredevils and barnstormers to check out their new machines. Europeans and Americans alike had started to take a more scientific approach to aviation, and for the pilots assigned to Dayton, technical training would be as important as flying skills.

One of the first of the new professionals was Eugene “Hoy” Barksdale, a Mississippian who flew for the British Exeter Cadet Squadron in World War I. Barksdale had three confirmed shootdowns before he was downed behind enemy lines in France. After the Armistice, his aerial prowess—he set a speed record in a Curtiss biplane, for example—impressed Billy Mitchell, so in November 1923 he was transferred to the elite group of pilots in McCook’s Flight Test Section. “Mitchell put together the best of the best in the Air Service at McCook,” says Shawn Bohannon, a retired Air Force archivist. “And Barksdale was definitely one of them.” The 26-year-old pilot quickly developed a reputation, and he took on some of the boldest assignments. When the rear stabilizer separated from an experimental metal Boeing XCO-7, Barksdale bailed out in a spin and survived—an early beneficiary of new parachutes developed at McCook. In 1925, as he made ground-skimming passes in a modified DH.4 to test wing loading, Barksdale felt a jolt. He landed the airplane to check the damage, only to discover he’d decapitated two Army surveyors riding in a flatbed truck, who had inadvertently strayed into the test area. Despite the shock, the next day Barksdale was back in the pilot’s seat testing another aircraft over the same course. “I sustained no injuries and I am subject to duty,” he told a Dayton newspaper reporter, adding, “Fliers must have lady luck with them sometimes if they are to keep going.”

Many of the traits later associated with the classic test pilot psyche came together in Hoy Barksdale. “He wasn’t a terribly excitable man,” says Bohannon. “He was an incredibly professional and stoic man—a gifted pilot who had the ability to just press forward with the mission at hand.” At the time, critical observations and recordings during a test flight had to be committed to memory or written on a clipboard strapped to a leg. Not only could Barksdale keep control of his aircraft in stressful situations, “he was also a very keen observer and recorder, fantastic qualities for a test pilot,” says Bohannon. In fact, Barksdale literally wrote the book on the subject, authoring the military’s first test pilot manual in 1926. In *Flight Testing of Aircraft*, he lays out a program for testing different aircraft, one per month, with the results meticulously recorded in a standardized seven-page report. Eventually, Barksdale paid the ultimate price for his methodical approach to taking on new risks. While testing a spin-prone Douglas O-2 observation airplane in 1926, he deliberately induced a left spin. “It went into a flat spin and he couldn’t recover,” Bohannon says. As he attempted to jump free of the plane, centrifugal force slammed him into the fuselage. The cords of his parachute were severed by the wing rigging, sending him plummeting to his death in front of scores of witnesses.

The crash traumatized the Air Service. “His death became the driving force behind extensive test work conducted solely to determine the cause of flat spins,” Bohannon says. Another McCook test pilot, Harry Sutton, made it his mission to discover techniques to counter the mysterious phenomenon, beginning with theoretical work that led to wind tunnel tests and ultimately successful flight experiments. When an airfield opened in Louisiana in 1933, it was named for McCook’s pioneering aviator; today it’s called Barksdale Air Force Base.

American pilots commonly returned from World War I steeped in stick-and-rudder sense but lacking formal training in aeronautics. McCook’s Air School of Application was set up to mold the most promising

AN AVIATION HISTORY LESSON THE FIRST TEST PILOTS (cont)

candidates into disciplined pilots with an engineering mindset. Lieutenant Edwin Aldrin, who would later get a Ph.D. in aeronautical engineering from MIT, was made assistant commandant, in charge of the school's operations. The curriculum included courses like "Economic Analysis of Dirigible and Airship Lines," and instructors taught topics from airfoil theory to propeller design.

Edwin's son Buzz Aldrin, who later became a NASA astronaut, connects the dots between McCook and the aerospace research that culminated with his own lunar landing in 1969. "It's all a big circle," he says. The school his father helped organize at McCook in 1919 evolved directly into the Air Force Institute of Technology—"the same institution that sponsored my Ph.D. in astronautics [on orbital rendezvous] in 1963." The senior Aldrin had studied physics at Clark University under Robert Goddard, inventor of the first liquid-fueled rocket. Edwin Aldrin also knew Charles Lindbergh, who in turn had connections to philanthropist Harry Guggenheim. When Goddard came to Dayton seeking backers for his rocket experiments, Lindbergh introduced him to Guggenheim. Forty years later, a giant liquid-fuel rocket would propel Edwin Aldrin's son to the moon. A big circle indeed.

The students and staff at McCook were a Who's Who of early aerospace. The legendary Jimmy Doolittle was in the class of '23. Leigh Wade was a McCook test pilot before setting out in 1924—with seven other Army pilots—on the first round-the-world flight. Stanford-educated John Macready was chief test pilot for the Air Service from 1920 to 1926, during which time he won the Mackay Trophy for aviation achievement three times. He even designed the first aviator sunglasses, working with Bausch & Lomb to come up with a shape and tint that could protect a pilot's eyes in the thin air at high altitudes.

In her biography of her father, Sally Wallace described his first day at McCook. Escorted by the officer in charge to observe the test of an experimental vehicle, Macready watched in horror as the aircraft stalled at 700 feet and spiraled in, exploding in flames and burning the pilot beyond recognition. "As you can see," the unfazed officer next to him said, "we need replacements."

No test pilot flew as many flights as "Mac" Macready, and under conditions as strenuous. In the 1920s, the development of pressurized cockpits was still a work in progress. The McCook engineers welded an airtight steel barrel incorporating flight controls, an altimeter, and a six-inch glass porthole into the open cockpit of a de Havilland DH.9. Sealed inside, Macready, hunched in what he termed "a metal coffin," would take it aloft.

The Engineering Division was always eager to find new applications for airplanes, and when a Cleveland park system employee wondered if the job of spraying trees with insecticide couldn't be done better by a hydrogen dirigible—or even a newfangled airplane—the idea drifted through the Department of Agriculture and ended up at McCook. Soon, a hand-operated hopper with the capacity for 100 pounds of lead arsenate poison was mounted on a Curtiss JN-4. With the hopper's designer in the observer's seat, Macready flew the Jenny at 80 mph, 35 feet above a grove of catalpa trees infested with caterpillars. The insecticide was dispensed in six passes, coating the trees and killing the pests. The science of crop-dusting was born. As Macready landed, ecstatic Department of Agriculture observers swarmed the airplane. Today aircraft spray 71 million acres of cropland each year.

Collaboration between the public and private aviation sectors was practically invented at McCook. When he retired in 1954, Gene Eubank was the oldest active pilot in the Air Force. Thirty years earlier, he had been a McCook test pilot assigned to bombers and large aircraft. Eubank had been flying border patrol missions against Poncho Villa's bandits when Billy Mitchell spotted him and brought him to Dayton.

In an Air Force oral history interview in 1982, Eubank described the daily life of a McCook pilot. Being the first to fly airplanes made by U.S. manufacturers was considered a perk for military test pilots, who at the time had no counterparts in private industry. While testing the XB-906, an all-metal design by McCook engineer Bill Stout that evolved into Ford's famous Trimotor, Eubank would frequently visit Detroit. "If there was anything to go to the factory to make a suggestion about...I was the one," he said. McCook pilots were treated like celebrities, the astronauts of their day. "Mr. Henry Ford had me to lunch with him," Eubank recalled. "Mr. Ford's chief engineer, Mr. Henry Mayo, came down to the train and met me, then took me to his private club and put me up, then put me back on the train when I went back to Dayton. Now, *that* was the accord that a young aviator got from the top people in this country."

Mac Macready enjoyed similar respect from industry leaders. Anthony Fokker, the Dutch-born aviation manufacturer who had moved to the United States in 1922, was a frequent houseguest at Macready's Dayton residence. Sally Wallace recalls the day in 1925 when Fokker invited members of her mother's bridge club for a flight on his new T-2 transport. Many of them had never flown before, but this game group of young Jazz Age women unanimously accepted the dashing Fokker's offer and took to the sky. Macready piloted the T-2 while Fokker schmoozed with the bridge club in the cabin and passed around a box of chocolates.

World War I had shown military strategists that altitude was advantage. Pre-war maximums averaging 8,000 feet were quickly surpassed by aircraft like the Fokker D.VII, with a ceiling above 20,000 feet. The limiting factor was not human physiology but the engine. The Liberty-12, a revolutionary water-cooled, 12-cylinder power plant developed at McCook, delivered 400 horsepower at sea level but less than 90 in the oxygen-starved environment above 25,000 feet. So McCook engineers, working with General Electric, developed a turbo-supercharger to

AN AVIATION HISTORY LESSON THE FIRST TEST PILOTS (cont)

sustain horsepower at high altitudes, and applied it to a Liberty-powered LUSAC 11 fighter. Rudolph “Shorty” Schroeder made the first few high-altitude tests. On his last attempt, his oxygen supply faltered at just over 33,000 feet. Momentarily lifting his goggles in the open cockpit to adjust the flow, his eye-balls were quick-frozen and he lost consciousness.

After the airplane plunged six miles in two minutes, the sound of the nearly empty fuel tanks contracting in the higher air pressure at lower altitudes jarred Schroeder back to consciousness, and he was able to glide the airplane to a landing.

Mac Macready took over the high-altitude program and made 50 flights above 30,000 feet in the LUSAC. On September 18, 1921, he was well above that when teardrops in his eyes turned to icicles and ice formed in his oxygen flow. “At this point, his mind began to grow fuzzy,” his daughter wrote. “Glancing at the airspeed indicator he was surprised to see that it read only 65 miles per hour.” It took a long moment before he realized he’d been peering at the tachometer displaying 6,500 revolutions per minute. “He told himself ‘I’m losing it,’ ” Wallace writes. Her father had enough altitude experience to know that a lagging thought process and a fizzy sense of euphoria were symptoms of deadly hypoxia. Nevertheless, he nudged the biplane up past 34,000 feet, where, in the thin air, it dangled more than flew, refusing to climb further. “Mac took a look around for the first time,” Wallace writes. “The sky was a dazzling white, almost blinding in its intensity.... He was higher at that moment than any man had ever been before.” Macready circled the LUSAC down to McCook in 5,000-foot increments. Although his altimeter read 41,200 feet (his daughter still has the instrument’s barograph traces), post-landing calibration led the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale to downgrade the official number to 34,563 feet. It was still a world record—witnessed by Orville Wright himself, who later came by Macready’s office to congratulate him.

During the war, when bullets hit the fuel tanks in wood-and-fabric airplanes, the craft became flying crematoriums. Pilots could opt to leap to their death or ride the flaming airplane down. Balloon observers had a better choice: When they jumped from the gondola, a rudimentary parachute unfolded that they could grab onto. The balloon escape system was effective: No wartime observer ever died as a result of one failing. In an airplane, however, instantly deployed parachutes could get tangled in the wing rigging, and aviators were dragged into the spinning prop. Billy Mitchell brought the problem to McCook engineers. Floyd Smith, a former circus performer and a test pilot for Glenn Martin who later headed the Parachute Division at McCook, spearheaded intensive research, which led to the invention of the Type A freefall parachute, made of Japanese Habutai silk. The Type A’s innovations included delayed ripcord opening—which allowed the pilot to fall clear of the airplane before opening the chute—and a smaller pilot chute to yank the main chute out of the pack.

Six months after the backpack-style Type A was introduced, McCook pilot Harold Harris was flying a Loening monoplane when the aircraft began to disintegrate. Harris released his harness and stood up, and was immediately blown out of the cockpit by the propeller blast. Normally that would have meant certain death, but instead, moments later he floated down beneath a billowing white canopy, landing in a backyard grape arbor without a scratch and becoming the first aviator saved by the McCook emergency freefall parachute.

A year later, when the engine in his DH.4 conked out over Dayton, Mac Macready “hit the silk” and claimed honors for the first nighttime save. Far below, at the estate of the president of the Dayton Chamber of Commerce, guests at a dinner party on the terrace were discussing the Book of Revelation when Macready’s de Havilland streaked overhead like a meteor and exploded in a vacant field, illuminating the sky. Seconds later, a disembodied voice could be heard in the darkness above. “My father was yelling ‘Hello! Help!’ as he came down in the parachute,” Sally Wallace explains. The host of the gathering, an avid Bible scholar, later likened the event to witnessing the archangel Gabriel calling down from heaven. Harold Harris and Mac Macready became, respectively, the first and second charter members of the Caterpillar Club, an organization that still records saves by parachute.

McCook did its part to assure the public that airplanes were safe by staging two record-breaking flights. In May 1923, Macready and Oakley Kelly flew a McCook-modified Fokker transport from Roosevelt Field in Long Island to San Diego, nonstop, in 26 hours. By then, research at McCook’s Instrument and Navigation Branch had made “blind flying”—flying on instruments only—more precise and predictable. To get headings free of magnetic deflection errors, the pilots used a compass invented at McCook. A bank-and-turn indicator, another McCook original, kept them shiny-side-up in clouds and fog. By the time Macready flew the big T-2 over sun-drenched downtown San Diego, their instrument-guided heading deviated less than a fraction of a mile from the course marked on the map. (Today the airplane is on exhibit in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.)

Such long-distance flights became something of a McCook trademark. In June 1927, test pilots Lester Maitland and Albert Hegenberger flew a Fokker Trimotor christened the *Bird of Paradise* across 2,425 miles of open ocean between Oakland, California, and Honolulu. The airplane was crammed with the latest and greatest from McCook’s Instrument and Navigation Branch, along with an inflatable raft complete with 18-foot mast and sail.

AN AVIATION HISTORY LESSON THE FIRST TEST PILOTS (cont)

Two radio navigation beacons modeled on an experimental version at McCook were set up in San Francisco and on Maui. A navigational error of just four degrees would cause the *Bird* to miss Hawaii entirely and run out of fuel over the vast Pacific.

Charles Lindbergh's flight to Paris had occurred just a few weeks earlier, and was still very much in the news. But notwithstanding the other risks he faced, Lindbergh could hardly have missed spotting the European continent as long as he kept flying. That fact was not lost on Maitland and Hegenberger. Lester Maitland's grandson, David Knoop, remembers his grandfather's take. "He certainly did believe [his] was a tougher flight than Lindbergh's, and he knew Lindbergh well," Knoop says. "As Lester always told it to me, it was a lot harder to find Hawaii than it was France back in those days."

The *Bird* took off from an extended runway in Oakland on the morning of June 28, and soon after, most of its technology failed. Malfunction of the compass was followed by loss of the radio navigation signals from both California and Hawaii. Attempts to get a position via air-to-sea radio contact with a nearby Navy vessel were frustrated by poor reception. Maitland and Hegenberger navigated instead by plotting position lines from sun sightings, taking sextant fixes on stars, and observing the spume on the ocean below to estimate drift. They approached Hawaii in overcast conditions at 3:20 a.m., on the ragged edge of that four-degree margin of navigational error. They missed the Big Island entirely, and came dangerously close to bypassing the rest of the chain when the bright, flashing oil-vapor lamp of the Kilauea Lighthouse shone through the cloud cover. Maitland brought the *Bird* around and reversed course to Honolulu. While critical systems had failed, the flight of the *Bird of Paradise* is credited with revealing weak spots in navigation technology, leading to improvements that eventually established a regular air route to Hawaii. (Commercial airliners still included a sextant port in the cockpit as late as the 1960s.)

Later that same year, all functions at McCook were transferred to newly constructed Wright Field, east of Dayton, and McCook began the fade into obscurity. During its 10-year tenure as aviation's R&D nerve center, a black sign with white letters large enough to read from considerable altitude had been mounted above the door of McCook's main hangar: THIS FIELD IS SMALL—USE IT ALL. The first test pilots did—every inch of it.

Frequent contributor to the *Air & Space* magazine, Stephen Joiner writes about aviation from his home in southern California. This article appeared in the November 2013 issue.

Editor's Note: Sent to me by a retired AF CMSgt and Lockheed friend from days gone by...BK – thanks for the interesting article.

INTERESTING WEBSITES

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMnm1lMn8Pw> XB-52 first flight

<http://www.barthworks.com/aviation/sr71breakup.htm> SR-71 breakup

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2064068/Tunnel-time-Revealed-67-years-passage-used-Great-Escape.html> Untouched for almost seven decades, the tunnel used in the Great Escape has finally been unearthed.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-two/10104134/Escape-tunnel-discovered-at-Nazi-death-camp-Sobibor.html>
Here is an escape tunnel that was discovered and the consequences of the actions of those involved.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dFIZX_RXuU&feature=youtu.be Battleship Arizona gun moved to museum in Arizona

<http://www.youtube.com/embed/nd5WGLWNlIA?rel=0> An amazing German VW manufacturing company...look at this and wonder why we aren't doing things like this.

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/bkca7/attachments/1035130313> Aviation art displays (power point)

<http://www.zenoswarbirdvideos.com/A-26.html> Flying tips for the Douglas A-26 Invader

<http://www.pacificwrecks.com> site devoted to sharing information about the WWII Pacific air war and the Korean War

http://www.youtube.com/embed/MgE2KiPd3xg?feature=player_detailpage Pearl Harbor—after the tours are over

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4zpk7hvrghcd7gd/D-qPNsG9ym#lh:null-Laffey%20Enhanced%20vo%203.wmv>
WWII Kamakazi attack on Navy ship.—actual footage.

B-45 TORNADO FIRST OPERATIONAL JET BOMBER

The **North American B-45 Tornado** was the United States Air Force's first operational jet bomber, and the first multi-jet engined bomber in the world to be refuelled in mid-air.^{[2][3]} The B-45 was an important part of the United States's nuclear deterrent for several years in the early 1950s, but was rapidly succeeded by the Boeing B-47 Stratojet. B-45s and RB-45s served in the United States Air Force's Strategic Air Command from 1950 until 1959. It was also the first jet bomber of the NATO Alliance, which was formed in 1949.

The B-45 began development in 1944, when the War Department, alarmed by German jet bombers like the Arado Ar 234, called for a new family of jet bombers grossing between 80,000 lb (36,287 kg) and 200,000 lb (90,718 kg). The North American proposal (**NA-130**) won, and on September 8, 1944, the company began production of three prototypes based on the NA-130.

The end of World War II resulted in the cancellation of many projects and delayed many others. In 1946, rising tensions with the Soviet Union caused the Air Force to assign higher priorities to jet bomber development and production. By mid-1946, the XB-45 and Convair XB-46 neared completion, but the Boeing XB-47 and Martin XB-48 were still two years away. The USAAF chose to evaluate the first two designs to determine which would be superior operationally. The B-45 proved a superior design, and on January 2, 1947, a contract for immediate production of B-45As was signed. It had been planned to equip five light bomb groups and three light reconnaissance groups with B-45As but as the B-47's development and flight testing made future production all but certain, the B-45's future became increasingly uncertain and in mid-1948 the Air Staff actually began to question the B-45's value. Soon afterwards, President Truman's budget restraints reduced Air Force expenditure and B-45 production was reduced to total of 142 airframes. Further budget cuts in the FY 1950 forced the Aircraft and Weapons Board to cancel 51 of the 190 aircraft on order. It was later replaced by the supersonic Convair B-58 Hustler.

Strategic Air Command Assignments

91st Strategic Reconnaissance Group (Later Wing) B/RB-45C, 1950-1953

Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, 1950-1951

Lockbourne AFB, Ohio, 1951-1953 322d Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron

323d Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron

324th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron

Note: Operated frequently from RAF Sculthorpe, England

91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, RB-45C, 1952-1953

Fifteenth Air Force (Attached to Far East Air Forces)

Yokota AB, Japan (Combat in Korean War)

Tactical Air Command Assignments

47th Bombardment Group (later Wing), B-45A, 1949-1957

Langley AFB, Virginia 1949-1952

RAF Sculthorpe, England, 1952-1957

84th Bombardment Squadron

85th Bombardment Squadron

86th Bombardment Squadron, 1949, 1954-1957

422d Bombardment Squadron, 1953-1954

86th Bomb Squadron operated from RAF Alconbury, England, 1955-1959

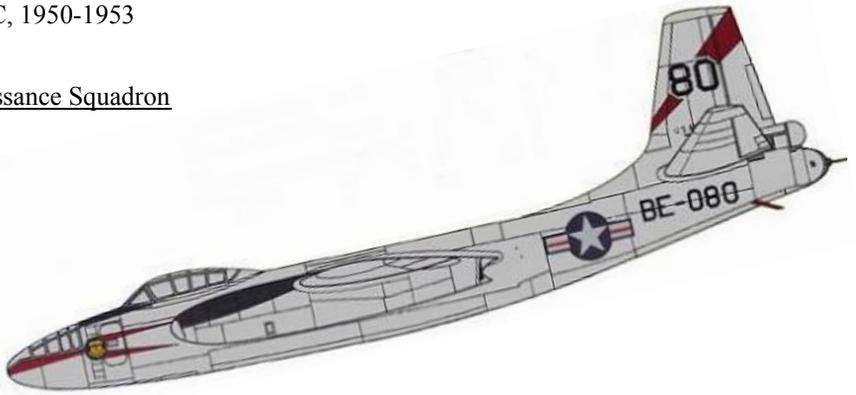
19th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, RB-45C 1953-1957

Ninth Air Force (Attached to 363d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing)

Shaw AFB, South Carolina, 1953-1954

Third Air Force (Attached to 47th Bombardment Wing)

RAF Sculthorpe, England, 1954-1957



General characteristics

Crew: 4 (Pilot, Co-Pilot, Bombardier-Navigator and Tail Gunner)

Guns: 2 × .50 in (12.7 mm) M3 machine guns



The North American Aviation B-45 was one of America's first operational bombers to employ jet propulsion. Designed during 1944 and 1945, the straight-wing *Tornado* was the first jet bomber in service with the U.S. Air Force and was the first four-jet aircraft to fly in the United States. Other versions include the longer-range B-45C with wing-tip tanks and the photoreconnaissance version, the RB-45C. Rated as a light bomber by modern-day standards, it was the first four-jet aircraft to drop an atom bomb and the first to be refueled in midair.