SHORT BURSTS

Air Force Gunners Association

DECEMBER 2016

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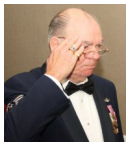
SERGEANT -AT –ARMS



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By the time this Short Bursts gets to you, the election will have been decided. As I sit here finishing up, I'm rocked back and forth by the 5.0 Cushing, Oklahoma earthquake. Is it all coming to an end?

I sure hope you all had a very memorable Veterans Day. We will participate in the El Reno Veterans Day Parade like we have for many years. I will ride with my life-long gunner, flight engineer, operator, and technician aircrew buddies to our Oklahoma State Capital to honor and remember our fallen comrade heroes with ultimate respect like we have for over two decades.

Also, take a memorable moment and remember all the gunners that gave their lives during peacetime operations and training missions. Keep their families in mind too as they go through the holidays.

But most importantly, please take meaningful time this holiday season to remember the heroic folks that gave it their all during the December Linebacker II operation along with those that were captured.

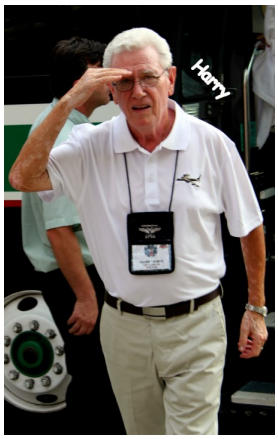
Now go and contact your gunner buddies, remember them too, and wish them a great holiday season!

FORMER AFGA ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

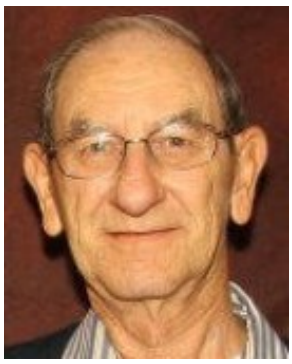
Apologies if you were a former officer and your picture was not included. Kindly assist by e-mailing or sending a picture to the editor and let me know to include you with this group in the next edition of the Short Burst. Thanks!

Original Founding Member
BILL DAYTON,
picture still not available!
If anyone has a Bill Dayton picture,
PLEASE SEND IT IN!
RIGHT NOW!
(Thanks)

BUD CONDER



HARRIS TOLMICH



FRED ARTHUR

JIM ZAENGLE

LARRY LEWANDOWSKI

BUD GANTZER

JOE KENNEDY

DOUG CALDWELL

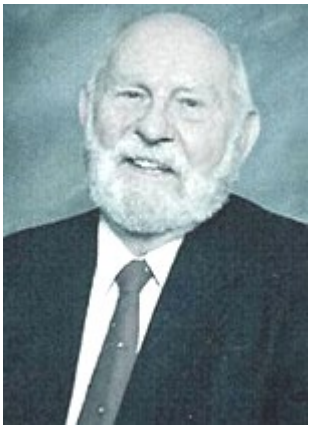
CEASE WALKER

RICK SWAIN

MACK LEE

FORMER AFGA ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

NEIL RICHARDS



PAUL SAVKO

ANDY ANDERSON

DON MURPHY

BOB MATHERLY

JIM HOKE

PARKER BLAKE

IGGY CRUZ

HONORARY GUNNERS KNOWN TO ATTEND REUNIONS

Pete,

This is **Colonel John Dalton** - life time friend and outstanding B-52 pilot and long-time, coin carrying **honorary gunner**.

Thanks for running this series on honorary gunners.

Mack Lee

Dear Very Respectable Top Gunner Lee (Mack),

Thank you very kindly for sending in the picture of a FABULOUS honorary gunner, Colonel John Dalton. Your contributions to gunners and the AFGA have definitely made the difference! Please invite Colonel Dalton to our reunion in Nashville. It is always great to have outstanding BUFF officers come out and enjoy our unique camaraderie! Keep honoring all that are honoraries! No question on character, send more pictures in for recognition, RIGHT NOW!

AFGA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - JOHN STALLINGS

Hello everybody,

It's that time of year where everybody is getting ready for the holiday season. It's also that time to give you information about the reunion in Nashville, Tennessee.

The reunion will be from **August 31 - September 3, 2017** in Nashville at the **Sheraton Music City Hotel**. The registration for the reunion will be $140 per person. The rate for the room is $125.00 plus tax. That rate is good for 3 days before and 3 days after the reunion.

The Sheraton Music City Hotel, 777 McGavock Pike, Nashville, Tennessee, 37214, is just five minutes from the airport via a complimentary roundtrip shuttle. The shuttle service is on the hour and half hour. To make reservations for the hotel, you can go to the gunners web site (www.gunners.net) and under the reunion link, you will see a link that will allow you to register for your room on line.

You can also call the Sheraton direct at 1-888-627-7060. Make sure you ask for the Air Force Gunners Association Guestroom Block Rate. If you have a special request as in a King or Queen bed, room close to elevator, or handicap room, you can ask and request at that time. All requests are based on availability. The hotel is shaped like a square and has long hallways, so if you would like to be close the elevators, please let them know.

YOU WILL NEED TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS FOR THE HOTEL BY **SATURDAY, JULY 29, 2017** to meet the suspense deadline.

The following tours will be offered: Music City Tour with a stop at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, (lunch will be on your own), Grand Ole Opry Dinner tour, Ladies Tour of Fontanel Mansion (former home of Barbara Mandrell) and on Sunday, The Hermitage, home of the 7th President of the United States with lunch included. (See the following pages for a description of each tour). This is also where we will be doing our Sunday Memorial Service at the Hermitage Church.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GO ON ANY OF THESE TOURS, YOU MUST SIGN UP BY WEDNESDAY, JULY 25, 2017. ANY REQUEST TO ADD PASSENGERS AFTER THE GUARANTEE FINAL COUNT IS SUBMITTED WILL BE BASED ON AVAILABILITY AND SUBJECT TO AN ADDITIONAL $10 PER PERSON, PER TOUR LATE SIGN-UP FEE. This late fee charge is a requirement of the tour company, not from your AFGA.

On the following pages you will find the tour descriptions and registration form that you need to **fill out and return to Dan Danish by 25 July 2017**. His address is on the bottom of the form. You will also need to make your meal selection and tour selection decisions. If you have questions about the form, please contact Dan Danish.

Every attempt was made to keep the cost of the reunion as economical as possible! Nashville is an expensive place and hope you are able to attend. For those of you who have not been to a reunion, I encourage you to come. The reunions are a great way to see old friends and meet new ones and you might even have fun while you are there.

Have a great holiday season, *John Stallings*

The toll free reservations number is **888-627-7060**. Ask for the Air Force Gunners Association Guestroom Block when making reservations. A personalized web site for Air Force Gunners Association Reunion reservations occurring between August 28, - September 4, 2017 has been created. Guests can access the site to learn more about the event and to book, modify, or cancel a reservation from June 22, 2016 to July 29, 2017. Below you will find the appropriate link for participants to access the site: (copy and/or paste)
https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1606226912&key=1FB1DBB7

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

MUSIC CITY TOUR - $56
Friday September 1, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

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

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

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

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

GRAND OLE OPRY DINNER TOUR - $91
Friday September 1, 4 - 10 pm

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

LADIES FONTANEL MANSION TOUR - $51
Saturday September 2, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

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

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

THE HERMITAGE, MEMORIAL SERVICE and LUNCH TOUR - $65
Sunday September 3, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

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

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

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

PLEASE CHECK ALL APPROPRIATE BOXES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

GRAND TOTAL FROM BOXES ABOVE

$_____

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

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

Air Force Gunners Association

Event date:
August 28 - September 4, 2017

Venue:
Sheraton Music City Hotel

Air Force Gunners Association

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

BOOK A ROOM

Sheraton Music City Hotel

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

Sheraton

OVERVIEW | PHOTOS | GUEST ROOMS | FEATURES & AMENITIES | DINING | LOCAL AREA | DRIVING DIRECTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

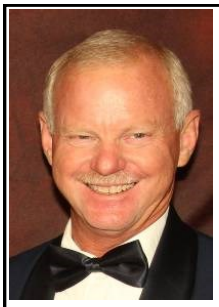
Guests can access the site to learn more about the event and to book, modify, or cancel a reservation from June 22, 2016, to July 29, 2017.

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

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

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

AFGA VICE PRESIDENT - BOB ASHLEY



Hello Fellow Gunners,

If you came into the gunnery career field as a cross trainee you probably thought, "Oh this is just another Tech School", but for the MINI GUNNERS, this was a culture shock from just getting out of high school.

In high school, everyone was the same age and had basically the same experiences growing up. But at Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTS) we might be sitting next to a Staff Sergeant or Tech Sergeant in class that had been in the Air Force for over ten years already.

One person I met at Castle AFB was TSgt (at the time) Joe Packey. Most these cross trainees also had a chest full of ribbons already. Very impressive to a brand-new, mini gunner basically just out of Lackland AFB with a National Defense Ribbon being the only thing on his chest.

Joe graduated flight training in the B-52 F model and was assigned to March AFB, California. After being there a few years, completing Central Flight Instructor Course (CFIC), becoming an instructor, being promoted to MSgt and going into a staff position, he would catch a flight whenever he could to keep that flight pay coming.

On October 19th in 1978, Joe was scheduled for a normal training sortie with air refueling, a nav leg and low level route bomb run up north through California into Oregon and back to March AFB for some touch and go landings for the pilots to stay current. That foggy morning turned out different than anyone expected. After losing two engines right after takeoff, the plane crashed about a half-mile past the runway. Joe was the only survivor from the crash.

Hemet, California ☆ Friday, December 29, 1978

SURVIVOR — Tailgunner Joseph Packey, an Air Force master sergeant, describes 'final moments' when he knew B-52 last October was headed for crash. (Hemet News photo)

I haven't seen or heard from Joe in many years but if he ever reads this I hope it finds you well!

Bob Ashley

'Trouble' Rode in B-52 With Members of Crew

RIVERSIDE—In the last moment before takeoff on a foggy Oct. 19 morning, the six March Air Force Base crewmen aboard the black B-52 first realized they had an extra passenger on board—trouble.

The nine-hour "out and back" training mission which was to take them from March AFB—a Strategic Air Comman (SAC) installation southeast of Riverside—up the coast into Oregon, Idaho, Nevada and back to March again, had no sooner started when a loss of power occurred in two port engines. Seconds later, the bomber crashed into a field 2½ miles southwest of the airstrip.

The holocaust that resulted left five of the six crewmen dead. But Thursday, before a battery of newsmen and photographers, the lone crash survivor, Master Sgt. Joseph L. Packey, 35, calmly recalled events leading up to the first crash of a giant Airforce B-52 since April, 1977 when a plane went down in Michigan.

That Packey—the tailgunner—was located at the rear of the 344-ton plane was a blessing for him. Although he remembered being "tossed around" by the impact, and tilted at a 10-15 degree angle when the plane came to rest, he said he was able to look around.

What he saw was not frightening. The plane was in flames and he recalled not being able to spot any "white helmets (worn by crew members) bobbing around."

Squinting through one unswollen eye Packet said, he pulled the canopy open at the top of the plane and dropped about a foot-and-a-half to the ground, noting the distance was not great as the plane had rolled over on its side.

Recalling that he "stumbled" (although I'd like to think it was more of a run) away from the wreckage, Packey said he stopped after some 20-feet, again to see if he could spot any members of the crew.

"It got to the point where the heat (from the flames) was so intense, I became motivated to run" farther away, recalling that the thought of "possible explosions ran through my mind."

Packey was found by a nearby mobile home resident by the name of Walter Hayes, he said, who transported him in a pickup to a safer distance.

He recalled reports from eyewitnesses of the crash that several explosions occurred, though he said he was not aware of any.

"All I remember is the sound of the buckling and burning of metal," he said.

Packey was later taken to the air base hospital where he was treated for a variety of injuries, among them, an abrasion to the left eye, assorted bruises, a

day, October 19, 1978 10¢ Per Copy Number 246

5 AF Men Killed in Crash of March B-52

An Air Force B-52 bomber carrying a training mission crew of six crashed into flames upon takeoff from March Air Force Base at 7:30 a.m. today, killing five of the six crewmen aboard.

The eight-engine Stratofortress bomber carried no nuclear weapons, Air Force spokesmen said, and it was not immediately known if conventional weapons of any type were on board when it crashed into a field 2½ miles southwest of the air base, near Markham street and Indian avenue.

A B-52 normally carries six to eight men and is designed to carry nuclear weapons, said a March AFB spokesman.

The Air Force said the surviving crewman was Master Sgt. Joseph L. Packey, 35, the tail gunner. He was listed in stable condition at the base hospital. Packey lives in Riverside, and is from Mt. Pleasant, Penn., a spokesman said.

Names of the five victims were being withheld until their next-of-kin could be notified.

The tail section was the only part of the plane to remain intact following the impact. Pieces of the wreckage, including engines which hang from the wings of the huge, black craft, were strewn over a quarter-mile stretch of land.

The smoke which billowed up from the crash site could be seen for miles, far away as the Winchester-Homeland area west of Hemet.

The California Highway Patrol encountered problems with traffic on nearby I-15E and with cars trying to get near the wreckage from a number of side roads.

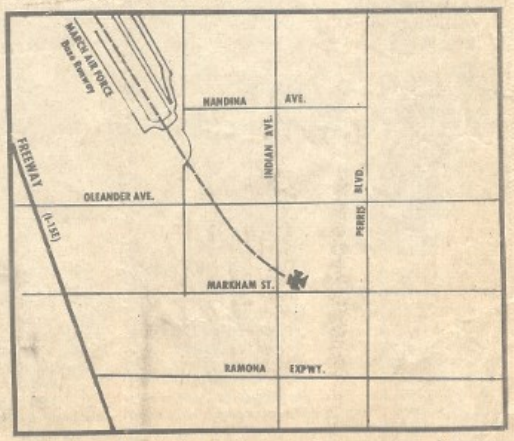
Armed military base officials quickly moved in on the perimeter of the crash scene, as a tight ring of security was set up with the help of the CHP and Riverside Sheriff's deputies.

Shaner said he could not confirm what caused the crash nor whether the plane carried a full load of fuel. He said he did not have information on what sort of training mission the plane was on, though he did say it was not a flight-training mission.

Shaner reported that the last crash to occur involving a plane at March AFB was on Jan. 5, 1962. That one occurred when an Air Force B-47 from the 22nd wing command crashed on Highway 395, killing three crewmembers.

Shaner said the names of the deceased crewmembers in today's crash would be

(Continued on Page 6.)



CRASH SITE—B-52 bomber crashed near the intersection of Markham street and Indian avenue, about 2½ miles southeast of the base runway.

The meeting will start at later than Oct. 22 through the

AFGA BX OFFICER - BOB DICK Jr.

When I enlisted, I was to become a vehicle operator dispatcher. I was told I would be driving a truck from school to school talking to kids about the Air Force.

Upon starting basic training, my goal was to blend into the woodwork, to become invisible. It was going well until I was called in to go over my career choice. They asked me if I knew what I was going to be doing with my job choice after basic training. Repeating what I was previously told, they began to laugh. They then proceeded to tell me what my actual duties would be, driving a bus from base ops to a plane and back again. “Is this what you'd like to do”, they asked.

When I told them “no” they had a short list of jobs available that I could switch to. One of the jobs I was offered was Defensive Aerial Gunner on a B-52 bomber. I remember thinking that this was a job that they make movies about these guys, so I asked them to give me details about the job. They said I'd get frequent TDYs to Australia, England, and Guam, flight pay and wings. “I'll take it”!

Well, the only deployment I saw was to Clinton Sherman, in Burns Flat, Oklahoma, I did get flight pay and wings but they did conveniently leave off the details about pulling alert.

Once I accepted the job, I was off on my own getting flight physicals and other required items to become a gunner. I had become even more invisible than I'd have ever hoped.

Then it was off to survival training where I learned to eat fine cuisine like rabbit and fish eyeballs.

Enough rambling for now!

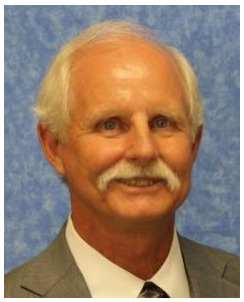
BX News.... Still looking for someone with computer experience to handle the BX online.
Before placing orders for BX items, please e-mail or phone me to insure we have the items desired in stock. Make sure to send the correct total of monies for the shipping of items desired.

Over and out!

Bob Dick

(Picture is of me eating the rabbit’s eyeball during survival training)

MEMBERSHIP CORNER - CHUCK DEAN



Over the past few months, I've had numerous calls/letters about your checks not clearing their bank. Our Finance Officer (Ralph Stearns) has had some rough going during those past few months. I hope everyone can be patient and understanding. Thank you.

We had one (1) new member this quarter. Also, I've had a few more in-active members contact me to re-activate their membership, which is GREAT! We still need to push to get more guys to become members! Come on you younger gunners!!!!

Please remember if you are planning on moving (or have recently moved) be sure you inform me or any of our officers of your new address info so we can continue to keep in touch with you.

You can send me an e-mail with the update or if you don't have e-mail, drop me a short note in the regular mail. Calling me directly on my cell (864) 907-3760 is also an option (please leave a message).

For our annual members, when you receive your renewal notice, please review the information for accuracy and provide any changes as needed. Then, return the lower portion of the notice along with your check in the provided envelope.

Please make your checks out to AFGA instead of a specific person. Also, include your membership number on your checks.

We have about ten months until OUR reunion in Nashville, start saving now!! I really think this is going to be a great reunion. Come on out, looking forward to seeing you there! Again!

Chuck Dean

HISTORIAN'S COMMENTS - RORY KOON

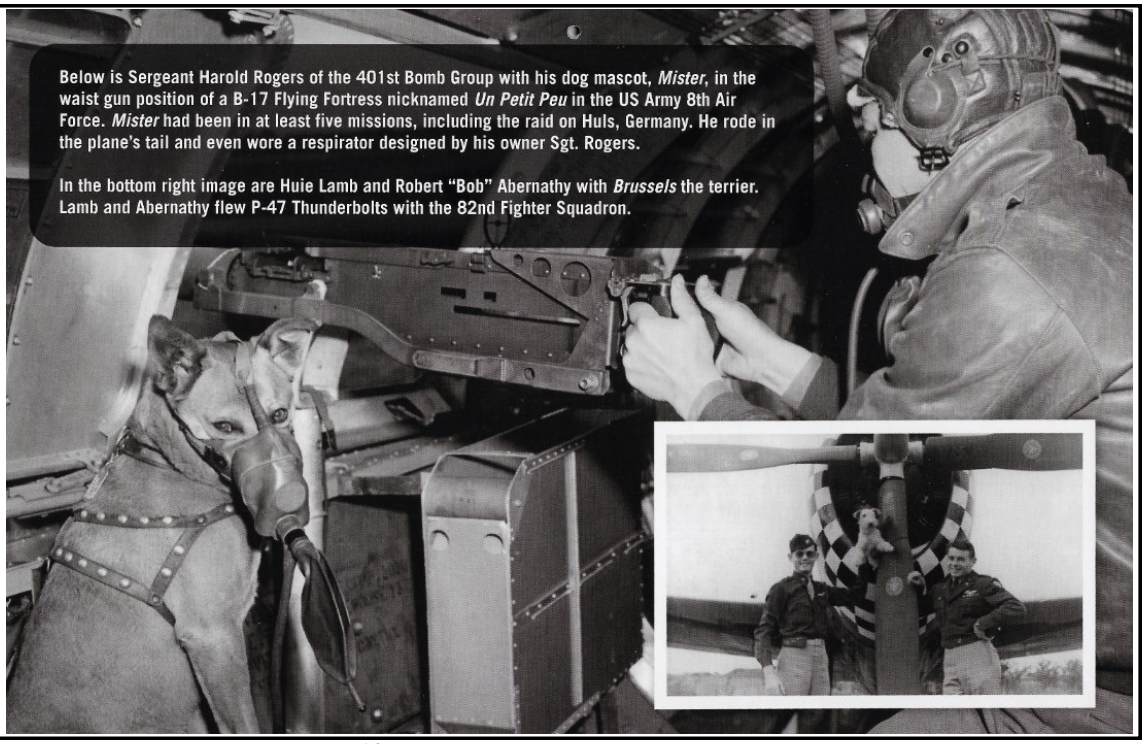
I was very saddened by the recent loss of Sherry Faulkner wife of Kenny Faulkner, Sharie Sterns, wife of Ralph Sterns and Nancy Thompson, wife of Joe Thompson. My condolences go out to Kenny, Ralph and Joe. My family spent a lot of time with Sherry and Kenny on camping trips around California when I was a young instructor gunner with my family at Castle. There were a lot of fun camping trips with the Faulkner's, Clinton's and Emde's. Someone was always imparting some wisdom!

I was especially saddened to hear of the loss of Gary Watland, my condolences to his wife Beverly. Gary was one of the first Instructor Gunners I was privileged to meet and learn from when I began gunnery training in 1972. He was very patient and knowledgeable and was able to teach a wayward eighteen year-old, country boy the intricate functions of the MD-9 Fire Control System. He will be missed. It really does go to show how short life can be and how important it is to live it to the fullest. More and more good guys are meeting their maker each time I look at my e-mail.

I recently located a old photo of the gunners from the 801st Provisional Bomb Wing during Desert Storm. The majority of the crews were from Barksdale AFB, LA, with a few mixed in from other bases such as Griffiss AFB, NY. It took a while to locate an old 801st Bomb Wing (Provisional) crew roster to put names with the photo. Still, there are a few faces I couldn't identify with the crew roster. If you were there and didn't show up in the lineup, let me know. We took the photo as Desert Storm was winding down so we had crews rotating back from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and a few may have wound up in the photo. I would really like to see any other group photos from any of the other B-52 units that were also involved in Desert Storm or even any other conflicts, so we can post them as well. Chief Myers was the catalyst behind the photo we took in Moron, Spain or we would not have had that piece of history in the archives. Thanks Chief!

As the years go by, I find going to the reunions and connecting to folks I have not seen in many years is absolutely invaluable. So many good times and memories come flooding back. As I get older, I find I have more time to reflect on things I took for granted and now wish I had more time doing or experiencing them. As the group works at finalizing the next reunion to get the best "bang" for the buck so to speak, I realize some of the experiences in the next and future reunions are part of the priceless memories we will be able to look back on in years to come.

"C'EST LA VIE" *Rory*



Gunners of the 801st Provisional Bomb Wing Operation Desert Storm – Moron, Spain

CMSgt Marvin Myers, SMSgt Rory Koon, MSgt Mike Sullivan, MSgt Mike Moffatt, MSgt Louis Screws, MSgt Dennis Ray, Msgt Rick Casey, Tsgt Jay Dub Wright, TSgt Bill LeClair, TSgt Don Miller, TSgt Rick Hollins, TSgt Dalton Pratt, SSgt Donny Ford, SSgt Martin VanBuren, SSgt Dan Parker, SSgt John Szuch, SSgt Mike Ocallaghan, SSgt Mike Barker, SSgt Robert Sprague, SSgt Paul Lazeroff, SSgt Tony Vandorn, SSgt Wayne McCoy, SSgt Jim Sellars, Sgt John McCutchen, Sgt Dale Jackson, Sgt Richard Smith, Sgt Dave Monk, Sgt Rory Thompson, Sgt Steve Grambling, Sgt Steve Roman, Sgt Ray Helms, Sgt Olly South, SRA Robert Ross, SRA Ken Adams, SRA Bernie Dauber, SRA Robert Barker, SRA Guy Modgling. A1/C Brian Nelson, and A1/C Joe Murphree,

EDITOR'S COMMENTS - PETE KARJANIS

As we approach the holiday season and another year comes to a close, I reflect on the gunners that are no longer here amongst our ranks. When the Air Force and career field managers realized in the late '60s that it could not sustain the gunnery career field at the entry level with experienced cross trainees, the gunnery career field was opened up for a test period to enlistees right out of basic training in the early '70s. These very young gunners were the trailblazers that lived up to the extreme and stringent expectations, opening the door for all gunners straight out of basic training that followed for the next two decades.

Before becoming a gunner at the basic training level, there were several filters that ensured only the very best would be able to continue successfully down this path. There were career field entry level aptitude qualification scores that were in the highest percentiles along with being able to pass a very thorough initial flight physical.

After basic training, water, and land survival, these test-case gunners finally made it to Castle Air Force Base. Class 72-12 started out with twelve and six of us made it through to graduate and go on to our operational assignments. We were met with some reluctance and a long probationary period at our units still being tested and expected to perform to perfection to prove we could take it. We were called baby gunners and mini gunners and after paying a lot of dues over time, we finally earned the respect of our senior peers.

There were several of us that ended up at Wright Patt as first-term gunners that obviously super-bonded together for our entire lifetimes. Most got out after their first hitch and being very disciplined, used their GI Bill for education or skilled training; one became a doctor, another became an airline pilot, and all had highly successful professional careers beyond gunnery. The sad part of this story is out of all the original test case Wright Patt first termers, only two remain. The others passed way before their time much too early because life does go by faster than a blink of an eye. Years seem to go right by like months now.

It is only a matter of time before the surviving gunners in the association won't be able to attend the reunions like our respected elder gunners that have difficulty traveling out of state much less across the country anymore. Very soon in the near future, there won't be enough gunners committing to attend the reunions. It will be cost prohibitive to even plan a reunion with the attendance reduction of aging members noted with each passing reunion.

Being a gunner was a huge blessing in my lifetime that made me the person that continually strived for perfection in every endeavor. I owe so much to every gunner that came before me and left their mark and impression with their friendship, leadership, and mentorship. You will never be forgotten for your contribution in the development of my positive gunner character. I always strived to instill these ideals in every gunner that came after me. Always!

If you are still reading this, the point of this narrative is life is indeed short and goes by way too fast. If you are able to attend the reunion in Nashville don't procrastinate for another minute, don't make any rationalizations of why you can't attend, don't put it on the back burner to fade away, there may not be another reunion in your future.

My best memory of a reunion is the 1999 Dayton/Wright Patterson reunion. It was the last time the Wright Patt first termers were all in attendance. It was a very special magical time in each of our lives I will never ever forget. It will not ever happen again because life is so unpredictable. So blessed we were all able to enjoy that precious weekend moment in time and so glad I was honored and privileged to be there for all our paths to cross for the last time.

The very first reunion in Orlando was extremely memorable too. It was a continual 24-hour party that established this fine association of warriors that will never ever be duplicated again in the history of the USAF. I am so grateful to have met so many great gunners before they very sadly passed in the following years after that initial 1987 reunion. It laid the granite foundation of this unique association. It was of monumental historical significance with so many distinctive heroes from all eras and airframes in attendance. They were sharing their very own flying wartime experiences and stories as only gunners do when around other gunners.

So, hope to see you in Nashville for our paths in life to cross once again so we can make some more precious gunner memories that will last hopefully for a very long and enjoyable lifetime.

GUNNER PROFILES

Where they've gone from here…

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

CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT (RET) JAMES HUNT

James Hunt hails from Roanoke, Virginia. He graduated from high school in June of 1955 and joined the USAF in September of 1955. He attended basic training at Sampson AFB, Geneva, New York. His next assignment took him to Lowery AFB, Colorado, for training as a B-66 gunnery system maintenance technician. He was then assigned to Hurlburt Field (Eglin Field Number Nine) in Florida, in May of 1956. He worked in the 95th Bomb Squadron gunnery system maintenance unit until November 1957. The wing was then reassigned to Royal Air Force Sculthorpe and RAF Alconbury, in the United Kingdom. There was a shortage of B-66 gunners at that time and in November 1957, maintenance technicians were offered the opportunity to retrain as B-66 gunners which he did.

In January1958, the 95th Bomb Squadron went to RAF Sculthorpe and he flew on the B-66 bomber until 1960. He was then assigned to Sheppard AFB, Texas as a B-52D gunner. He flew at Sheppard AFB until 1965 then went to Westover AFB, Massachusetts flying the B-52C and D models. He completed two, six-month Arc Light tours while assigned at Westover AFB. His next assignment was to Fairchild AFB, Washington in 1969 flying the B-52D until 1971 when Fairchild converted to the B-52G. He was assigned to the Stan Eval division at Fairchild on the B-52G.

An interesting side note, when he arrived at Fairchild, the unit was deployed to Arc Light. They needed a gunner so he went to U-Tapao for the final three weeks of that deployment. During a night takeoff over the water, number eight engine caught fire. Bombs were jettisoned and they landed with a flight time of nine minutes which he thinks is one of the shortest B-52D flights on record.

He completed Arc Light tours at Fairchild in 1969, 1970, 1971, and 1972 with a total of 240 missions. In late 1972, he was transferred to Kincheloe, AFB Michigan, this time flying in the B-52H. In 1974, a B-52D PCS wing was established at Andersen AFB, Guam and he was assigned there in late 1974. In April 1975, he decided to leave the gunnery field and became a first sergeant. He completed over 500 hours in the B-66 and over 5000 in B-52s.

He served as first sergeant at Andersen AFB, Guam, KI Sawyer AFB, Michigan, RAF Mildenhall, UK, RAF Upper Heyford, UK, and finally retiring at Andrews AFB, Maryland in 1985 as a Chief Master Sergeant First Sergeant.

(During the December 1967 Bob Hope Show on Guam, Ann Margret invited Sergeant Hunt to dance with her on stage!)

TSGT STANLEY E. ANGLETON US ARMY AIR CORPS (1942-1945)

When the War broke out, I was working at the Boeing Aircraft Company in Wichita, Kansas building glider aircraft. At that time, Boeing Wichita plant was one of the centers for aircraft construction. When I received my draft notice, my supervisor told me that he could get me a deferment due to the nature of my work. I told him that a lot of my friends were in the service and that it was right for me to go also. I entered the Army Air Corps on 5 November 1942.

I was inducted in the Army Air Corps in November 1942 and served until October 1945, serving as a flight engineer and gunner on the B-24D bomber. I was trained for A&M (aircraft mechanics) at Sheppard Army Air Field, Wichita Falls, Texas, spending about six months there, learning about B-25 and B-26 bombers. After that, I went to the gunnery school at Harlingen Army Air Field, Texas for about six weeks. Following this, I met up with my crew at Biggs Army Air Field in El Paso, Texas. There we began our training as a bomb crew, flying all over the country making dummy bomb runs. From there, we went to Topeka, Kansas where we picked up our new B-24.

In the fall of 1943, we flew to Benghazi, Libya along the northern route (i.e. via Maine, Iceland, England, and down to Casablanca, Morocco). Here we joined the 514th Bomb Squadron, 376th Bomb Group (Heavy). Our aircraft was named the "Red Wing" (serial number 42-42256).

I flew 25 bomb missions over the European Theater of Operations. We flew nine missions from Benghazi before we moved up to San Pangrazio, Italy where we flew another 16 missions. On Christmas Day 1943, we flew our 15th mission. We considered this mission a "milk run" as we had had no opposing German fighters after us. On 28 December, we returned to the same area to attack a railroad roundhouse and engine repair shops at Vicenza, Italy. We encountered something quite different. We had 18 B-24s on this mission, one that had to turn back.

As we came in from the Adriatic Sea, we encountered approximately 100 Luftwaffe fighters, FW-190s and ME-109s. Their attack was so sudden and swift that my bomber didn't drop any bombs, as we were fully engaged in shooting back at our attackers. All around me, airplanes were blowing up: I saw three airplanes blow up and not a soul got out of them. That was 30 men lost right there.

I was flying as a waist gunner when our aircraft was hit many times, causing it to begin burning its oxygen and fuel. Our pilot, 2nd Lt. Clifford Wendell, gave the order to bail out and we jettisoned our 8000 lbs. bomb load. I helped the ball turret gunner put a parachute on the other waist gunner who was severely burned, and push him out of the bomber. I parachuted, my flying suit no longer on fire, though I'd been burned around my eyes, on my back and neck, and had a shrapnel wound in my right hip.

We lost two crew members: Our bombardier got hung up in the nose doors and passed out and never came to, so he got killed when he hit the ground. The co-pilot bailed out okay, but got shot by a German fighter pilot on the way down.

Once on the ground, Italian civilians surrounded me, and shortly afterwards, we were taken into custody by the Germans. We found ourselves eventually in the POW Camp known by the name of STALAG 17B near Krems, Austria that was a POW camp for sergeants. I was to be a prisoner here for 15 ½ months, living in Barracks 19B in the complex.

Life wasn't easy in the camp. The Germans turned the water on three times a day for two hours at a time, and that was all the water they would let us have. There was no heat and no hot water at all. It was pretty cold especially in the winter snow. My only clothing was what I wore when I bailed out. We did get G.I. overcoats that the government sent in to us. As for food, we ate mainly rutabaga soup or potatoes. We also got Red Cross parcels, usually about every six weeks, rather than the supposed weekly distribution of these. In these were things such as D-bars (chocolate), powdered coffee and cocoa, sugar, powdered milk, butter and so on. We got small packages from home as well, stuff we could trade.

TSGT STANLEY E. ANGLETON , GUNNER PROFILE (Continued)

The Germans loved our D-bars, and we could get about anything for those. I got into trading with our guards for things they had which resulted in me being confined to solitary on bread and water for a total of 43 days during my time there. Yet, we managed to get bits and pieces to construct radios, etc.. I continued to trade, and somehow managed to avoid getting detected.

In early April 1945 as the war was drawing to its close, Russian troops got nearer to our location. The Germans decided to move our camp to another location near Brannau, Austria. We were forced to march there, a distance of about 500 kilometers (310.5 miles).

On the second day out, three other American G.I.s, two Englishmen, and I managed to escape. We traveled for about six weeks, traveling by night and hiding by day, eventually finding a cave where we made camp during the last part of our escape near Linz, Austria. It was during this time that we ran across a couple of German deserters who had been injured and were hiding out so that they wouldn't have to continue fighting. They had relatives in the little town near where we were hiding and they helped us during those last three weeks. When the war was over, we knew it right quick, because some of their folks came and told us. We stayed with some local families until we were picked up by American troops.

The memory that still stands out the most and which I still dream about almost every night was that 25th mission. As I said, this was supposed to be a milk run, but it turned out to be anything but that. Out of the 17 bombers that actually made the run, only two bombers were able to make it back to our base that day, 150 men did not.

Seeing planes getting hit by the German fighters and blown up in the sky without any of crewmembers getting out, bothered me most. These were the same guys that I had been with on many of my prior missions, guys I had played "Black Jack" and "Poker" with the night before.

I was 20 years old when all of this happened. Things like that I will never forget. Never!

HAL ADAMS , GUNNER PROFILE

I cross-trained from aircraft maintenance to gunner in about 1970. Was on E-20 at Kincheloe 1971-73, with one Arc Light TDY in the summer of 1972 and two previous PCS tours, (U-Tapao in 1967-68 and Phu Cat AB, RVN in 1969-70).

Interesting your comment about former gunners learning to fly as pilots. Working around my fellow Kincheloe E-20 crew dogs and witnessing what actually happens on the flight deck, gave me the flying bug, not to mention motivation for a long and fruitful career in aerospace.

I left the USAF in spring 1973 to finish my college at University of North Dakota, where, along with my degree, I secured my FAA private and commercial SEL (single engine land) license with instrument rating. After graduation, I finished my Certified Flight Instructor while working for Northwest Airlines in management, non-flying position. I promptly NEVER flew for compensation or taught a single student! Much to my regret. I was too busy with my career.

All that moving around in USAF got me addicted to moving, I think. In sequence: Northwest Airlines, Regional Cargo Sales, Chicago; Lockheed Georgia, C-130 business development, Atlanta; Litton Aero Products, Regional Director, based in Hong Kong for 5 years; Rockwell Collins, Regional Director, based in London, UK for 5 years; Director, Air Transport & General Aviation International Business Development for two years in Cedar Rapids, IA; Thales Avionics, VP The Americas, Air Transport Division, VP Product & Business Development based for three years in Paris, France & then back in Seattle. Some of my programs at Thales-Terrain Awareness & Warning Systems, New Airbus Flight Management System, Surveillance Business Area – TCAS/ Mode-S transponders; ACSS – Aviation Communications and Surveillance Systems, VP Marketing & Business Development based in Phoenix, L-3 Communications and Thales joint venture, L-3 acquired Honeywell TCAS, Mode-S transponder business and helped set up ACSS joint venture with L-3 Communications in Phoenix, AZ; Accord Technology, Co-Founder, COO based in Phoenix, developing, certifying, producing, supporting, selling GPS avionics receiver, sensor solutions – 2002 to 2015; Aspen Avionics LLC, Exec VP based in Phoenix, HQ in Albuquerque, NM, mid-2015 we merged our Accord Technology GPS business with Aspen. I am still very active in industry and FAA Next Gen initiatives while looking after our GPS business; Aerospace Business Development LLC, still maintain a private consulting practice with my wife (who worked for Rockwell Collins and L-3 ACSS for total of 27 years), but hardly have the time to work this business!

I assume this is far more data than you wanted. Just want you and anyone who is interested to know that a very BIG motivator for me was, and continues to be, the time I spent as a USAF B-52 crew member. My fellow Kincheloe crew members were very supportive and strongly encouraged me to finish my degree, etc.. I share this insight whenever I get the opportunity to do so; USAF and being a gunner was a great experience and military service established a firm foundation for my future. I am member of Air Force Association, as well as AFGA.

Very best regards,
Hal Adams
Co-Founder & Managing Director
Aerospace Business Development LLC
33210 North 12th Street
Phoenix, AZ USA 85085

WAR LETTERS HOME WRITEN BY JACK STACH

AUGUST MOON HOTEL, Hong Kong, Thursday 5th, 1969

Well it's ten-thirty in the morning and here we sit in hotel room waiting for the weather to clear (RJ is sleeping) we were supposed to have left at nine-thirty. If it clears by noon we will go on to Philippines for maybe one night - if it doesn't then we will stay here another night. Just as soon stay here - we have a cheap hotel and everyone is running low on dollars.

Our trip has been very exciting thus far - if we leave I'll finish this back on Guam - now on with my story - it took us eight hours from Guam to Hong Kong, arriving here in the afternoon - didn't do much, ate a good Chinese meal and ordered a garment for you and bought myself a shirt. I'll send yours home from Guam - if it doesn't fit, you will have to take it to tailor shop to be altered.

Well we departed Hong Kong next morning for Saigon (landed at Tan Son Nhat). Ernie Sexton works there in base ops so we went to see him and would you believe he was home on emergency leave - so next we had to have our dollars changed into Piasters (118 to dollar) Military Payment Certificate (one to one). We were then put on a bus, screened windows to protect occupants from hand grenades, and taken to that expensive city of Saigon. We had three rooms reserved for the six of us - however they did not understand so we wound up with two rooms, three men to a room at $30 a room about 3,000 piasters. After eating I did not leave the hotel - it was then about eight o'clock and curfew was ten o'clock I believe; so went to the roof of the hotel and watched the flares and fighting on the city's outskirts.

Day three - Back to Tan Son Nhat, by same bus. Forgot to tell you about breakfast at Embassy Hotel - three eggs, ham, and toast, about $1.50 however, I ordered coffee which was extra and they did not bring cream so when I asked for it - 10 cents additional - couldn't hardly believe it.

Back on Tan Son Nhat we were met by two officers who are to stay with us for our stay in Vietnam. Well we went to many, many briefings by MAC V to show us how the B-52 missions are selected and coordinated from the battlefield to MAC V to 3rd Air and up through the actual bomb drop. These briefings were quite interesting - being we (the crew) are involved.

We left Tan Son Nhat by C-47 flying to Pleiku where we were much welcomed by MAC V people and by the Army both US and ARVN (South Vietnamese troops). They had nothing but praise for the B-52 which made us all feel very good. Again more briefings - mostly by Army Rangers.

That evening we were more or less free so Al Young (the other gunner) and myself went to NCO Club - again we were introduced as B-52 crewmembers and couldn't buy a drink the remainder of the evening. The club is only open five to ten-thirty. Was very tired anyway and we did need a good night of sleep, (Puff C-47 gunship making an attack on VC on outskirts of the city - very impressive) because tomorrow will be the day of much excitement. To back up a bit - this same day we were shown all the fighting type airplanes and choppers of which there were many. The choppers were all Army, Caribou.

Day four - Up at six o'clock, good breakfast. Were taken to ARVN Headquarters where we were briefed on what has happened on previous day (war wise in this area - II Corps) and what would happen today or I should say what was planned to happen war wise. From there we were shuttled by jeep out to chopper pad - boarded a large one called Chinook - however before loading we were issued guns - helmets and flack vests which were very hot - some of the guys didn't like wearing them - but one man had lost his life the day before because he didn't have one on. So we all wore them gladly. Also AF photographer went with us from Pleiku to the very small plot of real estate called Dok To. I'm sure you have read about it - it's been the middle of many battles this last week. Unloading from chopper we were rushed inside large, well fortified building - no one hangs around outside because of incoming artillery. We were welcomed by an ARVN colonel who again smiled with much joy to meet the B-52 crews. Like all others in the field he greatly admires the power of B-52s but wants more strikes. He said the Viet-Cong's greatest fear was a B-52 strike.

We ate lunch here at Doc To which is called 'Fire Base One' then small choppers, called Hueys, picked us up and took us to a Special Forces camp called 'Fire Base Five'. This is where we were first under fire. We watched choppers firing rockets on a VC bunker which was less than a mile away - and they finally blew it up. About an hour after our arrival three Army trucks brought ammo to the camp. We could see them coming for about one-and-a

WAR LETTERS HOME WRITEN BY JACK STACH

-half miles - the camp commander warned us to be ready to head for the bunker when the trucks got close because more than likely the VC would start shelling us when the trucks pulled in and sure enough that's just what happened - the first round that hit us blew one man's leg off (he later died) - the rest of us made it into the bunker. They poured in 56 rounds of heavy artillery before it was over however we did not stay for all of it as the Hueys came in and took us to the top of a mountain called 'Fire Base Six'. It was relatively safe here. The top of this mountain was just large enough to have a landing spot for choppers - a bunker and one piece of artillery.

From here we watched them shelling a VC stronghold and talked to the Army Rangers; they have a very hard job acting as advisors to the ARVN troops. That afternoon this same stronghold was hit by a B-52 strike - couldn't believe my eyes. The strike was about three kilometers away - as the bombs were going off. The ground shook - the pillars of fire climbing for the clouds and the Army troops were all shouting - clapping and their faces covered with smiles. Now when I'm on these long missions I don't feel so bad, knowing that we are doing some good.

After the strike we were picked up again - this time by a Chinook chopper very large, haul about thirty people; and headed back to Doc To. Heading back into Doc To we were called by radio that the base was under attack so they dropped us off in a field. The chopper was needed to haul other Army troops from the top of 'Firebase Six'. Remember - we had eaten at Doc To that afternoon - well that chow hall no longer exist, it took a direct hit. About a half hour later the chopper again picked us up and delivered us back to Pleiku, where we cleaned up - had a couple of drinks and hit the hay.

Day Five - We left Pleiku by small AF plane called a Caribou, landing about one hour later at Nha Trang - where the C-97 was to pick us up. Had short time on the ground so ate at NCO Club and would you believe I ran into Doug Sorenson there (former gunner from Fairchild).

We landed back at Hong Kong for a one night stay however the next morning the weather was very bad so we were delayed for one more night.

Day seven - Headed back for Guam. Aboard our airplane we carried two boys one eleven and one twelve years young. They had stowed away on a ship from the Philippines and were not caught until arriving at Hong Kong. So we had to stop at Clark Field in the Philippines to let them off - guess what? The airplane developed an oil leak on the way so we spent one night there.

Day eight - back to the Rock (Guam)

My husband 'Jack' read Short Bursts from cover to cover. He often said he should send a story he wrote while on deployment. I found this in his things and thought, 'what the heck' I'll send it in. Please keep Short Bursts coming to our house until our subscription has expired.

Thank-you!!

Linda Stach, Wife of an amazing man!

Dear Mrs. Stach (Linda),

First of all, our most heartfelt, deepest condolences for your loss of your dear husband from every member of the Air Force Gunners Association and everyone reading this publication.

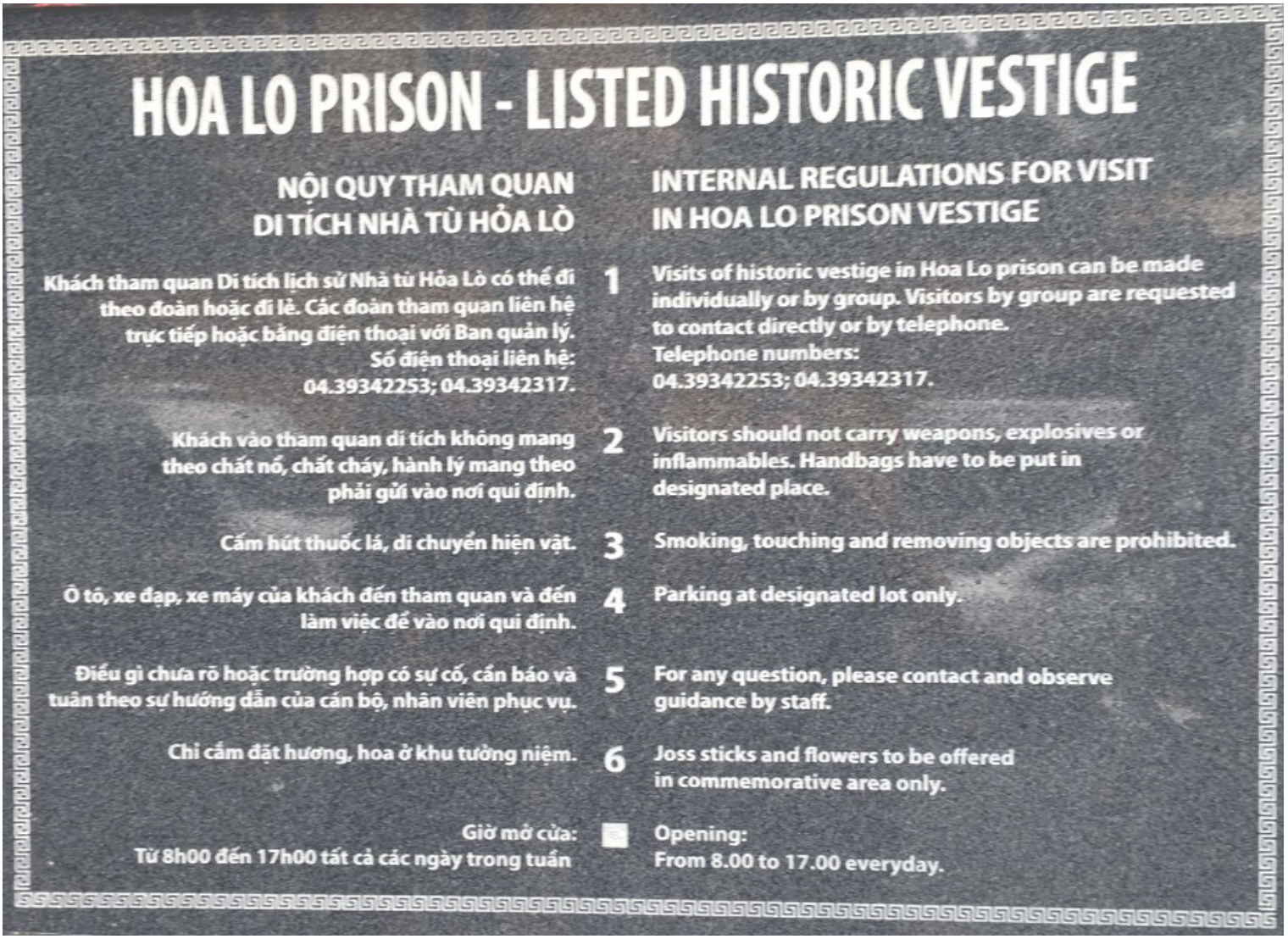
Second, it is AFGA standard procedure that you will continue to receive the Short Bursts for another two years complements of the Gunners Association.

Thank you so very kindly for having the strength and courage to send in the package with the hand-written letter of your husband's very interesting account of his very informative deployment (I transcribed the letter as it was written, the date at the top was exactly as printed without a month).

If any more War Letters Home are discovered, we hope you will again be encouraged to send them in! We'll be sure to publish anything you turn up of your husband's historical perspective of his experiences so well documented. Thank you again for your very kind consideration on behalf of all the gunners and the Short Bursts readership.

Short Bursts Editor

THE "HANOI HILTON" : 2016 by PETE DeFELICE, CMSgt (Ret)



By all accounts of 20th Century military history, the Hoa Lo Prison in Hanoi, better known as the "Hanoi Hilton" has an infamous reputation. For B-52 and other U.S. aircrews as well as a few "ground pounders" that fought in Vietnam, the Hanoi Hilton still holds in a dark, dark place in our collective memories. Surprisingly this is true not only in the American memory but the French and Vietnamese memories as well. In that light, the Hoa Lo Prison or "Hanoi Hilton" remains a must-see stop for foreign and Vietnamese tourists to Hanoi to this day. Working for USPACOM in Hanoi earlier this year, I had the opportunity to see for myself where so many B-52 Crewmembers were imprisoned during the war.

Today, the displays and tours of the Hanoi Hilton focus surprisingly not on U.S aircrew prisoners but on the hundreds of Vietnamese "freedom-fighters" housed and tortured by the French there from 1899 to 1954. The Hanoi Hilton was purpose-built as a prison from 1896 to 1899 by the French as a central location to house and re-educate captured Vietnamese "revolutionaries" in the northern half of Vietnam.

Located in the heart of old downtown Hanoi, the entire prison measures approximately 110 feet wide by 300 feet long. In the midst of other old buildings, it is surrounded by imposing stone walls about 12 feet in height, which included a barbed-wire system of high voltage lines running across the top. While not exactly square, the prison's four corners have small towers and are capable of observing most of the prison and streets nearby. The main gate was built with a two-story building that included a dome-shaped structure, likely for admin work. Unlike what may be depicted in movies, there is no main open yard for prisoners to assemble in formation or even have the chance to congregate. The prison is simply five or so buildings surrounded by four walls.

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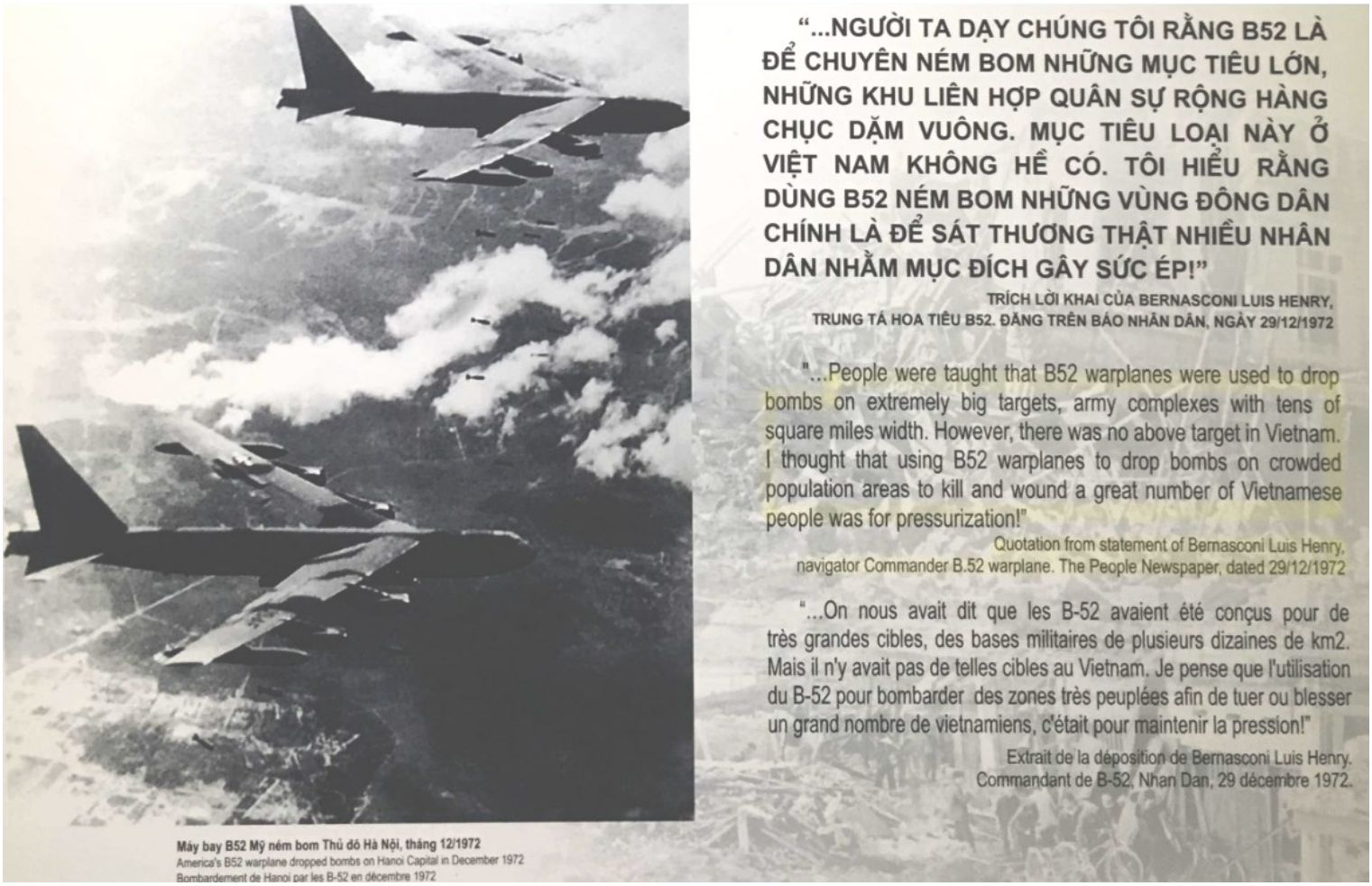


Only six or eight feet from the four walls sit the five or six, two-story buildings that housed prisoners, prison staff offices and barracks, etc. While some buildings contain large open bays that housed 50-80 Vietnamese prisoners at a time, all linked together by French-installed ankle irons, there are no specific rooms that are annotated as "interrogation" rooms. The ankle irons remain attached to the floor today. That said, there are plenty of spaces to conduct any variety of interrogation techniques nearby where prisoners were kept. The prison displays and curator go to great lengths to show how the prison's intended purpose was to torture Vietnamese patriots. It just "happened" to be a convenient spot to hold American "criminals" aka POWs when the war with America ensued later.

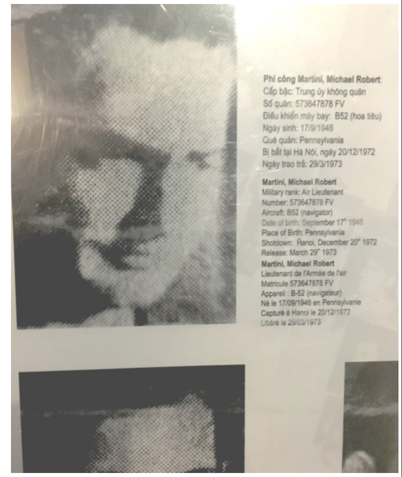
The concrete cells where the U.S. Aircrews were held are approximately six feet wide, 8 feet long and only six feet high; just as you would imagine, or recall from your Fairchild training days … Most but not all Americans were held in the same building. The American cells on display are located in groups of six or so on the ground floor, separated from other groups of cells by large doors. The walls of each dingy cell remain painted black or dark gray and look to hold one or two men. Some but not all had a concrete raised area for a bed or two. There are no windows except for a hole in the door. Where there was a window, you can still see it had been boarded-up long ago. There is no light fixture in any cell. And no, there are no sinks or toilets nearby. You can figure out how that worked …

Today's Vietnamese try to present American POWs as clean-shaven, well treated, and all making nice with their captors. It is clear from the photo displays and actually seeing the cells that is not accurate. With the exception of a poignant well-displayed exhibit dedicated to the longest-serving U.S. POW, LT Ed Alvarez, who was imprisoned from 1964-1973, ninety-nine percent of the U.S.-Vietnam War displays at the Hanoi Hilton are focused at B-52 operations over Hanoi and B-52 aircrews.

Numerous photos are on display of B-52 crewmembers just after they've been shot down. They include the name, rank, crew position, hometown, date of capture and date of release of each guy depicted. Of note to all Gunners, there is not a single enlisted aircrew member on display in the Hanoi Hilton. Believe me, I looked at every one

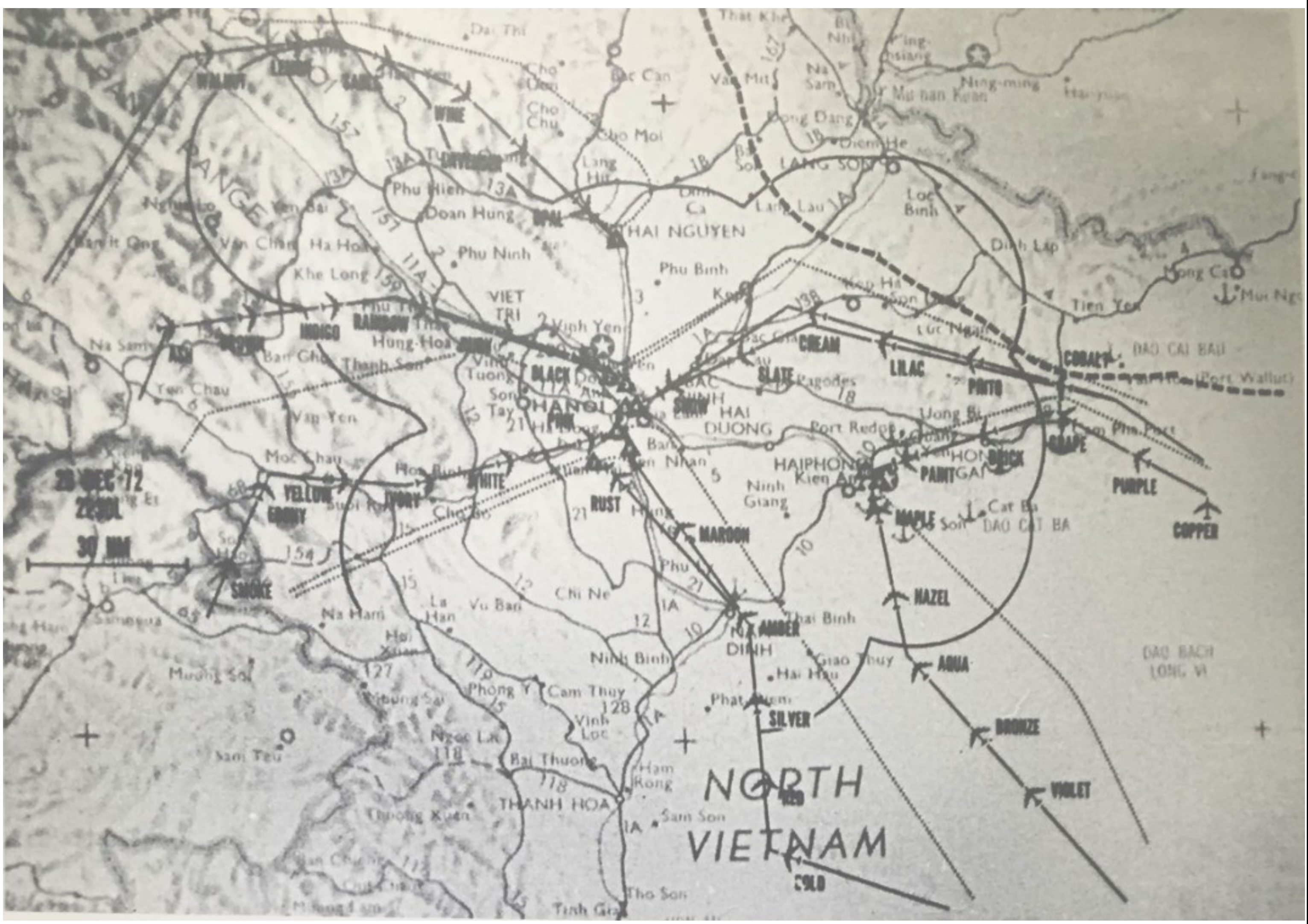
of nearly one hundred photos and displays. In my opinion, I think this is because the Vietnamese focused the Hanoi Hilton propaganda on the officer aircrew members, O-6 thru O-2, thinking that they held higher propaganda value than and an E-6 or E-7. Of note, many of the B-52 crewmembers held at the Hanoi Hilton were imprisoned long before Linebacker II.

What really hit home for me were photos of then-1Lt Mike Martini, a B-52 Nav shot down on 20 Dec 1972. I served with Major Mike Martini at K.I. Sawyer in 1979-83 when he was a Radar Nav on E-34, then in Stan Eval. Quite frankly, I was shocked to see his photos on display there. When we met at K.I. he proudly wore a shoulder patch depicting "B-52-fifty-two and a half missions-Vietnam" …

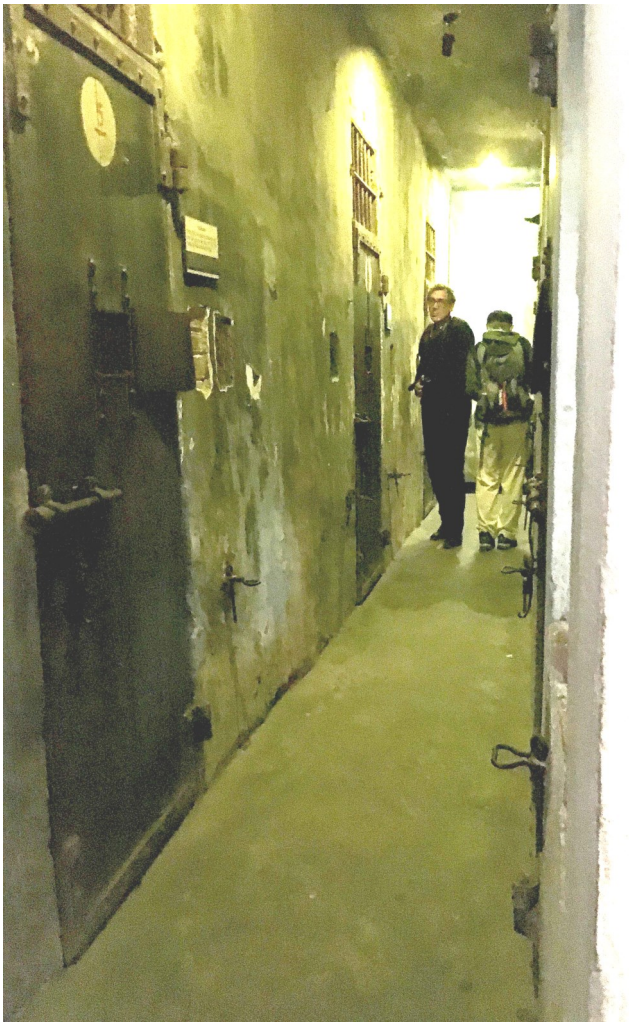


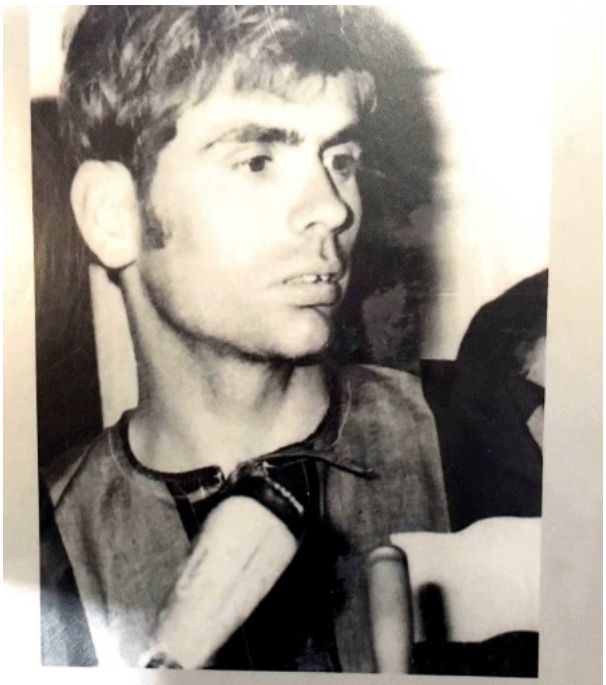
Clearly, Vietnamese Communist propaganda is everywhere at the Hanoi Hilton. For example, there is a single poster on display depicting U.S. aircraft shot down during the Linebacker II period that lists 23 B-52 kills. Other displays list incredulous B-52 bombing capabilities to include Vietnamese "BDA" photos of hospitals, churches and pagodas targeted by B-52s. There is a poster with the shape of a B-52 crashing in flames with the fuselage and wings made out of B-52 crewmember photos.

If you get the chance to go, the Hanoi Hilton is as sobering as a trip to Normandy or Arlington. As most B-52 guys know, Linebacker II happened 6-7 years too late. We all know what made the North Vietnamese sue for peace in January 1973, and it wasn't Henry Kissinger's smooth talking. It was eleven days of brave, brave men taking thousands of nose and tail-fused steel and Tritonal love letters raining on Hanoi and Haiphong.



Một số phi công Mỹ điều khiển máy bay B52 bị quân, dân Thủ đô Hà Nội bắn rơi và bắt trong chiến dịch: "Điện Biên Phủ trên không", tháng 12/1972
Some American Pilots who controlled B52 warplanes of "Operation Linebacker II", were shot down and arrested by the Hanoi army and people in December 1972
Pilotes de B-52 abattus, faits prisonniers pendant la bataille aérienne de Dien Bien Phu, décembre 1972



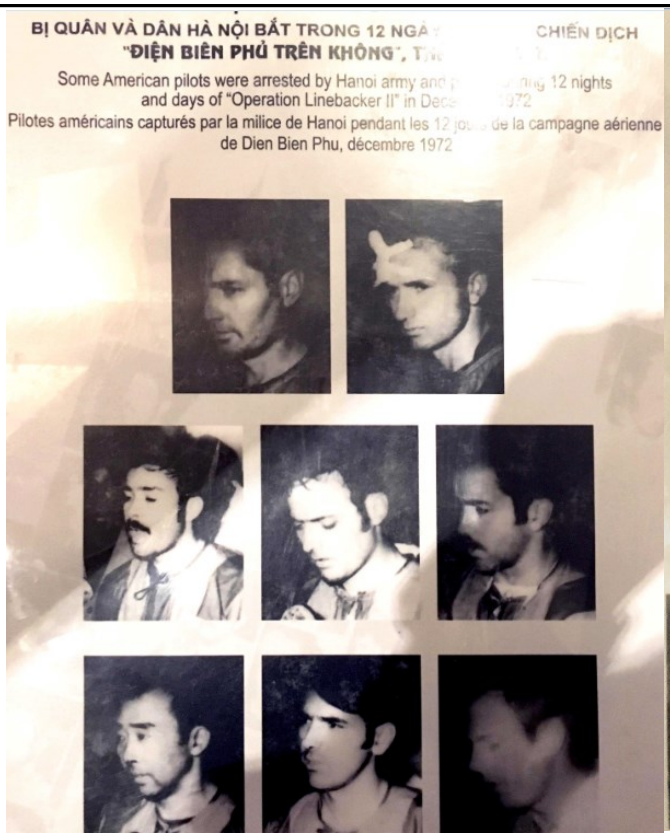


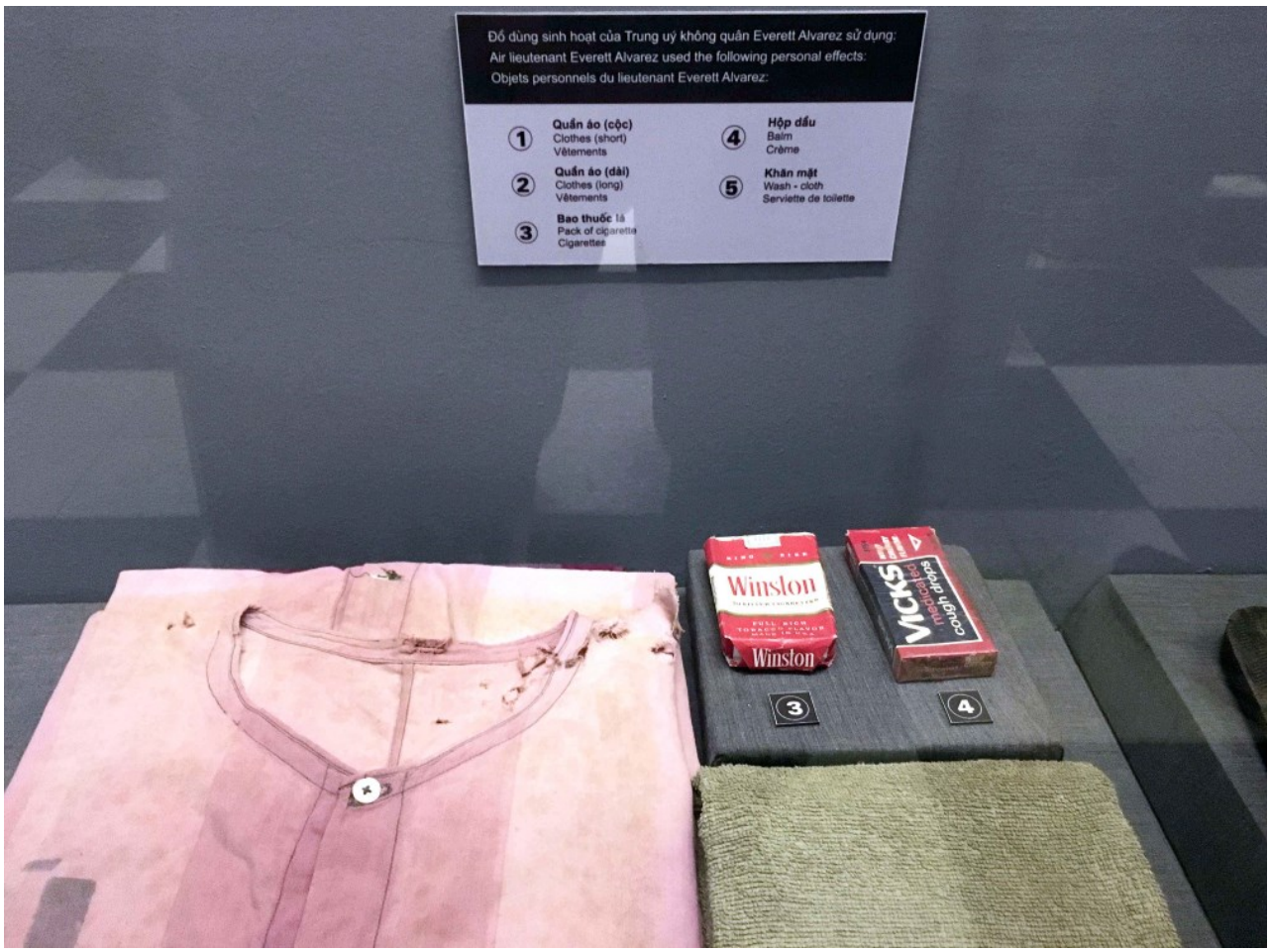
Phi công Brorow, **Charles Atheer JR**:
Cấp bậc: Đại úy
Số quân: FVO 25 349616
Điều khiển máy bay: B52D
Ngày sinh: 17/7/1946
Quê quán: Illinois
Bị bắt tại Hà Nội, ngày 19/12/1972
Ngày trao trả: 29/3/1973

Brorow, Charles Atheer JR:
Military rank: Captain
Number: FVO 25 349616.
Aircraft: B52D
Date of birth: July 17th 1946
Place of Birth: Illinois.
Shotdown: Hanoi, December 19th 1972
Release: March 29th 1973

Brorow, Charles Atheer JR
Capitaine
Matricule FVO 25 349616
Appareil : B-52D
Né le 17/07/1946 dans l'Illinois

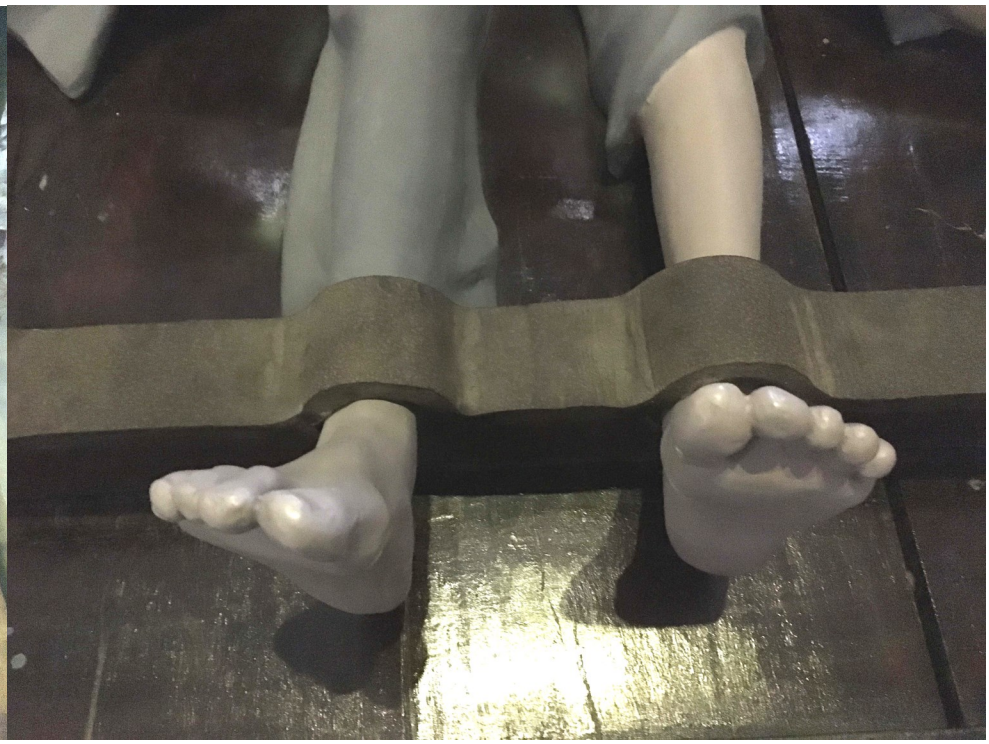
THE "HANOI HILTON" : 2016 by PETE DeFELICE, CMSgt (Ret)





THE "HANOI HILTON" : 2016 by PETE DeFELICE, CMSgt (Ret)

Seeing where our comrades and predecessors were held, and what they endured once captured is sobering and inspiring at the same time. Even seeing it in-person, you cannot fathom what the guys in the Hanoi Hilton endured on a daily basis for what was then an indeterminate amount of time. The nation owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to guys that walked out of the Hanoi Hilton in 1973. The average American today has no clue.



LINEBACKER II

December 18-29, 1972

Eleven Nights
729 B-52 Sorties
15,000 Tons / 30,000,000 LBS of Bombs Dropped
1,240 SAMs Fired
B-52s - 2 Mig 21s - 0
1 Cease Fire Agreement
591 POWs Released

AMERICAN AIRMEN, EXECUTING AMERICAN AIR POWER THRU STRATEGIC BOMBING

LINEBACKER II

Memorial Dedication Inscription

Beginning in early October and thru mid-December of 1972, United States National Security Advisor, Dr. Henry Kissinger and North Vietnamese Politburo Member, Le Duc Tho met in Paris to discuss proposals for a Peace Settlement that would end the decade old Vietnam War. Those peace talks effectively broke down on 13 December. Dr. Kissinger sent a message to the North Vietnamese warning of "Grave Consequences" if the talks did not resume within 72 Hours. That same day, President Richard Nixon ordered the planning of a "Maximum Effort" bombing campaign that could be executed within 72 hours.

On 18 December, with no response from the North Vietnamese Government, Operation LINEBACKER II was commenced with nightly bombing in and around Hanoi, Haiphong and other military and industrial targets in North Vietnam. Over the next eleven nights, B-52Ds and B-52Gs from U-Tapao Air Base in Thailand and Andersen Air Force Base, Guam flew a total of 729 combat sorties against military and industrial targets in North Vietnam. Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs), anti-aircraft artillery and MIG-21 Fighters were deployed defensively by the North Vietnamese against these B-52s and their support aircraft. Estimates of as many as 1,240 SAM firings resulted in 24 B-52s being hit, and 15 of those 24 being downed, 10 of which came down within the boundaries of North Vietnam. Two MIG-21s were shot down by B-52 Tail Gunners. Air Force and Navy tactical aircraft flying in support of the B-52 strikes lost an additional 11 aircraft during Operation LINEBACKER II.

After eleven nights of sustained heavy bombardment, the North Vietnamese were out of SAMs and their defense system was in shambles. They signaled that they wished to return to the Peace Talks in Paris. The bombing was immediately halted and 29 days later on 27 January 1973 a Cease Fire Agreement ending the Vietnam War was signed. Operation HOMECOMING began on 12 February 1973 with the eventual release and return of 591 American Prisoners of War.

LINEBACKER II
December 18-29, 1972

HISTORICAL BOMBER ACCIDENTS

WRECKAGE — Tail section was all that remained intact following the crash this morning of Air Force B-52 bomber 2½ miles southwest of March Air Force Base. California Division of Forestry firefighters use "light water" in extinguishing flames caused by the flaming bomber as it smashed to earth. (Hemet News photo)

Thirty-three B-52 crew members gave their all in December 1972 during the 11-Day War. Twenty-six additional USAF and USN aviators (13 on one AC-130A aircraft) lost their lives during that same period supporting the operation -- also known as Linebacker II or The Christmas Bombing. This action finally ended the Vietnam War and gained the release of our prisoners of war the following year.

Please keep these superior aviators and their families in your thoughts and prayers as you celebrate this 2016 Christmas Season with your families and loved ones. Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays and Happy New Year in 2017!

HISTORICAL GUNNER ACCIDENTS

The following short narratives of gunner peacetime losses were researched and submitted by Harry Tolmich, THANKS so very kindly for doing the historical research Harry! As each loss occurred, the USAF and the Boeing Company improved the B-52, for those Gunners who came later into the BUFF operation, they should be aware of how hazardous it was in the 1950s and 1960s. Flying was and is an inherently dangerous profession, please remember the gunners that lost their lives doing what we all loved. REMEMBER! As Frank O'Neil has said many times!

If you know of an accident, incident, or interesting story, please write your personal account and send it in now!

Raymond B. Riggs, TSGT, 9-17-1956, B-52B, s/n 53-0393, Castle AFB, CA. During descent aircraft was at 6200 feet altitude, crew smelled smoke then reported fire, pilot ordered bail out… Pilot and Co-pilot ejected… all other crew members were fatalities.

Gerald E. Riley, TSGT, 11-30-1956, B-52B, s/n 52-8716, Castle AFB, CA… aircraft take off and climb out appeared normal, two minutes and 44 seconds after take off, eight miles from base aircraft contacted the ground, aircraft destroyed, all crew members fatally injured.

Ray A. Miller, TSGT, 1-10-1957, B-52D, s/n 55-0082, Loring AFB, ME… aircraft at 31,000 feet... IP had co-pilot close his eyes while he put aircraft in unusual position… CP had impression aircraft instruments indicated in steep turn to the left and climbing… CP took corrective action for recovery. Last memory by CP was aircraft at 9000 feet at which time the aircraft broke up, CP ejected, the other eight occupants were fatally injured.

Sole Survivor of Jet Crash Talks to Wife

Loon survivor T/Sgt. Gene I. Grays talks with his wife shortly after crash of B-52.

Gene (GI) Grey, MSGT, 12-15-1957, B-52D, s/n 56-0597, Fairchild AFB, WA.... Aircraft had normal takeoff, witnesses reported aircraft started steep climb. Aircraft had reverse stabilizer trim (up was down and vice versa) due to stab motor wired backwards… aircraft stalled and crashed one mile from runway. Tail section remained intact, Gene Grey survived, all forward compartment crew members were fatal. Gene died of natural causes at his home Loon Lake, Washington many years later.

Oran C. Riley, MSGT, 7-29-1958, B-52D, s/n 55-0093, Loring AFB, ME, aircraft made jet penetration from 43,000 feet overcast to 36,000 feet, visibility on approach was four miles, 400 feet broken, 800 feet overcast, aircraft descended to 300 feet, declared missed approach, aircraft climbed to 800 feet, radio contact was lost… impact was four miles south of Loring. All crew fatally injured.

Leon R. Lew, TSGT, 8-16-1958, B-52D, s/n 55-0065, Loring AFB, ME… aircraft made RBS bomb run at 36,000 feet, aircraft made a break away, RBS operator 100 seconds later measured aircraft altitude at 8000 feet. Aircraft impacted ground 45 miles from St. Paul, Minn. Four crew members ejected… the co-pilot was the only survivor… others ejecting were fatally injured. The EWO, Gunner and RN were in the aircraft when it crashed and were fatally injured.

Thomas Lowry, A1/C, **Norman L. Kolmeyer**, TSGT, **Harold J. Funnel**, SSGT, 12-19-1958, B-52E, s/n 56-0633, from Altus AFB, OK. .... Lowry was the crewmember gunner, the other two gunners were instructor gunner and passenger..... aircraft made a GCA approach, requested climb to altitude for another jet penetration… tower observed at 2346 CST an explosion four miles north of the base, aircraft commander ejected, he was the sole survivor.

Howard L. Nelms, TSGT, 10-15-1959, B-52F, s/n 57-0036, Columbus AFB, MS. In the vicinity of Litchfield, KY. The B-52 closed rapidly on KC135, the pilot banked the aircraft to the right, collision occurred, pilot attempted to recover the aircraft, there was no response from the controls. The pilot called for bailout, the Emergency Alarm lights did not illuminate, the pilots ejected, EW ejected, the RN and N did not eject. The tail gunner did not jettison the turret and he was found in the vicinity of the tail section which separated in flight. All tanker crew members failed to exit their aircraft. Both aircraft partially disintegrated prior impact with the ground, wreckage was scattered over an area of nine by three miles. Impact was at 1847 CST.

HISTORICAL GUNNER ACCIDENTS

William R. Hill, MSGT, 2-1-1960, B-52G, s/n 58-0180, Ramey AFB, P.R., Aircraft returned from training mission, three touch and go landings were accomplished, request for two more touch and go landings was made. On the second T&G, the aircraft lifted off after touch down, the aircraft rotated nose high to 800 feet altitude, aircraft turned right and at an estimated bank angle of 70 degrees, the aircraft impacted the ground… all crew members received fatal injuries.

Pierre Maheux, SSGT, 12-9-1960, B-52D, s/n 55-0114, aircraft from Westover AFB, MA. At approximately 50 nm from Plattsburg, NY, aircraft descended into Oil Burner "Hangover" route. Entry was at 28,000 feet at 2214 EST, at 15,000 feet. At 2221 EST aircraft rolled into a 100 degree bank, the navigator, noted altitude was 8500 feet, ejected at that time. Pilot returned aircraft to wings level, pilot thought the ejection of Nav seat was aircraft structural failure and ordered the crew to bail out. All personnel in forward cabin ejected or bailed out. (the accident report for the tail gunner was sanitized and I could not ascertain if he bailed out or went down with the aircraft, the gunner did not survive). As crew members were floating down in chutes, they observed the aircraft was circling wings level, after several circles with altitude decreasing, aircraft struck the ground 70 miles N.E. of bailout point.

David A. Forsyth, TSGT, 1-19-1961, B-52B, s/n 53-0390, aircraft from Biggs AFB, TX. Aircraft at 36,000 feet when autopilot disengaged due to heavy turbulence, climb started to 40,000 feet, aircraft experienced violent bump and was followed by nose low right roll and then spinning maneuver. Co-pilot ejected at this time, as aircraft descended the aircraft broke into several major pieces. All remaining crew members did not bailout or eject… all fatal injuries. Structural failure due to turbulence.

Francis R. Barnish, TSGT, 1-24-1961, B-52G, s/n 58-0187, Seymour Johnson AFB, NC. Aircraft started massive fuel leak near #3 engine, aircraft descended to 10,000 feet, explosion was heard , aircraft rolled past 90 degrees. Pilot ordered bail out, pilot thought all seats fired and he ejected. The third pilot bailed out pilot's escape hatch when the aircraft was inverted. Five crew members ejected with RN sustaining fatal head injury after ejection, the EW and Gunner did not eject and became fatalities at impact.

Robert Gaskey, A1/C, 3-30-1961, B-52G, s/n 59-2576, Dow AFB, ME. **James H. Fults**, SSGT, Instructor Gunner, B-52 call sign Judy 24 was attempting air refueling, Judy 24 was closing rapidly, boom operator reported that Judy 24 had under run the tanker. The B-52 pilot attempted to slow the aircraft, the co-pilot said "Mac I think you have it in a stall", negative G forces were experienced, EWO heard the pilot say "bail out, bail out, bail out". At this time the navigator and EWO ejected, the rest of the crew were fatally injured. Impact 22 nm southwest of High Point, N.C. Total flight time 3 hours and 10 minutes.

Helmut Christ, SSGT, 10-15-1961, B-52G, s/n 58-0196, Seymour Johnson AFB, NC, aircraft call sign Pogo 22 was part of six B-52s participating in low level large scale air defense exercise. All aircraft descended to 1000 feet altitude, Pogo 13 was flying parallel track with Pogo 22 and had visual contact. WX 1500 feet scattered to broken, mild turbulence, and the sea very rough. The aircraft heading 270 degrees, targets were in the Pittsburg, Philadelphia area… Pogo 22 was last seen at the 1:30 position at about three miles and still appeared to be flying briefed course, at this time Pogo 13 turned westerly. All contact was lost with Pogo 22. Official report… aircraft lost at sea, no survivors.

Michael Okeefe, TSGT, 1-24-1963, B-52C, s/n 53-0406, aircraft from Westover AFB. MA. Highly qualified standboard crew S-06, aircrew chose the northern low level route POKER DECK, at 1930Z low level route was started, all systems normal, speed 280 knots, altitude 500 feet, 20 minutes at low level turbulence increased, pilot started climb to get out of turbulence. At this time the pilot heard a loud bang, aircraft went into 40 degree right bank, nose low descent of 2000 feet per minute. The aircraft would not respond to any control actions by the pilot, at this time the bail out order was given. My personal friend Michael Okeefe did not exit the aircraft. Impact was on Elephant Mountain at 1952Z. (I Googled Elephant Mountain ..the photo has the gunner's compartment and it is still there).

HISTORICAL GUNNER ACCIDENTS

Burl D. Dean, MSGT, 1-30-1963, B-52E, s/n 57-0018, Walker AFB, NM. Aircraft was at 42,000 feet, pilot requested change of altitude due to turbulence, descent to 38,000 feet, turbulence continued, aircraft descended to 34,000 feet, violent updrafts and at this time the crew heard a "loud bang", aircraft rolled left with another loud bang sound, controls had no effect and the pilot describes as two more rolls. The pilot ordered bail out, aircraft crashed 32 miles north of Las Vegas, N.M. The EWO and Gunner failed to exit the aircraft and were fatally injured. The rest of the crew ejected successfully.

Lacy Potter, MSGT, 12-23-1963, B-52F, s/n 57-0043, Columbus AFB, MS. Aircraft took off 0707:18 CST, flight path was normal until approximately 3 1/2 miles from the runway. Aircraft rolled right continuing through 150 degrees of bank and crashing at 0709:24 CST. Aircraft impacted in an inverted position. All crew members were fatally injured, no ejections were attempted.

Melvin D. Wooten, TSGT, 1-13-1964, B-52D, s/n 55-0060, aircraft assigned to Turner AFB, GA. Aircraft took off from Westover for return flight to Turner, flight leveled at 31,000 feet, moderate turbulence encountered and descent to 29,000 feet at this time turbulence became severe. Because this crew did not have an EWO on board, Sgt Wooten was in the EWO position. As the aircraft commander struggled to keep the aircraft level, the vertical stabilizer broke away at bulkhead 1655 and sheared the left horizontal stabilizer, the aircraft rolled on its back, all crew members ejected except the RN. Sgt Wooten was injured during bailout, and did not survive. The Nav ejected successfully but due to severe winter conditions, did not survive. The Co-pilot was not injured; the Pilot suffered major injuries but survived.

Fonzy E. Arrington, TSGT, 11-10-1964, B-52D, s/n 55-0108, aircraft departed Larson AFB, WA. on a combat crew training mission. Descent to the Flint Rock Oil Burner route, entry at Miles City, Montana, all crew members were qualified in low level flight procedures. The aircraft impacted the ground 51 miles S.E. of Glasgow AFB, Montana. All crew members were fatally injured.

Larry Thornton, MSGT, 12-24-1965… Larry was a B-52 gunner when he was ordered to Vietnam as a ammo loader on AC-47 Dragon Gun Ships. Aircraft was shot down. Witnesses reported Thornton evading Charlie on the ground. Larry Thornton was never recovered.

Ronald P. Snyder, TSGT, 1-17-1966, B-52G, s/n 58-0256, Seymour Johnson AFB, NC. Mission was scheduled indoctrination flight (Chrome Dome).... attempting air refueling at the Saddle Rock Refueling area Spain, vicinity of Palomares, Spain. WX was clear, no turbulence, approach normal to 1/2 mile (witnessed by 2nd B-52)… The B-52 continued to close and impacted the KC-135. B-52 pitched down and left, followed by explosion, KC-135 pitched over into steep descent and exploded .... Five B-52 crewmembers ejected, four survived, three did not eject and received fatal injuries. No attempt to bail out from the KC-135. All members were fatal injuries.

Gerald D. Turney, A1/C, 11-18-1966, B-52G, s/n 58-0228, Barksdale AFB, LA. Aircraft crashed 72 miles south of Duluth, Minnesota. Aircraft called descending from 23,000 feet to low level route of 2900 feet. This was last radio contact with the aircraft. One minute and ten seconds into low-level route, the aircraft crashed into wooded area at an elevation of 1570 feet. All crew members received fatal injuries.

John N. Snyder, SSGT, 11-2-1967, B-52H, s/n 61-0030, Griffiss AFB, NY… Aircraft on training mission experienced number 6 engine fire, engine was shut down, also generator number 5 overheat warning light came on. Command post advised to cancel the mission and return to base. Aircraft was on final GCA approach but was 200 feet above the glide path, a go-around was attempted. After passing the end of runway 15, the aircraft climbed to 2000 feet, wings level, then rolled right which continued past 90 degrees of bank. Bail out order was given, the Pilot, Navigator, and Gunner ejected, the Pilot and Navigator survived. The gunner's seat became entangled with his parachute, he sustained fatal injuries. The IP, Navigator, and two maintenance men were fatally injured in the crash.

HISTORICAL GUNNER ACCIDENTS

Kermit C. Casey, MSGT, 2-28-1968, B-52F, s/n 57-0173, Carswell AFB, Texas. Call sign Meal 88 entered the Matagorda RBS low level route, aircraft was cleared at the IP 40 miles in bound, the first tone break came loud and clear, second tone break was clear, Co-pilot called "bombs away", Meal 88 asked to be cleared from heading and RBS cleared them. At approximately 2304 CST a radio check was made and Meal 88 answered loud and clear. This was the last radio contact with Meal 88. Official accident report is listed as aircraft and aircrew "Missing".

Ronald E. Blazing, TSGT, 10-04-1968, B-52H, s/n 60-0027, Minot AFB, ND.... Call sign Fog 32 completed air refueling, then to gunnery range. Gunner reported 600 rounds fired before gun jammed. The crew aborted the gunnery range and proceeded to Minot RAPCON for clearance to start penetration. Aircraft acknowledged heading changes requested by RAPCON. Radar returns indicated the approach was normal, the aircraft disappeared from the RAPCON scope and crashed 14 ESE from Minot at 0407 hours. No emergency calls were made, aircraft impacted ground wings level. Entire crew suffered fatal injuries.

Lee A. Gunn, SSGT, 1-21-1969, B-52H, s/n 61-0037, Minot AFB, ND. Call sign Milan 34.... At 1135 aircraft cleared for take off, take off run was normal. Immediately after lift off, the aircraft rotated to a nose high attitude of 20 to 30 degrees and climbed to 300 feet. The aircraft then pitched down, pitched up again, then 20 to 30 degrees of left bank, at this time ejections were initiated. Aircraft impacted the ground. Ejections were not successful, all crew members suffered fatal injuries.

Harry Deal, MSGT, 5-10-1969, B-52D, s/n 56-0593. Crew E-22 from Fairchild AFB, WA... call sign Green 3… Original Green 3 became Green 2 due to original Green 2 having maintenance problems. E-22 spare aircraft was then moved into position as Green 3. Take off appeared normal thru gear retraction, at 2005:31 Co-pilot reported ”Departure, Green 3 is airborne". Aircraft attained an altitude of approximately. 800 MSL (200' AGL), the aircraft began a slow right turn which steepened to an estimated 45 degree bank prior to impact. Impact time was 2006:12. No evidence indicates crew egress was initiated. Water depth at the crash site was 1200 feet. There were no survivors.

Clinton E. Tibbetts, TSGT, 7-28-1969, B-52D, s/n 56-0630, call sign Blue 1 was scheduled for an Arclight mission. Take off was at 0711... take off was normal and lift off was normal at the 9000' marker. Aircraft was airborne for approximately 15 seconds at an estimated altitude of 200 feet when a burst of flames and right wing separation occurred. Flight time from lift off to impact was 23 seconds. There were no survivors.

Earl J. Barnes, MSGT, 10-04-1969, B-52G, s/n 58-0215, Loring AFB, ME. Crew S-01 was scheduled for a no-notice ORI. At engine start it was noted the Constant Speed Drive (CSD) on engine #7 had an oil leak. Engines were shut down and CSD changed in 46 minutes. At engine start, the new CSD started to leak so a second CSD was installed. Inspection of aircraft by Supervisor of Flying was good, aircraft cleared for take off. Lift-off 2137 EDT at 10,500 foot marker. Climb appeared normal, aircraft leveled off at 300 feet while in a slight right turn, aircraft entered a shallow descent and crashed 12,800 feet from the departure end of the runway at 2138 EDT, entire crew suffered fatal injuries.

Jerry M. Achy, TSGT, 10-7-1971, B-52C, s/n 54-2666. This aircraft departed Westover, AFB for RBS low level mission at Bayshore, Michigan. The weather was 2500 feet overcast, visibility 2 miles. The first bomb run was made at 700 feet altitude on target Echo and target Foxtrot at 800 feet altitude at 2305Z. Aircraft then made a right turn and proceeded on a parallel track to the re-entry point for the same type of run on targets Delta and Charlie. Release on target Delta was preceded by a normal 20 second tone ending at 2332Z and followed by verbal "bombs away" call from the aircrew. The aircraft turned 6 degrees left towards target Charlie, the bombing tone was interrupted after 4 second duration. Attempts to contact the aircraft were unsuccessful. There were nine fatalities.

HISTORICAL GUNNER ACCIDENTS

Allen H. Murray, MSGT, 3-31-1972, B-52D, s/n 56-0625, McCoy AFB, Fla. Call sign Sir 21 was at 7000 feet reported emergency, one engine out and number 7 engine torching. Aircraft was on final approach at 5 miles out, he was told he was above glide path, at 4 miles he was still well above the glide path. At 3 miles Sir 21 was advised he "was well above the glide path and too far left for a safe approach, climb to 3000 feet , maintain runway heading." Sir 21 acknowledged and stated, "we'll make a go around". At 1120Z, Sir 21 crashed 3200 feet short of the runway with all seven crew members receiving fatal injuries.

James M. Troutman, TSGT, 2-8-1974, B-52G, s/n 58-0174, Beale AFB, Ca. Aircraft call sign Force 30 completed air refueling, two high altitude bomb runs, and returned direct to Beale AFB. The aircraft completed a full stop taxi back landing. Aircraft taxied back for second take off. At the 70 knot call at approximately 2500 feet from start roll, the aircraft veered abruptly to the right and traveled approximately 2050 feet trailing fire. It came to rest and exploded. There were eight fatalities.

Robert W. Nemeth, TSGT, 12-12-1974, B-52D, s/n 55-0058, Anderson AFB, Guam. Aircraft call sign Bando 71 took off on a training mission, air refueling, night celestial, scheduled mission duration 6 hours, 45 minutes. Prior to take off alternator start was difficult, Co-pilot attempted restart which was successful. A/R and navigation celestial were completed and Anderson Center cleared Bando 71 to descend to a full stop landing. At 28,000 feet an alternator was lost, Co-pilot noted the Pilot's ADI was spinning about the lateral axis, aircraft was in steep left bank nose low attitude, at 24,000 feet pilot stated "I've lost control, abandon the aircraft", egress was calculated to be 18,000 feet. The Co-pilot and Navigator egressed successfully, the rest of the crew did not survive.

Ricky K. Griffith, SGT, 9-3-1975, B-52G, s/n 57-6493, Seymour-Johnson, NC. Call sign Exalt 15 experienced fuel leak from right outboard wing tank. Due to this malfunction A/R and low level bombing was eliminated from the mission. Wing flutter was experienced and aircraft was restricted to 250 KIAS, airspeed was reduced to 242 KIAS. Emergency fuel tank emptying procedures were accomplished by level off, 3 degrees of right wing down lateral trim was required, rudder trim was zero. At 1215 EDT both pilots airspeed was 248 knots, aircraft true airspeed 394. At 1219:59 EDT Exalt 15 requested clearance from Jacksonville Center for communications check, clearance was granted, Center told Exalt to report back on frequency, at 1220:08 Exalt responded "one five wilco." This was the last transmission from Exalt 15. The IP, RN, and Gunner did not survive. Accident report AF Form 711 had no further information.

John W. Moore, MSGT, 3-31-1977, B-52H, s/n60-039, KI Sawyer AFB, Michigan. Aircraft with eight crew members completed A/R, LL bombing. Crew requested enroute descent and was cleared for a touch and go. At 30 miles aircraft cleared to 2700 feet, at 8 miles final transferred to the Final Controller, then aircraft cleared to minimum 1600 feet at 5 miles.... clearance then given to start descent for landing. At 3.0 miles from touchdown, radar contact was lost, missed approach instructions were transmitted to the aircraft. No response was received, aircraft was destroyed on ground impact. All crew members were fatalities.

Timothy E. McFarland, SRA, 10-30-1981, B-52D, s/n 55-078, March AFB, CA. Aircraft call sign Text 10 was cleared for training mission. Aircraft descended into the IR-177 for LL terrain avoidance, minimum night altitude was 400 feet. Entry into IR-177 was at 1021Z, weather was clear with light winds. Impact time was 1145Z, all eight crew members suffered fatal injuries. B-52 crew of six and two maintenance personnel. No further information available on USAF Mishap Report, AF Form 711.

The night **Bob Nemeth** was lost, our crews briefed together, rode the same bus to our aircraft, and then went our separate ways. When we landed, I heard them on the radio making routine calls and I went home. You may know only the Co-pilot and Navigator survived. The next morning, I and several others, went out on a C-54 searching but nothing was found.
James Hunt

HISTORICAL GUNNER ACCIDENTS

Major Carter, SSGT, 4-11-1983, B-52G s/n 58-0161, Robins AFB, GA. Lure 75 and Lure 76 cleared into LL route IR 176, weather was minimum ceiling 4600 feet, visibility 7 miles. Lure 75 entered LL at 1800Z, Lure 76 entered 3 minutes later. (Prior to entry Lure 75 reported problems with mapping radar, no indication from Lure 75 that the problem was corrected). Lure 76 reported variable weather conditions thru the LL route, requiring repeated transitions between terrain avoidance altitudes in VFR conditions and IFR altitudes over cloud obscured mountains and peaks. Lure 75 impacted 7050 Square Top Mountain at the 6800 foot level. There were no survivors.

David W. Felix, SGT, 10-16-1984, B-52G, s/n 57-6479, Fairchild AFB, WA. Aircraft call sign Swoon 52 scheduled for air refueling, LL at IR 276, followed by high altitude navigation leg. Swoon 52 entered low level at 0244Z, shortly past point E, the aircraft struck Hunts Mesa at an elevation of 6130 feet… (location 13 miles NE of Kayenta, Arizona). There were two deaths and five survivors, the Gunner and Instructor Pilot were fatally injured. No further information available.

This completes the fatalities for Gunners involved in aircraft accidents. This does not include Gunners killed during Linebacker, as I do not have that information. Funny story.... John Olsen (deceased natural causes) relayed this to me personally one-on-one. His aircraft was destroyed trying to abort take off at U-Tapao. Prior to aircraft exploding, he exited the aircraft using the escape rope, he started to run away and tripped, he got up and ran again and tripped again. Looking down at his feet, he saw that his Mae West had slipped off his shoulders, slid down his torso to his feet causing the tripping....

Now that I look back… wow! I guess I never thought or realized how hazardous our missions were. I am glad that I was able to put this report together and recognize the Gunners who died. Their aircraft accidents actually were all not in vain, as each accident improved the structure of the aircraft, checklist changes, and operational changes in all facets of flight. This no doubt increased the survivability of the crews that followed. *Harry Tolmich*

Sole Survivor of Jet Crash Talks to Wife

Lone survivor T/Sgt. Gene I. Grays talks with his wife shortly after crash of B-52.

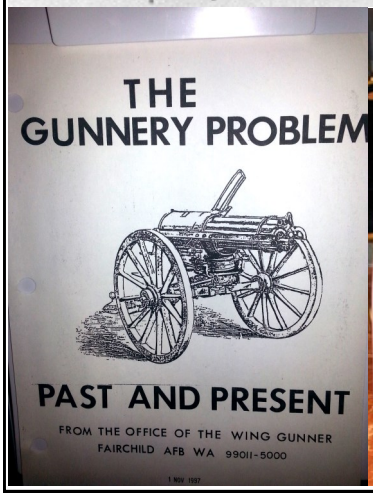
September 28 in U.S. Military History: 1912 – Corporal Frank S. Scott of the United States Army becomes the *first enlisted man to die in an airplane crash*. He and Pilot Lt. Lewis C. Rockwell were killed in the crash of an Army Wright Model B at College Park, Maryland.

MIRACLE SURVIVAL

Las Vegan recalls planes colliding in first B-52 raid of Vietnam War

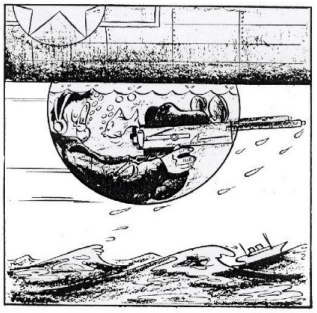
DON HARTEN/COURTESY PHOTO

Air Force 1st Lt. Don Harten, second from left, stands with fellow crew members, 1st Lt., Jim Erbes, left, and 1st Lt. Jay Collier, second from right, along with Lt. Col. Chuck Andermann, following the midair collision of two B-52s over Vietnam. Erbes, Harten and Collier were in one plane, and Andermann was in the other. They were the only survivors from the two six-man crews.



SHORT BURSTS

HEADQUARTERS 8TH AIR FORCE



SEPTEMBER 1944

MIRACLE SURVIVAL

Las Vegan recalls planes colliding in first B-52 raid of Vietnam War

By KEITH ROGERS

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Don Harten believes God had a plan for him, but dying in the Vietnam War wasn't part of it.

In the end, it was a miracle that he survived, not just the five combat tours and more than 1,000 hours he spent flying big bombers and fighter jets, but especially that day in 1965 during the first B-52 raid.

His plane never reached the target, a rubber plantation north of Hanoi. Instead, on the same day — June 18, 1965 — he survived a midair collision and another crash of the plane that had rescued him from the roiling South China Sea.

"My odds of living through that war were damned near zero," the gravelly voiced, 74-year-old Air Force veteran said in a late October interview.

He has been living in Las Vegas since 1997.

MISSION: ARC LIGHT ONE

The mission, known as Arc Light One, is the title of the book he wrote about his experience. Arc Light was the code name for B-52 operations throughout the war. This, the first one, was a response that President Lyndon B. Johnson had ordered after the Viet Cong's Feb. 7, 1965, attack on a Special Forces camp near Pleiku, South Vietnam, that had killed 28 military advisers.

B-52 Stratofortress

Although the massive B-52s could drop nuclear bombs, Harten's unit at Mather Air Force Base near Sacramento, Calif., had been practicing with conventional, World War II-type "iron bombs." The crews' skills were honed for the mission. The B-52 that Harten flew as co-pilot was the fifth to land in Guam.

They were supposed to take off 12 hours after they refueled and were loaded with bombs. Then they were to fly low over the South China Sea toward Haiphong and Hanoi, "then pop up to 1,500 feet and release more than 1,530 bombs — 51 from each of 30 B-52s — and literally vaporize the Phuc Yen airfield. They (the North Vietnamese) had no defenses to shoot down B-52s at that time, especially at night, especially low-level," Harten said.

"The war would have ended right there most likely."

Instead, the mission was delayed by more than four months and the target was changed to a rubber plantation in the jungle.

"There was nothing out there. They were told where we were coming and when we'd be there," he said, reflecting on the mindset of decision-makers who were charting a politically correct course for the undeclared war.

As a result, Harten said, there were flaws in the refueling strategy, with timing to meet airborne tankers thrown off by tail winds from a typhoon.

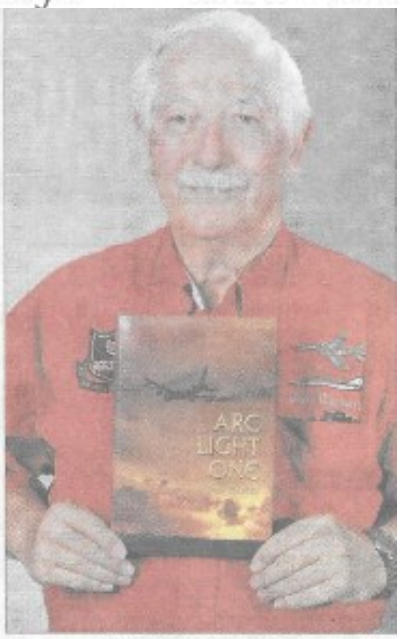
"A bunch of us first lieutenants complained about that. We bitched and moaned and cried and whined and everything else. They said, 'Well, you weren't on the thousand-plane raid to Hamburg' " during World War II.

"We said, 'Listen, you're fighting two wars ago. We're talking about now. You need to do some modern things with these modern jets, because they travel rather fast.' So we went out there, and the typhoon had sucked us inland. We were nine minutes early," he said.

CRASH OF THE B-52S

To adjust the arrival time for the tanker rendezvous, the pilot leading some of the B-52s made a 360-degree turn to chew up eight minutes.

Harten was at the controls because his pilot, Jim Gehrig, was taking a break before the refueling operation. Harten called on the inter-phone for Gehrig to hustle back, because Harten and the



JERRY HENKEL/LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Don Harten's book, "Arc Light One," tells about when, as an Air Force lieutenant, he was involved in a 1965 collision of two B-52 bombers over Vietnam. He has lived in Las Vegas since 1997.

radar navigator realized they would be facing other planes head-on as the lumbering formation circled. Their plane's airspeed, combined with that of the fast-approaching string of B-52s, meant they were on what amounted to be a 1,000-mph collision course.

"So we get halfway around the turn and radar navigator Terry Lowry said, 'We've got beacons at 4 miles and closing fast.' I looked out and here comes a B-52. Then I see this B-52 turn into a gray shape and its drop tank is going to hit me in the face, 18,000 pounds of jet fuel."

At that instant "everything turned into slow motion, real slow motion. I mean seconds became minutes, and we only had a couple seconds," Harten said.

It seemed like the approaching bomber "slowly got larger, and then it slowly fell underneath our cockpit and that great big six-story tail came sliding by on the right of us."

At first he thought the planes had missed each other. Suddenly there "was a big bounce and then explosions. It blinded me, and I didn't know that our right wing had blown off."

Harten's plane dropped straight down while the other, with its tail knocked off, went into a spin. Barely able to see, he grabbed the yoke.

"I kept thinking, 'If we just lost our wing tip I can still fly this thing.' Then,

somebody ejected and I thought it's time to jettison the airplane and get out, because it's starting to come apart."

He squeezed a handle to jettison the seat, but the lever was stuck. "I looked down and said, 'Fire you son of a bitch!' And 'bam.' Just then it fired."

The whiplash with a four-pound helmet on his head chipped a vertebrae in his neck. Another explosion sent shrapnel flying into his leg.

"Then the parachute opened and I looked down. The whole ocean was on fire."

DOWN TO THE SEA

The canopy started spinning, getting smaller as he dropped from 15,000 feet. The large fires on the sea from several hundred thousand pounds of jet fuel sent up a heat-filled cloud. He tried to slip out of its way but the chute kept spinning.

"Of all things, I thought of the law of conservation of angular momentum from college physics," he said.

So he pulled another handle, and a small, yellow life raft dropped on a 50-foot cord followed by a survival kit. Dangling below him, they stabilized the spin. "Conservation of angular momentum worked."

As he descended, the flames on the sea began to subside.

"To this day it seems like a dream," he said. "It just doesn't seem real. So I'm looking down at the ocean and I'm praying to God: 'Oh save my sweet ass.' And he said to me, and I swear I heard him say, 'Save it yourself. I want to see how you're going to handle the situation.' "

The typhoon-powered waves reached 40 feet tall, and the fierce wind blew his parachute at an angle.

"Finally I hit the water, but I didn't go in except up to about my waist because I suddenly set a world record for water skiing," he quipped. "I was drug sideways, and it was spinning me. And every time I was face down I would swallow a whole lot of water."

He struggled to pull the parachute release rings, but they wouldn't budge. With both hands he tugged on one with all his strength until it released, causing the chute to whip away and leaving him connected to it on one side.

He swam to the tiny raft. It was a tight fit. He pulled in the survival kit only to find items such as wool socks, a ski mask and sleeping bag for enduring a winter Arctic landing, but not much for the South China Sea in the summer. The turquoise water carried his raft up and down. In minutes he was seasick.

He saw an orange-and-black freighter pass within a quarter mile, but it was

Then suddenly he went down, pulled underwater by the still-connected parachute. He grabbed a knife from his thigh pocket and slashed the cord and his fingers too.

"Now I'm bleeding and I'm worried about sharks."

At sunrise he blew more air into the raft's stem to reinflate it.

"I just sat there thinking, 'You know for the first time in my life since I was an infant, I'm now totally dependent on somebody else for my life.'"

CRASH OF THE RESCUERS

In a while a low-flying air tanker circled overhead. Its crew dropped a large life raft out the cargo door within a few hundred yards of him. But the waves, cresting at 25 feet, were too tall for him to see it.

After five hours, a seaplane landed and taxied toward him.

"They kind of pulled in backwards. I see this float. It had a tie-down ring on the back of it. I grabbed a hold and wasn't going to let go. The next thing I know, this young kid popped out of the water. I said, 'Are you Neptune?' "

The crew pulled him inside the plane and bundled him in a blanket. Only three others out of 12 crew members from the B-52s had survived the midair collision. As the seaplane started to take off, Harten noticed water coming up from the floor. The plane's fuselage had cracked while landing in the rough sea.

"We tried to take off six times, but we hit the waves and couldn't make it. The last time we finally bounded into the air and got about 150 feet and crashed. It was solid and nasty. We were bobbing around, and the plane is really filling with water."

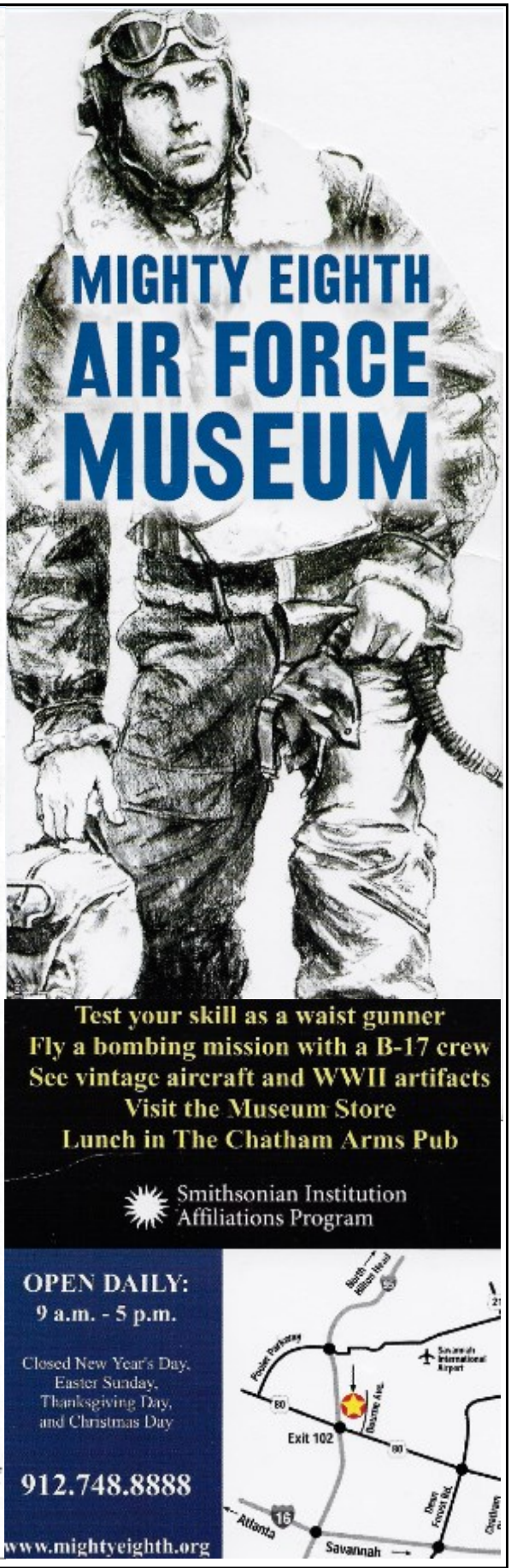
Then he looked across the water and saw the same black ship with orange trim that he had seen earlier, the Norwegian freighter, Argo. The crew sent over a long lifeboat that hauled them to the ship.

Harten said it was "survivor's guilt" that made him keep flying as a fighter pilot in F-105s and F-111s.

He said the Vietnam War was worthwhile for the effort to curb the spread of communism, but not for the way American politicians made the military fight it.

"There are things that changed in me. I found out what was important. You see these guys right here. Those are the guys who were important, the guys who died," he said, clutching a photograph of his crew.

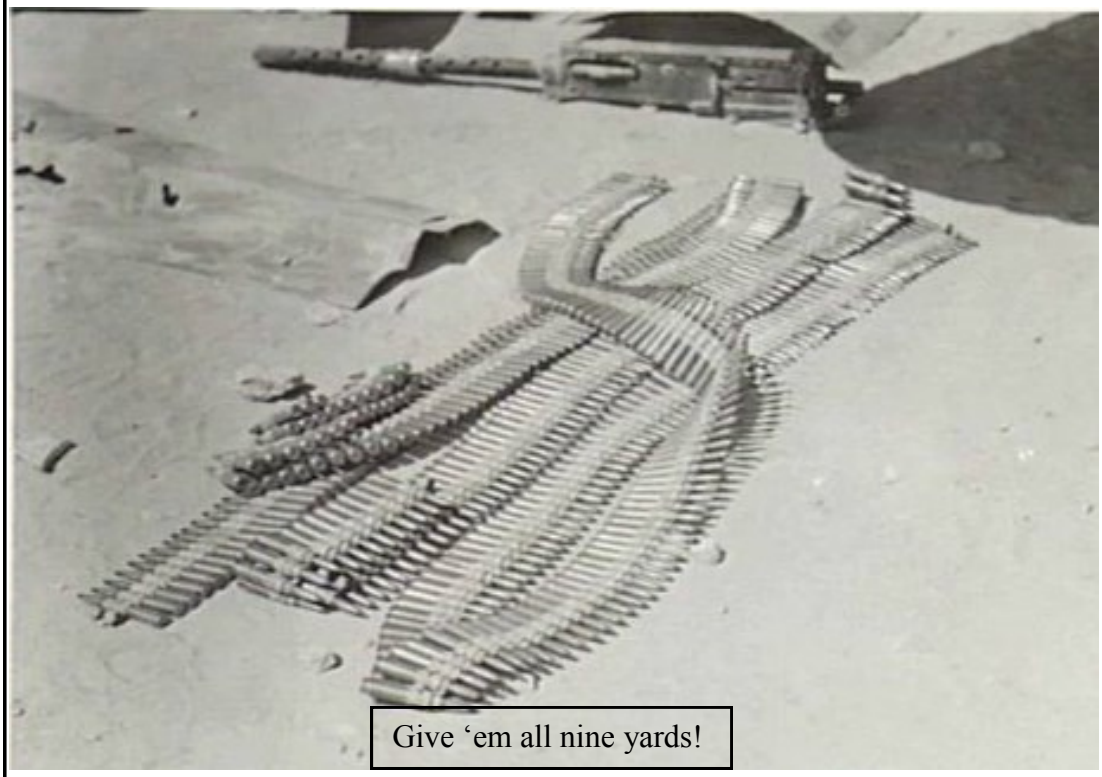
That's what he'll be thinking about on Veterans Day.



UNKNOWN ACES

To all my bomber gunner buddies: this one is for you. Great thanks to Lt Gen Brett Dula who forwarded this to me. JAB (*Joseph Bowden*)

The Unknown Aces of the 8th Air Force



Give 'em all nine yards!

Unlike the fighter pilots, individual bomber gunners did not receive official credit for any of their shoot downs. Part of this was for policy reasons– the Army wanted each gunner to think of himself as part of a larger crew and act as a team, rather than as an individual.

A much bigger reason, however, was practical–in a typical B-17 "defensive box" formation, each enemy fighter plane may have had as many as a dozen gunners firing at it simultaneously, and even if it was confirmed that the plane was in fact destroyed (often difficult), it was simply impossible to determine whose shots had actually brought it down.

Nevertheless, some bomber gunners did keep an unofficial count of enemy planes they had shot down, and some individual gunners were even given official recognition (though none was officially credited as an "air ace").

John Quinlan, the tail gunner on the celebrated B-17 "Memphis Belle", who had an unofficial tally of eight enemy fighters destroyed–five of those over Europe in the "Belle" and three more as a tail gunner in a B-29 over Japan.

One of the few gunner aces who received official recognition was **Benjamin Warner**, a B-17 waist gunner. During a bombing mission on July 5, 1943, Warner shot down seven German fighters, for which he was given the Distinguished Service Cross. He finished the war with nine enemy planes destroyed.

MSgt **Michael Arooth** shot down 17 enemy aircraft to reach triple "Ace" status. But he wasn't a fighter pilot. In fact, he wasn't a pilot at all . Arooth, a tail gunner on the B-17 "Tondelayo", shot down a total of 17 enemy fighters in the course of 14 missions. Arooth was one of the few bomber gunners who received official recognition, being awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

The bomber crew of which he was a part, participated in the infamous Schweinfurt raid in September 1943. They encountered flak and enemy fighters, and the aircraft was severely damaged. Sgt Arooth had shot down three enemy aircraft on this mission, but now, on the return trip home, more trouble erupted.

The oxygen system of the aircraft was damaged and only partially working, and Sgt Arooth was severely wounded when he discovered one gun was jammed. In spite of the situation, he repaired the gun in time to shoot down his 4th adversary. The aircraft attempted to make it to base, but was eventually ditched in the English Channel, with all hands being saved. For his efforts, Sgt Arooth was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

Staff Sergeant Arooth's official record as a gunner — the greatest in Air Force history — included shooting down at least 17 enemy planes on only 14 missions, though it was estimated he actually downed more than 20 enemy aircraft. In 1958, Arooth was selected as a pallbearer at the ceremonies of the burial of the Unknown Soldier of World War II at Arlington National Cemetery.

Nineteen-year-old mans Buff guns

FAIRCHILD'S YOUNGEST GUNNER at 19 practices his trade on an Air Force simulator. He's combat ready, Amn. Cliff G. Frome, who recently returned from TDY to Ellsworth AFB, S.D. where he up graded in the G model B-52. He left Wednesday for a TDY on Guam. (U.S. Air Force Photo)

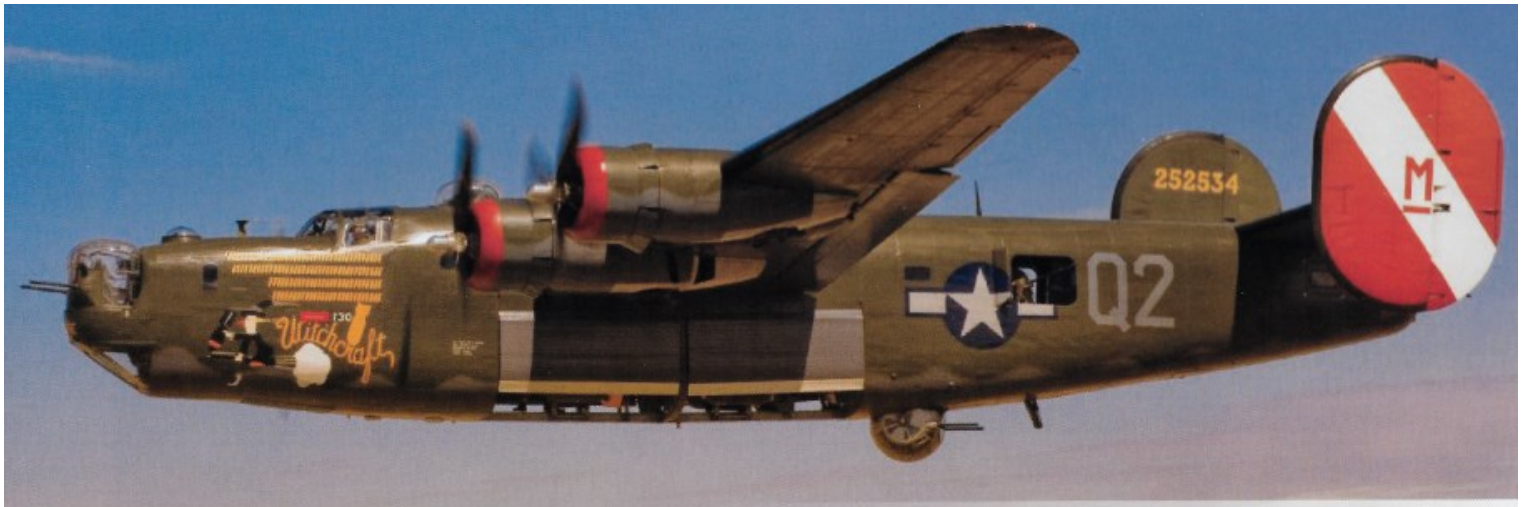
In the last few weeks Fairchild has experienced WAF SPs, a WAF in Life Support, the last crew to fly a tanker mission in SEA, and now it's experiencing a 19-year-old tail gunner.

The combat ready gunner is Amn. Cliff G. Frome. He's assigned to the 325th Bomb Squadron. Airman Frome received his initial training at Castle AFB, Calif. He came to Fairchild in time to go TDY to Ellsworth AFB, S.D. for upgrading in the G model B-52.

The Garden Grove, Calif. native completed his upgrading in time to become the youngest combat ready gunner in the 92nd Bomb Wing.

Airman Frome was graduated from Pacifica High School in Garden Grove in 1972. He entered the Air Force in December of that year. He is termed by his bomb squadron counterparts as "quiet but he knows what he's doing."

He left Wednesday on a TDY to Guam.



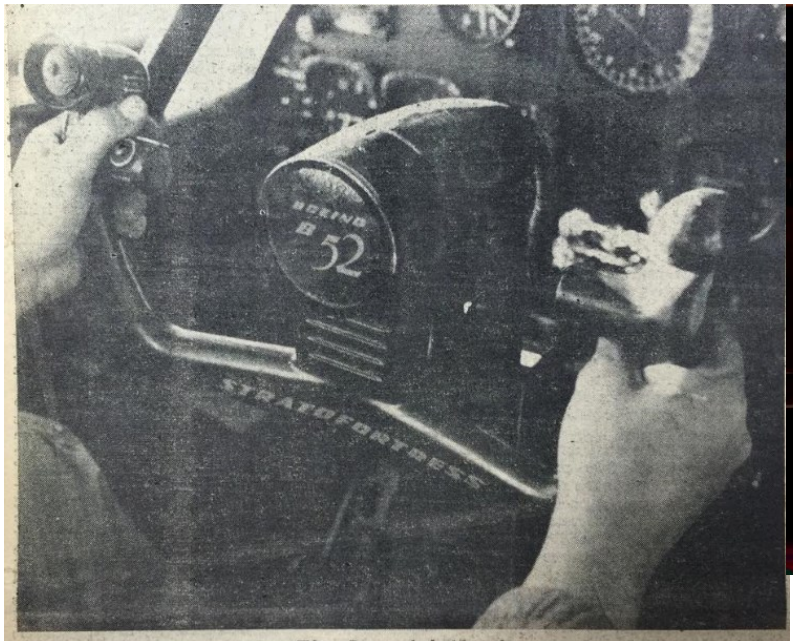
"You have heard the old expression: a B-24 looked like the box that the B-17 came in. It was an ugly airplane. But it would fly fast, it would fly high, it would fly with a bigger bomb load."

– Bill Toombs, B-24 flight engineer, Second World War

The B-24 Liberator was one of the two main types of bomber aircraft used by the United States Army Air Forces to attack Germany, carrying more bombs further and faster than the more famous B-17 bomber. It was made in huge numbers in American factories, with more B-24s built than any other American aircraft.

B-24s flew one of the most famous American bombing raids of the war, against targets in Ploiești, Romania — making a daring low-level attack on oil fields that supplied a third of Germany's vital high-octane fuel. Only the Liberator had the range to reach these targets from airfields in North Africa. Of the 178 aircraft sent, only 88 made it back to base, and of the 1,726 airmen involved, 500 were lost. With its long range, the Liberator also played a key role with the US Navy and RAF Coastal Command against German U-boats in the Battle of the Atlantic.

One of the last remaining airworthy B-24 Liberators, the aircraft above has been painted to represent 'Witchcraft' (serial number 42-52534). 'Witchcraft' is famous for completing 130 missions, the highest number of any 2nd Air Division craft.



The Powerful Hands

These hands and hands like these have been protecting the Strategic Air Command and the free World for 19 years. Hands like these first clentched the steering devices of the B-17, B-29, B-36, the B-52 and will clench future aircraft. These powerful hands are ever ready to give their strength in defending and preserving the peace. For the 92d Bomb Wing Anniversary story, turn to page 3. (Photo by Maj. C. B. Goodie)

Sleep very well tonight, your SAC Alert Force Gunners are on duty ready to defend the Homeland against all enemies, foreign and domestic! (You can't have this much fun unless you attend Nashville reunion)

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

August 10,2016

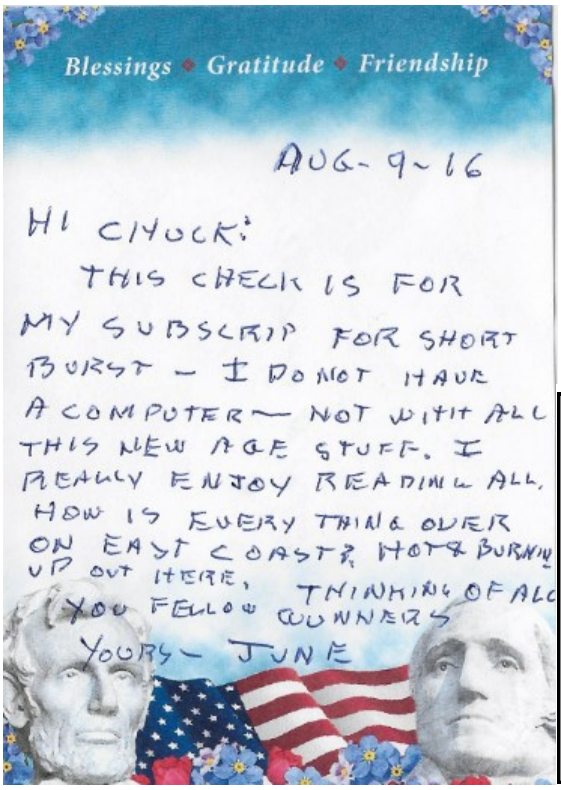
Chuck Dean
AFGA Membership Chairman
473 McMahan Mill Road
Piedmont, SC 29673

Dear Chuck:

Also I would like to point out that on the gunners WEB site , "About Us" section is a list of the airplanes that the Air Force Gunners served on. Missing in the list is the B-24 Bomber.

I flew 50 Combat Missions as a Nose Gunner on a B-24 during World War II in the 307th Bomb Group, 13th Air Force, in the South, Central and South West Pacific.

Sincerely
Lewis H Smith
Lewis H. Smith



Enjoy the work you guys do. Not much info on stories from us B-36 gunners it was a great plane a joy to fly with

Not much B-36 info because no one sending in their stories. Explain to us what is going on in this picture!

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Pete,

I have enclosed a picture that appeared in the Waco Tribune-Herald, and would like to see if perhaps someone in the Air Force Gunners Association can identify the Gunner and EW on this crew. The picture was taken at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, and the Radar Navigator, Lieutenant Colonel Bill Henderson, who is now 92 years young, cannot remember the names.

If anyone can identify any of them, please let me know by e-mail or regular mail and I will pass it on to Colonel Henderson. It will make his day! My e-mail and address is below.

Thanks very much,
Carl Buckland
AFGA Life Member

Carl Buckland
33025 Woodcrest Drive
Whitney, TX 76692

cbuckland08@windstream.net

COMPETING FOR HONORS—These are the members of Crew S-03, 325th Bomb Squadron, who are representing the 92nd Strategic Aerospace Wing in the 1966 Strategic Air Command Combat Competition. Left to right are: Maj. John H. Thigpen, aircraft commander; 1st Lt. Daniel J. Jarboe, copilot; Cap. Stanley Kmiecik, radar navigator; Capt. Donald R. Vallance, navigator; Capt. Donald E. Lumpkin, electronic warfare officer, and MSgt. Robert Colucci, gunner.

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

Dear Mr. Vanwey (Jack),

The tragic story of your brother sure did generate lots of interest and phone calls. Mr. Bob Reynolds was one of our B-26 gunners that called and added so much very personal information about your brother from that day in Korea when he didn't come back to the base after that flight with the Wing Commander. Bob, write your story!

These personal accounts of the gunners that were his squadron mates, honestly, I couldn't believe I was hearing from the gunners that were in the same squadron and sister squadron! Bob, please write your story!

I do know that the gunners that personally knew Bill "Willie" Vanwey spoke of his character in the very highest regards. I am so privileged to have heard these first-hand accounts of those events of the loss that day over six decades ago.

How interesting that you later came to work at Tinker and performed depot maintenance on the B-52s that most members of our Air Force Gunners Association have flown on.

If you come across anything about your gunner brother that would be of interest to our readers, I would consider it an honor to print it in this publication about gunners for gunners.

Very sincerely and respectably,
Editor, Short Bursts

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

FIFTH GENERATION AIRCRAFT POSE SERIOUS TRAINING/SIMULATION CHALLENGES TO USAF

Lieutenant General Jeff Harragian, an F-22 pilot and Prospective Commander, US Central Command; stated at a recent conference, "If you enter into a heavy threat zone with sophisticated air defenses in a fourth-generation fighter, you will die". The majority of the force will consist of these aircraft (F-15, F-16, F/A-18, A-10) will remain in the inventory well into the 2020s. The challenge to the USAF will be to employ these assets in such zones in a survivable and combat effective manner. The challenge can be and must be met with fifth-generation aircraft (F-22, F-35A) that can neutralize the threat. However, there will be fewer of these assets than requested by the USAF.

A serious limiting factor and technical challenge is the training of the fifth-generation pilots in conjunction with the other air assets in a realistic threat environment. To date, combat training has been inadequate. Air-to-air combat engagements with fourth-generation aircraft have been "ho-hum". Reports of F-35s losing air battles is patently untrue. Speed and performance envelopes require airspace and geography that are not available. Also, combining all the other assets required is not cost-effective, and would impose serious demands upon assets. The enemy can observe and determine performance and limitations.

The answer may be in simulation. However, the simulation must be of very high fidelity, must have the full set of human sensory inputs (visual, kinesthetic, etc.), while containing the full combat scenario (threats, collaborating assets, etc.). The sensor and performance capabilities of the fifth-generation aircraft alone (sensor fusion, total situation awareness) will impose very severe demands upon simulation technology. Fighter pilots are notorious for rejecting simulators and visual simulations that are deficient in virtually any respect. Massive investment in simulation technology may be required. However, this author fears that the technical challenges are beyond 'state-of-the-art' for the foreseeable future.

In summary, the projected threat environment will not permit fourth-generation aircraft to survive without the threat being neutralized by fifth-generation aircraft. These aircraft will be in short supply. Classical flight and operational training under projected threat scenarios is impractical because of limited airspace and geography, and very high cost of marshalling all the resources required for minimally effective combat training. Simulation offers promise, but the high performance and the incredible sensor technology of the fifth-generation aircraft; plus the need to simulate all cooperative and threat assets in the environment; poses simulation technology challenges that may be virtually impossible to meet without massive investment of already scarce funds.

This investment will result in fewer air assets; but may be preferable to having fifth-generation aircraft flown in high-density environments by inadequately trained pilots, thus jeopardizing the entire force.

William Gaddes
28 August 2016

THE BOEING COMPANY MUST BE DESPERATE

The Boeing Company has challenged the recent fighter purchase of a sovereign foreign government, Belgium; whose military has selected the F-35 as its next generation fighter. Boeing in an unprecedented manner, has requested "decision-making documentation" and related data supporting the decision. Belgium should be livid. French aviation firms are "looking on with interest". The old McDonnell Fighter Division, which will soon shut down the FA-18 line, will essentially go out of the fighter business. Tragic, as we all know the fabulous fighter history, especially the 5,000 F-4 Phantoms that equipped most of our Western Nation allies.

Why is Boeing so aggressive? There have been persistent rumors that certain fourth-generation fighters have bested the F-35 in classical aerial combat. There appears to be a lid on these claims. Does Boeing know something about the FA-18 SUPER HORNET vice the F-35 that could change the equation? This author hopes not; as we and at least eight of our Allied Nations have put "all of our eggs in the F-35 basket".

Source: The Wall Street Journal
Bill Gaddes

LETTERS AND E-MAILS

From: Gary Heinz
Sent: Saturday, September 24, 2016 5:17 PM
Subject: Honor List

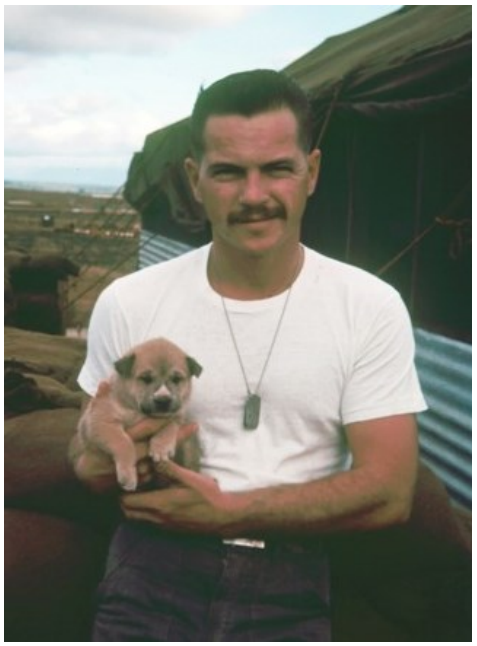
Gentlemen,

I am Gary K. Heinz, Life Member of the Gunners (AFGA # L 3095) and quickly becoming one of the oldest members of AFGA or at least in the over 75 group. I accessed the internet and reviewed the list of Gunners that have passed on. I must say it was a real walk through history for me. I was very sad at some of the names as the circumstances of their demise was not always a grey headed Grand Father with his loving family at his bed side. Rather, those that I knew and flew with in Viet Nam were not honored in your list and their deaths were at the hands of a savage communist military machine that hoped to conquer adjacent countries and spread their influence world wide. As my memory starts to fade, I hope I can recall those brave Gunners that gave it all so many years ago as they cannot and will not be forgotten!

I will set the stage for this by passing on a review of how Aerial Gunners came to be in Viet Nam in the first place. US was engaged in a struggle (undeclared warfare) in South East Asia due to the South East Asian Treaty from the Eisenhower administration. Signers to the pact in one form or another (Non-Combat for Japan and Philippines, etc.) all agreed that an attack on the infant democracy of South Viet Nam would be an attack on the home country (Australia, New Zealand, US, and Korea) and a military response was required.

Our word was our bond and all responded to the aid of South Viet Nam with US leading the charge around 1963 or 1964. The Air Commandos were deployed in this time period and were experiencing losses from a role designed to help the Viet Nam and Laotian military to achieve a more direct combat involvement. In this time period, the planners required a new weapons system to be deployed to SEA as the GE Corporation in Burlington, Vermont, had perfected a six-barrel, fast-firing, revolving gun to be mounted in a cargo plane. USAF had plenty of WWII C-47 aircraft and crew members to fly them. The new secret 'Gatling' guns were a separate problem for the planners as the Commandos and Tactical Air Command did not have a career field for gunners.

Myself and 24 additional crew dog SSgts were selected for combat in this newest of all weapons system with no change in AFSC (32371) or a cancelation of our TS clearance. The SAC gunners were hurried through training on AC-47 'Puff The Magic Dragon' aircraft at Forbes AFB, Kansas, and became an operational squadron on 1 November 1965 as the 4th Air Commando Squadron of the 1st Air Commando Wing. In addition, we were told that after the one-year remote combat tour, we would be returned to SAC and would be flying our beloved B-52 Bomber. I was returned to Dyess AFB, checked out in 50 days and flew with the 337th Bomb Squadron in the 'E' and 'F' models to complete a nine-year, military career.



The Gunners killed in combat not mentioned are:

Darryl Hassenger
Larry Thornton
Luther Rose
Robert Foster (Silver Star)
Matthews (correct name with AFGA historian)

Ces't La Vie,
Gary K. Heinz
116 Mill Run Drive
Mocksville, NC 27028
dosequis@yadtel.net

LETTERS AND E-MAILS, GUNNER PILOTS

Pete,

You asked for input on gunners who became pilots (private).

I was a 52 gunner 63-66 at Larson and Turner and then went to OTS in 66 after transferring to Turner. I requested pilot or navigator training but I was about one year overage so they sent me to Maintenance school where I stayed in SAC (Travis) until I received an Air Force Institute Training assignment. After the AFIT assignment and starting a new career in research and development of new systems, F-15, F-16, A-10, B-1, etc. I decided to join the Aero-Club and get my private pilot's license. Flying, especially solo, was something very therapeutic. Cruising the blue sky, hopefully not running into bad weather, really allowed me to minimize any problems outside of the cockpit. Life was pure and clean in the open air.

I was sometimes able to secure the airplane for a few days on business trips after retiring from the USAF and working for NASA. On one particular trip to Langley as I was trying to depart, I was given the directive to taxi out while two F-15s were running their engines. Suddenly I was given approval for takeoff but expedite my climb out (on a Cessna 172?) I did my best and at about 700 ft. two F-15s came screaming by, one on each side, with neat victory rolls. In another situation I was landing at Andrews when told to follow a Citation ahead of me and exit the active on the right (west) as soon as possible. Normally the aero club exited near the end of the active on the East side. The Citation exited in front of the control tower and asked for a priority parking as he had a "code" aboard. I was stuck behind him and could not move until he moved. The Army pilot, quite authoritatively again requested priority parking due to his "code". The controller then came back; "move that Citation to where I directed you or I will have it towed immediately as the President of Russia is landing and will park in the priority slot in front of you". That ended the discussion and I was told to turn left after the Army Citation moved and taxi to the end and await further directions.

I had to end my personal flying days in 1997 when I was found to have cataracts in both eyes. Today I would love to make a landing again. As I watch my granddaughter play soccer in Leesburg across from the Leesburg airport, I watch the takeoffs and landings with envy. It is almost as exciting as streaking down the runway on a chrome dome or ORI. I miss it.

Dave Austin, Ret AF Maj/B-52 Gunner/MBA

LETTERS AND E-MAILS, GUNNER PILOTS

In the latest Short Burst you asked about gunners with pilot training. When I became a First Sergeant at Andersen, my orderly room chief clerk was a flight instructor. The Navy had an aero club at Agana airport and I trained there receiving my private pilots license. I built up time by taking people on sight seeing trips around Guam if they paid the rental fee.

At KI Sawyer, I trained at the Marquette Airport receiving my single-engine, Commercial Pilot certificate with Instrument rating.

At Mildenhall, I flew with the Lakenheath Aero Club. Upper Heyford did not have an aero club but the RAF had gliders nearby. I gave flying gliders a try but wasn't very good at it and never soloed. It was a lot of fun as we did takeoffs using the reel and being towed by another airplane.

I haven't flown since I retired at Andrews.

James Hunt

From: Robert Ashley
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2016 2:00 PM
Subject: Pilot Training Story

Basically, the Wing Gunner, Ken Koval, was a Certified Flight Instructor at the Aero Club at Barksdale and every new gunner got the come on down to the Aero Club and check it out speech. So I took ground school, and flight instruction at the Aero Club with Chief Koval as my instructor and after about 6 months soloed at the Shreveport International Airport. That's about it.

From: Ken Schell
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2016 6:45 PM
Subject: Pilot Story

Hi, Pete.

Good to hear from you. I hope you, Connie, and all are well.

It took me about 13 years after separating to start flying. While attending college and pumping fuel at Oakland County Municipal Airport (PTK), I received my Private Pilot certificate, then my Aircraft Dispatcher certificate (which really helped prepare for later pilot tickets). Instrument rating was next followed by the multi-engine commercial. The only GI Bill benefits available was for college so my training was self-funded.

Being marketable, I began flying tourists around the Grand Canyon, then on to a regional airline; three years as a First Officer (FO) before upgrading to Captain in Part 121. This was my first type (command) rating: Saab 340. When I thought that the company was going under I jumped to business jets and was typed in the Lear 60 and Learjet. An old friend from my Dispatch days was flying international cargo and helped me get an interview - I then got type rated in the MD-11, though only acted as a First Officer and the occasional cruise Captain (and what a ride - same wingspan as the old D model but maxing out at 630,500 pounds for takeoff as opposed to the D model's 450,000!). My last rating was a Second In Command rating for the DC-9 since I flew the MD-80.

Not since facing aft for about 2,200 hours have I had such an exciting job. I have now amassed about 7,000 piloting hours in five continents. When I think back to my first deployment of Bullet Shot I know I'm lucky to be here at all, but that's another story. My most recent pilot job was back where it started for me; flying tourists around the Grand Canyon. Though still healthy I've aged out of Part 121. Marty Bridges knows this regulation all too well.

Thanks for all the good work you and the others are doing for the AFGA. I'm looking forward to Short Bursts.

Cheers,
Ken Schell

(Not quite 300 Missions, The Blue Max... *Editor*)

LETTERS AND E-MAILS, GUNNER PILOTS

I am nearing the end of a great flying career and I am often asked how I got started. I usually say I started out flying backwards. I do believe we are the sum of our experiences and I have had more than my share. In the spring of 1972 I was finishing up my sophomore year in college and lacking some direction in life. I enlisted in the Air Force and went off to Lackland. I also believe we all experience defining moments in our lives and one of those came while in Basic when I was called to personnel and was asked to volunteer for the Gunnery field. It was at Wright-Patt that I would make life-long friends. I began taking some flying lessons at the aero club between TDY tours to Thailand and Guam.

Upon separation from the Air Force I was back in Chicago planning my next move when I was contacted by a fellow gunner, Jim Milstead. Jim was at Southern Illinois University studying pre med. Jim encouraged me to come down and enroll in SIU's aviation program. I did just that and obtained my Commercial Pilots License and Instructors Certificate as well as a Bachelor of Science degree. My charter flying experience started there as well. It was December of '77 and most students were heading home for the holidays. The Chief charter pilot approached me and asked what I was doing New Years Day. "What ever you want me to do sir" was my response. An hour later I was airborne in the right seat of the DC-3 getting my co-pilot check out.

After graduation I took a job flying King Airs for a coal company in Pittsburgh PA. It was a nice job but I was craving more adventure. Answering an ad for a position with an aviation company on Malta, I found myself on a B-747 bound for Rome. My first project was to go down to Somalia and arrange for the shipment of parts and the ferrying of two DC-3 aircraft purchased from Somali Airlines. It was 1980. To say the ferry flights were interesting would be an understatement. We flew around the horn to Djibouti, then on to Port Sudan and Cairo. The next legs would be Crete for refueling then on to Malta. I was to make that trip several times, each one a new adventure. We had contracts with major oil companies in Sudan and Egypt as well as Somalia. I would eventually become Project Manager and Chief Pilot for our operation in Central Africa. Based in Tchad we would also fly in Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

Back stateside it was time to find more stable work. Hired at a division of Pan Am, I was off to Berlin and flying in Central Europe. I had the opportunity to make several ferry flights across the North Atlantic in the ATR 42 aircraft. The future was bright then Pan Am failed and I was back on the street. An opportunity to work for a small Texas based airline presented itself and off I went to Dallas. I have spent the last 25 years flying for Southwest Airlines. It has been an incredible ride and I have been very fortunate. I have been blessed to have flown airplanes for 40 years but I will always remember I was a Gunner first!

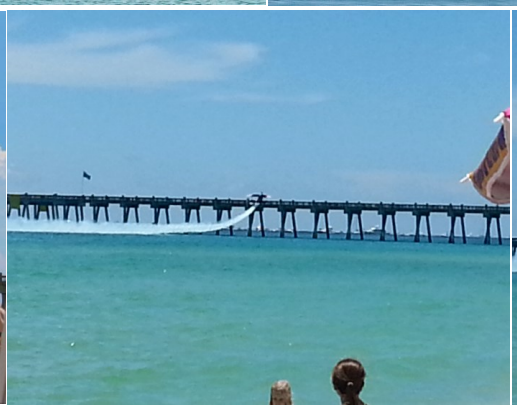
Blue skies and tailwinds,

Marty Bridges

PENSACOLA BEACH BLUE ANGELS

If it has been several years since you have been to an airshow, now would be a good time to look at next years' show schedule and find an event happening close to where you are located and plan to attend. We ventured to the Blue Angel homecoming at Pensacola Beach last summer and along with hundreds of thousands of aviation enthusiasts, we were not disappointed for a minute during this three-day event (Thursday, Friday practice, Saturday show). The practice and show reinforced that we were very safe from any type of extremist. There was a large US Coast Guard armed presence and made me boom with pride in light of our Navy being harassed almost daily in the Gulf.

The Blue Angels did some spectacular passes 300 feet from the shoreline at about 100 feet in altitude. Fast passes slightly less than the speed of sound were nothing short of the best exhibition flying I have ever witnessed. If you want to see the Fat Albert C-130 that supports the road show cut below and between two condos, along with the incredible max climb (without the rocket assist since the military has been cut to the bone and beyond in funding), this was the place to see the best show ever. Unless the Thunderbirds resurrect the F-4, they cannot even hold a candle to the sights and sounds compared to the US Navy and their F-18s in crowd-pleasing jet noise, skill, and low-level showmanship!



LETTERS AND E-MAILS TO THE EDITOR

Arc Light/Young Tiger Reunion, 6 – 10 June, 2017, in Omaha

The Embassy Suites in downtown Omaha will be the host hotel for the event and everything will be at that location except for a golf tournament, shopping trip, Zoo trip and if the STRATCOM HQ building is up and running, a possible tour there. Also backup is a SAC Museum tour.

There is a secured a rate of $139.00 per day for a double suite (living room, king-size bedroom and kitchenette with refrigerator and microwave). This price also gets cook-to-order breakfast, free parking, free cocktails (1730-1930) with snacks, free transportation to and from the airport and free shuttle service to anywhere within three miles of the location (this includes all the Casinos in Council Bluffs and all of downtown Omaha).

Should you elect to go to the Zoo, the shuttle will take you there and pick you up. There will be a buffet on the evening of arrival (3 June) and a Banquet on the last day of the event. All will be catered at the Embassy Suites.

For those of you that are unfamiliar with the "Old Market" in the Omaha area, I chose the Embassy Suites because there are at least a dozen restaurants, watering holes, and shops within a two or three block walk. You don't have to find a parking place to have a multitude of places to go or things to do.

"Arc Lighters or Young Tigers" tell all of your "fellow AC/BS" friends of this event. All have always had a very enjoyable time. Those "war stories" have a way of growing with the passing years!!

Questions, please e-mail me . I'll do everything I can to take care of you.

Johnny
Jjohn71660@cox.net

Subject: Gunners Sculpture

I am still working on getting a sculpture to put in the Maxwell/Gunter Memorial Park at the Enlisted Heritage Hall at Gunter. The sculpture will represent all enlisted gunners that flew on bomber aircraft in the Army Air Corps & United States Air Force. I want ideas. I would like inputs from as many people as possible. I want to know if they think the idea is good.

I would like to know how many in the AFGA will support this idea. It will require fund raising. I think the sculpture should be a larger-than-life gunner in a flight suit, holding a flying helmet, which will stand approximately 81" tall. The cost will be approximately $40,000. The reason I think we should do this is, we are the last of the aerial gunners that flew on bombers.

The project will take about a year to complete once the decision is made as to what it should look like. We could make a wall with all the aircraft that had aerial gunners, are just a few ideas about what we can do. E-mail APollardFlyboy@aol.com
Thank you,
Art Pollard

AFGA NEWSREEL

Three-hundred five enlisted airmen were selected among eight-hundred applicants and will take the next step to become **enlisted remotely piloted aircraft pilots**, the Air Force announced in early November. The airmen passed Air Force Enlisted or Officer Pilot Qualifying Test and the Test of Basic Aviation Skills, and will now get required medical screening. "We have an incredibly talented pool of enlisted airmen, and we're confident that this rigorous selection process will yield excellent enlisted aircrew who will continue to provide combatant commanders with the ISR (intel, surveillance, recon) they need to win today's fight," SMSgt. Rebecca Guthrie, Career Enlisted Aviator Assignments Manager at the Air Force Personnel Center, (*like gunners Timlake, Killgore, Galambos*) said in the release. Two master sergeants on Nov. 3 became the **first enlisted airmen to complete solo flights in 60 years** after their initial training flights. The two men, whose full names are not being released, are part of the Enlisted Pilot Initial Class (EPIC) program, which began on Oct. 12. Under the program, enlisted airmen will be trained to fly remotely piloted aircraft as part of a larger initiative to address an RPA pilot shortage. After completing Initial Flight Training in Pueblo, they will continue to RPA-focused training at JBSA -Randolph, Texas, and then Basic Qualification Training at Beale AFB, Calif. The program is usually completed in about one year. Thousands of enlisted pilots trained and flew operations during the World Wars in the first half of the 20th century. Last week's **enlisted solo flights were first since the Cadet Aviation Program ended** in 1961.

Gen. John Hyten took command of **US Strategic Command at Offutt** in November. Hyten, had commanded Air Force Space Command since August 2014, replaced Adm. Cecil Haney, who had been at STRATCOM since November 2013. Ash Carter said. "His experience and expertise will be a tremendous asset to STRATCOM as we prepare and face future threats in all domains." Dunford witnessed a very brief conversation between President Barack Obama and Carter before the apparently easy decision was made. "Given the array of threats and challenges we face, they knew that leading an organization of Strategic Command's importance was going to require a special leader, and clearly we have that kind of leader in General John Hyten," Dunford said. After taking command, Hyten shared his two "red lines" that he said he has shared in every one of his change-of-command speeches, including his first to his first squadron at Offutt in 1996. "First, I can handle any news that comes through my door, except old news. If something good happens, let me know, and I'll celebrate it with you. If something bad happens, let me know, and I'll help you fix it. But if something happens, and you chose not to tell me, when I find out, and I will, I'm not going to worry about you, I'm just going to worry about fixing that problem," he said. "Second, everybody that comes to work in US Strategic Command, each and every one of you, has made a special commitment to this nation, and you deserve to be treated with respect. I have no patience for those who don't treat others with the respect they have earned." During his confirmation hearing in September, Hyten said figuring out *how to respond to a North Korea that is capable of striking the Unites States* will be at the top of his to-do list. He also pledged to *review the Pentagon's EW capabilities* and ability to control the electromagnetic spectrum. Gen. John Raymond assumed command of AF Space Command from Hyten Oct. 25.

AFGA NEWSREEL

Two B-1s from Dyess, and **two BUFFs from Barksdale** AFB, La., took to the skies above the Gulf of Mexico last month to take out more than 200 digital enemy targets with simulated standoff weapon strikes. The live-fly exercise was part of a larger integration exercise at Barksdale between the 77th and 340th Weapons Schools. A six-month training course that involved ten agencies within the bomber community preceded the exercise. During the October 13 flight, the bomber crews simulated destroying enemy air defenses. "We integrate a lot of different capabilities to try to confuse the enemy to the extent that we can get those missiles to their intended targets," said Maj. Kevin Johnson, 77th WPS B-1 instructor. He said the use of standoff weapons is "a critical mission set that we need to be able to execute in order to hold our enemies at risk because as threat systems become more and more advanced, they have the ability to push us further and further away,". "If you want to talk about an exponential curve, it's near vertical after this week." Students from both weapons schools will continue training together at Nellis for the final phase.

The BOnes are headed to Guam for the first time in 10 years, as US Pacific Command replaces the nuclear-capable B-52s with conventional B-1s as part of the continuous bomber presence mission. BOnes from Ellsworth AFB, S.D., will touch down at Andersen, replacing BUFFs from Minot. The deployment includes 300 airmen. The BOne fleet has recently undergone a large-scale upgrade program, that forced the Air Force to return the aircraft from its continuous presence in the Middle East. "With a large weapon capacity and exceptional standoff strike capability, the BOne will provide US Pacific Command and its regional allies and partners with a credible, strategic power projection platform," Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) said in a news release. The deployment marks the first time BOnes have deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam since April 2006, and the first time they have deployed to Andersen while aligned under Air Force Global Strike Command.

AF issued a request for proposals for the **Long Range Standoff (LRSO) weapon**, a nuclear-capable, cruise missile meant to replace the current AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM), *already 20 years past its planned retirement.* The new missile would enter service in 2030. The AF has declined to provide any details about the LRSO, but it will be run out of Air Force Materiel Command's Nuclear Weapons Center, and specifically the Air-Delivered Capabilities Directorate at Eglin AFB, Fla. USAF leaders have refused to say whether they envision the LRSO as a hypersonic weapon, building on the success of the X-51 project, but the timing may coincide with such a goal. The USAF statement said the LRSO would equip the B-2, B-52, and *new B-21 Raider*, and is intended to be able to penetrate densely defended targets worldwide, denying any enemy "geographic sanctuary. "USAF said that while the ALCM remains "safe, secure and effective, it is facing increasing sustainment and operational challenges against evolving threats" and a replacement is necessary. The AGM-86B was joined for a time by the stealthy AGM-129 Advanced Cruise Missile, but that weapon was retired in 2012 as a cost-saving measure. The Air Force said the LRSO will provide a needed element to the air-launched aspect of the nuclear triad, providing credibility and a "tailorable deterrent effect" against adversaries and "evolving threats."

Echoing the Marine Corps aviation leader's concerns about his service's readiness crisis, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. David Deptula reported Friday that "**over 50 percent of our Air Force can't fly** because of lack of maintenance." Joining Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Jon Davis, the deputy commandant for aviation, at a forum hosted by the American Enterprise Institute and AFA's Mitchell Institute, Deptula, who is dean of AFA's Mitchell Institute, said "25 years of continuous combat, coupled with budget instability, lower than needed top lines, has made the Air Force the *smallest, oldest and the least ready in its history*." That punishing combination of factors has hurt not just readiness, but also force structure, he said, noting there is "*34 percent fewer people, 40 percent fewer aircraft, 60 percent fewer combat-coded fighter squadrons, and 25 percent fewer aircraft per squadron*." And the average of the service's aircraft has increased from 12 years to 27 years, he said. **Deptula equated using the 50-year-old B-52s to employing World War II B-17s over Baghdad.** "We're operating a geriatric Air Force," Deptula said, because, the "national security leadership, over the last 25 years," has neglected to modernize the force.

AFGA NEWSREEL

Early August, The **AF sent five nuclear-capable bombers on simultaneous non-stop flights** from the continental US to the North and Baltic Seas in one of the **biggest flexes of its nuclear might**, US Strategic Command announced. The aircraft – one B-52 from the 2nd Bomb Wing at Barksdale; two B-52s from the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot; and two B-2s from the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman – are flying to the North and Baltic Seas, around the North Pole and Alaska, and over the Pacific Ocean to Alaska's Aleutian Islands, non-stop with the support of Canadian and US fighter aircraft, along with NATO partner aircraft in Europe. The aircraft will conduct inert weapon drops at the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex, STRATCOM said along with "**Polar Roar** demonstrates the ability of the US bomber force to provide a flexible and vigilant long-range, global-strike capability, and provides unique and valuable opportunities to train and integrate with allies and partners." (Sounds just like Chrome Dome).

A B-52H from the 307th Bomb Wing at Barksdale AFB, La., **deployed** to take part in a **Slovak Air Show**. The BUFF will participate as a static display in the Slovak International Air Fest at Sliac AB, Slovakia, August 27-28, according to USAF in Europe release. A contingent of A-10s deployed to Slovakia that borders Ukraine in July to support Operation Atlantic Resolve.

Early September, A BUFF from the 307th Bomb Wing at Barksdale, has touched down at **RAF Fairford**, England, for a NATO-led close air support exercise. The **BUFF was previously deployed to Slovakia**, and will now fly in "**Ample Strike**," an exercise led by the Czech Republic The exercise focuses on training joint terminal attack controllers, air crew, and commanders of ground units on close air support. Two BOnes will join the BUFFs and operate out of Fairford, along with two tankers and five AH-64 Apaches deployed to the Czech Republic. International participation includes aircraft from Germany, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic. Last year's exercise included more than 1,000 sorties, with this year's total expected to be higher.

Airmen from Barksdale AFB deployed to the Middle East to continue **hammering ISIS in BUFFs**. The airmen from the 11th Bomb Squadron, 20th Bomb Squadron, 96th Bomb Squadron, and the 2nd Operations Squadron deployed to Al Udeid AB, Qatar, from September 6-10 to replace BUFF crews from Barksdale that have been deployed since April. The new deployment will be the first time B-52s in theater will be outfitted with the new CONECT modification, which improves communication and situational awareness.

The Air Force has set up a new continuous bomber presence in CENTCOM to keep bombers deployed for fights both in Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan. BUFFs first deployed to CENTCOM in April to replace BOnes, and increased operations as the deployment progressed and airmen were able to build up Al Udeid's infrastructure to support operations.

AFGA NEWSREEL

Air Force in August conducted a large-scale, integrated air operation in the Caribbean that not only trained aircrews, but also aided law enforcement agencies in **seizing 6,100 kilograms of cocaine**. Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James described an initial B-1 training operation in the Caribbean that also resulted in a drug bust. The Air Force is building on that idea for large-scale operations, and from August 22-29, the BOnes and BUFFs, along with HC-130s, KC-10s, KC-135s, E-8 JSTARS, E-3 Sentry, and RQ-4 Global Hawks, flew an integrated air operation focused on the **bombers finding and tracking drug traffickers**. Once the traffickers were acquired and tracked, their locations were passed along to relevant law enforcement agencies that made a bust. The operation resulted in the arrests of 17 drug trafficker arrests. The service will plan for future similar operations to get "**double bang for the buck**" by both training and stopping drug trafficking.

"**Major powers have not fought each other in over 70 years**," said Lt. Gen. Jack Weinstein, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration, "The nation's nuclear capability is the primary factor in this refrain from massive conflict." But Weinstein warned that this "strategic stability" is now under threat. While the *United States has not modernized its nuclear assets since the 1980s*, "other nations have not paused," Weinstein said. In order to retain "an asymmetric advantage for the United States" and its allies, Weinstein insisted on a long list of modernization priorities. He said the USAF needs "a new strategic bomber," "a replacement for the Ohio class SSBN," "a new long-range standoff weapon," "a new gravity bomb," and "a replacement for Minuteman." These capabilities would add up to "a survivable deterrent to ensure that the US cannot be coerced" by potential adversaries.

A once retired B-52H Stratofortress known as **Ghost Rider**, tail number 61-007, returned to Minot, the end of September after more than seven years at the boneyard operated by the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group at Davis-Monthan. The aircraft has been undergoing rehab work to make it the first B52-H regenerated back into the fleet at Tinker. The process began when a cockpit fire damaged an operational Stratofortress in 2014. Ghost Rider was previously stationed at Minot in the 1990s, and its primary crew chief from that time, Robert Crane, 5th Logistics Readiness Squadron vehicle management flight chief, was on hand for its return.

Last Living Doolittle Raider Announces the **new name of B-21** in September. The 2016 AFA Air, Space & Cyber Conference featured a number of newsworthy announcements, but none resonated quite like the announcement of the name for the US Air Force's B-21 Long Range Strike Bomber. After months of waiting, speculation and even a handful of comical suggestions for the new name, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James recognized two Airmen that aided in the naming, but it was the third Airman that stole the show: Lt Col Richard Cole (Ret), the **last living Doolittle Raider and Jimmy Doolittle's Co-pilot** was escorted to the stage and read aloud the name that the entire audience had been awaiting: "**Raider**" – *a name that draws upon the heritage* of our US Air Force, yet it will surely take us proudly into the 21st century.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER - JOHN STANTON

At last, summer's heat is well on its' way. Fall's moderate temperatures are with us at last. The days are getting shorter and we had our first rainfall of the season. We even got some snow up in the mountains. Now we are praying for normal rains and snow in the mountains. We are still fighting several forest fires all around the west.

I attended the 12th reunion of the B-52 Stratofortress Association held last August in Omaha, Nebraska. There were four gunners in attendance as well as other crew members and maintainers. We did a tour of Offutt AFB. It was strange seeing old SAC headquarters which is now Strategic Command headquarters. They still use the old headquarters building but the staff is a lot smaller. They are currently building a new headquarters building which will not have a command post underground. We also visited the SAC Air Museum which has moved off base to a location out in the country west of Bellevue. The next reunion will be at Barksdale AFB in 2018.

I attended Frank Taylor's funeral in Merced. It was well attended by many of the gunners living around the area.

I saw Ernie Conner recently and he is slowly recovering from the stroke he suffered last February. He is out of the wheelchair and walking using only a cane. He has resumed his duties with the Merced American Legion Honor Guard.

Don Lapore is still battling cancer. He is currently undergoing chemotherapy and radiation. He has lost quite a bit of weight. Keep Don in your prayers for a successful recovery.

We are entering the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season. My wishes are that all our members and their families have a safe, healthy, and happy holiday.

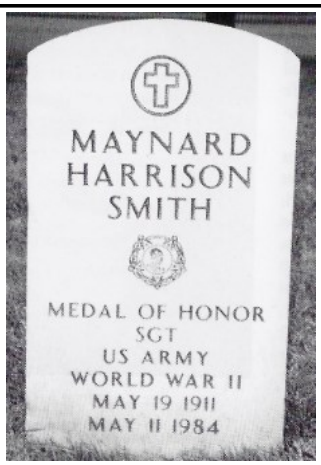
John Stanton

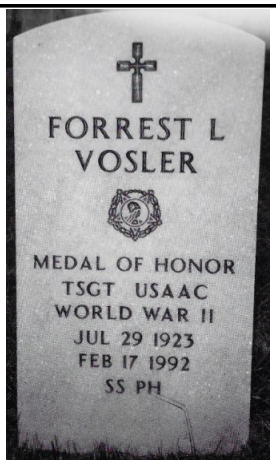
FRANK TAYLOR

Hi Gunners,

I don't know how many of you knew **CMSGT Frank Taylor**. He passed away this morning in the Mercy Hospital. He was a nice guy, gunner clear through, made most of our Gunners Conventions. He will be missed by all.

George Sziraki





FINAL FLY BY

FRANK ROBERT TAYLOR, Jr., March 21, 1928 - July 15, 2016

Frank R. Taylor, Jr., was born March 21st, 1928 in Whitefield, New Hampshire. He passed away on July 15th, 2016 in Merced, California.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bob and Alice Taylor and his infant son, John Jeffrey Taylor. Frank resided in Merced and Atwater for over fifty years.

Frank joined the United States Army Air Corps when he was just 17 years old and made the conversion to the United States Air Force in September 1947.

When he was first stationed at Castle Air Force Base, he was introduced to his wife Marie on a blind date. They then began their journey as a career Air Force family.

After serving 25 years in the service, they decided the only place to retire was to return back to Atwater. Frank started his second career with the California State Automobile Association and became a sales agent for the next twenty-four years. He continued to be active in the community serving several service organizations. Not only as a member, Frank was a true leader. He was a Mason for over fifty years, a Shriner, American Legion member, member of the Merced Trade Club, volunteer at the Castle Air Museum, and charter member of the Castle Atwater Kiwanis Club.

He held many key positions in the Kiwanis Club to include President, Lieutenant Governor of his district twice, and Governor to the State of California Nevada Hawaii District, the largest of all Kiwanis districts. When all of these positions were concluded, he continued on as consultant, team builder, and worked throughout the state opening new chapters. He was a Merced County Planning Commission member and he could always be found at most events the Italia American Hall.

Frank loved to travel and wasn't one to sit still for very long. He and his wife Marie enjoyed many cruises, trips to Europe, Russia, and extensively throughout the United States. The family would go anywhere and were bound to meet folks who knew them from their past. They made friends wherever they went and their home was always open to military folks who were away from home for a great meal and company.

He enjoyed many adventures on the road. He knew every back wood trail and every shortcut especially on the interstate system where he always made great time.

Frank loved his family and friends and often opened his home to share hospitality with others. If you were his friend, you were guaranteed a place to stay and a meal.

Frank was an avid sports fan and being from New Hampshire, he followed the Boston Braves from Milwaukee to Atlanta. He did the same for the Boston Celtics. Frank was a diehard Raiders fan. He had season tickets for many years. He enjoyed going to games with family and friends and shared his love of sports with four generations of sports fans.

Frank is survived by his wife Marie of sixty-six years, his daughter Laurie Taylor of Riverbank, California, his son Bob Taylor of Salida, California, and son Brian Taylor and his wife Denise Taylor of Merced. He was very fortunate to see all three children grow to be successful adults. He had four grandchildren that he loved very dearly. His great granddaughters were his pride and joy.

A memorial service was held on July 29th, 2016 at Stratford-Evans Merced Funeral Home in Merced.

FINAL FLY BY

From: Teresa Richards
Date: July 3, 2016 at 4:29:44 AM PDT
To: Dad

Subject: MSGT ERNEST SEXTON

Sorry to say my dad has taken a turn for the worse. He is not alert and his heart and kidneys are failing. He is at Sacred Heart CICU #827. I will keep you posted.

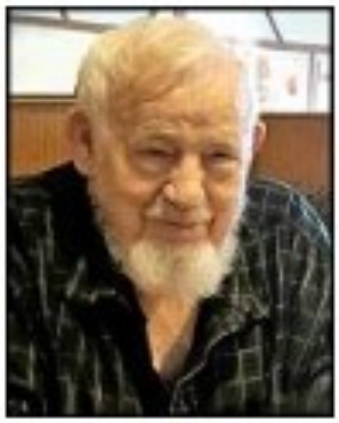
Terry

From: Harris
Sent: Sun, Jul 3, 2016 1:50 PM
Subject: MSGT ERNEST SEXTON

Ernie Sexton was at Fairchild for along time in B36s and B52s with Arc Light tours. He is now in the hospital in Spokane.

Harry Tolmich

ERNEST NORMAN SEXTON, APRIL 30, 1932 - JULY 3, 2016



Ernest N. Sexton of Spokane, Washington died July 3, 2016 at the age of 84 years. Ernie was born on April 30, 1932 in Talladega, Alabama to Jonah Jefferson Sexton and Sena Atkisson Sexton. He grew up on a farm in rural Alabama in a large family, one of 20 children.

He, along with all 12 of his brothers, joined and served in the military. Ernie served 8 months in the Army, then spent the next 20+ years in the U.S. Air Force, receiving multiple medals including Good Conduct Awards, an Outstanding Unit Award and one for Air Force Longevity.

He flew as a tail gunner in B-52 missions, spending time in places like Guam, Hawaii, and Vietnam. He retired from active duty in July of 1970 as a Master Sergeant.

Ernie then went to work as a computer analyst for many years, finally retiring from civil service at the age of 55, at Keyport Naval Base in Port Angeles, WA. Finally, he devoted two years as an ombudsman, providing support for the elderly in veteran nursing homes, before deciding to spend his golden years in Spokane, Washington near his children.

He loved to travel, try new foods, and spend time with his family - siblings, as well as children. He also loved to go fishing and dreamed of one day, traveling in space. His biggest passion in his later years was gardening. This brought him great pleasure to be able to share the fruits of his labor with those he knew, and the local mission.

Ernie is survived by his four children: Daniel A. Sexton, Lynn R. Sexton, Teresa E. Sexton, Gwen M. Sexton, and six grandchildren. Also by his brothers Jim Sexton, Luther Sexton, Jonah C. Sexton and his sisters Della Burrell and Zell Copeland Collins.

He will be greatly missed.

Services were held at the Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake, Washington on July 8, 2016.

FINAL FLY BY

From: Bob Matherly
Sent: Monday, July 25, 2016 10:44 PM
To: Pete
Cc: Chuck Dean; John Stanton
Subject: Passing of Fairchild Gunner

Talked to Ralph Steans this evening and he told me that **Jack Stach** passed away this month. Here is the website where you can find his obituary:

http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/spokesman/obituary.aspx?pid=180765564

He was a gunner at Fairchild with us back in the late '60s and early '70s. He was a Life Member (L0916) of the AFGA - should be a lot of older gunners who know - or knew - him.

John Stanton

Address:
John "Jack" Stach
14106 E. Springfield,
Spokane, WA 99126-2053

Bob

JOHN STANLEY "JACK" STACH, Age 84, December 14, 1931 - July 11, 2016

John Stanley Stach, 84 years young, was born in Wallace, Idaho to the late Stanley and Marietta (Martin) Stach. The family moved to Smelterville and again to Kellogg, where after graduating, he worked at the Bunker Hill Zinc Plant. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1958 and joined the 325th Bomb Squadron at Fairchild AFB, Washington. Here he made many life-long friends.

Jack served as an aerial gunner on the B-52 Stratofortress in the Vietnam War and earned many awards during his 20-year career.

Jack was active in the Boy Scouts at a young age. When he was 15, he had earned all the merit badges to achieve scouting's highest honor. Unfortunately he did not receive the Eagle Scout ceremony or the badge that came with it because he was a year too young. However, on his 61st birthday, he got quite the surprise when the scouts awarded him the elusive Eagle Badge, arranged by his sister Helen at her house. He had his moment of fame on television and the local paper.

A man of many talents, he enriched his home with creations made of wood and cement.

He loved travel and long drives. Hawaii was his favorite destination where he and his wife met many new friends.

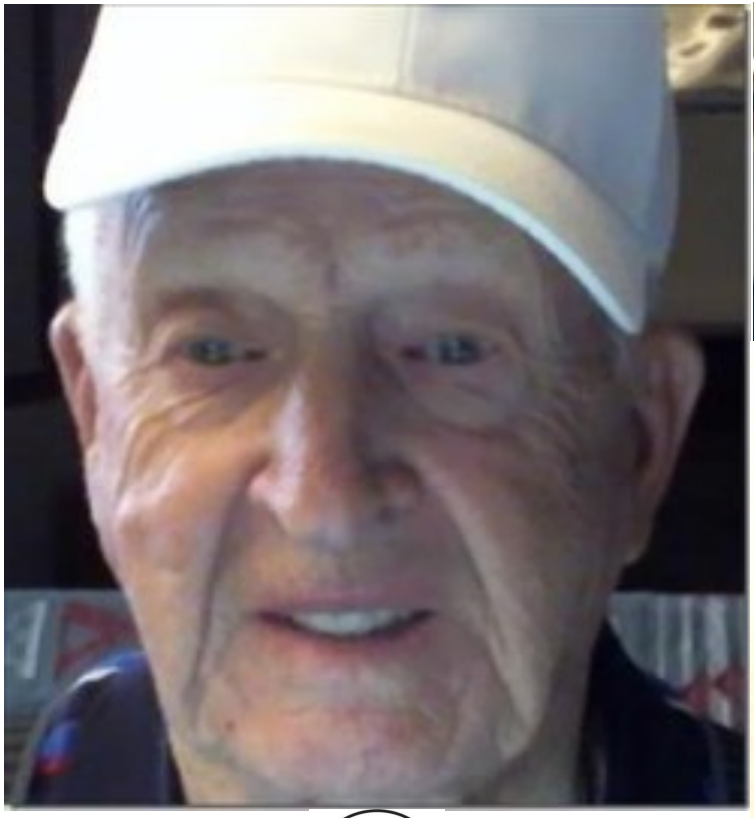
Jack is survived by his wife of 21 years, Linda, his son Mike (Beverly) Stach, daughter Tammy (Tim) Devine, son Terry Stach, grandchildren Brittney Thompson, Scott (Cassie) Thompson, Anthony Stach, Lindsey Pearson, step daughter Erica (Eric) Gordon, grandchildren Elijah, Zackary, and Zoe Gordon, brother James (Candy) Stach, and their son Greg Stach and daughter Sheila, sister Helen Shobe, nephews Tim, Todd, and Tom Shobe, and his little dog Pandy.

He is preceded in death by his brother. Robert Stach, daughter Sharon Pearson, and grand daughter Jodi Thompson.

Inumment was held on August 24th at Washington State Veterans Cemetery in Medical Lake, Washington.

FINAL FLY BY

JOHN STANLEY "JACK" STACH, Age 84, December 14, 1931 - July 11, 2016



Page 8 FAIRCHILD TIMES Friday, April 8, 1966

Bomb Squadron Supports Operation Chrome Dome

CHROME DOME—Members of 325th Bombardment Squadron Crew E-39 look pretty fresh after their chrome dome mission. Left to right are SSgt. J. S. Stach, gunner; 1st Lt. R. J. Smith, electronics warfare officer; 1st Lt. N. E. Weber, navigator; Capt. Jerry E. Taylor, radar navigator; Capt. J. T. Edminson, copilot; Capt. D. C. Roark, aircraft commander; Maj. Dick Barry, extra pilot.

By Capt. W. D. Staton,
325th BS Aircraft Commander

One of the last crews from the 325th Bomb Squadron to fly "CHROME DOME" for this period, Crew E-37, appears to be pretty fresh considering the fact that they have just flown more than 20 hours without a break.

During the months of February and March the 325th BS flew several missions in support of Operation Chrome Dome.

The missions began with briefings on weather and latest operational information. A breakfast of steak and eggs follows. Crews then proceed to their aircraft and take off.

The next 20 hours will involve exacting navigation, refuelings and crew rest where possible.

For the pilots, there is usually a third pilot to aid in relief. However, the navigators must coordinate between themselves and the mission requirements in order to obtain crew rest.

Frozen dinners are heated in a special oven at mealtime. After arrival at the local area and landing the crew attends debriefing. Time elapsed between the first and final briefing . . . more than 24 hours

Page 10 FAIRCHILD TIMES Friday, May 6, 1966

REWARD—Lt. Col. James R. French, (left) 325th Bombardment Squadron commander, presents a $25 reward to SSgt. John S. Stach (right), for his Big R suggestion concerning flying safety.

DONALD JAY OWENS, SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

Donald Jay Owens, age 78, passed away peacefully Monday, Sept. 19, 2016, at his home after lingering health issues.

Don is survived by his daughter, Becky Kilpatrick, and husband, Denny, of Corpus Christi, Texas; step-son, Will Blocker, and wife, Lynn, of North Bend, Neb.; and sister, Linda Bailey, of Nacogdoches, Texas. He is also survived by six beloved grandchildren, Geoffrey, Lindsey and C-Jay Kilpatrick, Shad Getz, Alesha Wilson and Landry Shrive. He leaves behind eight great-grandchildren, Allen, Madison, Paislie, Gentry, Maddie, Carter, Grady and Marie. In addition, he is survived by a multitude of extended family who will greatly miss him.

Don is preceded in death by the love of his life, his wife, Norma, and by their precious daughter, Cindy.

Born and raised in Blackwell, Oklahoma, the son of Jay and Winifred Owens, Don was a veteran of the United States Armed Forces. He entered the Air Force the day he graduated from Blackwell High School and made the military his career. He became a Gunnery Sergeant flying B-52 bombers through his military service. Don loved the military life. He loved the men he served with and he loved his country unwaveringly.

After retirement from the military, Don moved back to Blackwell to be of assistance to his aging parents and reconnect with extended family. For his family, he was a port in the storm. He could always be counted on to help wherever he could and made himself available whenever needed. He was generous with both his resources and his time, giving to his family as he had given to his nation.

Don Owens was rich in family and friends. His life impacted all those who knew him, even more in his later years than in his earlier. He is loved by those who knew him, friend or family, and he will be missed here on earth. In heaven, Don is reunited with all those he loved so much who have gone before and is celebrating their embrace. His family is greatly comforted in the knowledge that, in Christ, they will one day join him in one great family reunion.

Visitation was set for Friday, September 23, at Trout Funeral Home in Blackwell. A graveside service was scheduled for Saturday, September 24, at 2 p.m., at the Blackwell Cemetery. Memorial Donations may be made in Don’s name to Wounded Warrior Project.

From: John Stallings
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2016 12:16 AM
Subject: Passing of a Gunner

Gentlemen,

Beverly Watland called and wanted to let the Gunner's group know that her husband **Gary** just passed away on Sept. 27. Her phone # is 209-769-2949.

John

GARY D. WATLAND, SEPTEMBER 12, 1938 - SEPTEMBER 27, 2016

Gary D. Watland was retired from the USAF, after proudly serving his country for 23 years.

He is survived by his wife Beverly of 58 years, daughter Christine Sorgman (Dave), son's Gary Jr, Edward (Julia) and Andrew (Lisa), 12 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren, brother Roger (Shirlene) sister Sharon (John) Beal and brother Michael and many nieces and nephews.

FINAL FLY BY

JOAN "Chick" BLAKELY AUGUST 14, 2016

From: Bob Matherly
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2016 5:49 PM
Subject: In Regards to Joan "Chick" Blakely

For all who knew Joan Blakely

----- Original Message -----

BILLIE AND I SEND THIS REQUEST ON WITH A GREAT SENSE OF LOSS AND SADNESS...
PLEASE PASS IT ON TO THE TROOPS...

-----Original Message-----
From: joanburt2
To: CEASE
Sent: Mon, Aug 15, 2016 3:16 PM
Subject: In Regards to Joan "Chick" Blakely

We the family of Joan Blakely, are asking for your assistance. Would you please pass on the following to all the Gunners:

Our mother passed away at home surrounded by prayers and loved ones yesterday, August 14, 2016. Mom had injured her head after a fall while on an Alaskan Cruise. Though efforts were made to treat the head injury, mom never fully awoke after surgery. This has been a tragic accident, and leaves our entire family heartbroken.

There will be a Rosary for Mom on Wednesday August 17th at 7 PM at Wallin Funeral Home in Oak Harbor. 1811 NE 16th Ave #A, Oak Harbor, WA 98277 360-675-3447

Mass in memory to our mother will be on Thursday August 18th at 11AM at St Mary's Catholic Church in Coupeville WA, 98239. Followed by burial at the cemetery and reception after at St Mary's.

Local flower shop can be reached at 360-678-8010, though Mom and Dad always had a heart for those in need- donations could be made in Mom's name at the Oak Harbor Food Bank, 1091 SE Hathaway St, Oak Harbor WA 98277. 360-675-0681.

Sincerely,

The Blakely Children

FINAL FLY BY

From: Jim and Kathie Hoke
Sent: Tuesday, August 23, 2016 6:00 PM
Subject: Passing of Ken Faulkner's Wife

Ken and Sherry were stationed at Castle when we met them. We became great friends and will truly miss Sherry. Can you get this in the Short Burst next issue? Thanks. *Jim Hoke*

From: Rory Koon
Sent: Tuesday, August 23, 2016 10:06 PM
Subject: Re: Passing of Ken Faulkner's Wife

Kenny and Sherry were great friends to Cheryl and I. The Faulkner's, Emde's, Clinton's and us spent many great weekends camping together. She will be missed by all. *Rory*

SHERRY WOLFF-FAULKNER, SEPTEMBER 18, 1936 - AUGUST 14, 2016

Sherry Wolff-Faulkner, 79, Carrington, North Dakota, died peacefully at CHI, St. Alexius Health on August 14, 2016, Carrington, North Dakota.

Sherry Kay Smith was born on September 18, 1936, in Jamestown, North Dakota to Ward & Bessie Johnson-Smith. She was the eighth in the family of nine children.

Sherry married LeRoy Wolff in 1952. They resided in Jamestown and had 2 children, LeRoy Jr., and Julie Renee.

Sherry worked at the State Hospital for six years. Starting in 1962, she was Head Lab Technician for 13 years at the Depuy-Sorkness Clinic (later the Jamestown Clinic). During this time she attended Jamestown College.

In 1974, she moved to San Francisco, California. While visiting her brother Patrick in Merced, California, she met and fell in love with Kenneth Faulkner, a gunner at Castle AFB. They married June 7, 1975, in Reno, Nevada.

Sherry continued her education at Cal State-Stanislaus and Modesto Junior College, Modesto, California, making her dream come true in 1979, by earning her RN Degree. After graduation, she worked at the Merced County Medical Center on the Medical Surgical Floor for six years. She then became the Clinical Director at the BRITE Unit, Merced, CA, an acute inpatient psychiatric unit, until 1989, when she medically retired due to a heart condition.

Ken and Sherry then traveled the U.S., Canada, and Mexico until 2008, when they decided to put down roots in Carrington, North Dakota to be near family.

Sherry is survived by her loving husband Kenneth; son, LeRoy Wolff; daughter, Julie Mendez (Robert), Carrington; three grandchildren, Daniel, Emily, and Andrew Wolff; two great-grandchildren Harper and Adelaide Wolff; one brother Patrick Smith (Dolly), Jamestown; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, four brothers, Quentin, Harry, Roy and Jack, three sisters, Lois, Ruth and Darlene, step-daughter Debbie, and grandson Shawn.

Sherry loved her family and was a typical Smith – always giving, but found it hard to accept help when she needed it.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Carrington Medical Center Nursing Recognition Fund.

A Celebration of Sherry's life: First Baptist Church, Jamestown, N.D on Friday, August 19, 2016 at 11:00 AM

Her Burial will be at Carrington Cemetery.

SHARALYN RAE STEARNS, OCTOBER 16, 2016

Sharalyn Rae Stearns passed away on October 16, 2016. She was born June 5th, in Grand Island, Nebraska, to Orville and Vivian Dean. She graduated High School in Clinton, Iowa where she met the man she would spend the next 57 years with, Ralph Stearns.

Being an Air Force wife, she traveled all over with four little ones in tow. Often being both mother and father when her spouse was called away.

Early on, she was active in CB/HAM radio. She loved bowling, bingo and any slot machine whose path she crossed.

Her little family settled in Medical Lake, Washington where she and Ralph opened their hearts and their home to over three hundred foster kids from the greater Spokane area.

She became active in city government, being a council member from 1986 through 1993 and was later elected the first female Mayor for the City of Medical Lake 1994-1997. She was able to see her ideas and dreams for the city come to fruition. Such as the Juvenile Detention Center-Martin Hall, which she went to the state legislature and fought for not only approval but funding as well for the project.

She and her committee were instrumental in getting the first recycling center on the eastern side of the state up and running as well as getting the water treatment plant, including new wells for the city and water storage tanks. She was a board member of the Spokane Transit Authority as well as the Spokane Regional Health District Board of Health.

She was passionate about the Medical Lake Volunteer Fire Department Association and was an avid first responder. She always made time to be a Brownie and Girl Scout leader as well as a Medical Lake Cardinal Drill Team mom, taking the team to their first state championships.

As if all that wasn't enough, she was an exceptional cosmetologist with her own home beauty shop.

She is preceded into death by both her parents, a sister, a brother, and her first born daughter. She is survived by her loving and devoted husband Ralph; five children, six grandchildren, five great-grandchildren; her brother Doug and Cathy Dean of Indianapolis, Indiana; and many nieces and nephews.

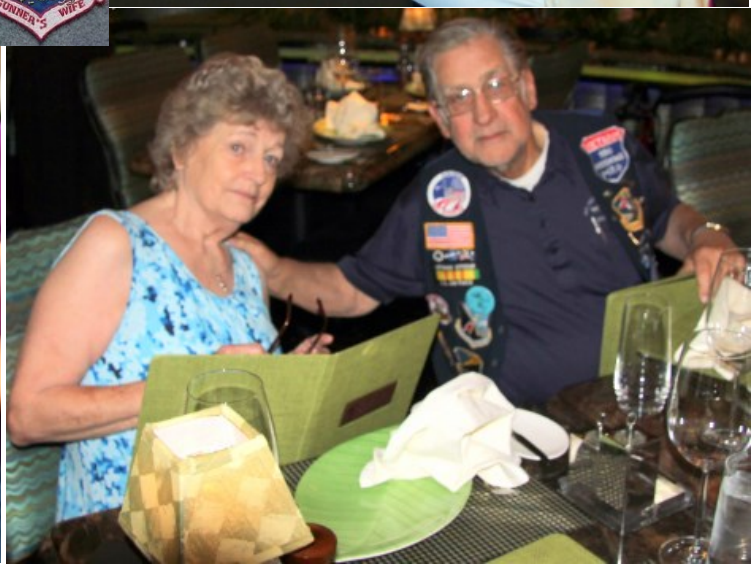
Although our hearts are heavy with the loss, she is with God and her loved ones. She will be waiting to welcome us all one day.

A celebration of Sharalyn's life was held at 11am, on Saturday, October 22nd, at St. John Lutheran Church, 223 S. Hallet Road, Medical Lake, Washington.

Her final resting place will be the Washington Veteran's Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the: Medical Lake Volunteer Fire Department Association, PO Box 369, Medical Lake, WA. 99022.

SHARALYN RAE STEARNS, OCTOBER 16, 2016



From: Bob Matherly
Sent: Monday, November 07, 2016 1:51 PM
Subject: Sad news...Nancy Thompson

Joe Thompson called and relayed the information that his wife, **Nancy**, passed away yesterday from cancer.

Joe will send me an obit and I will get it off to Pete when I get it. Joe was a long time gunner and was stationed at Mather while I was there.

Always sad to hear about the passing of a member or a member's family member leaving us.

Bob

FINAL FLY BY

MYRON SLATER, 1 NOVEMBER 2016

From: Joan Lee
Date : Nov 3, 2016 at 3:44 PM
Subject: SAD NEWS

Hi,

Received a phone call from Jackie Merrell that **Myron Slater** was found deceased on the bedroom floor on Tuesday morning (Nov 1). Daughter, Billie, had talked with him on Monday evening, Oct 31. They "assume" heart attack.

There will be no funeral because he had donated his body to science. Billie will have a small memorial service at the Slater home at a date and time to be announced. Do not know if an obituary will be published, but if so, Jackie will provide it for the Short Bursts.

Mack & Joan Lee

From: Robert Matherly
Date: 11/3/16 9:53 PM (GMT-06:00)
To: Joan Lee
Subject: Re: SAD NEWS

Thanks, Joan - always sad to hear of our friends passing. *Bob*

NANCY LOUISE THOMPSON, 6 NOVEMBER 2016

Nancy Louise Thompson passed away on November 6th 2016. She was born in Litton, North Dakota on April 29th 1940. Nancy grew up on a farm and was an accomplished horse woman, she learned to ride at a very early age, riding a horse to school until she graduated. She had four children, many grand children and great grand children. She was married to Joe Thompson, a retired Air Force Gunner, living in Frenchtown, Montana. They traveled the 48 states as a trucking couple until 2012 when she decided to retire. Her family will miss her, but have loving memories of her.

**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 ..

AFGA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____ **RANK:** _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____

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

WIFE'S FIRST NAME: _____

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

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

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

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

E-mail address: _____

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

AFGA BX OFFICER - BOB DICK Jr.

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

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

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

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

The "Official" **2015 Gunner's Reunion** His & Her personalized coffee mugs are hot off the press. 15oz His mug $17.99, 11oz Her mug $14.99.
These can be ordered anytime WWW.crewdawgcreations.com.

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

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

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

AFGA EXCHANGE

Air Force Gunners Association

AFGA

PURCHASE ORDER

Rev 11/5/2014

Please print for mailing

Air Force Gunners Association

"Warriors of the Sky"

DATE:

SHIP TO

EXCHANGE OFFICER

Bob Dick Jr.
2089 Sardis Rd
Clarksburg, WV 26301-6581
(304) 844-0624
gunnersbx@gmail.com

Membership ID [ ]
e-mail: [ ]

DESCRIPTION	QTY	PRICE	SHIPPING	TOTAL
COINS				
Item #1 – Gunner's Coin..... Bulldog on front, AFGA wings on back.		$4.00		
Item #2 – Gunner's Coin 1980.....Bulldog on front, You make the difference on back. Limit One per person		$7.00		
Item #3 – Gunner's Coin 1981.....Bulldog on front, You make the difference on back. Limit **One** per person		$7.00		
Item #4 – Gunner's Coin 1982.....Bulldog on front, You make the difference on back. Limit **One** per person		$7.00		
Item #5 – Gunner's Coin 1989.....Bulldog on front, You make the difference on back. Limit **One** per person		$7.00		
PATCHES				
Item #6 – Gunner's Patch.....B-52 Gunner's Patch. Embroidered 3.5"x4.25"		$5.25		
Item #7 – AFGA Patch.....3.75" round embroidered blue and silver patch featuring the		$5.25		
Item #8 – Served with Distinction Patch..... 4" round multi colored patch featuring the words " Fond Farewell To A Heroic Era, Served with Distinction & Honor", Aerial Gunners 1955-1991 36 Years. Also depicting the "D", "G", & "H" tails.		$5.25		
Item #9 – End of an Era Patch .....4"x3.5" Multi color embroidered patch featuring the words, "1917 Aerial Gunner 1991", "The End of an Era"		$5.25		
Item #10 – Air Force Gunner's Association Patch.....4" round multicolored embroidered patch featuring the words "Air Force Gunner's Association" & depicting the bi plane with the gunner's patch on the tail section.		$5.25		
Item #11 – Son of a Gunner Patch.....4"x3" multicolored embroidered patch featuring the words "Son of a Gunner and depicting the large bulldog next to the baby bulldog.		$7.75		
Item #12 – Gunner's Patch Large.....10"x12" Large multicolored embroidered Gunner's patch Great for jackets and vest!!!.		$39.00		
Item #13 – 200 Mission B52D Vietnam Patch.....3.25"x4" Red, white, & blue colored embroidered patch featuring the words, "Vietnam 200 Missions"		$5.25		
Item #14 – 100 Mission B52D Vietnam Patch.....3.25"x4" Red, white, & blue colored embroidered patch featuring the words, "Vietnam 100 Missions"		$5.25		
Item #15 – SAC Strategic Air Command Patch.....3"x3" Multicolored embroidered Strategic Air Command patch.		$5.25		
Item #16 – B-52 Gunner Bomber Patch.....8"x2.75" Blue background with yellow writing "B-52 Gunner" and depicting a silver silhouette of B-52 in the middle.		$5.25		
Item #17 – B-36 Bomber Patch.....5" Round multicolored embroidered patch depicting the B-36 Bomber.		$5.25		
Item #18 – 10th Air Force Patch.....3" Round red, white, blue, & yellow embroidered patch depicting the 10th Air Force Logo		$5.25		
LAPEL PINS				
Item #19 – AFGA Round Lapel Pin.....Lapel Pin, round 3/4", silver wings with blue background.		$4.25		
Item #20 – Bulldog Angel Lapel Pin.....1.5" Pewter bulldog angel with wings and halo lapel pin.		$7.25		

AFGA EXCHANGE

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

AFGA EXCHANGE

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

AFGA EXCHANGE

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

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

1. Please include your phone # and **email address**.
2. Make all checks payable to **AFGA**.
3. Send all correspondence to:

Bob Dick Jr.
2089 Sardis Rd
Clarksburg, WV 26301-6581
304-844-0624
gunnersbx@gmail.com

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

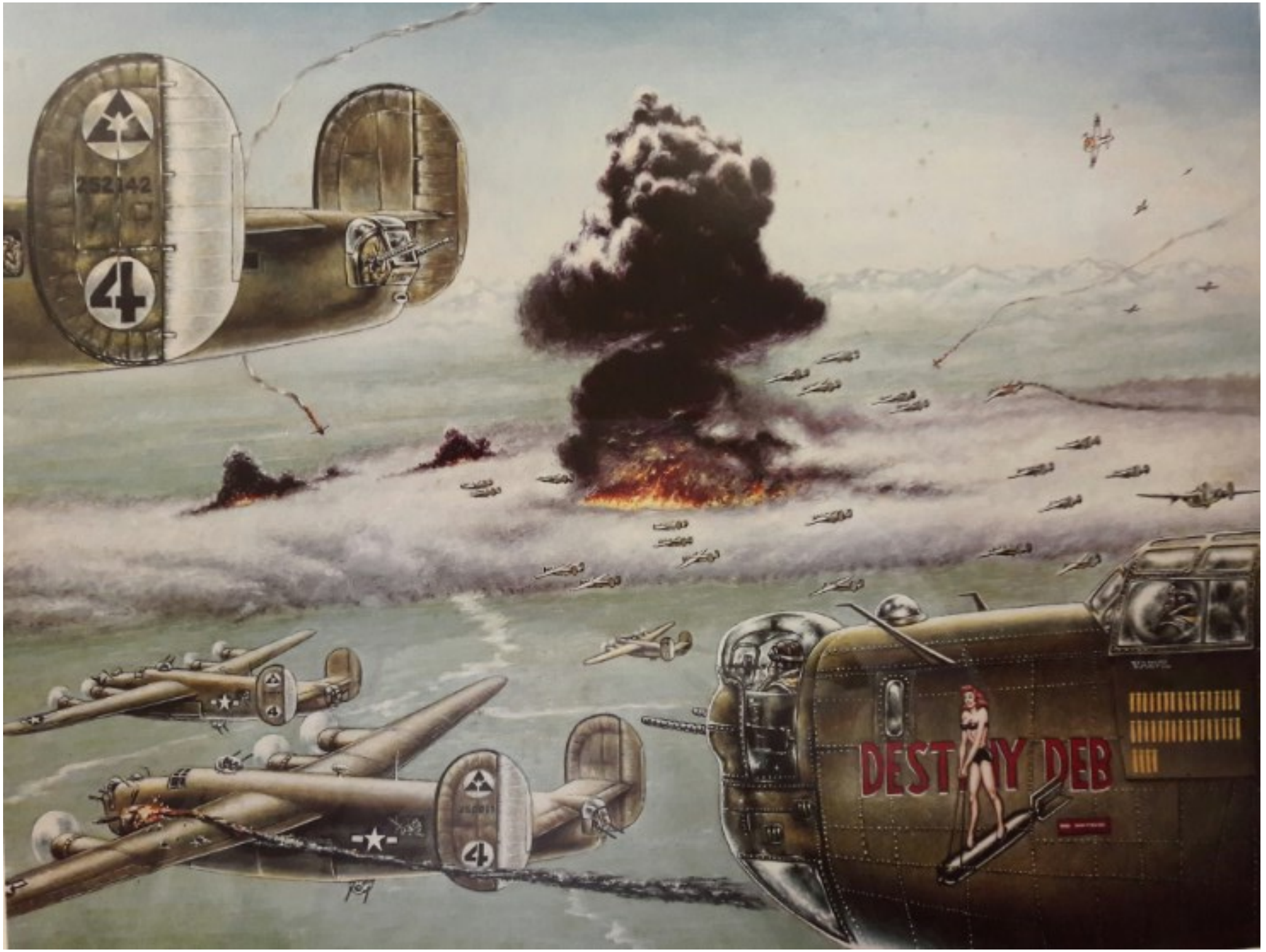
Signature *Date*

As for ordering the RENO REUNION COFFEE CUP, members can go to the following link:

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

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

Back cover art by our AFGA member, *John Shlapak*, the gunner in the tail in this picture of the B-24s over Ploesti as only he could document what he witnessed and then painted. John, I hope you are well my friend and I think of you often. I am honored and so privileged to have received a copy of your picture from you! Many congratulations to you and a testament to your documentation of Air Force History! What an honor to have a piece of the art you created that now hangs alongside the masterpieces in the United States Air Force Art Collection for all time. Much better is I was able to get to know you and hear your story first hand!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