Spring 2014 Issue 24

The Intake

Journal of the Super Sabre Society
Published Thrice a Year: March, July and November

— "Hun Landmark Tour Collection" —
174th TFS, Iowa ANG, F-100 "Stalking Mount Shasta" in 1975. (Credits, page 2.)

"The Misty Mystique" — Air & Space/Smithsonian Mag. (See page 11.)

The Intake

Spring 2014, Vol. 1, Issue 24 *JOURNAL OF THE SUPER SABRE SOCIETY*

Front Cover Credits

This photo showing Mike Paradise driving Hun 56-3221 near Mt. Shasta is his favorite of the three Arnie Clarke took on a cross-country from McChord to Hill on 16 Jun 75 that we have now used on front covers of "The Intake." That's some kind of record; three front covers from the same source. The other two were of Mike over Crater Lake for Issue 11 and Mike on Arnie's wing over the Tacoma Narrows Bridge for Issue 22. This completes what we might call the "Arnie Clarke Trifecta," because all three pictures are real winners among the many jewels in our "Hun Landmark Tour Collection" of fine photos. Many thanks to both Mike and (RIP 12/14/10) Arnie!

Dues Status

If your DUES STATUS (printed on the envelope this came in) is "In Arrears," our records show that as of March 10, you had not paid for 2014: $25 payable on or before 1 January of each year. If you are "In Arrears," please take care of that Member responsibility ASAP!

If you're not sure of your dues status, take action to find out! Contact: CFO (David Hatten) at email, david@houseofhatten.com / *phone* (512) 261-5071, or Editor (R. Medley Gatewood) at rgatewood@comcast.net / phone (505) 293-8396.

The Intake is published three times per year by the Super Sabre Society Inc., d.b.a. **Super Sabre Society, P.O. Box 341837, Lakeway, TX 78734. (Snail mail dues should be sent to this address!)** The society is open to all F-100 Fighter Pilots, F-100 Wild Weasel Bears and F-100 Squadron Flight Surgeons. Associate memberships will be offered at the discretion of the Membership Committee. There is no political agenda, although we support and respect the office of the President of the United States. There is no religious agenda, although men who trusted their lives to a slatted wing and a single J57 engine also trust in a higher authority. There is no social agenda, except to meet each other in mutual respect and admiration. We are the men who flew the mighty Hun! Visit our Website frequently at **www.supersabresociety.org, where you can also pay your dues online with a major credit card!**

We're gonna have a Party.
A big one!

F-100 Celebration Banquet

After weeks of dress rehearsals, opening night is just around the corner…and YOU'RE INVITED!

This long anticipated event is now a "Go," and is set for a one-night stand on 9 August 2014. On that date, we'll assemble 400 or more SSS'rs and guests at the Smithsonian's Udvar-Hazy Center for an evening of camaraderie and pride, commemorating the 32-year journey of F-100 56-3440 from a warehouse to her new home on the main floor of the museum among other notable and famous aerospace craft: SR-71, Concorde, "Enola Gay," "Discovery," and many more.

The activities for this gala evening begin at 6:30 PM when we gather for docent-led, small group tours of the facility while banquet preparation is completed. The social hour and banquet will begin around 7:30, right beside ol' 440, the star of the show. The supporting cast will be headed by General Ronald R. Fogelman, former USAF Chief of Staff, backed by other SSS members, several of whom actually flew or lovingly tended to this particular Hun. The full program for the banquet is still under development, but we know it will include a keynote speech, recollections, presentations, toasts, diner music…and some surprises! Let the good times roll!

Attire: Since this is a formal occasion, the chosen "uniform of the day" is black tie for gentlemen (mess dress or business suit, optional) and evening wear for ladies. Ol' 440, on the other hand, will look just as she did on alert at Bien Hoa Air Base during the 1968 Tet Offensive, loaded with ordnance, blackened gun ports, paint streaked with dirt—ready to kick some butt! Lights out: 10:30.

Logistics: Unlike an SSS reunion, we must rely on attendees planning for their own accommodations and travel in the local area. Convenient lodging at:

Holiday Inn Chantilly Dulles Expo|$79-$109|713-815-6060|Mary Kashani
Dulles Hyatt Regency Reston|$110- $139|713-709-1234
Hilton Washington Dulles Airport|Call for Price|703-742-4642
Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center|Mil Rate $167|301-965-4000

Registration: Much of the total cost of this event has been "donated to the cause" by private donors, to whom we are much obliged. Registration costs to attendees will be $150 per person to cover banquet expenses (including ticket, meal, wine and beer, music, etc.) and other incidental expenses. Tickets for this lavish event are offered on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Members are urged to register and purchase tickets online at our new, 21st century website (www.supersabresociety.org), or send a letter ASAP with your name and request for your and guest ticket(s), plus a check for the total due to Super Sabre Society, PO Box 341873, Lakeway, TX 78734.

Remember, our motto is: "First Class or Not at All"!

Staff Corner, CEO. Notes

Fellow Hun Jocks, you are in for a big change in the SSS website. Win Reither, our Chief Information Officer, has been working hard to bring us into the 21st century with a more user-friendly and workable site for those who use it for official things like dues and membership updates as well as other useful information. Win will be in touch to help us through the changeover.

Importantly, there will be an election this fall for a possible new President/Chairman of the Board. The election policy and process can be found on our website's "Governance" page. The 45-day nominating period will begin on 15 July and the summer issue of *The Intake* will summarize the process for you. If you know of someone who has the talent and desire to be our leader, please feel free to nominate a candidate.

Membership statistic update:
2013 New Members = 36
2013 R.I.P = 29
2013 Net Gain + 7
(Plus 22 new members in Jan 2014)

Sadly, our R.I.P. numbers will not go away (21 in this *Intake*). If you know a former F-100 pilot that for some reason is not already a member, please try to recruit him. Or if you want us to do it for you, we will do that. Email Membership Committee Chairman D H Williams, jeda@oncincobayou.com with your friend's contact information. Sustaining our membership numbers is something we should all help with.

In regard to the "Chantilly Shindig" plugged at left, this is going to be a SSS get-together "for the ages." I hope to see you there.

All the best, — *Hoppy*

Incoming/Outgoing — Correspondence

Here are some items of interest received from members or other sources, and our replies. Member/reader feedback remains very positive. We also publish here other pertinent information that we deem worthy of note. Thanks. ***Ed.***

General Comments on Issue 23

"The Color of Dawn"

Suffice to say that "The Intake *Issue Appreciation Quotient" hit an all-time high with this issue, based largely on our handling of Bud Day's flight west. Jack Doub, a major contributor to this issue, was first in the plaudits line with this short but effective statement,* "Great ***king cover, Editor, just ***king great! **– JD"** *Les Frazier chimed in concerning our long-time policy to feature only the F-100 aircraft on our front covers with a comment praising,* "…the magnificent cover you put on our latest journal. Great work, **— Les**" *Dick Baughn talks baseball,* "...read your last issue and as usual enjoyed it all. It was another home run. **— DB**" *Bud Stoddard gracefully brings in the bonus calendar,* "…this one is the VERY BEST ISSUE! And the calendar honoring Bud Day is a great tribute to him, but mirrors every F-100 pilot who also gave their best for our Nation. Thanks to you and the editorial staff for a wonderful issue. **— Bud & Pat**" *John Houser put it this way,* "Can't get over how ya'll keep raising the bar and still jump over it with each new edition. Well done! **— JH**"

And so it went, many times over. Sincere thanks and hats off to Robert Seale, portraiture photog extraordinaire, for use of his incredible imagery in both the journal and the revitalized SSS Calendar for 2014, to which we now turn.

2014 SSS Calendar

Notwithstanding its few typo-type warts, there was a strong wave of positive sentiment for the SSS 2014 calendar, the theme for which was Editor's Picks of Intake Cover Quality Images. A vast majority of those who wrote about this issue mentioned how pleased they were with the calendar as well as with the journal. Some Incomings were exclusively about the calendar. And many of either type wanted to know how they could get extra copies of the calendar for gifts to family and/or friends. Truth be known, we had never even considered such requests, and, consequently, had very few spare copies printed. But given the clamor for extras, we will most probably figure out some way for members to request extras of next year's calendars before we go to press. Here's what Treasurer Dave Hatten had to say about it: "…scored an additional shack with the calendar. I've been getting copies of some of the requests and have referred one to you. I would recommend coming up with a price and sending out a skip bomb to take pre-print orders with a cutoff date to allow Christmas delivery. You may have to use Metro Mailer if the orders are large enough." *We'll work on it, Dave.*

The knobs say, "KC-97"!

This "find" from Denny Schaan was an eye opener. "Awesome magazine and equally awesome calendar! That photo of five Huns in AB on the calendar cover is a keeper! One minor error in the July 2014 pages. The July photo's caption says it was taken from a KC-135. That is unlikely because the flaps on the F-100 are down. Most likely the tanker was a KC-97. Another giveaway is the knobs sticking out of the boom near the wings at 7:30 and 4:30. They can be seen on the KC-97 that refueled Jimmy Stewart in "Strategic Air Command." But all the KC-135 boom pictures I could find show no knobs like that. They are evenly rounded in that area.

Denny has good eyes and knowledge of tanker booms. We did some research by going back to Issue 10 when the picture was used on the back cover. Shaun Ryan consulted with Bob Ekes (the photographer), who consulted his Form 5 and found that, yes, the Arizona ANG "Copperheads" with whom he flew that day were flying KC-97s, not KC-135s (which they picked up shortly after this picture was taken). Checking the caption/explanation of the picture on page 35 of Issue 10, I see we did NOT identify the tanker type. So, the error was mine when I was dreaming up the calendar caption. Double Ugh!

Ramrod Revisited Brings Lots of Mail

In addition to valid Ramrod info, which we shall incorporate in the continuing series of articles on the famous 531st TFS mascot, we received a story about another exotic squadron mascot: a black spotted leopard/panther named Eldridge. The story was from Ross Detwiler, who encountered Eldridge on his second SEA tour flying F-4s at Udorn RTAFB with the 13th TFS. This, in turn, led to a story sent in about a statue of a black panther mascot owned by the 353rd TFS "Black Panthers" before they were inactivated and reassigned without personnel or equipment to Myrtle Beach in 1971. We'll run both of these stories in the summer issue of The Intake*, when we have more space. Thanks to Joe Hillner for this Black Panther statue tale. We'll have a few questions for Joe and others (the perps) to fully develop this gem of a caper.*

Closeout on the D-model Speed Brake "Cutout" Mod

We've had several inputs since this subject first came up some time ago. Looking at them all, it appears that the mod was accomplished at different times and places, according to anecdotal evidence. One thing all agree on is that it was a very worthwhile mod, and I'd like to close it out with a story about the how and why and when and where of the mod from an unlikely, but very welcome authority, Dave Menard, SSS OMA, known as Mr. "F-100."

How can this be? He flew west on 5 Feb 2013, according to the SSS 2014 Calendar! Sadly, that's true. But, Joe Vincent had encountered this topic some time ago and shared it with us. Here's his input.

"Medley: I just read the article in Issue 23 where you ask about the centerlines on D-models. I ran into that quandary back in 2007. I thought that early Ds didn't have those centerlines, so they had narrow crotch speed brakes. I figured that if you saw a Hun with the wide crotch speed brakes it had to have centerline capability—as well as articulated main gear doors so the wheels would miss a centerline store. Then I stumbled onto a photo that blew away my theory (the one below and left). That Hun was in a hangar. It had a small crotch speed brake but also had a centerline with the articulated gear doors. So, I emailed the expert in such matters. Below is Dave Menard's reply. Perhaps it will enlighten the discourse."

"Hi Joe: I sent those images of 56-3018 to Mike [SSS Associate, Michael Benolkin: http://www.f-100.org/hun.shtml] to put on his website after a 20th TFW GI sent them to me. OK, here goes the skinny on Hun speed boards.

"Every Hun, from 52-5754 thru 59-2563, was built with the narrow crotch S/B. When the centerline pylon came along, big problems came up, such as clearances for the main wheels during movement up or down, and non-use when a store was fitted to said pylon. So, they came up with a rod in the leading edge of the pylon that pushed into a hole in the fuselage that was supposed to disconnect the speed brake. It didn't work every time, and there were many incidents of the board coming down and splitting right up the center, totaling it! If the inert nuke shape was on the pylon, no sweat, it was concrete. But if the real special weapon was damaged: big time incident plus mucho paperwork and investigations.

"So about 1962, give or take a couple of years, depending on where you were, the wider crotch mod came into being. It was done by the troops in the field, such as the FMS (Field Maint. Sqdn.) or CAMRON (Consolidated A/C Maint. Sqdn.). Since these guys were related to my career field, usually next door or pretty close anyway, I watched many of these mods get done. It sure saved a bunch of work for crew chiefs, taking damaged boards off, fitting and trimming the new ones, then checking everything out hydraulically, after the A/C was jacked up.

"The only Ds that DID NOT get this newer S/B were the non-centerline-capable ones; the -1. -5. -10, -15, -35 & -40 models. By the way, these are the Huns the USAF palmed off to the French, Danes, and Turks.

"OK now? If you have any more questions, fire away. Cheers, **— Dave"** *Sure wish we could, Dave. End of Subject.*

Totally Unexpected Input on Issue 21 Story: "The Great SAC Plaque Caper"

"R. Medley. I'm not a member of the SSS, as I never got to fly the Hun, but I had been an F-84 pilot in one of the SAC fighter units in the '50s for seven years and also flew the 84 in Korea for 100 missions. Just before SAC transferred all their fighter units to TAC, I had transferred into the U-2 program as it was being formed. I spent nine years in the Dragon Lady and then transferred into the SR-71 Blackbird program, as it was being formed, and spent seven years there. SAC owned both of those programs.

Giant SAC plaque in "harms way" at the TSN O' Club.

"I'm writing because a friend of mine, a Hun driver and member of the SSS, loaned me a couple of copies of *The Intake*, a publication I had never seen. Loved them! Some great stories and saw lots of old fighter friends who wound up as Hun drivers. However, I have something I wanted to add to a story I read in last spring's Issue 21, page 33, about the SAC plaque on the wall of the O' Club bar at Tan Son Nhut. I don't have a clue who the SAC Lt. Col. would have been or what that Det. was doing in the 2nd AD. What I do know is that the story is in error where it says "there were no SAC aircraft based in Vietnam." I assume the author was thinking of bombers.

"But believe you me, our U-2 squadron started flying missions out of Bien Hoa in early February of 1964 and stayed in the theater for 13 years! We flew all over N. Vietnam before the strike missions began to hit there and brought back most of the preliminary target information for the fighters, and later the BUFFs. The first SA-2 missile fired at a USAF plane over N. Vietnam was at a U-2. No one

knew the SAMs were there until then. The discovery of SA-2s changed the whole tactical scenario.

"As the years moved on, the Blackbirds took over the up-north missions and the U-2s had to become very selective on their routes because they were obviously easy meat for the SA-2. (We knew that from the Gary Powers incident over Russia, Rudy Anderson over Cuba, and five of the Taiwan pilots we trained who flew over the China mainland.)

"In any event, I think you have a great publication and I thoroughly enjoyed going through the back issues. Just thought I'd make a ***small correction*** to a very funny story. ***— Pat Halloran"*** *Wow! So here's what I replied to Pat.*

"I was puzzled by your email of last night when I opened it this morning and started reading it. It didn't take long to come up to speed as to how you happened to be reading 'Turkey' Joe Turner's story about the SAC Plaque. Speaking for all our members, we are pleased that your opinion of our journal is so high, and trust you'll enjoy future issues shared with you by your SSS member friend.

"Since the 'The Great SAC Plaque Caper' story's origins were with the 481st TFS Intel Officer in his 1975-published recollections, we can't lay the blame for overlooking SAC's contributions to the war in general (and particularly the Recce part) on Turkey Joe. But as Editor (who maybe should have known better, maybe not), I'll take the blame for the serious omission of pertinent USAF history.

"We much appreciate your excellent summary of the facts of the matter (SAC birds based and "hanging it out" flying in SEA), and will publish it in the coming spring issue of The Intake*. Thank you for taking the time to write**, — RMG"***

After I replied, I did some quick Google searching and found that Pat Halloran is a retired SAC major general and a true expert on the subject of SAC Recce. On the 55th Wing Association website at http://www.55wa.org/, under the Heritage & Videos link, you'll find a link labeled "SAC Recon during Vietnam." There you'll find a first class professional article titled "SAC Reconnaissance in the Vietnam Conflict." You owe it to yourself to find and read this article, of which General Halloran is a co-author. Thanks Pat, for clearing up a bit of Vietnam/SEA history that many of our Tac fighter pilots may have never known or conveniently forgotten due to the sands of time. A copy of this issue of The Intake *will be sent to Pat, in case his SSS member friend forgets to send on his copy with this mention of Pat's 'small' correction."*

174th TFS "Phu Cat Bats," Iowa ANG — Some Kind of Record Set

"Phu Cat Bats"

As a new member of the re-vitalized SSS Membership Committee, Dick Pietro decided to attempt the near impossible goal of achieving SSS membership for 100 percent of the 28 174th TFS aircrew (pilots and flight surgeon) who participated in the 1968 deployment to Vietnam at Phu Cat Air Base. And on top of that, a secondary goal was to get all 28 of them registered and on the Smithsonian's Wall of Honor's SSS Airfoil at the Udvar-Hazy Center. Dick and other 174th Vietnam Vets spread the word of these two ambitious group goals, and eventually, all of the living members who were not previously SSS members became members, a near shack for goal One. Then, as a group, the 23 got themselves all registered for the Airfoil, a near shack for goal Two. Both goals were then pushed to 100 percent by the group (or members thereof) sponsoring their five fallen comrades who had already flown west, and enrolling them in both the SSS as RIP and registered for the Airfoil per SSS policy and procedures. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED at 100 percent and in spades! Congratulations for Dick's inspiration and to all the Phu Cat Bats for their sense of mission and, as a group, seeing the idea through to completion. To tie this achievement would be a challenge for other, similar Hun Vietnam Vet units…. Any takers?

354th TFW Reunion

Reminder: The 354th TFW is scheduling a reunion at Myrtle Beach from April 29 - May 2, 2014. This reunion is planned for F-100 drivers who were at Myrtle Beach from 1958-1968 but is open to all who would like to attend. The reunion will be at The Breakers Resort. For more information contact Pete Winters at cwinters1@sc.rr.com.

Wally "Wallybird" Mason (RIP November 1, 2013) — Recollections

Wally Mason was a pioneer who broke new ground and explored paths not trod before. I'm speaking, of course, of Wally's service to the SSS as a key nuclear member of the volunteer staff of our journal, The Intake*. In those early days, we had to contend with all manner of strange territory and terms encountered in the land of professional periodicals (of which we dreamed): e.g., style guides, paper weight, printing press "overs," and the most dreaded—CMYK, in the bizarre world of four color printing. As* The Intake's *first Photo Editor, Wally helped us steer through those shoals toward the smooth sailing waters we now enjoy in the realms of photography and of story editing policy and practices, both yielding the much lauded journals that SSS members and others enjoy so much today. Thanks, Wallybird. Your early influence helped shape the curve for all of us on our way "onward and upward," for eight years now!*

Another BEYOND COINCIDENCE Incidence (Or "Coinkydink," as Jack Doub puts such happenings.)

On page 32 of Issue 19 of The Intake*, we reported our first major coincidence in publishing* The Intake*, which was discovered in the making of the composite image published on the back cover of that issue. It turned out that Jack had been the pilot of a Learjet from which a picture was taken of two F-15s making a friendly interception of two MiG-29s entering Alaskan airspace above 41,000 feet en route to a Canadian air show. The coincidence was that we had selected that picture (from scores of internet pictures examined) to be the background for John Schulz's poem "Scratches on the Sky" planned for Issue 19's back cover. What were the odds of that connection to the SSS and* The Intake*? Astronomical!*

Now comes another Intake*-publishing coincidence of near equal "coinkydinkness," discovered by Tom Clark. To explain this coincidence, we'll start with* ***full disclosure*** *about Tom and another SSS'r who just happened to be stationed at Phan Rang on overlapping tours in March of 1969; that other SSS'r would be Rusty Gideon.*

As Tom explained in his inaugural "Dumb Things Done in a Hun" (DTDH) Department article on page 28 of Issue 23, he was a fairly junior Hun-driving guy, but because of a dearth of old heads, he managed to become a combat flight lead before his tour ended. What Tom DIDN'T reveal is that like many of us old heads in our early days, he was a "time-hog"! And, he went out of his way to beg additional flying time in about any kind of aircraft. As he later admits in recent correspondence, "When I was not on the schedule, I'd go sandbag a ride with the FAC Check-out School in O-1s, O-2s or OV-10s, or I'd go fly around the countryside in a C-130, or even fly combat missions in the backseat with the local O-1 FAC unit." Aha! Therein lies the seed that led to this coincidence, or maybe confluence of coincidences.

It seems that "one fine day" Tom was puttering around with one of his local FAC friends, when a Phan Rang two-ship was RTBing and just happened to check in to see if Tom's FAC had any use for their un-expended 20mm. As usual, he had a dangerous hooch nestled in a valley about 10 miles from home and asked if they would like to shoot it up. Silly question. Now if those last two underlined sentences seem familiar, you are right at the head of the class, because they are almost a direct quote from another story in Issue 23 by, you guessed it, Rusty Gideon. What's going on here?

Long story short: *Three coincidences. First, that Tom had been joy riding with the FAC that Rusty's flight had petitioned to provide them with a strafing target, the execution of which almost cost Rusty his life. Second, that Tom had taken a series of pictures of that "hooch attack" and still had the ancient images. And three, that both Tom's DTDH and Rusty's harrowing tale (a DTDH story in its own right) were published in the same issue of the inaugural DTDH Dept. Really coinkydinky stuff !!! You be the judge of the odds on the confluence of this trifecta-class of coincidences.*

Cut to the Chase*: Herewith are four of the ancient images captured by Tom of Rusty in action on that memorable day in March of 1969. Thanks Tom and Rusty. BTW Rusty's story had been submitted on 05/30/08* ***and just happened to be selected*** *for publication in the same issue we did Tom's Phan Rang tale; what a connection. Astronomical odds?*

General terrain, mountains west of Phan Rang.

Target area. "Hit my smoke!"

"Two's in!" With his fangs out?

Two's in "harms way." [Magnify on the white oval!]

And now, dear reader, you know "the rest of the story."

"Wee Willie" Wilson (RIP February 6, 2014) — Recollections

Willie was the world's funniest man and is likely already joking with Jonathan Winters in heaven. — ***Rose*** *(Don Shepperd's wife.)*

Great guy, great memories. Made an everyday chore…not so bad. — ***Jim Phillips***

Everybody has a Willie story. When news of his passing flashed around the internet, it was received with great sadness, yet heartfelt thanks that he had passed through our lives. He might have been the high time Hun driver, but he was also the guy who loved fun, and acted it out. His aerial exploits were legion, and his "Oh, Colonel, I was just funning!" antics were career defining snippets that kept the JAG guys busy and the promotion boards in a dither. When Willie called, "'Hotbox,' check," we all cinched up the lap belt a little tighter, and geared up, not for just another trip to the range, but for 1.5 hours of potential aviation history, or at least a howling debrief and another war story.

"Keep the turn going, Willie, we're all in trail and closing." — ***Condor*** *(Jim Quick)*

Condor's right. There are lots of Willie stories out there, and we'll be printing some of the best of them soon! ***Ed.***

Stake Your Claim (SYC)

By Jim Brasier [Jim's contacts: f100sabre@cox.net, (602) 757-2636]

There were no challenges to previous claims and just three valid new claims submitted for this issue by our deadline. This proved to be serendipitous because a flood of competing inputs for Issue 24 seriously pressed us for space, and a short SYC Dept. helped save our bacon. That press for space also forced us to postpone publishing the SYC Scoreboard in this Spring Issue, as is our norm. However, you'll find the updated Scoreboard on the SSS website.

New Claims — ► **Jerry Fowler's** claim is about an adventure he had in 1957 as a "filler" pilot ferrying a Hun from the U.S. to Europe under the auspices of the 1708th Ferry Group Det. out of Kelly AFB, Texas. His full tale of that island hopping experience was in Issue 23. Therein, he explains that, at the time, F-100 filler pilots had to have a minimum of 25 hours in type and 700 hours total (plus a "green card" valid for more than 30 days).

When Jerry was selected, he was an IP with ATC's 3597th CCTS at Nellis, and he had 29 Hun hours and 744 hours total, just over the minimums required. This is a valid SYC and Jerry is hereby awarded the title of **Lowest type time and total hours to qualify for an F-100 ferry High Flight to Europe = 29 and 744.** "I'd do it all over again in a heart beat," said Jerry in closing his full story.

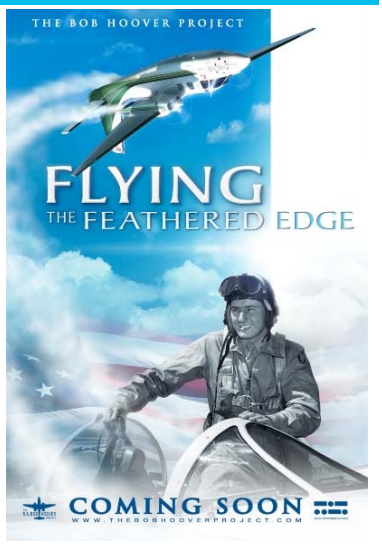
► **Mike Mottern** claims to be **The first F-100 pilot to land an F-100 at Pingtung AB, Taiwan.** Mike flew an F-100 from Tuy Hoa AB, RVN, to Clark AB, the Philippines; then on to Pingtung AB, Taiwan for IRAN in late 1969 or early 1970. Due to the heavy F-100 IRAN workload at Tainan AB, the normal IRAN facility, Pingtung had been made the overload facility to handle an increased workload.

Although Pingtung had 7,828 feet of runway (NATO standard), Mike dragged the tailskid on touchdown, making the first ever F-100 arrival at Pingtung a bit more spectacular for those watching than Mike had planned.

► **Fred "Fearless" Abrams** claims to be **A member of the only F-100 combat mission to deliver ordnance on its own air base**. Fred was Two in a flight of two F-100s tasked to provide FAC-directed (Bilk 34) air support when Bien Hoa came under attack by enemy forces on 31 Jan 1968 (Tet). Fred didn't provide any BDA, but as well as starting a valid new category for an SYC, this sounds like a good story for a later issue of *The Intake*, if it stands up, of course. We do predict a few ties!

Fini — We had intended to publish **Tad Derrick's** full account of his SYC title awarded in Issue 23, but pressed for space as we are, we'll just have to defer that to a later issue. Sorry, Tad. Meanwhile, please DO study the updated Scoreboard on our website and see if you can't top some existing records or come up with some valid new claims. Remember, whatever you come up with has to have been done by an SSS'r in or associated with an F-100. Till next time, cheerio. ◘

Update on "The Bob Hoover Project" since the page 29 article of Issue 23, Fall 2013.



*Here's **big time** news from a very happy Director/Editor, Kim Furst. **Ed.***

As some of you may know, this documentary film about the life of SSS charter member Bob Hoover is almost ready for release. Bob signed off on the completed film for historical accuracy in January of this year, and the picture is locked. At that time, Bob said, "Kim, you've captured it [exactly] the way it was–you did it!" Was I thrilled!

The post production has been wrapping up this February, including a brand new score, cleaning of the hundreds of photos, and the creation of titles and other effects.

As for where and when it can be seen, we are negotiating to get the film's distribution and premiere done as soon as possible. When the official dates are set, they will be posted on the website at www.thebobhooverproject.com.

The goal of the film was to enable the legendary Mr. Hoover to tell his own story and share the hard earned wisdom of a life spent pushing the edge of the envelope while contributing significantly to major developments in diverse fields of aviation.

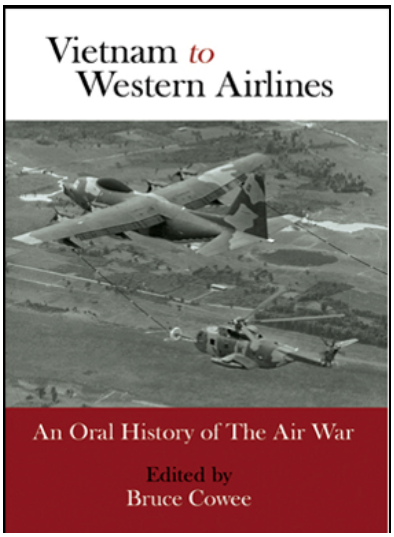
In *Flying the Feathered Edge*, Bob is joined by friends and colleagues Harrison Ford, Dick and Burt Rutan, Carroll Shelby, Gene Cernan, Chick Cleveland and Bud Day (MOH), and additional SSS members Bill Hosmer, Dan Druen, Ron Catton, and Jim Brasier. I would like to thank the Super Sabre Society for your support and continuing interest in this project and am eager to share the film with your members when we can make an arrangement to do that in the future. — ***Kim Furst***

I much appreciated being invited to attend a private preview screening of the flick on 20 Feb 2014 at the Museum of Flying at the Santa Monica Airport. Alas, I couldn't make it. Looking forward to Kim's kind offer! —R. Medley

Book Review 1 — "Vietnam to Western Airlines"

Produced/Edited by Bruce Cowee
Review by R. Medley Gatewood

Mr. Cowee was a USAF C-7A "Caribou" pilot in Vietnam who recently produced this compendium of fascinating stories by pilots of all sorts of U.S. aircraft and various missions in the SEA Theater. Among the 33 authors are three SSS members, Jerry Stamps, Jim Pollak, and KB Clark, who was a classmate of mine at Willie UPT and Luke Hun School. KB suggested I read this rather unique book and do a review of it for Mr. Cowee—and for our SSS members, should I deem it worthy. I did, and it is more than worthy. ***Five Stars!*** ***RMG***



Bruce Cowee at Nha Trang Air Base, 1968.

Producer/Editor/Author Bruce Cowee, a Vietnam War veteran himself (USAF 1968-69), had three driving reasons for putting together this book over a period of some 45 years: 1) to honor Vietnam veterans, in particular, the Vietnam service of men he had the honor to know and work with, *after that service*, as a pilot for Western Airlines; 2) to provide a vehicle for several authors to tell their stories for the first time, and 3) to dispel the negative stereotypes of Vietnam veterans as portrayed in many post-war books and by Hollywood movies. Through his leadership, tedious research and patience, Mr. Cowee has achieved all three of these special purposes…in spades!

As the subtitle (An Oral History of the Air War) implies, these collected works of 33 pilots (all volunteers) and other contributors focus on the service experiences of men engaged in aerial warfare. These recollections are representative of warriors from four of the five uniformed services and even includes one "black operations" (CIA) pilot. The aircraft they flew ranged from WWII vintage crates to workhorse transports, conventional bombers, sophisticated gunships, and modern jet fighters. This formidable array of hardware was used to perform simple to complex missions ranging from supply "milk runs" to airborne command and control, psychological ops, close air support, interdiction, combat air patrol, electronic warfare support, carpet bombing, forward air control, search and rescue, and "…a hundred things you have not dreamed of." (Quoting a line from John Gillespie Magee Jr.'s poem "High Flight.")

From this matrix of services, aircraft and missions, Mr. Cowee has succeeded in weaving a tapestry that provides intimate insights into the lives and wartime experiences of a select group of men as they served their country during the trying times of the Vietnam War. This *non-fiction work* is perhaps unique because, rather than a coherent story line that neatly ties things together, it is the post-war Western Airlines connections that provide the cohesion between the separate but chronologically arranged recollections of the many authors. Cowee has done a superb job of tying disparate time and place events together so they can be read sequentially or separately at the choice of the reader.

Good layout and readability notwithstanding, it is the content of the independently written stories "from the heart" that I appreciated the most. Each chapter's author is introduced in italicized text at the beginning of "his" chapter by the editor so as to prepare the reader for nuances that will come within the author's own words. Sometimes the editor ends a chapter with further italicized remarks pertinent to the author's story. These editorial remarks are helpful for the reader to appreciate the context of the author's personal story and its place in the overall conduct of the long air war.

Although each chapter/story can stand alone, there are three chapters that cover the same event but from distinctly different viewpoints. The event was a harrowing shootdown and subsequent successful rescue of a USAF F-100 fighter pilot who tells his story as the primary actor in a potentially deadly situation. In a second chapter, his lone wingman picks up the story from his airborne position, having switched from an attacker role to a defender role, trying desperately to locate and protect his downed leader and close friend. But soon, U.S. Army helicopters come to his aid, and perform a successful extraction and drop-off at a friendly Special Forces camp with a tiny landing strip clawed out of the jungle. The third chapter was written by the pilot of a search and rescue C-130 who miraculously managed to land that large aircraft on the short jungle strip, pick up the F-100 pilot, and deliver him to his home base. Whereupon, the C-130 pressed on to continue its mission over the Gulf of Tonkin. This trilogy of separate recollections had a happy ending that day.

But at the opposite end of the success spectrum is a story about one of the most deadly events of the Air War. This tragic event was the horrific collision of two B-52 bombers, resulting in the loss of both aircraft and six of the 13 total aircrew members aboard those aircraft. (Of historical note, one of the six dead or missing was SAC Major General William J. Crumm, at the time 3rd Air Division Commander, who was aboard one of the two aircraft as an observer. He

was the first USAF general to die in the Vietnam War.) The first chapter of this story was written by the copilot of the Number 1 aircraft that was hit by the Number 2 aircraft during a change-of-lead maneuver. It's a riveting story of things going dreadfully wrong in a very short time, the details of which are corroborated by the author of the following chapter who was the aircraft commander in the Number 3 B-52 in the formation…and he saw it all!

Falling between these two sets of emotional stories are some 32 other chapters that give first-person accounts of the Air War ranging from routine to truly heroic. As a Vietnam War veteran myself (two tours: 1967-68 flying F-100 fighters and C-130 Airborne Command and Control missions; 1974-75 flying A-7D search and rescue missions), I read the chapters out of sequence, according to my interests, as offered by the chapter titles. But I eventually read them all…and I thoroughly enjoyed every one of them. There were lots of emotions evoked in the total read, including fear, pride, pathos, humor, tight stomach-knot anxiousness, grateful relief, and many others. But most of all was the satisfaction of knowing that my personal experiences were not unique and would have fit in nicely with the chapters of this book. Its portraits of life on the frontiers of freedom in Southeast Asia are accurate, compelling, and a good read for those of us who were there, and a must read for others who were not, but would like to know what being there was really like. ◘

I am honored to have been asked to review and recommend this well-thought-out labor-of-love that Mr. Cowee has achieved. His motivation was on the mark, and the result is world-class non-fiction reporting.

R. Medley Gatewood, Editor & Publisher of the Society's Journal, "The Intake."

Particulars on the book: Published and released 11-11-2013 by Alive Book Publishing; 531 pages and more than 150 photographs, over 100 in color; Deluxe collectors' hardcover 1st edition with color photos and many upgrades (high quality paper, sewn binding, beautiful embossed boards), available only through this website: www.vietnamtowesternairlines.com, or by calling Alive Books at 925-837-7303, price is $49.95, signed by Editor Bruce Cowee and dated 11-11-2013. Standard (B & W) hardcover 1st edition, also signed and dated, is $36.95. The B & W edition may be available from online booksellers at a reduced price, unsigned. ◘

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Dumb Things Done in a Hun (DTDH)

Tom Clark suggested this department and we ran it as a trial balloon in Issue 23. Two guys saluted by sending stories and others indicated they have inexhaustible supplies of further examples, so we'll run this again as a second trial balloon before committing it to full Intake *Department status. Till we firm up the rules, we'll treat this column more like the Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence Dept., but we'll begin to keep track of the DTDH claims.* ***Ed.***

In an email to me, Rod Beckett provided this confession: Hi Medley: Hope this finds you well. After reading the recent INTAKE (Issue 23) cover to cover, I like the suggestion for a department for *The Intake* called "Dumb Things Done in a Hun" (DTDH). And I have a contribution that would fit in that department:

Rod Beckett

After jumping through all the hoops to become a flight lead/bomb commander in the 77th TFS at RAF Wethersfield, England, and although I was still a 2nd lieutenant, my name somehow came up on the schedule to take a Hun to the CASA (Spanish contractor) plant at Getafe, Spain, near Madrid, and then bring one home. The year was about 1959-60. This was where all the USAFE Huns went for IRAN (Inspect and Repair As Necessary) Maintenance. Being appropriately briefed by the old heads in the squadron on procedures for delivering and picking up the airplanes, I was soon on my way.

About 30 minutes north of the Torrejon TACAN, which was the IAF for the penetration and approach to Getafe, I received a call from the controlling agency informing me that Getafe was below minimums in fog and I should divert to Zaragoza AB, which was no sweat. I'd been into Zaragoza many times in the T-33. Upon my landing rollout on the 12,000 foot SAC runway at Zaragoza, out of habit, I reached up and grabbed the drag chute handle and deployed the drag chute, which I really didn't need. After parking the Hun in the transit area, I asked TA if they had an F-100 drag chute. They looked at me like I was asking for the moon! So my next landing (wherever it happened) would be a no drag chute landing. But as a fearless 2nd lieutenant, that didn't bother me at all!

So with the help of a TA airman, I wadded up the deployed drag chute, and stuffed it into the link-bay, so as not to leave an F-100 drag chute at a SAC base where it would probably just be discarded. A weather check indicated that the fog at Getafe had burned off, and away I went. I made my steep approach over the smoke stack at the approach end of the runway, and planted the airplane firmly on the numbers. My no-chute landing was successfully completed! I deplaned as if everything was normal, only to be met by the Lt. Col. who did the FCFs on all of the aircraft as they came out of IRAN. He drove up in his Mercedes Benz sports car, with the gull-wing doors open on the side, and barked "Where's your drag

chute?" When I informed him it was in the link-bay, he just shook his head, told me to get into his car, and he would send someone out to retrieve it. He took me to his office where I signed for the airplane that I was to take back to Wethersfield. I was soon on my way back to England.

Thinking that was the end of my no-drag-chute feat (or foible), it was a day or two later that Maj. Blanchard, our OPS Officer, called me into his office. It seems he had received a phone call from the Col. at Getafe, informing him that one of his 2nd lieutenants had landed on the short Getafe runway without a drag chute. Being a product of the Aviation Cadet Program, and taught not to quibble, I didn't make any excuses and agreed with Maj. Blanchard's comment that what I had done was ***really dumb*** by way of a sharp, "Yes, sir!" But it was probably a good six months or more before I took another airplane to Getafe.

The only difference between my DTDH and that of Tom Clark (see DTDH Issue 23) is that mine was totally planned and premeditated, whereas Tom's was one of those things that any Hun-driver could say, "But for the grace of God, there go I." Claim: **Totally planned and premeditated violation of standing drag chute usage guidance, and getting caught at it. — *Rod Beckett***

To which I replied: "Good to hear from you, Rod. I told Tom Clark that some of our old heads would love to play the DTDH game. He forgets that we all were dumb and 2nd lieutenants once upon a time, a long time ago, and that we were lucky to survive some of the things that came our way, whether our own fault or by fateful circumstance."

Here's another DTDH by email from Don Volz: I have a Double-Dumb Thing Done in a Hun (ref. Tom Clark's suggestion in issue 23). When my wife, Kay, joined me at Hahn AB, Germany, (461st FDS) in the spring of 1958, there were no apartments available on base, so I had to find a place to rent on the economy. A couple of squadron mates were moving on base from a house in the nearby village of Bischofsdhron (sp?) owned by a little old German lady named Petala, a widow whose husband had been a "mayor" (major) in the army. I arranged with her to rent the house with her as a "live-in" landlady. She spoke very little English but we managed okay. The house sat on a hill a short distance from the village.

Don Volz

One clear and lovely spring day I was up flying my clean (for the uninitiated that means no drop tanks) F-100C, and as I flew over the village, I thought I would give Kay a little buzz job. So I pealed off and dove down toward the little house on the hill. I came by about roof-top level at 400-450 knots. I pulled up and wondered if she had seen or heard me (she had). So I decided to give it another go, and this time I was at upper floor window level. Then, just to make sure Kay heard me, I lit the afterburner as I went roaring by!

When I returned to base and was climbing down from the Hun, I saw a civilian car driving up. It was Kay and she was *FURIOUS!* I think if she had a gun, I would have been history. She really let me have it!

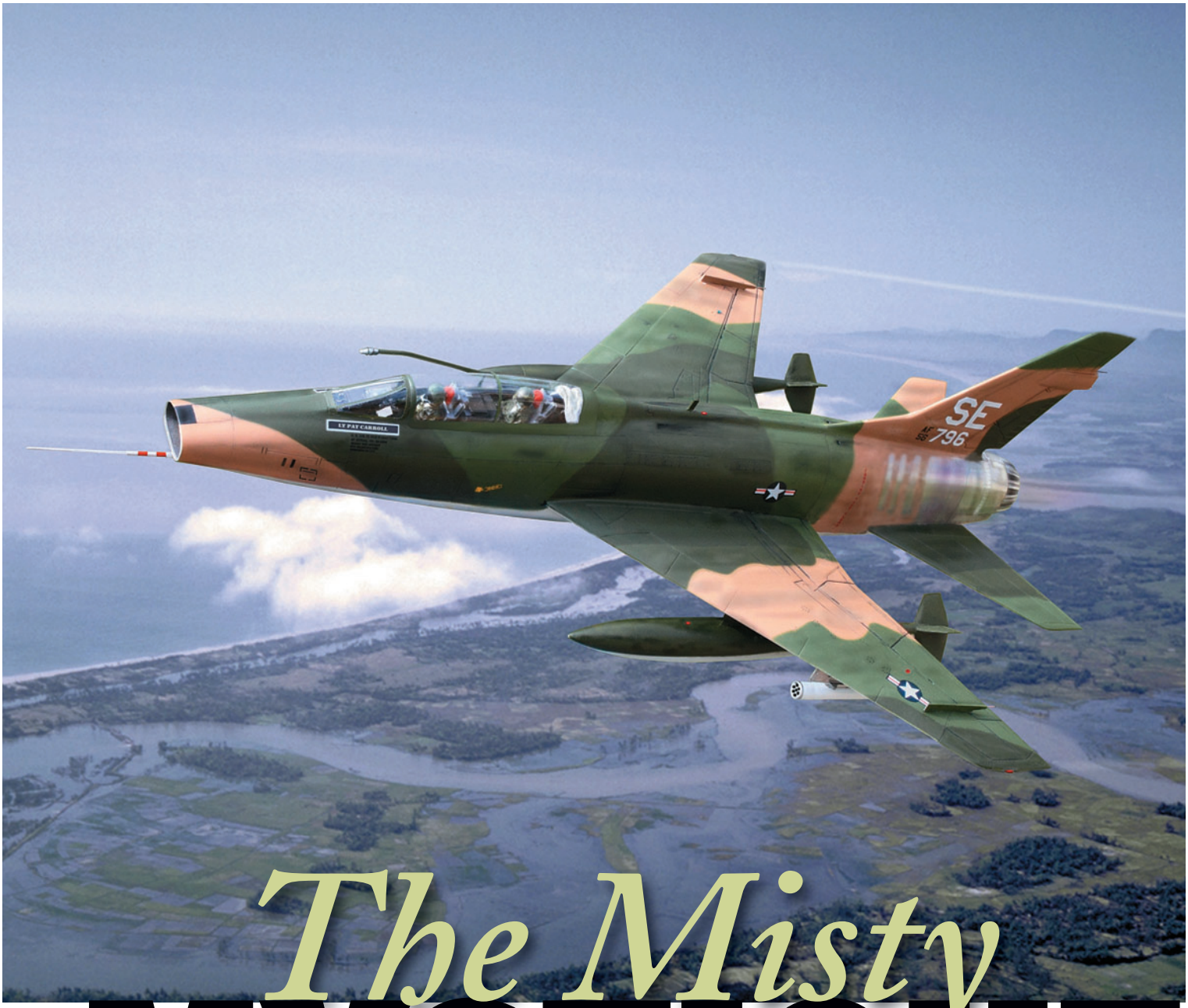
She said the first pass was loud but the second one rattled the foundation, the people in town were shaking their fists in my direction, and all the animals in town were barking, howling, mooing, baying, meowing, grunting, etc. She had been in the upstairs bedroom and could read my name painted on my helmet, and when I engaged the afterburner she was nearly thrown to the floor. She said that Petala came up and asked her, "Not Don? Not Don?" and she said "Yes, Petala, that is ***not*** the Don I thought I knew."

Standing there on the ramp, Kay was so upset that she didn't even want to go back to Petala's house that day. So we asked a squadron mate and his wife if we could spend the night with them, which we did—thus saving our marriage!

One pass like that was stupid, but two passes, the second with an afterburner engagement, was doubly dumb. Fortunately, I never heard anything of it from the Air Force higher-ups. Claim: **Not one, but two roof-top-level passes (the second with afterburner) disturbing a friendly village in an allied country. — *Don Volz*** *And, he **wasn't caught** at it! More confessions to come? I certainly expect so.* ***Ed.*** ◘

* * * * * Special Feature Article — By Popular Demand * * * * *

In Issue 23, page 17, we learned in the sidebar about portraiture photographer Robert Seale that one of his pictures of Bud Day from Seale's 6 June 2012 photo shoot with the Collings Foundation's F-100 was selected for the front cover of the March, 2013, Air & Space/Smithsonian magazine. That cover touts the feature article for that edition across Bud's chest, saying, "EXTRAORDINARY VETS/Tough Pilots and F-100s." The actual title of the article is "The Misty Mystique," by Mark Bernstein. Robert Seale put me onto the article, which is fantastic! After a friendly negotiation, we are pleased to announce that we have secured permission from the Smithsonian to make this article our feature article for this issue of our journal, **The Intake**. ***On the next six pages, it is "Reprinted with permission from Air & Space/Smithsonian magazine, copyright Smithsonian Institution 2013." And to Mr. Seale and to the Collings Foundation and to Mr. Bernstein and to the Smithsonian, we are most grateful. Enjoy the ride! RMG***



The Misty MYSTIQUE

During Vietnam, they flew fast and low. Later, they hit the heights.

BY MARK BERNSTEIN

IN SEPTEMBER 1968, a U.S. Air Force pilot, having ejected from his damaged aircraft, took cover in a rice paddy in South Vietnam. The area in which he landed was regularly patrolled by the Viet Cong. Remaining submerged up to his neck, the pilot managed to escape detection until a U.S. military helicopter could lift him from the scene. A quarter-century later, the pilot—Ronald Fogleman—was a four-star general and Air Force Chief of Staff.

In the Vietnam War, downed U.S. pilots were premium currency. For the North Vietnamese, captured airmen were bargaining chips; for the Americans, they were fellow warriors never to be abandoned. Once, however, orders came from a U.S. general in Saigon that a badly injured pilot, lying on North Vietnamese soil, was to be left behind because the rescue effort would conflict with a larger operation. An outraged captain reached Saigon by telephone to demand that someone find out "exactly what I'm to tell the guy on the ground as to why we are pulling out and abandoning him."

Back at base, the captain sat alone in the bar, cussing out various things, generals not least. A fellow pilot walked in, grinning, to say the downed pilot had been rescued. Apparently, "the general couldn't figure out what words to use to tell him why we weren't pulling him out." The captain who had posed that difficult question was Dick Rutan, a man of varied accomplishments, including a record-setting, nonstop, unrefueled, round-the-world flight in 1986. The aircraft he flew with Jeana Yeager, *Voyager*, is now on display at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

At the time, Rutan was a member of an elite group of forward air controllers—which Fogleman later joined—who flew F-100 Super Sabres over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in North Vietnam and Laos, looking for evidence of men and materials moving south toward the fighting. Flying under the call sign "Misty," the pilots would detect enemy targets, mark them with smoke-dispensing rockets, and guide strike aircraft—usually McDonnell Douglas F-4s and Republic F-105s—in for bombing runs.

The Mistys were a small group: Over the three-year period of the program, from June 1967 to May 1970, only 157 men served as pilots. After the war, many of them became notable achievers. When Fogleman was named the 15th Air Force Chief of Staff in 1994, he replaced Merrill "Tony" McPeak, who had also been a Misty. Two others, Lacy Veach and Roy Bridges, flew as astronauts on the space shuttle, and Bridges later headed NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida and Langley Research Center in Virginia. For his *Voyager* flight, Rutan received the National Aeronautic Association's Collier Trophy. Misty alumni include four other generals, a spate of entrepreneurs, a pecan grower, a coffee plantation owner, a sculptor, an evangelical preacher, and 13 colonels.

What accounts for how much Misty airmen accomplished in later years? "Misty was a group of volunteers self-selected from fighter pilots," says McPeak. "They were bound to be a bit special, so it should be no surprise that many of them turned out well when they eventually grew up."

Fogleman believes the motivation preceded the mission. "We were fighter pilots in the United States Air Force," he says. "But ones who wanted to go the next step beyond that. What is it that I can do? What is it that is out there? It was those kind of people—they liked responsibility. They liked hanging it out a little bit. Because somebody had to do it. And the same things that motivate people to achieve leadership positions or be exemplary performers in the military are traits that great CEOs have."

The North American F-100F (illustration, opposite) was the designated ride for Misty pilots. Colonel Ray Lee (above) helped set up the program.

The man who most shaped the Misty program was its first commander, Major George E. "Bud" Day. It was Day who gave the group its call sign, taken from his favorite song, "Misty," recorded by pianist Erroll Garner. "Misty came about because it was just a great song," says Day. "I was in Vegas, I think, in the late 1950s the night it was introduced. The guy played it on the xylophone first, then switched over to the piano. He wasn't a very good singer, but it was such a remarkable song, it brought the house down."

Day, a Medal of Honor recipient, spent five years as a POW in North Vietnam, where he shared a cell with future Senator John McCain. (In 2004, he appeared with other Vietnam veterans in an ad attacking presidential candidate John Kerry.) He retired from the Air Force as a colonel in 1977. He holds nearly 70 military decorations.

Before the Misty F-100s started flying as forward air controllers, the mission was flown by slow-moving propeller-driven aircraft (the Cessna O-1 Bird Dog and the Cessna O-2 Skymaster), which were getting shot at and, as North Vietnamese anti-aircraft weapons improved, hit with increasing frequency. "Neither aircraft was suitable for a dense automatic-weapons environment," says former Air Force Historian Richard Hallion.

"After the problem of the slow FACs was recognized, the decision was made by the Seventh Air Force staff to establish the fast FAC," says Day. "Their recommendation went to the director of operations and then to General [William W.] Momyer. They issued an order establishing what was officially called Project Commando Sabre. I was interviewed by the assistant director of operations and the director of operations for the Seventh Air Force, and ordered to Phu Cat [an air base in South Vietnam] to take charge. I made one recommendation: that we get some of the slow-FAC pilots who could ride in the back and take advantage of their experience as spotters."

Early on, Day was joined by operations officer Major William Douglass, who had been wounded while flying the O-1 during a previous tour and spent a year convalescing. The pair believed that flying fast and low—perhaps 450 mph at 4,000 feet—offered the pilot the best chance to observe what went on below and to remain safe from anything shooting at him. Officials from the Seventh Air Force decided to use the two-seat F-100F so that the second man, sitting in the rear, could be free to scan the ground, read maps, handle the radios, and take notes. Since nothing in the military long escapes be-

OPPOSITE: DAVID TIPPS/DAVIDTIPPS.COM; RIGHT: COURTESY DONALD JONES AND DONALD SHEPPERD

Last June at Ellington Field in Houston, Texas, retired Air Force colonel George "Bud" Day posed with an F-100F owned by the Collings Foundation. Day, who served in Vietnam (below), was the first commander of the Misty squadron when it formed in 1967.

coming an acronym, the rear crewman became known as the "GIB," guy in back. Though the term was used more commonly by Air Force F-4 pilots and their weapon systems officers, some Mistys were also familiar with the acronym. "The GIB was along for the ride," says former Misty James Piner. "He'd call in the coordinates, hoping the dumb son of a bitch up front wouldn't get him killed." Pilots new to the unit were assigned to the back seat for their first five or 10 flights, as an orientation. After that, the Misty pilots alternated front- and backseat duties.

The aircraft they flew, the F-100F, was a variant of the North American Super Sabre. "The feel of the F-100 at the working altitude and speed was solid and responsive," says former Misty Don Jones. "I liked the feel of the controls and the great visibility to see the area near the aircraft." The F model carried two 20-mm cannon, which could be used for strafing. More commonly, though, the pilots left the ground attack up to the strike aircraft they had summoned, marking targets for them by launching up to 14 white phosphorous smoke rockets, the maximum the airplane could carry.

When the Misty program started, only 16 pilots were on hand to fly the missions. Organizationally, they were a detachment of the 416th Tactical Fighter Squadron, with whom they shared space at Phu Cat, half an hour's flying time south of the border with North Vietnam. Phu Cat was a village surrounded by rice paddies. On the base, airmen lived in prefab wooden structures that offered window air conditioning and hot showers.

Douglass, who died in March 2012, picked many of the initial pilots. After that, however, most of the unit's pilots picked themselves. Misty was high risk, and that attracted volunteers who were drawn to challenge and danger. "Pilots wanted to come to Misty so they could fly north of the border," says Day. "We got people from various fighter wings trying to get hired long-distance. We attracted every studly young guy in Southeast Asia." For Fogleman, the draw was the mission's novelty. "It was a new use of a fighter airplane," he says. "The idea that you could take a jet fighter and put it into a hostile environment and have it survive and increase the effectiveness of the entire fighter force by being there to mark targets for [strike aircraft] that would come in—the whole idea appealed to me."

After the program got going, the pilots soon settled into a routine, flying four sorties per day (later seven). They started with a before-dawn takeoff; the last flight launched in mid-afternoon. The pilots assigned to the first sortie would rise at 3 a.m., shower, and head to the mess hall for breakfast. At 3:45 a.m., they'd get their flight and intelligence briefing, which included results of the previous day's missions and the locations of any aircraft losses, studying new intelligence photos and suggested targets for the day, reviewing tanker call signs and radio frequencies, and weather forecasts for North Vietnam.

Once airborne, the Mistys set about looking for targets for the strike aircraft: at the top of the list were supply trucks and anti-aircraft-artillery sites. A key technique was to look for signs of man-made objects in the jungle below. "If you found a square bush, a rectangle, or a circle, that was a target," says Fogleman, who compares the job to detective work. "And if the water was on the south side of the river crossing, you knew the trucks were moving in that direction. I can remember one particular mission where using that technique, and then flying very low and using sun angle, I was fortunate enough to get the glint off of a windshield of a truck that was camouflaged—there were a bunch of these trucks back there. So we started putting ordnance in there [via the strike aircraft], and we spent the better part of a morning just blowing up trucks."

"The poor bastard on the ground did not know what things looked like from

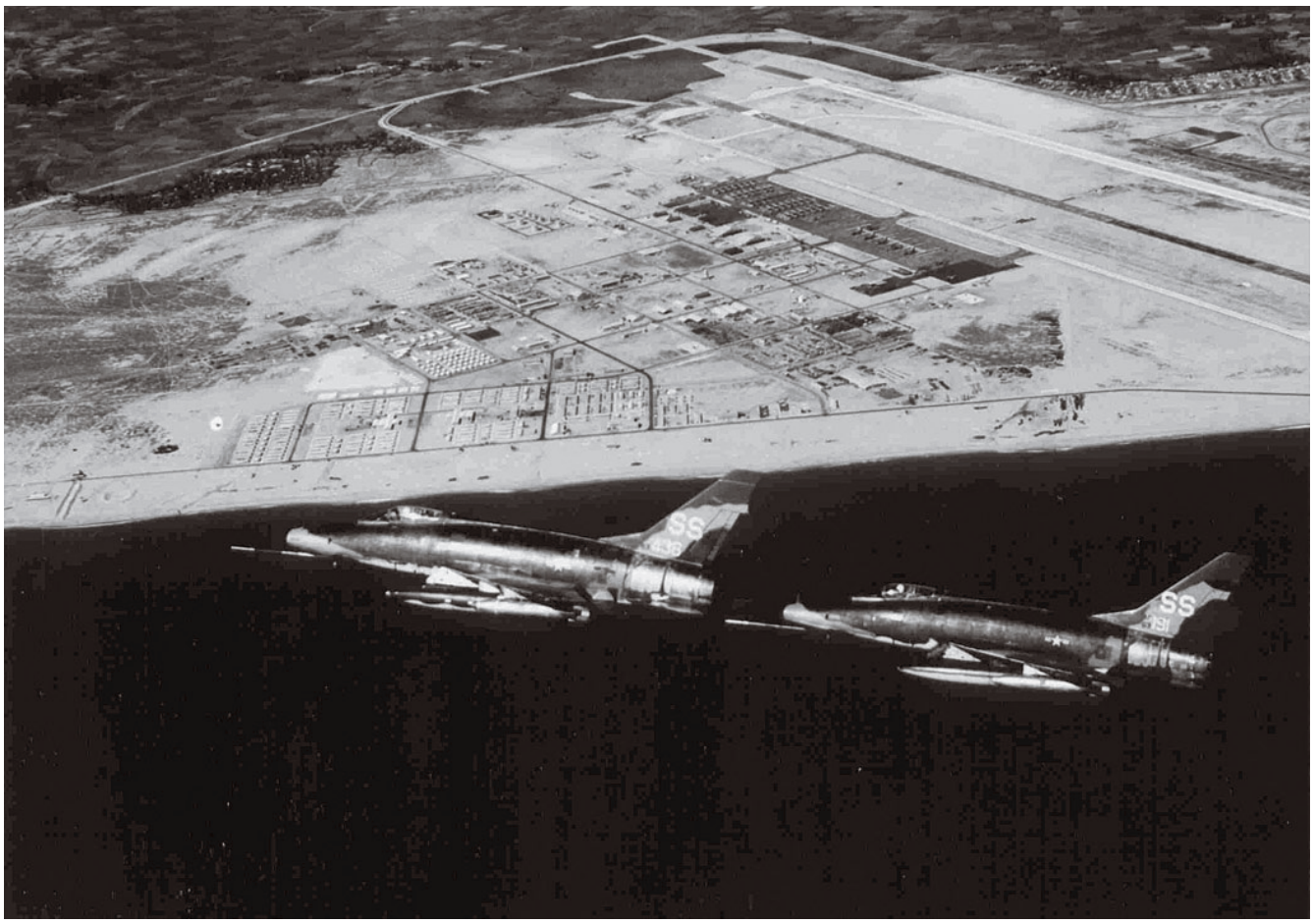
LEFT: COURTESY BUD DAY; RIGHT: ROBERT SEALE

the air," says Rutan. "All leaves have a slightly different shade on one side so you'd look for clusters of variegated leaves"—evidence that branches had been overturned for camouflage. Two of the most important attributes for Misty pilots were good eyesight and deductive reasoning. If treetops were covered with a layer of dust, for example, something was happening below those trees.

Misty pilots were impressed by the determination of the North Vietnamese soldiers. "They never gave up," says Jerry Marks. "We'd take a road away from them in daylight, and they'd take it back by [the next] morning." Says former Air Force chief of staff Tony McPeak: "We did hand out a lot of punishment, and all Mistys ended up respecting those truckers who stood up so well under heavy air attack."

It was the Misty pilots' familiarity with supply-line roads that the strike pilots depended upon, and the Mistys were crucial in guiding the strike aircraft in and out of enemy territory in North Vietnam. "The fighters were sent to our radio frequency for strike control," says former Misty Don Shepperd, who retired as a major general and head of the Air National Guard and is now a military analyst for ABC radio and CNN. "While they were inbound, we briefed them on target locations, defenses, and best escape routes. When we had them in sight, we rolled

Right: Two Mistys, Tony McPeak (back row, second from left) and Ron Fogleman (back row, third from left), would later become Air Force chiefs of staff. Below: A pair of F-100Ds fly over the Tuy Hoa air base in South Vietnam, where Misty operations were relocated in 1969.



TOP: NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE USAF; BOTTOM: COURTESY DONALD JONES AND DONALD SHEPPERD

Fogleman, now retired, was an F-100 pilot flying close air support before he became a Misty. Left: In Vietnam, forward air control was first flown by slow Cessna O-1s. Above: Misty pilots have been climbing the ladder since their first deployments.

in and marked the targets with smoke rockets."

After the strike aircraft had released their ordnance, Misty pilots flew over the area to see if the targets had been hit; if not, they gave corrections over the radio. "That was our specialty," says Fogleman. "We could put a smoke down, and we liked to brag that once we put a smoke down, it was always right on the sites, and we'd just say, 'Hit my smoke.' But every now and then you used to have to say, 'See my smoke? Hit 100 yards north of it.' " If necessary, they re-marked the targets.

The constant low-level flying was physically and mentally daunting. "We tried to maintain 400 knots and 4,500 feet while looking for targets," says Shepperd. "We constantly jinked—changed flight direction—and pulled Gs. This was very fatiguing."

All the jinking was a challenge for the F-100 as well. "The airspeed could not be maintained during the continuous G forces while flying the jink, so we frequently used the afterburner to regain the speed that kept us safe—or safer," says Don Jones, who flew for the Civil Air Patrol after leaving the Air Force. "Flying the F-100 at the low altitudes meant continuous exposure to anti-aircraft gunfire and even small-arms gunfire. The feeling I felt was exhilaration brought on by the general fear of being hit."

That fear formalized a few rules: Straight-and-level flight was forbidden, as was flying below 4,000 feet. Pilots were not to engage in second passes. If they missed a target, they let it be until a later return. In November 1968, Kelly Irving ignored that rule, which, he said, is why his military career consisted of one more takeoff than landing. Circling back over a target for a second try, his aircraft was hit. Irving recalled the incident at a 2008 Misty reunion in Oregon, outlining the procedure that pilots were to execute (if possible) after being hit: Level the wings, hit the afterburner for greater thrust, gain altitude, and head for the South China Sea (it was easier to retrieve pilots from the water than from the jungle).

When Irving's F-100 was hit, his GIB said the pair had to eject. Irving said no way. Moments later, Irving agreed it was time to eject, but this time his GIB voted no. The aircraft reached 23,000 feet, but its hydraulics had been destroyed and Irving couldn't control it. Losing altitude quickly, the two men bailed out over land. A bit more than an hour later, they were picked up by an HH-53 Sikorsky helicopter, commonly known as the Jolly Green Giant. The helicopter pilot was making his first rescue, and instead of hovering and pulling Irving up to safety, he started flying sideways, with Irving dangling in a rescue harness and dodging tree limbs. Said Irving at the reunion: "I may be one of the few people to get a Purple Heart for having been injured by a tree."

There were worse fates. Seven Mistys were killed. Four were captured. Thirty-four were shot down, landing either in

TOP LEFT: USAF/TODD BERENGER; BOTTOM LEFT: USAF; RIGHT: COURTESY DONALD JONES AND DONALD SHEPPERD

the South China Sea or in North Vietnamese-held territory.

Do Misty pilots today think the risky missions paid off? "I did control some memorable attacks as a Misty," says Tony McPeak. "But the fact is, neither Misty nor anybody else succeeded in stopping traffic down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Mission not accomplished."

Historian Richard Hallion says that Mistys laid the groundwork for future air tactics: "Misty FACs were crucial to the success of strike aircraft operating in high-threat areas where SAMs [surface-to-air missiles], anti-aircraft fire, and possibly MiGs could be encountered. If the absence of the kind of sensors and precision weapons available today limited the results of such attacks, it is still fair to state that the Mistys were the direct forerunners of the F-16 killer scouts used so successfully in [Operation] Desert Storm a generation later."

In a conflict that brought many no sense of accomplishment, most Mistys believed they were making a difference. One-time Misty commander P.J. White describes his best work as attacks he directed near Quang Tri on a North Vietnamese artillery field that was shelling U.S. Marines across the Demilitarized Zone. Jere Wallace, flying GIB with White, recalls: "We were up before dawn so we could verify the flashes of the guns," which had a range of 25 miles.

The shelling of the Marines went on for a week, and White remembers waiting patiently for the U.S. strike aircraft to hit their targets. In general, "you couldn't tell if it was a truck, tank, or tractor that was hit," says White, who went on to become the first commander of Red Flag, an aerial combat training exercise. In the end it didn't matter. "We destroyed them," he says, referring to the artillery that had been attacking the Marines.

There was never any solid measure of how much southward-bound North Vietnamese armament Mistys helped demolish. On one successful mission during the 1968 Tet Offensive, 79 trucks were destroyed, and the pilots believed that such successes would have been more frequent had there not been technical shortcomings involving bombing accuracy and the lack of a capability to operate at night. Whatever the number of trucks or arms destroyed on a mission, the pilots knew that for at least the next day of the war, life for U.S. troops on the ground was safer.

Right: Former Misty Dick Rutan (middle) inspects damage on an F-100F (no. 56-3837) now on display at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton, Ohio, below. Painted as it appeared in March 1968, the jet was flown by Rutan, Fogleman, and McPeak.

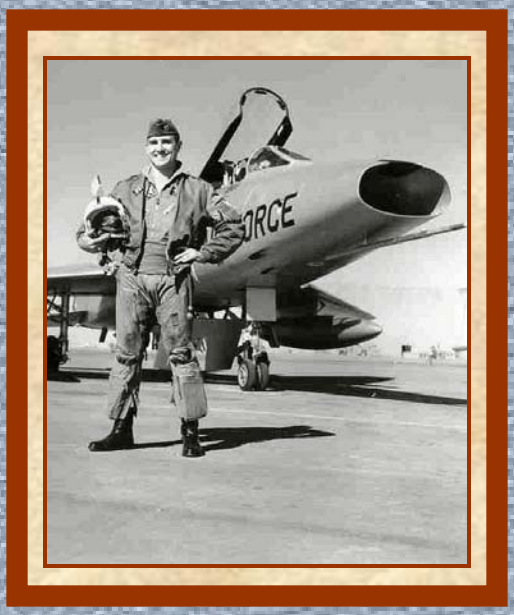
TOP: RENZO DIONIGI; BOTTOM: USAF

The Way We Were

Fifty to sixty years younger and 40 - 50 pounds lighter, we were always ready to kick the tires, light the fires and belly up to the bar at happy hour. Those were the days!

"Herb" Acheson

Tom Clark



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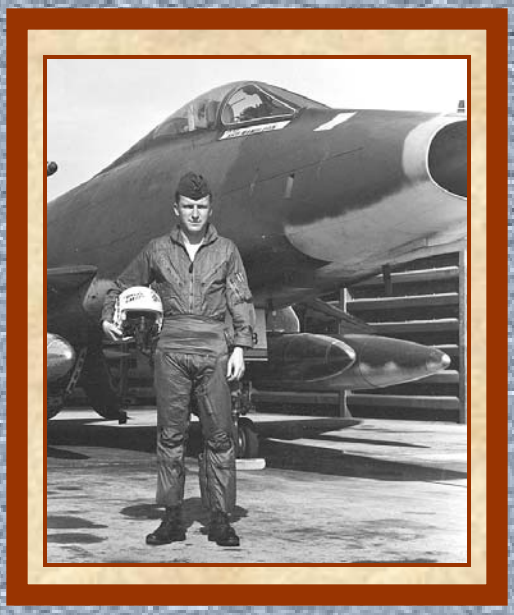
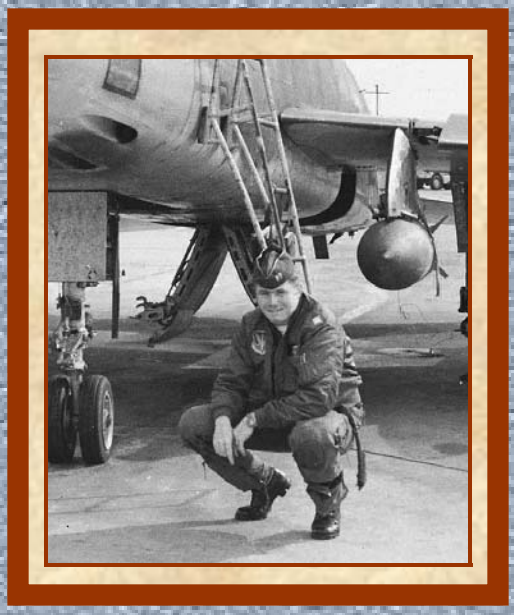


Denny Kerkman



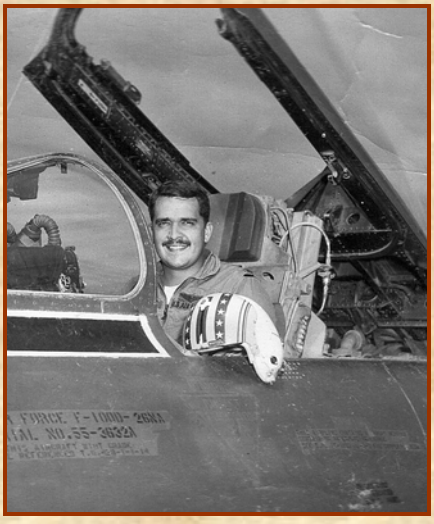
Gary Parent

Dick Pietro

We have "Hero Pictures" of only 325 of 1,500 members and we've published 222. It's time to add lots of others to our supply, before more of our heroes fly west. So, please dig out your favorites and participate ASAP! We prefer scanned photos (at 300ppi) emailed to Photo Editor Shaun Ryan at (f100plt@gmail.com). If you have no way to scan, snail mail it with a return address to Shaun at 6610 Sutherland Ridge Place, Tucson, AZ 85718, and we'll return the originals. Thanks, P. Ed.

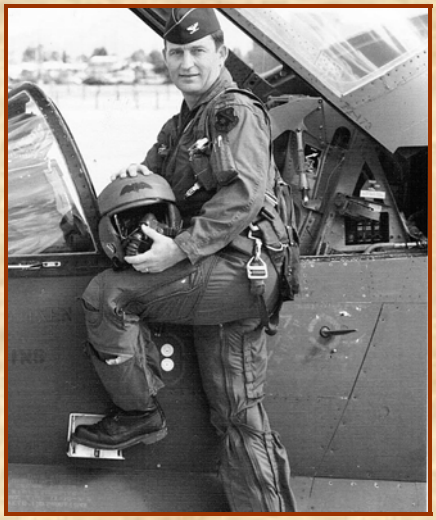
Daryl Hubbard

George Inabinet, Jr.



Chris Kellum

Mike Sorrel, III



Gerry Swartzbaugh

"Peach" Vanek

20th FBW: First in Nukes & Pioneer of Upside-down Dive Bombing

By Richard M. Baughn

Overshadowed by the Korean War and cloaked in secrecy, the 20th Fighter Bomber Wing (FBW) became the *world's first nuclear capable fighter unit*. The need for a tactical nuclear capability was established a few months after 90,000 North Koreans invaded South Korea on 25 June 1950 and the Soviets threatened further expansion in Europe. Because the U.S. had all but eliminated its military forces following WWII, it had difficulty mustering sufficient ground and tactical air forces to prevent the North Koreans from overrunning South Korea. Hopelessly outgunned and outmanned in Europe, the only U.S. option to deter the Soviets was to create a *USAF tactical nuclear force* and station it in Great Britain.

Tactical Air Command's (TAC) 49th Air Division (AD) was given the job and assigned two wings—the 20th FBW and the 47th Bomb Wing (BW) to spearhead the initiative. The 20th FBW's three squadrons were assigned a total of 107 nuclear capable/in-flight refuelable F-84Gs (instead of the usual 75, for additional punch) and the 47th BW was authorized 40 B-45s for its two squadrons. The 49th AD was ordered to become nuclear capable ASAP and move to Great Britain, with the 20th FBW scheduled to be in place by May of 1952 and the 47th BW by June.

Background Some may wonder how the U.S. became so weak—so soon—after WWII. Ignoring the Soviet's aggressive and uncooperative behavior in Europe, a vote-conscious Congress began a "bring the boys home" effort when Germany's defeat became apparent. After the B-29s bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Japan surrendered, Congress demanded an immediate demobilization. In *less than two years*, the USAAF dropped from 2.3 million people to about 200,000. The Navy discharged nearly 250,000 sailors a month and Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz complained that not a single Navy squadron was combat ready. The U.S. Army was left with two-and-a-half divisions, manned with partially trained recruits and General of the Army Omar N. Bradley said his forces "couldn't fight their way out of a paper bag."

On the heels of this precipitous demobilization, Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson, believing that USAF nuclear armed strategic bombers could cover America's military needs, said he would "trim the fat out of the Armed Forces." He cut the defense budget from 30 billion to 14.2 billion, which slashed the funds for the conventional forces of the Army, Navy, USAF's Tactical Air Forces (TAF) and the Marines.

In the summer of 1950, America's fifth-rate conventional force struggled to defend South Korea and needed a ***"quick fix"*** in Europe to deter the Soviets—until a "Cold War" force could be constituted. Colonel George M. "Mort" Lunsford, the 20th FBW's Director of Materiel during this period, ***later*** explained this "quick fix" in the June 1978 issue of the *Air Force Magazine*:

> "The proposal to build a tactical atomic bomb, particularly one carried by fighters, met some opposition in those early days when SAC still had its hands full dealing with strategic nuclear weapons. But Col. John Stevenson (now a retired major general) and other proponents stumped the halls of the Pentagon and sold the idea. The Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) said that a tactical atomic bomb could be built. It would have something more than the yield of the Hiroshima bomb, and could be carried on the wing of a fighter or shaped to fit the bomb bay of a tactical bomber. The signal was given to go ahead; and along with it came the order to form the 49th Air Division, composed of the 20th Fighter Bomber Wing and the B-45-equipped 47th Bomb Wing."

The Quick Fix Weapon Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was given the task and developed the Mark (MK)-7 nuclear bomb. Training shapes were provided for the 20th FBW in 1951, and the weapons were made available by the spring of 1952. Here are this tactical nuke weapon's vital characteristics.

MK-7 Nuclear Bomb

Length:	15 ft 2.5 in
Weight:	1,680 lbs
Diameter:	2 ft 6.5 in
Yield Options:	Variable, up to 20 kilotons

However, the 20th FBW's participation in "the fix" was delayed because of a previous deterrent commitment that came two weeks after the Korean War began on 25 June 1950. With only seven days notice, the wing was sent to Britain for six months to reinforce the meager U.S. forces in Europe (the Strategic Air Command's 12th Strategic Fighter Wing originally had the task, but it wasn't ready).

The Quick Fix Delivery Systems Following the 20th FBW's return to Shaw AFB in December 1950, key personnel were secretly informed about the new nuclear mission. A few weeks later, a detachment of seven pilots and support personnel was sent to Langley AFB to develop tactics for delivering the MK-7. At the time, their only viable option was dive bombing, and to avoid being vaporized by the nuclear bomb blast, they had to enter at 20,000 feet, recover by 12,000 feet and escape at maximum speed.

Technology Solutions Even as the 20th FBW began high altitude dive bomb training, the USAF established a formal requirement for a low altitude bombing system (LABS) for fighters, because WWII experience had proven the European weather would prohibit high altitude visual bombing much of the time. The Air Research and Development Command assigned the task to the Wright Air Development Center, and Major John A. Ryan, a non-rated West Point engineer, was made the project officer. Ryan was soon joined by Captain John W. Hanlen, an engineer and pilot (a few years later, Hanlen was killed in a crash while assigned to the 20th FBW as a fighter pilot).

Because time was of the essence, Ryan and Hanlen designed and fabricated a LABS computer with off-the-shelf hardware. Later, in the spring issue of the 1957 *Air University's Quarterly Review*, then-Lt. Colonel John A. Ryan wrote:

> "….the story of the development of this bombing system is one to which the USAF's Air Research and Development Command can point with pride. Started early in 1952, the first LABS was completed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base by the middle of February. Presentations and demonstrations of a "pinball" type machine to HQ USAF, the Navy, and the AEC brought encouragement and the needed official blessing to continue.
>
> "Although the LABS could employ the stockpile bomb, the development proposal suggested an internal change *in the bomb* that would further increase the LABS flexibility. This was wholeheartedly supported by the AEC and soon resulted in an increased capability in the stockpile weapon. Flight testing began at Albuquerque, New Mexico, in May 1952, and by the following spring, the LABS was operational in the U.S. and in Europe and the Far East…."

Commenting further about internal weapons modifications, Ryan added:

> "….there were as many proposed solutions to [dealing with] the escape range as there were different agencies working on the problem. Basically most of these proposed solutions had one thing in common—altering the trajectory of the bomb by significantly increasing or decreasing its velocity after release…. Most of these solutions had another feature in common, a loss of priceless time. Production weapons were operational at overseas bases. The solution had to be one that solved the time problem—get there "firstest with the mostest"—as well as the technical problem."

Until those internal weapons modifications were made to increase the escape distances, Ryan and Hanlen recommended that LABS missions use a preplanned pull-up point, short of the target and toss the bomb forward. While the bomb was in flight, the pilot would complete half of a Cuban Eight and dive away in the opposite direction.

In the October 1957 issue of *Popular Mechanics*, USAF historian Dr. Delmer J. Trester wrote an article titled "Over-the-Shoulder-Bombing" (OTS) that covered Ryan's and Hanlen's work. Trester said they got approval to have the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) fabricate several low altitude bombing computers, then expedited their delivery to the 4925th Test Group (Atomic) for testing. The test group started tossing 500 lb. bombs at the Aberdeen Bombing Mission Precision Range at Edwards AFB, California, and later at the Los Lunas bombing range in New Mexico. Eventually, inert MK-7 shapes were tossed, and the computers proved to be better than Ryan and Hanlen had anticipated. They immediately passed the results to all concerned. Lt. General James D. Hughes, the 20th FBW adjutant at the time, recalls first meeting Major Ryan and Captain Hanley in early 1952 at Langley AFB, when they briefed the wing commander and others about the status of their LABS program.

Getting Combat Ready While the LABS development effort progressed, the 20th FBW completed a multitude of demanding tasks on their way to combat readiness. They replaced their 70-odd F-84Ds with 107 F-84Gs, moved the wing from Shaw AFB to Langley AFB, and absorbed an additional 800 people when their manning jumped from 1,600 to 2,400. They flew seven days a week to qualify their pilots in high altitude dive bombing, long range navigation and in-flight refueling. To accelerate their combat readiness, each squadron also spent several weeks at one of Eglin AFB's auxiliary fields for a concentrated flying training program. Their extensive ground training included several weeks of classroom work at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque learning the intricacies of the MK-7.

77th FBS F-84G from Langley AFB refueling off a KC-97 in early 1952.

In early May 1952, the 20th FBW was declared ***combat ready*** and on the 15th of May, their 107 F-84Gs and six T-33s began the first leg of their island hopping journey to Britain. Flying across the North Atlantic in the early 1950s had its share of risks, not the least of which was the tricky weather made more problematic by the lack of reporting stations and absence of radar.

Particularly challenging was the very hazardous approach to the second ground refueling stop, the Bluie West One (BW-1) airfield in Greenland. BW-1 was guarded by the rocky walls of a fjord, 50 miles inland from Greenland's intimidating coastline. (Due to the precarious approach, an excellent topographical map of the coast, the fjord leading to the airfield, and the terrain surrounding the field had been fabricated for pilots to study at their first refueling stop, Goose Bay, Labrador.)

Because low clouds were a common occurrence along Greenland's coast, in the fjord and at the airfield, jet fighters always made the published letdown over the water, using a low frequency beacon located at the entrance of the BW-1 fjord. From there they flew visually between the fjord's menacing 1,500 foot walls that led to the field.

But the fjord didn't permit a straight shot to BW-1. About five miles short of the field, pilots had to make an abrupt 90-degree turn to the left and fly through a 300-foot-deep saddleback—which was followed by a quick 90-degree right turn over the 1,200-foot snowcapped terrain to line up with the runway. The approach end of the runway bordered the fjord's water, and just beyond the runway's far end, a 600-foot rocky hill jutted out 90 degrees to the runway. Directly behind the hill, Greenland's glacier had pushed a wall of huge boulders. A 1,500-foot rocky wall also paralleled the runway half a mile to the right. Due to the terrain, jets had to land coming in over the water and take off in the opposite direction.

Picture of Greenland's daunting BW-1 airfield taken from the west at about 1,500 feet. This picture was taken about a hundred feet above the snow covered hill, approaching from the west (field is right center of the picture). The west end of the runway started at the water's edge and ended just short of the hill and glacier boulders. Landings at BW-1 were always made from west to east, with takeoffs east to west due to the hazardous terrain.

Historian David Mets said that you had to make the approach to landing good to avoid a "dangerous go around." I would add in today's parlance, you had to "focus." But in those days, we not only kept our eyes peeled—we gave it our unfettered concentration. My concentration was so rapt that I believe my 90-year-old eyes could still focus well enough for me to negotiate the fjord and make a landing today—62 years later.

On May 20th , after a five day delay in Goose Bay due to bad weather in Greenland, the wing flew to BW-1. One night was spent there and another at a base in Iceland before all 113 aircraft arrived in Britain on 22 May 1952. The 79th Fighter Bomber Squadron's (FBS) 35 F-84Gs and two T-33s landed at RAF Station Bentwaters, the home of the 81st Fighter Interceptor Wing (F-86As). The 79th would remain at Bentwaters until its nearby permanent home (RAF Station Woodbridge) was ready.

The 55th and 77th FBS's proceeded to RAF Station Wethersfield, where they and the wing headquarters would be located. East Anglia was dotted with WWII airfields, all of which had suffered from seven years of neglect. From the air, the recently reactivated Wethersfield appeared no better than the rest, and several flights flew on past it, believing it was another abandoned airfield, before turning back.

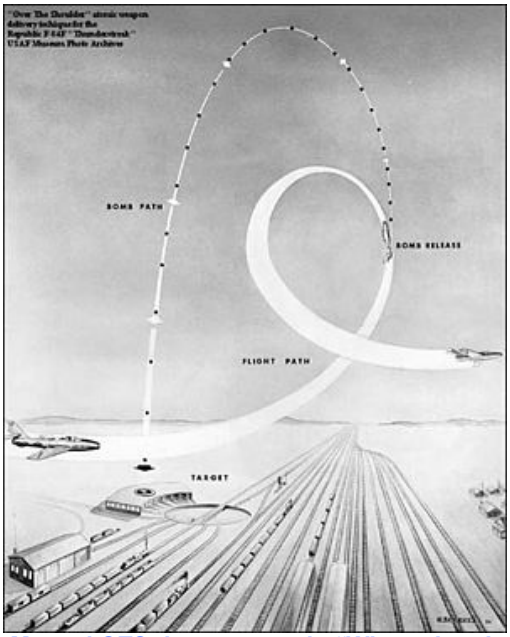
77th FBS F-84Gs showing the flag over Mt. Vesuvius, Italy.

Getting Ready for Cold War in USAFE The day after arrival, the wing launched orientation flights around the UK and the Continent to get the lay of the land and demonstrate a presence to the Soviets. At the same time, steps were taken to commence dive bomb training at the Dengie Flats bombing range near the coast of East Anglia. To ensure continuity of training, plans were also made to rotate aircraft to Sidi Slimane Air Base, a SAC airfield in French Morocco, for dive bomb training. The bombing range was located 150 miles south, near the Atlas Mountains. It had a 2,000-foot circle and an inner 500-foot circle plowed in the desert where bombing was conducted by flights of four, with the pilots scoring one another's bomb drops.

Along with the initiation of flight training, the wing and 49th AD staffs finalized the war plan. U.S. policy at the time prohibited the wing's possession of some of the critical MK-7 components in the field. They would be delivered by air within 24-36 hours after the air division began posturing for nuclear strikes. Due to this restriction, no part of the force was kept on alert. If wartime posturing became necessary during off-duty periods, a carefully prepared and frequently tested pyramid phone notification plan had to be activated to assemble the wing's widely scattered personnel.

Once alerted for war, the wing's first priority was to disperse two thirds of its aircraft, weapons, support equipment and personnel to four satellite airfields to help preserve the force in case of an attack. To facilitate the dispersal plan, the three fighter squadrons were divided in half to form six task forces (TFs), with each having 15 aircraft/weapons. Within a few hours after notification, the aircraft were flown to the four dispersal fields and the ground support packages followed by truck convoy. Once in place, the ground crews quickly configured the aircraft for combat and waited for the critical weapons components to arrive for installation.

The 20th FBW's flight training in Britain confirmed the necessity for a low altitude bombing capability and highlighted the difficulty in finding suitable pop-up toss bomb pull-up points for many targets during target planning. These factors led to a need to modify the under-development LABS computers with an additional bombing mode to allow OTS toss bombing. But it took some time to get those modifications done, tested, and into the field. Meanwhile, there was lots of OTS theory study, work-around proposals, manual OTS training, etc., to keep the troops busy.



Manual OTS theory at work: "Where there's a will, there's a way!"

Because most targets were large and easy to see, the wing wanted to have the capability of ***using the target*** as the pull-up point. The weapon would be released when the aircraft was near vertical and continue vertically, before decelerating and falling back to the target. The same half of a Cuban Eight escape maneuver for tossing the bomb would be used. (Some jokingly referred to the new delivery as "upside down dive bombing," but it soon became known as OTS toss bombing, or the "idiot's loop.") All this was still just a theory—no modified LABS had been delivered as yet and so the guys started trying to figure out how to do the maneuver ***manually***—*Theory at work!*

The OTS delivery offered several advantages. First, it reduced the possibility of aiming/steering errors that could be magnified when using a distant and sometimes hard-to-identify pull-up point. Equally important, it

gave the pilot the flexibility to attack from any direction!

Some were concerned the OTS bombing unnecessarily exposed the pilot to the heavy defenses surrounding most targets. However, WWII strafing attacks against heavily defended targets in Europe showed the initial attack usually achieved enough surprise to survive. But strafing losses became prohibitive when the fighters "circled the wagons" for multiple attacks.

Enthusiasm for the OTS bombing concept grew quickly, and the pilots explored ways of accomplishing it on their own, before the LABS could be modified and fielded. Their first task was to find a way to determine when the aircraft was vertical. During one of the many discussions, Major Herman A. "Dutch" Meyer, a former instructor at the USAF Instrument School, pointed out that the flight attitude indicator flipped at 89 degrees when doing a loop and suggested that flip could be used as the reference. Majors John J. Kropenick and John Farrow took Meyer's suggestion and began developing a manual OTS bombing technique. Using a 4-G pull, they began tossing practice bombs near vertically to determine the time delay necessary, after the attitude indicator flipped at 89 degrees, to compensate for target over-shoot on pull-up and also correct for head or tail wind components. Once a method of timing was established, the pilots began serious training with their "homegrown" OTS bombing method. Bottom line—it worked!

Things Begin to Come Together In the winter of 1952, Ryan and Hanlen and their installation team delivered four original-design LABS computers to the 20th FBW for evaluation. Except for a few minor installation problems, the computers worked as advertised during pop-up, forward toss bombing. And when briefed about the wing's manual OTS bombing effort, Ryan and Hanlen were enthused and certain the capability could be added to their computers. But they knew it would take time, so they calculated a mathematical model of the 20th FBW's manual OTS maneuver to determine its profile and expected escape distance.

Using a run in speed of 500 mph at an altitude of 50 feet and a constant 4-G pull-up, they calculated the bomb should be released at 20 degrees past vertical to correct for target overshoot. Their delivery profile indicated the release point would be reached near 6,000 feet and the bomb would continue to rise another 6,000 feet before starting down. Using the half of a Cuban Eight, followed by a .82 Mach dive would provide 17,000 feet of separation from the bomb detonation—which was slightly less than the pop-up, forward toss method. [But what the heck!]

(Naturally, a safe escape was of concern to every pilot, but many targets were so deep the pilots didn't have enough fuel to make it back to friendly territory. Moreover, their weapons effects indoctrination had taught them the potential devastation that would come with a nuclear exchange—their one hope was that the U.S. would remain strong enough to ***deter*** the Soviets from the unthinkable).

After adding a second gyro to the original LABS computer design to permit computer OTS toss bombing, Ryan and Hanlen delivered two of the modified computers to the 20th FBW for evaluation in the fall of 1953. Testing continued with good results, but because of changing USAF systems priorities, manual OTS continued to be the mainstay delivery option for the 20th FWB until the F-84G was phased out in June 1955 in favor of the F-84F. ◘

Because the author PCS'd away from the 20th FBW in February 1954, this concludes his first person recollections of the beginnings of USAF tactical nuclear forces and the pioneering of "upside-down dive bombing." It was a heady time; the 20th FBW explored a new world and in large measure, set up the rules and processes for tactical nuclear deterrence and warfare (if needed) that would become familiar to many of us Hun drivers in ensuing years. Of note: the 20th FBW started converting to the Super Sabre on 16 June 1957, and, as they say, "the rest is history."

Incidentally, as the pioneering tactical fighter nuclear force, the 20th FBW introduced the use of the dreaded eye-patch to protect one eye from flash blindness if/when we really went to nuke war. A really comforting concept. Yuck!

About the Author**: Dick Baughn had an interesting and fulfilling USAF career and "after that" life in retirement. He flew combat in P-51s with the 8th Air Force during WWII, had three TDY F-105 and one full F-105 combat tours in Thailand in the Vietnam War era, and is the author of a marvelous historical novel based on his WWII experiences as a 19-year-old fighter pilot (*The Hellish Vortex: Between Breakfast and Dinner*). He has 7,000 total (5,000 jet fighter) hours and has flown 45 different types of military aircraft. In addition to all that, he's penned more than 30 articles for various military and civilian periodicals. I've read and relished his novel and a lot of those articles, most of which reflect studious and rigorous research in quest of the real truths about U.S. military history. It's been a pleasure getting to know Dick and work with him as a fellow SSS member, documenting the history of our beloved Hun and the men who flew her. I look forward to several more articles for* The Intake *from this gifted, "aging fighter pilot," as he calls himself. **Ed.

Dick Baughn – Fighter Pilot

The "Last" A-7D Reunion

By R. Medley Gatewood

Having been on the ground floor of the A-7D or Corsair II or SLUF Program, what ever you want to call it, I'm fairly confident it's fair to say that from the get-go, it was mostly F-100 pilots who first populated the ranks of A-7D units. In fact, I'd say that for its entire life, some ex-Hun Drivers were among all the units that flew the SLUF, the last single-engine, single-seat jet fighter for many of our older generation. And, you can bet those SLUF Drivers were mighty proud of that fact. Well do I remember the slogan, "If you ain't single-engine, single-seat, you ain't S…!" (Code word, Sierra.)

So, with esprit de corps like that, it's not surprising that a bunch of ex-Hun Drivers (and some other SLUF Drivers) set up and ramrodded the First Ever A-7D Reunion *in the millennium year of 2000. It was a real blast, headquartered at the Hilton East in Tucson, and attended by some 350 guys and gals from all over the U.S. of A. "The Plan," dreamed by the Tucson-based organizers (ably led by Keith Connolly), was to conduct a memorable event and pass the leadership baton on to other groups of SLUF Drivers who would try to up the ante at different locations around the country, from time to time. Fortunately, the first SLUF reunion was a rousing success. Unfortunately, nobody picked up the baton, and the years rolled by—sans a follow-on reunion anywhere…but there was talk.*

Well, by January of 2012, having experienced three fabulous SSS reunions, Keith Connolly got restless (he's always restless), and fired out an email to his hard core of organizers in Tucson that said, "Guys! Had a crazy idea…why not a ***'last'*** *A-7D reunion! If we are ever going to do it, we need to get on with it cause 'time's passing.'" And, man, did they get on with it. It came off without a hitch and with happiness for all. Here's an After Action Report.*

The date and venue set for this "Last" A-7D reunion quickly firmed up to be 6-9 November, 2013, at (you guessed it) the Hilton Tucson East (the price was ***really*** right…again). That allowed for lots of planning which resulted in as smooth a registration process as we've ever seen for about 350 of us (again) and events pulled-off with aplomb, exactly as planned.

After greeting receptionists at the Registration Desk,

folks picked up their name tags and goody bags.

Then, they examined the SSS recruitment display, and

pressed on to the watering hole, er Hospitality Heaven!

I mentioned above that the price was really right for the very comfortable hotel rooms, which was $102 that included a breakfast for two at a lavish, full-up breakfast buffet; but the very best deal of the century had to be the Registration/Hospitality Suite. That combo was a real steal. For 30 bucks apiece, you got your fees, a goody bag that included a handsome deck of playing cards picturing a flight of four SLUFs, with each card bearing the reminder slogan "The Last Original A-7D Reunion 2013," AND you got "Hospitality Suite Heaven": long hours daily with four separate, sizable rooms featuring all manner of liquid refreshments and light snacks. I kid you not. I hadn't seen the equal of this anywhere since the "First Original A-7D Reunion" of Y-2K. Let the good times roll…and they did, indeed they did!

Eventually, Thursday morning rolled around, and after the lavish breakfast was tested, we loaded up almost 200 folks on three buses for a professionally guided tour of the fabled D-M Boneyard. As often as many of us had seen it from the air, very few of us had spent any time there as a rubber-necking tourist. So, most agreed that it was a very enlightening experience for $35 each that included a sumptuous luncheon back at the hotel. But on the way out of D-M, we were treated to a stop at the "Warrior Memorial Park," just inside the main entrance to the base. Most of us had never seen this truly marvelous, and large, park. We had time to check out only a small portion of it. But that included some admiration and story telling time at two of the 12 aircraft on display. The two being the venerable Super Sabre and the single-engine, single-seat SLUF follow-on. Space limits our verbal report, but you should check it out thoroughly for a really good time. It's a rather amazing place: See http://www.skytamer.com/6.1/AZ/Tucson,DavisMonthan.html. No room for a paragraph here…time to sum up! Yes there was golf on Friday and an endless Happy Hour starting at 0900 (not a typo). Yes, there was a Mexican Banquet for about 370 folks Friday evening with a retreat to the Hospitality Heaven AFTER the meal! And yes, there were tearful good-byes after the breakfast buffet on Saturday morning. But there was NOT to be an offer for a 3rd A-7D reunion. ***So be it.*** A million thanks to those Tucsonan SLUF Drivers who did two, magnificently! ◘

The venerable Super Sabre: 1 engine & 1 seat!

The crowd advances to the SLUF follow-on.

"…I was considered the Snake Control Officer (SCO)."

"Ramrod" — The Story Behind the Story, Part II

By Vern "Mouse" Nordman

Part I of this serpent saga introduced the coming of a python mascot named "Ramrod" ("Rod" for short) as a gift from some IV Corps FACs to the 531st TFS at Bien Hoa in mid-1966. Rod rapidly became a legend as Mouse Nordman tells the tale in a series of Ramrod Vignettes. After six short "VIGs" in Part I, Vern takes up where he left off, but these vignettes have grown to the point of having their own names, not just VIG-numbers. Enjoy the continuing tale. ***Ed.***

Eating Habits Whenever we brought food into the squadron building for our mascot, Ramrod, he instinctively knew it was there, and he was then immediately ready to eat! On one occasion there was a chicken to be had, and I started looking around to see where he was hiding. I found Rod behind a folded table that was leaning against a wall, but from the looks of him, he was definitely tensed up and ready to strike. I just backed away.

As I did, I brushed against one of those old gooseneck ashtrays, and the thing started to sway back and forth. Well, Rod saw that movement and struck viciously at the swaying ashtray, spitting teeth for his effort.

This event taught me to be careful whenever food was brought into the squadron, because his sense of smell was excellent. I therefore forewarned everyone about this possible behavior. Not long after that, when I was gone on an R&R, a Rod-meal was brought in and one of the Operations airmen went looking for Ramrod. It was early in the morning, and Rod was soon found, comfortably coiled up and sleeping on the squadron commander's desk—at least that is what the unsuspecting airman thought. He walked up and started to reach under Rod to pick him up. Well Rod was ready to strike anything that moved and he did. Wham!!! Rod had struck the poor airman in the chest of his neatly pressed fatigues, perforating his name tag. Startled, he grabbed Rod by the neck, pulling him off while screaming, "HE'S GOT ME!"

After things calmed down, Rod had his breakfast.

Nocturnal Nightmares Ramrod had the run of our squadron and occasionally was given a "walk" out in the rear yard. One night, it just so happened that when the squadron building was locked up tight, ol' Ramrod was accidentally left outside. Being a nocturnal creature, he started to roam. It wasn't long before he found the fence line behind our building and proceeded to follow it. Eventually, he came upon the road that led to other squadron buildings and decided to cross it. Well, as luck would have it, right in the middle of the road was a Vietnamese guard shack with an armed night guard posted. As I've mentioned before, the Vietnamese were deathly afraid of these snakes and this guard was no exception. An airman from one of our sister squadrons (the 416th TFS) was riding his bike to work and came upon the guard, now standing on top of the roof of the guard shack pointing and screaming at this moving fire hose in the road. (I don't know why he had not shot Ramrod—maybe they didn't give them ammunition—but I was very thankful that Ramrod was OK.)

A true Cajun from New Orleans, "Mouse" first flew the Hun in Advanced Pilot Training at Nellis in Jun '61, moving on to the 613th TFS at England AFB, then to the 531st TFS at Misawa, England AFB, and finally at Bien Hoa till Nov '66. Then came the airlines.

Anyway, this airman looked at the snake and thought it looked like Ramrod. He picked him up, put him on his shoulders and rode off. "Crazy, these Americans," the Vietnamese guard must have thought. I don't know when that guard climbed down off his guard shack, but about 11:00 PM I received a call from the 416th, telling me that they had a snake that matched Ramrod's description, and what did I want them to do. I asked if they were worried about the snake, and they said, "No, he's just making himself comfortable on the floor." So I told them I'd check with them in the morning. But, I had second thoughts. What if it wasn't Ramrod they had? Somebody could get bit.

So, I wandered over to the 416th. By this time, the jocks had launched off for the first set of night sorties and everyone else had gone out for their midnight snack, having locked up the squadron building. I opened our building and looked around to see if I could find Rod. I couldn't, so the 416th actually did have our mascot.

Because their building was locked, I used my Scouting experience and opened the doors. It didn't take long until I found Ramrod snugly coiled up on the floor behind their Operations desk. I picked him up, returned him to our squadron and then relocked the 416th building. What I didn't do was leave them a note telling them what I had done. They spent the rest of the night looking over their shoulders expecting a snake to drop in off the rafters. Priceless!

Ramrod's Swimming Pool It was my understanding that cold-blooded creatures, like snakes, would regulate their body temperature by getting into water and hold the moisture in their scales, which would cool them while it

slowly evaporated. So, my next project was to acquire a 55-gallon drum, have it sliced in half lengthwise and welded together to make a swimming pool. Ramrod loved it! On one occasion, two ducks were brought in for Rod's weekly meal, but for some reason, he wasn't interested. During the heat of the day, I put Rod in his swimming pool with the two ducks. Rod was nowhere in sight, because he was comfortably cooling off in the bottom. Both of the ducks were happily quacking away while swimming in little circles, unaware that their end was near

All of a sudden, "Kersplash!" One of the ducks disappeared under the water, and it was obvious that Rod was now very interested in eating. After putting the first duck to sleep, he dragged it out of the pool and proceeded to have lunch. This was only an appetizer, apparently, because he went back into the pool and finished off the second duck.

Entertaining VIPs The 531st Squadron building had the largest briefing room on base, so any time a visiting dignitary came through Bien Hoa, he would receive his situational information at our "house." On this particular occasion, there was a Pentagon general to be briefed. He evidently was not very popular with his entourage because none of them would sit with him. They all sat in the back of the room.

Ramrod was doing his thing, wandering around the building, and decided to participate in the briefing. Now, everyone at Bien Hoa knew Ramrod, so his presence was not a problem. Ramrod crawled in the door and was aimed at the podium. The general caught sight of him but didn't want to say anything at first, apparently trying to be "cool." But as this roving fire hose proceeded to stretch across the room right in front of him, he finally screamed, "GET THAT THING OUTA HERE, " as he jumped back two rows, knocking over the chairs.

Realizing the predicament that Ramrod had created, one of our Ops airmen walked in, scooped him up, and proceeded to return him to his cage. So much for the fearless general.

As it happened, on this particular day, we had acquired a chicken for Ramrod's weekly meal and thought that the general would like to witness his feeding, but after his public panic attack, we cancelled that idea.

One benefit of having visiting dignitaries was that they were always provided a cooler filled with some kind of liquid refreshment. So after the general had left, we were all standing around sipping his iced tea. It was then we decided to give Ramrod his meal.

I opened Ramrod's cage and placed the chicken inside. Now this chicken was no dummy. He took one look at this huge snake across from him and decided to freeze. The chicken was pressing against the cage wire on one side with Ramrod's head on the opposite side, apparently not paying any attention. Well, for a bunch of fighter pilots, this would never do, so I took out a pencil and gently "goosed" the chicken, just a little.

The chicken moved up and down slightly while giving out a quiet "squawk." I could see that Ramrod was starting to get interested because his body repositioned just slightly. So I "goosed" the chicken a second time with the same result. Now I knew that Ramrod was *very* interested. As he repositioned himself a little more, I could detect a slight "S" in his neck as he prepared to strike.

Naturally, I "goosed" the chicken a third time, and this time the chicken took off, flying straight up with a loud squawk; Ramrod struck, catching him in mid flight. He slammed that chicken to the top of the cage, wrapped two coils around him and then slammed him to the floor. I jumped back, quite startled by the suddenness and ferocity of the strike, but I wasn't the only one startled because there was iced tea all over the floor. So much for all of us thinking we were fearless fighter pilots.

First Combat Time Because Ramrod was truly a member of our squadron, Capt. Ken Smith took it on himself to introduce Ramrod to combat flying and see if we could qualify him for a one-time Air Medal. Ken placed Rod in his helmet bag, tightened the drawstring, and took him out to his jet. Ken kept the bag tightly tied until he strapped in, but when he then placed him in the back of the canopy, he decided to loosen the drawstring very slightly to allow Rod to breath. Big mistake!

First Air Medal for Ramrod. Would there be Oak Leaf Clusters to come?

Evidently, due to the cramped quarters in the bag and the heat of the sun in Vietnam, Ramrod soon wanted out. It didn't take him very long to squeeze his head out of the bag and then to crawl out completely. Now it is difficult enough managing a supersonic fighter in combat without any distractions, but a huge writhing snake loose in the cramped fighter cockpit really made things interesting.

Ken had to use all his skill and ingenuity to get Ramrod back under control. Using a combination of trim as well as negative and positive Gs, he grabbed this scared and startled snake and attempted to get him back in the bag. Now Ramrod had seen this bag trick before and didn't like the idea at all, so he resisted as much as he could.

Then a new problem arose. Ramrod got airsick! Have you ever seen a snake barf? Fortunately, Ramrod's heaving distracted him enough that Ken was able to squeeze him back into the helmet bag, *pull the drawstring very tight*, and continue the mission. Ken's helmet bag was never the same again. ◘

TO BE CONTINUED….

"Think I've got the bitch figured out…"

Chris Kellum and the USS New Jersey Incident

By Ross "Rosie" Detwiler

Rosie's Roomie… Chris Kellum

Chris' Roomie… Rosie Detwiler

We lost Chris Kellum last fall. I'd been worried about Chris when he didn't make it to Bud's funeral in Destin, and on 24 September, I checked in on the old roomie to see what was going on in his life. "Rosie, I'm in pretty good shape for the shape I'm in. But, I'll be at the October Misty reunion with Joanie and my daughter. See you there." Two days later he was gone.

When you think what Chris had been going through for the last 30 years, his response was exactly what you would expect. I'm not a doctor and I don't know the full extent of his problems, but I do know he talked about the nine hours a night that he spent on dialysis as most men would talk about having to detour an extra mile to get home at night. It was, "A little inconvenience," as he put it. If you didn't know what he was going through, you'd never know how bad it was from his outside appearance or demeanor.

Chris had described the early onset of what turned out to be type 1 diabetes when [in the early '70s] he was in the middle of a night VFR approach during transition to the F-111, getting ready for his second tour in SEA.

"I rolled out on final and saw two runways where there should've been only one."

"Jeez, Chris, what did you do?"

"I told the guy in the other seat I was having a little blurry vision and to make sure I stayed lined up with the runway. Then I just proceeded to line up between the 'two runways.' Pretty nice job if I say so myself."

That was typical Chris. Here're some more typical Chris antics and doings, harkening back to Misty days at Phu Cat.

The Set-up I woke up one night at Phu Cat to see Chris at our desk reading some sort of manual concerning the USS New Jersey. Those porta-camp trailers were not the most spacious of accommodations, especially in the small area reserved for two junior officers. We had a bunk bed on one side of the entry door. On the other side was an air conditioner just above a big easy chair. Beside the easy chair was a small desk, a desk chair, and then, on either side of the center aisle, sat a vertical wardrobe closet just before you got to the bathroom.

Chris figured "it" out and turned off the lights.

I was in the top bunk, "two inches above the sandbags of the bunker surrounding the trailer," as Chris used to remind me. Chris was sucking on his "think pipe," in deep concentration, and the place was full of smoke.

"What's going on?"

"Think I've got the bitch figured out," says Chris, "We'll just have to see." With that, he crawled into the bottom bunk and turned off the lights.

Backing up a Bit Let's back up a little. In the fall of 1968, the Mistys were still roaming the lower panhandle of North Vietnam, seeking out supplies bound for the South. The Northeast Monsoon had had two effects: it deterred our ability to get in and get close to the highways, and it impeded the North's ability to cleanly move supplies through the rain-choked-passes and along the coastal flood plains. End result was that supplies were building up in concentrated choke points. If you could find one of those stockpiles and get some ordnance on it, you could set Uncle Ho back a few days with just a few bombs. Those build ups had a lot of guns around them though, so each time you found some of the supplies, the ground fire was intense.

Enter the battleship USS New Jersey, BB-62, "The Big J." We first heard of its presence from either Bob Guido or Jim Titus, our two Misty Intel guys at the time. The news was nothing short of fantastic. The New Jersey, call sign "Onrush," could shoot 2,700 pound shells through its nine big 18-inch guns. (I know they're 16-inch, but we were told 18-inch at the time). We described the shells as little Volkswagens, full of dynamite.

The reports of the New Jersey, as she came on the "gun line" off the coast of Vietnam, were encouraging. Her first targets were in the South and reportedly, the fire had been devastating to the enemy.

At Phu Cat, "Home of the Mistys," we were walking around the base talking like the war was going to come down to just showing up and directing the New Jersey on any little Commie that happened to piss us off, while we sat safely off-shore and watched the destruction. If someone should shoot at us, our big naval friend would surely silence the firing with airbursts from those big guns.

The Mistys were even more obnoxious when at the O' Club. "C'mon up to the big war. Hell, there's not even a triple-A threat anymore, with 'The Big J' in the neighborhood." Talk about overconfidence….

Homework Don't ask how, but out of the blue, Guido and Titus came up with an Army field artillery direction short course and exam. We studied after missions. Imagine the motivation for book work after a five-hour mission with a cold one on the table. Team study was the word of the day. Terms such as "fire" meaning they had fired, "shot" meaning the shell had been airborne the predicted amount of time and should be exploding. Short, long, and straddle meant some of the shells had hit on one side of the target and some of them on the other (that's a good thing) followed by "fire for effect."

Armed with our new-found artillery direction knowledge, we were chomping at the bit to add the New Jersey Naval Artillery to our bag of tricks on the trail. "Oh Boy!"

Disaster Strikes I don't know which of us Mistys tried to use the New Jersey Artillery for the first time, but the results weren't good. It was hard to figure out what had gone wrong. Our guys had been informed by "Onrush" that the first shot would be a 1,800 pound Willie Pete spotting charge, just to help the guns "zero in" on the target. Misty reported a shot "lost" meaning they didn't see anything. Keep in mind that it was 1,800 pounds of Willie Pete! Everyone in Dong Hoi should have had a white face after that one went off, and our two guys didn't even see it. The New Jersey had then fired some live ordnance, and our guys reported random shots hitting in the same province as the gun emplacement, probably no more perturbing to the gunners than thunder.

Hopes sank and there was much discussion at Misty tables concerning "The Big J." Interestingly enough, Kelly Irving (aka "Short Fat Dumb Dumb") had reported one night that if you look closely after the big ship fired, you could see the shells flying through the air, and perhaps we might try using that fact for better results. Everyone just stared at Kelly, who stared back with a smirk of self confidence, knowing we wouldn't admit our eyes weren't that good, but afraid to call bullshit on him until we tried. I never did see the shells in mid-air.

"The Big J's" Naval Artillery didn't quite measure up to the hype. With COMPACFLT 1 onboard, it was a real SNAFU! Then came Kellum….

Anyway, the next day I tried to hit a target up near the Ron River [yes, "Ron," not the "Red"] with Bob Lynch, our Ops Officer, in the back seat. As we came into the area, Hillsboro gave us a frequency for Onrush and we contacted them for the firing order. Bob went through the normal drill and read them the GeoRef coordinates from our maps.

Just before the first shot, the bridge of the New Jersey came on in a booming voice, "Misty 41, we have COMPACFLT 1 onboard and observing; please pass your BDA in the clear for that reason."

"Ah, Rog."

I ran parallel to the shore and just north of the New Jersey as we observed the first three shots explode from the middle turret. Feeling sure that we were clear of the trajectory, I pulled up and rolled off on the right wing waiting for the impacts. We saw nothing. We were unable to correct for the second salvo, because we saw nothing from the first. On the second firing, an explosion occurred on the top of the mountain just to the west of where we were trying to hit.

"Long, down four hundred meters."

"FOUR hundred meters?"

"That is correct."

For the third salvo, we saw two big splashes in the water about 200 yards off shore.

Figuring we were wasting time and in a very unprofessional artillery spotting command voice, I said, "Onrush, the target is 400 meters short of your first shot and 200 meters long of your second. Fire for effect."

"Roger."

On the fourth fire, we saw the smoke from six guns and the quivering wakes in the water on the downrange side of the ship as it recoiled from the firing. We saw two explosions within a three-quarter mile circle around the target.

"Misty, Onrush standing by for BDA"

"Onrush, had you on at 18 past the hour and off at 29 past the hour. 100% of the ordnance within a three-quarter mile circle around the target (that was generous). There doesn't appear to have been any damage done to the intended target."

"Misty 41, COMPACFLT 1 requests re-pass BDA."

"Is he kidding," questioned Bob in the back seat.

Bob was a man of small stature, but large in capability and determination. He seldom moved his lips more than about a quarter inch as he talked through clenched teeth, seemingly mad at anyone that he deemed wasn't in the game 100%.

"I'll take this, Rosie."

"Onrush, Misty 41. You got just what you always get. Nothing."

Don't blame me. I was the dumb lieutenant up front, driving.

The "battleship from hell that couldn't shoot straight" was beginning to be a huge pain on our missions that took us away from sneaking around in the murk of the monsoon looking for targets.

Enter Kellum. The day after I found Chris awake late at night in our trailer, he was flying a mission with Onrush, firing on a bridge abutment in about the same area as the target Bob and I had worked a few days earlier. After one or two salvos with about the same results as always, Chris called, "Onrush, can you sync your five-inch guns on me with radar?"

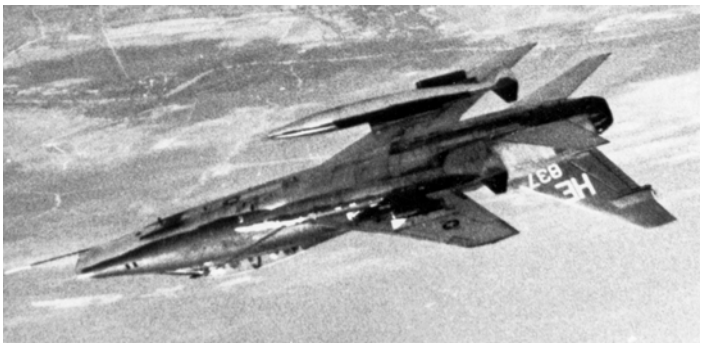
"Affirmative, sir."

"OK. I want you to track me on radar and when I say fire, I want you to shoot me. How's that sound?"

"Roger, Misty, we got it. Be advised the time of flight on the five inchers is only about 18 seconds."

"I'll be out of the way."

Down out of the monsoon murk came Kellum and whoever had the good luck to be with him on that mission. Jinking, unloading, jinking, unloading again, and coming down on the bridge like a screaming banshee about as fast as the ol' Hun would go. Chris just unloaded and flew straight at the bridge for about the last 200 yards, crossing it only a few hundred feet in the air.



Twisting and turning, upside-down from the murk came Kellum, having "figured it out" for the "The Big J."

"Fire!" exclaimed Kellum.

"Fire!" replied Onrush.

Chris pulled up hard and banked right, away from the direction of the incoming shells. As he got to about 6,000 feet, the first salvo hit with a straddle about 20 meters either side of the target.

"Straddle. Fire for effect."

And they did, handily taking out the bridge abutment. With five-inch cannon fire, yet. Amazing. Absolutely amazing. *Kellum had "figured out the bitch" and done the impossible!*

Chris telling legendary stories.

The Story Retold Chris regaled us again with this story about midnight of the second day at the October, 2012, Misty reunion at the USAF Museum in Dayton. Chris was a genius dressed in a flight suit. After he lost his medical clearance in September of 1972, he went on to earn both a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering from Purdue. Not anything that I would've ever been able to accomplish.

"Nickel on the grass" to you, roomie Chris. For you, as you were so fond of saying, "It's all over but the hand clapping." The rest of us will be along in due course. — ***Rosie*** ◘

Origins of legendary stories, back when.

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

"Songs From A Distant Cockpit" Selected for both Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum Bookstores

SSS'r John "JJ" Schulz was contacted in late January by officials at the Air and Space Museum to inform him that the book selection committee voted to include "Songs" in the Air and Space Museum bookstores in D.C. and at Udvar-Hazy. It is the only book in either store about the F-100 Super Sabre and the men who flew her. The request came as a surprise: A former AFROTC college classmate sent a copy to a friend at the Smithsonian, who loved it and passed it on. At the two museums, the book will sell for $15.99. Members of the SSS who order directly from the author can get autographed and inscribed copies of the 290-page book for $11, plus $3.17 for postage. (Additional copies increase postage costs about 60 cents per book.) With 500 "Songs" sold, over 100 went to SS'rs who report they "couldn't put it down." For much more about the book, go to www.songsfromadistantcockpit.com or contact jjschulz@bu.edu. — ***jjs***

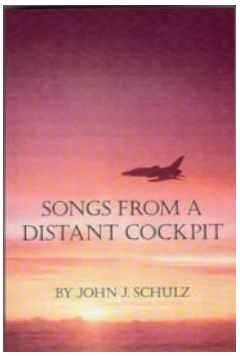
I was incredulous when hearing of this "happening," but happy to learn we'd get such visibility for our F-100! ***Ed.***

Book Review 2 — "Songs from a Distant Cockpit"

Author: John J. Schulz Published 11 Nov 2013
Available and signed from www.songsfromadistantcockpit.com, or unsigned at Amazon.com, paperback or Kindle.

Reviewed by: Al DeGroote (01/11/14), SSS Member & 90th TFS Ops Officer during much of the action.

John Schulz gives a thumbs up from his F-100 cockpit.



A Poet-Warrior Tells OUR Story: Five Stars

I first met John Schulz when he walked into our 90th Squadron Ops building at Bien Hoa Air Base, Vietnam, in April, 1967. He was a bright-eyed, talkative, young captain fresh out of F-100 check-out school, and I was a somewhat grizzled old major in the assistant ops job. John had a few new guy growing pains but soon fit right into the squadron social and working structure. I quickly took a liking to this lanky kid who seemed eager to take on any job that needed to be done. We soon discovered that the "kid" was a talented writer, something that we never had enough of and we soon were making good use of his talent.

A short time later, someone worked up a touch football game, the 90th against one of the sister squadrons. I found myself in the huddle as the ranking major so I appointed myself team captain. I asked if anyone could throw the football and John quietly volunteered that he could. I then instructed him to throw that sucker as far as he could down the right sideline where I knew I could outrun the fat defender. I ran my route and saw the ball in sub-orbital flight sailing way over my head. Back in the huddle, where John was sporting a Cheshire cat grin, I asked, "OK, where the hell did you learn to throw like that?" "I was a QB at Montana," was his smiling response. "OK," said I, "You just became team captain."

Having established that John had been a successful varsity quarterback and a writer, I began to look for any other lights hiding under his basket. I watched him compose impromptu poems on the back of napkins for departing pilots at farewell parties. I flew with him quite often and found that he'd developed into a top-notch combat pilot. I remember asking myself, "Is there anything this kid doesn't do?"

Well, the answer to that might well be, "No," but I've just finished reading his *Songs from a Distant Cockpit,* and I'll focus exclusively on his abilities as the author of a very different "fighter pilot's story." I knew from Vietnam days that John had a natural gift with a pen, and we kept in loose contact over the years while he was at Lakenheath and I was in London, and when I was Air Attaché in Laos and he was a VOA correspondent. He was making his living as a writer, and I wondered if he'd ever complete his book, which I knew he had been crafting as far back as our days in England.

We renewed our friendship more fully when the Super Sabre Society, the official repository of F-100 pilots lore, brought us together at reunions. I had been working on my own book and wanted very much to see how John would attempt to meld "John the historian" with "John the poet."

Now I know! One of the favorite aviation writers of pilots everywhere is Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. "Saint X," it seems to me, was able to write prose that bordered on poetry without the readers ever realizing they had slipped unknowingly into this world of near-poetry. I would submit that John has the opposite and probably more difficult task of writing poetry that slips, almost unnoticed into image-laden prose. I admit to being apprehensive when I opened the book to find poetry and prose mixed as if there were really no distinction. That might be OK for academics who read this, but what about all of us he-man fighter pilots? We're not generally known for our ability to grasp the nuances of emotion-sustained verse. (Let's see—*iambic pentameter*—isn't that the meter that counts the rounds leaving a five-barrel Gatling gun?) My advice is: read on—you'll get the message and you'll find it all the more meaningful.

I at first resented the intrusions of poems into a page-turning narrative—later I found myself looking forward to the intrusions and even cheating a bit to find the next one. In the chapter discussing the tragic loss of our friend, Clyde Carter, John swings easily from a discussion of Pericles to recitation of a run-in with our sister squadron's mascot, a large python named Ramrod: A touch of the classics followed effortlessly by slapstick and, a few pages hence, by the poem, "News Item…" (p. 188), which I challenge all of you hard-boiled fighter pilots to read without choking up.

At his best when painting pictures with words, John was able to bring back squadron friends who had all but faded from my ancient memory with his colorful descriptions of their dress, mannerisms and personal quirks, returning them to my existential world, just as they were decades ago.

John has written a book that will be discussed in our aviators' world for many years. It is a tale of courage, loneliness and sacrifice, and some of the stories are not for the faint of heart. For those of us who read it having long ago been ***in*** those "distant cockpits," it expresses many thoughts that may have been buried too deep to have ever otherwise found expression. For all who never had the privilege of flying from those distant cockpits, *this* is how it *really* was! ◘

Lots of adrenaline rushes on this one.

Stuck AB Nozzle Emergency at Night

By Carl Lyday (Original submission 06/07/08)

In 1970, I was at Luke for F-100 check out. Toward the end of the program, probably in June, we started night gunnery missions to Gila Bend. This sortie was to be my first night solo mission to the range. A C-123 would be on station to light up the desert with zillion-candle-power flares, just like it was on my introductory dual ride a few nights before.

On this moonless night, I was one of two student solos with an IP as lead. Friedhelm Baitis was the other solo. I was to take off on the IP's wing and Friedhelm, as #3, would follow. After the briefing and preflight, we taxied out and lined up on Runway 22. I glanced forward after we were lined up.

We would be heading into an absolute black hole. The yellow-white runway lights converged in the distance like railroad tracks and then disappeared into the black. Not a light was to be seen off the end of the runway. I had 1,700 hours as a T-38 IP, so night flying was not new to me, but I had never seen anything so black. Shortly after pulling into takeoff position, Lead called, "Run 'em up." I checked the EPR, oil pressure, etc. I was still not used to the dim, red instrumentation. The T-38 had clear, easy-to-read white lights. Everything seemed very ghostly and eerie. I felt very much all alone in a dark cocoon. With no intercom, I couldn't even hear myself breathe, but I'm sure the breathing was rapid and deep.

As I ran the throttle up and smelled that unique F-100 burnt-oil odor, I felt a definite, indescribable rush—different from the fear factor. I suddenly knew I had one of the most elite "jobs" in the world. I was in a single-engine, single-seat fighter, about to accomplish a night formation takeoff and then drop bombs in the dark desert under the light of flares!

As the adrenaline pumped, a fleeting thought crossed my mind: the eye-hand coordination for this night formation takeoff and the subsequent bombing under flares certainly rivaled that of a brain surgeon! But, I was quickly drawn back to reality.

As I released brakes on Lead's call and lit the AB, I was not prepared for the up-close and personal experience of 16,000 pounds of raw thrust erupting in an orange fireball from the ass-end of Lead's bird. The sound and vibration were piled on top of the visual.

I had performed many night formation takeoffs in the T-38 with its clean-burning engines that made for gorgeous blue plumes with silver shock diamonds. The J57 plume was hundreds of times brighter. It was simply awesome. My eyes were reflexively drawn to that bright orange streak with the brilliant shock diamonds, like a moth to a flame. I could not believe the length of the plume! My night vision was destroyed in an instant. Still, how could one not look at those shock diamonds as they streaked out of Lead's jet nearly as long as the aircraft itself? Although I was nearly blinded, I was an excellent formation pilot, so I instinctively looked at Lead's nose instead of the light on the star so I could regain some depth perception.

After UPT at Williams AFB, Carl became a first assignment T-38 IP at Laughlin AFB until starting Luke Hun School in Feb '70. He flew 235 combat sorties with the 614th TFS at Phan Rang before flying one of the redeploy birds back to Barnes ANG Base in July '71. Then it was on to the world of the Aardvark.

At rotation, another phenomenon occurred that was a first for me. The exhaust plume struck the runway at the same angle as the nose rotation, and like a perfect reflection, it was bounced back forming a perfect V-shaped angle. I made my takeoff in precise wingtip position. (Oddly, there was no call for gear up, but Lead's moving gear was lit up by the ABs).

At the first motion of Lead's gear, I pushed the throttle full forward, *then* reached for the gear handle. From my experience in formation takeoffs, I knew that pushing the throttle forward, before reaching for the gear, was the best method to stay in perfect position. If you reached for the gear first, no matter how quickly, the delay would cause you to fall back. As we approached 350 knots, the IP deselected burner, again with no call, but the sudden disappearance of a brilliant 50-foot plume made a call unnecessary.

I came inboard and back on the throttle to maintain position, but almost instantly shot ahead of lead. I suddenly realized my AB was still cooking. As I shot ahead of Lead, I instinctively yanked the throttle even further back and the AB went out. As I fell back in position, I slowly advanced the throttle to maintain position but the sucker lit again, eerily lighting up Lead's aircraft in the now total darkness.

In AB, I again shot ahead of Lead. I again yanked the throttle back to maintain position. I heard, felt, and saw the AB had gone out. But, as I fell back and advanced power, the AB lit again. After at least four or five more of these "instantly on, instantly off gyrations," with only a minimum of throttle movement, Lead called, "Two, do you have a problem?"

I shouted, "I don't know, but the AB keeps lighting when I just push the power up a bit."

To keep from having the AB light, I kept the power below the setting where I found the AB lit. In what

seemed just a few seconds, far faster than I thought possible, I had lost sight of Lead.

As I turned my attention to the instruments, I discovered I was in a rather substantial descent at 220 knots! Lead was now nowhere to be seen. I looked forward out the canopy. NOTHING. Talk about dark.

My mind raced, not computing how I got so slow. As I continued to descend into the abyss, even though I had the power forward, my bewilderment was suddenly broken when the IP screamed, "Two, push it up. You're too slow and descending. I'm going to drop back on your wing. If the AB lights, keep it lit and head for ***high key***."

I pushed the throttle slightly up, and again the AB lit. The IP, in a firm voice, said, "Keep the throttle full forward and accelerate to 350 knots. Climb to 16,000 feet and don't come out of AB."

After we passed about 10,000 feet, with my mind still reeling as to why I was heading to high key, he asked, "Two, what's your fuel?" I looked at the gage and it read less than 4,000 pounds. Wow! We had been airborne less than three minutes. What was going on?

Fortunately, the IP had analyzed the situation perfectly, but it didn't dawn on me at all. The IP said, "You're going to fly an SFO. Your nozzle is stuck open and your AB fuel pump is on regardless of your throttle position. You have virtually no thrust unless you light the AB, and I'm not sure it will light when you push the throttle forward, so let's treat this as a true dead-stick landing."

OK, now I realized why I was descending into the desert at 220 knots, even with the power forward. *A wide-open nozzle has almost no thrust unless the AB is lit.*

As I hit high key, I pulled the throttle back and the AB went out. I then flew a night SFO with lead on my wing. He coached my turn so I would aim 1/3 down the runway. Fortunately I aimed somewhat long, because I came over the threshold at about normal landing height at 220 knots. As I flared for landing, it still was not clear in my mind what had happened. I made a smooth landing, and as I came to a full stop, I shut down on the runway as Lead circled to land on the parallel runway.

Neither the IP nor I had time to declare an emergency, so there were no fire trucks. Somehow, I knew the situation must have been serious. As soon as I shut down on the runway, I climbed out in the darkness and went to the back of the airplane. Sure enough, the nozzle was stuck wide open and there was fuel all over the runway. The engine compartment was drenched with raw fuel. I had less than 2,000 pounds remaining after less than five or six minutes airborne.

Shortest flight? I have no idea how much time I actually logged, or even if I filled out the forms. My legs were a bit rubbery. But I believe the flight has to qualify for the shortest flight with the most amount of fuel pumped out the ass-end.

Later, at about 2200, Friedhelm Baitis bought me a drink at the totally empty bar. As we analyzed the rapid decrease in fuel, it was then that I really realized how close I'd come to un-assing a Super Sabre—or buying a piece of that dark desert floor.

I'd like to again thank the IP who saved my butt with his quick analysis of a true emergency, but time has faded his name into oblivion. If you read this and were my IP, please give me a call. I'd love to thank you again. I'm certain I would have flown out 10 or 20 miles, still not realizing I was rapidly running out of fuel until it was too late.

Sincerely, — ***Carl Lyday*** ◘

If anyone reading this knows who Carl's IP that night was, let us know and we'll try to facilitate getting the two of them together again! I asked #3, Friedhelm Baitis, but, it's too long ago for him to remember, too. ***Ed.***

Departures: ***The following members of the Super Sabre Society have flown west.*** ***R.I.P., Good Friends.*** ◘

Jacob James Caldwell, Jr. ***September 30, 2011***	***Bob "Foxy" Bazley*** ***December 16, 2012***	***Richard D. River*** ***January 4, 2013***	***Robert L. Russell*** ***January 11, 2013***
Ken M. Hiltz, Jr. ***August 13, 2013***	***Richard W. Arnold*** ***October 18, 2013***	***Robert A. "Bob" Draper*** ***October 27, 2013***	***Wally Mason*** ***November 1, 2013***
Tom Murch ***November 11, 2013***	***Jerry D. Richards*** ***November 18, 2013***	***"Denny" J. Kerkman*** ***November 23, 2013***	***Phillip Coll*** ***December 24, 2013***
"Chuck" E. Deeds ***December 26, 2013***	**Sylvere H. Coussement** ***December 30, 2013***	***"Fred" R. Dent, III*** ***January 1, 2014***	***Thomas R. Olsen*** ***January 5, 2014***
Francis J. "Frank" Byrne ***January 16, 2014***	**Bob Thorpe** **January 22, 2014**	***Gail "Wee Willie" Wilson*** ***February 6, 2014***	***Ben Boshoven*** ***February 16, 2014***

Richard E. "Dick" Bolstad
February 21, 2014

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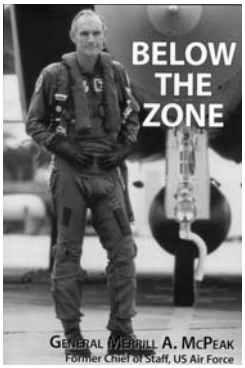
Book Review 3 — "Below the Zone"

Tony McPeak Thunderbird 5/6



Second of "The Aerial View" trilogy.

Title: *Below the Zone*

Author: Merrill A. McPeak - Publisher: Lost Wingman Press
http://generalmcpeak.com,
Also available at Amazon & Allegro Media Group.
http://www.amazon.com,
http://www.allegro-music.com/online_catalog.asp?sku_tag=MCP86008.

ISBN: 978-0-9833160-5-3, $=variable; hard, paper, electronic.

Reviewed by: John J. Schulz, PhD., (February, 2014), Former Dean, College of Communication, Boston University; NWC Class of '86; SSS member, Asst. Editor, *The Intake*-Journal of the Super Sabre Society.

5.0 out of 5 Stars I left the Air Force in 1971, long before "Tony" McPeak became Chief of Staff, USAF. But after reading the second book in his three-part memoir, I concluded that, had I the power, I would appoint him SecDef tomorrow, figure out how to keep him on task for four years, and give him the mandate to implement all the clear, sensible, deeply thoughtful suggestions, initiatives and reorganizational ideas in *Below the Zone.* I *can* call the current National War College commandant to suggest making this a mandatory part of the reading list. And, I thus imply, a book every SSS'r who has ever thought about the role of air power in war fighting ought to read as "next" on his reading list. Or read it to see how the heck a Thunderbird and Misty pilot came to be a base commander!

As with *Hangar Flying,* which traced McPeak's years as a line fighter pilot, Thunderbird and Misty, *Below the Zone* is a fast, easy, often entertaining read. But close attention is rewarded when he discusses regional political-military situations, the good, bad and ugly of how we have fought wars of every size and type in several regions, and the reasons why our current military structures cry out for a complete (and mighty sensible) overhaul–and clearer sense of "doctrine."

Going through his 240 pages in just three easy sittings, I was rewarded by the *bon mots* and witty one-liner summaries as he zigzagged on his often strange and curious journey to the top job in the Air Force. Indeed, I was first put off a bit by what seemed a travelogue taking him (and Ellie) to a huge variety of relatively short-term assignments; then I realized: at each stop, he was gaining great insights into just about every facet of Air Force operations. He even gained a good sense of the civilian policy think tanks that often create and change U.S. Grand Strategy (none more influential than the Council on Foreign Relations, where he spent a year and wrote an important article on U.S. Middle East policy and relations with Israel). As with so much he observed and then analyzed, that article makes sense to this day.

Late in the book, as I assessed how it was organized, I realized there was method in a presentation that seemed to some degree a *hodgepodge* of assignments, brief sketches of some people he met, the functions and inner workings of units at various levels, and more. Often, the point of this seeming trivia was to help readers as McPeak then provides his remarkable insights into far more important matters related to joint and combined operations, service organizational structures (talk about *a hodgepodge*!), how management and leadership must meld (and how to do that), and much more.

The biggest rewards come toward the end. Having taken us on a journey to air so rarefied that only SR-71 pilots or officers who achieve four stars will ever really experience, McPeak provides a series of lessons, observations and solutions to a wide variety of problems and on-going intra-service issues that repay careful reading and further thought. Indeed, every high-ranking general officer in every service ought to study the final 50 pages, and then think very hard about any seemingly "valid" counterarguments they might wish to unsheathe to address his compelling points.

Tracking the careers of any number of my classmates in NWC '86 who rose to three or four stars and high levels of command responsibility, I'd concluded that the path to such lofty military success was pretty clear, and that sidetrack assignments could be death. McPeak did everything wrong. Yet it is this *hodgepodge* resume that prompts me to make him SecDef....tomorrow! Consider: *no*t an Academy grad; sidetrack assignments out of mainstream operations (Council on Foreign Relations; air attaché; base commander)...I could go on.... His list of "*no-no*" assignments is lengthy. But the result of this wandering career *path* is a rich tapestry of jobs of every kind, which provided an observant, hard-working, analytical officer with the broadest possible exposure to every job, role, task and mission our Air Force has—or an awful lot more such jobs than any of my star-studded NWC classmates. And that path provided McPeak much grist for thought.

I've no idea, as yet, how or what Gen. Merrill McPeak did as Chief of Staff—that book is yet to come. But *Below the Zone* is the easiest, smoothest read you will ever encounter as you journey through a travelogue, a superior management and leadership course, and an amplification on Sun Tzu. McPeak then suggests changes to definitions, acronyms, ambiguous notions and overlapping military command structures that add cost, and create command and control conflicts and other operational inefficiencies. The result of all these problems, as few will dispute, is a *hodgepodge* system still under constant construction, as we will see, I would think, in book three! — ***JJS*** ◘

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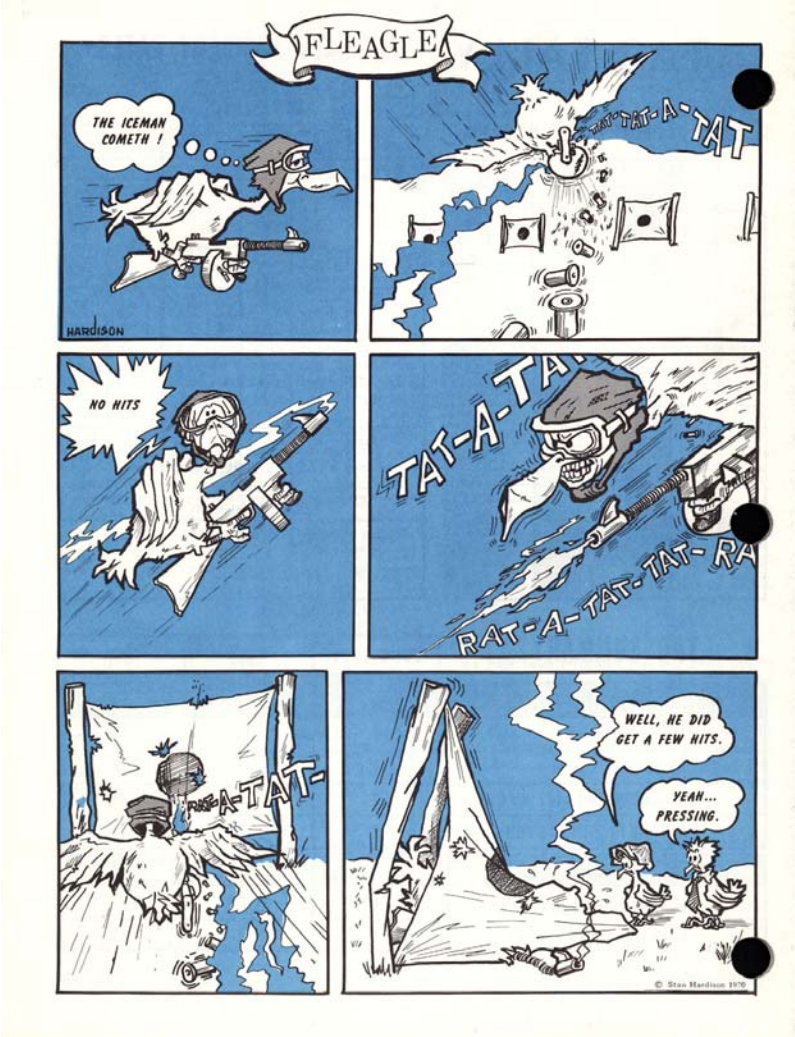
Note:* The Intake – *Journal of the Super Sabre Society is published three times per year. Mailings are planned for delivery (stateside) in mid-March, mid-July, and mid-November. If you don't see yours by the end of the next full month, contact the Editor. It might be a simple address problem, or your dues status may be way overdue.

Reminder

SSS Membership Comes With Annual Dues of $25, Due On or BEFORE 1January.

If You Haven't Paid Your 2014 Dues Yet, Why Don't You Take Care of Business Now and Not Be Among the IN ARREARS Members Come the Summer Issue of *The Intake*.

Save a 49¢ stamp by paying online at our website, or send to the address at the bottom of page 2!



TAC Attack – 13th Fleagle Strip – July 1971

Return to those thrilling days of yesteryear with Fleagle! These pages of history are courtesy of the beloved Safety Strip's creator Stan Hardison and today's Air Combat Command. Read all about it at URL http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1844888/stan_hardison

Back Cover Credits

Keith "Herb" Acheson of the 124th TFS, Iowa ANG, has a neat "Hun Landmark Tour Collection" photo of a Hun over Hohenzollern Castle, Germany. But it doesn't quite make the grade for a front or back cover for lack of clarity. He did, however send a very nice, circa Nov 1976, B & W pic of a Hun D-model (55-3601) framed against the grid of the heartland of America as a flight was returning to Des Moines after a low-level and DACT mission with A-7Ds. 601's pilot was Capt. Wayne E. "Whiskey Delta" Davis. Photog was Lt. Les Baitzer in the back seat of an F-model piloted by Col. Junior Lane. Hats off to all three jocks…and to Herb.

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Parting Shots on Your Personal Contact Data and Dues

Remember to check your personal data at the NEIW SSS website. This 21st century upgrade allows members to select their own password, so you don't need a mind jogger phrase here. But if you have trouble setting your personal password, give me a call at (505) 293-8396 and I'll get you squared away!.

If something's wrong with your personal data, send the corrections to Hoppy Hopkins. If you owe dues, send the money direct to David Hatten via the Lakeway P.O. Box.

Because $25 dues are payable on or before 1 January every year, it might be a good idea to remember that (and take care of it regularly). To do that, try putting the SSS on your Christmas Card List and include your check for $25 every year. "Works good and lasts a long time!" (Quoting the many Luke Hun academic IPs.)

******Happy, happy springtime! Ed.******


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