Spring 2008 Issue Six

The Intake

Journal of the Super Sabre Society

Published Thrice a Year: March, July and November

"First In…"

F-100F Wild Weasel Leads the First Successful Hunter/Killer SAM Strike in SEA - Hun Fine Art, Courtesy of Keith Ferris - http://www.keithferrisart.com/

Feature Story

"Hun Wild Weasels … Some Ballsy Flying!"

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The Intake

Spring 2008, Vol. 1, Issue 6 *JOURNAL OF THE SUPER SABRE SOCIETY*

The front cover Hun Fine Art (used with copyright permission) is a limited edition (1,000) 20 x 31 inch lithograph print by SSS Associate Member Keith Ferris. It depicts the main event action in our featured story about the Hun Wild Weasels. For each sale of this print ($150), a substantial donation to the Wild Weasel Foundation will be made by the Keith Ferris Galleries. Please visit Keith's web site at www.keithferrisart.com or call at (973) 539-3363.

***The Dues Situation and* The Intake**

***Please read the* "SSS Dues Policies and *The Intake* Mailings" message from the Board of Directors in the Staff Corner Department on the next page. If need be, contact: Treasurer (Lee Graves) at email hgraves@austin.rr.com /phone (512) 255-0477, or Editor (R. Medley Gatewood) at rgatewood@comcast.net /phone (505) 293-8396.**

Staff Corner

The A, B, Cs of SSS Dues Policies and *The Intake* Mailings

As the SSS moves into its second year of growth, and our publication and distributing processes for *The Intake* mature, it is vital that our entire membership fully understand and support our dues policies and how they relate to a member's eligibility to receive our fine journal. This relationship seems simple to the SSS leadership, but it may not be as well understood by the membership at large. Here's the deal in a nutshell—if you're not current on dues, you won't be getting further copies of *The Intake* until that problem is fixed. Here's the deal with a bit of explanation:

According to our by-laws, annual dues (currently set at $25) for charter, regular and most associate members is payable in advance by January 1st of each year. Members whose dues are more than 120 days in arrears after (that date) and reasonable appeals to renew will be terminated or placed on an "inactive" list until their dues status is resolved. This "in arrears" policy also applies to eligibility for each issue of *The Intake*, a copy of which is an SSS benefit accorded to all members in good standing.

We faced two major problems in implementing the dues currency requirement in relation to members' eligibility to receive our journal: the *Intake's* mail delivery success rate itself, and awareness of individual members as to their dues currency status. Here's what we've done to address both problems.

To better insure delivery of our journal, it's now being sent USPS First Class in a white envelop with a return address. That change seems to be working well. With Issue Five last fall, only 13 of 1,132 envelopes sent were returned, and all 13 of these address problems were resolved.

In addition to email and phone campaigns to increase dues status awareness, with Issue Six, we are printing the dues status of each member (as reported by the treasurer) right after their name in the address block of the envelope containing their copy of *The Intake*. That's why we asked you to save the envelope until you read this article and understand your dues status and its ramifications and remedies.

There are four possible statuses: "N/A" (Not Applicable for a small set of certain individuals such as Honorary Members), "Current thru 20XX" (the current year or out-year—many have paid a few years in advance), "Paid 20XX" (the previous year, 2007 in this case), or ***"IN ARREARS !"*** If your status shows as either of the last two, you need to be concerned for two reasons: 1) we are concerned about you, and 2) if you don't do something quickly, you won't be getting another issue until our concern is resolved!

The "Paid 2007" status tag on the spring issue merely means that you paid dues in the prior year, but at press time, we had no record of you having paid the current year (2008, in this case). If you have paid for 2008, you need to contact the treasurer (see page 2 or 35) and clear up the matter. If you haven't paid the current year, you need to send in your dues because by the time the next issue comes out, you will then be IN ARREARS and that issue (for sure!) will be the last issue you get until you resolve the situation.

If you see the ***"IN ARREARS"*** tag on this spring issue, it means you are behind in dues more than one year NOW, and that this is the last issue you'll get until YOU initiate resolution of the matter by contacting the treasurer (see page 2 or 35) and return to "member in good standing" status. If you are in this boat, we urge you to act quickly.

That's it; the **A, B, Cs of SSS Dues & *The Intake*** — Questions? Contact the Treasurer or the Editor (see page 2 or 35) If you need to pay dues, make your check out to Super Sabre Society and send to **Super Sabre Society, P.O. Box 3100, Georgetown, TX 78627**. Thanks for taking care of business.

This Message Approved by the Board of Directors

From the President's Desk

As you can tell by reading the adjacent article, we are rapidly getting much closer to resolving issues regarding the SSS dues situation. Recently, I, along with Pete Davitto and Sloan Brooks, both members of the Membership Committee, phoned a number of our members to tell them that they were overdue on their dues payments. We found out that, in general, they were unaware of their status and were more than willing to pay up. It was also clear that we had not done a particularly good job in communicating the dues situation to our membership.

The new procedures for notification of your dues status (which will be shown on the mailing envelope of your copy of this and future issues of *The Intake)* should go a long way in resolving any questions regarding your individual dues currency status.

Shifting gears, we are now entering an advanced planning phase for the next SSS reunion. As most of you know by now, it will take place at the Gold Coast Hotel and Casino in Vegas on 31 March through 2 April 2009. We are working with Nellis AFB for Red Flag tours, and hopefully, we will also have a golf event. We will get out the detailed information regarding events and registration in the next issue of *The Intake*. Regarding the Red Flag tours, the number of attendees per tour will be limited by the AF. So, if you want to have a seat on the bus, sign up early when you get your registration form.

We are pleased that the 2009 SSS reunion dates will overlap for a day or two with the 2009 F-86 Sabre Pilots Association reunion; which will also be held at the Gold Coast (March 29 – April 2). This will make it easier for us SSSers who also flew the F-86 to see some other old friends. Likewise, I understand that the 48 TFW will be holding a reunion in Vegas during the time of our reunion.

And finally, I know there must be a bunch of Hun drivers that don't know of the existence of our SSS. Please take a moment or two to get the word out and sign up a gaggle or two of new members.

Cheers,
Bill Gorton

Incoming/Outgoing – Correspondence

We are pleased to receive long, short, mostly great (and a few not quite so great) correspondence items via various media sources. The overwhelming response is very positive. Here are some incoming samples (and appropriate outgoing replies) since the last issue came out. Also, we include items in need of discussion discovered by Intake *staff ourselves. Ed.*

General Comments on Issue Five

After taking steps to resolve the mailing SNAFU of Issue Four which resulted in a very poor initial delivery success rate, we think we've almost got it right. Issue Five was the first mailing done using First Class postage AND in an envelope with a return address. We're pleased to report that out of 1,131 copies mailed by our mailing contractor, all but 13 arrived safely at the correct address and in reasonably good time. Of the 13 "Returned to Sender," all were eventually re-mailed to the recipients after we identified and repaired the various reasons for initial delivery failure. Most of those reasons were simply failure of members to have updated their addresses in our database after moving. Continued use of First Class and envelopes with return address should eliminate this concern completely. Thanks to those members who cooperated so positively in our address correction investigation.

We continue to receive very positive comments about the quality and enjoyable nature of our journal. A few of the best of the many received for Issue Five follow. There still have been no serious negative remarks, thank goodness. Ed.

There were some great stories in this *Intake* and yesterday when my son, the photographer, came over for a drumstick he read every one of them. But, as soon as he picked the issue up he said, "WOW" you guys have a quality magazine here. Good work guys, another "Attaboy" from a quality source. — ***Bob Fizer*** *(Les Frazier advises that Bob's son, Mike, is probably the chief photographer for AOPA and also provides imagery to Trade-a-Plane; thus qualifying as a quality source! Thanks, Mike. Ed.)*

I am astonished at the quality of *The Intake*. This is a top notch magazine and there is no way to thank you guys for the hours and hours of work that you must put into it. — ***Bob Weston***

Really enjoy reading the "Intake." Can't put it down till every word has been read. Ironically, it's more fun and interesting than the Daedalian pub or the MiG Sweep. Keep up the good work! — ***Andy Anderson***

I received *The Intake* today and read it from cover to cover. My hat is off once again to the staff. Just outstanding, and thanks. The Bud Day story was touching and just makes you feel good. — ***Gus Gunther***

Congratulations on a great, very professional magazine. Slick! The articles in the fall issue are wonderful, especially the story about Colonel Day. I appreciate the effort you guys have made, and look forward to every issue. Also looking forward to the 2009 reunion in Las Vegas! — ***Bud Stoddard***

Bud Day Story … Major Mea Culpa

After all the kudos, here's one of those "not so great items" that sometimes "just happen." As Editor, I take full responsibility for a serious mistake in Jack Daub's otherwise excellent, and deservingly lauded, story about Bud Day. That error near the end of the first introductory paragraph, in response to a question posed to Day by Jack, has Day saying in reply, "Sure am, pa,."

I'm sure Colonel Day and Dorie (and perhaps other readers) have noticed that final editing, major goof, and I sincerely regret it. I have written a letter to Bud that includes an apology for mangling his signature reply, and offer the same to Jack and to the membership. Wish I could say that such errors won't happen again, but I expect they will. Ed.

It Happened Again, Already…Front Cover Photo Credit—Botched!

In Issue Four, I inadvertently left Joe Vincent out of the list of photo contributors to the reunion recap story (which happened to include Joe Broker) We apologized to Joe Vincent in person and publicly for that omission. In what must

have been a sense of guilt about that, I somehow managed to credit the Issue Five "Landmark Tour" photo of a Hun Diamond over Mount Rushmore to Joe Vincent. When I asked him how he liked how it turned out, he remarked that the first time he had ever seen that photo was when he picked up his copy and looked at that cover photo! Double Gasp!!

After some agonizing file system searching, I found that the photo contributor was actually—you guessed it—Joe Broker! When I called Joe to explain and apologize (this is getting to be a habit), like the good trooper he is, he said "none required. I'm just glad the photo got used and looks so good." Thanks Joe, and I still owe you one or five adult beverages of your choice at the Gold Coast .Ed.

Hahn Wx Story … Remarks

I would like to add a postscript to Don Nichols' story about the lousy weather at Hahn AB, Germany. This is the opposite side of the story that Don neglected to mention. During my time there before Nichols, there were the occasional times when the very low fog prevailed throughout Europe and EVERY airfield was WOXOF (for the uninitiated that is, if I recall correctly, "indefinite ceiling zero, zero visibility due to fog", which means "socked in), "except for Flugplatz Hahn, which was above the fog in the clear and CAVU (clear and visibility unlimited). I think somewhere in my flying memorabilia I have a copy of such a weather report from Europe. — *Don Volz*

I was at Hahn '60-'64. The Rhine froze one winter; 1963, I believe. We launched in zero x zero routinely—if you had a green card, and Spang, Bit or Ramstein was 1000/2. I launched eight or ten times like that. It wouldn't have been a lot of fun, if you'd have had a partial engine failure. Launched a four ship to Wheelus once with breaking at 2.5 on ice. Yep, weather and experiences at Hahn were something else! — *Keith McDonald*

During my tour at Hahn with the "Fightin' Tenth," 1966-69, the wx had not improved. But once again, HQ came up with a solution. This solution lead to our four ship sitting at the end of the runway in zero-zero wx waiting for…now get this…a C-130 to make a pass dropping dry ice over the runway end to raise the vis. Of course, when the vis did rise, there we were, covered with about two inches of rime ice. The DO, sitting in his blue car next to mobile, yelled, "Launch!" Off we went to Wheelus with sheets of ice flying off the planes and eye balls poppin'. They also tried to use this method to recover aircraft…not good…RVR off the scale. Happy Holidays! — *Ron Hunter*

F-4 Puke Patch Story … Remarks

This is a continuation to the recent "F 4 Puke" story by Rusty Gideon. I was the 494 TFS CO at the time the F 4 Puke patch came into being. Later, I became the assistant DO of the 48th WG. In the spring of '73, the wing CO (banner of the patch) was promoted and transferred. Thus, a going away party was scheduled. This is where complications were encountered. The wing king and DO had a falling out, so to speak, and the DO took leave so he wouldn't be in attendance at the farewell festivities. We (the ops wizards) had decided it most appropriate to present the departing commander with his very own copy of the banned "F 4 PUKE" patch. In the absence of the DO, it became my duty to make said presentation. I feel certain that General Pittman long cherished that gift from the mighty HUN DRIVERS of the 48th TFW. Over and out! — **V/R** *Terry Cawley.*

Photos Spark Interesting Remarks

Dave Menard sent in some further recollections regarding Colonel George H. Laven's penchant for colorful Hun paint jobs and some more photos, but we'll hold that for another time. He did have a very cogent remark about ***Joe Broker's*** *miss-credited cover photo. Here's what Dave had to say: Ed.*

The lead Hun in the cover shot is 754, a true ex-Thunderbird aircraft. She sits today in the AF Museum in full Thunderbird markings so she survived the drone target program, thank goodness. Just thought you all might want to know. *(Break, break.)* Issue was outstanding as always. Cheers. — *Dave Menard*

Based on Ron's *(Standerfer's)* book review of *F-100 Super Sabre at War*, I purchased a copy. A close look at the cover photo four-ship shows that the right wing aircraft is 56-3081 which is the F-100D I am restoring at MAPS Air Museum *(Ackron, OH)*. Thought you might like to know. — *Ken Ramsay* *(We're glad to know about the cover photo connection to the restoration, AND, that people are responding to Ron's book reviews. There will be more! Ed.)*

Another Nutshell Story—"The Jokes on Me," by Bud Stoddard (Educational Specialist)

I was an honorary member of the academic squadron at Luke and invited to their Christmas party one year. Arriving on scene of the party, the squadron commander/host asked me to help him carry in a big heavy box. I recalled later that he smiled a bit. When it was time for him to hand out the joke gifts, I got the big box! All eyes were on me as I opened it—to find a full set of encyclopedia! Dated 1928**!** The note said, "to bring you up to date!" What a laugh! ☻

Stake Your Claim

By R. Medley Gatewood

As soon as Issue Five hit the street, the rebuttals and counter claims started arriving in our Inbox: er Incontainer. Das is gut, nein? Here's a message from **Dick Hale** to start us off.

I'd like to lay claim to the (1) smallest number of official dual rides and hours before solo and (2) the most hours in an F-100 OUTSIDE AF flying, i.e. civilian flying and (3) tied with Rod Beckett as flying the last pond crossing from Europe (island hopping). Details follow:

*1. **Smallest Number of Official Dual Rides**: I was hired on as a replacement pilot for Tracor Corp. in Wittmund, Germany in October, 1994 (flying dart tow and aggressor missions—my AF background was F-4 Weasels). Bill McCollum gave me two FCP rides: TR-1 on 10/11/94 and TR-2 on 10/13/94, and then turned me loose on 10/14/94 for my first solo ride (TR-3). On10/14/94, I had my second solo ride (TR-4) and my check ride (TR-5) on the same day-10/14/94. The previous two dual TR rides consisted of 2.2 hours and 7 landings. (I had a couple of other rides in the RCP prior to this, but those were just "tagging along" before my "official training" started.) Thus, in summary, from start to finish was a total of 4 days—**2 FCP rides with an IP (2.2 hours 7 landings),** two solo rides (2.1 hours/7 landings) and a checkride (1.0/4 landings). That was the total of my checkout program with Tracor.*

*2. **Most Hours of Flying The F-100 Outside-AF, i.e, .Civilian Flying** (all with Tracor/BAE): **Total is 1034.9 hours**. (Might want to check with Rod Beckett, Bill McCollum and Harv Damschen. They could maybe give me a run for my money on this one.)* They will, I'm sure. Ed.

*3. **Last Pond Crossing in a F-100**: **Rod Beckett** (extraordinary wingman) and **I** (fearless lead) ferried two F-100Fs twice in the summer of 2002 from Wittmund, Germany to Mojave, CA. The first two-ship was flown from 6/3 to 6/6/2002 via Norway, Iceland, Greenland, Canada and then the US. The second two-ship was flown from **6/24 to 6/28/2002 with** pretty much the same routing. Thanks...great job—keep up the good work. Check Six, **Jim "Dick" Hale** (Still in the fighter business--currently flying Alpha Jets).*

Well, Dick, I'd say you're ahead in item 1 unless Leo Kimminau wants to "clarify" his 3 FCP rides and 4.7 hours original claim. As noted above, I suspect one of your buddies might chime in on item 2, but it's a good target setting. I suspect claim number 3 for you and your extraordinary wingman will stand up pretty well. But, you never know in this game. Thanks for playing.

The competition for **shortest Hun flight** continues. This from **Walter "Skip" Cornelison**:

In 1965, I was on soft alert at Ton Son Nhut and was scrambled on a mission to the Delta. The FAC gave us a mark and we proceeded to deliver our ordinance. We had a good target because we immediately could see flashes from small arms fire. After a couple of passes, my number two, Hal Stewart, called to inform me that he had received a hit through his canopy and into his left arm. We immediately aborted the mission, switched to guard and contacted Paris Control for vectors to the nearest runway that could accommodate an F-100. That was back at Ton Son Nhut. I asked Hal if he could survive the flight back and received an affirmative. When we finally got on final, Hal was fading fast but managed to make a safe landing. Maintenance and rescue met him on the runway so I had to divert to Bien Hoa.

*After landing, I requested 2,000 pounds of fuel and a replacement chute. I proceeded to base ops and called my squadron. They informed me that the runway was open, and I was cleared to return. So I started up and taxied to the departure end of the runway. I was cleared for takeoff, applied the burner and was soon airborne. I climbed to 1,000 feet leaving my gear down and immediately contacted Ton Son Nhut tower. I did a little jig-jag turn to line up with the landing runway and requested clearance for a straight in landing which was uneventful. The **actual flight was four minutes** but I **rounded it up to five, added five for STTO time** and recorded my flight as **ten minutes total**. This flight counted as one of my 230 combat sorties!*

Quite a "nutshell" story, Skip. The "stake your claim" (SYC) lawyers might argue that you never would have made that flight from Bien Hoa if it weren't for Hal's IFE that brought you back to TSN and the full stop at Bien Hoa. However, you did make the **claim breaking, ten minute flight** without an aircraft IFE and as far as this Department is concerned, that's currently the standing record in this category. Congratulations!

Now comes one of our newest members, Henry "Butch" Vicellio, Jr., to lay a claim that tops our very oldest claim of record. That being "Fire Can" Dan Walsh's claim for the longest non-stop flight in a F-100 as described in Issue One at length in *Operation Double Trouble*. That record, with KB-50 support, was 6,400 NM in 12 hours and 35 minutes. Butch now lives near Seattle, WA, but flew the Hun at Luke, Homestead and Cigli, Turkey, from '63-'65. Here's Butch's recently submitted claim in a Letter to the Editor.

When I was in high school in Victoria, TX, my father was commander of the "Suitcase Air Force," 19th AF, at Foster Field. Sometime in the late '50s, three members of

the local fighter day wing flew nonstop from London to Los Angeles, which, as I recall, took something over 14 hours. If memory serves, this was an anniversary of the Mayflower arrival, or something to that effect. I have a photo somewhere taken at end of the flight with time en-route painted on the nose of one of the C model Huns. Carlos Talbott may have been the flight leader, I am not sure. But I do know that one of the pilots was ***Jack Bryant****, who later became my dad's aide-de-camp. During one of the air refuelings, the drogue flipped up and smashed his canopy, cutting his face in the process. No sweat!! Jack just topped off and continued on for several hours in freezing temperatures and with pressure breathing. If I can find the photo I will formally challenge "Fire Can" Dan's "longest assisted flight" on Jack's behalf. BTW,* The Intake *is awesome. Keep it up. I will send some true stories about Izmir soon. The 307th TFS in '64 was full of great guys, and was a terrific first assignment for this young stick.*

Thanks, Butch. We'll welcome the stories, but since you haven't found the cited photo yet, we'll allow the excerpt you sent in from the free encyclopedia *Wikipedia* recognizing the record flight to stand in for the photo proof. Here's the Wiki statement: "On 13 May 1957, three F-100Cs set a new world distance record for single-engine aircraft by covering the **6,710 mile (5,835 NM, 10,805 KM) distance from London to Los Angeles in 14 hours and 4 minutes.** The flight was accomplished using in-flight refueling (with **KB-50s**)."

"Fire Can" Dan can be proud of staking the first claim for this SYC Department, but records are made to be broken. Who knows, someone might dig up one to beat **Jack Bryant and his two flight members**?

We had a few other claims reported that we disallowed for SYC categories. **Don Volz** had a story about delivering a LABS "shack" at El Uotia while his wife was delivering a new baby girl at Hahn. Good story, but shacks in a LABS delivery are not really that unheard of. In fact, when Skip Cornelison filed his shortest flight SYC, he also offered a LABS shack claim. We did use Don's "double delivery" story in the Odds and Ends Department of this issue on page 20. Check it out, along with a couple of interesting **Chuck Turner** "close misses" stories (that didn't qualify for SYC either) he submitted with his shortest flight red flag in Issue Five on Wally Mason's original claim in Issue Four.

That's the way this Department is supposed to go: original claim, trump, counter-claim, counter-trump, etc. So join the fun and send in whatever you have or can come up with within that claim sequence.

Joe Haines sent in a couple of doozy original claims and a Hun History lesson that'll rock us all back a bit—but they'll have to wait for space in Issue Seven, come the hot summer-time of August. Till then, get your red flags cleaned and your golf shoe spikes sharpened. **— R. Medley** ☻

Departures

The following Hun Drivers, associates, or honorees have truly "slipped the surly bonds of Earth" and departed the final approach fix en-route to their last PCS and permanent resting places. They will not be forgotten! Our sincere condolences to their families and close friends.

John Richard "Rick" Layman
July 3, 2006 – Memorial Service at Arlington National on May 23rd '08: 12:15 PM

Robert "Bob" F. Hermanson
November 3, 2007

William "Bill" K. Smith
November 6, 2007

"Randy" M. Anderson
December 4, 2007

Gary Sanders
December 27, 2007

Carl "Stub" Young
January 20, 2008

William J. "Bud" Breckner, Jr.
February 16, 2008

Robert E. "Bob" Darlington
February 16, 2008

Edgar Wylie Hurd
February 24, 2008

Please provide departure information to the SSS leadership or *The Intake* staff as soon as it is known. We'll do our best to honor our fallen comrades in a timely and professional manner.

National WWII Memorial — Registry of Remembrances

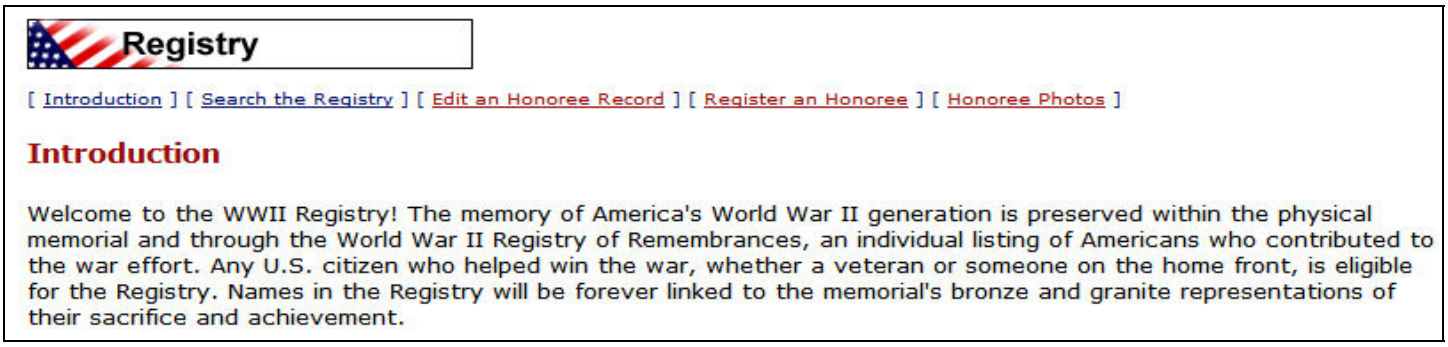
By R. Medley Gatewood

From its design conception, the National WWII Memorial*, on the Mall in Washington, D.C., was meant to be more than just a stone, brick and mortar monument to honor all those Americans who helped win that great global conflict. From its beginning, a modern 21st Century database was envisioned that could contain the names and other wartime data about the millions of Americans involved in that magnificent effort. About 16 million served in the uniformed services, and millions more civilians toiled in harms way in vital direct support roles (diplomats, Office of Strategic Services, merchant marine, etc), civil service jobs at all levels; or by powering the industrial might of the nation. That database, designed to encompass and enshrine this multitude of American patriots, is called The* ***Registry of Remembrances****.*

Other than incomplete records of the dead and missing, now held by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), which formed the nucleus, the Registry's database is being built from inputs of honorees (and pertinent data about them) enrolled by the American public. Total enrollment now stands at about 2.2 million, and is growing slowly.

Our SSS membership "family" includes many who directly qualify to be so honored (including uniformed service or civilians on the home front during WWII). That "family" probably knows of many who are not members, but who are known **by** our members to qualify (relatives, friends, acquaintances). We would be doing our country a great service by enrolling those who qualify (including ourselves), or enrolling those we know to be qualified, but are unable to do so themselves because they don't know about the **Registry** or have already "departed the fix, headed west."

If you don't know much about the Registry of Remembrances, you can go to the National WWII Memorial's Web site at www.wwiimemorial.com and learn more. Once there, click on any link to the Registry, and you'll find yourself looking at this intro page:



If you've previously enrolled someone, you can edit your input or enroll others via the "Edit an Honoree Record" link, providing you know your account number/zip code of record. If you would like to edit or enroll someone else, but you don't know your account number/zip, contact me and I'll help you get them.

If you've never enrolled yourself or someone else, you can do so via the "Register an Honoree" link. In any case, enrolling someone is free, but if you want to get fancy and add a photo (which you are encouraged to do), the Registry charges a $10 processing and handling fee (payable with a credit card for web uploads).

If you would like to search for people you know who should be in the Registry, use the "Search the Registry link." There you will find a "Basic Search" page asking for Last Name, First Name and/or State. The search engine will search for any or all of these inputs. Sometimes you might not remember a person's name, but you might remember their hometown. In those cases, the "Advanced Search" may help or be of interest.

If you click on "Advanced Search," you can skip any names, put in a Hometown and State and click "Submit." This will yield all the names from those hometowns (10 per page) that are in the Registry. This is an interesting exercise even to simply see how many people are enrolled in your own hometown. Since the Registry is still a-building, the numbers may be surprisingly small. Please contact me if you need any assistance in your searches or enrolment issues.

Four examples of WWII Honoree Plaques/Pages are on the next page. Three are/were members of the SSS who later became Hun Drivers. The fourth (Carr) too was later to be a Hun Driver in Vietnam. He passed away in 1998 and thus had no chance to be an SSSer. But, he is the hero of our next article abut a WWII ace's pre-Hun E&E adventure.

Examples of National WWII Memorial Registry of Remembrances Honoree Plaques/Pages

Some plaques/pages say more, some say less; the important thing is for all eligible folks to be enrolled.

World War II Honoree

World War II Veteran

Edgar Wylie Hurd

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Army Air Forces

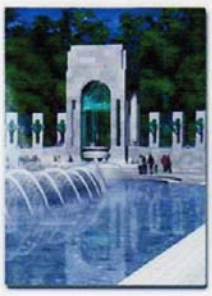
HOMETOWN
Hoquiam, WA

ACTIVITY DURING WWII

VOLUNTEERED FOR AIR CORPS AVIATION CADETS IN 1942 AND ENTERED ACTIVE SERVICE IN FEBRUARY, 1943. COMPLETED BASIC TRAINING AND GRADUATED FROM THE PILOT FLYING TRAINING PROGRAM WITH WINGS ON MAY 22, 1944 AT FOSTER FIELD, VICTORIA, TEXAS. COMMISSIONED A SECOND LIEUTENANT AND WENT ON ACTIVE DUTY THE NEXT DAY. SELECTED FOR ADVANCED PILOT TRAINING IN THE REPUBLIC P-47 'THUNDERBOLT' AND QUALIFIED IN THE MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY OF SINGLE ENGINE FIGHTER PILOT (1055). ASSIGNED TO THE 464TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, 507TH FIGHTER GROUP, PREPARING FOR DEPLOYMENT TO THE PACIFIC THEATER OF OPERATIONS. DEPARTED THE CONTINENTAL U.S. WITH ADVANCE ELEMENTS OF HIS UNIT ON MARCH 25, 1945 BOUND FOR A STAGING BASE IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS VIA THE USS ROI, A SMALL U.S. NAVY AIRCRAFT CARRIER. HELPED TEST-FLY THE SQUADRON PLANES AT THE MAJURO ATOLL STAGING BASE. THEN, WITH FERRY STOPS AT SAIPAN AND TINIAN, ARRIVED AT FORWARD BASE IE SHIMA NEAR OKINAWA. ENTERED COMBAT FROM THAT BASE AND FOUGHT, IN THE RYUKYUS, AIR OFFENSIVE JAPAN, AND CHINA OFFENSIVE CAMPAIGNS. DURING A 48-SHIP FORMATION ATTACK AGAINST INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE JAPANESE HOME ISLANDS, HIS P-47 NAMED 'RAIN QUEEN' TOOK MULTIPLE HITS BY BOTH SMALL ARMS AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY, BUT WAS ABLE TO RETURN TO BASE WITHOUT AN EMERGENCY DECLARATION. WOUNDED BY THIS ENEMY ACTION ON JULY 27, 1945 IN THE VICINITY OF KYSUHU, JAPAN. LATER STATIONED AT YONTAN, OKINAWA, DURING THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN. EARNED THE DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION, PURPLE HEART MEDAL, AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL, ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN MEDAL WITH 3 BRONZE BATTLE STARS, WWII VICTORY MEDAL, ARMY OF OCCUPATION MEDAL, JAPAN, AND THE PHILIPPINE LIBERATION MEDAL. HONORABLY SEPARATED FROM ACTIVE DUTY AS A FIRST LIEUTENANT ON OCTOBER 31, 1946 AT THE SEPARATION CENTER, FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON.

World War II Honoree

World War II Veteran



George E. 'Bud' Day

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Marine Corps

HOMETOWN
Souix City, IA

HONORED BY
MSgt. Joseph P. Bowman, Friend

ACTIVITY DURING WWII

SERVED IN THE PACIFIC; STATIONED AT JOHNSTON ISLAND.

World War II Honoree

World War II Veteran

Robin Olds

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Army Air Forces

HOMETOWN
Hampton, VA

ACTIVITY DURING WWII

GRADUATED FROM THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY, WEST POINT, NEW YORK, AND COMMISSIONED AS A SECOND LIEUTENANT IN JUNE 1943 (ONE YEAR EARLY BECAUSE OF WAR NEEDS). JOINING THE 479TH FIGHTER GROUP, HE SAILED TO ENGLAND IN MAY 1944. BY SUMMER, HE WAS A CAPTAIN IN THE 434TH FIGHTER SQUADRON FLYING A P-38J NAMED 'SCAT.' HE BECAME AN 'ACE' IN HIS FIRST TWO COMBAT MISSIONS, CLAIMING TWO FW-190S ON AUGUST 14 AND THREE ME-109S ON THE 25TH. AT THE END OF THE WAR, HE WAS FLYING 'SCAT VII,' A P-51 MUSTANG, AND CREDITED WITH 107 COMBAT MISSIONS AND 24.5 VICTORIES, 13 AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN AND 11.5 AIRCRAFT DESTROYED ON THE GROUND. A CAREER OFFICER, RETIRED AS A BRIGADIER GENERAL.

World War II Honoree

World War II Veteran

Bruce Carr

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Army Air Forces

HOMETOWN
Union Springs, NY

ACTIVITY DURING WWII

ENTERED AVIATION CADET PILOT TRAINING ON SEPTEMBER 12, 1942 AND GRADUATED WITH WINGS FROM SPENCE FIELD, GEORGIA ON AUGUST 30, 1943. QUALIFIED AS A SINGLE ENGINE FIGHTER PILOT AND DEPARTED THE CONTINENTAL U.S. BOUND FOR THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS. FIRST ASSIGNED TO THE 380TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, 363RD FIGHTER GROUP, BASED AT KEEVIL, ENGLAND. HIS FIRST VICTORY OVER A ME-109 ON MARCH 8, 1944 BROUGHT HIM ADMONISHMENT FOR, 'BEING OVERLY AGGRESSIVE IN COMBAT,' RESULTING IN REASSIGNMENT TO THE 353RD FIGHTER SQUADRON, 354TH FIGHTER GROUP, EVENTUALLY OPERATING FROM FORWARD BASES ON THE CONTINENT. ALMOST A TRIPLE 'ACE,' CREDITED WITH 14 AIR VICTORIES IN WWII. EARNED THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS, SILVER STAR MEDAL, DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS, AIR MEDAL, DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION, AMERICAN CAMPAIGN MEDAL, EUROPEAN-AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN CAMPAIGN MEDAL WITH MULTIPLE BATTLE STARS AND THE WWII VICTORY MEDAL.

The only pilot known to leave on a mission flying a Mustang and return flying a Focke-Wulf!

WWII Fighter Ace Bruce Carr . . . Evading With a Dead Chicken around His Neck

Originally published in *Flight Journal* magazine and written by Budd Davisson.

WWII Ace Bruce Carr, Hun-driver to be.

This intriguing story of an eventual Hun Driver (Carr flew F-100s later in his career, including Vietnam) was passed on by SSSer Pete Davitto, who secured the author's permission to use it in The Intake. *Thanks Pete, thanks also to Mr. Budd Davisson of* Flight Journal *fame (see http://www.airbum.com), and thanks for photo support (with permission) from Chuck Stone's web site (www.rb-29.net). Adventures such as this are good examples of how the* Right Stuff *always makes a difference in the outcome.*

Budd Davisson
Flight Journal
Editor-in-Chief

After carrying it *(the dead chicken)* for several days, 20-year-old Bruce Carr still hadn't decided how to cook it without the Germans catching him. But, as hungry as he was, he couldn't bring himself to eat it. In his mind, no meat at all was better than raw meat, so he threw it away. Resigning himself to what appeared to be his unavoidable fate, he turned in the direction of the nearest German airfield.

Even POW's get to eat. Sometimes. And they are not constantly dodging from tree to tree, ditch to culvert. And he was exhausted.

He was tired of trying to find cover where there was none. Carr hadn't realized that Czechoslovakian forests had no underbrush until, at the edge of the farm field, struggling out of his parachute, he dragged it into the woods.

During the times he had been screaming along at tree top level in his P-51 "Angels Playmate," the forests and fields had been nothing more than a green blur behind the Messerchmitts, Focke-Wulfs, trains and trucks he had in his sights. He never expected to find himself a pedestrian far behind enemy lines.

The instant the antiaircraft shrapnel ripped into the engine, he knew he was in trouble. Serious trouble.

Clouds of coolant steam hissing through jagged holes in the cowling told Carr he was about to ride the silk elevator down to a long walk back to his squadron. A very long walk. This had not been part of the mission plan.

Several years before, when 18-year-old Bruce Carr enlisted in the Army, in no way could he have imagined himself taking a walking tour of rural Czechoslovakia with Germans everywhere around him. When he enlisted, all he had focused on was flying airplanes…fighter airplanes.

By the time he joined the military, Carr already knew how to fly. He had been flying as a private pilot since 1939, soloing in a $25 Piper Cub his father had bought from a disgusted pilot who had left it lodged securely in the top of a tree.

Piper Cub
Credit: RB-29.net

His instructor had been an Auburn, NY, native by the name of Johnny Burns. "In 1942, after I enlisted," as Bruce Carr remembers it, "we went to meet our instructors. I was the last cadet left in the assignment room and was nervous. Then the door opened and in stepped the man who was to be my military flight instructor. It was Johnny Burns!"

"We took a Stearman to an outlying field, doing aerobatics all the way; then he got out and soloed me. That was my first flight in the military."

AT-6 "Texan"
Credit: RB-29.net

"The guy I had in advanced training in the AT-6 had just graduated himself and didn't know a bit more than I did," Carr can't help but smile, as he remembers..."which meant neither one of us knew anything. Zilch! After three or four hours in the AT-6, they took me and a few others aside, told us we were going to fly P-40s, and we left for Tipton, Georgia."

"We got to Tipton, and a lieutenant just back from North Africa kneeled on the P-40's wing, showed me where all the levers were, made sure I knew how everything worked, then said, 'If you can get it started … go fly it' ... just like that! I was 19 years old and thought I knew everything. I didn't know enough to be scared. They didn't tell us what to do. They just said 'Go fly,' so I buzzed every cow in that part of the

state. Nineteen years old…and with 1100 horsepower, what did they expect? Then we went overseas."

By today's standards, Carr and that first contingent of pilots shipped to England were painfully short of experience. They had so little flight time that today they would barely have their civilian pilot licenses. Flight training eventually became more formal, but in those early days, their training had a hint of fatalistic Darwinism to it: if they learned fast enough to survive, they were ready to move on to the next step. Including his 40 hours in the P-40 terrorizing Georgia, Carr had less than 160 hours total flight time when he arrived in England.

P-40 "Warhawk"
Credit: RB-29.net

His group in England was to be the pioneering group that would take the Mustang into combat, and he clearly remembers his introduction to the airplane. "I thought I was an old P-40 pilot and the P-51B would be no big deal. But I was wrong! I was truly impressed with the airplane. REALLY impressed! It flew like an airplane. I FLEW a P-40, but in the P-51, I WAS PART OF the airplane ...and it was part of me. There was a world of difference."

When he first arrived in England, the instructions were, "This is a P-51. Go fly it. Soon, we'll have to form a unit, so fly." A lot of English cows were buzzed. "On my first long-range mission, we just kept climbing, and I'd never had an airplane above about 10,000 feet before. Then we were at 30,000 feet and I couldn't believe it! I'd gone to church as a kid, and I knew that's where the angels were and that's when I named my airplane 'Angels Playmate.'"

"Then a bunch of Germans roared down through us, and my leader immediately dropped tanks and turned hard for home. But I'm not that smart. I'm 19 years old and this SOB shoots at me, and I'm not going to let him get away with it."

"We went round and round, and I'm really mad because he shot at me. Childish emotions, in retrospect. He couldn't shake me...but I couldn't get on his tail to get any hits either. Before long, we're right down in the trees. I'm shooting, but I'm not hitting. I am, however, scaring the hell out of him. I'm at least as excited as he is. Then I tell myself to c-a-l-m d-o-w-n."

"We're roaring around within a few feet of the ground, and he pulls up to go over some trees, so I just pull the trigger and keep it down. The gun barrels burned out and one bullet … a tracer ... came tumbling out ... and made a great huge arc. It came down and hit him on the left wing about where the aileron was."

"He pulled up, off came the canopy, and he jumped out; but too low for the chute to open, and the airplane crashed. I didn't shoot him down; I scared him to death with one bullet hole in his left wing. My first victory wasn't a kill—it was more of a suicide."

The rest of Carr's 14 WWII victories *(some say 15)* were much more conclusive. But being a red-hot fighter pilot was absolutely no use to him as he lay shivering in the Czechoslovakian forest. He knew he would die if he didn't get some food and shelter soon.

"I knew where the German field was because I'd flown over it, so I headed in that direction to surrender. I intended to walk in the main gate, but it was late afternoon and, for some reason, I had second thoughts and decided to wait in the woods until morning."

"While I was lying there, I saw a crew working on an FW 190 right at the edge of the woods. When they were done, I assumed, just like you assume in America, that the thing was all finished. The cowling's on. The engine has been run. The fuel truck has been there. It's ready to go. Maybe a dumb assumption for a young fellow, but I assumed so."

Carr got in the airplane and spent the night all hunkered down in the cockpit.

"Before dawn, it got light and I started studying the cockpit. I can't read German, so I couldn't decipher dials and I couldn't find the normal switches like there were in American airplanes. I kept looking, and on the right side was a smooth panel. Under this was a compartment with something I would classify as circuit breakers. They didn't look like ours, but they weren't regular switches either."

Focke-Wulf 190 Cockpit study time!"
Credit: RB-29.net

"I began to think that the Germans were probably no different from the Americans...that they would turn off all the switches when finished with the airplane. I had no earthly idea what those circuit breakers or switches did ... but I reversed every one of them. If they were off, that would turn them on. When I did that...the gauges showed there was electricity on the airplane."

"I'd seen this metal T-handle on the right side of the cockpit that had a word on it that looked enough like 'starter' for me to think that's what it was. But when I pulled it...nothing happened. Nothing."

"But if pulling doesn't work ...you push. And when I did, an inertia starter started winding up. I let it go for a while, and then pulled on the handle and the engine started.

“The sun had yet to make it over the far trees and the air base was just waking up, getting ready to go to war. The FW 190 was one of many dispersed throughout the woods, and at that time of the morning, the sound of the engine must have been heard by many Germans not far away on the main base.”

The Focke-Wulf 190 engine started OK. Credit: RB-29.net

But even if they heard it, there was no reason for alarm. The last thing they expected was one of their fighters taxiing out with a weary Mustang pilot at the controls. Carr, however, wanted to take no chances.

“The taxiway came out of the woods and turned right toward where I knew the airfield was because I'd watched them land and take off while I was in the trees. On the left side of the taxiway, there was a shallow ditch and a space where there had been two hangars. The slabs were there, but the hangars were gone, and the area around them had been cleaned of all debris."

“I didn't want to go to the airfield, so I plowed down through the ditch, and when the airplane started up the other side, I shoved the throttle forward and took off right between where the two hangars had been.”

At that point, Bruce Carr had no time to look around to see what effect the sight of a Focke-Wulf ERUPTING FROM THE TREES had on the Germans. Undoubtedly, they were confused, but not unduly concerned. After all, it was probably just one of their maverick pilots doing something against the rules. They didn't know it was one of our own allied maverick pilots doing something against the rules.

Carr had problems more immediate than a bunch of confused Germans. He had just pulled off the perfect plane-jacking; but he knew nothing about the airplane, couldn't read the placards and had 200 miles of enemy territory to cross. At home, there would be hundreds of his friends and fellow warriors, all of whom were, at that moment, preparing their guns to shoot at airplanes marked with swastikas and crosses—airplanes identical to the one Bruce Carr was at that moment flying.

But Carr wasn't thinking that far ahead. First, he had to get there. And that meant learning how to fly the German fighter.

“There were two buttons behind the throttle and three buttons behind those two. I wasn't sure what to push, so I pushed one button and nothing happened. I pushed the other and the gear started up. As soon as I felt it coming up and I cleared the fence at the edge of the German field, then I took it down little lower and headed for home. All I wanted to do was clear the ground by about six inches.”

“And there was only one throttle position for me: FULL FORWARD!"

“As I headed for home, I pushed one of the other three buttons, and the flaps came part way down. I pushed the button next to it, and they came up again. So I knew how to get the flaps down. But that was all I knew.”

“I can't make heads or tails out of any of the instruments. None. And I can't even figure how to change the prop pitch. But I don't sweat that, because props are full forward when you shut down anyway, and it was running fine.”

Contemporary Focke-Wulf 190 erupting from the trees! Credit: J. Stiglmayr

This time, it was German cows that were buzzed, although, as he streaked across fields and through the trees only a few feet off the ground, that was not his intent. At something over 350 miles an hour below tree-top level, he was trying to be a difficult target. However, as he crossed the lines ... he wasn't difficult enough.

"There was no doubt when I crossed the lines because every SOB and his brother who had a .50-caliber machine gun shot at me. It was all over the place, and I had no idea which way to go. I didn't do much dodging because I was just as likely to fly into bullets as around them."

When he hopped over the last row of trees and found himself crossing his own airfield, he pulled up hard to set up for landing. His mind was on flying the airplane. “I pitched up, pulled the throttle back and punched the buttons I knew would put the gear and flaps down. I felt the flaps come down, but the gear wasn't doing anything. I came around and pitched up again, still punching the button. Nothing was happening and I was really frustrated."

He had been so intent on figuring out his airplane problems, he forgot he was putting on a very tempting show for the ground personnel. "As I started up the last time, I saw the air defense guys ripping the tarps off the quad .50s that ringed the field. I hadn't noticed the machine guns before. . .but I was sure noticing them right then."

“I roared around in as tight a pattern as I could fly and chopped the throttle. I slid to a halt on the runway and it was a nice belly job, if I say so myself."

His antics over the runway had drawn quite a crowd, and the airplane had barely stopped sliding before there were MPs up on the wings trying to drag him out of the airplane by his arms. What they didn't realize was that he was still strapped in.

"I started throwing some good Anglo-Saxon swear words at them, and they let loose while I tried to get the seat belt undone, but my hands wouldn't work and I couldn't do it. Then they started pulling on me again because they still weren't convinced I was an American."

"I was yelling and hollering; then, suddenly, they let go. A face drops down into the cockpit in front of mine. It was my group commander, George R. Bickel." "Bickel said, 'Carr, where in the hell have you been, and what have you been doing now?'"

It didn't matter. Bruce Carr was home! And he entered the record books as the only pilot known to leave on a mission flying a Mustang and return flying a Focke-Wulf.

For several days after the ordeal, he had trouble eating and sleeping, but when things again fell into place, he took some of the other pilots out to show them the airplane and how it worked. One of them pointed out a small handle under the glare shield that he hadn't noticed before. When he pulled it, the landing gear unlocked and fell out.

The handle was a separate, mechanical uplock. At least he had figured out the really important things.

* * * *

Epilogue

Carr finished the war with 14 aerial victories *(some say 15)* after flying 172 missions, which included three bailouts because of ground fire. He stayed in the service, eventually flying 51 missions in Korea in F-86s and 286 in Vietnam, flying F-100s. That's an amazing 509 combat missions and doesn't include many others during Viet Nam in other aircraft types.

Bruce Carr continued to actively fly and routinely showed up at air shows in a P-51D painted up exactly like "Angel's Playmate." The original "Angel's Playmate" was put on display in a museum in Paris, France, right after the war.

There is no such thing as an ex-fighter pilot. They never cease being what they once were, whether they are in the cockpit or not. There is a profile into which almost every one of the breed fits, and it is the charter within that profile that makes the pilot a fighter pilot—not the other way around.

And make no mistake about it: Colonel Bruce Carr was definitely a fighter pilot.

Modern replica of Bruce Carr's P-51 Mustang, "Angel's Playmate."

☻

Super Sabre Society Store = Hot Deals

There are several items for sale on the SSS Web site under the link **Auxiliary Equipment**. As nice as they all are, some of those items bring no cash to the SSS. However, the items shown below (which are a sub-set of those on the Web site) DO bring some cash into the SSS coffers. So belly up and get a hat that's Not Orange, and buy some other sew-on or stick-on items to help you celebrate being an SSS member. Sloan Brooks will process and deliver your order if you send a snail-mail letter with your selections and a check to "Auxiliary Equipment," SSS, PO Box 500044, Austin, TX, 78750, or I'll bet he'd even take an email order from you addressed to sloanb@swbell.net and send the goodies when he gets your check. Good stuff, good cause, good deal!

					
Not an Orange Hat! $15	Small Patch (3.5"x3") $5	Large Patch (7.71"x9") $15	F-100 Patch (3.5 ") $5	Stick-on Decal (2") 2/$5	Stick-on Decal (3") 2/$5

Here We Go Again!

Operation Double Trouble—Act II

By Jed McEntee with Ron Standerfer

Those of you who read Issue One of The Intake *know that* Operation Double Trouble *was part of a large, integrated response to an unexpected and bloody uprising in the Middle East back in '58. In an audacious move, American air power was positioned within striking distance of every capital in the region as well as the underbelly of the Soviet Union. The 354th TFW at Myrtle Beach was initially tasked to deploy twelve F-100s nonstop to Incirlik, Turkey for that epic operation. This is SSS member Jed McEntee's recollection of a second deployment during those historic days. Ed.*

The word was out among the pilots of the 354th TFW. The deployment of twelve F-100s nonstop from Myrtle Beach to Incirlik, Turkey, on July 14, 1958, had been a disaster. It was as if Murphy's Law had run amok over the dark and stormy skies of the North Atlantic, inflicting pain on every Hun it could find. As the result of bad weather, lack of tankers and communications problems, only four aircraft made it to Turkey that night. The rest were scattered across the pond at various divert bases. One pilot was forced to eject over Nova Scotia because of fuel starvation. Would history repeat itself if another deployment were launched from "the beach?" That was the question on everybody's mind.

Jed started flying the Hun at The Beach *in '57 with the 353rd FDS. Left active duty in 1959 and joined the Ohio ANG. Called up for the Pueblo Crisis, he spent a TDY tour at Phu Cat, SVN. After 3000 hrs in the Hun, left the Guard to fly the F-105 & F-4. Retired in '86 with 4800 hours of fighter time.*

A few days after the ill-fated deployment, I headed for Surfside Beach, which was just down the road from my house. The target was elderberries, and my mission was to pick as many as I could. Elderberry was my favorite pie and with any luck, I might have my nose in one by that evening.

As it turned out, I didn't have any luck at all, in more ways than one. Just as I finished picking the berries, my wife rushed up to spoil my whole day. "The squadron just called," she said breathlessly. "They want you at ops ASAP and said to bring your travel kit." So much for the elderberry pie!

I was pretty sure that this recall had something to do with Operation Double Trouble, and as it turned out, I was right. The mission was simple enough: Ferry eight F-100Ds to Incirlik and bring four F-100Fs and two F-100Ds home. The latter needed to be returned because they were almost out of time. It never occurred to me to ask why TAC would deploy two birds on a super important deployment with just a few days left before scheduled maintenance was required. But to paraphrase the old saying, "Ours was not to reason why…"

It was four in the afternoon before all the pilots arrived for the mission briefing. Takeoff was scheduled for two in the morning. The first flight of four was to be led by Major Walter Turnier, with First Lieutenants Chuck MacGillivray, John Hill and Willis Hedgepeth as wingmen. The leader of the second flight was First Lieutenant Charles Vasiliadis, with First Lieutenants Duane Rice, John DeBock and me, flying wing. After the briefing, we all gathered around a large map laid out on the floor to draw the route of flight and choose rendezvous points for the three refuelings. All agreed that we should refuel east of Bermuda, near the Azores, and just off the southern tip of France.

We launched on time at 0200 and all went well for the first two hours. So far, so good! Then the tankers reported that the weather was bad in the refueling area, and we had to divert to Kindley Air Base in Bermuda. Was this the first sign that Murphy was lurking out there somewhere waiting for us? It was too early to tell. After debriefing and briefing for the next day, we were ushered to a World War II barracks building where we swatted mosquitoes for a few hours, went for a swim, and later suited up for a late night launch.

When we arrived at the first refueling area, we were greeted by six KB-50s, two and a spare for each four-ship flight. Everyone got hooked up promptly and we were on our way. It was a good start, although I noticed that no one had more than 1,000 lbs. of fuel left by the time they hooked up. Hopefully, this wouldn't happen again.

When daybreak came, I spotted the first flight off to our right at about five miles—just where it should be. I relaxed and settled in for the rest of the trip. But the peace and quiet was soon shattered by a terse radio call saying, "I'm losing altitude and I've got full power." I won't divulge who made that call, but another pilot in the flight quickly responded by pointing out that the plaintiff's speed brakes were out. What followed was a long, pregnant silence before a sheepish voice said, "The cuff on my flight suit must have snagged the switch. Sorry 'bout that."

The second refueling was a little more interesting. We all had trouble finding the tankers, and it took us a while to get joined up. This meant that once again, we would all be down to 1,000 lbs. by the time we got hooked up. While I was chasing my tanker, I happened to look to my left and notice that a refueling hose had wrapped around the 450 gal tank of Chuck MacGillivray's aircraft. It was looped over a wing slat, leaving the basket trailing ten feet behind the wing. "Not good," I said to myself before returning to the business at hand. After all of us had refueled and rejoined, I looked at

Chuck's aircraft and saw a huge dent in his right wing slat. I could not believe that he had unraveled that snake and got a load of fuel!

The third refueling took place after flying over Spain and around the southern tip of France. (As usual, we could not overfly France.) Once again, I only had 1,000 lbs of fuel at hook up time. No big surprise there. While we were refueling, Chuck's bird had a pressurization failure. That made it official. Murphy had been with us the whole time. He had just decided to pick on Chuck and leave the rest of us alone. That was okay by me. The remainder of the flight to Incirlik was uneventful.

Two days later, I got to participate in a show of force mission; a 16-ship flyby in diamond formation over Lebanon. What made this a particularly interesting experience was that our "fearless leader" took it upon himself to make a small side trip into Syria to see if we could scare up some action. It was not at all clear to me what we were supposed to do if we did scare up some action, given that the only armament we were carrying was the 20 millimeter cannons; but as I pointed out earlier, "Ours was not to reason why…"

By the time we were ready to return home, we were all feeling pretty good about ourselves. The trip over hadn't been perfect, but it went a hell of a lot smoother than the July 14th "group grope." I mean, look at it this way; we only had one divert to an alternate, and that divert we all made together in an orderly fashion. Plus, nobody had to punch out! What more could you ask for? What escaped our attention was that we still had to get back. This inattention was a serious mistake.

The return group with four Fs and two Ds was slightly different, and it wasn't a cake-walk. L to R: Chuck MacGillivray, Rod Cameron, John Hill, Walt Turnier, Charles Vasiliadis, Jed McEntee, John DeBock and Duane Rice.

When the time came, I launched in one of the Ds for Tripoli, the first stop on our trip home. But I didn't get very far because the gear would not retract. So, it was back to Incirlik where the bird was put on jacks and the gear raised 25 straight times without a failure. On the next flight, the gear worked fine, and I landed in Tripoli with just enough time to refuel and grab a bite before leaving for Sidi Slimane AB, Morocco.

While I waited around for my bird to get refueled, Chuck MacGillivray walked up and handed me a go card with a picture of "Joe Btfsplk" on it. Remember him? He was the funny looking little guy who always walked around with a raining cloud over his head. The message was clear. Chuck was officially passing the torch to me. In this case, "the torch" was good old Murphy. I was not so sure I liked that. It was like sticking a "kick me" sign on my back.

The four F models left and Vasiliadis stayed with me until I was refueled. Twenty minutes later, we were airborne and guess what? The gear would not retract. Now, I had learned that you kept a lot of power on the Hun for landing if heavy, and for sure I was heavy, having not burned down any fuel. Sure enough, when I eased the throttle back it touched down right NOW!!!! The drag chute worked (whew) and it was back to the jacks for another 25 successful retractions. I could almost hear Murphy snickering in the background. Vas and I stayed overnight and missed the trip to Morocco.

The next morning we met up with the others and left for the Azores. The landing gear worked fine for a change. The weather was minimal for launch out of the Azores, and I was on Major Turnier's wing. As I reached for the gear handle, we went into the soup, and I moved in until all I could see was the wing tip light. A short time later, Lajes was shut down due to weather and a communications failure. The refueling rendezvous was uneventful, thanks to the radar on the tankers. (I never could figure why the early KC-135s didn't have radar on them like the KB-50s and KC-97s. It must have cost too much money).

Just as I finished refueling, there was a loud explosion right behind my head. The cockpit filled with smoke as I quickly disconnected. That's when I realized that Chuck really *had* passed the torch. If fact, Murphy was now sitting right on my shoulder! Damn! What next? I accelerated the bird and began to climb. As I did, the smoke cleared and I could see that all instruments were normal.

Two hours later, I noticed that the cabin pressure was above 15,000 ft and I was getting warm. I tried to cool the cockpit down several times without success. That's when it dawned on me that the cooling turbine had exploded. The cockpit continued to heat up to the point where it was almost unbearable. Of course I could have depressurized, but then again, I had a $15 bottle of bubbly in the map case, and I didn't want to drink that at 35,000 ft.

"Do you want to land in Bermuda?" my flight lead asked. "No" I answered.

A tired, wet and very thirsty Lieutenant McEntee returns to The Beach.

"Are you sure you are okay?" he persisted. "Do you have enough water to drink?"

"Yes," I said emphatically. I had come this far and didn't want to stop short of the home turf.

By the time I landed at Myrtle Beach, I was drenched with sweat. It was as if someone had turned a fire hose on me. It was a warm, pleasant day with a light breeze blowing from the ocean. The minute I opened the canopy and stepped out of the cockpit, I broke into a violent fit of chills and shaking. It was several minutes before I could make them stop. But I was glad to be home.

Exactly one week after the great elderberry caper, I walked through the front door of my house. "How was your trip?" my wife asked simply. She had been a TAC wife long enough to know that it was useless to ask me where I had been or what I had been doing. I shrugged my shoulders and tried to look bored, replying, "Just another ho-hum day at the office. Have you made that elderberry pie yet?" ☻

About the SSS Web Site @ URL www.supersabresociety.com

For members without internet access, or those who have it, but visit our site infrequently, or even those who visit regularly, here are a few facts you may find interesting or useful.

Since our webmaster, Ron Doughty, opened the site for us shortly after our founding in 2006, the site has been visited some 40,000 times. Assuming about 1,000 web savvy members, that would equal 40 visits per member over the last two years. But that's fairly high because we don't know how many non-members that 40,000 number includes. In any case, we want you to know that the *rate* of visitations has been increasing lately. That, no doubt, is in response to our recent email and phone "member contact" campaigns aimed at improving our annual dues payment situation and membership renewal rate.

It is also a fact that the web site has been growing and adding new features of late. Bob Dunham has a neat member biography section set up under the Membership/Bio Lists link. There are now archived PDF copies of our journal under the link named "The Intake Journal. (Both these features require a current password—available by email or phone request to SSS officers for members in good standing.)

And the unit photo collection, run by Joe Vincent, has been rapidly expanding. To refresh your memory, it is part of the emblem/patch collection on the main page of the web site. For example, you click on the various wing patches, say the 3rd TFW, and you get that wing's squadron patches. Click on a squadron patch, say the 510th Buzzards, and you come to photos relating to that squadron, etc.

Space limits this "About" pitch, but the bottom line is that we encourage visits to our web site, and we will be striving continually to improve its content and utility to our still growing organization. ☻

Reflections on a Life with an Airplane…or

The Hun and Me

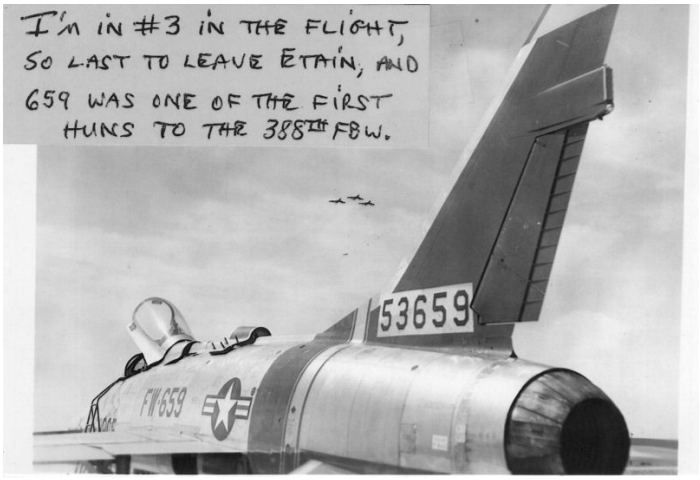
By Bill McCollum

As reported in Issue Four, Bill Holds the Stake Your Claim (SYC) record for most non-consecutive years flying the F-100 at 45 ½. To fill in some of the blanks about that feat, here's a story (most of which he wrote in 1993) that provides some insight into a love affair with the Hun that Bill is still working on extending. Ed.

Lieutenant Bill McCollum in Sabre Jet garb at Wheelus Air Base, Libya, Feb. '56.

I will never forget my first look at an F-100. I had been flying the beautiful little F-86 for about three years and had even flown one across the Atlantic to Hahn, Germany, arriving on the 4th of January, 1955, after 42 days en-route from Clovis, NM. *(Yes, 42 is correct: a story in itself for another time, maybe. Ed.)* Our base at Etain, France, was finally ready for the 561st FBS/388th FBW and I moved down there in 1956.

In the spring of 1957, the first F-100 arrived on our ramp. I thought it was a huge, ugly monster with a great, odd-shaped hole in the nose; but as the years went by and the Air Force started to fly REALLY ugly airplanes like the F-4 and F-111, the old Hun looked prettier and prettier. However, in 1957, I clung to my F-86 and flew the very last one out of Etain in April.



Bill's airborne in the last flight of Sabre Jets out of Etain as the future looms in the foreground.

Then in May, I started my checkout in the Hun. With an airplane tied down on the run-up pad, my instructor reached in and jabbed the throttle back and forth to demonstrate a compressor stall to me. It literally blew my feet off the rudder pedals. I thought he was crazy, but compressor stalls just became part of living with the Hun.

The airplanes were equipped with a short, straight refueling probe, and we had to learn aerial refueling with KB-29s. On my first mission, my wingman kept count and told me that I finally hooked up on my 75th stab! Once I was hooked on and got the sight picture, it became easier. Later they came out with the bent probe that you could see in your peripheral vision, and the task became much simpler. (Rumor had it that someone had bent the probe by accident and so discovered this design improvement.)

In January 1959, I reported to my new base at Myrtle Beach, SC, and a new phase of my life with the Hun, namely Atlantic crossings. I made six of them with the KB-50s, each one a "You Bet Your Rear" proposition, because once we descended to tanker altitude, there was seldom enough fuel to get to the Azores or another safe landing spot if you were unable to hook up. Two later crossings with the KC-135s were a snap by comparison, because we joined up two fighters with a tanker on climb out and let him navigate for us, fueling up whenever we needed it on the way over.

We pulled Victor Alert at Aviano AB, Italy, for four months each year. I sat thousands of hours on the alert pad over the years, got to know the F-100 really well, memorized a lot of miles of target maps and folders, and became fairly proficient at handball. I never wanted to be launched on one of those Victor trips, however, because they were one-way excursions, and would be the beginning of the end of the world as we knew it.

Captain Bill and Lieutenants Dick Sharp (L) and Ron Lord mastered "flying the pond" and nuclear alert in Europe with the 355th TFS/354th TFW from "The Beach."

There was one development for the Hun that I was not impressed with. It was known as ZEL, for Zero Launch. The idea was to have the airplane sitting on a sort

of pedestal and fired off by rocket. We even had a handle mounted in front of the throttle so you could lock the throttle in the forward position under the terrific acceleration. I'm glad I never got to try it *(See* The Intake, *Vol. 1, No. 2 for a complete story about the ZEL Program. Ed.)*

ZEL Program prototype. We're all glad this concept never went fully operational.

The only really serious problem I ever encountered with a Hun happened at Myrtle Beach in April of 1959. It was squadron open house day, so all the wives and kids were out to watch operations. I took off as number three for an air refueling mission. On lift off, I experienced a loss of power, and on hearing my wingman say that I was on fire, I ejected. Since I was only a hundred feet or so in the air, my parachute didn't blossom until it was below the tree line to the observers. As it popped open, I swung a quarter-swing backwards and sat down in some bushes. I was unscratched, but the really scary part was when the helicopter came, picked me up in the horse collar sling, and carried me hanging below it all the way to the base hospital!

In April 1965, I was assigned to HQ TAC Stan/Eval. Wanting to quickly build some SEA experience into the shop, they sent Eddie Gallardo and me TDY to Da Nang, RVN, to get some combat time flying with the 614th TFS. We swam at China Beach guarded by US Marines, drank beer at the DOOM Club (Da Nang Officers Open Mess) and flew at least one mission every day!

Eddie was shot down near the base one day, picked up by a US Army chopper and was at the squadron waiting when the other three of us in his flight got back. The 614th had started flying strike missions to North Vietnam in March, so I got to see that the flak really looked as bad as it always did in the WWII movies, especially when you realize that the guys on the ground really were trying to kill YOU! In June, we moved to Bien Hoa and only flew in-country missions till we returned to Langley at the end of our four months of "combat familiarization."

In January 1968, I went back to Bien Hoa, just in time for the Tet Offensive. My job was operations officer of the 510th TFS Buzzards of the 3rd TFW. I ended up in October with 280 total combat missions in the Hun. Six times I took hits, including an incident wherein one of the rounds traveled five feet into the intake before it contacted metal and finally stopped in a wire bundle behind the instrument panel. My Dad carried that bullet on a key chain for years.

Major Bill had "combat familiarization" before returning for more experiences with the Buzzards of Bien Hoa.

The Hun was a pretty tough old bird and brought guys back after some pretty nasty hits, including tree strikes. One of the 510th guys, Kirk "Beaver" Brimmer, RTBed with a six-inch diameter limb embedded in the leading edge of a wing!

After my tour in Vienam, I went to the 20th TFW at Wethersfield, England, as the operations and training officer, flying with the 77th TFS, and then on to a staff job at Wiesbaden, Germany. I flew what I thought at the time would be my last flight in a Hun in April or May of 1971. At that point, I had ended up with 13 years and 2,655 hours in a machine that I had originally thought was ugly but had grown very fond of by then.

Bill's first "Last Flight" was with the 77th TFS, 20th TFW at RAF Wethersfield in 1971.

I retired from the Air Force in 1975 and went to flying civilian airplanes. In 1980, I was packing to move and decided that I would *never* need my F100 checklists or technical orders again, so threw them all out. (Eventually, this proved the old adage that you should "never say never!")

Then, 17 years later and with over 6,000 hours in some two dozen different models of civilian airplanes, in September of 1992, I went to Mohave, CA, and got rechecked-out in the Hun. The first ride was a bit strange, the second comfortable, and on the third, I felt like Gene Autry singing "Back in the Saddle Again!" Now, I'm shooting for my 3,000 hours in the Hun and to hold the record as the person taking the longest time to do it!

Epilogue –

1 November 2002: The original version of the article above was written in the fall of 1993 and published in *Warbirds Worldwide Magazine*, Issue 27, December, 1993.

The reason I rechecked-out in the Hun in 1992 at Mohave was to take a position with Tracor Flight Services, Inc., flying Hun dart-tow missions in support of German Air Force training activities in Europe and the Mediterranean. We were home-based at Wittmund, Germany, and deployed to other training areas as needed.

Tracor Huns were used primarily for dart-tow mission for the German Air Force

With the Cold War over, we towed mostly for F-4 units, but occasionally towed for other weapon systems including MiG-29s inherited from East Germany. I was lucky enough to get one ride in that beast.

I flew my last Hun mission for Tracor at Wittmund, on 30 October 1996 and, again, assumed that I would never again fly an F-100. Once again, I was to be proven wrong!

In August of 1998, I went to Texas to get re-current again and to then give a check-ride to the private owner of an F-100. I did so again in August of 2000 and got re-current again in October of 2002. I have now been flying the F-100 for 45 ½ years and have actively flown it in every decade since the '50s with the exception of the 1980s! To be continued…

The Cold War was over, but Bill and the Hun flew on, and on …and on?

4 April 2007: I'm going to try to get a flight this summer to regain landing currency and to up the record for non-consecutive years of flying the Hun to 50 years!

19 November 2007: Missed the summer flight, but I'm *still trying!* —*Bill McCollum*

Some Fun at Night Mobile (an "In a Nutshell" story) – from Rusty Gideon

Rusty strikes again?

Sitting at night mobile is usually a giant yawner, but one night at Phan Rang in 1969, I had a little comic relief.

It was black, really black…and boring. We hadn't even had our nightly mortar or rocket attack to brighten the skies for a few minutes. Two Huns were through last-chance *(maintenance/ armament inspection, Ed.)* and cleared on for take-off. I could not even see the silhouettes of the planes, just a couple of position lights taxiing into position. Very professional, so far. Lead says, "Run 'em up." Five seconds later Two says, "Ready." Very professional. Then Lead's AB lights, and that beautiful tongue of fire with dazzling diamonds in it turns the end of the runway into daylight.

Lead slowly (remember how very slowly with a full load!) rolls forward about 20 feet and then stops, burner in full glory. Now, I thought that was a bit unusual; but, not knowing the standard operating procedures for the other two squadrons, I was certainly not going to criticize.

The burner finally went out and there was absolute silence in the pitch blackness for a few seconds. Then my good friend Bob Patterson keyed his mike and said very quietly, "Tower, would you mind sending the maintenance troops back out here, please. I need them to get me out of this #%*&+@ barrier and re-stow the tailhook?"

Laugh, I thought I'd die!

Of course his secret was forever safe with me, and I have no clue as to who it was that made that anonymous phone call to Bob's squadron mates at the hooch bar that evening. —*Rusty Gideon*

Odds and Ends

Simultaneous Happenings in a Nutshell
By Don Volz

Here's a human interest story about getting a nuke shack and a baby girl at the same time.

After my initial Hun squadron, the 461st FDS at Hahn AB, Germany, was deactivated in April '59, most of the troops were assigned to other 36th TFW units. I went to the 22nd TFS at Bitburg AB. My wife Kay and I were expecting the arrival of our first child in June of that year, and shortly before the due date, I was told I would have to go to Wheelus, Libya for annual gunnery qualifications. I protested that I would like to delay that trip until after my wife delivered, but the squadron CO, Van Chandler (who we lived two floors above in housing) assured me his wife would look after Kay and they would get me right home if/when delivery started.

I grumbled, "Okay" and went to Wheelus as ordered. On the morning of June 3rd at Wheelus, I was told that Kay had gone into delivery, so I said "Okay, do you have a bird for me to go home?" The powers-that-be said they were sending an F down to get me (guess they didn't want to let me go alone—get-home-itus or something) and that I had to qualify with the "shape" (dummy nuke bomb on the wing) before I left. Well, now I'm really ticked!

So off I went in my C-model with the asymmetrical configuration we had to fly with when carrying the nuke. I drove into the range at 50 feet and…what was it, 450 knots? Over the target I pressed and held the pickle button as I pulled up into the LABS maneuver, precisely holding the G schedule and keeping the wings level with the LABS needle centered. The "shape" released as programmed, and as I continued the ½ Cuban-8/Immelman maneuver to recovery, I heard the range officer shout, "Shack !!!". That means bulls-eye—not a frequent result in the F-100C, I believe. I RTBed a little less ticked and tickled pink with my shack.

When I got back to operations, I was congratulated on my shack **and** my baby girl. Yup, the word had come that Kay had birthed a little girl about 20 minutes or so before I landed. I figured back in time and computed that my shack had splashed at almost the exact time that Kay had delivered that little girl (whom we named Susan). Incidentally, it was SSS member Doc Broadway who brought the F from Bitburg and took me back (he probably doesn't remember this) after posting that remarkable, and unforgettable, "simultaneous shack!" ☻

Stake You Claim Drop-out
By Chuck Turner

Chuck wrote: "Is there a category for close mid-air calls, or is this topic too numerous to enumerate?" *The latter; but good, close mid-air tales (or near-misses) are always of interest. Ed.*

Tale 1) Five of us were returning from Wheelus to Ramstein and stopped by Torrejon instead of Aviano for gas. Out of Torrejon, we were in route formation at the border between Spain and France at the directed cruise altitude but had not been able to contact air traffic control in France *(typical)*. I believe Ray Sharpe was the lead. I was on the left wing and Don Tanner was outboard of me. One of the guys, possibly Duane Baker, on the right side suddenly called out a bogey at 12 o'clock. I checked 12 and all I saw was a bunch of rivets and an air intake go by. Don said he checked 12 and ducked in the cockpit. It had to be a Caravel airliner! Never did hear anything about it from traffic control.

Tale 2) Three of us out of Phu Cat were en-route to a target in extended route formation. Col. Lee, the wing vice, was leading. Immediately after he called us to the FAC frequency, I spotted a bogey at 12 o'clock. I had the FAC frequency preset, so continued to it and called the bogey. Number three later said he saw the bogey and went to guard and called it. Many years later at a Misty reunion, Col. Lee told me he had not heard either call but saw the bogey and bunted—**hard!**

From my view on the side, it looked like his tail had gone between the inboard engine and the fuselage of a C-54! ☻

Shades of "Fate Is the Hunter."

Remembering IP Willie Wilson

By Don D. "DD" Wolfe

I flew the F-100 in the Ohio Air National Guard with the 112th TFS (1975-79). During UPT pilot training, the F-100 was used as an example of an underpowered fighter, with adverse yaw, inertial coupling, compressor stalls and generally poor table manners. The "Sabre Dance" flick was shown to us several times to illustrate the point. While at UPT my ANG unit lost three jets, killing the base commander, a first lieutenant and leaving two other pilots seriously injured. About the same time, my close friend "Trashcan" Ashcraft deadsticked a Hun from over the overrun after the engine quit from a massive fuel leak. With these thoughts in mind, I began F-100 RTU in Tucson with the 162nd TFG.

The IP's at Tucson were an experienced group of fighter pilots. I had the good fortune of flying with many of the "Misty" FACS that had become IPs there. It was an honor to have men like that teaching us the trade. There were many "characters" in that group of IPs that flew a great jet and provided "entertainment" as well. So it was that I had a memorable sortie with IP Willie Wilson.

It was maybe ride eight or nine: a low level with some formation work. Willie's briefing concerned topics and techniques that I'd never heard of. As I sat there with a puzzled look on my face, Willie asked me what was wrong. I told him that I didn't have a clue what he was talking about. He said; "OK smart boy, you do the briefing!" GOTCHA #1: Have the student do the brief so the IP can find out how much or LITTLE you know.

It was a hot summer afternoon when we taxied the F-100s on to the runway. I was the perfect example from Air Training Command: both visors down, mask on, sleeves down and gloves on. Willie on the other hand was exactly the OPPOSITE! He stopped the jet, looked over at me, pointed, and gave the runup signal. He pointed again, gave a "head nod," stroked the blower, and we were on our way. I sat out there on the wing working my butt off to stay in position while Willie proceeded to "get dressed" during the takeoff roll. He looked over at me, smiled, and put on the mask. Another look and the visor went down. "Line Check Speed," and an OK signal. About halfway down the runway, he held his hands up and put his gloves on one at a time, tucking each finger like a surgeon. When both gloves were on, he flexed his hands above the glare shield, and then rotated the jet for takeoff. As we climbed out I was thinking: "What the hell was that?" GOTCHA #2

Willie's antics on that ride took the edge off of my concerns about the Super Sabre. If a guy could reach a point where he could fly and act cool like Willie, maybe this jet wasn't so bad after all. I flew the F-100 for four years and really enjoyed the experience...although I never did forget the only two boldface procedures that really mattered: "REJECT and EJECT!" ☻

"Do You Remember?" – by Harv Damschen

Getting shit-faced the night before, knowing positively you were riding the Big Bird...then leading the deployment instead?

Getting shit-faced the night before, knowing positively you were leading the deployment?

From the Editor's Desk

Greetings and welcome to 2008, the second year of our Super Sabre Society's and (its journal) *The Intake's* journey "onward and upward." That's our unofficial motto, and we seem to be on that course, given the appraisals of many members. Thanks for your appreciation of the product of our hard working volunteer staff.

We like to think that, in some ways, *The Intake* is the glue that binds our society together. The secret of that glue is not our staff, it's the varied inputs we get from you, the members, that sets our journal apart. Sure, we have talented staff who can and do enhance your inputs if required. But it's really the basic "flavor" of the distinctively different storytelling styles and recollections of our many contributing members that shines through, spices up and makes reading each issue a great expectation and satisfying experience.

To keep this trend going, we need and solicit your inputs continually. Inputs can be completed articles, photos, stories with photos, anecdotes or simply suggestions for stories. We prefer inputs be sent by email to the editor, but if you're not into that technology, mail them to me at the return address on the envelope or send them to "The Intake" care of (%) Super Sabre Society, P.O. Box 3100, Georgetown, TX 78627.

When we get your inputs, we analyze them, categorize them (History, Heroics and Humor), summarize them and place that data in our "Potential Stories" living document. There, they are lined up in descending chronologic order according to when we received them. The actual materials sent in are saved separately for retrieval when it's time to use a particular input.

Generally speaking, our policy for use is "first in, first out." There are valid exceptions to that rule, but eventually most every input will work its way to the top and be selected for use. When that happens, your input materials will be retrieved, developed and published according to our internal processes…which we aim to document in the near future. That effort will enhance our quality assurance, keep us on that "onward and upward" track and provide continuity/stability when we experience editorial staff personnel changes—as will inevitably happen over time.

Meanwhile, watch for gradual, but continuous improvements, some innovations and continual solicitations for your inputs. Why not front load those inputs to us soon, while you're thinking about all those adventures you had…way back when.

Thanks again: for your memories, and for your service to our county.

R. Medley Gatewood

I looked out and saw that both ailerons were in the full up position.

IRAN Aileron Job Was a Bust!

By Mick Greene

Sometime before we left Etain *(France)* for Spang *(Spangdahlem, West Germany)*, circa 1958, I landed the nasty job of flying commercial to Madrid to pick up a D coming out of the IRAN *(Inspect and Repair As Necessary)* contractor facility at Getafe, Spain. It always raised some eyebrows to put a parachute into the overhead bin! After the usual "rough and ready" night in downtown Madrid, I taxied out to Getafe to pick up my bird for the trip back to Etain.

The trip back was uneventful until I got to the Etain area. There were two 275-gallon tanks on the airplane, so I had a lot of extra fuel. I decided to burn off the excess by flying some maneuvers in the acro area, starting with a cloverleaf. On bottoming out of the first leaf and starting back into the second, as the nose rose through about 60 degrees, I noticed the very disturbing fact that I had to put the stick in the far left corner of the cockpit to make the bird go where I wanted it to. I recovered to somewhat level flight and looked out to see that both ailerons looked to be in the full up position. Not a reassuring sight!

Mick's 2300 hours of Hun time started at Nellis in the A and includes '58-'62 tours at Etain and Spang. After AFIT, re-qualed at Kirtland in '64 (weapons test outfit) till he transitioned to the F-104C and D there. He re-qualed in the Hun again at Cannon in '67 for assignment to the 416th TFS at Bien Hoa 'till Phu Cat was opened, concluding his Hun time with 150 missions South and 62 North as a Misty FAC.

I was able to maintain minimum satisfactory control with rudder by keeping the airspeed above about 270. In what was probably a mezzo-soprano voice, I called the tower to explain my predicament. I then started a large racetrack at about 5,000 feet over Etain. On one pass over the field, I dropped the 275s as I passed over the far end of the runway. I discovered that as the weight went down, the speed at which I could keep a wing from dropping off was decreasing a little. I could get down to about 230 before I had to dive back into controllability.

In the meanwhile, the wing commander, Colonel "Red" Grumbles, and the chief of stan eval, Captain Larry Girton, had scrambled in a T-Bird and pulled up alongside to make the sage announcement that both ailerons were full up! I thanked them for their observation, and asked for suggestions. Lots of silence!

All the while, I was preparing myself for the inevitable bailout. As I pondered this event, my mind raced to all the things that could go wrong. How well did I preflight my chute? What happens when I let go of the stick to raise the handles and squeeze the triggers? Would the rate of roll prevent me from grabbing the handles? Would the rolling wingtip get me as I went out? Worst of all, I had a nine inch knife in a scabbard tied to the parachute strap with no quick release. What was going to happen to this knife when I hit the slipstream? Surely this knife would fly out and get me right through the heart!

After circling Etain for an hour contemplating all these potential catastrophes, I decided that I would rather die trying to land than perishing in one of the bailout scenarios that I had concocted. I kept evaluating my minimum controllable speed and discovered, at 1000 pounds remaining, it was now down to about 205 knots.

Lacking any advice, sage or otherwise, from Grumbles and Girton, I announced, "I'm going to land!"

Etain was 7,700 ft long, as I recall, and we had lost a few birds off the far end on both takeoff and landing. However, after touching down at 205 knots and getting a good drag chute at 180, my voice returned to a confident baritone, as I informed the tower that I would turn off at the far end and shut down.

I was somewhat relieved to see that the right aileron was still full up as I shut down. I would have hated to find that I had somehow screwed up and caused the whole deal! The real cause? "Bolt in the right aileron linkage installed upside down by IRAN personnel and internal locking nut not used. Bolt fell out allowing gravity load on the actuator arm to cause the disconnected hydraulic actuator to drift to the full up mechanical stop position." A full-up post mortem revealed that the full-up mechanical stop position was even higher than possible for the still properly connected left aileron. This asymmetrical "full-up" condition of the ailerons aggravated the drag imbalance and required lots of unexpected rudder work to overcome. Generally speaking I had to use about half left rudder just to keep the wings level.

I made a quick stop at the BOQ to change my underwear, then spent the rest of the night in the bar!

I got an "attaboy," in the form of an Air Medal recommendation (naturally, it was downgraded to an AF Commendation Medal), and some slack cut by Colonel G. To the best of my knowledge, there was at least one bailout but no other landings due to this problem. Anyone out there know of other incidents (with the benefit of years of hindsight)?

In my '64 –'67 experience at RAF Woodbridge, UK, "tough duty" pickups at Getafe were a perk reserved for old heads. FNGs were simply told, "You can't go until you've been there before—and you can only go once!" Ed. ☻

"First In…Last Out" The Wild Weasels

By Jack Doub

Prologue The four F-4Cs of Leopard Flight were having trouble staying VFR as they weaved their way silently through the clouds over North Vietnam (NVN) at 28,000 feet, flying MiG CAP for the F-105s below. Due to the heavy radio traffic associated with mass air strikes in Southeast Asia, the entire flight had turned off Guard Channel. Consequently, they didn't hear the EB-66 call that SAMs (surface-to-air missiles) were in the air west of Hanoi.

Leopard Flight was in the clouds when Leopard Four spotted a long white missile streaking toward them, trailing a plume of bright reddish-orange exhaust as it guided toward the other side of his flight. Almost as soon as he saw it, and before he could transmit a warning, the missile detonated directly under Leopard Two, flipping him inverted and sending shrapnel ripping through the rest of the flight.

The crew of Leopard Two ejected just before the Phantom II broke into pieces. The pilot, Captain Roscoe Fobar, was never seen again. The pilot systems operator, Captain Richard Keirn, was captured and remained a POW until February, 1973. (The North Vietnamese Army [NVA] later reported Fobar had died in captivity, but refused to elaborate.)

The remaining members of Leopard Flight were able to land safely back at Ubon Royal Thai AFB, but all three aircraft sustained major damage from the blast.

It was the morning of 24 July 1965 and the USAF had just lost its first plane to a SAM.

Background The U.S. military knew early on that the NVA was building SAM sites around NVN—they had been spotted in early spring and photographed by a U-2 in April of 1965. By that July, Hanoi was ringed by a protective net of Soviet SA-2 missiles, but despite the pleas of aircrews, Washington did not believe Ho Chi Minh would use the SAMs against U.S. aircraft. Further, U.S. political leaders believed the Russians would be upset if we attacked their technicians as they assisted the NVA with the construction of a vast SA-2 network. Tragically, US intelligence and our political leaders were wrong on both counts.

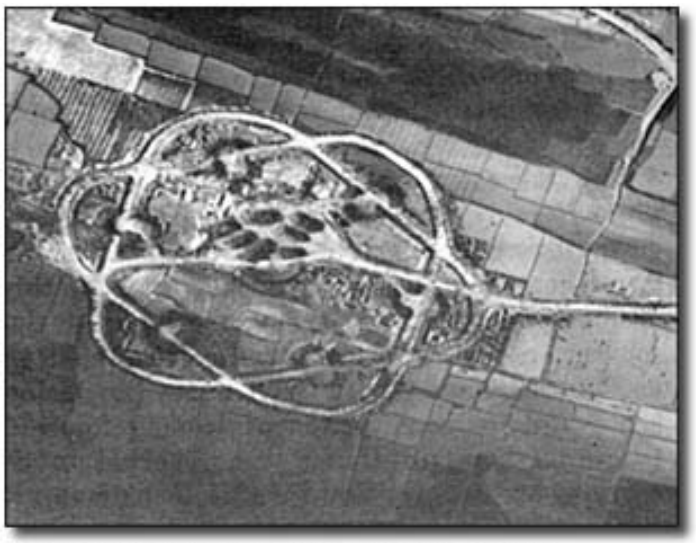
The SA-2 Guideline system was a fearsome weapon for its day. The missile itself was some 35 feet long and consisted of two stages: a solid-fuel booster rocket that fell away after launch, and a liquid-fuel second stage that contained the guidance gear and a 288-pound explosive warhead. The ground-based Fan Song radar guided the missile to its target at speeds up to 3.5 mach, with a range of about 25-35 miles. The SA-2 weapon-system had brought down a U-2 over Cuba in 1962 and was widely believed to be the same weapon that downed famed U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers over Russia back on 1 May 1960.

USAF reaction to the missile attack over North Vietnam was swift. In retaliation for the loss of Leopard Two, the SAM sites were removed from the restricted target list, and three days later the AF mounted the first major strike against missile sites in NVN.

This first SAM strike was a total disaster. Of the 48 F-105s attacking two SA-2 sites 30 miles west of Hanoi, six Thunderchiefs were lost and the targets all turned out to be dummies, flak traps, or were unoccupied! Apparently, Hanoi had been forewarned after 7th Air Force in Saigon was notified of the exact target locations.

We had been aware of the SA-2 Guideline for 13 years, after NATO intelligence sources had first identified the new weapon-system. But little had been done to develop defenses; the thinking of the day was that a low altitude attack strategy would easily defeat the SAM system's radar lock-on. This turned out to be incorrect. Returning pilots often reported the Fan Song radar tracking them at low altitude.

The NVA was very pleased with its new defense system, and by the end of 1965, a total of 56 SA-2 sites were deployed around Hanoi and the port city of Haiphong.



Reconnaissance photo of a North Vietnamese SA-2 SAM site. *(USAF Museum web collection)*

Finding a Solution Within three weeks after Leopard Two was downed; the Air Force formed a task force to study the new threat. It turned out that counter-measures technology already existed, but, interestingly, an anti-SAM proposal to the USAF in early 1965 had been turned down because there was no formally documented AF requirement for it. Well, we had one now. And thus began the Wild Weasel Project.

The F-100F was selected as the aerial platform component of the overall anti-SAM system, and a test group was quickly formed. Testing would take place at Eglin AFB, Florida, directed by Major General Walter Putnam. The plan was to involve Air Force and industry technicians tasked with modifying the F-100F as a SAM-fighter, then testing the plane and the rapidly developing hardware and software of the embryonic system. Initially, two F-100Fs were modified to test mission capability.

*A Wild Weasel F-100F in one of the many ordnance combinations tested; BLU-27 napalm canisters inboard; LAU-3 2.75" rockets outboard, and 20 mm. (Note: one of the RHAW antennae is visible just under the nose intake.) **

Next, the Wild Weasel Project needed test and operational aircrews. There were no manuals for fighting SAMs. No tactics. No schoolhouse. Not even an official "SAM-fighting" airplane. All we knew for sure of was: ***they*** had lots of SAMs! But we had brave volunteers—and they and their progeny would become the storied Wild Weasels! This is their story.

The Wild Weasels' Story Captain Allen Lamb was not your standard, cocky, fighter-pilot. He was a genuine candidate for "WGFP"—World's Greatest Fighter Pilot! He was flying the F-100 with the 354th Wing at Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C., after a tour in Huns at Misawa Air Base in northern Japan. A highly qualified and very aggressive young fighter-pilot, Lamb flew with the wing weapons section and was widely considered a top notch pilot.

On 23 August 1965, he received a call from Lieutenant Colonel Charlie Joseph, the TAC Headquarters honcho for the new, top secret Wild Weasel Project. Joseph flew to Myrtle Beach and over lunch, explained that Major General Putnam had asked for Lamb, by name, to volunteer for a brand new project at Eglin AFB. Lamb listened intently, and then said, "I'm a volunteer." Joseph handed him a commercial airline ticket to Florida along with a set of TDY orders to Eglin AFB, with "variations in itinerary authorized." These "variations" would eventually take him to Korat Royal Thai AFB, Thailand.

"When do I leave?" asked Lamb.

"Tomorrow," Joseph replied.

Lamb was instructed not to sign out from Myrtle Beach AFB, but rather, "to disappear." The mission was TOP SECRET and he was not allowed to tell anyone his destination. He was to simply disappear...and report to Major General Putnam's office when he arrived at Eglin.

The original plan called for three pilot/electronic warfare officer (EWO) aircrew teams. The pilots were to be Lamb, Captain Maury Fricke, and a pilot from Homestead AFB, Florida. Lamb was the senior officer.

They were cautioned to be security conscious to the maximum, because this was a high-visibility, extremely sensitive mission, and they "would be watched." The seriousness of this security aspect was underscored the second week when Major General Putnam called everyone to a meeting in the hangar. The pilot from Homestead had taken a staff car to the famous "Beach Club" at Eglin and in the process of trying to impress a nurse at the bar, explained he was part of a TOP SECRET mission headed for Vietnam. The Homestead pilot, the general explained, was gone...and so was his Air Force career!

Subsequently, the Weasel crews were isolated from other base personnel for the remainder of their stay. Security guards were posted around their quarters and they were cautioned to discuss the mission with absolutely no one. Obviously, they were under close scrutiny by unnamed security agencies. The pilot from Homestead was replaced by Captain Ed White.

Most of the EWOs were former SAC B-52 electronic warfare officers who would work the new RHAW gear (Radar Homing and Warning) in the backseat of the Hun. The leadership decided they would fly as formed teams as much as possible.

The original pairings were: Allen Lamb, pilot, with Jack Donovan, EWO; Maury Fricke, pilot, and Walt Lifsey, EWO; and Ed White, pilot, and Ed Sandelius, EWO. "Sandy" Sandelius was the exception to the SAC EWOs sourcing: he came from TAC EB-66s.

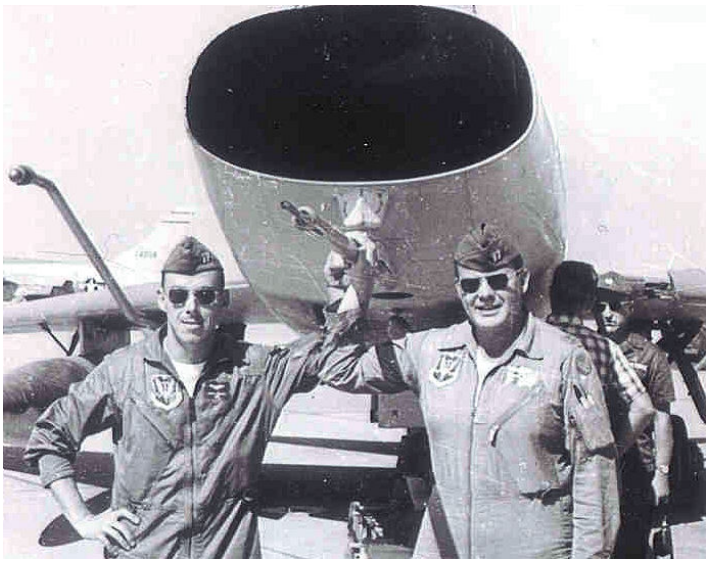
*Original pairings: Allan Lamb, Pilot (right), with Jack Donovan, EWO (left).**

Eventually, for attrition and maintenance reasons, the decision was made to increase the force to four aircraft and five crews. This would prove to be a wise move.

The first official commander of the group was skeptical of the mission, and was summarily relieved.

Major Garry Willard, an experienced F-100 driver, emerged as commander by the time they departed Eglin for Southeast Asia. The two additional aircrew teams would be: Captain Leslie Lindemuth, pilot, and Captain Robert Trier, EWO; and Captain George Kerr, pilot, with Captain Don Madden, EWO. Additionally, Major Bob Schwartz was brought on board as ops officer, and Captain John Pitchford was assigned as the Tactical Air Command (TAC) evaluation officer, along with Major Ted Lyons from Air Force Logistics Command (AFLC).

Original pairings: Maury Fricke Pilot (left), with Walt Lifsey, EWO (right).



Original pairings: Ed White, Pilot (left), with Ed "Sandy" Sandelius, EWO (right).

With the final complement of aircrews complete, teamwork became paramount, so it was decided that each Wild Weasel Pilot and EWO would fly together whenever possible, both at Eglin and later in Southeast Asia. They were to become a team in every sense of the word. This produced some strange bedfellows because the former B-52 EWOs were in a constant state of cultural disorientation trying to adjust to the style of their young fighter-pilot associates, who were such a stark contrast from their SAC crewmates. The somewhat flamboyant Allen Lamb, for example, was teamed with the quiet, taciturn Jack Donovan, an older, veteran B-52 electronics officer. But when the mission was explained to Donovan, he muttered, "You gotta be shittin' me!" That pithy observation rapidly became "*YGBSM,"* the consensus motto of the Wild Weasel force!

Familiarization Training They flew on the Eglin ranges, making run after run on simulated SAM sites, testing and learning the new Wild Weasel equipment as they figured out how to apply their evolving tactics to the deadly Soviet/NVA threat. There were no manuals on how to do this, so they figured it out as they went. If it worked, great; if it didn't, well, they'd try something else.

Each crew had different ideas on how to get the job done. To Donovan's continual and utter consternation, his pilot Allen Lamb's approach was, "the only way to get these guys is to go right down their throat and take them out!" The crews, over time, learned how to interpret the new electronic signal displays and viable tactics began to emerge.

The threat warning system installed in the "Weasel Huns" was ingenious, but required extensive modification of each Weasel aircraft. The new Radar Homing and Warning (RHAW) gear consisted of three elements:

1) The "Vector IV" system gave 360-degree warning of S, C and X-band signals. A panel of warning lights indicated the type of threat-signal, and a three-inch cathode ray tube in each cockpit presented a directional strobe indication to both crewmen. But there was no distance information, so interpreting the radar strobe for distance became a matter of aircrew skill and cunning. This vector system incorporated four new antennae. Vector IV was eventually standardized as the APR-25 RHAW system.

2) The IR-133 added three additional antennas and provided threat analysis, i.e., the type radar (SAM, GCI, AAA).

3) The most critical system may well have been the WR-300 Launch Warning Receiver (LWR). Intel had discovered the Soviet radar went into high PRF mode, that is, an increase in signal energy, just before launch, and technicians therefore tuned the WR-300 to the specific SA-2 guidance and control frequency. The LWR was connected to a red "LAUNCH" light in the cockpit, which was hard to miss and later became known as the "Aw Shit" light!

An amusing thing happened when the new, albeit small, antennas were installed on the first Wild Weasel bird. The pilots reported unusual buffeting. Probably all the new antennas, everyone surmised. When the four modified F-100Fs arrived at Eglin and were assigned to their crew chiefs, the buffeting was much discussed. One of the new crew chiefs, a grizzled old veteran on the Hun, laughed and said the buffeting had nothing to do with the new antennae, explaining that all F-100Fs suffered the

same problem—the two gun barrels vibrated in their tubes!

The old crew chief stuffed a couple of golf tees in the gun barrels and the buffeting stopped! This "figure-it-out-as-you-go—and then adapt" concept became the hallmark of the Weasels.

Very few Eglin folks knew about the hush-hush test mission, and many became quite concerned when the F-100s began attacking the base at all hours and from all directions. It was particularly disturbing at nearby Hurlburt Field as the Weasel Huns began making low altitude runs into the beach, followed by their wild maneuvering as they went into their attack mode, quite often roaring through Hurlburt airspace at all altitudes and airspeeds!

Theirs was the highest priority mission at Eglin, however, and they were given *carte blanche* within the Eglin airspace. Interestingly, they even operated from the same hangar once used by Doolittle's Raiders of WWII fame.

As the learning curve of the aircrews progressed, Willard and his team decided it was time to field-test the system.

That meant one thing...combat!

Colonel Robin Olds arrived from TAC Headquarters to hear their deployment briefing. Major Willard gave the mission overview and Captain Lamb presented the deployment plan. Colonel Olds agreed—it was time to take the Weasels to combat!

Deployment In November of '65, the advanced party left for Korat to set up the Weasel operation and prepare for the arrival of aircraft and crews. Air Force Secretary Harold Brown came to Eglin to personally wish the team luck and impress upon them just how important the Wild Weasel Project was to the Air Force mission in Southeast Asia. On their day of departure, General Putnam climbed the ladder of each aircraft to wish the crews "Godspeed and good hunting." When he advised Captain Lamb of the importance of their success, Lamb replied, "General, I'll get you one *(a SAM site)* by Christmas."

As mentioned before, Allen Lamb was, if anything, a macho fighter-pilot! (He inscribed the words *"World's Greatest Fighter Pilot"* backwards on his helmet visor...just to remind himself when he looked in the cockpit's rear view mirror!)

They taxied out on a bright, sunny Sunday morning. It was 21 November 1965 when the Wild Weasels went off to war. The crews were: Flight Lead - Willard/Fricke; #2: - Lindemuth/Trier; #3:- Lamb/Donovan, and #4: - Kerr/Madden. At 1000 Local, they were airborne and headed for their rendezvous with three tankers, a high priority gaggle of seven planes...headed west.

They cancelled their flight plan and changed to a classified frequency and call signs, a tactic that would take them to Korat in utter secrecy. The gaggle surreptitiously trailed a normal, unsuspecting, deployment by the 421st TFS so as to have rescue support across the Pacific. After the long flight from Eglin, they stopped at Hickham AFB, Hawaii for the night and were parked in a secluded corner of the base.

Lamb then produced a bottle of Beefeaters, and the Weasels toasted the success of their deployment's first leg. Then they went to bed early, expecting an oh-dark-thirty launch the next morning; but the weather gods

Stateside training was over. Robin Olds agreed: it was time to take the Wild Weasels to combat!

stepped in and the departure was delayed for a day.

The weather was even worse the following morning, but they were released anyway. The Air Force **really** wanted the Weasel birds at Korat!

As the tanker pilots briefed with the Wild Weasels, it soon became obvious their takeoff was going to be a bit unusual. The Weasels wanted to be all joined up before their individual tanker went into the low clouds, so they settled on a typical "figure it out as you go" Weasel maneuver. The lead tanker lined up on the runway, did its engine run-up and rolled. Wild Weasel 1 and 2 waited until the tanker was about to lift-off and commenced their roll. Meanwhile the second tanker had stopped on the taxiway with Weasels 3 and 4 behind them. As soon as the first tanker and their Weasels rolled, the second tanker made a rolling takeoff with Weasels 3 and 4 close behind. The spare tanker took off last, behind them.

(Allen Lamb on their takeoff: "I didn't want to lose sight of our tanker in the clouds, so I was determined to get joined up *beneath* the clouds. We stopped about 1,000 feet behind him and rolled when he rolled. Checking the engine instruments on the roll, I looked at Shep (Captain George Kerr) and lit the burner with the barest of head nods. We were all over that tanker; on his wing well before he went in the clouds." *The* WGFP *at work!*)

Despite the worst turbulence they'd ever experienced during their first refueling, Lamb and Kerr were able to take on fuel and the flight proceeded uneventfully to Guam. Both aircraft were icing up badly in the clouds during refueling as well, something they would never have risked on a routine mission. Wild Weasel 3 and 4 had about the same experience. On schedule, the seven-plane gaggle landed at Guam and was again isolated from the rest of the base.

The next day, Thanksgiving Day, 24 November 1965, they took off for Korat, arriving without incident at 1430 Local. Allen notes wryly, "By the time we got to the club, all the turkey was gone."

The strange arrival of four F-100Fs at a Thud base in Thailand was met with raised eyebrows and some folks muttered, "What the hell are *those* guys doing here?" Although they were under the operational control of the 388th TFW, they were, in fact, officially part of a new unit; the 6234th TFW (Wild Weasel Detachment).

On 28 November they began flying orientation missions near the NVN border between Route Packs 2 and 3. The flights would team with an RB-66 ELINT aircraft and troll for signals from the NVA air defenses. All their gear was working as advertised.

The F-105 crews were briefed on a need-to-know basis as the Weasels practiced locally and worked on tactics with the old heads at Korat. Basically, it would be a hunter-killer team concept. A team would take off as a five ship—four Thuds and a Weasel. The Hun would fly wing to the last refueling, then take the lead for entry into the target area. Because of the Thud's higher cruise speeds, the Huns had to use higher-than-normal power settings. The resulting higher fuel-use rate would become an important mission planning consideration, and refueling both inbound and outbound became a high priority. (Fortunately, the Hun and the Thud had compatible refueling gear and used the same tanker system.)

In the early days, tactics were "just get it done somehow." Eventually, all the F-105 pilots at Korat and Takhli were briefed on the Weasel mission, although only the 388th would operate with the Hun Weasels.

Show Time! 1 December 1965 marked the launch of the first Wild Weasel combat mission of the war. Garry Willard and Walt Lifesy led Ed White and Ed Sandelius on this first IRON HAND strike. (IRON HAND was to be the code name for all future Weasel missions.) The Huns carried drop tanks, two LAU-3 pods of 19 2.75" rockets each and 20mm. Each Weasel bird had a trailing flight of four F-105s loaded with various ordnance, but usually 4 x LAU-3s, plus their 20mm Gatling gun.

The plan was, if possible, for the Weasel bird to try to locate the radar van and take it out with rockets, while the Thuds would then go after the missiles and anything remaining at the SAM site. If necessary, the Weasel and Thuds would re-attack with 20mm until they were sure the site was completely out of action. *Note: Clearly, what was really needed was an anti-radiation missile, but none was to appear until May, 1966 when the first AGM-45 Shrike was adapted for use by the F-100F.*

The Weasels flew two missions a day with negative results until 20 December, when their worse fears were realized: the NVA SAM crews had learned to turn off their radar at crucial times of a mass Alpha Force strike. The target this day was Kep Airfield, a MiG base about 30 miles northwest of Hanoi. John Pitchford and Bob Trier led a strike package of 12 F-105s, with Bob Schwartz and Jack Donovan trailing them with eight additional Thuds. This was not the Weasel's favorite mission. They were, in fact, leading a straightforward Rolling Thunder strike, as opposed to the IRON HAND missions where the Weasels and their F-105 escorts went in ahead of the strike force, ferreting out SAMs, watching for AAA patterns, and even checking the weather in the target area for the incoming strike force.

This basic change in doctrine did not go well.

Radar guided AAA could be deadly too.

About 40 miles east of Hanoi, Pitchford and Trier, operating as Apple 01, began receiving both Fan Song and Firecan AAA signals. According to Pitchford, before they could react, they "felt a heavy *thump* and the fire warning lights started going crazy!" They had been hit by radar-guided AAA.

Pitchford fired his rockets in the site's general direction and started a hard turn for the coast. Still 40 miles from the water and making good speed—about 450 knots—Apple 01 had a chance of making it to the relative safety of the sea. But the escorting Thuds quickly reported that their plane was on fire, with pieces falling from the aircraft. Before they could reach "feet wet," the bird pitched over into an uncontrollable dive.

Trier blew the canopy, but didn't eject. As Pitchford struggled with his ejection seat trigger his, arm was sucked out of the aircraft and wrenched from its socket. Then he heard his backseater eject. Somehow he managed to eject himself—at very high speed. The chute opened, he took about three swings…then hit the ground hard.

He was instantly surrounded by a dozen or so militia and decided to throw his pistol away. One of the militia took this action the wrong way and shot him three times in his good arm! (Later, Pitchford was told by an NVA that Trier had "fought back" and was killed.)

Although the Weasels had suffered a devastating loss, the missions continued. But tactics changed, and the Weasels were never again used as strike force leads. Subsequently, they flew only the IRON HAND missions for which they had trained and were best equipped.

And fortune changed for the Weasels on 22 December, when Allen Lamb and Jack Donovan got their first SAM kill on a mission to the rail yard at Yen Bai. It was as exciting a mission as anyone can imagine.

First Success Off the tanker, the Weasel took the lead, began the descent to the deck and went to minimum comms (communications) as they switched to their attack frequency. Allen fondly recalls the brisk check-in:

"Five!"…"One!"…"Twoop!"...."Threep!"…"Fourp!"

About 95 miles from the target, Donovan picked up a low PRF Fan Song signal. Lamb took the flight down to the weeds, trying to keep a row of low hills between the flight and the suspected site. He locked the throttle at about 98%, giving them 595 knots, just five knots below the 600 knot maximum airspeed for the rocket pods, and made his only radio call, "Tally Ho!"

Streaking through the hills with a pair of Thuds on each wing, they began their game of cat and mouse. They would pop up above the covering hills, take a hack on their RHAW strobe—"10 o'clock," then back down to the deck; then up again—keeping the strobe between 10 and 11 o'clock as they homed in on it, then back down. Finally, Donovan called, "High PRF," which meant the RHAW gear was telling them the SAM site was locked on to the Weasel. They were close!

In Lamb's words, "I turned north, directly into him. I knew I was right on top of him and started to climb. I pulled up and rolled inverted, trying to get a visual on the site. I saw the site when we were at an altitude of about 4,000 feet and rolled in at a steep dive angle. I was way too steep and pulled out way too low. My rockets were short but as I was pulling off there was a bright flash. I must have hit the oxidizers tank used for SAM refueling. The site was next to the Red River dike and we knew the enemy had AAA guns all along the dike."

As Lamb called out the site, Thud leader, Spruce 1, called, "I got it. I got it."

Spruce 1 fired his rockets and saw the vans, missile transporters and other structures leap into the air as 76 rockets hit and exploded. (The 2.75" High Explosive Armor Piercing [HEAP] rockets were probably the best munitions available for the target at that time and hit with devastating results.) Hot on Lead's tail, Spruce 2 scored a direct hit with his rockets, and the target area erupted with fires and secondary explosions.

Bending it around, Lamb pulled more or less abeam of Spruce 3 and re-attacked the SAM site with guns. As he lined up, he spotted the radar van and walked his burst directly on target. His strafe clobbered the van, and it went off the air permanently.

While the rest of the flight attacked the site itself, Spruce 3, firing his four rocket pods singly, attacked the AAA along the river. He silenced them too, as the rest of Spruce Flight continued to wreak havoc on the now-smoking SAM site.

Meanwhile, Spruce 4 spotted a structure in the target area that was not burning yet and put a pod of rockets on it before he broke right to avoid the re-attacking Lamb. Spruce 1 and 2 also re-attacked the SAM site with 20mm. leaving the target a smoking ruin. After his rocket pass, Spruce 4 joined with 3, strafing the AAA positions and relieving the pressure on the birds still striking the SAM site. (Spruce 4 later commented that Spruce 5's [Weasel Lead/Lamb's] initial rockets were short, but his 20mm fire raked the van, setting it afire.)

After everyone had made their two passes, someone called "Bingo Fuel" and the aircraft began making their individual egresses. But before leaving the area, Spruce 4 shot his one remaining pod of rockets at the radar van, peppering the area.

During the hunter/killer team's re-attack, another SAM site came up from across the nearby river. Obviously, they really wanted the Weasels! But, by this time Spruce Flight had no ordnance or time remaining to play with them that day.

Jack Donovan, Lamb's EWO recalls, "As we left, the entire SAM site area was covered by black and white smoke rising to four hundred or five hundred feet." Lamb took the rejoined flight down on the deck behind yet another row of hills and they left the area at high speed. The mission had been a complete success. Though low on

fuel when they returned to Korat, the irrepressible Lamb led the victorious five-ship, hunter/killer team in a tight vee formation low and fast over the thousands of troops watching the Bob Hope Christmas Show!

This message went out to The Joints Chiefs—***"Wild Weasel sighted SAM site - Destroyed same!"***

(Take a reading break and gaze at the action again on the front cover. Keith Ferris' work really brings a "you were there" feeling to the Spruce Flight action described above by Reporter Jack Doub with inputs from WGFP Lamb and YGBSM Donovan! - Ed.)

The Weasels had performed exactly as they should have. Later intelligence confirmed the entire missile site had been totally destroyed. The next day, 7th Air Force in Saigon informed the world about the destruction of the first SAM site—*by F-105s!* The Hun Wild Weasels were still so secret no one outside of the Pentagon and Korat was to know a thing about them.

Allen Lamb and Jack Donovan were given credit for the first official SAM kill in USAF history and awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses for their most satisfying mission, as were all members of Spruce Flight. (Interestingly, Lamb was nominated for the Silver Star for the mission, but turned it down when only the DFC was offered his EWO, Jack Donovan. He figured they were a team and if Donovan didn't get the Silver Star, neither would he. (*Is that the "Right Stuff," or what? – Ed.*)

Major Garry Willard, first Wild 'Weasel CC, gets a close-up debriefing after the first successful SAM kill from WGFP Allen Lamb as others listen in.*

Jack Donovan would go on to fly 12 more Weasel missions before leaving for home in February, 1966 to set up the Wild Weasel schoolhouse at Nellis AFB. Allen Lamb remained in SEA and was eventually credited with three SAM sites destroyed. His 90-day TDY to Korat had turned into six months, but he got Major General Putnam the SAM site he'd promised...and he did it by Christmas!

Lamb's second SAM-site kill was much easier. In mid-February he and Captain Rick Morgan, replacement EWO for the departed Jack Donovan, launched with a Thud flight led by Major Bob Krone. After trolling for SAMs about 40 minutes, the flight reached bingo fuel and turned for home. Then a SAM came on the air, and as it happened, the site was on their route home. They were able to locate it, get a visual, hit it with one pass each and destred the site. The Weasels were getting good at this!

The F-105s noticed things getting better as well. The NVA was learning to be wary of the wily Weasels and began silencing their radars when they were detected. If the Weasel presence got them to turn all their radars off, the NVA became blind and the Weasel mission was a success—even if they didn't kill anything.

Lamb's third SAM kill was memorable because it occurred on his mother's birthday, 4 March 1966. Captain Frank O'Donnell, another follow-on EWO, was in the back seat on his first combat mission.

Their Thud leader had aborted, so it became a flight of four. Just outside of Hanoi, on a hazy day near the Black River, the Fan Song came up. Lamb homed in on the site and fired his 38 rockets, but they missed the radar van. The Thuds carried a new weapon, a mix of napalm and white phosphorous, but they all missed the van as well. The visibility was down to three miles—not a good day to be there. As they turned to egress the area, surprisingly, the radar stayed on the air. Lamb turned back, homing again on the signal. As he neared the site at 3,500 feet, he pushed over, tracking the strobe. When he broke out of the haze at about 1,800 feet, there it was, right at twelve o'clock! He put a long 20 mm burst into the radar van, and the signal stopped as the cannon shells ripped through it. This time, the site stayed off the air.

Interestingly, it turned out this site, some 17 miles from Hanoi, was an SA-2 training site, where Russian technicians helped teach. Lamb was subsequently told by 7th Air Force that intelligence indicated they had indeed killed some Russian technicians in their SAM attacks over North Vietnam.

In late March of 1966, the Weasels' broad mission, Suppression of Enemy Air Defenses (SEAD), received a boost when the first AGM-45 Shrike anti-radiation missile was approved for use by the F-100F. The need for improved munitions had rapidly become apparent to the Weasels at the beginning, and this was a big step. (The need for cluster bombs adaptable to the SAM mission was also being addressed.)

The Shrike was the product of a Navy program started after the Cuban missile crisis, when the need for an anti-radar missile became apparent following the downing of a U-2 and an RF-101 by Soviet-supplied SA-2s. Shrike was a 10-foot missile capable of about 1.5 mach—above the aircraft's speed. It weighed about 400 pounds and had a 145-pound warhead that scattered 23,000 steel fragments in addition to the blast effect

Along with their new Shrikes, the Weasels received three new aircraft modified for their mission, plus the first graduates from the new Wild Weasel School started by

Jack Donovan at Nellis. In addition to the loss of Pitchford and Trier, one aircraft had been lost in a training accident, and another was downed by AAA on 23 March. The crew survived the training accident, but in the combat loss, both crewmembers, Captains Clyde Dawson and Donald Clark, were killed in action.

In mid-March, Captain Allen Lamb rotated back to the states, the last of the initial Weasel cadre to leave. His 30-day TDY to the Wild Weasel Project had lasted over six months. *(Note: Two years later Allen Lamb received the Silver Star from HQ Air Force.)* Ultimately, he would end up in the Wild Weasel IV program at Nellis AFB, developing the F-4C for the rapidly expanding SEAD mission.

The Follow-ons Despite its successes, the F-100F Wild Weasel Project (later known as Wild Weasel I) was nearing its end. A decision had been made on 8 January 1966 by General Dempster and the Air Staff that a more powerful platform was needed. The F-105F was chosen as the follow-on Weasel aircraft, and all Thud crew training was conducted at the Wild Weasel school house at Nellis AFB. The F-105F Weasel birds began arriving in Thailand on 28 May, but the F-100F continued flying combat missions until 11 July while the new Thud Wild Weasel crews gained combat-ready status.

EWO Art Oken flew with the second generation of Hun Wild Weasels and later in the Thud WW era too.

The original Wild Weasel Project had been a complete success, although they lost almost half of their F-100F fleet. In all, nine SAM sites had been destroyed and countless others had been forced off the air, leaving the strike force free of that particular threat.

Though some had thought the emergence of the SAM threat would be the death of the flying Air Force, the Weasels developed an essential and lasting capability for the USAF. The brave Weasel crews had developed an effective countermeasure against the SAM threat that had initially proved devastating for the USAF strike fighters over NVN.

The Weasels (Hun and Thud) led the way for the strike forces over North Vietnam, protecting them during their attacks, leaving only when the last strike fighter had departed the battlefield. But the mission didn't come cheap. Weasel crews completed their individual missions at great personal risk. In all, 34 Wild Weasels were killed or missing in action and 19 became POWs.

Their credo had been right on: ***"First In…Last Out!"***

The Weasel Program has now progressed from the F-100F through the F-105F and G, F-4C, F-4D, F-4E, and finally the mission-dedicated F-4G (which many consider to be the deadliest Weasel aircraft of them all). The anti-radiation missiles likewise progressed from the early Shrike to the much more effective Standard ARM, and finally to the modern and spectacular HARM. Today, the F-16CJ is a dedicated SEAD aircraft capable of firing at multiple targets, simultaneously, with awesome results.

The Wild Weasel pilots of today carry on in the spirit of those brave souls who manned the F-100Fs of Wild Weasel I back in 1965. The fact that the early Weasels were attacking active SAM sites with 2.75" rockets and 20mm strafe underscores what incredible skill and cunning was displayed each day by this dedicated, innovative group of Hun pilots, who simply "made it up as they went along." Brave souls to a man!

Epilogue Space limitations preclude listing all the "WGFP" pilots and "YGBSM" EWOs who flew during Wild Weasel I. The extreme closeness and camaraderie the crews felt for one another is exemplified by the fact that Jack Donovan named one of his sons after his old frontseater, Allen Lamb.

As their story developed, there came to be a deep respect for the technicians, ground crews and aircrews that made up the Wild Weasel I Project. Their story, which began and ended in just under a year, truly typified Yankee ingenuity at work.

For any air crewman who flew so much as one Weasel mission over NVN, my hat is off to you...that was indeed some ballsy flying!

As an added footnote: One can't help but compare two of the unique missions flown by the F-100F—the plane used by the Wild Weasels *and* the Misty FACs. In fact, one of the first Wild Weasel birds, #226, flew in both roles. Interestingly, that was the bird Allen Lamb and Jack Donovan were flying when they recorded the first SAM site kill. And in a unique twist of fate, #226 was shot down by AAA while SAM-hunting over Route Pack 1 in 1968...*on a Misty mission!* (Both crew members ejected and were rescued after the aircraft was hit.)

* * * * *

*Special thanks to Allen Lamb and Maury Fricke for their help with research publications, complex naratives and personal details. I borrowed frequently from Allen Lamb's writings, with his kind permission, because no one can tell it better. Some day I'll buy Allen a martini or five, because any guy who prints "World's Greatest Fighter Pilot" backwards on his helmet visor, just to remind himself in the mirror, is my kinda guy! Getting to know the Weasels, and their story for this assignment, was pure pleasure for me. —**Jack Doub*** ☻ (* = Image courtesy Lt. Col. Alan Lamb [USAF, Ret.] via the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force.) (Note: Jack's zeal for this story filled seven tight pages when he was allocated five. Therefore, he willingly gave up the usual author photo & mini-bio for each major article. Thanks, Jack! We'll make it up to you. Ed.)

The Poet Reflects… with Hindsight

During the period from April 1967 to April 1968 (when I left Bien Hoa Air Base, RVN, after 275 missions in the F-100), the 3rd TFW flew about 54,000 sorties. Initially that involved five fighter squadrons, but two rotated to Tuy Hoa not long after I arrived. Thus, the brunt of the combat flying, day and night to pre-scheduled targets and to close-air-support fights all over III and IV Corps, was done by the roughly 65 squadron pilots (and a few wing personnel) in the Dice, Ramrod and Buzzard squadrons. If memory serves correctly, we lost just under 30 of our original 60+ Huns that year, and more than 20 pilots…almost all of them close friends or acquaintances.

My "defense mechanisms" against fatalities were in good working order; first was the usual fighter pilot rationale that "it can't happen to me, I am too good at this." (People first encountering fighter pilots call that "cocky," but they miss the point.) Second, by January of '68, I avoided getting to know the "new guys." I had lost a lot of very close friends by then, so my reasoning was that if any of them were next to buy the farm, "the less I know about them, the better." Despite what was close to a one-third loss rate in that close-knit wing, I thought I had a perfect emotional firewall between me and the sad news of yet another good man and good friend down. Privately, I was a bit surprised that somehow, I just did not let the losses "get to me."

In late January 1968, the Tet Offensive hit hard in III and IV Corps—our wing's exclusive flying domain. By the time hot action tapered off dramatically in late February, I was pretty worn down from a lot of combat in a relatively short period. For two or three weeks during the offensive, Gary Tompkins and I had been on a special night alert at our squadron building, with two "hot cocked" birds with a soft load. We were used as a special or additional alert force and very often launched three times a night to bad fights in bad weather; then, exhausted, tried to catch some daytime sleep. Things were near back to "normal" when news came that we'd lost another pilot.

As I write, some 40 years later, I cannot even recall which of my close friends among the veteran pilots had "bought the farm" that day, or where, or how. But the news caught me with my guard down. I remember being stunned, and very, very angry. (It was 20-some years later that I learned from my psychotherapist wife that "anger is a mask for pain.") I remember walking out of our "Dice" squadron bar, standing alone in the darkness with a cigarette or two. Then I went in, grabbed a gin and tonic, sat down with a pen and some paper, and started scribbling. (When I write poetry, often it comes in a rush, usually done in 20 to 40 minutes—a full-blown idea that needs to get out of my head and onto paper. Until it does, the words, rhymes and rhythms fill my brain, and nothing much else can be processed. Sometimes, the idea dies away before it is all "done" and has thus become "shaggy doggerel" or a real poem. Sometimes, the "lost verse" comes back, even now, 40 years later.)

What I hastily scribbled that night, sitting in a corner of our noisy squadron bar, was as honest a thought as I could ever express about my thinking and feelings at that moment. With one exception, every word was exactly right to create a message to a world outside my head, outside my squadron, and outside my circle of warrior friends. Ultimately, it mirrored my thoughts and reactions to "yet another friend dead." The "exception?" It *was not* true that "I used to weep when a friend of mine died." That was "poetic license." In reality, I had decided months before going into combat that "guys get killed in war," and to expect it and move on.

As with everything I write about "our war," or fighter flying, I want a universal audience to grasp the thought, feel, sight, sound, taste and even smell as we *all* experienced it. As I did always back then, to check for that universality (and still try to do now) I showed that night's "scribble" to several squadron mates. They knew the drill: that I was trying to go beyond the personal, to instead say on paper what we *all* could or would say as fighter pilots who were "*there*" then.

I know my poems about fighter flying are successful when other friends today do just as my mates did that night: they read the scribbled page, nodded, and said quietly, "Yeah, that's got it right." Occasionally, even now, the Muses strike, and I try to convey things "right" yet again about that time and place long ago, and the wonder, joy and deep pride of being a combat fighter pilot, surrounded by such remarkable men. This "News Item" poem conveys that pride, and what I was also thinking at the time: as bad as this night might be for all of us who knew our fallen comrade, "Eight thousand miles away in the night," a boy back home in the USA was already determined to someday be his replacement. —*John Schulz* ☻

News Item: "TODAY AN F-100 WENT DOWN IN THE DELTA" *By John J. Schulz*

My soul is ravaged and tattered and shorn,
My senses bombarded, my mind is untidy.
My body's been driven, my nerve endings worn;
I'm not a young man, I'm old, and not mighty.

The moon is all bloody -- I no longer dream,
And my conscience is beaten and shred.
Things are no longer quite what they seem,
And my country's hand-picked are now dead.

I used to weep when a friend of mine died,
His spiraling laughter transcended the earth.
But the salt has now turned to steel inside,
For, who cares what our talents are worth?

I know I'm a hundred years older than most,
And quicker, and skilled more by far.
The eagles I fly with are similar ken,
And they soar above men like a star.

Today a jet pilot went down in a dive
To destroy a nest full of hot lead.
He was a close friend -- while he was alive,
And now, one more friend of mine's dead.

And eight thousand miles away in the night,
A star falls from out of the sky;
Unknowing, a child, with all of his might,
Makes a wish that some day he will fly.

(Bien Hoa, RVN, Feb. 1968)

First International Huns Story

NATO Fighter Weapons Meet —."Best Hit '71"

By Soner Capoglu

Soner is a 44 year-old retired aerial photographer from Turkey who discovered the SSS, loves the F-100, and sent us an original photo essay about a significant NATO event from the '70s. His father, Huseyin Capoglu, was a legendary F-100 pilot of the Turkish Air Force who was the squadron commander and leader of the Turkish Team in this completion. Sadly; Huseyin passed away when he was 40 years old in 1972. He had 3,500 hours in F-100C/D/Fs. Soner managed to get a couple of Hun hours too and treasures that experience. As background for Soner's original story and photos, we first present an extract from an article by Lieutenant Colonel Harold A Susskind, USAF, that appeared in the Air University Review, *March-April 1973.*

BACKGROUND

"Lieutenant General Fred M. Dean, Commander, AIRSOUTH (NATO's Southern Region) from August 1968 to June 1972, was a firm believer that a tactical weapons meet with its pressures, problems, and requirements contributed immeasurably toward increasing the overall ability of a command to accomplish its mission. Soon after taking over as Commander, he directed his staff to look into the possibilities of reviving the AIRSOUTH weapons meet competition among the air forces of the three Southern Region nations. The meets, which had been hotly contested and well attended during the mid-fifties, had not been held since 1956, even though each nation had won a leg on the Air Commander's Trophy during that period.

In September 1969, after much spade work, the Italian Air Force was officially asked to host the meet, reviving the AIRSOUTH Weapons Competition. Upon Italy's acceptance, invitations went out to the other Southern Region nations asking them to participate. Turkey accepted, but the Greek Air Force, although strongly supporting the meet, could not actively participate the first year. The United States Air Force and the United States Navy were each asked to contribute a team to be known as guest teams. Both accepted the invitation, but the Navy team withdrew before the competition started.

The 1970 AIRSOUTH Tactical Weapons Meet, "Best Hit '70," was held at Istrana Air Base, Italy, 4-12 September 1970. The Maniago Gunnery Range, 70 kilometers northeast of Istrana Air Base, was used for all ordnance delivery. With the AIRSOUTH Commander's Trophy as top prize, the meet initially took the form of competition between the Fifth Allied Tactical Air Force and the Sixth Allied Tactical Air Force, with the Italians representing FIVEATAF and the Turks representing SIXATAF.

Poor weather conditions during the competition phase of the meet prevented flying the minimum number of missions required by the rules, so a winning team could not be selected. Although no winner was named, the meet was deemed a success since many organizational procedures were tested and the competition did give valuable training to the pilots participating. It also furthered the close working relationship between the ground and air crews of the nations involved. Most of all, it set the stage for "Best Hit '71."

The 1971 meet was held at Eskisehir, Turkey, and hosted by General Mushin Batur, Chief of Staff of the Turkish Air Force. It brought together pilots from all three NATO Southern Region nations, plus a combined U.S. Navy-U.S. Air Force guest team. It also featured for the first time in international gunnery competition five different air weapon systems: Northrop F-5s, Fiat G-91s, North American F-100s, LTV A-7As from the USN, and McDonnell Douglas F-4Es from the USAF.

Final standings showed the Turks on top with 596 points, the combined U.S. team with 538, the Italians with 464, and the Greeks, the first-day leaders, with 422. By winning, the Turks were one up on their Southern Region allies."

SONER'S ORIGINAL STORY

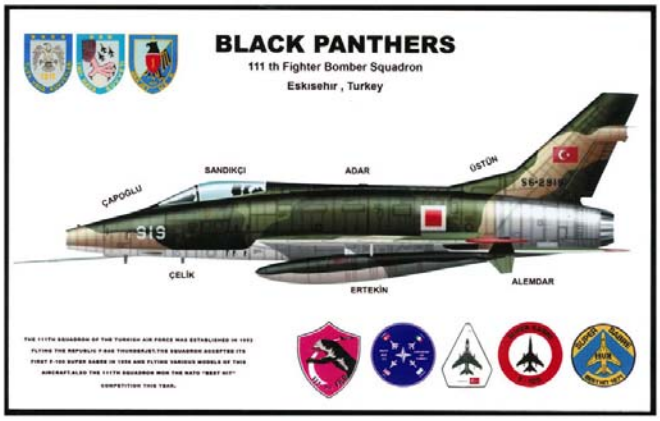
"In 1954, NATO's Southern Region nations began a series of contests for the "AIRSOUTH Challenge Trophy," which had lapsed for fifteen years by the time the 1971 "Best Hit" event was organized. Held at Eskisehir Air Base, home of the First Turkish Tactical Air Force, the competition included U. S. Navy A-7A Corsairs from Carrier Air Wing 3, Torrejon-based USAFE F-4E Phantoms of the 353rd TFS Black Panthers, Greek Air Force Northrop F-5As and Italian Fiat G-91s, as well as the F-100s of the host squadron *(filo in Turkish, I think. Ed.)*, 111 Filo, also known as the Black Panthers.

"The four-day competition involved missions over the Osmaniye Range, 85 miles south of the Black Sea, that were intended to revive the skills in individual accuracy which characterized tactical aviation in the years immediately after the all-out nuclear strategies of the 1960s. Gunnery and bombing assessments resulted in three individual awards: Major Harvey Kimsey (353rd TFS) for strafing, Lt John Shenn USN for rocketry and Captain Ormero Cominato (Italian AF) for bombing. However, the overall winner was 111 Filo with 596 points, 58 more than the USAF F-4E team. The Turkish Black Panthers F-100Ds were led by Lieutenant Colonel Huseyin Capoglu., the 111 Filo Commander and the team included six other pilots of the Turk Hava Kuvvetleri (THK, or Turkish Air Force).

"Sincerely, Soner."

A collection of six photos from Soner associated with 111 Filo and "Best Hit '71" follows.

Visual Reflections of "Best Hit '71"



Official lithograph of the Turkish Team.

Official patch of Best Hit '71 Fighter Weapons Meet.

Turkish Hun Drivers camaraderie.

Soner logged a couple of Hun hours too.

BDU 33's, 2.75" rockets and 20 mike mike were the betting chips.

Hail to the victors!

Thanks, Soner. ☻

"… past, present, and future, rolled into one."

What Is A Fighter Pilot?

By Unknown Author via Wally Mason

A fighter jock is quite a phenomenon. He likes flying (single seats only), especially gunnery, acrobatics and cross countries. He has a strange fascination for flying boots, gambling, cigars (the bigger the better) and breaking glasses. He can usually be found in sports cars, at parties or Happy Hour. His natural habitat (while on the ground) is the Land of the Bearded Clam, Europe, and/or certain parts of the Orient. He has an affinity for women and booze (especially martinis so dry the bartender just faces Italy and salutes). He likes Steve Canyon, reads Snoopy, eats steaks and tells dirty jokes. His favorite hiding place is in dark cool bars or behind a pair of dark glasses. He is capricious. To amuse himself he may fire practice flares from mobile control, throw empty beer cans down the BOQ corridors, pour drinks down an over-exposed décolletage or may become generally obnoxious. His favorite conversation is a continuous chatter revolving around flying, booze or females (the order of priority is irrelevant).

He has an aversion to survival training, bomber pilots (or most other pilots for that matter), mobile control, AO duty and extended alerts. He tolerates ankle biters and house apes (other than his own), and has an overwhelming hatred for bingo. Whenever possible, he avoids weather, icy runways, lost communications, flame outs and ejections. Water makes him sick (unless frozen and surrounded by scotch), and he would rather face a firing squad than be caught pushing a baby carriage or carrying an umbrella. At the mention of matrimony, he becomes a catatonic schizophrenic and has a mysterious distaste toward wearing a wedding band.

A fighter pilot is a composite. He has the nerves of a robot, the audacity of Dennis the Menace, the lungs of a platoon sergeant, the vitality of an atomic bomb, the imagination of a science fiction writer, is glib as a diplomat, impervious to suggestion, and is a paragon of wisdom with a wealth of assorted, completely unrelated and irrelevant facts. He wears the biggest watch and has the shortest staying power. When he tries to make an impression, either his brain turns to mud or he becomes a savage, sadistic jungle creature bent on destroying the world and himself with it.

Who else can cram all of the following into one flying suit: check lists, maps, Dzus fastener openers, checklists, a dime novel, knives, guns, flares and snares, nylon cording, a handkerchief, assorted inhalers, aspirin, cigarettes, matches, a flashlight, more check lists, pencils, pens, gloves, a deck of cards, coded telephone numbers, a wallet, keys, a talisman, a St. Christopher medallion, even more check lists, and a chunk of an unknown substance.

At home with his wife, he is docile, sweet, tender, loving, amiable—just a helluva nice guy to have around the house—straight arrow all the way except when they're fighting. Then he becomes a beast who is tyrannical, suspicious, diabolical and a masochistic sex fiend who just ain't got no couth (these symptoms also appear after beer call).

As a father, he is tough but oh, so gentle, kind, just, protective, far-sighted, ambitious and really proud of that young fighter pilot (he'll never admit it, and it's never displayed in public, but that goes for the little girl too).

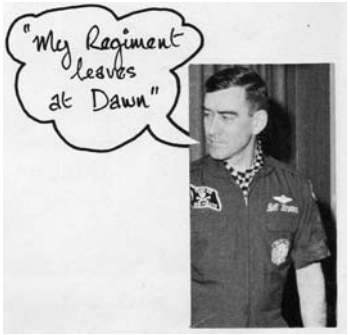
In the air, he is calculating and confident. His voice is gruff and steely cool (an acquired characteristic regardless of how he feels), piercing the garbled airwaves, barking terse commands. On the hunt he becomes part monster; scanning with the eyes of a falcon, has the reaction speed of a cat, the instincts of a barracuda, the cunning of a fox and the ability to rotate his head 360 degrees on all axes. When approaching the target, mind and metal fuse; spawning a killer child. Destruction is as sure and precise as Euclidian geometry. Steel and fire split the icy atmosphere—swift and merciless, he revels in his private moment of truth.

After the mission, he is tired, thirsty, dirty and bedraggled. Hair matted with helmet rat snarls and mask scars etched on a red, raw face, he knows he has bid and beaten the Grim Reaper. And then, with the oily odor of JP-4 clinging to a salt encrusted zipper-ripper, he'll unleash that shiny-eyed smile which says "let's press on to the O' Club and inhale a few tall frosty ones," whereupon he miraculously regenerates into a critical mass and with a flurry of hands, arms, legs, and body English, stuns his alcoholic cohorts with tales of "hairy" deeds.

A fighter jock is magic; a master imposter: Houdini with the top of his blouse unbuttoned. Sometimes he's old, sometimes young: immature, yet sage. He is instant fear and lasting bravery. The original metamorphosis, he hovers between play and business and can make your date vanish right before your eyes. He is past, present and future— rolled into one.

* * * * *

But most of all, he's got wings—with a throttle in his left hand and the stick in his right, he's shackled to a million dollar blow torch and always ready to get the maximum out of every minute of every hour of every day. ☻



Archetypical fighter pilot example at USAFE '72 "Farewell to the Hun" party at Lakenheath. He later wrote the beloved 2007 SSS Reunion ballad "Hun Drivers in the Sky." Do you know this guy?

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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 late March, July, and 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 you may be In Arrears!

TAC Attack – Second Fleagle Strip – July 1970

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://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0JCA/is_7_12/ai_112090770.

Plan Ahead for Reunions

Sabre Pilots Association
March 29 – April 2, 2009

Super Sabre Society
March 31 – April 2, 2009

Both events will be at the
Gold Coast Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada

Reservation forms will be in the summer and fall issues of both the* Sabre Jet Classics *magazine and* The Intake *journal.
Block your schedules NOW!

Back Cover Credits

This issue's back cover is a composite piece put together by our Contributing Photo Editor, Wally Mason. The back-ground photo is from J. D. Wetterling, http://www.jdwetterling.com/. It is, in fact, used on the front cover of his book,* Son of Thunder, *modified slightly to accommodate the Hun reminiscence prose by Jed Erskine found in Dave Anderton's book* North American F-100 Super Sabre. *In all aspects; the photo silhouetting the Hun, the words, and the photog work creating the whole are worthy of a "Well Done" award. Thanks, to all.

Parting Shots on Your Personal Contact Data and Dues

Remember to check your personal data at the SSS Web site. Current password is "things on the ass end of the airplane that open up when you call for AB." If they don't come to mind, or you don't have web access, give me a call at (505) 293-8396.

If something's wrong with your personal data, send the corrections to Pete Davitto. If you're dues delinquent, send the money direct to Lee Graves via the Georgetown P.O. Box.

Since dues are due on 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 every year. Works good and lasts a long time!

Have a great springtime! Ed.

F-100D … Reminiscence

This is beautiful, just airborne—on the wing. Lead is frozen in the sun. What a beautiful bird. I can hear myself sucking on oxygen. Gear is up, engine's humming, 5,000 foot check, disconnect the lanyard. Settle down, move out to route.

Beautiful down there. Armament safety check complete. Wonder who will receive these today? Between us, we have four snakeyes and four napes, plus 20 mike mike, of course. It's beautiful here, mountains below, puffy clouds above. A cryptic message on the radio—ignore it.

We're there—start down; speed brakes…ready…now…air buffet. Refocus…Refocus! All mechanical and calculating now. Emergency bail-out area. Location of friendlies. What's the target? Set 'em up hot.

Red golf balls drifting up look soft and silly. Lead's in hot…lead's off left. I'm in…check the switches. Check the target…airspeed…dive angle…pipper… release altitude. Forget all that now. Go for the feel of it.

Pickle button. EXCITEMENT, ADRENALIN…PULL! HARD…LEFT…LOOK…CHECK SIX. Going up, airspeed down, ease off, look at the smoke…soft turn…then, back in…there's a hooch—a truck—maybe that's a…What the Hell…WAKE UP…PICK ONE!

Keep turning—pulling—AIRSPEED...AIRSPEED. Off left—500 knots. Head this sucker home. Snappy rejoin and I'm back on lead's wing, settle down. Bird's OK. Lead's OK—not like last time! What a beautiful bird. We really shouldn't make her do these things, but she will survive it.

That's why I love her so.