

The Intake

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



— “Hun Fine Art Collection” —

“Robert G. ‘Bob’ Coleman II’s London Find” (Credits, page 2.)

523rd TFS Goes to France (Featured article, page 9.)

“Count” Flies Last Mission: A long lost Wee Willie Wilson saga (page 25).

The Intake

Fall 2017, Vol. 2, Issue 35

JOURNAL OF THE SUPER SABRE SOCIETY

7 Rare Air Defense Command Hun SYC, By George Demers

8 Current Events: 100th Anniversary for Later Hun UE Squadrons, By R. Medley Gatewood

9 523rd Tactical Fighter Squadron Goes to France, By Lacy Breckenridge

13 Current Events — Joe Smith Comes Home, By Dewey Clawson and Dave Young

16 George Elsea and His Tuy Hoa Ace, Assembled By Bob Salisbury

17 Dug In, An Extract from *I USED TO DO THAT—A FIGHTER PILOT'S STORY*, By Darrell Couch

18 From Dogfight to Détente, *An Interesting E-mail Conversation*, By R. Medley Gatewood

19 Book Review Time #1: “Jet Pioneer,” By Carl G. Schneider, reviewed By R. Medley Gatewood



Bob Coleman stumbled onto this oil on canvas painting by Englishman Dion Pears when he was killing time passing through London in January 1971 on his way to Upper Heyford to ferry a Hun to the States for ANG use.

By April of 2014, Bob was cleaning house and asked then-Editor Medley Gatewood if the painting might be of interest for display at the Military Aircraft Preservation Society's Air Museum. It's there now. See page 9 for the amazing story about this painting's history and travels getting to MAPS, 43 years after Bob acquired this treasure, now in safe-keeping!

22 Book Review 2: — “Vietnam to Western Airlines,” Produced and Edited By Bruce Cowee

24 The Day a CBU-2 Almost Got Me, By Stew Byrne

25 Another Wee Willie Wilson Story: “Count” Flies Last Mission, A newspaper article on Wee Willie Wilson

28 Jack Doub, “The Golden G-Suit,” Part III: Misty and Life After the AF, By John J. Schulz

31 It All Began With Her Enlistment and Later Commissioning in the USAF, By Pat Williams “*A Wife's Perspective*”

35 Multi-Engine Puke to Fighter Pilot, By Don Campbell

36 Tet Offensive of 1968 at Tuy Hoa, Phan Rang and Phu Cat: Part II of a two-part series, By John J. Schulz

39 Laughter Silvered Wings & More, *SSS Contacts, Dues Due, Back Cover Credits and Closing Remarks*

Last Chance !!!

If your **DUES STATUS** (printed on the envelope this came in) is **“2017 DUES NOT PAID,”** your **membership BENEFITS** will be **SUSPENDED** and this is the **very last issue** of **THE INTAKE** you will receive until you **get paid up!!**
See page 39.

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Staff Corner

From the President's Desk

Hoppy never ceases to amaze us. He pulled off the Vegas reunion with seemingly little sweat on his brow (no mean feat), receiving numerous kudos and some very excellent member suggestions for the next reunion in 2019. There is no rest for the wicked. Hop is now well into planning the next main event – the January unveiling of famed aviation artist Keith Ferris's painting in front of Hun #440, memorialized for its takeoff after the NVA and VC had overran part of Bien Hoa Airbase northeast of Saigon on the morning of Tet 1968. Old #440 is displayed at a prominent location at the Udvar-Hazy National Aviation and Space Museum in Chantilly, VA. A short ceremony will be held at the museum with an evening coat and tie dinner at a nearby hotel. See our website for particulars. Number 440 and the airfoil inscribed with SSS member names will serve as our SSS memorial. Both will be seen by millions of visitors over the years, who will view part of our legacies up close and personal. We hope you will attend.

But that is not enough. Hoppy is also putting together another F-100 flying event, at Ft. Wayne, IN. Dean Cutshall has once again offered to provide rides for the cost of gas (approximately \$5,000). The event will be similar to the last event with opportunity for wives, kids and grandkids to watch granddad fly a Hun! There will also likely be raffle rides. It will be a guaranteed good time full of fellowship and flight. And whoever thought we would ever fly the Hun again? Come see, hear and feel the afterburner we all remember

We are making a big press to collect biographies from those who do not have one on file. MB Barrett is an exceptional writer. She is hard at work on the phone, Internet and computer collecting your information. Bios, *The Intake*, the Internet, books, articles and videos are all “keys” to preserving our legacies. You may not care whether you have a bio on file, but your family, kids, grandkids and theirs will. The idea is to have our bios, accompanied by a video, available on the Internet for posterity. Those, along with our stories in the *Intakes*, #440 and the airfoil at Udvar-Hazy, personal items donated and displayed at the MAPS Museum, North Canton, OH, and books and articles written by us are our legacy. They are also consistent with our mission statement to: “...preserve the history of the F-100 Super Sabre and the men who flew it.”

Expect Jack Paddock, our webmaster, to give us some new looks soon on the website. Further, look for a new “Authors Corner” to be unveiled after January. This new service will offer SSS authors a way to list links to their books. Further, we will offer assistance to those who want to write and publish. Many talk about writing a book, few do it. We can help. We'll hook you up with an SSS author who offers encouragement, information and suggestions. Writing is part of the problem – publishing is another. We'll hook you up with SSS members that have done both. We want people to know who we were and what we did – ONWARD AND UPWARD! — *Shep*

From the Editor

Among my shorter and longer “careers,” I spent 25 years in journalism as a writer, editor, senior correspondent and deputy news director. The work ranged from wire service (UPI), to international radio broadcasting (VOA) to magazine chief editor (*Arms Control Today*). A lot of it was great fun, and in senior jobs, where I spent a third of my time, the added satisfaction of helping young folks become successful, often highly successful. But the most fun, in many ways, has been my last eight or nine years as an assistant editor, and now, editor, of *The Intake*.

Despite the “promotion” to “Editor” (seems like a century ago, but only five issues as editor), the one constant has been the pleasure of working very closely with “Med Ed” (who shifted jobs and changed his alias to “Pub Med”). The added pleasure has been my opportunity to work more closely with the several members of *The Intake* Staff, whose names are listed in the masthead on the previous page.

I mention this because it underscores my main point: *The Intake* is a real team effort in every way, and before it's published it goes through several phases of editing and is carefully scrutinized by many eyes. Thank heaven, because in my haste, and with the added focus of proper “layout,” I miss many little (*and some big!*) things that would markedly detract from the very high quality of our “product,” in terms of top quality copy editing as well as layout and design.

My main goal has been to maintain the top-notch publication standards you've seen the last decade or so. And that would be impossible without the hawk-eyed supervision still in place, with Medley working very closely with me, and equally impossible without the terrific job of copy editing and general comments by our Assistant Editors and Final Proof Readers. The whole process takes many hours over four months, and all of it with the goal in mind to “preserve the history, heroism and humor of the men who flew the mighty Hun.” I can't thank them all enough.

But there is a final element in all this: that is each of *you!* There is not a Hun driver who has ever lived who hasn't encountered “unforgiving seconds,” while helping create the wondrous history of the Hun in its Cold War roles. Nor is there one among us who hasn't encountered some mighty fun or funny things worth sharing. Please, we're getting low, so write and send a story you treasure. It's YOUR journal! — *JJ Schulz*

Incoming/Outgoing — Correspondence

Here are several items of interest received from members or other sources since Issue 34 hit the streets. We also publish here other pertinent information we consider worthy of note. As always, we welcome comments, additions and especially corrections (heaven forefend that we ever need correcting!). *Ed.*



A Thank You from Al Dempsey — Eighth Recipient of the Coveted SSS Outstanding Member Award

7/16/17 Email to John Schulz and Medley Gatewood with CC to Don Shepperd, Hoppy Hopkins and Greg Butler:



Al's on top of the World, after his surprise of the century!

Hi Medley and John: I have to start this out as an item for the Incoming Correspondence Dept. Just got my latest issue (#34) of the SSS *Intake* and again what an outstanding job you all do to keep our ancient minds refreshed with the Super Sabre's astounding history. I started thumbing through the issue to get the gist of the great stories I'm about to read, when I turned to page 20. WOW! Man, did that jump out at me. You guys got the flavor of the occasion perfectly. It was an amazing evening for me, just to be going to a gathering of Palm Springs Air Museum members and guests to celebrate the official opening of the General Ken Miles Korea/Vietnam Hangar, and all of a sudden to be the star of the show! What a complete surprise and honor for me. Most of the 200+ attendees knew nothing about the Super Sabre Society, but Greg Butler did a masterful job of filling them all in, while making the presentation. Certainly kudos to Greg and all the other SSS members who made it all happen, and in just about one month, start to finish. My sincere thanks to all of you. Triple Eight now sits in a prime spot in the new hangar, and for those of you who haven't made it yet, get down soon and add your signature to the side of the aircraft. Best, — **Al** *All the email addressees and several other SSSers concurred with the appropriateness of this event.*



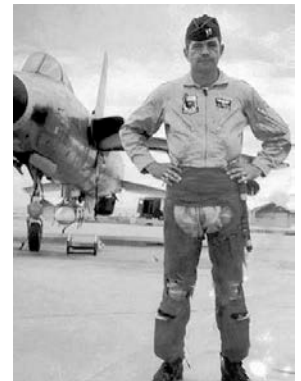
Important Picture with Incorrect ID of an Important Person

Hot on the heels of the Issue 34 mailing, we received an email from Bill Kriz, who informed us that the person ID'd as "Robert 'Percy' Purcell" in a picture on page 42 was NOT Percy!

Rather, Bob said, the person looks more like a trusty airman, probably a crew chief. Whoa!

Upon closer inspection, we agree. Medley blames Google for this SNAFU. It seems that among the dozen or so hits for Robert Purcell, there were only two in color: one for *The Cookie Caper* author, Jon Reynolds, and the other was the one Medley selected, thinking it was of Percy because the data with the picture, among other items, said the Thud (62-4252) was a combat loss and that the pilot was Capt. Robert Baldwin Purcell. Thus, Medley thought he had color pictures of both the *Cookie* author and the *Hero of the Caper* ... a perfect pairing for the two-page layout.

Given the benefits of hindsight and further Google research, Medley says he wishes he had selected and used the No Sierra picture shown here (R) of Percy in front of a Thud, even though it's only in black and white. Thanks to Bill Kriz for recognizing the ID error, and our apologies to our readers—especially to all of Percy's close friends.

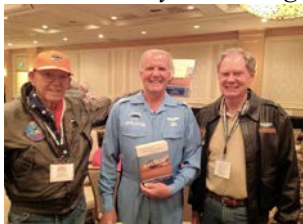


A hero pic of the real Robert. B. "Percy" Purcell.

[P.S. Later, SSSer Ben Dailey, also found and reported this serious error. Thanks to both "finders"!]



Self-described "Trash Hauler" and Historian Attends SSS Reunion 2017



Gatewood, Pietro & guest historian Bruce Cowee at the recent SSS reunion.

A thank you message from a guest: I had the honor of attending the SSS Reunion in Las Vegas in April 2017 as the guest of Joe "Jose" Thomas. Upon signing up for the reunion I was immediately contacted by my UPT Classmate (68E at Willie) Dick Pietro, who I learned is the Director at Large of the Society. Dick made sure that everything went smoothly for me at the reunion, and I had a wonderful time. I finally met Medley Gatewood, who I have only corresponded with by email, and I was able to order the beautiful color lithograph of the F-100 that has a place waiting on the wall in my den. In addition I was able to buy an autographed copy of Don Shepperd's book *Misty*. It doesn't get any better than that! Thank you all for making me, a humble trash hauler, feel so welcome at your reunion.

And, to whomever the Hun driver was who got **under** my Caribou and scared the crap out of me when I was flying up the coast at about 100 feet in December 1968, good show! Thank God it only happened once! — **Bruce Cowee** (*Bruce is the Producer/Editor of the acclaimed "Vietnam to Western Airlines" series of books. See our Book Review of his latest volume on page 22.*)



Friends of the Super Sabre (FSS) News (With apologies for not getting this into Issue 34 as requested. 😊)

"The FSS is pleased to announce the addition of Bettye Dunham as a Director of the FSS. Bettye is the sister of Bob

Dunham (RIP), SSSer and Co-founder of the FSS. Bettye comes from a military aviator's family. Her father, Robert Dunham Sr., was one of the IPs of the Tuskegee Airman, and of course brother Bob carried on the family tradition in the "Hun."

"Bettye brings many business and organizational attributes to the FSS. Currently she is CEO of Rauch, Inc. in New Albany, Indiana. That's a nonprofit organization supporting people with disabilities with such services as early childhood intervention therapy, employment, housing, day activities, and ALS and foreign language interpreting. Prior to relocating to New Albany Bettye worked in Columbus, Indiana, New York City and Melbourne, Australia.

"Bettye is no stranger to volunteer work. She is presently involved with Rotary International, has served as District Governor and is currently in a district leadership position. Bettye has stepped forward to become involved in the FSS because she remembers with great fondness the passion Bob had in the creation of the F-100 museum exhibit. We welcome Bettye and the many talents she brings to the creation of the Super Sabre Memorial Exhibit at the MAPS Air Museum in Canton, Ohio." — **Mike Dean, FSS COO** Thanks for the update, Mike.



Welcome aboard, Bettye!



The Second "Last A-7D Reunion"—EVER!



Blue Sky SLUFs

Ladies and Gentlemen: Summer and Fall have come and gone; Winter's coming on. And before you know it, 2018 will be upon us. And, of course, the biggest happening in 2018 is gonna be the "2nd Last A-7D Reunion"! That's right, rumors at the "Last A-7D Reunion" in November 2013 that there might be another Last A-7D Reunion were true. Here's the scoop!



SLUFs in Combat

Dates: 4 – 7 April 2018. Location/Address: Doubletree Inn by Reid Park, 445 S Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85711 (same place as the last two A-7D reunions). Check out all the details at <https://rbtp32.wixsite.com/slufreunion>. There you'll find rather hilarious descriptions of a variety of reunion events that attendees can pick and choose from, including: Hospitality Suite (each afternoon); Davis-Monthan AFB and ANG 162nd Wing Tours; Golf Practice Rounds and/or Friday Golf Tournament; Pima Air & Space Museum Tour; Arizona-Sonoran Desert Tour; Sabino Canyon Visit; Gala Reunion Dinner. "And the beat goes on

Also, there on the reunion website, you'll find a link to a Military Reunion Planners (MRP) website at which you will find Hotel info and how to make Room Reservations; additional Reunion Events info; and the all-important Event Reservations Forms (one for online credit card Payments; and another one for check Payments). If the link to the MRP website doesn't work for you, you can go via Direct to <https://militaryreunionplanners.com/SR/index.php?folder=A-7>.

If you don't do High Tech Stuff (like internet, email or computers) but would like to attend, or for other planning info, contact this reunion's Head Honcho, **Rick "Moose" Moio**, by; Phone 520-955-0573; U.S. Mail 7941 S Avenida Bonita, Tucson, AZ 85747; or Email sluf.reunion2018@gmail.com. Rick and his crew hope to see you next April!



Keith Ferris' Last Hun Painting & Lithographs Status [This is Keith's report to CEO "Hoppy" as of 5 Oct. 2017.]

The drawing is almost complete on canvas and ready for the painting process to begin. The drawing is probably my best ever. I have attached the best I can do in photographing it with an IPAD, but this photo doesn't do the drawing justice!

This is a real labor of love for me. I have followed the F-100 from its inception in the 1950s. It never occurred to me then that I was going to be able to enjoy much hands-on personal experience with the airplane. In 1963 I was to spend a week with the F-100 as an artist flying in the Thunderbird F-100F with the team from the East Coast back to Nellis where I was able to help change its engine before flying a practice demo in the slot. I was also to accompany the team and their F-100 maintenance crews for their European and Paris Air Show tour in 1965. That all said, here's the way forward.



Ferris at work, near ready to paint.

The size of the painting is 30" high by 48" wide (allowing a 15" by 24" or larger back lighted transparency). I'm expecting to finish the painting by the week of 15 November. I will then have the Hi Res scan created by my superb digital lab and delivered to you easily by the end of November. At that same time, we will be going to the press with an edition of 300 signed and numbered limited edition of prints plus 30 Artists Proofs. It's our goal to get the signed lithographs in the mail to subscribers by the end of the first or second week in December so as to be delivered in time for Christmas. — **Keith**

This report's bottom line is that this project is right on its production schedule—Merry Christmas to the 300! Ed. ▣

"Do You Remember": One-liners by the irrepressible Harv Damschen!

The Columbia Club, London? xxx Blab parties at Wheelus? xxx The "DOOM" club, Da Nang?
Trying to find Gorgazzo's after happy hour at the Aviano club? xxx "Wheels-in-the-well" fair fights? ▣

Stake Your Claim (SYC)

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

Many of the SYC titles coming in are becoming more complex and longer, and in some instances marginally different from those already validated and awarded. However, the SYC Department considers them worthy because each has a story to tell, so keep them coming.

Claim Challenges — ► Ira Holt - Claims an SYC, not so much a challenge but a 'me-too' as having "flown all models of the F-100 while with the same unit". The 188th TFS of the New Mexico Air National Guard flew the F-100 A, C and F. While deployed to Tuy Hoa in 1968-69, Ira flew a "D" model with the 309th TFS of the 31st TFW while still assigned to the 188th TFS. Ira's name will be added to the scoreboard along with George Demers SYC I-34 as the **"Only Hun pilots to fly all models of the F-100 while with the same unit."** Note: SYC policy is to accept only one "tie" for each claim title.



Luke IP of the Month and Quarter, 1st Lt. Tad Derrick poses here with an F-100C.

New Claims — ► Tad Derrick - SYC claims to have been "Luke AFB, CCTW lowest ranking (2/Lt.) and lowest total time (650 hours) to enter an F-100 CCT/IP upgrade training." After F-86 training at Williams AFB and F-100 training at Nellis AFB, Tad's end assignment was with the 506th FDW at Tinker AFB. The tour was cut short when the 506th FDW was stood down. Tad was PCSed to Luke AFB, still a 2/Lt., where he was greeted by the Luke CO, "What are you doing here?" It seems Luke CCTW only accepted pilots into the CCT/IP upgrade program who had a minimum of 1,000 hours total time. Tad had only 650 total hours with 228 logged in the F-100. However, Tad made a promise to the CO that he would be the best Luke CCT/ IP ever. The CO acquiesced, sent him to Nellis for a few more Hun hours and put Tad into the F-100 CCT/IP upgrade program as a Second Louie. Tad completed the CCT/IP upgrade program on 14 May 1959, the same day he made First Lieutenant and was assigned to the 4514th CCTS. Tad went on to fulfill his promise to the Luke CO within a year, by being selected the Luke AFB CCT "IP of the Month" and subsequently "IP of the Quarter." **Tad Derrick** is therefore awarded the SYC of **"Lowest ranking and lowest total time to enter the Luke AFB CCT/IP training = 2nd Lt. 650."**

(Editor's P.S: You'll never guess who my IP was in 1966 in the 481st TFS at Cannon when I checked out in the Hun. Yep, the now-battle tested Tad Derrick, back from a long Vietnam TDY.)

► **Laird Leavoy** - On behalf of his SSS father, submits an SYC claiming that **Les Leavoy (RIP)** was the "Oldest F-100 operational pilot on active duty in the USAF at 52 years old." Les was Air Force Advisor to the 149th TFG, Texas Air National Guard, at Kelly AFB at the time. Let's see if this SYC will bring on a challenge as we award the SYC to **Les Leavoy** titled **"Oldest USAF operational Active Duty F-100 pilot at 52 years."**

► **Herman Westbrook** - SYC claims to have been designated on orders as an "IP in the F-100F model not ever having flown an F-100F before, let alone never having been in the backseat." About the 1956 time period, Herman was assigned to the 510th FBS at Langley AFB, Virginia, when his Ops Officer, Billy Cothorn, told him he was now an F-100/IP and to take that shiny new two seat F-100F sitting on the ramp to Seymour Johnson AFB and check out some pilots in the jet. Before Herman could say "But, but, Sir," Herman was on his way to Seymour Johnson with fresh IP orders tucked in his flight suit and flying the F-100F for the very first time.

One can only imagine the angst of both the front seater and Herman the IP as they mounted their trusty steed, both for the very first time in their respective seat positions. The SYC titled of **"Only F-100F IP to never have flown from the backseat before"** is hereby awarded to **Herman Westbrook**. However, we suspect this new SYC title will be challenged, pronto!

► **Ron Green** - Claim basis is that: Ron was at Tan San Nhut AB, Vietnam, in December 1965 flying with the 416th TFS as number two in a three-ship formation when fog swept over the Tan San Nhut airport. The tower recalled all IFR traffic, but did not close the field for weather, and allowed VFR traffic to take-off. Ron said he had to taxi with the canopy open to keep lead in sight taking the runway. The three-ship lined up on Runway 12 and took 15 second spacing for takeoff. Ron held 120 degrees on his heading indicator and broke into the clear above the fog as flaps were retracted. The SYC is awarded to **Ron Green** as the **"Only SSS Hun pilot to take-off on a VFR clearance in Zero/Zero weather conditions."**

Parting Thoughts — ► The Tad Derrick SYC is similar to Jerry Fowler's I-23 SYC "Lowest type time for Hun CCT/RTU IP qualification" however, we elected to make Tad's SYC a separate entry, because of the story behind it and the different CCT/IP qualifications at Luke and Nellis. ■

Rare AIR DEFENSE COMMAND Hun SYC

By George Demers

We don't know of any other SYC about ADC Huns "Active Air Scrambles," so here's the full story as promised in I-34.

During the period from around 1960 to 1965, we were on five-minute day alert status with F-100As of the 118th FIS, Connecticut ANG, at Bradley IAP, CT. We routinely would complain among ourselves that during all our scrambles, (usually twice or more a week) we would get vectored around all the Boston and New York traffic, only to get to altitude and be advised that this was a *practice scramble*. The one and only time we actually had a real world "ACTIVE AIR SCRAMBLE," I was the lead aircraft! I don't recall the exact date of this unique occurrence, but it was probably in 1962.

At the end of the climb corridor, where we would normally be advised that this was a practice scramble, I was given a new climb vector and assigned my final altitude. To my best recollection, it was from Shalimar Control, located at Griffiss AFB, NY. We flew out over Cape Cod and then went approximately 250 NM out into the Atlantic on this same heading, which had not changed since level-off, all the way to the target. From about 15 miles, I obtained a "Tally Ho" on what appeared to be a single B-47 aircraft. I advised Shalimar of the sighting, and was then requested to get a closer visual for a positive ID (we were now about 10 miles from the B-47).

In accordance with the Rules of Engagement we were operating under at that time, I was cleared in to obtain the visual, and my wingman, Captain Don E. Joy Jr, was cleared to break the "ARMAMENT SEAL" on his "MASTER ARM SWITCH"! He was then directed to climb to a "Perch Position," while I went in for the visual ID. I moved in closer and confirmed that the aircraft was in fact a B-47. Shalimar then asked if I could get the tail number of the B-47. I then slid onto his left wing and gave Shalimar his tail number. After a few minutes, I saw the pilot look over his left shoulder—and do a "DOUBLE TAKE" at the F-100A sitting on his left wing (I think he wrenched his neck).

During the RTB, I was advised that the aircraft was out of Spain on Emergency War Orders (EWO) and under strict radio silence as requested by HQ SAC. So, the pilot must have been extremely surprised to see a single-engine fighter aircraft on his wing some 250 NM out over the Atlantic!

For us, just another day in the life of a "Day Fighter Interceptor Pilot"? Nope, rather a unique experience worthy of a SSS SYC, some 55 years later, eh what? — **George Demers** ■



The target was a friendly.

Front Cover Painting's History and Travels

Then-Editor Medley Gatewood first became aware of the Hun Fine Art featured on this issue's front cover when its owner, Bob Coleman, called (in 2014) and they discussed Bob's "London Find." Bob was searching for a good home for it, because he was in the downsizing business ... as are many other aging SSS members. Bob was aware of the MAPS Air Museum with which the FSS and SSS were working out dual partnerships (that have now resolved and are working well). So, Medley put Bob in contact with Ken Ramsay, the MAPS Director, who was and is a member of both the SSS and FSS. Long story short: This piece of Hun Fine Art is now proudly displayed in the "Super Sabere Memorial Exhibit" sponsored by the FSS and the SSS. This article expands on the Front Cover credits on page 2, beginning with Bob's story about the art. Ed.



Medley: Here is the skinny on the oil on canvas art we discussed by phone. Framed, it measures 39 x 31. I was passing through London on my way to Upper Heyford to ferry a Hun back to the states for Guard use in January 1971. While musing around in the popular Covent Garden Market, I spotted this painting. I asked the gentleman-artist what he wanted for it. He said 75, and I said I would be right back. I went to Columbia Club where I was staying and cashed a check for \$75, then went back to pick up the painting and handed the man the \$75 American. He looked at me in amazement and said in a British accent, "That would be £75 pounds sterling [circa \$100] laddie." "Too much," I said. He paused for a few seconds, then, with a wistful smile and twinkle in his eye, said, "Then it's all yours, Yank." So that painting hitched a ride in the ferry Hun to Torrejon AB, Spain; from there to Shaw; on to Kelly, and then back to England AFB, from whence I had come. The British painter is Dion Pears (from Surrey). He said he got the idea while listening to some jocks in a pub describing the war in SEA. They gave him a small picture of a Hun, and there you have it ... the rest of the story. This painting started off in London and finished up here in GA after 16 moves—without a scratch!!! — **Bob Coleman**

As you can see, the Pears' painting is conspicuous in one of the displays of the Hun Memorial Exhibit. For those of us who knew FSS co-founder Bob Dunham (RIP), it's nice to see a mannequin facsimile of Bob guarding this exhibit ... it's proof that dreams really can come true! Here's to the MAPS-FSS-SSS hookup and may its future dreams come true, too! RMG ■

Current Events — 100th Anniversary for Later Hun UE Squadrons

By R. Medley Gatewood

America formally entered WWI on April 6, 1917, and in that pivotal year, several fighter squadrons that would later fly F-100 aircraft were first activated and thus are now in their centennial year of existence. We were curious as to which squadrons had achieved this noteworthy 100th anniversary, some of which we know are formally celebrating their longevity. So, we tasked our “Hun History in Cloth” guru, Associate SSSer Randy Troutman, to dig up the facts concerning this historical matter. Here’s what he came up with, in answer.

“I have verified the activation dates of various squadrons with official DOD records. The bottom line is that there were 12 units that fit this criterion. Four were active duty and eight were ANG: 35th FS, 36th FS, 55th FS, 90th FS, 107th FS, 110th BS, 112th FS, 113th FS, 118th FS, 119th FS, 120th FS, and the 128th ACCS.

“The ANG units were in the 100-series of numbers when first activated, but were renumbered in 1918, then returned to their original numbers eventually, well before they came to their Hun eras. They, and the active duty units listed above, now can claim their first century of existence, some of it flying the first Century-Series fighter, our beloved Hun.”

At least two of the 12 units Randy identified have created special patches to commemorate that achievement, and at least one (the 90th FS) celebrated with a blowout party which was attended by several Dicemen SSSers. Ever the Lieutenant, Travis Vanderpool sent out a short report to selected 90th alumni with killer pictures that we deem worthy of publication. Here ‘tis. Enjoy!



35th FS



36th FS

Fellow Dicemen, [And SSSers]

It was a moving and memorable experience to be a part of the 90th Celebration (AUG 17-20). The guys there put on a great program. After a couple of drinks at the Dice bar, I was taken back to our days in 1967. It was so encouraging to see that all the days of political correctness had not bleached the fighter pilot out of fighter pilots. They are so much like us, or, like we were in 1967. Right Tip? Tip had a photo made with all of the wives. Bob Baxter came. I had not seen Bob since he left Bien Hoa. Tip gave a great speech at the banquet.

As usual, Abe Tanaka sent the Dicemen the traditional Hawaiian beads for everyone—as well as that great Hawaiian bread. All was a big hit. Remember the correspondence we used to get from the old WWI Dice guy in 1967? Well, that old feller is now us! I think it was very clear ... the young guys with their F-22 Raptor toys sincerely appreciated our being there to celebrate and for being a part of their heritage. I've attached some photos. — LT



The party kicked off at 1700 in the Dice Bar. At 1930, there was a time out for the traditional fighter pilot “Piano Burn.” See below.



Tip Clark strikes a pose, with Travis and Bob Baxter grinning.



The old Dice guy now with two young Dice guys in 2017.



This traditional ceremony was unknown to this author, but it looks like something fighter pilots would dream up for entertainment!



This steed flown by today's young fighter pilots is definitely NOT your father's Oldsmobile.

Rather, it's a dream that old “First of the Century-Series” Hun drivers really wish could come true. It's not to be, but as the song goes, “Dream on—Dream on!”

523rd TACTICAL FIGHTER SQUADRON GOES TO FRANCE

By Lacy “Breck” Breckenridge

We’ve published various stories about Huns and other aircraft types over the years having to do with, or referring to, the 1961 Berlin Crisis and U.S. responses to that major Cold War event. Here’s another that might well be “the definitive article” (as RIP Bob Dunham might have called it) due to its length and the author’s rich reporting of details. Enjoy! Ed.

Pertinent Information: Location: Temporary duty (TDY) at Myrtle Beach AFB, SC, August 1961. My Status: Capt., USAF, D Flight Commander, 523rd TFS, 27th TFW, Cannon AFB, Clovis, NM.

The Prequel, About 2100 on 4 September: “American people, don’t let them do this to us.” With that short sentence from Lt. Jack Frantz, our busload of 27 fighter pilots broke out in loud spontaneous laughter—he broke the ice! Prior to that, it was a completely quiet, serious and somber atmosphere as we were being bussed to our F-100s. The weather was terrible, with heavy rain and gusty winds, but not as bad as it had been. In fact, it had been a horrible afternoon. What were we doing here anyway? Was this trip necessary?



This event started about four days earlier at Cannon. The 27th TFW had several squadrons on alert since early August because the Soviet Union was threatening to close the air corridors going into West Berlin. The Cold War was sure getting Hotter! This morning, the telephone woke me

at 0230, and a serious voice said report to the squadron with packed bag. Except for toilet articles, it had been packed for three weeks in anticipation of deployment. At 0530, I was airborne in an F-100F, leading three other pilots in “Ds” going to Myrtle Beach AFB. My squadron arrived with 24 aircraft and 27 pilots (three aircraft were Fs). All of our Maintenance personnel, plus their equipment and deployment kits, arrived late that afternoon in C-130 cargo aircraft.

It was a typical military “hurry up and wait scenario,” so for three days, we were busy keeping tabs on our aircraft and equipment. Now it was Labor Day, 4 September, and Robert (our first son) had just turned four. (Jeffrey, #2 son was only three weeks old.) Most of us pilots were enjoying the swimming pool at the O’ Club, because the high alert status required us to stay on base, so that was about all we could do to pass the time. That day, the sky was high overcast; it was humid, but did not seem hot for this time of year. About 1130, I had just finished a hamburger, after enjoying about three hours on a very comfortable lounge chair soaking up the sun, when we were recalled to the Ops Building, told to preflight our aircraft, including running up the engine and topping off the fuel tanks, and then report back for the deployment briefing to Chambley AB, France. There was a major hurricane south of Bermuda tracking

toward the island, and the “powers that be” decided to launch us to Europe before the storm interfered with our capability to go east for several more days. After a 1300 briefing, we were instructed to go into our “crew rest” in special “blackout” quarters, and to be awakened at 1900 for dinner, followed by a final briefing prior to our scheduled departure time of 2200.

Night departures for non-stop flights to Europe were pretty standard, so that we could make daylight landings at strange airfields after the crossing. Unfortunately, the weather in our immediate area had become very unstable, and after about four hours of sleep, all hell broke loose with tremendous thunderstorms moving across the base in squall lines about 30 minutes apart. Lightning hit the electrical transformer just outside our building, and it exploded with a tremendous noise, so there we were without lights and air conditioning. The room temperature got hot in a hurry. I doubt if anyone slept after that. But I stayed in bed and tried to rest the best I could until we were told to pack our bags and go to dinner. I was extremely uncomfortable, having blistered badly from the stay at the pool—especially my shoulders and back. Prior to going into crew rest, the Flight Surgeon had given me several tubes of ointment that helped for a while, but I was still hurting, especially after I put on my parachute before going to the airplane. As a matter of fact, I peeled three times in as many weeks!

Back to Real Time: After the final briefing on weather and flight planning data, we boarded the bus wearing ponchos, and shortly thereafter in complete silence except for the steady pounding rain, Lt. Frantz made his unsolicited, and never-to-be-forgotten remark on our bus, “American people, don’t let them do this to us.”

None of us were exactly anxious to go. It was miserable pre-fighting in the rain, and impossible to get into the cockpit without getting wet. Our squadron commander, Lt. Col. Clifford Meier, in an F-model with Lt. David Sands in his back seat, led the first eight out to takeoff position with two spares holding nearby. For such a departure, the first four aircraft taxi 1,000 feet down the runway so their jet blast during run-up would have minimum impact on the second flight of four holding



“Breck’s” Hun service: Itazuke & Cannon, ’57-’65. Then came the Phantoms: C & E ‘till ’74.

behind. I was leader of the second four in an F-model with Roy Moore in my back seat. Other members of my flight were Lt. Bruce MacLennan, Capt. Bob Wargowski, and Capt. Pat Barry. Normally, in such a line up, the #2 aircraft is stationed on his leader's left wing, with #3 on the leader's right wing, and #4 on #3's right wing, with each wingman maintaining wingtip clearance. Per standard procedure, the second flight holds brakes and makes their final engine run-up, then holds in position in idle while the lead flight checks their engines.

However, we had a problem, and it was with the prophetic Lt. Jack Frantz. Prior to taxiing onto the runway, Flight Lead had made a final radio check and each pilot except Jack (#2 in the first 4-ship) checked in with Call Sign. After lining up on the runway and repeated calls to Jack to check in, it was apparent that he could hear, but his radio transmitter was inoperative, producing only an unreadable squeal. Lead ordered him off the runway and called for Spare #1 to prepare to take his place. But Jack held his position on Lead's left wing, so the spare couldn't move into position, and it was time to take off. It seemed Jack was determined to go, regardless of his radio. After more futile attempts to get Jack off the runway, Lead took off with Jack on his left wing. Thirty seconds later, Three and Four took off in formation. After holding for one minute more, I led the second flight off with the same spacing as the first four.

Crossing the Pond: We entered the clouds at 400 feet, climbing at a reduced airspeed, expecting to break out on top of the clouds and leveling off so my Three and Four [Flight numbers Seven and Eight] could join up before we continued climbing up to 37,000 feet. Also, with the four aircraft in front of us, I turned 30 degrees right, as directed by radar control to insure spacing, and we finally got on top at 30,000 feet. Eventually, all eight of us joined up in loose formation as we headed for our first inflight refueling point to rendezvous with KB-50 tankers over Bermuda.

Side Note 1: During the climb out in the clouds, St. Elmo's Fire was all over my cockpit. There was a continuous flow of it in strings of beads rolling from the nose of my airplane up to and over my windscreen. Bruce, in close formation on my left wing, said, "Look at me!" His F-100 was completely outlined in St. Elmo's Fire, as was mine, so he said. That's the only time in 45 years of flying that I have ever seen such a dramatic display of that type of electromagnetic energy.

Side Note 2: In just a few minutes after departing Myrtle Beach AFB, we were "feet wet," meaning that we had departed land and were over the Atlantic Ocean with

only Bermuda and the Azores Islands between us and Portugal ... about 2,500 miles over deep water in a single engine jet fighter at night. Fortunately, the F-100 Super Sabre had a reliable engine and systems, but it does make one wonder and increases the "pucker factor." After departing good ole *terra firma*, it's amazing how many new, weird engine noises you hear that you've never heard before; also, the engine oil pressure gage seems to increase in size, and becomes a primary flight instrument.

The cyclonic feature of the advancing hurricane south of our position gave us headwinds stronger than forecast, so we rendezvoused with our tankers with considerably less fuel than programmed. We had to descend from 37,000 feet to 19,000 feet to join up in trail with the KB-50 tankers. The KB was a modified version of the B-29 Super Fortress bomber of World War II. Their optimum refueling airspeed was 220 knots. That's very slow for a fighter, especially after taking on a big fuel load.

The rendezvous itself was very good, with all eight fighters positioned in trail with their assigned tanker. As I recall, there was one tanker for two fighters. The tanker has a tear-shaped pod on each wing tip that contained a hose they would reel out to about 60 feet. On the end of the hose was a funnel shaped receptacle called the "basket" for the probe on the fighter. Our F-100s had the original straight, short, refueling probes, about 6 to 8 feet long, extending out of the right wing about 6 feet laterally from the fuselage.

The forward end of the probe on the D (single-seat model) was about even with the pilot's head, while on the F-model, the end of the probe was about three feet behind the head of the front seat pilot, which made it difficult for the front seat pilot to put the probe in the receptacle. It was an easy task for the rear seat pilot because the front tip of the refueling probe was forward of his head. We were experiencing moderate turbulence at our refueling altitude, and the extended hose was oscillating up and down an estimated 10 to 15 feet, making it very difficult to put the probe in the basket, to say the least.

After several unsuccessful tries to hookup, I was approaching "bingo fuel," a specified fuel state that would require me to land at Bermuda if I could not "hook up" with the tanker in about five minutes.

That's a long time, so I gritted my teeth, so to speak, and finally hooked up and began taking fuel. Shortly thereafter, the tanker pilot transmitted that I had received my scheduled fuel. I looked at my gages, and I was 2,000 pounds (300 gallons) short of what I should have after leaving him. I told him I needed 2,000 more pounds, and he said that I had the scheduled amount, and he would have to save the rest for the fighters behind us or they would have to land at Bermuda. I told Meier to tell him to give me the fuel or I would have to land at Bermuda, so I got the fuel, and so did the guys behind us, and all of the KB -50 tankers returned safely to Bermuda as scheduled.

Side Note 3: These two-part-humorous, part-scary events happened to Squadron Commander Meier with Lt.



523rd Huns deployed somewhere (it was a way of life). Note the 450 tanks. A Dave Menard pic via M. Benolkin.

David Sands in his back seat. About 30 minutes after the first refueling, Lt. Sands got bored in the back seat, and decided to check the fuel gages without informing Meier. This is accomplished by pushing a button and observing needle-type fuel gages as they decrease from full to low, and at a prescribed point, a red low fuel light on a caution warning panel in both cockpits comes on. I think Meier almost had a heart attack when that light came on, and his comments to Sands are not printable. Shortly after that, Sands, in an effort to be productive, and again relieve his boredom, decided to replace one of the individual instrument light bulbs that was burned out. He found a spare light bulb and in the process of inserting it, the light bulb shorted, sparked, and blew out all of his instrument lights in the back seat. Needless to say, with sparks in the back seat, Meier almost had his second heart attack. In strong fighter pilot language, he ordered Sands to just sit there and not touch anything!!!

Our second air refueling was scheduled to rendezvous with KC-135 tankers over Lajes Field, on the island of Terceira (one of nine islands of the Azores, which are about 800 miles west of Portugal). Again, all of us were very low on fuel, so the tankers flew toward us and adjusted the rendezvous 200 miles west of Lajes. All fighters took fuel as scheduled, and the tankers stayed with us until we were at our original drop-off point east of Lajes; the tankers then proceeded to England.

The third air refueling was accomplished over landfall at Portugal as scheduled, with KB-50s, except the probe of Jack Frantz's aircraft stuck in the basket. When he backed off to disconnect, the hose pulled out of the tanker and wrapped around his bird, so he was accompanied by Meier and made a precautionary landing in Portugal. The rest of us landed at Chambley AB in France after an interesting 9 hours and 30 minutes flight.

Operations and Life in France: We were the first USAF combat flying unit to arrive in France in answer to the call for TAC Air. In fact, I was the first 523rd airplane to land at Chambley. We were welcomed by USAF Major General

Spicer and staff, who had driven down from Germany. USAFE had maintained a very small "Base Keeping" force at Chambley to keep the facilities operating. The 429th TFS, also from Cannon, arrived the next day, and the base was suddenly deluged with a large number of officers and airmen.

My squadron moved into an empty barracks, so we had to go to a warehouse that stored War Reserve Material to get beds, mattresses, chairs, etc. for our rooms, which we shared "two to a room." Captain Pat Barry was my roommate.

Also, they had to open a dining hall to feed all these new people, and almost ran out of food on the third day before ample supplies were trucked in from Germany.



Officers and airmen had to share the same "Club", and that was a bad situation that I will not bother to explain.

The day after we arrived, our airplanes were loaded with ammo and air-to-air missiles, and we were put on various stages of alert in anticipation of any aggressive actions by the Soviets to close the air corridors going into West Berlin. After a week of full alert, we were ordered to stand down half of our jets and fly training missions. As a rule, the weather was lousy with lots of rain, fog and minimum ceilings. However, it was not unusual to be on top of the clouds at 5,000 feet, so we practiced air combat maneuvering. Also, it was not unusual to find different types of fighters from other bases ... and anybody was fair game! For example, one day my wingman and I bounced a couple of F-105s, and while we were chasing them, a couple of French F-84s got on our tail, and then a couple of Canadian F-86s jumped the French; we were in a huge tail chase! We had air-to-ground (strafing, dive bombing, and rocket) requirements, but the weather was usually too bad to use the weapons ranges in our area. After a month of that, and with no relief in sight, we were allowed to send a few airplanes to Wheelus AB in Libya, whose mission was to provide air-to-ground training ranges for fighters stationed in Europe.

Life at Chambley was groady. It was always cold and wet, without much to do. Some of the guys bought an old Hudson. That clunker, plus Lt. Colonel Meier's GI ever-ready, sedan staff car, provided transportation to visit the Base Exchange at *Toul-Rosières* AB, about 20

miles south of us. There was a cafe near the base that opened for dinner, but you had to make reservations and specify what you wanted to eat, because they would only buy food for that day. The wine and cheese were always good. It was about a two-hour drive to Ramstein AB in Germany. Meier would occasionally take a few of us there for a good steak. I went on one trip and observed a very humorous situation at the O' Club. Before going into the dining room for dinner, I went to the men's room. There was another officer standing at the adjacent urinal. I nodded and said hello; I did not recognize him. I looked at him again as we were washing our hands. The lighting was better, and both of his eyes were "black" and somewhat swollen—he looked like a raccoon. Only then did I recognize Dan Peterson. Dan had been in the squadron about a month—not long enough to be checked out in the F-100. Consequently, he had arrived as a passenger on an advance airplane and had come to Ramstein AB the preceding day without my knowledge. He said someone



Chambley was off the beaten path. Definitely "provincial"!

had slipped up behind him last night and really beat him up, but he was unable to recognize his assailant. I did not know Dan very well because of his short tenure in the squadron. However, I did know that he had been shot down during the Korean War and spent time as a POW, during which the North Koreans had tortured him by pulling out his fingernails with a pair of pliers. I had been told that Dan, as a rule, was calm, cool and collected. However, he could get very rowdy and aggressive after a few drinks. Anyway, several of us and four Canadian fighter pilots were standing in the dining room foyer telling “war stories” and having a drink while waiting to be seated for dinner.

As a rule, Canadian fighter pilots are very “gung ho,” rowdy and mischievous ... they march to their own tune! We were standing in a circle when Dan joined us. Shortly thereafter, one of the Canadian pilots positioned himself directly in front of Dan, reached out and grasped Dan’s tie, and said something like “My, what a beautiful tie, may I see the label?” As Dan accepted the compliment with a smile and started to say “thank you,” the Canadian stepped forward as if to examine it closer and identify the label on the tie. He grasped the tie in his teeth, ripped it in half and handed that part to Dan. Unknown to us, that was one of the Canadian’s favorite pranks. For an instant, Dan just stood there in shock, not believing what had happened. Then you could clearly see his face turning red as his anger and outrage was building while he was contemplating retaliatory action after being caught off guard. Fortunately, Colonel Meier was in our circle, and he stepped in front of Dan and ordered Dan leave the immediate area to cool off. Except for Dan, all present thought it was a great joke, and roared with laughter. In about 15 minutes, Dan rejoined our group, approaching with his hands behind his back and a big friendly smile on his face. String ties were popular at the time, and he had borrowed one from the Club Officer, because ties were required and the office kept some available. After several minutes of group dialogue, Dan excused himself to go to the bathroom; instead, he slipped behind the pilot who had administered the *coup de grâce* to his tie. From that position, Dan reached around and grabbed the guy’s tie, cut it in half with a pair of scissors and handed the severed part to the owner. Another roar of laughter. It was tit for tat for Dan; the Canadian pilot merely said “Oh, I say, that’s not cricket ole’ chap!” The remainder of the evening was uneventful. However, the next morning we returned to the O’ Club for breakfast and three of the Canadian fighter pilots were mopping the floor for one of the employees. It seems that they had stayed up all night (so they said) drinking, and wanted something else to do ... I believe it. They were a bunch of real rogues.

When Lacy submitted this article back in 2015, he said he had written it for his children and grandchildren, “...and that is why it explains things (terms, procedures, etc.) in more detail than needed for an Intake article.” True enough, and that’s why we removed some of those explanations, Lacy. But other than that, editing the rest of your manuscript was a piece of cake. Well done Lacy! So, readers, please consider submitting your children/grandchildren stories, too! Ed.

When fighter pilots get bored, they can be very conniving and mischievous, as well as very inventive. There was a large lounge in the middle of our barracks. Except for going to the base theater, reading, or telling war stories, playing cards, and/or drinking beer in the lounge, there was nothing to do in the evening. I guess Dave Sands got really bored; he stacked empty Heineken beer cans (soldered together), and covered an entire wall. On one occasion, Jack Frantz had a few too many and passed out. We put him in his bed. One of the pilots had a blow-up female mannequin. For want of something else to do, they pulled the covers off of Jack, and took pictures of him in various positions with the manikin. I don’t think he ever lived that one down!



Dave Sands (RIP in 2016) was among the bored.

After three months at Chambley, we were replaced by two Air National Guard squadrons flying F-84Fs from Holloman AFB, New Mexico. On our return trip, we landed at Lajes Field, spent the night, and then air refueled to Pope AFB, NC, where we cleared U.S. Customs, and then went on to Cannon AFB the next day. When we were on the last leg, over Louisiana at 35,000 feet, I asked Fort Worth Center to tell me as soon as we crossed the Texas border. He did, after which I told the rest of the squadron they could remove their oxygen masks and breathe that pure Texas air.



Somewhere along their groady way, the 523rd came up with this patch commemorating this historic deployment.

In Closing: After we left France, the situation with the Russians cooled off, and the Guard units also returned home. Overall, it was a good experience.

I don’t have a list of all the members of the 523rd TFS who were on this deployment, and several have now flown west. My apologies to those not included with these patriots who I do recall ... some vividly! Lt. Col. Clifford Meier (RIP), Squadron Commander; Major Peter Boyes (RIP), Operations Officer; Captains Richard Davis, Dan Peterson (RIP), Albert Martin, (RIP), Pat Barry, Bob Wargowski; Lieutenants Mike Ryan (RIP), Bruce (Big Fella) MacLennan, David Sands (RIP), Jim Davis (RIP), Karol Bobko, Richard Koehnke, Al Logan and Paul Orf (RIP). A fine group of fighter pilots, all!!! ■

Current Events — Joe Smith Comes Home

By Dewey Clawson and Dave Young



Then-1st Lt. Joseph "Joe" S. Smith.

Pertinent Facts: F-100 pilot Joe Smith went MIA in Cambodia on 4 APR '71. Forty-six years later, his remains found their way back to his hometown, a small village in Illinois. The whole town, and a lot of other folks, turned out for his homecoming. This report on that is by two pilots who knew him well: Dewey Clawson, who flew with him at Phan Rang, and Dave Young, who was a UPT classmate of Joe's. Good job, guys. Thanks for sharing. **Ed.**

At first glance, there's not much to Assumption, Illinois, population 1,168. Surrounded by acres of cornfields and soybeans, the most notable architecture is the hundred-foot-high grain elevators. But when we entered the town on Monday, July 17, 2017, those towering elevators didn't even catch our eye. What captured our attention—and our hearts—were the American flags lining the highway—hundreds of them, gently flowing in the Midwest breeze. Assumption was welcoming home one of their own: Joe (aka "Smitty") Smith. On the previous Saturday, July 15th, hundreds of well-wishers, fire and emergency vehicles from all over Central Illinois, hundreds of motorcycles, and an eight-mile stretch of highway lined with American flags, awaited the fallen pilot who was finally returning to his home.

On April 4th, 1971, Smitty was shot down in Cambodia flying an F-100. He was only 25 years old. It was not until this past June that we were notified Smitty was finally coming home. It took 46 years for his remains to be located, positively identified and returned by the USAF to his family, friends and hometown of Assumption.

Can one feel joy and sadness simultaneously? We did, as did Smitty's other fellow Vietnam squadron mates, USAF pilot training classmates, and other friends who were in attendance.

We felt an acute sadness as we thought of all that Smitty had missed out on in his too-short life, what he would have contributed and accomplished in the ensuing years—along with Elaine, his wife of six months—when he left for Vietnam.

St. Mary's Catholic Church, the location of the funeral mass, was packed, standing room only. As the service was performed, with eulogies given by college roommates, family members and boyhood friends, interjected with patriotic music and songs, the good feelings grew.

Among the mourners was Smith's widow, Elaine Mills, since remarried, who had been married to Smith for less than a year when she was widowed. Mills did not speak during the church service, because this was obviously a very emotional time for her. She did write a prepared statement and it was delivered by her sister, Annette Unser Brinker.

Fr. Alan Hunter opened the hour-long service, saying that those left to mourn cannot understand why Smith lost his life so young. Fr. Hunter said only God knows the answer to that: "Whatever purpose Joe was created for was complete at his death," he added. "We do not understand this, and maybe the time will come when some of this will become clear. But we will know the full answer when we join Joe in heaven."

On behalf of her sister, Annette praised the memory of all fallen veterans who "watered the tree of freedom" with their blood. "The price that our freedom demanded, didn't allow you to come back," she said. "We pray for peace ... welcome home, Joe, welcome home."

Several friends spoke at the service, including retired Air Force Col. Robert Plebanek, a University of Notre Dame roommate, fellow pilot and his brother-in-law. Smitty and Plebanek had been the best man at each other's weddings, and Smitty was the godfather of Plebanek's son.

Plebanek tearfully recalled his friend as a patriotic, dedicated man who flew more than 100 combat missions and earned two DFCs. He said that he would always see Smith as that dashing 25-year-old fighter pilot ready to face a challenge with bravery and determination. "Well, Joe, your journey is complete. We salute you," said Plebanek.

The Col. asked Smith's fellow combat pilots and pilot training squadron mates, who came from across the nation for the service, to stand and be recognized. The assembled mourners honored them with an extended round of applause. At the graveside, those pilots each stepped forward to leave coins on Smith's casket, honoring the age old tradition to "throw a nickel on the grass."

For those of us who had served with Smitty, the day really hit home when we entered the cemetery adjoining St Mary's. As we passed through the flags, the people lining the streets, the police saluting and the fire truck with the giant American flag hanging from its ladder raised in salute, we felt a strong sense of pride and happiness, for the long overdue honors being



* Nancy Clawson's pic of Vietnam and UPT buddies and their mates.



The procession enters the cemetery to the haunting sound of bagpipes. Pic by Clay Jackson.

slow, curving salute over the cemetery before disappearing to the north.

The graveside service began with the flyover—getting everyone’s attention—and ended with the traditional sequence of a military funeral: the 21-gun salute by an Air Force rifle team, the Air Force bugler playing Taps, and the ceremonial folding of the American flag and presentation to Elaine by the Air Force honor guard.



Amid no shortage of “Old Glory” flags, the “bugler” plays Taps on a trumpet.

rendered to our friend, and the closure finally bestowed to family, friends and the town. The procession included a bagpiper playing the haunting “Going Home” from Dvorak’s New World Symphony, and then “Amazing Grace.” And as the mourners gathered at graveside, a lone C-130 approached low, out of the west and flew in a



The attention-getting C-130 approaches the gathering crowd, signaling start of service.

One could only feel an overwhelming sense of pride. Pride for the lengths we will go to bring our service men and women home, even if half a century has passed. Pride for the way we honor those who have served our country and made the ultimate sacrifice. Pride for the way that, in situations like these, there are no political ties, agendas or differences. We are simply all Americans paying tribute to a



In the tradition invoked by the famous fighter pilot ballad, “Throw a nickel on the grass ...”

fellow countryman and brother-in-arms.

As each of us approached the government-provided, hand-crafted wooden casket holding Smitty’s remains and laid Air Force pilot wings, nickels, dimes and quarters down, in the tradition of honoring fellow aviators who had “gone west,” we knew in our own way that our friend, Joe Smith, was finally home! ■

** FYI: The five Vietnam and/or UPT attendees included: Listed left to right in the group pic by the church; Dewey Clawson, Phan Rang Hun; Dave Young (UPT classmate), BUFF driver who went to Hanoi in Christmas of '72; Lee Howard (UPT classmate), Phan Rang Hun; Wayne Johnson (UPT classmate), OV-10 Prairie Fire, and Ron Sharek, Phan Rang Hun (who was Smitty’s wingman on the terrible day of 4 April 1971). Thanks to these gents and their mates who came to Assumption from far and wide to welcome a good friend home ... at last! **Ed.***



Departures: The following members of the Super Sabre Society have flown west. RIP, Good Friends ... * = Inactive

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <i>David Allen Sands</i> June 25, 2016 | <i>*Joe Clarkson</i> November 25, 2016 | <i>Joseph “Joe” Gordy</i> February 9, 2017 | <i>*Robert L. Cass, Sr.</i> February 11, 2017 |
| <i>Ruby Gordon Hayes Clements</i> March 10, 2017 | <i>Perry Minor Lusby</i> March 21, 2017 | <i>John Roderick Wilson</i> April 24, 2017 | <i>Paul E. Wagner</i> June 1, 2017 |
| <i>*George W. Dooley, Jr.</i> June 30, 2017 | <i>*John K. “Jake” Neely</i> July 3, 2017 | <i>Jim Alexander</i> July 27, 2017 | <i>Walter J. Rabe</i> July 23, 2017 |
| <i>Charles “Chuck” McClarren</i> July 30, 2017 | <i>Michael “Mike” G. Major</i> September 3, 2017 | <i>Robert “Bob” L. Groshner</i> September 14, 2017 | <i>Sam R. Winborn, Jr.</i> October 24, 2017 |



Remembering Bill Reesman—AKA “Wild Bill” and “Willie Babes”

By Dick Trickel with assistance from Julie Nistico Reesman



Dick Trickel's "hero picture" beside the Hun "way back when"

Every once in a while in life you meet a person who can only be described as a "one of a kind."

There's an oft-told story about the little boy who says to his dad, "When I grow up, I want to be a fighter pilot." His dad replies, "Son, one or the other, but you can't do both!" That little boy could have been Bill Reesman—he never grew up!

I know that those who served with Bill will agree, but for those who never knew Bill, here is a quick profile, at least from my perspective, acquired over 40+ years.

He spent 43 years flying two of the most famous Cold War jet fighter opponents; logging 2,000 hours in the F-100 with 320 combat missions in Vietnam, and 1,600 hours in MiG-15s and 17s. He performed over 700 airshows in the MiGs, including 93 night pyrotechnic shows with flames trailing back 1,000 feet from his wingtips—a feat unlikely to ever be duplicated.

I met Bill in 1969 when we both showed up at the Sioux City, Iowa, ANG unit, which was flying F-100s at the time. Bill had been in the Air Force, stationed at Phu Cat, Vietnam, as was Sioux City's 174th TFS, having been called up after the Pueblo Crisis of 1968. Bill was furloughed from Northwest Airlines after less than a year and never got recalled.

He and I spent the next seven years as part-timers at Sioux City, flying the Hun and commuting from Minneapolis regularly. During that time, I came to know Bill as a "one of a kind." Here is the fun-loving Bill Reesman I knew.

He was "infamous" for coming up behind a good looking wife or girlfriend in the bar and biting her on the ass. One night in the O' Club at summer camp, he bit the Group Commander's wife on the ass. It didn't sit well with the Colonel, but because it was Bill, he got away with it—after a few choice words from said Colonel.

Bill was also known for lighting "afterburners" in the club, at a bar, or at a party. He would secretly fill his mouth with lighter fluid and exhale it over a cigarette lighter. It would light up the place to everyone's surprise. One of his "afterburners" went wrong one night and Bill's hair caught fire. It was quickly extinguished when an alert bystander poured beer over him!

Of course, tobacco and alcohol were a part of his life. I remember hearing a crew chief tell Bill to bring an ashtray with him the next time he flew his airplane. (Bill would "light up" and relax in the cockpit, cruising along in straight-and-level flight.) He was a smoker for quite some time, and probably wouldn't have logged 2,000 hours in the Hun if he'd had to pass an alcohol breathalyzer test before each flight!

On an F-100 deployment to Europe, Bill was the F-100 liaison officer in the KC-135. In flight, the tanker crew came on the radio and said: "Pull up on the left side of the aircraft, Captain Reesman wants to show you something." I slid over, and there was Bill, "mooning" us out the side window of the 135.

In the '70s, supporting a family was tough on ANG part-timers pay, so Bill became very successful selling insurance.



Part of Reesman's air show: low, low, low!

Fast forward to 2000 and I'm living in Las Vegas where Bill is scheduled to fly his MiG at Nellis AFB. I went and saw his show. After he landed, I talked my way through to him. We embraced, and he updated me on his life as it was then going. He had sold his insurance business, enabling him to buy some MiGs and several support aircraft, including a Lear 24. He lived down the street from Roseanne Barr in Beverly Hills, CA. His MiGs were based at San Bernardino/Norton AFB, CA. He had remarried. His new wife, Julie, was his airshow announcer and support aircraft pilot. Her brother was VP/GM for Red Bull Energy Drink and arranged for Red Bull to sponsor his show and pay some of the bills. Bill was known as the "Pit Bull" for his calm demeanor—NOT! After

the show, the Lear took off with Bill in his MiG on the wing in close formation—I'm not sure *how* or *if* they got USAF permission for that departure!

The next time I saw him at Nellis for his show, he pointed to a Lockheed Jetstar sitting on the ramp nearby and said it was his new support aircraft. The tail number on the Jetstar ended in "BH." Turned out they'd bought Bob Hope's Jetstar!

In February, 2011, he emailed friends that things had gone badly financially with his stocks in 2008 and he had to sell the MiGs. In the emails, he expressed regrets for losing his "identity and purpose" in life. Fast forward to April 15, 2011, in true Bill Reesman style, he again surprised everyone by voluntarily going to the "other side" as he called it. Before taking his life, he wrote friends to say he'd "see us all, but we'd have to behave!" He did it HIS way, right to the end.



But he wasn't done. Two months later Julie received birthday flowers from Bill and an apology for not being with her. ▣



Just before his amazing MiG airshow, Bill Reesman poses beside his "red baby."

George Elsea and His Tuy Hoa Ace

As assembled by Bob Salisbury

Readers of *The Intake* will recognize the cartoons depicting the Tuy Hoa “Ace,” penned by SSS member George Elsea. This article comes from our Assistant Editor, Bob Salisbury, who was based with George at Tuy Hoa. Bob informs us that this information on the origin of the “Ace” cartoons was compiled from two sources: an “in his own words” piece that George wrote for the USAFA class of 1960 web page, and a recent email exchange with George, who had this to say:



“I have no claim to being an artist. For as long as I can recall I enjoyed drawing—primarily airplanes, and almost always fighters: Warhawks with teeth, Spitfires, Thunderbolts, and Mustangs. (And maybe a smoking Messerschmitt or two.) The drawing dropped off when I switched to making model airplanes out of orange crate parts.

“Much later, in the early ‘60’s, I drew some light-hearted poster board sketches to illustrate my additional duty pitch as nuclear weapons instructor at RAF Lakenheath. I don’t remember drawing any cartoons before the scribblings featuring the Ace.

“Following four years at Lakenheath I was assigned to the 510th TFS at Bien Hoa. Upon arrival in early November, 1966, I was met at the airplane and told, “Don’t unpack. You’re assigned to the



George Elsea: Creator of A Tuy Hoa Ace cartoons.

308th Squadron, and we’re leaving tomorrow for Tuy Hoa.

“Tuy Hoa was in a state of hurried construction by a civilian contractor. A steel mat runway, taxiways and a parking ramp were laid out on the sandy beach in Central South Vietnam, which extended a couple of miles inland from the South China Sea. Tents had been erected for basic functions. Our squadron was immediately tasked to fly combat missions in bare-base conditions. About three or four weeks later, the 31st Wing from Homestead AFB arrived with the 306th and 309th Squadrons and the 308th rejoined the 31st Wing.

“The 1966 Northeast Monsoon was exceptionally fierce. Strong winds and rain swept off the South China Sea with considerable effect. For the troops living in the tents, it was like living inside a flag. There was not much to do other than fly missions when the weather permitted, eat C-Rations and Spam sandwiches in our makeshift crew dining room, or play cards and drink beer in the Officer’s Club. (The Club was a top priority self-help project created from a clothes drying room the civilian contractors had used.)

“There was plenty of spare time. On an afternoon in early December, ‘66, fifty-knot winds and rain shut down flying. I began doodling on a sheet of airmail stationery. From random sketches, appeared a decrepit generic fighter pilot. He evolved into a character used to depict many of the routine aspects of our life at Tuy Hoa at that time. I stuck cartoons on the wall of the Club from time to time for the next six or eight months. By then the Ace had become a popular figure. Some of the pilots wanted to have the cartoons made up into a souvenir book. The original drawings that had survived posting in the bar were printed in Taiwan as a book titled *A Tuy Hoa Ace*.

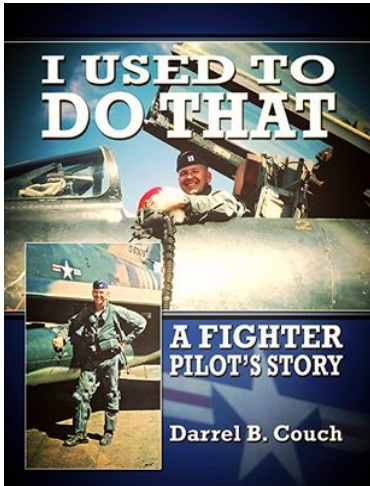
“At Tuy Hoa, our top mission priority was to give close support to the troops on the ground fighting the Viet Cong and the NVA regulars. We also supported army helicopter troop movements by bombing trees to create landing zones and suppressing enemy fire just before the troops arrived. We escorted Ranch Hand C-123s to discourage anti-aircraft fire coming from the jungles. We flew interdiction missions in Laos against the Ho Chi Minh Trail supply lines, and flew some missions in North Vietnam. But most preplanned missions were flown to attack suspected VC locations. In any of these missions the visible target was usually trees. And Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA) from most missions was ‘No BDA due to Smoke and Foliage.’ Hence the origin of the Tuy Hoa ‘Ace.’ [See BDA symbols below Ace’s cockpit.]

“The ‘Ace’ character is not based on any individual. He is a generalized guy who experienced situations common to most Tuy Hoa F-100 pilots of November, 1966, until about midsummer of ‘67. Some elements of his adventures were probably common to other fighter pilots based at Bien Hoa, Phan Rang and Phu Cat. (Some of George’s 308th colleagues believed that the “Ace” was patterned after a snuff dipping USAFA graduate in the squadron. *Ed.*)

“About ten years after ‘Ace’ was born, I drew and posted cartoons based on events or typical situations encountered by the Air War College Class of ‘78. That resulted in a collection of sketches understandable only to people who had been there at the time. I haven’t done anything similar since then.” (Compiled by **RCS**) ■

Great thanks to Intake Assistant Editor Bob Salisbury for doing the research and talking with his old friend George. When George left Tuy Hoa, he turned over the task of selling his book, previously printed in Taiwan, to Bob, who reports that guys would even fly in from other bases to buy copies. Periodically, Bob would send “royalty checks” to George. In near alternate Intake issues, we have been publishing “Ace” cartoons since Issue Seven. There are two more elsewhere in this issue. Your mission, should you accept it, is to go find it for yourself without help from us. — Ed.

*This abridged account of the 6 AUG 1967 action at Tong Le Chon, RVN, is from Darrel's autobiography I USED TO DO THAT – A FIGHTER PILOT'S STORY. He had written it long before he saw John Schulz's Issue 32 article titled Another Part of the Story about that action, which was first mentioned in Al Dempsey's Issue 31 article reporting on the heroics at Tong Le Chon on those dates as part of the Palm Springs Air Museum's 2016 Annual Gala. Since Darrel's part in that action was as a Bird-Dog FAC, its subtitle could suitably be **Still Another Part of the Story!** Enjoy. Ed.*



In earlier pages I have written about how and why extremely accurate strafe was needed in certain Close Air Support (CAS) situations. Here's a perfect/prime example of extremely accurate strafe that helped save the day at a Special Forces (SF) Camp named Tong Le Chon. Having been "FACed" at Phan Rang, I was

there in my trusty O-1, instead of my Hun!

The SF camp was attacked by a large force of NVA Regulars around 0100 and soon was in immediate and extreme danger of being overrun. The night FACs on target had already used all of the alert missions available and were starting to get diverted to early morning CAS missions. I wasn't on the night missions, but by daylight, I was the first FAC on target with a flight of three Huns to work with.

The NVA weren't stupid. They knew that with daylight and lots of CAS they would be in bigger trouble than they had been in the dark. So, by first light, they had begun a partial withdrawal. However, with this camp being on a steep hill, rows of logs were used to provide perimeter defensive fire locations for the SF and their fighters.

Unfortunately, with the defenders pulled back, the logs provided shields for the attackers! And in this case, the NVA had dug in a protective area under the logs AT ONE LOCATION!! Even though the defenders now had full control of the entire camp, they couldn't get the NVA dislodged from that one foothold under the logs. Given this situation, I told the SF CO that if he would pull his forces back and take cover, I could have the best Hun driver solve his problem faster than you could say good-bye to the NVA!

The dug-in NVA were a hundred feet or more above the surrounding terrain, and the hillsides were fully cleared. The reason the NVA were such a problem was that they were sniping through the crack between the logs. The SF CO was not exactly sure he liked my plan, but no other came to mind, and he didn't want to lose any more of his men trying to assault the NVA's one defended position. So I gave the Hun flight's Lead a full briefing of my plan to get rid of the CO's problem.

Hun Lead fully understood the safety problems, given the proximity of the friendlies, and readily agreed with my plan, given as Hun pilot-to-Hun pilot. The pass would be at an angle to and from below the elevation of the logs. This would keep any dispersion pattern out of the camp itself, and also prevent the ejected 20 mm shell cases and links from impacting inside the camp. On my call, the friendlies pulled back and in less than 10 seconds, the Hun pilot hit the NVA position with a lethal burst of HEI, dead on target. Problem solved!!! Bye, bye Hun flight.



Tong Le Chon SF Camp, upper right, and surrounding area.

In the above full color aerial view of the area around Tong Le Chon, you can see the clear fire zone to the jungle and note the jungle had been defoliated with Agent Orange. These passive defenses created other problems for the NVA. They had waited too long to withdraw, they were disorganized and visible in the daylight, and they were using open trails toward Cambodia to the west to get the heck out of the area.

The next flight on scene was three F-4Ds with bombs and 20 mm Gatling Gun pods out of Cam Ranh Bay. We deployed the bombs in the jungle around the camp, flushing more NVA and putting them on the move. I called for and was given clearance to strike (at my discretion) any target within five miles, or so, west of the camp. With NVA everywhere on the trails, I gave the F-4s clearance to strafe all of the trails. The three birds worked at high angles and long ranges. This gave them long firing times and wider dispersion of the impacts. They walked the ammo along thousands of feet of the withdrawal trails. I had no idea how many NVA they were able to catch flat footed, but it had to be a big bucket of deplorables. The best BDA I could truthfully give them was "A helluva lot of NVA KBAs." ■

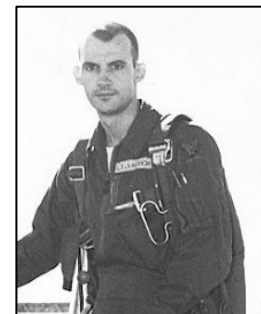
A third (and enlightening) Intake article about the rescue of Tong Le Chon! Thanks, Darrel.

An Interesting Email Conversation

From Dogfight to Détente



SSSer John Wagner, who lives in Torrance, CA, heard of an event down the road at the USS Midway Museum that was scheduled for 21 Sept., featuring panel discussions between U.S. and North Vietnam (NV) Aviators. The info was in an APB SSS email sent out in July by Dave Skilling. John then went to the online website given for more info. According to the flyer he found for this event, “These men fought against each other during the Vietnam War in air combat, attempting to eliminate their ‘opponent’. Watch as they reconcile in an emotional night of discussion, memories, and friendship. This once-in-a-lifetime panel discussion will be one for the history books.” Well, John put this event on his Bucket list, and he and his wife, Adele, attended.



John Wagner, PrimeTime.

While they waited for the event, John got to thinking of what he could do to promote that “reconciliation” mentioned. He came up with a plan to provide each U.S. and RV pilot with a copy of Robin Old’s memoirs in “Fighter Pilot,” because of the rich coverage of air-to-air combat in the NV skies. Robin’s daughter Christina thought it was a great idea, and with her help, John arrived at the event with 22 copies for the aviators, each addressed by name in Christina’s signings, with eight unsigned spares—an ambitious project, indeed! But it all worked out well. All this said as a preamble. Here is the “Email Conversation.”

The conversation started with a couple of thank-you emails. Dear John: I want to thank you for my copy of the book *Fighter Pilot*, personally autographed by Christina Olds and to convey the appreciation of the other pilots in our group too. It is a treasured remembrance of the reconciliation we had with the Vietnamese pilots in San Diego. The effort you made to deliver the books was a fine gesture; it was a pleasure meeting you. Perhaps our paths will cross again one day. I may have had it, but can’t now find Christina Olds email address. Please convey to her our appreciation and best wishes. Kindest Regards, — **Jim Hoogerwerf** [Jim was the spokesman for the U.S. aviators.]



Robin Olds, Prime Time.

Here’s the second thank-you email. Christina and John: Thank you for the signed book. I look forward to reading it. Christina, I know I don’t have to tell you that your Dad was an icon in the fighter pilot community—in both the USAF and USN. He was highly respected as both a fighter pilot and an inspirational leader. I had the pleasure of meeting him (just in passing) at a River Rats event back in the day, and he certainly had a lot of charisma. So, although I didn’t personally know your Dad, I (like a lot of others who flew F-4 Phantoms) have a lot of respect for him and feel a certain kinship to him as well. Thanks again for the book. Best regards, — **Jack Ensch**, Captain, USN (Ret.) [Jack was a POW for seven months.]

Jack’s thank-you was attached to this email from, John. Hi Medley, Three weeks ago Adele & I met with NV fighter pilots in San Diego & on the Midway Carrier Museum. I had contacted Christina & purchased copies of her book on Robin. She autographed copies for the 11 NV pilots & host U.S. pilots, most of which were Navy. The NV have put together a record of every encounter. When translated it should make interesting reading. Big take away of the “From Dogfight.to Detente” event was obvious. Under the NV personnel system, their tour was “*DROS hava NO*,” meaning “Forever.” No one-year Tours — **JW**

My email reply to John with CC to Christina. I was aware of the USS Midway shindig and knew some of our SSSers who attended. Must have been some creepy feelings on both sides for the contestants of bygone air-to-air encounters. Nice idea for providing copies of Robin’s/Cristina’s biography. Thanks for advising me of that extracurricular activity. — **Medley**

Christina’s email reply to John and Medley. I confess that it felt a bit weird to sign books for pilots who might have shot down some of my dad’s guys. But I just reminded myself that Gunther Rall, a WWII Luftwaffe pilot who was in direct dog fights with Robin, became close friends with him when they met at the American Fighter Aces in the 1980s. They became dear friends for the rest of their lives and visited each other’s homes often in Germany and Colorado. It was Gunther Rall who called me, obviously crying, the day after my dad passed away in June 2007 and said, “I will miss your father so much. I really loved him.” Such is the honor of fighter pilots and I held that thought as I signed the books to each of the NV Pilots for the Midway event. — **Christina**

And so ends this Email Conversation. Kudos to SSSers John and Christina for pulling off the idea to use a great leader’s book to “promote reconciliation” between aviators on opposite sides of the Vietnam War. You’ll find another article about this USS Midway event on page 23! — **Pub Med.** ■



Christina’s Author Pic.

Book Review Time #1 — Jet Pioneer

Title: *Jet Pioneer: A Fighter Pilot's Memoir*

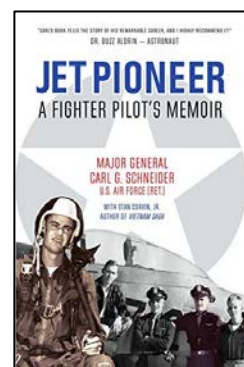
Author: Carl G. Schneider - Publisher: Southwestern Legacy Press

Official Website www.jetpioneer, Available in Hardcover | Paperback | Kindle. Note: All royalties go to veterans organizations. Also available at Amazon <http://www.amazon.com>,

Reviewer: R. Medley Gatewood, (AUG, 2017), Editor Emeritus & Publisher of *The Intake-Journal* of the Super Sabre Society (SSS), Founding Member – SSS.



Author
Carl Schneider



Carl's second
published book.

5.0 out of 5 Stars on Amazon! Official Website's Brief Description

"The remarkable story of Major General Carl G. Schneider's thirty-two-year U.S. Air Force career. Beginning in 1946 as a newly enlisted airman, he rose through the ranks to become a two star general; an accomplishment very few men in American military history have ever achieved. This book is a fascinating look into the unprecedented career of a jet fighter pilot who flew one hundred combat missions in Korea and served in Vietnam, flying combat missions with the VNAF. It takes the reader along as the author recounts riveting combat missions, often humorous accounts of his Air Force career as well as the "gut-wrenching moments" of learning close friends were shot down by the enemy and killed or captured."

Written with Stan Corvin, Jr. (himself a published author), I found this 172 page memoir an easy and insightful read. With its straightforward and simple style, the co-authors have done a remarkable job of covering the military career of a remarkable man. It begins with a poignant dedication of the book to the 22 KIA (or in accidents) and three POW pilots (and their families) in his Korean War fighter group. A foreword follows by later-astronaut Dr. Buzz Aldrin who served with, and under, Carl in the early days of their careers; friends still today.

In his introduction Carl explains how his book is organized. As expected, "... for the most part chronologically accurate with each chapter written in essay style about a specific period in my life and surrounding events. I have included many anecdotes and personal stories to add 'flavor' ... bring the reader along metaphorically in the back seat for the 'ride.' Some are funny, but most are serious, because war and combat flying are dangerous and deadly!" He closes the intro with this: "I believe this book can inspire young people to overcome the *obstacles* they will inevitably encounter in life and achieve great success despite, perhaps, coming from humble beginnings." And that, in a nutshell, is exactly how Carl's life and career played out, starting with his humble beginnings on a farm in Texas, as the reader learns in Chapter 1.

Obstacles to overcome, as mentioned in the closing sentence of Carl's Intro, are plentiful as you go through the chapters. But Carl seems to thrive on them, frequently turning them into positive outcomes and volunteering for all sorts of "things"—quite the opposite to the adage an old sergeant suggested to him early on, "Never volunteer for anything!"

For example: after Basic, at the Lowry AFB Tech School, he was assigned to the auto mechanic course, his first obstacle. A buddy tipped him to go to the personnel office and plead his case. He did and volunteered for the toughest course at the school, the B-29 Remote Control Turret Course. He graduated at the top of his class, was promoted to corporal ... and that put Carl into the aviation world—exactly where he wanted to be! Sure, there were many more obstacles to come, but Carl seemed to turn most of them into opportunities time and time again. That capability, along with a positive "can do" attitude and a little good luck, resulted in a providential path that took him through a most successful military career.

Readers will find many examples of these challenges in almost every chapter of this amazing book. And, need I say that with each chapter pointing to the next, it's hard to put it down. My read took only two sessions! In addition to the text, the authors have placed cogent pictures and other images at the end of most chapters, and a few endnotes in some chapters that point to further readings on the subjects at selected websites. What's not to like?

So, as Buzz Aldrin highly recommends the General's book, I also join him and the several Amazon reader's reviews, all of which at this writing are 5 Star, and likewise strongly recommend. You might enjoy reading their reviews by browsing the book information at Amazon. — **R. Medley Gatewood** ▣

Customer reviews

★★★★★ 12
5.0 out of 5 stars



[See all verified purchase reviews](#)

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The Way We Were

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



Tad Derrick



Louis Distelzweig



Bob Eatinger



Glenn Nordin



Robert Seal



Brad Sharp

RED ALERT – ALERT!! We have **ONLY** about 48 “Hero Pictures” left in our dwindling supply (out of 1,999 total members since our founding –including Inactives & RIPs). We’ve now published 360. It’s time to add lots of others to our supply, before more of our heroes fly west. So, please dig out your favorites and participate ASAP! We prefer scanned photos (at 300 PPI) emailed to Photo Editor Shaun Ryan at (f100plt@gmail.com). If you have no way to scan, snail mail it with a return address to Shaun at 6610 Sutherland Ridge Place, Tucson, AZ 85718, and we’ll return the originals. Thanks! P. Editor



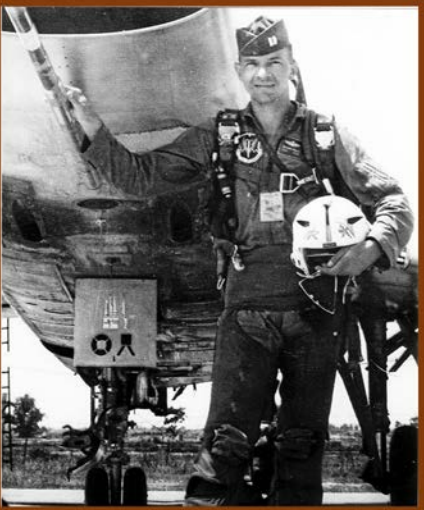
Dick Heinisch



Charles “Chuck” McClarren



Richard Niemela



Paul E. Wagner



Kenneth Weiss



Homer “Whit” Whitlow

Book Review #2 – “Vietnam to Western Airlines” Chronicles of the Air War in Two Volumes

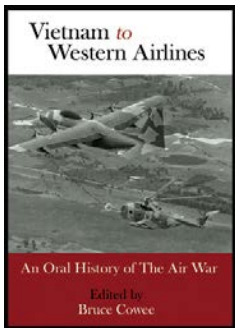
Produced/Edited by Bruce Cowee

Review by R. Medley Gatewood

Bruce Cowee was a USAF C-7A “Caribou” pilot in Vietnam who, in late 2013, produced a compendium of fascinating stories by pilots of all sorts of U.S. aircraft and various missions in the SEA Theater. Among the 33 authors were three SSS members, Jerry Stamps, Jim Pollak, and KB Clark. KB suggested I read this rather unique book and do a review of it for Bruce—and for our SSS members, should I deem it worthy. I did, and it is more than worthy. We gave it **Five Stars!** And you can read all about it on page 9 of I-24.

Based on the popular appeal of that book, Mr. Cowee has produced a second volume, and now there’s a real chance for additional volumes. Here is our review and comments on the series and a look inside Volume 2. First some background on the first volume from Mr. Cowee’s website for the series, in case you don’t go back to I-24.

About Volume 1: (From our I-24 review.) Producer/Editor Bruce Cowee, a Vietnam War veteran himself (USAF 1968-69),



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

As the subtitle (An Oral History of the Air War) implies, these collected works of 33 pilots (all volunteers) and other contributors focus on the service experiences of men engaged in aerial warfare. These recollections are representative of warriors from four of the five uniformed services and even includes one “black operations” (CIA) pilot. The aircraft they flew ranged from WWII vintage crates to workhorse transports, conventional bombers, sophisticated gunships, and modern jet fighters.

This formidable array of hardware was used to perform a wide range of missions ranging from supply “milk runs” to airborne command and control, psychological ops, close air support, interdiction, combat air patrol, electronic warfare support, carpet bombing, forward air control, search and rescue, and “...a hundred things you have not dreamed of.” (Quoting a line from John Gillespie Magee Jr.’s poem “High Flight.”)

From this matrix of services, aircraft and missions, Mr. Cowee has succeeded in weaving a tapestry that provides intimate insights into the lives and wartime experiences of a select group of men as they served their country during the trying times of the Vietnam War. This *non-fiction work* is perhaps unique because, rather than a coherent story line that neatly ties things together, it is the post-war Western Airlines connections that provide the cohesion between the separate but chronologically arranged recollections of the many authors. Cowee has done a superb job of tying disparate time and place events together so they can be read sequentially or separately. *My bottom line of this review was: I am honored to have been asked to review and recommend this well-thought-out labor of love that Mr. Cowee has created. His motivation was on the mark, and the result is world-class non-fiction reporting.*

About Volume 2: (From Cowee’s excellent website for the series.) When *Vietnam to Western Airlines* was released on

Veterans Day 2013, there was never a plan for a second volume. However, the reception that book received within the former Western Airlines pilot group was so positive that the seed for a second volume was planted within a few months. When several of the pilots who were reluctant to put their stories in writing when the first book was being put together saw the published book, their reaction to it was overwhelmingly positive. They realized that perhaps it was time for them to tell their stories. The passing of two pilots who had planned to write their stories, John Theorell and Dave Boaz, and a third, Doug Hellwig, whom Bruce had pursued about writing a story, put a sense of urgency to the project. Considering what was involved in the collection of the stories and photographs for this second publication, it has been completed in record time.



This book is a continuation of the oral history of the air war in Vietnam, with stories written by the men who were there and flew the missions. The fact that they ended up meeting after the war as pilots for Western Airlines is the thread that ties them together. All the uniformed services who provided combat pilots, and all the types of aircraft and missions these pilots flew, are included in this volume. The chronology of the book covers the air war from its beginning in August 1964 to its end in January 1973. Bruce’s respect and admiration for these men is obvious throughout, and it was only because they had a common bond that he was able to earn the trust required to complete this project.

Given Bruce’s intro on his website (above), and my enjoyment in reviewing Volume 1, I waded into the 618-page Volume 2 with great expectations. I was NOT disappointed! — R. Medley Gatewood

The Day a CBU-2 Almost Got Me

By Stew Byrne

This hair-raising story and the remarkable pictures capture an incident that none of us would like to duplicate, and given the deadly capabilities of those CBU clusters, Stew may be lucky to be alive to tell this story. Each of those CBU clusters sent 360 large steel pellets in all directions at four times the speed of sound. That made that particular weapon especially effective when there were troops in contact and sufficient distance from “our guys” to deliver these devastating weapons.



Stew Byrne as a 510th TFS
Bien Hoa Buzzard in 1967-8.

Cluster Bomb Units (CBU) were very effective weapons in Vietnam. The question was, were we sometimes shooting down our own aircraft with these weapons? We were told that the bomblets would not arm until they were well clear of the aircraft. But unfortunately, for me at least, that was not the case on one fine day in Vietnam, when those little devils nearly “got me.” Whether there were other accidents or fatalities due to CBU is difficult to determine to this day, or whether guys were downed by ground fire instead, because the wreckage was most often not accessible and ground fire was generally reported in the area.

As a young captain in late 1967, I was part of an F-100 three-ship out of Bien Hoa flying south into the Delta to attack sampans reported to be loaded with weapons. The two majors in the flight were to soften the area and

provide cover as I dropped down to 300 feet, heading southwest down a long canal filled with small boats.

With the CBU-2 dispenser set to release two tubes at each pickle, I started punching them off. All was well until one of the bomblets exploded just as it exited the tube. Various lights in the cockpit came on immediately, but it was the engine fire warning light that got my attention. I started converting speed to altitude as I tightened straps to prepare for an ejection. The fire light went out, so I started a turn back to the north, hoping to reach more friendly territory before I ejected. As luck would have it, the target area appeared just off the nose, so I decided to deliver the remaining weapons to lighten my load then head for home.

As I then climbed above 10,000 feet I gained enough composure to survey the damage. I could see numerous small holes in the drop tank fins and aileron on one side of the airplane. As the other two men in my flight joined on my wing, they reported a hole burned through the titanium skin around the engine, with much of the aft underbelly burned away, and fluid misting from various places. Other than that, everything looked pretty good, so I held my heading toward Bien Hoa.



Engine fire damage.

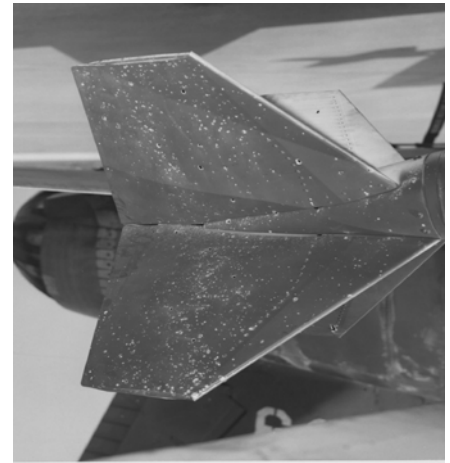
As I recall, I lost the utility hydraulic system and one of the two flight control systems. That meant a straight-in approach, emergency gear and flap lowering with no drag chute. The systems worked as expected, and I carried a little extra speed on final in case the engine decided to quit. After giving thanks for the 10,000 foot runway, I touched down on the numbers, held the nose off, and slowly increased pressure on the brakes once the nose gear was on the ground. The arresting hook button was a big part of my crosscheck during the rollout. Fortunately, the aircraft slowed nicely and I was able to make a turn at the end of the runway into the de-arming area before shutting down the engine. Just lucky for sure.

It was obvious that a bomblet had exploded right out of the tube because there were over 300 holes in the aircraft that could be traced back to the exact point of detonation. One steel pellet went through the turbine section of the engine and another went through the slab area, shearing off one of the two hydraulic actuator lines. The remaining line was extremely swollen from the heat of the hydraulic fluid fire. It was surprising to all of us surveying the damage that the remaining line did not burst.

We never received any word from Wing about the cause, so it remains a mystery to me to this day. We all knew to maintain straight and level during delivery, and to avoid moving the ailerons until the tubes were clear, because

aileron air disturbance could affect CBU-2 deliveries. After reviewing the engineering and our delivery technique, many suspected a CBU-2 system failure. Who knows the answer? ■

We'd all be interested in hearing from anyone else who had the same thing happen to them while delivering CBU-2. Ed.



About 300 CBU holes in the right fuel tank!

“Count” Flies Last Mission

By MSGT. BILL BRADFORD

S&S Staff Correspondent

TUY HOA, Vietnam — One of the most colorful pilots in the Vietnam War, “Count Wilson der Blitzkrieg von Phan Rang,” almost didn’t make his port call for the States recently. His O-1E Bird Dog went down during his last mission. [In 67.]

The “count,” who actually is Capt. Gail H. Wilson, a forward air controller (FAC) in this area who dropped personal calling cards wrapped in three-foot streamers of red silk to friendly and enemy troops, had just completed his tour of duty in Vietnam.

He had packed his bag and was ready to leave, but as he put his gear in a vehicle taking him to the air terminal, Maj. Clifford Allison Jr., air liaison officer, ran by. Wilson asked what was happening.

“The VC are hitting a Special Forces camp,” the major replied.

Wilson asked if he could do one last mission before leaving.

Arriving over the camp that was under attack at about 8:15 p.m., Wilson and Allison successfully directed Air Force fighter pilots on bombing and strafing strikes against the Viet Cong, taking the pressure off the friendly forces.

But as the pilots finished their work, Wilson was beginning to have trouble with his small plane.

“I noticed my oil pressure dropping and knew I would have to land. It was almost zero. We told the fighter pilots about our trouble and that we had to land and would need light,” Wilson said.

The fighters contacted a flare ship and they lit up the area.

“We noticed a small sand bar in the river across from the Special Forces camp and decided to land there,” Wilson said.

“As we touched down, the place was alive with enemy fire. Using the survival radio, we contacted the fighters for help, but they had used all of their ammo.”

Two medevac helicopters made an attempt to pick them up, according to Wilson, but the ground fire was so intense they had to move off.

Finally, to give Wilson and Allison a chance to get away from the sand bar, the fighters came down in a simulated strafing run. The VC shifted their fire and the two stranded pilots ran into a nearby cane field.

“After we got into the field, the VC started mortaring us. To try and draw their fire away, we asked that the flare ship orbit a half mile to a

mile from us and drop flares there. They did and the VC, thinking we had moved, shifted their fire again.

“About this time, another FAC plane showed up and we were able to contact him on our radio and direct them toward us.”

The uninjured Wilson and Allison were brought back to Tuy Hoa.

“Count Wilson der Blitzkrieg von Phan Rang” has returned to the U.S., but his calling card will be remembered.

It read, “Your airborne FAC has been Count Wilson der Blitzkrieg von Phan Rang. Willie Wilson, Captain, United States Air Force, Jet Fighter Pilot (Extraordinary), Parachutist, Playboy, World Traveler, Big Game Hunter, International Lover. Wire U.S.A.F.”

The reverse of the card had an inscription that may well have fitted the occasion of Wilson’s emergency landing.

It said, “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil. For I’m the meanest S.O.B in the valley.”

Note: At 82, Wee Willie Wilson, aka Count Wilson der Blitzkrieg von Phan Rang, flew west on 2/6/14. RIP. Ed.



This article sent by Jack Hartmann on 8/22/16. “Wonderful Willie Story” We agree: Ed. & Pub Med.

Wee Willie was a frequent Contributing Author for our journal. We’re still looking for more. Send, please.

Last Operation Rolling Thunder Mission into North Vietnam, November 1, 1968

By Ed Haerter

The last day of Operation Rolling Thunder turned into an unusually hairy mission for Ed and his fellow Hun driver, and a most unusual one when two Huns, two Thuds and two Phantoms formed a “briefed-in-the-air” team to do the job. Ed.

President Johnson ended any air strikes on North Vietnam after November 1, 1968.

Our Air National Guard (ANG) unit was based at Phu Cat, and on that last day, I was scheduled to fly a late afternoon mission using the 37th Wing call sign, “Sun Valley,” instead of our 174th ANG “Bats” call sign. My flight Lead was Col. Clayton, 37th TFW DO. He normally flew late missions after his day at the desk and liked to fly our C- models because the feel was tighter, and, fully loaded and armed, the Cs weighed only as much as the Ds with fuel tanks and no weapons.

That day, we were fragged to fly flak support for two F-4s, call sign “Shark Bait 01,” who would be dropping mines into the river at Vinh, at the north end of Route Pack 2 in North Vietnam. We had been pre-briefed that defenses in the area were 85mm, 57mm, 37mm, 23mm and 12.7mm quads, plus the SA2s. I suppose there were kids with slingshots, too!

This was a preplanned mission so we had no FAC. The Misty guys were down near Mu Gia Pass that day to get their last licks in at the truck parks. We were armed with two MK 82HD bombs on the inboard stations, and two canisters of CBU-2A [cluster bomb units]. We arrived at the holding point and were told by the C-130 controlling us that the F-4s would be late, so we were vectored to the tanker at Tiger Island, where we refueled and joined up with two F-105 Wild Weasels. The Weasels were there because there were active SAM sites in the Vinh area, and they hoped to be able to take care of suppressing them.

The four of us flew back down to the area near Vinh, and about the time we got there the F-4s came up on frequency. The Thuds recommended we do one pass each, from opposite directions. We all flight-briefed on the air, after which I went about 20 miles inland with one F-4; Col. Clayton and his F-4 went about 20 miles out to sea. The F-105s lingered up high.

Someone decided it was time to go in, so I dropped down and led my F-4 toward the north bank of the river and thence to the ocean. The other spur-of-the-moment-flight-of-two turned inbound from the other direction, toward the south side of the river. The plan was to fly simultaneous head-on attacks with lateral separation, with the Huns dropping our ordinance a couple hundred yards inland, while the F-4s dropped their mines in the river.

About five miles from the town, all hell broke loose, with tracers flying everywhere. We got right down on the deck, and although the CBUs were supposed to be dropped at 350K, I got a lot faster than that. I leveled out at 100 feet, with tracers coming at me from every direction right over the canopy, pickled the proper number of times to disperse the CBUs, pickled off the bombs, then dropped down on the deck and lit the burner. I was over 600K and accelerating when I went feet wet. The F-4 was right with me. The flight coming the other direction was a bit late, and got feet dry when we were already safely out of range. Just then, the Thuds yelled “Missiles in the air,” and we went down to a few feet over the water, still in burner. The other *ad hoc* flight dropped their ordinance, turned a quick 180 and got the hell out of there back to sea. The SAMs had been fired at the Thuds, and after they evaded them, our Thud guys attacked the site that had fired at them.

The Thuds had fired some Shrikes at the SAM radars right as the SAMs were fired, but the NVA was good at boresighting the SAMS visually, turning the radars on when they fired for guidance, and then turning them off as soon as the missile either hit or missed its target. The NVA had brought a bunch of SAMs south, some right into the DMZ before the bombing halt.

Never, ever, did I think we’d fly anything like this mission, and I still wonder what the people who dreamed it up were thinking? Luckily, even though all four of us attackers had felt hits, none of them seemed to be serious. So we all landed at Da Nang to refuel and get our aircraft checked out. As we had surmised, none of the battle damage was serious enough to ground our aircraft, and so, with our O-6 also telling the inspectors we wanted to leave, we got gassed up and flew home.

It was an interesting mission. The F-4 crews wrote it up for their Awards and Decs guy, and later we were all awarded DFCs from 7th AF.

I always enjoyed flying with Col. Clayton, and that mission was sort of typical in some ways. Coming back from Laos, he’d get into some valley, including the very dangerous A Shau Valley several times, and troll for guns. Our plan was that if anyone shot at him, the rest of the flight was supposed to go after the guns. And we actually did just that a few times. During my tour, we flew in Laos around Tchepone, Ban Phanop, etc. In the North, we mostly flew rescaps or truck parks. Misty found plenty near Mui Ghia pass, and truck parks seemed to be everywhere in Route Packs 1 and 2 in the North. ■



Ed at Phu Cat, 1968.

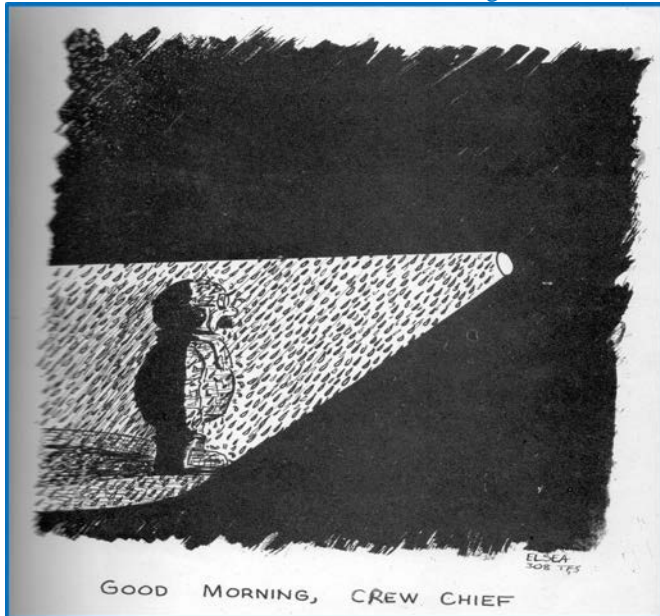


Ed flew 194 combat missions during his tour, all through Laos, North and South Vietnam.”

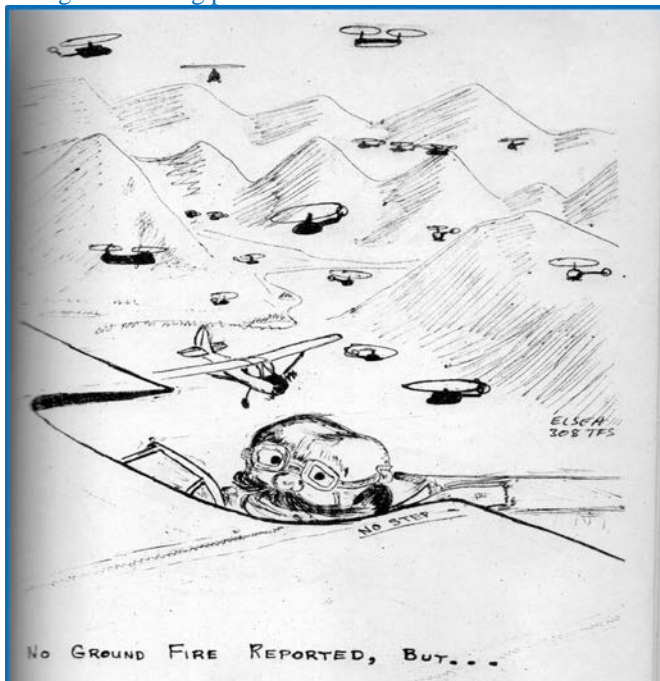
More George Elsea and His Tuy Hoa Ace

Congratulations! If you're reading this, then you've successfully completed your mission challenge from the Editor on page 16 to find the two more "Ace" cartoons with no help from us. Turns out that in addition to George's musings on the origins of his Ace creation, he also gave examples of what true-life adventures were experienced by Tuy Hoa guys that led to another cartoon. None of the cartoons in his book have this sort of background regarding the inspiration for a given cartoon. So we've added the background thoughts he mentions elsewhere for two of his examples. Enjoy.

"Somehow you were always on the early mission during the monsoon season. Likewise, of course, were the ground crews."



"Ground fire was often the least of our worries on close support missions. There were many Army and Marine flying machines in Vietnam, particularly around a hot battle area. The traffic density was considerable, especially at low levels where we made 500 mph bombing and strafing passes."



A Letter from "Topsy" — July 16, 2017

My Dear Mr. R. Medley Gatewood,

Thank you for continuing my name on the list for *The Intake*. My sons and I enjoy looking for names we recognize and stories that sound familiar. Like most fighter pilots, the stories receive a new twist each time they are told.

My husband, Bill Malloy (RIP 5/19/13), so very much loved flying, the Air Force and the comradeship. He made friends in his Cadet training days who were with him when he flew west. Rex Hammock and Don Martin now join him.

The narratives in *The Intake* are often too technical for my sons and me to fully understand. They do, however, provide us with thoughts and memories, and much laughter over the Air Force life we led. If we were not living overseas, we were at Luke or Nellis. At Luke, we lived next to Ted and Kay Banick. On three different occasions, three different guys named "Wilson" slept on our lawn! Once, the APs came to collect one of them, because the paperboy thought he was dead.

When we were stationed in Spain, known for its fabulous cuisine, the TDY pilots always requested the same menu when they visited us at number 14B of Zaragoza housing—that being a recipe called "That Same Dammed Old Chicken and Midwestern Meatloaf." The guys were always welcome.

How I'd love to once again hear "Easy" hollered from the side door. "Look who I found in the Stag Bar!" That Irishman of mine knew how to LIVE! But now, Life is quiet in solo retirement.

Thank you again. My sons and I wish you all the best. When God gets His face touched [as in *High Flight*], I know He smiles on the guy in the cockpit!

— Rosemary "Topsy" Malloy,
aka Mrs. William M. Malloy

Topsy is enjoying one of the benefits offered to certain survivors of deceased SSS members. Ed.

The Way We Were Pictures

When Asst. Editor Bob Salisbury was reviewing and commenting on I-35, he was surprised to find a picture of his friend (Louis Distelzweig) in the TWWWW Dept. Bob had assumed that this dept. was for SSS members only, but he knew that Louis had flown west in 1970 in a tragic, unsuccessful ejection from a crippled RAF Wittering Harrier when Louis was on an exchange tour. "What gives," Bob asked, in relation to eligibility for TWWWW Dept. Here's the skinny: Original policy was that it was for SSS members only. But, as time wore on, we would occasionally receive pictures of friends from SSS members, and as our stash of pics dwindled, we saw no reason NOT to use perfectly good pics of non-member Hun Drivers. So, what's not to like? Policy evolves! Thanks for asking, Bob.

Jack Doub: Portrait of a Warrior, Part III: Misty and Life after the Air Force

By John J. Schulz

This is the third and final part of the story of Jack Doub, who passed away early this year at the age of 83. He was not only a rare and gifted fighter pilot who could “make the Hun dance a jig” if needed, but one of the most aggressive combat fighter pilots most of us ever knew. He was a happy prankster who was always up to fun and funny mischief. But in combat, few could be more serious, aggressive, or effective. During his two Vietnam combat tours (the first at Bien Hoa in 1967), he flew the most combat missions (572) and the most combat hours (744) of any F-100 pilot who served in Vietnam.



Jack Doub at Bien Hoa,
287 Missions in 1967.

At the close of 1967, when Jack Doub ended his first combat tour, having logged 287 combat missions with the 90th TFS “Dice,” he became a briefing officer for CINC PACAF in Hawaii for a year or so. Odds are, he added more than a little humor to his briefings to the top brass. Indeed, Jack always pursued—and no doubt found—“laughs and good times” just about everywhere he went.

But that trait disappeared when he climbed into the Hun. There, he was not only deadly serious, but deadly to enemy forces. Very deadly. Back on the ground, he was a source of pranks, great humor and entertainment, likely every day of his life, and certainly a source of fun in every outfit lucky enough to have him, and every lady who ever met him!

Having fallen in love with the notion of becoming a fighter pilot at the age of four, Jack managed to fly jets throughout his AF career, even when his primary job was as a student or teacher, and, as we shall see, in a variety of highly successful endeavors tied to aviation after he retired.

During his year-plus in Hawaii, he maintained his flying currency in T-33s, and then returned to Huns at Bien Hoa, this time as a Buzzard in the 510th TFS. From 14 December 1969 to April, 1970, he flew 102 Misty missions out of Tuy Hoa. As that program was ending on 22 April 1970, he returned to his Bien Hoa squadron, where he completed his record 572 total F-100 combat missions.

Two of Jack’s Misty contemporaries pick up the story.

Doub: Misty 145 (1969-’70), by Dave Thomson Misty 149

I first met Jack when I was a first assignment T-38 IP student at Randolph AFB, TX, in the summer of 1965. He worked hard to fit in with the ATC cadre there, and he still stood out in many ways. First of all, he cared, and he was a fighter pilot through and through.

When he was demonstrating, he put the airplane on, rather than herding a supersonic trainer through the skies. My first T-38 ride with him was as number Three in a four-ship flight. Returning to Randolph on a weather recall, I was on Jack’s right wing, and number Four was having a rough time holding position. Jack spotted a hole in the clouds and rolled us into a diving 90-degree bank turn through it. Number Two and number Four were bouncing so hard their IPs took over. My IP didn’t say a word. He just

sat through it all. It was one of my better times holding position. When we got on the ground, Jack’s debrief was all of one minute long: Did we learn anything? Then he gave me a long look and just said “good job!” It was my first time flying with Jack.

I didn’t see him again until he walked into the Misty briefing room at Tuy Hoa in early 1970. I’d arrived at Tuy Hoa in June 1969 and had flown 130 combat missions when I was asked to volunteer for Misty, which was selecting pilots from the Tuy Hoa squadrons. On January 1, 1970, I moved over to the Misty unit. (Jack was a couple of weeks or so ahead of me, but our paths didn’t cross until that day.)

Misty was full of real good pilots. We all had to learn to jink in a three-dimensional environment. I’d been taught two dimensional jinking, so this was a vital new skill.

Our first few Misty flights were in the back seat, learning the territory and trying to take pictures, but the high-G jinking tossed us around, resulting in lousy photos.

Ten to 15 missions into my Misty tour, the “old” Misty guys left. (Before that, in late November or in early December, Larry Whitford, the 309th Sqdn. Commander at Tuy Hoa was lost over Laos while serving as Misty CO. Chaos ensued until Hank Buttleman took over as Misty CO.) When I reported in, I was welcomed by Hank. He flew infrequently, and only with the new guys.

When all the longer-time Mistys rotated, there were just three “old heads” left: Jack, Mike Hinkle and I had just 10-12 Misty missions and suddenly we were the IPs. We each flew two Misty missions a day. There had to be an IP on every flight. We’d schedule three morning missions with all three of us as IPs. Those were four- or 4.5-hour missions with tankers. We’d refuel near Da Nang or in Thailand. In the afternoon, the three of us flew as IPs on mop-up missions to follow up on what we saw in the morning. Those were unrefueled flights, 1:30 or 1:40 in length.

The three of us pulling IP duty would talk after lunch, and again to debrief the afternoon sorties. We’d sometimes talk about tactics, teaching three-dimensional jinking, and about flying at max speeds, where we would raise the nose, turn, then put the nose down to pick up speed. We also developed new jinking techniques and taught the guys to look for dust on the trees from convoys passing. We were also the on-the-scene commanders for Search and Rescue out-country missions. The three of us wrote notes on the sides of the back canopies, and we’d have photos of our notes taken by Intel guys before turning the birds over for maintenance.



After his four years as AF Advisor to the Indiana ANG at Terre Haute, Jack started a flight instruction and small airline business at the same airfield (1977). In two years they had 29 planes. He and his pal Jack Robbins are sitting in Doub's airliner, which serviced two cities.

Jack knew the strengths and the weaknesses of the Group. For those last three Advisor years he continued to fly Huns. He decided to quit after four years in the job (1977) because by then the F-4s were to come very soon. "When the Huns go, I'll be going," he'd say. And he meant it!

Jack immediately started H&D Aviation with a friend, based at same airport at Terre Haute. They started with a single-wide trailer as their office, a fuel truck and two Cherokee 140s. Son Butch ran flight line.

Two years later, by 1979, the company had grown to two big facilities for offices and a 50x100 ft. maintenance building, doing all sorts of maintenance work at the airfield. Their total airplane fleet went from two to 28, and they ran a thriving contract flight school for nearby Indiana State's Flight Department, providing instructors and airplanes.

H&D also had a contract with the U.S. Government to fuel and service their helicopters and another to service British Airways airliners. Besides all that, H&D ran its own airliner service, with an 8-passenger Piper Navajo making two flights a day to St. Louis and one to Chicago.

Jack ran the Sales Department and he sold a lot of airplanes all over the country. Back then, people were buying light planes "like they were golf carts or trucks."

After over six years, Jack sold H&D; he needed to be with his parents in Atlanta. While still living in Indiana, he spent most of the next six or seven months with them. After both of them passed away in those months, Jack moved again, to Ocala, FL. He kept his airplane sales company, but he also bought an old theater, tore out the seats and put in tables and chairs. It quickly became a popular movie pub, selling beer, wine, pizzas and subs while people watched the movies. Butch, who worked with him, says Monday Night Football games meant the place was always sold out. Their pizza was considered the best in town; yet again Jack's business effort was a huge commercial success.

This concludes the three-part series on the life of Jack Doub, whose remarkable flying skills were only matched by his love of laughter and his love of combat. For so many who flew with him, he was indeed, "the world's greatest fighter pilot." Ed.

Jack also sold and delivered airplanes all over the country, and added nicely to his growing fortune by doing so. After about three years in Florida, he sold the pub and went to San Diego, and in 1988, joined Flight International (FI), flying Lear Jets and Mu2s. For the first year, he delivered loads of cancelled checks for the Federal Reserve.

Then FI picked up a NATO contract, so Jack and Butch moved to the Netherlands, where Jack flew a Lear jet with a winch that could pull a target. He would "buzz" the NATO ships several times so the gunners could do target practice to remain qualified.

After two years there, they returned to San Diego. There Jack did the same work for the Navy. When the company got a contract with Elmendorf AFB in Alaska, he moved there, living and working on base for the next two-plus years. It was his "spook assignment." He would get up at 2 or 3 a.m., sneak out and take off, then turn and head toward land to see if he could rouse the air defense radars.

Butch was with him for eight months "up there" and used to ride with him, and sometimes do the flying (he was a pilot with several certifications.) They also had a Cessna 185 with extra-large wheels (in bush pilot fashion), and they flew it all over the hinterlands of Alaska to go hunting or fishing with friends. "Great times," Butch says.

In 1993, Jack realized it was time to retire. He had moved back to San Diego by then and settled there awhile. A year and a half later, he moved to Valdosta, GA, because Butch had gone back "home," was married, and Jack's first grandchild was due to arrive. At that same time, Jack's other son, Scott, who was living in the Valdosta area, was getting married. So by early 1995, he too was living in GA, was 100 percent retired and with the full-time job to spoil his grandkids. "If I'd known how fun grandkids were, I would have had them first!"

It should be added that between his string of successful business enterprises and his investments in the stock market, (focused especially on Chinese stocks during the huge boom years there), he retired quite "comfortably."

As Scott says, "All the grandkids loved Poppa Jack with a burning passion." During their growing up years, whenever Jack could be around, he spent much time with his kids. He taught Scott to fly at age 16, and Scott reports, "The only time I ever saw Dad worried or flustered was the day I soloed after he had taught me to fly." ■



In his mid-'60s Jack wanted to buy this racer from the owner (beside him). He wanted to race it in Reno, but his sons, Butch and Scott, talked him out of it.

It All Began With Her Enlistment and Later Commissioning in the USAF

By Pat Williams

This unusual story is part of a periodic series of articles called “From a Wife’s Perspective,” highlighting a vital aspect of life for most SSS members. It’s no cliché to say, “What would we have done without ‘em.” Ladies, there are about 1,200 of you whose husbands are SSSers. My coffers are now near empty. I anticipate getting about 1,000 new stories. Please!!! Ed.

My life started on 5 June 1961. I was 23 years old. It began when I raised my hand and made an oath to serve my country as an enlistee in the USAF.

Joining the Air Force was by chance. I had never even given the military a thought, but a friend was interested, and asked me to go with her to the recruiter. After our meeting, I went home and asked my dad what he thought. His answer was, “You’ve always chosen good people as friends, and you’ve already been on your own for the last few years. Joining the Air Force would give me some peace of mind. You’ll have shelter, food, medical care and hopefully given a job you’ll enjoy.” So I joined.

I went to basic at Lackland AFB, TX, then on to Biloxi, MS, to become a radar operator. The Air Force hadn’t really thought that one through. None of the radar sites had facilities for women. I went to Stewart AFB in Newburgh, NY, and was making a phone call one night a year or so later when I saw a notice that officer candidate school was closing. The last class would start in January 1963 and they were trying to attract more women. Why not give it a go? I took the tests, passed, and went on to my biggest life changing experience.

Arriving back at Lackland, I was warmly greeted by a young man who told me where to bring my things and get settled in. I walked into my assigned room and the gal already there came at me with a pair of scissors. Got my attention. She explained she was going to remove the stripes from my uniform before someone came and yelled at us. Barely one snip, and two huge guys stormed into the room demanding to know if we were enlisted or officer candidates. I had only been there an hour. Three months of harassment until those upperclassman graduated. “Yes sir, no sir” was said hundreds of times a day ... silently adding “three bags full.”

I pinned on my shiny brown bars in June and headed for three months of traffic management school at Wichita Falls, TX. But first, I went home to see my parents and tell them that when I finished that school, I would be heading to RAF Lakenheath, England, for three years. They knew I was excited about that, and managed to put on brave faces with quivery smiles. (Being Irish, Catholic and an only child comes with built-in guilt feelings.) I headed across the big pond in November of 1963, moved into the nurses BOQ and found out I was the first WAF to be assigned there. The men stared and the wives clutched their children to their bosoms.

My boss was very protective of me, and one thing he warned me about was a den of iniquity called “Northcourt.” A bunch of fighter pilots lived there. and my reputation might be ruined if I were to take part in any of their social gatherings. I asked him to draw me a map. Shocked the poor guy.

I’d been at “The Heath” about a week when I finally got up enough nerve to go to happy hour. I took my meals at the O’ Club, but hadn’t ventured into the bar. I met this guy. Good looking, but he had already had “tee many martoonies.”

That following Sunday there was a knock on my door in the BOQ. I figured it was one of the nurses. I had my hair in rollers and a facial mask—a green one to boot! Opened the door, and ... *ta da!* There was the cute guy from the bar, looking absolutely stunned. He stammered out that there was an impromptu house party and he thought I might like to go. I said I couldn’t talk because my face would crack, but I could be ready in 30 minutes. (*When the bachelors lived at Northcourt, they always had an Easter Egg hunt for the families. The night before they’d have an egg dyeing party. A few eggs would always have a message that said, “Give to Col. So and So and get \$10.00.” Bill Douglass was usually the instigator.*)



Wedding couple, 1966.

I met him in the Club and we left for the party. (*I was surprised he had waited.*) I told him I was bad at remembering names. but I knew he had two first names. Was he Buddy Roberts? No, he was Brian Williams. And that’s how it began. Never let it be said I didn’t make an impression!

Brian and I didn’t exactly hit it off on our first date. We have different memories of what happened, but my version involves fighter pilots vs. all others, especially ground pounders. When reminded I was a ground-pounder, I was told, “That’s different, you’re a girl.” We didn’t date again for several months. But once we did, we became an “item.”

Brian left for Cannon AFB in August, 1965, then sent me an engagement ring for Christmas, and we got married in April. 1966. I had to go back to Lakenheath to apply for a compassionate assignment to Cannon and joined him there in September. He went TDY a few times, I did the same, and we talked about the possibility of Vietnam. My career field was critical at that time and I said once he got notice, I too would volunteer. We wouldn’t be together, but at least I’d be in SEA. Sure, until he said he



“Airman Pat” before USAF OCS to 2nd Lt.

had orders and didn't want me to go ... thought he'd have enough to worry about without worrying about me. So I stayed at Cannon. (*grumble, grumble*).

Brian's parting gift to me was a backseat ride in the F-100. We were up just over an hour, but I was totally wiped when we landed. It gave me a glimpse of the grueling job pilots did ... especially in wartime. Brian arrived at Phu Cat on July 12th, 1967, and joined the 416th TFS. On January 1, 1968, he became Misty 36. His Misty tour lasted four months, but to this day, that group truly is a band of brothers.

The first thing I did after moving off base (Wells Jackson was my landlord), was learn how to drive. *I know, I know. I was a late bloomer.* I learned on a crew cab, and a very patient motor pool instructor took me through the drill. He even prepared me in case of an accident. That turned out to be a good thing. Three days after getting my license, I decided I could drive myself to Wichita Falls for a transportation course. I won't go into the details, but en route I rolled the car. I was banged up and the car was totaled. The state trooper who came to question me said there was no law covering inexperience. It was a Corvair, Brian's first brand new car. As the car was flipping over I thought, "If I'm not killed, Brian will finish the job." I didn't tell him until months later when we met in Hawaii on R&R. I figured he'd be in a good mood. *I was right!*

Guess I should get to the reason Don Shepperd asked me to write this. The first time we spoke, Shep was writing his second book on Misty. I had no idea who he was. He wanted to know about my reactions, etc., when Brian was shot down in North Vietnam. So Shep, this is for you. The rest of the story.

Being on active duty and having a top secret clearance, the Intel guys *did* keep me up to date the best they could about the war (No, not about Misty). I knew Brian was in the group and flying up north. Did I worry? Yes. In the back of my mind I knew Brian was a good pilot, as he often said, "the world's greatest."

On March 18, 1968, I was watching the 10 o'clock news and the announcer said, "Today an F-100 was shot down in North Vietnam." I said, "OMG, it's Brian!" I just knew. Held my breath for a couple of hours, and when the blue car didn't pull up to the door, I went to bed. The phone rang about 4:00 a.m. and it was Brian calling to tell me he was OK, but his front seater was missing. We said all the husband-wife things people say, and I told him not to be a hero. We said goodbye and I started back to bed. Then, I lost my temper. *How dare someone try to kill my husband!!* I wanted revenge. Good thing there weren't any Vietnamese around, or I probably would've found them and knocked them silly. Hey, I'm Irish.

I went to work in the morning. About 10:00 a.m. I looked up from my desk and the base commander and D.O. were walking toward me, wearing long faces. I held up my hand and told them I had talked to Brian, he was OK, etc., etc. They said the message had come in with the news that H. Williams and B. Williams had been shot down. They thought it was Brian who was missing. When they left, all my staff were looking at me with owl eyes. I told them what had happened. My secretary said, "OMG, and you came to work?" Had to, otherwise I might've been trolling the streets looking for Vietnamese.

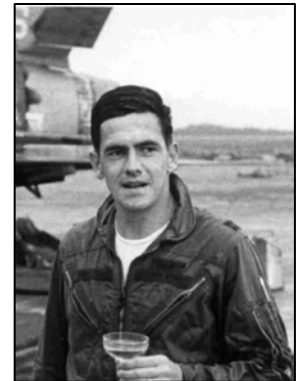
Next morning at a staff meeting, I was getting my notes ready and someone nudged me and said the wing commander was trying to get my attention. He had been calling me "Mrs. Williams." It was the first time anyone had called me "Mrs.," and I didn't realize he was talking to me. He said he was glad my husband was safe but hoped I knew that he'd be expected to continue with the mission. I told him I would expect no less of my husband, and thanked him for his concern. I knew he was being kind, but men never did quite grasp that while wearing the blue suit, I was a USAF officer. (*Pause for flag waving and patriotic music.*) In those days at least, all the WAF officers I knew felt the same way. I bet they still do. (*Nowadays that would include a flight suit!*)

The only other scare I had while Brian was in Vietnam was when I thought he was having an affair. We used to send cassettes back and forth. I usually recorded both sides, but Brian only one. I decided to reuse one and was rewinding when I heard a woman's breathless voice talking in a foreign language. Shock! Turned out the "girlfriend" was me, with the tape playing backwards. LOL!

The rest of the year passed, and Brian had an assignment to Torrejon, Spain. I was told there were no slots for my career field, and that the next opening would be 6 months to a year. By this time we'd been married almost two years. Hadn't seen each other until six months before the wedding, and then another 6 months or so after, then 10 months together before Vietnam. I knew Brian wasn't going to follow me around for my career progression, and I figured we'd start a family. (I figured incorrectly.) So I resigned my commission. Thought I should give this marriage thing a fighting chance.

He came back to get me at Cannon and had bought some booze that he'd put in his suitcase. You guessed it! All the bottles were broken. He handed me his suitcase and said his clothes needed washing. I did wash them, but only after we took care of some other "pressing needs."

I've done many loads of wash since that day. I'm sure my dying words will be, "Don't forget there are clothes in the dryer." It sometimes has been touch and go, but we made it: 51 years last April!



Brian celebrates his last Misty Mission, April. '68.

Some other observations about our Air Force years: Remember the wives who didn't exactly give me a warm welcome on my arrival at Lakeheath? We soon became good friends. I even danced in their Wives' Club show productions. Maybe dating Brian gave me "cred."

I used to watch the wives, especially during those Vietnam years. Traveling while handling all the luggage for themselves, and often several children. They arranged moves and handled whatever else was handed to them. They looked exhausted, but never complained. And for some, they took the news of their loved ones never returning with strength and grace. Their job was to keep the family together and to get by with limited income and none of the perks in today's world. And they did it. *They too are heroes!*

That's my story, and I'm sticking to it! — Pat Williams ■

Poet's Corner

I'm a Poet and I know it. My feet show it: they're Longfellows!

ALERT

By R. Y. Costain

The SCRAMBLE klaxon's urgent note
Sends chills along the spine;
We must be airborne in our jets
Within five minutes time.

Power up and drop the brakes,
Then burners to the max!
The midnight runway falls away;
We'll soon be on attack.

Lead calls "Tally, switches hot!"
Then says with mild disgust,
"It's an off-course big trash hauler,
Red Flight, safe 'em up!"

o-o-o

MY WINDOW

By R. Y. Costain

The birds race by in joyful flight,
They've joined up with each other.
While tucked in close, and turning hard,
A chick will find its mother.

And mixing in, the snowflakes fall,
In their erratic flight.
The birds and I—we both love them—
A captivating sight!

I marvel at this wondrous scene
Of gently falling snow.
Then suddenly! It's "Race the wind!"
When it begins to blow.

But in the end we all must land,
They're fading from my sight.
The story's over, merry band,
And so I say, "good night!"

o-o-o

Post Script: *R.Y. flew west Feb. 18th of this year, but not before completing an 11-page booklet of his poems. His flying career involved eight different fighters. He flew 244 combat missions in Southeast Asia.*

THE WIDOWMAKER

By John J. Schulz

The silent Super Sabre sits,
His mouth a gaping sneer.
With speed and grace in every line
He dares you to draw near.

With swept and supersonic wings
His beauty takes your breath,
But if you let him "have his head"
He'll spin you to your death.

The moment that you first forget
Exactly what he's made for,
He'll plant you in a piece of farm
That is all bought and paid for.

So listen now, young fighter jocks,
And fighter-jocks-to-be,
You won't get into trouble
If you heed these words from me.

"That bird you see a'sittin' there
With guns and gaping jaw,
Can do a trick that ruins your day,
So watch its adverse yaw.

"Those four guns you see beneath
Can sing a deadly song,
But when it starts its "Sabre Dance,"
You won't be livin' long.

"In any venture, one sour note
Can ruin the melody,
And this great beast can ruin the song
By running through a tree.

"There's many a Sabre lesson taught,
And each day do you learn,
For many a man has failed his class
In 'Base-to-final-turn.'"

No, I don't trust you, Mighty Beast,
You won't get me today.

I love you, but respect you more,
When we go up to play.

Written in 1970, on alert at RAF Lakenheath, after a long discussion with a new "brown bar" Hun driver.

A Thank You from the National Museum of the USAF (NMUSAF)

“World’s largest military aviation museum is getting bigger!” So reads a banner on a NMUSAF web page plugging the 8 June opening to the public and the 11-12 June Grand Opening of the long awaited Fourth Building addition to the museum’s infrastructure. Here’s what the museum’s Foundation had to say about it. “See more than 70 aircraft in four new galleries: Presidential, Research & Development, Space, and Global Reach. You can board a space shuttle, walk through four presidential aircraft, step inside cargo planes, enjoy new educational opportunities in three STEM Learning Nodes and much more ... all with FREE admission and parking! Plus, try out the Air Force Museum Foundation’s new suite of simulator rides including the Pulseworks’ Virtual Reality Transporter (for a small fee), the first of its kind in North America, featuring an exclusive Space Voyage experience!” Each dues-paying SSS member played a small part in making all this happen!

Here’s the gist of an email that arrived on 7/14/17 from Olivia Ventullo, the museum’s Donor Relations Manager. The bronze plaques recognizing major 4th building contributors have been installed on the Patrons of the Museum granite wall near the south entrance to the Museum! Thank you for the Super Sabre Society’s contribution to the Air Force Museum Foundation. We truly appreciate your support. Attached is a photo of your plaque, I hope you’ll visit soon to see it with your own eyes! This recognition is well deserved for your building fund donation and your commitment to supporting the Foundation and the Museum. Thank you all ... and all the best! — **Olivia Ventullo**

It’s been over five years since the SSS contributed to the realization of this 4th NMUSAF building with four new galleries. Many of us hadn’t seen this premier museum before the 5th Biennial SSS Reunion at Dayton in 2015. Odds are, all of us who attended and felt the majesty of the NMUSAF, in our tours and at a gala banquet, are proud to know our donation “back when” was well worth the money approved unanimously by the Board for this NMUSAF project. One might say, this small plaque is a small bit of our SSS’s legacy, well applied! **RMG** ■



The shiny 4th building is now in business, thanks to large and small donations to the Museum Foundation (somewhere near \$40M total, we understand). The SSS was a Patron.



SSS recognition plaque: Up close.



Patrons Wall: We’re there ... somewhere!

Picture Caption Contest – Go Consult Your Funny Bone



“Game of Darts, anyone?” Pete Fleischhacker’s winner!
Mine was: **“Check my 93 mph fastball, it’s a rocket!”**
(He seems ready to throw the missile in his hand. – jj)

It was “Hoppy” Hopkins, our CEO, who suggested this ongoing Caption Contest. He is the unchallengeable sole judge of the winner. So, now, produce a caption for one of the Dice all-time mischief-makers, Tip Clark, who obviously pulled rank and ordered all the wives to “fall in!” They did!



Caption THIS one if you would, please.
Surrounded by adoring wives of the 90th TFS F-22 pilots based in Alaska, Tip Clark basks in the adoration. He was a “Dice Guy” at Bien Hoa 50 years ago and joined in the Dice 100th anniversary celebrations, causing as much mischief as usual. Go Tip!

Send your contest-entry captions to jjschulz@bu.edu. The usual 5% handling fee applies for the relay to “Judge Hoppy.” Send checks to your beloved *Intake* editor to help fund his Hawaii vacation. — **Ed**.

Multi-Engine Puke to Fighter Pilot

By Don Campbell

Don, an SSS member, wrote recently to say, his year-and-a-half in the Hun was the highlight of his 21-year AF Career. This is his story, similar to that of other multi-engine guys who, because of the war in SEA, finally got to fly fighters. Ed.



Don by his Hun 1968

I know there are other guys like me who were affected by the Air Force policy during Vietnam that every pilot would serve a combat tour before anyone went a second time. This is the tale of how I finally made it, and what it was like to break into the culture to become one of “you” guys.

I don’t know about WW II training, but by the 1950s and ‘60s, very few got a fighter assignment after UPT. Such was my case in Class 60-B at Greenville AFB, MS. when I put on wings in September of ‘59. Our class had about 70 graduates and we got only five or six fighter assignments. Like so many others, I hoped for a single-engine, single-seat fighter. I had wanted to be a fighter pilot since I’d learned to fly as a teenager. But in the ‘50s and ‘60s, SAC was king and was taking the bulk of the UPT classes for their big airplanes. I was in the top quarter of my class, but was only offered bombers or tankers. *Crap!* I was big-time depressed, but thought KC-135s was a better deal than B-47s or B-52s.

When my tanker assignment came, it wasn’t even for a KC-135; I went to KC-97s. *What the heck was a KC-97??* Somebody told me SAC had some of them at Little Rock AFB, so the next weekend I drove up there. I talked my way onto the flight line and saw a very ugly airplane leaking oil on the ramp. *Oh! My! God! No!* It’s lucky I didn’t have a sharp instrument with me or I might have ended it all right then!

I went to Randolph AFB, TX, for KC-97 training, then to Lincoln AFB, NE, then to Selfridge AFB, always with the 307th ARS. All great guys, but (to me) we were flying a not-so-great airplane. The years 1960-64 dragged on with me constantly bugging MPC for a fighter assignment. Their response was always the same: “NO, you are a critical SAC resource.” Which was nonsense; the 307th had tons of co-pilots and aircraft commanders.

By 1965, I’d upgraded to the KC-135 as an aircraft commander at Ramey AFB in balmy Puerto Rico (the best SAC base). I continued my bid for SEA and a fighter: F-105s, F-4s, F-100s, A-1s—anything to get out of SAC! But always the same MPC response: “NO!” I got several KC-135 “Young Tiger” TDYs to SEA, passing gas to fighters going North. Then, at last, in late 1968, the Air Force had to dip into the multi-engine pilot pool and I got an F-100 assignment. *Hallelujah!* Did Water Survival in FL, thence to Luke AFB, one of 19 students in Class 69F.

We did a few hours in AT-33s (gosh, was it super to be back flying fun airplanes!), then on to the “Hun.” I was in Heaven!

On one early flight, my IP, Maj. Don Ehrhardt, took me down inside the Grand Canyon. (*Those were the days!*) My best scores were in strafe—what fun! Training went by fast. Then on to Snake School en route to Vietnam and the 510th TFS “Buzzards” at Bien Hoa. Lt. Col. David Procter was the Sqdn. CO when I arrived in early January 1969. The Buzzards were loaded with great high-time fighter guys like Len Moon, Bill Keller, Art Huhn, “Tiny” West, “Speedy” Moore, Les Drane, and Bruce Gold. They were all nice, but I could tell I was not yet “one of them.”

As my mission count built up, I could sense a little bit more respect because I didn’t screw up. Then, on a scramble off Alert (I was Two), a very excited FAC in III Corps told us he had a large building under some trees that he suspected was storing ordnance. After we missed the target on a couple of passes, I put a high drag through a window and got a large secondary explosion. The FAC went nuts: “Wow, Two, you did it! Great bomb!”

That mission brought me a long ways closer to being one of “you guys.” My upgrade to Lead and lots of CAS missions helped. On another Alert Pad mission, the FAC had spotted “a large sampan” (mounted guns in front, center, and rear) under some trees along a large stream. The bad guys thought they were hidden. I was flying Two on “Speedy” Moore’s wing. We dropped our slicks in singles (hard to hit a small target dropping from slick bomb altitude). The FAC was getting a bit desperate as we continued to miss his major boat find. Then, on my last bomb, I got a bullseye! By the time I got to the bar that evening, I had embellished that story to where I had sunk an NVA battleship!

My Vietnam F-100 tour was the most enjoyable time of my 21+-year Air Force career. And by the time I left Bien Hoa, I began to feel a bit like “one” of “you guys” (maybe with an asterisk). Fighter guys are great, and maybe a few more old “multi guys” in the SSS will appear to comment on this article. But I want to let you “real” fighter guys in the SSS know that if you were lucky enough to spend most of your careers flying “fun” type airplanes, lots of us are still very envious.

Post Script: On 16 May 2016, at Ft. Wayne, IN, 47 years after my last mission at Bien Hoa (as a Buzzard), I flew in Dean Cutshall’s F-100F (at age 80). Thanks, Dean and Hoppy, for making it happen! ■

Tet 1968 at Tuy Hoa, Phan Rang and Phu Cat

This is the second of two articles focused on the impact of the Tet Offensive of January-February 1968 on the four F-100 Wings based in South Vietnam. Part I focused on Bien Hoa, which seems to have been hit hardest by that offensive—for several hours, portions of the base were overrun and one end of the runway was occupied. Over the next 30 days, firefights and the supporting close air support missions in III and IV Corps were frequent and often very intense. In contrast, Tuy Hoa, guarded by a South Korean Army division, was never directly attacked; the others experienced sporadic mortar and rocket attacks, and the pilots found that many of their support missions were very intense indeed. The following is a short collection of articles and vignettes from Hun drivers who were there when it all began, the night of January 31, 1968. **Ed.**

WIKIPEDIA EXTRACT ON THE TET OFFENSIVE OF 1968 – AN OVERVIEW

Though initial attacks stunned both the US and South Vietnamese armies, causing them to temporarily lose control of several cities, they quickly regrouped, beat back the attacks, and inflicted heavy casualties on North Vietnamese forces. During the Battle of Huế, intense fighting lasted for a month, resulting in the destruction of the city by US forces. During their occupation, the North Vietnamese executed thousands of people in the Massacre at Huế. Around the US combat base at Khe Sanh, fighting continued for two more months. The term "Tet offensive" usually refers to the January-February 1968 offensive, but it can also include the so-called "Mini-Tet" offensives that took place in May and August.

Tet at Tuy Hoa By Bob Salisbury

I was on alert at Tuy Hoa on January 31, 1968 when the Tet Offensive started. This was my experience during three missions off the Alert Pad that first day, and what happened at Tuy Hoa in the days that followed. — RCS

Historians have reported that the North Vietnamese build-up to the 1968 Tet Offensive began during 1967 and that General Westmorland had a suspicion that they were preparing for a major offensive. However, those same reports say the senior military staff in Saigon was not prepared for the attack and those of us at Tuy Hoa (about 350 miles northeast of Saigon) did not have a clue.

The North and South Vietnamese had declared a truce to begin on January 31, 1968, the first day of Tet, the Vietnamese version of the Chinese New Year. While truces were usually effective, we had to be prepared for violations. This meant that during the truce, the three Tuy Hoa F-100 squadrons planned to maintain two aircraft each on Alert, to be scrambled in the event that friendly forces needed support. Alert duty during a truce was not good duty, because we did not expect to be scrambled. The alert pilots had to stay at the alert shack, reading or playing cards, while the rest of the pilots had a day off and everyone relaxed, went to the beach and consumed adult beverages.

Even though I had been with the 308th for almost 10 months, I was still the only lieutenant in the squadron and was assigned to alert with another pilot from the squadron from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. While the first attack of the offensive was reported to have occurred at 3:00 AM both at Bien Hoa, just north of Saigon 16 miles, and at Hue, in the northern part of South Vietnam, we had heard nothing about either of those attacks.

We routinely pre-flighted our aircraft when we went on duty at 6:00 AM and settled in for a long and tedious day.

There were the usual six F-100s on alert, two each from the 306th, 308th and 309th. Each flight had different armament configurations. The two of us from the 308th were assigned the call signs Litter 01 and 02 (Litter was the 31st Wing call sign) and our aircraft were loaded with two 500-pound "snake-eye" high drag bombs, two 750-pound napalm cans and a full load of 20-millimeter bullets for our four cannons. It was for most pilots the favorite configuration: "Snakes, Nape, and 20 Mike-Mike."

Shortly after we went on duty, at about 6:15 AM, the field telephone buzzed and the duty officer at the command post ordered: "Scramble one and two." As we took off and proceeded to the target area, I assumed we were dealing with a truce violation by a small enemy force. We were sent to Ban Me Thout, a fairly large city in the central highlands about 160 miles northwest of Saigon. It had been used by the French as a center of coffee and rubber production.

When we arrived in the area, the FAC told us that a large Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) force was attacking a military garrison located near the center of Ban Me Thout. We then dropped our ordinance on the enemy forces, close to the city center. This was very unusual because most battles occurred in outlying areas or near small villages, not a large city. After completing our attacks, and while returning to base, we heard many more aircraft on the radio, indicating that this was *not* an isolated incident.



Bob Salisbury in 1958

We returned to Tuy Hoa, and while our aircraft were refueled and rearmed, we debriefed the mission at the intelligence office. It was then we learned that attacks were occurring all over the country (*Over 300 places that first day Ed.*), and the entire wing was being called to duty.

As soon as our aircraft were ready, we were scrambled on our second mission. This time we were sent to the city of Pleiku in Central Vietnam. The situation there was very much like it had been on our first mission. The FAC directed us to drop our ordnance and concentrate our strafe on enemy forces attacking a U.S. military installation near the center of town.

Again we returned to Tuy Hoa, debriefed while the aircraft were refueled and reloaded, and once again, as soon as the aircraft were ready, we were scrambled. This time we were sent north to the large city of Hue, 50 miles south of the demilitarized zone, the boundary between North and South Vietnam. It had originally been the capital of Vietnam and included an ancient walled city known as the Citadel. At the beginning of the Tet Offensive, a large force of the North Vietnamese Army had attacked the city, which was defended by South Vietnamese Army forces. We were sent to support allied forces operating just outside the Citadel. What was most surprising to us was that we were asked to drop ordnance very close to the ancient walled city.

When we landed from our third mission it was about 11:30 AM. The rule at the time was that pilots could fly no more than three missions per day. By then, the rest of the Wing was working a full day of missions and replacement pilots were pulled in to take our places on Alert. We had the rest of the day off!



Tuy Hoa Bunker. Oh, Yuk! A Latrine!

As best I recall, the Tet Offensive never directly affected our base at Tuy Hoa. The Republic of Korea (ROK) “Tiger” Mechanized Infantry Division was responsible for the security of Phu Yen Province, where Tuy Hoa was located. The ROK troops had a reputation for being fierce fighters, and they were feared by the Viet Cong and NVA. On the first day or two of the Tet Offensive a stray mortar round exploded inside the base perimeter, but it was nowhere near the aircraft or any major facilities on the base. However, when it exploded an alert was sounded and a few pilots ran inside one of the bunkers near the pilots’ quarters. Unfortunately, they quickly learned that the Vietnamese maids had been using the bunker as a latrine (they used the real toilets in our trailers as the place to wash their hair).

While Tuy Hoa Air Base was not attacked during the Tet Offensive, there were some attacks in the river valley just to the northwest of the base. At one point, while outside our quarters, I was able to observe a flight of F-100s providing close air support to the U.S. and ROK forces just a few miles outside of the base. It was interesting to see the Huns coming “down the chute” on their dive bombing passes. Quite a different perspective!

As a post script, the production of the Keith Ferris lithograph of Huns taking off at the beginning of the Tet Offensive could be just as relevant to Tuy Hoa as Bien Hoa. While the painting shows aircraft 440 lifting off from Bien Hoa with a wingman behind, it could just as easily be Litter 01 and 02 on the first scramble from Tuy Hoa. Litter 01 is just lifting off and I was following in Litter 02 with eight second spacing. **RCS**

Tet at Phan Rang By Win Reither



Win in 1968 at Phan Rang

I arrived at Phan Rang in early 1968, just in time for a rocket attack at the end of January. I had just received a local area checkout and a final ride with Bobby Beckel, USAFA 1959, who seemed very cautious with me. Likely because I had just graduated from UPT and had 120 hours in the Hun and worse, to him, had been in SAC. He must have been unimpressed that I was an experienced EWO and was probably the only guy on the base who thoroughly understood the many features of Hun’s APR-25 RHAW Radar Warning Receiver.

At Phan Rang AFB in January 1968 before the TET offensive, all the pilots were highly experienced. The squadron commander of the 615th, Lt. Col. Buzz Sawyer, flew once or twice a day and finished with 325 combat missions. Our ops officer was Major Burt Field, who had already ejected from an F-105 and had two more ejections from the F-100 during his year in Vietnam. Mike Connolly did the scheduling; he had started his AF flying career in F-86s. The squadron’s fighter pilots were most impressive: with W.H. Davidson, D.L. Gish, Bob Oberg, David A. Dreifuss, Howard Eckersley, John Miko, Howard Hanson, J.W. Edwards, Jim Anthony, Ed Maney, J.F. Cassidy, C.A. Crooker, D.C Douglas, Chick Henn, J.J. Closner, and Jim Martin all there at once. Never again did I see this much talent in one unit. I saw myself as finally living in tall cotton.

After the base was rocketed almost every night, I was flying two and sometimes three times a day. In February, I flew 40 missions and finally figured how to drop napalm and high drag bombs by the seat of my pants—during that first month



Huns at Tuy Hoa. Tet was a busy time.

or so. I learned how to nail a pair of high drags every time. Half of those early missions were “troops in contact,” and the bad guys were often 100 yards or less from our troops. But I was most terrified by the prospect of having to land on rainy dark nights with a nearby mountain 1,000 feet above the GCA let down point.

Phan Rang was hit pretty hard during Tet, especially on one night early in Tet. After that attack, when the others came I just stayed in bed; the rockets and mortars were very inaccurate, but they did hit our base often during Tet.

I was amazed how much I learned in those first three months, and I believed we were winning the “war.” But by mid-February, or two weeks into Tet, North and South Vietnamese casualties had risen to almost 39,000, including 33,249 killed. American casualties were more than 1,200 KIA.

I continued to fly once or twice a day and only got hit twice, once with “small arms fire” and another hit that forced me to land at Binh Thuy Air Base on a short (6,000’) runway. But we all believed we were winning the war!

Over the years, I slowly learned that the flying experience in South Vietnam, and the casualties hit a peak in 1968, and what followed is hard to swallow. **WR**

A High Altitude View of the First Morning of Tet, as Seen by a Misty Pilot at Phu Cat Headed North. A Brief Vignette from Don Shepperd, Misty 34

During Tet 1968 I was at Phu Cat flying Misty FAC missions over North Vietnam. The morning of 31 January 1968 the Tet Offensive was in full swing and every base/town in Vietnam was under attack except ours and Tuy Hoa. Both of those bases were protected by the ROKs (South Koreans) forces.

We launched on a Misty mission before first light and as we proceeded north, I could see every town with large plumes of smoke and firefights/artillery/explosions going off in the streets. Passing Hue, looking down, it was extremely violent, with lots of explosions in the old Citadel. It was the one mission where I was glad to be going to North Vietnam.

Coming home, we discussed what to do if we could not land at Phu Cat because the base was under attack (and thus we’d have no tower contact). We talked about several options and decided if worst came to worst, we would just go eject off the coast near Qui Nhon and float until someone picked us up (another great plan!). When we got back to Phu Cat, it was “ops normal.” Our base was probably the only one that was not attacked that morning - GO ROKs! — *Shep*

Tet Action as seen by one of the “Marine Guys on the Ground” at Khe Sanh By Don Griffin, USMC (posted on Facebook with a reply from Don Shepperd)

I always recall this time of year personally... In 1967 and ’68, I was at Khe Sanh. It was 14 miles from the DMZ and five miles from Laos. The enemy decided if our base could be defeated, it would be a huge plus for them. I was in Marine Recon, and our group kept reporting huge enemy build-ups after every mission. We also reported seeing Chinese officers leading the enemy, but in the debriefings they always struck that info from the report.

The base started getting hit with 150 mm shells before Christmas, and it increased weekly. Every recon patrol became increasingly dangerous, and on January 17th we were ambushed, and everybody was killed in my group except me and a sergeant. We had been forced to take a Vietnamese soldier with us, and I felt he had informed the enemy where we were. Later he showed up and said he had “escaped.”

There were about 5,500 soldiers at Khe Sanh, mostly 1st Calvary Army, 26th Marines and 20 of us in the Recon unit. We were surrounded by 25 to 30 thousand NVA, including the 325th NVA, and the elite, highly trained 304th Division.

Our entire ammo dump blew up and it was blamed on direct hits from incoming. We believed it was suicide bombers but weren’t allowed to share the info with anyone outside the base. One night, six men in Marine Corp uniforms tried to come through the gate. One of the guard dogs growled at them and a Captain called to them. None of them spoke English, so the guards opened fire and killed five, but one escaped after taking papers from the others. They were all NVA officers. I was sure others had infiltrated and marked important locations.

All this was at the start of Tet. Some days now I can’t remember where I leave my shoes, but I remember Christmas that year and Tet every January, and all the buddies I lost. It’s hard to believe it will be 50 years ago next January. I think about all the U.S. troops in war for us today and hope they all come home safe. Too many folks take living here for granted but I don’t want anyone to ever have to go to war to understand how much they should appreciate living here.

Shep’s Response to Don Griffin: *I remember Khe Sanh and Tet well. I was a Misty FAC flying two-seat F-100s out of Phu Cat over North Vietnam. At daylight on 7 Feb 1968, Jim Fiorelli and I headed north and they diverted us to look west of Khe Sanh at Lang Vei Special Forces Camp with whom they had lost radio contact. We flew over at very low level and reported that it looked like a tornado! The perimeter was breached everywhere, nothing moving, dead bodies and TANKS IN THE WIRE! No one would believe us when we reported in by the radio. And on the ground later, “There ain’t no tanks in South Vietnam” was their response. So we showed them our hand-held Nikon 35mm photos.*

*I am still reminded of how good the NVA were at camouflage. We were REALLY good at locating camouflaged targets from the air, that was our business, but there were two or three divisions, 30,000+ NVA troops and nothing stirred! No dust, no movement, no nothing. “All quiet on the western front,” An amazing battle. Glad you and we survived! — *Shep**

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

****Reminder****

SSS Membership Comes With Annual Dues, Due On or BEFORE Jan 1.

If You Haven't

Paid Your \$35 2017 Dues Yet, Your SSS Benefits Are Now Suspended & This Is Your LAST ISSUE of "The Intake"

Until You Get PAID UP

AND Ahead of the Power Curve!

If this applies to you, why not pay your \$35 for 2017 AND \$35 for 2018 online at our website or send your \$70 total to REINSTATE Your Membership to the SSS PO Box given in the Contacts text box on this page.

Laughter-Silvered Wings

*This is the 18th installment of the LSW "mini-department," featuring short, humorous "fun in the Hun" anecdotes. We all have funny yarns to share, and my **bag is now empty**, so please get on the stick and send yours to Intake Editor John J. Schulz, jjschulz@bu.edu. My job? "Make it fit."*

o-0-o

A Highly Decorated Roach?

I arrived at Bien Hoa in July '66 to join the 510th TFS—the Buzzards of Bien Hoa. To help wile away the boring hours between missions, I decided to grow a moustache. Anyone who's done that knows it comes with an unanticipated characteristic: unless it's regularly trimmed, there's always one wild hair that has to be pushed away with your tongue!

A couple of months later, cruising to a meaningless tree-busting mission in III Corps, I couldn't seem to push an errant moustache hair off my lip with my tongue. So I took my glove off, unhooked one side of my mask and tried to move the hair off my lip with my fingers. Imagine my surprise when I looked down and saw a big old Vietnamese cockroach sitting in my mask like he owned the thing. Its antenna was obviously the "hair" against my lip!

My first reaction was to jump out of my seat—but, of course, I was strapped in! If I'd pulled negative Gs on the level off, I'm pretty sure I would have eaten the damn thing! I disconnected my mask completely and dumped the bug out onto the cockpit floor—all this while trying to keep wings level. Mr. Cockroach scrambled out of sight before I could stomp it, and try as I might during and after the mission, I couldn't find the little beast.

Thus ended that brief episode. But I always wondered if that old roach had found a suitable roost in that Hun—and ended up flying enough combat missions to earn an Air Medal!

The next day I shaved off my moustache. — **Ross Becker** ▣

OK, guys, that's the story of his 'stache, but let me stress again, it's the last of my "stash" of short, funny LSW anecdotes. I know there are half a million more out there that need telling. So c'mon!! — JJ



Back Cover Picture Credits

"♪ Somewhere under the rainbow ... ♪"

Readers of last fall's Issue 32 will recognize this Hun on a stick as 56-3880. That's the F-100 President Shepperd dedicated at Joint Base Andrews on 9/13/16. He sent this follow-on picture on 4/29/17 with this note, when queried about its source: "A CE troop stationed at Andrews at the Guard operational HQ caught the photo by accident and another friend saw it and sent it to me."

So, we don't know specifics about its pedigree, but we sure do appreciate the CE troop and the intermediate friend who passed this jewel on to Shep, and thus to us. It's absolutely perfect for our back cover—one year from our introduction to old 3880 in I-32!

Publisher's Parting Post

On page 3, our President and Intake Editor have their columns to pass on their thoughts of importance or opinions. Since I retired as Editor almost two years ago, I've missed the privilege of a personal column. So, when Editor Schulz suggested we didn't need this space for "Parting Shots about Your Dues", we agreed to try a Publisher's column here. I'm looking forward to it and plan to address items of interest to all. ☺

***** Have a nice wintertime! Pub Med. *****

