

The Intake

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



— “Aerial Refueling Collection” —

(Credits/details page 2.)

A Twist on Our “From a Wife’s Perspective” Series (Featured article, page 30.)

Seventh Biennial Reunion: After-Action Report (Page 8.)

The Intake

Summer 2019, Vol. 2, Issue 40

JOURNAL OF THE SUPER SABRE SOCIETY

- 3 Staff Corner: Pres. & Editor
- 4 Incoming/Outgoing Correspondence
- 6 Past President Don Shepperd's Parting Thoughts
- 7 Stake Your Claim (SYC) as of Summer, 2019, By Jim Brasier
- 8 The Way We Are: Reunion 2019 After-Action Report, By R. Medley Gatewood, with contributions from: Leo Mansuetti, Dewey Clawson, Crow Wilson, Don Shepperd and JJ Schulz
- 20 The Way We Were, By Shaun Ryan
- 22 Functional Test Flight, By John Lowery
- 24 The Forgotten Call-up of the Air National Guard—Redux, Part 2, By then-Major Joseph B. Speed
- 27 Vietnam War: Squadron Turnovers Documented, By R. Medley Gatewood
- 28 Final Chapter (at last)—The Super Sabre Society's Nellis Rock Monument Project, By Don Shepperd
- 29 Honor Flight—A Must-Read Report, By Ed Haerter
- 30 A Daughter and a Wife's Tale—Col. Keith Heiniger (Misty 15), By Christine Heiniger Johnson and Peggy Heiniger
- 32 In a Nutshell, Story 1, By Hal Hermes; Story 2, By Rusty Gideon
- 33 Now THAT'S a Compressor Stall! By Larry Van Pelt
- 34 Sam Gore's Caterpillar Club Story
- 35 614th Deployment to Vietnam – Gulf of Tonkin, August 1964, Pt. 2 of 3, By Jim Brasier
- 39 Laughter Silvered Wings & More, SSS Contacts, Dues Due, Closing Remarks

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The Intake – Journal of the SSS

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Front Cover Aircraft Credits

SSS Photo Editor Shaun Ryan provided this stunning photograph from his stash of superior aviation pictures. When he sent the pic recently, we assumed Shaun was the Photog going back to early Hun days for the Tucson ANG “Tigres.”

But “NO,” said Shaun. Turns out he came by the pic around four or five years ago when the 152nd Photo shop was “cleaning house” and giving all sorts of historic stuff away. Thank goodness for Shaun’s sharp eye! Here’s what Shaun can positively say or conjecture: Pic was taken in the early Hun years because the Tank is a Missouri ANG KC-97. One of the 152nd Photo shop guys probably took the pic. Most likely, it was on a four-ship training mission with the Photo guy filling the bucket on No. 4. Anyone with more about this pic, please sound off to Shaun, Medley or JJ. Don’t be bashful!

Dues Status

If your DUES STATUS (printed on the envelope this came in) is “In Arrears,” our records show that as of 10 July, you had not paid for 2019—\$35 payable on or before 1 January of each year. If you are “In Arrears,” please take care of that MEMBER responsibility ASAP!

If you’re not sure of your dues status, take action to find out! Contact: CFO (David Hatten) at email, david@houseofhatten.com / phone (512) 261-5071, or Membership (Dewey Clawson) at deweyclawson@hotmail.com / phone (724) 336-4273.

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

Staff Corner

From the President's Desk

Overall, the reunion in San Antonio was a success. Most people had a wonderful time seeing old friends, telling tall tales and reliving a lot of warm memories together. As always, there were some problems in the planning and execution of the reunion. We made some mistakes, The Menger Hotel made some mistakes, and the MRP (Military Reunion Planners) folks added to the list. We have received a lot of your feedback, both positive and negative, and we need to hear all of that. Many thanks to everyone who took the time to let us know about your experiences. We are gathering inputs and recommendations for the next reunion, and our planning and decision processes are working overtime. The place, dates, venues and schedules will be coming out to all of you in the near future. Many of you did a super job in getting your year groups and organization groups together. That really helps. I hope more do that the next time.

As I said at the General Membership Meeting, one of my major goals is to gain a stronger sense of membership. I want to increase membership inputs and feedback on everything we do and the direction we are going. I intend to do that by asking for your opinions, critiques and “druthers.” One method of doing that will be an increased use of surveys, which I do not intend to be cumbersome, but rather to help me and the rest of the leadership make this SSS look and feel like you, the members, want it to be. At the heart of this effort is the need to focus on the mission of the SSS “... to preserve the history of the F-100 Super Sabre and the men who flew the aircraft.” We are increasingly receiving notes and letters from widows, children and grandchildren about their husbands, fathers and grandfathers. Some are informational, some are inquiries asking for more information. They are constant reminders that what we are doing is so very essential. In the meantime, maintaining our camaraderie and strong bonds of friendship will strengthen us as an organization and assist in accomplishing our mission.

General Joe Ashy presented a superb outline for further developing the complete story about the crucial roles that the F-100 has played as a key component in the defense of our country. You'll be seeing more about this project as we continue to get more historical information and data.

In response to a large number of inquiries about how to donate or endow funds to the SSS, Peter Collins, our group lawyer, developed a very comprehensive plan for that purpose. Following approval from the Board, Peter is continuing to coordinate, finalize and publish the SSS Endowment Fund and Individual (or Named) Endowment Fund. More on that coming.

It was wonderful to have the Friends of the Super Sabre (FSS) and the Military Aviation Preservation Society (MAPS) Air Museum with us at the reunion. We will continue to nourish and strengthen our relationships with both of those organizations. Finally, I must mention the need and importance of completing and updating biographies. MB Barrett is working this hard and needs all of us to help. **It is very important!** ■

Onward and Upward — Tom Griffith

From the Editor

Much of the front half of this issue is devoted to a report on the various activities that took place during our San Antonio Reunion. One thing I suspect we can all agree on is that there was plenty to see and do, and a large variety of places to eat just about any kind of food that tickled your fancy.

Kudos yet again to Medley Gatewood, former editor/publisher and now “publisher” of *The Intake*. I swear, he is working harder and writing and editing as much or more than when he wore both hats. No complaint here; makes my job a lot easier! His compilation of reports and the several he authored in the front portion of this issue make for a very comprehensive load of information to digest, particularly for those who weren't able to attend this time. You missed a lot of “fun stuff” and interesting conversations.

Tom has mentioned various things that didn't go quite right, but from my perspective as a “consumer” for most events, I thought things went very well. And as the organizer of events at the banquet, my critique is that the after-dinner portion went longer that I'd hoped before we got to the superb presentation by our guest speaker, Dr. Eileen Bjorkman. She was inspired to pursue a career in aviation development and technologies at an early age, seeing her dad fly the mighty Hun. She did a terrific job of covering much about the Hun, some of which none of us knew. *Well done, good Doctor!*

As for this issue and those yet to come: the whole thing will fall apart without your contributions, because more than anything else, it is a compilation of stories and features focused on the history, heroism and humor of every one of you, the guys who flew the mighty Hun. My point? We welcome and need more stories and items in each of those categories, and indeed the supply of short, humorous items for our Laughter Silvered Wings feature is drying up fast. So, to be terribly repetitive: sit down at that computer and start banging out your favorite adventure or misadventure in the Widomaker, or, long or shorter, any of the fun and humorous things that you witnessed or participated in. Who knows, it may come as a form of confession after all these years, but we are standing by now to laugh with you at your yarn.

It goes without saying that it was great to see each of you. Be well and we'll see you in two years ... if not sooner! Fly safe! ■

— “JJ” Schulz

Incoming/Outgoing — Correspondence

Here are several items of interest received from members or other sources since Issue 39 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. & Pub Med (Publisher Medley Gatewood)**



Correction Needed in I-39's Steve Amdor's F-100 Caterpillar Club Story

Within 10 days of the I-39 mailing, one of our steely-eyed readers, Dick Trickel, sent the following email to the Editor: "JJ: First of all 'Congratulations' to you and Medley on another great issue!!! But as I read the Caterpillar Club story of Steve Amdor, I detected what I think is a misstatement. The text states that after flaming out at 300 feet AGL, he 'traded altitude for airspeed.' At 300 feet AGL, trading altitude for airspeed ain't going to get you much of a return before you're in the dirt!!! I'm sure the text meant to say that he traded airspeed for altitude, since he had 400+ knots and peaked out around 3,000 feet. Nit-picking? Truly!!! — **Dick Trickel**"



Steely-eyed Trickel of the 174th TFS Sioux City ANG.

"Gasp," said several old heads we consulted about this finding, including Steve Amdor himself, and Pub Med, who selected this Caterpillar Club story for Intake publication. "It looks like a dyslectic typo ... probably picked up in one of the several "unassment" stories that were manually retyped for most all our Caterpillar stories over the years as our website matured," said Pub Med (one of the volunteer editor/typists doing those story makeovers over 13 years). In any case, as to why, we're not sure. But all our gurus agree the phrase is upside-down, so we've fixed the website and plan to try to fix this problem on page 18 of the PDF version of Issue 39 in our Intake Archive. Then, when we go public one of these days, future readers will never see what Trickel found! **Ed.**



Daryl Hubbard's Reply to Pub Med's Request for the Root Cause of His Takeoff Accident Story



**Daryl Hubbard
36th TFS when survived.**

We closed Daryl's story with, "This was a frightening tale and well told. However, there is NO mention of the cause of the incident/accident. Would be nice if we could get Daryl to supply the pertinent findings, and if the bird ever flew again under her own steam?" Daryl was quick to say he'd send what he had about the root cause and the disposition of the "carcass." That last word sorta sums it all up! Here's the official findings; nothing really definitive.

Primary Cause: Material failure or malfunction of the flight control systems or components from an undetermined cause. Possible Causes: There were five. The last was considered the most likely: Blockage of one or both of the hydraulic return lines at the quick disconnect. Contributing Causes:

There were three. The last was one that seemed all too frequent in those days when "Safety is Paramount" ... and often made the troops puke. "Supervisory factor on the part of the Squadron Commander (Daryl's wingman that day) in that the pilot was allowed to take off downwind." YGBSM!!!

Thanks for sharing, Daryl. One thing we all can agree on: your number WAS NOT up that day! Thank the MAKER.

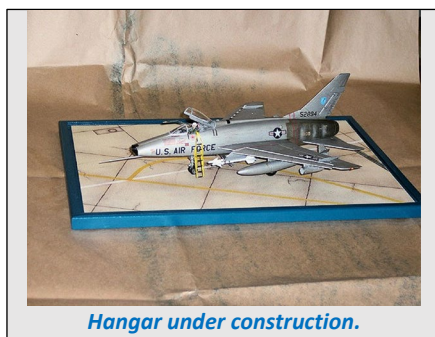


Promised for Issue 40: Eye Candy for Model Makers and Don Kilgus Fans

This from Don's younger brother, Jim, last Nov: Hello friends – I believe I told you that my brother-in-law made a model simulating brother Don's F-100 when he got the "Probable Kill" in 1965. He did a great job, including custom made decals for Don's name on the canopy rail, his crew chief's name underneath, and the name "Kay Lynn" on the nose. And I had him include the *Silver Knights* emblem on the tail with the proper aircraft number. I just finished making a display case to house it to keep the dust off (see pics attached). The model came with the tarmac and background prints. They may not replicate Da Nang in 1965, but they are representative of the era, so I was happy to use them. Note that I made the frame of the case a nice Air Force Blue! — **Jim Kilgus**



Extreme Close-up (ECU) picture lingo.



Hangar under construction.



A Shau Valley background?

No sooner did we get this promise to Jim Kilgus posted for Issue 40, than he came up with several long-lost pics of Don (Misty 47) enjoying his last-flight hose down by other Mistys and ground crews. Alas, we must wait for Issue 41! **Ed.**



A WWII Vet and SSSer's Connection to the National Museum of the Pacific War (A 2019 Reunion Event)

This from 94-year-old George Kinnison back on 03/19/19: Dear Medley – Received Spring edition of *The Intake* and see the 2019 Reunion events will include an optional visit to the Admiral Nimitz Museum (now a part of the National Museum of the Pacific War, since 2000). I first visited there in the late 1970s and had an experience I will never forget that had to do with the then-relatively-new Veterans Walk of Honor. At that time, as I recall, the Walk was reserved to honor all forces of the Navy and you needed a “sponsor” to vouch for your eligibility for inclusion on the Walk.



George as Test Pilot for North American Aviation.

When I signed in at the entry desk, I was greeted by a woman (old enough to be my mother) who asked if I had ever had any direct contact with the Admiral himself [Nimitz]. My answer? “Yes! Would you like to hear about it?” Here’s the short story about my “contacts.” My ship’s (a submarine named the *USS Sawfish*, SS-276) 3rd war patrol was a “clean sweep.” All torpedoes fired ... all hit targets. Result: Skipper received his first Navy Cross (one of two). The *Sawfish* entered Pearl Harbor Sub Base with all flags flying and a broom attached to the superstructure. V/Adm. Lockwood, COMSUBPAC, and Admiral Nimitz came aboard. This was my first war patrol, and I was proud to receive my Combat Pin from the “brass.”



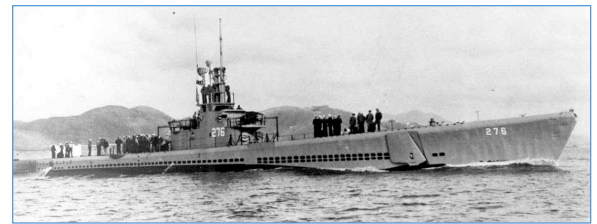
George as WWII Submariner Seaman.

When I finished my story, the reception lady mentioned that her son had also been a submariner aboard the *Icefish* (SS-367), who had transferred to the *Kete* (SS-369), which was lost in March of 1945.



George's "Certificate of Special Recognition/"

Well, with that info, we both choked up for a few minutes and when the grieving mother regained her composure, she asked if she could be my sponsor for the Walk of Honor ... an act which she considered would be an honor. And that’s how I came about being one of the early people honored among the memorials at the Admiral Nimitz Museum.



George's ship, the USS Sawfish, saw 10 total war patrols.

FYI: Originally, the Walk was for all Navy forces, because Nimitz was Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT)—but his first “love” was Submarines. Big Time! — **George Kinnison** “*The Go-to-Guy*”

Thanks for your enlightenment about the submarine world, George. We wonder if any of our members visiting this event saw George’s name on the Walk by chance. If so, please let us know so we can pass the news on to George and all our readers. **Ed. P.S.** George’s name is also on two of the Smithsonian’s Wall of Honor airfoils: the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association and, of course, the Super Sabre Society.



Gradient Shift Changer Stuff

This may be a “First,” a letter to the Editor from one of our Brothers from the Royal Danish Air Force! Read on ... Dear John — In the *Intake* Issue 39, page 19, George Goodall describes an incident with the "Gradient Shift Changer." I happened to remember the name for that [Hun equipment] because the Royal Danish Air Force lost an aircraft due to a failure of the gradient-changer actuator! You asked for comments from experts. I am not an expert, but I do have my Dash-1. Attached you will find a copy of the relevant page. Best regards and thank you for an excellent publication.

Yours, Max Vilhelmsen: Major (ret.)~Royal Danish Air Force

The Dash-1 attachment is Section 1, page 1-52, and we’ll try to get the “Gradient” info stuffed somewhere else in this edition. If we can’t make it, you’ll still be able to get smart on the Gradient gizmo from an article by Charlie Friend. But we couldn’t squeeze it into this issue, so look for it in Issue 41. Thanks for your comments and the Dash-1 reference. **Ed.**



Hal Hermes' Requests

Hal and Anne missed Reunion 2017 at Vegas because they were in the process of moving from CA to CT to be nearer family. So, it was nice when the Butlers and Gatewoods caught up with them at Reunion 2019 (in Landry’s Seafood House on the River Walk). In the course of the conversations, Hal brought up two subjects regarding Hun “lore” that he asked us to do some research about. So, we are hereby soliciting information from any SSSers who can weigh-in on these items:

1) “Black Friday” at Luke in the 1968-1970 time-frame when the 4510th CCTW lost (Class A mishaps) at least four aircraft in that one day (two Huns and one German F-84 and one MAP(Military Assistance Program) F-86, resulting in the prompt replacement of the Wing CO. Any more facts/corrections on this matter will be appreciated.

2) Hal recalls a parody by a Luke student in the late ‘60s of John Gillespie Magee, Jr.’s “High Flight.” Hal says the parody described a “typical” air-to-ground training mission as it would have been experienced by Magee, and that it ended in “Put out my hand, and touched my filthy, sweaty face.” Further, Hal says he lost his copy and hopes we can find another!

Full Disclosure: In *Issue One* of our journal, Hal is the guy who wondered if anyone had a copy of a “nostalgia piece” titled “Do You Remember.” His request for that document produced a copy for *The Intake* and we have enjoyed Harv Damschen’s wit ever since. Let’s hope for another “find” stimulated by Hal’s second request for Hun lore research! **RMG**



A Thank You Email From X CEO Hoppy Hopkins on 24/5/19 About His Attaboy

“Gents, Today I received one of the nicest and most memorable gifts from you, the Board of Directors [*and other Officers*] of the Super Sabre Society. Your kind words and thoughtful design gave me a thrill and some watery eyes. Thank you beyond words. All I can say is that for four years, it felt very special to do things for the best fighter pilots of a generation, maybe of all time. I am flattered, honored and privileged to have been your Executive Director/CEO. This framed gift will be prominently displayed in my home for all to see. Thanks to everyone. All the best, Hoppy”



Close-up to see the Board and other Officer's signatures.

This thank you includes the fact that Carolyn Mansuetti rigged some cellphones so that Hoppy could hear Leo's remarks about him to include a toast to our out-going CEO (who could not make this reunion). RMG



“This will go on the wall.”



Shep's Parting Thoughts — Looking Back with Nothing but Thanks

The Philosopher — Life is full of seminal events: birth, grandparents, kindergarten, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, high school athletics, college graduation, marriage, pilot training, kids, and then one of the best of all – F-100 TRAINING and YOU ARE FINALLY A FIGHTER PILOT! But not really, not yet. You've reached a life-long dream, but you're just a green bean and now the hard work begins – you will soon find that it takes years to be a REAL fighter pilot. You report to your first squadron and learn that humility will be an important asset because you will need lots of it. You'll have to learn to fly tight wing in bad weather, some of it at night. You'll have to earn the respect of grizzled veterans with thousands of hours of flying time; learn how to navigate to pinpoint targets over confusing terrain in poor visibility with nuclear weapons; detect a pause as the eyelids open, then the kick of the afterburner and the welcome tug of the drag chute on a wet runway; endure instrument and tactical checkrides; watch your scores and shed your quarters on the gunnery range as you compete against real pros; pass Stan-Evals and ORIs; guide a flight member who lost his radio to a wing landing in bad weather; perform tanker rejoins on a long overwater deployment; handle emergencies; lower the hook and hit the center of the barrier; sweat fuel; divert; drink, but not too much; train and sometimes pull alert in foreign countries, England, France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Spain, Denmark, Morocco, Libya; Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines; Thailand; perform what seems like endless tours of duty on Mobile, as Range Officer and FAC with the Army; live in old housing; lose valuable items on repeated PCS moves; endure, then draft OERs; be a “SNACKO” or draw nuclear target low level route maps; realize the joy of finally becoming a four-ship flight lead, then maybe a flight commander; wait for a Fighter Weapons School slot; ... eventually the dream of every true fighter pilot—the world's best job—becoming a SQUADRON COMMANDER!

When we look at the list of things we had to do, had to learn, had to be good at, even just to stay alive, it is amazing anyone can ever do it all. But—WE DID IT—ALL OF US! That's why we are special and why our stories are worth telling, worth gathering at reunions to remember and laugh, worth writing books about, worth remembering.

And then there was war, and we put it all together, everything we learned, and used it in Vietnam against a determined enemy and did everything we could to win and save American kids and our allies on the ground at any cost. If someone went down, we pulled out all stops, ignored all rules, braved any danger to keep the bad guys away until the bravest of the brave, the Sandys and Jollys, could make a rescue. We did it because we knew everyone would do it for us. It didn't all turn out well. We lost too many, some endured as POWs and some will never return. Our families feared, but best not knowing, as we dove through groundfire, endured AAA, dodged some SAMs, and early-on encountered a handful of MiGs. We asked tankers to head our way in a hurry ... and they did. We felt the thump of AAA hits, lost engines, smelled smoke, saw fire, ejected on rocket seats, heard beepers and landed in thick jungle. We used tree lowering devices, pulled out survival radios, pen-gun and smoke flares, awaited and directed the blast of Jolly Green helo blades and grabbed the cable and penetrator seat. We deployed survival kits, inflated life vests and pulled ourselves into life rafts in the South China Sea with mortars from the shore exploding around us.

We came back from the war, bent but not broken; not victorious, but not ashamed. WE DID OUR BEST in a difficult jungle war, long ago and far away—and we did one other very important thing: we said, NEVER AGAIN! – never again would we go to war when we didn't have what we needed to win. As a result we worked to give our kids in today's Air Force what we didn't have: we didn't have chaff and flares, radios that worked, night vision equipment, precision and standoff weapons, the ability to find and hit targets day and night, stationary and moving, in all kinds of weather, all-aspect and extended range air-to-air missiles, targeting pods, ECM, reliable intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, STEALTH. Today's kids have what we didn't have and our sacrifices gave it to them. And when we say these things to each other, one even knows what we are talking about ... but not our wives, not our kids, not our grandkids - ONLY US!

“Shep's Parting Thoughts” is continued on P. 23.

Stake Your Claim (SYC)

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

The exciting memories of flying the F-100 apparently have not faded over the years as the SYCs continue to stream in. Some pass muster for SYC categories, and some do not. However, the stories behind the claims are always interesting, so keep those cards and letters coming!

Claim Challenges — ► Amazingly, for the **second time in a row**, we had not a one for this cycle!

New Claims — ► **John Edelblute II** claims he is the **“Only Hun pilot to safely land an F-100 with no aileron control.”** In early 1965, while flying top cover for an RF-101 taking photos on a Tonkin Naval Depot strike in North Vietnam, John while dropping CBU-2s, took a small caliber hit in the right wing of his F-100F, jamming both ailerons. By using pitch control and rudder control he was able to fly 300 miles south and safely land at Da Nang AB, South Vietnam, after much angst on John's part as to whether it could be done successfully. For John's extraordinary feat of airmanship, he is awarded this valid SYC, as we have modified his exact wording. (*Great story for Issue 41*)

► **Rusty Gideon** claims to be the **“Only father-son pair to fly a combat mission in an F-100F.”** Rusty's father, Francis Gideon, was commanding 13th Air Force at the time (Feb., '69, flying out of Phan Rang). This will be a difficult SYC to challenge, because there were not that many father-son pairs in Vietnam. Rusty is therefore awarded the valid SYC as submitted.

► Charlie Neel submitted this claim on behalf of **Guy Gruters**, with Guy's knowledge and approval. Although submissions by a third party are not normally accepted, this SYC is noteworthy. The title for a SYC for Guy is **“The only Hun pilot to fly a total of ONE F-100 combat sortie between two F-100 combat shoot downs.”** Guy was flying a Misty mission with Charlie Neel when they were shot down and both rescued on 8 November 1967. After recovering from severe injuries from that shoot down, Guy flew one Misty mission on 18 December 1967. On the very next Misty mission Guy flew on 20 December 1967, and was shot down with Bob Craner. This time both pilots were captured and became POWs. Therefore, Guy is awarded the SYC as submitted for him by Charlie Neel. Convolutd, but Valid.

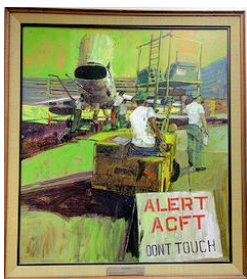
► **Pete Winters** claims he is the **“Only Hun pilot to make an emergency landing at an emergency airfield with only 200 pounds of fuel remaining.”** Pete was expending CBU-58 over the Parrots Beak and was 2,000 pounds lower than his wingman after a fuel check. His wingman said Pete's Hun had a large hole in the intermediate fuel tank area and was losing fuel rapidly. Applying a fuel-saving flight profile, Pete made it to a low key at Can Tho airfield, a 6,000 foot strip in the Mekong Delta, where he landed successfully. We find no exact match for this claim, and Pete is hereby awarded the SYC title as submitted, with one minor change made by the SYC Guy. We suspect others may come forth with 200 lb., too.

► As a result of reading the I-39 story “614th TFS Deployment to Vietnam Gulf of Tonkin, August 1964,” where Jim Brasier air refueled with a probe 180 degrees out of the normal position, both **Jim Kempton and Ken Ramsay** were prompted to claim “Me too!” As a result, an SYC was born. **“The only pilots to successfully Air-to-Air refuel on an ocean crossing with the refueling probe 180 degrees out of the normal position.”** Both Jim and Ken's incident happened while traversing an ocean, like my experience. But having NOT submitted my 180 degree refuelings for SYC, this SYC guy has benevolently agreed to give credit where credit is due and award this SYC title jointly to Jim Kempton and Ken Ramsay, a virtual tie.

Parting Thoughts — ► On the 75th anniversary of D-Day, one can still marvel at the exploits and sacrifices of the men and women of that American military force. After over five years as *The Intake's* “SYC guy,” I still marvel at some of the claims submitted by the SSS F-100 pilots whose exploits and sacrifices I can only hope will be properly recognized by their countrymen on **their** 75th equivalent anniversaries as well. — **JB**

The Story Behind the Hun Painting in the Air Force Safety Center at Kirtland AFB, NM

Tom Griffith's son snapped a pic of a Hun painting in a hallway at the Center while there on business. In the I-39 Publisher's Parting Post (Page 38), I promised to go hunting for the story behind that art and report my findings. Here they are. Pertinent data found: Painting Name-“Alert Aircraft.” Author-Neil Boyle. Date/No.-1966 077. Description by artist-“Ground Crew Arming Aircraft at Ton Son Nut Airport Outside Saigon, March 28, 1966.” Original Location-USAF Art Collection. Composition-oil on canvas, approximately 24x30 in frame. So, that's the facts as I found them on the copy in that hallway or in the Art Collection data on the Internet. But, one mystery remains: Why on Earth the striking difference in color/tone/difference-in-visible area? Wonder what would Keith Ferris have to say about this? Keith? **RMG**



From Center hallway.



From Internet. 7

Reunion 2019 — After Action Report

By R. Medley Gatewood (aka Pub Med)

“NOW HEAR THIS — DEPLOYMENT ORDER: All Super Sabre Pilots man your aircraft! Report to the Historic Menger Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. Daily frag orders, mission briefs and pilot meetings to follow - expect cockpit alert and daily scrambles - and listen up for Emcee JJ Schulz’s critical announcements and in-progress modifications to original ops plans!” Source: 4/24/2019 6:43 PM Pub Med Email.

SUPER SABRE SOCIETY REUNION SAN ANTONIO MAY 15-19, 2019

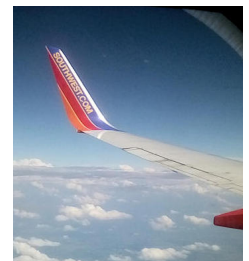


The “Not Quite Familiar,” High-class, Menger Hotel in San Antonio awaits invasion by thirsty SSS Hun drivers and Hun lovers! This Reunion 2019 “Banner/Logo” is another piece of Ms. Mary Elizabeth Barrett’s (aka “MB”) talented artwork. Great job again, MB!

Yep, once again, as planned two years ago, the SSS headed “elsewhere” than Las Vegas for our 2019 reunion and settled for this historic venue in the Lone Star State. Bottom line? Except for the usual SNAFUs, mainly concerning the wait lines for hard and soft refreshments, banquet cuisine vagaries, and a dearth of wastebaskets in some of the fancy suites, it was a very good reunion. Here’s what our founder, Les Frazier, had to say in his short report for the HOZ crowd, longer to follow.

“The SAT SSS Reunion is over. I think I’m going to make up an after action report for the PIF. Basically, it was a great reunion. The only bad part was seeing so many of my friends on canes or hobbling.” Right on, Les! You’re familiar Ace Reporter, R. Medley Gatewood, whose goal is to again create a word and visual painting of all the doings so that those who attended have fond memories and those who couldn’t make it will wish they had been there!

Hmmm. Again, where to begin this report, the seventh SSS Reunion Report I’ve done? Most likely where we’ve started all the others ... on the day before the official start day. Why? Because for each reunion, we wanted to be well rested and available to help in any capacity needed to get the “show” ready to go by the advertised opening times for both Registration and the Welcoming Reception in the Hospitality Suite. In this case, that “pre-day” was 13 May 2019, and we arrived at the Menger Hotel from ABQ after an “on-time” Southwest Airline flight via a plane change at Dallas and a short taxi ride from the SAT airport. We got settled into our room by about 1800L, and would you believe it, our room turned out to be the “May West Suite!” Go figure.



Medley & Barbara arrive via SWA ... and a \$30 cab ride!

15 MAY, OFFICIAL DAY 1: REGISTRATION COMETH The long awaited day finally dawned. There were lots of things to be done by a lot of folks to get ready for Registration and the opening of the Hospitality Suite. It was a matter of logistics and preplanning. Much of that work was done by the staff of the Texas-based Military Reunion Planners (MRP) Company, which performed their services well for our 2015 Reunion at Dayton, same-o for the 2017 Reunion at Las Vegas, after which we elected to use



Registration begins. These guys all got the “wear blue” email suggestion!

them yet again for our 2019 Reunion in San Antonio. Suffice to say, the MRP folks were on top of their game, which included a meeting with CEO Leo Mansuetti and all the appropriate hotel and catering chiefs that we would be working with through all the hotel events. There turned out to be a few “burps,” but, overall, this initiative was well worth Leo’s and the MRP’s time. Meanwhile the FSS folks were busy selling tickets for the F-100 Quilt drawing, slated for mid-way through the Saturday evening banquet. Sales were brisk.



Linda Dean, Pam Dunham and Sharon Frazier “man” the quilt ticket booth.

After check-in, I checked with the MRP ladies, and they assured me they had everything under control and freed me from my offer to help. So, I went exploring for the Hospitality Room, aka the Minuet Room on the ground floor and the “Sam Houston” meeting room (which was supposed to be on the 3rd floor) where the Board of Directors (BoD) was to meet at 1600, sharp!

I easily found the Minuet Room, but the Cash Bar was, as yet, not in operation. More on the Cash Bar, later.

Since our room was on the 3rd floor, I figured finding the “Sam Houston” room with “This Way” signs on our floor would be a snap ... but NO, it was not! As it turned out, in this ancient and historic edifice, that meeting room was actually on the 3½ floor and it took some calls to the front desk for directions to find it. That was also true, too, for several others of us attendees!

Having finally achieved both these objectives and being a devoted PGA Tour fan, *especially* during major championship play when Tiger Woods is in contention, I then joined Lady Barbara (also a fan under these circumstances) in our rooms sipping tonic water with lime. Then duty called and I moved to the 3½ floor Sam Houston room to support the BoD as an SSS Officer representing our journal, *The Intake*. Can’t talk further about the meeting here, but you’ll read all about most of it from President Griffith in our General Membership Meeting report on page 16.



Flight Suit/Jacket Party, Welcome Reception & Chow The official Reunion schedule for the busy first day called for the Minuet Room’s Hospitality Cash Bar to close at 1530 in order to reopen at 1830 in the Ballroom foyer at the beginning of this event. Since I was in the BoD meeting until almost 1800, I can’t accurately report on this venue shifting drill. But by the time Barbara and I got to the Ballroom, the place was jumping. And ... as promised, here’s what I found about the Cash Bar: a long line, or maybe two long lines had already formed. One turned out to be the “beverage ticket” line, and the other the actual bartender line. The ticket line lady had a chalkboard showing the various prices for your favorite beverages (by type, not brand, as I recall). And, when you got the gist of things from the ticket lady, got your colored type tickets, and turned around ... there were LOTS of folks already in the bartender line! It’s a good thing we were all friends, and most of us managed civil conversations, some with people you knew well, and some with relatively unknown (but friendly) folks with whom we made new friends. After all, that’s what you would expect at a really good reunion.



No bartender line pic available. Trust me. It was LONG!

According to MRP Company Honcho Ray Casey and his bean counting of final Event Excel Sheets, there were 203 hungry folks with tickets for this event. And with open seating, the evening wore on as folks enjoyed big-time table-hopping. Here’s some random samples we’ve culled from about 76 pics taken by Dewey and/or Nancy Clawson while “roaming.”



New CEO Leo assures new POTSSS Hog Piner (L) making his rounds to see all his good buddies.



At 94, Ray Kleber “keeps going, and going, and going.” A true fact!



Mike Dean (R) takes John Postgate to the foyer so they can hear.



Thought the blue guy above was a waiter. Nope, just Mike Connolly! (R-L) Jim Wiltjer & Nicholas Vrettos cheer Dewey’s “Best Vest,” again!



Dick Goddard and another blue Connolly. This time it’s Keith.



Natasha Wilson is telling a table-mate about why they were late.

And so went the evening until the wee hours (so I was told). But one thing was missing. Where, oh where, was the SSS’s vaunted and familiar “Toasting Cabinet”? Well if you had listened to Wilson’s story, you’d know that as local residents, they had volunteered to be the cabinet’s keeper and were on their way to the party when they had a blowout en-route. Their saga to get on to the Menger is for another day. Suffice to say, in their own words, “We arrived at the Menger a bit after 1600. When we finally located Leo, he said to ‘leave it in our room until needed’” That turned out to be at Saturday’s Banquet, but with little fanfare, it was seldom used. *Das Ende!* — **MG**



The popular SSS Toasting Cabinet travels all over!

16 MAY, DAY 2: SURLY TO RISE AND A BUSY ONE

Historic San Antonio Excursion, By Pub Med (aka R. Medley Gatewood), MRP Count 83, Bus @ 0845

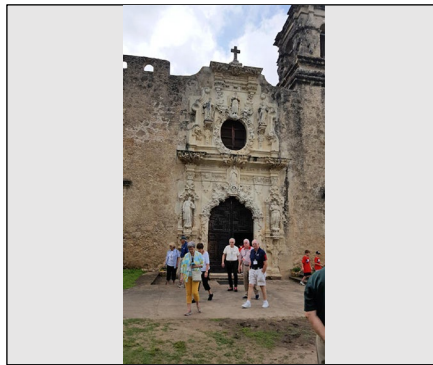
This was the first of the several MRP-arranged tours, and it was a perfect introduction to those that followed. All of them were near perfect and this tour was simply “first among equals.” The one blemish was a bit of rain during our walks!

When I signed up for this tour, I had no clear conception of what it was all about. Think I was assuming we would just cruise around this city gawking at its major attractions. WRONG-O! Rather, it was a perfectly narrated trip through HISTORY, embodied in the sprawling expanses of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park!

First stop was at the Park’s Visitors Center at the San José Mission. There we first saw a 45-minute movie covering the regional history, beginning with the true natives before the Europeans’ explorations and later settlements—and ending with the decline of Missions in 1824, when they were secularized. The lands were redistributed among the inhabitants and the churches were transferred to secular clergy. This exceptional presentation set the stage for our guides to continue our education “in the field.” For those of us familiar with West Coast Spanish missions, the Texas missions appeared to be much larger in total acreage, but we forgot to ask about that observation. Go figure! Here are a few pictures of the San José Mission taken by SSS members that day.



This view of the Church is the wall to the right of North-facing doors in the pic to the right.



This structure attached to the South wall of the Church was series of rooms for guest clergy or laymen.



This is a close-up of various utilitarian buildings comprising part of the perimeter fortifications.



Dewey Clawson checks out the well, a must have inside-the-perimeter accoutrement for survival under fire.



Looking to the West from the well, it's a long, long way to the end of the Mission's defensible territory!

The second stop for this tour was the Alamo IMAX Theatre, cozied up next to the Menger Hotel itself. There, we climbed high in the cavernous room and took seating to watch a 45-minute, commercially produced movie about the famous defense of the second mission on our tour, Mission San Antonio de Valero, now commonly called the “Alamo.” The house lights dimmed and we were treated to a film that, to me, seemed like a Grade B, low-cost propaganda depicting the action leading to the end of the battle and pointing to the ultimate victory of the Texans at San Jacinto. But what the heck, this being Texas, you’d think the film would have been like our SSS Motto—“First Class or Not at All”!



IMAX with Alamo Flick.

The movie being a bit hokey, the third stop on our tour, the Alamo, was the REAL THING, — it and its surroundings, clearly hallowed ground! And our tour guides took care to explain details of the battle and its significance far more seriously than did the gaudy IMAX version we had just viewed. So, thanks to both our guides, for everything they did so well!



We saw a lot ... and learned a lot!

Flying the Super Stearman, By Leo Mansuetti, Not a MRP event: 14 flyers, 57 attendees.

As advertised in our “Reunion 2019 Need to Know Booklet,” this event was an Ad Hoc initiative that Leo was able to put together that was somewhat akin to the Dean Cutshall Hun Fly-ins we had at Fort Wayne a year or so ago. In this case, because of overlapping other events, Leo had to pull this off in two sessions: one on Thursday with 10 flyers and one on Friday with four flyers. I’m told the drill and results of the second “go” were pretty much like the first go. Here’s Leo’s overall account of the way things went on that first day. — MG

This flying event at Stinson Field featured a 450 horsepower bi-wing, open cockpit Stearman. The early days of the PT-17 were as the initial trainer during WWII before moving to the T-6. The airplane we all flew at Stinson Field was an upgraded version. It had the 985 cowed engine instead of the original 220-horse engine. The ground crew were three very nice young ladies who strapped us in with a double harness and fitted the fabric helmet with a mike and ear phones. They also posed with us for our hero pictures. Our active duty Air Force crews of long ago were not near as cute.



Vintage Flying Machines

The SSS pilots were Pete Collins, Keith Connally, Don Shepperd, Bill Lairsey, Mike Hinkle, Ray Kleber, Bill Barry, Barney Higgins, Janet Higgins, Craig Colter, Eben Jones, Al Rimkus, Harry Kieling and Leo Mansuetti.

We all flew from the front seat with full controls. Our IP was Darren Bond. He gave us a good briefing including throttle and prop settings. He made the takeoffs, and after a quick turn out gave us control. Instructions were to climb out at 30 inches of manifold pressure to 600 feet, head south to a lake and feel the bird out. Cruise power was 25 inches. I found a train east of the lake and rolled in for a strafe pass on the train engine. When we scared Darren enough, we headed back to Stinson for initial. The tower told us to break left or right depending on traffic. After we rolled out on final, Darren took control and landed it. My wife, Carolyn, made us all white scarves with the SSS patch on the front—very snazzy! We did our Snoopy imitation for the hero photos. The fun level for everyone was way up on the chart.

The outfit that allowed this all to happen is Ageless Aviation. Their motto is “GIVE BACK TO THOSE THAT HAVE GIVEN.” They are dedicated to Military Veterans living in long-term care facilities who have always had the burning desire to soar like an eagle. They have four Stearmans and many volunteer pilots spread across the country, flying about 800 vets per year, free of charge. The company that funds this operation is Sport Clips, owned by Gordon Logan, an ex C-130 AF pilot. That’s about it, except for some neat pictures — Leo



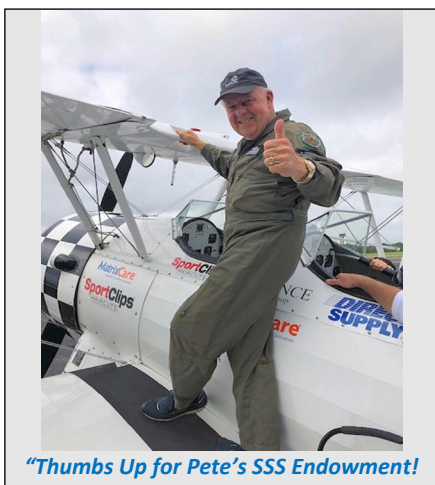
“Ready for taxi, Sir.”



“Babes in Toyland” send-off.



Well-wishers watching last briefing.



“Thumbs Up for Pete’s SSS Endowment!”



“This is ‘Shep.’ Is my Thumbs Up OK?”



“Come on, Keith. Give us the Thumbs Up.”

Cowboy Ranch Dinner, By Dewey Clawson & Crow Wilson

This venue, dinner, and entertainment program has been providing authentic Texas ranch/cowboy experiences with good reviews for some 32 years. Recommended highly by our MRP folks, it appears to have been a good choice, as told by our event reporters and voluntary comments from many attendees, especially our avowed “tenderfoot” folks! — MG

On Thursday afternoon about 150 hungry fighter pilots and their wives and/or girl friends gathered in the hotel lobby to board busses to head out to the country. We were in for an unusual, unscheduled treat, watching and riding along with some masterful bus drivers. The three massive 50-passenger busses maneuvered thru San Antonio rush hour freeway construction traffic like Notre Dame’s four horsemen went thru their collegiate rivals in 1924.



Serving 150 with ease.

Finally departing the Interstate System, we wound our way progressively thru smaller and narrower roads till it looked like we would run out of pavement. Just in time, we turned into a narrow lane leading to our destination, the Rio Cibolo Ranch. We were met by a cowboy who appeared to have just come in from the range while herding our dinner in. He ushered us into Zuehl’s Hall, a large Texas/western-style banquet hall with a well-stocked supply of cold ones.

As soon as we had a chance to recover and re-hydrate, we were escorted to the hay wagon for a short ride to visit several of the local residents, a field full of hungry Texas Longhorns and a few Llamas and miniature donkeys. After stopping amid the giant oak trees, we were given a brief lesson on how to feed the critters while keeping all 10 fingers intact. A very interesting side trip.

Back at Zuehl’s Hall, dinner was served buffet style. On the serving tables ready to choose were sausage, brisket, chicken, beef ribs, beans, coleslaw and potato salad. Dessert included cherry, peach and blueberry cobblers and ice cream – in large soup bowl-size portions! All were absolutely delicious and all you could eat.

After gorging ourselves on the sumptuous feast, and a not-so-healthy humongous bowl of cobbler and ice cream, we were regaled with lessons on how the old time cowboy movie stars did their rope tricks and six-shooter tricks. Very entertaining.

After a final “pit” stop, all were aboard the busses and the return to the Menger was unusually quiet. Perhaps there were more than a few folks zeeing away after sampling Rio Cibolo Ranch hospitality, including that humongous dinner! Here are some well-chosen Tom Clark photos documenting that busy evening with the cowboys.



Herk, Loren Timm & Tom Wittman are poised to be first off the bus. Wonder why?



The entertainment magic was all sleight of hand, as the “Greeting Hand” supervises.



Now this beats the Menger easily. All you can drink beverages are free!



Some preferred musica.



Some took the cozy hay ride. Some looked at the meal options. Some turned away to sign up for the ASPCA.



And some couples loved Selfies!

And so closed the evening. We wish someone had taken snapshots of the serving tables. But it was not to be. Just take Dewey’s and Crow’s words for how things went at tables that were *heavily laden* and came with unlimited “seconds.” 😊



17 MAY, DAY 3 TWO TOURS WITH DINNER AND ENTERTAINMENT ON YOUR OWN

Air Legends Tour, By Leo Mansuetti, MRP Count 99, Bus only @ 0815

As also advertised in our "Reunion 2019 Need to Know Booklet," this event was another Ad Hoc initiative that Leo was able to put together because of his personal acquaintance with the owner of this private collection. And a true World Class collection it is. That includes the World Class staff at this stop who bent over backwards to make our tour an unforgettable experience ... and it was! Here's Leo's "insider" report. —MG

"Lewis Air Legends" is a private collection of World War II and Korean War fighter and bomber aircraft owned by Rod Lewis, principal of Lewis Energy Group, an oil company. The collection of roughly 24 aircraft includes some of the most significant and best restored aircraft of the WWII era, including the P-38 "Glacier Girl," a Spitfire Mk.V, a P-40C Warhawk and a P-39 Airacobra. The collection is not open to the public, but individual aircraft often appear at air shows across the country. The Super Sabre Society was invited to the Air Legends hangar at the San Antonio airport to view the airplane collection.

We were met by the curator, Lisa Damuth, and four of her staff. She introduced David Whitney, and he gave a



Curator, Lisa Damuth.
A warm welcome before she hurried off stage and Tom couldn't get focused fast enough, darn it!

presentation on a P-38, now named "Glacier Girl," that included a professional video of the recovery operation in Greenland, where she was in a flight of brand new airplanes (four fighters and a B-17 bomber) being ferried to England for the war effort in 1942. Weather in Iceland caused the flight to abort and return to Greenland, where weather and fuel caused the flight to crash-land on the ice. The leader landed gear down and the deep snow cover caused the airplane to tumble upside down, but the pilot was able to escape unhurt. The others landed gear up and slid to a stop. The pilots left on foot and walked 17 miles to a rescue ship.

In 1992, a civilian recovery effort was attempted. It met with many obstacles including the belief that the airplanes would only be covered by a heavy layer of snow that could just be bulldozed away. It took ten trips to the glacier before a proper steam-powered burrowing ball made its way down through 268 feet of ice and found the airplanes.

The B-17 was completely shredded and only one wheel was found in one piece. The P-38 was fairly crushed and the tail was separated, but was found about 100 feet away from the fuselage. The team carved out a cave around the airplane and dismantled it. It was brought up in pieces.

The tires were still inflated. After shipment back to the States, a long process of rebuilding began. Parts that were crushed beyond repair were recreated according to original plans. The recovery and restoration project spanned approximately 10 years and cost several million dollars. A few pilots have flown Glacier Girl, but Steve Hinton is the only one that I know personally. He's a great pilot and is known for the Chino Planes of Fame Museum and the Reno Air Races. He is the pilot who starts the race as lead aircraft.

The owner of Air Legends (Rod Lewis) is an active pilot and flies all of his airplanes, including his personal business jet. I would recommend a visit to this collection for every aviation enthusiast, but because it is very private and difficult to get into, our visit was close to a once-in-a-lifetime event. — Leo

And, we are fortunate to have some classic photographs taken by photog extraordinaire Tom Clark. Here's a sample!



"Glacier Girl" The Main Event as told by Video, Lecture and Hands-on. A+ Tour.



David Whitney – Lecture Man He was there! And he's a great guide.



Four sub-groups of about 25 make things up close and personal. Bravo!



"Glacier Girl" flies again stateside. Will she ever make it across the pond as hoped?



Not sure what red-shirt is pointing too. But "über" organizer Leo Mansuetti is pleased!



David Whitney takes it easy when the tours venture to other of Mr. Lewis's hangars.

National Museum of the Pacific War (NMPW) & Fredericksburg Excursion, By Don Shepperd

The NMPW is an outgrowth of the February 24, 1967, establishment of the Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Museum in the restored Nimitz “Steamboat” Hotel. Since that beginning, the Museum has expanded to occupy a six-acre campus and gained a reputation as one of the premier military museums in the country. It is the only institution in the U.S. dedicated exclusively to telling the story of the Pacific and Asiatic Theaters in World War II.

The SSS has at least one member who is among the heroes with a Certificate of Special Recognition at this Museum’s “Veterans Walk of Honor.” Read about him on page 5!

Whoever of the Texas Super Sabre Society members suggested an optional tour of the Pacific War Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas, deserves our gratitude. Almost 100 attendees participated in the bus tour, an hour drive north of San Antonio in the beautiful Texas hill country. The original Museum, established in 1967, was intended to honor Fredericksburg’s native son, Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces, Pacific Ocean Area in WW II. In 2000 the Museum was re-designated, “The National Museum of the Pacific War,” intended to memorialize the Pacific Theater battles of WWII. Nimitz was born in Texas and graduated from the United States Naval Academy in the class of 1905. He became a submariner for 20 years and after the attack on Pearl Harbor was named Chief of the Pacific Fleet and soon after, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas. Nimitz’s name and aura are pervasive in the tourist town of Fredericksburg and of course throughout the museum.

Most of us are thoroughly familiar with the European theater of war, including the Battle of Britain, North Africa, Sicily, Italy, D-day and the massive bomber raids and horrendous losses over Germany. The devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, the “Europe First” strategy of the allied forces and geography that consisted of vast expanses of blue water oceans, seas, islands and coral reefs frustrated Gen. Douglas MacArthur and initially impoverished the Pacific Theater of military capability. Despite Jimmy Doolittle’s Tokyo Raid, this was initially a Navy and Marine theater essentially owned by the Japanese and devoid of airfields usable by allied forces until recaptured from the Japanese, island by island, at the cost of countless sailors and Marines who fought valiantly; Wake Island, Coral Sea, Midway, Guadalcanal, Attu, Tarawa, the Bismarck Sea, Iwo Jima, Guam, Okinawa, and of course, the key B-29 base of Tinian in the Marianas from which the fire raids on Tokyo and final atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki ended the war.

The 6-acre, 3-museum complex includes stunning exhibits, artifacts and interactive displays that remind one of the scope and human sacrifice of war in general and the particular difficulty of combat in the Pacific theater: jungle terrain, disease, weather, long distances that complicate logistics, heat, and death. Each of the major battles is described in detail in separate rooms along with artifacts, memorabilia, videos, audio recordings of veteran experiences, original photography, uniforms, original letters written home, and educational presentations. President George H.W. Bush cut the ribbon to the gallery carrying his name in 1991 and spoke of the terror he experienced as a 19-year-old Navy ensign carrier pilot flying the TBM Avenger torpedo bomber, ditching once, shot down another time, and rescued by submarine. For him and others, the Pacific was a most difficult war against a fanatical enemy. The gallery includes a Japanese mini-submarine that participated in Pearl Harbor, a Japanese “Rex” floatplane and a B-25 Mitchell medium bomber that participated in the island campaign. Other indoor and outdoor exhibits include vehicles, weapons and reconstructed replicas of docks, entrenchments, beachheads and coral reefs.

In 1976, the Japanese government donated to the museum the “Japanese Garden of Peace,” dedicated to the memory of sacrifice on both sides and a symbol of friendship, respect and hope for an end to war. The outdoor “Plaza of Presidents” was opened in 1995 on the 50th anniversary of Admiral Nimitz’s acceptance of the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Harbor. The plaza is a tribute to 10 U.S. presidents who served during WW II, FDR (Commander-in-Chief), Truman (Commander-in-Chief), Eisenhower (Army), JFK (Navy), Lyndon Johnson (Navy), Richard Nixon (Navy), Gerald Ford. (Navy), Jimmy Carter (Navy), Ronald Reagan (Army) and George H.W. Bush (Navy). A Pacific Combat Zone re-creation contains a realistic replica of a battlefield including a Quonset hut hospital, a PT boat, Japanese tank, palm trees, machine gun emplacements, various weapons and other war tools.

The bus ride home allowed time for reflection. The recommended tour length for the museum is “two full days.” We only had a few hours, including lunch at a typical Fredericksburg German restaurant; schnitzel and beer. Nimitz was a GREAT man. He served his country well: so did we. His generation had their war, we had ours; different times, different places, different faces, but the sound of gunfire was the same. So, too, was the courage of young men who were dedicated to their country, but even more to each other. Amongst the many displays, plaques and signs was one that stood out in particular: “Uncommon valor was a common virtue.” Such is war! Fleet Admiral Nimitz and his troops knew and experienced it, so did we, long ago and far, far away.

We were thinking of more pictures, but Shep has done such a thorough job with compelling text alone, bringing a war somewhat neglected by history into a bright spotlight, that we’re leaving well enough alone. Great job, stand-in Shep!



Entrance to NMPW.



Grabbing German fare.

Fare close-up!

18 MAY, DAY 4 A REALLY, REALLY BUSY DAY

Saturday River Walk Boat Tour, By JJ Schulz, MRP Count 139, Walk @ 0930

It was called "The Complete Tour," and apparently it was just that.



It began with a walk ... down hill to the San Antonio River.

On Saturday morning, enough SSSers to fill four (or five?) boats walked down from the hotel to the famous River Walk area, and at 10 a.m. loaded onto the river barges for a fully narrated tour of the entire river walk area. It was a great success for several reasons: we saw a lot, learned a lot, and did so with minimum expenditure of energy! We just piled aboard one of the barges (each of which could hold about 50 people), found ourselves a seat and relaxed while our pilot/guide did all the work.

Our guide was clever, informative and responded well to any questions. He provided a constant flow of interesting historical, architectural and cultural information about the ever-changing views of buildings and bridges on both sides of the narrow, densely populated river. For much of the journey, there were large numbers of restaurants and tall office and hotel buildings on both sides.

After passing under several bridges, we came to one that put us in a different world, where much shorter buildings were framed by trees of all kinds, and where nary a restaurant was to be found. There, instead, in the newly opened "Arts section," we found two or three art museums and other public buildings of more recent vintage. We also entered a "lock," where our barge was lifted (and later lowered) almost 10 feet as we proceeded to the end of the river excursion area. When the boat tour ended (around noon), many of us headed into one of the several river restaurants very near our hotel and enjoyed leisurely lunches and warm comradery. — JJ

Here's some prime pictures to support JJ's text! That's him, just to the pilot's right with a baseball hat on.



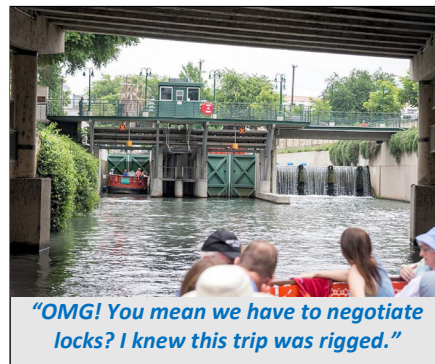
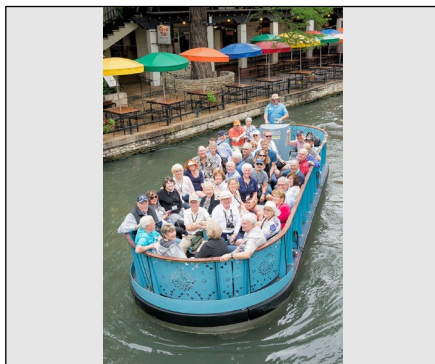
At the bottom? You guessed it; "hurry up and wait!"



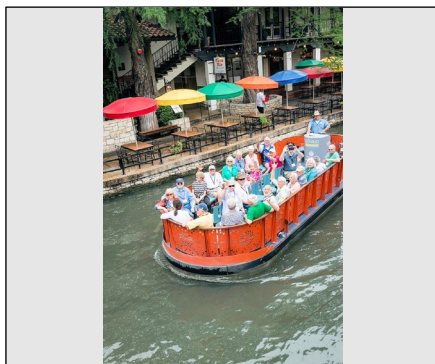
"All Aboard!" The traditional pilot's call before shoving off for adventure.



Soon, away from the "maddening crowd" into a quiet forest-like environment.



"OMG! You mean we have to negotiate locks? I knew this trip was rigged."

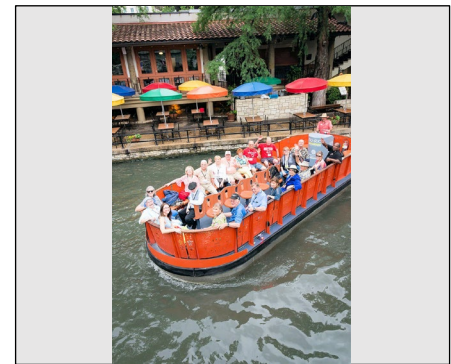


Our reporter (JJ Schulz) wasn't sure whether or not our tour group comprised four or five barges.

Most probably, it was four, because our photog (Tom Clark) snapped only the four different barges you see here departing the downtown jumping off boat landing.

No matter; everyone saw a lot and learned a lot going up and down the river.

👍



The 7th Biennial Members Meeting in Ballroom A After the River Walk boaters had ample time to freshen up, this much-awaited-meeting kicked off on time at 1400. With President Griffith presiding, he gave a synopsis of his first face-to-face BoD and SSS Officers' meeting, with guest Don Shepperd, held in the late afternoon on Wednesday in the hard-to-find (nigh on impossible) Sam Houston room. In addition to several discussions about other matters, the Board considered five very important changes and/or upcoming initiatives which were formally announced at this Membership Meeting. Those announcements are summarized here by our President.



Once you found the Boardroom, it was a rather nice and well equipped facility!

- **Call for Stories and Bios.** What keeps each issue of *The Intake* so interesting? The stories you share. And they all deserve to be retold! *The Intake* is not only a fun read for those who flew the F-100, but it's also a valuable resource for military historians as they construct the legacy of Century Series fighters. So send your stories to JJ Schulz and his staff. Also check out the biographies of hundreds of Hun pilots on our website: www.supersabresociety.com. Don't see yours? Send your information to Win Reither (win@reither.com). You are a part of history; share your part.
- **Dues Increase.** Annual dues will increase by \$15, to \$50/year, effective next year on 1 January 2020. (If you've paid for 2019 before mid-November, you're set to go on into 2020 and pay your \$50 soonest!) In organizations like ours, membership declines each year despite our efforts to find more F-100 pilots—many of whom don't know that the SSS exists. Meanwhile, our expenses—publishing *The Intake*, maintaining our excellent website, etc.—aren't static. To ensure that the F-100's importance in military aviation history lives on (and keeps us all in touch), this modest increase is essential.
- **Super Sabre Endowment Fund.** Pete Collins, our lawyer, is creating a Super Sabre Endowment Fund to allow us to bequeath money to the Society. The endowment will maintain our legacy so our kids, grandkids, and grandkids' kids can learn who we are and what we did. More information coming soon.
- **2021 Reunion Location Survey.** Reunion '19 was a terrific success. We're already planning how to make Reunion '21 even better. In the coming weeks, we'll ask you where you'd like that next reunion to be. Washington DC, home of Air and Space Museum and Udvar-Hazy Center? Colorado Springs, with HQ Space Command, Air Force Academy, and Cheyenne Mountain? Pensacola/Ft. Walton Beach, FL? Back to Las Vegas? Other locations? Give it some thought—and expect a series of surveys in the future on other key issues.
- **Member Involvement.** Finally, we know members want to be more involved in SSS activities. Along with the 2021 reunion location survey, we'll also ask for your opinion on several key areas of Society involvement. When you get that survey, please take a few minutes to respond. Your input is what keeps the Super Sabre Society relevant and growing.

After feeling the energy in San Antonio, your board of directors and I are even more excited about the future of the Super Sabre Society. (Take a look at the Reunion pictures in this Reunion Report, thanks to SSS members who contributed theirs to Medley: Tom Clark, Dewey and Nancy Clawson, Leo Mansueti, and a few others.)

We'll be in touch soon.

There were three other main speakers at the meeting: Vice President Eddie Bracken, FSS COO Mike Dean, and one of our Four-Stars, Joe Ashy. All were well received and you will find summaries of their important topics in the minutes of this biennial meeting on the SSS website, in the Password-required "Members Area." If you need help getting or changing your password, please contact Membership Committee Chair Dewey Clawson by phone at 724-336-4273.



The Gala Banquet Finally Begins The Cash Bar opened again in the full ballroom foyer at 1800 with the familiar



Man working bar in background. Served ladies in foreground.

beverage tickets lady, but with two bartenders instead of one (thank goodness). It was official cocktail time until 1855 when the Emcee would call the attendees to assemble at their tables. Meanwhile, the attendees were free to stock up on their beverages of choice, take a turn with the Photog (a complete surprise to me), identify their tables and seats, and wander at will until the Emcee's call. Sounds pretty simple ... but I have it from good sources that the touted seating plan did NOT work



I've NO idea how/why a photog posed this group together. More than a table.

as well as expected. Nevertheless, not long after Emcee JJ Schulz's on-time call, the seating puzzle seemed to solve itself within a reasonable time. So, "On with the show," said cool Emcee JJ!

As the crowd shuffled itself into a semblance of order at JJ's call, he pressed on with his checklist: Greetings and Quick Opening Remarks; Pledge of Allegiance; Grace by Wells Jackson; Seat Everyone, and Opening Emcee's Poem. "What's that?" asked lots of folks who didn't know JJ very well. Answer for those folks: People in the know, know that JJ is a gifted poet, beginning from his early years growing up under the tutelage of the Missoula (Montana) Jesuit Catholic High School,

which at the time was all boys, and moving on to college (University of Montana, 1958-62) where he was a prize winning poet (and varsity quarterback). With that background, (truly loving poetry) JJ naturally assumes that good poetry is appreciated in almost any setting. Hence, his public demonstrations of his life-long talents. So, it's no wonder that as Emcee, he chose to recite a short poem to transfer from his opening obligatory rituals toward the serious gala business that would come AFTER the served dinner and desert. Here's the poem he recited and his translational comment.

"This poem is an extract from a WW I poem known to many U.S. pilots in Vietnam. Its title is 'An Irish Airman Foresees His Death' by William Butler Yeats, widely considered one of the greatest poets of the English language. Enjoy this extract."

Abridged

I know that I shall meet my fate	Nor law, nor duty bade me fight,
Somewhere among the clouds above;	Nor public men, nor cheering crowds,
Those that I fight I do not hate,	A lonely impulse of delight
Those that I guard I do not love;	Drove to this tumult in the clouds.



JJ Schulz, SSS Poet Emeritus.

And the transitional comment was: "Enjoy your meal, and each other's company."

Then Came the Second Part of the Banquet Program, Around 2000 As the crowd responded promptly to Emcee JJ's urging to "Take seats please," he called me to the podium, saying "Medley has an important announcement." And I responded in turn with the following comments I had been working on at the behest of the Board of Directors ... for days!

"Yes, JJ ... I have a *Very Important* Announcement. It's about something called the Super Sabre Society's Outstanding Member Award ... or OMA for short. For those here tonight who've never heard of our OMA ... or those who only vaguely recall something about this top-of-the-line award, here's a short refresher course ... in a nutshell.

"As we approached the 2nd SSS reunion, set for April 10, 2009, our Board of Directors, in their wisdom, decided we needed a top-level award that our fledgling Society could use to recognize those members who, as President Bill Gorton put it, 'have given of themselves the extra measure' in support of the SSS mission and its motto, 'First Class or Not At All.'

"As it turned out, after due deliberation, the first recipient of our brand new OMA was selected unanimously to be ... Yours Truly! And that's why I'm here, to explain or refresh our group knowledge of our now-coveted OMA ... and to announce our ninth recipient, selected recently by the Board by unanimous vote. But first, allow me to clarify a few facts about the OMA.



First OMA recipient.

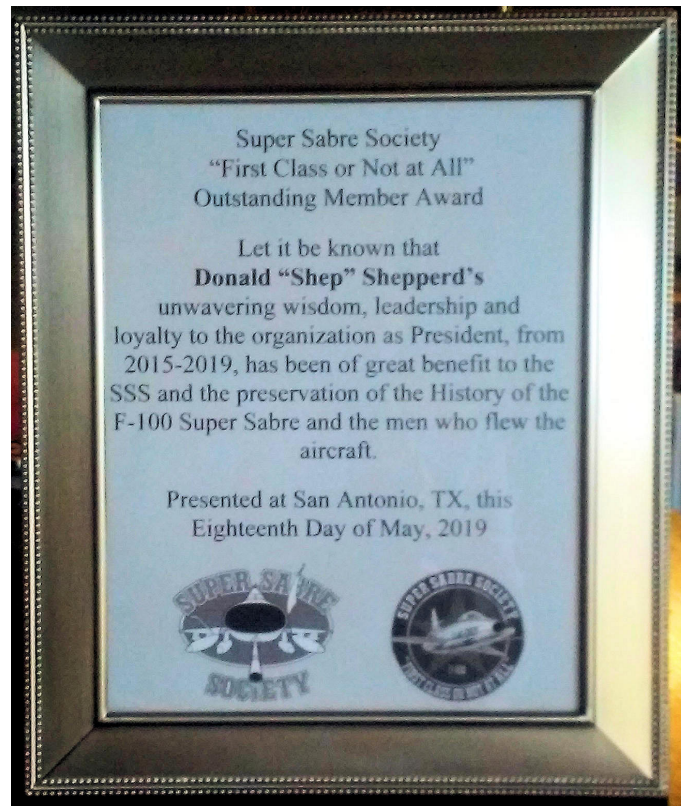
"Unlike some other organizations of note, our OMA is NOT a Man of the Year award and may be presented when and where the Board deems appropriate. Likewise, more than one presentation may be given at

the same venue or to deceased members at appropriate venues. And ... the physical awards may be of different design, appropriate to the recipient and conditions considered by the Board.

"With these OMA characteristics in mind, here are the names and a few bits of info about other previous OMA holders who will be joined by today's member: Bob Dunham with a Hun model (now RIP) 2011, Associate Dave Menard with a Plaque (RIP before presentation) 2013, Hoppy Hopkins with a Hun model 2013, Ron Doughty with a framed Citation (first Webmaster, in absentia) 2015, Dick Pietro with a Hun model 2015, Dave Hatten with a Hun model 2017, and Al Dempsey with a Hun model (at Palm Springs Air Museum) 2017.

"And now ... the ninth SSS Outstanding Member Awardee is ... Donald Shepperd! Get up here, Shep !!!"

A surprised Shep made his way to the podium where I was reaching for his OMA, this time a printed citation to accompany the award, mounted in an 8 by 10 silver frame with a southwest motif, selected by the Board, " ... because he already has too many airplanes on sticks!" I took this opportunity to read aloud the citation verbatim. You can read it for yourself (I hope) in the picture here. I figure this is a more meaningful image than a traditional pix of a presenter and recipient saluting each other. Focus on the words " ... unwavering wisdom, leadership and loyalty to the organization" They are the most important attributes of a Past President and friend: Shep!



9th OMA: Framed Citation for Shep.

After Shep held his OMA up like a trophy for all to see, he gave his thanks to the BoD and made a few cogent remarks about moving “onward and upward.” When he was finished and reseated (to thunderous applause), Emcee JJ called President Griffith and CEO Mansuetti to the stage. It was time for these two “newbie” Board members to say some **semi-official “hellos”** to all the reunion attendees, especially those who they hadn’t had the opportunity to meet and chat with in person—so far in the Reunion. **Tom took the first turn.**



The newbies take turns.

He began by thanking everyone for electing him President, said that succeeding Don Shepperd was an honor and a humbling experience, and then recognized several folks in the audience. Among these were PK Robinson, who was a POW in North Vietnam, SSS Founder Les Frazier and Mike Dean, a SSS Associate Member AND COO of the Friends of the Super Sabre (FSS). Each stood for applause. And, when our oldest member, Ray Kleber (94), a WWII, Korea and Vietnam vet (and a recipient of the civilian Congressional Gold Medal, CGM) was recognized, he came on stage and offered a toast from all attendees to Dick Rutan, of Round-the-World in the “Voyager” fame, and who continues his pioneering work in aerospace inventions and developments.

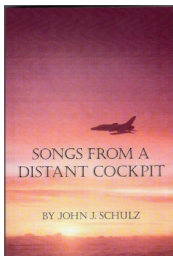
Tom then turned to SSS business, announcing that effective next January, annual SSS dues will increase to \$50, and that those who have prepaid will be grandfathered. He then announced that Board legal advisor Peter Collins is in the process of establishing an SSS Endowment Fund, which will soon be legal and proper. It already has \$3,000 in donations.

Leo then took his turn at the mike and after thanking outgoing president Don Shepperd for his great work, praised Hoppy Hopkins, his predecessor as CEO, saying how much he had come to appreciate what Hoppy had done as he transitioned into the job this past nine months. “I learned SSS members were a ‘gaggle’ of independent thinkers, not at all like I assumed. I thought being CEO would be easy. I’d just come up with a good plan, put it out there and every one would say, ‘GREAT let’s do it!’ Not so—and they’re really vocal about it.” He then listed Hoppy’s many accomplishments (two Udvar-Hazy events, three Fort Wayne flying sessions and more, setting things up after extensive travel at his own expense, along with wife Gladie, “who pitched in to help.” He also mentioned several of the Ft. Wayne flyers, notably “Gen. Bobbi Doorenbos (who was in attendance), without a doubt the nicest and best looking F-100 pilot ever.” Leo thanked all who had volunteered to help him with CEO tasks, then noted what new President Tom Griffith brings to the task of president: “He is a West Point graduate and comes with a great resume, including two tours in Viet Nam, one with the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion at Bien Hoa flying choppers and one as an F-100 pilot with the 308th TFS at Tuy Hoa.”



The “Uber” Founder and Ray Kleber, CGM.

That closed the remarks and observations by these two “newbies,” who then retired to their tables to sincere applause.



JJ’s opus, SSS best seller!

As this round of applause died down, Emcee JJ Schulz took off his Emcee hat, so to speak, and began his part of the entertainment. It was his 15 minute trademark monologue that he happily calls **A Walk on the Lighter Side**. In truth, it’s a mix of “light fare” and “more sober fare” (much drawn from his **skill as a poet**) to near perfection. Unfortunately, with so many planned and extracurricular reunion events to cover again this year, we are going to have to omit a thorough reportage of “**Schulzie’s Time**” from this report. But I want to be sure our members know of his hard work preparing this interlude and the entertainment it brought to all those in attendance. Everyone who cheered at his sometimes ribald, sometimes deadly serious entertainment, will vouch that his professional quality is outstanding ... for a standup comic. Many thanks, Herr Editor!

Next on the banquet program was the **much-awaited drawing for the FSS F-100 Quilt**. Who was going to win it was



An expected prize. But unexpected winner!

the question of the day. Emcee JJ called on stage Linda Dean, the CFO of the FSS, and Ginger Griffith, wife of Tom, who had been asked to do the drawing honors as the First Lady of the SSS. The quilt drawing came first and fast. “And the winner is,” confirmed by Linda, “Wells Jackson!” (Wait a minute. Isn’t he the guy who did grace for the banquet? Something must be rigged here.) The winner of the first FSS quilt drawing at the 2011 Reunion was Joe Coleman, husband to the FSS President, Anne Cohagan-Coleman! And now you tell us the Padre is the winner? *Go figure!* Now about that other drawing.



An unexpected prize. Signed by the Artist!

In a nutshell, it seems that Kath Macaulay, wife to SSSer Dale Sprotberry, is an extremely talented artist specializing in watercolors. “We mean she’s a PRO,” said Linda Dean when I asked about the second drawing “gifted” painting as she put it. In any case, the painting is beautiful, started and finished at the reunion, and couldn’t have been won by a more deserving couple, Crow and Natasha Wilson! Thanks to Kath for Prize # 2 ... and to Sharon Frazier and Pam Dunham for Prize #1. One of these days, we promise to tell the full story of Kath and her incredible artistic talents. 🍌

Finally, it was time for our **Special Guest Speaker, Dr. Eileen Bjorkman**. She has a direct connection to/with the Hun and the SSS. Why? She's the daughter of SSSer Arnold E. Ebneter, and was strongly recommended by our CIO, Win Reither.

Also, as we found out, her credentials are impressive (including a near 30-year USAF career). Emcee JJ covered them all thoroughly (*see below*), adding terms like "impeccable" and "incredible," and after hearing/seeing her PowerPoint presentation she created just for the SSS, we agree with JJ's assessments.

So here's an abridged take on her "right to-the-point" look at our beloved bird, the F-100 Super Saber, aka the Mighty Hun ... warts and all! And, yes, this appraisal was written by Emcee JJ!

From the start, Dr. Bjorkman provided us with a fascinating history of the early development of the Hun, through its active duty, National Guard and "air gunnery target" years, to its eventual retirement to pedestals and air museums around the country. In one of her early slides, she compared the F-86 to the F-100 (*see box*), then traced both the trials and triumphs as North American moved from the A-model (with a larger tail than the original) to the C-model (eventually with a fighter-bomber capability requested by TAC). Then came the D-model, heavier and more versatile than the C and with much better air-to-ground combat capability (its primary role in Vietnam).

F-86 vs. F-100D	
Empty Weight (lb)	11,125 to 21,000
Max T/O Wt (lb)	18,152 to 34,832
Rate-of-Climb (ft/min)	9,000 to 22,400
Burner thrust (lb-ft)	5,910 to 16,000

Dr. Bjorkman, who was heavily involved in development, provided a "10-year history of the F-100 and the later F-16: 588 F-100s destroyed, with 262 fatalities, versus 95 F-16s destroyed, with 36 fatalities, underscoring the great advances in flight safety along with the "great leaps forward" in fighter-bomber capabilities in a relatively short time.

She also traced the Hun's involvement in Vietnam, beginning with F-100D early deployments to Thailand (1961) and to Da Nang (1964). After 1965, F-100s in SEA increased, and were mostly used for CAS. The last Vietnam flights were in 1971. During the Vietnam War, F-100s flew 360,283 sorties in SEA, second only to the F-4s. During that time, the Hun suffered 198 combat losses—16 in North Vietnam, 147 in South Vietnam and 35 in Cambodia and Laos.

At the end of her prepared presentation, Dr. Bjorkman took questions and comments from the audience. And it was not a surprise that the Q and A lasted for quite a few minutes, with promises of further research to come when several "facts" came to light about Hun statistics and accomplishments that varied from what we long had reckoned as true Hun history. *Of particular interest was the possibility that the USAF F-4 community may have flown more combat sorties during the Vietnam War than had the F-100 community, which we had long reckoned to be 360, 283. T will be interesting to learn what "further research" on this sticking point turns out to be definitive!*

Nevertheless, audience response afterward was overwhelmingly positive, with many commenting that they had learned things from Eileen's presentation that they hadn't known until now, despite their years in the Hun. Bottom line: Dr. Eileen is welcome at any SSS function/event, and we look forward to seeing her again.

Needless to say, when **Emcee JJ announced that the banquet event was officially over**, there were lots more "internal conversations" going on in the ballroom until who knows when. Here are some pictures showing folks continuing those conversations and **leave-takings**, because quite a few of us "Reunionizers" had **early flights** on Sunday morning!



(L-R) Father "Ev" Ebneter, Doris Reither, Win Reither, Daughter Dr. Eileen Bjorkman.



Emcee JJ's job done, he chats.



FSS table poses on stage.



These folks listening to speaker?



Leo's table in foyer pose?

And that's about how the banquet ended, at least for this reporter and his wife, Barbara. Back at our room, it was packing time, along with a request to the front desk for a 0600 wakeup call for a 0645 rendezvous with an "appointment" Yellow Cab on Sunday morning. Another \$30 cab drive that put us with the historic Menger Hotel in the rearview window where they were celebrating their 160th year of Hospitality, and we were at the SAT Airport. An uneventful SWA flight and we were on the ground at ABQ. And FINALLY, we were pulling up to 622 Stagecoach Rd. SE. Home Sweet Home ... at last. Thanks to all the folks who helped on this report. You know who you are! **R. Medley**

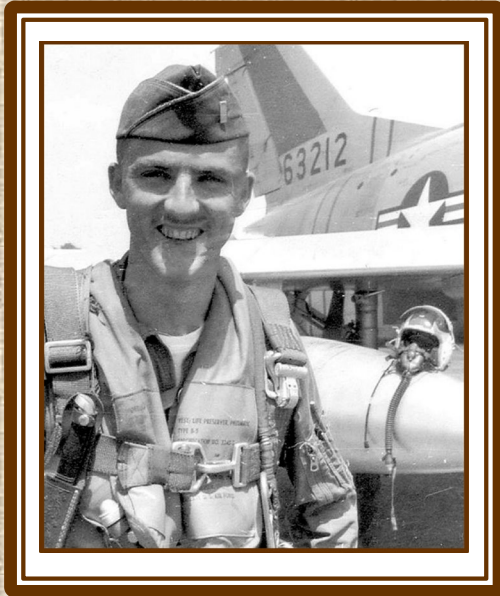


The Way We Were

Fifty 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!



James Autry



Charles Boatwright



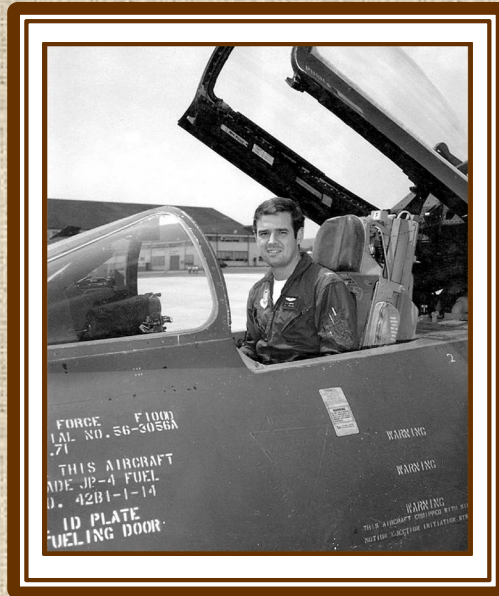
Donald F. Crane



Phillip Hawkins



Chuck Hernet

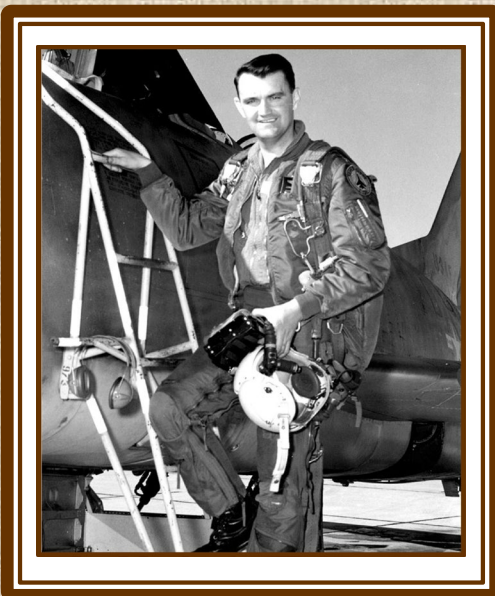


Robert Lampke

RED ALERT – ALERT!! Although there's been a recent up-tick, after this issue, we will have **ONLY** about **24** "Hero Pictures" left in our dwindling supply (out of 2,450 total members since our founding –including Inactives & RIPs). We've now published 420. 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



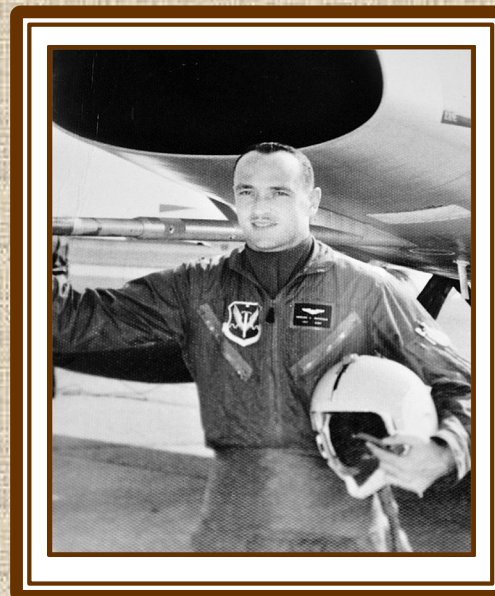
Gordon Denton



John France



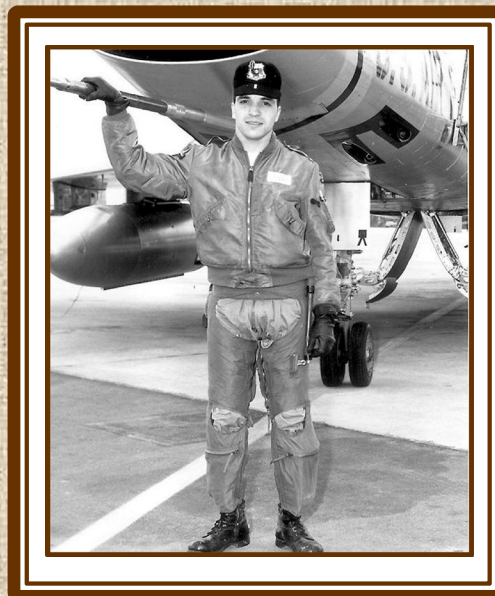
Lou Hausmann



Gary Nophsker



Durwood Tell



Frank Tullo

Functional Test Flight

By John Lowery

It was July 1959, and I was newly assigned to the 36th TFW at Bitburg Air Base (AB) Germany (BIT). Equipped with the F-100C, the wing's mission was to conduct (mostly one-way) nuclear strikes designed to help stop a Russian invasion of Europe. This included four aircraft each from the 22nd TFS and 23rd TFS sitting Victor Alert at BIT, and four on alert at the detached 53rd TFS based at Ramstein AB, Germany.

My assignment was as the first Flight Test Maintenance Officer in the wing's Maintenance Quality Control. This encompassed responsibility for all Functional Check Flights (FCF) in the 36th TFW. Although three pilots in each fighter squadron remained on FCF orders, they were subservient to the Flight Test Maintenance Officer.

This position was authorized by activation of Air Force Manual 66-1, which took all maintenance and supply responsibilities from the fighter squadrons and assigned them to the wing's Maintenance and Supply Division. Taking the FCF function away from the fighter squadrons was very unpopular with squadron pilots. An FCF had been an opportunity to practice dog-fighting by bouncing some of your friends – especially one of the 525th Air Defense Squadron's F-102 Delta Daggers based at the far end of the BIT airfield.

An FCF was designed to ensure the aircraft was safe and capable of performing all its design functions, before making it available to one of the fighter squadrons. The new FCF program was defined in a maintenance document, the designation I recall as the Dash Six, "Inspection and Repair." The Dash Six outlined the FCF requirements, which required the pilot to use an itemized checklist on a Flight Test Card.

Before AFM 66-1, a squadron-conducted FCF typically resulted in two or three discrepancies. Under the new manual, and with some coaching from the NCO QC inspectors, my FCFs were producing 10 to 12 discrepancies per flight. This proved *very* unpopular with the flight-line maintenance officers, who complained bitterly to the Chief of Maintenance.

For example, during preflight I began requesting a tire pressure check. And for the first few weeks the result was a 45-minute delay while the tire pressures were brought up to TO standards.

Then, sometimes at full power during takeoff roll the Engine Pressure Ratio (EPR) would be at the bottom of the allowable EPR scale: still legal but not producing maximum rated thrust. Although technically okay, a wingman trying to stay in formation with his element leader during takeoff would lag well behind. Writing this up caused several caustic encounters with the flight-line maintenance officers: Corrective action, which usually occurred at night, required a squadron pilot to taxi the aircraft to the engine run-up area and join an engine specialist (dispatched by Maintenance Control) to adjust the EPR.

A complete FCF required the pilot to record engine indications: oil pressure, EPR, RPM and EGT (on takeoff and every 10,000 feet to 40,000 feet). At 40,000 feet, the aircraft was slowed to 145 KIAS for an afterburner ignition test to check for compressor stalls. And often the Super Sabre's J57 engine compressor would stall, producing a sound equivalent to a 105mm cannon going off in the cockpit.

Some maintenance actions, such as flight control work, required only a quick airborne check at varying speeds – easily accomplished in 20 minutes. But I had found that flying at least an hour and cold-soaking at 40,000 feet on *every* FCF caused heretofore undiscovered malfunctions to appear. After completing a full test card, I began using the remaining fuel to fly a practice nuclear strike mission; usually a low level excursion into France, ending with a high speed check of the LABs system, then returning to BIT at high altitude.

Accident History

From my July 1959, assignment until the end of December 1959, the 36th TFW experienced 17 major F-100C accidents, many involving tire failure during takeoff. And I was invariably the accident board's "maintenance investigator." The accidents were especially prevalent when the aircraft was heavy with an asymmetrical load, carrying a "Blue Boy" (a simulated, but classified, nuclear weapon).

The tire failure problem was identified by the NCO QC Control Inspectors as due to aircraft crew chiefs failing to check and adjust the tire pressure during the daily preflight. The heavier weight and asymmetrical load required much higher tire pressures. Also involved was poor housekeeping, with nuts, bolts and screws found scattered over the ramp and taxiway. This was causing deep cuts in the high pressure tires during taxi.

Another problem that occurred while taxiing was that upon hitting a bump in the taxiway, the G-meter in some aircraft would bounce to 10-12 Gs. Because of main wing spar fatigue failure in both the F-86s and F-100s, G-meter indications had become a major concern. The official (airborne) G-limit was 7.33 Gs. Any over-stress indication required the aircraft to be grounded for a time-consuming wing spar check. To prevent pilot-cheating, due to an accidental over-G incident in flight (such as while dogfighting), some fighter bases installed G-meter blocks to prevent pilots from erasing the indication



John Lowery.

after landing. While the blocks weren't installed at BIT, a 10-12 G indication was of concern to Maintenance Quality Control. The end result was installation of *several* new G-meters in 36th TFW aircraft.

The antiskid system check also proved problematic. The Dash Six required heavy braking during landing roll to verify antiskid on-off cycling. But after blowing tires on three consecutive flights, I was ordered to stop doing the antiskid test. Still, because of the importance of the Super Sabre's antiskid protection, I discovered the test could be accomplished safely during taxi. This involved taxiing just a bit fast, then clamping down hard on the brakes. If it worked, you could feel the antiskid release; but if it failed, no tires were blown.

Once the required test card items were checked, the final check was a LABS maneuver. (Note: When sent TDY as maintenance officer to our gunnery camp at Wheelus AB, Libya, I sometimes carried a bomb rack loaded with six 25 lb. dummy bombs. This way, I actually got practice with bomb deliveries on the gunnery range.) Then it was back to 20,000 feet for a radar-monitored TACAN approach into BIT, or a practice GCA into Wheelus AB.

The final area of special concern was the landing roll. You always hoped the drag chute deployed, otherwise you spent an hour or more in the "hot brake area." The problem was that hot brakes could result in a wheel brake fire; or worse yet, cause a tire to explode and kill or seriously injure members of the line crew. (This was before adoption of "fuse plugs" that melted to relieve the tire pressure once the brake reached a critical temperature.)

As for the new maintenance system (because none of the base's leadership had studied AFM 66-1), during practice alerts, the squadron operations officers often failed to remember they no longer controlled aircraft tail-number scheduling. During one alert, the Maintenance Control Officer had a fighter squadron ops officer arrested, because he was on the flight line countermanding their radioed instructions to the line chief. (He simply refused to accept the new system!)

Having attended the AFM 66-1 course at Chanute AFB, IL, just prior to arriving at BIT, I was tasked for a wing staff briefing on the new maintenance program. Everyone listened attentively, but the Wing DO and squadron operators never warmed up to their loss of control. Gone were the weekend cross-country flights that the ops officer or a flight commander dreamed up during Friday night beer call. This sometimes included a flight of two aircraft, with a 9:00 AM Saturday morning departure, for a trip to Aviano AB, Italy. Their mission ... to have dinner and drinks with friends at some exotic off-base location. Yet this required squadron maintenance personnel to work most of the weekend!

Still, the new maintenance system eventually began to work: And Operations and Maintenance became separate, but equal, partners. And, while flying two or three test flights per day, I found the F-100C a real joy to fly. ■

Shep Looking Back With Nothing But Thanks (Cont. from P. 6)

The President — It has been my great pleasure to serve as President of the Super Sabre Society for four years. I had the good fortune of having a great CEO, Hoppy Hopkins, who had unlimited energy, superb ideas and the ability to carry out innovative schemes. I was backed by a great board and officers who volunteered countless hours, unseen and under-appreciated, to bring us such things as our world class *Intake* journal and our website, as well as plans to take us into the future with an endowment that will finance our biographies, stories and photos for our kids and grandkids and theirs. We and what we did will live in the history of aviation forever. Most important, we have solid leadership under our new president, Tom Griffith, and CEO, Leo Mansuetti. These two good guys who are part of "us," with the experience, vision, passion and ideas to carry us into the future.

When we get old, we say we don't need any more plaques, but in my fighter pilot's "I Love Me" room, I retain two plaques of which I am very proud. I received both at the recent San Antonio reunion. One is from the board and officers thanking me for my term as President. The second, is the Super Sabre Society "Outstanding Member Award." Both are treasures displayed on my wall next to one of Hoppy's many great ideas, a framed litho of the Keith Ferris painting, "Super Sabres Respond – Tet '68." I look up at them every day from my computer, and I smile. I finished my Air Force career with over 5,000 hours, mostly in fighters. Later, I flew several thousand hours in other civilian aircraft. People ask what is my favorite airplane? The best fighter I flew was my last, the F-15 Eagle. BUT ... the one I enjoyed the most was the F-100—the airplane, and of course, growing up with all of you. THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES—ONWARD AND UPWARD! — "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers" — no one but us understands — Shep ■



Recent Photo of Shep's "I Love Me Wall."



Allen Strasser: OMG! CU AFROTC Cadet Commander, USAF Regular –Turned ANG.

Part 1 of this 3-part series reminded readers that our first version of this general-subject article was written by SSSer Allen Strasser, Jr. and published in Issue 18 of The Intake. Part 1 also declared that Strasser’s article, “... was a masterpiece concerning an up-and-coming mission which propelled the ANG into a new era of partnership with the active forces: That concept was eventually known as ‘Total Force!’ Allen’s only regret about his article was that we couldn’t give him more pages for this worthy subject and his masterful story telling.” Further, Part 1 revealed we had found a very similar article about this ANG call-up written by a student at Air Command and Staff Collage that began with a historical-context chapter and then covered the detailed facts about and adventures of the major ANG units called up and focused on the F-100 units that found themselves flying alongside regular USAF Hun units in Vietnam, starting with the 120th TFS “Colorado Cougars,” the first on-scene and the last covered in Part 1!

So, herewith, we continue with the 174th TFS Sioux City “Bats” and then the 188th TFS “Tacos.” Part 3 will close out the series in Issue 41 with New York’s 136th “Fuzzy” TFS, and, lastly the 355th TFS’s “Fighting Falcons” (otherwise known as “The Forgotten Squadron”). Ed.



An Abridged Manuscript
AU/ACSC/08-8361/AY06
AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE
FORGOTTEN HEROES –
U.S. ANG FIGHTER SQUADRONS OF VIETNAM

By Joseph B. Speed, Major, USAF
A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements
Instructor: Dr. Michael E. Weaver
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama April 2006

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THE BATS

While the 120th TFS was the first ANG fighter squadron deployed to South Vietnam, the 174th TFS was close on their heels. The 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron “Bats,” an F-100C unit from Sioux City, Iowa, was similar to the 120th TFS in that it was assigned to the parent 140th TFW, Buckley ANG Base, Colorado. Similarly, the Bats were activated on 25 January, 1968, and were told to be prepared to depart for overseas within 72 hours. However, the 174th’s departure was delayed until 14 May and did not arrive in Vietnam until 17 May. Subsequently, it was transferred to the 37th TFW, Phu Cat Air Base, Republic of Vietnam.



174th TFS Bats

provided to support the deployment of the 174th so depleted the ranks of the 185th TFG that it did not have enough manpower to continue operations in their absence. Of the deploying group, Lt Col Gordon L. Young led 129 airmen and 29 officers specifically assigned to the 174th after their arrival in Vietnam. The Bats brought a total of 22 F-100Cs to Vietnam.

As an indication of their readiness and professionalism, all of the pilots of the 174th were Operationally Ready (OR), which included theater indoctrination and three missions, within 11 days of arrival in Vietnam. By the end of September, every pilot of the 174th was flight lead qualified for combat missions in Vietnam. Additionally, the 174th TFS picked up an alert commitment during June, which included two alert aircraft prepped to support possible TIC (Troops in Contact) situations, loaded and maintained on 15 minute alert status with two alert crews, day and night.

Within barely one month of flying combat missions, most of which were under the control of FACs, the Bats had flown over 1300 hours and were credited with 17 confirmed KBA, 111 destroyed VC structures, 54 destroyed fortifications and at least 2 destroyed gun positions. During

the subsequent three month period, the 174th flew 2048 combat effective sorties, which was the highest combat sortie count of the four squadrons in the Wing. Additionally, the 174th dropped between 32 percent and 33 percent of the total bombs for the entire Wing, which included four fighter squadrons, during this period. Lastly, the 174th's first full three month reporting period ended with over 400 confirmed KBA, over 300 destroyed hostile structures, 25 destroyed gun positions, and a host of bridges, trucks, tunnels, sampans, and other structures destroyed. Their accomplishments were on par, if not surpassing, many of their active duty counterparts.

Much like the 120th TFS, the 174th TFS's maintenance section was superb, as well. During the July – September 1968, reporting period, the 174th was “consistently C-1 throughout the period” which reflected “the exceptional esprit de corps and high professional standards for which the squadron has become known and respected.” As a matter of fact, the 174th TFS was the only squadron whose mission readiness (“C”) rating did not drop below C-2 during this period, having the C-2 rating for only a period of six days. This meant that the squadron maintained the highest level of mission readiness possible during the entire quarter, except for six days. The squadron's performance helped the entire wing by significantly bolstering the TFW's overall “C” average.

Unfortunately, the 174th experienced its first loss on 14 July 1968 when 1Lt Warren K. Brown was shot down by enemy ground fire while on an airstrike in the A Shau valley. Lt. Brown was killed when his parachute failed to fully deploy after he ejected from his disabled aircraft. The 174th lost another aircraft, but rescued the pilot, when it went down due to suspected battle damage on 27 September, 1968. On that day, shortly after takeoff, 1Lt Kuldar Visnapuu felt a “thud” and his F-100C quickly decelerated. 1Lt Visnapuu attempted to return to Phu Cat but had to eject near the ocean. An Army helicopter crew picked him up, returning him within 30 minutes from the time he took off.

During the October – November 1968 timeframe, the Bats began flying missions over North Vietnam, due to a 37th TFW commitment, only to have the emphasis changed again, due to the 1 November “bombing halt” of North Vietnam, to Laos against infiltration routes. These missions constituted 60-80 percent of the squadron's daily sorties and the enemy normally fired at the pilots with a combination of 12.5mm, 14.7mm, 23mm, 37mm, and 85mm antiaircraft fire. The heavy concentration of ground fire caused the 174th to fly higher, in order to avoid most of the antiaircraft fire, and drop a large number of “hard loads” on their missions. A hard load is slick bombs that can accurately travel from the higher release altitudes, caused by the antiaircraft fire avoidance maneuvers, and still hit the target with a high degree of reliability. The change in weapons had little effect on the Bats' results. During the October – December timeframe the 174th TFS

was credited with over 50 confirmed KBA, over 190 destroyed hostile structures, over 150 destroyed bunkers, 25 destroyed gun positions, and various other enemy emplacements and sites.

Despite their prowess of bringing destruction to the enemy, the 174th TFS showed itself a friend to those in need. As Christmas approached, the men of the 174th sponsored a drive to help the children of the Kim Chau orphanage, which was located about 10 miles from their base at Phu Cat. By Christmas, the 174th had received and distributed more than 300 boxes of gifts for the orphans, received from individuals and small organizations in Iowa. Sioux City doctors also sent many boxes of medical supplies to one of their associates deployed to the combat zone. In fact, so many packages were received for the orphanage that parts of the packages were taken to the Qui Hoa leprosarium near Qui Nhon and the refugee center in Phu Cat village.

It did not take long for the 174th's accomplishments to become widely known. By the spring of 1969, the Bats had been awarded the AFOUA, the Presidential Unit Citation, and were key contributors to the 37th TFW being awarded the Southeast Asia Outstanding Fighter Wing Award. Even the 37th TFW's outgoing commander, LeRoy J Manor, lauded the “outstanding skills of the Air National Guard personnel.”

Although the 174th began preparing for their departure in May, 1969, their performance never lagged. During this time, the 174th continued to lead the Wing in such important areas as low dud rates for munitions, repeatedly being the best of the four squadrons. This was especially important since the enemy often used “dud” munitions, or those weapons that were released but did not explode, as booby-traps, on friendly personnel. The enemy did this by disassembling the dud weapons and using the explosives against friendly ground personnel. Additionally, the 174th continued to rack up amazing statistics such as having over 98 percent of its sorties effective and consistently having the highest OR rates in the Wing.



37th TFW - Phu Cat

The 174th redeployed from Phu Cat on 12 May 1969, and arrived in Sioux City, Iowa, on 14 May 1969 and prepared for subsequent deactivation. The Bats left behind a memorial of achievements and a legacy of greatness. Prior to their departure from Phu Cat, Commander in Chief, Pacific

Air Forces (CINCPACAF) sent his congratulations and thanks to the officers and airmen of the 174th for their “splendid contribution to the war effort in Vietnam.”

The men of the 174th brought home 12 Silver Stars, 35 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 30 Bronze Star Medals, 115 Air Force Commendation Medals (AFCMs), and some 300 Air Medals. Best of all for the men of the 174th, when they

returned home they got something that few Vietnam Veterans received, that is, a hearty “Welcome Home” by an

entire community that was thankful for their service to its country.

ENCHILADA AIR FORCE

The 188th TFS “Tacos” were federalized for active duty on January 26, 1968, under the command of Lt Col Fred J. Fink. Preparation for deployment to SEA consisted of sea survival training at Homestead AFB, Florida, a 3 day survival school at Kirtland AFB, and night attack training at Cannon AFB, New Mexico for all pilots.



188th TFS Tacos

Orders for deployment were received in May 1968 with a deployment date of 4 June 1968.

Out of a total of 800 personnel activated within the 150th TFG, the parent organization of the 188th TFS, only 28 officers and 334 airmen were authorized to deploy to Vietnam.

In addition, aircraft to be deployed consisted of 20 F-100Cs and 2 F-100Fs (two-seat versions). After some minor en-route mechanical issues, such as two jets with inoperative radios and a fuel leak in the tanker aircraft’s refueling hose, the 188th TFS reached Tuy Hoa Air Base, RVN, with 18 F-100Cs and 2 F-100Fs on 7 June, 1968, and was subsequently assigned to the 31st Tactical Fighter Wing. The last two F-100Cs arrived on 8 June, completing the authorized deployment of 22 F-100s and 25 pilots. The 31st TFW was the largest wing in SEA and the only fighter wing that had been fragged, as of the end of 1968, for all of the Corps areas on a daily basis plus about 40 sorties into Laos. The arrival of the 188th TFS brought the number of tactical fighter squadrons in the 31st TFW to five.

Pilot checkouts began on 13 June, which consisted of one backseat ride in an F100F, one front seat ride in an F-100F, and 18 F-100C missions as wingmen to become flight leads. By 30 June, the 188th TFS had 22 pilots operationally (combat) ready and had flown a total of 352 combat sorties.

Enthusiasm was running high among the members of the 188th TFS. According to the Commander of the 188th, “the only complaints were from those people he had to leave behind in New Mexico.”

It did not take long for the 188th to make a big impression. By the end of July, letters of commendation were already arriving for the Tacos’ aerial expertise and bravery.

For example, on 23 July, the HQ Provisional Corps Vietnam commended Taco 51 flight for its “professionalism” and “outstanding accuracy” for their part in a mission in the A Shau interdiction program. Again, in October, 1968 Taco 01 flight was commended by the TACP from the ROK Capital Division for delivering “all ordnance” within “ten meters of the point requested.” The

Fighter Duty Officer of the TACP commented that this was “commendable under ideal conditions and almost unbelievable under the actual conditions.”

During July, the 188th TFS had the highest number of hours flown among the five fighter squadrons of the 31st TFW. The 188th TFS repeated this feat in August and September. Additionally, the 188th TFS had the highest “C-1” rating (92 percent) of the entire Wing during the July-September quarter.

By the end of the year, the Tacos had ranged the skies over SEA from the Mekong Delta to the Steel Tiger area in Laos, passing their 6,000th hour of flight time in country. The 188th TFS regularly encountered 23 and 37 millimeter (air burst) automatic weapons fire and had two aircraft hit by enemy ground fire during this quarter. However, both aircraft managed to reach a safe haven without further damage. The last quarter of 1968 also saw the highest KBA of the squadron to date, with 119 confirmed and 72 estimated.

Others noticed the experience and expertise of the Taco pilots, as well. By the end of the year two Taco pilots were TDY to Phu Cat as part of the then-top secret, and extremely challenging, “Misty” FAC program which flew interdiction missions in North Vietnam and Laos.

As of 31 December, Captain Cassaro had just left the squadron to join the program and Captain Kretz was scheduled to return in mid-January. There were additional Taco volunteers for the “Mistys” but the number of Misty slots authorized was then presently filled. At the turn of the New Year the Taco pilots averaged 150 combat missions and 220 hours of combat time.

Unfortunately, like the other ANG fighter squadrons, close calls, and eventually tragedy, found the Tacos as well. On 31 January 1969, Captain Jerry N. Williams, flying an F-100C, lost elevator control returning from a combat mission due to battle damage. The aircraft crashed but the pilot ejected and was picked up about 40 minutes later.

However, on 4 January 1969, Major Bobby Neeld and 1Lt Mitchell S. Lane were returning from a day combat mission when they apparently crashed at sea while diverting, due to weather, to Phan Rang Air Base, RVN. No wreckage or aircrews were found, and the pilots were subsequently listed as missing-in-action (MIA). Lastly, Captain Michael T. Adams was killed in action on 4 May, 1969, when he made a high speed ejection from a rocket pass. A chute was sighted but he was reported dead on recovery.

In February and March, the 188th was still at the top of its game, posting 92 percent and 93 percent “effective combat sorties” rates and dropping over 1,300 tons of bombs. It had already accumulated 7 DFCs, 3 Bronze Stars

with V and 25 Air Medals, among others. Indeed, the 31st TFW stated that the 188th's "mission performance" in all areas "is near perfect" and that their "daily accomplishments demonstrate that they are a true asset to the 31st TFW."

The 188th impressed the Inspector General (IG) team of the 7th Air Force. During a 27 March – 5 April 1969, IG visit, the 188th TFS scored an "outstanding" for Operations and Administration. The IG team stated that "this unit clearly identified itself as a superior ANG unit on active duty with the USAF" and that "discipline, morale, and pride in appearance were clearly apparent among pilots and operations personnel."

The Tacos continued their outstanding ways until they departed on 18 May, 1969. Parting laurels included those of 1st Lt Gordon Denton, 188th TFS, who was one of the first pilots to win the newly established 31st TFW "Top



31st TFW - Tuy Hoa

the Presidential Unit Citation, the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Palm, 3 Vietnamese Gallantry Crosses with Silver Stars, the Vietnamese Air Service Medal (Honor Class), 289 Air Force Commendation Medals and one Army Commendation Medal.

To be continued in Issue 41 ...

Gun" Award in April, 1969. Considering the competition among the five fighter squadrons, this was no small feat. Tellingly, when the Enchilada Air Force finally returned home, they had accumulated 8 Silver Stars, 29 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 26 Bronze Star Medals, 270 Air Medals, 3 Purple Hearts, the AFOUA,

Vietnam War: Squadron Turnovers Documented

At the recent SAT Reunion, still very active 94-year-old, Ray Kleber gave us two pictures of his squadron (the 612th, 1 Jan '68 to 1 Jan '69) to scan and add to our Hun Group Pictures Collection. His pics are rare, because Ray wrote the names of all the folks in both pics, and the comparison graphically shows the turnover over a six month period: 1 Jan '68 to 1 Jun '68. Lots of faces in both, but more in Pic 1 because it shows more Wing and Misty folks than are in Pic 2. In any case, enjoy checking the named faces! Can you find any "planted" errors? Ray says there's only one; can you find it? **Pub Med**



37th TFW - Phu Cat



1 Jan Pic: L/C Ray Kleber assumes command.



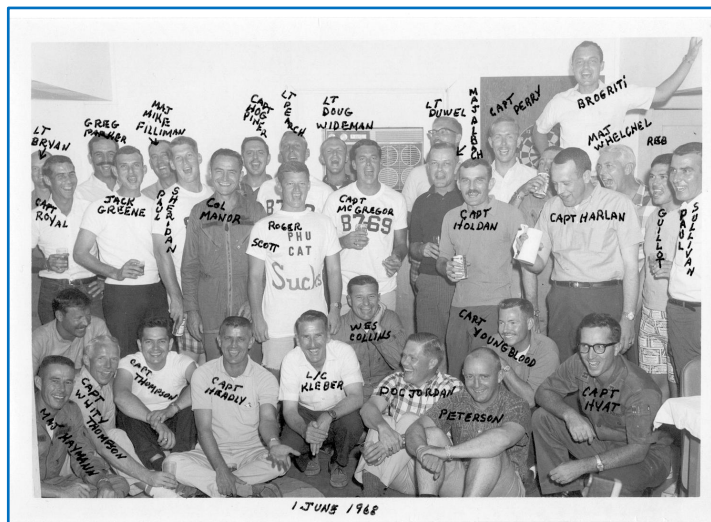
612th TFS - Phu Cat

How many members are aware of our "Hun History in Cloth" concept? Very few, it would seem. But if you know how to find it, our website offers a truly world class collection of unit patches, numbering in the thousands!

That's counting Wings or higher levels and, of course, Squadron or lower levels, many connected in stove-pipe fashions.

But it's at the Squadron level that the magnification was designed to really hold a lot of "Hun History," and that means LOTS of pictures, all kinds of 'em.

And that's why Ray Kleber's fresh pictures come into play. Why? Because the patches concept is NOT now the keeper of image history.



1 Jun Pic: L/C Ray Kleber, still naming faces!

"Why not?" one might ask. The answer is in the design of our website, which with our new emphasis on provisions to preserve our legacies (people & planes), should include activation of the existing capabilities of the History in Cloth concept to preserve images of all sorts (group and other photos of people, as well as all sorts of hardware, and memorabilia).

So, if you concur with this plan, you need to learn how to access the existing unit patches collection and see the possibilities! On the Home Page, click on the Our History link, and from there, click on the Unit Patches and Other F-100- Associated Imagery link, and "follow your nose." You'll be glad you did! **Pub Med**

Final Chapter (at last) — the Super Sabre Society's Nellis Rock Monument Project

By Don Shepperd

The day was 15 March 2019. The noise was familiar: afterburners; but something was different—the airplanes weren't all U.S. It was the early morning Red Flag takeoff of 80-plus planes: 4th generation F-16s, F-15s and A-10s, and 5th gen F-22s and F-35s, accompanied our allies, all headed to the skies. And, it wasn't just airplanes filling the restricted areas north of Nellis. New warfare tools, space and cyber, were playing a big part in today's scenario. But this Red Flag wasn't the main event.



Oh no! Later in the afternoon, a group of geezers, aged warriors from days gone by, began moving to attend the culmination of a long project ... the dedication of the Super Sabre Society's F-100 Rock Monument along the walk to Waxman Hall by the Nellis Weapons School. It is no longer called the "Fighter" Weapons School because warfare today is multi-dimensional and much more complicated than the war we fought in Vietnam.



SSS Hun pilots only for the official dedication picture.

About 75 people attended the dedication including Gen. James "Mobile" Holmes, commander of Air Combat Command. It was a typical Nellis day, with light winds and bright sunshine. The monument was inspired by the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association's Rock Monument that memorializes air-to-air combat in the Korean War. We all wanted to be those F-86 guys, shooting MiGs.

But our F-100 deserved a rock, too. It started with an idea, then board approval, base permission, fund-raising, design, construction, transportation and installation—a two-year effort! Members contributed \$29,770, enough to construct the rock monument and also donate \$10,000 to the MAPS Museum to assist them in becoming the primary reservoir of F-100 information and artifacts for the public.

Tom Griffith, our president, introduced Don Shepperd, who described the background of the rock project. Shep spoke about calling JR Alley, president of the F-86 association, to ensure there was no objection to adding an F-100 memorial and to promise the Super Sabre rock would complement, not compete with, the 86 rock. He pointed to the nearby 86 memorial and it was obvious the promise was fulfilled. Herk Herculson and Pote Peterson spoke as "old guys from the past," about the early Hun days. General Joe Ashy, retired four-star, SSS member, former CINCNORAD and USCINCSpace, concluded the ceremony with remarks about his memories of Vietnam and the importance of remembering what we did ... and those who did it.



Close-up of speakers Joe Ashy, "Shep", "Herk," President Tom and other folks of note.

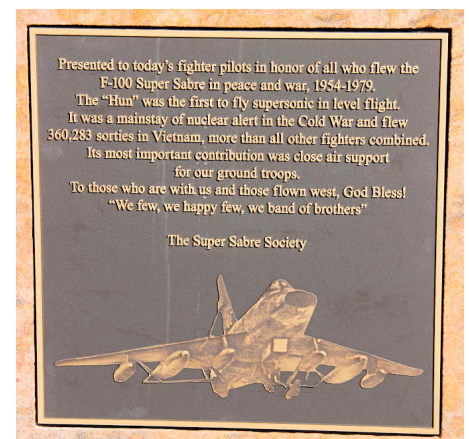
The afternoon Red Flag sorties landed as the ceremony ended, airplanes flown by young kids who want to be us, the old guys in a real war, the early jets; us looking at young kids flying everything we had wanted and didn't have—standoff and precision weapons, night capability, ECM, chaff, flares, range, speed, payload. We old SSSers, accompanied by wives and family members, retired into a briefing by the Weapons School Staff on current tactics and equipment. The SSS Toasting cabinet ended the briefing with toasts to the past, bringing some wet eyes and throat lumps.



The popular SSS Toasting Cabinet travels all over!

As new, young pilots, men and now women, enter Waxman Hall they will walk past our monument. They will stop to read words on the brass plaque. When we read the plaque dedicated to all who flew the Hun in peace and war, we don't see words. We see faces. We hear laughter and voices and parachute beepers—and see gunfire. These are our memories

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The heart of the matter.

and the F-100 rock will be in place long after we are all gone to remind the future of the past – the past "US" and what we did is worth telling and remembering for our families and for history.

As to be expected, the long day ended in the absolutely packed club, with what has made aviation work for years—old heads and newbie pilots drinking their favorite beverages together...as it's always been ... and will always be so. — Shep ■

HONOR FLIGHT — A Must-Read Report

By Ed Haerter

On the evening of November 3rd, 2018, several thousand well-wishers noisily greeted and reached out to 90 veterans whose service spanned the Korean and Vietnam Wars as we deplaned from the Badger Honor Flight to Washington D.C. and back upon our return to Madison Wisconsin's Dane County Airport. It's difficult to put into words what that emotional outpouring of sincere gratitude meant to all of us, coming from so many wonderful people, most of whom we'd never met. It's been 50 years since I returned home from Vietnam to a mostly standoffish society, some outright hostility, and, outside of my family, very few celebratory greetings. Although we veterans of the Vietnam War have made some strides in positive recognition over the years, some of this hostility still surfaces from time to time, when someone still seems to feel compelled to remind us "how wrong" our war had been, and how they had been, and evidently still were, against the war. All of that paled, and in my case, was finally put to rest, by the recognition and accolades each of us received during the day of the Honor Flight, during our time in Washington, and especially upon our return home to Madison.

The plane that transported us to Washington and back home was a kind of magic carpet, a dream maker, where we were treated as celebrities by everyone who had made the day possible, or had any contact with us throughout the day. I found my fellow veterans on the flight to be quiet, reflective and humble, whose hearts, individual memories, and often raw emotions, were exposed time and time again during our journey to Washington, during the activities we attended and the memorials we visited there, and finally during the flight back home. My time at the Vietnam Wall was extremely difficult and emotional, where I read and touched the names of many squadron mates and friends who didn't make it home.

So, after 50 long years, I personally found some closure with the many "Welcome Home, Brother" greetings that were only a closely held wish in the past. Finally, I served my country gladly, honorably, and with extreme pride for 32 years, in the company of true patriots, who were absolutely the finest group of men and women I have ever had the honor to have known. I am extremely proud, and feel privileged to call my military comrades "Brother," or "Sister." I urge all veterans to seek information about future Honor Flights planned for next year and beyond. And, if the opportunity presents itself, please find it in your heart to reach out to a veteran with the words "Welcome Home, Brother, Welcome Home, and thank you for your service to our country." ■ — **Ed Haerter**



After 6 years a Regular in Huns and Thuds, Ed moved on to an ANG career which included a year-long SEA Hun tour. Then came 18 years of tanking other aircraft.



Here's what Pub Med had to say after reading Ed's report: "I've been aware of the Honor Flights since they first came out back around 2005. Back then, the flights were only for WWII vets, as I recall. Not sure when they spread to later conflicts. But, a good idea is to follow Ed's lead to bone up on this organization and start hunting around for your local Honor Flight Hub, check out the schedules, submit a request, and join the 'magic carpet' ride as did Ed. 'Extra, Extra, Read All About It!' URL is <https://www.honorflight.org/>." Ed.

"Hun Drivers in the Sky" (Latest Iteration)

At our recent San Antonio gathering, Bill Hosmer and I had planned that he would come on stage at the banquet to present his latest iteration of that wonderful parody of "Ghost Riders in the Sky" that he and his all-boys choir sang at some of our earlier reunion banquets. Unfortunately, this time he was unable to find singing voices that met his high standards, so I asked him instead to plan to just recite it at the podium. We planned to make some final arrangements during cocktail hour before the banquet program commenced. Unfortunately, we weren't able to hook up, and I feared that he was not at the banquet, so, as Emcee, I skipped over that item on the agenda and moved on to the next one. Turns out, Bill WAS there and ready to roar. So I've asked him to send me his newest (and shorter this time--two stanzas) version so everyone can enjoy it. With apologies to Bill, here 'tis: Ed.

A SALUTE TO THE MEN WHO FLEW THE MIGHTY HUN

By Bill Hosmer

The first in the Century series was a bird we called the HUN
It's huge intake and swept-back wings gave pilots flights of fun.
But the thing about that airplane, that really gave it poise
Was the afterburning engine, and its everlovin' noise.

Now the cannons and wing stations gave it wherewithal to kill.
And pilots by the hundreds used those things with guts and skill.
So when I think about that plane, and things I did in flight
I remember guys I flew with.... and I salute you all tonight!!

A Daughter and a Wife’s Tale: Col. Keith Heiniger (Misty 15)

By Christine Heiniger Johnson and Peggy Heiniger

This iteration of “From a Wife’s Perspective” comes with a variation on the theme: it is enriched by the perspectives, experiences and reactions of a daughter and a wife. As you will find, it is a combination that has worked out very well. Ed.



Daughter Christine, now a senior executive.

Colonel Keith Heiniger (Ret.), Misty 15, was my Dad. He was born on a small farm in northeast Kansas, the youngest of four boys. His strong work ethic and depth of character were no doubt results of the farm life. Each boy was assigned farm chores when they turned five years old.

Dad and Mom (Margaret “Peggy” Shipman Heiniger) were high school sweethearts. They married in June, 1953, and by the time Dad received his orders to Vietnam in 1966, they had four daughters ranging in age from 11 years to 18 months. I’m the second oldest. I was nine when Dad left for survival training in preparation for his tour in Vietnam.

That period seemed so nebulous; almost like it was someone else’s life. Mom, my sisters and I moved back to Kansas to be near the extended family while Dad was away. Mom (who was a saint) had already packed up the family and moved 10 times in her 13 years of married life. Mom knew that Dad’s Air Force career and passion for flying were part of “The Man.” He had an

adventurous nature, often telling me and my sisters to “shoot for the stars.”

It must have been difficult, however, for Mom to return to her hometown Kansas community, where no one understood our nomadic military life, and where awareness of the physical and emotional challenges were unacknowledged. She was isolated from military families who also surrendered their husbands/fathers to the duty-call of war. Back home, mom’s constant fears for her husband’s safety remained unspoken due to lack of empathetic, listening ears. Mom demonstrated to her daughters and to her community the amazing strengths and grace personified in the military wife. She walked that line between supporting Dad’s aspirations and wishing for a more stable and settled life for her family.

While Dad was in Vietnam, we communicated via audio tapes and occasionally an 8mm movie. Dad would never talk about what he was actually doing in Vietnam. Instead he would talk about the people, the weather, the geography, etc. It didn’t matter what he talked about; we were just so glad to hear his voice. I’m thankful we had our mom and dad’s extended families so near to provide emotional support. We would gather at my uncles’ or my grandparents’ houses for holidays and special occasions. My uncles were so much like Dad that it was comforting to be around them and made me feel like I had Dad back. I remember that the family, all of us, tried to shelter my Grammy (Dad’s mom) from the details of what Dad was doing in Vietnam. Grammy worried so much for his well-being ... a feeling we all shared. Each of us carried the weight of worry differently. Evidence of Mom’s constant worry was visible as she cringed every time there was a knock at the door. She was terrified it would be notification that something bad had happened to Dad.

Fortunately, I did not know all of the specifics of what Dad did during his service in Vietnam. In fact, it was not until 2014 that Dad talked to my sisters and me about Vietnam, Forward Air Controllers, and the Mistys. I was in awe as I listened to him recount what his day-to-day existence was like. Dad flew as a Misty FAC from July, 1967, to November, 1967. During his time in Vietnam, he flew 356 combat missions in the North and South, accumulating more than 900 combat flying hours.

Dad will forever remain larger than life for me and my sisters; a hero in every sense of the word. Until I was grown, married and had children of my own I didn’t fully understand the courage, character and sacrifice my dad and those with whom he served modeled for their families and for the country they loved. Dad never cut corners or took shortcuts. “If something was worth doing, it was worth doing right.”

Dad passed away in January, 2015. As we looked through the papers and pictures that he had stuffed away in his desk, my husband, Ken, came across a handwritten letter from a fellow Misty. It was profound and wonderful to read. Ken decided it would be good to read the comments at Dad’s memorial service. It read:

“I have flown with Major Heiniger on numerous occasions and consider him to be absolutely fearless and completely calm under fire. His ability to control tactical strikes is most accurate and precise. Even though Major Heiniger’s duties have required continuous work days of 12 to 14 hours, he continues to apply himself conscientiously and without complaint. The effectiveness of this Misty test group is greatly enhanced by the service of this officer during our establishment and initial operations. Major Heiniger has a rare combination of intelligence, patience, common sense and a sharp wit, which contributes to his effectiveness and has created great respect for him within this unit.”



Keith Heiniger, Misty 15, flew 356 combat missions in North and South Vietnam.

There are many things I have forgotten about the bases where we were stationed—like names of friends and classmates in most of the places we lived. What I shall always cherish, however, is the knowledge that I was privileged to see a larger cross-section of life than most people my age. Although I often envied other kids who were able to live their entire lives in one place, I realize, in retrospect, the gift I was given by being exposed at a young age to multi-cultural experiences. I am humbly proud to be related to the valor-rich military community of men and women and their families. — **CHJ**

Wife Peggy (Shipman) Heiniger adds:



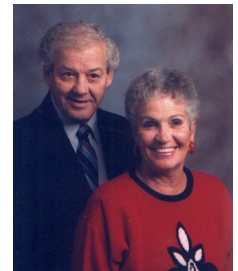
Peggy Heiniger.

I was married 62 years to Misty 15, Colonel Keith Heiniger. We knew each other ever since high school in our hometown in northeast Kansas. Military life was new to me, so our numerous moves over Keith's 23-year career was a surprise that took some adjustment. While the many moves were the downside, the wonderful community of friends we made was worth the inconvenience, upheaval and unsettling transitions.

Keith received orders for Vietnam in 1966. Needless to say, I was not happy to hear this news. We had four daughters, ages 11, 9, 7 and 18 months. Such a question as, "How do I handle this responsibility with him being gone?" was *out* of the question! A military wife is as much a part of the "mission," to some degree, as is her spouse. Family Services provide answers for the myriad questions that arise when moves and relocation require one to at least appear "in control of the situation." Fear became a familiar companion when Keith left for Vietnam. Every time someone came to the door, I was afraid something had happened to my husband.

I think Keith was less prepared for coming home from the war than he was in going to war. The emotional withdrawal and detachment that must prevail in a combat situation is difficult to unpack and put away when reconnecting to the "normal you" that your family expects to greet when you return. Keith was changed by the war. It was hard for us at home to understand that for Keith, "home reality" had to be displaced by "survival reality." Those of us left at home cannot relate to a war-lived reality. We believed our reality was simply to hold his place in the family and for him to resume the "head-of-the-house" he had maintained before he left.

Keith and I enjoyed wonderful years of retirement in spite of war-related health challenges. Managing physical discomforts related to "the mission" and health challenges resulting from exposure to Agent Orange (from which he eventually died) did not deter him from enjoying an active community life. Keith would be the first to express sincere gratitude for his military service. I am proud of the strength of character and "can do" attitude that we embraced as a military family. It was always our hope that America recognizes the risks and gallantry that our military men and women demonstrate daily to secure the abundance and freedoms we enjoy. ■ — **PH**



Keith & Peggy in 2008.

A Good Wingman

By Jim Serrill

The Commander and the Ops Officer of the 510th TFS at Bien Hoa both had a military vehicle for transportation between the squadron hootch and the flight line. It was too far and way too hot to walk, so most of us bought 90 CC Honda motorcycles (called *Nit Nois*).

The custom was for departing jocks to sell theirs, without profit, to the new guys. The *Nit Nois* worked great for the 0330, 0600, etc. mission briefings and late night returns from the O' Club. For squadron events like the going-away parties, it was not uncommon to see a mass formation of *Nit Nois* on the streets and taxiways.

On one such occasion, there was a mandatory briefing and "pre-party lubrication" at 1800 in the squadron bar, in party suits, followed by a mass *Nit Noi* formation departure at 1855 with a 1900 TOT at the O' Club. We formed up in the parking lot. Tommy Thompson was Lead and I was about number 16, way out on the left wing. The formation (an inverted V or wedge) looked good as we departed the squadron parking lot, turned left onto Main Street, made another left onto the taxiway, and a final left turn into the O' Club parking lot. The turn onto the taxiway was a little tight and the only way I could maintain position was to go through the *klong* (a drainage ditch filled with nasty, putrid water). My *Nit Noi* sputtered a bit in the deepest part, but like a good wingman, I maintained perfect position as I scrambled up the far bank and back onto the taxiway. We arrived at the O' Club at the prescribed TOT and began a standard-issue Going-Away Party, including at least one bottle of Mateus Rose wine each, which, at \$1.60 a bottle, was the best I ever tasted.

At the debriefing, back at the squadron bar, all agreed it was a good mission, and while I never mentioned the tight turn to Lead, that party suit never fit right again after its *klong* water "rinsing." ■

P.S. I retired from the Air Force as a Colonel flying multi-engine, multi-crew F-4Es and -Gs. But to this day, I still live by the attitude, disciple, confidence and skills learned as a wingman from great single-seat, single-engine fighter pilots like Al Bartels, Tommy Thompson, Bruce Gold and Jack Doub. ■ — JS

“In a Nutshell Story” 1

After reading I-39’s “More KB-50J Refueling Reflections” by George Goodall, **Hal Hermes** recalled a second-hand KB-50 refueling short story circulating among members of his first line fighter squadron, the 522nd “Fireballs”, Cannon AFB, NM, in the fall of 1962. The story features Chuck Bradley at a time before Hal’s arrival but he swears this is a true tale ... told as accurately as he can remember. **Ed.**

Chuck was on a routine KB-50 refueling mission in the local area. All was going as planned until the refueling pre-contact phase when, bobbing and weaving at just above stall speed, Chuck somehow managed to get the KB refueling hose lodged under his right wing slat. Numerous and futile attempts to break the hose free instead resulted in cutting it clean through, leaving a few yards of hose (basket attached) along for the ride back to Cannon. Chuck, adding a few knots on final for good measure, landed there without incident. But for the KB crew, however, a follow-on incident was in store.

It seemed that the KB’s hose take-up system malfunctioned, and the severed hose, spewing jet fuel, retracted into the wing. Fire ensued. Bailouts followed. Scratch one KB-50! The F-100 involved, tail number 56-3140, soon bore a KB-50 silhouette just under the left canopy rail. Many years later ol’ 140 was seen on the ramp of the Ohio ANG, still sporting the KB-50 “kill” emblem. — **Hal** ■



Magnifier please. Silhouette is just above R in “AIR.”

“In a Nutshell Story” 2

This Tale from **Rusty Gideon**: “I understand that once two similar SYC claims have been accepted, no more will be considered. In the latest issue, I noticed the line on page 11 about Bob Hires and Bill McCollum being the ‘Only Hun pilots to nearly shoot themselves down while strafing,’ and I have a story much like Hires’. I’m not staking a claim; just adding a story for your interest.” And interested we are! **Ed.**

It happened at Gila Bend when I was in Les Leavoy’s CCTS in early 1968. It was on probably my first solo strafe mission. I was very careful not to foul, due to dire warnings about the danger and that one could be fouled off the range which was a bit embarrassing. So, after a pass, I was in a left climbing turn 1/2 way back up to downwind when the right quarter panel erupted like a gun shot. It is a two-ply panel, and the inner part completely shattered with tiny particles of safety glass which peppered the cockpit. It gave my front side a full shot of glass. At that time, I wore sunglasses and did not usually lower the clear visor in my helmet. My sun glasses were scratched in several places and my face was pocked with many little bloody spots. After that episode, you can bet I always used a visor, day or night.

The outer panel stayed intact with only one mark where the round hit, and there was no other aircraft damage. With an abundance of caution, I landed at the Gila Bend Aux Field, which was only a couple miles away, and got a jeep ride back to Luke. Of course the instructors were ready to jump me for fouling, but happily gun camera film proved that I did not even get close to the foul line. So the incident was immediately forgotten. If you have ever seen videos of tracer round strafing at night, you wouldn’t believe how the sky is filled with rounds going up and down, and it is not surprising at all that I ran into a round falling back down. And furthermore, it’s amazing that it doesn’t happen much more often during strafing. — **Cheers, Rusty** ■



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

<i>Emil Buran</i> RIP Date Unknown ???	<i>David R. Basinger</i> October 13, 2015	<i>Harvey L. Kimsey</i> March 19, 2017	<i>Sheila Field</i> January 4, 2018
<i>Frank L. Gailer, Jr.</i> September 6, 2018	<i>Leon K. Hofford</i> December 10, 2018	<i>Edward Erick Sandelius</i> January 13, 2019	<i>John C. Bartholf</i> January 18, 2019
<i>Donald F. Crane</i> February 22, 2019	<i>William "Whiskey Bill" Weiger</i> February 25, 2019	<i>James "Jim" Pollak</i> March 26, 2019	<i>Robert "Bob" LeFevre Hutten</i> April 6, 2019
<i>George John Forster</i> April 27, 2019	<i>Roger Dana Root</i> May 4, 2019	<i>Lloyd Richard Laycook</i> May 30, 2019	<i>Miles Durfey</i> June 7, 2019

No further explanation needed: Scaring the daylight out of my passenger.

Now THAT'S a Compressor Stall!

By Larry Van Pelt

How do we adequately describe a jet engine compressor stall, particularly in an F-100? I'll try.

A compressor stall happens when the airflow into the engine is distorted or woefully inadequate for the engine's demands. When this happens fuel is belched into the wrong places and dramatic explosions ensue. The effect is kind of like a backfire in a car engine—but on a scale beyond belief.

The “Hun, with its long engine air intake right under the pilot's feet, seemed to be the most prone jet to elicit this phenomenon. The result was a huge jolt—an experience the pilot never forgets. Flames shoot out the nose—and many would say, even the slightest of other openings around the engine. The most attention-getting part of it was that huge explosive noise—right under our feet, which literally flew off the floor.

The first time I experienced this shocking aircraft behavior the instructor pilot in the back seat just laughed, then told me to reduce power, and the compressor stall immediately stopped. He assured me that this was not an uncommon experience in the F-100! “No biggie.” *Oh yeah?* Just completely disruptive to normal thought processes, that's all!

I never really got used to it, but I did learn to laugh when it occurred (laughter has a way of eliminating terror I'm told). Hun pilots, with their typical fighter pilot humor, often joked about all the hair-tingling compressor stalls they had experienced or witnessed in others planes. I eventually learned to anticipate, and thus prevent compressor stalls. They were most likely to happen when I was lighting the afterburner while flying at fairly low speeds.

Now that I've explained and described them, let me tell you about a really memorable one that occurred while I was flying a photo chase mission at Eglin Air Force Base. I was flying an F-model, (the two seat F-100, which had a much longer fuselage than the single-seat version and therefore was more prone to compressor stalls).

The mission was to accompany an F-4 on an air-to-ground missile test and photograph the results. We made several dry runs before the F-4 actually released the missile. The profile was basically a racetrack pattern climbing up to about 10,000 feet, reversing course, and then descending toward the target at the fairly slow speed needed to gather as much data as possible in the dive. The performance difference between an F-100 and an F-4 was *very* significant. I had to use afterburner to stay with the F-4 during his climb, and then use idle power and even speed brakes to keep from passing him in his slow speed descent. During the turnaround to begin the climb again, the F-4 would push up and get massive power derived from his two engines and forcing me to light the afterburner at the beginning of every climb while I was still at a relatively slow speed.

Now comes the fun part of this tale. Brian, the airborne photographer in my back seat was brand new, a young airman, just out of technical training. *He had never flown in a jet fighter before.* He did have a great attitude though, and was eager to go fly. I gave him a very thorough preflight briefing on all the emergency procedures, reassuring him of the wonderful flying experience he was about to receive. But it never occurred to me to brief him on compressor stalls.

Despite what I said above, compressor stalls were very rare and it had been a long time since I'd last experienced one. Without any advanced warning, Brian was about to get the surprise of a lifetime.

We were nearly through with the mission, and I'd used the afterburner several times, with no untoward results. *And then it happened*—a monstrous explosive compressor stall—*kerbang, kerbang, kerbang!* One of the “best” ones I'd ever experienced. “*Now that's a compressor stall*” I thought. But, “*OH NO – what must my photographer be thinking?*” His first jet plane ride and the airplane blows up! I glanced in the mirror and saw his eyes were as big as silver dollars. I needed to quickly alert him: “*It's okay, it's okay,*” to reassure him before he could take any drastic action (like ejecting!). But I was temporarily incapacitated—with laughter! Laughter so hard I couldn't stop! What a time for fighter pilot humor to appear: with a passenger overcome by the frightful unknown, my momentary inappropriate levity lasted much too long. After a few seconds though, I was finally able to shout “*IT'S OKAY – IT'S OKAY!*” He managed to utter a few squeaky words, enough to indicate to me that his terror was under control.

I uttered a gentle “*whew*” and then attempted to refocus his attention on the mission at hand. I kept my eye on the mirror, and listened as Brian's breathing rate gradually slowed back down. The next pass was the live missile shot. Much to his credit, Brian was able to overcome the unnerving engine compressor explosion experience he'd just experienced and get some terrific photos. A job well done. I was impressed.

After we landed, I told Brian, “*I'm sure glad you didn't think we had blown up and then ejected yourself from a good airplane.*” He told me he *had* thought about it, and then added, “*I didn't know what happened—but I wasn't going to eject unless you did.*”

Brian was a good man. He trusted his pilot—and he could think with his feet off the floor! ■.



Larry Van Pelt
In Younger Days.

Sam Gore's Caterpillar Club Story

It's been 53 years since I "punched out" of F-100D 179 over the desert in Libya, and I should not be writing this account. I should be stone cold irrevocably dead. It was the summer of 1958 and I was a pilot in the 494th TFS, 48th TFW



based at Chaumont, France, and was TDY to Wheelus AB, near Tripoli, Libya. Out in the Sahara desert, there was a practice gunnery and bombing range about 20 NM away. The primary mission of the 48th was to deliver nuclear weapons to targets in Russia and its satellites in event of war. So, we spent a lot of time in Libya practicing the maneuver that fighter pilots used to deliver a nuke. This maneuver consisted of a high speed run-in at low level, then a 4G pull-up over the target. This was supposed to fling the nuke to an altitude high enough so that by the time the bomb fell back to earth and detonated, the pilot would have had time to escape the blast.



Before move to "the Heath"!

On this particular day, I was one of three aircraft practicing these maneuvers on the range at Wheelus using four 25-LB practice bombs. My first three deliveries were good enough to complete my re-qualification, so I decided to use my remaining bomb to do the maneuver without using the afterburner at pull-up. I added another 25 KTs to the run-in speed to do this. I was about 1/3 of the way down the run-in line at 100 FT above the ground with 525 KTs indicated airspeed and the throttle at full military power when it happened.

There was a loud bang (much louder than any compressor stall), all warning lights came on, and dense smoke filled the cockpit. All of this occurred in about 2 seconds and I had no idea what had happened. Visibility in the cockpit was zero and aircraft attitude unknown, so with no hesitation I made the decision to eject. With my left hand, I raised the armrest, squeezed the trigger and was out of there. I probably followed the departing canopy by about 1 second. When the ejection seat fired, I still had both feet on the rudder pedals and one hand on the stick and hadn't assumed the proper ejection position, so when my head popped up into that 525 KT slip stream, it was lights out for me.

The accident investigators found my busted helmet in the desert and theorized it split when the slipstream slammed my head against the headrest. When I regained enough consciousness to somewhat function, I found myself being dragged slowly across the desert by what was left of my chute, and even though I was only half conscious, I managed to release one shoulder strap to collapse the chute. I was told that some chute panels were damaged or missing and many had burn marks caused by friction from the risers when the chute deployed. I have always wondered what my rate of descent must have been when I hit the ground. After I got the chute deflated, I must have passed out again for a while, because the next thing I remember was a chopper being there and medics lifting me onto a stretcher. I don't remember the chopper flight to the base hospital at Wheelus where I spent the night under observation. An exam the next day revealed only a fractured coccyx and I was released.



"Hitting the silk!"

I was back flying in a few days, although I had a sore butt for a month. I still can't believe that I had no serious injuries. My wife, however, maintains that the severe blow to my head knocked me senseless and that I have not yet recovered. I was lucky in that I had all my equipment set up correctly.

My chute had just been repacked and re-fitted, my visor was down, D-ring lanyard disconnected, etc. and against all odds, everything worked exactly like it was supposed to work. The accident investigation determined that the explosion was caused by the #1 turbine wheel disintegrating and causing catastrophic failures of everything aft of it.

I stayed in the AF for another 8 years, flew 160 Nam missions in the F-5, then resigned and flew 23 years for Eastern Airlines. When Eastern went under, I completed crop dusters school at Ag-Flight in Bainbridge, GA, and dusted for a short while, then spent 10 summers bush-flying and commercial salmon fishing in Alaska. I still practice short field landings in my C-180 with the big bush tires in the pasture behind my house. One might say that at my age (born in 1933), I am still trying to kill myself by lethal airplane. If I am lucky, one of these days I'll succeed. — **Sam Gore**

Original version was published by The Union Democrat, Sonora, CA, on May 13, 2016. — Ed.

This late-comer is from once-a-TACO, Allan "Elliot"

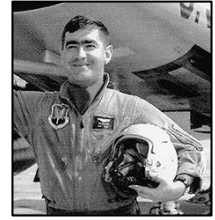


This door mat might well be applicable to most SSS pilots!

614th TFS Deployment to Vietnam - Gulf of Tonkin, August 1964

By Jim Brasier

Chronologically, Jim's Part 1 of 3 installments began with his somewhat complicated situation within the 401st TFW after he graduated from the USAF Fighter Weapons Instructor Course (FWIC) at Nellis. Bottom line was that, as a newlywed and completion of FWIC, he had been reassigned to the 614th TFS, and two weeks after settling into married life and a new squadron, the 614th was alerted as one of the first Hun units to deploy in response to the 4 August 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Incident! Thereafter, Jim's narrative continues his and his squadron's adventures as they hopscotch their way as far as getting to Clark AB in three legs via Hickam AFB, Hawaii, Anderson AP, Guam, and finally Clark. Once there, they encountered the familiar "hurry up and wait" phenomena—fortunately the pain only lasted for a week. And that's where Part 2 begins. Read on. —Ed.



Jim Brasier

Leg Four: Clark AB to Da Nang AB



614th Lucky Devils

The 614th TFS had been at Clark AB for about a week when we got the word to launch 8 F-100s to Da Nang AB, Vietnam, some 700 miles west of Clark. The Squadron Commander naturally led the flight and briefed that because we were going to be the first ever F-100s to land at Da Nang, we would fly down the runway in an 8-ship formation as a show of force. The flight approached Da Nang from the south, heading north in two four-ship fingertip formations, the second one trailing the lead four-ship. The Boss flew so low down the Da Nang runway that the trailing four ship had to fly up into the lead formation's wake turbulence to avoid scraping Blue Four (of the trailing formation) off on the jungle tree tops. This low level buzz job created much angst in the trailing formation, and gave cause to all of us to ponder if we were going to arrive at Da Nang in a graceful fashion ... or in a ball of flame.

As we crossed the airfield, I was high enough in the trailing formation to be looking down onto the airfield, and lest my eyes deceived me, I spotted several fighter jets in the revetments that, I swear, looked just like F-100s. "No way? It couldn't be." (Remember: We had been told at Clark our 8-ship of F-100s would be the first ever American jet fighters to land at Da Nang AB.) We pitched up in sequence from our respective formations into the traffic pattern, and twelve days, 22 flying hours and 8,883 great circle air miles after leaving England AFB, Louisiana, we finally were on the ground in Vietnam!

As we taxied in, my eyes had not deceived me. Sure enough, those were F-100s I saw with TAC emblems on their vertical stabilizers sitting in the revetments, but where did they come from? Pulling into the parking ramp, I began to recognize familiar faces and wing patches on flying suits, not from our squadron, but from our sister squadron the 615th TFS from England AFB.

I had been TDY to Cigli, Turkey, and to Nellis AFB, Nevada, for the last ten months, so I had no idea where the 401st TFW fighter squadrons had been deployed. These constant deployments were typical for a Tactical Fighter Wing in the States. It was also not uncommon not to see another close friend fighter pilot from your own wing for more than a year unless you happened to cross paths with them when you were going somewhere, and they were coming home, or vice-versa. That was the life of a TAC fighter pilot during the 1960s. As it turned out, the 615th TFS had deployed the squadron to Da Nang AB and had been there since June 1964, doing some bombing missions up in the Plain De Jars in Laos.



615th Ramp at Da Nang circa August 1964, when the first eight 614th Huns got there ... thinking THEY would be the first American jets to land at that Air Base.

Additional Duty Already—Yuck!

As I was unpacking my B-4 bag from the ammo bay, I was given verbal orders by the Ops Officer, Major Thomas "Buck" Barker, to "Get on that Gooney Bird to Tan Son Nhut AB, Saigon, and relieve Captain Gordon Williams at (something called) the 2nd ADVON." Before I could say "WTFO," I was strapping myself into the canvas seat of a C-47, and the next thing I knew, I was bouncing south to Saigon, wondering what wartime priority would whisk a new F-100 Weapons School graduate away from his squadron and from the "pointed end of the sword" of war to the "hilt end of the sword" at 2nd ADVON Headquarters. (2nd ADVON was the precursor to what would become the 7th Air Force.)



Gooney Bird from Da Nang to Tan Son Nhut.

As the door of the C-47 was opened, the smell of Saigon whiffed into the cabin of the old Gooney Bird. (It reminded me of the same unique odor I smelled three years ago when passing through Tan Son Nhut on a C-130 on our way back from Bangkok to Clark.) Standing on the ramp was my friend Gordy Williams with his bag packed. Gordy had preceded me at the FWIC at Nellis AFB, and I had not seen him for about a year (although we had shared the same bachelor rental houses at both Clark AB and Alexandria, LA, before I got married). After a quick hand shake greeting on the Tan Son Nhut tarmac, I asked, "Gordy, what the hell are we doing here?"

My good friend replied, "The staff folks at 2nd ADVON have been sent here TDY for 90 days, and most have never seen a jet fighter before, let alone an F-100. Many are slick wing majors and lieutenant colonels and don't have a clue how jet fighters operate. However, they are tasked to write and send out the frag orders to the fighter units. Your job is to check the frag orders and make sure they make sense before they're sent out. That will take you about 30 minutes a day."

That was the extent of my in-briefing to my job at 2nd ADVON Headquarters. With those parting words, my friend threw his bag into the open door of the Gooney Bird, climbed up the ladder and shortly thereafter was headed north to rejoin the 615th TFS which was scheduled to leave Da Nang the next day.

YGBSM ... in Spades

My duty at 2nd ADVON was everything Gordy said it would be. The first part of the morning was spent plugging into the outgoing frag orders such essential details as radio contact frequencies, rendezvous points, tanker call signs, and the types and number of weapons to be carried on F-100s. The rest of the morning was spent participating as the F-100 representative member in a planning session on "How to win the war in Vietnam in 30 days." When our plan was submitted to the SAC colonel heading the planning committee, it was summarily rejected and the colonel stated that we could not use napalm in our planning. This led to us going back to the planning table the next day, with even more restrictions and tasking imposed at the planning session now working on "How to win the war in Vietnam in 60 days," only to be again rejected by the colonel. The last plan I worked on was "How to win the war in Vietnam in 180 days." History reflects that plan didn't pass muster with the SAC colonel either.

Luckily, I was "rescued" from 2nd ADVON, after being there for only five days, because for some reason I don't recall, but welcomed, the Squadron (614th) called and ordered me to return to Da Nang AB, post haste!

But before I departed Saigon, I contacted a former F-100 squadron pilot, R.Y. Costain, who was flying A-1s at Bien Hoa AB, just outside Saigon. We rendezvoused in downtown Saigon at the Rex Hotel's famous rooftop bar. The situation was surreal! As we sat in cushioned chairs sipping martinis, from our rooftop vantage point we were actually able to watch bombs being dropped by South Vietnamese fighters on the outskirts of the city. Ringside war seats!

The next day, I hitched a ride back to Da Nang on a C-123. (I used to fly copilot on a Provider to get extra flying time during my first short-lived F-100 fighter assignment with the 309th TFS, 31st TFW, at Turner AFB, Albany, Georgia, in 1958. As a second lieutenant in a fighter squadron, in addition to flying the F-100, I was also flying the T-33, L-20, and C-45 out of Base Ops to build my flying time. How the Air Force has changed since then. These days a fighter pilot is only allowed to be checked out for flight *in one airplane.*)



The famous Rex Hotel with its celebrated rooftop watering hole, circa 1964.

Into the Shooting War

My local F-100 orientation flight out of Da Nang was on the wing of Captain Don Morrison from the 615th TFS who had remained behind to provide our squadron pilots with checkouts of the local area. We took off in a two-ship and flew over the Special Forces camp in the A Shau Valley at about 12,000 feet. Looking down, I saw what looked like machine gun flashes coming from the trees on the sides of the valley with the attendant white vapor trails heading our way. I had never seen live machine gun fire before, so I keyed the mike and said, "Ah, Ah, Ah Lead, I think they're shooting at us. Let's get 'em!" voiced with all the wavering anxious enthusiasm of an FNG's first time being shot at.



The infamous A Shau Valley in 1964. Not a great place for an orientation flight.

I felt kind of sheepish in a way: As a recent FWIC graduate, (which Nellis AFB touts as the "Ph.D. of the fighter business," and now being the 614th TFS Weapons Officer in a combat zone), I had never been exposed to gunfire before now! This was the first time, some seven years into my fighter pilot career, that I had been shot at. Don calmly replied, "Those are 50 calibers and they can't reach

us. By the way, the Rules of Engagement (ROE) are that we are not allowed to shoot back in South Vietnam anyway, but once we get over into Laos then we can shoot back."

With that strange and puzzling bit of ROE tucked into my memory, we flew into Laos for a quick look see. No one shot at us, so we RTB to Da Nang. Before landing, I had concluded that with my 5-day exposure to 2nd ADVON and the ROE Don mentioned, this was not going to be a short war, compared to WWII and Korea. The next event for the 614th TFS at Da Nang only further reinforced that prophetic notion.

(Note: Before leaving home base, the 614th TFS had pre-planned targets in North Vietnam in a first strike scenario. One of the pre-planned targets was Gia Lam airfield in Hanoi, approximately 375 miles north of Da Nang. The weapons load was: 2xGAM-83 Bullpup air-to-ground missiles on the inboard pylons, 2x335 gal. external fuel tanks on the intermediate stations and 2xCBU-2 on the outboard stations. The planned tactic was to swoop in at high speed and low level, to avoid any SAMs, expend the CBU-2 suppressing the AAA guns around the airfield, climb to around 15,000 feet, aim at the target in a 30 degree dive angle, launch one of the Bullpups, hand guide it from the F-100 cockpit in a steady predictable track until missile impact, climb back up to altitude and launch the remaining Bullpup in the same fashion, then RTB to Da Nang.

(This Bullpup delivery method was every North Vietnamese seven-level AAA gunner's equivalent to a wet dream. I can see it now, "Gomers let's review: the Yankee Pirate fighter airplane flies a predictable track and the missile leaves a white smoke trail back to the fighter. Are there any questions?"

("No comrade, I think I can handle that. Extra ration of rice for whoever shoots down a jet, however, only half ration for downing one firing a Bullpup." Additionally, no one in the squadron had ever expended real CBU-2 before, let alone seen one. Later we discovered some bomblets tended to detonate prematurely as they came out of the launcher putting holes in the Hun's aft fuselage.)

SNAFU after SNAFU after SNAFU

Thus, started one of biggest three day fiascos I have ever witnessed in my military career. Squadron pilots were notified in the afternoon to go to bed and get some sleep because the primary pre-planned target mission to Hanoi would take-off at O' Dark thirty for a pre-dawn strike the next morning. The next morning, we reported to the flight line and our eight F-100s were loaded as planned with 4xM-117, 750-pound low drag bombs. It was still dark when we climbed the ladder into the cockpit, started engines, and trundled to the runway arming area. We waited in the arming area for take-off clearance, but it never came. We were told the mission was cancelled. The sun was just coming up as we taxied back to the ramp.

That same afternoon we again were told to get some sleep preparing for another pre-dawn launch up North. The new target was a barracks near Vinh and the weapons load would be napalm.



The GAM 83 and other "exotic" (at the time) munitions were all "on the table," but for ROE quirkiness.



The familiar M-117 750 LB. slick bomb.



M-116 750-LB. un-finned napalm cans stockpiled, waiting to be fragged.

The next morning when I got to my airplane there was one each M-116, 750-pound un-finned napalm can on each inboard pylon, 2x335 gallon fuel tanks on the intermediate wing stations, one M-116 napalm can on the right outboard pylon and what looked like a baggage pod hanging on the left outboard pylon. I asked the two-stripper munitions guy, "What the hell is that?" He said they ran out of the M-116 un-finned napalm cans so they scrounged some 500-pound napalm cans that go on the Vietnamese A-1s to complete the loads on the Hun.

There wasn't time to download the itinerant foreign napalm can, but my preflight determined that the left inboard pylon ejector mechanism was not set correctly and needed to be reset. I asked the munitions two stripper to correct it. He stuck his screw driver into the pylon hole to change the setting and "Jesus, Mary and Joseph" the napalm can fell about four feet to the ground with a crunching sound.

Full discloser: I believe I jumped ten feet in one single bound away from the airplane. The "flee" senses of my entire body automatically triggered before I could utter what I truly thought at the time would be my last words. To my great surprise there was no "Whoof" and ensuing inferno. I hailed the fire truck nearby and when I looked back towards the airplane, the two-striper was down on his knees unscrewing the front white phosphorous plastic igniter fuse from the 750-pound napalm can to de-arm it. I yelled for him to get away from the plane, but he calmly continued his work. After

removing the front igniter, he proceeded to remove the rear white phosphorous igniter as if nothing had happened out of the ordinary. Fortunately, the front and rear white phosphorous fuses had not ruptured. If either white phosphorous fuse had ignited, the 500 pounds of jellied napalm would have turned the entire ramp section into a fiery inferno because all eight F-100s were loaded with four napalm cans each and were dutifully marshaled right next to each other on an open ramp ready for inspection, ala Pearl Harbor fashion.

The mission up North was again cancelled before we got to engine start. As I dismounted from my Hun, I asked Airman Folger, the munitions two striper, why he didn't run like hell when the napalm can fell to the ground and he said, "I haven't had any sleep in 72 hours and I didn't care whether it blew or not. We've been loading and unloading munitions steady for more than three days." Airman Folger was one of those unsung heroes who never got the proper recognition for the action he took, because of the demanding tempo of the ongoing weapons changes going on at Da Nang.

The pilots were told the mission had been cancelled, not because of the fact we had run out of the properly certified napalm canisters for the F-100. Rather, it was cancelled because of the ROE. Napalm was not allowed to be expended, even in North Vietnam. Having recently been witness to the foibles of 2nd ADVON, my suspicion was that they were somehow involved. Humm ... ?

That afternoon, the 614th TFS pilots were told the same old drill: Go to bed, get some sleep, etc., etc. Another mission up North was scheduled for the next day. This time a higher Headquarters, apparently higher than the last two higher headquarters, said we could only drop conventional bombs up North, so load 4X M-117, 750-pound low drag bombs for the mission. Rumor had it this ROE came down from PACAF HQ, or even higher.

Early next morning when we reported to our airplanes, all eight F-100s were loaded with 4xM-117s each. However, the munitions troops looked like zombies. They had now been working 4 days/nights straight, with no letup. However, before it was time to start engines, again the mission up North was abruptly cancelled, with no further explanation. Thus ended one of the biggest fiascos I have ever witnessed in my entire military aviation career. ■



The SNAFUs turned the munition troops into exhausted-looking zombies

To be continued in Issue 41

Picture Caption Contest – Go Consult Your Funny Bone



Winning Caption for I-39
"Nice going #4, you just dropped your travel pod"
 Submitted by Keith "Herb" Acheson, Iowa ANG



*A jalopy even older than the Hun in the 1950s.
 Ok, have at it with your suggested caption.
 Mine? "A race? Do you know about my burner?"*

OTHER GREAT CAPTIONS SUBMITTED FOR ISSUE 39 PICTURE

"Ok, Team VC, Can One of You Guys catch one of these?" Submitted by Bill McCollum

Others submitted by "Herb" Acheson

"Hold my beer. Just watch this idea for style points."

"I said, this jet is fickle, I did not say 'pickle'!"

"The boss is gonna be very impressed. I hope that was the target!"

SOME GOOD RESPONSES THIS TIME. NOW YOU GET ON THE STICK AND KEEP THOSE CAPTIONS COMING!

Former CEO "Hoppy" Hopkins suggested this Caption Contest. The challenge is still the same: Put your funny bone to work and produce a caption! The pic needing a caption is above on the right.

SSS & The Intake *Functional Contacts*

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Hero Pix, Hun Photo Archives, Questions/Help: Shaun Ryan, f100pilot@gmail.com, (520) 907-9775 (Photo Editor).

Call contacts for their snail mail address or mail your material to **Contact's Name, c/o Super Sabre Society, P.O. Box 341837, Lakeway, TX 78734.**

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

Reminder

SSS Membership Comes With Annual Dues of \$35 (going to \$50 next year) **Due On 1 January and Accepted Early!**

If You're Among Those **Still in Arrears, as of Right Now,** Why Don't You Take Care of Business **Now** and Not Still Be Among the **Dues Not Paid for 2019** Members Come the Fall Issue of *The Intake* and **At Risk of Suspension!!!**

Why not save a Forever Stamp by paying online at our website, or send a check to the address at the bottom of page 2!

Laughter-Silvered Wings

NOTAM: This is the 23rd installment of the LSW "mini-department," featuring short, humorous "fun in the Hun" anecdotes. We all have funny yarns to share, so please get on the stick and send yours to LSW Czar and Editor John J. Schulz, jjschulz@bu.edu, or to Intake Publisher Medley Gatewood, rgatewood@comcast.net.

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12 Hours Twixt Bottle and Throttle: Lesson Learned the Hard Way By Jim Serrill

About 0130 one night in 1969 at Bien Hoa, I closed out several hours of drinking in the 510th TFS Buzzard Bar. I had to stop and get some sleep and figured I would be awake and sober for my 0700 Alert Pad duty. But at 0300, someone pounded on my door and told me to report to the Alert Pad because the night shift had already flown the max and needed replacing.

I pre-flighted the jet and went in to get some sleep. But the dreaded klaxon sounded a couple of hours later, scrambling Buzzard 1 and 2. I knew I wasn't completely "with it," but I jumped in the jet anyway, selected 100% oxygen and taxied.

I felt a big flash of nausea in the arming area but stifled it because I knew I'd never live it down if I barfed over the cockpit rail prior to take-off.

The flight to the target area etc. was routine. But about 1.6 Gs into the standard "4 G's in 2 seconds" recovery from my first napalm pass, the whole world went gray. I could feel the Gs, could hear the airplane and could sense movement, but I couldn't see anything! Nothing!

After several seconds I finally relaxed enough G's to regain my vision, which included lots of spots and stars, then executed a nose high, slow airspeed unusual attitude recovery.

On downwind, I zipped up my G Suit, sucked up a lot of oxygen and on the next two passes, did exaggerated "G maneuvers" on the recovery. My vision narrowed and I saw stars, but I didn't "gray out" as badly.

From then on, I was a firm believer in "12-hours Bottle to Throttle!" ■

— JS

o-0-o

Ok folks, I'm very low on "LSW supply" so it *really* is time to write and send those funny stories you tell over beers with the guys. — Ed.

"Do You Remember?"

Nostalgia by Harv Damschen
As the Hun gave way to the SLUF.
One liners revived by Hal Hermes.

The bleed air door and saddle
back checks.

Afterburners and eyelids.

Heading, time and distance.

How to dive bomb manually BH
(before HUD).

Shooting the DART, Towing and
launching it.

Listening to the ADF instead of
your IP.

All for now ... more later!



Publisher's Parting Post

Hope you enjoyed the Reunion 2019-After Action Report; the 7th as I count, whether you were there or not! And how about that reunion Banner/Logo, the second created by MB Barrett, a key member of our Legacy Website Development Team who was at the reunion!



*MB was there, meeting folks needing SSS Bios.
*** Have a nice summertime! Pub Med ****



George Kinnison (the "Go-to-Guy") tells us this 29" x 26" (when framed) painting of 56-5728 was accomplished by "Gene" Clay (who worked for George at NAA) while the bird was on the flight line waiting for pick-up by the Thunderbirds. It was the first of nine C-models procured for the team, and George made the maiden flight of 5728. The painting hung outside the Superintendent of Manufacturing's office for several years until the F-100 production terminated. George then liberated his 5728 painting, gave it to his son Gary, and it now resides in the Kinnison's home in Fallbrook, CA.