



# The Stratojet Newsletter

Volume 10

April 2001

## Early Cold War Overflight Flyers Honored

A symposium to honor the early Cold War flyers was held from February 22-23 at the Tighe Auditorium of the Defense Intelligence Agency at Bolling AFB, Washington, DC. Sponsors of the symposium were the United States Air Force, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, Air Force Historical Foundation, Korean War Commemoration Committee, Boeing Company and Eastman Kodak Company. Two hundred and fifty people attended the symposium, among them were thirty flyers who were involved in the overflights. Health and other personal problems prevented many other flyers from attending. As Cargill Hall, the National Reconnaissance Office historian, stated, "We have to honor these heroic airman while they are still around. Many of the flyers are WW II veterans and are getting up in years."

The period that the overflights covered was from the end of World War II until 1956. The advent of the U-2 obviated the need for the other more vulnerable reconnaissance aircraft to overfly the Soviet Union. However a variety of aircraft were still engaged in peripheral flights along the borders of the Communist bloc nations. The aircraft involved during this period included the RB-45C, RB-57A/F, RF-86 A/F, RF-80, RF-100, RB-50 and the RB-47E/H. The symposium covered the various reconnaissance programs geographically: Europe, the Far East, and the Arctic.

The symposium opened with the reading of a letter that Donald H. Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense, sent a letter to the to the veterans of the overflights. In the letter he recognized the role of their heroic efforts and expressed his thanks to them on behalf of the the American people. The letter in full is found at the end of this article.

One of the early speakers at the symposium was General Andrew Goodpaster, USA (Ret.), who served as the Defense Liason Officer and Staff Secretary to President Eisenhower from 1954 to 1961. Following his address General Goodpaster answered a question addressed to him, "As to whether, General LeMay was a loose cannon who ordered the overflights of the Soviet Union on his own without the approval of the President?" as alleged by Paul Lashmar the author of *Spy Flights of the Cold War* and by Richard Rhodes the author of *Dark Sun*. General Goodpaster stated unequivocally that, "LeMay never acted on his own and was primarily interested in operational readiness."

All overflights required presidential approval. To preclude possible leaks very little was put in writing; a per

sonal code was developed among the small number of participants involved in the approval process.

The theatre commander or CINC/SAC would submit a request for approval to conduct a flight to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Twining, who in turn would submit it the Chairman of the JCS, Admiral Radford. Admiral Radford would then coordinate the request with the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, and then take it to the president for his approval. The Secretary of State might on occasions coordinate with an ambassador to a foreign nation if the situation warranted it.

M/G Foster Smith, USAF (Ret.), the former ACOS for Plans and Ops at the Air Staff in 1974 stated that we owe a great debt to General Goodpaster for his support of the Air Force's



The front face of the medallion presented to all attendees. The American/British flags and RB-45C represent the joint Anglo American overflight program.

reconnaissance program.

Former Secretary of the Air Force, Thomas Reed, and M/G Roadarmer, USAF (Ret.), former Director of Reconnaissance and Electronic Warfare on the Air Staff followed with their introductory remarks. After which presentations were made that covered RB-45C, RF-86F and RB-57A overflights over China and the Soviet Union in the Far East. The Korean War was the stimulus behind these flights. The most colorful of the speakers was M/G Mel Vojvodich, USAF (Ret.) who flew RF-80s over Manchuria and was instrumental in modifying the F-86 in Korea to carry cameras. He flew as far north as Mukden, Manchuria and was awarded the Silver Star.

Cont. pg.3 Col.1

**Editorial Corrections**

The author of the article, "**The War Years, Local Vet Recalls early 50s**" was Bob Lamb.

Bob Robbins name was left off the caption under the picture, "The First and the Last."

The Boeing test pilot was Jim Fraser and not Jim Fisher.

The correct e-mail address for sigmund alexander is sigmund.alexander@worldnet.att.net

From Max Moore clarification on the Major Palm memorial. Olmstead and McKone survived the downing of Palm's aircraft. They were repatriated in January 1961.

**Bulletin Board**

Assistance in locating **Bob Bailey**, a WB-47 AC, who was stationed with the 53rd WRS at Hunter AFB in 1964. Contact Bob Nobbs 104 Pheasant Ln, Summerville, SC 29485-5122, Tel. 843-874-8953, e-mail: nobr@webtv.net

Assistance in locating **Capt. James C. Wayne, USAF**, Asst. Ops Officer, B-47 pilot, 303rd BW, Hunter AFB, 1955-57. Contact Patrick Wayne, P.O. Box 9000, Forrest City, AR 72336-9000

Assistance in locating **James A. Carr, Bryant Murray, Harvey B. Logan, and Floyd Doss**. Contact Duane Branson, P.O. Box 17477, Munds Park, AZ 86017. Tel. 520-286-1756, e-mail Duane1956@aol.com

Assistance in locating **anyone who served with the 70th SRW from 1950-55**. Contact Col. Jason C. Carlisle 683 Sheridan AV, Chico, CA 95926. Tel. 530-891-5978 e-mail jasonjc@cmc.net

Assistance in locating any **members of the 320th BW (M), March AFB**. Contact Robert N. Pugh, 47534 Frederick Rd, Shelby Twp, MI 48317-2810. E-mail RobtPugh@Flash.Net

Assistance in finding information on **B-47 Reflex operations at Torrejon**. Contact Alex Rodriguez e-mail bpgalo@hotmail.com

Assistance in finding **380th BW patches**. Contact George V. Adams, e-mail 74267.3654@compuserve.com

Assistance in finding **the tail numbers and dates of 55th SRW aircraft that deployed to Brize-Norton from the late 50s to early 60s**. Contact John Roberts e-mail robertsjd@earthlink.net.

Information on a **B-47 crash that occurred on 3 July 1952 from the 306th BW near Myakka, FL. killing all three aboard**. Contact Charles A. Powell, email address cbpowell@mindspring.com

**Thanks**

**Selma Norton** for the movie of the 340th BW flyover to mark General Twining's retirement as Chief of Staff of the Air Force in 1957.

**Bob Nobbs** for his paper clippings on WB-47 operations at Hunter AFB.

**Katherine D. Marks** of the Historical Electronics Museum for the picture of Baltimore harbor as viewed by the APQ-56 side looking radar.

**Tom Gates** for the 1st BS patch

**Charlie Orr** for the 3906th CSG, Sidi Slimane patches

**Jim Cornett** for his *Memories of Plattsburgh*

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**Cont. from pg.1, col.2**

Overflights in the European area followed the Far East presentations. Air Vice Marshal Ron Dick, RAF (Ret.) was the first speaker on European overflights. Marshal Dick read Sqd Ldr. John Crampton's, RAF (Ret.) account of his RB-45C flight into the heart of Russia in 1952. Crampton and two other RB-45Cs were involved in the mission. These flights were extremely dangerous and General Le May personally decorated Crampton and the other crews for their bravery.

Hal Austin followed Marshal Dick with his account of his overflight of the airfields in the northern Soviet Union in May 1954. On display in the auditorium were photographs that Hal Austin's crew had taken on May 8, 1954. This was the first time that Hal had ever seen any of the photos that were taken on that flight.

Hal was followed by Col. Cecil Rigsby, USAF (Ret.) who flew F-100s and M/G Gerald Cooke, USAF (Ret.) who flew RB-57As. They discussed their overflights of the Soviet satellite countries from 1954-58.

The final presentations of the first day were on imagery. Among the presenters was Mr. Dino Brugioni, the famed photo interpreter of the Cuban missile crisis. Mr. Brugioni though retired from the CIA remains active in the field of reconnaissance imagery interpretation. He appears on TV programs and remains busy writing books and articles related to his field of expertise. Mark and I had the pleasure of spending an hour and a half listening to Mr. Brugioni discuss some of the most interesting aspects of his career in Washington including those involving briefing the various presidents.

The final day of the symposium was a continuation of overflight presentations that were flown in both Europe and Asia. Among them were Col. Howard "Sam" Myers, USAF (Ret.) who covered his reconnaissance missions through out the Far East during the Korean War and Lt. Roy Kaden, USAF (Ret.).

Roy Kaden's mission was flown from Thule in 1952 in an RB-50 over Franz Joseph Land. The mission was hampered by clouds and they descended to 2,500 feet to take photographs and make visual observations. They found nothing of military significance on the islands and flew back to Thule where they reported their findings to the intelligence debriefers, who refused to believe that there was nothing on the islands.

The last presentations of the day were on B-47 reconnaissance operations. Little new was revealed in these presentations. However, General Earl O'Loughlin, revealed that the APQ-56 side looking radar equipped RB-47Es were involved in operation *Homerun* and in locating the battleship *Wisconsin* at sea for General LeMay to prove that an aircraft could not only locate but identify a specific naval vessel at sea.

Earlier in the program a statement was made regarding the deepest penetration of the Soviet Arctic by an unknown pilot.

That pilot was later identified as John Lappo.

General Earl O'Loughlin paid one of the highest tributes I have heard an Air Force general give about an Air Force pilot. "John Lappo is one of the finest pilots I have ever known. If there had been a war, you could have relied on John to hit Moscow even if his radar was out." The general then went on to discuss John's coolness under stress. "Returning late from a reconnaissance mission over the Soviet Arctic John was running critically low on fuel. When ground control wanted to launch a tanker, John told them not to. John remained calm and brought the aircraft in and landed his aircraft just as he said he would." The general stated that John now has Parkinsons.

The history office of the NRO revealed that they have six cans of films taken on operation *Homerun* and that in the future photographs taken during the operation may soon be shown for the first time.

The final event at the symposium was held in the Hilton hotel that evening. M/G Glen Shaffer, USAF, the Director of Intelligence, Surveillance, and R, Deputy Chief of Staff, Air and Space Operations of Headquarters Air Force and Mr. David Kier, the Deputy Director of the NRO, paid tribute to the reconnaissance flyers in their addresses to the attendees. Later they both personally presented the recognition medallions to all the flyers. It was heartwarming to see not only wives but children and grand children of some of the flyers at the symposium.

Thanks to Cargill Hall, his wife Shirley, Matt Doering of NRO, and Deane Allen of DIA for their efforts that made the symposium such a success.

**Sigmund "Alex" Alexander**

### **Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld's Message to the Veterans of Cold War Overflights**

It is with great pleasure that I join in honoring the service and bravery you displayed while risking your lives in the earliest and most dangerous skies of the Cold War. In the name of security, the story of your courage has for so long remained behind a veil of secrecy. In the name of history, America today lifts that veil and proudly honors your extraordinary contributions to the nation's defenses. Today, you step from the shadows of the unknown and the unsung and at last assume your rightful place in the ranks of the nation's heroes.

We are now more than a decade removed from the collapse of the Berlin Wall and freedom's victory in the Cold War. The Soviet Union is no more. Communism is discredited. more people live under freedom than ever before.

From this day forward America will know the full story — until now, largely unknown even to your families — of how your heroism made all the difference in that great struggle. America will know how from 1950 until 1956, you took to the skies over "denied territories" such as the Soviet Union and China.

**Cont. on Pg. 4 Col 1**

**Cont. from Pg. 3 Col.2**

America will know how you risked your very lives every flight — often taking fire from the most advanced Soviet fighters when the Cold War turned hot. America will know about your unparalleled record — how in mission after mission, every plane and every airman returned safely home.

As Secretary of Defense, I want the nation to know of your service. Even, more, I want you to know what your service meant to the nation. Because of you, our military stood stronger and more prepared in those early, uncertain days of a half-century ago. Because of you the American people were safer and more secure during what President Kennedy later called "the long twilight struggle." And in the struggle, you were the wings of freedom.

I commend each and every one of you for lending your voices to this heretofore untold chapter of our nation's history. On behalf of all those who serve or have served this nation, I thank you for your vital role in ensuring the strong, ready military that helped win the Cold War. On behalf of the American people who enjoy the liberties you helped preserve so long ago, thank you for

**Reunion in Seattle Sep.18-22 2002**

On March 14, the Board of Governor's decided that the 2002 reunion would be held in Seattle. Arrangements for the reunion will be handled by Linda Irvine, a professional reunion planner.

The reunion will be held at the Doubletree hotel. The cost will be \$115 a night for a suite and will include a continental breakfast and parking. The hotel provides free shuttle service to and from the airport. There will be a hospitality room and there is a Nordstrom's department store nearby.

Tentative reunion schedule:

Seat 18, Thurs: Arrive, register, hospitality room, and buffet dinner at the hotel.

Sept 19, Fri: Tour of the Boeing plant, hospitality room, and a salmon dinner on the Indian Tillicum island..

Seat 20. Sat. Shuttle buses to the waterfront and Museum of Flight, hospitality room, banquet at the hotel.

Sept. 21 Sun Breakfast and depart

The Association obtained the services of Linda with the assistance of Clark Clemons and Henry Whittle; Linda is an Air Force brat who plans military reunions.

The weather in Seattle is supposedly ideal at this time of the year. The waterfront is full of shops and restaurants and is an ideal place to do what tourists do best spend money. Nordstrom's is world famous and can be considered on a par with Neiman-Marcus. Full of exquisite things that can quickly empty a wallet or purse. The Museum of Flight has recently acquired a number of fighters from the Champlain Air Museum

Further details will be provided in the next newsletter. ..

**From the Hay Field to the Air Field**  
by Jim Diamond, former B-47 Crew Chief

From the time my older brother returned from England after WWII, where he was with the 8th AF, I had always wanted to be just like him. But being from western Missouri and raised on a farm that seemed to be just be a dream for me. In high school, I bought a car with money I earned working after school, on weekends and during the summer. I worked for a neighbor who did custom hay baling. After a couple of years of throwing 75-100 lb hay bales around I was pretty sure there was better work to be had, I just had to find it.

About a year after high school I even tried my hand at selling Singer sewing machines. My commission for selling two machines a month didn't go far and I knew I needed a more reliable job. I was in the post office one day and I saw a poster saying the Air Force needed men. Well that's all it took. I met the AF recruiter on Friday and on Monday I was on a Greyhound bus to Kansas City and on to Lackland AFB in San Antonio, TX for basic training..

After the eleven weeks of basic training I was sent to Amarillo, Texas to become an aircraft mechanic. During the first week of training the instructor took us to look at a B-47. I stepped through the small hangar door, looked up and up and up to the top of that high tail and those swooped down wings of the shiny B-47 bomber. Just like the expression used so often by Gomer Pyle "Gooolllee." They sure don't make them like this on the farm. And they were going to let me work on one of them too. After completing the school, I was sent to Smoky Hill AFB, KS, a real "Air Field."

Now for the transition from farm boy to fly boy. I was given a secret clearance badge that gave me access to the flight line. My first job was with a refueling crew. We towed aircraft to the fuel pit where we stood and looked at the small overflow vents for about an hour while the plane was refueled with 8-10,000 gallons of jet fuel. When the refueling was completed we returned the aircraft to its assigned parking spot. After about 3-4 months of this, I was told that I was going to be the third wiper on a crew. My job turned out to be wiper upper, gofer, and parts runner. Later I was even allowed to sit in the copilot's seat during engine maintenance runups. I was beginning to get the hay seed out of my hair and had earned a couple of more stripes.

Then one day I was told I would be a crew chief. The big day had finally arrived. I was now the one who would salute the aircraft commander and present him with the 781 when he arrived to preflight the aircraft. All through the pre-flight I was prepared to answer any questions that he might ask of me. I positioned the ladder and stands in the correct position as directed in the check list. Everything clicked as it should have. I still recall with pride that first launch. I thought my heart would get the best of me when that big old bird lifted its wings and took to flight. I was so proud and I had a grin on my face a mile wide. **Cont. Pg.5 Col.1**



**Cont. from pg.4 col.2**

Unfortunately Smokey Hill, Kansas was not a bed of roses especially in the winter. Kansas is cold in the winter but when the wind blows it really really gets cold. One night, I was working at night readying my aircraft for a morning flight. I had to remove three inches of snow that had fallen on the wings before it froze on them. My assistant and I busied ourselves sweeping off the wings with brooms; but my assistant forgot about the vortex generators and took out about thirty of them. There are about 100 vortex generators, that are shaped like small airfoils and are designed to direct the air flow over the wings. Each vortex generator was attached to the wing with screws and attached to it was an electrical wire that controlled the flow of deicing fluid.

I reported the problem to the line chief and ordered the needed parts. I told the chief my assistant would replace the broken generators. The chief informed me that I would have to replace the broken parts as my assistant was scheduled for classes. Further more the repairs had to be accomplished now and not in the morning. It was colder than a witch's t\_\_\_. I am lying on the wing, the wind was blowing up my pants, and I am unable to wear gloves for fear of dropping a screw or letting the wire drop into the wing thereby creating an electrical fire hazard. In the cold I could only replace one generator at a time before I had to go to the base flight latrine and run hot water over my hands to thaw them out. The base flight clerk must have thought that I had some real problem by my constant visits to the latrine. I was a SAC crew chief and there was no way in hell that my plane was not going to make its scheduled take off time. My bird made the scheduled take off time while I lost a night's sleep and had chapped hands for a week.

There were also good times TDYs to Davis-Monthan, MacDill, England, Goose Bay and Eielson. While TDY to Greenham Common in 1957 I met my future wife. We have been together now for 42 years and after twenty years in SAC I retired and returned to Missouri along with my wife and five children where I began a second career as a railroad engineer.

The old B-47, the Air Force, and yes even SAC has provided me with great memories and lots of friends. Friends that I still stay in contact with. The best part is I never had to go back to work again in the hay fields.

**Dues Policy**

There has been quite a bit of confusion regarding dues and I hope this will clarify the subject. The annual dues are \$15 a year and are payable at the beginning of the new year. The date you last paid your dues will be found on the upper right hand corner of your newsletter address label. For example: 01 means your dues are paid up through 2001.

All dues will be sent to the Association Secretary, Mark Natola. Do not send Mark any other money. Mark records

the payments and passes the payments to the Association Treasurer, Don Cassiday.

A number of members send in amounts larger than the annual dues as gifts. Mark credits each gift as paid up dues for future years.

Some members felt that the "Please pay your dues" on the cover of the last newsletter was specifically directed at them. It was not, it was placed there where the message would not be missed.

**Who Is That Knocking ?**

by Louis J. Malucci, former navigator with the 340th BW

It was just another typical mission. The B-47's six engines were whining as the aircraft eased through flight level 245 enroute to the flight clearance level of 280. The tedium of the long flight had barely set in when suddenly a strange knocking noise interrupted the tranquility. Thump. Thump, thump, thump. Thump. The aircraft commander, quizzically mumbled into the interphone mike, "Anyone else hear that banging noise?" The copilot replied, "Yeah, I can feel it back here." It was not particularly alarming in that it did not have the characteristic signature of an impending compressor failure. Compressor failures were dangerous and often times fatal.

Deciding that discretion was the better part of valor, the AC pulled back the throttles and began leveling off. He announced that he was terminating the mission and we were heading home. Our fourth man was a crew chief who got on the interphone and notified the AC that he was sure the knocking sound was that of a flapping open external door. Everyone was aware that if this flimsy door broke off, it could cause serious damage to the wing, engine, or tail.

The AC was satisfied that he had made the right decision to abort the mission and initiated a gentle descending turn. The crew chief informed the AC if he leveled off the aircraft and slowed it down to minimum speed he could close the door. The crew was incredulous; surely this guy was nuts.

However, the chief insisted that if someone would hold his legs, he could reach out and grab the cloth lanyard attached to the door and pull it shut. The crew chief was serious and the AC reluctantly said, "OK, go ahead." The aircraft had to be depressurized to allow the chief to first open the inner door to let him reach the outer door.

As the navigator, I was the only one could assist the crew chief. At the altitude we were at, without oxygen, a crew members total useful consciousness time, TOT, was two minutes. The crew chief would have to close the door without being hooked up to the aircraft's oxygen system or an oxygen walk around bottle. I decided to keep my oxygen mask on in lieu of a bottle as I held on to the crew chief's legs. As the chief descended into the entrance hatch, my hose stretched and stretched until it finally separated from my mask. I was in quandary I was unable to breathe through the mask and would soon lose consciousness. If I let go of the crew chief,

**Cont. Pg.6 Col.1**

**Cont. from pg.5 col. 2**

he would hurtle into the sky below. Since my interphone jack

had also separated I was unable to notify the AC and copilot of my plight. I looked up in panic at the copilot only to see him wave in the manner of greeting an old friend; "How are you doin', Lou, ole buddy?" I was filled with rage, shaking my head vigorously, and screaming for help from the copilot.

But to no avail, the copilot responded jokingly, "When are you gonna get it done; we got a mission to perform?" With one final lunge that almost took the both of us out of the aircraft, the crew chief succeeded in pulling the hatch door shut. Exhausted but proud of what he had accomplished, he crawled back to his seat and reconnected his oxygen mask.

I too was finally able to reconnect my mask and returned to my seat where I turned the oxygen regulator to 100%. As the life giving oxygen restored me to my normal state, I explained to the AC and copilot what had occurred.

"How ya doin' ol buddy? You screw ball." That cost the copilot a couple of drinks at the bar and not at Happy Hour prices.

Lets face it neither I nor the crew chief were in the mood to continue the mission; but the thought of explaining why we had not finished the mission motivated me to press on.

### **We Just Jettisoned Our Nuke**

Editor's note : In 1958, a fighter plane collided with Major Howard Richardson's B-47 during a simulated fighter attack on his aircraft. The B-47 was forced to jettison the nuclear bomb it was carrying in the Savannah River estuary. Recovery ships were unsuccessful in locating the bomb and today a Georgia congressman is proposing that the government renew its search for the missing A bomb. The nature of the collision is very similar to that occurred between the Chinese fighter and the Navy EP-3C. The article below appeared in the SAC flying safety magazine entitled "Heads Up Flying Club." Major Richardson's aircraft was class 26ed.

Skill, courage, and keen presence of mind in concern for the safety of others won membership into the SAC Heads Up Flying Club for Maj. Howard Richardson, 19th Bombardment Wing, Homestead Air Force Base. Major Richardson, the aircraft commander, ably assisted by his crew, 1/Lt. Robert J. Lagerstrom, pilot, and Capt. Leland W. Woolard, navigator, skillfully brought their crippled B-47 safely home following a mid air collision. Despite a badly damaged aircraft, they carefully selected isolated areas when it became necessary to jettison a wing tank and bomb bay weapon.

Returning from a mission, the B-47 was under simulated fighter attack when the crew felt a crash and saw a bright flash behind the right wing. the B-47 was thrown into a violent skid and lost speed. Sensing that it had been hit by a fighter, Major Richardson immediately released the autopilot and alerted the crew for bailout. A quick inspection by the pilot revealed that the number 6 engine

was hanging from the the forward mount at a 45 degree angle, the right wing tank was missing, and there appeared to be a bump in the wing or aileron. Unable to get the number 6 engine throttle in cutoff detent, Major Richardson pulled the fire button and shut down the engine. After getting a position and heading from the navigator Major Richardson began a slow gear up descent. As the airspeed continued to drop and control became more critical, he checked to insure they were in an isolated area and jettisoned the left wing tank.

At 20,000 the Stratojet jet was leveled off and put in a landing configuration to check the minimum control speed. At 170 knots the B-47 was controlled only with a great effort. Major Richardson decided that the weapon in the bomb bay added dangerously to his gross weight and the risk involved in landing with undetermined aircraft damage. Again the navigator directed the aircraft to a safe area and the weapon was jettisoned.

As airspeed was reduced to 190 knots on final, it was discovered that large amounts of trim were necessary. Keeping lined up on final became more difficult as power was retarded, and at flareout full rudder was required. With the left wing purposely held low to prevent NO. 6 engine from dragging, the aircraft touched down but skipped due to speed. On the next touch down Major Richardson called for the brake chute and as it took effect, applied light, steady brakes. The B-47 was halted 4,500 feet from the touchdown point.

In addition to the loss of the wing tank and damage to No. 6 engine, severe damage had been done to the right aileron and a main spar in the right wing had been broken. A portion of the horizontal stabilizer had been sheared off and that the vertical stabilizer had received two holes, one more than a foot in diameter. The gunnery system was also damaged and the right side of the fuselage had a hole three feet in diameter that extended into the aft aux. tank. Parts from the fighter were found inside the B-47 fuselage. ( the fighter pilot ejected successfully) By reacting with outstanding skill, courage, and judgment

Major Richardson, with the aid of his crew, solved complicated and dangerous emergency without injury to the crew or others. See other photos on **Pg.11**.



The damage sustained to the vertical and horizontal stabilizers, the gunnery system, and three foot hole are readily visible. Other Photos are on pg.11



# **Exclusive !!** Published for the first time photos taken by Hal Austin, Carl Holt, and Vance Heavlin on their daring overflight of the Murmansk area on 8 May 1954



Above: Soviet airfield near Kandalaska. Right: Clearly visible in this blowup are the parked MiG-17s. Below: Large industrial complex, Kandalaska.



These U.S. Air Force photos were obtained through the assistance of Cargill Hall and Matt Doerling of the National Reconnaissance Office History Office.. Below: This photo of a MiG -17 was taken by an oblique camera on Hal Austin's aircraft and was only discovered recently when the film was again reviewed. The MiG-17 was climbing to attack Hal Austin's aircraft.







Orville Granville was one of the first B-47 pilots to fly 3,500 hrs. He earned the majority of his hours flying as a B-47 instructor at Davis-Monthan.



Olga Hollis was presented this cake on the occasion of her 80th birthday. Olga's son, Dr. Ken Hollis, and grandson, Jason, were on hand to help her celebrate. Olga's deceased husband Ken was a B-47 pilot.



Dave Nicholson, who now resides in Kerrville, TX paid a nostalgic visit to Lockbourne AFB, OH last summer. In the picture on the left, Dave is standing in front of what was the operations building of the 4th SRS and 4353rd BS. In the picture on the right Dave is standing in front of one of the B-47 alert facility or the "Mole Hole." One of the few B-47 alert shacks still in existence.



## Plenary Session of the Early Cold War Overflights Symposium



L to R RB-47 flyers Hal Austin, Earl Chinnock, and Carl Holt and Alex Alexander, president of the B-47 Assn.



L to R M/G Gerald Cook , USAF (Ret.) former RB-57 recce pilot, and an unidentified flyer being presented a medallion by M/G Glen Shaffer, USAF



55th SRW, RB-47H veterans Robb Hoover and Roy Kaden



L to R Svend Aage Christensen of the Danish Institute of International Affairs, DUPI, and M/G H.P. Smith, USAF ( Ret.) former B-47 pilot and Intelligence Officer



L to R Mark Natola's Dad, Sam Meyers, RB-45, RB-47, and B-52 pilot and a bearded Mark Natola bent on breaking the camera.



M/G Glen Shaffer, USAF, AF Director of Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance; David Kier, Deputy Director of NRO; B/G Lorraine Potter, USAF, Vice ACOS Chaplain of the Air Force; and Cargill Hall, NRO historian.

## Unique Patches from North Africa



3906<sup>th</sup> CSG, Sidi Slimane  
( unofficial, made locally )



3905<sup>th</sup> Air Police Squadron  
Sidi Slimane AB, Morocco  
( unofficial, made locally )



3906<sup>th</sup> USAF Dispensary  
( unofficial, made locally )



Nouasseur Aero Club  
( made locally )



3905<sup>th</sup> Air Police Squadron  
Sidi Slimane AB, Morocco  
( unofficial, made locally  
worn on the back of jackets)



3905<sup>th</sup> Air Police Squadron  
Sidi Slimane AB, Morocco  
( unofficial, made locally  
worn on the back of jackets)

The patches depicted above were sent to the editor by Charles T. Orr, a SAC patch collector in Woodstock, Virginia. They were made by local tailors on or near the bases of Sidi Slimane and Nouasseur. They are unofficial and may or may not have been worn on fatigues. They are now considered folk art and those worn on the back of the jacket were 8 inches in length. An English patch collector owns the originals. The Estimated value of the two large patches is between \$1,500 to \$2,000.





There

is not



much holding the No.6 engine to the wing.  
L to R Major Richardson, Lt. Robert Lagerstrom, and  
Capt. Leland Woolard. Capt. Woolard is now deceased.  
A map of the drop area is found on pg.7

**Bill Dunnington's record.** Bill Dunnington was a crew chief on 52-6103 at Chennault AFB, LA. in 1953. During the month of November his aircraft, 52-6103, flew 71 hours and 45 minutes. Can anyone beat or match the hours that Bill's aircraft flew?

Bill went on to OCS, became a maintenance officer and retired as one. He now resides at 2302 Morning Dr, Baytown, TX 77520-3754

**Recalling my Combat Crew Training and Early Days in SAC .**

By John Sorenson

I assigned to SAC from an overseas assignment in Germany to become a B-47 AC. In the early 1950s the B-47 training program was a long drawn out affair. Pilots were first sent to navigation/radar training at Ellington and then radar/bombardier training at Mather and finally to combat crew training at Wichita.

When I reached McConnell, I wanted to increase my flying hours in a B-47 beyond those that I would obtain in the training program. I sought out the assistance of my younger brother, who was a Major assigned to the Air Force Acceptance Group at Boeing. He introduced me to the pilots of the group, where after hanging around they agreed to let me fly with them as a fill in copilot.

It was on one of these flights on October 14, 1955 that I flew to the edge known as Coffin Corner. Coffin Corner is where the high and low speed stall curves intersect. On that day I was flying with Joe Richel, the head of the Air Force Acceptance Group at the Boeing plant. Joe was a magnificent pilot and during the flight I asked him about Coffin Corner. He replied, "Let's find out." So we started climbing to 20, 000, 30, 40, 45, and 48 trying for 50 but - - - no dice. At 49, 675 feet we had a three knot spread between the high and low speed buffets. We quit but I was exhilarated by the experience of having flown to the edge, Coffin Corner, and survived.

Flying with the Acceptance Group though rewarding was secondary as to why I was at Wichita, that of competing combat crew training. It was my good fortune that I was assigned Jim Beck as my navigator/ bombardier. Jim was a very competent navigator and we hit it off, and we went on to make an outstanding crew.

Following completion of training at McConnell, crews were sent to Davis-Monthan for checkout by SEG, Strategic Evaluation Group. SEG was the forerunner to the Comat Evaluation Group, CEG. ( Editor's note: In 1958 after completion of combat crew training in Wichita, crews received their checkouts at their home bases.) Our crew completed the checkout in two instead of the normal three flights and were allowed to go home to the 305th BW at MacDill. We flew 52-500, that we nicknamed Beauty, to MacDill in an hour and forty-seven minutes. It is a record that I believe is still unbroken. .

I had a great and interesting time at MacDill I dropped live bombs on the Sar el Souk bombing range in Morocco, flew the refueling sequences for Jimmy Stewart's film "Strategic Air Command, appeared with my family in a Grantland Rice sports short, and earned one of the first thousand hour pins in SAC.

Jim and I were fortunate to have been selected to attend the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell. While we were there, we were dismayed to see a picture in the paper of a crashed B-47 that was 52-500. The aircraft had crashed while attempting to land at NAS Atlanta. Our beloved Beauty was no more.

I would love to have a picture of 52-500, Beauty. Does anyone have a picture of Beauty? My address is 3320

### Hall of Fame

C/MSgt. Walter Satcher, USAF (Ret.) was born in San Antonio, TX in 1921. He attended local schools in San Antonio and dropped out of high school to join the Texas National Guard as an infantryman in the 141st Infantry. He received an honorable discharge 26 months later.

In February 1939, Walter joined the Navy, where after completing basic training, he was assigned to the support vessel, USS Sirius. He went on to become a machinist mate serving in a number of naval bases on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and all over the Pacific during World War II. Sgt. Satcher was discharged from the Navy in October 1945 as a Machinist Mate 1/C.

The call of the military was strong and after two years in civilian life, Walter enlisted in the newly created Air Force at Brooks Field, TX in December 1947. While at Brooks, he initiated the periodic maintenance system that was eventually adopted by the Tactical Air Command. For this he was recommended for the Army Commendation Medal.

After two years at Brooks he was first reassigned to Barksdale AFB and then later on to Langley AFB, where he was promoted to Master Sergeant in July 1951. In 1952 Sergeant Satcher was sent to Sculthorpe, England where he implemented the new AFM 66-1 maintenance system at the squadron level.

In 1955 Walter became a member of SAC when he was assigned to the 40th BW at Smoky Hill AFB, KS, where he was the NCOIC of Job Control from 1955-1960. As NCOIC, he was responsible for developing a B-47 maintenance schedule that had to consider Reflex, Alert, TDYS, ORIs, and higher headquarter's inspections. In June 1959, Master Sergeant Satcher became among the first sergeants to be promoted to Senior Master Sergeant. On December 1, 1959 Senior Master Sergeant Satcher was again among the first group of sergeants promoted to Chief Master Sergeant. When the 40th BW was deactivated in 1960, Walt was reassigned to Brize Norton where eventually became the Assistant to the DCM and was responsible for the maintenance and support of the Reflex alert force.

In 1963 Chief Satcher was reassigned to the 100th BW at Pease AFB as NCOIC of Job Control. In 1965 when the B-47 was sent to the bone yard, he was reassigned to Clinton Sherman. In 1966 he was again reassigned, this time to Headquarters SAC, where he became Maintenance Superintendent of the Tanker Branch. At SAC he was responsible for the KC-135 dash 6 inspection system and both the landing gear and boom replacement programs.

Chief Satcher retired from the Air Force in 1970 and was awarded the Distinguish Service Medal. He went on to work for Pemco Aircraft retiring in 1994 ending a distinguished military and civilian career.

### Association Memorabilia

1. Association Pin \$10.
2. Association Patch \$ 5
3. Association T-shirts \$15.
4. Pewter airplane tie pin \$ 5.
5. 1,000 hour pin \$ 25.
6. B-47 Place mat /Mouse pad \$ 3.
7. B-47 Golf Cap \$12
8. Mugs \$ 10
9. Reunion Golf Visor \$7.
10. Engraved reunion wine glass \$5
11. 3,500 hour pin \$25

Checks should be made payable to the **B- 47 Stratojet Association**. Postage and handling are included in all costs. Mail your orders to George Brierley, 53 Mountain Ave, St. Johnsbury, VT 05189.

### Financial Statement

2001 Income	
Dues	\$ 4513
Merchand. Sales	\$ 1109
Total	\$ 5622
Expenses	
	\$ 972.53
Current Balances	
Cash	\$ 7,132.85
CDs	\$ 5,883.81
	\$ 5,947.34
Total Current Assets	\$ 18,964.00

Identified planned expenses for 2001: four newsletters and roster \$11,000.

### Final Flight

**Al Nieman** died in 1999, no other details available.

**Charles Sugaref** died in June 1998, no other details available

**Lt. Robert Keurtz, USAF (Ret.)** died on 12 January 2001 of Westwood, OH. He is survived by his wife, Aldy, a son, and three grandchildren. His widow's phone number is 1-513-661-8646.

The obituary in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* on January 12 contained an appalling error "Later he served with the Strategic Air Command (SAC). The SAC was established in 1946 to deter nuclear war. Lt. Col. Keurtz carried atomic bombs from Alaska to the Soviet Union and back. Since the above appeared in a newspaper the public in Cincinnati will assume it is the truth. Carrying atom bombs to the Soviet Union??? The ignorance of those in today's news media is unbelievable. George Orwell in 1984 could never have foreseen our politically correct and ignorant news media.



## From the President / Editor

It is with a sense of pride that I can report the Association continues to grow. I am particularly elated by the number of the NCOs who have joined the B-47 Stratojet Association.

I wish to thank all those members who have sent me memorabilia for the archives and stories for the newsletter. However, I am now starting on the June newsletter and need both articles and pictures.

Over forty copies of my booklet on B-47 accidents have been sold netting \$125 to the Association. If you desire a copy, send me a check made out to me for \$7. I have received several inputs with additional information on the crashes. If you have any amplifying information on any crash please send it to me. I am particularly interested in obtaining newspaper photos and clippings related to any crash.

Thanks to Tiny Malm and Dick Purdum we made \$10,288 on the reunion in Odessa. \$5,000 was donated for the construction of the Officers' Club, and the remaining money was deposited in the Association's bank account.

Seattle has been selected as the site for the 2002 reunion. The next newsletter will provide you with further details.

Mark is working on a new roster, please send him any changes to your phone number or e mail address.

The Board of Governors will be meeting in May in Wichita. Details of the meeting will be published in the next newsletter.

My closing paragraph is taken from a speech given by George Will, the *Washington Post* syndicated columnist, as part of the Forrestal Lecture series at the Naval Academy on January 24, 2001.

"We're told all the time there is a large and growing problem and that there is a need to close the gap between the military and civilian society. I think that the gap is healthy and the gap is necessary, that the gap must exist in any society and, in a sense especially in a democratic society. That is because the military must be exemplar of certain virtues that will, at any given time, seem anachronistic and its a function of the military to be exemplars."

Sigmund "Alex" Alexander



## Reunions

**55th SRW, 17-20 May, Holiday INN Beach Resort Melbourne-Oceanfront, FL.** Reservations may be made by directly calling the hotel at 1-321-777-4100, Fax: 1-321-773-6123 or through Holiday Inn reservations at 1-800-465-4329.

Information on the reunion may be found at the 55th web site at [www.55SRWA.org](http://www.55SRWA.org) or by calling Barney Clary at 407-459-1182

**303rd BW, Apr. 19-22.** Information regarding this reunion will be published in the next newsletter.

### 50th Anniversary Reunion Marking the Delivery of the 1st B-47 to the 367th BS of the 307th BW in 1951

**Nov. 9-11 at MacDill & Tampa & St. Petersburg Beach Best Western Motel**

Planned activities include golf, boating, fishing and a picnic. There were 44 reservations when Ken Tollin sent in the notice for publication. Ken's address is 2742 Perryville, Odessa, TX 79761. Tel. 915-362-1797



This picture appeared on the back cover of the 7th Air Division monthly magazine the "Strato Scope." in January 1958. It was purposely taken out of focus and leaves one trying to determine what his thoughts were.

**Jan Tegler's book the B-47 Stratojet** may be obtained for \$24.95 plus \$3.50 for postage and handling from Edward R. Hamilton, Falls Village, CT 06031-5000. This is over a \$10 saving from the publisher original price.

Sid Steele has put together a one hour video and a CD on the B-47. The video/CD includes development, training and LABS. Price \$32.95 for the video or \$37.95 for the CD + \$3.59 S&H. Address: 3508 Corto, Ft. Worth, TX 76109. Tel. 817-824-0042



B-47B 50-0062 a veteran of various test programs at Eglin AFB, FL. was sent to the Florence Air & Space Museum after the B-47 was retired from active duty. The aircraft was acquired by the Mighty Air Force Museum in Savannah, GA in 1998 when the Florence Museum went belly up. The aircraft was disassembled and shipped to Georgia where it is presently undergoing restoration.

AFB, FL

**B- 47 Stratojet Association**

*Mark Natola, Secretary*

23 Oak Ridge Road, W. Lebanon, NH 03784

Tel.603-643-3399 e-mail: [mark.natola@hitchcock.org](mailto:mark.natola@hitchcock.org)

**Application**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial) (Rank) (Spouse)

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

City : \_\_\_\_\_ State : \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code : \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone : \_\_\_\_\_ Fax : \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail : \_\_\_\_\_

B-47 Wings you served with and dates of service : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Crew or ground position : \_\_\_\_\_ Civilian position: \_\_\_\_\_

Status : Active Duty \_\_\_\_\_ ; Retired, when \_\_\_\_\_ ; Separated, when \_\_\_\_\_ Veteran \_\_\_\_\_

Civilian, your relationship to the B-47 : \_\_\_\_\_

Current Occupation : \_\_\_\_\_

Any other comments you may care to add : \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues are \$15 per year are payable to *The B-47Stratojet Association*. Enclosed : \_\_\_\_\_

Send Application and check to the Secretary

**Web site: <http://nerd.dartmouth.edu/~man>**





President Dwight D. Eisenhower being escorted by the B/G James V. Edmundson, Division Commander Davis-Monthan AFB. Exact date is unk, it was before General Edmundson was the DCS/Ops at SAC in 1958. Photo: Orville Granville.

## For Meritorious Achievement



This is to certify that  
The Commander of 100th Bombardment Wing  
extends the congratulations and appreciation of the  
100th Bomb Wing to the members of "A" Flight 100th OMS  
whose outstanding efforts and professional achievement  
resulted in a year of superb B-47 maintenance, 14 Oct. 1959  
to 14 Oct. 1960. 4900 Flying hours and 792 sorties, without  
a single maintenance cancellation.

### A Flight

SM5G SHIRMAN B MCCLELLAN	CAPT ROBERT L HAMILTON	TSGT JAMES O EARNES	TSGT HARRY J REDDISH
TSGT MERCEY J LATHICART	SSGT ROBERT L BENSON	SSGT CLINTON E HUGHES	TSGT CHARLES R CARD
SSGT KENNETH J COUSINO	SSGT DONALD P FERRARO	SSGT LESLIE E WYMOUTH	AIC JAMES A BURNLEY
AIC BARRY M O'DONNELL	SSGT RICHARD J LOVETT	AIC THOMAS E GREER	SSGT WILLIAM A MEMPHRE
AIC JAMES B BARRETT	AIC WILLIAM J MCMALE	SSGT LESTER P SULLIVAN	SSGT CLIFFORD L LATOIE
TSGT VINSTON S CORBIN	SSGT FRANKLIN J TUMAL	AIC ELMORE E STANLEY	SSGT ROY V LOWMECH
AIC WILLIAM G GRAVES	AIC WILLIAM F SHEEHAN	AIC GUNARS GREIFERS	SSGT GEORGE G BAUMAN
AIC RAYMOND W HARRIS	AIC DONALD K RUSH	AIC HARVEY S DAVIS	AIC KARL W FAHLBUSH
SSGT ROBERT B EMSLEY	AIC FRANCIS A MAIER JR	AIC GEORGE M FORD	SSGT THOMAS M DOWNIS
		AIC FREDERICK J CHRISTENSEN	

Quite a testimony to the dedication and professionalism of the men of "A" flight of the 100th OMS. I bet that is a record that can't be matched today. Certificate provided by C/M Sgt Clinton E. Hughes, USAF (Ret.)



## CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

SIGMUND ALEXANDER

In full recognition of your service during the period of the  
Cold War (September 1945 - 29 November 1961) in promoting  
civility and stability for the Nation, the people of this Nation are  
honored.

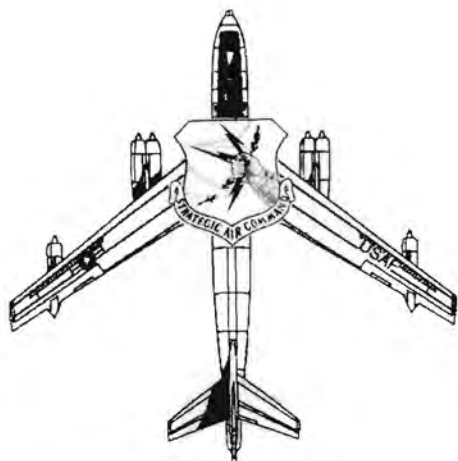


This rare patch was worn by members of the 367th BS / 306th BW. Technical problems led to the cancellation of the Rascal program. The patch provided by Dick Sebers.

The above certificate is being awarded to all Cold War warriors. If you desire one, they may be obtained by writing to: Cold War Recognition, 4035 Ridge Top RD, Suite 400, Fairfax, VA 22030. Include a copy of your DD 214. There is a long period between sending in the request and receiving the certificate.

**B-47 Stratojet Association**  
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San Antonio, TX  
78233-5953

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### 1962

On Sept .24, 1962 RB-47H 53-4278 was intercepted over the Baltic by two Soviet MiG-19s and a Yak-25 in step formation. When Joe Cleary, Raven # 1, discovered that one of the fighters had locked on to his aircraft, he broke the lock. A Mig-19 then proceeded to take a close look at 53-4278 and the copilot took this picture. The Soviets broke off their escort mission when all the aircraft were about to enter Finnish air space. Photo: Joe Cleary

### 2001

Deja vu, on April 1, 2001 a Chinese F-8 fighter intercepted a Navy EP-3, Orion, over the South China Sea 80 miles off Hainan island. It was apparent that Wang Wei, the Chinese pilot, was not as skilled as his Soviet counterpart was in 1962 since he ended up hitting the EP-3E. The aircraft commander, Lt .Shane Osborn, and his copilot, Lt.j.g. Jeffrey Vigney, managed to regain control of the aircraft after losing 7,500 feet . In the fifteen minutes it took to reach the Chinese airfield on Hainan island the crew executed their distruct plan. Lt Osborn is a Cornhusker, having received his commission from the NROTC program at the University of Nebraska.

