

The Stratojet Newsletter

July 2004 Volume 19

For Those Who Designed, Built, Flew, Maintained and Loved the B-47



B-47 Stratojet Association President Dick Purdum "scrambles" into the cockpit of the RB-47H on display at the U. S. Air Force Museum at Dayton Ohio, site of the 2004 reunion.

From The President's Desk

Have you sent in your application for the upcoming reunion? In case you misplaced your copy you can download a copy from our web page **B-47.com**. Our web master, Jim Diamond, is doing a great job maintaining our web page. If you have pictures or anything else pertaining to the B-47 E-mail them to Jim at imjack@swbell.net.

...continued on page 2

President...continued from page 1

Now is the time to dust off your Christmas card list and contact your B-47 friends to invite them to attend the reunion and meet you in Dayton. This is a golden opportunity to see former B-47 friends as well as make new ones.

Don't forget to make your reservations not later than 23 August 2004 at the Holiday Inn Dayton North 937-278-4871. They have smoking and non-smoking rooms available. Be sure to tell them that you are attending the B-47 reunion so that you will get the special rate of \$79 a night plus applicable taxes. The hotel offers free airport shuttle and free parking at the hotel.

George Brierly, our BX officer, has designed and purchased some very nice looking tee shirts and cups with our Association's Logo embossed on them. You can contact him at E-mail b-47assn@together.net, phone at 727-321-1606 or write him at 5342 6th Place South Gulfport, FL 33707, to order these and other items. He will be selling these items at the reunion. If you want to be sure and get your size then order it before the reunion.



You can see what the B-47 Stratojet Association monument will look like with the inscription and SAC Shield on the front and all of the wings that flew B-47's on the back. This beautiful monument will be dedicated with a special ceremony on Friday afternoon at the USAF Museum Memorial Gardens. Our special thanks go out to Don Cassiday and Mike Gingrich (Dayton Ohio) for working so diligently

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President...continued

with the monument company and the Museum personnel to make all of this happen. A huge thanks also to all of our generous donors whose contributions made this financially feasible.



You can see what a great job that the renovation people did, at the USAF Museum, in the before (fuselage on flat bed) and after as it looks in the

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President...continued from page 2

museum today (see photo on page one 1). You will never see a nicer looking B-47 than the one on display at the USAF Museum. The aluminum skin has been polished to a high gloss. The only B-47 that I have ever seen before that even comes close was B/Gen Tibbet's B-47 at MacDill AFB, FL (306th. Bomb Wing), when he was the Division Commander there.

Is your back window B-47 decal getting faded for you folks in the sun-belt? I have more available, 3 bucks for one or 5 bucks for two. Contact me at DickPurdum@cox.net or 13310 South 26th Ave. Bellevue, NE 68123. Please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope.

Several of our members have been moving around the country and some have new area codes for their phones. Please take a look at your directory and update this data by E-mailing to Mark Natola mark.natola@hitchcock.org or 23 Oak Ridge Road W Lebanon, NH 03784. If you know of anyone that has passed away we want to know this so that we can place his or her name on the roll call of honor in the newsletter.

Remember you can determine your dues status by looking at your mailing label on the top line all the way to the right (04 means you are paid up through 31 Dec 2004).

Looking forward to seeing you at the 4th B-47 Stratojet Association Reunion in Dayton Ohio!

Mayday

Jack Farquhar is seeking information from anyone who might have known his father, **Jack B. Farquhar**. Captain Farquhar was killed (as well as the rest of the crew) on takeoff in Shreveport in 1957. He had participated in Operation Greenhouse earlier in his career. Jack can be reached at JCJSFAR@aol.com.

Roll Call of Honor

Olga Hollis, widow of Lt. Col. Raymond Hollis, passed away on 27 April 2004.

Michael Cooper-Slipper, Battle of Britain Hero, Orenda CL-52 Test Pilot

On February 23, 2004, Michael Cooper-Slipper died in Victoria, British Columbia at the age of 83. Mike joined the Royal Air Force in 1938 when he was 17 and became a Hurricane pilot. He flew in the Battle of Britain, where he distinguished himself by shooting down nine German aircraft. For his heroic feats he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC). In 1941, Mike became C.O. of 135 Squadron, which was equipped with winterized Hurricanes. His squadron was to be sent to Russia to defend Murmansk. However in 1941, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the British colonies in the Far East, the winterized Hurricanes were sent to defend Singapore. Though the Japanese fighters outclassed the Hurricanes, Mike managed to shoot down several Japanese bombers. After the fall of Singapore Mike and his squadron retreated down the island of Sumatra and thence on to Java. Wounded in a bombing raid, Mike escaped on a Chinese riverboat from Batavia (now Jakarta) to Colombo, Ceylon. From Colombo, he was sent to South Africa where he recovered from his wounds and malaria. Reassigned to Cairo, he helped modify Spitfires to allow them to intercept untouchable reconnaissance Junkers JU-86Ps that were flying over Egypt at altitudes above 40,000 feet. In November of 1944, he returned to England and became a test pilot. Following the end of the war, in 1946, he resigned from the RAF and immigrated to Canada.

In Canada, Mike first worked for Avro Canada as a test pilot and in June 1955, he became Chief Test Pilot for Orenda Engines Ltd. Here he was involved in the development of engines for the CF-100 Canuck, the Canadair F-86, and the Avro CF-105 Arrow. In 1955, the CF-105 was the most advanced interceptor in the world. Two Orenda Iroquois engines, each with nearly 20,000 lbs of thrust, were to power the Arrow. The B-47, designated CL-52 by the Canadians, was selected to be the test bed for the Iroquois engine. Mike and fellow test pilot, Leonard Hobbs, went to Wichita AFB KS where they became students, along with their American Air Force counterparts, in the B-47 crew-

training program. Mike and Leonard were the only non-Americans ever to go through the B-47 Combat Crew Training Program.

Following completion of training, they delivered a B-47B to the Canadair plant at the Cartierville airport at Montreal for modification. The modification involved installing the engine pod on the right side under the tail-plane. The nacelle was six feet in diameter and 30 feet in length and was located quite a bit off the centerline of the aircraft. It was toed out-ward which gave asymmetric problems of control during the Iroquois testing. Apparently the 20,000 lb thrust of the Iroquois engine precluded it from being mounted on the wing, as the 10,000 lb GE TF-34 engine that was mounted on the port wing B-47 engine test aircraft. Ballast had to be added to the aircraft to offset the 4,500 lb. weight of the engine under the tail-plane. An additional engine throttle control for the Iroquois engine was added to the copilot's engine throttle controls. The nose was converted to a flight engineer's test station.

Despite the short runway at Cartierville, Mike made an uneventful takeoff. However, landing the CL-55 at Malton/Orenda airport proved to be a quite challenging. As a result of its clean lines, the B-47 had a built in tendency to float as it prepared to touch down. On landing, Mike now had to counter the additional lift provided by the rear engine pod. Keeping the wings level and utilizing the brake chute at the right moment was critical to bringing the aircraft down safely.

In flight, one of the B-47 engines on the port side of the aircraft, had to run at full power to counter the asymmetrical thrust of the Iroquois engine and another to keep the electrical and hydraulic systems operating. As testing continued, the balance of the engines could be closed down. However, it was not possible to run all seven engines at full power in flight. There appear to have been no major problems uncovered during the flight test program. However, a turbine blade did fail in flight and it caused an explosion. The engine was shut down and the aircraft landed safely. On the ground it was discovered that the blade had penetrated the fuselage of the B-47. Fortunately, there was no major damage to the aircraft. The problem with the blade was rectified by a change in design and manufacture. The

engine had flown 31 hours when the CF-105 program was cancelled on February 20, 1959.

All the modifications were removed from the CL-52 and Mike and his crew flew the ex-CL-52 to Davis Monthan AFB where salvageable components were removed and the aircraft was cut in half and sent to the smelter.

After leaving Orenda, Mike worked for several aviation firms and the government of Ontario. In 1986, he retired to Victoria, British Columbia where he died.



Chief Test Pilot Michael Cooper-Slipper on entry ladder of CL-52 with his crew, Len Hobbs, pilot, and Johnny McLaughlin, flight engineer.

*Sigmund Alexander
12110 Los Cerdos Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78233*

More CL-52 photos are located on page 10.



The 14 April 1956 Overflight of Noril'sk, U.S.S.R.

The following article was published in August, 2003 by the Office of the Historian, National Reconnaissance Office. Its author, Cargill Hall, has since retired as Historian for the NRO.

Those familiar with the history of American intelligence operations know that United States leaders established the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) in 1961 to consolidate in one organization all of the "nation's satellite and overflight reconnaissance projects." Many do not know, however, that the precursor of these covert overflight projects is traced to a once compartmented but now declassified Sensitive Intelligence (SENSINT) Program. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, today viewed as the "patron saint" of overhead reconnaissance, authorized this most secret peacetime overflight program sometime in the fall of 1953, shortly after hostilities ceased in the Korean conflict. U.S. theater commanders, the Joint Chiefs, and the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) could request one or more of these special missions, while providing ample justification for taking the risk. The overflights were conducted by standard or specially modified military reconnaissance aircraft. The President's "Special Group"—consisting of his National Security Advisor, the Secretaries of State and Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the DCI—vetted all covert operations including SENSINT overflight requests, and President Eisenhower made the final decision. Eisenhower terminated the military-directed SENSINT Program in December 1956, shortly after the CIA's high-altitude U-2 aircraft began overflight operations.

Of all the SENSINT missions, one of the most audacious and dangerous took place on 14 April 1956, when three Strategic Air Command (SAC) RB-47E photoreconnaissance bombers took off from Thule Air Base, Greenland, to find and photograph a Soviet metropolis that was known to exist but had never been seen by westerners—the city of Noril'sk. Located east of the Ural Mountains and some 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle, Noril'sk had been founded as a slave labor camp, or gulag, in the mid-1930s by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin who sought to exploit the rich nickel deposits nearby. The nickel products moved on a short rail line from Noril'sk to the town of Dudinka on the Yenisey River. There, loaded on board ocean transports during the summer months, they were shipped north on the Yenisey to the Kara Sea and then west to ports like Murmansk on the Kola Peninsula. By 1956 Noril'sk had become (and remains today) the largest nickel producer in the world. Its Kremlin masters declared the site a strategic asset, off limits to all but Communist officials and those who worked in its mines and smelters. In fact, travel to remote, frigid Noril'sk is still restricted, a point underscored in a recent article in *The Washington Post*.

All three of the three-man SAC aircrews* that launched into Greenland's sub-zero Polar air in April 1956 knew nothing of these things. For them, Noril'sk was just a name and a set of coordinates on a map, a site to be imaged while operating at highest altitude and maximum speed. Though SENSINT aircrews would not speak of these missions for the next forty-five years, they remembered well their flight instructions: "One pass and haul ass!"—out of "denied territory." The seemingly endless winter darkness that enveloped Noril'sk had just begun to lift with the vernal equinox a few weeks before. Now the sun marched northward each day toward equally undending daylight and a brief summer. SAC meteorologists forecast excellent weather in northern Russia on 14 April, and mission planners called for the RB-47Es to arrive over Noril'sk just after noon, local time, when the sun angle in the far north would cast long shadows in the snow, permitting precise calculation of building sizes, shapes, and heights.

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B47 Stratojet Assn. Reunion

Sept 23-26, 2004

~~ Dayton, Ohio ~~

To be held at the Holiday Inn Dayton North in historic Dayton Ohio. Hotel rates are only \$79 per night, plus tax. Registration will be \$165 per person and include the following:

- ~ Welcoming Package with name button, itinerary, list of attendees, & local information*
- ~ Thursday Welcome Reception w/ Dinner Buffet, beer , wine and punch*
- ~ Friday Transportation to WPAFB Museum and Dedication*
- ~ Friday Dinner at AF Museum (includes transportation)*
- ~ Saturday Symposium/General Membership Meeting*
 - ~ Saturday Banquet Dinner & Program*
 - ~ Saturday Show/Evening Dance*
- ~ Hospitality Room stocked with snacks & beverages & cocktails*
 - ~ All associated taxes and gratuities*
 - ~ Sunday Checkout*

Call the Holiday Inn Dayton at 937-278-4871 no later than August 23, 2004 to make your hotel reservations. The hotel offers free airport transportation and parking.

An optional tour is available on Saturday and includes:

City Tour/Waynesville- Includes guided tour of the highlights of Dayton. Afterwards we will drive out to the unique and charming city of Waynesville for some great shopping. Tour includes lunch at the Dear Dutchman. An Amish & Mennonite restaurant/gift shop, known throughout Ohio for their fantastic food. Tour time 9:30-4:30 pm. Price per person \$35

COME JOIN US AS WE SHARE OLD MEMORIES AND MAKE NEW ONES!!!

For More Information:

Contact: Dick Purdum

Phone: (402) 291-5247

Email: DickPurdum@Cox.net

Or

Contact: The Reunion BRAT

Phone: (360) 663-2521

Email: Info@TheReunionBRAT.com

Set Your Course For Dayton OH - 23-26 September



Navigation Instructions

The Holiday Inn Dayton North is located off I-70 near the airport.



•From I-75S

Take Exit 61A to I-70E
From I-70 take Exit 44A to I-675S
I-675S take Exit 15
Follow signs to Museum

•From I-75N

Take Exit 43 to I-675N
I-675N take Exit 15
Follow signs to Museum

•Services

The Museum is handicapped accessible. Wheelchairs are available on a limited basis for use inside the Museum building. No pets please. Guide and service dogs only.



Not exactly a B-47, but an essential piece of transportation for the reunion. The Holiday Inn will be happy to pick you up at the Dayton Airport.



The B-29, Bockscar 44-27297, delivered the second atomic bomb (Fat Man) of WWII to Nagasaki on 9 August 1945. This Boeing-designed, Martin-built (in Omaha) Superfortress was flown to the Museum on 26 September 1961.

photos: Dick Purdum



The interior of the Museum's RB-47H is as nice as the exterior. Note the prized "horn button."

Overflight...*continued from page 5*

Flying in close formation and operating in complete radio silence, the RB-47Es rendezvoused with KC-97 aerial tankers over the North Pole and took on full loads of JP-4 jet fuel.** The airplanes crossed the Kara Sea and coasted into Soviet territory over the Taymyr Peninsula, well east of the Yenisey river and the Soviet air base that straddled its mouth at Dikson. Carefully avoiding an altitude at which contrails would form, their cockpit-warning devices indicated that Soviet radars had not detected their presence. Cruising at 40,000 feet and at nearly full throttle, the SAC aircrews found and photographed for the first time the city of Noril'sk, then swung south on the Yenisey river to image the town of Igarka and turned north to capture on film Noril'sk's port of Dudinka. Turning northeast once more, away from the Yenisey, they exited Soviet airspace at their approximate point of entry.

As the three aircraft and their precious cargo of exposed film neared the North Pole, they rendezvoused once more with KC-97s for another refueling—enough, mission planners had determined, to return them safely to Greenland. But, now running late against schedule, the RB-47Es encountered unexpected headwinds on the return leg over the North Pole, and their time of arrival in Greenland came and went. Forty-five minutes passed. In the control tower at Thule Air Base, anxious planners finally broke radio silence. Using the lead aircraft's call sign, Lloyd Fields, Lappo's squadron commander, asked him to report how much fuel he had remaining. The welcome if disquieting radioed reply was a loconic: "Enough!" A few minutes later, one after another, the reconnaissance bombers touched down on Thule's 10,000-foot runway, their fuel tanks nearly empty, their fuel reserves far below the Strategic Air Command prescribed minimum at landing.

Once on the ground, the aircrews were escorted to a secure room at base operations and debriefed. A specially cleared photographic team at Thule developed the film from the bombers' reconnaissance cameras. Afterward, the original negatives and their copies were flown directly to SAC headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, and to CIA headquarters at 2430 E Street, N.W., in Washington, D.C. The aircrews that took the images of

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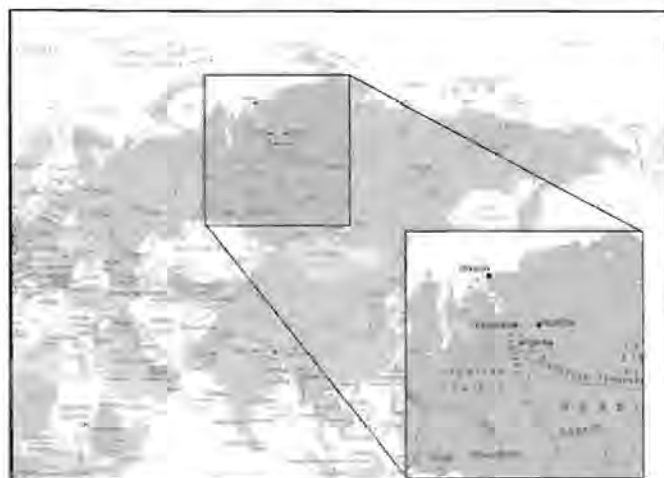
mysterious Noril'sk did not possess the clearances to see them. But you will see in the accompanying photos some of the nearly 50-year-old images of that remote city—a city and its inhabitants fixed on film at one moment in time. Smoke from the enormous chimneys at the coal-fired smelters hangs motionless in the frosty air of 14 April 1956. Even the headquarters building of Noril'sk Nickel, built in the early 1950s at the city's center, can be identified. For the U.S. Intelligence Community and the nation's leaders, this and other SENSINT overflight missions marked an important step in revealing the industrial and military secrets of the Soviet Union.***

*SAC's legendary reconnaissance pilot John Lappo (*died 21 Nov 2003, ed.*) piloted the lead aircraft, with Dyle Channel co-pilot and Harry Wolfe navigator. Charles "Bud" Mundy commanded the second aircraft with Howard Adams co-pilot and Ronald Whitely navigator. Franklin Roll piloted the third RB-47E, crewmembers unknown.

**The KC-97s also operated in complete radio silence, but each mounted an electronic beacon that the reconnaissance bomber radars could home on and follow until the tankers were sighted visually.

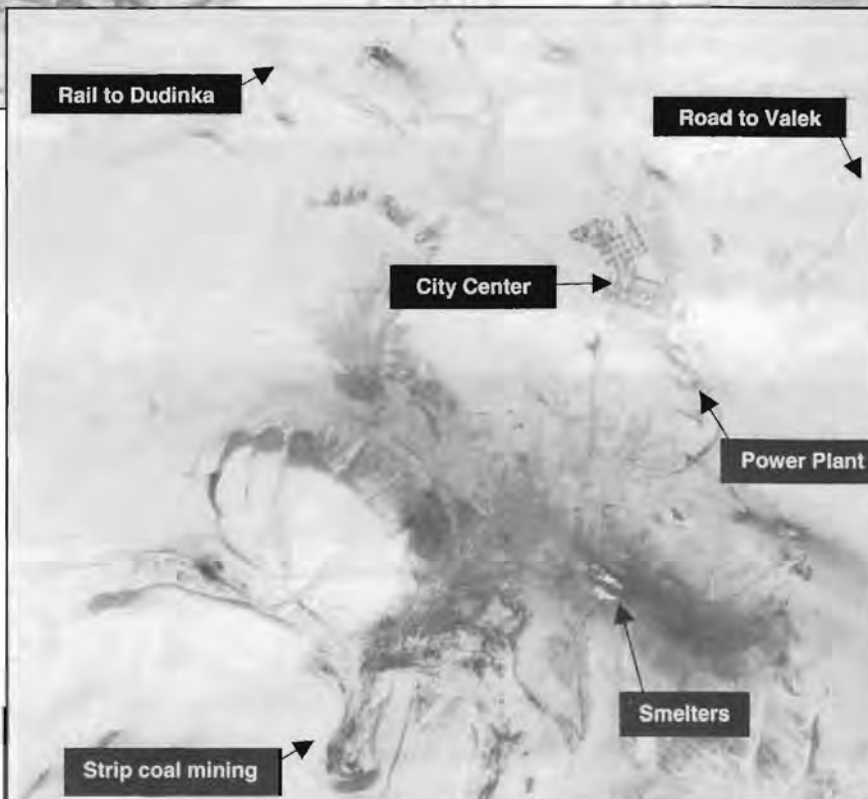
***The most complete accounting of the SENSINT Program currently available is contained in R. Cargill Hall and Clayton D. Laurie, eds., *Early Cold War Overflights, Symposium Proceedings, Volume I: Memoirs, and Volume II: Appendixes* (National Reconnaissance Office, Washington, D.C. 2003).

*R. Cargill Hall
Historian (Retired)
National Reconnaissance Office*





Noril'sk's smelters imaged by a 36-inch focal length camera mounted in a RB-47E. Based on the smoke plumes and distribution of soot and ash, the wind at the surface on 14 April 1956 was blowing in the opposite direction to the local prevailing winds.

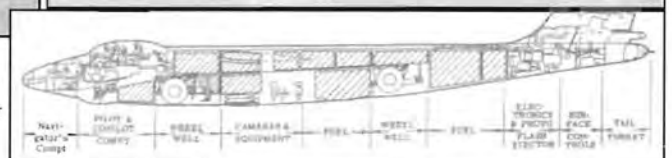


Left - Noril'sk imaged during a SEN-SINT mission on 14 April 1956 using the 6-inch focal length camera mounted in a RB-47E.

Below - The city center of Noril'sk. The headquarters of Noril'sk Nickel can be identified by its shadow.



Aerial Refueling of RB-47 reconnaissance bombers by KC-97 tankers made possible deep penetration overflights of the Soviet Union.



Bookshelf

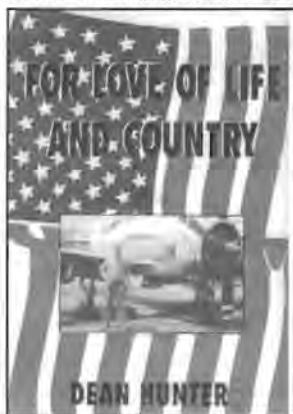
Former B-47 Association President Sigmund Alexander has published several histories in recent months that will certainly be of interest to the membership. The first is a very complete history *The B-47 Stratojet, Centurion of the Cold War*. It is softbound and 245 pages



in length with over 400 photos and diagrams. This is not only a technical history of the airplane but also an insider's view of what life in SAC and on alert was really like. It places the B-47 into the context of world events of the Cold War.

The book is available from the author at 12110 Los Cerdos Dr., San Antonio TX 78233. The cost of the book is \$30.00. Alex has also published two other histories that will be of interest to our readers. *History of the 100th BW(M)* is available for \$25.00, and *History of the 100th Air Refueling Squadron* is \$15.00.

Dean Hunter has led an interesting and exciting life, serving in the Marines during the Korean War and later as a pilot in the USAF. He joined the Air Force hoping to later land a job with the airlines, but stayed until retirement. He flew B-47s with the 320th at



March AFB and later with the 384th BW at Little Rock. Later assignments took him to Vietnam as an Air Commando in T-28s and A-1s. His book *For Love of Life and Country* is \$25.00, and available from amazon.com. Copies may also be available from the author at 9818 Dekoven Drive SW, Lakewood WA 98499-1825.

The book is hardbound with 402 pages. It is illustrated with black and white photos.

Cooper-Slipper...continued from page 4



The 7th throttle for the Orenda mounted on the co-pilot's throttle stand in the CL-52.



The Orenda nacelle mounted on the aft fuselage of the Canadair CL-52.

B-47 Stratojet Association Jacket

The jacket is navy blue, 70% cotton/30% rayon, peached poplin with 100% nylon lining. Full zip, with antique zipper, contrasting sand color collar with storm flap, fabric self-adjustable cotton cuff, set-in front pockets, and elastic waistband. Cost is \$110 for sizes S-M-XL. 2XL is \$115; 3XL is \$118. Monogram on the left front can be added for \$10. First line is name, second line is bomb wing, third line is squadron. Send prepaid order (with size and monogram information) to: Positive Impressions, Inc. 106 South Main, Ottawa, KS 66067 (800-214-8337). Checks should be made payable to Positive Impressions, Inc. Visa and Master Card are accepted. See the Association web page for order form.

Supply Room

Items are available from George Brierley, 5342 6th Place South, Gulfport, FL 33707. Make checks payable to the B-47 Stratojet Association.

Association T-Shirt	\$15
Association Pin	\$10
Association Patch	\$5
Association mouse pad	\$3
Association Mug (new design)	\$10

Reunion Golf Visor	\$7
Pewter B-47 tie pin	\$5
1,000 hour pin	\$25
3,500 hour pin	\$25
B-47 Commorative medal	\$10
B-47 Stationery (25 sheets/25 envelopes)	\$13

Application For Membership - The B-47 Stratojet Association

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth (for life members): _____

Military - Your Position In The Air Force: _____

Bomb Wing(s) You Served With: _____

BW from _____ to _____

BW from _____ to _____

BW from _____ to _____

Civilian - Position/Job _____ Company: _____

From _____ to _____

Comments: _____

Dues

One Year: **\$15.00**

Life Memberships

Age	Dues
59 & under	\$300
60-64	\$250
65-69	\$200
70-74	\$150
75-79	\$100
80 & up	\$ 50

Dues are payable each January.

Payments and this form should be mailed to:

Mark Natola, Secretary/B-47 Stratojet Assn.,
23 Oak Ridge Rd.
W. Lebanon, NH 03784.

-This form may be copied to avoid cutting newsletter-

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*Blasting off for the B-47 Stratojet Reunion
in
Dayton OH 23 - 26 September, 2004*