

The Stratojet Newsletter

April 2010 Volume 32

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

Destination Omaha ~ 23-26 September 2010



The proud but weathered nose of B-47E 52-1412 stands guard over the silent warriors of the Strategic Air & Space Museum (SASM). This is the only bomber version of the Stratojet that is preserved and displayed indoors and it is next up on the Museum's restoration shop schedule. The restoration fund has been steadily growing with donations from the Association and our individual members purchasing bricks for the Museum's memorial walkway. The aircraft is patiently awaiting your arrival as we gather in Omaha for our seventh Reunion on 23-26 September of this year. The SASM will be the host for a wonderful Friday evening of fine food, great entertainment (provided by The Avi8tors, a well-known local singing group), and an opportunity to spend some quality time with the exhibits, especially the B-47. Make sure you check out the memorial bench donated by our membership and displayed near the Stratojet. Deadline for registration is August 22. Registration materials were mailed in mid-April. If you did not receive yours, contact the Newsletter Editor, Dick Purdum (402-291-5247, dickpurdum@cox.net) or The Reunion BRAT (360-663-2521, info@TheReunion-Brat.com). Sign up and make your reservations now. See you there!

photo: SASM

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Roll Call of Honor

Thurman E. Ray, Georgetown TX, passed away last year.

Norman W. Cook, Santa Maria CA, passed away on 15 February 2009.

Bob Fudge, DeBary FL, passed away on 6 January 2010 from complications following heart valve replacement.

Mayday

I am a boom operator in the 32nd Air Refueling Squadron and we are researching our squadron's history. We know the 32nd was in the 301st BW at Barksdale from '52 - '58, then into electronic/recon from '58 - '64, when it was inactivated at Lockbourne, OH. We're looking for any info, memoirs, memorabilia, photos and other mementos of the 32nd's time as a B47 squadron that anyone would be either willing to donate, or if it is a document, allow us to make a reproduction/copy. Any information you can provide us with would be greatly appreciated. Very respectfully,

SSgt Jeremy Becnel, 32 ARS Boom Training Flt
609-754-8969, Jeremy.Becnel@McGuire.af.mil



Important Reminders

- **Pay your dues for 2010** (the number on your mailing label indicates the year through which you are paid-up).
- Send dues to Bob Griffiths, Treasurer.
- Send address, email, & telephone corrections to Bob Griffiths.
- Send newsletter articles, photos, news about members, etc. to Mike Habermehl, Editor. NOTE: new email address: cmhs@sbcglobal.net

The B-47 Stratojet Newsletter is published three times each year. It is intended solely for the enjoyment, camaraderie, and enlightenment of the membership of the B-47 Stratojet Association. Requests to use or reprint any portion of the contents should be directed to the Editor. Contributions of material to the Newsletter should be sent to the Editor, B-47 Stratojet Newsletter, P. O. Box 1144, Brenham, TX 77834-1144, cmhs@sbcglobal.net.

Association Website - <http://www.b-47.com>



Our Reunion hotel will be the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Omaha. Rooms have been set aside for us at the rate of \$85 per night including parking and airport transportation. Make sure that you tell the reservations clerk that you are with the B-47 Stratojet Association Reunion to get the special rate, free parking and full breakfast. If you are traveling by air, make sure they know you are with the Reunion when you call the hotel from the airport to insure you get the free ride. The hotel telephone number is 402-393-3950. Reservations must be made by August 22, 2010. The hotel is located at 3321 South 72nd St., Omaha NE. A map will be in the July newsletter.

Reunion Agenda

The schedule for the Reunion will be a full one but it is designed with plenty of time to rest and recoup from the many activities.

Thursday - Sept. 23

Arrive and check-in
Buffet meal
Hospitality Room
Meet and greet old and new friends

Friday - Sept. 24

Henry Doorly Zoo/Offutt AFB Tour*
Visit local attractions
Hospitality Room
Evening at Strategic Air & Space Museum
(5:00 PM-10:30 PM)*

Saturday - Sept. 25

Durham Museum/Old Market Shuttle*
Business Meeting (AM)
Banquet & Dance

Sunday - Sept. 26

Farewell Breakfast Buffet
Depart

* extra cost for event - reservation must be made on registration form.



What To See and Do

The Old Market - shops, restaurants, galleries, historical buildings, museums, walking tours, etc.

The Durham Museum - a downtown icon located in the former Union Station is now a collection of exhibits, galleries, and shops dedicated to telling the story of Omaha and the western expansion of our nation.

Henry Doorly Zoo - The world's largest indoor desert, under the world's largest Geodesic dome, next to the world's largest indoor rain forest. Truly unique, this world class zoo also has an aquarium, cat complex, gorilla valley, and an IMAX theater.

Offutt Air Force Base - the SAC chapel is a must-see for all Cold War veterans.

Lewis & Clark - Lewis & Clark Landing and Lewis & Clark Historic Trail Visitor Center are important stops for the history buff.

Kenefick Park - Two of the greatest locomotives ever to power Union Pacific Railroad: Centennial No. 6900 and Big Boy No. 4023 are on display.

Freedom Park Navy Museum - Minesweeper USS Hazard and submarine USS Marlin are among exhibits.

General Crook House - restored home of frontiersman General George Crook, Commander, Dept. of the Platte.

Gerald R. Ford Birth Site & Gardens - rose garden modeled after the one at the White House.

First National's Spirit of Nebraska's Wilderness and Pioneer Courage Park - bronze sculptures representing the spirit of westward expansion.

Strategic Air & Space Museum - 300,000 square feet of indoor exhibits including the aircraft of the Strategic Air Command.

We will have more features about the Reunion and Omaha in the next issue.



Lest We Forget ~ B-47 Memorials Across America

Part II

by Sigmund Alexander

Crew & Individual Memorials



The Memorial to Major Palm's crew. The aircraft was shot down over the Barents Sea. The monument park was neglected until Olga Harris, the widow of B-47 aircraft commander Lt/Col Hollis, got the city of Topeka to clean it up in 1994. Olga has since died and the present condition of the park is unknown.



The memorial to Capt. Craven's crew was commissioned by the family of Lt. Janarone (Mrs. Mary Anne Finton, his widow, and son Paul), and dedicated on 18 October 2002 in Enonsburg VT. Capt. Craven's family also visited the crash site later in the month. Brian Lindner was the archaeologist of the crash site and served as the guide when the families visited the site.



Capt. Truman Burch was a copilot on a B-47 of the 100th BW that crashed on takeoff at Pease AFB, NH. Unfortunately his family was not aware that Truman was in the United States Air Force and not the Army Air Force. He had been a member of the 349th BS but at the time of his death was a member of the 351st BS.



307th BW Memorials

The 307th BW has memorials at the Air Force Academy, the National Museum of the United States Air Force, and Veterans Park in Antelope Park in Lincoln.

Unveiling of the memorial sculpture of Capt. Russell Bowling at the Bowling Lake Lodge, summer 1958. L/R: B/G Perry Hosington, 818th Air Division C.O.; Mary Joyce Bowling, Capt. Bowling's widow; Capt. Bowlings's broher and mother; Robert and Rebecca, his children; and Andy Devine. Capt. Bowling was killed in a crash at RAF Lakenheath on 27 June 1956.



The Veteran's Park memorial was dedicated in 2000. On it are the insignia of the 307th, the Air National Guard, and the Air Force Reserve.



The Air Force memorial wall eagle at the Air Force Academy was donated by former prisoners of Stalag Luft III on 12 May 1995. The 307th BW memorial plaque was dedicated in 1998.



The 307th memorial bench at Veteran's Park.

On 16 Oct., 2008 a memorial was dedicated to the 307th BW crew on the field where the aircraft crashed. The site is the property of Jack Johnson who recalls the crash. The monument was created by John & Ray Mazolla to honor their uncle, Lt. Anthony C. Marcanti, the navigator.



Author's note: Lt. Marcanti was a class mate of mine in nav school at Ellington AFB. We graduated in April 1952.

The Strategic Air Command Memorial Chapel



The chapel was completed in 1956, and in November 1958 General Power initiated a program to honor the SAC combat crewmen killed while flying missions. The crewmen who died would be honored at an annual SAC Memorial Sunday which would be held on the Sunday that proceeded the founding of SAC, 21 March (1946). In addition a stained glass window would be created and installed in the Command chapel. Generous donations from base chapels in the Command made it possible to install not only the originally planned glass memorial window, but stained glasses in the remaining chapel windows. These windows identify the four Air Forces and the seventy-two SAC divisions and wings. The stained glass windows were dedicated on 29 May, 1960.

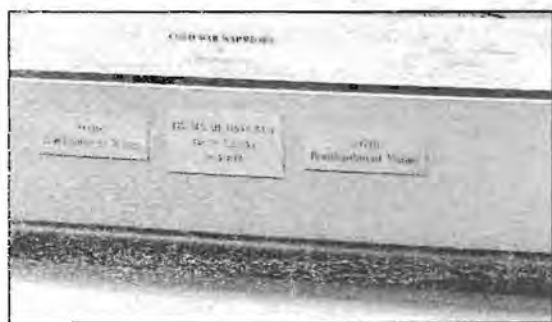


On 23 March, 1996 the SAC Memorial Wall of Honor was dedicated in the chapel. The memorial wall includes the names of all flying and missile crewmen killed in the performance of their mission, and support personnel who lost their lives as a result of enemy action.

Cold War Warrior Prints



The Lincoln print with the small plaques on the mat below.



Tony Minnick was the guiding force behind the Lincoln effort to get the print displayed at the airport. It is located in the terminal in the area indicated by the circle in the photo.

In 2008, framed "Cold War Warrior" prints became a part of the decor of the Salina and Lincoln airports and base operations at MacDill AFB. The prints were donated by Tom Hatten.



Major Cappy Bie presenting the print to MacDill AFB. Cappy was assisted in the effort by Dick Purdum.



Salina airport authorities accept the print. It will eventually be displayed in a museum that will be built and dedicated to the base and the personnel who serve there. Leary Johnson and Roe Walker led the effort at Salina.

The Chanute Crew And The XB-47



The gang up in the Chanute area continue their work on the XB-47. Bill Geibel, on left, Chanute Air Museum Restoration Coordinator, caulks and seals the canopy while Richard Redden and Pete Troesch install the new navigator's table in the old bomber's nose. Rol Barger (not pictured) provided assistance with shaping and riveting a new piece of aluminum to permit the display of the manufacturer's (Boeing) instruction plates. Although work slowed during the winter months the guys still put in about 90 hours of work (December-March) on the airplane's entrance door and the J-47-11 engine.

Photos: Pete Troesch

Getting Up Close And Personal With The Second B-47!!!

The Chanute Air Museum (formerly Chanute AFB) would like to extend an invitation to Association members to attend a weekend get-together of individuals living within a 3-4 hour driving distance from the museum in Rantoul, IL. Cities within this 3-4 hour driving time include Chicago, Milwaukee, Davenport, St. Louis, Indianapolis and Gary. Of course other members are welcome, too.

Members of the B-47 Stratojet Association and their friends will be able to get up close and personal with the museum's XB-47. The attendees will be able to participate in preservation activities of the Stratojet if they desire or just share B-47 stories with other admirers of this historic and only one-of-a-kind airplane (or any of the other 38 aircraft on display at the museum).

Dates planned for this get-together are Friday and Saturday, June 25th and 26th, 2010. Special rates, through the Chanute Air Museum, for overnight lodging are available at the Quarters Inn located a short distance from the museum. Continental breakfast is available. Camp sites with utility hook-up are located nearby.

If you are interested in this event, please contact Robyn York, Tel. (217) 893-1613 Ex. 22 or email, volunteers@aeromuseum.org or Association member, Pete Troesch at Tel. (309) 662-1685 or email, patnpete8@verizon.net.

Bookshelf

Two B-47s were lost during the Cuban Missile Crisis. This small booklet is the story of one them and the Electronics Warfare Officer who lost his life with the rest of the crew. *He Was A Hero* documents the life of Capt. Robert Dennis and those last fateful minutes of RB-47H 53-6248 on 26 October 1962 as it took off from Kindley AFB, Bermuda. Also lost was Major William Britton A/C, Capt. Robert Constable NAV, and Lt. Rasmussen CP. The cause of the crash was an improper water/alcohol mixture that had been prepared by a civilian contractor. Written by Neil E. Webner, the brother-in-law of Capt. Dennis, the booklet is 32 pages in length with eight black and white photos. Publication date is 2008 and the book is available from lulu.com. Price is \$9.93.

Another lulu.com publication is *In Defense of Freedom; A History of RAF Greenham Common*. The book's author is J. J. Sayers and it was published in 2006. About 40 pages are devoted to B-47 operations including accounts of several accidents that were Stratojet related. Black and white photos illustrate base facilities (some of them provided by member Gus Letto). The 170 pages cover the years 1941 to 1992. The softcover book sells for \$16.33.



We have one more publication related to nuclear accidents of the Cold War. It isn't about B-47s but it is a well-written and documented account of the first lost atomic bomb. On 14 February 1950, a B-36B (44-92075) crashed after conducting cold weather tests with a Mark IV atomic bomb at Eielson AFB. The crew of 17 jumped from the stricken plane over Prince Royal Island off the coast of British Columbia. All but five survived. The

bomb was jettisoned over water and the autopilot was set to take the airplane far out to sea. However, on 3 September 1953, a Royal Canadian Air Force Lancaster, on a search mission for a different aircraft, reported it had sighted the wreckage of a B-36 at the 6000' level of Mt. Kologet, 60 miles east of Stewart, British Columbia. It was determined, after a ground party reached the aircraft, that it was indeed 44-92075. The last crew member to leave the stricken aircraft was the copilot/weaponeer. Had he remained onboard and attempted to fly back to land? There are a lot of questions generated by this "aviation mystery" and the author does a fine job of presenting the story. SAC veterans will find the chapter on Gen. LeMay and the early years of the Command interesting as well as the details on early procedures with atomic weapons. *Broken Arrow: America's First Lost Nuclear Weapon* was authored by Norman S. Leach. The softcover book is 203 pages with over 60 black and white photos and diagrams. There are notes, a bibliography, and an index. Price is \$19.95, published by Red Deer Press in 2008.

Supply Room

Items are available from George Brierley, 9071 St. John's Pkwy, Apt. 12, Niagara Falls, NY 14304. Make checks payable to the B-47 Stratojet Association. **Please ADD \$3.00 for shipping and handling**



Association Pin - \$10.00

1000 Hour Pin - \$25.00



Association Coaster (2) - \$2.50

Mug - Association "Horn Button" emblem on reverse side - \$10.00



Association Mouse Pad \$3.00

Tote Bag from 2008 Reunion at Marietta (side pockets, carrying strap, Association logo)

\$10.00



Association T-Shirt With Pocket - \$17.00 (Size -M,L,XL)



Shirt Front



Shirt Back



Back in the July 09 Newsletter (Vol. 30) we ran the photo on the left and asked if anyone could identify these happy fellows. Donald O'Hea could because he had sent the original photo. L/R, A/C Maj. William Reeter, Pilot 1st Lt. Alonzo Simpson and Nav Capt. Martin Iverson, all of the 3rd SRS, 26th SRW at Lockbourne AFB, OH, in 1955. S/Sgt O'Hea was the Crew Chief. This is a good place to put in a plug for your photos and articles. We can't use all of them right away but your help will insure that the Newsletter will have interesting content for years to come.

Photo: Donald O'Hea

Application For Membership - The B-47 Stratojet Association

☐ New Member
☐ Renewal (Fill in Name only, and address data if changed)

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:

Bob Griffiths, Treasurer/B-47 Stratojet Assn.
 303 Double Eagle Road
 Burgaw, NC 28425-8559

~This form may be copied to avoid cutting newsletter~

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We're not real sure whose crew this is or exactly what they are doing. We are reasonably sure that the location is Lockbourne AFB (Ohio plate, Columbus dealer sticker, RB-47E). There were always rumors about Lockbourne. Maybe this is why.

Photo: via Editor

Pay Your Dues For 2010 Today
2010 Reunion - 23-25 September - Omaha NE