



The Stratojet Newsletter

Vol. 11

August 2001

Board of Governor's Meeting in Wichita

By Sigmund "Alex" Alexander

We came from near and far to attend the first Board of Governor's meeting of the B-47 Stratojet Association in Wichita. Don Cassiday flew in from Chicago and Wen Painter and his wife Jo-Ann flew in from Mojave, California in their Cessna from making stops every two hours to allow Wen to stretch his legs. Jim Diamond drove in his Ford 350 diesel from Kansas City while Dick Purdum drove in from Omaha and Mike and I made that long road trip from Texas that was rather prosaic until we reached the Kansas border. Just inside Kansas the sky turned black and as we proceeded down the highway we were hit with gale force winds and a blinding rainstorm. When the visibility reached zero we crept off the highway and parked at a truck weighing station. When the abated, we slowly proceeded to Wichita and finally arrived exhausted at the Ramada Inn where we were met by Andy Labosky. Andy led us to a Chinese buffet restaurant that offered a fabulous variety of Chinese and American food. After dinner, we waddled back to the hotel where we held an impromptu bull session in the parking lot that was interrupted by the noise of a B-1 taking off in afterburner. We then proceeded to the basement of the Ramada to hold a meeting. All items on the agenda were covered and the meeting was closed. Poor Don Cassiday had nothing but trouble in finding a suitable room. As he was proceeding down the hall, one could hear the strains of Wagner's Flying Dutchman. The truth is that the Ramada was rather run down and was in the process of being renovated that was long overdue.

The next morning Andy met us and we proceeded to the Kansas Air Museum that was formerly the Wichita airport terminal. Bob Erdman, a former B-47 instructor at Amarillo, joined us at the museum for the tour. The ex-terminal is a wonderful example of art deco and the front of the building has beautiful multi colored aeronautical reliefs. The interior of the building is in the process of being restored but this did not diminish the outstanding artifacts on display. My principle source of interest was the archive section that contains scores of B-47 photos, articles and books. I could have spent the rest of the day in the archive section. However, we proceeded outside to watch a B-1 takeoff. The B-1 took off in afterburner and it was most deafening engine roar I have ever heard. I don't know how the residents of Wichita put up with it.

After the takeoff we proceeded to the B-47 memorial where we met Lt. Ron Betts, who was in charge of the restoration of the B-47 and Mel Horstman, a former member of the 40th BW at Smoky Hill and Forbes. The folks at McConnell did an outstanding job in restoring the B-47 and are to be commended for a job well done. After viewing the Stratojet, we proceeded to lunch at the base and then on to the Boeing plant where we had another board meeting. During the day we were sandwiched in between the 462 members of the 73rd BG, B-29, that were also touring the base and Boeing. The first part of our tour took us to view the restoration work on the B-29 named "DOC". The aircraft has been completely disassembled and is being restored to flying condition by 2001 standards and not those of when it was built in 1944, it is labor of love. Andy then took us to an engineering office where we given a demonstration of computer assisted design. Computer assisted design has resulted in the elimination of slop in both design and construction producing near perfect items and doing away with the

need for shims. The afternoon concluded with a tour of the 737 production line and the fascinating world of computer assisted machines. The production rate of the 737 is near max with 28 fuselages being turned out a month. Leaving the Boeing plant we returned to the hotel and proceeded to dinner together at Carlos Kelly's Mexican restaurant. There was no nightlife for us as we were rising at 5 AM to get on the road home. It was a very productive meeting that will result in making the association a better organization. On behalf of the members of the board I want to thank Andy Labosky for a job well done in arranging for our visit and tours.

Minutes of the Board of Governors Meeting, 17 May 2001



L to R Mel Horstman, Jim Diamond, Don Cassiday, Bob Erdman, Wen Painter, Dick Purdum, Andy Labosky, Alex Alexander, Mike Habermehl, Lt. Ron Betts, and Lt. Neil A. Poston. .

Financial Report The treasurer presented his report showing that we have over \$15,000 in the bank as of mid May. Future financial obligations were discussed and it was decided to publish 3 newsletters and a new roster this year. Sufficient copies of the roster will be published to cover sending copies to all paid up members, extra copies for new members and other contingencies.

Financial Audit The board discussed the possibility of an annual audit but rejected it based on the safeguards currently in place and the high cost of accomplishing such an audit.

Dues Payment The paid up dues date was inadvertently left off the address label on April newsletter. A postcard will be sent out shortly clarifying the whole issue.

Web Site Jim Diamond has agreed to take over the Web site from Mark Natola. The board approved the expenditure of funds by Jim to establish and run a web site.

Cont. pg.3 col.1

Cont.from Pg.1 col. 2

Donation to the SAC Museum The board agreed to send \$2,500 to

Editorial Corrections

Article by Jim Diamond, *From the Hay Field to the Air Field* pg. 5 the electric wire supplied heat to the vortex generator and not deicing fluid.

George V. Adams PO Box 26062, Christiansted, VI 00824 is looking for a 380th BW patch.

Sid Steele's one hour Video/CD on the B-47 had an incorrect phone number and shipping charge. The correct information is: Price Video: 32.95, CD: \$37.95 and S/H: \$3.50.

Address: 3508 Corto, Ft. Worth, TX 76109
Tel. 817-924-0042

Article on the 50th Anniversary reunion on the delivery of the 1st B-47 pg. 13, a typo error it should have been the 306th BW not 307th BW.

Bill Dunnington's record on pg. 11. The base was still named Lake Charles AFB in 1953 and did not become Chennault AFB until 1959 or 1960. The correct tail number was 51-7063 and not 52-6103.

Bulletin Board

Blue Flame: Lt.Col. Marshall A. Dean, USAF (Ret.) is interested in ascertaining how many pilots were caught in Blue Flame and ended up as B-47 copilots. His address 450 Canyon Road, Wetumpka, AL 36093

Cold War roll of Honor Wen Painter is trying to compile a list of all the people who were involved with the B-47 over its lifespan. Please send him copies of orders or any other information you might have or send him your name and rank, the squadrons and wings you served with and the time frame in which you served. Wen's address P.O.Box 719, Mojave, CA 93501

Tel.661-824-2907, E-mail: wpainter@antelcom.net

Veterans of Underage Military Service The underage veterans association is seeking to recruit underage veterans. If you are interested in joining or obtaining more information on the organization, write to Veterans Of Underage Military Service, 4011 Tiger Point Blvd, Gulf Breeze, FL 3256. Tel. 888-653-8867, Fax: 850-934-1315.

Korean Service Medal. If you served in Korea during the Korean War you may be eligible to receive the ROK Service Medal. To qualify you must have served in the military from June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953, been PCS or TDY for 30 consecutive days or 60 non consecutive days and performed your duty within the territorial limits of Korea, the waters immediately adjacent to the waters thereto or in aerial flight over Korea participating in actual combat operations or in support of combat operations.

To apply a veteran must forward the request to HQ AFPC/DPPRA, 550C Street West, Suite 12, Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4714. A copy of his discharge papers, DD-214, or DD-215 must be included with the request. You may call Awards and Decorations from M-F, 7:30a.m.-4:30p.m. (CST) at 800-558-1404 or 210-565-2432/2520/2516, Fax 210-565-3318. The web site is <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/awards>

A **free CD of the USAFE band** is available by requesting one from the USAFE band at E-mail Allison.Baugh@SEMBACH.AF.MIL. Please include your name and address.

The B-47 Stratojet Association web site The web site of the B-47 Stratojet Association has moved, it can be found at: <http://www.b-47.org>. The new web master is Jim Diamond, the former hay bailer, B-47 crew chief, MOPAC engineer and computer guru. Our sincere thanks to Mark Natola for all his work on the web site in the past and to Jim for all his hard work in putting the new web site on line.

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Board of Governors

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The Korean Service Medal

the SAC Museum for the express purpose of restoring the B-47 at the museum.

B-47 Legacy Society Dick Purdum introduced the subject of the B-47 Legacy Society of the SAC Museum. Membership in the society is \$240 and the funds raised will be used by the museum to perpetuate the memory of the B-47.

Paid Up Lifetime Membership The board agreed to explore the possibility of establishing paid up lifetime membership in the Association based on actuarial tables. The board will vote on whether or not to establish a paid up lifetime membership and the price of such a membership after all the facts have been gathered and studied.

Newsletter by e-mail In an effort to hold down costs members on the Internet will be offered the option of receiving the newsletter by e-mail. Those desiring to receive the newsletter by e-mail in lieu of the hard copy please notify the editor Sigmund "Alex" Alexander - email address Sigmund.Alexander@worldnet.att.com

Bronze B-47 at the Air Force Academy Don Cassiday will explore the possibility of raising funds to erect a B-47 on the esplanade at the Air Force Academy.

Video history Mark Natola has agreed to arrange for the video recording of the reunion in Seattle, as well as establishing a video recording room where members can record their B-47 experiences. The board discussed the importance of capturing these memories on tape while it is still possible.

Jim Diamond's CD Jim is creating a CD that will contain a history of the SAC B-47 fleet and a vast collection of B-47 photos. Jim plans to sell the CDs as a money making proposition for the Association.

Nominations for a new president President Alex has stated he will step down as president in Seattle. Nominations are now in order for a new president.

B-47 Jackets Wen Painter has agreed to work with George Briery regarding making B-47 jackets available for members to purchase.

Membership List The fact that occasionally, the membership list of the association has been obtained by commercial organizations was discussed. It was agreed to remind all that the membership list is not to be made available for commercial purposes.

Stratojet Stationery The possibility of obtaining and selling B-47 stationery as a fundraiser will be explored. Those having an interest in obtaining such stationery should contact Alex.

Reunion in Seattle 2002 The Museum of Flight will be asked to have B-47 memorabilia available for sale. Pioneer B-47 engineers from Boeing and early Air Force B-47 pilots will be invited to attend as honored guests. The board will meet on Thursday in Seattle and a business meeting for the membership will be held following the Saturday banquet. Further details on the reunion will be found in the next newsletter.

Pressing Board Business Any important board business before the board meets in Seattle will be conducted via the Internet Synopsis of Web site information in the newsletter This issue is unresolved.

Reunion 2004 Members will be asked to select the next reunion site from the following: the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, Wichita, Kansas, or the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia.

Sigmund "Alex" Alexander
President of the B-47 Stratojet Assn.

Attendees: Sigmund Alexander, president; Dick Purdum, vice

president; Don Cassiday, treasurer, Mike Habermehl, member; Andy Labosky, member; Jim Diamond, member; and Wen Painter, member.

Absent: Mark Natola, Secretary

I May be Dumb but I am Not Stupid

By Jack Earle

A B-47 crew returning from a night mission was preparing to land at March AFB California. Approaching Blythe, the start



Andy Labosky and Lt. Ron Betts, the project officer, for the restoration of the B-47 in the McConnell Memorial Park.

descent point for landing, the crew was unable to contact the command post. The Aircraft Commander, Homer A, instructed the copilot to try the various radio stations in the area to relay message to the command post. The copilot tried unsuccessfully to contact Blythe, Needles, Palm Springs, and Daggett. Finally they managed to contact March and although it was weak they were told the weather was poor and that they might have to fly to Davis Monthan to RON. The commander post also stated that the weather was slated to improve enough for landing in a hour or two and that a KC-97 was enroute from Bakersfield with enough fuel to allow him to hold and land when the weather got better. Homer, the AC, replied, "Well you know I'm one of them there non-ready troops and if I got down there and could not get my fuel, I'd be f d." At that point it seemed like every radio in southern California came on the air with the same request -- "Say again call sign--say again call sign." Homer replied, "I ain't that f d up, I'm going to fly to Tucson. I may be dumb but I am not stupid."

Reunion 2002

Where: Seattle, Washington

When: Sept. 18-21, 2002

Hotel: Doubletree Suites at Southcenter

Reservations : Tel 206-575-8220

Cost : \$115 per night + 12.4% Local Tax
for a total of \$ 129.26

Amenities: Free transportation to and from the airport, a free breakfast buffet, and suites will be provided instead of rooms.

Registration Fee: \$130

Amenities: Registration room, hospitality room stocked with alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and snacks, reception buffet dinner, tour of the 747 assembly plant, shuttle bus transportation to the Museum of Flight and the Seattle waterfront, banquet dinner, ten honored guests and their companions, projector and large TV screen, and a farewell coffee and Danish.

Optional Activity: A salmon dinner on the Indian Island of Tillicum, the cost of \$67 per person includes transportation.

Reunion Schedule:

Sept. 18, Thurs: Registration, reception buffet, and the hospitality room.

Sept. 19, Fri : Tour of the Boeing plant, following the tour the remainder of the day including dinner are on your own. The hospitality room will be open and that evening the optional dinner on Tillicum Is.

Sept. 20, Sat : Visit the Museum of Flight and or the Seattle waterfront, hospitality room, and the banquet dinner.

Sept. 21, Sun: Farewell Danish and coffee, depart.

Group Air fare will be available.

Final Registration date: August 20, 2002

Registration Flyers will be sent out in January 2002 that will provide final details information including information regarding the forwarding of payments.

B-47 Monument at USAFA

Don Cassidy

The B-47 Stratojet Association was formed to preserve the legacy of a great airplane and the men who flew and maintained it during the critical period of the Cold War. In keeping with that mission, the Board of Directors, at its recent meeting elected to pursue a monument to the B-47 at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

Those of you who have visited the Academy are probably familiar with the beautiful monuments of the great airplanes of the USAF in the area immediately north of Harmon Hall. These monuments are actually beautifully rendered models of the airplanes rendered in bronze and mounted on a suitable stone with appropriate bronze plaques to describe the airplane and the place it and its people played in the history of our Air Force. It is a wonderfully fitting place to display such monuments since the future leaders of our Air Force see them and are reminded of the legacy we have provided them. Because of their location, they are also visible to the thousands of tourists who visit the Academy every year. It was our belief that this would be a fitting project for us to undertake to perpetuate the legacy of the B-47. Don Cassidy, our treasurer, was chosen to head up this costly but tremendously important project. Don is in the process of forming a small group of members to attack the problem of raising the \$300,000 it will cost to build and install this monument. Clearly, this is not something we are likely to be able to do by ourselves but we believe that there will be a few organizations out there who will want to help us. Boeing who built the B-47 and for which it was the first in a long line of splendidly successful aircraft will, we feel sure, want to

participate with us.

As we are in the organizational stage of this campaign, we need to identify other persons of wealth and organizations that might be approached to contribute. You can help us by contacting Don Cassidy at 1402 West Downer Pl, Aurora IL 60506 or doncass@worldnet.att.com with your ideas such as:

1. Who do you know who might be interested in helping/donating?
2. What companies besides Boeing played a significant part in the B-47 and profited from that part?
3. What can you do to help?
4. What ideas do you have about the project?

Finally, we will need a representative from each B-47 wing to make personal contacts of the members in the wing. If you are willing to serve in that capacity, please contact Don.

Dues

The response from the membership to pay their dues has been most gratifying. We have 1360 names in our B-47 roster and roughly half of those listed are paid up. We have collected a little under \$10,000 to date but this will barely keep us abreast of our current and projected expenses. Recapping our expenses to date the April newsletter cost \$2900 to print and mail, mailing and telephone costs by Association officers was approximately \$200 for the first half of the year, and putting the new web site cost \$325. The new roster cost \$2100 to print and mail leaving roughly \$ 5,000 to publish and mail the remaining two newsletters. Therefore it is readily apparent why we need your support and why we are again asking those of you who are delinquent to please pay your dues. We cannot print and mail the newsletter and roster and maintain the web site without your support. If further dues are not forthcoming we will be forced to reduce costs by reducing the distribution of the newsletter to only those who are currently paid up. Again, I solicit your support for the B-47 Association by paying your dues.

Some members have been confused regarding the amount of dues they owe. Below is an example of an address as it will appear on your newsletter. The first line, 2*3*****Mixed AADC 760, is a code of the mailing company and is to be ignored. The second line is the year that the dues are paid up through. In the example below 0 means that John Smith has paid his dues through the year 2000.

A further guide to line two is below the address example.

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2*31 *****Mixed AADC 760
0
John Smith
Lake of the Woods
Boon Dock, MN 06913
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If line 2 is blank, you sent in your name but never joined the Association. If you desire to join please send in \$15

97 Last paid in 1997, \$45 in arrears
98 Last paid in 1998, \$35 in arrears
99 last paid in 1999, \$25 in arrears
0 last paid in 2000, \$15 in arrears

Dues should be sent to Mark Natola, 23 Oak Ridge Rd, W. Lebanon, NH 03784

What Really Happened By JD Moore/ Alex Alexander

Editor's note On June 17, 1986 M/G JD Moore and LtC Dale Wolfe flew 52-0166 from the NWC at China Lake to the Castle AFB Museum. The aircraft had lain on the desert floor since 1964 and it took volunteers four years to restore it to flying condition. An AFLC team deemed that the aircraft could not be flown safely and General O'Loughlin, the AFLC commander, refused to grant approval for the flight. However, General Larry D. Welch, CINCSAC, in coordination with the 15th AF commander gave approval for the flight. The ground crew that had worked on the restoration preflighted the aircraft and the aircraft was successfully flown to Castle AFB. However just as the aircraft was about to touch down, it was apparent there was a problem. The aircraft was in a nose high attitude and the # 6 engine scraped the runway. The following is J.D.'s account of the flight.

The takeoff was normal but shortly after liftoff the airspeed indicator and the down elevator control were lost. As we climbed the flaps were retracted normally and two T-33s came alongside to provide us with airspeed readings. The flight was flown with the gear down at an airspeed of 280 knots at an altitude of 18,000 feet and it took an hour and a half to reach Castle. The engines operated flawlessly. On reaching Fresno I flew a series of 45 degree S turns to allow the aircraft to descend to the approach altitude. When I started to make my first right S turn I lost the right aileron and later as we descended I also lost the left aileron and eventually both flaperons. With no down elevators I only had airspeed to control our descent. We flew a box pattern over the field and I made a very long final approach to runway 35, at 500 feet our escorting T-33s departed. We were now left on our own to feel our way down to touch down with only the rudder to control the direction of the aircraft. At 200 feet we were hit with 15-20 knot winds at a 45-degree to us making it difficult to keep the wings level. As we approached touchdown a Dutch roll induced by rudder inputs caused the nose to rise and we hit rear wheels first. As we touched down I popped the chute, that was not a B-47 brake chute but one made up of three F-105 chutes. The rollout was normal and I cut the outboard engines as we taxied in. A sigh of relief came over both Dale and myself as we knew the aircraft was safely on the ground.

It was not until we had exited the aircraft that we learned that we had scraped the #6 engine. Looking back to when I volunteered to make the flight, I had thought it would have been a routine but historic flight but would never have imagined that we would have encountered the problems we did. However, fortunately it all worked out in the end. The problems we encountered in no way can be attributed to the Castle ground crew that preflighted the aircraft, they did an outstanding job. The problems are directly related to an old aircraft that had lain in the desert for over 20 years.

"Hammer engineering, i.e., if it doesn't fit, pound it in."

By Louis Malucci

As you recall before each flight, ever crewmember checked the 781 for maintenance write-ups. As a navigator my main concern was the condition of the radar bombing system. What I read in the 781 did not inspire confidence in the system on the aircraft we were about to fly. The write up was, "radar occasionally encounters spoking" - circular flashes along the sweep which obliterates any returns on the screen. However, the maintenance team was unable to duplicate the malfunction or to determine the root cause. The following notation was indicated in the "actions taken" block in the 781-1, "when encountering spoking, kick

modulator." We were scheduled for a typical multi-profile mission which consisted of an air-to-air refueling, a celestial navigation leg and a low level navigation leg ending with a bomb run on the RBS, radar bombing site, at Minneapolis. After completing our refueling and high altitude navigation leg we entered the low level route and were on the bomb run when severe spoking appeared on the radarscope. I was faced with a dilemma, do I or do I not kick the modulator? The MA7A was reputedly worth \$300,000 in 1950 dollars and I was reluctant to kick this sensitive and expensive device with my combat boots. I called out, "Abort, abort! Severe spoking." The copilot immediately called the bomb plot reporting that we were abandoning the bomb run. Before he completed his transmission I interrupted him yelling, "Hold on a minute" as I gave the modulator a kick. The spoking disappeared and we proceeded to make a successful bomb run. Surely this is another version of "hammer engineering," i.e., if the part doesn't fit, as it should hit it with hammer until it does. We filled another SAC square as scheduled with the assistance of a good kick.

Early Cold War Overflights



LtC. William J. Meng is pictured talking to the Governor of Greenland in 1947. At the time Col. Meng was in charge of an expedition to map Greenland. Ten years later, in 1957 Col. Meng as commander of the 26th SRW deployed the wing to Thule to conduct operation Homerun, the mapping of the Soviet Arctic. A 156 missions were flown over the Soviet Arctic without a loss. Photo: Betty Meng



Mrs. Betty Meng, General Meng's widow is shown looking over her deceased husband's scrapbook. Col. Meng went on to become a general and after retirement worked for GD. On retiring from GD, he and Mrs. Meng moved to San Antonio. Mrs. Meng was presented with a Cold War medallion by the president of the association in recognition of the major role General Meng played in early Cold War reconnaissance.

What have you done for me lately?

By Sigmund Alexander

In June I received an unsettling letter stating that the name of the Strategic Air Command Museum had been changed to the Strategic Air and Space Museum. This was the culmination of a series of events that have occurred with the museum that have left me wondering what was going on?

At the last reunion of the Society of SAC in 2000, the board of the Society dissolved the Society without the approval of the membership. All assets of the Society were turned over to the Museum without an audit or a disclosure of the amount of funds involved.

Later that same year the museum created the B-47 Legacy Society. There was no coordination with the Stratojet Association regarding the objectives of the Legacy Society. However, if you send them \$250 you can become a member.

With the change of name of the museum it is obvious to me that the present board is not concerned with preserving the heritage of the Strategic Air Command. **You former members of SAC may have spent years on alert preserving the peace and winning the Cold War; but what have you done for me lately?**

The museum inherited a core of aircraft from the old SAC museum and has a fine facility. The board now feels its time to forget the past and move on. However, the past is remembered on the aircraft carriers *Intrepid* in New York City and the *Lexington* in Corpus Christi and on the battleship *Texas* in Houston. I am not against expanding the mission of the museum in Ashland, its outlook can be expanded while preserving the rich heritage of the past. The museum at Pueblo Colorado is the Fred E. Weisbrod Aircraft/ International B-24 Museum. The museum could be named the Strategic Air Command / Nebraska Air and Space Museum. In so doing the past could be remembered as the museum broadens its mission toward the future.

As expected the name change has aroused the ire of SAC veterans. We have two weapons at our disposal to make our views known letters and withholding funds. The members of the Board urge the members of the Association to send letters to the board of the museum and letters or e-mails to the Omaha World Herald. The letters should not be combative in any way but should express your views in a polite manner. Listed below are the addresses of the board and the Omaha World Herald.

Chairman Bruce Rohde
843 So. 96th. St.
Omaha, NE 68114

Vice Chairman Robert B. Daugherty
Valmont Industries Inc
P.O. Box 358
Valley, NE 68046-0358

Secretary/Treasurer Kenneth E. Stinson
FAX 402-445-8650

Charles W. Durham
1329 So. 83rd St.
Omaha, NE 68124

CMSgt (Ret) of the Air Force James M. McCoy
13705 So. 22nd Circle
Bellevue, NE 68123

C.J. Raffensperger
681 J.E. Blvd.
Omaha, NE 68132

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1000 Kiewit Plaza
Omaha, NE 68131-3374

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28210 West Park Highway
Ashland, NE 68003

Omaha World Herald
Public Pulse
World-Herald Square
Omaha, NE 68102
Fax 402-345-4547
E-mail" pulse@owh.com

The decision on remaining a member of the museum is a personal one and the Board of Governors of the Association is neither advocating nor opposing continued membership in the Museum. In the past I was both a member of the Society of SAC and the museum. I am not renewing my membership in the museum and any thoughts of joining the B-47 Legacy Society have been cast aside. I will only renew my membership in the museum if the name is changed to reflect Strategic Air Command.

I have an extensive collection of written B-47 materiel and memorabilia and the museum in Ashland will not be the repository of my collection if things don't change.

The membership will be apprised of any changes as they occur.



Reconnaissance is Black by Col. David Irwin, USAF (Ret.)

A series of four volumes related to reconnaissance. The first volume is presently available and includes coverage of the RB/EB-47s and the 55th SRW. It may be obtained from Turner Publishing 412 Broadway, Paducah, Ky 42002 or by calling 800-788-3350. The cost \$24.95+ S&H \$6.00.

THEN AND NOW

by Tom Gates

It was the winter of 1957-1958. Three officers were making their way towards Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, home to the 9th Bomb Wing (M), 15th Air Force, Strategic Air Command. The 9th was home to the 1st, 5th, and 9th Bomb Squadrons. The three officers were destined by name for a blank space on a wall in the operations office of the 1st Bomb Sqdn., designated only as N-22. The B-47 Aircraft Commander designee, Major Richard (Dick) Edmondson, arrived, having just completed nav training for pilots at Waco, Texas. 1st Lt. H. Paul Johnson, the B-47 Pilot designee, arrived from Reese AFB and Waco having completed pilot, then nav training for pilots. 1st Lt. Tom Gates, the Nav-Bomb designee, arrived from Mather AFB after completing the B-47 Radar Bomb Nav training. Each completed survival training at Stead AFB by the end of March and were ready to begin the ascent to B-47 crew-ready status. Crew N-22 spent most of 1958 training and successfully qualifying in the B-47. The crew upgraded to R-22 in January 1959 and certified in SIOP specific targets. They flew as an integral crew for about a year. Dick was selected 1st Bomb Sqdn. Ops officer and left the crew. With a new aircraft commander, Paul and Tom went on to become a lead crew, E-02, and then shortly thereafter to select crew status as S-02. Paul then left the crew and became the wing performance engineer until his assignment to Hq. SAC in 1963. Tom remained at Mt. Home until July 1963 in wing standardization on crew S-92. Dick ultimately became the commander of the 15th Bomb Squadron, retiring in October 1964 as the 9th Bomb Wing was sending the last of its B-47s to Davis Monthan AFB prior to wing deactivation. Paul retired in April 1978 from Hq. ADC, Ent AFB, CO. Tom retired in July 1982 from the Alaskan Air Command, Elmendorf AFB, AK.

The three have remained close friends over these many years. They enjoy the 9th Bomb Wing's biennial reunions and can be found retelling tales and reliving many memories they shared as B-47 crewmembers: the confusion of their first day on alert in the new underground alert facility; the day 11 of the 33 ATO bottles inadvertently fired on our "47" during a Bravo exercise; a 24 hour delay in notifying a father he had a new daughter because he didn't answer the phone at home (he was on alert!); the night of landing just a little short at Castle AFB in bad weather with inoperative windshield anti-icing and nothing but steady boost pump lights showing in the pilot's eyes, the "shacks"; Bar Nones; and the hi-altitude large charge Salt Lake Bomb Plot never did find; launching with a Mark 15-2 in the bomb bay and a full ATO rack to sit alert at Spokane's Geiger Field during the Cuban missile crisis. We all have our stories, our memories, which are shared by the many crews that flew and maintained the B-47 during its heyday in the Cold War, the war of skill and professional dedication which was so valiantly fought by so many.

Dick retired after many years with United Air Lines and lives with his wife Katy in Las Vegas, Nevada. They are very active in the Las Vegas community outreach program for abused youth. Paul is retired and lives in Salem, Oregon. Paul, a collector of Pierce Arrow automobiles, never married. He is the past President of the National Pierce Arrow Society (4 terms) and currently serves as a director of the Society. After a second career with the State of Alaska, I retired and my wife Bette and I now reside in Troy, Idaho.



1958 L to R Major Richard (Chick) Edmondson, AC; 1st Lt. H. Paul Johnson, CP; and 1st Lt. Tom Gates, Navigator, at Mountain Home AFB, ID.



1998 L to R Tom Gates, H. Paul Johnson, and Richard (Chick) Edmondson at the Pima Air and Space Museum at Tucson.

As The Crow Flies by R. Adam Sollis. R. Adam Sollis is the nom de plume of Bruce Bailey, the author of *"We See All,"* a history of the 55th SRW. His new book covers the development of a new reconnaissance platform to ascertain the capabilities of a new Soviet missile system and how to counter it and then follows the deployment of that aircraft to Turkey. Bruce is a senior Old Crow and his book is fascinating reading. The book may be obtained at: www.xlibris.com/bookstore 888-795-4274; Amazon.com; Borders.com, or your local book store.

Hank Cervantes has written a book entitled **Piloto, Migrant Field Worker to Jet Bomber Pilot**. It is published by Hellgate Press and will be available in July 2002.

A B-47 is down Over the Atlantic

By Sigmund Alexander

The author is indebted to Dick Glogowski, Ken Haertling, Frederick "Chick" Lange, Louie Alley of the Air Force Safety Center at Kirtland AFB, NM, and Jim Diamond for their assistance in writing this article. The copilot lost in the collision, 1st Lt. Duane Bartlett, was a student of mine at the University of Rochester ROTC program in 1956

The Collision

Every Monday on various SAC B-47 bases in the United States three aircraft were sent to the UK, Spain, and Morocco to replace three aircraft and their crews that were on nuclear alert. The operation named Reflex started in 1957 and was an integral part of the 24-hour alert program. Prior to 1957, B-47 wings were deployed overseas for 90 days as their B-29 predecessors had been.

During the day of the flight the crew received their reflex briefing, preflighted the aircraft, and had their baggage, as well as spare parts or an engine stowed on the bomb bay pallet. Attempting to sleep during the day was nearly impossible and when the crews boarded their aircraft they had to fight the need to sleep and remain alert as they flew across the pond. Pretakeoff briefings were held in the evening and were primarily devoted to weather, last minute changes and a review of the flight. The flights normally hit a tanker going over and coming back across the Atlantic. The operation had become routine and it took under seven hours to make the flight from Plattsburgh to the UK. The only problem encountered during the flight was staying awake after the refueling when the flight became boring due to straight and level flying. Arriving at their destination, the weariness was gone as the adrenaline kicked in as the crew prepared to land.

The flight of three aircraft of the 380th BW at Plattsburgh, NY scheduled on Monday Sept. 13, 1960 to RAF Brize-Norton was cancelled to avoid hurricane Donna. The takeoff was rescheduled for the next day, Tuesday. The three aircraft in the flight were Holt 66, the leader; Holt 61, #2; and Holt 53, #3. The two aircraft involved in the collision were Holt 61 and Holt 53.

The aircraft commander of Holt 66 was Major Dick Blakeslee, Wally Barnes was the copilot, and Earl Moorehouse the navigator.

The aircraft commander of Holt 61, 53-1967, was Capt. John L. Brennan, a veteran of World War II with over 4,500 flying hours and 763 hours in the B-47. His copilot was Capt. Richard Glogowski who had graduated pilot school in March 1958 and had a total of 718 flying hours with 170 B-47 in the B-47. The navigator was 1st Lt. John A. Carnochan.

Holt 53, 51-7047, was under the command of Capt. Robert C. Huber, who had over 2800 flying hours of which 546 hours were in the B-47. The 380th BW was copilot 1st Lt. Duane E. Bartlett's first operational assignment after graduating pilot training in December 1957. He had 740 flying hours and 194 hours in the B-47. The navigator was 1st Lt. Gary I. Simpson.

Both crews involved in the collision could be considered as typical experienced B-47 crews of the period. However, Capt. Brennan was by far among the more experienced B-47 aircraft commanders.

After taking off late Tuesday evening the cell of three aircraft proceeded to the Presque Isle Maine VOR where they accepted a single altitude clearance to 29,000 feet MARSAs, Military Accepts Responsibility for Separation Altitude. At the time the number of 707s crossing the Atlantic was relatively small and the B-47s had the high altitude air spaces almost to themselves. The flight continued in a loose trail formation with no specified distance separating the aircraft VFR (visual flight rules) on top. Number

two kept number one in sight and number three kept two in sight; in weather the navigators of #2 and #3 used their radars to station keep.

The flight was proceeding as planned and the cell was given clearance to climb to 33,000 feet. Shortly thereafter Capt. Huber proceeded to fly in close formation with Capt. Brennan's aircraft. It is surmised that Huber's crew had come in close to take pictures. Taking pictures during flight across the Atlantic or during refueling was not an uncommon occurrence.

Unfortunately, Huber positioned his right wing under the downwash from Brennan's left wing. To maintain his position, Capt. Huber had to pull back on his control column to overcome the downwash to fly straight and level. Reducing power slowly would have allowed Huber's aircraft to leave the downwash safely. Instead, Huber apparently increased power and once his wing was out of the downwash the nose of his aircraft rose dramatically since his control column was pulled back. Huber's aircraft then proceeded to collide with Brennan's aircraft and was last seen spiraling toward the sea.

Brennan's aircraft sustained major damage but with exceptional skill he kept his aircraft in the air. The rear mount on the #1 engine broke and the nose of the engine pivoted upward creating considerable drag. The left fuel tank was torn from the aircraft, the ECM access door was forced open, and only ten feet of the left horizontal stabilizer remained. Horizontal control of the left stabilizer was gone, and the #2 engine though damaged continued to operate at 70%. On the ground Capt. Glogowski recalled seeing the red 530th BS identifying stripe found on the tail of 51-7047 on the left side of the nose cone and nacelle of the #1 engine. He further stated that scrape marks on the bottom of wing indicated that when the wing tank separated that it had pivoted horizontally hitting the exhaust nacelle of the #2 engine and probably the ECM compartment and the stabilizer.

Realizing the aircraft was not about to crash Capt. Brennan proceeded to jettison the right wing tank and to shut down the #2 engine since it was damaged and might disintegrate destroying #3. Capt. Glogowski placed the SIF, Selected Identification Feature, on his IFF, Identification Friend or Foe, on emergency squawk and notified Holt 66. Holt 66 circled Holt 61 to ascertain the damage to Brennan's aircraft and then obtained clearance from Croughton airways to proceed to Prestwick, Scotland over the nearest landmass of Northern Ireland. Holt 66 escorted Holt 61 as permission was granted by Croughton to descend to 23,000 feet in order for Holt 61 to maintain an airspeed of 220 knots. Though the crew calculated that had enough fuel to arrive at Brize with 8,000 lbs, Capt. Brennan decided to land at Shannon where the weather was good while it was marginal at Prestwick and Brize. Approaching Ireland the crew decided they would ditch and not bail out if they could not make land, but their luck held out and they successfully made it.

On reaching land Capt. Brennan made a minimum control speed check of 170 knots with the landing gear and flaps retracted. The aircraft reacted normally and Brennan began a slow descent to 2000 feet. Holt 66 determined that Holt 61 could safely land and proceeded on to Brize-Norton. Neither aircraft was able to contact Shannon tower. However Shannon tower transmitted the necessary information in the blind on 121.5 with Brennan receiving the instructions over the OMNI radio navigation receiver. After a visual flyover with the navigator keeping track of the runway Capt. Brennan put Holt 61 safely on the ground on runway 23.

Capt. Brennan had done a superb job of flying and landing the airplane at Shannon despite the drag created by the damaged number #1 engine, damaged left horizontal stabilizer and the lost horizontal control of the left stabilizer. The next day articles and pictures appeared in both Irish and English papers. The

September 15, 1960 copy of the *London Daily Mirror* carried a headline "The Pilot is a hero" along with a picture of Brennan and his crippled aircraft.

An intensive air and sea search was conducted by Air Force SA-16s, RAF Shackletons and ships of the Royal and US Navies; but they failed to find any trace of Holt 53 that had gone down 250 miles off the Irish coast.

Air Force investigative team and security forces were flown to Shannon from England and the crew after being interviewed was flown to Brize-Norton. Security forces surrounded the damaged aircraft and photography was forbidden.

The Recovery of Holt 61, 53-1967

With the aircraft safely on the ground, a maintenance team from Brize-Norton was dispatched to determine whether to repair or scrap Holt 61. The team determined that it was economical to repair the damaged aircraft. However, it also found that maintenance personnel in the UK were unable to repair the aircraft and that a depot team would be needed to repaired the aircraft.

A 13 man team was sent from the Oklahoma Air Logistic Center at Tinker AFB, they were assisted by three airmen from Brize to repair Holt 61. The major problem facing the team was the replacement of the left horizontal stabilizer. A stabilizer was found on a B-47 assigned to Brize Norton that was used for the training of MMS, Munition Maintenance Squadron personnel in the loading and unloading of nuclear weapons. The stabilizer was removed from the aircraft and sent by truck and then ship to Ireland. In Ireland a special truck was obtained to carry the stabilizer from the port to Shannon over curvy village and country roads that had very little clearance. At the airport the necessary equipment to position the stabilizer was not available and the team had to improvise. A ditch digger and a chain hoist were used to put the stabilizer in place. The stabilizer had come from a Douglas built B-47 while Boeing built 53-1967, despite the fact that different companies built them the stabilizer fit perfectly. A local upholsterer made a balance bay seal when it was discovered that only one seal instead of two needed had been sent.

The horizontal stabilizer, the left and right elevators and the trim tab were replaced. The #1 engine mount was repaired and both the #1 and #2 engines were replaced, both the ECM dome the leading edge of the left wing were repaired. Repairs to the aircraft were completed on December 31.

All B-47s in the UK were under the command of the 7th Air Division and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Maintenance at 7th deemed that a Flight Functional Flight, FCF, (See 1) would have to be flown at Shannon before the aircraft was authorized to fly to Brize.

On December 31, 1960 the flight crew of Capt. Fred Lange as pilot and Capt. Larry Brechel as copilot and a maintenance launch team along with a power cart and liquid oxygen were flown to Shannon in a C-54. Fred was an extremely capable pilot with seven years in the aircraft and was the 7th Air Division Chief of Standardization who flew as the pilot for the division commander. Larry Brechel was a B-47 IP and the Field Maintenance Officer at Brize

The aircraft took off late in the afternoon from Shannon on December 31. Capt. Lange stated the aircraft needed some forward pressure on take off but he trimmed out. On reaching altitude Fred slowed the aircraft down to check trim at low crossover speed, at which time he turned off the power control unit, PCU. The aircraft immediately pitched up violently. Larry Brechel stated that he had the Boeing logo found on the horn of

the control column permanently implanted on his knees. Both Fred and Larry exerted all their force to keep the nose down. Holding the trim motor down to its maximum reduced some of the pressure. Capt. Lange felt that if he tried to revert to power control there could have been a violent reaction that might have snapped the wings off. He allowed the aircraft to climb and then started a roll to the left, and when he went through the horizon neutralized the down pressure and turned the power controls back on. Fred elected to his chances that the power controls would not fail, cancelled the rest of the FCF and obtained clearance to Brize. The rest of the flight was uneventful until they prepared to make a GCA at Brize where the English civilian controller mistook Fred's B-47 for a RAF Blackburn Beverly transport. Had not the ILS been on to cross check the GCA instructions, a lot of work might have been in vain.

Fred and Larry made it back early enough to attend a New Year's party at the Officers' Club. At the club the leader of the Tinker depot team asked Fred about the aircraft. Fred did not answer him but just glared. Brize maintenance personnel found that the depot team had installed the balance bays incorrectly. (See 2). CM/Sgt. Walter Satcher, the Non Commissioned Officer in charge Job Control at Brize, commented that the Tinker people were the supposed experts and they botched the job.

Epilogue

On his return to Plattsburgh, Capt. Brennan faced an accident review board. Capt. Brennan did not receive any accolades as he had in the English and Irish newspapers but was discharged from the Air Force. Having an accident in SAC was a heinous unforgivable sin and Capt. Brennan was a sinner. A former member of the accident board cynically summed up the action of the accident board as Capt. Brennan being told to take a hike on interstate 85, the highway that was located in front of Plattsburgh AFB. With his jet experience, FAA, the Federal Aviation Authority, hired Capt. Brennan to fly check rides on commercial 707 pilots. John Brennan retired from the FAA and died a few years ago.

Capt. Richard Glogowski stayed on with the 380th where he became an aircraft commander. In an ironic twist of fate Dick flew Holt 61, 53-196, to the bone yard in 1965. Walking away from the aircraft he recalled the surprise, fear, the prayers and grief he experienced the day of the accident. He retired from the Air Force and now resides in Illinois.

Capt. Lange retired from the Air Force and lives in the state of Washington; his copilot on the flight Larry Brechel died in July of this year in Florida

The aircraft commander of Holt 66, Major Richard Blakeslee, went on to fly B-58s. He was killed when he lost one or two engines on a low-level training mission and was unable to regain control of the aircraft and it rolled over and crashed.

(1) The B-47 had two systems to operate the aircraft's flight controls a manual system consisting of cable wires and pulleys and a hydraulic boosted system, PCU. With the aid of the PCU, power control unit, the pilot could move the flight controls with ease. The PCU was the primary flight control system for the B-47. The manual trim was centered on the ground for straight and level flight. A Functional Check Flight, FCF, was required to confirm the streamline settings or when a control surface was replaced. Electric trim motors were connected for the FCF and this was the only time the electric trim motor was used, they were disconnected the remainder of the time. At the proper altitude and airspeed, the pilot would turn off the PCU and use the electric trim to set the aircraft to fly straight and level. After the trim was

set the pilot would revert to hydraulic operation. On landing the motors were disconnected and stored on dummy plugs.

(2) Balance bays were installed on the ailerons, rudder, and elevator controls where they served to reduce the amount of force a pilot would have to exert in moving the flight controls. Balance bays consisted of balance panels, balance seals, and openings that permitted changing air pressure to act on the balance panels. Each elevator had two outboard and inboard balance areas with both upper and lower bays. Balance bays utilized the differential air pressure between the bays caused by moving the control surfaces to reduce the physical effort needed to move the control. When Capt. Lange took off the PCU was on and he was able to fly the aircraft with relative ease and when he turned the PCU off, the reversed balance bays pitched the aircraft up violently and he then was fighting an unbalanced condition to regain control of the aircraft.

1. Holt 61's crew mission planning at Plattsburgh AFB in 1960. L to R Capt. Richard M. Glogowski, copilot; Capt. John L. Brennan; and 1st Lt. John A. Cornochan, navigator.
2. The damage to the left horizontal stabilizer, elevator controls, and the ECM pod are clearly evident.



1



2



3



4

3. The damaged dangling #1 engine.
 4. The damaged #2 engine and pod.
 5. 31967, Holt 61, at Shannon Airfield Ireland.
- Photos: Richard Glogowski
A photo of Fred Lange is found on page 11



5



Air Commodore Bird-Wilson receives a certificate of recognition for having flown in a B-47 from Col. Van Dyke, the American commander at Brize-Norton. On the Commodore's left is Major Harry Ball of RAF Fairford, an unknown officer, and Major Fred Lange. The Air Commodore made the takeoff from the front seat, it wasn't authorized but everyone in the chain of command expected him to make the takeoff. To demonstrate the B-47's maneuverability Major Lange flew a split S. Air Commodore Bird-Wilson's home station was Little Rissington where he served as the Commandant of the RAF's Central Flying School with the responsibility of providing instructor pilots for all aircraft from helicopters to jets. He also had the additional responsibility for insuring flight standardization and had a wing of flight examiners assigned for this purpose. Photo Fred Lange, circa 1961

We Kept Them Flying

By S/Sgt. Robert W. Erdman, 3339th Training Sqd.
Amarillo AFB, TX

On September 18, 1947, the USAF became a separate service along with the Army and Navy. During the same month, the first XB-47 rolled out the doors of the Boeing plant in Seattle with little fanfare.

It was not until 1951 that the Boeing plant in Wichita began producing the B-47B with the first B models were delivered to the 306th BW at MacDill AFB.

This was also the beginning of an enormous air and ground support crew training program. An aircrew-training base was established at the Wichita Municipal Airport next to the Boeing Wichita plant. Initially named Wichita Air Force Base, it was later renamed McConnell Air Force Base. A B-47 mechanics school was established at Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls, TX. Sheppard became the site of the largest Armament and Electronics, A&E, school in the country.

In 1951, I was sent to Amarillo AFB to become a B-47 mechanic. In World War II, the base had been used to train B-17 mechanics and had since undergone a facelift with new buildings and living quarters dotting the landscape. A general jet mechanics school opened on September 17 and the B-47 jet mechanics school opened soon after.

The first B-47Bs assigned to Amarillo arrived on February

7, 1952, they were 50-0011 and 50-0012 and shortly thereafter the first class of 18 students began training. Simultaneously the B-47 school at Sheppard AFB was closed and B-47A 49-1904, that had been assigned there was flown to Amarillo AFB. This was to be the last time that the aircraft was ever flown.

I was assigned to the second shift of the first class. We were eager to learn about the systems and maintenance of the B-47 and competed for high grades. The word was out that those with the highest grades would have their choice of B-47 base assignment. As it turned out, that did not happen. I was high man in my class and instead was sent to the Technical Instructor Course (TIC) to become an instructor. Instructors were in short supply and the enrollment in the B-47 school was growing rapidly. As a result I became a B-47 landing gear and fuel system instructor.

The need for B-47 mechanics was so great that the school was operated on three shifts. Some of my students were experienced mechanics from the field and they made things interesting for me by asking me questions that I would never have thought of. They were influential in changing my teaching program to spend more time on the aircraft and less time in the classroom.

At the time, Fred Olsen was the Boeing field service representative; and he answered all my questions and kept me updated on the latest B-47 changes. To keep us apprised of problems arising in the field; we instructors were sent TDY for forty days to Wichita AFB.

The number of specialized B-47 schools at Amarillo continued to expand and more aircraft were assigned and special courses added to the curriculum i.e. ejection seats, and canopy seals, and the installation and removal of fuel cells. Six B-47Bs, 50-0011, 50-0012, 50-0020, 50-0023, 50-0039, 50-0004 were assigned to the B-47 school. B-47E 51-5257 and RB-47E 52-724, were also part of the school inventory. The three A models 49-1904, 49-1907, and 49-1909 were assigned to the general jet mechanic's school.

As the years have passed I look back and recall what an exciting period it was. The B-47 was on the cutting edge of aircraft engineering and its influence can still be seen on the commercial jet airliners of today. It kept the peace and never dropped a bomb in anger.

Note: Bob is part of the group that is pictured on page 1.



A B-47B on jacks at Amarillo. Photo: Bob Erdman

Reunions

340th BW Sept. 9-12, Las Vegas, NV. Contact Henry Whittle 13707 Castle Grove Dr, San Antonio, TX 78231. Tel 888-240-2662, E-mail: henrywhittle@juno.com

303rd BW 110 members attended the reunion in April. The next reunion will be in the fall of 2002 in Tucson, AZ. Information may be obtained from Warren Davies at warren@beachcity-tech.com

310th BW Oct. 25-28, Wichita, KS. Information may be obtained from Louis Barr, email: louis.barr@flightsafety.com

98th BG/BW 9-13 Oct, Tucson, AZ. Contact Stan Flentje at 310 Sunnywood Ln, San Marcos, TX 78666-8914 for information. Tel. 512-396-2509

367th BS / 306thBW 50th Anniversary Reunion, marking the delivery of the 1st B-47 to the 367th BS.

Change of date to **Nov. 8-10** from Nov. 9-11.
Contact Ken Tollin 2742 Perryville, Odessa, TX 79761.
Tel. 915-362-1797.

Final Flight

John T. Gleason died on March 16 at his home at 36 Sycamore Dr, Lewis, DE 19958-9758.

Larry Brechel died in Florida and was buried at the Dallas/Ft. Worth National Cemetery on August 10.

Clinton O. Dalbec died in San Antonio on January 22, 2001. He was buried in the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. He retired from the Air Force as a Major in 1963. During WWII he flew B-24s out of Italy and transports during the Korean War. He flew B-47s with the 100th BW at Pease.

C/M Sgt. Marvin Borenstein on May 31 in Spokane, WA. No other details are available, he was the Master Sergeant, whose picture appeared on page 13 of the April newsletter.

Ltc Irwin Ziff died in 2000, the exact date unknown. He was a classmate of the editors in the B-47 Combat Crew Training program at Wichita. He is remembered as a kind, delightful, and humorous person. After retiring he became a TV character actor.

Robert Charles (Nick) Nicklaus was buried in Hearne, Texas on July 7. He died after battling cancer and will be remembered for the love of his family, his war stories and tales of his wild teenage years, and his love of fishing and square dancing. Nick was a KC-97 aircraft commander with the 100th BW and went on to become a KC-135 aircraft commander. Nick was one of those unrecognized dedicated KC - 97 crewmen on whom we in the B-47s knew would be there when we needed them.

Lynn Jackson was buried in March in Portsmouth, NH. He had been seriously ill with heart problems and other maladies. He had served with the 100th BW.

Richard Hamblin of the 9th BW died on May 16, 1999

James C. Mitchell of the 9th BW died on February 2, 2000.

Harv Utech died on June 11 in Auburn, CA. Harv was originally a navigator and flew as an RO in F-89s in Newfoundland. After becoming a pilot in 1959 he was assigned to the 307th BW at Lincoln AFB and was reassigned to the 9th Weather Reconnaissance Wing on Lincoln's closure.

Association Memorabilia

1. Association Pin \$10.
2. Association Patch \$ 5
3. Association T-shirts, currently unavailable.
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.

He was retired medically for diabetes in 1969. After leaving the Air force he worked for 25 years as a county tax assessor and only recently retired. He died of a massive heart attack and is survived by his wife Pearl.

Gathering of SAC Eagles 2003 Meyers Jacobsen has with the cooperation of the Castle Air Museum established Oct. 7-11 2003 as the occasion for the reunion of SAC combat crewmen. This is a heads up article and more information will be provided as it becomes available. For those who can't wait his e-mail address is: meyersjacobsen@email.msn.com there is also a web site: www.jacobsensb-36hangar.bigstep.com

Another external hatch episode Jim Grady sent me an e-mail about his experiences closing the outer door of the outer hatch after reading Lou Malucci's article, *Who is that Knocking?* Jim's oxygen hose like that of Lou's became disconnected and he too had to deal with the lack of oxygen. He unlike Lou had a lifeline and he also somehow managed to close the hatch. I have previously refrained from making a comment on Lou's efforts but now I feel I might describe both incidents as : When I was young and foolish and thought I was invincible and would live forever.

B/G Reg. Urschler had a 5 way emergency open heart bypass operation in May. He has successfully recovered and is among those leading the charge to restore the name of the museum to the Strategic Air Command Museum.



Orville Granville took this picture of his new Thunderbird in front of the base B-47 on its arrival at Sidl Slimane after being shipped from the states. Circa 1963

THREE TODAY IN TAMPA BAY

By Col. William W. Simmons, USAF (Ret.)

There was a period in the early history of MacDill AFB, Tampa Florida, that the phrase, "One a day in Tampa Bay," was coined as a result of the large number of MacDill aircraft that crashed in the bay. However, this was well before the following incident occurred on September 26, 1960, that was described by a reporter for the *Tampa Tribune*, "the chain of events would rival the hottest chapter in the Perils of Pauline".

Our combat crew was assigned to the 306th Strategic Bomb Wmg at MacDill AFB. The crew consisted of 1st Lts. Roland W. Korte, age 30, aircraft commander; William W. Simmons, age 25, copilot; and Harry A. Sheffield, age 29, radar-navigator. All of Lt. Korte's prior experience had been in fighter aircraft. I had two years prior experience as a navigator in transport aircraft and went on to pilot training and upon graduation in 1960 was assigned to B-47 Combat Crew Training at McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas. Lt. Sheffield and I had completed Combat Crew Training on the same crew and were assigned to Lt. Korte's crew upon arrival at MacDill AFB in the summer of 1960.

On September 26, 1960, our crew was scheduled for a routine training mission with a 6:40 PM take-off. A fourth man scheduled to fly in the crawlway seat. Upon completion of the exterior preflight, we boarded the aircraft and just prior to engine start, we were advised that the fourth man would not accompany us and he left the aircraft.

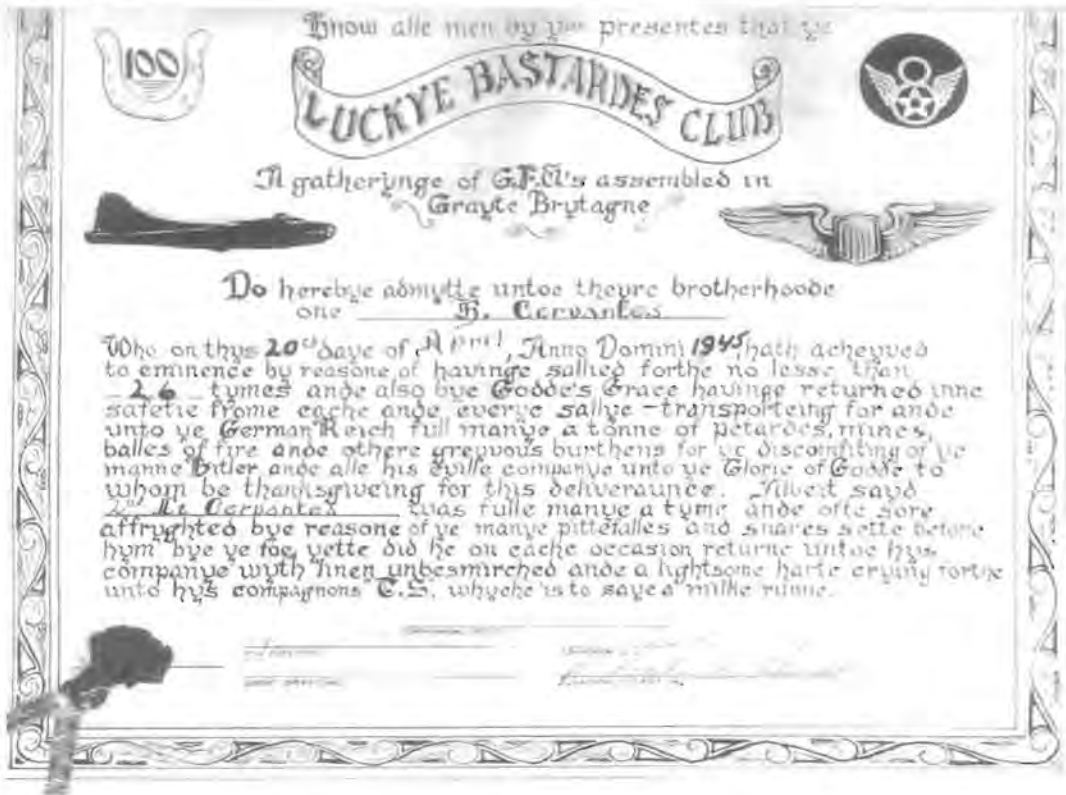
After 4th man's departure, we started engines, taxied to the active runway and took off. The weather conditions were ideal clear skies with a very light wind. The take-off and initial climb were normal but as we were passed through 1,800 feet, I heard an explosion, looked to our left and saw flames around the left outboard engine. The aircraft immediately started a roll to the right and Korte and I with full opposite controls were unable to override the roll. Lt. Korte ordered us to bailout. The accident investigation board determined that the #1 engine aft mount pin had failed causing the engine to fall down while still producing thrust that sent the aircraft into an extreme right roll. As the aircraft rolled through 90 degrees Lt. Sheffield and I initiated the ejection sequence and when we separated from the aircraft it was at 120 degrees. Lt. Korte ejected only after he knew we had safely ejected. The aircraft continued to roll and was upside down, but by the time Lt. Korte ejected the aircraft had rolled another 90 degrees and he ejected horizontally outward instead of vertically downward.

Upon hearing the order to bailout, I immediately initiated the ejection sequence. I remember the canopy blowing, the seat bottoming and the tremendous force of the wind that hit my body as the ejection seat departed the aircraft. I momentarily "blacked-out" and don't remember losing my helmet. I vaguely recall separating from the ejection seat. The next thing I remember was looking up at my deployed parachute and then looking down at the water below. I said several Thank yous to God and deployed my dinghy. After a few seconds, I disconnected my chest harness but didn't inflate my life vest or release the guards on the parachute quick releases of my harness (contrary to our survival training procedures). I remember thinking that there was no way I was going to touch the quick release guards until my dinghy hits the water. Shortly thereafter my dinghy hit the water, I pulled the guards down, my feet hit the water, and I depressed the parachute quick releases. I entered the water at a slightly higher speed and descended to a lower depth than I would have if I jumped off a high diving board. I deployed my life vest and when I came to the surface my dinghy was within arms reach. I had often

wondered if I would have a problem getting into the dinghy if I ever had an occasion to bail out over water. There was no problem, I grabbed the sides and propelled myself into it on the first try. In fact, I almost jumped over it. I rolled over on my back, and said several more Thank yous to God and disconnected the dinghy strap attached to my harness. I was now safe in my dinghy and the sharks can't get me. All I have to do now is wait for someone to rescue me.

Shortly thereafter I heard a helicopter approaching, it hovered above me and I could see a basket being lowered. The basket was maneuvered to the side of my dingy; I grabbed it and rolled out of my dinghy into it. I became airborne again as I was raised to the door of the helicopter where I was helped into the helicopter by the Coast Guard hoist operator. I took a seat in the rear facing forward toward the door. The helicopter moved a short distance and hovered again and I saw the basket being lowered. When it was raised to the door, Lt. Sheffield was helped into the helicopter and joined me. We both still had our life vests on and were congratulating ourselves on our good fortune as the helicopter moved another short distance and went into the hover mode again. I saw the basket being lowered and in a few seconds the helicopter starts forward without the basket being raised. Although we didn't know it the helicopter was losing power and the pilot pushed the controls forward to avoid descending on Lt. Korte. I could see water approaching the door and suddenly realized we were descending into the bay. All of a sudden the water is at door level and the Coast Guard crewman in the door yells "Let's go!!" and jumps out into the water. The helicopter continued to settle into the water and started rolling to the right. This is apparently is my night for right rolls. I raced to the door and exited as the door is about half submerged with water rushing in. I think, Oh my God, the helicopter is sinking, my life vest is going to pop me to the surface of the water and the rotor blades are going to cut my head off and kill me. I stay under the fuselage of the helicopter to keep from surfacing until I ran out of air. When I popped up, the blades had stopped rotating. About this time, Lt. Sheffield surfaces next to the helicopter without his life vest flailing his arms and screaming, "I can't swim! I can't swim!" He had taken off his life vest to escape from the aircraft as the water rushed in. I swam over and grabbed him. The helicopter did not sink but remained partially afloat and the three helicopter crewmen were now perched on it. Lt. Korte reached us and the three of us hung on to the fuselage of the helicopter. I started thinking about sharks again. I had left the safety of my dinghy in order to be rescued by the helicopter. Now it was dark, I'm back in the water again, without my dinghy, and in need of being rescued again, with my body serving as shark bait. It just wasn't my night. There was a sound of an outboard motor and a helicopter crewman fires a flare. We started yelling and soon a pleasure boat appeared manned by a father and son. The teenage son had seen our B-47 crash and the parachutes open and notified his father. They hitched up their boat to the car and drove it to a boat ramp. Once in the water they headed to the area of the crash. The six of us boarded the boat and we headed toward shore that was about two miles away. I said to myself, "Safe at Last! Safe at Last! Thank God I'm Safe at Last!" The sharks can't get me

Cont.15



The April issue of the newsletter contained a certificate of merit that was presented to the OMS personnel of the 100th BW. Seeing it, Henry Cervantes sent me a copy of the certificate he received in WWII after having successfully flown 26 combat missions with the 100th Bomb Group. The 100th was named the "Bloody Hundreth" after it suffered horrendous losses in October 1943 during the attacks on Schweinfurth and Regensburg.

Hank eventually became an instructor at McConnell. He retired from the Air Force and now resides in California.

Application to join the B- 47 Stratojet Association

Dues are \$15 a year payable each January. Dues payments should be forwarded to Mark Natola, Secretary of the B-47 Assn, 23 Oak Ridge Rd, W. Lebanon, NH 03784. Tel.603-643-3833. e-mail:mark.natola@hitchcock.org

Name : _____

Spouses Name _____

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 _____

If a civilian, your relationship to the B-47 : _____

Current Occupation : _____

Any other comments you may care to add : _____

Cont. from pg.13

and I don't have to worry about a helicopter falling out of the sky! It's funny how your mind works in such a situation. In all my flying experiences over water, my greatest fear was that I would wind up in the water and be attacked by schools of sharks.

There probably was not a shark within ten miles of me in the bay that night. With eight of us in the small boat, it was overloaded and running very deep in the water. We traveled about 30 yards and ran aground. When the helicopter crashed, we didn't realize that we were on the western edge of the ship channel and the water was only about chest deep outside the channel. We six crewmembers jumped out of the boat, pushed it off the mud flat and walked along side until we came to an area of the flats that was deeper. We got back into the boat and continued slowly toward shore where we were met by a crowd of on-lookers. Someone called MacDill and gave them our location and in about 45 minutes an Air Force ambulance picked us up and took us to the hospital. The flight surgeon checked us over, found no injuries, and kept us overnight for observation. It was subsequently determined that Lt. Korte had torn some tendons in his shoulder during ejection and would require surgery.

Now that I was in the hospital and didn't have any worries about sharks, I began to worry that I might have been castrated when the parachute deployed. I remembered having been told during survival equipment training that if your parachute harness leg straps were too loose they could castrate you when the parachute deployed. In retrospect, I think this was an extreme example used to impress us with the necessity of having the harness snugly adjusted. I don't recall how tight mine were but I'm happy to report, they were tight enough.

We learned the next day that when our helicopter went down the Coast Guard had immediately launched a second helicopter that also lost power and crashed in the same vicinity. All four of its crewmembers were also rescued with minor injuries. We heard that both helicopters had launched routinely after starting their engines without allowing the engines sufficient time to warm up. As a result of the weather conditions, high humidity and calm winds, and hovering close to the water surface resulted in carburetor ice and the engine lost power and went in.

We continued to fly as a crew until 1963 when we were assigned to B-52 crew training and on completion of our training were assigned to the 462nd BW at Larson AFB, Moses Lake, Washington.

We were extremely lucky that night, but the luckiest person alive was our fourth man, who had been scratched from the flight. Without an ejection seat, there was no way he could have safely bailed out of the aircraft and survived.

From the President

On behalf of the Association I would like to express my best wishes to all the former members of the **367th BS of the 306th BW** who will be celebrating the 50th anniversary marking the delivery the first B-47 to the squadron. See the Reunion section for further details. I hope that either Ken Tollin or Bob Lamb will take photos and send them to me for the next newsletter.

The 2001-2002 roster has been published and mailed to all members who are paid up through 2001. If you did not receive one and are paid up, please contact me.

I have contacted a number of prospective reunion guests and the response has been universally positive. The completed plans will be found in the next newsletter. However, I want to assure you that this is a reunion you won't want to miss.

I will be updating the accident booklet in the near future and plan to add an Annex with pictures and the complete stories of some of the accidents. It will not be published but will be available on a CD/RW due to costs and other considerations. Following that I will start working on the 90 days overseas deployments and reflex. I need pictures in black and white and color of people, the bases, and the aircraft.

Sigmund "Alex" Alexander



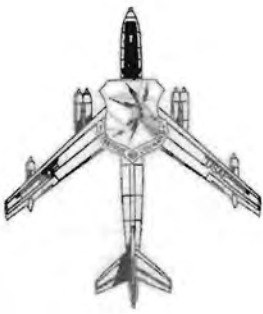
This is how 51-2075 looks at Edwards AFB. Sad, she deserved better. Photo: Wen Paniter



A different perspective of a WB-47E at Ramey AFB. Photo: Dick Purdum

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This is a great shot; could you imagine what the environmentalists would do if the B-47 was operational today?
Photo: Robert Pickett Collection, Kansas Aviation Museum