



The Stratojet Newsletter

Volume 13

April 2002

The B-47 Stratojet Reunion, Seattle, WA, Sept-19-22, 2002

Make your plans now to attend the third B-47 Stratojet Reunion. This a chance to see the beautiful city of Seattle, on Puget Sound, Gateway city to the Orient., Seattle and its environs are home to Boeing, Microsoft, numerous other software companies, Starbucks, and the Nordstrom department store chain. The waterfront is a tourist paradise full of stores, boutiques, and restaurants serving food from the four corners of the globe. Don't miss this opportunity.

If you are not much of a tourist but are primarily interested in airplanes, there are a number of planned activities that were designed for you. These include tours to the 747 plant at Renton, the symposium of B-47 pioneers and visits to the Museum of Flight. Above all there is the opportunity to meet and interact with the B-47 pioneers and fellow B-47 veterans.

If you arrive by air, call The Southcenter Doubletree Hotel for transportation to the hotel. Linda Irvine, our hostess will be in the lobby to greet and register you. A hospitality room, stocked with alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and snacks, will be available during the reunion. On Thursday evening there will be a buffet in the hotel .

Breakfast through out our stay will be provided by the hotel on Friday and the rest of the days of the reunion will be provided by the hotel. There will be two tours to the Boeing Renton plant, one at 9:30 AM and the other at 10:30 AM. The symposium will start at 1:00PM and end at 4PM or when ever. Participants will include Boeing engineers Bill Cook, Bob Withington, and Ben Werner; Boeing test pilots Bob Robbins, Dick Taylor; and Jim Fraser; Air Force B-47 Program Manager, Henry "Pete" Warden; and Air Force test pilots Guy Townsend and Charlie Andersen; and Recce pilot, Don Hillman. Dinner will be on your own or you can elect to partake of the optional salmon dinner at the Indian Village on Tillicum Island.

Saturday there will be two buses to provide transportation to the waterfront and the Museum of Flight. The destination of the buses will be clearly marked as well as their last departure times from the museum or the waterfront. You will have to pay to visit the Museum of Flight. .The evening activities will begin at 5PM with picture taking for the reunion souvenir booklet. Cocktails will be served from 6 to 7PM, followed by dinner. There will be a short slide presentation by of the honorees after dinner Dick Taylor and Guy Townsend will be the guest speakers.

At the conclusion of the program there will be a short business meeting. Two agenda items for the meeting will be the election of a new president and the selection of a reunion site for 2004.

Sunday is sayanora. See you all again in 2004.

Reservations for the Southcenter Doubletree Hotel
Tel. 206-575-8220. Cost \$115 per night + 12.4 % local tax for a total of \$129.26.

The hotel will provide transportation from the airport.

Registration/Activity Fee : \$135. The mail in form is found on page 3.

Amenities: Hospitality room stocked with alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and snacks, breakfast every morning, Thursday buffet dinner, tour of the 747 assembly plant, transportation to and from the waterfront and the Museum of Flight and the banquet dinner.

Optional Activity: salmon dinner at the Indian village on Tillicum Island, \$65 per person.

Reunion booklet: The booklet will be in color and will be available for \$20, this includes shipping and handling.
B-47 Memorabilia Please bring your personal memorabilia to share with the membership in the hospitality room.



Sr.A .Duane White of the Air Combat Command, ACC designed the above art. It will appear on one aircraft of each Major Command and the Thunderbirds. "Lets Roll," were Scott Beamer's last words as he and the other passengers went after the hijackers on United flight 93.

Letters to the Editor

Tom Nation Tom, a former MMS and MA-&A A7E Maintenance man, was not thrilled with Lou Malucci's account of how he corrected the spoking radar set by kicking the stab unit. Lou mis-identified the stab unit as the modulator. Tom has promised to send me an article for the newsletter.

Robin Armour Robin was an AC with the 509th at Pease and then went on to fly 135s. Don Tynan's article on his travails of refueling led Robin to send a letter and then to an article, that is contained in this issue, on what a "typical" B-47 mission involved.

Clint Stiltner Clint was a jet engine mechanic with the 384th BW at Little Rock and inquired why there were no articles about Little Rock or the 384th BW. I replied I would gladly print an article if some one would provide me with one. Clint followed up by sending me an article that is also contained in this newsletter.

Corrections

The article from a former Global Central Weather commander and weather guesser. I must confess that I did not pay attention to exaggerated mach, .95, that the unknown author stated that the clean B-47 was capable of flying at. The B-47 could only hit Mach.95 in a vertical crash dive. I attribute the Mach .95 to literary hyperbole.

Thanks

Tom Nation for the copies of the patches of the 341st A&E Sqd, the 42nd MMS hat patch, and the 6th MMS Sqd.

Jim O Connor for the pictures of the 320th A&E in formation and of the 320th birds at Brize.

John M. Ogle for the copy of the 817th Air Police Sqd. Patch

Wen Painter for the video on refueling between a B-47 and a KC-135, the copy of the book, "Thirty Seconds to Live" by Elizabeth Land, the history of Edwards AFB, and the picture of Lt. Obenauf.

Bob Robbins for the video and all the papers relating to his flights in the XB-47.

John Burgess for the copies of the MacDill *Airman* and the *Lockheed Southern Star*

Bob Blair for the article on Barry Goldwater's B-47 flight and the 2nd BW newsletter.

Dues

2002 Dues are due, send your \$15 to Mark Natola, the Secretary, 23 Oak Ridge Rd, W. Lebanon, NH 03784. The next newsletter and 2002 roster will only be sent to members who are paid up through 2001.

B-47 Stratojet Assn. Inc. Officers

President: Sigmund Alexander, 12110 Los Cerdos Dr, San Antonio, TX 78233-5953. Tel: 210-653-5361

Fax: 210- 653-1001

e-mail: sigmund.alexander@iworldnet.att.net

Vice President: Dick Purdum, 13310 South 26th AV, Bellevue, NE 68123. Tel. 402-291-5247

e-mail: dickpurdum@aol.com

Secretary: Mark Natola, 23 Oak Ridge Road W. Lebanon, NH 03784. Tel: 603-643-3399

e-mail: mark.natola@hitchcock.org

Treasurer: Donald Cassiday 1402 West Downer Aurora, IL 60506. Tel. 630-859-1922

e-mail: DonCass@worldnet.att.net

BX Officer: George Brierley 53 Mountain AV. St. Johnsbury, VT 05819. Tel. 802-748-4486

e-mail: b47assn@together.net

Board of Governors

James Diamond 898 NE Coronado St

Lee's Summit, MO 64086-5529, Tel: 816-524-9562

e-mail: imjackd@swbell.net

Wen Painter: P.O. Box 719, Mojave, CA 93502

Tel: 661-824-2907

e-mail: wpainter@antelcom.net

Andy Labosky: 707 Briarwood Rd.

Derby, KS 67037-2114

Tel: 316-788-5277

e-mail: labov47@msn.com

Mike Habermehl: P.O.Box 1144

Brenham TX 77834-1144. Tel. 979-836-9427

e-mail: mhaberm@tenet.edu



Patch of the 817th Air Police Squadron at Pease AFB, NH that provided security to the base and to the 100th and 509th BWs. John M. Ogle

Personal Experiences and B-47 Memorabilia.

Please keep sending me your personal articles and pictures of your B-47 experiences, I need them for future newsletters and the archives. Does anyone have a picture of the city of Savannah, the State of Texas, the city of Merced, the city of Atwater, or the city of Lincoln?

REGISTRATION FORM

YES SIGN ME UP FOR THE B47 STRATOJET ASSN. SEPT 19-22, 2002 REUNION !!!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

NAME OF YOUR GUESTS _____

BANQUET DINNER SELECTION: BEEF ___ CHICKEN ___ VEGETARIAN ___

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: _____

PREFERRED TIME FOR BOEING EVERETT PLANT TOUR
(requests will be accommodated on a first come basis)

_____ 9:30am -12:30pm or _____ 10:30-1:30pm

REGISTRATION FEES:

NUMBER PERSONS ATTENDING ___ \$135 = _____

NUMBER TMLICUM INDIAN VILLAGE DINNER ___ \$65 = _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 20,2002

PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS AND MADE PAYABLE TO:

The Reunion Brat
4005 S. IONE
KENNEWICK, WA 99337
Tel. (509) 582-9304

Confirmation of Registration and Itinerary will be sent out by September 1, 2002. A \$20 per person cancellation fee will apply to all cancellations received within 30 days of the event. Cancellations received within 10 days of the event will be non-refundable.

Call The Double Tree Southcenter at 206-575-8220 no later than August 19, 2002 to make your hotel reservations. Be sure to mention you are with the B47 Stratojet Assn. to receive your group rate of \$115 a night, plus tax. These prices are available 3 days prior to and after your event should you choose to extend your stay.

Call 1-800-323-8728 for your Group Airfare, guaranteed to be the lowest available rate!! We'll see you soon in beautiful Seattle, WA!

Bob Hippler and his wife will be leaving on a Holand America Alaska cruise that leaves Seattle and returns a week later. If you are interested in taking the cruise contact Bob at bhippler@net-magic.net Bob was a copilot and later an AC with the 98th BW from 1957-63.

A Shadow Story

from Robin Armour

In the shadow of major events there exists many related stories. As every journalism 101 student learns, the "shadow story" may have existed long before the tragic assassination of President Kennedy. When a reporter was unable to get anywhere near the main story, as it unfolded in Washington, D.C., he went to Arlington, and interviewed the grave digger preparing the plot for the President. This was the shadow story that ran away with journalistic prizes, captivated much of the nations' press, and gave the term "grave digger" to any parallel event of a primary story. A routine 509th BW B-47E Reflex deployment to Upper Heyford included this parallel, or "shadow" story that accounted for the unusual quantity the quality of crash films -o-f-a-tragic '47 landing accident..

Scene: A moonless, dark night.

Except for a bomb bay platform loaded with cases of eggs, bread 'n milk, and an unusually long shopping list for camel saddles, Maja Soap, Hummels and all the peach flavored slo-gin 'n Mateus Rose Wine we could declare, it was a nominal flight up to the point of hitting the '97's out of Goose Bay.

Bad weather (of course), radio-silence (sure), night heavy-weight (why not), contact 5,000 feet above scheduled altitude (at least the join up 's in the clear), '97 with stacks glowing orange and torching blue-white exhaust, leaking boom (as usual), toboggan out of the clear, star-studded night into the freezing layer and weather below, with an added bonus of Saint Elmo's fire (at no extra charge).

- "no problemo ameeego. Pull the stall warning CB Co'."

- " 'n Boomer, give me extra if you've got it."

Single contact, almost vertical toboggan, visibility that ended somewhere between the inboard nacelles 'n the drop tanks, with moderate turbulence, single disconnect, heavy weight off load as scheduled plus three grand. (Boomer knew, without looking, it must be a 509th receiver.)

Climb power, set.

- "A/C - Co', I'm indicating an airspeed of 35 knots."

- "Co' - A/C, ditto."

"Nav' A/C, what's flight time to reach 'Heyford at 35 knots?"

"A/C - Nav', just over three days, with these winds. BNS ground speed confirms what your clocks are indicating."

"Jolly 51 - Jolly 53"

" '53 - go."

"Pitot-static iced-up all around. We'll fly power settings and station-keep, 'less you have a better idea."

- "Sounds good. Keep me in the loop."

- Roger."

"Co' - A/C the throttles are all yours."

- "Co-pilot, roger."

The dash-one gross weight vs. power settings vs. altitude resulted in putting the rest of the Jollies in our rear view mirror. UHF with Jolly 51, lasted 'bout as long as our flight lunches, and the trip turned into a very quiet, peaceful and pleasant solo flight until we raised what passed for UK approach control and the command post at 'Heyford. Some snitch had informed SAC of our situation, and despite the TV news and heavy press that informed everyone on the planet

pleasant solo flight until we raised what passed for UK approach control and the command post at 'Heyford.

Some snitch had informed SAC of our situation, and despite the TV news and heavy press that informed everyone on the planet of one recent B-47 vs. B-47 mid-air, resulting in a safety-of-flight bulletin warning against it, they suggested, you-guessed it, another '47, "B" not "C", fly formation and give us airspeed readings.

When I respectfully reminded them of the SOF bulletin they acted as if I had dreamed up the whole SOF thing 'cause I was opposed to engaging in a sun rise mid-air. 'Heyford C' Post came to the rescue with a base op's T-33 to ride our wing and nothing more, of course, was heard from Omaha-ha-ha. The '33 suddenly appeared, like a Highway Patrol, off our port wing. We penetrated, then were driven around an extended pattern.

Scene: Usual gray morning at Upper Heyford Meanwhile, behind our backs, on another frequency, the rest if the flight was being landed ahead of us so if we, without air-speed indicators, rolled it into an aluminum ball on landing, the runway wouldn't be littered with FOD (read - our machine). This last scenario was what brought out the exceptional number of movie cameras to film our airspeed out landing. As it turned out, they also filmed the tragic crash landing of the '47 ahead of us, that had attempted a go around with the approach chute out, in a moderate to strong port-side crosswind, while leaving number six engine at home (read - in idle).

Somewhere between the outer and inner markers our airspeed indicators spooled up from 35 knots to just about what the '33 driver was giving us, scoring me another challenging but no sweat landing on the hill disguised as a runway at 'Heyford.

The accident site was off the runway in the POL area on the south side of the ramp. We turned off the active, chased the "follow me" truck and parked. Before shutting down I used the HF radio and my ham call sign, on a ham frequency, to contact my old friend KLZIT, in the toll-free area of Kittery, Maine, and have him patch me thru to my home phone. Telling my wife what had happened, I asked her to call the wives of therest of the crew and let them know we were all well. Because of the out-of-sequence way the flight crossed the pond, the report of the accident was first transmitted back the the Zi identifying a position the crashed aircraft occupied in the flight, which corresponded to our position on the 60-9. Within half an hour my Capart door bell was being activated by the base Chaplain and a 509th staff officer who both thought my wife was in shock and deranged denial when she related the preposterous story that she had just talked with me, on the phone. less than ten minutes ago, from my aircraft on the ramp at 'Heyford. They insisted on having a neighbors' wife stay with her, and they promised to check back, leaving her a number to call.

Cont. on pg.6



Jim O'Connor sent in this great picture of the 320th A&E Sqd. at March AFB, CA just prior to going TDY to Brize Norton for 90 days in the summer of 1954. With a powerful magnifying glass you can pick out Jim, he is the 18th man from the right in the fifth row. Prior to World War II it was traditional to take squadron pictures. Apparently for awhile the custom was revived in SAC. With Alert was established in SAC, taking squadron pictures was forgotten.



Another great picture provided by Bob Blair. L to R: Capt. Jim Blain, Nav; Capt. Phil Ashlinger, copilot; Major Harry McCreary, AC; and Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona. Senator Goldwater flew a "Globe-Trotter" mission with the crew of the 22 BS of the 2nd BW at Hunter AFB in June 1955. Senator Goldwater was a member of the Committee On Interior and Insular Affairs at the time. Senator Goldwater was also an Air Force reservist who rose to the rank of Brigadier General. How many senators in the Senate today would fly an eight hour mission in a bomber today?

Cont.. From pg. 6, A Shadow Story

A note aside; the Today Show announced, on their 9 A.M. (eastern) news, that a SAC bomber aircraft had experienced a landing accident in England.

Within two to three hours all of the reporting had been corrected, and this shadow story had played out. The tragic accident resulted in the loss of a friend and the creation of the Middlestat Trophy.

Robin Armour, 509th BW, 57'-66

Editor's note: The above article is printed as was written without editing at the request of the author. The three crew members involved in the crash of 53-2296 were: Capt. Robert L. Lunden, AC; 1/Lt. James V. Mullen, pilot; and Capt. Robert E. Mittlestad, nav (killed); and Lt. Robert E. Johnson. Mittlestad was suffocated by foam that the fire truck sprayed on the aircraft. Due to location high above the ground the fire truck driver did not see Mittlestad, who was on the wing.

I was proud to have been in the 384th BW by Clint Stiltner

Editor's note: Clint's article reflects the pride that SAC ground crewmen had and continue to have in their former units. The 384th was activated in 1955 and deactivated in 1964. Despite the accident Clint writes about the wing had one of the finest B-47 safety records in SAC. I was unable to ascertain any information relating to the bombing competition that the 384th won with the RAF. Maybe a reader may be able to provide some information regarding the event.

In December 1955 after graduating from jet mechanic's school at Chanute AFB, I was assigned to the 384th BW at Little Rock AFB. I was surprised at what I found when I checked in. The facilities and structures needed to support the B-47 had not been completed and teams of workers were at work frantically trying to complete the various projects before the arrival of the first B-47. Fortunately, the first B-47 did not arrive at the base until February 1956. The tempo of activity heightened as the B-47s continued to arrive in increasing numbers. We learned how to keep the '47 in the air while the air crews proceeded to get checked out. Once the wing had received its compliment of aircraft and the crews were checked out, the emphasis in the wing shifted to become combat ready. After becoming combat ready the wing became eligible to deploy overseas and in 1957 the wing was sent to RAF Brize Norton for 90 days.

The 90 days overseas brought us together as a wing and we were now not only a fighting but a proud tight unit. While in England I really got to know a lot of my fellow crewmen and I still remember them with fondness. I was a young country boy and it was quite an experience for me to travel to a foreign land. The people were very hospitable and the countryside outside the base was beautiful and the surrounding small towns interesting and quaint. I still recall the excitement of my first trip into London. It was one of the biggest and most sophisticated cities in the world

and I was in it. There was so much to see and do and in those days it was affordable even to a young airman like me.

After 90 days in England we redeployed back to Little Rock. As much as I enjoyed my overseas experience, the USA was still home and it was good to be back. In 1958 the wing suffered its first fatality in a crash that killed all three crewmen aboard. However, there was also bright spot, we won a bombing competition with the Royal Air Force. In 1984, the 384th was recognized as an Air Force Outstanding Unit and we were now eligible to wear that ribbon. I wore that ribbon proudly on my chest. I left Little Rock in 1959 but I have good memories of both the 384th BW and SAC.

The Strategic Air Command Museum

I received a letter from Bob Wicklund that contained copies of correspondence between Charles W. Hooker, the president of the 340th BW, and Scott Hazelrigg, the Executive Director of the Museum, and Col. Ed Burchfield, USAF (Ret.), Assistant to the Chairman of the Board of the Museum. Bob has been a leading and articulate spokesman of the effort to restore the word "Command" to the name of the museum in the Omaha area. Ed is the apologist for the museum and after reading Ed's reply to Charles Hooker I am convinced that the name will never be changed back.

However, I found one line in Ed's letter quite offensive, "While the vast majority of former members of SAC are dedicated to the preservation of the Command's heritage, they are not noted for making large contributions (as a group or individuals) to keep it operating." In simple terms your service and dedication no longer count unless you are a contributor. The reason many SAC veterans don't contribute is because they don't have the means to contribute. There isn't much left at the end of the month when all the monthly bills are paid. The profession they chose provided them with many rewards but money was not one of them.

SAC 2002 Reunion

There will be a SAC reunion at the Mighty Eight Air Force Museum in Savannah, GA from May 16-18 2002. The reunion has been organized by SAC veterans who were opposed to dissolution of the Society of SAC. I will be unable to attend this reunion but I urge all the membership who can to do so. Topics to be discussed are the establishment of a new Association of SAC veterans and a slate of officers. I unequivocally support the creation of a new organization of SAC. Information may be obtained from Tommy Harrison 1231 Lake Piedmont, Apopka, FL 32703-7457. Tel. 407-886-1922. tgharrison@aol.com

Never Volunteer

By Lt.Col. Alex P. Brewer, USAF(Ret.)

After completing 50 combat missions in an RB-26 in Korea I was sent to the B-47 nav training program. Following the completion of training I was assigned to the 306thBW. The 306th BW was the first B-47 wing and was commanded by the legendary Col. Mike McCoy. My AC was a former WWII P-51 combat veteran and our copilot was a new lieutenant, fresh out of pilot school. Following combat crew training, our crew was designated as combat ready and shortly thereafter we were upgraded to lead status.

My AC was desirous of getting a spot promotion and was hypnotized by the sight of those bright major leaves on his collar. He thought he might advance his cause by gaining recognition by volunteering his services. He hung around the Command Post where he looked for some opportunity to ingratiate himself with the powers to be. After a grueling week of training I looked forward to the weekend to relax; but not my AC. He was in the command post looking for a golden opportunity to demonstrate what he could do.

At last it came. A crew was needed to fly a B-47 to Bryan AFB, Texas to demonstrate its prowess to aspiring fighter pilots, who were learning to fly the T-bird, Lockheed T-33 jet trainer. The idea behind the trip was to get the students to volunteer for the B-47 instead of the F-86. It defied logic. Why would any potential fighter pilot want to give up flying fighters to fly a big bomber, even if it was a B-47? However, that was the mindset of the SACumsiced Headquarters SAC weenies.

We were scheduled to fly a routine training mission on a Friday after which we would land at Bryan; spend Saturday propagandizing the fledgling aviators, return to MacDill on a Sunday, and report to work on a Monday. It was perfect SAC planning no training time was lost and only the crew lost a weekend at home.

We completed mission planning on Thursday and on a hot Friday morning we took off from MacDill. We flew our scheduled 50-8 training mission and proceeded toward Bryan AFB. Bryan, now closed, is located north of Houston near College Station, the heart of Aggieland.

Unfortunately, there was a complete breakdown in planning from our crew up to SAC headquarters. We arrived over Bryan at 1300 with a scheduled landing time of 1330. The runway at Bryan was considerably shorter than the 10,000 feet at MacDill and the thermals from the Texas heat would make it more difficult to put the aircraft on the deck. The runway temperature was 109 degrees when we arrived over the field. The landing at Bryan was going to be dicey as the AC and copilot figured out the landing gross weight, approach speed, and stopping distance. The aircraft was too heavy to land immediately and fuel needed to be burned off before we could land. Unfortunately the ETA that SAC forwarded Bryan was incorrect and our bird and

T-birds were all in the landing pattern at the same time. The tower cleared us to make an orientation run over the field and requested the T-birds to stay out of our way until we landed. We continued flying in the local area at a thousand feet to burn off the excess fuel, disrupting the normal routine of the base. Finally three T-birds declared bingo, running out of fuel, and the tower managed to safely land them around our aircraft. We were the proverbial bull in the china shop and one of the T-bird instructors informed us if he had been armed he would have shot us down.

Finally we burned off enough fuel to land. However, we came in too hot on our first approach. The AC wisely proceeded to make a go around. On his second approach he made a fighter approach that scared both the crew chief and myself. However, he lined up correctly and our airspeed was right on as we passed over the fence. Unfortunately the aircraft continued to float and would not touch down. Finally it hit nose first and the aircraft porpoised and porpoised again. The porpoising finally ended when the copilot popped the landing chute and the aircraft settled down.

Our travails were not over; The AC had managed to stop our bird at the end of the runway. To get to the taxiway we had to proceed on an asphalt turnoff. The asphalt was soft and slippery and was not designed to take the weight of a B-47. The aircraft sank into the asphalt when the AC hit the brakes. The nose was over the turnoff and the rest of the aircraft was on the runway. As a result, the runway was closed and all the T-birds were diverted to Randolph or Bergstrom.

The aircraft was shut down where it had become mired. On the ground to greet us was the base commander. To say he was unhappy would be an understatement.

The next day, we met the fledgling pilots in the base theatre where the AC instead of explaining the many virtues of the B-47 faced a barrage of questions regarding what had occurred the day before.

A recovery team from Barksdale was sent to repair the hydraulic seals on the front mains and it was a week before we were able to leave Bryan. We returned to McCoy on the following Saturday. After we had landed, the AC and copilot were directed to debrief Col. McCoy. I never learned what transpired but it could not have been pleasant. However the old military adage of not volunteering was not the cause of our misfortunes, but poor planning.

The Historic 98th becomes a part of the Active Air Force again

On November 5, 2001 the 98th wing was reactivated as the 98th Range Wing. The 98th is the new name for the Nevada Test and Training or the Nellis Range. This is the range where the exercise, Red Flag, is flown. The range covers 12,000 square miles of air space and 2.9 million acres of land. The range wing is responsible for overseeing 1,100 contractors, 170 government employees, and a land area almost equal in size to that of Connecticut.

Colonel Bill Percival, the commander of the 98th Range Wing, welcomed 30 members of the 98th Bomb Grp / Wing to the reactivation program. Stan Flentje, attended the ceremonies and stated that they were treated royally and the attendees were invited to attend a fire power demonstration in February. Stan attended the fire-power demonstration along with ten other 98th veterans on February 8th. He found the demonstration truly impressive and was touched by the graciousness of their hosts, the 98th Range Wing. After years of indifference toward its historic past, the Air Force is now in the process of honoring those units that help make it great.

One Day on the Ramp at Edwards by M/G Fred J. Ascani, USAF (Ret.)

I was the Director of Experimental Flight Test at Edwards in the early fifties when an unusual incident occurred that involved a B-47. I had been notified to set up set up a B-47 JATO test light for M/G Albert Boyd, the Chief of the Flight Test Division at Wright Field.

The aircraft was parked in front of the operations building with the internal JATO bottles loaded. I don't recall whether four or six bottles were loaded in each side rack but the number is immaterial.

It wasn't every day that General Boyd came to Edwards to fly an airplane and the Operations staff emptied their offices to witness the event. We watched the general board the aircraft and fire up all six engines. Just after the chocks were pulled, all hell broke loose. Our jaws dropped in astonishment as a cloud of white smoke poured out of the JATO rack areas. The JATO bottles had fired. A tremendous white cloud of exhaust gases engulfed the operations and other nearby buildings. The JATO bottles had misfired or someone had inadvertently hit the JATO fire switch. The aircraft lunged forward but somehow the general managed to control the aircraft despite the tremendous thrust of the JATO. After the bottles had burned out the general taxied out, took off, and flew the rest of the fight without incident.

I said to myself there is going to be hell to pay. I felt I was in deep kimchee and I also thought so was that copilot. Nothing was ever said to me and I was promoted to general. I continued to wonder how the inadvertent JATO firing could have occurred and had assumed that the

copilot probably had inadvertently fired the JATO.

Editor's Note: Not being a pilot I researched the Dash 1 and searched out my AC friends for answers. The sequence of events for JATO firing is as follows: copilot puts the circuit breaker in and then arms the JATO firing circuit. The AC is the only one who can fire the JATO and at the appropriate time on the take off roll he hits the firing switch. I was mystified if the copilot could not fire the JATO; did General Boyd hit the fire switch? However, I could not believe that a test pilot of General Boyd's caliber could accidentally fire the JATO.

I was able to find the answer in a chance remark about the incident to Guy Townsend. Guy was selected as the IP for General Boyd's B-47 JATO takeoff. The general had never made a JATO takeoff and wanted to make one. The answer was quite simple the firing harnesses were attached incorrectly to the bottles and when the arming switch was tuned on it fired the JATO bottles instead of arming them. A fifty year mystery is solved and Guy also went on to make general.

Castle Air Museum Foundation Inc, 5050 Santa Fe AV, Atwater, CA 95031 is soliciting funds to construct a \$5 million restoration hangar to house the museums most fragile aircraft. Contributions are tax deductible. Sustaining memberships are \$25.

Hal Berry suffered dural bleeding last summer. Hal is fully recovered but has no memory of the incident including how he got to the hospital. Hal informed me that the 2nd BS Association of the 22nd BW at March AFB has dissolved due to a dwindling membership.

Books

Because I Fly by Helmut H. Reda.

A collection of aviation poetry, available from the McGraw-Hill Bookstore

Tel. 800-352-3566

<http://www.bookstore.mcgraw-hill.com>

Bruce Eugene Mills-1944 Diary of a Bomber Pilot.

Available from Vantage Press Inc, 516 West 34th St. NY, NY 10117-0405

Tel.800-882-3273

Cost: \$8.95 + \$2.50 S/H

NY state residents must add 8 1/4% sale's tax.

351st Air Refueling Squadron of the 100th Air Refueling Wing. The 351st ARS is the successor of the World War II and B-47 bomb squadron while the 100th ARW is the successor of the WWII Bomb Group and the B-47 Bomb Wing. The wing is stationed at RAF Mildenhall, UK but was deployed to Rhein-Main AB, Germany to support Enduring Freedom refueling requirements.



Association members Gerald Swisher and John Burgess are shown in front of the first RB-47E modified as a QRB-47E by Lockheed / Marietta. The aircraft was about to be turned over to Flight Test Engineering. Both Gerald and John were with the 306th BW and on leaving the service went to work for Lockheed in Georgia. Both left Lockheed to go to college. Gerald presently lives in Connecticut and John in Chevy Chase, MD.

Final Flight

Don Maselin, Col. USAF (Ret.) died in Pennsylvania of a heart attack, date unk. After retiring from the Air Force Don taught school in New Hampshire and only recently returned to his home state. He was the copilot on the 100th BW crew that came in second in the 1957 bomb comp.

Jim Norton died last year, he had served with the 340th BW at Whiteman AFB, MO.

Ken Plumeau died of leukemia on March 20. those desiring to make a memorial contribution in his name may make a donation to Red Cloud Indian School 100 Mission Drive, Pine Ridge, SD 57770-2100.

Tom Carr Died on March 20 after a prolonged illness.



A proud Chuck Morrell points to his 1958 bomb comp winning aircraft. Photo: Chuck Morrell



Our man in Mojave, California, Wen Painter. See article on pg. 9

Board Member, Wen Painter

Editor's Note: Wen was elected to the Board of Governor's in Odessa in Sept 2000. Since that time he has been constantly involved in efforts to preserve the historical legacy of the B-47. A feature article on Wen appeared in the November 25, 2001 issue of the *Antelope Valley Press*.

Wen Painter was born in Ainsworth, Nebraska, near the South Dakota border in

1935. Wen always wanted to fly and when he was 17 he earned money at a nearby airport for an hour weekly flying lesson. He soloed after four months and obtained a private pilot's certificate the following year. Wen joined the Air Force in 1953 with aspirations of becoming an Air Force pilot. Unfortunately the cadet pilot program ended when the Korean armistice was signed and Wen was assigned to attend the Armament and Electronics School. On completion of the course he was assigned to the 90th SRW at Forbes AFB as an A-5 Gunlaying Radar Technician on the B-47 where he served from July 1954 to July 1957. After he was discharged Wen attended Wichita University under the GI Bill where he earned an Aeronautical Engineering degree in 1963. While attending college he also worked at night at Boeing on B-52 fire control systems. After graduation Wen went to work for the NASA Flight Center at Edwards AFB and retired in 1986. The following year Wen became a instructor Test Pilot at the National Test Pilots' School In Mojave where he still works.

However, his job at the Test Pilots' School does not preclude him and his wife, Jo Ann, who is also an accomplished pilot, from flying all over the country. They own three aircraft a 1929 open cockpit Pietyenpol, a Cessna 182, and a Cessna 140A. Over the years Wen has owned 18 aircraft and considers himself fortunate to have been able to fulfill his childhood dream of becoming a pilot.

Seven High

Ltc. Alex Brewer, USAF (Ret.)

Editor's Note: General LeMay and the other senior military leaders of the post World War II era were determined that there would never be a repeat of the attack on Pearl Harbor. The only way to preclude another Pearl Harbor was by being prepared and vigilant. An ever-ready Strategic Air Command was designed to deter an open Soviet attack on the United States and its Western allies. However, there was also a covert threat posed by Soviet espionage and sabotage. Counter espionage was the responsibility of the FBI but protecting SAC's aircraft was LeMay's responsibility and he took it very seriously.

The incident that Col. Brewer described occurred at MacDill AFB during the same period that the movie *Strategic Air Command* was being filmed. An early scene in the movie depicts a Seven High when an unauthorized C-47 lands at MacDill and from it steps General LeMay as played by Frank Lovejoy.

When the Air Force became an independent military service in 1947, the name of the military police was changed to that of Air Police to reflect that of the new service. Initially their responsibilities remained the same, that being that of the base police department. However, in the Strategic Air Command their responsibilities were increased to include that of protecting the aircraft and supporting logistic infrastructure.

As with everything in SAC there were constant exercises, inspections, and *games* designed to test the readiness and capabilities of the combat crews and all the supporting elements.

Access to the flight line was restricted and controlled at checkpoints manned by security police where badges were checked. to insure that the face on the badge matched the bearer and that access to the restricted areas was authorized.

Unauthorized personnel could only gain access to the flight line if the guard at the gate had been lax. Maintenance personnel on the flight line were responsible for insuring that only authorized personnel approached their aircraft. If an unauthorized person was found on the flight line a Seven High was called that brought a Security Police reaction team to apprehend the unauthorized penetrator.

To test security on the flight line the Security Police would plant a penetrator, who would be dressed in fatigues and provided with a fake ID. The penetrator's job was to place a sticker on the aircraft that indicated the aircraft could have been sabotaged. If the crew chief stopped him, he was turned over to the Security Police. If he failed, the Crew Chief had to explain his lapse in security to the squadron commander. It was a game to the Security Police but it was a source of irritation and distraction to the flight line personnel as they worked on the aircraft.

As fate would have it a would-be penetrator was recognized before he could plant his sticker on the aircraft. However, this time the Security Police were not called and the would-be saboteur was taken to a hangar office. There he was stripped of his clothes and painted from head to foot with mercurochrome. Stark naked, the pink policeman was dropped off by a security shack. Little was made of the incident, the maintenance personnel made their point to the security police that the game had gone a bit too far.

Postscript: The above incident is amusing but it is also well to remember the dedication of the Security Police that protected the Strategic Air Command around the world, around the clock, and in all kinds of weather from searing heat to sub zero cold. We all owe them a debt of gratitude.

Application to join the B- 47 Stratojet Association

Dues are \$15 a year payable each January. Dues payments should be mailed 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

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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**



341st A&E, Dyess AFB
 6th MMS, Nouasseur AB, Morocco. Tom Nation

Reunions

40th BW, Smoky Hill and Forbes AFB, KS (1952-64).
 Oct.10-13 in Fort Worth, TX. **Contact:** Roe E. Walker, 9653 Airpark Dr, Granbury, TX 76049. (817-578-3369) (rewalker@flash.net)

100th BW, Pease AFB, NH. Oct.3-6 in Portsmouth, NH.
Contacts: Ron Freeze, 18 Glendale Rd, Rye, NH 03870-2813 (603-431-6330) (freeze@tllc.net) or Joe Falletti, 75 Fern Ave., Rye, NH 03870 (603-964-5988) (JBFalletti@attbi.com)

SAC, all former members. May 16-18 at the Mighty Eight Air Force Heritage Museum, Savannah, GA. **Contact:** Tommy Harrison (407-886-1922) (TGHarrison@aol.com)

307th BW, Fort Worth TX, May 1-5 **Contact:** R.T. Boykin, 832- Shady Glen, Bedford, TX 76021-4335. (817-571-0356) RTB832@email.msn.com

308th BW, Hunter AFB, GA. Apr.26-27 in Savannah, GA.
Contacts : Roy Harris (407-859-3871) or Pat Gennaro (407-859-3871)

321st BW, Pinecastle / McCoy AFB, FL (1954-64).
 May 2-4 in Orlando, FL. **Contact:** R.W. Cribley, 5341 Lake Jessamine Dr., Orlando, FL 32839 (407-855-3007)



The president of Venezuela inspecting a B-47 of the 306th BW that made a good will visit to Boca del Rio in 1954. photo: Chuck Morrell



B-47 Stratojet Association
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The 306th BW flying en masse in the first overseas deployment of a B-47 wing to Fairford, UK On June 3, 1953.