



The Stratojet Newsletter

July 2008 Volume 28

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

Reunion At Marietta, 25-28 September 2008 Register Now!



The 6th Reunion of the B-47 Stratojet Association will be held in Marietta GA on 25-28 September 2008. The site of the meeting will be the beautiful Marietta Conference Center and Resort. The hotel is located on the site of the former Georgia Military Institute built in 1851. Over 10,000 wounded and sick soldiers were cared for on these grounds during the Civil War. The Institute's original Superintendent's home, one of Atlanta's few remaining antebellum masterpieces, is still maintained adjacent to the hotel.

The City Club, an 18 hole golf course shares the location with fairways laid out on the rolling hills behind the Center. A back porch with rocking chairs offers a beautiful view of Kennesaw

Mountain and the sunset every evening. The Center has well-appointed rooms and specializes in a distinct manner of Southern hospitality, at once both gracious and energetic. Conference facilities will house the reunion's hospitality room, symposiums, and banquets.

The hotel is near the historic downtown Marietta square and within a short drive to Dobbins AFB and the Lockheed plant.

Call now for reservations. **Toll free telephone: 888-685-2500**, Telephone: 770-427-2500, Fax: 678-819-3224. Reservations must be made **no later than 24th August**. Rates are \$104.00 per night including a full breakfast and free parking.

B-47 Stratojet Association Officers

President - Sigmund Alexander
12110 Los Cerdos Dr., San Antonio, TX 78233
210-653-5361
sigmundalexander@sbcglobal.net

Vice-President - David Hitchcock
2016 Joann, Wichita, KS 67203
316-942-6607
akaplanenut@cox.net

Treasurer - Bob Griffiths
303 Double Eagle Road, Burgaw, NC 28425-8559
910-300-3015
bobnsara@ec.rr.com

Membership Chairman - Dick Purdum
13310 South 26th Ave., Bellevue, NE 68123
402-291-5247
DickPurdum@cox.net

BX Officer - George Brierly
5342 6th Place South, Gulfport, FL33707
727-321-1606
b47assn@together.net

Editor - Mike Habermehl
P. O. Box 1144, Brenham, TX 77834-1144
979-836-9427
cmhs@sbcglobal.net

Board of Governors

Don Cassidy
1402 West Downer, Aurora, IL 60506
630-859-1922
colcass@sbcglobal.net

James Diamond
898 NE Coronado St., Lee's Summit, MO 64086-5529
816-524-9562
imjack@swbell.net

Wen Painter
P. O. Box 719, Mojave, CA 93502
661-824-2907
wpainter@antelecom.net

Andy Labosky
707 Briarwood Rd., Derby, KS 67037-2114
316-788-5277
labov47@msn.com

Ken Tollin
2742 Perryville, Odessa, TX 79761
432-362-1797
ktollin@juno.com

John H. Daly III
391 Riverwoods Drive, Flushing, MI 48433
810-487-1985
JohnHDalyIII@aol.com

Mark Natola
23 Oak Ridge Road
W. Lebanon, NH 03784
mark.natola@hitchcock.org

Roll Call of Honor

Roy M. Salzman, Rockport ME passed away on 3 December 2006.

Ernest Kappe, Minden, NV, passed away (date unknown).

Another Story From Carl Midkiff

The takeoff from Brize Norton was normal, all four wheels were up and in the green and the wing tanks were feeding. We climbed out, leveled off, and headed home to Plattsburg. I slid down onto the pressure door and prepared for a nap.

Over the intercom the copilot said, "Chief, Chief flip up your (1,2,3, ???) receiver switch on your ICS box. Not knowing what was going on I flipped up the switch and could hear the copilot talking to someone with a foreign accent. They were using ham radio phraseology and it sounded to me like a normal ham radio conversaton.

I don't remember what was said but when the conversation ended the copilot asked me "Where do you think the other guy was talking from?" Of course, I had no idea and told him so and his answer really suprised me..."Moscow." I don't remember if he talked to the guy regularly or just that one time, but considering the times (early '60s), I was amazed at the conversation.

Important Reminders

- **Pay your dues for 2008** (the number on your mailing label indicates the year through which you are paid-up).
- Send dues to Bob Griffiths, Treasurer.
- Send address, email, & telephone corrections to Bob Griffiths.
- Send newsletter articles, photos, news about members, etc. to Mike Habermehl, Editor. NOTE: new email address: cmhs@sbcglobal.net
- Invite a friend to join the Association.

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

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

Reunion Registration

Registration for the B-47 Stratojet Reunion is \$146.00 per person. The fee includes welcoming package, Thursday reception buffet, Saturday's banquet and dance, hospitality room (with snacks, beverages, and cocktails), symposium, commemorative keepsakes, and all associated taxes and gratuities. Other tours and events are optional and available at an extra cost. Please note that the symposium and Cyclorama/MLK tour are at the same time.

Reunion registration forms were sent to members in early June. If you did not receive one or it has been misplaced, you can print one off of the Association's internet website (<http://www.b-47.com>) or call Bob Bowman at 770-826-5562 (bbowman@northhighland.com) or The Reunion BRAT at 360-663-2521 (info@thereunionbrat.com).

Those planning on joining the Lockheed Martin plant tour must provide date-of-birth and social security number.

Agenda For The Reunion

Thursday, Sept. 25

*Check-in, Visiting with friends
Reception Dinner Buffet*

Friday, Sept. 26

*Lockheed Martin Plant Tour (optional at extra cost)
Yacht Club Dinner and Dixieland Jazz (optional at extra cost)*

Saturday, Sept. 27

*Association Business Meeting
Symposium on B-47 & SAC history
Optional Tour of Cyclorama/MLK District in Atlanta (extra cost)
Banquet, Program, and Dance*

Sunday, Sept. 28

Goodbyes and departure



**CITY CLUB
MARIETTA, GA**

Directions To Hotel

The Marietta Conference Center and Resort is easily accessible. Take exit 263 off of Interstate 75 north of Atlanta. If you are coming from the north, turn right onto S. Marietta Parkway. If you are coming from the south, turn left onto S. Marietta Parkway. Powder Springs Street will be a left turn off of S. Marietta Parkway. The hotel is located at 510 Powder Springs Street adjacent to the City Club (see map below).



Golf At The City Club

For members who would like to get in a few holes of golf during the reunion week, the City Club, located adjacent to the hotel, offers a well-manicured 18 hole course. Rates are detailed below. For Tee Times, call 770-528-4653

18 Hole Senior Rate	\$30.00 (M-Th only)
18 Hole Friday	\$53.00
18 Hole Weekend	\$58.00
Twilite	\$35.00 (weekday) \$38.00 (weekend)
Rental Clubs	\$31.80
Small Bucket (40 balls)	\$ 4.75
Medium bucket (70 balls)	\$ 7.75
Large Bucket (100 balls)	\$10.75

- All Golf rates include golf cart
- Rate include tax
- Twilight times vary during the year

What To See And Do In And Around Marietta...



The Marietta Square is the heart and soul of the city. It is surrounded by historic buildings, museums, shops, and food vendors. There is ice cream, pizza, and fine dining available. Fifteen antique shops are located nearby. You might even get to see a wedding as the gazebo is a popular place for couples to say their vows.

Across Powder Springs Street from the hotel is the large Marietta City Cemetery and Confederate Cemetery. The City Cemetery was established in the 1830s and the Confederate one in 1863. More than 3,000 soldiers lie in graves on the hallowed ground. There is also a National Cemetery just east of the Marietta Square.



*Who can think of the Civil War without thinking of **Gone With The Wind**. For fans of that old classic, there is the **Gone With The Wind Museum** on the Square. Open Monday thru Saturday, 10 AM until 5 PM, the museum showcases memorabilia from the movie and Margaret Mitchell, author of the Pulitzer Prize winning novel. The collection is housed in a former livery stable and cotton warehouse built in 1875.*



*The Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History is located in the nearby town of Kennesaw. There is an excellent display and interpretation of Civil War history along with the re-creation of the Glover Machine Works, an early builder of locomotives. The old factory was a time-machine of history when its contents were moved to the museum for public display. The real treasure of this collection is the Civil War locomotive **The General**, one of two involved in the "Great Locomotive Chase." You can see **The General** as well as a movie detailing the story of that eventful day of April 12, 1862.*



Kennesaw Mountain looms over City Club golf course and Marietta Conference Center and Resort grounds. The mountain was the focal point of a great battle and those grounds are now a very fine memorial to those who fought and died there. The park (Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park) headquarters, at the base of the mountain, houses an excellent museum. Another battle site is Pickett's Mill Battlefield located near Dallas GA, several miles west of Kennesaw.



*The main attraction of the Cyclorama in Atlanta is the huge painting depicting the Battle of Atlanta on July 22, 1864. The painting, completed in 1886, is 42 feet high and 358 feet in circumference. Viewers feel as if they are actually in the battle. The building also houses excellent displays of Civil War artifacts. The main floor is dominated by **The Texas**, the other locomotive involved in the "Great Locomotive Chase" (see previous page). Tours of the Cyclorama are available on Saturday morning from the reunion hotel (extra cost) or you may choose to see it along with other attractions (such as Stone Mountain, the Aquarium, MLK District, and Coke Museum) in the Atlanta area on your own schedule.*



Stratojet meets Hercules. Lockheed was producing both aircraft in the same building in 1954 when this photo was taken. The Stratojet is 52-272, a B-47E that was delivered on 6 May 1954. It was flown to the 308th at Hunter AFB on 9 May and served there until being returned to Lockheed for modification on 7 December 1955. The next stop was Homestead AFB with the 379th BW on 20 April 1956 and it remained there until transfer to the 4347th CCTW at McConnell AFB on 11 February 1959. The aircraft was reclaimed at Davis-Monthan AFB on 23 January 1960. This assembly line is on the Friday tour at the reunion.

Photo: Lockheed Georgia

Lockheed And The B-47

Many great aircraft designs have rolled from the production line at Lockheed Martin's plant at Marietta GA. All but one have carried the Lockheed label. That exception was the B-47 Stratojet bomber designed by Boeing.

The very first B-47 flew at Seattle WA on December 17, 1947. It marked a new era in aircraft design and performance as it was the first large swept-wing multi-engine jet to ever fly. The Air Force decided to buy the airplane after early testing but it wasn't until the Korean War heated up that a decision was made to purchase it in large quantities.

Boeing produced the airplanes at Wichita KS (with the exception of the first two experimental models built at Seattle) but with the expanding orders it found both factories taxed to the limits. This led the Air Force to award contracts to Lockheed and Douglas to build the B-47 at Marietta and Tulsa OK. This was not a new arrangement. During World War II so many B-17 Flying Fortress bombers were needed that Boeing's capacity was exceeded. Douglas and Vega (a division of Lockheed) were enlisted as secondary sources and Boeing planes began to roll off of production lines at Long Beach and Burbank CA.

After Lockheed Georgia was selected as the site for production the first B-47 rolled out the doors on November 11, 1952. The Air Force had required delivery by February 1953 but the company set the goal as "Into the Blue in '52." The first eight airplanes were assembled from Boeing parts but the rest were fully Lockheed products. The Marietta plant built 394 Stratojets and maintained many more.

The B-47 was the subject of frequent modifications and many of the airplanes returned to the factory for work. Programs such as Peach State, Southern Belle, and Fur Coat added electrical, electronic, and other upgrades. Two modifications led to new designations for several B-47s. Fourteen QB-47Es were produced and delivered to the Air Force as target drones used in missile testing and training. Thirty-four WB-47Es were delivered to the Air Weather Service for weather reconnaissance duties.

It is interesting to note that the B-47 was built side-by-side with the C-130 Hercules. While the Hercules is still in production, the B-47 is long gone from the factories, the ramps, and the skies. Its memory still lives with those who designed, built, flew, and maintained it. They are the members of the B-47 Stratojet Association.



Lockheed's program to fly its first B-47 was called "Into The Blue In '52." The goal was met and the photo above shows 51-2197 lifting into skies from the Marietta plant in late 1952. Chief Pilot Bud Martin and Joe Garrett were at the controls for the first flight. The aircraft was nick-named the "Chattahoochee Highball." This B-47B later served with the 22nd BW, 321st BW, 3340th BW, 19th BW, and 379th BW. It was reclaimed at OCAMA, Tinker AFB, on 29 July 1960.

Photo: Lockheed Georgia

Right, B-47s roll off the production line at the Marietta plant. Note how close the embankment is to the ramp. There is barely enough room for the airplanes to make the turn. Below. At least one Lockheed B-47E was named *Gone With The Wind*. Looking on are actresses Ann Rutherford and Cammie King, who starred in the movie.

Photos: Lockheed Georgia





The WB-47E played a very important role in the Arc Light Missions over Vietnam. The photo above was taken at Clark AB, Philippine Islands on 26 May 1969. From left to right, 1st Lieutenant Lee Boris, copilot, Major Dick Purdum, Standardization/Evaluation Pilot, Lt. Colonel Frank Ross, Aircraft Commander (also Operations Officer at Det 2, 9th WRW) and Captain Matt Koc, Navigator. The words on the sign say "Consecutive Arc Light Missions Successfully Flown 400." There was at least one mission per day out of Clark so the number represents over a year of no missed missions or aborts. That's not a bad record for the old Stratojets and her crews. The airplane is 51-2406, delivered to the 2nd BW at Hunter AFB on 24 February 1954. It later served with the 307th BW and 306th BW before being delivered to Lockheed Georgia on 6 February 1963 for modification to the WB-47E.

photo: via Dick Purdum

The WB-47E And Arc Light

It was the job of Air Weather Service to fly aerial weather reconnaissance missions to determine which aerial refueling track had the best weather conditions to refuel the B-52s. This mission was flown by the WB-47Es from 1965 to the fall of 1969. I flew one of the first WB-47 Arc Light missions on 17 September 1965 from Clark AB with Jim Reid as my copilot and Bob McCutcheon as the navigator on aircraft 51-2358. Our crew was stationed at Eielson AFB, Alaska and we flew to Clark, via Yakota AB, Japan, to fly Arc Light missions for 45 days in a TDY status. At that time there were no Air Weather Service crews permanently assigned to Clark AB. Later on there were crews permanently assigned but until then crews were sent from Eielson AFB, McClellan AFB, Ramey AFB and Hickam AFB to cover this important mission.

*Dick Purdum
Bellevue, NE*

WB-47E - A Very Brief History

There were thirty-four B-47Es modified into WB-47Es during 1963, the first delivered on 20 March and the last on 15 November. They were delivered to the 54th WRS at Anderson AFB, 53rd WRS at Hunter AFB, 56th WRS at Yakota AB, 55th WRS at McClellan AFB, and Det. 1, 55th WRS at Eielson AFB. Lockheed Georgia modified the aircraft in the BIG BLUE program and installed four sub-systems: horizontal, vertical, data handling, and communications. Air sampling scoops and related equipment were added inside and outside the bomb bay. Besides the Arc Light Missions the WBs flew regular weather reconnaissance, observations in support of the early manned spaceflights, air sampling work for the Atomic Energy commission, and even some hurricane and typhoon reconnaissance. Reductions in the fleet began in 1965 but total phaseout started in 1969. One ship flown by the 55th WRS logged well over 6000 hours. When it came to the 55th it had somewhat over 3100 hours of SAC duty. The last WB-47E, and the last operational B-47 in the USAF was delivered to Davis-Monthan AFB on 31 October 1969 by non-stop flight from Hickam AFB.

**Give the gift that lasts forever.
Strategic Air & Space Museum
On Interstate 80 between Lincoln & Omaha Nebraska
Memorial Patio Walk Bricks**

Preserve history and pay tribute to a loved one. The memorial Patio Walk is located in the front of the Strategic Air and Space Museum between the Thor and Blue Scout Missiles. The walk is created out of bricks each engraved with a tribute to an individual or group. The patio provides a resting spot for Museum guests. All of the bricks purchased by the B-47 Stratojet Association members will be grouped together. You can create this permanent remembrance for only \$500. One hundred dollars of this goes to create and place the brick in the walk and \$400 goes directly into the restoration fund for the restoration of the only B-47 bomber model left in the world that is in an indoor protected area. A receipt will be mailed to you. A gift card to the person(s) being honored will be sent upon request. Make all checks out to the **B-47 Stratojet Association** so that these funds will be placed directly into the restoration fund for the B-47. Won't you join us in this most worthwhile project? Please send your check for \$500 and this form to **The B-47 Stratojet Association**, to:

Bob Griffiths, Treasurer, 303 Double Eagle Road, Burgaw NC 28425-8559

Your gift is 100% tax deductible and will help insure that future generations can view a real B-47 Bomber. Include the name you wish to appear on your brick.

I would like to purchase _____ brick(s) at \$500 per brick.

I would like my first brick to read:
(Maximum of 3 lines/16 characters on each line including spaces)



*WB-47E, 51-2417.
Note scoop mounted on belly. Tail turret was modified to provide space for the nine shot dropsonde dispenser. The inflight refueling capability and bombing equipment were deleted.
Photo: via Dick Purdum*

Bookshelf



You might wonder if anything new can be written on the Cuban missile crisis but this new book might prove it possible. *One Minute To Midnight* by Michael Dobbs is a well-researched day-by-day and hour-by-hour account of that tense period in our history. There is nothing extensive about the B-47 but the author does delve into how the 509th deployed from Pease AFB to Logan Airport to begin the dispersal and alerts.

There are copious notes and a selection of black and white photographs. The author seems to capture the sense of urgency better than most histories have although some may be put off by his style. This book reveals for the first time details about the U-2 flying over Soviet territory during the crisis and Soviet plans to nuke the Guantanamo naval base. Publisher is Alfred A. Knopf and the price at Amazon is \$19.11

Books And Video From Sigmund Alexander

The below listed books will no longer be available after December 31, 2008. Items may be ordered from Alex at 12110 Los Cerdos Dr., San Antonio, TX 78233

1. *The B-47 Centurion of the Cold War* \$38
2. *B-47 Losses* \$22
3. *History of the 100th BW* \$28
4. *History of the 100th ARS* \$18
5. *Headquarters SAC Analysis of B-47 Accidents* \$18
6. *B-47 Insignia and Livery* \$ 28
7. *Pictorial History of Bruntingthorpe, Chelveston, Fairford, and Lakenheath* \$18
8. *Pictorial History of Brize Norton* \$18
9. *Pictorial History of Greenham Common* \$18
10. *Pictorial History of Upper Heyford* \$18
11. *Pictorial History of B-47 Bases in Spain* \$18
12. *B-47 Bases in Morocco 1953-63* \$20
13. *The Pictorial History of Lake Charles 1953-63* \$18

The newest books I have written are listed below:

1. *The Production and Disposition of the B-47 Stratojet* \$22
2. *The Pictorial History of MacDill AFB* \$18

...continued in next column

The Following DVDs are available:

1. *The Strategic Air Command, A Proud Heritage* \$15
2. A DVD that consists of the *home movies* taken by members of the *100th BW, 307th BW, 310th BW, and 340th BW*. This DVD includes movies of Pease, Brize Norton, Torrejon, Lincoln, Zaragoza, Greenham Common, KC-135 refueling, Schilling, Zaragoza, Majorca, B-47s flying to Washington, DC to honor General Twining on becoming chairman of the JCS and an air show. \$15
3. *Final Flight* consists of two versions of the flight of the "Spirit" from Inyokern to Castle AFB, comments from Dale Wolfe on the flight, and the flight from DM to the Pueblo, CO. museum. : \$15

Supply Room

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



Association Pin - \$10.00

1000 Hour Pin - \$25.00



Association Coaster (2) - \$2.50

SPECIAL - 6 2006 Reunion Wine Glasses/6 Coasters - \$20.00

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



Note Pad with Pen \$4.00

B-47 Commemorative Medal - \$10.00



Medal - Front



Association Mouse Pad \$3.00



Medal - Back



Association T-Shirt (right) - \$15.00
 With Pocket - \$17.00 (give size)
 Association Cap (Blue) - \$10.00



Shirt Front



Shirt Back

Application For Membership - The B-47 Stratojet Association

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

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth (for life members): _____

Military - Your Position In The Air Force: _____

Bomb Wing(s) You Served With:
 BW from _____ to _____
 BW from _____ to _____
 BW from _____ to _____

Civilian - Position/Job _____ Company: _____
 From _____ to _____

Comments: _____

Dues

One Year: \$15.00

Life Memberships

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

Dues are payable each January.

Payments and this form should be mailed to:

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

~This form may be copied to avoid cutting newsletter~

B-47 Stratojet Association
P. O. Box 1144
Brenham, TX
77834-1144

Non Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Brenham, TX
77833
Permit No.
#84



B-47B, 51-15808 flies over Stone Mountain near Atlanta GA. This Stratojet was delivered on 5 October 1953 to the 22nd BW at March AFB. It later served with the 380th, 307th, and 68th Bomb Wings before being retired to Davis-Monthan AFB on 1 February 1963.

Photo: Lockheed Georgia

Pay Your Dues For 2008 Today
2008 Reunion - 25-27 September - Marietta GA