

# *The Stratojet Newsletter*

July 2010 Volume 33

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

## *Seventh Reunion Will Convene In Omaha 23-25 September*



Today Omaha reminds many people of the College World Series, Rosenblatt Stadium, and the world class zoo. Not so during the years of the Cold War. The young sentry reminds us that Omaha was the home of Offutt AFB, home of the Strategic Air Command. The signs and symbols have changed but during the 7th Reunion of the B-47 Stratojet Association we will remember when "Peace Was Our Profession" and tremors from CINCSAC received attention from all over the world. If you have not registered for the Reunion, do so today. If you have not received registration materials, contact The Reunion Brat (360-663-2521, [info@TheReunion-Brat.com](mailto:info@TheReunion-Brat.com)), Dick Purdum (402-291-5247, [dickpurdum@cox.net](mailto:dickpurdum@cox.net)), the Newsletter Editor, or download the info at our website (<http://www.b-47.com>). Hotel information and Omaha attractions are on page 4 & 5.

Photo: Clifford Goodie

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## *Roll Call of Honor*

**Hudson A. Nichols**, Tullahoma TN, passed away on 29 March 2010.

**Milburn (Dean) Jackson**, Warsaw NC, passed away on 27 March 2007.

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## *Kudos*

“Alex” Alexander has always been the chief ambassador for the Association. He was involved in the formation of this organization, planned and managed our very first reunion, edited the Newsletter for a number of years, and served as President several times. We recently received this note from Jim Bard, Secretary of the 91st SRW Assn.:

“The RB-47E equipped 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association held its 2010 reunion in San Antonio TX, 12-17 May 2010. Sigmund Alexander came by with books and literature on the B-47 and the Stratojet Association - it was much appreciated. Please tell everyone of his work above and beyond.”

Thanks, Alex, for representing us so well!



## *Important Reminders*

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

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

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

## Another Voice

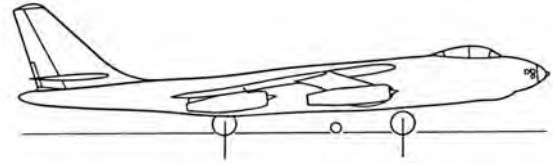
*Editor's note: Jim Hooppaw's story "Busier Than A One-Legged Man At Butt Kicking..." (Vol #30) probably garnered more response than anything we have ever printed. Gus Letto sent the following note.*

Hooppaw's story about the B-47 copilot was very interesting but I must take exception to the claim that the copilot was the busiest man on the crew. I did my own analysis of tasks on our five-man EB-47E crew and it turned out that my navigator (Dave Nicolson) was actually running the crew. He planned the routes and timing, ran the rendezvous with the tankers, planned and plotted the celestial navigation shots, was solely responsible for the precision navigation legs and did most of the flight record-keeping. All I had to do was take off, refuel and land and turn

over the control of the aircraft to him when he called for "second station". True, the copilot had a heavy workload, but it was nowhere near what the navigator had to do. If there had been such a thing as "most valuable crewmember" award in those days, it surely would have gone to Dave Nicolson. In addition, he was usually doing all that work while he was freezing to death. The heating and cooling system on the B-47 was atrocious. On a day-time flight, the pilots were roasting from all the sunlight coming through the canopy and the sunshades were of little help. That meant that the airflow was usually set to full cold. The poor navigator had no windows to capture the heating from the sun, so he sat there and froze. Things were better for him at night. I am sure Dave Nicolson will verify what I am saying.

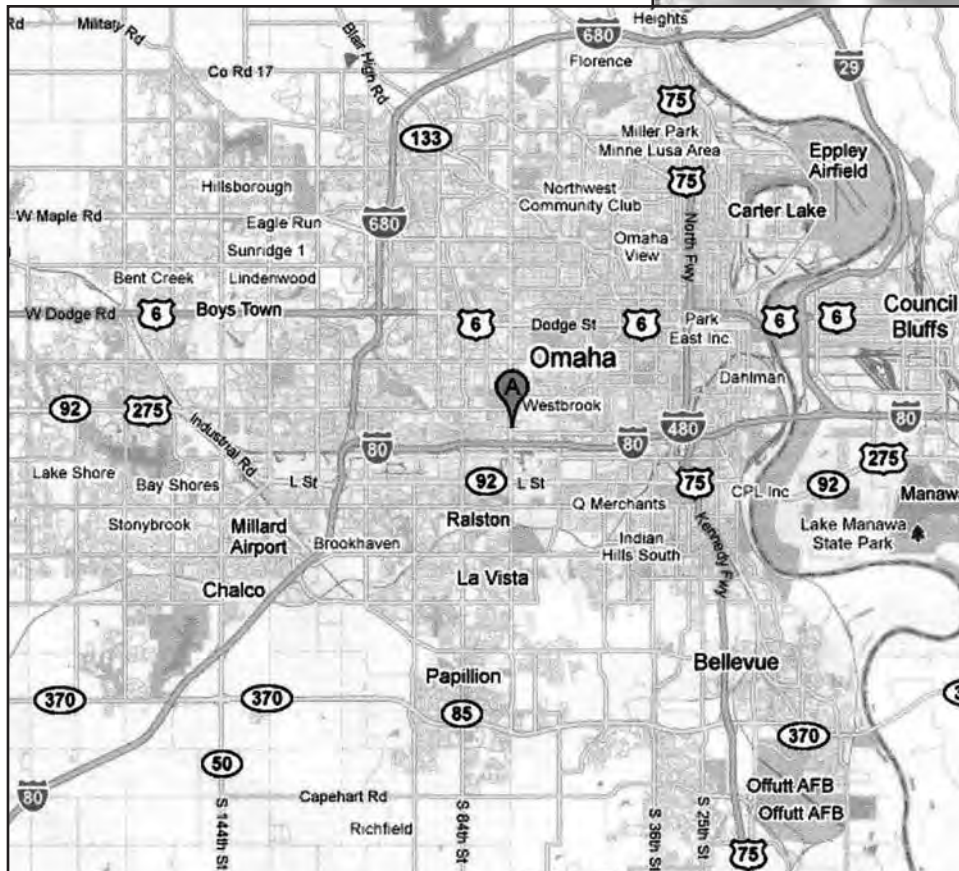
Augustine R. Letto

**J-47 Maintenance** - The photo below features personnel from the 320th BW while the one on the right is from an unknown unit. Photos: USAF



# *Reunion Hotel ~ Holiday Inn ~ Convention Center*

3321 S. 72nd St., Omaha, NE, 402-393-3950 ~  
Located on the map below at the "A" symbol just  
north of Interstate 80 in the center of the map. If  
you arrive by air, be sure and tell the hotel you are  
with the Reunion for free transportation.



*The Henry Doorly Zoo features the world's largest geodesic dome covering the largest indoor desert (below) next to the world's largest indoor jungle and rain forest (above). It's on the agenda for Friday.*



# DURHAM



The Durham Museum is located in Omaha's former Union Station, a wonderful example of art deco architecture. Inside is the Velde Hall of American History, Baright Home & Family Gallery, Byron Reed Coin & Document Gallery, Trish & Dick Davidson Transportation and Commerce Gallery, train car displays in the old boarding tunnel, a model train display, and a wonderful soda fountain and gift shop.

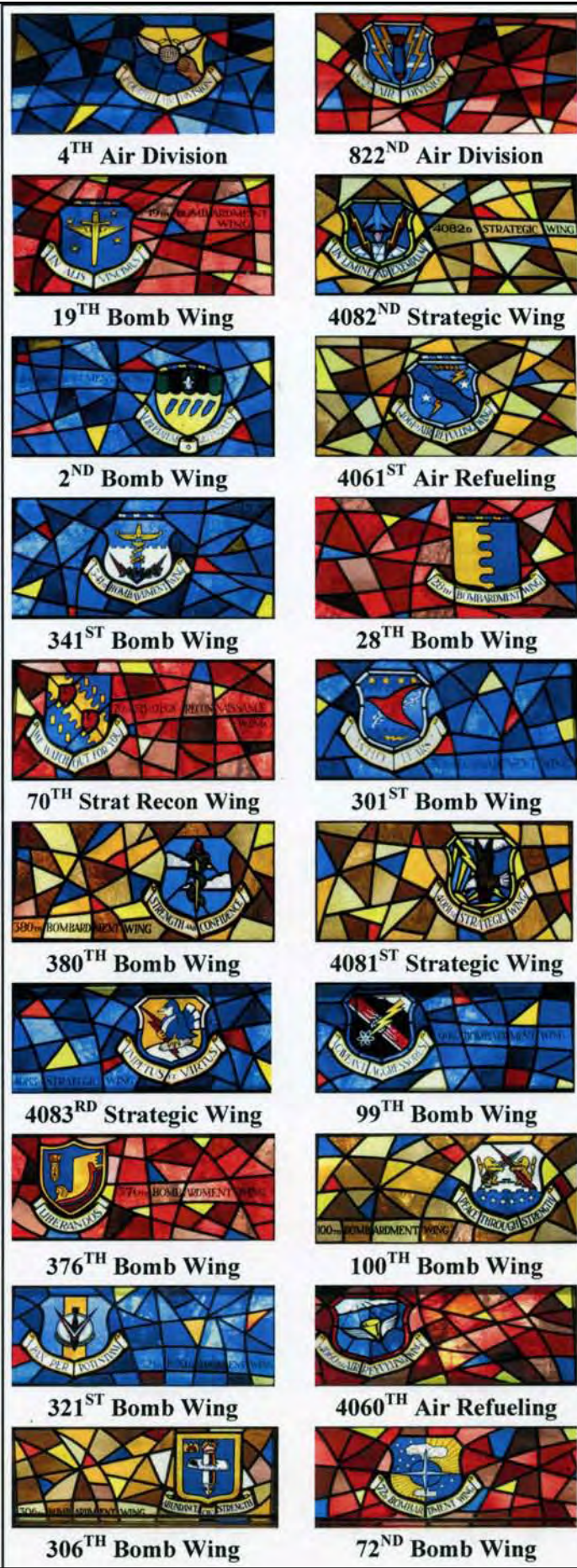
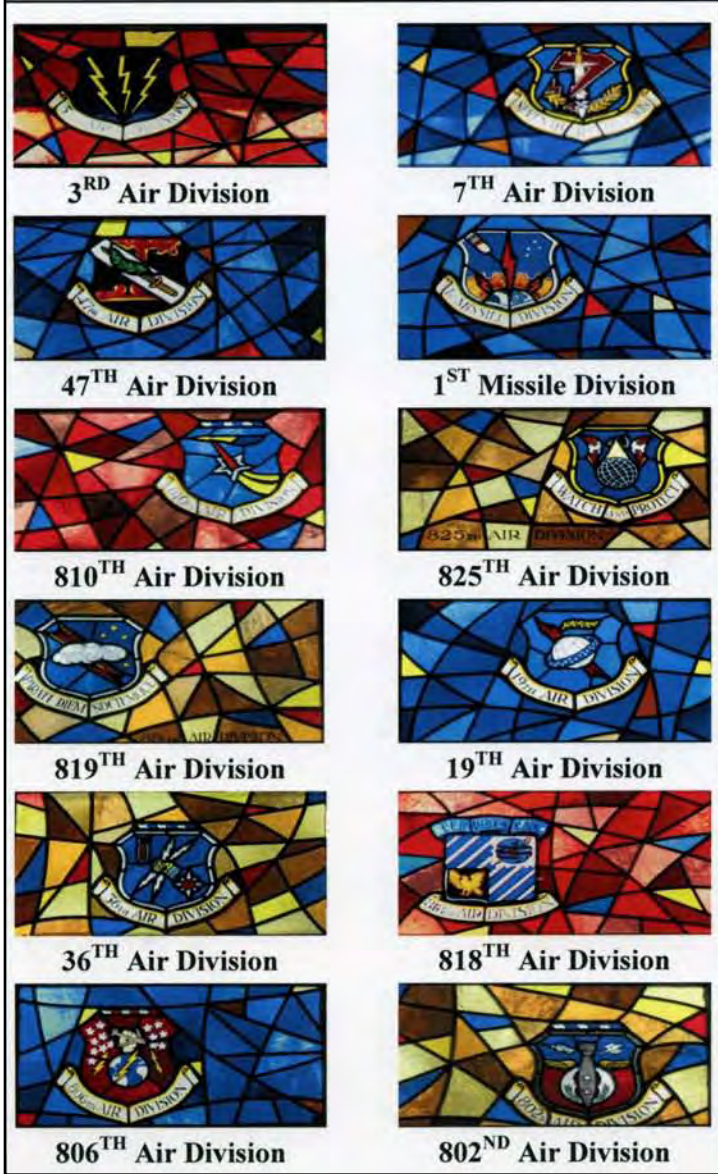


The SR-71 Blackbird is mounted dramatically in the entry atrium of the Strategic Air & Space Museum. The high-flying reconnaissance platform performed for SAC for many decades before retirement in the 1990s. It was a true national asset. Photo: SASM



**WEST WALL AT SAC MEMORIAL CHAPEL**

The sun-drenched window mural depicts 72 divisions, wings, groups, and with dancing light and color memorialize the service of sacrifice of the men and women of Strategic Air Command. The 72 windows represent furlled flags and flags still serving in today's United States Air Force.





44<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



68<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



303<sup>RD</sup> Bomb Wing



310<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



97<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



98<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



320<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



4397<sup>TH</sup> Air Refueling



305<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



307<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



4050<sup>TH</sup> Air Refueling



4130<sup>TH</sup> Strategic Wing



340<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



384<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



4238<sup>TH</sup> Strategic Wing



4126<sup>TH</sup> Strategic Wing



42<sup>ND</sup> Bomb Wing



379<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



55<sup>TH</sup> Strat Recon Wing



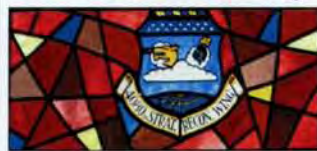
90<sup>TH</sup> Strat Recon Wing



5<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



6<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



4080<sup>TH</sup> Strat Recon Wing



544<sup>TH</sup> Recon Tech Gp



9<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



22<sup>ND</sup> Bomb Wing



308<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



509<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



40<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



43<sup>RD</sup> Bomb Wing



7<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



3<sup>RD</sup> Weather Wing



92<sup>ND</sup> Bomb Wing



93<sup>RD</sup> Bomb Wing



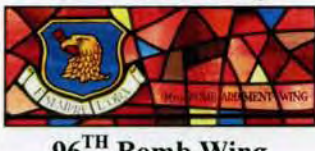
4123<sup>RD</sup> Strategic Wing



11<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



95<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



96<sup>TH</sup> Bomb Wing



Pi Chi Sigma



Lisieux Society

## More B-47 Memorials

Alex's article on Stratojet memorials in the last two issues has generated quite a response. Our members have sent in further details as well as photos of other memorials. If you know of others, please contact the editor.



The 91st SRW placed this bench at Barksdale AFB across from the B-47E on display at the base museum. It was dedicated in 2000. A B-47 is etched in the upper left corner with images of the RB-45, KC-97, and B-29 in the other corners.

Photo: Jim Bard



The 91st SRW has been very active in placing memorials. The plaque above was mounted at the NMUSAF in 1998. An identical one was dedicated at the Air Force Academy in 2002. The plaque at right was dedicated at Minot AFB in 2007 and is mounted in their Professional Training Building.

Photos: Jim Bard



The 96th BW placed the plaque below on the memorial wall at the National Museum of the United States Air Force. The one at right was placed on the memorial wall at the Air Force Academy Cemetery commemorating the WWII years of the 96th BG as well as those of the Cold War era.

Photos: Ralph Zoerlein







The Palm Memorial mentioned in Newsletter #32 is well-maintained and has gained a major sponsor, Wal-Mart. The park has a baseball field, playground, restrooms, parking lot, and a grassy area. Ron Grundon had a friend in Topeka who located the park and took the photos. It's great to see this public park treated with respect.  
Photos: via Ron Grundon



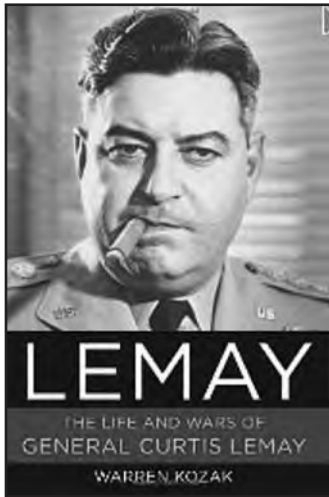
The B-47 Association plaque looks mighty handsome at its mounted location in the Heritage Hall of the Lockheed Martin plant in Marietta GA. The plaque was presented to the company during the 2008 reunion and is mounted in the factory where 386 B-47s were built and many more were modified and overhauled.  
Photo: Jeff Rhodes via Bob Bowman



Mike Gingrich sent in the following correction. "Page 7 (Newsletter #31) shows the photo of the 307th BW memorial bench at NMUSAF as being dedicated 19 May 95. It was actually dedicated on 21 June 1996 as part of the wing reunion. I planned and was in charge of the ceremony. In May 1995 the bench did not yet exist!"

Mike also writes this about the Armenian Big Safari memorial, which is taken from *The Price of Vigilance -Attacks on American Surveillance Flights*, by Larry Tart & Robert Keefe, published by Ballantine Books in 2001. "It was sculpted and erected in 1993 by a man who witnessed the aircraft going down and who emigrated to the US. In 1996 the Big Safari chief, Col Bill Grimes sent a team to Armenia to recover some wreckage from the aircraft. The team leader was Mike Patterson, a co-worker of mine. They discovered the memorial had been destroyed, but could not determine the mechanism of destruction. Some funds were raised and the original sculptor made another which was installed more securely and dedicated in 1997. "

## Bookshelf



The photo on the dustjacket is classic “LeMay” and the text inside is a credible biography of the famous commander. Although the book adds little to what has been previously written (*Iron Eagle* and *Mission With LeMay*) this more recent analysis is helpful in understanding the General’s impact on the history of 20th century America. His roles in WWII and the Cold War are both seen in a positive light but the author

does not overlook his weaknesses and mistakes. We will almost certainly never see the likes of him again. Can you imagine Curtis LeMay “selling” his expertise to the 24/7 news machines of today? The hardcover book is 354 pages long, published by Regnery Press, and available from Amazon for \$18.45.

### *Lincoln AFB History*

Once again, Sigmund Alexander has assembled an illustrated history of the B-47 era. This time it features the Stratojet years at Lincoln AFB. As with his other publications (*MacDill AFB*, *LakeCharles/Chennault AFB*, *RAF Brize Norton* and others) the book is softbound with a fine selection of photos and detailed captions. The book is available from Alex at the following address: 12110 Los Cerdos Dr., San Antonio, TX 78233.

### *From The Editor*

Some of you received copies of the last Newsletter (Vol. 32) that had smudges on some pages due to a problem at our printing company. I apologize for that. We know that most of the copies mailed out were okay. However, if you received one that had the smeared ink please let me know.

We are in the process of exploring some options to upgrade the print quality. We have always endeavored to keep costs as low as possible. There are some issues with mailing costs that might enable us to move to a different printing process with better quality.

We thank you for your kind emails, notes, and phone calls. They are always welcome and we especially appreciate those accompanied by stories and photos for the newsletter.

## Supply Room

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



Association Pin - \$10.00



1000 Hour Pin - \$25.00



Association Coaster (2) - \$2.50

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



Association Mouse Pad \$3.00

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

\$10.00



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



Shirt Front



Shirt Back

# Reunion Schedule

**Thursday - Sept. 23**

Buffet Dinner  
Hospitality Room

**Friday - Sept. 24**

Zoo/Offutt AFB Tour  
Hospitality Room  
Evening/Dinner at Strategic Air & Space Museum

**Saturday - Sept. 25**

Business Mtg  
Durham Museum/Old Market  
Banquet & Dance

**Sunday - Sept. 26**

Farewell Breakfast

## 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

<b>Life Memberships</b>	
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

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

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*The last Stratojet in the SAC inventory was this RB-47H, 53-4296, shown at Offutt AFB in 1967. In December of that same year it would be flown to Davis-Monthan AFB and placed in storage. All of the "H" models were assigned to the 55th SRW, first at Forbes AFB, then at Offutt.*

*Photo: USAF*

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