



Photo courtesy of Cliff Goodie

The Stratojet Newsletter

Number 8

July 2000

Stratojet 2000 Update

By now, everyone should have received official notification of the upcoming B-47 Stratojet Association meeting which will be held in Odessa, TX from 5 – 8 October, 2000. A flyer containing a registration form and hotel information was mailed to everyone on the roster back in April. If you have not received a flyer (a few were returned mangled by the Post Office), or if you know of a non-member who would like to attend the meeting, please contact Dick Purdum as soon as possible. Dick can be reached by telephone at (402) 291-5247 or by e-mail at DickPurdum@aol.com. Co-hosts Dick Purdum and Don "Tiny" Malm are pulling out all of the stops to make this meeting a success. *We hope to see you there!*

Memorial Honors Flightcrew 40 Years Later

By Scott R. Greenberg

Kent and Susie Dederick were digging holes to plant pine trees in the southeast corner of their pasture last year when they came upon bits of hydraulic tubing, wires, electrical connectors and parts of an airplane wing.

They called their friend Scott Weir, an inveterate military aviation buff, to take a look at what they had dug up.

Weir came over and did some digging of his own. He even brought a metal detector with him. What he found became an "obsession" for him for the next year.

Weir pored over old newspapers on microfilm, obtained an Air Force accident report and spoke to numerous people who knew what happened.

Just before 2 p.m. Friday, April 29, 1960, a Boeing RB-47H crashed eight miles southeast of Topeka. The military aircraft was on its way back to Forbes Air Force Base after a two-hour flight in low cloud cover. The aircraft's three-member crew had been maneuvering the plane to test work done by a ground crew.

The aircraft had been modified to conduct reconnaissance missions and had onboard electronic intelligence-gathering equipment. Such a plane would typically carry a crew of six but this flight included only a pilot, co-pilot and navigator. All were killed in the crash.

"Weather was most likely a factor," said Weir, an environmental scientist with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Air and Radiation, air monitoring services section. He said thunderstorms had been moving

through the area for several days, so the crew had to wait for the weather to clear.

Because the Air Force doesn't release causes of accidents in their reports, "the only two people who might have known (what caused the accident) perished in the crash and that would be the pilot and the copilot," Weir said.

As a child, Weir "lived right under the main approach to Forbes. I was always fascinated by the great big, shiny, aluminum aircraft," he said.

Through his dogged research he was able to confirm the names of the RB-47H's crewmembers: **Capt. Paul Jones, 1st Lt. Carl Heaberlin, and 1st Lt. Granville Harkrader.**

Weir talked it over with Kent Dederick and the two decided they would like to erect a monument to memorialize the men who died in the crash.

Neil Woerman, a friend of Weir's, had been working closely with a contractor who was involved in renovating Memorial Hall, the building at 10th and Jackson that now houses the offices of the attorney general and the secretary of state.

The general contractor's job superintendent agreed to allow Woerman to take a chunk of scrap stone left over following completion of the construction.

Weir and Dederick hauled the 800-pound granite block to **Lardner Monuments** for engraving. The rectangular gray granite block is now set in 1,300 pounds of concrete on Dederick's land. Beneath a drawing of the downed aircraft captured in flight, a thick cumulus cloud rising behind it, the monument reads in part: "*RB-47H 53-4309 CRASHED ON THIS SITE 29 APRIL 1960. THIS MONUMENT DEDICATED 29 APRIL 2000 IN MEMORY OF THE AIRCREW.*"

Forty years after the crash to the day, a memorial service was conducted. Weir made some introductory remarks.

"I grew up under the approach to runway one-three-zero, watching numerous RB-47s pass over my neighborhood every day," he said. "Most of my time during the warmer months of the year was spent outdoors, and I always took time out from whatever was going on to look up at those big, beautiful aircraft as they passed over with their drag chutes flared behind them.

After learning of the tragic event that occurred on this spot 40 years ago, my ultimate realization was that this flight crew were real people who flew some of those aircraft over my backyard so many years ago, and that fact had to be acknowledged in some way. These men should never be forgotten, and it is fitting that their names should be set in stone."



Capt. Michael Richmond, public affairs officer for the 55th Wing, delivered a letter on behalf of **Col. Gregory H. Power**, commander of the 55th Wing at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska.

"Today's ceremony is action," Richmond read. "It is a public declaration that Capt. Paul Jones, 1st Lt. Carl Heaberlin, and 1st Lt. Granville Harkrader did not die in vain, that the principles for which each of them died are worthy of the sacrifice and that we are forever grateful."

"It was a very moving ceremony," said Woerman, director of budget and special projects for the attorney general. "It was very moving to see the widow of the pilot there and for her to see this monument erected 40 years after the crash. It was in such a marvelous, peaceful setting."

Added Kent Dederick, a lieutenant with the Topeka Fire Department: "I think it's a very good

remembrance for the pilots that were killed in the accident.”

When Capt. Jones' widow heard about the memorial service “my first thought was “There's no way I want to be near that crash site,”” said **Lorna L. Jones**.

“But it was a beautiful, peaceful, glorious day.” Jones said. “You can still see the indentations where the wings might have crashed. I think to a degree it was almost as if I could say goodbye to him, finally. I sat there with tears rolling down my cheeks.”

*Editor's note: I'd like to thank **Olga Hollis** for bringing this article to my attention. Special thanks to the folks at **The Topeka Capital-Journal** for allowing us to reprint this article.*

Crash on the Mountain Follow-up

*This letter was received from **Bill Brooks** soon after the last newsletter was published. I thought you'd like to hear a follow up.*

I was assigned to the 380th A&E at the time we lost that B-47 (see newsletter # 7 for details). It was very personal for me, as I knew and worked with airman Jensen. I also was one of the volunteers that climbed the mountain that spring, when snow and weather was better, to recover any remains that were still there.

I don't have any formal or official reports on this accident, but I will fill you in on what we were told at the time. First the crew had just finished a high level run on the Watertown bombing range and was starting their first low-level penetration when they went off the radar. The low level run went between mountains, but when they entered the run they were off course due to strong winds that night. Whether this was what actually happened or not, I don't know, but I would be interested in knowing if there is any way to get an official report on this accident.

Also of note, when we were on the mountain, we found that one of the main gear struts had struck a granite mountaintop – don't know if it's still there. Also, that summer, some kids climbed the mountain and brought back the 20 mm cannon, for their school I think. At any rate, we had to send someone from the armament shop to make sure they weren't loaded.

A Message From Hal Austin

This letter is to introduce the **March Field Air Museum** located at the Van Buren exit on Interstate 215, approximately 6 miles south of Riverside, California. The Museum is owned and operated by the March Field Museum Foundation, a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization.

The Museum was established in 1979 as a part of the U. S. Air Force Museum system and became an independent museum in 1996 following realignment of March Air Force Base to an Air Reserve Base. The collection exceeds 50 aircraft with thousands of artifacts on display for the viewing public. The Museum has one 27,000 s.f. hangar, a smaller restoration hangar and a \$1.575 million fund raising effort underway for a second 27,000 s.f. hangar with construction to begin by December 2000. The Museum grounds are also home to the P-38 National Association and 475 Fighter Group with separate buildings, the 15th Air Force memorial wall and the War Dog Memorial. The Museum, open 7 days a week, had more than 80,000 visitors last year from all around the world.

The Museum is operated solely on donations from the public along with gifts from individuals and corporations. Situated on 40+ acres of land along side March ARB's 13,500 ft active runway with an additional 30+ acres to the south reserved for expansion. The Museum is in a prime Southern California location surrounded by the Inland Empire communities, 80 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, 80 miles north of San Diego and 40 miles west of Palm Springs and the Desert communities.

The March Field Air Museum is always looking for new aircraft or aerospace vehicles, military or civilian, to add to its collection. Please refer interested donors to the Museum. If you would like further information write to the Museum at P.O. Box 6463, March ARB, CA 92518 or visit our web site at: www.marchfield.org

Sincerely,

Hal Austin, Col. USAF (Ret)
President, March Field Museum Board of Managers.

Reunion News

305th A&E Squadron Reunion

By Robert Trakinat

The Bomb-Nav section of the 305th A&E Squadron held a reunion in Tampa, Florida on October 27 - 29, 1999. Most of those in attendance served from 1951 to 1954 and had not seen each other in nearly 45 years. Following a tour of MacDill AFB, the group lunched at the Officers Club. Another reunion will be held in the near future. Anyone interested in attending should contact **Robert Trakinat** for more information. Robert can be contacted by e-mail at btrakinat@accunet.com or by telephone at (217) 854-6531.

340th BW Reunion

By Henry Whittle

The 340th Bomb Wing and its supporting organizations held their 12th biennial reunion since their deactivation in 1963 at Whiteman AFB, MO. The reunion was at Shoney's Inn of Music Valley in Nashville, TN, from Oct 27 to Oct 30, 1999. There were over 144 attendees.

The main attraction seemed to be the hospitality suite, which was open from 0900 till 2400 hours. Attendees renewed old friendships, and made new friends. The instructions from the attendees at the 1997 Reunion were, no airfields, no air bases, no dinner on a boat. We were able to provide a tour of Nashville for a good number and a larger group at the Friday night Grand Ole Opera. They were all provided with a continental breakfast each morning and lunch on Friday and Saturday, in the hospitality suite, followed with a Prime Rib dinner and all the trimmings at a Saturday night dinner dance.

The next 340th reunion will be held in 2001 at Las Vegas, NV with the exact date to be determined.

55th SRWA Reunion

The Holiday Inn Melbourne Oceanfront in Melbourne, Florida will be the scene of the next 55th Reunion, May 17-20, 2001. With a grand Hospitality Suite overlooking the ocean, 55th veterans will have the perfect backdrop to renew friendships and tell those Cold War, hot war, and

typhoon evac stories one more time. Organizers are planning a tour of Cape Canaveral, inland waterway boat trips, golfing, and beach duty galore. Saturday morning speakers will include a review of past highlights of 55th/AFTAC joint recee operations, a recounting of the last time the Russians fired warning shots on an RC-135 (i.e. 17 Nov 70), and an update of current 55th operations. We're even planning to bring in a piano so that John Caban can tinkle out those wonderful tunes of yore like Bless 'em All, Bless 'em All, I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy, and the Air Force Song. Those who sign up early for this event will be eligible for a drawing for a free room for the duration of the Reunion. Details are now being finalized. Watch this space for registration forms, which will be posted soon.

Reserve the dates and tell your friends now. Call John Caban (321-779-4448) or Barney Clary (321-459-1182) if you'd like to volunteer to help out.



Rod Nackerman, Bob Lamb and Robert Bonser relax at the recent 306th A&E SQ. reunion in Branson, MO.

Book News

As all of you are aware, books featuring the B-47 have been few and far between, until now. I am pleased to announce the arrival of several new books and an older book that I just discovered, which I think you will all enjoy.

The first selection is an entertaining yarn written by author **Tom Hanley** titled "**Flyboys**," the story of four boys growing up on Forbes AFB who decide to sneak a peak at an unguarded RB-47H during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The distinguished radio commentator Paul Harvey recently plugged Hanley's delightful tale. For more information, check out Tom's home page at: <http://www.kestrok.com/~thanley>.

"The B-47 Stratojet - Boeing's Brilliant Bomber" is Volume 7 in the **Walter J. Boyne** Military Aircraft series, published by McGraw-Hill. From conception to phase out, author **Jan Tegler** tells the story behind the development and deployment of the Boeing B-47.

Veteran aviation writer **Alwyn Lloyd's** long awaited, **"A COLD WAR LEGACY - A Tribute to the Strategic Air Command 1946 - 1992"** is a comprehensive 760 page book with more than 700 photographs, maps, color unit insignias, in-depth tables and appendices. With a forward written by General Russell E. Dougherty, CINCSAC 1974 - 77, Al chronicles the evolution of strategic air power from WW I through the final days of the Strategic Air Command in 1992. In addition, Al writes extensively about the many operations, exercises, and events that occurred throughout SAC's 46-year history. This book belongs in everyone's collection and it is available directly from the publisher. For more information, call Pictorial Histories Publications at: (406) 549-8488.

Finally, just in case you missed it the first time around, I'd like to mention a wonderful book titled, **"Test Flying at Old Wright Field."** Seventy-two authors have contributed more than 100 stories of their flying days at Wright Field, from the "Twenties to the Fifties." All profits from this book go to the Wright-Patterson A.F. Base Educational Fund and are used to provide academic achievement scholarships and zero interest loans for the children of WPAFB officers, enlisted men and civilian employees. To order your copy, contact **Colonel Nathan Rosengarten** at (937) 848-4210. Don't forget to tell Nathan that you heard about the book here.

McConnell Rededication Ceremony

By Andy Labosky



A rededication ceremony was held at McConnell AFB, Kansas on Monday June 12 for the recently refurbished B-47 Stratojet, S/N 53-4213. The ceremony began with a flyover by a KC-135 Stratotanker and the posting of the colors, the National Anthem, sung by **TSGT. Claudelle Daway**, and an opening prayer by the chaplain. The Commander of the 22nd Air Refueling Wing, **Colonel Fred Roggero** followed with the story of the aircraft's history. Then, **Colonel Walter Boyne** (USAF Retired) was introduced. Colonel Boyne talked about the history of the B-47 Stratojet and the history of McConnell AFB and the 3520th Combat Crew Training Wing. **Lt. Ebarb**, project officer for the rededication, added to the story of the aircraft and the restoration.



Guest Speaker Colonel Walter Boyne

Lt. Ebarb's comments were followed by a flyover made by a B-52 and a B-1 bomber.

Colonel Roggero then presented Colonel Boyne with a plaque and presented Colonel **Mel Horstman**, representing the B-47 Stratojet Association an appreciation award. Colonel Roggero and Colonel's Boyne and Horstman then unveiled the brass plaque that will be installed at the B-47 site. Also present at the ceremony were **Colonel Ron Johnson**, Commanding Officer of the 931 ARG and **Colonel Ed Flora**, Vice Commander of the 184th Bomb Wing.

The colors were then posted and a reception followed.

History of the 98th Bomb Wing

By Sigmund "Alex" Alexander

The 98th Bomb Group was activated at MacDill Field on February 3, 1942. Following training in the B-24, the group departed Brooklyn, New York on July 15, 1942 for a month long voyage around South Africa to Suez where they disembarked on August 16th. The group was then sent to fields outside of Haifa, Palestine in now what is Israel. Flying Liberators, they attacked targets in Crete and Libya. Attacks in Libya were directed against Rommel's supply lines. The group was awarded an outstanding unit citation in recognition of their operations in support of Montgomery's Eight Army pursuit of the Afrika Korps. The unit's aircraft were painted desert pink (presently the Confederate Air Force has a B-24 painted in the same pink colors named "The Strawberry Bitch").

After the fall of Cyrenaica Libya, the 98th moved to bases near Tobruk on January 29th. From these bases, the 98th attacked targets in Sicily, Italy and Greece. The group helped neutralize Axis power in Sicily prior to the invasion by bombing German and Italian airfields on the island.

In the summer of 1943, five B-24 bomb groups began low-level training missions in preparation for an attack on the Ploesti refinery complex in Romania, code-named Tidal Wave. American planners were unaware of the scope of the defenses that awaited the bombers. Ploesti was the most heavily defended target outside the Reich. Its defenses included both German and Romanian fighters, flak guns, flak towers, and barrage balloons. On the day of the raid, a flak train by chance happened to be in Ploesti further adding to the defenses.

The attacking force was divided, Col. Keith K. Compton, commander of the 376th, led the first half. Col. Baker of the 93rd accompanied Compton. Compton misidentified a checkpoint and thereby took his two groups to Bucharest instead of Ploesti. On realizing his mistake, Compton then turned toward Ploesti. The mistake had forewarned the defenders and when the attackers arrived over Ploesti they were met with the full fury of the determined defenders.



Russell P. Davis and Terry Backley of 98th

Colonel John R "Killer" Kane led the second half which consisted of Kane's 98th, Col. Johnson's 44th, and Col. Wood's 389th. They approached the assigned Ploesti target as planned. When they arrived over their targets they were met by the bombers of the 376th and 93rd coming at them from the opposite direction. The 376th and 93rd had been directed to hit targets of opportunity and the result was bedlam as bombs were being dropped at house top level with 45 second fuses. Exploding bombs were blowing up on coming B-24s. The 98th was leading the aerial equivalent of "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

The commander of the 98th, Colonel "Killer" Kane, received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the flight leaders were awarded Distinguished Service Crosses, and the 98th its second outstanding unit award. However, the 98th paid a bloody price. Of 48 aircraft launched only eighteen who made it to the target returned. One aircraft crashed after takeoff and eight-aborted enroute. Thirty-nine aircraft made it to the IP; fifteen were lost over the target; three to fighters after departing the target; one crashed at sea; one crashed on Cyprus; and one crashed on Sicily. A number of aircraft that made it back to Libya were class sixed. The loss rate was greater than 55 %; the 98th had been decimated in the raid.

After the group had recovered its strength, it resumed bombing targets through out continental Europe until the war ended. Fortunately there was never another raid like the August 1943 raid on Ploesti. From 1942 to 1945, the group had flown 416 combat mission and on returning to the states was deactivated in November 1945.

In 1947, the group was reactivated and assigned to Spokane, Washington where it was equipped with B-29s. In 1948 when the Air Force changed the designation of groups to wings, the 98th became the 98th Bomb Wing. Following the North Korean attack on South Korea in June 1950, the 98th was sent to Yakota, Japan to hit the invading North Koreans. The first mission was flown against the North on 9 August with air crews helping to load bombs as all ground support personnel had still to arrive. The wing continued to bomb targets in the North in daylight until the arrival of MiG-15s in the fall of 1951 forced a change of tactics. In January 1952, the 98th switched to night operations and continued to bomb targets until the fighting stopped in July 1953. The 98th earned a third distinguished unit citation for the period 1 December 1952-30 April 1953. The wing had dropped 167, 100 tons of bombs during the Korean police action.

After the end of fighting, the 98th remained at Yakota until July 1954 when it was transferred to Lincoln Air Force Base. Lincoln was to be the home of the 98th (and 307th BW) until it was inactivated in June 1966.

B-47s began arriving in January 1955 and the wing successfully flew its Operational Readiness Inspection, code named Post Hole, in October. This was followed by a 90-day rotation to Lakenheath with the tankers going to Harmon.

The following year the wing won the SAC bomb comp, a singular honor since the wing had been combat ready for only a year. The winners of the Fairchild trophy were Lt. Colonel William J. Amos, AC; Capt. James H. Grady, copilot; and Major William L. Polhemus, navigator.

From 1956 until the B-47s were sent to the bone yard in 1965 the wing followed the normal routine for a SAC B-47 wing: alert, reflex, flying, ORIs, practice ORIs. Yet what is normal is hard to comprehend unless you were a part of it; the day to day tension, the separation from the family, the constant demands of the job, anxiety, fear accompanied by pride, sense of duty, comradeship and even fun.

The 98th ARS Squadron was inactivated in April 1963. In 1964, with the acquisition of Atlas missiles, the wing was redesignated a Strategic Aerospace Wing. However, the Atlas' were withdrawn from service in April 1965 followed

by the retirement of the B-47s; the last one leaving Lincoln on December 7, 1965. In a final tribute, the Wing was presented with an Air Force Outstanding unit award in 1965.

On December 7, 1965 the last three B-47s of the 98th were lined up abreast on the ramp. Facing them at parade rest in a single line formation were the airmen who had maintained the Stratojets. As the B-47s taxied out the airmen came to attention and saluted. Once in the air all three B-47s, a mile apart, flew by the tower at 500 feet in a final salute. It was the end of an era, the aircraft commanders of all three of these aircraft had been stationed at Lincoln from its opening. Earlier in the day, a Boeing B-47 53-4213 was flown to Wichita where it was put on display. This aircraft is presently on display at McConnell AFB.

The Lincoln papers of the day contained very laudatory articles on the B-47s and the Air Force personnel who served at Lincoln. Their tributes were truly heart warming and the last line of Don Walton's article entitled "On Target" summarized the tone of the articles, " Goodbye, old buddy."



98th BW Select Crew
LTC Amos, Capt. Grady, Maj. Polhemus

The 98th BW was inactivated on June 25, 1966. However, the Torrejon Wing in Spain became the 98th Wing until it too was deactivated in December 1976. The 98th is now like so many other former B-47 wings only a name in the book of history of Air Force Combat Wings.

B-47 Happenings

Jason Unwin, Secretary of the **Pueblo Weisbrod Aircraft Museum** in Pueblo, CO would like everyone to know that there will be an "Open Cockpit Day" at the museum on October 28, 2000 from 10 AM to 2 PM. The museum has a B-47 on display.

Association member **Dean Hunter** recently had a feature story describing an incredible experience in a B-47 published in the winter issue of the **Daedalus Flyer**.

Personals

Rich Jones, 2755 Eakin Road, Columbus, OH 43204-2802 is looking for a 376th BW shoulder patch.

Jim Waddell, 9200 W. Murdock, Wichita, KS 67212 would like to hear from someone with information about the 40th BW mailing list.

Charlie Powell would like to hear from anyone with information about a B-47 crash near Myackka City, FL in the early 1950s. Charlie can be reached by e-mail at: cbpowell@pop.mindspring.com.

Lloyd Grant would like to hear from anyone who may have known his father, Lt. Colonel Lawrence H. Grant, a navigator stationed at both MacDill and Pease AFB. Lloyd can be reached by e-mail at: palidin@netzero.net.

Veterans of Underage Military Service (VUMS) would like to hear from any one who may have served while younger than the legal age. For more information contact: **Bob Thorpe** (608) 676-4925 or **Ed Gilley** (888) 653-8867.

Jack Martin is seeking information about the following individuals: George McCrary stationed at Eglin AFB from 54 – 56, Ronald Marcinanas, David Luthy, Mike Lemaro, David Luthy and Marvin Bornstein. Jack can be reached at (573) 346-3304.

Hugh Rote would like to hear from anyone who knew his father, navigator, Captain Thomas Roten who was stationed at Davis-Monthan during the early to mid 50s. Hugh can be reached by e-mail at h.rote@excite.com or by

mail at 1907 Petit Blossom, San Antonio, TX 78247.

William Parrish needs the serial numbers of RB-47Bs and those B-47Es modified for Tee Town ECM pods. Also definition and serial numbers of the following modifications, "Ebb Tide," "High Noon," "731 Standard," and "Turnaround." William can be contacted by e-mail at Wparr80023@aol.com or by mail at 34 Sharilyn Drive, Shalimar, FL 32579.

Claude Weaver would like to hear from anyone who can help him locate **Ned Schuler** (93rd Squadron) and **Jim Magruder** (30th Squadron). Claude can be reached at (949) 582-5059 or at 25955 Blascos, Mission Viejo, CA 92691-5812.

David Galvan is eager to hear from anyone who may have known his father **Bob Galvan**, who died in 1956 at Smoky Hill while attempting a landing in a horrible wind and dust storm. He can be contacted at: dccgalvan@hotmail.com or at 14073 Antonio Drive, Helotes, TX 78023 (210) 695-9230.

Several newsletters back, I mentioned that **Bob Robbins** and I are collecting material for use in a book of first-person B-47 stories. I am pleased to announce that we have received nearly one hundred stories for this project so far. Since we have a December 2000 deadline, there is still time to get your story to us for inclusion in this project. Anyone interested should drop me a line at: Mark Natola, 23 Oak Ridge Road, W. Lebanon, NH 03784 (603) 643-3399, or e-mail me at: mark.natola@hitchcock.org.

President's Podium

By Alex Alexander

I am really looking forward to the reunion at Midland to renew old acquaintances and to make new ones. Our meeting in Omaha was great and I know this one will even be better. I have managed to obtain a copy of every SAC B-47 wing insignia and these will be on display in a book in the hospitality room at the reunion. I would also like to add the squadron insignias to the book. If you have a squadron insignia please send it to me to copy, I will return it promptly. I will be meeting with Jay Miller in Arlington at the end of the month; Jay is arranging to have my book published in England. I will provide further details in the next newsletter.

The Last Word

By Mark Natola

It's hard to believe that four years have passed since I began working with the founder of the B-47 Stratojet Association, **Lt. Colonel Charles Brown**. Many of you learned of the existence of this organization, as I did, back in 1995 and 96 through announcements that Charlie had placed in magazines like the **RTOA** and **Air Force Monthly**. At that time, it seemed as though the B-47 was destined to remain the unsung hero of the Cold War. Due to Charlie's untiring efforts, this Association was formed for the purpose of promoting both the airplane and the individuals associated with it.

As those of you who were around back then will recall, Charlie was successful in building a roster of nearly 250 men. With the help of individuals like Bob Dennison and Ed Jedrezewski, Charlie's dream of memorializing the legacy of the B-47 was becoming a reality.

Unfortunately, he did not live to see the fruits of his labor. After entering the hospital in October 1996 for routine back surgery, Charlie suffered a series of complications and passed away in November.

Upon learning of Charlie's untimely death, Bob Dennison and I took over the responsibility of running the organization until a suitable replacement could be found. Fortunately, Alex was just around the corner.

The first newsletter was written and mailed in two days back in December 1996. The main purpose was to announce Charlie's passing. Additionally, I asked to hear from everyone who wished to see this organization continue. I was not prepared for the response that my letter would generate. Within days, my mailbox was overflowing with letters, my e-mail in-box became packed, and my telephone was ringing off the hook. Overwhelmingly, the reply was, "*Keep it going!*"

Since that time, this Association has experienced remarkable growth. We now have 1,276 members, and membership applications continue to arrive at a steady rate. Much of this growth can be attributed to the efforts of individuals like

Association President **Alex Alexander** and member **Andy Labosky**.

During the past four years, I have acted as both the Secretary and the Newsletter Editor (this is Issue # 8 if you are counting). Although I have enjoyed this opportunity, my many commitments make it difficult for me to continue to act in both capacities. Therefore, I have informed Alex that I will be stepping down as the Newsletter Editor, effective immediately. Alex will be taking over as the editor of the newsletter beginning with the next issue.

Although I will no longer be writing the newsletter, I will be a contact person for anyone who wishes to pass information along. I will also continue to act as the Secretary, and I will be available for membership issues as usual.

P.S. Don't forget, dues are due at the first of the year. Your current status is printed at the top left of your newsletter address label (ex. 00 indicates paid through 2000).



"The Professional"

**Tom Sams 68th BW
TDY at Brize Norton 1957**

Association Memorabilia

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| 1) B-47 Association pin | \$10.00 |
| 2) B-47 Association patch | \$5.00 |
| 3) B-47 Association T-shirts | \$15.00 |
| 4) B-47 (airplane) pewter tie pins | \$6.00 |
| 5) B-47 1,000 hour pins | \$25.00 |
| 6) B-47 Association Mouse Pads | \$10.00 |
| 7) B-47 Association Golf Caps | \$12.00 |
| 8) B-47 Association Mugs | \$10.00 |

Please make your checks payable to **The B-47 Stratojet Association**. Mail your orders to George Brierley, 53 Mountain Ave, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819. Please note that postage and handling is included with all items.

NOTE: George has informed me that we only have a few 1,000-hour pins left, so anyone interested in purchasing one should act now before it's too late.



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WEB SITE: <http://nerd.dartmouth.edu/~man>

The B-47 Stratojet Association

Membership Information Form

Name; _____

(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Initial) (Rank) (Spouse)

Address; _____

City; _____ State; _____ Zipcode; _____

Telephone; _____ E-mail; _____

Former Bases; _____

Crew Position; _____

Current Status; Active Duty? _____ Retired? _____ Year? _____

Comments; _____

Dues of \$10 payable to "The B-47 Stratojet Association" enclosed _____

Send Completed Form to:

B-47 Stratojet Association
23 Oak Ridge Road
W. Lebanon, NH 03784

Web Site: <http://nerd.dartmouth.edu/~man>



**B-47 Stratojet Association
23 Oak Ridge Road
W. Lebanon, NH 03784**

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