

C-7A Caribou Association



Volume 19, Issue 2

November 2008

Awesome Events in Dayton at the 19th Caribou Reunion!!

The Hope Hotel next to Wright-Patterson AFB, OH was the gathering place for the 19th C-7A Caribou Association Reunion from 29 Sep thru 3 Oct 2008. The 298 individuals who attended consisted of 158 members, 89 spouses, and 51 guests. The member/spouse total of 247 included 38 first timers. The 537th won bragging rights for best attendance with a count of 38 to 34 for the 535th. After signing in, attendees greeted old friends or met new ones in a War Room well stocked with homemade goodies in addition to the usual snacks and beverages. There were well-attended meal events on every evening of the reunion starting with the Deli Reception on Monday.

On Tuesday, an all day Aviation History Tour visited local sites commemorating the Wright Brothers and Dayton's aviation and industrial heritage. Included was a stop at Huffman Prairie, the world's first airport.

In This Issue

President's Corner	Page 2
Thanks From A Hero	Page 4
Reunion Attendance.....	Page 5
<i>Mail Call</i>	Page 8
The Caribou (poem)	Page 11
Wallaby Airline	Page 12
Bumper of My S.U.V.	Page 12
Shortest Tour	Page 13
Caribous Are SF Lifeline	Page 14
2009 Reunion	Page 14
Sierra Hotel	Page 15
Boo Boo Magoo Pt.2	Page 18
Daily Grind	Page 18
Hero of the Ia Drang	Page 20
A Flight to Remember.....	Page 21

The Hope Hotel surprised 178 dinner guests with a Caribou-embossed ice sculpture that was a photographer's delight and greatly appreciated by all. Later, in the War Room, a drawing was held for approximately 30 door prizes that, at times, were an occasion for a little bit of humor.

The Wednesday morning Restoration Tour was booked solid and a reunion hit. The star of that show was the Memphis Belle, the first B-17 to complete 25 bombing missions over Europe in WW II. The Belle is now down to her zinc chromate and on her way to a complete restoration.

A Wednesday evening Oktoberfest buffet at the WPAFB Club featured Ms. Betty Darst who – in period costume – wowed the crowd with her impersonation of Katharine Wright and her animated first person narrative of life and experiences as sister to Wilbur and Orville.

Appearing at that same event was Sgt. Maj. Ed Komac, USA, Ret., who was in camp during the April 1970 siege of Dak Seang. Sgt. Maj. Komac offered a personal and moving thanks to Caribou troops who – by their airdrops – kept the camp alive and helped break the siege. After Ed's remarks, Pat Hanavan led a well-deserved three cheers for Ed in appreciation for his service. Many thanks to Dana Kelly, 535th, for his suggestion to invite Ed to our reunion as guest of the Caribou Association.

As usual, memorabilia sales were brisk. The inventory also included a new item that many members will want to own. The item is a DVD of an edited

film collection of Caribou operations in Vietnam, carefully edited and enhanced with songs of the 60's and 70's by our own Peter Bird, 535th. A well-deserved Sierra Hotel is due to Peter for his tireless work on this project.

Thursday was a busy day. In the morning, attendance at the business meeting was close to standing room only, perhaps due to a drawing for 15 free room nights! While members were meeting, about 60 gals and guests toured the Museum's Presidential Aircraft display.

After morning activities, it was time to get ready for the solemn dedication of the Association's memorial granite bench inscribed with the names of our 39 fallen brothers. The dedication ceremony began at 3 PM in the Museum's Carney Auditorium with the posting of the colors by the WPAFB Honor Guard, playing of the national anthem, and the invocation by Chaplain Jon Drury, 537th.

Tom McHugh, 537th, served as emcee. His remarks recalled the Air Force takeover of Caribou operations from the Army in January 1967, the reactivation of the 483rd Troop Carrier Wing, later to become the 483rd Tactical Airlift Wing, with headquarters at Cam Ranh Bay and squadrons at Cam Ranh Bay, Phu Cat, and Vung Tau. For the benefit of guests unfamiliar with Caribou operations, he noted that many if not most Caribou flights were to remote camps with short runways that could not be used by larger aircraft and that enemy ground fire was a frequent hazard. He concluded by observing that, during

Continued on Page 3

The C-7A Caribou Association Newsletter
is the official publication of the
C-7A Caribou Association.

Elected Officers and Board Members....

President/Chairman of Board - Peter Bird [535, 71]
Vice President/Board Member - Pat Hanavan [535, 68]
Treasurer/Board Member - Mike Murphy [537, 68]
Secretary/Board Member - Al Cunliffe [458, 68]
Board Member at Large - Jerry York [537, 67]
Board Member at Large - Fred Dimon [535, 68]
Board Member at Large - Bob Neumayer [459, 69]

Appointed Positions

Bereavement Chairman - Jay Baker [535, 66]
Chaplains - Sonny Spurger [537, 68], Jon Drury [537, 68]
Historian - Robert Blaylock [457,70]
Parliamentarian - Wilson Petefish [535, 68]
Newsletter Editor - Pat Hanavan [535, 68]
Reunion 2009 Planner - TBD
Reunion Advisor - Wayne DeLawter [458, 66]
Webmaster - Peter Bird [535, 71]
President Emeritus - Nick Evanish [457, 66]
Chaplain Emeritus - Bob Davis [457, 69]

Squadron Representatives...

457th Royal Moulton [457, 66], phone 540-720-7092
 457th Mike Thibodo [457, 70], phone 651-483-9799
 458th Lee Corfield [458, 69], phone 724-775-3027
 458th Al Cunliffe [458, 68], phone 334-285-7706
 459th Bob Cummings [459, 66], phone 865-938-7290
 535th Cliff Smith [535, 69], phone 804-453-3188
 535th Mike Messner [535, 70], phone 321-453-0816
 536th Dana Kelly [536, 70], phone 407-656-4536
 536th Chuck Harris [536, 68], phone 325-465-8096
 537th George Harmon [537, 69], phone 951-695-0630
 483rd Gary Miller [483, 68], phone 262-634-4117
 4449th Bill Buesking [535, 70], phone 210-403-2635
 18th AP Bill Buesking [535, 70], phone 210-403-2635

All members are encouraged to communicate with the Editor of the Association Newsletter. Please send any change of address, phone number, or e-mail address to:

Pat Hanavan
 12402 Winding Branch
 San Antonio, TX 78230-2770
 pathanavan@aol.com
 210-479-0226 (home), 210-861-9353 (cell)

\$10.00 dues are payable each January. Send your check to

Mike Murphy
 15892 Cedarmill Dr
 Chesterfield, MO 63017-8716
 MikeM53@earthlink.net

President's Corner

I think it is safe to say that we have just wrapped up another successful reunion with nearly 300 people in Dayton for our 19th annual gathering. Before I say another thing, I wish to thank Tom McHugh, his wife Barbara, his children, and even some of his grandchildren for their unprecedented and tireless efforts to make this one of the best reunions ever. We also had huge support from Pat and Alicia Hanavan, Marty Hillman, and Margie Wright covering the memorabilia room. Registration was staffed by Yogi and Judy Behr and Steve Kelly. Tom McHugh's family made significant contributions: Bob and Sara Hastings worked hard to assure an unending supply of refreshments in the War Room; Cathy Gross handled computer support and printing; Tommy and Krista McHugh and Cathy Gross helped set up the War Room; Maureen (McHugh) Moore handled flowers; Colleen (McHugh) McGovern got the Coca-Cola wine cooler; Kevin McHugh provided/plated the bell for the dedication; Jerry Pfeifer and Skip Raymond were co-leaders of the Aviation History Tours; and Tommy McHugh loaded and pulled the trailer with War Room supplies.



Both the hotel and museum staffs went out of their way to assure everything went smoothly. I think we can all be proud of the beautiful black granite memorial to our fallen brothers that we dedicated and then turned over to the care of the National Museum of the USAF.

Considering the vote in the business meeting and although the final accounting will take some time, I am almost reluctant to report that the reunion seems to show a small profit. We will try to come closer to the \$2,000 net cost requested by the membership on the next one. Thanks to Tom's meticulous records, we have a very good set of numbers for planning the next reunion.

I spent much of my time in the War Room with so many familiar faces and so many names that my old brain refuses to remember, but in the comfortable knowledge that I was amongst friends. My personal prize for the best hat at the reunion was the one that said "Dysfunctional Veteran, Leave Me Alone." I decided that hat suited me perfectly and would like its owner to know that I have located and ordered one! Of course, the prize for the hat with the most pins on it has to go to Bob Davis! Again, the 537th topped attendance, but the 535th is gaining!

As I look out the window into the New Hampshire woods, the snow has not yet arrived, but the Board will not be in hibernation. We are working on reunions for 2009 and 2010. Plans for Warner Robins in 2009 are starting to look feasible. Anyone in the Macon/Warner Robins, GA area who wishes to help out, please let us know. The key to a successful reunion is a dedicated group of people willing to volunteer some time and effort.

I wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas and hope that I will see everyone again next year.

Reunion Summary (from Pg. 1)

the five and one-half years of Air Force Caribou operations, nineteen aircraft were lost and, along with them, the lives of 39 crewmembers whose names are inscribed on the memorial bench. Pat Hanavan, 535th, designed and unveiled the bench, President Peter Bird presented it on behalf of the Caribou Association to Museum Director Maj. Gen. Charles Metcalf, USAF (Ret.).

After Maj. Gen. Metcalf's acceptance remarks, Army Sgt. Maj. Komac, in his dress blue uniform, tolled the bell after Tom McHugh read each name of the fallen. The ceremony concluded with Chaplain Drury's benediction, the retirement of the colors, and the playing of Taps.

Group pictures were taken in Carney Auditorium immediately after the dedication ceremony and the likenesses of most reunion attendees were captured for posterity. Check them out on our web site. After the photo shoot, there was approximately one hour in which to relax in the museum foyer or to browse in the gift shop before making the short walk to the Modern Flight gallery for the 6 PM start of our social hour and banquet program.

Indeed, it was a program to remember. First, there were two cocktail bars to obtain your favorite beverage right next to the museum's Caribou that was open for inspection via the rear ramp. The interior couldn't have looked much nicer than when the Bou was first delivered. The call to dinner at 7 PM by emcee Peter Bird was followed by the WPAFB Honor Guard posting the colors. MSgt Shawn Stanley of the AF Band of Flight then performed a stirring rendition of the National Anthem.

Guest introductions included MGen Metcalf – who welcomed our group – and Mrs Metcalf, AFRL Commander and our speaker MGen Curtis Bedke and Mrs Bedke, the Museum Restorers and their wives, and Sgt. Maj. and Mrs Ed Komac. Chaplain Emeritus Bob Davis, 457th, assisted by repre-

sentatives from Cam Ranh Bay, Phu Cat, and Vung Tau, then presented the candlelight commemoration service that has become an honored tradition at our reunion banquets.

After an invocation by Chaplain Jon Drury, 267 folks enjoyed a great dinner in a grand Under-the-Wings setting, a setting like no other and especially impressive for Air Force veterans.

The best was yet to come, after a short intermission. Specifically, the Air Force Band of Flight presented a medley of patriotic songs that was truly spectacular and stirred emotions of even the most cavalier.

Our speaker, MGen Bedke, was up to the challenge and he followed a great act with a great presentation of his own. He spoke a little about his experience as former Commander of the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, CA and more at length about his current job as Commander of the Air Force Research Laboratory, the latter about developments not only at the point of the spear, but ideas about developments in front of the point of the spear. His remarks were roundly applauded by an appreciative Caribou audience.

Emcee Peter Bird presented Gen. Bedke with a Caribou Challenge coin and an acrylic Caribou paperweight as tokens of appreciation for appearing at our reunion banquet.

Peter then introduced former president Chris Nevins who, on behalf of the Association, presented an Honorary Lifetime Member certificate to Dave Hutchens in recognition of his longtime service as Caribou newsletter editor.

Finally, it was time to bring down the curtain on a great evening. To do that, Peter invited Lee Corfield to the podium to sing his signature rendition of God Bless the USA.

After hearty applause for his performance (Lee's 3rd reunion banquet performance in a row), Peter directed the Honor Guard to retire the colors and Taps was sounded to end the evening. Hearing Taps a second time on the same day was no less poignant than hearing it

earlier in the afternoon at the memorial dedication ceremony.

The 2008 Reunion closed with a continental breakfast in the War Room on Friday morning as attendees prepared to head home.

Lastly, my thanks to the folks for their help at the reunion and the following who helped me prepare for it: Wayne DeLawter (my counsel on numerous occasions); Peter Bird and Pat Hanavan (for doing well what they do); Bill Buesking (for taking the registrations and getting me the lists I needed); my 5 kids (who all helped in some way, especially Cathy with computer support); my sister Sara and her husband Bob (who kept the War Room running like a well-oiled machine), and mostly my wife Barb (who helped with the core planning and put the finer touches on most everything).

Tom McHugh [537, 69]

Membership Report

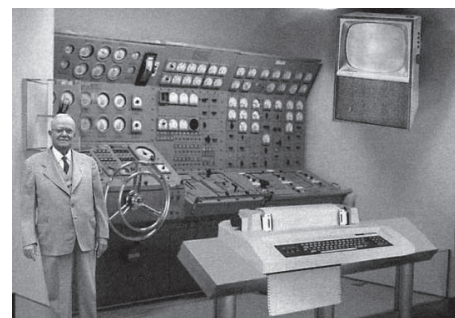
by Bill Buesking [535, 70]

Our Association has 780 active members as of 1 Sep 2008, an increase of 6% since the last reunion. The 537th has the most members, 141, followed by the 535th with 131 and the 536th with 121.

Ten members passed away last year, compared with 7 the previous year, 20 in 2006, and 15 in 2005.

The 536th and 459th tied for largest percentage increase (10%) in active members during the year.

RAND Corp 1954 Vision of a Home Computer



Thanks From A Hero

by Sgt. Maj. Ed Komac, USA, Ret.
5th Special Forces

I spent three tours in Vietnam with the 5th Special Forces Airborne with side trips to Cambodia and Laos.

During my second tour of duty, I was assigned to the A-Team at Ben Het in the Central Highlands.



In April 1970, the A-Team at Dak Seang, which was located in the Dak Poko valley surrounded by mountains, came under attack by the 28th North Vietnamese regiment and its attached units.

The North Vietnamese completely surrounded the camp and it came under intense attack from 122 mm rockets, 75 mm recoilless rifle fire, and 120 mm and 82 mm mortars from the surrounding mountains.

The North Vietnamese launched ground attacks and were stopped at the perimeter, where they dug in.

I volunteered with another team member to be inserted into the camp to assist in the fighting. We flew in with as much ammunition that the helicopter could carry. Upon landing, a South Vietnamese Special Forces officer who was with us was killed by small arms fire.

The camp was completely leveled except for the fighting bunkers, the John Wayne tower and the generator bunker.

There were underground bunkers and trenches that were connected to the fighting bunkers.

The camp was low on ammunition, food and water. Resupply by helicopters was not successful. The fire from the dug-in 14.5 mm and 12.7 mm was just too intense. Two helicopters were shot down during the resupply attempt. We were just hanging on.

Now, our heroes arrived riding in Caribous. They dropped the "beans and bullets" to enable us to keep fighting.

I was and still am in awe of those brave men flying through that intense fire to drop those supplies. They never wavered in their mission. They just kept on coming.

They risked their lives for us and three of your gallant crews lost their lives saving ours.

I'm here today because of their sacrifice. They gave all their tomorrows for my today. No words can express my feelings for what they did for me and my fellow Special Forces soldiers.

I did not know any of them, but I'm here today to honor their memory and their sacrifice.

Please, remember our young men and women who today are serving in harm's way.

God bless America, and God bless the United States Air Force.

Note: Sgt. Maj. Komac assisted in dedicating our memorial bench at the National Museum of the USAF on 2 Oct 2008. His remarks above were made at our dinner the previous evening.

I.R.A.N.

If you know where IRANs (Inspection and Repair As Necessary) were performed after the Bous returned to the U.S. from Vietnam, please share your information with the editor by email to: pathanavan@aol.com

C-7A Balance Sheet 123107

C-7A Balance Sheet 123107	
Assets	
Checking Account	\$2,896.71
CD 1036	\$10,289.04
CD 0930	\$21,487.59
Reunion Deposit	\$500.00
Memorabilia Inv.	\$4,457.89
Postage/Pkg Pre-paid	\$113.44
Total Assets	\$39,744.67
Liabilities	
Advance Dues Liability	\$3,447.20
Equity	
Equity Reserve (Pre paid dues)	-\$3,447.20
Opening Balance Equity	\$37,107.87
Retained Earnings	\$2,636.80
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$39,744.67

C-7A YTD P&L 123107

C-7A YTD P&L 123107	
Income	
Dues	\$9,350.00
Donation-Memorabilia Order	\$2,067.38
Donation to Association	\$170.00
Interest	\$1,095.25
Reunion Registration	\$18,687.00
Reunion Refunds	-\$1,177.00
Donation-charity @reunion	\$369.50
Total Income	\$30,562.13
Expense	
Postage/Shipping	-\$7.80
Bereavement Expense	\$110.00
Newsletter Printing	\$2,523.92
Newsletter Mailing	\$961.77
Dues Reminder	\$35.98
Return Address Fees	\$33.25
Reunion Reception	\$467.00
Reunion Banquet	\$12,767.49
War Room food/drink	\$4,768.85
Donation-charity remit	\$369.50
Memorials	\$5,675.00
Bank Fees	\$44.00
Software (QuickBooks)	\$176.37
Total Expenses	\$27,925.33
Net Income	\$2,636.80

Wilson's Law

As soon as you find a product that you really like, they will stop making it. (Amen!)

2008 Reunion Attendance by Name

* indicates a first time attendee

** indicates a guest

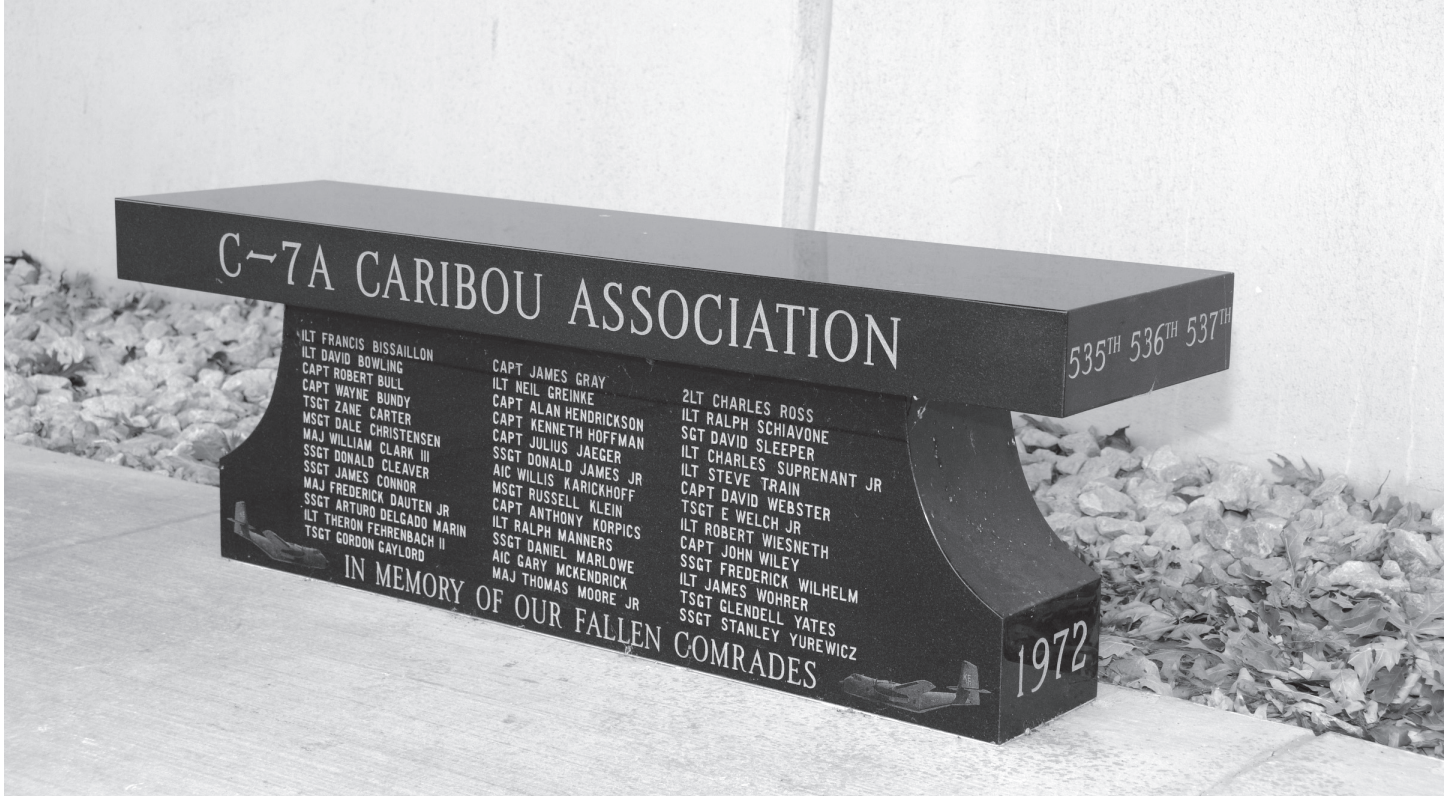
Abrams, Aubray and Judith
Allison, Max and Shirley
Alten, Larry
Anderson, Andy
Ardoin, Richard and Shelby
Asbury, Don
Bailey, James
*Baldwin, Aaron
*Beck, Frank and Margaret
**Bedke, Curtis and Ina
**Bedke, Ernie and Marilyn
Behr, Wolfgang and Judy
Besley, Richard and Linda
Betz, Robert and Pamela
Bird, Peter
Bone, Jim and Judy
*Bonner, James and Nancy
Borts, Lee and Darlene
Boston, Doug
Bowen, Brian
Bowers, Bob and Evelyn
Boyd, Lloyd and Yolanda
*Boyer, David and Deanna
**Bradford, Richard
Brunz, Wayne and Joyce
Buesking, Bill and Mae
Buser, Wayne
*Byrd, Franklin and Sarah
Campbell, Larry
Carlson, Donald and Virginia
Cathell, Allen
**Chain, Billy
Chapman, Dean and Marcia
Chrisman, Kenneth and Venita
Clarke, William and Shirley
Collins, Tom and Chantell
Comer, Dennis and Diana
Corfield, Lee and Donna
Cowee, Bruce
Cowgill, John
Craig, John and Nadine
Cunliffe, Al and Shirley
Curtis, Lester
*Davenhall Kenneth
**Davis, Caryn
Davis, Robert and Georgia

Davis, James and Dot
**DeFoe, Vincentia
DeLawter, Wayne and Pattie
**DeVries, Richard and Shirley
Dimon, Fred
Drury, Jon
Dugan, Bob and Pat
Dunlap, Shanon
**Durham, Dian
**Elton, David
**Erchinger, Christian and Robin
Erchinger, Ralph and Eleanor
Erickson, Mark
Faubus, Stoney and Melva
Ferguson, William and Mary
Fink, Paul
Fox, Gary and Sharon
*Fry, Lew and Janet
Furlong, James and Cheryl
Garner, Hugh and Peggy
Garrison, Larry and Patricia
Gill, Lawrence
**Golart, Carole
Golart, Milt and Marjorie
Graetch, Joseph
Griffin, Donnell and Virginia
Grissom, Kelly
**Gross, Jeffrey and Catherine
Haffly, James
*Hamilton, Robert and Sarah
Hamrin, Robert and Kathryn
Hanavan, Pat and Alicia
**Hanavan, Michael
Harmon, George
Harris, Chuck
**Hastings Robert and Sara
Helterbran, Glenn and June
Hillman, Marty
Hutchens, Dave and Jill
Ippolito, Gerald
Jordan, Charles and Dorothy
Karamanian, John
Kelly, Dana and Carolann
Kelly, Steve
**Kinzler, Myrna
**Komac, Ed and Barbara
Kowalski, David and Christine
Lavelle, Mike
*Lavin, Paul and Beverly
Lewis, John
Lipscomb, Robert and Dorothy
*Mannion, Patrick
Martwig, Larry

Mascaro, Ken
Matthews, John and Helen
McCorkle, Mac
*McGinnis, Daryle and Cynthia
**McGovern, Kevin and Colleen
**McHugh, Kevin and Julie
McHugh, Tom and Barbara
*McKenzie, Christy and Marilyn
Mednansky, Edward
Mellert, John
Messner, Mike
Miller, Bob
**Minner, Esther
**Moore, Craig and Maureen
**Morgan, Susan
*Mosher, Walt and Marian
Murphy, Mike
**Murphy, Michael
Myers, Harold
Nassr, Mike and Bobbie
Neumayer, Bob and Iola
Nevins, Chris
Nicklas, Volker and Kathleen
Osgood, John
Oxley, Art and Marie
Pacholka, Ken
*Passero, Frank
Patterson, Rick and Antoinette
Peoples, Paul and Win
Perry, Bill
*Pfeifer, Jerry and Carol
Phillips, Pat and Barbara
Piercy, Jeff and Ann
Pluta, Stephen
**Pont, Stephen
*Raymond, Neil and Cynthia
Reynolds Earl and Pamela
Rice, Al
*Riedner, Stephen and Mary
Riess, Michael and Eileen
**Robbins, Doris
Rodda, Allen and Bonnie
Ryland, Keith and Opal
Sanger, Gary
Schiff, Larry
Schmitz, Charles
*Schuepbach, John
*Schwanke, Otto
*Senter, Douglas and Ellen
Shanahan, Allen and Mary
Shaw, James and Patsy

Continued on Page 6

Memorial Bench Dedicated on 10-01-08 at the National Museum of the United States Air Force



Attendance (from Page 5)

**Shaw, James
 Shilling, John
 *Shoun, John
 *Sidwell, Larry
 **Slade, Bob and Wynell
 Smith, Randy and Chri
 *Smith, Leon
 Smolinski, Jerome and Kathleen
 Snodgrass, Tom
 Spanks, Donald
 *Sprague, George and Deborah
 **Stalk, George
 Stalk, Joan
 **Stalk, Bruce
 Strickland, James
 Tanner, Ray
 Tawes, John and Frances
 Taylor, Charles and Nancy
 *Terando, Steve
 Teske, John and Elaine
 Thomas, John and Mary
 Thrasher, Glenn and Zannai
 Tost, Charlie
 Vickery, John and Patricia

*Ward, Robert and Sandra
 Westman, John and Deborah
 Wever, Gary and Restie
 *Whiteford, Dean
 Wilson, Hugh
 Wilson, John
 *Witzig, Bill and Candace
 Woodbury, Roger
 Woznicki, Franklin
 **Wright, Margie
 Yamashiro, Rich and Vicki
 *Yewdall, Ed and Jeanette
 Yost, Dan and Arlene
 **Yost, Kathleen
 Zender, Paul

Summary of Minutes of Business Meeting

Quorum verified at 0935, meeting called to order, Pledge of Allegiance, invocation, agenda adopted, and minutes of the 2007 business meeting accepted unanimously.

Board motions since last meeting:

Fred Dimon appointed to fill vacancy on Board; Crew Duties for Secretary adopted; Nominating Committee appointments (Stoney Faubus to 2 year term); Purchase of QuickBooks 2008 for keeping financial records; Policy on Liability for Dues Paid in Advance; Shuttle vans for Dayton reunion; \$800 Subsidy of Museum fee for banquet; Apply excess of Memorabilia transactions proceeds at reunion to additional busing from the Hope Hotel to the NMUSAF; Nominating Committee Crew Duties; Additional duties of the Treasurer

Reports: Bereavement; Reunion; Roster; Audit Committee; Treasurer

Election of Officers and At-Large Board Members (see results on pg. 2)

Report on replacement plaques

Motion passed to subsidize future reunions by \$2000 from general funds

Reunions in Warner Robins, GA and Branson, MO are being considered

Adjourned at 1035

New Board Member Bob Neumayer [459, 69]



Raised as a farm kid in Iowa, I graduated from Iowa State University with a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and a ROTC commission. My USAF career began with pilot training in Texas followed by a first flying assignment as a C-118 pilot at Hickam AFB.

Follow on assignments included:

C-124's at McChord AFB, AFIT MS program at the Univ. of Washington, C-7s at Phu Cat and Tan Son Nhut, Engineering Support Chief at Hill AFB, C-118 VIP pilot and then Action Officer at REDCOM - MacDill AFB, and AWACS SPO NATO Test Chief at Hanscom AFB. I ended my AF career as a Lt Col after 21 years in 1980.

Since then I have been employed by Lockheed Martin for 23 of the past 27 years starting near Boston and ending up in Denver where I just retired in December 2007 and live today. I worked on various defense oriented computer and software development programs, primarily in quality assurance and test management. The break of 4 years was spent with several non-defense companies in software development.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the reunions, especially the camaraderie. The reunion speakers, for example, have been outstanding speakers on super topics not available elsewhere. Now that I am retired, I am able to help support the Association which means a

great deal to me and I will work to keep it growing, interesting, and relevant to all members.

My wife, Iola, and I thoroughly enjoy the Rocky Mountains and Denver. We are skiers, but she plays golf when I go hiking or prospecting. Our family includes three grown children and two grandchildren.

The Teacher and the Boots

Did you hear about the Texas teacher who was helping one of her kindergarten students put on his cowboy boots?

He asked for help and she could see why. Even with her pulling and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on. By the time they got the second boot on, she had worked up a sweat. She almost cried when the little boy said, "Teacher, they're on the wrong feet."

She looked, and sure enough, they were on the wrong feet. It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off than it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as, together, they worked to get the boots back on, this time on the right feet. He then announced, "These aren't my boots."

She bit her tongue, rather than get right in his face and scream, "Why didn't you say so?" like she wanted to. Once again she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet.

No sooner had they gotten the boots off when he said, "They're my brother's boots. My Mom made me wear 'em." Now, she didn't know if she should laugh or cry.

But, she mustered up what grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots on his feet again. Helping him into his coat, she asked, "Now, where are your mittens?" He said, "I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots."

She will be eligible for parole in three years.

Books by Bou Guys

Hangar Flying with Grandpa: Flight and Adventure Stories for My Grandchildren. by Col. Wilbert Turk, USAF, Ret. [483, 68] Authorhouse, November 2002. ISBN 9781403379849, 424 pp.

The Flying Greek: An Immigrant Fighter Ace's WWII Odyssey with the RAF, USAAF, and French Resistance. by Col. Steve N. Pisanos, USAF, Ret. [457, 68] Potomac Books Inc., April 2008, ISBN 9781597970785, 349 pp.

Called to Honor by Lt. Col. Wallace H. Little, USAF, Ret. [536, 68] Dockside Publications, Inc., ISBN 0-9742998-6-3, 400 pp. Available from PBCO, 3565 Chastain Way. Pensacola, FL 32504. 850-438-6156 or sales@calledtohonor.com

A Waterfall In A War by Daryle D. McGinnis [459, 70] Available mid 2009. Daryledmcginnis@aol.com

Review by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

Darlye has written a compelling historical fiction novel which could only be penned by a Bou guy. He captures the beauty of the landscape, the horrors of combat, the insanity of fighting a war with peacetime rules, breaking those rules at times, and the twists of a crazy situation we all saw every day we dragged out of the sack to fly. The characters are his creation, but they seem like people we knew, lived with, and fought with daily as we flew into Special Forces camps, outposts, and remote areas where the Caribou could "strut its stuff." A must read for anyone who remembers the odor of nouc mam, the sight of Montegnards and Cambodian mercenaries, and the craziness of the daily hustle on the ramps of airfields from the DMZ to the rice paddies of IV Corps.

Tour of Vietnam

Aubray Abrams is planning to organize a tour of Vietnam. If you are interested, contact him at: 5915 Musket Lane, Stone Mountain, GA 30087-1710 or 770-938-6358 or aubraya@mindspring.com

Mail Call

by Dave Hutchens [459, 69]

"You all did a great job. My daughter and I thought the Dayton reunion was the best to date. This was the first one she really attended, and being an Air Force brat she was thrilled at all the events. Thanks again for a great job.

Best Regards,
BILL PERRY [536, 68]

Date: 5/2/2008 1:52:04 P.M.
From: larrymjones@sbcglobal.net
Hi Dave,

I just returned from the 40th reunion of USAF Flight Class 68F, the First of The Finest, Randolph AFB. During our dinner program, Lt Robert Wiesneth's wife, Donna, was honored by our class and presented with a 68F reunion T-shirt and hat.

Bob was the only 68F Randolph member KIA in Vietnam. He was a C-7 pilot. We were all glad to see Donna at the reunion.

I just happened across your C-7 website and noticed Donna was at the memorial ceremony at Dyess (USAF Photo, last on right).

I'm sure I can speak for all the F Troopers in saying we were proud to have served with Bob.

Larry Jones

Dave,

Thanks for the interesting and nostalgic article on the 535th. I was among the first 12 Air Force officers to check out on the Caribou at Ft. Benning and go to Vietnam as cadre, joining Army aviation companies. Six went as future squadron commanders and I, along with five others, went as future operations officers. Jay Baker and I served together until I was transferred to the wing headquarters at Cam Ranh Bay.

Jay pretty well told the story. The only point I would like to add is the fact that the 57th Aviation Company was known as the Gray Tigers, when I arrived to join that unit. My understanding is that

the previous Army commander of the unit was known as the Gray Tiger and hence, his unit. As the unit grew in Air Force strength and decreased in Army strength, we changed the Tiger from Gray to Blue.

I hope this fills in at least the part of "where did the Tiger come from."

Dick Schimberg [483, 66]
jodicks@cox.net

This exchange started with an e-mail to Bob Davis.

Hi,

I was doing some research on the Caribou, looking for some information regarding a flight around March 1969. We were bound for a resupply to a SF A-Team near Tay Ninh, RVN and received ground fire while on short final. I was on that flight and came across a list of C-7s and was wondering if I could locate that plane or anyone who was a member of the crew.

Would appreciate if you know that incident or anyone who might.

Thanks,
Bob Hartford
bhart101@yahoo.com
101st RRC 1968-1969
727-643-6557

On Wed, 6/4/08, Robert Davis wrote:

From: Robert Davis <ragcdavis@yahoo.com>

Subject: Re: Caribou C-7

To: bhart101@yahoo.com

Date: Wednesday, June 4, 2008, 5:53 PM

Hi— I have queried members of the Association about this flight. Where did the flight start? Do you recall the color painted on top of the vertical fin? Do you have any photos of C-7 aircraft? RAD

From: Robert Hartford <bhart101@yahoo.com>

To: Robert Davis <ragcdavis@yahoo.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 4, 2008 8:34:50 PM

Subject: Re: Caribou C-7

RAD, Thank you for your effort. I have a picture I believe is the Caribou which I have scanned and attached. It looks like the tail has a KH designation. I talked to one of my team members, (The 3/101st RRC supported all of the Special Forces B-Teams and MACV Advisory Teams in III Corps.) and he thinks this was mid March 69 and we were TDY to An Loc/Loc Ninh on that mission. I believe this was Advisory Team 47 and SF B-33. The flight was making a resupply to a SF A-Team and then on to Saigon. I happened to be headed to R&R in Sydney and caught this flight out. Basically, the damage was machine gun rounds on the pilot's side, down the fuselage and up the tail section. We were met on the ground by AF personnel, but I was anxious to catch my flight to Sydney and didn't stick around, so I always wondered about the crew and wanted to thank them for the excellent job of getting back safe, which I didn't think would happen at the time. So thank you and all the C-7 crews for the great job you did in Vietnam.

Bob Hartford

Hi Dave,

I enjoyed Dave Kowalski's historical chronology of aircraft 63-9755 in the May newsletter. At the end of his piece, he poses a question about the distinction between "A" and "B" model C-7's. This is a subject which has come to constitute, I fear, something of a fixation for me.

I have long maintained that there was no such thing as a "B" model C-7; only the C-7 and C-7A. There were two production versions of the Caribou built for the Army. The earlier version, 60-3762 thru 61-2600 (56 planes), had a gross weight of 26,000 lbs. DeHavilland designated this model DHC-4. The original Army designation for these planes was AC-1. In 1962 Army changed the designation to CV-2A.

The second production run, 62-4144

Continued on Page 9

Mail Call (from Page 8)

thru 63-9765 (103 planes), incorporated internal airframe modifications, apparently to satisfy the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, which increased gross weight to 28,500 lbs. The earlier 56 aircraft were all eventually modified to this standard. To distinguish the second run from the earlier version (takeoff and landing characteristics were also different) the Army designated them AC-1A, then CV-2B in 1962. This became the DeHavilland standard model DHC-4A for all subsequent sales.

When the aircraft were transferred to the USAF in January 1967, the initial 56 aircraft (AC-1/CV-2A) were designated "C-7" to denote the original production design. The other 103 aircraft, built to the modified design, were designated "C-7A" to denote those changes. I could be wrong, but I doubt there ever was a "C-7B." I think the confusion derives from the Army's employment of a "B" designator in CV-2B. My source for this opinion is Wayne Mutza's book, *C-7 Caribou in Action* (p.12 and 16), numerous consultations with Caribou maintenance and flight crews, and my own recollections.

I have never found a definitive, "official" reference to a "B" model. Also, the USAF aircraft flight manual is designated *Technical Order 1-C-7A-1*. As far as I know, it was the only one in existence. Personally, I think we should drop all references to a "B" model until such time as someone can produce conclusive evidence in support of such a designation. Perhaps a challenge to that effect could be issued. Kind of funny the things one can become fixated on. Maybe it's a manifestation of OGS (Old Guy's Syndrome). In any case, so far it's proven relatively harmless.

Aloha,
Doug Lamerson
483 CAMS (OLAB) VTAAF, 69

Bruce Silvey is the Executive Secretary of the Army Otter/Caribou Association, the sister organization to our

C-7A Caribou Association. Bruce and I have been in touch with each other for the past seven or eight years and I have gleaned a lot of help and information from Bruce and other members of his organization. I wanted him and his organization to be able to appreciate and enjoy our new movie so I sent him a copy. His reply:

Dave

Thanks for the copy of the Caribou film – it's well done with lots of action stuff that will bring back the memories of those great days. We will likely run it through our digital projector at the reunion – and just have it playing in the background on a screen in the hospitality suite.

Thanks again
Bruce

That response from Bruce got me thinking about what all went into getting the DVD made.

It started with Jerry York checking out the film from a base library quite a few years ago. When the base closed, Jerry sent the film to Nick Evanish in Biloxi for safe keeping and some possible future use. Peter Bird discovered that Nick had the film and Nick sent the film to Pete. Thank Heaven for that, because the film would probably have been lost in Hurricane Katrina.

The C-7A membership, in the 2004 business meeting in Odessa, Texas, had the foresight to approve having the film digitized and made into a DVD. Later, the Board approved \$700 to have the film professionally digitized.

Peter Bird was the prime mover of this project and he shepherded it through to completion. He spent **many, many** hours working on the movie. But, Peter credits Bob Markham for staying on top of the project and applying the pressure needed to assure continuous progress. When the project was completed, Peter sent Bob the first copy. It is Peter's voice doing the commentary on the film, and Peter selected all of the wonderful, nostalgic songs on the DVD. And in the end, our Association

is the proud beneficiary of some good luck, good foresight, a lot of hard work, and of a wonderful gift to preserve the many memories of "Long, long ago in a land far, far away..."

One thousand copies of the DVD were made and over 300 were sold at the reunion in Dayton, Ohio.

Dave Hutchens [459, 69]

Saluting by Veterans from USAF Retiree News Service

Veterans and active-duty military not in uniform can now render the military-style hand salute during the playing of the national anthem, thanks to changes in federal law that took effect this month.

"The military salute is a unique gesture of respect that marks those who have served in our nation's armed forces," said Dr. James B. Peake, secretary of Veterans Affairs. "This provision allows the application of that honor in all events involving our nation's flag."

The new provision improves upon a little known change in federal law last year that authorized veterans to render the military-style hand salute during the raising, lowering, or passing of the flag, but it did not address salutes during the national anthem. Last year's provision, was contained in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, which took effect Jan. 28, 2008, also applied to service members while not in uniform.

Traditionally, members of the nation's veterans service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the national anthem and at events involving the national flag while wearing their organization's official head-gear.

The most recent change, authorizing hand-salutes during the national anthem by veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel, was sponsored by Sen. Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma, an Army veteran. It was included in the Defense Authorization Act of 2009, which President Bush signed on Oct. 14, 2008.

Just A Normal Day's Work

Tom Hansen [535, 70]

The C-7A was a workhorse, but it was an ugly duckling, a noisy crate, slow, did not have a great payload, but it was able to slow-fly almost like a Helio Courier and get into and out of some ridiculous places mistakenly called airfields. It was a real bush aircraft!

Simple, like the Beaver and Otter. Taking off empty, she would zoom climb like you wouldn't believe until the airspeed bled off to a normal figure. I once saw, momentarily, a 3,800 feet per minute climb.



The most exciting routine missions were hauling ammo into fire bases near the border, since these hot areas ruled out the use of truck convoys. We hauled 105 mm, 155 mm, 175 mm and eight inch howitzer projectiles into places such as Katum, Bu Dop, Djampap and Thien Ngon. Four or five birds flew these missions, flying four shuttles each from the hot cargo ramp at Bien Hoa. We took one or two pallets, depending on the projectile size, the maximum being about 4,200 pounds per pallet. The grunts unloaded each plane with a forklift, if a usable one was available. More often than not, the forklift was broken so we did a speed off-load by dumping the ammo out the back onto the ramp while the bird was moving (the famous *Ground LAPES* without a chute). Although the grunts didn't like it that way, it was our fastest way to unload. When you're hauling 175s or eight inch "howies" into a place like Katum, minimum ground time is the name of the game.

Because it usually didn't work, the least desirable method to off-load was

to have the grunts back a truck up to the back end of the bird. Then we were supposed to push the pallet (two tons, mind you) off the plane onto the truck. Pushing a pallet of shells in the aircraft was no problem – pushing it into the truck was! For most cargo sorties, the C-7A was configured with two cabin-length roller conveyors, enabling us to quickly load, unload, position a pallet (a half-size C-130 type 463L pallet) or most importantly, jettison a load in case of engine failure.

One man could move a pallet load of up to two tons. We strapped down loads to allow us to remove all the tie-downs, except the last one, in the event of a speed off-load at a hot fire base or emergency in-flight jettison. The last strap was released or cut at the critical moment allowing the load to roll out. My squadron lost a plane on a single engine go-around at Dalat for lack of a good sheath knife when the flight mech undid the last strap and tossed it over the load. The load rolled aft as planned, but hung up on the tail ramp when the tiedown ratchet snagged in the rollers. They couldn't climb single-engine with the center of gravity drastically out of limits, so the Caribou "mushed" in two thirds of the way down the runway and slid down a hill. Luckily, the crew escaped serious injury.

As we approached fire bases with an ammo load, the pilot flew the bird, watched for other traffic and ground fire, while the copilot worked the radio, flaps, and gear. The flight mech opened the rear cargo door and undid all the tie downs, except for the last one, and ensured that nothing would foul the load. When the aircraft was on the ground, the props were reversed and the ramp trailed level with the floor. Meanwhile, the pilots changed trim and flap settings for takeoff. At the unloading area (usually located mid-field), we stopped with the nose pointed toward the active runway and reversed props, taxiing in reverse at five to ten knots while the flight mech undid the last strap. The pilots went to forward pitch

to pull forward and the load slid to the rear. Being on rollers, it dumped out the back onto the ramp while we did a fast taxi to the runway with the copilot calling for clearance. When the approach end was clear, we would scam. Total ground time from touchdown to liftoff was six to eight minutes.

The oddest cargo I ever carried (on three separate missions) consisted of 3,600 pounds of teletype paper (to an ARVN base I doubt even had a teletype), one GI helmet strapped to a pallet, and an ice-filled garbage can with three of the largest lobsters I've ever seen. It really was a STRANGE war!

Financial Terms – 2008 Update

CEO – Chief Embezzlement Officer.

CFO – Corporate Fraud Officer.

Bull Market – A random market movement causing an investor to mistake himself for a financial genius.

Bear Market – A 6 to 18 month period when the kids get no allowance and the wife gets no jewelry.

Value Investing – The art of buying low and selling lower.

Broker – What my broker has made me.

Stock Analyst – Idiot who just downgraded your stock.

Stock Split – When your ex-wife and her lawyer split your assets equally between themselves.

Financial Planner – A guy whose phone has been disconnected.

Market Correction – The day after you buy stocks.

Cash Flow – The movement your money makes as it disappears down the toilet.

Yahoo – What you yell after selling it to a poor sucker for \$240 per share.

Windows – What you jump out of when you're the sucker who bought Yahoo @ \$240 per share.

Institutional Investor – Past year investor who's now locked up in a nut house.

Profit – A word no longer in use.

The Caribou

by Capt. Alan E. Hendrickson, USAF [459, 67]

They sat in state, the heroes, in the vaulted halls of fame,
In proud and scornful silence, for each had made his name.
On fields of storied battles, on many a bloody sea,
Though forged in fire or carved in mire, each dead is history.

There was fighting Davy Crockett and the martyr Nathan Hale,
And the Rebel line that fell in Shenandoah's bloody vale.
There was Grant who had brief glory, but died another way,
And others known to time alone, but each had his day.

On each haunted visage, there was a day's forbidding gloom,
And every gaze, a stranger, who had ambled in the room.
In his right hand was a checklist, in his left an SOP,
His clothes were torn, his face was worn, and lined with misery.

The first to rise was Caesar, by virtue of his age,
And the ominous finger that he pointed was trembling with his rage.
"What right have you, brash youngster, what claim to fame have you?"
And the man replied, though not with pride, "I flew the Caribou."

It was in a far-off Asian land, a land that God forgot,
Where the sand filled winds are piercing and the sun is scorching hot.
We were young and brave and hopeful, fresh from the United States,
Though somehow we knew and the feeling grew, we were going to meet our fate.

For there's a maniac madness in the supercharger whine,
And you can hear the joints expanding in the main hydraulic line.
The dull brown paint is peeling off, it lends an added luster,
And the pitot head is filled with lead, to help the load adjuster.

The nose gear rocks and trembles, for it's held with baling wire,
And the wings are filled with Avgas to make a hotter fire.
The landing gear struts are twisted and the wheels are not quite round,
This sorry state, arranged by fate, is to carry you off the ground.

The cargo doors are rusted and close with a mournful shriek,
And the plexiglas is covered with oil from some forgotten leak.
The runway strips are narrow, rice paddies on either side,
And the crash trucks say in a mournful way, you're on your final ride.

You taxi to the runway, mid groans from the tortured gear,
And feel the check pilot's practiced teeth gnawing at your rear.
The rotting rice on the cargo floor induces a nauseous coma,
Mingling smell, like a stench from hell, with the dead man's foul aroma.

So it's off into the overcast yonder, though number one is missing,
And the leaking hydraulic fluid sets up a gentle hissing.
The compass dial is spinning in a way that broods no stopping,
And row by row the breakers blow with intermittent popping.

The airplane has been inspected and the maintenance records signed,
It's been classed as "airworthy" by some low and twisted mind.
There is no hope, no sunny day, to dry those tears of sorrow,
For those who land, and still can stand, must fly the cursed thing tomorrow.

The stranger stood in silence, a tear shown in his eye,
And from his honored audience, there rose a ghastly sigh.
Caesar rose to meet him with pity on his face,
And bowing low, he turned to show, the stranger to his place.



Photo by Hiromichi Mine in
*Requiem: By the Photographers Who Died
in Vietnam and Indochina*

A U.S. twin-engine transport Caribou (62-4161) crashed after being hit by American artillery near Duc Pho on August 3, 1967. U.S. artillery accidentally shot down the ammunition-laden plane, which crossed a firing zone while trying to land at the U.S. Special Forces camp. All three crewman (Capt. Alan Hendrickson, Capt. John Wiley, TSgt. Zane Carter) died in the crash.

This haunting photograph, which graced every Caribou briefing room, was a grim reminder that the Viet Cong and the NVA were not the only problem for pilots in Vietnam. This was early in the transition of the Caribou from the Army to the Air Force and highlighted the need for far better coordination amongst the services.

Dixie Pub Nose Art

Where/when did this nose art on 62-9756 get painted? Send info to: athanavan@aol.com



Wallaby Airline Pilots Recognized

from *The Australian* newspaper, April 4, 2008
Discovered by Tom Neutzling [458, 69]

More than 40 years since serving under the command of the US Air Force in Vietnam, members of the so-called Wallaby Squadron [No. 35 Squadron] have finally been honoured at a ceremony in Canberra, Australia.

A total of 128 USAF Air Medals were belatedly awarded to the Australian pilots and ground crew of the RAAF's 35 Squadron, in recognition of their efforts when they flew with the Americans during almost a decade of battle.

They were the first RAAF operational unit sent to Vietnam in 1964, and the last to leave in 1972.

Operating Caribou aircraft, the RAAF 35 Squadron, also dubbed Wallaby Airlines by their American counterparts, was responsible for supply drops, extractions, and the recovery of soldiers, both dead and alive, during 12-13 hour days.

U.S. Ambassador to Australia Robert McCallum, who today presented the pilots and ground crew of 35 Squadron with their medals at a ceremony at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, described their efforts as "nothing short of amazing".

"Day and night, these men, sometimes flying in the worst of weather and into the worst terrain and airfields, got the job done," Mr. McCallum said.

"We are here today to recognise a particular group of Australians who in their particular Australian manner wrote a page in that history and made their indelible mark on our countries' alliance," he said.

"I'm not particularly pleased that it took this long for (the awarding of the medals) to occur, but on the other hand, it has occurred, it is a recognition of the remarkable activity that was undertaken by these six aircraft in the Wallaby Airline."



RAAF Caribou flies over Australian War Memorial

Editor's note: Many of the awards were presented posthumously. The unit, 35 Squadron of the RAAF, was under the operational control of HQ 7th Air Force in Saigon. The 13 year effort to gain recognition for the members of 35 Squadron was led by Ron Workman, a pilot in the squadron. Congress approved the awards after vetting by several U.S. agencies.

Bumper of My S.U.V.

Song by Richell R. Wright
Recorded by Chely Wright

I've got a bright red sticker on the back of my car,
Says: "United States Marines."
An' yesterday a lady in a mini-van,
Held up her middle finger at me.
Does she think she knows what I stand for,
Or the things that I believe?
Just by looking at a sticker for the US Marines,
On the bumper of my S.U.V.

See, my brother Chris, he's been in,
For more than 14 years now.
Our Dad was in the Navy during Vietnam,
Did his duty, then he got out.
And my Grandpa earned his Purple Heart,
On the beach of Normandy.
That's why I've got a sticker for the US Marines,
On the bumper of my S.U.V.

But that doesn't mean that I want war:
I'm not Republican or Democrat.
But I've gone all around this crazy world,
Just to try to better understand.
An' yes, I do have questions:
I get to ask them because I'm free.
That's why I've got a sticker for the US Marines,
On the bumper of my S.U.V.

'Cause I've been to Hiroshima,
An' I've been to the DMZ.
I've walked on the sand in Baghdad,
Still don't have all of the answers I need.
But I guess I wanna know where she's been,
Before she judges and gestures to me,
'Cause she don't like my sticker for the US Marines,
On the bumper of my S.U.V.

So I hope that lady in her mini-van,
Turns on her radio and hears this from me.
As she picks up her kids,
From their private school,
An' drives home safely on our city streets.
Or to the building where her church group meets:
Yeah, that's why I've got a sticker for the US Marines,
On the bumper of my S.U.V.

When the Music Stopped

by Chaplain Jim Higgins

I recently attended a showing of "Superman 3," here at Balad Airport, Iraq. We have a large auditorium for movies and other large gatherings. As is the custom back in the States, we stood and snapped to attention when the National Anthem began before the main feature. All was going as planned until about three-quarters of the way through the National Anthem – the music stopped.

What would happen if this occurred with 1,000 18-22 year olds back home? I imagine there would be hoots, cat-calls, laughter, a few rude comments, and everyone would sit down and call for a movie. That is, if they stood for the National Anthem in the first place. Here, the 1,000 soldiers continued to stand at attention, eyes fixed forward. The music started again. The soldiers continued to quietly stand at attention. Again, at the same point, the music stopped. What would you expect to happen?

Even here I would imagine laughter, as everyone finally sat down and expected the movie to start. But here, you could have heard a pin drop. Every soldier continued to stand at attention. Suddenly there was a lone voice, then a dozen, and quickly the room was filled with the voices of a thousand soldiers, finishing where the recording left off: "And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say does that star-spangled banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

It was the most inspiring moment I have experienced here in Iraq. I wanted you to know what kind of soldiers are serving you here. Remember them as they fight for you! Remember to be ever in prayer for all our soldiers, airmen, marines, and sailors serving us at home and abroad. For many have already paid the ultimate price.

Shortest Tour???

by Rick Patterson [459, 69]

Dan Ahern, Tom McCloy, "Cuffy" Kelso, and I left Travis AFB on 30 Nov 1969 and felt lucky that it was the last day of the month. We could rotate home earlier in Nov. 1970 and only spend 11 months in-country! Well, that was our thought as the first graduates from the new C-7A school at Dyess AFB.

We arrived in-country at Da Nang and spent a couple of days there before we finally got a shuttle to Phu Cat. I know it's hard to believe, but all four of us were graduates of the same class at the Air Force Academy, the same pilot training class at Vance AFB, and the first Dyess class. We arrived in Phu Cat about 14 or 15 December. Dan and I were assigned to the 459th and roomed together. Tom and "Cuffy" were assigned to the "other" C-7A squadron. Dan was sent back to Da Nang so he could get checked out faster and I was to get checked out at Phu Cat.

On 26 December, I took off with Dave Hutchins and flew to Chu Lai. Dave was a flight examiner and we were on our third or fourth training flight together. Dan flew down from Da Nang with Dave Bolling. Dan was on a check ride, but Bolling was only an IP and could not give check rides. So Dan and I changed planes. I didn't know Dave Bolling or "Squeaky" Welch (the flight engineer), but we hit it off OK and taxied out for take-off. I remember the take-off because I had my new Pentax 35 mm camera with me and left it in the plane that Dan and Dave were flying. The next thing I remember was being in the hospital at Tachikawa, Japan.

Dave, "Squeaky," and I were on our way to Tien Phouc carrying 155 mm howitzer ammo. Since I cannot remember, the remainder of the story is a compilation from talks I've had over the years with people familiar with the crash. One of those people is the photographer for the accident investigation. He gave me his photos.

We were in the final turn at Tien Phouc when an AK-47 bullet, fired from over a mile away, hit Dave in the hip. Dave was the only pilot I knew who wore his flak vest. Everyone else (including me) sat on theirs to "protect the family jewels." But Dave didn't. The bullet passed through the space where the armor plating of the seat and plane did not overlap. He was incapacitated, so I took over. I was unable to save it – the engines were found in METO power, but the props had not been advanced.

Tien Phouc had a US Army controller who was really smart. He saw that we were going to crash and dispatched a jeep and a few soldiers to where he thought we would land. We crashed inverted about a mile from the runway. Dave and "Squeaky" did not survive the crash.



The soldiers found them first. The Army flew the C-7 with a crew of two, so they thought they were done, but someone heard me. I still was strapped in under the broken airplane.

Someone called the Tactical Airlift Liaison Officer and he rerouted his helicopter to the crash site. It was used to lift the aircraft off of me. I was extracted and placed in the helicopter. They flew me to the Chu Lai hospital. I was on the operating table in less than 45 minutes from the time we crashed.

That was one of the things that save my life. Another was that the best neurosurgeon in the Army was at Chu Lai and on duty. Even though I still

Continued on Page 14

Shortest Tour (from Page 13)

was wearing my helmet, my most serious injury was a right frontal skull fracture with penetration of the durra. That means I had pieces of skull in my brain and other injuries that were not as severe.

I spent a lot of time in several hospitals during my recovery and proved all the other doctors I saw wrong, except that initial neurosurgeon. He said, "He'll either completely recover or die."

That's the story about what could be the shortest Vietnam tour.

Caribou That Hissed

from Frank Costanzo [483, 71]

Cam Ranh Bay Air Base, Vietnam – Although C-7 Caribous aren't tactical aircraft, one did pack a big "bite." A 483rd Tactical Airlift Wing aircraft commander, while making the preflight check of his aircraft, looked up into the nose wheel well straight at a cobra, in full hood, daring him to come closer.

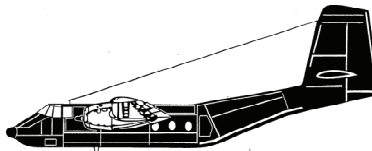
A hasty call went into the Security Police and the intruder was evicted, allowing the C-7 to proceed on its mission.

2009 Reunion

The location being considered for our 2009 reunion is Warner Robins, GA. Although there is no hotel in Warner Robins large enough for our group, there are several in Macon, GA which is only 14 miles away from Warner Robins, within range by chartered bus.

Possible activities include:

- day tour to Andersonville National Historic Site with lunch at a quaint restaurant enroute
- visit to the Museum of Aviation (see picture above)
- dedication of a memorial to our fallen brothers (C-7A #63-9756 is located at the museum)
- tour of Warner Robins AFB (the C-7A was managed by WR-ALC and a E-8C JSTARS wing is located at the base), tour of Macon's historic homes/sites
- *Dinner Under the Wings* in the museum.



Caribous Are SF Lifeline

Surfside Sentinel, Vol. 2 No. 1
Cam Ranh Bay, Jan 3, 1969

"Those Caribous are our lifeline," Army Special Forces Capt. William A. Poe said.

Poe is the Special Forces A-Team commander and Senior American Advisor at Bu Prang, a Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp on the Cambodian border in II Corps.

The C-7A Caribous are assigned to the 483rd TAW at Cam Ranh Bay. They are the smallest, and in many ways, the most important of the planes with an airlift mission.

"Nothing else can get into our camps with the small fields with our food, ammunition, and mail," Poe commented.

"I get an average of one Caribou per week," he continued. "That brings us our food and mail and ammo and whatever else we need."

The men who fly the Caribous agree with Poe.

"On missions like this," Maj. George C. Finck said, "We really earn our money. Helping the Special Forces is the greatest thing we do."

Maj. Richard R. Erickson, the pilot on the mission agreed.

"When they see us coming, we are their mail, their food, their supplies, everything," he said.

Sgt. Peter DeAnda, flight engineer commented, "When you bring in the mail and beer and soda, and these guys haven't seen any in weeks, it's really worth it."

The C-7As keep the camps supplied and both the crew members and the Special Forces troops agree – the Caribous are their lifeline.

DFC Project

Contribute to our history records – If you received a DFC during your Vietnam tour(s), please send your name or a copy of the citation to the editor.

Sierra Hotel!!!

by Dick Besley [535, 68]

I think most aircrew recognize and appreciate the key role that aircraft maintenance troops play in their survival. Never was it more clear to me than in the year I spent in the 535th flying out of Vung Tau Army Air Field from November 1967-November 1968.

Prior to Vietnam, I had three years' experience with the P&W R-2000 engine flying the C-54, mostly up and down the Atlantic Missile Range out of Patrick AFB. Those were short flights between islands, averaging an hour in duration. So, lots of high power settings was something I was accustomed to, and we normally backed off to METO power as soon as possible...around 500 ft. since our takeoffs were out over the ocean. Just trying to save those tired R-2000s...and we had four!

But, in the Caribou we had only two, and most of the time it was hotter'n hell. Most of the time we had 12-15 sorties a day! If you drew Tong 422, (the Cu Chi Shuttle) you had 20-22 sorties a day, each averaging 20 minutes. After takeoff from Cu Chi, we didn't back off to METO 'til we were well out of small arms range. On many days, a spiraling climb up to at least 1500 ft was recommended. This procedure was common at many of the "Iron Triangle" hot-spots such as Bu Dop, Loc Ninh, Tonle Cham, Dau Tieng, Thien Ngon, Katum, Chi Linh, Lam Son, Song Be, Tay Ninh, Xuan Loc, and the like.

This meant extended periods of high power settings and low airspeed which is not the way to treat a venerable old recip' like the R-2000. We simply abused that engine, day after day, week after week! Before the sun set, we'd fly it back to the home 'drome, inspect it for holes or dents, and hand it over to the friendly maintenance troops, as if we'd done nothing wrong.

Those guys were really tolerant! They didn't ask a lot of questions about our operating technique or "touch." They didn't make us explain dried mud

up inside strange places. When they couldn't replicate a write-up, they'd work on it anyway.

We should all recognize that those maintenance troops really deserved half of our flying pay...maybe more. My own experience was that in over 650 hours of flying time (I was Squadron Admin. Officer, too) in Vietnam, I never had to shut down an engine, never had a landing gear malfunction, flaps failure, and even when we were hit by ground fire at Minh Thanh, the tanks self-sealed and we just drove it on home.

Our knuckle busters were even skilled at installing the bladder-tanks for ferry missions to Clark AB. They had to be! It was simply amazing how those young troops worked on old engines and a Canadian airplane, to boot, in a hot, humid, oppressive environment, with little reward.

Sierra Hotel, guys! Thanks for a job well done.

Over 50 Perks

- Things you buy now won't wear out.
- You can eat dinner at 4 p.m.
- Kidnappers are not interested in you.
- In a hostage situation, you are likely to be released first.
- No one expects you to run – anywhere.
- You sing along with elevator music.
- People call at 9 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?"
- People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
- There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
- You no longer think of speed limits as challenges.
- You quit trying to hold your stomach in, no matter who walks into the room.
- Your eyes won't get much worse.
- You can't remember who sent you this list.

Attitude Is Everything

by Joseph Kinney

Thirty-nine years ago, I was shot in an ambush while serving as a Marine on a night patrol in Vietnam. I had potentially fatal wounds to my chest and a serious wound to my right leg. To put matters bluntly, I had never been more terrified in my life. Would I die? And if I died, would I go to heaven? I also thought about the buddies I was leaving behind. Somehow, I wanted to believe that they would be better off without me to slow them down.

The next morning I woke up at a hospital in Da Nang. The doctors told me that my days as a fighting Marine were over. I felt that I had more to give, but would never get the chance.

My history is relevant only because there are huge differences between then and now when it comes to our Wounded Warriors. For the past couple of years I have had the privilege of knowing Col. Jack Cox, USA, Ret., a stalwart in the Wounded Warrior Program at Fort Bragg. He is a great friend and mentor, and has taken the time to introduce me to some of this generation's wounded.

There are at least two important differences between my generation and the young troops I see at Fort Bragg's Womack Hospital, near where I live.

For openers, the Army acts as if the wounded person is going to remain forever a soldier. That is their basic operating assumption.

Second, the attitude of these young troops is amazing. These brave warriors, no matter how badly wounded they are, believe that they will soon be back with their units fighting in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Today, there are 17 Marines who are amputees fighting in Iraq. I am certain that there are as many soldiers doing the same for the Army.

Recently, I received a widely distributed e-mail from Col (Dr.) Brett Wyrick. He was a trauma surgeon at Balad Air Base in Iraq.

Continued on Page 16

Attitude (from Page 15)

He wrote: "If I ever hear (anyone) griping and complaining, I jump into them pretty quickly. Most people over here have nothing to gripe about compared to the Marines. Marines are different. They have a different outlook on life.

"One Marine Private was here for several days because he was a lower priority evacuation patient. He insisted on coming to attention and displaying proper military courtesy every morning when I came through on rounds. He was in a great deal of pain, and it was stressful to watch him work his way off the bed and onto his crutches. I told him he was excused and did not have to come to attention while he was a patient, and he informed me he was a good Marine and would address 'Air Force colonels standing on my feet, sir.' I had to turn away so he would not see the tear in my eye. He did not have 'feet' because we amputated his right leg below the knee on the first night he came in.

"One morning I asked a Marine Lance Corporal if there was anything I could get him as I was making rounds. He was an above-the-knee amputee after an IED blast, and he surprised me when he asked for a trigonometry book. 'You enjoy math do you?' He replied, 'Not particularly, sir. I was never good at it, but I need to get good at it, now.'

'Are you planning on going back to school?' I asked. 'No sir, I am planning on shooting artillery. I would slow an infantry platoon down with just one good leg, but I am going to get good at math and learn how to shoot artillery.' I hope he does.

"I had the sad duty of standing over a young Marine sergeant when he recovered from anesthesia. Despite our best efforts there was just no way to save his left arm, and it had to come off just below the elbow.

'Can I have my arm back, sir?' he asked.

'No, we had to cut it off, we cannot re-attach it,' I said.

'But can I have my arm?' he asked again.

'You see, we had to cut it off.'

He interrupted, 'I know you had to cut it off, but I want it back. It must be in a bag or something, sir.'

'Why do you want it?' I asked.

'I am going to have it stuffed and use it as a club when I get back to my unit.'

I must have looked shocked because he tried to comfort me, 'Don't you worry, Colonel. You did a fine job, and I hardly hurt at all; besides I write with my other hand anyway.'

Now, please tell me that these young troops aren't the Greatest Generation that has ever lived."

Screw Flies Revisited

by Dave Kowalski [908, 75]

We rotated aircraft about every sixty to ninety days or so. Typical itinerary was from Maxwell AFB, AL; pick up maintenance and flight crews from our sister unit at Dobbins AFB, GA; RON at Homestead AFB, FL; on to Grand Turk Island where the contractor on the island always had t-bone steak that we fondly looked forward to. We frequently traded for those big, pink conch shells to bring back and sell for a small fortune. Leaving Grand Turk, we landed at Roosevelt Roads Naval Air Station and started dropping the sterile screw worm flies the next day.

Airspeed was about 120 knots at our drop altitude of 900 to 8000 feet, depending on the topography of the land. Puerto Rico has some high mountains. Our motto for the mission was "Love 'Em To Death."

When the flies started to hatch after takeoff, it was a mess. They smelled bad and they crawled into everything. We used tape to close any opening in our flight suits, e.g., sleeves, legs, neck. We taped a plastic sheet over the cockpit door to help the pilots, but it didn't help much. Keeping the cockpit windows open worked best. The flies left their specks all over the soundproofing and behind it. For years after the mis-

sions, we were still finding dead flies in nooks, cracks, and crannies.

The chute that went out the cargo door could be adjusted to put out so many boxes of flies per minute. When the grid we flew revealed a "hot spot," we threw as many as we could out the cargo door. The El Conquistador Hotel in San Juan had a big, heart-shaped swimming pool, and one time we made that a "hot spot." Ha! We taped up some fly boxes so they wouldn't open till they hit the ground – easier to hit the d.z.

We were at about 1000 feet. The people by the pool were waving at us as we dropped boxes of big green flies on them. We got at least one box in the pool. What a life. Ha, Ha!

Some people were rotated every two weeks on commercial aircraft – DC-10's. That was a lot of fun, especially the free rum bar at San Juan. We didn't care if the base ever sent a driver out to pick us up.

One time a C-7 was grounded at Roosevelt Roads with a cracked augments tube. Another guy and I hand carried the tube from Montgomery to the Atlanta airport and then down to the rum bar at San Juan. We got a lot of odd looks carrying it through the terminal buildings.

What in the World Is This?



Send you answer to the editor at:
pathanavan@aol.com

April 24, 1995



Boo Boo Magoo Memoirs – Part 2

by Bob Ross [535, 69]

Awards and Decorations Officer

I really hated my additional duty of Awards and Decorations Officer. The task consisted mainly of writing flowery things about bravery, courage in the line of duty, etc. so that the deserving could get Air Medals and other awards. When I asked for guidance on this job, I was informed that the most important part of the task was, "To make sure the typewriter has clean teeth." Several months into this assignment and bored out of my mind, I happened to fly a mission carrying live food to the Vietnamese. Fastest way to the cockpit was to climb over the top of the load. As I climbed over a wicker basket full of ducks, one reached up and bit my leg, drawing blood. Seizing the opportunity, I put myself in for the Purple Heart using my best awards and decorations language about my encounter with the VC duck. As soon as the paperwork hit channels, I was no longer the Awards and Decorations Officer.

Passenger Service

My squadron flew a lot of passenger missions, some more memorable than others. Two configurations were used, cabin "seats down" carried about 28 GIs and their combat gear. The occasional emergency evacuation was "seats up," local citizens fleeing the area sitting with their backs to the wall on either side, and a cargo strap around 35 passengers on a side. The loadmaster provided our in-flight service. One of my favorite loadmasters had an excellent technique for avoiding airsickness during emergency evacuations. He would pass out airsick bags, crack the cargo door about a third of the way up while taxiing, and indicate with body language that anyone getting airsick while airborne would be tossed out the open cargo door. It must have been the fresh air that kept everyone from getting sick.

Another loadmaster introduced what

may have been the first passenger screening for explosive devices. As Vietnamese soldiers boarded, he would make them put their hand grenades in a box to be returned on off-loading. It was not unusual for him to find grenades with the pin removed and the handle held down by a rubber band, ready for action in a hot landing zone.

Medical evacuations left a lasting impression on me. Flying a plane full of wounded GIs on stretchers from where they got hurt to where they could get some serious help made me feel good about why I was in Vietnam. On the flip side, we often picked up GIs fresh off the commercial airliners as they arrived at the Saigon airport. You could see their eyes bug out of their heads as they left a shiny 707 and walked across the ramp to board the Caribou. More than once, one of these poor kids would refuse to get off upon arrival at their up country destination. I also remember the sad flights carrying the remains of fallen soldiers in body bags, with their escort on the first leg of their final journey home.

Twenty Eight Two Hundred

First flight of the day from Vung Tau was so routine that you could do it in your sleep – preflight, taxi to the terminal to pick up passengers whose R&R had ended, fly to Saigon or Ben Hoa, land, taxi in, open the cargo door, and off load. The procedure was for the loadmaster to compute landing weight and, when asked, call it out to the pilots prior to landing. Since the trip was always the same, the landing weight was always 28,200 pounds. One day, my "in your sleep" theory was proved. Preflight, taxi out, takeoff, landing, and taxi in all seemed normal. Sitting on the Ben Hoa ramp, however, the cargo door didn't open. I waited and waited, nothing happened. Time passed, still nothing. I called on the intercom, "Sergeant," nothing. Finally I yelled on the intercom, "SERGEANT!" The loadmaster awoke with a start and replied in an even voice, "Twenty eight two hundred."

Daily Grind

by Ed Breslin [537, 67]

One day we were flying passengers from An Khe in II Corps to Camp Evans, the new 1st Cav base camp in I Corps. Most of the pax were just kids really, wearing brand new uniforms and carrying new weapons. We took 17 of these troops aboard, which brought us up to maximum allowable gross weight with full fuel. What was most striking about them, besides their shiny new boots, was the way they smelled. Like they just had a bath. Nobody in the field smelled like they EVER had a bath! But, these kids were replacements. As crew members, we saw them everyday: faceless herds heading innocently into the fray. We tried not to look at the name tags on the new fatigues since we knew from our own experiences that they weren't all coming back, at least not like they were now. The Army didn't just send them off to face the enemy with just the basic training they had received in the States.

Oh, no. Upon arriving in base camp they were put into a training program that gave them the benefit of the field experience of battle seasoned NCOs. At Camp Evans, I put out a single ramp for them to walk down and they each took a brand new duffel bag and carried it off. The flight engineer always stacked all the duffel bags in a neat pile on the right side of the cargo compartment, just aft of the passenger seats and secured them with two 5,000 pound cargo straps. Getting off, the troops picked up the first bag they came to on the pile. Ownership was sorted out on the ground.

The return trip involved a stop at Da Nang Air Base for a few NCOs who were Army couriers delivering pouches to some unit or another. At Da Nang, we were told they had a 10 KW generator for us to take to the Marine base at Monkey Mountain, a short distance away. We also picked up an Air Force E-8 headed for Tuy Hoa Air Base.

After we loaded the generator and

Continued on Page 19

Daily Grind (from Page 18)

briefed the Sarge on what to expect, we got airborne for the short flight to Monkey Mountain. On the way over, our number two engine started to run rough. When we got on the ground, it really got rough so we shut the engine down. We parked and when the Marines came to get their generator, I asked them for a maintenance stand. The E-8 and the copilot helped me open the engine cowling so I could look at the engine. I used to be in the Navy Air Reserve and was a recip engine mechanic with "A" school training, so it didn't take me long to discover fuel running out of the body of the fuel pump.

The Colonel and the copilot went in to operations to call for a replacement pump, and the Sarge and I took a break beside the aircraft waiting for the part. As we were talking, we could see a VC flag flying on the hill just south of the base. At about the same time, something struck the ground near the aircraft with a zinging sound. No need to wonder what that was!

It occurred to me that it might be better to find some chow instead of standing where we were. The Sarge was wearing stateside fatigues (as opposed to jungle fatigues or a flight suit) with all his stripes. We went scouting for a place to eat, found the Marine mess hall at the bottom of the hill, and got on the back of the line.

Soon, a gunnery sergeant came along and said, "You can't stand here." I replied, "We only want to get some lunch." The gunny said, "Well, you can't stand here. All NCOs go to the front of the line." The Air Force E-8 said, "We're not in any hurry." The gunny replied, "Either go to the front of the line or get off the line." We went to the front of the line. We decided that the Marines had a rule about NCOs going to the head of the line, because they couldn't afford to have their NCOs away from the combat activity for too long. After all, they were the ones keeping the troops alive!

After eating our lunch, we returned to the flight line and found that the fuel pump was there. After installing the new pump and running up the engine, we were soon on our way to Tuy Hoa.

Tuy Hoa is a beautiful place, with a long, white beach and the bluest water I have ever seen. The runway on the Navy base runs parallel to the beach and is a 10,000 foot runway with a parallel concrete taxiway. As we descended on final, the tower called and advised that he had a Crusader on final behind us, and he requested that we exit the runway at the first available turnoff.

The opportunity didn't evade Jonesy. He did his best full flap, combat descent and short field landing exhibition, touching down on the overrun and turning off directly into the parking area that was at the very end of the runway. "What the @!?!&* was that?" exclaimed the controller! Apparently he had never seen a Caribou respond to the challenge of a short field landing.

My Favorite Holiday

by Gary Seymour [536, 70]

The red clay characteristic of the terrain surrounding Phu Cat, Vietnam, was my "snow" on Dec. 25, 1970.

The war had become a "game" played by Pentagon generals and my mission as an aircraft commander in a C-7A "Caribou" had been reduced to hauling Budweiser and Coke on pallets to Special Forces camps in the northern region of Vietnam.

This Christmas, we decided to do something for the enlisted men in the field. The squadron artist painted the nose of the Bou as Santa's face, and we promptly dubbed it the SantaBou. With the help of the Red Cross volunteers (called doughnut dollies) and gifts received from stateside relatives, we were ready to launch SantaBou.

A peculiar aspect of war is that different items take on a value unheard of in the States. This time it was toilet paper. I had managed to save five cases of toilet paper that had accidentally

fallen off some pallets during unloading at Bien Hoa. We were rich!

Finally, we were ready to take off for the camps. We went into Dak Pek, Tra Bong, Dak Seang, and other areas with the same resulting astonishment! Everyone flocked to the aircraft with the bright red nose and to their delight were served egg nog and given presents by the dollies. Ironically, the present of the day was their own roll of toilet paper.

Note: Gary was a winner in the Tribune's "favorite holiday memory" contest in 1979. He donated his \$300 prize to a scholarship fund.

Things Aren't Always What They Seem

by Paul Peoples [459, 67]

After my checkout as A/C in the 459th, we were assigned a passenger pickup mission in southern II Corps, outside the 459th's usual operating area in I Corps. Apparently, the ALCE was scraping the bottom of the barrel and was cleaning out a few old jobs. We were to pickup 15-20 passengers for Nha Trang. We found the place and a non-descript gaggle of Vietnamese men dressed in a mixture of military and civilian clothing. They didn't speak English, but they did understand "Nha Trang" and seemed ready to go there.

Our loadmaster thought he saw a pistol under the shirt of a passenger, so he confiscated the weapon, rather forcefully. After subduing the "obvious VC infiltrator/saboteur" and restraining him with tie down straps, much to the glee of other passengers, we set off for Nha Trang and the hero's welcome we expected. Our captive had a lot to say – we didn't understand a word.

Inbound to Nha Trang, I called and advised of our "passenger." USAF and VNAF Air Police met us. A lot of yelling took place by all concerned.

The net result: The man we "subdued" was the guard for a group of suspected VC sympathizers and draft dodgers being taken in for questioning/prison. Sorry, no medals!!

Hero of the Ia Drang

by Bob Fiallo, 82nd Airborne

You're an 18 or 19 year old kid. You're critically wounded, and dying in the jungle of the Ia Drang Valley, Landing Zone X-ray, Vietnam. Your infantry unit is outnumbered 8 to 1 and the enemy fire is so intense, from 100 or 200 yards away, that your own commander has ordered the Med Evac helicopters to stop coming in.

You're lying there, listening to the enemy machine guns, and you know you're not getting out. Your family is half way around the world, 12,000 miles away, and you'll never see them again. As the world starts to fade in and out, you know this is the day.

Then, over the machine gun noise, you faintly hear that sound of a helicopter, and you look up to see a Huey, but it doesn't seem real, because no Med Evac markings are on it.

Ed Freeman is coming for you. He's not Med Evac, so it's not his job, but he's flying his Huey down into the machine gun fire, after the Med Evacs were ordered not to come.

He's coming anyway. And he drops it in, and sits there in the enemy fire, as they load 2 or 3 of you on board.

Then he flies you up and out through the gunfire, to the Docs and Nurses.

And, he kept coming back ... 13 more times ... and took about 30 of you and your buddies out, who would never have gotten out.

Medal of Honor Recipient Ed Freeman died on 3 Sep 2008 at the age of 80, in Boise, IDR.I.P.

Note: Freeman was one of the true heroes featured in the book and movie *They Were Soldiers Once...and Young*. He was not only responsible for getting out a large number of casualties from the Ia Drang valley ambush, but he kept coming back with his Huey overloaded with ammo, food, and water for the soldiers that he felt responsible for, since he had helped insert them into the maelstrom that was causing so many casualties.

Landing at Buon Blech

by James Butler [459, 66]

Late in the afternoon of Dec 23, 1966, we had completed our mission for the day and we were headed back to base when Capt. (Joe) Brand had a radio call asking us if we would make a resupply of food to Buon Blech Special Forces camp and bring out a Montagnard striker who was dying of advanced malaria. Capt. Brand asked me if I was willing to chance it and I said, "Let's do it." The weather was extremely bad – rain, thunder storms and low clouds.

We loaded 3 pallets of food and headed for Buon Blech. The weather started to clear somewhat and by the time we arrived in the vicinity of Buon Blech it had cleared to approximately 3 miles and 1000 feet with light rain.

The base was dirt with a heavy canvas-like covering installed over it. Unknown to everyone, water from all the rain had run under the covering, especially on the approach end, creating lots of mud under the covering.

Capt. Brand made a low, fast approach to the runway (3,200 feet of M8A1 light duty steel matting, not anti-skid treated). About a half mile from the end, small arms fired on us as we passed over some trees. It was only a few rounds, including some tracers. Capt. Brand made the finest short field landing I have ever seen. When the wheels were firmly on the ground and the props in reverse, we came to the mud which had run off from under the covering.

We looked like a rooster on roller skates for about 2 seconds, but our pilots were professional aviators with great expertise and they had the old Bou on a perfect line, straight down the runway. How, I don't know.

Special Forces troops met us with a truck and we off-loaded the pallets and then loaded the Montagnard striker aboard. We departed without incident. Later we found out that the Montagnard striker survived.

C-5 Galaxy

from *Aerospaceweb.org* (3/23/08)

Needing an extremely large strategic transport, the Air Force selected Lockheed to develop a complement to its C-141. The C-5 Galaxy was, for a time, the largest aircraft in the world. The design uses loading doors at both ends of the fuselage – an unobstructed cargo deck 121 feet long and 19 feet wide.

The C-5 has high-lift slats and flaps to reduce takeoff run, air-refueling capability, advanced radar equipment, and 28-wheel landing gear to operate from unpaved surfaces.

Though the aircraft proved invaluable as a long-distance heavy transport, the C-5 suffered from significant structural fatigue early in its lifetime. Structural cracks limited the planes to only 20% of their maximum payload capacity.

To restore full capability and extend service life, the Air Force had all 77 C-5A aircraft re-built with a new wing. Improvements in reliability were introduced in 50 C-5B aircraft that featured newer engines and avionics.

The C-5 is the primary heavy transport for the USAF alongside the C-17 Globemaster III. Budget planners have long battled over modernizing the aging C-5 fleet or purchasing more C-17's. Currently, the 111 remaining C-5 aircraft will get an avionics upgrade to replace outdated electronics systems, but only 49 of these will also receive a costly engine replacement.

More On Party Hootch

by Dick Baird [457, 68]

See Nov 2007 newsletter, page 16

I had many occasions to enjoy the efforts of John Vickery and his 457th elves. It was a tremendous effort and result. We stored ice cream in a freezer in the hootch and delivered it to Green Beret camps on the first flight of the day from CRB to the central highlands. The ice cream was donated by the Meadow Gold Dairy at the Cam Ranh Army Port/Camp.

A Flight to Remember

by Jim Noone [536, 71]

It was a perfect day. The sun was shining, the temperature in the mid 90's, and the sky a brilliant blue and amazingly clear of clouds. We were flying a visual approach to runway 02 right at Cam Rahn Bay Air Base in Vietnam. This was late November 1971 and I had just returned from a week of extremely hard work in Bangkok. I delivered one Caribou to the IRAN (Inspect and Repair as Necessary) facility at Dong Muang International airport. The aircraft we were supposed to pick up was not ready. Can you imagine that I had to wait almost a week in Bangkok with nothing to do before I could get back to the war?

As we finally taxied to the East ramp at Cam Rahn, I was slightly concerned when the ops section called, saying that the Squadron Commander wanted to see me as soon as I finished post flight. Squadron Commanders rarely call you in just to "chat." As I knocked on his door, I was mulling over various explanations for staying away for a week.

"Come in and have a seat Jim." After saluting and taking a seat, I was surprised at how genuinely jovial he seemed. "Jim, we have orders to take 12 Caribous back to the States. We need 21 pilots and 3 instructor pilots. Since you have 11 months in country and are an instructor, I would like you to volunteer for this assignment. It would mean a one or two week less in your tour." At this time, all tours in Vietnam were for 12 months. Even a 2-day drop was considered a blessing. I was really off balance. Not only did he not want to talk about Bangkok; he was actually offering me a reduction in my tour. I would get to fly my own "Freedom Bird" home. As I was thinking this over, he said, "I want you to think this over carefully and let me know by tomorrow morning. By the way, how was Bangkok?" I got the message.

Back at the "hooch," I realized that the "offer" was for me to fly a two

engine airplane with no autopilot and no over water navigation equipment 9,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean at the measured pace of 110 mph. Didn't someone named Amelia try this once? But, how could I turn it down? I called the Commander back that afternoon and said "Yes." He said that I was relieved from all combat operations immediately to work full time at preparing for the flight back to the USA.

During the next two weeks, I worked with a small group of dedicated professionals as we prepared for the trip back to the "World." Pilots, mechanics, crew chiefs, and maintenance folks all worked their tails off to insure that our airplanes and our planning was perfect. Our support staff was committed to making sure we made it across the pond. My crew chief told me, "Sir, if this thing goes splash in the ocean I want it to be your fault not mine." That certainly made me feel better.

The crews selected for this mission were all seasoned pros. Most of us were nearing completion of our tours and were asked to volunteer. Many had over 1,000 hours of flying time in the Caribou. The process of selecting the crews went fast. By one means or another, 24 pilots and 12 Flight Mechanics were selected within a couple of days.

Training began in earnest early in December and I believe that each man absorbed more from those training sessions than ever before in his career. We actually paid attention during weather briefings. The formation of 12 was divided into three flights with 4 airplanes per flight. Each flight had a flight leader who was usually a senior staff officer. The instructor pilot (IP) flew in the third position. I was to be the IP for the second flight. The popular joke was about the Pacific being a 4 engine ocean and maybe we should put oars aboard the "Bou" just in case. Each crew was assigned their own airplane and crew chief. The crews pampered, polished, and protected their machine like a mother chick. Every nick and scratch was fixed, the engines tuned and tested.

No one had to tell us to test the equipment; we had plenty of self-motivation. I remember mentioning one day to my crew chief that the pilot's seat was really kind of ratty. When we arrived next day to flight-test the new fuel system, there were brand new seat cushions in both pilot's seats and a grin on our crew chief's face. I had never seen a new seat cushion before in over 1,100 hours of flying the Caribou.

The fuel system was a Rube Goldberg original. Two rubber bladders connected by rubber hoses and a maze of water faucet valves mounted in the cargo compartment prompted many interesting hours of discussion on how to use it. We would pressurize the main bladder using the compressed air system designed to activate the deicing boots. The boots had long since fallen into disrepair. With temperatures usually in the high 90's, wing icing was not a worry in Vietnam and most of us had forgotten there was a deicing system on the airplane. The pilot would turn on the deicing switch, then the Flight Mechanic would open a petcock once pressure was built up. Fuel would flow from the bladder to a wing tank. When the tank was full, the pilots would tell the flight mechanic to shut it off.

The Pratt & Whitney R-2000 engines were a real piece of work. It took a hand with 6 fingers to start one and it used only slightly more av-gas than oil per hour. We couldn't access the engines in flight, so we had to come up with a way to feed oil to the engines. We used a hand pump rigged to a 55 gallon drum.

Eventually, the training ended, the last test flights were completed, and we found ourselves standing on a rain washed ramp at 6 a.m. preparing to depart Vietnam. Many former "Bou drivers" remember the joy of starting the engines on this bird during wet weather. The crews, through skill, cunning, and other questionable means managed to crank every engine without incident and with only a few backfires.

Continued on Page 22

A Flight To ... (from Page 21)

At 0800 on Dec 10, 1971, we began to roll. Three flights of 4 planes rose into the overcast covering the coast. The tower, usually crisp and concise with their radio transmissions, said "Good luck, guys" as each plane lifted off.

We climbed above the weather and finally set up cruise at 8,500 feet. Seven hours later we landed at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. After landing, everyone now beamed. "Hey, that's not so bad." Others said "Piece of cake." After a good night's sleep, we left Clark for Anderson AFB, Guam. This was the first really long leg and was a dry run of sorts for the much longer legs ahead. Remember, the Caribou had no over water navigation gear on board, no autopilot, and only a basic crew of two pilots and a flight mechanic. We flew by the heading and hope method of navigation for long periods of time. The weather was fair and the winds most favorable during this leg. A C-130 "duck butt" rescue bird flew part of the way with us to provide sea rescue and limited navigational assistance. After a flight of 14.3 hours we touched down at Guam. In my logbook I wrote, "Long flight to Guam, ocean fright gone."

In December 1971, Guam was virtually a ghost town. When we landed, there were 3 KC-135's parked on the ramp and a C-118 in front of the tower. Little did I know that when I returned to Guam some 8 months later, the ramp would be full and the second runway completely filled with parked B-52D's. We received VIP treatment the whole time we spent on Guam. An extra day was needed here to correct minor maintenance problems. Our crew chiefs, flown in by C-130, worked unselfishly throughout the night preparing our planes for the next leg. Rested and excited, we passed our exhausted crew chiefs on the way to our planes. These guys really cared. The old Air Force adage: "The crew chief owns the airplane, the pilots only borrow it" was never more in evidence. There was

work to be done and so they worked and worked. Each of them personally knew the crews who would fly their plane and realized that any mistake, any job left undone, or any shortage of fuel or oil could cost men their lives. All planes were in top-notch condition when we left Guam in the predawn darkness. The only sound was the roar of the engines and the quiet clink of bottles recently liberated from the class 6 (tax-free) store. The first portion of our flight to Wake Island was uneventful. After a few hours, however, the weather began to go down hill in a hurry. Dawn came, but the weather did not improve. After about 2 hours, we heard that one of the planes in the third cell returned to Guam with engine problems. The plan was to get to Wake just before nightfall.

As we got closer to Wake, we learned that the weather, which was forecast to be quite good for our arrival, was actually deteriorating rapidly. The winds at Wake were blowing directly across the runway at 45 knots with gusts up to 55. The Caribou had excellent crosswind performance and while this kind of wind was well above our normal limits, no one expressed undo concern. The book said we could fly final approach at around 60 Knots and each of us knew a trick or two about landing into the wind at a slight angle to the direction of the runway. The fuel began to drop and tension slowly rose. The weather was now solid and very black at our cruise altitude. As we began our descent into Wake, the weather was reported as a 300 foot ceiling with 40 knot crosswinds. Wake tower eased our minds considerably when they informed us that trucks had been positioned along the taxiway with lights on to provide a runway into the wind should anyone require it. As we descended through 6,000 feet, my wingman lost all primary flight instruments and could not restore electrical power. We were descending into a solid overcast and so he joined on my wing and flew the approach as my wingman. We declared an emergency and flew the ILS approach until we saw

the runway at about 400 feet. After a flight of almost 12 hours, all airplanes recovered safely. We received word that we would be delaying at Wake until the Caribou that returned to Guam could be repaired and rejoin us. This meant, of course, that we had to go to the pub. The pub at Wake, the food, and the scenery are right out of *South Pacific*. Crews relaxed after dinner and a few beers and held a "formal" debriefing. Using both hands, pilots demonstrated the novel crosswind techniques used by the plane in front of them.

We had to wait 2 days until the 12th airplane could rejoin us. The weather turned beautiful and the sun and sea were magnificent. As all good things must end, we packed our bags, climbed into our planes and departed. After an uneventful ten-hour flight, we landed at Midway amid the clatter and continuous honking of the famous Gooney birds. We all laughed at the antics of these incredibly clumsy birds. I watched one bird use 300 feet of sidewalk to get airborne only to slam into a building. After shaking his head, he walked back to the exact spot where he started his previous takeoff and did it again.

The Navy treated us with style and good food during our brief visit on Midway. We left with rising excitement for each of us knew that the next landing would be in Hawaii; "the World," the USA. We landed at Honolulu airport during a torrential downpour at 11 p.m. The landing was not particularly difficult, but when we tried to taxi from the civilian runway to the Air Force ramp at Hickam field, it was a nightmare. The darkness, rain, and the wind reduced visibility to nearly zero. Unfortunately, the Caribous is not particularly weather proof. The engine controls are overhead so as I taxied with my right hand on the throttle, water poured down the sleeve of my flight suit leaving me thoroughly "damp." We shut down engines, cleared through customs and agriculture, and left the ramp quickly. We were wet and tired, but wonderfully

Continued on Page 23

A Flight To ... (from Page 22)

excited to be back in the U.S.

The next morning, we began planning for our trip to the mainland. The next leg of our journey was for all the marbles and everyone knew it. Our fuel consumption had been higher than planned on previous legs, so we needed to add a bladder for a bit more range. A review of performance charts, combined with experience, revealed that we needed a minimum of 1 knot tail wind throughout the flight. Observation planes would fly at low altitudes to get an accurate picture of en route winds. Maintenance completed the necessary work on the planes after only 2 days and crews began test flying the new equipment. Then we waited for the weather to oblige.

Two days passed before we received word that the forecast was favorable. Takeoff was set for 1500 the next day. Most of the crews went downtown to relax. No one wanted to be alone with their thoughts. We all knew that what we had done so far was nothing compared to what lay ahead. Back in our quarters, we tried to rest as best we could, but it was difficult. The next day we reported for our briefing, not really believing that the time had come. Rumor had it that the winds were bad and the flight would be cancelled, but as we prepared for the briefing, we realized that the show was on for today. The weather en route was bad. Squall lines, freezing rain, and clouds spread in bands some 200 miles thick at one point. The good news was that we had a 2 knot tail wind. We were also assured that the bad weather would drift north of our track by the time we reached it.

We loaded our gear on board and performed a detailed preflight inspection. All our training and all our experience would soon be put to the test. Our professionalism was on the line now. The normal maximum gross weight for a Caribou was 28,500 pounds. For ferrying an airplane the absolute maximum limit was raised to

31,000. But, we had a problem. Even at the maximum allowable weight we couldn't carry enough fuel to make the West Coast. This afternoon with the third bladder installed and filled, my airplane weighed 35,000 pounds. No one really knew how the airplane would perform at that weight. My plan was to rotate at 100 knots, keep the airplane in ground effect to reduce drag, and delay my climb until I neared the end of the runway. We had no performance charts for this weight, so I could only guess what speeds to use and what we could expect for climb out performance.

One by one, the planes cranked engines to test them and then immediately shut them down in order to save fuel. All planes were ready and we copied our clearance from Hickam ground control. After everyone checked in on the radio, our formation leader contacted Honolulu tower and told him we were ready to go. Honolulu came back loud and clear. "Attention all aircraft in the vicinity of Honolulu airport. This is Honolulu tower on Guard. The airfield is now closed due to departure of priority military aircraft. Lucky 51 and flight cleared for takeoff." This sent a chill down my spine. I knew it was for real, and would have given anything for a confirmed seat on United.

We cleared the ground equipment and shattered the silent ramp with the sound of 24 1450 HP radial engines coming to life. We taxied as soon as the engines were started and took off immediately on reaching the runway. The takeoff roll was long and I remained at 50 feet until I neared the end of the runway. By then I was indicating slightly more than 100 knots. As I raised the nose to start my climb I felt the stick start to vibrate in my hands as the stick shaker indicated the approach to a stall. I dropped the nose a *skosh*, gained a little more speed, and was able to blast away from earth at 50 to 100 feet per minute. The day was beautifully clear and we were able to look up at Diamond Head as we passed by. This would be our last view of dry land for a very long time.

The first critical point was now behind us. We now entered a critical performance zone for the aircraft. If we should lose an engine before reaching 6,000 feet we could not dump fuel fast enough to remain in the air. At 6,000 feet, at least in theory, we could dump fuel while descending and level off a scant 50 feet above the water. All planes were airborne and the first danger point passed without incident. The crews settled down for the long flight.

We flew for about 4 hours when we received a position report and a weather update from a C-130 "duck butt." They told us that we had no wind and were about 50 miles behind plan. Not so bad yet, but we all decided to watch it closely. Darkness approached rapidly and the horizon filled with dark, unfriendly clouds looming ominously in the distance. We noticed that the air was considerably colder now and the humidity was evidently increasing because the slight blue crack of St. Elmo's fire began to appear on the windscreen.

At 2100, my weather radar caught on fire. We turned it off and extinguished the fire, but now we were blind. We were experts at using our radar to pick our way through the thunderstorms in Southeast Asia. Not having it felt like trying to write down a phone number without a pencil.

Some 9 hours after we left Hawaii, we passed our point of no return or "bingo" point. This is the place along our route where we had enough fuel to continue and just enough to return. About this point, we heard that one plane in the preceding flight lost a generator, but elected to continue. All 12 of us had crossed the line and were committed. As more time passed, I began to get more and more concerned about the solid line of thunderstorms directly ahead. We could not go around them, over them, or under them, nor could we turn around and go back. This was the weather that was forecast to be well north of our track, but obviously

Continued on Page 24

A Flight To ... (from Page 23)

it decided to hang around a while and welcome us. Our only option was to try and punch our way through the cells as we had done many times before in Vietnam. The difference this night was that the thunderstorm cells were much larger, it was dark inside the thick cloud cover, and I had no radar. As we entered the clouds, we started to encounter heavy turbulence. Our cruising altitude of 8,500 feet varied from 7,000 to 9,000 feet in the updrafts and downdrafts. We were vaguely aware of the outline of the extremely large storm cells from the contrast of white and dark clouds reflected by the almost constant lightning. We caught an occasional glimpse of moonlight filtering between the larger cells. I never thought I would actually welcome lightning, but this natural illumination helped us avoid the center of the cells as best we could.

St. Elmo's fire was everywhere and the plane literally glowed. This blue green static electricity is supposed to be harmless, but I have to tell you that it doesn't feel that way when you are bouncing around in a thunderstorm over the middle of the Pacific. Finally, it began to enter the cockpit and, like a sticky fluid, seemed to cling to everything. Sparks jumped from the heads of both pilots to the overhead throttles. Blue flame like balls rolled into the cargo compartment and our pulse rate increased rapidly.

Suddenly, we entered a white crystalline wonderland. It was beautiful and all the colors of the rainbow reflected from the clouds that surrounded us. It was as if we were part of a gigantic rainbow in the depths of the darkness. The engine coughed and our reverie ended. In that instant, we realized what it was – ice – that hated and most deceptive killer. The carb heat was full hot, mixtures rich, and I called for a scan of the wings. The engineer reported from the rear of the airplane that the wings were entirely covered. I remember thinking that this was only a dream. I would soon

wake up and it would be over. It was not a dream. We exercised the controls to keep them from freezing and at times it took the full strength of both pilots to break them free.

As the ice kept building up, we began to descend. Slowly at first, but no increase in power could stop it. Then, the instrument power light flickered at first and then came on full. That meant the co-pilot had no flight instruments. I knew it was only a matter of time before I lost mine too. We attempted everything we could think of just to get out of the ice. No luck.

Mother Nature was not done with us yet. We deliberately backfired the engines to create a sonic pulse and we attempted pull up maneuvers to flex the wings. Nothing worked. Down we went. At our weather briefing 12 hours ago, they told us that the freezing level would be right down to the surface for this portion of our route. This meant that we would probably retain the ice no matter how low we went. As we descended through 2,000 feet I applied METO power and ordered the crew to prepare for bailout. By increasing power, I knew that our fuel burn would increase quite a bit. If we stayed at this power setting for any length of time we would not be able to make the coast. On the other hand, I also knew that if I didn't add power we would shortly be swimming in the Pacific.

The crew donned their anti exposure suits and parachutes in record time. They transferred fuel and oil and went about their duties without question. Unfortunately for me, there was no way to get out of the seat since my instruments were the only ones working and I needed to keep my hands firmly on the ice laden controls. If that wasn't bad enough, we were still bouncing around like a cork in the ocean. Each crew member learned for themselves that night that you could function amazingly well in the face of pure fear.

Once I realized that we had done everything we could possibly do, I felt a real sense of inner peace. It was a

real spiritual feeling that I had never had before, nor since. I know it sounds crazy and even now it is hard for me to explain. It is one of those things that you can't really put into words. It was, without question, the most powerful experience in my life. What would happen next was largely out of my hands. I would continue to do the best I could and pray for the best. Life became very simple.

By now of course, we were totally lost. No one was talking on the radios. Even though we had no contact with air sea rescue for several hours, we began transmitting our Mayday call as we passed 1,000 feet. In the background, we heard other calls of distress. One plane lost an engine, was badly iced up and going down, another lost all electrical power and had no instruments. He too was going down. We finally leveled off at 800 feet and the ice stopped building up. We were still in the clouds, but the turbulence was greatly reduced. The situation of the other planes had become far more serious than ours and so we tried to see if we could assist the others. The one crew that lost an engine was now reasonably stable at an indicated altitude of 10 feet. The pilot, Donnie Henderson, was a friend since pilot training. I remember his saying that he would try and make it until daylight before he ditched. He knew that with only one engine working at almost takeoff power there was no way to make California with his present rate of fuel consumption. Someone asked him how it was down there and he joked that at least it was a bit warmer. This touched off a series of wise cracks – anything to relieve the stress.

We recomputed our fuel state and realized that, at our current power setting, we would not reach California either. We decided that it was either the engines or us and the engines lost as we leaned out the mixtures as far as we dared. All our hope rested on those engines that had now been running for 14 hours. We were never able to rees-

Continued on Page 25

A Flight To ... (from Page 24)

establish contact with air sea rescue. We learned later that they had to abandon their mission since they could not get around the thunderstorms either.

Even though we were technically lost, we figured that the North American coastline was hard to miss. All you had to do was fly East. To relieve the tension, we took bets on where we would make landfall: Canada, Mexico, or maybe even California. Almost as though the night had finished with us, the sky got lighter, the clouds began to thin, and the ice began to fall off in huge chunks. Occasionally, a piece of ice would slam into the tail with a loud bang. As the last of the ice fell away, we began a climb back to our planned altitude of 8,500 feet. Shortly after we leveled off, the clouds really began to break up, while the sun peeked over the horizon. After almost three hours of dodging thunderstorms with wild gyrations in heading and altitude, we were stunned to see our #2 wingman right in front of us in perfect formation. Both crews enjoyed watching this sunrise, as if we never had before.

The automatic directional finder (ADF), useless because of the electrical disturbances in the air, now began to crackle with the distant sound of the Farallon Island radio beacon. A quick fix revealed that we were amazingly close to our original course and some 300 miles away from California. After several tries we finally raised Oakland air route traffic control. "Lucky Flight, squawk emergency and state fuel condition." We responded with our critical fuel state. Center replied with the most amazing clearance I have ever heard, "Lucky Flight is cleared block altitude sea level through 10,000 feet, airspace blocked 100 miles north to 100 miles south of the San Francisco airport. Cleared to land on all airports, all roads, and all beaches within your view. State police have cleared the beaches and rescue is standing by. State your intentions, please."

This was like the voice of an angel. We pumped our fuel bladders again and found to our surprise that 80 more pounds had magically turned up. This would give us an additional 12 minutes. Maybe we could do some sightseeing over San Francisco Bay.

Several of us were able to continue to our original destination of McClellan AFB. Most landed at Hamilton AFB which was right on the coast. Unfortunately, one ditched. Rescue was standing by and was able to pick up the copilot and flight mechanic almost as soon as they hit the water. Donnie was knocked unconscious on impact and had to be cut loose from his harness by the para rescue team.

As we rolled to a stop on the ramp at McClellan, some eighteen and a half hours after we left Hawaii, the engines were cut, the chocks put in place, and all three of us raced on shaking legs to the rear. We really did kiss the good earth.

Almost anti-climactically, we delivered the airplanes two days later to the Air National Guard at Maxwell AFB, AL. This was the evening of December 22. My tour in Vietnam was now officially over and I was on leave for two weeks. Early the next morning, I got a ride to the commercial airport, bought a ticket on Delta, and slept most of the way to Boston. I arrived home on the afternoon of Dec 23 and spent the most wonderful Christmas of my life with my wife, my 18-month-old son, and my 6-month-old daughter. Life was looking good.

Bou Test Pilot

George Neal, de Havilland Canada test pilot, made the first flight of the prototype DHC-4 Caribou on July 30, 1958 at Downsview Airport, the location of the Toronto Aerospace Museum. He retired in 1983 as Director of Flight Operations of de Havilland Canada. On November 21, 2008 Mr. Neal celebrated his 90th birthday. Mr. Neal is in great health and still an active pilot.

Laws of the Natural Universe

- **Law of Mechanical Repair:** After your hands become coated with grease, your nose will begin to itch, a gnat will buzz in your ear, or you'll have to pee.
- **Law of the Alibi:** If you tell the boss you were late for work because you had a flat tire, the very next morning you will have a flat tire.
- **Law of the Telephone:** If you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal.
- **Law of the Bath:** When the body is fully immersed in water, the telephone rings.
- **Law of Biomechanics:** The severity of the itch is inversely proportional to the reach.
- **Law of Logical Argument:** Anything is possible if you don't know what you are talking about.
- **Law of the Result:** When you try to prove to someone that a machine won't work, it will.

Patching Up Bous

by George Chappell [459, 69]

It seemed like every time I went to the NCO club and had a few too many, our NCOIC of Maintenance, I think it was SMSgt Hennery, would be at my bunk side at 0 dark 30, shaking me to wake up, telling me, "I have a mission for you. One of our aircraft is up at (some hellhole base), with ground fire holes that went in at panel #%##\$ and came out at #\$\$**". He would tell me "figure what could have been hit, draw the necessary parts from supply and be at the flight line in 30 minutes with whatever you need to fix it." "Oh, and do a good job because you are flying back it that aircraft"!!!!

I was young, in my early 20s, and, at the time, was not too happy to be getting yanked out of a deep sleep to go to who knows where to patch up some airplane. But now, I realize that I loved every second of it!

Memorabilia

MEMORABILIA ORDER FORM

Contact Jim Meyer at jsmeyer3019@sbcglobal.net to check availability of items.

Fill out this form and mail with a check to: **C-7A Caribou Association, c/o Jim Meyer, 3019 Oneida, San Antonio, TX 78230.**

1. Polo Shirt*	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$18.00	Total: _____
2. Colored T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$15.00	Total: _____
3. Three-View T Shirt CLOSEOUT	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$10.00	Total: _____
4. Denim Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$25.00	Total: _____
5. Denim Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
6. Baseball (white) Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
7. 457 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
8. 458 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
9. 459 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
10. 535 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
11. 536 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
12. 537 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
13. 483 rd Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
14. Caribou Lapel Pin		Qty. _____ @ \$2.00	Total: _____
15. Caribou Poster (12" x 18")		Qty. _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
16. Caribou Challenge Coin		Qty. _____ @ \$8.00	Total: _____
17. Caribou DVD – 1:10 long (NEW ITEM)		Qty: _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
*Polo shirt colors: White, Gray, Yellow, Red, and Light Blue (please specify)			Total: _____

Note: Each amount above includes cost of purchasing item and domestic shipping. Any excess funds are a donation to the Association.

Photos of items can be seen on the web site: <http://www.c-7acaribou.com/memorabilia/memorabilia.htm>

Danger!!! Danger!!!

2008 Reunion Attendance by Unit

457 th Member	16
457 th Spouse	8
458 th Member	18
458 th Spouse	12
459 th Member	20
459 th Spouse	11
483 th Member	8
483 th Spouse	3
535 th Member	34
535 th Spouse	19
536 th Member	18
536 th Spouse	10
537 th Member	38
537 th Spouse	23
4449 th Member	3
4449 th Spouse	2
18 th AOD	1
AFAT2	1
908 th TAG	1
908 th TAG Spouse	1
Guests of Members	39
Guests of Association	12

2008 Reunion Attendance by State

AL	11	NE	4
AZ	8	NH	2
CA	14	NJ	6
CO	2	NM	2
CT	3	NV	5
DE	8	NY	3
FL	25	OH	37
GA	13	OK	8
IA	2	OR	3
IL	12	PA	14
KA	3	SC	5
KY	2	TN	8
LA	4	TX	33
ME	3	UT	1
MD	1	VA	10
MI	7	WA	5
MN	4	WI	4
MO	7	WV	2
MS	1	Canada	1
NC	2	UK	2
ND	2		

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it does not show “**2009**” or later, then it is **TIME TO PAY** your Caribou Tax or this will be the **last** newsletter you will receive.

If you aren’t up to date, you:

1. may have changed your address and the dues reminder in the last newsletter went to an old address
2. may have just sent in your check
3. may have forgotten to send your check
4. are one of the **423** roster names who should send 2009 dues **NOW**.

DO IT TODAY.

Write your \$10 check to the C-7A Caribou Association and send it to:

Mike Murphy
15892 Cedarmill Dr
Chesterfield, MO 63017-8716

Your \$10 helps the Association grow and put on other outstanding reunions like the one just held in Dayton.

**Post-reunion survey – Please, record your responses in the right column/ Thank you for your input.
If you did not attend the 2008 reunion, skip questions 2-7.**

1. How did you hear about the reunion?
 - a. Newsletter
 - b. Web site
 - c. Other
2. How did you travel to the reunion?
 - a. Airplane
 - b. Private vehicle
 - c. Other
3. What would you do to improve the War Room?
 - a. Nothing
 - b. Larger
 - c. Smaller
4. Would you like to see changes in the memorabilia room?
 - a. Larger inventory?
 - b. Advance sales where you order the memorabilia online and pick it up at the reunion?
 - c. Would you like to help Jim during the next reunion?
5. During the reunion did you have enough time to do all the things you wanted to do?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No, we stayed longer to enjoy the sights.
6. What are your thoughts on the Business Meeting?
 - a. Well prepared and not too long.
 - b. Reports were helpful and informative?
 - c. Agenda was helpful?
 - d. What changes would you like in the meeting?
7. Please rate your 2008 reunion experience: 1 being the worst and 10 being the best.
8. Are you planning to attend the 2009 reunion, if it is in Macon-Warner Robins, GA?
9. How do you like to spend your free time at a reunion?
 - a. Sharing experiences in the War Room
 - b. On my own, visiting interesting places in the area
 - c. Pre-planned tours to interesting places and entertainment in the area
10. How often should we have reunions?
 - a. Each year
 - b. Every two years
 - c. Every 3-5 years
11. Comments (Good or Bad)

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. | A | B | C | | | | | | | |
| 2. | A | B | C | | | | | | | |
| 3. | A | B | C | | | | | | | |
| 4. a | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 4. b | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 4. c | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | A | B | | | | | | | | |
| 6. a | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 6. b | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 6. c | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 6. d | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 8. | Yes | No | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | A | B | C | | | | | | | |
| 10. | A | B | C | | | | | | | |
| 11. | (write comments below) | | | | | | | | | |

**Remove this page, complete the survey, fold in half with Al's address showing, seal with tape, add a stamp, and mail.
If you prefer, you may download the survey from the website and print it. Thank you.**

Place Stamp Here

**Al Cunliffe
2370 North Cobb Loop
Millbrook, AL 36054-3643**

12402 Winding Branch
San Antonio, TX 78230-2770
Address Service Requested



Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Tulsa, OK
Permit No. 1957