

C-7A Caribou Association

Volume 1, Issue 21

Newsletter

January 2005

C-7A Caribou Association 16th Annual Reunion May 12-15 2005 Salt Lake City, Utah

This year we will be gathering in Salt Lake City to join once again with our comrades, ladies and friends, to celebrate our 16th Annual Reunion, to renew old friendships and acquaintances and to review (and rewrite) a few old war stories. Our reunion is early this year so that it could be coordinated with the memorial plaque dedication services at Hill AFB on Saturday. We have had less planning time for this reunion so things are a little rushed. Our headquarters will be at the Red Lion Hotel, 161 West 600 South. If you are flying in, the hotel provides a free airport shuttle as well as a courtesy shuttle in the downtown area.

Salt Lake City is a beautiful reunion destination at this time of year. The weather should be agreeable: May average highs are 70 degrees and their average lows are 51 degrees. Average rainfall is 2.3 inches for the month of May so, if all goes well, we should have another great reunion.

Salt Lake City is located amid some of the most beautiful mountains in the country, and one should do some investigation and planning to take advantage of the gorgeous scenery and to make your trip to this area most rewarding. There are fifteen national parks and

monuments within a one-day drive from Salt Lake City; twelve are located within Utah's borders. There is so much to see and do that extending your stay by a couple of days would not be a bad idea.

Sight seeing in Salt Lake City is superb. We will be located near the Temple Square area. No commercial tours have been scheduled because of the many things to do and see right in the local area. There are however, numerous commercial tours available. Salt Lake City has a transportation system to get you around. Fares are \$1.35 for everyone ages 6 to 64. Seniors (65+), and the disabled ride for a reduced fare of \$0.60. All-day passes are available for \$2.70, and are good for unlimited local bus and TRAX (light rail) rides for the day of purchase. There is no charge if you travel in the "Free Fare Zone." If the weather cooperates, there is a fantastic walking tour of Temple Square. A complete online guide is available at www.visitsaltlake.com as well as the guide being available locally.

Thursday is a day of checking into the hotel and free
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Jay Baker - New Board Member

I feel privileged to be a board member because my fondest memories of my 28-year Air Force career were with the 535th TCS at Vung Tau in 1966-1967.

It all started in April 1966 when my wife received a call from CMSGT Skip Horan, Line Chief of the 1612th Organizational Maintenance Squadron, McGuire AFB, NJ. I was a 25-year-old 1st Lieutenant aircraft maintenance officer at the time and Chief Horan asked my wife if he could speak to me. "He's not at home" stated my wife while straddling our 10-month-old daughter in her arms and keeping a watchful eye on our 2-year-old son. "Can I
See **Baker** on page 3

Al Cunliff - New Board Member

I grew up in Asheville, N.C. My dad was a commercial pilot as well as an Airframe & Powerplant Mechanic and an FAA Mechanic Examiner. He had a part-time business performing maintenance and Annual Airworthiness Inspections for the pilots in the area. I traveled with him and helped uncowl the engines, open the inspection panels, then put everything back together after he had finished the inspections and any repairs. I was introduced to the "pleasures" of repacking wheel bearings, cleaning oil screens, and similar jobs.

In 1964 during the summer between my Sophomore and
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The C-7A Caribou Association Newsletter is the official publication of the C-7A Caribou Association.

Elected Officers and Board Members....

President/Board Member - Bob Markham [459, 69]
Vice President/Board Member - Peter Bird [535, 71]
Treasurer/Board Member - Bob Dugan, [537, 68]
Secretary/Board Member - Stoney Faubus, [458, 68]
Chairman of Board - Jim Collier, [537, 67]
Board Member at Large - John (Jay) Baker [535, 66]
Board Member at Large - Al Cunliff [458, 68]

Appointed Officers...

Bereavement Chairman - Bob Markham [459, 69]
Chaplains - Sonny Spurger[537, 68], Jon Drury [537, 68]
Historian - Robert Blaylock [457,70]
Parliamentarian - Wilson Petefish [535, 68]
Nominating Committee - Jay Baker [535, 66]
Newsletter Editor - Charlie Steadman [834, 67]
Reunion Planner - Wayne DeLawter [458, 66]
Assistant Reunion Planner - Huey Frye [457, 70]
Reunion Advisor - Earl Reynolds [537, 66]
Reunion Coordinator - Christine Phillips
Webmaster - Pete Bird [535, 71]
President Emeritus - Nick Evanish [457, 66]
Chaplain Emeritus - Bob Davis [457, 69]

Squadron Representatives...

457th Jim Fairweather
 458th Steve Lentz
 459th Bob Markham
 536th Russell Riggleman
 537th Kelly Grissom

Please advise the Association of any change of address, phone number, or e-mail address. Send your changes to:

Jim Collier
 5607 Jolly Ct.
 Fair Oaks, CA 95628-2707
 jascoll@pacbell.net

\$10.00 Dues are payable annually. Send your check to Bob Dugan, 1700 Brooks Ave, Brownwood, TX 76801-7323

All members are encouraged to communicate with the editors of the Association Newsletter. Write, call or e-mail to:

Dave Hutchens
 17916 E. 96th Street North
 Owasso, OK 74055
 (918) 272-3518
 Printhut@aol.com

Charlie Steadman
 (Address and phone
 not available at press
 time)

A Call To Service

I'm sure all of you are aware of the statement "Let George do it!" It has valid application to many organizations especially an all volunteer organization and it certainly seems to apply to the C-7 A Caribou association. The Caribou Association is well organized, responsible for a great web site, great reunions, a great newsletter and most importantly it honors and memorializes those who made the "ultimate sacrifice." Had it not been for a few dedicated "George's" this unique organization would exist in name only and we all would have been poorer in the spirit of our memories and recognition of loyal service to our country. These "George's" have kept that spirit alive and we should salute them for that. The best way I know to salute them and to honor the memory of those who "went" before us is to share some of the workload in sustaining and continuing the C 7 A Caribou Association. The more of us who contribute our time, the stronger and more valuable the organization. Please don't just read this, say I'm too busy, throw it in the trash and then "Let George do it" again and again and again. We're all busy but you can do it.

At our next reunion in Salt Lake City, we will propose nominees to run for office. Here is a list of the offices that you can nominate yourself or another member (Remember if you nominate another member you must receive his/her approval before doing so). If you want to run for office or volunteer to help in anyway let the nominating committee know by contacting the committee at jbdpms@aol.com. If you don't have access to the Internet you can mail me with your nomination at the following address: C-7 A Caribou nominating committee - c/o Jay Baker - 104 Blanco Cove, Georgetown, TX 78628.

List of Offices:	Chairman of the Board
	President
	Secretary
	Treasurer
	Newsletter Editor
	Board of Directors (3 positions available)

Additionally, the association could use volunteers to assist the webmaster, historian, bereavement committee, and the reunion committee.

Jay Baker
 Nominating Committee

Letter from the President:

First I want to thank the past Board Members and the Committee Chairmen for their input into last year's agenda.



We had a very successful 15th Caribou Reunion at Odessa Texas. I want to thank Donald "Tiny" Malm, our host to this reunion, and the Commemorative Air Force for an outstanding Air Show. This reunion was made possible because

of the hard work of our chief reunion planner Wayne DeLawter. He worked almost everyday in contact with the Odessa Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Elegante Hotel in coordinating the many details. My thanks also go out to Patty DeLawter for her work as the reunion receptionist and photo coordinator. And to all of those that volunteered, a very special THANK YOU.

We learned that Stoney can be a replacement for a defective PA system. I welcome the New Board Members and Committee Chairman. We have a responsibility to move our Association forward.

We are planning our 16th reunion for mid May 2005 at Ogden, Utah. This reunion will be in conjunction with the C-7A Dedication ceremony at Hill AFB on May 14th 2005. This Dedication ceremony will be the same as the ceremony conducted at Dyess AFB Texas in March 2002, in memory of the 38 crewmembers lost in Vietnam. There will be two ceremonies that morning. The second will be to recognize the 38 persons, through efforts of George Harmon, that donated the funds to repair and repaint the old 537th Caribou airplane that is on display at Hill AFB. This airplane is one the 537th flew during there tours of duty at Phu Cat, Vietnam.

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take a message, Sgt. Horan?" "No ma'am, I need to talk to him. Have him give me a call when he gets in. If he can't reach me have him call Personnel." My wife instinctively knew that this was the dreaded Viet Nam call.

When I returned home she met me at the front door with "THAT look" on her face.

I called CMSGT Horan immediately and he confirmed my wife's fears. The next day I went to Personnel and they gave me the news. I was selected as part of a 36-man maintenance officer contingent to report to Ft. Benning in August 1966 for training on the Army CV 2 Caribou, which was officially being transferred to the Air Force on 1 January 1967.

In July 1966, our family moved from McGuire to Springfield, IL (where my wife was raised) and I drove to Ft. Benning where the 36 selected maintenance offic-

ers trained on the Caribou systems with a Dehavilland tech rep. I returned home and a few days later left from Chicago for a flight to and a one night stay in San Francisco where I connected with a few of the guys I had met at Ft. Benning. We prowled a few of the bars that night and even watched Carol Doda (now there's a trivia question for you) descend from the Whiskey - A-Go-Go ceiling on a Grand piano. It wasn't worth the three dollar per person cover charge.

The next day we departed Travis on a "Flying Tiger" cattle car and transited Alaska and Yokota on our way to Viet Nam. Arriving at Ton Son Nhut at 0630, we were provided the standard in-country briefing prior to being dispatched to a large screened in hooch. The next few days were spent in processing, and waiting. Then the first bit of news, rendered by a Warrant Officer Jefferson, the unit admin Officer, that 36 maintenance officers were not needed to man the six Caribou units. That number was reduced to 24. Luckily, as it turns out I made the cut. Now down to 24 maintenance officers our unit assignments were soon announced. I would be attached to the 57th Aviation Company in Vung Tau. I had no idea where Vung Tau was but I soon received a hint of its desirability when one of the other M.O.'s, who apparently had done his homework, offered me a fairly large sum of money if I would switch assignments. I may not be smart but I'm not a fool and after asking seeking out Mr. Jefferson and asking him a few pertinent questions I respectfully declined the offer to switch assignments.

The next day it was on to Vung Tau on my first Caribou ride. I remember the short takeoff with a couple of Army Warrant officer pilots ferrying us the 50 or so miles to Vung Tau. The back door was wide open (by the way the back doors had a habit of falling off on landing and I eventually found out why when one of my sharp eyed senior maintenance NCO's put two and two together but that's another story for a different time) and I got my first look at the beauty of the Viet Nam country side from about 2,000 ft.

Soon after landing I met my new Commander Lt. Col. Leo Ehman and his Army counterpart, Major Maynard Austin. I believe I was the sixth Air Force Officer to arrive and be assigned to the 57th Aviation Company. Several more would follow and I formed several friendships with the young pilots including my roommate, Dave Lithgow, who arrived after me. Perhaps some of those friendships were formed because as the Maintenance officer I was the only junior officer with a jeep and many times it was used as a shuttle to the beautiful Vung Tau beach or as the French called this resort town, Cape St. Jacques.

My experience with the 57th Aviation Company and eventually the 535th was very positive. I had for the first

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time in my Air Force career a job which involved responsibility of managing and leading approximately 85 dedicated NCO's and Airmen and a fleet of 16 aircraft. What a great ride and one I shall never forget. By the way, two months into my tour the number of maintenance officers were trimmed down to 18 (so much for planning). Once again I made the cut and thankful I did.

Jay Baker [535-1966]

(Official Bio. Born in Brooklyn NY. Raised in East Orange, NJ. Undergraduate degree from Illinois College, Jacksonville, IL. Joined Air Force Sept 26, 1963 and attended OTS. Married to Diane with three children. Assignments include McGuire AFB NJ, Vung Tau, RVN, Scott AFB, IL, Norton AFB, CA Hickam, AFB HI, Travis AFB, CA Andrews AFB, MD. MBA from Pepperdine, Univ. Retired in 1991 as an O-6. Now own an auto repair shop in Waco, TX. Soon will be moving to Sun City, TX in Georgetown area.)



Cunliff from page 1

Junior years I got a job at the Asheville Regional Airport as a "line boy," doing basically what Transient Alert does at a typical AFB. That's where I saw and touched my first 'Bou; we had several Army 'Bous from Ft. Bragg or Ft. Benning drop in from time to time and get fuel from us. I worked that job until just before entering the Air Force.

I graduated 1966 and entered the Air Force in March 1967. I am one of the few enlisted AF veterans who can lay claim to have never set foot on Lackland AFB. Due to overcrowding at Lackland, the AF had set up a satellite Basic Training operation at "beautiful" Amarillo AFB, Texas and I was one of the "fortunate few" who went through BMT at Amarillo.

After completing Basic Training in April 1967 I attended Maintenance Specialist Course (43131F, Turbo-Prop, C-130/C-133) at Sheppard AFB, TX. From there I went to Shaw

AFB, Sumter, S.C., arriving in September 67. The closest C-130 unit was at Pope AFB, N.C., so I wound up in Base Flight working on C-54s. While at Shaw I went through upgrade training to my "5" skill level and was promoted to A1C.

In May 68 I received orders to Cam Ranh with a TDY enroute at Sewart AFB for C-7A FTD training. There were several airmen and NCO's assigned to Base Flight at Shaw who had been part of the Army to Air Force transition of the Caribou so I heard a lot of "war stories" about the airplane and Cam Ranh before I left for Sewart in early July 1968. Sewart was where I first met "Stoney" Faubus.

Upon arrival at Cam Ranh I was assigned to the 458th TAS. My first two days in-country were spent in-processing, the next five days were spent in Security Police augmentee training. ("Newbies" get all the perks.) Right after I finished SP augmentee training I was sent TDY to the Nha Trang mission site for 15 days.

Once I returned from Nha Trang in September and made it to the flight line I was assigned as a "floater", helping out where a crew chief needed help, or filling in for a crew chief on his night off. I seldom worked any particular airplane more than one or two days at a time.

In October '68, aircraft 62-4171 was damaged by a grenade thrown under its wing at BanMeThout. As the Structural Repair folks and others finished the necessary repairs, I was assigned as Crew Chief for the airplane. Like any crew chief I now had "my" airplane to take care of and I gracefully "allowed" the flight crews to go traipsing around the country with it during the day.

In December '68 I went TDY with the airplane to Clark AB for Corrosion Control. It was at that time the airplane was repainted Olive Drab instead of the standard AF SEA cam-

ouflage scheme. Returning to Cam Ranh in January '69 I settled back into the routine of working on my airplane. In July '69, 62-4171 was due IRAN and was scheduled to be the first airplane to go through a new maintenance contractor. The AF wanted to send a crew chief with the airplane. I had my orders back to Shaw AFB, and had less than the scheduled 45 days left in-country, so two other crew chiefs were sent instead. I spent the rest of my time in-country working on a TCTO team checking all the C-7A landing gear struts for cracks.

I returned to the States in August '69 and reported back to Base Flight at Shaw AFB. In January 1970 I married my wife Shirley. Stoney Faubus traveled to Asheville from Richards Gebaur AFB, Mo to stand as my best man.

I remained at Shaw as a crew Chief on C-54s and T-29s until August 1972. I made SSgt in June 1970, the very first enlisted promotion cycle under the AF's new Weighted Airman Promotion System (WAPS). In August '72 I was caught in a massive AF directed involuntary retraining effort and was sent to Lowry AFB, CO to 46130 Munitions Maintenance Specialist school. I had to leave my 6 week old son and wife in Sumter, SC while I was in Denver for two months. At Lowry I received notification that I would be going to U-TaPao, Thailand. After returning to Shaw in October '72, I out-processed, moved my family to Asheville and made the trek to Thailand.

When I returned from Thailand I was assigned to Seymour Johnson AFB, NC for thirteen months. While there I was selected for promotion to TSgt in Jan 74. I had received orders for Eielson AFB, Alaska in November 73, so I made the move to Eielson in March 75. This was the time the Trans-Alaska pipeline was being built, so I had to wait until June for base housing before my family ar-

rived. My daughter was born in November 1975. While in Alaska I got my Private Pilot License.

After Alaska I was assigned to Hurlburt Field, FL from October 77 – October 79. I received an assignment to RAF Bentwaters in March '79, was selected for promotion to MSgt in July 79. I departed Hurlburt in October and reported to RAF Bentwaters in November.

From Bentwaters in November 83 I was assigned to George AFB, CA., arriving there in January 1984. While at George AFB I went back to school and earned a B.S. in Aviation Management from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. In the summer of '85 Stoney Faubus retired from active duty and moved to California City, not too far from me at George. We had kept in touch over the years but had only seen each other briefly while I was stationed at Hurlburt. We and our families were able to socialize several times before I left for my next assignment.

I made SMSgt in June 1986. I was sweating a remote assignment to Korea or Turkey when an old friend told me about a hot AF project the needed people. The AF was developing the Combat Ammunition System (CAS), a computer system to track the worldwide inventory of all their bombs and bullets. They needed people with broad experience in the Munitions Career Field to provide the technical details of manual processes into technical specifications and requirements the computer folks could use to develop the needed software. I reported to Gunter AFB on the East side of Montgomery, AL in February 1987. I joined a team of 14 other "AMMO" folks for what was the most challenging assignment of my career. After 3 years and a little bit, I decided 23 years, 4 months and 24 days was enough fun for one man. I retired effective 1 August 1990. I still work on CAS as a contract employee, and hope to hang on until I can "retire full

time".

I checked into the Maxwell AFB Aero Club in May 1991 after not flying for 12 years, and got checked out and started flying again. In 1994 the VA started paying for flight training again so I started serious flying and have earned my FAA Commercial, Instrument and Multi-Engine certificates and my Certified Flight Instructor (CFI), Certified Flight Instructor – Instrument (CFII), and Multi-Engine Instructor (MEI) ratings. I now instruct part-time at the Maxwell Aero Club to keep my sanity. If any of the pilots who went UPT in 64 – 72 flew T-41As with the following tail numbers: 5134F, 5203F, 4974R, 4989R, 4992R or the T-41C 7892N at the AF Academy, you might like to know that we are still flying them at Maxwell.

I am pleased the association has shown their confidence in me by electing me to serve on the board. I look forward to working with the board, the association as a whole and with any individual member who may want to bring anything to the attention of the board.

Bankers Rules

A crusty old man walks into a bank and says to the teller at the window,

"I want to open a damn checking account."

To which the astonished woman replies, "I beg your pardon, sir; I must have misunderstood you. What did you say?"

"Listen up, damn it. I said I want to open a damn checking account right now!"

"I'm very sorry sir, but we do not tolerate that kind of language in this bank."

So saying, the teller leaves the window and goes over to the bank manager to tell him about her situation. They both return and the manager asks the old geezer, "What seems to be the problem here?"

"There's no friggin problem, dammit!" the man says, "I just won \$50 million bucks in the damn lottery and I want to open a damn checking account in this damn bank!"

"I see," says the manager, "and this bitch is giving you a hard time?"



C-7A Caribou Merchandise Store

The C-7A Caribou merchandise store is open for business.

We have The C-7A Caribou embroidered polo shirts in colors of Gray, White, Yellow and Light Blue: Sizes Small, Medium, Large, and Extra Large. \$20.00 includes shipping.

The White Ball Caps are \$15.00 Shipped.

Squadron Patches - We are now stocking them. We have the 457th, 459th and 537th in stock. The remaining patches are on order. \$5.00 each shipped.

Also we have 20 DVD's from Doc Kugler's 1967 VHS tape, "A Day In The Life of a Caribou Pilot." They sell for \$10.00 each, shipped.

All this Merchandise can be seen and ordered on the web site www.c-7acaribou.com/merchandise. Or for those who do not have a computer you can call Bob Markham at (909) 792-0848 and make arrangement for purchases.

C-7A Caribou Association 2004 General Membership Meeting Odessa, Texas

October 1, 2004

Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order by President Bob Markham at 0900, with 84 members present.
2. Election of officers: There were no nominations from the floor, so the ballot was approved by acclamation. The following officers and board members were elected: President, Bob Markham; Vice President, Peter Bird; Secretary, Stoney Faubus; Treasurer, Bob Dugan; Board Members at Large, Jim Collier, Jay Baker and Al Cunliff. (Subsequently the board members selected Jim Collier as the Chairman Of The Board.)
3. The minutes from the 2003 meeting were approved, as published in the association newsletter and as posted on the web site.
4. Financial report was given by Treasurer Bob Dugan. Motion and second to approve was passed.
5. Introduction of new Association volunteer positions: Dave Hutchens is the new Chief Editor of the Newsletter, and Charlie Steadman is the Editor. Bob Blaylock is the Historian; Wilson Petefish is the Parliamentarian.
6. George Harmon briefed the Association on the progress of the restoration of the Hill AFB C-7A. The aircraft should be painted and ready for a dedication on 14 May 2005.
7. A motion was made, seconded and passed to have the 2005 reunion at Hill AFB in conjunction with the dedication ceremony.
8. Jim Collier stated that Peter Bird had access to old Air Force footage of C-7 Caribou operations in Viet Nam. A motion was made, seconded and passed for the Association to pay for the editing and making DVD's available to the Association.
9. A drawing was held for a free night in the Hotel. Larry Caine won the drawing.
10. Wayne DeLawter briefed the Association on the Airsho schedule for Saturday.
11. Motion to adjourn at 1022, seconded and passed.

C-7A Caribou Association
Secretary
Stoney Faubus

Order of Business for the 2005 General Membership Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah

Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:

Establishment of a Quorum:

Agenda approval:

Election of officers:

Old Business:

1. Approval of the 2004 Membership Meeting Minutes.
2. Committee reports. (Web Site, Newsletter, Bereavement, History, Sqd Reps, Etc
3. Financial Report:

New Business:

1. Status of 2006 Hill Dedication.

Move to adjourn

Reunion News



Looking Ahead to 2006

Wayne DeLawter [458, 66] - Reunion Planner

The top location for military reunions voted by many other veteran's groups is Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. After checking this area out, we have to agree! Less than 10 miles to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, 7 miles to Gatlinburg and 2 miles from Dolly Parton's Dollywood and within blocks of many popular venues like the Louise Mandrell Theater and the Black Bear Jamboree, we will be in the middle of where to be in East Tennessee.

Dollywood <http://www.dollywood.com/> will be featuring its Festival of Nations while we are there. For a sharply reduced group admission price we will be able to view the premier shows from other nations around the world. Because we will have a large group there we will get deep discounted fees for other venues too.

This 2006 reunion will be April 9th thru 13th, 2006. This is a beautiful and comfortable time of the year in East TN. Our "Command Post" reunion hotel is the Music Road Hotel & Convention Center <http://www.musicroadhotel.com/>. If you thought the hotel in Odessa was something, you will really be impressed with Music Road. This hotel is only a couple years old and the most elegant we've stayed in yet. The incredible thing about this is the \$66 per night room fee. Those making early reservations may be able to get rooms with jacuzzis or fireplaces.

In consideration for the lower cost of flying to this reunion, we are beginning this reunion on a Sunday. Those flying in can come on Saturday evening and cut their airline cost by 50 to 60%.

You need to mark your calendars for this April reunion in 2006. This may be THE REUNION and vacation of your lifetime. Don't miss it!



What About Those Reunions?

The average "John Doe Reunion Guy" might not have an understanding of the planning involved in managing a reunion. He might not understand why his room rate is not as cheap as the "other" hotel down the street. He might not realize that his room rate encompasses and pays for the extra curricular activities and expenses of meeting rooms, war rooms, etc., or the coffee provided at those meetings. He also might not understand that it is essential that he register at our "Reunion Hotel" because our

room rates are based on a guaranteed occupancy that our reunion planners have provided to the hotel. Not many people actually wonder where the buses come from that take us from one place to another. Who arranges for them and who pays for them, who tips the drivers, and who makes the schedules? Who orders the banquet dinners, who arranges for the beverages in the war room, who negotiates for the bars and bartenders? Who schedules the group pictures? Who gets the blame when there isn't coffee and donuts in the war room at 0630? "Why do we only have Bud and Millers and no Coors beer?" "Why isn't there any wine?" "I don't drink bourbon, I drink scotch. Why isn't there any scotch?" Yea, Right!

Our reunion planner, Wayne DeLawter [458, 66], has agreed to give us a greater insight into the intricacies of planning and sponsoring an association reunion. I'm sure that not all of us realize the many steps and considerations that go into the making of a reunion, the many, many hours of communications, planning, conniving, and manipulating contracts and people. Wayne has performed the job of reunion planner for the past several reunions. He says that he would like to do more of them but that they present a real hazard to his marriage. I'm not real sure just what that means, but Patty says that Wayne does understand the problem and he will be taking a break. We all know that behind every successful man there is a successful woman. Also, behind every reunion planner there is a very hard working wife and helper. We hope everyone is aware of the tremendous amount of service Patty DeLawter has performed on behalf of our association reunions. And for that, Patty, we give you a tremendous "Thank You."

This is our 16th reunion. There have always been reunion planners. These are some of the names of the many who have produced our wonderful reunions over the years: Nick and Myrna Evanish, Paul and Christine Phillips, Milt Golart, Steve Kelley, Bob and Pat Dugan, and this year Jim and Betty Collier. And that doesn't even address the many people who are always there to give a hand on what ever needs to be done to make the event a success, not to mention the involvement of the association board members. To all those people who work so hard for our pleasure, a hearty "Thank You."

What follows is a good description of what goes on in setting up our reunions.

Planning Reunions

Wayne DeLawter [458, 66]- Reunion Planner

We have learned that the application of good business principles to planning reunions is what is needed to pull off a reunion in a way that gives us good value. It cer-

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tainly is a business for the hotels, the entertainment and attraction vendors. If we aren't familiar with the terms and standards of the industry and the leverage of our group, we are apt to not get good deals.

Four of our members, Jim Collier, Wayne DeLawter, Huey Frye, and Bob Markham have attended several event planner training seminars that are specifically geared to military reunion groups. There is no doubt to us that this training better equips us to plan, protect, and negotiate our events. The professional trainers stress planning at least 2 years in advance, considering more than one city or area, considering several hotels and attractions in each area, and always do personal site surveys.

To bring quality reunions we have made numerous changes in reunion cities, hotels, and attractions in the last several years of planning. On average it takes about 4 months of coordination and negotiation to decide on the best city and hotel from which to begin building the details of our reunion.

We have found that some of the advertisement material misrepresents the quality and even the layout and square footage of rooms, so the site surveys are really important. This requires us as planners to actually go to the hotels and attractions and see for ourselves exactly what the facilities are about. For the 2006 reunion my wife and I spent 3 different nights in 3 different hotels in 2 different towns as we did 5 hotel and 5 attraction site surveys. We met with the businesses group sales representatives at each place, so you can imagine how busy these days were. The hotel that I had thought would be the best for us turned out to be the worst and the opposite was true about the one that we chose. Site surveys are essential.

We always must deal with vendor and facility contracts. Since learning how to protect and negotiate for our reunions, we have never accepted the initial hotel or vendor contract as originally proposed. Con-

tracts are primarily written only for the protection of that business, and they are geared to dealing with commercial business groups, which we are not. We always request changes to those contracts to provide protection for our Association. About 80% of the businesses accept all our requested changes. If they don't agree with those changes, we walk away and go with someone else.

The majority of contract modification involves attrition clauses, cancellation clauses, price adjustment, space requirement, and banquet issues.

The removal or modification of attrition clauses that commercial businesses can accept because they can guarantee the number of attendees is paramount to groups like ours. To do otherwise sets us up for major financial losses. While our number of reunion attendees seems fairly stable, this is an all-volunteer force. We can't draft you like the Army did for Vietnam, and we just can't guarantee the numbers. Most attrition clauses require a large penalty if we don't accurately estimate the number of attendees that will come to a reunion that may be 2 or more years away. Most attrition clauses state that if we estimate that we will occupy 300 hotel rooms at \$100 a night per room and the turnout occupies only 100 rooms then our Association must pay \$20,000 – the revenue that they would have received from the 200 unfilled rooms. Yet if we block only a 100 rooms, but many more than that want to come, they probably won't be able to get a room. As you can see, elimination of the attrition clause is important for us.

Cancellation clauses are typically written only to benefit hotel or vendor. We always require incorporation of a reciprocal cancellation agreement that provides the Association reasonable protection.

The cost of the attractions or hotel rooms is something that we look at in terms of value. We always keep an eye to keeping all costs as low as possible to keep the reunions within the financial reach of everyone. We

assure that our rates and costs are commensurate with what we bring to the business. What we have found is that we only get what we ask for, but at the same time we must understand that the business must make a reasonable profit. For example, if we aren't completely filling the hotel, we can't assume that we will get meeting rooms without charge. Either the guest room will increase, or the Association will pay a meeting/hospitality/banquet room and equipment charge.

There are many other complex issues that we work on that we won't go into here. Some of these are compliance with local food and beverage laws; determining the banquet and reception menus/service and layout; scheduling/reserving meeting rooms; and ground and airline transportation.

The important thing about military reunion planning is to consider the desires of our membership. By applying the above principles, while assuring there are venues of interest for our spouses as well as for ourselves, we have the ingredients for a good time. Your inputs about the changes that you would like are always welcomed.



The "Dear. John" Letter

The soldier serving overseas and far from home was annoyed and upset when his girl wrote breaking off their engagement and asking for her photograph back.

He went out and collected from his friends all the unwanted photographs of women that he could find, bundled them all together and sent them to her with a note stating the following:

"Regret can not remember which one is you ... please keep your photo and return the others."

15th C-7A Caribou Reunion, Odessa, Texas, October 2004

Dave Hutchens [459,69]

My first thoughts of attending a reunion out in West Texas were somewhat less than enthusiastic. Tiny Malm had briefed us on the Commemorative Air Force Airsho, and what a great deal it was. But West Texas? I knew something about West Texas... tumbleweeds, barbed wire and jackrabbits, not to mention howling winds and dust. But what would Odessa have in store for us? Well, to our great surprise, we found Odessa to be a really nice city full of West Texas hospitality. The Elegante Hotel, our reunion headquarters, was truly first class.

Of course the main attraction at this reunion was the Commemorative Air Force Airsho. And what a show it was. It is beyond my ability to explain or describe the excitement and activities that were going on all day, but it was far and away the best air show that I have ever attended.

The general theme of the show was the air war of World War II. It started with the surprise attack on that sleepy Sunday morning in Pearl Harbor, performed by the CAF's world famous "Tora! Tora! Tora!" group, and a simulation of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. It continued through the war and the dropping of the big bomb at Hiroshima, the air war in Korea and Vietnam. There was so much going on... P-51's chasing Zero's, B-25's and B-26's dropping bombs, B-17's, B-24's and B-29's raining hell down on earth, and all sorts of fighters, bombers, transports, etc. George Moore and I counted over 40 planes in the air and in sight at one time. Almost unbelievable that so much was going on at once, and that every one up there in the air was able to avoid everyone else. Unseen and unheard is the extensive and exhaustive planning and training involved by the managers and airmen of the air show.

But that was only a part of the show. There were demonstrations by aerobatic planes, the army's Golden Knights skydivers, flyovers and formation flying of F-18, F-16, and the B-1 bomber. The B-1 made a first pass over the show in slow flight and then disappeared for a while. A little later it came swooping down across the show at probably just under Mach 1, wings swept back and contrails rolling off the wing tips as it nosed up, afterburners blowing white hot, and roared out of sight. The F-18 puts on a similar performance. It sneaks up on the spectators at low level, high speed and just over the center of the field it points its nose straight up and blasts completely out of sight. There were formations of P-51's and F-16's flying close formation. Truly a show of joining the "Past and the Present."

The show lasted about all day. It would be nearly impossible for me to describe all of the events. Championship pilots wrung out their aerobatic aircraft, from a T-34

to special supped-up aircraft. One plane even had a jet engine booster that made its performance spectacular. About the last act there were three aerobatic planes all performing at the same time, and it looked like they were trying to stay within the boundaries of the Midland airport. It was amazing to watch their performance. How they do their stuff and stay out of each other's way is way beyond my level of comprehension. There first, last and foremost rule had to be: "KEEP TWO OTHER AIRCRAFT IN VIEW AT ALL TIMES!!"

Our day at the Airsho will not be forgotten soon. A brief bus ride in the morning took us from our hotel to the Midland Airport. The weather was cool and brisk, but after a walk around the acres and acres of hundreds of display aircraft the day turned sunny and beautiful. Tiny Malm and the Commemorative Air Force were our hosts for the day. They treated us like royalty giving us special seating under the big tent, dubbed the "Officer's Club." Just outside our tent we had more special seating at tables and chairs where we could watch the air show, eat complimentary hamburgers served by the Donut Dollies, (Simulated WW II USO Gals) and drink all the drinks we could hold. Then after a completely full day, and buy this time with a few crinks in the neck from watching the show, we were treated to a real Texas Bar-B-Q. There was plenty of time for casual eating and conversations before we walked to our bus for our short ride back to the hotel. By this time, we were all ready to call it a day. But not without giving our whole hearted thanks to Tiny Malm and The Commemorative Air Force. Thanks a million, guys!



Reunion from page 1

time, followed by getting together in the war room in the evening.

On Friday night there will be a reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres. Of course the war room will be open until O Dark thirty each night.

On Saturday a Memorial Plaque dedication ceremony will be held at Hill AFB Museum, about 30 miles North of Salt Lake City. The ceremony will be very similar to that held at Dyess AFB in 2002. There will be busses to take us there and back. We will have lunch at the Hill AFB Club and return to the hotel for a no-host cocktail hour followed by the banquet.

The registration fee of \$70 includes the welcome reception on Friday night, the bus to and from the dedica-

See **Reunion** on page 10

Reunion 2004 Attendees

Bruce Ainsworth, TX	Franklin Godek, TX	Paul Peoples, MI
Francisco & Marcella Archibeque, MS	Milton Golart, OR	William Perry, CA
James Bailey, VA	Justin & Nadine Graham, KS	Wilson & Betty Petefish, TX
Jay & Diane Baker, TX	Don & Sue Griffin, TX	Ralph Renfro, VA
Alvin & Audrea Balak, CA	Kelly & Susan Grissom, TX	Leonard & Nancy Reynen, OK
Robert Beaver, IA	Ron Ham, NM	Earl & Pam Reynolds, LA
Wolfgang & Judy Behr, TX	Cameron Hamilton	Michael Riess, MN
Tim & Grizelda Black, TX	Bob Hamrin	Russell Riggelman, VA
Robert Blaylock, KY	Ted & Cathy Hanchett, CO	Peter & Caroline Rollin, OK
Brian Bowen, FL	George Harmon, CA	Keith & Opal Ryland, AL
Bob & Evelyn Bowers, CA	Wyatt & Annell Heard, TX	Rex & Norma Sanford, SC
Michael Brabant, MI	Glen & June Helterbran, CT	Johnny & Ginger Scamardo, AR
James & Janice Breitenstine, TX	William Higgins, TX	Larry & Lee Schiff, PA
William & Ella Mae Buesking, TX	Sandra Hill, OK	Robert & Dory Scudder, CA
Richard & Susan Bunting, CA	Martin Hillman, WA	George Selvidge, OK
Lawrence Caine, IN	Jerry Huffmaster, FL	Robert & Wynell Slade, FL
Charles Calhoon, AZ	Dave & Jill Hutchens, OK	Jerry Smoliski, LA
Larry & Mary Campbell, OK	Loyd & Nancy Jenny, WA	Thomas & Kathy Snodgrass, KS
David Carnahan, CA	David Karr, OK	Don Spanks, MA
Ralph & Betty Chasteen, AL	Kenneth Kimseu, CA	Sonny & Cindy Spurger, TX
Kenneth & Venita Christman, MD	David & Christine Kowalski, AL	Charlie & Billie Steadman, TX
Jim & Betty Collier, CA	Steve & Sandy Lentz, NE	Cary & Christel, Stephenson, CA
Ted & Michele Collins, TX	Roger Lessin, AZ	Robert Strang, CA
Robert Cooper, TX	John & Rosemary Lewis, LA	Hank & Jane Strauss, TX
John & Nadine Craig, OK	Marvin & Evelyn Marek, TX	James Strickland, TX
Al & Shirley Cunliffe, AL	Tim Markham, CA	David Sutton, TX
Robert & Maria Darvas, AZ	Bob Markham, CA	Ray Tanner, NV
Wayne & Patty DeLawter, TN	Juan Martinez, OK	John & Fran Tawes, GA
Jon Drury, CA	Larry & Marva Martwig, TX	Curry Taylor, AZ
Bob & Pat Dugan, TX	John & Helen Matthews, TX	Otto & Wanda Terrell, NM
Roy & Burma Dunn, CA	Jim & Marcia McDonald, NC	James & Frances Touchton, LA
Bill & Edeltraud Duvall, WA	Butch McKenna, MA	Richard & robin Urbanovsky, TX
Steve & Sue Elsasser, KS	James & Julie Meyer, TX	John & Patricia Vickery, AZ
Ralph Erchinger, TX	Phil & Lynn Molohosky, TX	Kristen Vickery, AZ
Mark Erickson, IA	John Mood, HI	J.T. Watkins Jr., TX
Jim & Joanne Fairweather, MN	George Moore, LA	J.T. Watkins III, TX
Stoney Faubus, CA	Mike Murphy, MO	Miles Watkins, TX
Arthur Findley, OK	Robert & Iola Neumayer, CO	William Weaver, OK
Tom Finkler, WI	Tom & Cheryl Neutzling, CA	George Williams, ME
Stephen Frances, OK	Chris & Eileen Nevins, NH	Clyde Wilson, CA
Huey & Mary K Frye, FL	Terry & Candy Obermiller, TX	Paul Witthoef, TX
Mary Furrie, TX	Margaret Patterson, TX	Roger Woodbury, IL
Chris Garber,	Rick & Antoinette Patterson, VA	Frank Woznicki, NY
Al & Lorraine Estelle Ghizzone, NV	Bob & Yong Payne, TX	Dan Zachary, OK
Larry & Mary Gill, TX		

Reunion from page 9

tion service at Hill AFB on Saturday, lunch at Hill AFB, and the Saturday night banquet. You are encouraged to register early so that there will be a good head count to establish the guarantees to the hotel catering department and the bus company to secure favorable pricing. Also registering early at the Red Lion Hotel will guarantee that

you have a reservation. Please advise Jim Collier at 916-966-404 or jascoll@pacbell.net if you are planning to attend. Also, be sure to review the cancellation clauses in the registration forms in case the need arises. The Red Lion requires a 48 hour cancellation to avoid being charged for a one night stay.

Reunion Demographics

Here are the statistics on the 2004 reunion: Odessa evidently was a good draw to get this many members out.

Total number of members and guests:	207
Members	120
Guests	11
First Time Attendees	45
FOA (Friends of Association)	3

Members by organization:

4449 - 4	458 - 17	483 - 5	536 - 16
457 - 16	459 - 18	535 - 10	537 - 29
908 - 1	18-1 (AFAT-4) - 1		

Members by year in country:

1964-1	1967-20	1970- 9
1965-1	1968- 24	1971- 6
1966-30	1969- 29	

Members by State:

AL-1	FL-4	IN-1	MD-1	MS-1	NV-21	SC-1
AR-1	GA-1	KS-3	ME-1	NC-1	NY-1	TN-1
AZ-5	HI-1	KY-1	MI-1	NE-1	OK-12	TX-34
CA-15	IA-2	LA-4	MN-2	NH-1	OR-1	VA-4
CO-2	IL-1	MA-2	MO-1	NM-2	PA-1	WA-3
WI-1						

Numbers for the past four years are:

		Members	Guests	Total
Tucson	1999	84	55	139
College Park	2000	58	36	94
Las Vegas	2001	100	61	161
St. Louis	2002	78	54	132
Charleston	2003	110	83	193
Odessa	2004	120	87	207

First Time Members (FNG's)

2001	19
2002	28
2003	39
2004	45

Here are a some of the attractions in the Salt Lake City area:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Historic Temple Square. Be sure to visit Temple Square and other attractions and events offered by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — all are free.

Downtown Classic Cars International. Over 100 classic automobiles on display. 1920's, 30's, 40's, 1950's, V-16, Cadillacs, Packards, Pierce Arrow, Movie Star Cars.

Catholic Cathedral of Madeline. This recently refurbished Roman Gothic styled Cathedral is a masterpiece, complete with magnificent stained glass windows and other elaborate artwork.

Family History Library. The Largest Genealogical research center in the world, located at 35 North West Temple.

Great Salt Lake. The Great Salt Lake has a saline content of 5% to 27%, nearly seven times saltier than any ocean.

Clark Planetarium. One of the best known and most innovative planetariums in the world, it offers two exhibit floors and features a domed theatre offering spectacular star shows, genuine moon rocks. Features star shows, space/science exhibits, and gift shop.

Kennecott's Bingham Canyon Copper Mine. The world's largest open-pit copper mine.

Utah's Museum of Natural History. Visit the Dinosaur Discovery Hall. Learn about Utah's Native Americans. Explore the natural wonders of Utah.

Utah's Hogle Zoo. Enjoy an animal adventure and see hundreds of exotic animals including bears, elephants, giraffes, snakes, and tigers. Open daily.

Museums

- The Beehive House
- The Children's Museum of Utah
- Daughter of Utah Pioneers, Pioneer Memorial Museum
- Museum of Church History and Art
- Utah State Historical Society
- Chase Home Museum of Utah Folk Arts



**C-7A Caribou Association
16th Annual Reunion &
Hill AFB Dedication**
Red Lion Hotel Salt Lake Downtown
161 West 600 South
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101
May 12 - 15, 2005
1-800-733-5466 or 1-801-521-7373

Thursday - May 12th

Check-in

Commercial Tours Available

1200 - 2300 Registration and Socializing in the
War Room**Friday - May 13th**

Check-in

Bus Tour Salt Lake City

1800 - 2000 Reception - Heavy Hors D'oeuvres
Buffet with Cash bar

2000 - 2100 Business Meeting

1000 - 2300 Socializing in the War Room

Saturday May 14th0830 - 0930 Board Busses for Dedication
Services at Hill AFB Museum

1000 - 1045 Dedication Ceremony

1045 - 1200 Group Photos

1045 - 1115 537th Dedication Ceremony for Donors

1200 - 1330 Lunch at Hill AFB Club

1330 - 1500 Tour Museum and Chapel

1500 - 1600 Board Busses to Hotel

1800 - 1900 Cocktail Hour w/cash bar

1900 - 2100 Banquet

2200 - 2400 Socializing in War Room

Sunday May 15th

Depart



Squadron Patches

Jon Drury, [537, 68]

First, let me say thanks. My first Caribou reunion, in Odessa, proved an amazing experience. I served in the 537th in 1968 and 1969. I was not much of a joiner when in-country, but I was surprised that I knew a number of guys, and others looked familiar. I greatly appreciate the efforts many expend to extend the benefits of the association.

When I attended, I asked about unit patches. I found that no unified effort had been made to get or produce our unit patches. Impressed by the efforts others were making in support of the association, I determined that I would put myself to work developing a program to investigate unit patches. And so I have.

My first effort was to purchase patches for all the squadrons, the 483rd Tactical Airlift Wing, PACAF, and 7th Air Force. That is about the time I ran into a maze of obstacles: 7th Air Force patches were inexpensive, PACAF patches, more costly, Wing and the Squadrons, nothing was available. I did find some Army Caribou patches, but they were \$20.00 a pop. Nothing was available for the USAF Caribou units.

Well, as you can see, I was headed on a mission. I located the Jerome Polder's Comprehensive Illustrated Guide to U.S.A.F. Pocket/Shoulder Insignia, in six volumes, a truly esoteric publication. The guide is pricey, out of print, and black and white, except for newer volumes such as Persian Gulf. I guess it is somewhat helpful. I have located a full set, and it is on its way to me. Of course, eventually I found my way to AFR 900-3, truly the final word on patches. But what I found here is that very probably not 5% of organizations follow the regs.

My next task was to consider how the patches could be procured or made. Here, I ran into the cost factor. The first embroidery outfit I tried wanted \$65.00 to do the graphics, and I think about \$7.00 to make the first patch. Ouch! Then I came on the package-deal people. They can get the unit price down, but want a bulk order. They roll the graphics costs into the overall package. It was a big risk, because our patches have to be excellent quality, 100% embroidered. I generally found bulk prices of \$3.00 - \$8.00 per patch. Though some of my own money is tied up in this, I am committed to selling the patches to the Association at exact cost, so it can make a profit.

I am still putting this together. So if you know of any examples of patches that have been made for our units, please let me know. An easy way to do this is to scan the image (if you are into computers), and send it to me at jond@redwoodchapel.org, along with the exact measure of the patch. If you are unable to do that send it to me: Jon Drury, 19300 Redwood Rd., Castro Valley, CA 94546. We are starting to get the patches rolling and have them for the 537th, 457th and 459th. They sell on our web merchandising site for \$5 each.. I will keep you updated.



Vietnam Myths *By Stephen Sherman*

For nearly 30 years I... like many Vietnam veterans... seldom spoke of Vietnam, except with other veterans, when training soldiers, and in public speeches. These past five years I have joined the hundreds of thousands who believe it is high time the truth be told about the Vietnam War and the people who served there. It's time the American people learn that the United States military did not lose the War, and that a surprisingly high number of people who claim to have served there, in fact, DID NOT.

As Americans support the men and women involved in the War on Terrorism, the mainstream media are once again working tirelessly to undermine their efforts and force a psychological loss or stalemate for the United States. We cannot stand by and let the media do to today's warriors what they did to us 35 years ago.

Below are some assembled facts most readers will find interesting. It isn't a long read, but it will... I guarantee... teach you some things you did not know about the Vietnam War and those who served, fought, or died there. Please share it with those with whom you communicate.

Vietnam War Facts:

Facts, Statistics, Fake Warrior Numbers, and Myths Dispelled

9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the official Vietnam era from August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975.

2,709,918 Americans served in uniform in Vietnam.

Vietnam Veterans represented 9.7% of their generation.

240 men were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War.

The first man to die in Vietnam was James Davis, in 1958. He was with the 509th Radio Research Station. Davis Station in Saigon was named for him.

58,148 were killed in Vietnam.

75,000 were severely disabled.

23,214 were 100% disabled.

5,283 lost limbs.

1,081 sustained multiple amputations.

Of those killed, 61% were younger than 21.

11,465 of those killed were younger than 20 years old.

Of those killed, 17,539 were married.

Average age of men killed: 23.1 years.

Five men killed in Vietnam were only 16 years old.

The oldest man killed was 62 years old.

As of January 15, 2004, there are 1,875 Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

97% of Vietnam Veterans were honorably discharged.

91% of Vietnam Veterans say they are glad they served.

74% say they would serve again, even knowing the outcome.

Vietnam veterans have a lower unemployment rate than the same non-vet age groups.

Vietnam veterans' personal income exceeds that of our non-veteran age group by more than 18 percent.

87% of Americans hold Vietnam Veterans in high esteem.

There is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam Veterans and non-Vietnam Veterans of the same age group (Source: Veterans Administration Study.)

Vietnam Veterans are less likely to be in prison — only one-half of one percent of Vietnam Veterans have been jailed for crimes.

85% of Vietnam Veterans made successful transitions to civilian life.

Interesting Census Stats and "Been There" Wanabees: 1,713,823 of those who served in Vietnam were still alive as of August, 1995 (census figures).

~ During that same Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country was: 9,492,958.

~ As of the current Census taken during August, 2000, the surviving U.S. Vietnam Veteran population estimate is: 1,002,511. This is hard to believe, losing nearly 711,000 between '95 and '00. That's 390 per day. During this Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country is: 13,853,027. By this census, FOUR OUT OF FIVE WHO CLAIM TO BE Vietnam vets are not.

The Department of Defense Vietnam War Service Index officially provided by The War Library originally reported with errors that 2,709,918 U.S. military personnel as having served in-country. Corrections and confirmations to this errored index resulted in the addition of 358 U.S. military personnel confirmed to have served in Vietnam but not originally listed by the Department of Defense. (All names are currently on file and accessible 24/7/365).

Isolated atrocities committed by American Soldiers produced torrents of outrage from anti-war critics and the news media while Communist atrocities were so common that they received hardly any media mention at all. The United States sought to minimize and prevent attacks on civilians while North Vietnam made attacks on civilians a centerpiece of its strategy. Americans who deliberately killed civilians received prison sentences while Communists who did so received commendations. From 1957 to 1973, the National Liberation Front assassinated 36,725 Vietnamese and abducted another 58,499. The death squads focused on leaders at the village level and on anyone who improved the lives of the peasants such as medical personnel, social workers, and school teachers. — *Nixon Presidential Papers*

Common Myths Dispelled:

Myth: Common Belief is that most Vietnam veterans were drafted.

Fact: 2/3 of the men who served in Vietnam were volunteers. 2/3 of the men who served in World War II were drafted. Approximately 70% of those killed in Vietnam were volunteers.

Myth: The media have reported that suicides among Vietnam veterans range from 50,000 to 100,000 — 6 to 11 times the non-Vietnam veteran population.

Fact: Mortality studies show that 9,000 is a better estimate. "The CDC Vietnam Experience Study Mortality Assessment" showed that during the first 5 years after discharge, deaths from suicide were 1.7 times more likely among Vietnam veterans than non-Vietnam veterans. After that initial post-service period, Vietnam veterans were no more likely to die from suicide than non-Vietnam veterans. In fact, after the 5-year post-service period, the rate of suicides is less in the Vietnam veterans' group.

Myth: Common belief is that a disproportionate number of blacks were killed in the Vietnam War.

Fact: 86% of the men who died in Vietnam were Caucasians, 12.5% were black, 1.2% were other races. Sociologists Charles C. Moskos and John Sibley Butler, in their recently published book "All That We Can Be," said they analyzed the claim that blacks were used like cannon fodder during Vietnam "and can report definitely that this charge is untrue. Black fatalities amounted to 12 percent of all Americans killed in Southeast Asia - a figure proportional to the number of blacks in the U.S. population at the time and slightly lower than the proportion of blacks in the Army at the close of the war."

Myth: Common belief is that the war was fought largely by the poor and uneducated.

Fact: Servicemen who went to Vietnam from well-to-do areas had a slightly elevated risk of dying because they were more likely to be pilots or infantry officers. Vietnam Veterans were the best educated forces our nation had ever sent into combat. 79% had a high school education or better.

Here are statistics from the Combat Area Casualty File (CACF) as of November 1993. The CACF is the basis for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall): Average age of 58,148 killed in Vietnam was 23.11 years. (Although 58,169 names are in the Nov. 93 database, only 58,148 have both event date and birth date. Event date is used instead of declared dead date for some of those who were listed as missing in action)

	Deaths	Average Age
Total:	58,148	23.11 years
Enlisted:	50,274	22.37 years

Officers:	6,598	28.43 years
Warrants:	1,276	24.73 years
E1:	525	20.34 years
11B MOS:	18,465	22.55 years

Myth: The common belief is the average age of an infantryman fighting in Vietnam was 19.

Fact: Assuming KIAs accurately represented age groups serving in Vietnam, the average age of an infantryman (MOS 11B) serving in Vietnam to be 19 years old is a myth, it is actually 22. None of the enlisted grades have an average age of less than 20. The average man who fought in World War II was 26 years of age.

Myth: The Common belief is that the domino theory was proved false.

Fact: The domino theory was accurate. The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand stayed free of Communism because of the U.S. commitment to Vietnam. The Indonesians threw the Soviets out in 1966 because of America's commitment in Vietnam. Without that commitment, Communism would have swept all the way to the Malacca Straits that is south of Singapore and of great strategic importance to the free world. If you ask people who live in these countries that won the war in Vietnam, they have a different opinion from the American news media. The Vietnam War was the turning point for Communism.

Myth: The common belief is that the fighting in Vietnam was not as intense as in World War II.

Fact: The average infantryman in the South Pacific during World War II saw about 40 days of combat in four years. The average infantryman in Vietnam saw about 240 days of combat in one year thanks to the mobility of the helicopter. One out of every 10 Americans who served in Vietnam was a casualty. 58,148 were killed and 304,000 wounded out of 2.7 million who served. Although the percent that died is similar to other wars, amputations or crippling wounds were 300 percent higher than in World War II75,000 Vietnam veterans are severely disabled. MEDEVAC helicopters flew nearly 500,000 missions. Over 900,000 patients were airlifted (nearly half were American). The average time lapse between wounding to hospitalization was less than one hour. As a result, less than one percent of all Americans wounded, who survived the first 24 hours, died. The helicopter provided unprecedented mobility. Without the helicopter it would have taken three times as many troops to secure the 800 mile border with Cambodia and Laos (the politicians thought the Geneva Conventions of 1954 and the Geneva Accords or 1962 would secure the border).

Myth: Kim Phuc, the little nine year old Vietnamese girl running naked from the napalm strike near Trang Bang

Myths from page 14

on 8 June 1972... shown a million times on American television... was burned by Americans bombing Trang Bang.

Fact: No American had involvement in this incident near Trang Bang that burned Phan Thi Kim Phuc. The planes doing the bombing near the village were VNAF (Vietnam Air Force) and were being flown by Vietnamese pilots in support of South Vietnamese troops on the ground. The Vietnamese pilot who dropped the napalm in error is currently living in the United States. Even the AP photographer, Nick Ut, who took the picture, was Vietnamese. The incident in the photo took place on the second day of a three day battle between the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) who occupied the village of Trang Bang and the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) who were trying to force the NVA out of the village. Recent reports in the news media that an American commander ordered the air strike that burned Kim Phuc are incorrect. There were no Americans involved in any capacity. "We (Americans) had nothing to do with controlling VNAF," according to Lieutenant General (Ret) James F. Hollingsworth, the Commanding General of TRAC at that time. Also, it has been incorrectly reported that two of Kim Phuc's brothers were killed in this incident. They were Kim's cousins not her brothers.

Myth: The United States lost the war in Vietnam.

Fact: The American military was not defeated in Vietnam. The American military did not lose a battle of any consequence. From a military standpoint, it was almost an unprecedented performance. General Westmoreland quoting Douglas Pike, a professor at the University of California, Berkley a renowned expert on the Vietnam War). This included Tet 68, which was a major military defeat for the VC and NVA.

THE UNITED STATES DID NOT LOSE THE WAR IN VIETNAM, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE DID. Read on.....

The fall of Saigon happened 30 April 1975, two years AFTER the American military left Vietnam. The last American troops departed in their entirety 29 March 1973.

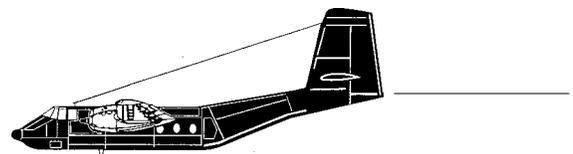
How could we lose a war we had already stopped fighting? We fought to an agreed stalemate. The peace settlement was signed in Paris on 27 January 1973. It called for release of all U.S. prisoners, withdrawal of U.S. forces, limitation of both sides' forces inside South Vietnam and a commitment to peaceful reunification. The 140,000 evacuees in April 1975 during the fall of Saigon consisted almost entirely of civilians and Vietnamese military, NOT American military running for their lives. There were almost twice as many casualties in Southeast Asia (primarily Cambodia) the first two years after the fall of Saigon in 1975 than there were during the ten years the U.S. was involved in Vietnam. Thanks for the perceived

loss and the countless assassinations and torture visited upon Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians goes mainly to the American media and their undying support-by-misrepresentation of the anti-War movement in the United States.

As with much of the Vietnam War, the news media misreported and misinterpreted the 1968 Tet Offensive. It was reported as an overwhelming success for the Communist forces and a decided defeat for the U.S. forces. Nothing could be further from the truth. Despite initial victories by the Communists forces, the Tet Offensive resulted in a major defeat of those forces. General Vo Nguyen Giap, the designer of the Tet Offensive, is considered by some as ranking with Wellington, Grant, Lee and MacArthur as a great commander. Still, militarily, the Tet Offensive was a total defeat of the Communist forces on all fronts. It resulted in the death of some 45,000 NVA troops and the complete, if not total destruction of the Viet Cong elements in South Vietnam. The Organization of the Viet Cong Units in the South never recovered. The Tet Offensive succeeded on only one front and that was the News front and the political arena. This was another example in the Vietnam War of an inaccuracy becoming the perceived truth. However inaccurately reported, the News Media made the Tet Offensive famous.

[Stephen Sherman grew up in Lexington, Massachusetts, where he graduated from Lexington High School. Stephen went on to get his degree at Tufts University (before the war) and a degree from Harvard Business School (after the war). He was a Special Forces officer in Vietnam in 1967-68. He maintains a comprehensive database and publishes archival information on Special Forces in SE Asia (www.greenberet.net/books/). His op-ed piece, "Conduct Unbecoming", was published by the Wall Street Journal, January 26, 2004. The information above is condensed out of the proceedings of a Conference called "Examining the Myths of the Vietnam War", held under the auspices of The RADIX Foundation, which took place at Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston MA, 26-29 July 2004. Complete information on the Boston conference is available at www.viet-myths.net.

Just coincidentally, Steve was a high school classmate of Peter Bird, the Caribou Association Vice President and Webmaster. Ed.]



MY CARIBOU CONNECTIONS

By Jim Davis, [537, 68]

It was a dark and stormy night...

Wait, that's not right! This is not about Snoopy sitting on top of his doghouse musing about his exploits as a WW I pilot. However, I have to admit that there was a lot of 'dark and stormy' in my 30 years with the USAF, USAFR, NJANG, and 32 years with Eastern, Northwest, and United Airlines. I loved to fly the Caribou; Snoopy would have loved to fly the Caribou, too!

My connection with the 'Bou started when I was assigned to the fly with the 537th TAS at Phu Cat, RVN. My year in Vietnam was from Nov. '68 to '69. I was to become a "SOUL", the call sign of the infamous KN, yellow tail-flash, fighting 537th. The KN's, one of six squadrons that made up the C-7 family in Vietnam, flew a regular schedule in all areas of the country. The 537th's primary mission however, was to support the Army's 1st Cav in the central highlands region of the country. We had some close calls, even tragedies during my year. The flight crews, maintainers and aircraft got a workout when the NVA surrounded and put a significant siege on the Special Forces camp at Ben Het in June of 1969. I remember that everything that could fly close air support (including B-52's) for our twenty-second in-trail re-supply airdrops did so. I remember the heroic efforts of everyone involved with the Caribou mission busting his buns to get the aircrews, payloads and aircraft ready to perform the mission that *only* the 'Bou could perform. Ben Het would be saved! I had learned lessons about pilotage, teamwork, sacrifice, professionalism, and 'higher headquarters support' that I would carry with me for the rest of my flying career! Yes, the caribou community took some hits but thankfully no loses.

War Stories!



I returned to the land of the "big BX" in Nov. of 1969, and was assigned to fly the C-141 Starlifter with the 6th MAS at McGuire AFB in New Jersey. I was still in the local upgrade program in the spring of 1970 when news of Dak Seang reached McGuire. The NVA regulars had chosen Dak Seang as their next target. Close air support was again tremendous, however our Caribou community suffered three aircraft losses during their airdrop missions. We lost friends and members of our family.

I flew the C-141 in the regular Air Force and with the reserves 702nd MAS until early '73. I had heard a rumor that the "Jersey Guard" was getting a new airplane to replace their aero medical evacuation mission C-121 Super Connies. Rumor was correct; the 170th Tactical Airlift Group was getting Caribou's from the reserves at Maxwell AFB. The following is a list of aircraft tail numbers that the unit received from the reserves. 60-3767, 60-5437, 61-2391, 61-2396, 62-4139, 62-4145, 62-4146, 62-4149, 62-4160, 62-4169, 62-4184, 62-4188, 62-4190, 63-9764.

I know what you all are thinking. Worldwide mission, gleaming silver, air-conditioned, four engine jet, C-141 missions – vs. – camouflage green/brown, two engine prop, heated in summer, air-conditioned in winter, C-7's? No problem making that choice! I was hired into the 170th TAG, 150th TAS. Dusty was the unit call sign; Dusty I became. I was connected again.

As the unit became more proficient in flying the 'Bou, the missions became increasingly interesting. We supported Army Special Forces in the South, Navy Seals

night drop insertion missions at Pax River, and the International Parachute Association Jumpfest competition at Hurlburt field, Florida (we dropped 1,310 jumpers using 3 aircraft in three days). As the word spread that the Jersey Guard was willing to fly the airplane anytime, anywhere, and fly it like it was intended, we got more and more difficult assignments. Those missions frequently involved the Special Forces. One mission was to support the Alabama Special Forces in war games in the Salmon River Mountain Range northeast of Boise, Idaho. Short field landings, LAPES, high and low altitude airdrops into blind drop zones were the items on the menu. These sorties would be as difficult as any I had flown in Vietnam.

I think the highlight in all of my years in flying the Caribou came in March of 1975. My unit commander Col. Jim Young got a call from the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C. He was told that three C-7's were available for rescue if he wanted to pick them up. Where were they you ask? In beautiful downtown Bangkok, Thailand of course! Col. Young never said no to anything except to pay for my additional man-days – the rescue mission was on!

I was out of work at the time with Eastern Airlines, and was working the Stan-Eval shop in the 170th. The unit put together three very experienced crews to get the 'Bou's home from Bangkok (make that, crews that had enough time off and did not have any knowledge of geography). Unlike most war time one-way ferry missions, this one had to get from New Jersey to Thailand and then back across the Pacific Ocean to New Jersey. The actual flight distance both ways is about 24,780 miles. Once we left McGuire, it would take 45 days to return with the three C-7s. Aircraft

ferried to NJ from Bangkok in April – May 1975: 60-5430, 61-2389, 61-2392.

We begged, borrowed, and stole rides on “anything” military that flew to get the three crews to Bangkok. To make matters even better, we had, besides all our personal and professional gear, all the aircraft survival equipment as well. Each crew had a twenty-man raft; four one man rafts, signal devices, emergency radios, as well as our own personal survival kits. We looked like a band of gypsies wherever we went! We left McGuire on the first of April and arrived in Bangkok eight days later. To our surprise, the aircraft were far from ready for the journey home. After asking a few questions we found out that the planes were in use by Air America in Laos during the war. *They were all very well used!* Each aircraft had over 15,000 hours logged on it! They all had numerous patches where repairs had been made for bullet holes. My aircraft 61-2392 had been involved in an accident and had been repaired in Udorn, Thailand before being sent to Bangkok for delivery to the states. Oh goody, what fun! Excuse me, one question, how do I get out of this? We finally got to “test fly” our individual airplanes on the 12th of April. We noted the discrepancies, and requested – no make that demanded – fixes. After a week of haggling, negotiating and accepting, we were ready to set off on this odyssey back to New Jersey. After a week in Thailand, our band of ‘merry’ New Jerseyans changed the mission call sign from Dusty to Turkey. It seemed very appropriate at the time (it still does today by the way). The workers at the depot were so excited about the call sign change that they painted the Thai word for turkey on the side of each airplane. My crew would be Turkey 3!

The first leg of our planned route was from Bangkok to Clark AFB, Philippines. Because of the political

situation in Cambodia and Vietnam, we would have to fly far off shore of Cambodia and well to the south of Vietnam to avoid a possible incident or airspace violation. No overflight authority was ever requested. The first leg would take 12.8 hours. After arriving at Clark, and after a few thousand “soft drinks”, we did some serious reflection on what we had gotten ourselves into. The remainder of the route would island-hop across the Pacific from Clark to Guam, to Kwajalein Atoll (in the Marshall Islands and part of the Pacific missile test range), to Midway Island, due north to Adak Island in the Aleutian Islands chain, to Elmendorf AFB in Anchorage Alaska, to McChord AFB outside Seattle-Tacoma Washington, to Wright-Patterson AFB Ohio, to McGuire AFB, NJ. You have realized by now that Hawaii to the mainland is not mentioned in the plan. The folks at HQ ferry command, after suffering a few ditchings, decided that the C-7 did not have the range for that leg.

Each crew kept a very detailed log on fuel and oil consumption for each leg. We had determined that we all could have made the trip from Hawaii to San Francisco with plenty of margin. Ferry Command didn’t want to consider our “mumbo-jumbo” figures. We were overruled and were ordered to fly the northern route. We left Bangkok on the 20th of April and would not arrive in New Jersey until the 15th of May. We would have flown 98.5 hours. An HC-130 being delivered to the NY Guard would be the ‘duck-butt’, our long-range navigation system. They would fly long racetrack patterns over the top of our flight to keep us on course. They were also loaded with pararescue specialists and survival gear, just in case something really bad happened. The 130 would be the cause for two air aborts due to bird strikes. We had taken off from Midway Island on two separate occasions only to be called

back after 1 ½ hours because the “Herkey” had taken gooney bird strikes in the props. Our Caribous had hit the gooneys on takeoff also, but the big birds just bounced off the deicing boots. We were dented, but not broken! However, Col. Young had decided that if there was one more abort by our C-130 friends we were going North without them. I’m glad we didn’t have to do that!

Each crew pretty much settled into a routine after the first hour of the first leg. Colonel Young’s airplane was an oil-burner! The flight engineer would pump oil from the 55-gallon drum out to the engine oil tank until his arm fell off. The F/E would be replaced by one of the pilots until his arm too was also burning with fatigue and fell off. This process continued until everyone had his turn. Oh what fun! On the plus side of things, all the aircraft were holding up very well mechanically. When the flight got to Kwajalein the mechanics changed two “jugs” on the left engine. Turkey one’s oil problem got remarkably better!

The most remarkable flying came after we reached Adak Island in the Aleutian chain. Navigation aids were available and with good weather, we said goodbye to our friends in the HC-130. The three C-7’s flew VFR (visual flight rules) over some of the most spectacular scenery that I’d ever seen. There are numerous mountains along the Aleutian Islands, the highest being Shishaldin volcano (9,372’) on Unimak Island. We flew down the Cook Inlet and the Kenai Peninsula to Elmendorf AFB at Anchorage. After a few “soft drinks” and crew-rest, we took off to the mainland of the US of A. After Turkey 1 and 2 had departed it was my turn. As luck would have it, we blew a hydraulic line and had to make an emergency return to Elmendorf. My flight engineer and the base hydraulic shop were on it in a second, and within two

Connection from page 17

hours we were fixed and on our way to the mainland. This leg also was flown VFR and was more spectacular than the last. Mt. St Elias at 18,000 feet high in Glacier Bay National Park was breathtaking. The flight into British Columbia, Canada, passing Victoria and Vancouver on our way to Seattle and McChord AFB was spectacular.

After our late arrival at McChord, the three crews gathered at the O-Club to relax and reflect on the journey across the Pacific Ocean. We all came away with the same feeling that we had been very lucky not to have any major problems during the crossing. The one thing that had hit everyone was that the pond that we had just crossed was a VERY BIG ONE! It also hit us that the longest leg lay just ahead. The 1969-mile leg to Wright Patterson AFB would be the longest of the trip! However, the flight from McChord to Wright-Pat was a non-event. With plenty of emergency fields below, our spirits soared! Wright Patterson was waiting for us and had the reception committee out. They washed the three turkey birds so that they would look 'clean' and oil free for the VIP welcome that was waiting for them in New Jersey which was now only 500 miles away.

We had so much practice flying in formation that we were actually quite good at it. Colonel Young had us in left echelon as we "roared" down initial at 120 knots on runway 24 at McGuire. A right break to a spot, short-field landing was all that was left of this unreal mission. The entire unit had turned out to welcome us (It seems that there were numerous wagers placed on everything from how many of us would return, to what month we would return in). Local papers, politicians, military brass, and photographers were all waiting. The happiest sight was that

of our wives and families waiting for us as we taxied the planes to their parking spots. What a rush!

The 170th would fly the Caribou until April 1977 when we would transition to the KC-135. My last flight came on March 29, 1977 when I delivered # 184 to the 135th Tactical Airlift Group, Maryland ANG. They flew the C-7 from February 1977 until October 1980. Maryland was the only C-7 equipped unit from the time it accepted them from New Jersey until they converted to the C-130 in 1980. I don't have any information on where the aircraft went after that, but I suspected foreign military sales or the boneyard. In 1985, I had a chance to tour the boneyard at Davis-Monthan AFB in Arizona. The curator told me that the C-7's *came in and went out faster* than any other aircraft they ever had. Destinations were to countries in Africa and South America.

Now as I reflect back on my career in the military, and particularly the time spent in the Caribou, I realize how lucky I was. The places I've been and the people I've met have been wonderful. More than that, I had a fantastic time flying this airplane. Sure it was cold in the winter and hot in the summer – who cared - dress warmly or open the windows and turn on the air-conditioning. R-2000's forever!

My AF Form 5 says that I ended up with 2,031 hours in the Caribou, and had made 1,176 landings (all survivable). It was flat-out FUN!



For some time I have been wanting to get a hold of some stories about the 'Bou and it's life after Vietnam. The preceding article, Jim Davis' "Caribou Connection," came to me after our Odessa reunion. At the Odessa reunion I talked with Dave Kowalski about his service with the 'Bou at Maxwell AFB, and he sent me the following letter, and a series of articles on his

Pacific and Atlantic crossings ferrying the 'Bou. When it rains, it pours. The series of articles will be spread out over the next few issues of the newsletter. It is very interesting reading. Ed.



Hi Dave,

Hope you all had a good trip back home from the reunion. We spent a few days at Vicksburg, Mississippi on the way back to Titus Alabama. Had a big time.

Dave, I don't have anything together yet on my trip from Thailand to Alabama aboard C-7A #755. That is the 34 day 13,000 mile trip we had talked about in Odessa. You got me going in the right direction though, at least I'm thinking about it.

I found this old newspaper that tells about another long and exciting trip our C-7's took. Maybe one of the stories in it, especially the one about losing the engine four hours out of St. Johns, Newfoundland, could be used in the C-7A Caribou Association Newsletter.

A little background. The mission: Reforger 78. Aircraft 69-9765, from the 908th Tactical Air Group, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, was one of six C-7's and six C-123's that deployed to Germany in Reforger 78. As you know, 10 p.s.i. had to be maintained in the 500 gallon ferry bladder tanks to maintain the fuel flow to the main wing tanks. When our pressure pump went out the 10 p.s.i. had to be maintained with the emergency back up system, a *bicycle pump*. The pump that was used was bought in June of 1972 at Sears, along with four others. We had taken these pumps to Thailand with us to bring the Caribous back home to Alabama. I now have this particular pump in my workshop for a back up to my air compressor. It might make a good "show and tell" item for the war room at our next reunion. They just don't make em like that any more. Ha, ha.

See Kowalski on page 19

Kowalski from page 18

We stayed in St. John's for five more days changing the engine. Some how the 94th TAW didn't close out the tab after the party (after all the aircraft were in.) We ate and drank good for five days – lobster, duck, steak. I guess the hotel got paid?

One other story I have about the “Life of the Caribou

after Vietnam” was how the C-7A helped to eradicate the screw worm fly in Puerto Rico. The story isn't that long so maybe I can get it ready for the next newsletter.

This is the first letter I've written in a long time. About wore me out! Hope some of this stuff can be used in the newsletter. Keep in touch.

Dave Kowalski [908, 75]



Crew Flies Four Hours on One Engine

By Maj. Ron Peacock, 357th TAS

Now, some people might think just being in a C-7 over the North Atlantic, 400 miles from the nearest land would be a problem, but JACK Zero-One had just blown an engine!

JACK Zero-One was one of 10 C-7s and C-123s returning from Weisbaden AB, Germany, to the CONUS after participating in the “Reforger '78” exercise. After stops at Torrejon AB, Spain, and Lajes AB, Azores, the aircraft was on its last overwater leg, from Lajes to St. John's, Newfoundland, about nine hours flying time in a “Bou.” Along with the four C-123s and six C-7s was KING One-Eight, a rescue C-130 from the 303rd ARRS, March AFB, Calif., the “Duckbutt” for the oil burners.

For the first six hours the flight had been rather routine — the only excitement being generated when the flight had to penetrate a weather front containing some light rain showers. The rest of the time the aircrews, including my co-pilot, Capt. James Ballard, and flight mechanic, SSgt. Jerry Roland busied themselves with periodic “burnouts” to keep carbon from building up in the engines, transferring fuel from the ferry tanks to the wing tanks by use of the engine-driven air pressure pumps and idle chatter on the FM radio. “Hours and hours of sheer boredom ... punctuated by moments of stark terror.

“KING One-Eight, this is JACK Zero-One, we are having a problem . . . we are shutting down the left engine.” All checklist items were completed and power was increased on the good engine to maintain flying airspeed. As a precaution, in the event the other engine became inoperable, each crewmember donned his “Poopie Suit,” Life Preserver Units, and fitted his parachute. The pros and cons of ditching versus bailout were weighed and it was agreed that should it become necessary, the crew's best chance of survival would be to ditch the aircraft.

Having been reduced to one engine would seem bad enough, but JACK Zero-One had another, even more pressing problem. The air pressure pump on the right engine had failed; as a result, fuel could not be transferred from the ferry tanks to the wing tanks except by use of a bicycle pump and some hard work on the part of the crewmembers. For the next hour and a half, each crewmember took his turn until enough fuel had been pumped to complete the flight. From then on, it was up to the airplane.

JACK Zero-One landed safely at St. John's, Newfoundland, four hours after going single engine. The crew, tired and happy to be back on the ground, walked away from their C-7 with a new respect for the “Caribou” and its single-engine capability.

Maxwell Crew Logs Flight On The Ground

This article appeared in the November 1978 Minuteman Newspaper, Dobbins AFB, GA.

By Capt. Chris Scheer, 14th AF(R)

With one of his C-7 Caribou's two engines running rough and daylight waning over the dangerous North Atlantic Ocean, Capt. William R. Buechner and his 908th Tactical Airlift Group (Reserve) crew weren't choosy where to land.

They were on the final and longest leg of the REFORGER ('78) deployment, along with five other 14th Air Force (Reserve) C-7s and six C-123s from stateside bases, to Weisbaden Air Base, Germany.

The crew was nearly three hours out of Keflavik, Iceland, on their way to Weisbaden when trouble began. The

Air Force Reserve HC-130H “rescue ship” flying ahead of the STOL aircraft radioed for a fix on the nearest landing strip. It turned out to be a small airport at Stornaway, the tiny island of Lewis just off Scotland's rugged North Atlantic coast. Finding the small landing strip was challenge enough, but Captain Buechner's real flying began after he landed!

Air Force air controllers called the airport's manager at home — he had closed for the day — and told him to expect the C-7. He opened the airport and the landing was uneventful. The HC-130H crew radioed ahead to

See **Ground Flight** on page 20



Franklin Woznicki [536, 66] has a very unusual story to tell. On September 23, 1966, Frank was on his “fini” flight, which was headed south out of Vaung Tau to the South China Sea. To be more specific, about 25 miles out in the South China Sea. Purpose of the mission: To dispose of a full pallet load of newspapers sufficiently far from shore so that no remaining copies of the newspaper would wash up on any beaches.

As you can see in the head-

line above, there is a little typographical error. The headline of the feature article read “Open VC Farm Credit Bank.” From that it appeared that the program was designed to assist VC (Viet Cong) in obtaining low interest farm loans... Whoops!!... That should have read “Vietnamese Farmers” instead of “VC.”

Who published the newspaper? Whose faces were red? Frank doesn't know who would own up to this fiasco but the newspaper was The Observer, an official publication



A whole pallet of bundled newspapers that Frank had to toss overboard.

of MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam.) Someone had enough clout to direct a Caribou mission to accomplish this nasty job.

Frank wasn't really prepared for this sort of fini flight. It turned out to be a whole lot of work. The newspapers were bundled in small packets and stowed on pallets. Frank had to untie each bundle, unfold the newspapers so that they would blow apart as he threw each bundle off the

ramp. The crew kept the Bou in an orbit off the coast until Frank finished throwing out the last bundle.

Frank remembered that he had this old newspaper stuck away somewhere, but didn't come across it until just recently. Frank is pretty sure that he has the only copy of that issue in existence today. He hasn't looked into whether there is any collector's value in the old paper. After all, this newspaper was printed just 37 years ago last August.

Ground Flight from page 19

Weisbaden and a reserve maintenance crew was readied to fly to Stornaway the next morning with a spare engine. “The airport manager warned us that strong winds were predicted and we were just beginning to tie the plane down when they began!” The “winds” turned out to 50-knots gales of variable direction that threatened to tip over the C-7.

“We tried to block the wind with heavy snow removal equipment and other airport machinery,” Captain Buechner recalled, “but the gusts began hitting 80 knots and we

knew tie-downs just wouldn't hold. The only thing left to do was to fly it on the ground.”

That's just what the Montgomery, Ala. based reservists did. They were able to start one of the airplane's engines and taxi into the wind for the next two hours. As the wind changed direction, so did they. The C-7 never left the ground during the “flight,” but the constant taxiing kept the plane from cartwheeling over on its wings.

The crew was Lt. Donald A. Cameron, SMSgt. M. F. Dodd, and SSgt. Kenneth Menich.

The Continuing Saga of the "Blue Barron"

In the September 2003 newsletter, issue 18, page 16, we had an article entitled: "The Blue Barron' Does It Again." It is a story of one Harl V. Piety, his harrowing flight encounters and his expert piloting abilities.

In the next newsletter, issue 19, Jay Baker responds with an e-mail that was posted in the Mail Call section describing his memories of Harl Piety, and Walt Simons also has an e-mail posted in which he recalls, as operations officer, his memories of Capt. Piety. Then in newsletter issue 20 Tom Finkler reported his findings of an Internet search of Harl V. Piety, the Blue Barron.

Harl's son, James Piety, found our web site and read of his father's exploits and Tom's findings. He sent me the following e-mails and with his permission I have posted our conversations. I have also included the previous article, "The Blue Barron Does it Again" so as to provide continuity for those very few people who don't keep a copy of the Association Newsletter handy.

"The Blue Baron" Does It Again.

The following article is taken from "The Tiger Rag," the squadron newsletter published by the 535th Troop Carrier Squadron. It is Issue 8 dated 17 May 1967.

"The Blue Baron" has truly lived up to his name once again. His unusual knack of arriving at unforeseen circumstances and overcoming them was proven again on 9 May 1967.

Shortly after touch-down (approx 100 ft roll.) at Due Hoa, a loud noise was heard. The "Baron" looked at his co-pilot and said "My God, did I set her down that hard?" It was at this crucial point it was discovered that the right landing gear had struck a land mine planted on the runway by Charlie (or maybe it was "SNOOPY".)

By sheer ability (and possibly some fright), the Baron kept the "Bou" rolling straight ahead and stopped it in the minimum amount of feet. To keep the aircraft on the runway was imperative; parked adjacent to the runway on the right side were several helicopters and disaster was evident if the aircraft should veer toward them. The Baron's control of the damaged aircraft prevented this.

Upon inspection, the two right tires were found to be blown off, and the right wing and starboard engine were riddled with shrapnel, aileron shot away and the starboard side of the fuselage completely peppered with shrapnel, all but two of the windows shot away and the cargo door was laying on the runway. Even the horizontal stabilizer was hit. Of the ten barrels of fuel being transported, not one had a hole in it. The crew and passengers escaped

injury. The Baron's comment: "Gimme another plane."

On another occasion, the "Baron" was credited with outstanding flying ability when he successfully landed his aircraft which was fully loaded, after losing one engine immediately after take-off.

Of equal importance is the fact that on both of these occasions, no injuries were sustained, a definite result of the Baron's flying ability.

To the Baron, we all say "Well Done."

(Reportedly the "Baron" is one Captain Harl V. Piety. There seems to be no trace of the Baron, no records, and he is not a member of our association. If anyone can identify him, or locate him, please get him to our next reunion and I will personally buy him a drink. Ed.)

From Jay Baker...

First, on the article on page 16, "The Blue Baron Does It again," the article tells the exploits of one Captain Harl V. Piety. I do not know where he is located but I knew him as Van Piety. A burly sandy haired guy with a burly mustache to boot. I was the squadron maintenance officer and I remember some of the incidents Captain Piety was involved in. If my memory serves correctly we had to replace the wing on the subject aircraft that struck a land mine at Due Hoa. The wing was shipped from a depot in the United States in a large two-piece metal canister. Half of this canister, with the assistance of some great Structural Repair and Welding troops, became the largest Barbecue pit I ever saw. After construction we parked it at the Bung Lai hotel and with charcoal from Ham Tam and steaks traded with Special Forces troops, we had some great meals and camaraderie to go along with the meals.

From Walt Simons...

Hi, Dave,

The article in the latest newsletter brought back memories.....I was the ops officer of the 535th when Capt. Piety was assigned. He was short (about 5' 5") and stocky, and soon became an A/C. Although he wore the standard flying gear while in flight, at other times he delighted in wearing a leather jacket, long blue silk scarf, and leather helmet and flying goggles.....where he got them, I don't know....and thus claimed to be the "Blue Baron," and the nickname stuck.

The article is accurate, the aircraft was a total loss, and miraculously there were no casualties. Piety was still with the Sq. when I left so I have no info on him after that.

Keep up the good work!

Walt Simons
535 Sq. 66/67

From Tom Finkler...

Good Morning Dave:

I was intrigued by the two recent articles mentioning Harl Piety. (Sept 2003, page 16 and Jan 2004, page 10.) I did a little net snooping and found at least three references to a Harl Piety. Two reference "V" as his middle initial and one references "O". The "Advanced Radar Instrumentation Aircraft History and ARIA 328 Memorial Web Site" (www.flyaria.com) shows a picture of a sandy haired Harl as an adult.

The "Bushy Park High School, London England" shows a young Harl "Van" Piety. He's listed as deceased, but it's definitely the same man as the above photo. (www.bushypark.org) This site lists Harl as being from Texas and wanting to be an engineer.

The "Bendix Field Engineering Corp" homepage referencing USAF radar work (<http://gschultz.members.atlantic.net>) lists Harl "O" as deceased.

Anyway, in case any of the Caribou Association members who actually knew Harl want to see a photo of their old buddy, the first two site above may prove helpful.

Time to get back to work.

Tom Finkler [459, 69]

7/1/2004 From jdpiety@suscom.net

Dear Mr. Hutchens,

It is with great interest that I recently discovered the C-7A Caribou Associations newsletters. Particularly the last three issues which had a number of references to my Father Capt. Harl V. Piety.

The story covered in the September newsletter is one I remember hearing on more than one occasion. My Father loved to fly and would often tell his three small sons about his experiences. Unfortunately he had far too little time to recount his stories. He passed away in July 1974 shortly after his 38th birthday.

My heart was warmed by your reaction to the piece (buying him a drink, which I'm certain he would have appreciated) and the subsequent letters sent to you with further anecdotes about "The Blue Baron." If there are any other association members out there who recall my Father and times spent with him I would truly enjoy hearing about it.

I would like to point out that of the three references that Tom Finkler found of Harl Piety (page 10 of the June 2004 issue) only one was my Father. The "Bushy Park High School, London England" (www.bushypark.org) reference is my Father. One of his classmates recently contacted my older Brother in search of my Father for a class reunion and thus found out of his death. The other two

references are to Harl Ovid Piety my grandfather who was employed by Bendix and worked on the ARIA program. Harl O. Piety passed away in 1980. We are still left with one Harl, my Brother. Harl Gareth Piety lives near me here in York, Pennsylvania and also served in the Air Force in the early 1980's.

I may have some material that is of interest to the Association. My Mother still has several copies of "The Tiger Rag" which I will locate and scan copies of for you. There also may be some slides or photographs taken by my Father while he was in Vietnam. I will try to locate them and get prints or digital photos created from them. I will locate any of the photos or newsletters that we have and send copies on to you or whoever you designate. Sincerely, James Piety

7/02/04

To: jdpiety@suscom.net

Dear James,

Thank you for your wonderful and interesting letter. It always excites me when a casual story or incident develops into a real human interest story like your's and your father's. I didn't know your dad nor have I talked to anyone who was close to him. But I do know that almost everyone who read about your dad's feats and adventures felt like they either knew him, or of him.

For me, my time as the newsletter editor has come to an end. But this is one of the really rewarding parts of the editing job. With your permission I would like to send your letter on to Tom Finkler. And again with your permission I would like to put it in the next newsletter.

Thank you so much for responding to our articles in the newsletter. I know that a lot of people will be very interested in reading more about the "Blue Baron."

Dave Hutchens

7/10/2004

From: jdpiety@suscom.net

Dear Mr. Hutchens,

Sorry it took so long for me to reply. I was on vacation with the family for the past week in Williamsburg VA.

Please feel free to forward my letter to Mr. Finkler. I noticed in the newsletter that you were no longer the editor, but I felt compelled to write to you because of the personal nature of your statement at the end of the article about buying my Father a drink.

My siblings and I appreciate the responses and inquiries we saw about our Dad. For the record we are Nicola (Nicky) 42, Harl (Gary) 40, James (Jamie) 38 and Andrew 37 who was born while my Father was in Vietnam. That is another interesting story as the telegram he re-

ceived about the birth of my brother congratulated him on the birth of a 40 lb baby.... and the telegram ended there. It wasn't until sometime later that he found he had another son who had a quite normal birth weight.

My Mother has given me several copies of the Tiger Rag and some other interesting items from my Dads days in Vietnam. Should I send them to Mr. Finkler?

Please let me know.

Thanks much.

Sincerely,

Jamie Piety

7/10/2004

Dear Jamie,

Please send the materials to me. We have a new editor and historian who are just now getting started. I will be helping the new editor, Charlie Steadman, in getting the next issue out. I can probably handle the materials more easily. If you do not want the newsletters returned I will forward them to Bob Blaylock, our new historian. If you want them returned, I will do that.

Tom Finkler was in my squadron, the 459th, at the time I was there. He instigated the search for you Dad on his own after reading the article in the newsletter, and then forwarded the information to me.

Jamie, I want to make the point that the communications between you and me, and the C-7A Caribou Association, is not a trivial thing. All of our members are vets from the Caribou in its Vietnam operations and we were all in your Mom and Dad's situation. It is still very close to our hearts and each year we attend our reunions to rekindle those old memories and to renew our acquaintances and make new ones. I will attempt to put as much of our conversations as possible in the next newsletter. And I will be sure that you receive a copy of the next newsletter.

As you know, all of our newsletters

are posted on our web site as well as many photos.

Thanks again for your letters,
Dave Hutchens

Editor's note: I am sure that Jamie Piety would like to hear from anyone familiar with the foregoing episodes. You can e-mail him at jdpiety@suscom.net



The following article appeared in my local newspaper right at Christmas time. I was so overtaken with it I cut it out and saved it. When I started putting this newsletter together I had mixed emotions about using it. Sentiment got the better of me, so here it is. Ed.

Military clans face new wars, same feelings

Jay Bookman

ATLANTA — As little kids, the three of us would wriggle into our pajamas on Christmas Eve and gather around the radio, waiting to hear the news on Armed Forces Radio that Santa Claus had been picked up on radar taking off from the North Pole.

Then off to bed we'd scoot, motivated by mom's warning that if we were still awake when Santa arrived, the old guy would pass us by.

It only added to the excitement that Dad, an Air Force sergeant, actually worked on that radar system. When it wasn't busy detecting flying reindeer, the system served as the nation's early warning against Soviet attack. Dad even told us that one year he himself had seen Santa and his sleigh on the radar screen, a story that stretched my faith in Santa well past its normal expiration date.

Occasionally in those years, dad would be called away from home on TDY, or temporary duty. Sometimes he had to be away so long that my memories of him would grow pain-

fully dim, making him fade into little more than an image in a family picture. But we were lucky — in all of our years as a military family, dad never had to miss a Christmas, and because of his specialty, he never got orders for Vietnam.

This year, a lot of children didn't share that good fortune. We have roughly 175,000 troops in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many of them are someone's mother, father, husband or wife. And of course, they are all someone's son or daughter.

There's something very tribal about professional military families. It's a way of life so distinct from the normal that those who share it build a bond that tends to overwhelm ethnic or other differences. That sense of separation from the outside world, and membership in a tight-knit clan, is so powerful that it extends right down to the children.

As kids, we were all accustomed to families being transferred at a moment's notice to places other people would think of as strange — Japan, Europe, Mississippi. But I remember vividly the surprise my friends and I felt when one of our gang announced that his father was leaving the military. The idea that someone might leave the tribe voluntarily to enter the civilian world was almost inconceivable. It was a violation of the unspoken code to choose to become one of "them."

Even now, many years later, that tribal feeling hasn't gone away — especially not in times such as this. It was sobering to think that in military towns across the country this holiday season, there were tens of thousands of empty chairs at the family dinner table. The person who dominated the thoughts, conversation and recollections of the holiday was someone who wasn't there. But unlike Vietnam and other previous wars, there were at least phone calls from

Iraq to loved ones here at home, calls that often ended in tears.

For the most part, our troops ate their holiday meals in mess halls thousands of miles from American shores, much like that tent mess hall in Mosul where several Americans and Iraqis died. The drab military facilities were no doubt decorated with schmaltzy trimmings, with holiday music playing.

And I bet it's the music that hit our troops the hardest. My father has never been what you'd call the senti-

mental type. With him, you take your moments of candor when you find them. But one year, when the song "I'll Be Home for Christmas" came over the car radio, I remember him commenting about the impact that song had on him during his first Christmas in the service, when he was stationed in Morocco. I could see his point: The final, poignant lyric — "I'll be home for Christmas ... if only in my dreams" — sure could get a guy down.

That song was first recorded by

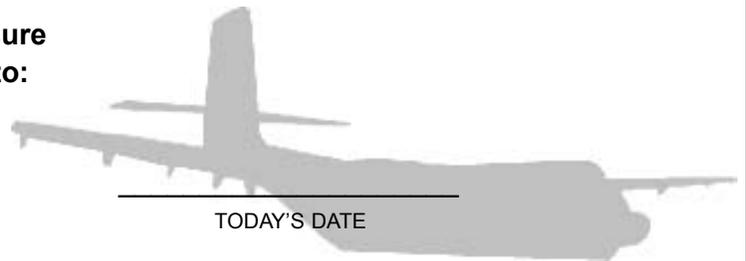
Bing Crosby in time for Christmas of 1942, when millions of American troops were spending their first holiday away from home, fighting in the Pacific and elsewhere. Those were different times, and a different war — the whole nation was a military family back then.

But for the people in uniform overseas, and those here at home, I bet the experience hasn't changed much. *Jay Bookman is the deputy editorial page editor of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. E-mail: jbookman@ajc.com*

VITAL STATISTICS: January 2005

Check your vital statistics and mail label to insure that the information is correct. Send changes to:

C-7A Caribou Association
Attn: Jim Collier
5607 Jolly Ct.
Fair Oaks, CA 95628-2707



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