



# Sabre Jet Classics

Volume 10 Number 3

FALL 2002

*A publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association*

*All Air National Guard Issue,  
14th Reunion Info. More!*



# SabreJet Classics

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 3  
Fall 2002  
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## It's a surprise!

(front cover) April 1962 - An F-86H from the 131st Fighter Squadron over Pisa, Italy, enroute to Wheelus AB, Libya, during the Berlin Crisis deployment.  
(credit - Dan Paluca)

## SabreJet Classics

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## The Presidents Notebook

As I mentioned in the last issue of SabreJet Classics, there was a big to-do at Chino Airport last month that everyone would have appreciated. Dorothy and I drove down to the Planes Of Fame Museum in Chino, California, last weekend. We had a great time watching an F-86 and a MiG-15 take off, make several passes over the field, and land. Thank God there are dedicated folks with the skills, resources, and dedication to keep aircraft like these in excellent flying condition. If you're in Southern California, make a determined effort to visit the museum located at the Chino Airport. It will be well worth your time and effort.

I want to thank the members who have sent in their change of address so we have a reliable membership roster. For the rest of you, please take a few minutes out of your busy retired life style and send us any changes to your address, marital status, etc., that have occurred in the last two years.

Each year our reunions get better and better. And this one, Reunion 14, will be no exception. Clear your calendar for April 13th through the 16th, 2003, and plan on coming to Las Vegas for a great time. In this issue we are printing, for the second and last time, the reunion registration form and schedule of events for the 14th Reunion. If you haven't done so already, please fill it out and send it along with your check to the Reunion address. If you have to cancel for any reason after you have sent in your money, we have a very liberal refund policy. The prices for Reunion 14 are the same as Reunion 13, a bargain in itself. And if you register before 1 February, 2003, you get a \$10 discount.

By the time you receive this issue of SabreJet Classics you should have time to take out the Flight Line Sales order form and purchase something you've always wanted for Christmas. I recently ordered more shirts and jackets. We have every shirt size available in red, white, or blue. Every size is available in blue jackets, with some sizes still available in red and white.

Every month I receive letters from the members saying how much they enjoy the SabreJet Classics magazine. Editor Larry Davis does an outstanding job of putting the magazine together three times a year. But it can only be as good as the stories he has available - your stories. Please take a little time, reflect back on how much you enjoyed flying the Sabre and associating with the guys that flew it with you. Write up a narrative, dig through your archives, and send some pictures to Larry to support the story.

Have a safe and Happy Holiday season and may

God Bless  
The United States of America!

Jerry R. Johnson  
President

## FOLDED WINGS

Duane E. "Bud" Biteman, September 23rd, 2002  
Walter W. Fellman, February 1999  
Leo E. Fournier, October 2002  
George R. Grosz, Jr., October 13th, 2002  
Martin C. "Joe" Johansen, October 19th, 2002  
James B. Rossi, November 4, 2002

### POLICY STATEMENT

The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association does not participate in any solicitation or endorsement not controlled by, or for the sole benefit of, the association. Readers are cautioned to be wary of any representation in conflict with this policy.

Hello again. Here it is, the long awaited All Air National Guard issue of *SabreJet Classics*. We certainly hope you enjoy the issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together. It was a long time coming mainly because we simply did not have enough stories and photos for a full issue.

And I know that of the hundreds of Guard pilots that are in our organization, there have to be many more stories and photos. Did anyone fly with the Colorado Guard "Minute Men" using Project GUNVAL F-86F-2s originally built with four 20mm cannons. Or how about more stories about activation and deployment to Europe and the Far East during various international incidents. Maybe some stories about the Guard gunnery meets.

We're always looking for stories about US pilots helping to train foreign nationals how to fly the Sabre, or stories about aircraft deliveries to other nations that bought the F-86 in one of its many flavors. We're never had anything on Sabres in Central and South America.

Reunions - if anyone is having a reunion that includes Sabre pilots of any era, we want to know about it. We will put a small informational ad in *SabreJet Classics* to inform our membership of your upcoming reunion. I often look through Air Force Magazine and other aviation-oriented journals and pick out reunions of interest to our members. But we have to have a six month leeway to be able to get your notice in *SabreJet Classics* before the actual reunion. I often get reunion notices a couple of weeks or months prior to a reunion, but midway between two issues of the magazine. Thus we cannot print it before the reunion takes place.

Our 14th Reunion is coming up FAST, very fast! Next April will be upon us before we know it. So make your reservations at the Monte Carlo and register for the convention before the holidays. Every F-86 Sabre Pilots Convention that I've been to has been better than the previous one. It's something you do not want to miss. Many of your buddies will be there and wanting to know where YOU are. So be there. I will - and will be looking forward to meeting with all of you guys.

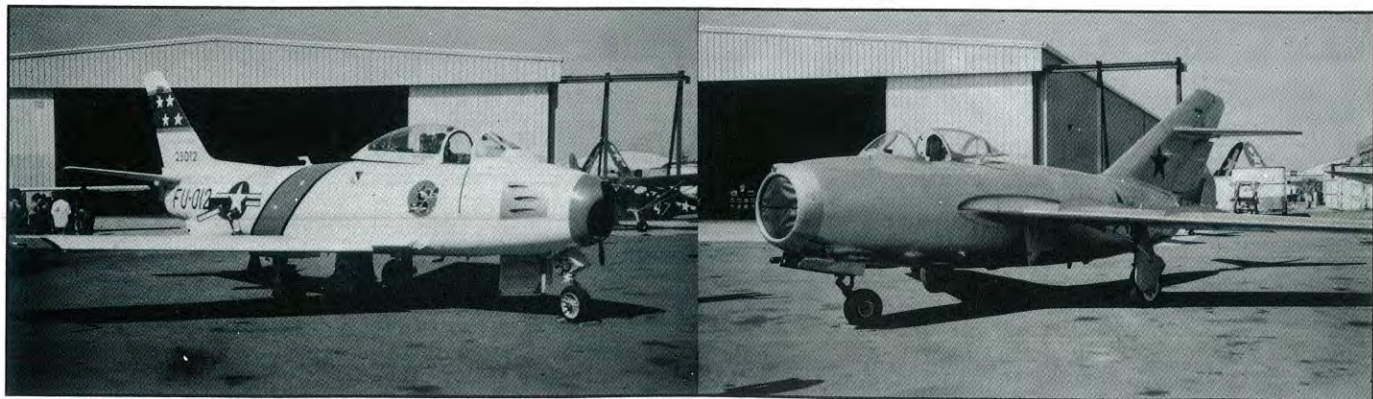
Lastly, we want to hear from you guys about articles or subjects you want to read about. We know that not everyone wants to read about Korea, but that's often the only stories we have available. If you ask about something, we'll make every effort to find out something about it and turn it into an article of interest to everyone.

And don't forget photos. We can use almost any kind of photo as long as it's F-86 oriented - aircraft, crews, places of interest, gunnery meets, test flights or modifications. One thing though, it is a rare photo indeed that comes across the internet that we can use. The problem is 'dot pattern'. A scanned photo over the net will print out with a dot pattern, which will show up on the printed pages of *SabreJet Classics*. If you have original photos, color slides, or negatives, we ask that you trust us with those valuable items so that we can have our lab professionally print them for use in the magazine. All photos, negs, and/or color slides will be returned to the donor as quickly as possible.

I will close for now. Thanks Guys!

Larry Davis  
Editor

President Jerry Johnson was one of several members to attend an air show at Planes of Fame Museum, Chino Airport, California, which featured an F-86 Sabre and a MiG-15 that made several flybys and a mock dogfight. Both aircraft were extremely impressive and put on a good show. (credit - Jerry Johnson)



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the latest poop

Associate Editor David Menard asked for information about an unknown squadron patch. He received the following info from Bill Along:

What a shock to open my new *SabreJet Classics* and see the emblem of my old unit on page 19. The unit was Detachment One, 86th FIW at Wheelus AB, Libya from August 1958 on. We provided air defense for the base when a void was created by the reassignment of the 431st FIS to Sidi Slimane.

The emblem depicts a Trojan/Spartan figure depicting our military, warrior spirit, with three lightning bolts showing our response capability as well as our bases of origin in Germany, France, and England. The inscription written in Arabic, translates to "Death Before Dishonor".

Some of the pilots who made up Det One in the 58-59 period include: Major Bob Weinard, CO; Captain Pete Frederick, Ops Officer; and Lts. Bill Along, Don Aunapu, Pete Branch, Dave Francis, Murray Glazier, Ed Nemer, Dale Wagoner, and Dick Waxman.

Hope this helps.



from Ron Millard

I enjoyed the article on "Saving The Sabre Pilots". Thought you might enjoy seeing the rescue 'craft' that pulled me out of the Korean Straits in March 1954.

I was ferrying an F-86 from Itazuki to Kimpo when I had to bail out. These guys picked me up about 15 miles off of K-10. There was a crash boat at K-10 but they'd turned "Dog Channel" off because there was too much chatter.

The picture was taken several weeks later when the Korean military gave the boat crew an award, plus a tank of fuel and supplies.

from Harold Chitwood

Concerning your photo on page 10 of the Summer issue of *SabreJet Classics*. I was flying Mac's (Capt. Joe McConnell) element the day he was shot down. By the way, he shot down the MiG that hit him. The MiG overshoot Mac and you didn't make that mistake with him.

The two wingmen and I escorted Mac out of North Korea to the Yellow Sea. Both wingmen were low on fuel and had to leave. They went to K-14 for fuel and both blew tires on landing. I vectored the chopper to Mac, and stayed until he was lifted out of the water.

There were no other aircraft at the site so this could not be a photo of Joe McConnell's rescue. I too had to land at K-14 for fuel. Mac almost beat me back to K-13 before the two wingmen and I returned.

(Note: The photo was captioned using 'official' information on the back written by DOD personnel. Capt. McConnell was rescued by a YH-19 assigned to the 581st Air Resupply Squadron, the only available aircraft in the area. The 581st was involved in missions that took them to many places not on the combat maps, i.e. CIA-type missions.)

from Bob Brackett

I enjoyed reading the story about the Yong Joo Jahae Orphanage (*SabreJet Classics* vol.10-2). I would like to add a little.

The war was about over. The chaplain, Father Dan, asked us if we'd help the orphanage get some clothing. Hank Buttlemann, John Winters, J.W. Hegler, Fred Mamerow, myself and others got our mothers and their friends to send us a bunch of clothes. We got Col. Hardee's jeep and went to the orphanage. This is where we also met "Little Takusan".

The story was that this young fellow had lost his entire family when their village was hit by napalm. The kid's face, arms and legs were all scarred, but he could still smile. In the picture, he wouldn't let go of the shirt we gave him. I wonder whatever happened to him. It's kids like him that remind us of how lucky we had it.





A trio of 182nd Squadron F-86Ls over Texas in 1959. The white areas on the fuselage are Day-Glo Red paint, applied to all aircraft as an air to air visibility aid. (credit - Larry Davis Collection)

## NO START!

by C.D. 'Tad' Foran

I'd been flying '86Ds in the 181st FIS, Texas ANG since about 1957. In 1960 I took a job in Terre Haute, Indiana and transferred to the Indiana Guard flying "Hogs", F-84Fs. I flew the 'Hog' for a couple of years, then returned to Dallas and rejoined the 181st, which was then flying F-86Ls.

I got recurrent in the '86 and decided to build up some flight time by going to Terre Haute with another guy, Jack Sallee, to get a spaghetti dinner. The Ops Officer at Terre Haute owned a great Italian restaurant and it seemed like a good excuse to get in a weekend hop.

Jack took the Lead and I got on his wing. We left Dallas in perfect VFR weather. I loosened up after we got to altitude and we were just kinda 'hanging out' without paying any attention to where we were at or going. After about 20 minutes, Jack broke in "I'm not sure where we are!" I looked around and it looked like either Arkansas, East Texas, or Southern Missouri to me. (Jack's compass had locked up and he hadn't noticed.)

I called up "Star Gazer" and a friendly voice answered - "What can I do for you?" Jack advised that he was a little uncertain of his position and would appreciate a fix. This was complied with in short order, and we decided to land at Blytheville, Arkansas, a SAC base, get some gas, then proceed to the spaghetti dinner.

Upon landing at Blytheville, we were greeted with the typical SAC comments - "What the hell are you raggedy-ass militia pukers doing on our field?" We advised that all we wanted was some fuel and we'd be gone as soon as they topped us off. (We never told them we were lost!)

Transient alert gassed us up and ready to go in record time. Jack and I jumped into the aircraft and started cranking them up. After a few minutes, Jack came on the radio and told me he couldn't get his started en-

gaged and that I would have to shut down and see what we could do next. After much cussin' and discussion, we decided we'd go over to the line shack and see what they could do. The starter and generator on an '86L were the same unit and there was none on the base as Blytheville was all B-52s.

After about an hour discussing alternatives, I mentioned that I'd heard some guys in the Korean War had started an F-84 by 'windmilling' the engine with another guys exhaust and using the air-start circuit. We mulled this over and took another look at the dismal Blytheville scene. What the hell, let's give it a go!

I taxied out in front of Jack's '86 and asked the transient alert guy to watch and see if I was burning the nose off Jack's airplane. I ran it up to 100% and waited for some good news. After awhile it became obvious that this wasn't going to work. About this time, four Marine A-4s showed up and were watching all this mickey mouse goings on and laughing like crazy. I shut it down as one of the Marines walked up and suggested

SCRAMBLE! A 181st Squadron pilot jumps up the ladder during a scramble from NAS Dallas in 1958. Texas Guard F-86D/L squadrons were assigned to Air Defense Command. (credit - Larry Davis Collection)



A 181st FIS F-86L on the ramp at NAS Dallas in 1963. The 181st Squadron converted from F-80Cs to F-86Ds in August 1957, then to F-86Ls in 1959. In 1964, the 181st Squadron began conversion to KC-97 tankers and a whole new mission. (credit - Robert Mikesh)

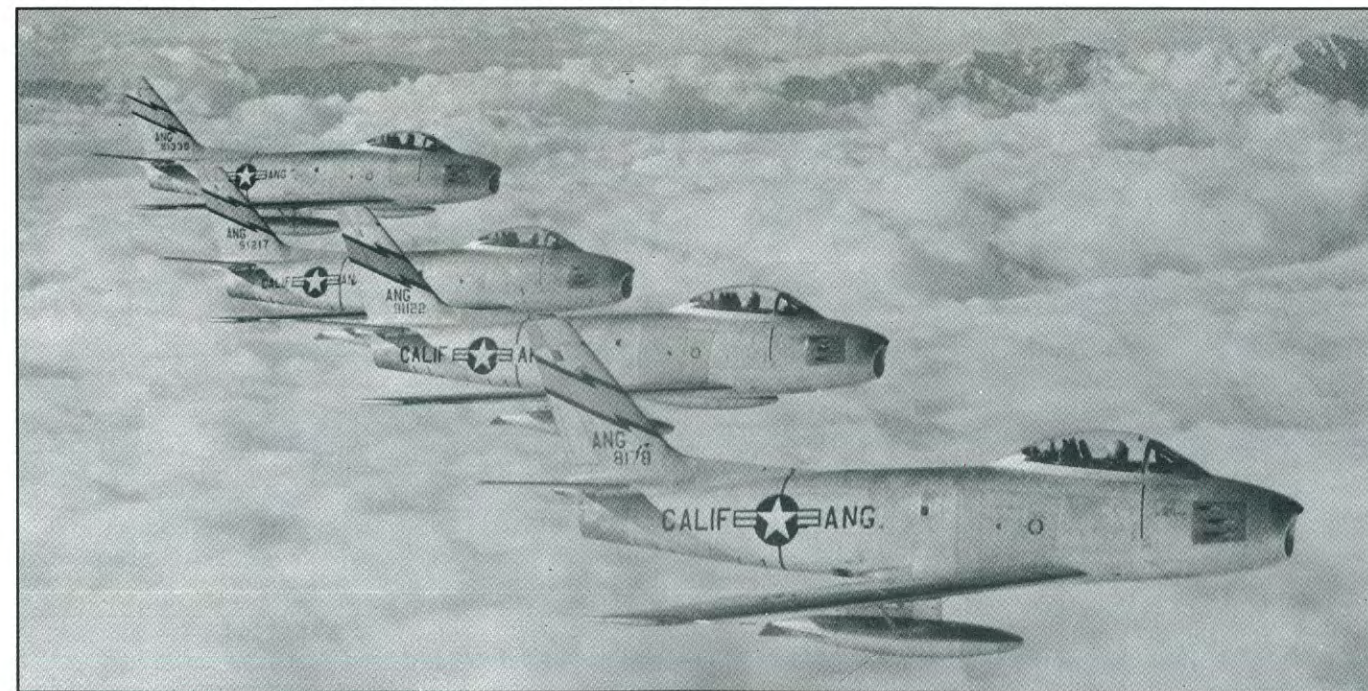
they push my airplane a little closer to Jack's. Seemed like a good idea to me so we proceeded.

About this time a little blue sedan drove up. It was the Aerodrome Officer who wanted to know "What the hell is going on?" I described the plan to him and he looked absolutely stunned. (Remember we're on a B-52 base!) He shouted, "I know there has to be some kind of regulation against this sort of thing!" I suggested he mind his own business and go down the ramp and count missiles on his B-52s or something. Looking at the situation, he decided this was a good idea and left.

I started up again and very shortly, all the troops started

waving and clapping. I craned my neck and looked around. Sure enough, there was heat coming out of Jack's tailpipe. Now I'm low on fuel again, so we got a quick center-point fueling on my airplane, and without further ado, activated a previously filed flight plan and hauled out of Blytheville. After we were airborne, we decided to hell with the spaghetti dinner and returned to Dallas and went to the club for a couple of beers. Obviously, we did NOT elaborate our problems and solutions in the '781', but just noted that the starter didn't work. Years later at the Rhein-Main "O" Club, we confessed our 'sins' to the wing maintenance officer. He just shook his head.

A flight of F-86As assigned to the 194th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Fresno, California in 1957. Many of the California Air Guard F-86As were Korea veterans with many combat mission. (credit - Larry Davis Collection)



# BERLIN CRISIS

by Pete Beeble

In the summer of 1961, the communist leaders of the Soviet Union began making noises about a separate peace between East Germany and the USSR. At the same time, they began building the infamous Berlin Wall between West Berlin and its communist neighbors in the east. Thoughts of the 1948 Berlin Blockade began to arise in Washington. President John Kennedy responded to the threat by strengthening the squadrons assigned to USAF and NATO.

This was done through mobilization of the Air National Guard units throughout the United States. A total of thirty-one Air National Guard squadrons were called to active duty in the Fall of 1961 - three were equipped with the F-100C Super Sabre, twelve with F-84F Thunderstreaks, four with RF-84F Thunderflash reconnaissance aircraft, six C-97A transport squadrons. Three more squadrons had F-104A interceptors, and three squadrons of F-86H Sabres. The F-86H units were the 101st and 131st TFS, Massachusetts ANG, and the 138th TFS, New York ANG.

On 30 October 1961 the tactical fighter squadrons were assembled at Loring AFB, ME to await the "Go!" signal for the Hi-Flight that would take them to various bases on the European continent for the next twelve months. I was a member of the 138th TFS, "The Boys from Syracuse". The operation was code-named STAIR STEP, and we departed Syracuse to join up with the other F-86H squadrons from Boston and Westfield, Massachusetts, at Loring.

The Hi-Flight took us over the route flown by many other Air Force crews that had deployed to Europe since World War Two - Newfoundland, Iceland, Greenland, Scotland, France. Our final destination was Phalsbourg AB, France,

A 131st Squadron, Massachusetts Air Guard F-86H on the ramp at Elemendorf AFB, Alaska in 1961. The green and white stripes on the rear fuselage and wingtips are special exercise bands applied for the Alaska deployment. The 131st Squadron flew F-86H-1s which had six .50 caliber machine gun armament. (credit - Dan Paluca)



An American M48 tank blocks the road at what became Checkpoint Charlie during the initial stages of the Berlin Crisis in October 1961. American and Soviet tanks faced each other at this point for the next 30 years. (credit - Kristina Davis)

where we were assigned to the 17th Air Force, USAF. Although our F-86Hs had a nuclear capability, the mission of the three F-86H squadrons would be strictly tactical fighter bomber. A number of our aircraft were on constant alert 24 hours a day. But other than building the Berlin Wall and generally making life miserable for a large number of German citizens in both West and East Germany, the threat posed by the Soviets seemed to be minimal.

With that in mind, the activated Guard units began doing what comes naturally, rat-racing in the skies over Europe when the weather permitted. But in spite of the typically bad European weather, we had a ball. Once on top of the overcast, everybody was fair game and there was a lot of 'bouncing' going on. The F-86H with its 8920# thrust engine (the J73), was more than able to hold its own against the British Hunters and German Canadair Sabre Mk. 6s.

There were many high spots during the STAIR STEP



Capt. Pete Beeble on the ladder of his 138th TFS F-86H-5 at Syracuse Airport prior to the deployment to Europe in October 1961. (credit - Pete Beeble)

deployment, including several gunnery deployments to Wheelus AB, Libya, and a NATO base exchange with a West German Sabre squadron based at Leck, Germany. Leck flew the Canadair Mk. 6 with the Rolls-Royce engine and it was a good match for the J73-powered F-86H. The Germans were great hosts, showing us the more *interesting sights* in Hamburg. In turn, they visited us at Phalsbourg and we took them to Paris.

In October 1962, the Guard was deactivated and returned to state control after a return Hi-Flight. The Air Force allowed any pilots who wanted to remain on active duty to do so. Those who didn't stay in, Hi-Flighted back to their Stateside home bases, taking our beloved F-86Hs with them.

Along with many others (And much to the chagrin of our families back in the States), I opted to resume my Air Force career..We stayed in Europe and helped organize the newly activated 366th TFW which was headquartered at Chaumont AB, France. Our aircraft were a bunch of well-worn ex-Guard F-84F Thunderstreaks that had been deployed under STAIR STEP against the Berlin Wall crisis the year before. Many of the Guard pilots who returned home found themselves in a newer and better aircraft than those left behind for us to meet the Soviet threat.

I'd previously flown the '84E and G 'plank-wing' Thunderjet, but the transition into the '84F after years of flying the F-86H was a frightening experience. Instead of leaping forward at brake release, the '84F just sat there for a few seconds before inching, and I mean inching down the runway. Now I knew why they called the Republic F-84 series "Hogs".

We were assigned targets in East Germany but many of us wondered how effective our iron bombs would be with all the SIOP going off around us. Fortunately, we never found out. The 366th Wing remained in France for another year before DeGaulle kicked us



F-86Hs from the 101st and 131st Squadrons, Massachusetts ANG, and the 138th TFS, New York ANG, line the ramp at Goose Bay, Labrador, during the deployment to Europe in October 1961. (credit - Pete Beeble)



(above)One of the stops during the deployment to Europe was Sondrestrom AB, Greenland, which was already snow-covered in October 1961. (credit - Pete Beeble) (lower) One of the better layovers was at Prestwick, Scotland, where they had the House of Seven Gables O-club. Next stop was Phalsbourg and a possible combat mission. (credit - Pete Beeble)





An F-86H-1 from the 131st TFS, Massachusetts ANG, the "Polish Guard" on a High Flight enroute to Phalsbourg during the Berlin deployment of October 1961. So rapid was the deployment order that some aircraft recently returned from IRAN, were flown sans unit markings. (credit - Dan Paluca)



Major Dan Paluca beside his F-86H-1 during the Alaskan exercises in March 1961. Major Paluca deployed to Phalsbourg AB, France, with the 131st TFS, Massachusetts ANG in October 1961. (credit - Dan Paluca)

out of the country. I went back to the States via another Hi-Flight on my way to Holloman AFB, NM.

After a few more years, I returned to my Republic roots and flew a tour in '105s out of Takhli. But for

"Cindee Lind 6th", on the ramp at Detroit in July 1955, was the personal F-86A of Major Dave McAllister when he commanded the 142nd FIS, Delaware ANG. The squadron was based at New Castle County Airport. The 142nd flew F-86As from March 1954 to late 1955 when they received their first F-86Es. In the Summer of 1958, the 104th converted to F-86H and a tactical mission. The large "A" was applied for the annual ANG gunnery meet, and indicated the squadron commander's aircraft. (credit - David Menard Collection)



me, the erection of the Berlin Wall was a godsend enabling me to complete a twenty-two year Air Force career. However, I am glad the thing was finally been knocked down.



F-86Ls of the 185th FIS, Oklahoma ANG, line the ramp at Oklahoma City Military Airport in 1959. The 185th FIS converted to F-86Ls in May 1958 with an Air Defense Command mission. In 1961, the squadron was transferred to MAC and converted to C-97s. (credit - Richard Lindsey)

## a D-Tale

by Jack 'Spider' Webb

I flew with the Oklahoma Guard unit at Tulsa in '58-'59. One summer we deployed to Gulfport, Mississippi, for summer camp and rocketry on the range over the Gulf of Mexico. We launched from Tulsa on a hot summer morning in flights of four for the 2+ hour flight to Gulfport. Our ops plan called for take-off "sans burner to save fuel as that was a very long leg for the F-86D." That was a questionable procedure in itself.

Being a 2nd Lt., I flew #4. As we approached the Gulfport area, Lead asked for a fuel check. The low man on fuel would assume the Lead so as not to have to jockey the throttle much in formation. #3 assumed the Lead and reported the field in sight and was told to report on initial about 5 miles out.

We lined up in echelon formation for a left break and Lead reported "On initial". The tower replied, "Not in sight. Continue." Over the end of the runway, Lead reported "In the break". Again, the Gulfport Tower said, "Not in sight! You are over Keesler AFB, which is 12 miles east of Gulfport!"

By that time all four aircraft had pitched out and had their gear down ready to land. Pull the gear and flaps back up. Lead proceeded with a missed approach and headed west to Gulfport. The rest of us followed like a flock of stray geese. When Lead finally saw the Gulfport airfield, he called the tower in a high pitched tenor voice and was cleared to land on runway 22, which had adequate length to land. But he lined up on runway 18 which was too short. The tower advised him of such and to look for 22. Cleared to land, his responses now became soprano in nature.

Meanwhile, the rest of us are milling around north of the airport and all of us are now in a world of hurt fuel-wise. Finally, Lead is on the ground and 2 and 3 followed. I was sucking fumes by then, finally touching down and starting to taxi off the runway. As I pushed the throttle forward to get on the taxiway, I felt no response from the engine. FLAMEOUT! I called the tower and requested a tug to pull me to the ramp. John Rudolf, our Ops Officer, came out with the tug and jumped up on the wing. "What's the matter Spider?" I stuttered "Flameout!" He reached into his flightsuit and brought out the most beautiful bottle of bourbon I'd ever seen. I took a big gulp. "Only the laundry man and I knew how scared I was."

A crew chief points to the squadron emblem that adorned the vertical tail of all 185th FIS F-86L aircraft. (credit - Richard Lindsey)



The Way It Was:

## Mighty Mouse, Dogs, and Delmars

By Ron Weinert

In the late 1950s, the 124th Fighter Group, 190th Fighter Interceptor Squadron ("First Class Or Not At All"), Idaho Air National Guard, based in Boise, Idaho, also known as FANGOs (Friggin' Air National Guard Officers), received F-86Ls. Checkouts were done in-house, and the unit was proclaimed combat-ready and assumed full-time air defense alert posture, with two aircraft ready to scramble 24 hours a day. Part and full time pilots who were able to devote time to the eight-hour shifts filled the alert commitment.

For those of you 'real' fighter pilots who never flew rocket-armed interceptors, here's a bit of 'Ground School' on airborne intercepts circa the 1960s. Rocket attacks were generally flown on a 90-degree "Lead Collision-Course" beam attack. The interceptor was positioned by GCI, and when the airborne radar gave him a contact, he would 'lock on'. The computer adjusted for speed and drift, and guided the aircraft on a collision course with the target MINUS the distance the rockets would travel. The pilot flew the airplane according to the computer directions displayed on his scope. There was a 'rate of overtake' circle showing the closure rate.

If the interceptor was ahead of the 90° beam, the closure rates increased and decreased as the fighter fell behind the 90° beam. Ideally, the fighter remained on the 90° beam, and the closure rates ran around 600 knots, with the 'target' at around 300 knots TAS and the 'attacker' somewhat faster. The 'miss distance', or the distance by which the fighter and target missed each other, was about 250 feet on a 90° beam with a 600-knot overtake speed.

The interceptor pilot 'shoved his head into the scope', and flew a computer generated steering dot, striving to keep it exactly in the center. The scope had artificial horizon bars, so the pilot could see his pitch and bank attitude and maintain control during the attack. At 20 seconds before "launch", the overtake circle 'snapped' to half size. The pilot then had a closer reference to 'bury the dot'. If all went well, the computer would insure that the interceptor was not going to hit the target but the rockets presumably would.

At 10 seconds, after getting the final OK from the target, the interceptor pilot squeezed the trigger. The computer computed the exact firing time, automatically extended the rocket tray, fired, and then retracted the tray. The pilot would observe the circle shrinking to a dot, whereupon a large 'X' showed in the scope, and, in an actual firing pass, would feel and hear the rockets launch. Most



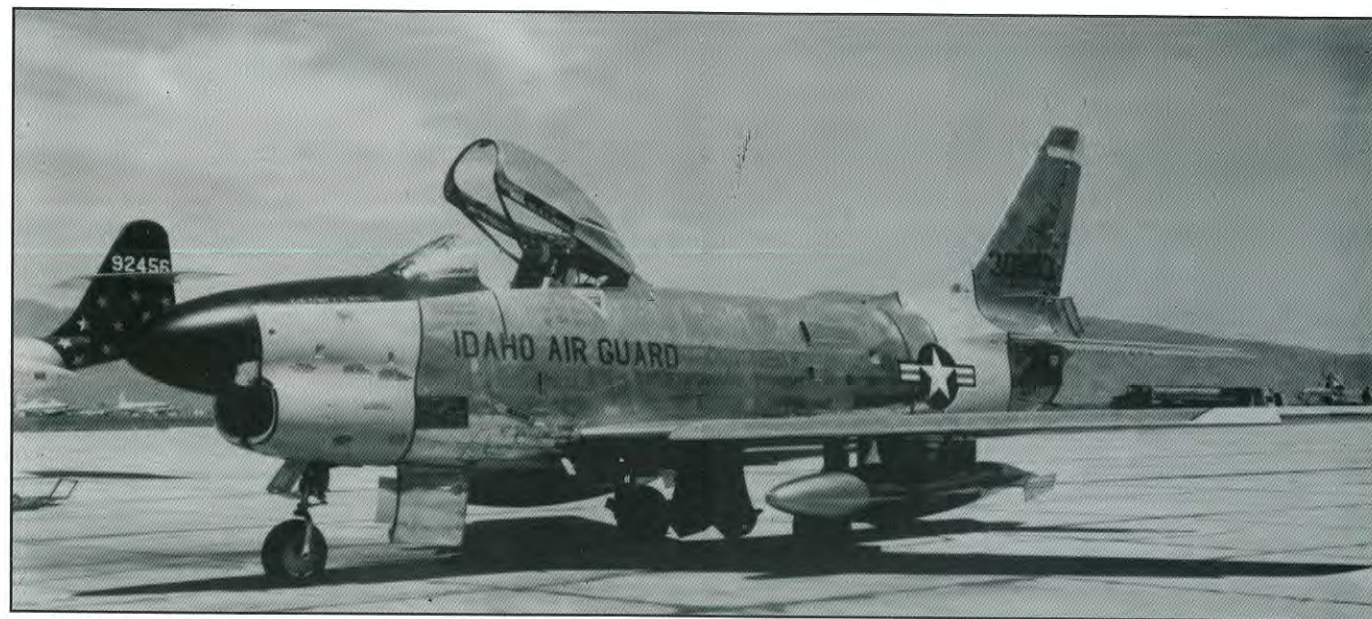
LT. Ed Lundgren (standing on right) with other 190th FIS pilots pose in front of a F-89B Scorpion. The 190th FIS converted from F-89s to F-86Ls in April 1959. (credit - Ron Weinert)

training runs were made against the target aircraft itself. On live firing runs the target was the tow device, usually a Delmar.

It could get pretty interesting, especially if the fighter got ahead of the 90° beam. This could happen due to poor positioning by GCI, if the jock over-steered the dot, or if the target turned into the attacker or decreased speed radically. Attacks from 100-110° were pretty safe. Above that, the 'miss distance' became marginal, since the projected rocket travel would be shorter as the attacker moved closer to a head-on position.

On dry runs, the key to safety was at "20 seconds". The target pilot looked for the fighter to start drifting. Up until that point, the attacker held a steady position. But at the "20 seconds" call, he'd better be moving back along the target's canopy or there was danger of collision. The target could let him continue, with a "Stand by" call, but if there was no movement at the "10 seconds" call, the target called for immediate break off of the attack. Perceiving movement, the target called "Clear", and the jock carried through the attack to (simulated) launch. If the jock didn't receive a verbal "Clear" at "10 seconds", he immediately broke off by turning sharply in the direction of the target, thereby increasing 'miss distance'.

It was demanding but safe, as long as procedures were followed; and as long as the fighter jock kept himself close to the beam. It could be pretty hairy at night, especially on those 110° attacks, what with the tricks lights can play.



An F-86L newly assigned to the 190th FIS, Idaho ANG, shares the ramp with a 190th FIS F-89B in April 1959. Based at Boise Airport, the 190th FIS converted from the '89B to the '86L that month. (credit - Ron Weinert)

The F-86D also had the capability to fire manually in salvos of 6, 12, or 24. Since there was no gun sight or other means of directing rocket travel (more strategic thinking by AF brass), this was merely for jettisoning rockets. I once tried to fire rockets at a ground target from an F-102 for an evaluation of Deuce capabilities for 'Nam, and, even though the target was a hangar door, I never got one within half a mile of the thing.

Manual was pretty simple: you selected how many you wanted to fire, selected Manual, and pulled the trigger. The pod dropped, the rockets launched, and the pod retracted - no sweat, no strain. It either worked or it didn't; USUALLY it was foolproof.

For live rocket qualification, the closest air to air rocket range was at Wendover, Utah. The "L" had limited range, and flying from Boise to Wendover and back left scant fuel for rocket passes. It was decided that the best course was to stage out of Wendover for rocket qualifications. The base was officially closed, but still suitable for operations, although fuel had to be trucked in from Hill. The tower was operational, and personnel from Hill could be TDY'd in for short stints. However, one summer Wendover couldn't be used, and the squadron used Hill.

On this occasion, there were 6-8 F-86s and a T-Bird tow ship on the pad out in the 'pea patch' at Hill. The maintenance and armorers had flown down in the C-54, and the pilots brought the aircraft down from Boise. The T-bird towed what we called the 'Delmar', a fiberglass bomb shaped device about 4 feet long, with radar reflectors inside for a good return. On station, the tow aircraft would reel the Delmar out at least 1000 feet. After the mission, if it hadn't been shot off by one of the rockets, they could reel it back in.

So, there we were, at Hill AFB, ready for a live firing session. To improve the illusion of reality, we would do the exercise from 'alert' posture, and scramble the first flight of two, with the remaining flights in a 'cockpit alert'. Once the airborne flight was off the target, the remaining three flights were scrambled.

The first flight was Majors Ed Lundgren and Jim Frazier. They were scrambled from their lounge chairs alongside the flight line, and were airborne in less than seven minutes. I was in the second flight, and mounted up leisurely, strapped in, and had the APU plugged in, ready for the 'scramble'. I turned on the UHF, and switched over to tactical frequency. The Wendover Range was under 100 miles from Hill, and we could occasionally pick up the R/T traffic while they were still on the range.

After several minutes of sporadic transmissions, I heard something about "bailout". Then a staff car came screaming down the flight line, with the Group CO, Col. Ken Nordling, announcing that the mission had been scrubbed, and to proceed to the debriefing area.

This is what happened. On the first pass, either Ed or Jim had managed to hit the Delmar. The mission was over since that was the only T-Bird we had rigged for Delmar deployment. The pre-briefing was to jettison any rockets not fired rather than bring them back.

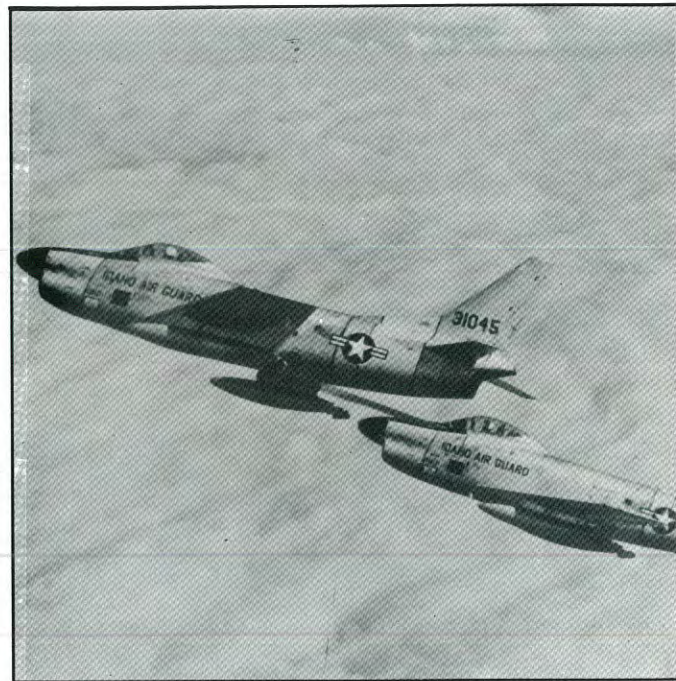
Ed and Jim broke off and headed to the designated jettison area, dropping down to around 5000 AGL to pickle off their remaining rockets. Ed selected Manual, SIX, and squeezed the trigger. Everything worked fine except that some of the rockets 'launched' while the tray was still retracted, advancing several inches into the forward electronics bay.

The Master Caution Panel lit up like Las Vegas, the stick froze, and Ed noted that his Sabre was on a direct collision course with Earth. He did what every brave and fearless fighter jock would have done in the same situation - he punched out!

But, there's more: When the chute opened, the chest strap and buckle came up very smartly rapping him under the chin, and he found himself hanging from the chute, held in only by his crossed arms over the chest strap. His fanny was out of the sling, and he swayed gently with the oscillations of the chute. It seems in the simu-



The 190th FIS, Idaho ANG, pose at Boise in 1959 following the conversion to F-86L. In July 1960, the 190th FIS was assigned to Air Defense Command, remaining with ADC through the 1960s until assigned to TAC and equipped with RF-4C Phantoms. (credit - Ron Weinert)



A pair of 190th FIS F-86Ls during an intercept 'mission' in 1959. The 190th FIS flew F-86L Sabres until April 1964 when they converted to the supersonic F-102A Delta Dagger. (credit - Ron Weinert)

lated scramble, he leaped into the cockpit and hooked up every strap except the leg straps. He'd been a paratrooper and smoke jumper and that probably saved him, as he instinctively went into a jumper's "pike" with his arms crossed over his chest. Otherwise, the 'chute opening shock would have shot him out of the harness like an arrow from William Tell's bow.

His only injuries were a pretty badly wrenched shoulder, and some sore ribs, mostly from the ribbing he took for shooting himself down - "Four more, and you'll be an ace". Ed later flew the F-102 with the Idaho Guard,

"Clarysse", an F-86D, assigned to the 199th FIS, Hawaii ANG, on the ramp at Hickam AFB in 1959, was flown by the squadron commander, Lt. Col. Ashford. The Hawaii ANG received its first F-86D/Ls aboard USS Windham Bay in February 1958, flying the Sabre until 1961 when the 199th converted to Convair F-102A Delta Daggers. The highly polished surfaces are indicative of a commanders aircraft. (credit - Hawaii ANG)



and continued his airline career, retiring from Northwest Airlines in the 1990s, then a DC-10 simulator and line check pilot with Federal Express. He now works as a FedEx consultant, and lives in Collierville, Tennessee.

The Dog Sabre (and the 'L') wasn't really a fighter, but it got a lot of us into the Sabre Society, and I do appreciate that. Other than that, about all I can say about flying interceptors was that we got to say "Judy" a lot, which is what the Spitfire guys said during the Battle of Britain. That's about as close as we got.



October 1964 - the 107th FIS "Red Devils". Major Bob McMath (kneeling 2nd from left) was the commander of the 107th FIS. LT. Dean Juhlin is standing in the dark flight suit. (credit - Bob McMath)

## MICHIGAN GUARD PILOT

by Dean Juhlin

There were two squadrons in the Michigan Air National Guard, both based at Detroit-Wayne Major Airport, the 107th and 171st Fighter Interceptor Squadrons. The only other aircraft operating at Detroit-Wayne were transports, airliners, and general aviation small planes. One of the transport types was ZANTOP, and a few of our guys had regular jobs flying C-54s, with them or should I say DC-4s.

The 107th Squadron can be traced all the way back to World War One when it maintained the aircraft of the AEF in France. In May 1926, the 107th Observation Squadron was activated at Rouge Park Airfield in Detroit. During World War Two, the 107th was assigned to the 67th Observation Group in 9th AF, flying Spitfires and F-6 Mustangs. The 107th was extended federal recognition in September 1946, initially flying Douglas A-26 Invaders, then Republic F-84B Thunderjets.

The 171st Squadron can be traced back to the 374th Fighter Squadron, 361st Fighter Group flying P-47s and P-51s in the 8th AF. The 171st was granted federal recognition in April 1948, initially flying F-51s before also converting to F-84Bs in 1950. Both the 107th and 171st were activated on 1 February 1951 and deployed to Luke AFB, Arizona, as part of the 127th Pilot Training Group.

Several of us had flown the F-86A and E at Selfridge, and some had the 100 mission requirement in Korea. We departed for Korea when the 107th and 171st were activated and sent to Luke. In Korea, I was successful twice, getting a MiG on 20 January and 5 March 1952 while flying with the 16th Squadron. We were based at Selfridge AFB, near Detroit from September 1950 until July 1951, after which we departed for Korea. Both squadrons were released

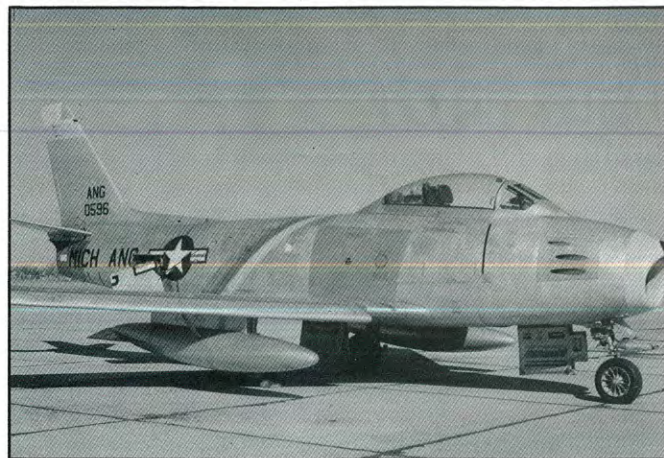
Lt. Dean Juhlin at Selfridge AFB, Michigan, in 1951. (credit - Dean Juhlin)



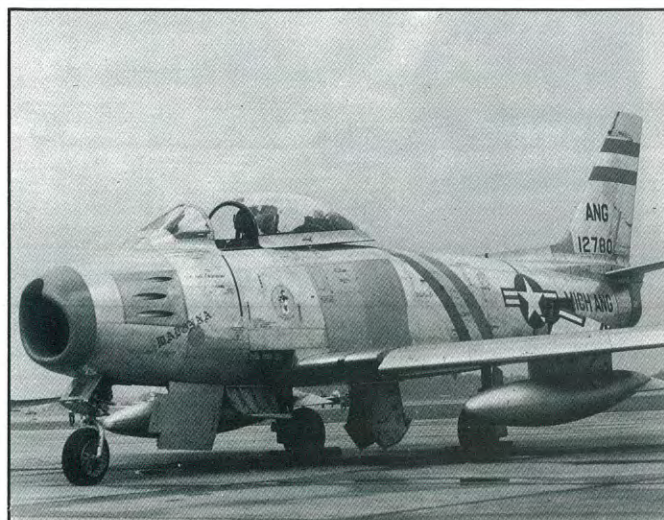




(upper) "Michigan Resources Rocket" was the F-86E-6 assigned to the commander of the 127th Fighter Wing, Michigan ANG, based at Detroit-Wayne Major Airport. (lower) This is "official business". Captain Les Erickson was the race winner and was kissed by actress Anita Ekberg in 1955. And they say "War is Hell!" (credits - Wm. J. Balogh, Jr.)



(upper) An early F-86E-1 assigned to the 171st FIS, Michigan ANG. The Michigan ANG began conversion from F-51H Mustangs to F-86E Sabres in November 1953. (credit - Selfridge ANG Base Museum) (lower) "Madonna", an F-86E-10 assigned to the 107th FIS, Michigan ANG based at Detroit-Wayne. The 107th FIS had an air defense mission flying F-86Es from March 1954 until April 1955, when the unit converted to F-89C Scorpions. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh, Jr.)



F-86E-6 Sabres of the 171st FIS on the ramp at Detroit-Wayne in 1955. Many of the aircraft assigned to the Michigan Guard squadrons were Canadair F-86E-6s that were bought by the US Air Force to augment depleted Sabre inventories in Korea. (credit - Selfridge ANG Base Museum)

Wm. J. Balogh, Jr., was a photographer that covered the men and aircraft of the Michigan ANG. Bill Balogh is seen with movie actress Anne Francis at the Armed Forces Day Air Show in 1954. (credit Dean Juhlin)

from active duty on 31 October 1952 and returned to state control.

Initially flying F-51H Mustangs, the two squadrons began receiving F-86E Sabres beginning in November 1953. Many of these Sabres were not the garden variety F-86Es. They included a large number of the Canadair-built F-86E-6s that had served in Korea with the 4th and 51st Fighter Wings. The two squadrons flew the F-86E until June 1955 at which time they converted to Northrop F-89C Scorpions.

When the squadrons began receiving the F-86E, I was immediately cast in the role of Instructor Pilot. (I had a full tour in the E model Sabre with the 16th Squadron.) Both squadrons were assigned to Air Defense Command, and were placed on a Ready Alert status. Many times we were scrambled to identify an aircraft penetrating the Air Defense Identification Zone of our assigned area, mainly

The 120th FIS, Colorado ANG, had an aerobatic team between 1953 and 1958 called "Minute Men". Initially flying F-51Ds, then F-80Cs, the "Minute Men" received four very strange F-86Fs from the boneyard in 1958. These F models had only four gun ports. They were originally assigned as part of Project GUNVAL during the Korea War. They were armed with four 20mm T-160 (M39) cannons in place of the standard .50 caliber armament. The "Minute Men" flew the F-86F-2s until the 120th FIS converted to F-86Ls in 1960. (credit - Pete Garremone)



from Canada obviously. Most of the time it was an off-course civilian airliner, even a flock of geese. But we also were sent to identify UFO's, i.e. anything that was picked up on the Early Warning Radar net.

While in the Air Guard, we participated in summer camps at Alpena, Michigan. As you can see by the accompanying photos, gunnery training was a lot of fun. With no commercial jets to clog up the upper stratosphere, there wasn't anything to interfere with some good old fashioned rat-racing above 15,000 feet. We also participated in many Armed Forces Day, Armistice Day (now known as Veterans Day), and Freedom Festival parades, making transonic passes in diamond formation over the parade route in Detroit. I left the squadron in October 1955 to pursue other interests.

## TROPHY RACE

by Bob Railey

Back in the '50s, the Air Guard conducted an annual air race from point to point with the winner being the one with the shortest elapsed time. Initially, the race was flown with all the aircraft types in the Guard, from F-80s to F-86s - with a handicap computed for those types that needed it. After all, a Sabre was much faster than any of the other types. Later they selected one airplane type, the F-86 Sabre.

I participated in the race in 1956 in an F-86E, flying from Hamilton AFB, Calif. to New Orleans International Airport. I was Commander of the 121st FIS, D.C. Air Guard at the time. There really weren't any rules or restrictions for the race. Each pilot could plan his own refueling stops, and the maintenance people could "soup up" the airplane any way they saw fit. I solicited the advice of the best maintenance man I knew - Warrant Officer Leo Cleary. Leo selected the airplane with the hottest engine and proceeded to add 'mice' (small metal plates) inside the tailpipe to increase exhaust gas temperature, thus increasing thrust.

By 1956, I'd been flying the '86 for three years and was fairly well versed on the climb and cruise performance by race day. I elected to depart Hamilton with a stop at Kirtland where I'd drop the wing tanks; proceed to Ft. Worth for fuel, then on to New Orleans.

At Hamilton, we were all towed out to the runway for the start. All were supposed to have identical ballast and whatever configuration the pilot selected. I was no. 2 in the lineup, with Maj. Dave McCallister from the Delaware squadron as no. 1. Dave had a turtle soup business in civilian life and used turtle soup as ballast!!! in his six ammo cans. Prior to our departure, I saw Dave passing out samples of the soup to visitors and realized that each

A lineup of 121st FIS, DC ANG, F-86As on the ramp at Andrews AFB in 1954. The 121st Squadron converted from F-51Hs (in background) to F-86As in March 1954. (Bob Railey)



Autographed photo of Senator Barry Goldwater in the cockpit of Captain Bob Railey's DC ANG F-86H. (credit - Bob Railey)

'sample' was reducing the weight of his airplane! Not being one to be taken advantage of, I advised him to collect all his 'samples' and return them to the ammo cans. The judges agreed wholeheartedly.

Dave took off first and ten minutes later I blasted off into the blue. I made a fast climb to 42,000' and headed for Albuquerque. I bent the throttle past the firewall and the EGT (Exhaust Gas Temp) was indicating about 702° - 12° above maximum. About 100 miles from my first



In late 1955, the 121st Squadron began conversion to F-86Es. But not your garden variety 'E. These were 'E-15s with 6-3 hard wings and wing fences. Colorful markings were yellow with black trim and white stars. (credit - Peter Bowers)

stop, I let down at full throttle, crossed over Kirtland at 300', at over 600 knots heading southeast. I figured I'd kill off my airspeed with a high G pull up and a left turn heading west for landing. However, when I pulled up and turned, I blacked out from the high Gs and held the stick back until I thought I was in position for base leg and gear down. When I released the back pressure and could see the airspeed indicator, I was still doing over 250 knots. I threw the gear lever down to help slow up, hoping the gear doors stayed on.

I landed to the west where two fuel trucks waited for me with enough room for me to make a 180° turn, and pull between the two tankers. Two mattresses were on the ground for me to drop my external tanks on. I took off to the east and headed for Carswell. Total time on the ground was two minutes and forty-five seconds!

All was going well at altitude with the throttle still bent when, over Reese AFB, TX, I heard a loud thud and a very high pitched whine, followed by some severe vibrations.

A pair of 121st TFS, DC ANG F-86Hs on the parking ramp at Andrews AFB in 1959. The 121st Squadron exchanged their 'E model Sabres for F-86Hs in late 1957, then converted to F-100Cs in mid-1960. (credit - Bob Railey)



(L-R) Capt. Frank Mattingley, Capt. Bob Railey, Senator Barry Goldwater, and Major Pancho Pasqualicchio at Andrews AFB in the late 1950s. (credit - Bob Railey)

I knew some of the buckets had departed the engine and throttled back to make an emergency landing at Reese. The airplane was vibrating so badly that the radios didn't work. My race was over even though I knew I was in the lead.

After landing, I coasted off the runway and shut down, waiting for someone to come out and pick me up. After no one came, I turned the radio back on and called the tower. They were unaware that on this bright Sunday afternoon, an airplane had even landed on their runway! A short time later the fire trucks and Duty Officer came out and took me to Base Ops.

I didn't want to miss the post-race party so I called Lt. Wayne Icenhower at Kirtland to come to Reese in his trusty T-33 and pick me up. When he arrived, I had a flight plan already made out. We gassed up, took off and headed for New Orleans. Lt. Larry Horton met me with a change of clothes and we got to the hotel just as the party started. We lost but the partying went on well into the night.

## National Guard Sabre Photos



A Maryland Guard pilot shows "Hands Clear!" as the armorers remove safety pins from the underwing ordnance. Along with other tactical aircraft, Maryland Guard F-86Hs were camouflaged in the 'Lizard Scheme' in the late 1960s. (credit - SabreJet Classics)

FA thick layer of foam covers a Maryland Guard F-86H as firefighters at Glenn L. Martin Airport near Baltimore, check for hot spots. The F-86H was assigned to the 104th TFS. The aircraft had an engine fire which resulted in the aft fuselage separating from the front. The 104th Squadron was one of the final units to fly the F-86 as they retired the last aircraft in August 1970. (credit - SabreJet Classics)



(upper) Capt. Bill Marriott and LT. Les Wellman, Maryland ANG, check the charts before a flight from Travis Field, near Savannah, Georgia, in 1956. The 104th FIS was equipped with F-86E Sabres from June 1956 to December 1957, when the unit converted to F-86Hs. (credit - Les Wellman) (lower) Rare photo of a 197th FIS, Arizona ANG, F-86L during an air show at Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix in 1959. Most historians think that the Arizona ANG flew only F-86A Sabres. The aircraft has the distinctive Copperhead snake painted on the fuselage. The 197th flew the 'L' from June 1958 to July 1960. (credit - Larry Davis Collection)



book review

## MiG Alley

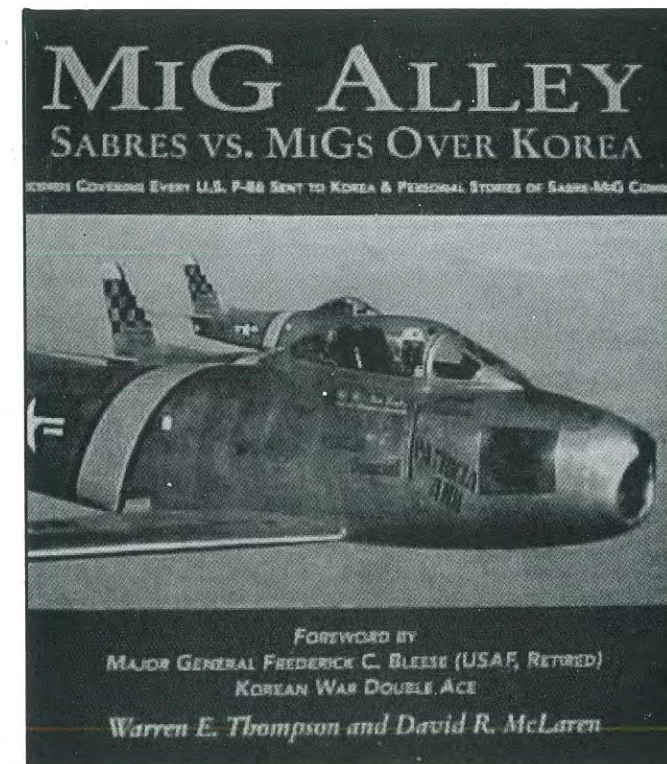
Sabres vs MiGs Over Korea  
by Warren Thompson & David McLaren

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With all the excellent books published in recent years about the F-86 and the Korean air war, one might wonder if everything has already been told. Larry Davis (*MiG Alley*, *Walk-Around F-86 Sabre*, *Fourth Fighter Wing In Korea*), and Robert F. Dorr (*F-86 Sabre - History of the Sabre and FJ Fury*), and in collaboration with Warren Thompson - *The Korean Air War* have done marvelous work documenting the history of the F-86 and the men that flew it. Now Warren Thompson has teamed with David McLaren to add another superb account of air to air combat in Korea.

The authors have assembled many of the same cast of characters for their account of the air war as did the other authors. After all, there are only so many pilots who were there and are still here to tell about it. But somehow, they've come up with many stories not before told in print, as well as photos not widely seen previously. All in all, the stories flow smoothly and chronologically, following a candid appraisal of both the MiG and F-86 in the Foreword by Major General Frederick C. "Boots" Blesse, a double ace.

Readers will perhaps find special interest in a colorful and detailed account of Project GUNVAL - a Top Secret (at the time) program to put 20mm firepower in the F-86. John Henderson, a retired North American Tech Rep, researched and wrote this chapter, which is extremely well done. Mr. Henderson may be the greatest living technical authority on the F-86, and he was intimately involved in GUNVAL.



Four remarkable appendices list: (1) Every Sabre (by tail number) that flew in Korea and what eventually happened to them; (2) Tail number of every Sabre lost, with the pilot's name and cause; (3) Every 'confirmed' victory by an F-86 in Korea, with date, pilot, and other data; and (4) A list of all F-86 aces, the date they made ace, and their final score.

For those who were there and their progeny, as well as for other students of military history, this book must be a part of your library. Aside from the interesting stories and beautiful collection of photos, the appendices alone make Thompson-McLaren's *MiG Alley* worth a trip to your favorite bookstore - before they're gone.

Review by Lon Walter

### Sabre Reunions

14th F-86 Sabre Plots Reunion  
13-16 April 2003  
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68th Fighter Squadron  
April 24-26, 2003 in Branson, MO.  
Contact W. Hearon, 7548 University Dr,  
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e-mail wvhaze@bellsouth.net

Korean War Cottonpickers  
If you served in the 8th or 15th Recon Sq during the Korean War, you're invited to join a Wednesday chat between 8-9pm Central Time. Keep up to date on your fellow squadron mates.  
Contact L/C John Duquette at;  
wrangler01@prodigy.net

510th Fighter Squadron  
30 March- 3 April 2003  
at Langley AFB & Williamsburg, VA  
Contacts - Hal Bingaman (541-482-0928)  
or Jim Colegrove (805-937-8456)



An envelope sent to SabreJet Classics by Harry Gordon, a pilot in the 51st Wing at Suwon. Anyone knowing the entire story of the "Sabre Jet Air Mail", please contact the editor. Note that the Post Office jacked up the price of the letter a whole penny even though it was from a combat unit. Things haven't changed a whole lot. (credit - Harry Gordon)



The pilot of this Sabre Dog assigned to the 2nd Fighter Squadron was a real "Dog". We'd love to hear the story regarding this photo. Please contact the editor if you know anything at all about this photo. (credit - Larry Davis Collection)



Mike Jungers sent us this photo awhile back. It shows actor Kirk Douglas and an unidentified actress standing next to Lt. Col. Leroy Gover's F-86A Sabre "Ace In The Hole", possibly at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. Major Don Streich is in the cockpit. Does anyone know who the others are in the photo? Please contact the editor. (credit - Mrs. Rose Marie Streich)

**WANTED** - Capt. Thomas M. Collie  
 Capt. Collie's son would like to hear from anyone that flew with his dad at Nellis in 1954-55. Contact Deane Collie-Bear at CollieDeane@aol.com

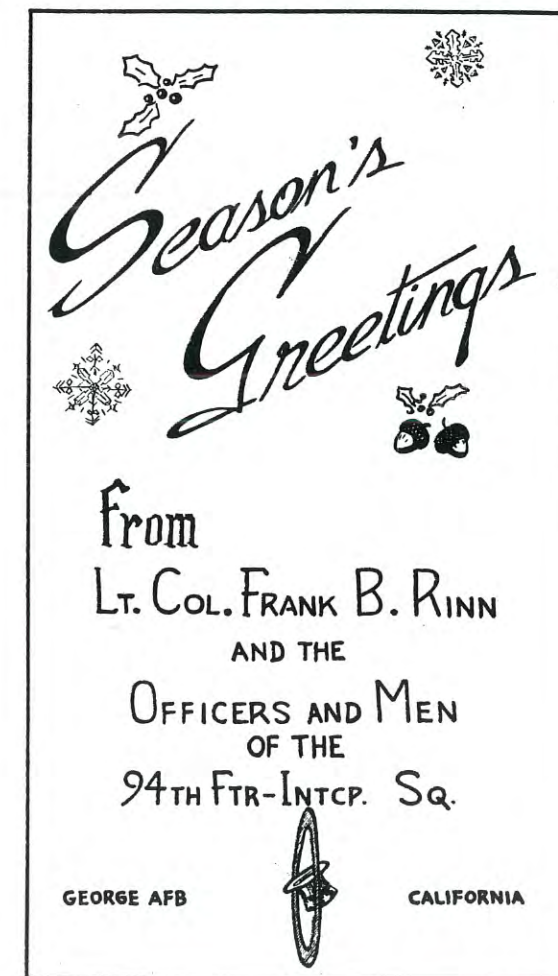
**J47 Engines**  
 I have 36 GE J47-17/17B engines available. All are in brand new condition, with maintenance records, overhaul and inspection sheets. All are convertible to -23/-25. Contact J.A. Parjus, ph: 305-439-2378 or 305-444-4329; e-mail japarjus@bellsouth.net

**Lt.Col. Vermont 'Gary' Garrison**  
 Wanted - information, stories, anecdotes and photos of LtCol Garrison's life, Eagle Squadron, 4th FG WW2, Korea, between wars, Vietnam. For a story about his life. Contact: Larry Davis, Editor, SabreJet Classics, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709, ph: (330)493-4122, e-mail <sabreclsx@aol.com>

**F-100 Photos**  
 Larry Davis needs photos of the next generation Sabre, the F-100 Super Sabre. Any members having photos, especially those that flew the 'Hun' in Vietnam, please contact Larry Davis, Editor, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709, ph. 330-493-4122, or e-mail sabreclsx@aol.com

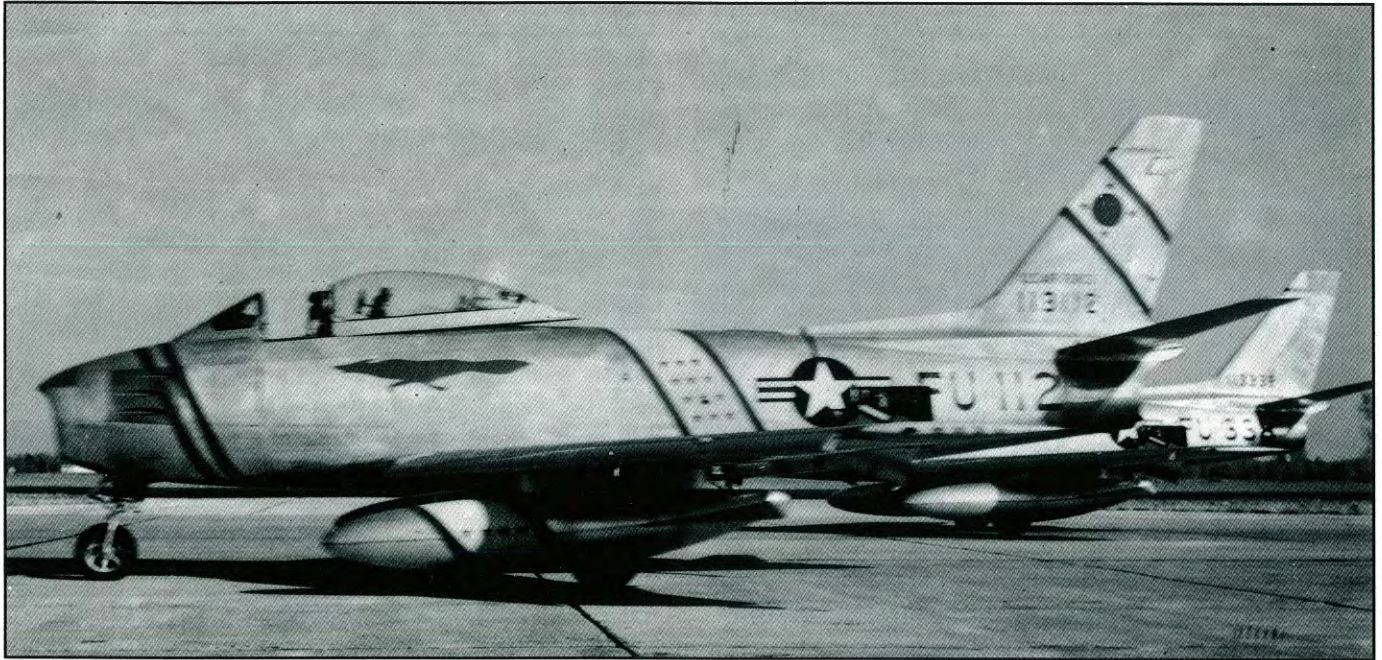
**1/Lt Bradley Irish**  
 Wanted - Information regarding the MiG kill that 1/Lt Bradley Irish, 334th FIS, 4th FIG, scored on 21 October 1951. An effort is being made to record this victory in the "official credits list". Anyone knowing anything should contact Pat Halloran, 3791 Blue Merion Ct, Colorado Springs, CO 80906 Ph. (719)576-6077 e-mail - Pat HABA@aol.com

**Patches Wanted**  
 or color xerox of any patches used by F-86 Sabre squadrons or flights, especially 'special patches' such as 335th FIS "Mach Riders", recon units, air demonstration teams, etc. For use in SabreJet Classics magazine. Contact: Larry Davis, Editor, SabreJet Classics, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709, e-mail <sabreclsx@aol.com>



# MERRY CHRISTMAS

from your  
 F-86 Sabre Pilots Association  
 &  
 the gang at  
 SabreJet Classics



*Who Is It?* A gentleman sent me this photograph many years ago. It is one I've never been able to identify as to unit, place or time. All I know for sure is that it is an F-86E-15, #51-13112, one of a batch of early F-86Fs that were delivered with the J47-GE-13 instead of the J47-GE-27 engine called for in the F-86F specs, then redesignated as "F-86E-15". Many also had the '6-3 hard wing' with fences installed and most were delivered to Air National Guard squadrons. Anyone with knowledge of this aircraft and unit is asked to contact the editor, Larry Davis, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709. (credit - Bob Esposito)

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