

Sabre Jet Classics



Volume 17, Number 3

Fall 2009



*Inside: The H, Facts & Fiction,
Sabres After Combat, Bruce Hinton,
More!*

A publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

SabreJet Classics

volume 17, number 3
Fall 2009

Contents

- 3.....President's Notebook
 Folded Wings
- 4.....from the editor
 list of e-mail addresses
- 5.....to the editor
- 6.....Folded Wings,
 Bruce Hinton
- 8.....The F-86H,Fact & Fiction
 by Larry Davis
- 14Sabres In Their
 After-Action Years
 by JR Alley
- 19.....Mike Collins - Sabre Pilot
- 20.....This 'N That
- 22.....Sabre Reunion
- 23.....Merry Christmas
back cover.....What Is It?

(front cover) Four F-86H-10s from the 83rd FDG based at Seymour Johnson AFB, NC in 1956. The 83rd FDG turned over their aircraft and the base to the returning 4th FIW, who promptly transitioned into the F-100. (credit - Hess Bomberger)

SabreJet Classics is published by the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423. The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association is a non-profit, veterans organization, with membership limited to individual pilots who have flown the F-86 Sabre aircraft. The goals of the association is "to perpetuate the history of the F-86 Sabre, the units to which it belonged, and the men that flew the Sabre," and to perpetuate an accurate, patriotic portrayal of our national, military, and Air Force history and heritage. If you are not a member, but meet the membership qualifications, you are invited to join. Application forms are available on our web site, or from our Las Vegas address. Dues for one year are \$25, three years \$50, and a life membership is \$200, \$100 for those over 75 years of age. *SabreJet Classics* is published solely for the private use of association members. No portion of *SabreJet Classics* may be used or reprinted without permission from the President of the association, and Editor of the magazine. Since this is an all volunteer, non-profit organization, there will be no monetary reimbursement for submitted materials. *SabreJet Classics* is published three times a year. Extra copies of the current issue can be ordered at \$3.00/copy, providing copies are still in stock. A subscription to *SabreJet Classics* is available for non-members of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association at a rate of \$25/year. Back issues are available to members and non-members, providing they're available, at a rate of \$5/issue, which includes mailing and handling. All payments should be made payable to "F-86 Sabre Pilots Association" in care of the Las Vegas address.

SabreJet Classics

Published by
The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

Board of Directors
Pat Hughes, Chairman
Glenn Carus
Sam Hollenbeck
Pat Hughes
Bob Matasick
Alonzo Walter

Association Officers
J. R. Alley, President
Jerry Johnson, Vice President
John Martin, Treasurer
Bill Weiger, Web Master
Polly Winesett, Director,
Computer Services

Editor
Larry Davis

Associate Editors
Alonzo J Walter, USAF Ret.
John Henderson, NAA Ret.
David W. Menard, USAF Ret.

Questions and/or comments regarding SabreJet Classics articles should be sent to: Larry Davis, Editor, SabreJet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr. NE, Canton, OH 44721, (330)-493-4122, e-mail/sabreclsx@aol.com

Questions and/or comments regarding the F-86 Pilots Assn. its members. memberships. or other Association business should be directed to JR Alley - President, F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn., 3737 N. Campbell Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89129, (702)363-9880, or email alleyoop3@cox.net

the president's notebook

With the passing of Bruce Hinton this past June, we have lost another great leader of the Air Force and our Association. I did not have the pleasure of meeting and knowing Bruce, but I know I would have felt the same about him as all those who did know and work with him. He will be missed.

I take my hat off to Larry Davis for producing another outstanding issue of SabreJet Classics (17-2) There's always that feeling of excitement when the mail arrives and the Classics is there. it takes top priority over the rest of the mail to see what Larry has published for us. He never lets us down.

I've been browsing over many of the past issues of the Classics and I couldn't help but notice that all the previous presidents have expressed their concerns about the basic issues of memberships, dues, updating personal data, and writing Sabre stories. Other than reunions, these are the heart of the things that keep the organization alive and well. I will be stressing the same issues.

As for membership, we signed up only 26 new members this past year, while losing nearly 100. So our membership is shrinking. Your help is essential in seeking out former members who might be persuaded to rejoin "The Gaggle" as Glen Nordin used to say, and keep a good search scan for new members.

When it comes to dues, don't forget the address label on the Classics has your expiration date printed on the top line. We're getting many \$25 one year renewals. Why not take advantage of the \$50 for 3 years membership since you get one year free? You don't have to worry about sending the \$25 check each year. Of course, the \$100 Life Membership can't be beat for those of you who are 75 years of age or older.

We're getting more and more returned SabreJet Classics for lack of a forwarding address. If you move, be sure to put us on your new address list so you won't miss a single issue. Also, send me a note if you have any other changes such as telephone numbers, even area code changes, and/or email addresses.

As for the stories for the Classics, I urge you to put pen to paper and let us all read your favorite Sabre tale. Larry has done a tremendous job in writing articles about the Sabre. But his well could be getting low.

I have a small change that appears in this issue. On the inside cover, there's an information block labeled "Questions and/or comments regarding SabreJet Classics articles should be sent to: Larry Davis, editor." That is valid and greatly appreciated.

However, you will notice my name, address, telephone number, and email address also listed for questions regarding the Association and not the magazine.

Larry has been fielding many questions about the Flight Line Sales Store, notifications of those who have 'flown west', and more. While Larry willingly fields those questions, they should come to me in order to take the load off Larry. By the way, for those still unaware, the Flight Line Sales Store was closed as of the end of the reunion last April.

For those who enjoy air shows, and who doesn't, McChord AFB will be hosting its AirExpo/Open House 2010 next 16-18 June 2010. There will be at least three Sabres at the show thanks to Mr. Doug Fratoni. Doug is a SabreJet Classics subscriber, an avid admirer of the Sabre, and an air show coordinator. He has suggested that if we could get enough members to attend, he could set up a dinner the Saturday evening during the event for Sabre and former Sabre pilots.

Also he's working on making the theme of the air show, "The 60th Anniversary of the Korean War." Doug has some pretty big ideas for this event. He's not new to setting up air shows and making big things happen. We'll hear more about that later. For any of you in the Northwest, or anywhere for that matter, this could be a lot of fun. "The Lord willing and the creek don't rise", I'll be there.

God Bless Sabre Pilots,
God Bless our troops,
and God Bless America.

JR Alley
President

FOLDED WINGS

Joseph Brown, Jr., June 12th, 2008
Ralph K. Cassada, October 12th, 2009
William T. 'Dizzy' Dilzell, September 14th, 2009
Herman F. Holle, August 25th, 2009
John A. Lewicki, July 9th, 2009
Charles A. Macivor, January 1st, 2009
Richard F. Merian, October 21st, 2009
Richard E. Pegg, September 19th, 2009
George M. Sayre, Jr., August 4th, 2009

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.

from the editor

Greetings from the land of the Buckeyes. We're just starting to get Fall weather. You know - leaves all over the grass, frost on the windshield some mornings, even a dip or two into the 20 degree range. All the fun things.

But it's also that time of the year when I ask for new material for inclusion in the magazine. I have a small backlog of stories from you guys, plus a couple of big articles including part 2 of JR Alley's story about flying with Flight System Inc. and Hector Negroni's Sabre time with the Puerto Rico ANG. But it is starting to get thin in the file box.

So how about sitting down and writing up something you did or heard about being done. Don't be afraid that it won't be good enough, or long enough, or funny enough, or whatever. I can make adjustments in size and punctuation and spelling and anything else that it needs.

One thing I can't do is come up with photos for use with your story unless you provide them. They can be of you (a necessity), your airplane or other birds in your squadron, other pilots and ground crew members. Just as long as they're tied in with your story in some way.

My latest project is two-fold. 1) The on-going saga of Project ARROW - the renumbering of the ADC F-86D units in 1955 that confuses everyone. and 2) A new one on the F-86H. In this issue we describe the Fact & Fiction about the different H mods.

But in doing that I noted that I do not have many worthwhile photos of Air Force F-86H units. So that's my new goal - to get as much coverage as possible of the squadrons that flew the H in Air Force service. This would include the Guard units that took the H into harms way during various activations for things like the 1962 Berlin Crisis. Help me out here guys.

Lastly, I want to remind all of you to start planning for the next reunion in April 2011. Everyone had a great time at the 2009 reunion. I know 2011 will be just as much fun. And if you have a regular squadron association that meets on a regular basis, try and tie it in with the 2011 Reunion. It'll be beneficial to both your unit and the Sabre Pilots Assn.

That's all for now. Happy Holidays and I'll touch base with everyone again in 2010.

larry davis
editor

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Board of Directors

Pat Hughes,
Chairman of the Board
hugpat@aol.com

Glenn Carus, Director
gcarus@mindspring.com

Sam Hollenbeck, Director
samhollenbeck@sbcglobal.net

Bab Matasick, Director
rmatasick@bellsouth.net

Lon Walter, Director
keydet49b@austin.rr.com

Association Officers

J.R. Alley, President
alleyoop3@cox.net

Jerry Johnson, Vice President
Jjohn52132@aol.com

John Martin, Treasurer
johnmartin@pikk.com

Bil Weiger, Webmaster
WEBMASTER@SABRE-
PILOTS.ORG
website
SABRE-PILOTS.ORG

Polly Winesett,
Computer Desk Ctr
pawinesett@aol.com

to the editor

The TF-86F
vol 17-2

Great feature on the TF. I saw the prototype once. We didn't have 'firing-in butts' at Jolly Gearge Airpatch so we used the bunkers at Nellis, either late at night or early morning. I pulled the duty during the period when Joe Lynch was on base to demo the TF.

I dropped by Base Ops to take a look at the bird and the base maintenance NCOIC invited me back after the demo flight for a cockpit check. Why I didn't stay for the flight itself, I don't know. But I was in the O-club when the shocked horde arrived recapping the accident.

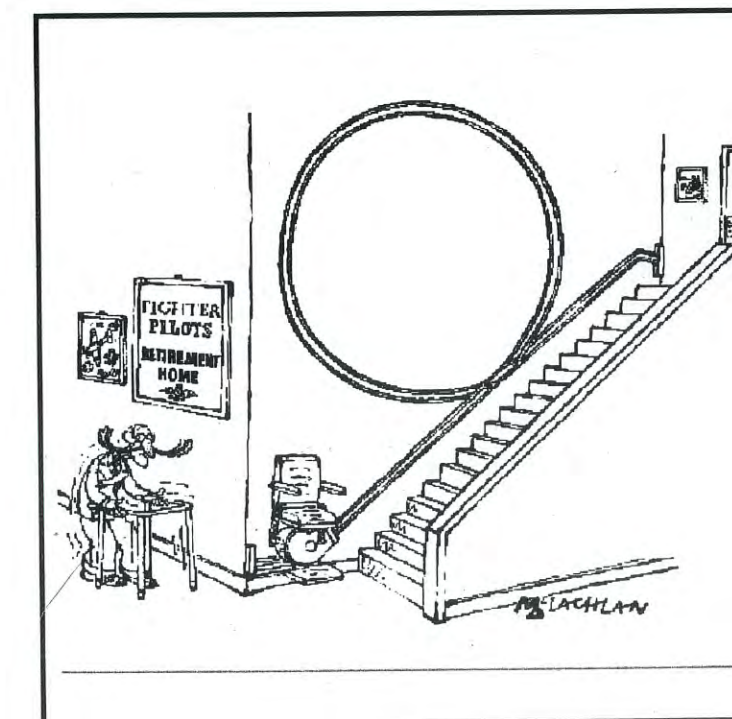
Lynch was doing a gear/flaps down roll on takeoff, which was a signature for him, and which I'd seen him do in a regular F model. Somehow the TF washed out and he went in. I recall the cancellation of the project was clear and immediate.

Dick Hefton

Sometimes photos lie. The photo at right shows TF-86F # 51-2932. It came to me via email. I took one look and said "FAKE". First off the serial, 51-2932, is not a viable TF-86F serial. It is that of an F-86F-5, which served in Korea with the 334th FIS, then to Japan with the 35th FIG, and then to CAF on Formosa.

Also, looking at the photo, the aircraft looks strange, like it's too fat in the middle. It is! As best as we can discern, it's a North American-produced image of what the TF-86 would look like when, and if, produced. Rare image of a non-existent airplane.

An incremental part of the pre-breakfast happiness at the Fighter Pilots retirement Home. (credit - Jean Marie Deudonne)



Bruce Hinton

June 27th, 2009

The Air Force and the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association lost one of its greatest leaders when Bruce Hinton passed away on June 27th 2009. Most people remember Bruce only because he was the first Sabre pilot to shoot down a MiG-15 over Korea on 17 December 1950, That is in fact, how I met Bruce for the first time, when he willingly let me interview him. I remember the smile on his face as he talked about fooling the MiGs into thinking his flight was one of the F-80 flights. And how surprised they were to see the Sabre.

Bruce was also instrumental in the telling of the story about a great MiG pilot called 'Casey Jones' and his almost shoot-down of Col. Glenn Eagleston in June 1951. The reason why it was 'almost' was because Bruce Hinton put his own life on the line for his friend and drove the MiG pilot off before he could get another shot at Eagleston. But that was what Bruce Hinton was all about.

Bruce Hinton enlisted in the Army Air Corps in December 1939, winning his wings and was commissioned as a 2nd Lt at Kelly Field on 30 August 1940. Bruce served with the 24th, 43rd, and 53rd Fighter Squadrons at Howard Field, Canal Zone until 1946. He was then assigned to the 4th Fighter Group serving as Squadron Commander of both the 335th and 336th FS until promoted to Deputy Commander of the 4th FG. It was during this time that Bruce took the unit to Korea in November 1950, to counter the MiG threat. His success, and the success of the many pilots that he trained and led, were the primary reasons that UN forces had complete air superiority over Korea.

Following his tour in Korea, Col. Hinton was assigned to the 48th TFW, before becoming Assistant Deputy for Operations, 17th AF, USAFE. In 1954, Col. Hinton Commanded the Fighter Weapons School at Nellis AFB. Later he served as Chief, Tactical Requirements Division, Hqtrs USAF, before retiring in December 1965. For the next 23 years he worked for Hughes Aircraft Co..

Bruce Hinton (sitting) and the pilots of the 8 aircraft detachment sent to Chitose AB, Japan in February 1951 to counter the MiG threat to northern Japan. (credit - Bruce Hinton)

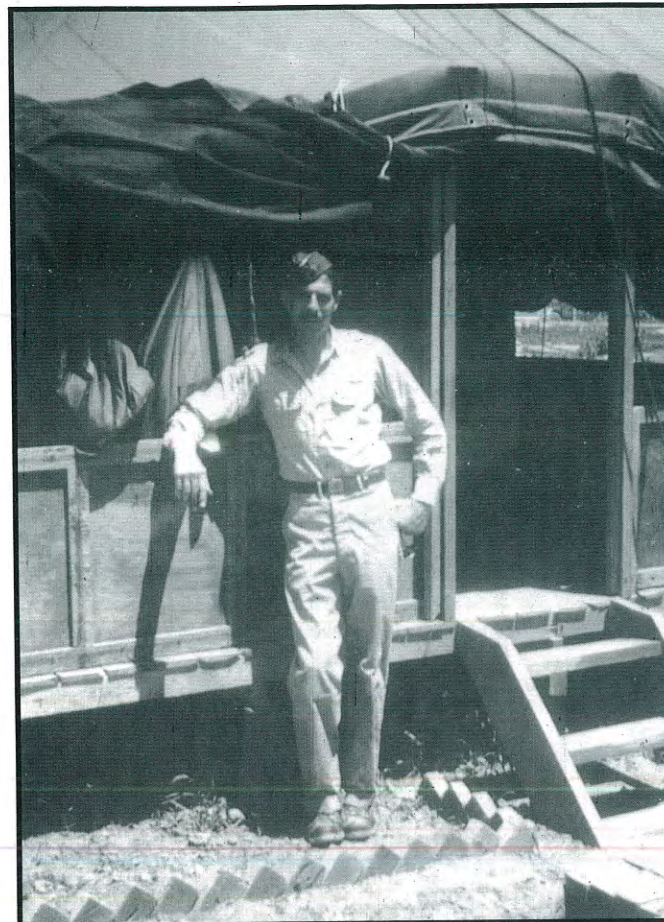


Bruce Hinton stands next to the F-86 painted as 'his' aircraft at the National Museum of the USAF in 2006. (credit - NMUSAF)

In the Summer of 1998, Bruce Hinton was asked to take over as President of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn. following the untimely death of Bob Ashcraft. Bruce never wavered and immediately accepted the position as our President, serving until the Spring 1998. He remained on the Board of Directors until Spring 2007.

He is survived by his wife Jenny, three daughters - Sally Hinton Ennis, Kimberly Hinton, and Laurel Hinton, with four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Pintail Red Leader has flown West. He will be sorely missed.



LtCol. Bruce Hinton outside one of the huts at K-13, Suwon AB, in the Summer of 1951. LtCol. Hinton commanded the 336th FIS during this period. (credit - Bruce Hinton)

Bruce Hinton will be forever memorialized at the National Museum of the USAF at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, by this F-86A that carries the markings and serial number of the airplane that Col. Hinton flew when he scored the first Sabre-MiG victory on 17 December 1950. (credit - NMUSAF)



(L-R) LtCol. Bruce Hinton, Zack Taylor, and Capt. Deck, toast the 'bug-out from Kimpo' on 2 January 1951 aboard the last C-119 to leave the base as the Red Chinese closed in. (credit - Bruce Hinton)



Joe Lynch, North American Test Pilot, stands next to the first F-86H, #52-1975, prior to the first flight on 30 April 1953. The first two aircraft built had the original short chord/short span/slatted wing used on the F-86A/E/early F, with no armament. (credit - NAA)

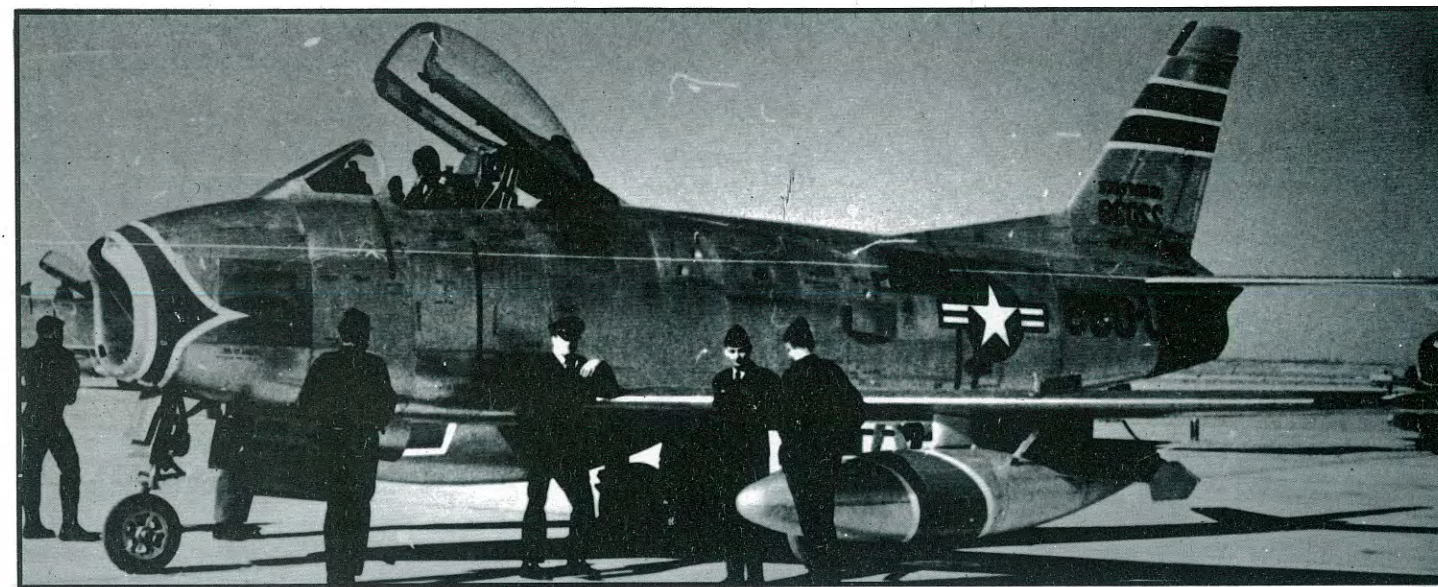
THE F-86H Facts and Fiction

by Larry Davis

Ever since we ran a photo on the rear cover of *SabreJet Classics* 16-3, showing an F-86H with six gun ports, I've been bombarded with notes and phone calls saying that the "H had four 20 mm guns", and "That has to be an F model with six guns". And there were several calls about whether or not the H model had a 6-3 hard wing with fences, without fences, etc. So I thought a little primer on H production might be in order.

North American proposed the F-86H as the be all/end all version of the basic F-86 airframe. It would incorporate all the changes brought about by deficiencies noted in the F-86s flying combat in Korea. These included more firepower, greater thrust, and capable of carrying much greater payloads. But, Air Force did not want to give up the things that made the

The eighth F-86H-1 makes a test flight over Edwards AFB in 1955. The F-86H-1 was delivered to the Air Force with six .50 caliber machine guns and the then-new '6-3 hard wing with fences'. This airplane has been retrofitted with the longer span wing, which had one foot extensions. (credit - NAA)



The first unit to receive the H model was the 312th FBW at Clovis AFB, NM, beginning in early 1955. Initially, the 312th was equipped with F-86H-1s in all three squadrons. The wing fence and short-span wing can be seen in this photo. (credit - Col. E.M. Hanley)

(*SabreJet Classics*, vol. 14 #2). However, the M39 was still in development when the F-86H was ready for production. Thus the initial production Hs would retain the standard M3 .50 caliber machine gun armament.

The '6-3 hard wing' with fences, had also just recently been developed for the combat in Korea. And Air Force wanted to retain the maneuverability and ordnance capability of the 6-3 wing on their new 'ultimate Sabre'. However, when the first H was rolled out, it had the original short chord, short span wing, and no armament. YF-86H-1, #52-1975, was rolled out at the Los Angeles plant in mid-April 1953. It looked like a fat Sabre. NAA Test Pilot Joe Lynch made the first flight on 30 April 1953. Only two Hs were built by NAA/Los Angeles, YF-86Hs 52-1976 and -1976. All regular production H models were built by NAA/Columbus.

The initial pre-production airplanes built by Columbus, all had the 6-3 hard wing installed, which was also retrofitted to the two YF-86Hs. Production of the

An F-86H-1 from the 312th FBW, touches down at Clovis AFB in 1956. At some point the 312th traded their H-1s for later H-5/-10s armed with four 20mm cannon. This aircraft still has the hard wing with fences and extensions. (credit - NAA)



F-86H-1 got underway at Columbus in the Summer of 1953, with the first airplane being delivered in September. The first fourteen F-86H-1s all were equipped with the 6-3 hard wing.

The entire production run of F-86H-1s, 113 aircraft, were built with M3 .50 caliber machine gun armament. The first Hs produced with 20mm cannon armament were the F-86H-5s. North American Columbus built 60 F-86H-5s. They differed from the H-1 only in armament. The H-5 carried four M39 20mm cannons with 150 rounds per gun.

The F-86H-10 was the next variant off the Columbus assembly line. They differed only in the electrical system. Columbus built 300 F-86H-10s, delivering the last H-10 in March 1956. Except for the sixth H-1 and the last ten H-10s, all F-86Hs were delivered with the 6-3 hard wing and fences. The last ten aircraft were fitted with leading edge slats on the 6-3 wing, which had also been extended one foot on each wingtip. The same



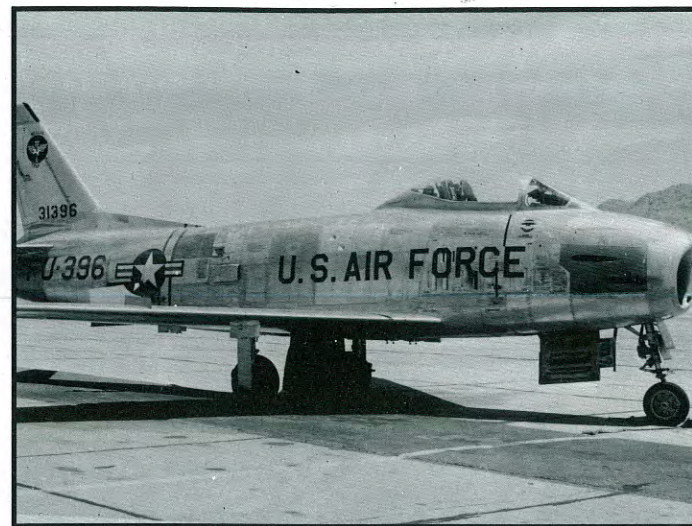
An F-86H-10 makes a test flight over Ohio in 1956. The H-10 had the four 20mm cannon introduced with the H-5, but retained the hard wing as all previous variants. (credit - NAA)

modification was also retrofitted to any remaining F-86Hs and F-86Fs in service.

The first unit to receive the F-86H was the 312th FBW at Clovis AFB. The entire wing was equipped with F-86H-1s having the six .50 caliber gun armament. As soon as the 20mm armed F-86H-5 became available, they were rushed into service with the 413th FBW at George AFB. A total of six wings operated the F-86H - the 312th and 474th at Clovis, 413th at George, 50th at Hahn AB, Germany, and the 83rd FBW at Seymour Johnson. The 83rd then turned their aircraft over to the 4th FBW when they returned from the Far East in late 1957.

But with the F-100 coming into the inventory, the F-86Hs were rapidly phased into Air Guard service. In September

The 474th FBW was the second wing at Clovis AFB to be equipped with the F-86H, with both H-5 and H-10 aircraft. This 1955 photo shows both types having the long 6-3 wing with fences. These aircraft are assigned to the 429th FBS with colorful black and yellow tail stripes. (credit - NAA)



An F-86H-10 assigned to The Fighter School at Nellis AFB in late 1956, returning from a gunnery practice flight (note the smoke stain on the gun panel.). (credit - Merle Olmsted)

ber 1957, the first F-86Hs were delivered to the Guard. All had been brought up to the latest H standard with the extended wingtips and 6-3 slatted wings. The H-1s with the M3 .50 caliber gun armament were split up between several squadrons. The Massachusetts ANG had a squadron of each type, with the 104th "Irish Guard", having H-5/-10 Sabres with 20mm cannons; while the 131st "Polish Guard", had H-1s with .50 caliber machine guns.

The F-86H served well with the Guard, including several possible combat deployments including several squadrons involved in the 1961 Berlin Crisis. The last unit to have F-86Hs was the New York ANG's 138th TFS "The Boys From Syracuse", who turned in their F-86Hs for A-37Bs in the Fall of 1970.

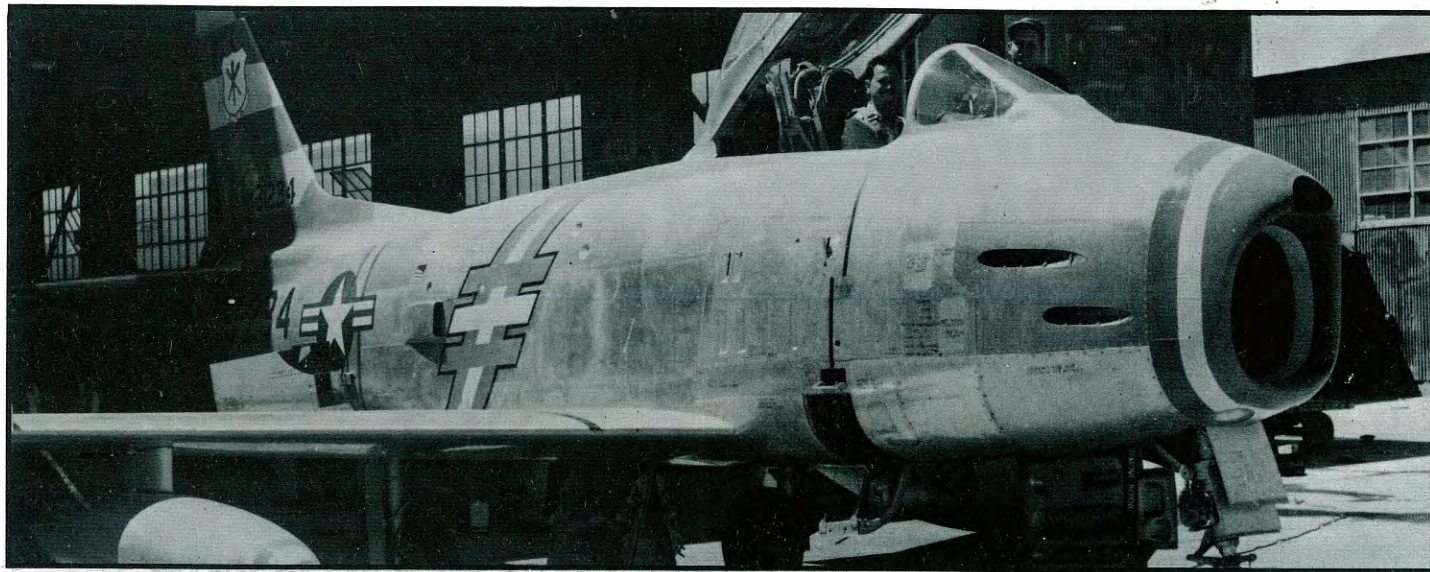


A group of 474th FBG F-86Hs parked at Narsarsuaq AB, Greenland in April 1956 when the unit deployed to Europe in a show of force. By this date, the aircraft have had the slatted extended wing retrofitted. (credit - USAF)

Major maintenance at Clovis AFB was quite often performed right on the open ramp, including complete engine changes. All the Hs were powered by the General Electric J73 engine which could put out over 8900 lbs of thrust. (credit - NAA)

The Clovis parking ramp is full of all three models of the F-86H in 1955. Note the aircraft at center, FU-313, has the multiple color bands of all the squadrons, indicating it is assigned to Col. Franklin Scott, CO of the 474th. (credit - NAA)





The 413th FDW was commanded by Col. George Laven, Jr. when the unit had F-86Hs in 1956. Based at George AFB, CA, Col. Laven's F-86H was the most colorful F-86 ever, having all three squadron color bands painted on the nose, tail, fuselage, and drop tanks of his airplane in DayGlo paint! (credit - David Menard collection)



An F-86H-10 assigned to the 10th FBS at Toul-Rosieres AB, France in 1957. All the H model Sabres had a nuclear capability with the LABS toss-bombing system. (credit - David Menard collection)

Five F-86H-10s with the 83rd FDW on the parking ramp at Seymour Johnson AFB in 1956. In December 1957, the 83rd FDW, the 83rd was replaced when the 4th FDW returned from their 'short TDY' to the Far East in December 1950. (credit - Col. Hess Bomberger)



An F-86H-5 from the 34th FDS, takes off from George AFB in 1956. All F-86Hs except the prototypes, were built at the North American plant in Columbus, Ohio. The wing fence is clearly seen. (credit - USAF)



A West Virginia ANG pilot waits as his crew chief attaches the 200 gallon drop tank under his F-86H-1. Note that the aircraft has both .50 caliber machine guns and leading edge slats. (credit - Bob Burns)

This August 1958 photo of a West Virginia ANG F-86H-1 shows that by this date the Hs were equipped with the slatted '6-3 wing' with extensions. (credit - Bob Burns)



By the time that the F-86H production was being completed, some aircraft were going straight into Air National Guard squadrons. This March 1956 photo shows a number of the last H-10s built with both USAF and Guard markings. (credit - Mick Roth)



The end of the road for the F-86H was in units with the Navy! As a target drone! This QF-86H-5 was assigned to VX-5 at the Naval Missile Center at Point Mugu NAS in November 1974. It is not known if it survived its mission as a target drone. (credit - Mick Roth)





No caption (credit - JR Alley)

F-86 SABRES IN THEIR AFTER ACTION YEARS

By JR Alley

Throughout the Korean War and during the early portions of the Cold War, the North American F-86 Sabre carved a tremendous niche for itself in fighter aviation history. In the years that followed, a few Sabres were purchased for personal use, for air shows and some as gate guards on pedestals at certain military bases and parks. It is not widely known what other roles the Sabre played during those years. A significant number were converted into remotely controlled vehicles (QF-86s) as targets for missile testing and development such as:

1. The U.S. Navy's Target Simulation Department at Pt. Mugu NAS, and their employment of approximately 150 former Japanese F-86Fs and a few former Air National Guard F-86Hs.
2. Flight Systems, Inc. (FSI) converted and operated a significant number of former Royal Canadian Air Forces Canadair MK 5 Sabres as "QFs" for Army missile testing at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico.

Then there was a program that employed the Canadair MK 6 Sabre (Sabre 6) as a Dart (target) tow aircraft used in the Tactical Air Commands (TAC), Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), and United States Air Forces Europe (USAFE) aerial gunnery training.

Using Sabres for towing targets was certainly not a new concept as they had been towing banner targets, if T-33s were not available, for air-to-air gunnery for many years. As a replacement for the "Banner", the Dart target was introduced. It was towed by F-100s and later by F-4 Phantoms. The big improvement of the Dart versus the banner was, the Dart being 15ft. long, 5ft. wide at its maximum and very aerodynamic, it could be towed in high "G" maneuvers nearly to the limits of the towing aircraft. Additionally, it could be towed supersonic. However, when the F-15s and F-16s came along some new problems for Dart gunnery came with them.

The F-15s and F-16s with their higher stabilator authority were not certified to carry and deploy the Dart from the standard A/A37U-15 tow rig. This meant these units had to schedule F-4 Phantom tows. There were fewer and fewer F-4 units remaining and it became apparent that TAC was going to have a problem finding an aircraft to tow the Darts. In a personal interview with Rod Beckett, former manager of FSI's Drone and Dart Tow Operations, he explained how it came about that the Sabre 6 returned to life as a target tow aircraft. In 1978 at Holloman AFB, during a conversation between Rod Beckett and Colonel B. V. Johnson, the 49th TFW Director of Operations, Col. Johnson told Rod that he was having trouble getting F-4s to tow Darts and when he did get the F-4 tows; their effectiveness at providing a target was very low. A high percentage of Darts prematurely fell off after take off, en-route to the range or during launch. Rod felt FSI could help by using FSI Sabre 6s. He took his ideas to the FSI management which resulted in four free demonstration sorties to prove FSI's capability to tow Darts. All four sorties were effective. A three month contract was negotiated in November 1980 using FSI Sabre 6s to tow Darts at Holloman AFB. At the completion of this contract, FSI was contracted to fly Dart tow sorties at Holloman, Hill, Nellis, Langley and Eglin Air Force Bases.

The Sabre 6 became an outstanding aircraft for that role. After 500 tow sorties had been flown, only one sortie had been aborted. That abort was due to a failure of the tow system provided by the Air Force.

The Sabre 6 Tow proved to be so successful that Pacific Air Force (PACAF) became interested. That resulted in a contract with FSI deploying three Sabre 6s, three pilots and five maintenance personnel to Kadena AB, Okinawa in 1982. The same high quality target towing and success rate was provided as in TAC.



JR Alley and 'FS87 at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska in the Summer of 1996. It was 'poopie suit' time. (credit - JR Alley)

Then USAFE got into the act as they had the same requirement for their F-15 units in Europe. FSI did not have sufficient Sabre 6s to meet USAFE's requirement, but Bob Laidlaw, then President of FSI, had previously purchased six F-100Fs from Denmark and had them in flyable storage in the U.K. USAFE awarded FSI a contract to tow Darts using those F-100s for its units deployed to NATO's Decimomannu Weapons Training facility at Sardinia, Italy. I bring up the use of F-100s because when that contract expired, FSI lost the follow-on contract to Corporate Jet who competed with Sabre 6s. Due to considerable cost differences to operate F-100s versus Sabre 6s, FSI could not compete against the Sabre and lost the contract.

To show FSI's effectiveness using the Sabre 6 in tow operations for TAC, their original deployment package consisted of three Sabre 6s, four maintenance personnel and three pilots. TAC required three tow aircraft as that was what they required for their own F-4 tow contingents to get a reasonable success rate. Over a period of time, FSI's success rate continued to be at or slightly above 99%.

TAC asked FSI if it could provide more tow sorties to meet increased demands. FSI responded by offering to eliminate one of the spares and deploy two Sabres to a location. TAC agreed and a two Sabre deployment configuration was employed at some locations. The sortie success rate continued to be at the 98% level.

Tactical Air Command continued to request more tow sorties as more Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units needed to fire aerial gunnery. In fact, with the added units, the original five deployment locations increased to over twenty. By now, FSI's Holloman team had gained considerable experience with the Sabre 6's reliability and they felt confident they could perform at nearly the same high success rate by deploying one Sabre. TAC agreed to the single ship deployments. After several deployments, the success rate stabilized at better than 97% and the single Sabre deployments became the norm.

The Sabre Tow program had nearly a one hundred per cent sortie success, but there was another aspect of the Dart program that was important as well. That was to inject more realism into air-



A Flight Test Research Sabre 6 at Mojave in 1071. Flight Systems Incorporated bought FTR's complete operation in Spring 1972. The purchase of FTRnetted FSI three T-33s and the Sabre 6. (credit - FSI)

to-air gunnery. Tactical Air Command had, over the years, developed its Dart towing profiles. They were very benign profiles of Figure 8 and rectangular patterns with gently climbing and descending turns not normally exceeding 60 degrees of bank and two "Gs". There was the Butterfly pattern that heated things up considerably, but it was not the standard. The Sabre Tow brought into the training arena a new degree of realism. Of course, one was the similarities of the Sabre 6 to the Mig-15 and Mig-17 in size and plan-form. Another was the performance of the Sabre 6 with its 7275 lbs of static thrust in the F-86E airframe. It is fully understandable why RCAF Sabre 6 pilots, our NATO partners, were so respected in the skies over Western Europe during the late 50s and early 60s.

The Sabre 6, even while carrying an A/A37U-15 tow rig and a Dart deployed out to approximately 1600 ft., had considerably more maneuvering performance than any tow aircraft before it. A more realistic and challenging aerial gunnery profile, called Combat Dart, was developed and employed.

This is how a typical mission went. It consisted of two ship or four ship shooters. Two shooters would take off five minutes ahead of the Sabre Dart, clear the range area for safety and orbit at the shooter anchor point located at the far end of the range.

The ex-FTR Sabre 6 (N186F) at Mojave in the mid-1970s with regular FSI markings of white with blue stripes. (credit - Larry Davis collection)





A FSI Sabre 6 carries an A/A37U-15 tow reel and Dart target. (credit - JR Alley)

The Sabre Dart would proceed to a range entry point, normally the closest to the base, as rapidly as possible, deploy the Dart and depart it's anchor point when all players were ready. The intercept normally started 20 to 30 miles apart depending on the size of the range with a head-on intercept. The tow would normally be assigned an altitude block from 20,000ft. to 25,000ft. The shooters could be at any altitude outside the tows' assigned block and remain there until the merge and Tally Ho's had been obtained. The shooters had their choice of single side offset, pincer or whatever attack geometry the flight lead briefed. The Sabre Dart was given guns and Atoll heat seeking missiles (Soviet Sidewinders) as simulated armament. Inbound, the tow may drop chaff bundles, if authorized, to spoof the shooters radar as well as performing some deceptive maneuvering. The shooters called the tow pilot at the ten miles-to-go point, at which time the tow pilot hacked his clock which started the five minute engagement time. At the merge, the fight was on and properly pilot gave the "Cleared to Fire" call when both the shooters and the tow had each other in-sight. The shooters would employ their best attack options. The tow pilot could choose his adversary and turn up into, down into or extend and turn as he felt he needed. Should the tow pilot see the opportunity to reverse his turn to another shooter, he could do that providing he gave a "Cease-Fire" command for his safety while he reversed, then gave a "Cleared-to-Fire" once he had the Dart the tow trailing properly. Should the tow pilot gain an advantage on a shooter, he could call which weapon he was employing i.e., "Fox 2", formissiles or "guns-guns". When this situation occurred, it was not a happy postmission debriefing to say the least. It was embarrassing for the young fighter pilots in their new higher performance fighters to be bested by the old fighter pilot with an old fighter.

If the Dart was not shot off at the end of five minutes, a reset of all players would take place. The shooters would return to their anchor point or a second element would be waiting for their turn. The Sabre Dart would climb back to altitude toward the Dart anchor. If the firing sequences progressed quickly and smoothly and the range was not a long distance from the home base, as many as three five minute engagements could be flown. Most aircrews were ecstatic about flying that challenging profile. There were variations however.

Not all pilot's proficiency level in air-to-air was such that they were ready to engage in the full-up Combat Dart profile I just described. In that case the profile began by the same head-on engagement except no chaff or deceptive maneuvers were used by the tow pilot. At the merge, the tow pilot would establish a 3-1/2 to 4 G, 350KIAS predictable spiral turn and continue until the five minutes expired or the Dart was shot off. The Sabre Dart was still given the simulated ordnance and could attack a shooter or supporter should that situation present itself.

There were pilots, mostly new trainees, who were not ready for the Combat Dart profile, especially RTU students. In these cases, the profile commenced with the shooters joining up high and behind the tow in a perch position. Once the shooter called ready, the tow pilot would hack his clock to start the 5 minutes and establish his 3-1/2 to 4 G spiral turn at 350 KIAS. The shooters could fire as a single with an instructor chasing or both could cycle in and out, each firing during the five minutes.

At this point, let me say with all this realism packed into the Combat Dart profile, FSI tow pilots were very concerned that the shooters met their mission objectives and that was to shoot at the Dart. Once a shooter maneuvered into a reasonable firing position, the tow pilot would stabilize the turn and present a good stable target. Tow pilots proved nothing if they yanked the Dart out from under the pipper of the shooter which was very easy to do by just pumping the stick or pushing on the rudder pedals.

I have put considerable emphasis on FSIs nearly one hundred percent success using the Sabre 6. The Sabre 6 was definitely the right vehicle for that mission, but the team FSI had behind that great airplane was truly outstanding. A full article could be spent on the mechanics, their skills and leadership to make that program so successful. One Sabre, one mechanic (crew chief) and one pilot meant someone had to be a jack of all trades. Not only did a crew chief have to be a master of his trade, but he had to be a specialist in many fields: electrical, avionics, hydraulics, engine, egress, quality control and more. All FSI crew chiefs had great backgrounds as aircraft mechanics in their previous military careers. Additionally, they all obtained their credentials as FAA certified A&P mechanics. A word for the pilots is in order as well. The pilots performed



A pair of FSI Sabre 6s on the ramp at Mojave in May 1982. The near aircraft has the A/A37U-15 Tow Reel but not the Dart. (credit - Bob Shane)

all their flying related functions to make the mission happen, but that was not all. They had to be logisticians while on the road and support the crew chief in everyway possible. This may entail assisting in refueling, help loading a Dart, and when an engine change or an aircraft inspection was required while deployed, the crew chief became the boss and the pilot assisted in any manner the crew chief requested. Without men of this caliber and knowledge, FSI would never have progressed to the 97 per cent success rate they attained with one Sabre 6; a record the Air Force could not accomplish with three tow aircraft, and a full maintenance and support team.

During the early period of the Sabre Dart program in TAC, its' success became apparent in providing the most realistic live firing environment and the maximum learning experience possible at that time. Referencing an article in TACs Fighter Weapons School Newsletter back in 1981 titled "Sabre Dart". F-16 Fighter Weapons Instructor Capt. Kevin Henabray had this to say about the Sabre Dart program. "The F-86 Dart Tow can be described with one word - SUPER." From my own personal experiences of flying the Sabre Dart, the F-15 and F-16 pilots were exuberant and very proud to have shot

FSI also flew a pair of QF-86E (Sabre Mk.5) aircraft as target drones for surface to air missile tests at White Sands Missile Range. The Sabres were based at Holloman AFB, NM. (credit - FSI)



against it. In many cases, after firing was completed, the flight leader would request the Sabre to join up and RTB in formation. One reason was, It Just Looked So Good! Another was to have a younger wingman get up close and tight with the famous Sabre.

Many times as I was returning to base in formation with a flight of shooters, I couldn't help but feel proud and fortunate to be flying such a great airplane and how lucky I was to have found a job like that. In the summer of 1982, I first heard that a civilian company was flying F-86s towing Darts for TAC. After some investigation, I decided I wanted, more than anything, to work for them and fly the Sabre. After a few months I was hired on with FSI, not as a full time Dart pilot, but in another opation which allowed me to fly and support the Dart Tow operation occasionally. As time went by, I eventually became a full time Sabre tow pilot as well as remotely controlling and flying QF 86s, flying T-33s, F-100s and F-4s in varied support roles for the Air Force, Army, Navy and some other countries. Even though I flew the Sabre for just a short time during my military career, I was fortunate to fly it for over 1500



An FSI Sabre 6 aircraft on the ramp at Peterson AFB, CO in August 1991. Note this is an ex-West German Sabre 6 equipped with a Martin Baker ejection seat as denoted by the raised front edge of the canopy to clear the seat. (credit - Mike Fox)

hours throughout nearly twenty years of my second flying career. As I have often said, I felt like I was a fighter pilot who died and went to heaven.

There is more to tell about the Sabre 6 and how an innovative modification further improved the Sabre Darts' performance.

Even with this improved performance and the exceptional success of this program, TAC was developing plans as to what tow vehicle and next generation target they wanted to employ. For more about the finale of this great airplane as it was used in a highly realistic aerial gunnery program and what happened to it, see the next issue of Sabre Jet Classics.

JR Alley, President of the F-86 Sabre Pilot's Association, beside an FSI Sabre 6 (credit - JR Alley)



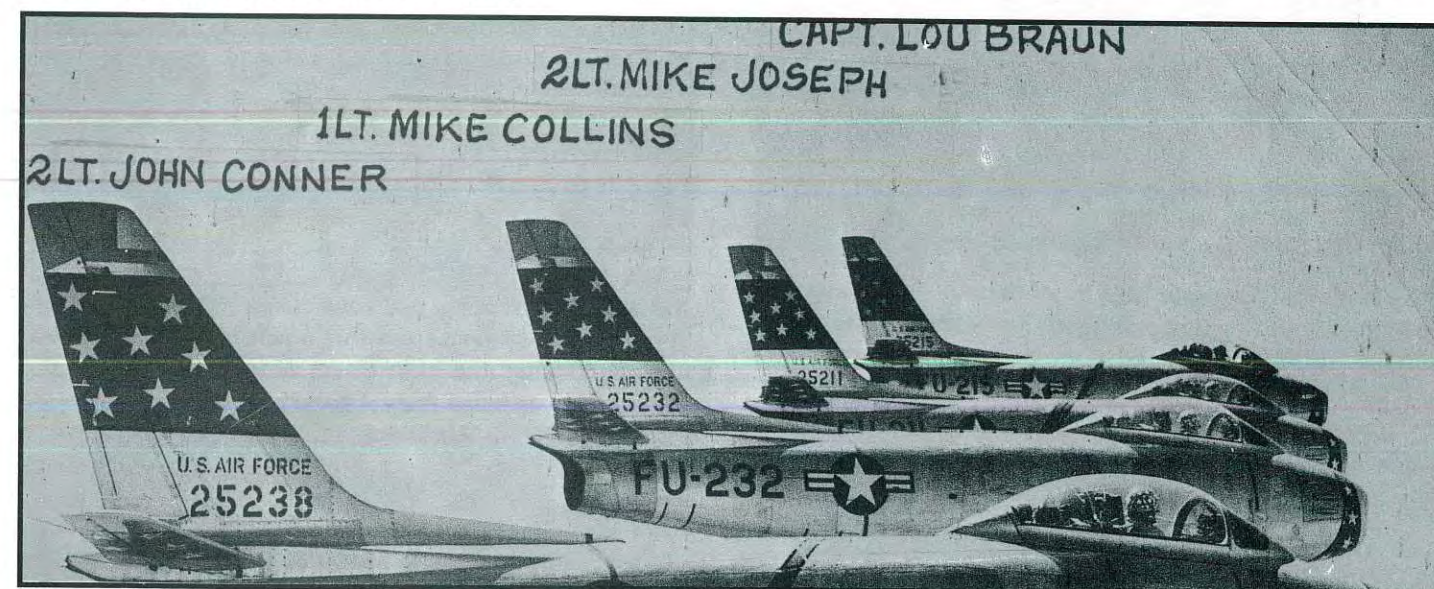
MIKE COLLINS SABRE PILOT

It has been brought to my attention that indeed, all the astronauts of Apollo 11 were Sabre pilots during their careers. We forgot Mike Collins. More than one member pointed it out, including Mike Collins himself. He also mentioned that "Apollo" is spelled with one 'P'.

Mike was in the 72nd FBS of the 21st FBW at George AFB in December 1953. A Fox Able flight took him to Chambley AB, France until 1957. He had about 1100 hours in the F-86, and said - "I always thought it to be more than a little scary that as a 26 year old Lt., I was a Flight Commander responsible for training myself and four others to fly very low altitude over the border and drop atom bombs on targets in East Germany.



Mike Collins pre-Apollo Sabre pilot. credit - 72nd FBS Assn.)



Redman Flight, 72nd FBS, Chambley AB, France 1956. (credit - Mike Collins)

What is it? I'm going to repeat this "What is it?" subject because no one seems to have an answer. I certainly don't. It's an F-86A, #49-1189, with RF camera bulges on the gun bay doors, and is painted overall white with red, yellow, and black stripes. All we know for sure is it may have been a North American test bird flying with Autonetics Division. Anyone with any knowledge of the airplane and/or its mission, please contact the editor, SabreJet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, OH 44621, or email sabreclx@aol.com. (credit - Emil Strasser)



THIS 'N THAT



Who Is It? This photo has been in my files for many years. It's an Air Force pilot demonstrating the new parachute, type F-1, automatic ripcord release. It's a WADC photo but no mention of the pilot's name. Anyone know who it is, contact your editor. (credit - USAF)



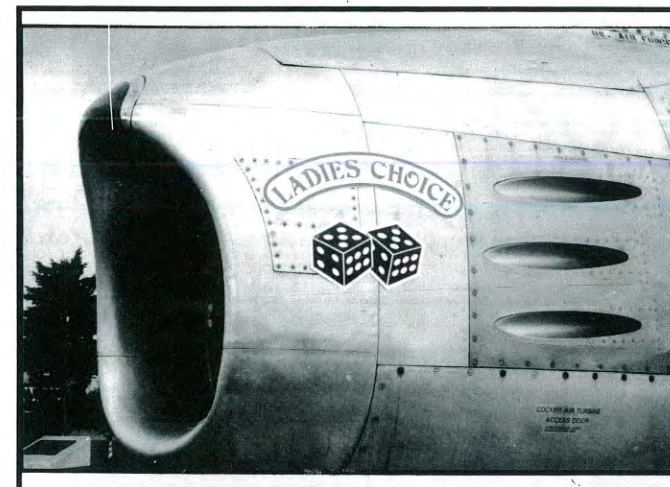
Bill Van Dine sent us this cover from a North American Service News magazine showing a pair of 469th FIS pilots, Maj. Bob Mckee and Mike Hayes, holding the remains of a target that was holed from a rocket in 1955. Nice shooting guys! (credit - Bill Van Dine)

Don McNamara sent us these two photos taken at the dedication of the F-86 Sabre monument at the National Museum of the USAF, Wright Patterson AFB. On the left is Jim Campbell, with Don McNamara on the right. (credit - Don McNamara)



Not much is known about this pair of F-86Fs except they're assigned to the Weapons Center, presumably at Eglin AFB from all the palm trees. The email photo is not very good. Anyone with better photos or other information, please contact your editor. (credit - Larry Davis collection)

Bob Ingalls flew this F-86H when he was the CO of the 121st TFS, DC Air Guard. (credit - Bob Ingalls)



John Ridout was "The Stubborn Rebel" in Korea with the 334th FIS. (credit - John Ridout)



Duke Castleton flew "Cotton Picker" when he was an Instructor Pilot with the Arab air forces training in the Sabre during 1960. (credit - Duke Castleton)



Jerry Houser flew "The Urgan Virgin" in the 44th FBS when they deployed to Formosa in 1955. (credit - Jerry Houser)



sabre reunions

Plan Now! The 2011 Reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association. At the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino, Las Vegas, on 10,11 & 12 April 2011. See you there!

If you have a unit reunion slated in the future, feel free to contact the Editor, SabreJet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, OH 44721, or email sabreclsx@aol.com with the details. We will run an ad in each issue of SabreJet Classics until the reunion.

SABRE HOG PHOTOS

Wanted - Info and photos, especially color photos of TAC and USAFE F-86H Sabres. Want to hear from anyone that flew the F-86H in the 4th FDW, 21st FBW, 83rd FDW, 312th FBW, 413th FDW, and/or the 474th FBW, please Contact Larry Davis, Editor, SabreJet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, OH 44721; or email at sabreclsx@aol.com

Wanted -- Lt. Sonny Davis

Anyone with information about an aircraft accident involving Lt. Sonny Davis at Kirtland AFB, NM, 13 January 1958, please Contact Smoky Slover, (865)977-6077, or email expilot38@hotmail.com

SUPER SABRE SOCIETY

Attention Hun Drivers!
If you are interested in starting up an F-100 Super Sabre Society, let me know. Contact Les Frazier, Life Member of the F-86 Sabre Pilots, at 702 River Down Road, Georgetown, TX, 78628-8240, ph. 512-930-3066, or e-mail supersabresociety@cox.net

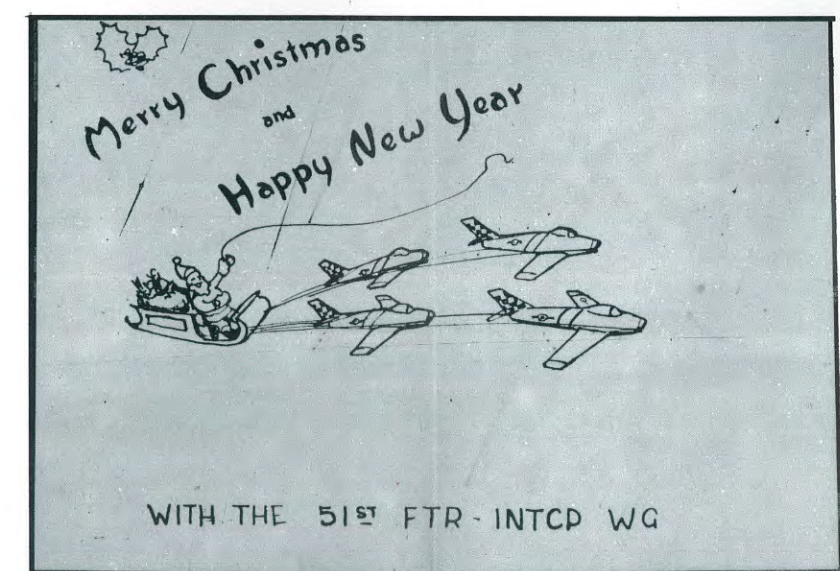
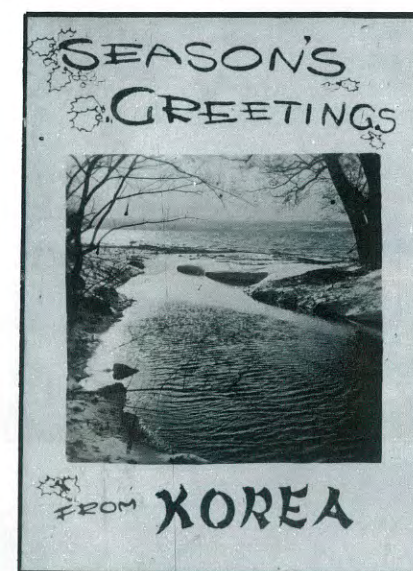
'Ace' Edmunds - Happy 90th Birthday

Anyone that served with Alan C. "Ace" Edmunds when he COd the 531st FBS at Chambley AB, France, can wish him a Happy 90th by emailing ace21edm@comcast.net

Who Is It?? Can anyone identify what unit this F-86H is from. It could be the 312th FBW at Clovis but the tail markings do not resemble any that have been seen on other 312th aircraft. Note there is a second Sabre with the same markings behind the first. Photo is taken in 1957 but location is unknown. If you know anything about this airplane, please contact the editor of SabreJet Classics. (credit - A. Muhlenkamp)



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



SabreJet Classics

P.O. Box 34423
Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423

NONPROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
CANTON, OH
PERMIT NO. 207

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ATTENTION MEMBERS!!!

Please check the mailing label. If the address is incorrect or outdated, please send the changes to the Las Vegas address SabreJet Classics, PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423. If the date above your name is previous to the current date, then your dues are due. Dues are \$25/year, \$50/3 years, and \$200 for Life Membership, unless you're older than 75, at which time a Life Membership is \$100. Send your check payable to Sabre Pilots Association, PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423



What Is It? The only reason this F-86H is in the "What is it?" section is because of the large red number on the fuselage. Can anyone tell us what the number was for. The aircraft is from the 474th FBW at Clovis AFB in 55-56, but no explanation is given as to why it was applied. The numbers only appear on 428th FBS Sabres. If you have information about this, please **CONTACT** Larry Davis, editor - SabreJet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, OH 44721, or email sabreclsx@aol.com