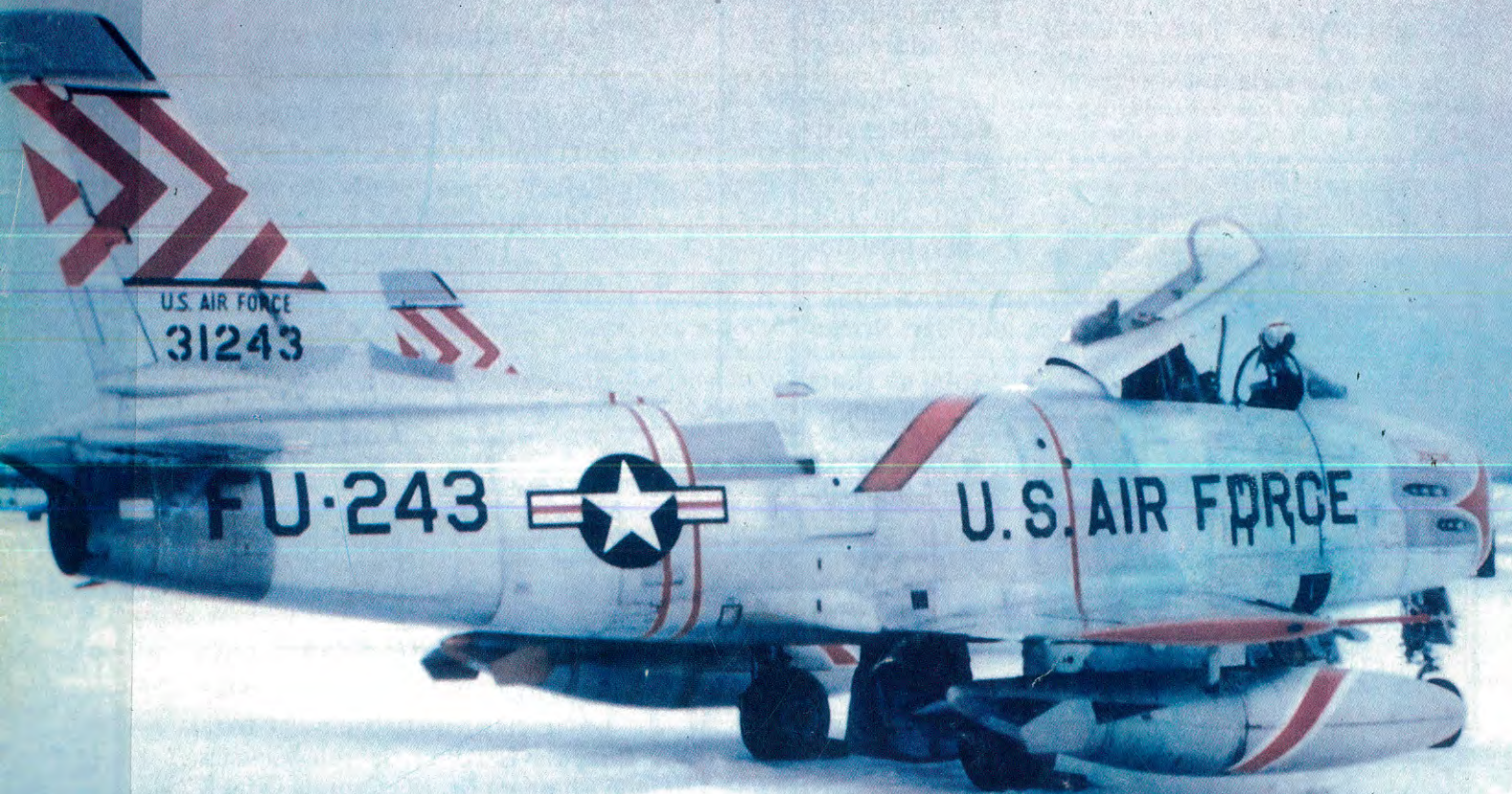


# Sabre Jet Classics



Volume 18, Number 3

Fall 2010



*inside - USAF Tactics Team, Autonetics Sabre,  
Reunion Registration, Clancy the 81st Pup,  
more!*

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

# SabreJet Classics

volume 18, number 3

Fall 2010

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(Front cover)

An F-86H assigned to the 430th FBS,  
474th FBG sits on the snow covered ramp of  
Clovis AFB, New Mexico, during the Winter of  
1956-57. (credit - J. McCullem)

# SabreJet Classics

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## the president's notebook

!!!! ALERT — ALERT — ALERT!!!  
After all the effort to get the registration started for Reunion 18, I was notified that one of our member's letter with his registration form and check was returned by the Post Office: stamped incorrect address, cannot be forwarded. Wow, what happened? Further checking found I made a one digit error on our P.O. Box number. Instead of F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, P.O. box 34423, I put 34424. Our proof reading fell through the crack. I have received several registration forms that the P.O. caught, but I don't yet know how many were returned.

I immediately went into crisis management mode. I emailed Larry Davis to correct the error for the Classics 18-3, and I asked Bill Weiger to correct the same mistake listed on our web site. Then I went to the Post Office to see if they would post a note over our box to make sure mail sent to the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association gets put in our box. They have done that and they assured me they will catch any mail sent to us with the wrong number. I feel confident we have dodged the bullet and I apologize for any inconvenience and anxieties I might have caused you.

To get the word of a problem out faster, I made a considerable effort to transfer all your email addresses into a group address book. After a very tedious effort of moving over 800 addresses, I performed a test of sending out 400 emails to alert you to the mail box error. Over 250 were returned because of invalid email addresses. That put a stop to that idea and effort for now.

For those who are on-line and haven't given me your address or who have changed your address recently, I urge you to do so. Check what we show in the roster and if wrong let us know. If I get a significant number of current email addresses in the future, I will pursue the group emailing effort as I think it is very worthwhile. Also, we need your correct address before we publish the 2011 roster due out by late January. Now back to my planned comments.

It seems like the summer edition of the Classics just came off the press and Larry tells me he is ready for my comments for the fall edition. He is working high order to get the fall edition out on time so he can get the spring edition to you well before the reunion next April.

Not related to our Association, I would like to share with you an experience I had this past June. Planes of Fame Air Museum at Chino, California conducts a special event, one Saturday every month, in what they call Living History Flying Days. They choose one particular aircraft in their stable of aircraft that are air worthy to display and fly and they open up a hanger for people to attend. They invite guest speakers who were or are associated with that particular aircraft to speak and share their experiences. Then they fly that aircraft on several fly-bys for everyone to watch.

June 5th was designated Living History Flying Days for the F-86 Sabre. My wife Avis and I attended along with Association member Bud Miles and his wife Trudy. Bud and I were given the floor to speak for nearly 30 minutes each to a group of over 400 aviation enthusiasts who were absolutely

great to talk to and be with. Kevin Eldridge, P.Q.F. Chief Pilot and Association member flew the F86 for all of us to watch. I don't know when they will have another F-86 day, but the Living History Flying Days I attended was great and very professionally presented. Also, you will find the Planes of Fame Air Museum to be one of the finest anywhere with many beautiful airworthy flying machines (over 50 in all). If you would like to find out more about them, go to their web site [www.planesoffame.org](http://www.planesoffame.org).

Now, it's time to talk reunion. First, an admin item. To satisfy the security police at Nellis, I need your birth date if you sign up for the Weapons School Briefing. Anywhere in a good open space on the form is fine.

As I said in my comments in the previous edition, Bob Hoover has agreed to be our guest speaker. Well, that is not all. He will be attending a major part of our reunion and he is more than willing to talk and just spend time with all the fighter pilots. You can't afford to miss this opportunity to be up and close with a Fighter Pilot Aviation Icon who is as down to earth as humanly possible. The time is right, the price is right and you will never regret that you did the right thing by coming to Reunion 18, next April 10, 11, and 12, 2011. Don't read all about the reunion and say, "I really ought to go this time, but there is a lot of time left to decide, I'll wait a little longer to register." Make your decision and register soon. That will help us in a big way by spreading our workload out and make for more accurate and better planning. I would like to see every one of you there.

God Bless Sabre Pilots,  
God Bless our troops,  
and  
God Bless America.  
JR Alley  
President

## FOLDED WINGS

Robert H. Burris, March 9th, 2010

Charles G. Carl, July 16th, 2009

Lt.General William H. Ginn, Jr., June 1st, 2010

Asa P. Hamrick, date unknown

Brent Layton, June 30th, 2010

Morris 'Moe' Lazan, January 26th, 2010

Lewis L. Libengood, March 2nd, 2010

Andrew 'Andy' K. McKenzie, RCAF, November 2009

Thomas McMullen, May 19th, 2009

Rezk M. "Mo" Mohamed, July 30th, 2010

## 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.

*from the editor*

As Summer 2010 draws to a close, I am both sad and glad. Sad because it means putting my new Mustang convertible away for the winter. But glad because it means that the 2011 reunion of the Sabre Pilots Assn. is getting closer. Included in this issue of SabreJet Classics is another copy of the information and registration form for the 18th Reunion.

As more than a few have pointed out to me, the last issue, vol. 18-2, was chock full of mistakes. Not historical mistakes but typos. So what happened?

Well the problem was that I upgraded my computer systems. But it wasn't compatible with the system used by our printer. So he had to download the disc with the articles and layout to his wife's computer, and then transfer all the data to another computer that operates the printing press.

Somewhere in all the transfers, a large number of words got muddled and no one caught it. Reason? Because I proofed my disc and everything was OK. Since my disc was OK, I didn't bother proofing the text before going to press. I simply made sure the photos and captions were correctly placed. Sorry guys. We're trying to get the systems together for a flawless magazine, or at least a lot closer than 18-2.

Also, I have had queries from several members about articles they had submitted and why they weren't being printed. The reasons for that are simple - your article might be too large for our small magazine; or (more likely) you did not include any photos with the article.

Being too large isn't a really big problem. I can trim it down to size and/or do a two-parter in back to back magazines. The lack of photos is a big problem. Your story might be great. Most are. But without photos it will lay dormant in the drawer until I can round up photos suitable to match the subject matter.

Photos add flavor. Most readers will see a photo that they can readily identify with, a group of pilots or a plane with their unit markings or a place they recognize. That will draw their attention to the main body of the article. I do have a large collection of Sabre photos but even my collection isn't complete on every subject.

With that in mind, *PLEASE SEND PHOTOS* and/or color slides that we can have printed for use in the magazine. I love to get your color slides in so we can have them printed professionally for possible use on the cover.

*Larry Davis*  
editor

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**Sabre reunions**

**PLAN NOW!!** The 2011 reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association will again be at the Gold Coast Hotel Casino in Las Vegas. The dates are April 10, 11, and 12, 2011. Registration forms are available within this issue vol.18-3. See you there!

*To the editor*

**Sleep Well Tonite**

Although we had previously run the photo of the old gentleman in the "Sleep Well Tonite, Your Air Force Is Awake", we had never received any information about the photo or the 'pilot'. But finally, several members sent us information regarding the subject.

Mike Freebairn, John Dumas, Jack Burwell, Don Sorlie, and several others had information regarding the 'Alert Pilot', some with more info than others. But all agreed that he was a maintenance man at an Air Force facility in the mid-1950s.

Don Sorley and Mike Freebairn offered that the photo was generated by some test pilots at the Hughes Aircraft plant in Culver City, CA. The old gentleman was a janitor at Hughes. The pilots dressed him up in a flying suit, a rather ragged flying suit, put a helmet on him, and took the photo.

It was circulated around the Air Force between 54 and 56. Don Sorley added, "It sure brought a chuckle and I thought it was funny enough to save in my memorabilia. It gained a life of its own and now continues to exist in perpetuity like other great works of art."

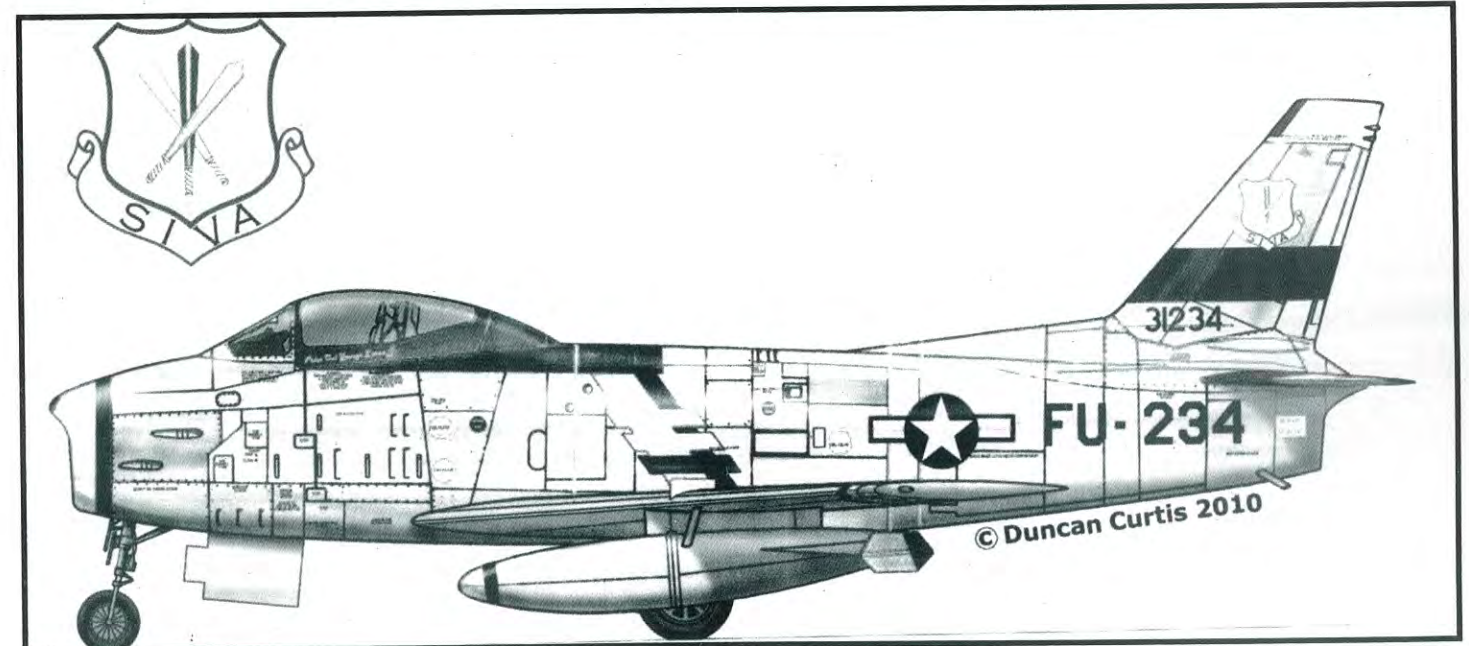
Thanks to all that called and/or emailed.

**Who Is It?**

Frosty Sheridan:

The back cover painting of the unidentified F-86H in VERY colorful markings was ID'd by Frosty Sheridan as none other than Gol. George 'Ravin' Laven's F-86H with the 413th FDG at George AFB in the 53-54 era. Frosty recalls that the colors were first generation DayGlo and hard to work with. "Parrots were what we called them. The Navy said they could see us from San Diego on take off roll.

Ole George really liked his colors, and got his butt chewed for the money he was spending on paint. DayGlo was about \$30 a bucket, which was a bunch of bucks back then. At one point he was ordered to strip all the paint and do a 'sane' paint job."



*Misspelled Name*

We inadvertently misspelled the name of one of our members that had folded his wings. Robert T. Slater folded his wings on July 2nd 2010. Our sincere apologies to his family and friends.

## Finally

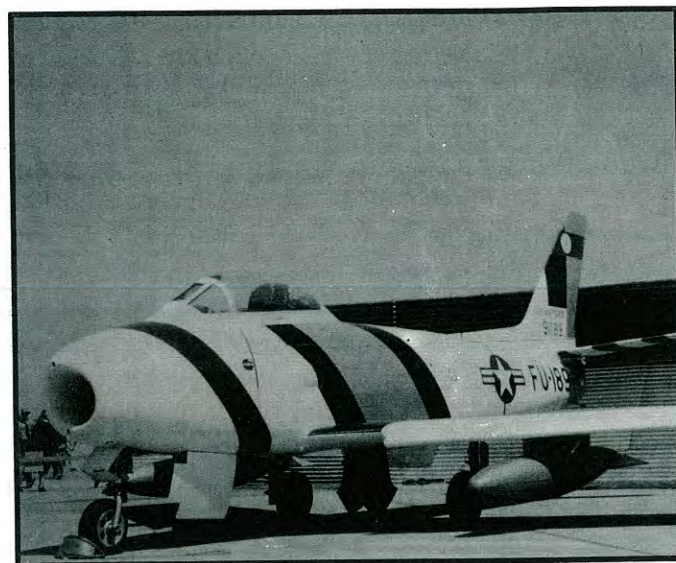
Over the past umpteen number of years, we have published a number of "What Is It" SabreJet Classics photos, asking for help from the members as to who, what, where, and what the airplane was used for depicted in the photo. About 95% of them have been ID'd by the members correctly, usually with added information. But a number of photos of Sabres remained unidentified.

The photo of F-86A #49-1189 that appeared on the back cover of vol. 3-3, and again in full color on the front cover of vol. 16-1 was one of the few that no one knew anything about. Several pilots and crewmen made guesses, none of which turned out to be correct. We finally have the answer to as what the gaudily painted F-86A with RF-86F camera bulges was all about.

Associate Editor David Menard, a 20 year veteran of the USAF that put in another 20 years at the USAF Museum in both restoration and in the Research Division, has finally tracked it down. Actually he got sent in the right direction with help from John Henderson and Ed Rusinek of North American. Both thought it could have been a bird used by Autonetics Division of North American. But no one could tell us what Autonetics Division did.

A 1956 edition of Skyline magazine, the NAA company magazine, spelled out exactly what Autonetics was all about and even had another photo of 'our' F-86A. So here's the straight skinny on 49-1189.

The article starts out "A series of clear-white smoke puffs suddenly appeared at the left-hand wingtip of the F-86A and were rapidly left behind a split-second before the



interceptor, a 20mm gun-packing F-86K, broke off its simulated attack." Yes, 'our' Sabre was an electronic scoreboard for some early ACM in the skies over Southern California.

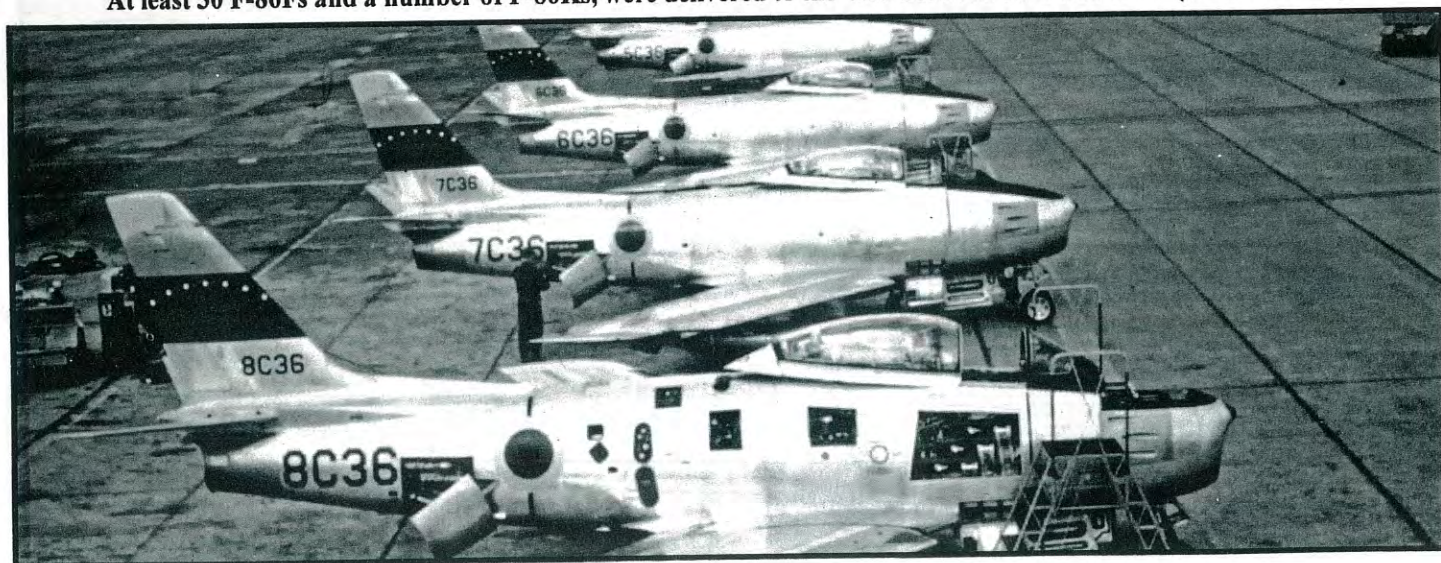
Autonetics Division of North American developed a number of electronic advances for aviation use. They were also involved with surface-to-surface navigational aids used in both the targeting computers of ICBMs as well as the forthcoming Space Shuttle re-entry computers. 'Our' F-86A had a targeting computer installed that indicated whether or not the attacking aircraft had actually pulled the correct lead and was in position for the 'kill'.

So there you have it. Many thanks to Dave Menard for his continuing research into this subject. It's a small piece of the F-86 puzzle but enough small pieces will get the picture finished - maybe!

### Sabres Around The World

F-86Fs line the tarmac at McClellan AFB, CA, in February 1967 prior to being delivered to the Venezuelan Air Force.

At least 30 F-86Fs and a number of F-86Ks, were delivered to the VAF between 1955 and 1960. (credit - USAF)



## No TACAN, No Parrot, No Joy

By R.Y. Costain

After having a very notable Air Guard/Air Force career flying F-94C Starfires, F-89D & J Scorpions, F-102 Delta Daggers, F-100 Super Sabres, A-1 Skyraiders and F-4 Phantoms, R.Y. Costain joined a small band of retired fighter pilots flying for Flight Systems, Inc. (FSI) of Newport Beach, CA. He began this second career by flying Canadair T-33 Silver Stars on a contract with the U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery (ADA) school. The FSI satellite facility servicing this contract was located at El Paso International Airport, TX, which was near the Army's McGregor Range — an ideal setup. Two types of missions were contracted: banner tow for live-fire surface-to-air Vulcan 20 mm training, and high-speed, low-level passes against ADA Hawk and Chaparral missile batteries to provide "enemy" targets for simulated firings. He frequently flew the Sabre Mk5 (QF-86E), in both manned and unmanned scenarios, at White Sands Missile Range, adjacent to Holloman AFB (HMN), in support of Rod Beckett's FSI drone operations. What he didn't know at the time was he would be offered to expand his flying experience with FSI beyond his expectations.

One day Rod called me at our El Paso office and asked if I'd like to ferry a Sabre 6 from FSI's main operating base at Mojave, California to Holloman AFB. I had never flown a Sabre 6. The cockpit layout was somewhat different from the Mk Vs, mainly due to FSI modifications for the Dart mission. Its Orenda 14 engine, powering the Sabre 6, produced about 1500# more push than did the Orenda 10, which powered the Sabre 5 (QF-86E) drones. I decided in a microsecond, and the next day was on my way.

I must say flying that immaculate, newly-painted, high-powered beauty was a thrill. As I remember, its thrust-to-weight ratio came close to that of the F-86H. After I landed at Holloman and taxied to the North Ramp, Rod came out to meet me. He advised me that one of his pilots was grounded, probably permanently, due to a busted physical and a Dart Tow deployment to Langley AFB (LFI) was imminent. He then asked if I'd like to join the Dart Tow team. Two unbelievable opportunities in two days! Of course my response was an enthusiastic "YES," one I never regretted throughout my 13 years with FSI.

Sometime later I was at LFI again (we supported 11 CONUS TAC bases) for the standard 2-week deployment, working with F-15s of the 1st TFW.



RY during his Flight Systems days. (credit JR Alley)

One day the weather was almost at the cancel point, as it went above and below minimums throughout the morning. But after a few range-time "slips" and a suitable forecast, the Command Post gave the go-ahead to launch the Dart mission. The four-ship of Eagles and I launched, and proceeded toward the Air-to-Air (A/A) Range and our respective holding points. After entering the range, which is located over the Atlantic Ocean off the East Coast of Virginia, it became apparent that the thick weather with imbedded thunderstorms would probably spoil our day. We needed an area clear of clouds for our live fire mission. Before long Eagle 1 called "Let's knock it off for weather and RTB" (Return To Base). Shortly thereafter the LFI Command Post called us and told the Eagles to divert to Richmond, as the weather at home plate was deteriorating and rapidly approaching Precision Radar (GCA) minimums. He then asked me what my intentions were. I advised that I was switching over to Langley Radar Approach Control (RAPCON).

Now, dragging that Dart around with a yard of rudder trim in (no centerline tow capability yet) really sucks up the gas. I jettisoned the Dart and its 1300 feet of steel cable, hoping I was still over the range. I was unsure because my TACAN (Tactical Air Navigation System) had broken lock with LFI, and RAPCON did not as yet have me on their radar. I told them due to my fuel state I couldn't make Richmond, so asked what the current conditions were at nearby NAS Oceana. The field was closed, with thunderstorms overhead. I thought of trying to find NASA's Wallops Island Facility where Rod

Beckett had dead-sticked a Sabre 6 a couple of years before. However, it was located near the coast and adjacent to the A/A range which was now well behind me. I thought about trying to find a small airstrip on one of the Virginia "Capes," directly west of the A/A Range, which I had seen on previous missions. However, that runway had seemed to be very short and the weather would no doubt keep me from finding it. I asked RAPCON about the status of those fields; they told me "The Capes" as well as Wallops were clobbered with thunderstorms. I had expected as much. The only choice remaining was to recover at Langley, so I stated this as my intention.

I was then greeted by the news that the LFI TACAN was down, which explained why I had lost lock-on earlier. Additionally, the glide slope was out on the Instrument Landing System (ILS). The storm had taken a toll on LFI's navigation systems. Nevertheless, RAPCON said they should be able to vector me onto final approach for a GCA pickup. As I "rogered" that transmission I figured that due to elapsed time I was probably close to the point where I should be descending to instrument pattern altitude, some 3 miles below. RAPCON told me to "Squawk Flash" with my "Parrot," a radar identification transponder. Then, not seeing me, they told me to squawk "Emergency." My heart sank as they advised they still did not have me on their screen. We went through some other codes, but I finally accepted the fact that my Parrot was "bent."

So I started down without Air Traffic Control clearance, with the thick weather getting thicker, announcing my descent on Guard Channel. It was late afternoon, but the clouds made it almost dark. Now I was really sweating. My fuel state was past "Bingo," and I didn't know where I was. I leveled at 1500 feet and decided upon a west-southwesterly heading, although the turbulence was tossing me around to where I had to put my full attention on just keeping a semblance of aircraft control. Our Sabres had no autopilots.

I thought of the aeronautical definition of "Severe Turbulence," which includes "aircraft momentarily out of control." That was surely the case here. Lightning flashes were brilliant in the darkness, zapping my night vision, as full-up cockpit lighting didn't help much.

Cape Charles is a TACAN site just west of the A/A Range; I knew its frequency, so dialed it in. The azimuth locked up, but no DME lock (Distance Measuring Equipment), so I had no idea how far I



RY ready to fly his first FSI Sabre 6. (credit - R.Y. Costain)

had flown from the Range. "What else could possibly go wrong?" I wondered. I was out of ideas except for one: I got out my Northeast High-Altitude Chart, and with some difficulty folded it so both Cape Charles and Langley were showing. I then continued to fly with my knees and an intermittent left hand. I attempted to hold my pen between the two stations to pick off a rough magnetic heading from Cape Charles' to Langley, and lay out a rough estimate of the distance as well. I decided on a heading that I thought was close enough, so I dialed it into the Course Deviation Indicator, or CDI, about the time the Cape's DME locked in. I could see by it and the CDI, plus its associated needle, that I was Southwest of Langley. I started an easy right turn that would hopefully allow me to align the jet somewhat on course toward LFI, gambling that the GCA controller could pick me up on his screen even without an operational Parrot.

Coming out of the storm. (credit- JR Alley)



Taxing back after a tough flight at Elemendorf in 1995. (credit - R.Y. Costain)

I called Langley GCA on Guard, and they came right up. I was greatly relieved to hear the controller say he had an intermittent skin paint on me, although the heavy rain was making scope interpretation difficult. They must have had their best man on the radar, for he directed me onto final approach about 15 miles out, even with just on-and-off contact. He gave me missed approach instructions which made me smile (grimace?), because even if I had had enough fuel for a missed approach and another try, which was doubtful, I could not imagine repeating the terror of the last 15 minutes. He also advised that an F-15 ahead of me which had not diverted took the departure-end jet barrier after landing, so it would not be available to me. Another comforting thought. If an Eagle could not get stopped, maybe I couldn't

An FSI Sabre 6 at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 1999 (credit - R. Y. Costain)



either. The GCA was not the smoothest one I've ever flown. I broke out of the weather below minimums (who cared about them in this situation?) and right of the runway, but I jinked left, chopped the power and put that Sabre down on some asphalt I thought I might never see again, using a good part of the 11,000' storm-soaked runway to get her stopped. Between intermittent hard braking and hydroplaning I shredded the tread on the right main tire (no anti-skid on the Sabre).

As I taxied to where I thought my parking spot might be, presently occluded by the driving rain, hail, and non-stop cloud-to-ground lightning, I clearly realized that I had just joined the ranks of countless other thankful Sabre pilots who had been brought safely home under adverse circumstances by this marvelous jet. I had to strain to see through the sheets of rain drowning my windscreen, and even then forward vision was very limited. Taxiing was mostly accomplished by looking out each side of the canopy, even to the point of detecting turns ahead. The tower was of no help, as I was in an invisible jet. Soon I spotted my faithful crew chief, Don Lyon, standing in ankle-deep water with arms raised, directing me into the chocks. He appeared to be the only person on the whole flight line. Don was disregarding the frightening and massive electrical storm pummeling the air base, putting mission completion and care of the aircraft and me before self. Had we been on active duty I would have put him in for the Meritorious Service Medal, as he was doing his job relentlessly and with total devotion, in the face of high danger. But then, that was Don.

# USAF Tactics Team

(Circa 1955)

by Boots Blesse & Dan Druen

Air Force emphasis on air tactics had diminished after the end of combat in Korea to the point where it had been all but dropped from the training schedules of the tactical units. This was partly due to some non-standard procedures and some unsafe practices being used during the few Air Combat Maneuvering (ACM) sorties being flown. The results were unwarranted accidents that could have been avoided if proper procedures had been in place. It had become easier not to do and not take the chance.

In late 1954, while at Nellis AFB, then Major Frederick "Boots" Blesse completed a tactics manual entitled "No Guts, No Glory". It encompassed extensive coverage of the entire tactics problem, which provided the basis for comprehensive and safe air tactics training. The manual was an instant success, which prompted the Fighter Division in the Pentagon to request Blesse to tour the Far East tactical units with a tactics demonstration team in an effort to improve aerial combat training in that theater of operation.

The team consisted of Blesse as the leader, Captain Don Pascoe as number two, Captain Pappy Liles as number three, and 1st Lt. Dan Druen as number four.

Later in his book "Check Six", Blesse said the pilots were picked from the already elite group at Nellis. All were combat veterans from Korea with Pappy having some World War II combat as well. The flying time for the group ranged from 3000 to 1600 hours with much of that time in the F-86 Sabre. Druen, the junior ranking member of the flight was put in charge of baggage.

The mission was to visit the 12 F-86 squadrons in Asia and complete a report of the findings when finished. Each wing would select four pilots to fly



Don Pascoe, Boots Blesse, Pappy Liles, Dan Druen

the series of training missions and then these four pilots would be responsible for continuing tactics training after the team's departure. All pilots in each wing would receive the tactics manual briefing presented by the team before any flights were conducted plus a through debriefing upon completion.

The flying portion of the training included four missions starting with Four vs Four and progressing down to Two vs Two. Numerous air engagements were planned for each mission limited only by fuel and time. All of the tactics applications were to be included in the missions. The Fluid Four formation would be primary with the proper fighting wing position for the wingmen and spacing for the element. Split defenses, High-speed yoyo, Low speed yoyo, and a last ditch maneuver would be included if time and the situation warranted it.

Departure from Nellis to Travis for transportation to Japan was in mid-January 1955. The trip over was normal except for Pappy who was given the entire shot quota prior to boarding the Military Airlift

aircraft. His story was he had forgotten to bring his shot record along. Sure he had! Luckily his arms were back to normal before we started flying.

We arrived in Nagoya, Japan and briefed the 5th Air Force operations people before proceeding north to Chitose Air Base to pick up four F-86 F Sabres assigned to us for the trip. After one acceptance flight we were off to Misawa Air Base to brief and fly with our first unit.

All went as planned at Misawa and we were initially blessed with clear weather although the snow covered base let us know winter was there. The weather was still clear when we went into our first flight briefing. When we came out to fly, it was snowing, however lightly. The saying around the base was if you didn't like the weather in Misawa, wait a minute or two. Needless to say, the winter weather was a bit different from what we had been use to in Nevada. It was unusual for us to be flying over snow-covered terrain. When we made our initial landing at the base, we were surprised to be landing between high banks of snow on each side of the runway. The snow clearing machinery had piled the snow so high you could barely see the top of the control tower.

We didn't waste any time in completing our missions with this first unit at Misawa so we could proceed on to warmer weather in the south. We hadn't brought any cold weather gear other than a lightweight flying jacket, which made for cold walk-arounds prior to take-off. However, it was eye opening to see the lack of air-to-air training, which had preceded our visit. The pilots were receptive and eager to continue the program after we left, which made our efforts worthwhile.

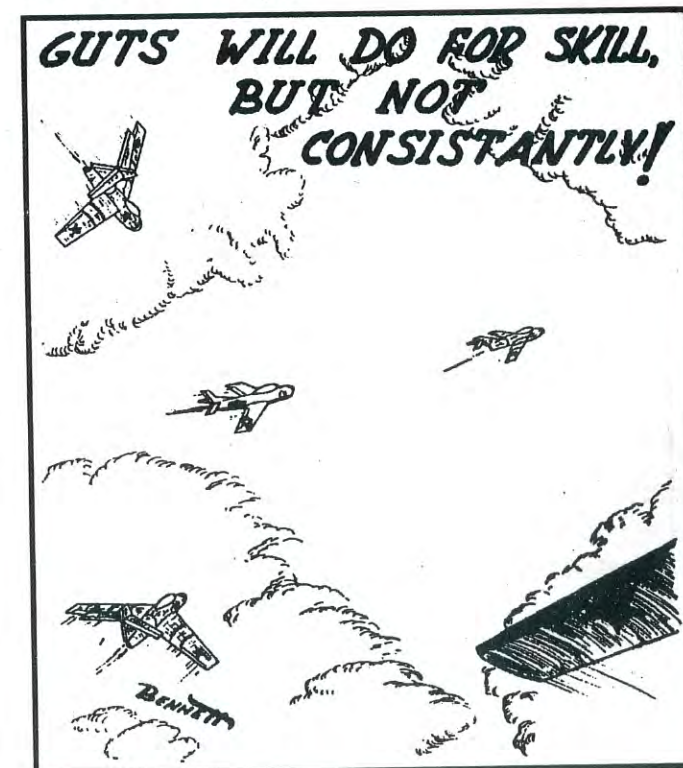
One point that presented itself on our first flying mission was the initial point of engagement. We had briefed we would meet over a certain point on opposing headings, our flight at 25,000 feet with theirs at 26,000 feet to give them an altitude advantage. Apparently the leader of the wing flight didn't believe us and had his flight at 30,000 feet. He didn't even see us when we passed, he was so high. We made it a point in the future to insure

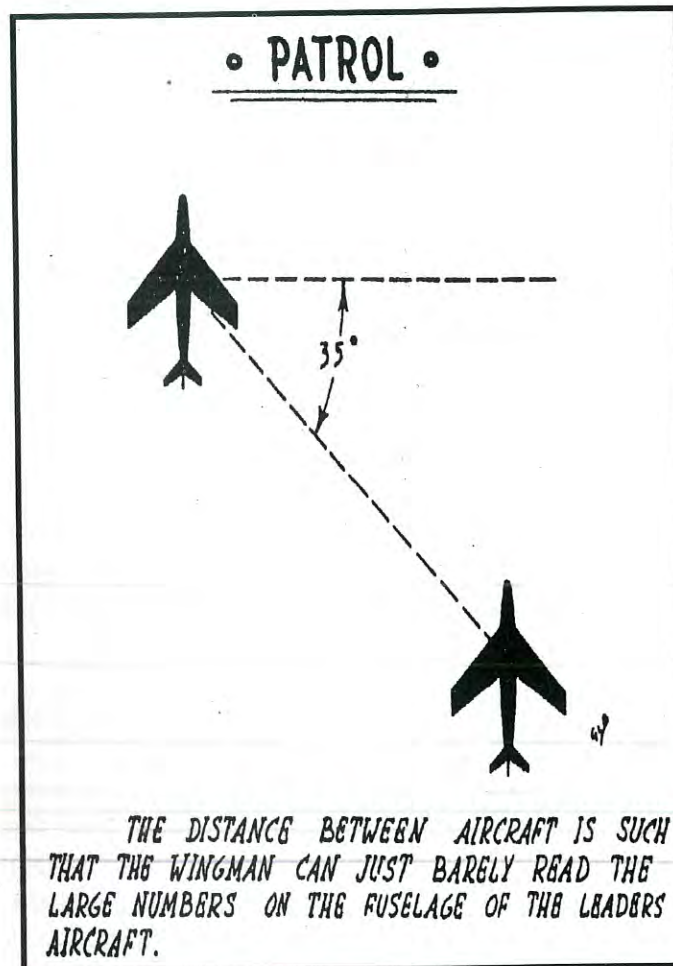
the opposing flights we would be true to our word and be on the heading and altitude briefed. Nothing like getting a jump on the good guys.

Our second base was Itasuki. Our arrival at Itasuki was uneventful with the exception that most of the pilots and planes had been deployed to K-55 in Korea.

To fly into Korea, we were briefed we must first land at K-14, Kimpo, the entry airfield, for we were considered new arrivals in the country. Landing back at Kimpo was a bit nostalgic since we had all flown our combat from there when we were assigned to the 4th Fighter Wing. There was very little activity going on, but not much had changed including the old Base Ops, still in its battered condition, unchanged since the war ended.

Entry procedures didn't take long and we were off to K-55 after a quick jeep trip around the base. Prior to briefing the 8th Wing pilots or beginning any flights in Korea we were invited (?) to the Division Commander's Quarters for an informal meeting. General Momyer's aide met us at the door of a large metal structure, which didn't look like much from the outside. When we entered, we found ourselves in a well-furnished double Quonset hut, which was a surprise to us all. After serving us drinks, the aide informed the general we were waiting.





General Momyer's entrance was dramatic, his first words to Blesse were: "Just what in the H\_\_\_ are you doing here?" No one recalls if Boots got much of an answer out before the general cut him off. He was very specific on making sure we knew the rules of flying close to the North Korean border. There wasn't any way he was going to let anyone, especially four upstarts from Nellis, restart the war. When we left his quarters there was no doubt who was running things, he was impressive. By the way, if any of us took even the first sip of our drink, it must have been before the General entered.

Flying with the 8th Wing pilots was a joy. We zipped through the planned missions with good lessons learned by all. They were the first ones who seemed to have some idea of combat air training. They must have been getting in some practice on their own. Before engaging on each mission we spent the time cruising along the border while we burned our external tanks dry. It was a bit eerie to be flying along the 38th parallel and not turning north like we had done in earlier years.

One interesting feature occurred during our flying in Korea. Pappy lost his airspeed indicator on our first mission and it couldn't be fixed at K-55. They said we would have to wait until we got back to Itasuki. It didn't really cause us any problem; Pappy just landed on number four's wing after each mission. It did however make for some fun times when Pappy would do his over-the-top maneuver after making a defensive break. More than once we were at zero airspeed as we floated on the backside of the roll.

We bid our farewell to Korea, feeling there was hope for a strong ACM program in the Far East Air Force, especially in the 8th Wing. We made our stop in Itasuki to get Pappy's airspeed fixed before heading south to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa.

The flight south to Kadena went well until we touchdown on the runway. On rollout, Pappy started drifting left almost going off the left side of the runway. Pappy was having some unknown difficulty controlling his plane. As it turned out,

his ailerons had gone full left just after touchdown, causing the erratic directional control on the runway. After shutdown the maintenance people found an offset screwdriver lodged in his aileron actuator that must have been there since the aircraft's last inspection. Pappy was indeed fortunate it hadn't jammed his actuator during some of our earlier flying maneuvers.

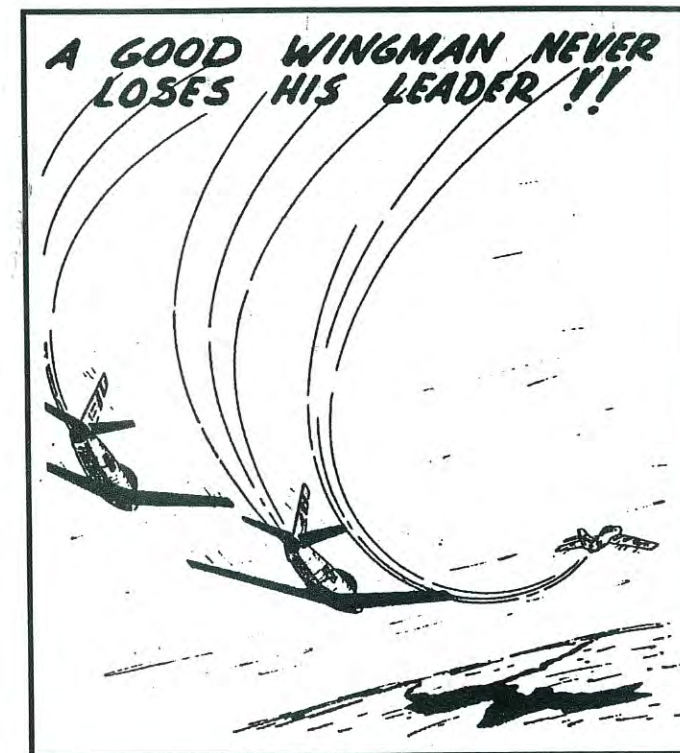
Kadena was our first real indication of the lack of ACM training, which could be blamed on wing leaders. When the Wing Commander came out to meet us he asked if we would be putting "Our Show" on over the field. Blesse was quick to explain that we weren't an acrobatic team and that we would be doing our ACM training away from the field. The Colonel then wanted to know if he could come up in his T-33 and watch. (He wasn't checked out in the Sabre.) Blesse, in his most eloquent explanation since attempting to answer General Momyer's question in Korea, convinced him that if he sat in on the debriefs he would have a much better feel for what we were trying to accomplish.

Basically the training with the Kadena pilots went well. It wasn't their fault they had been lacking any ACM training. The wing pilots we flew with were good and more than willing to take on their training role after we departed. We just hoped they would get the support from up top that was required to have a continuing and meaningful program.

Before leaving for the Philippines we got orders to go to Taiwan and fly with the newly activated 5th fighter wing at Toyon Air Base. It was a new F-86 unit and the Taiwanese Chief of Staff, General Tiger Wong, wanted us to start them off on the right track.

We departed Kadena for Taipei, Formosa, more exact we were headed for Toyon Air Base just outside the capital city. It was our first real over water flight of any length and we didn't want to miss the northern tip of Formosa and end up in China. Therefore all four navigation devices were under great scrutiny so we could assist our leader with his navigational duties.

Upon our arrival at Toyon the Taiwanese Air Force



met us with open arms. Their first impression was we were bringing them four more Sabres for their air force. After explaining we were there at the request of their Chief of Staff, General "Tiger" Wong, we were given VIP treatment. Captain Sam Hollenbeck, the US advisor to the unit set us up in quarters and introduced us to the pilots we would be flying with.

The 5th Fighter Group was the first unit in the Taiwanese Air Force to be equipped with F-86's and they were very proud to have them. Our routine varied slightly from the US wings since we didn't attempt to brief the entire unit on the tactics manual. We concentrated our time with the three Taiwanese pilots, plus Sam who made up the fourth member of their flight. The flying was super since these pilots were well versed in air tactics and we were able to add to their level of expertise. According to the Taiwanese intelligence, when the 5th Group flights took-off and flew training missions in the straights, Migs would usually come up and patrolled their side of the straight. On missions we flew, we climbed out to the north to stay out of the Chinese radar coverage. But, when we turned south to start our training, their radar would pick us up and any Migs patrolling their side would go back over the mainland in order to prevent starting an international incident. We conducted all our

maneuvering within the designated area of operation, which was just off the Taiwanese coastline. It would have been nice if there had been Migs joining us, it would have made for a perfect training situation.

Prior to our departure for Clark Air Base in the Philippines, the Taiwanese held a big party for us in downtown Taipei. The setting was in a large arena, which could have contained two regulation size basketball courts. We were seated at a large round table in the very center of the open area. The menu included much rice wine and some dishes not available in any Chinese restaurant we had ever visited. It was a wonderful send-off after a week's worth of great flying.

The distance from the northern tip of Formosa to Clark Air Base in the Philippines was going to stretch the range of our Sabres. So Blesse was insistent on getting a heading of 180-degrees for an on-course climb out. The Taiwanese tower operator was insistent on passing the exact departure instructions he had been provided from his Flight Control. The conversation went something like this:

Blesse: Toyon tower, Blue Flight ready for take-off, requesting on course climb out.

Tower: Roger Brue Fright, you are cleared for take-off and climb on a heading of 360-degrees. Report back over the field at 20,000 feet.

Blesse: Negative tower, we can't go north. We need an on course climb out to the south.

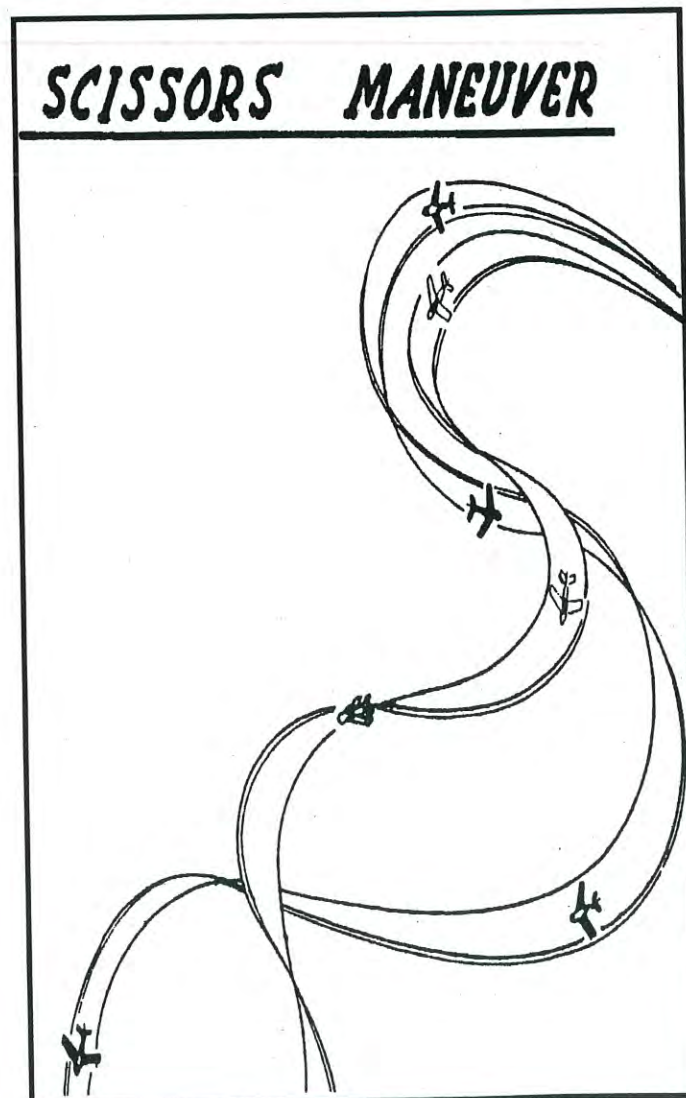
Tower: Roger Brue Fright, cleared to climb on course to the south. Report back over field at 20,000 feet.

Blesse: Negative tower, we can't report back over the field, we must climb on course.  
(After a lengthy pause.)

Tower: OK, Brue Fright go ahead and take off and go where you want. Tower out.

Except for one external tank that didn't feed out entirely on Pascoë's Sabre, the trip to Clark was uneventful.

The squadron at Clark was more than receptive to our program and Blesse's "No Guts, No Glory" manual. They had done little or zero ACM training and were eager to fly and learn. Since the squadron was a single unit on the base and also the last unit we would be working with, the briefing and contact with the pilots was a little less formal. We were able to include a few more pilots on the flying portion, which spread the on-hands approach a bit deeper in the unit. Our few days at Clark went well and before we knew it our mission had been completed. Now it was time to return the aircraft to Nagoya Air Base in Japan and head back to Nellis. Like a horse with the bit in his mouth we departed Clark early in the



before noon. Then it was on to Kadena for another refueling stop before flying the last leg of our journey into Japan.

Our departure from Kadena was late in the afternoon, which dictated a night landing at Nagoya. A night landing wasn't to be a problem, but we were surprised when we started turning on navigation and cockpit lighting at 25,000 feet en route. There wasn't an aircraft that had more than one navigation light. One had a left wing tip light, another a right wing tip light, and one with a light behind the canopy. The cockpit lights were even sparser; the only saving factor, we had picked up flashlights before departing Kadena; a prudent decision, to say the least. It was difficult flying formation with minimum lighting, but we landed four very tired F-86 Sabres at the Nagoya airfield.

We had made the roundtrip without scratching a bird. Each of our write-ups read the same: Flown hard, check for airworthiness.

It wasn't all noses to the grindstone during our visits to the various bases. We played a couple of rounds of golf on sand greens, once on Okinawa and the other in the Philippines. Putting was certainly different. We played a lot of ping-pong and one game of pool. Blesse didn't win the pool game. We flew to Hong Kong in a gooney bird operated by the MAAG group on Formosa. It was a pleasant overnight trip. We flew some worthwhile missions and imparted knowledge we hoped would increase fighter capability in the Far East. And, we had done it safely. We believed we had accomplished the mission as it was planned and we felt the pilots with whom we came in contact felt the same.

After our return to Nellis, Maj. Blesse was asked to give a courtesy briefing to General Roberts who was the Nellis commander. He described the briefing this way "I pulled no punches and let the fault for the lack of air training fall where it belonged - with the Wing Commanders." General Roberts asked him if he really wanted to do that, indicating that some senior officers would be very unhappy with this and Blesse could suffer detrimental effects to his own career. His response to the General was, "I felt a responsibility to accurately report our findings. The Air Force spent a lot of money sending us over there and if my career has to suffer a little to do the job right then that's okay with me."

Later in his book, Check Six, Blesse said that after submitting a thorough report of our findings, some significant changes occurred. Not the least of which was the firing of two wing commanders and the changing of dozens of jobs throughout the command. He said he checked behind doors for weeks.

One positive occurred a month or so after our visit to the 8th Wing in Korea. One of the four pilots we flew with was attacked by a Mig-15 in the skies over Korea. He shot the Mig down.

Can't be all-bad!



## Herr von Fredricksy "Clancy"

From Howard Meyers

During a short outing to Munich for several maintenance personnel from the 81st Group, we acquired a certain Boxer pup. When the time came to return to England, I was forewarned as to the problems involved in clearing UK Customs authorities, let alone bringing an animal in without proper papers.

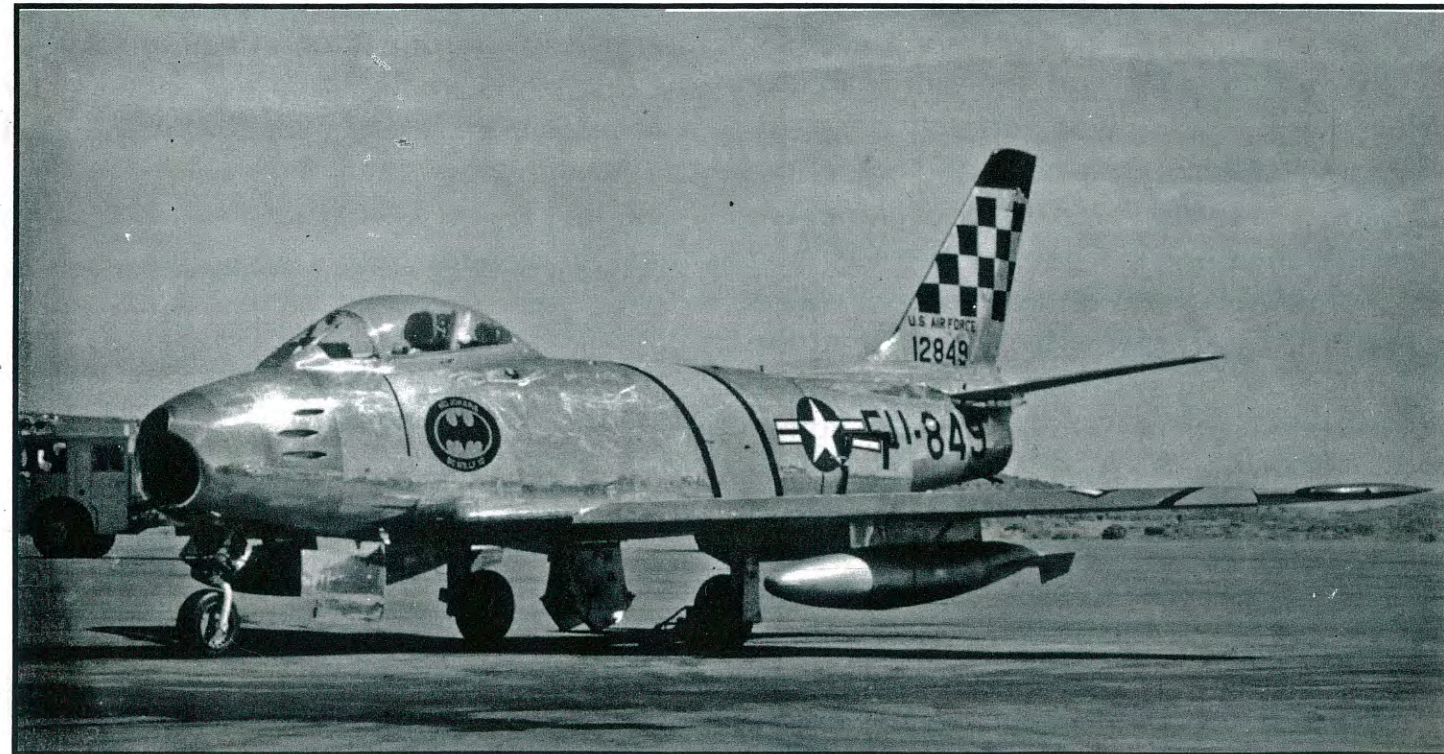
Not knowing what to do with the six month old Boxer pup, who quickly became the favorite of all the personnel involved, we decided to place the pup in the aft enclosed toilet area behind a locked door in the C-47 we took to Munich. We hoped Clancy wouldn't make any noise during the customs head count at Manston. After many agonizing minutes during our short stay, it seemed as if Clancy sensed the strained atmosphere and never made a sound. The flight back to our base - RAF Bentwaters - was short, and fortunately nothing was said about the affair. Thus started a decade long love affair with Clancy.

One of the interesting features of Herr von Fredricksy, now named Clancy, was his ability to socialize only with Air Force personnel, ignoring anyone out of uniform. Clancy remained a faithful family member of slightly more than ten years before succumbing to heart worm disease.

A highly polished Sabre 6 restored in 51st FIG markings is seen at the Reno Air Races in September 1991.



(above) Howard Meyers and 'Clancy' at RAF Bentwaters.  
(below) Clancy relaxes in the intake of an 81st FIG F-86F at RAF Bentwaters. Clancy was Meyers pet for over 10 years.  
(credit - Howard Meyers)



A 71st FIS F-86D in full afterburner during a night 'scramble' from Greater Pittsburgh Airport in 1954. The 71st FIS transferred from Pittsburgh to Wurtsmith AFB, Michigan during the Project Arrow moves of August 1955.  
(credit - B/Gen. William Shields) .

Lt. Bill Parker and Lt. Bill Shields discuss intercept tactics following a mission from Wurtsmith AFB in 1956.  
(credit- B/Gen. William Shields)



"The Imp" was the personal mount of the Commander of the 40th FIS based at Yokota AB, Japan in 1955. The 40th FIS flew the F-86D until 1960 when they transitioned into the Convair F-102A Delta Dagger.



# CLARK AFB, CIRCA 1954

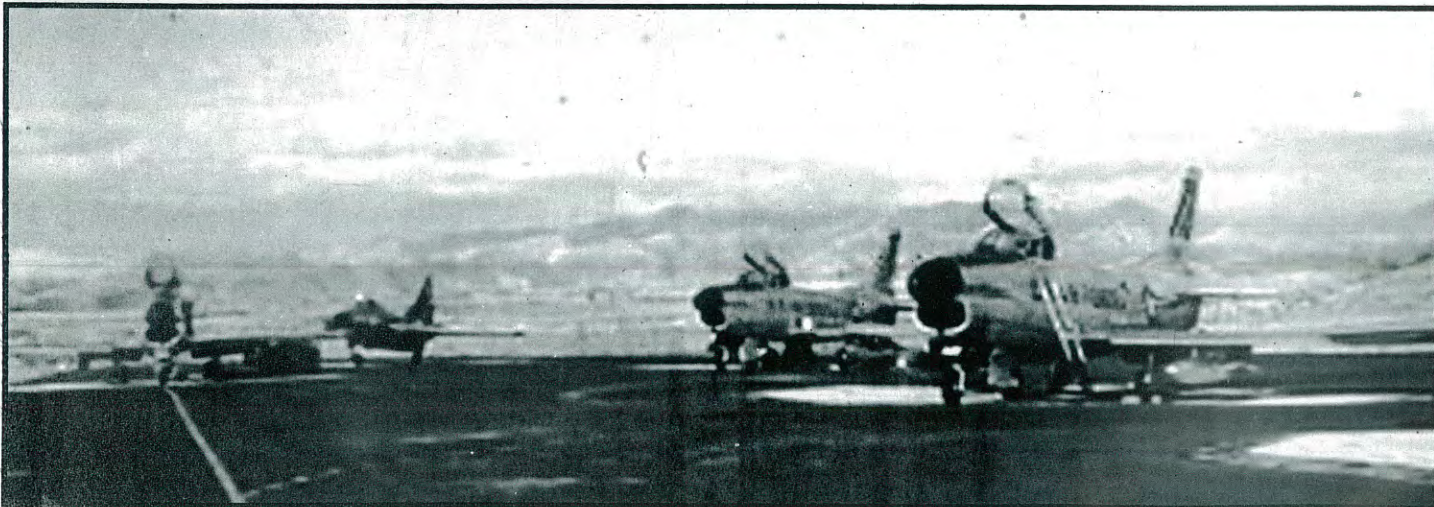


Arnold Hogarth stands next to a 26th FIS F-86D, serial 52-10001, wearing sharks teeth at Clark AB, Philippines, during 1956. The 26th FIS flew the F-86D from 1954 until 1959 when the unit was deactivated and the aircraft were transferred to the 509th FIS. (credit - Arnold Hogarth)



Main Gate at Clark AB, Philippines, in November 1954. (credit - Arnold Hogarth)

The 26th FIS alert pad at Clark AB in 1955, when they shared the ramp with a US Navy F9F-6 Cougar unit. (credit - Arnold Hogarth)

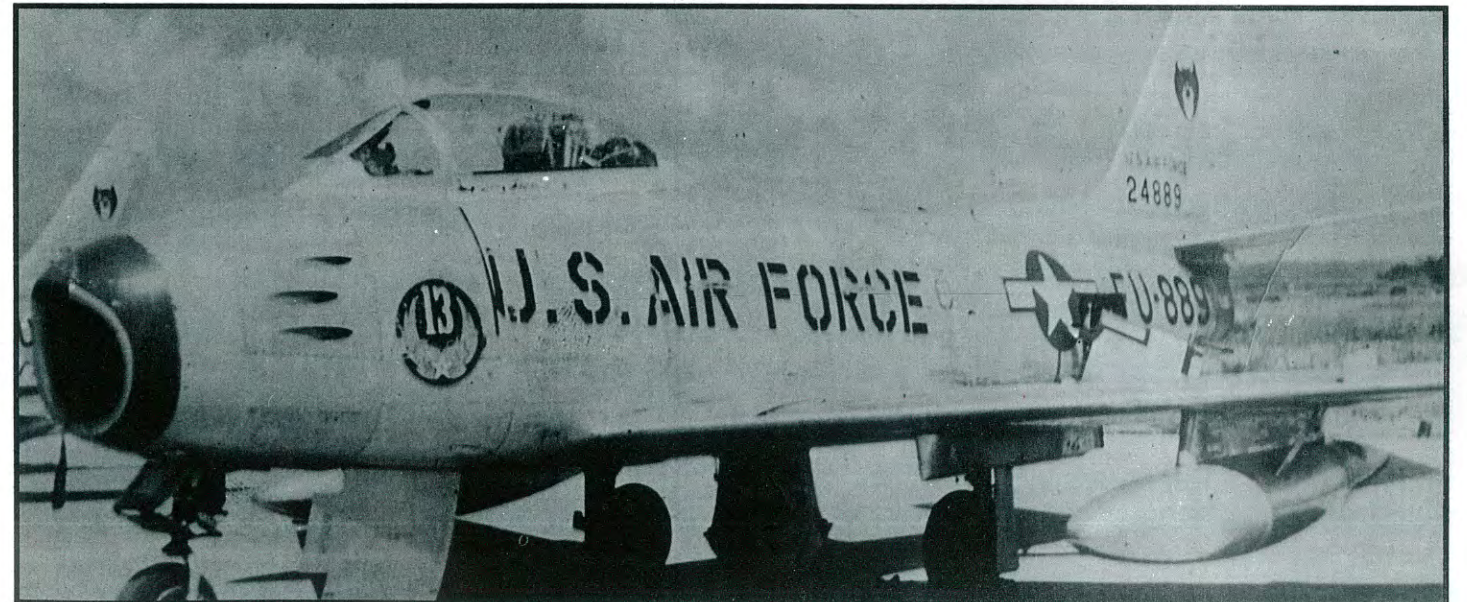


The 26th FIS parking ramp at Clark AB in 1955. The 26th FIS was part of the 51st FIG. During the Korean War, the 16th and 25th Squadrons were transferred to the combat in Korea. The 26th Squadron remained on air defense duty at Clark. (credit - Arnold Hogarth)



26th FIS pilots (L-R) Barry Falgoust, Arnold Hogarth, Kemp, and Simonson, at Naha AB, Okinawa in June 1954. The 26th moved from Naha to Clark in July 1955. (credit - Arnold Hogarth)

Jerry Houser flew the "Urgin Virgin", a 44th FBS F-86F when the squadron was deployed to Formosa in 1955. The 44th was known as the vampire bats as indicated by the tail marking. (credit - Jerry Houser)



## Maryland Air Guard F-86Hs



Maj. Walter Somerville flew this F-86H in September 1964 when he was CO of the 104th TFS, Maryland ANG. This was the first F-86H that member Andy Michalak flew. The 104th was based at Glenn L. Martin Airport, Middle River, MD. (credit - Andrew Michalak)

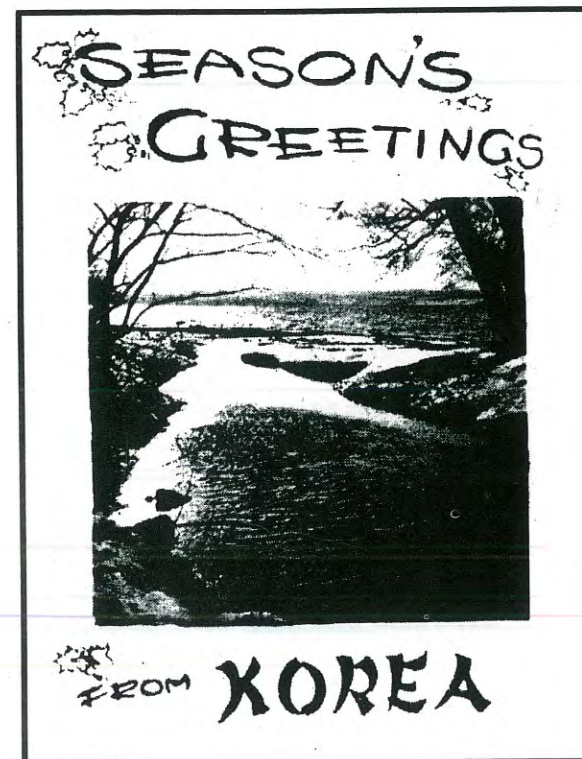
June 1968. Capt. Andy Michalak holds his one year old son Andrew, Jr., following a flight. The 104th was activated for duty caused by the North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo. (credit - Andrew Michalak)



In January 1966, the nicely polished, natural metal F-86Hs of the 104th TFS were given a coat of tan and green camouflage paint, called for by Tactical Air Command directive. Andy Michalak has just delivered the airplane from Savanna, Georgia back to the Glenn L. Martin Airport. (credit - Andrew Michalak)



## Happy Holidays



**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**F-86 SABRE PILOTS ASSOCIATION**  
**EIGHTTEENTH REUNION, April 10, 11, 12, 2011**  
**GOLD COAST HOTEL & CASINO, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**

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 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
 SPOUSE/GUEST, (FIRST & LAST) \_\_\_\_\_

EVENT	FEE	NO. IN PARTY	TOTALS
<b>SUNDAY, APRIL 10, 2011:</b>			
REGISTRATION: Starts at 10 AM (REQUIRED FOR ALL)	\$50.00	x _____	= \$ _____
<b>RAFFLE TICKETS (6 for \$5)</b>	\$5.00	x _____	= \$ _____
COCKTAIL PARTY (5PM to 7PM) Hors D' Oeuvres & Cash Bar	\$13.00	x _____	= \$ _____
<b>MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2011:</b>			
NELLIS WEAPONS SCHOOL BRIEFING (0900 to 1200) (Be at Bus for Departure @ 0730)	\$12.00	x _____	= \$ _____
LADIES LUNCHEON (11:30 to 2PM)	\$20.00	x _____	= \$ _____
BUFFET (6PM TO 8PM) cash bar	\$35.00	x _____	= \$ _____
<b>TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2011:</b>			
BRUNCH (9AM to 11AM)	\$13.00	x _____	= \$ _____
BANQUET (6:30PM to 11pm) cash bar Prime Rib of Beef	\$40.00	x _____	= \$ _____
Chicken Cordon Bleu	\$35.00	x _____	= \$ _____
			\$ _____
<b>REUNION FEES TOTAL</b>			

**MAKE YOUR TRAVEL AND ROOM RESERVATIONS EARLY.** Call the GOLD COAST room Reservations @ 1-888-402-6278 or web site <http://www.goldcoastcasino.com/groups>. Identify yourself with the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association and use GROUP CODE "1F86C04" to receive the \$49 room rate. All reservations must be received the GOLD COAST by Wednesday MARCH 9, 2011.  
 Mail completed form and check to: F-86 Sabre Pilots Association  
 P.O. Box 34423  
 Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423

**WE NEED VOLUNTEERS,** Ladies and gentleman are needed to assist in registration processing. Please indicate availability by number volunteering in your party \_\_\_\_\_.

**18<sup>th</sup> F-86 SABRE PILOTS**  
**ASSOCIATION REUNION**  
**April 10, 11, & 12 2011**  
**GOLD COAST HOTEL, LAS VEGAS NEVADA**

The 18<sup>th</sup> F-86 Sabre Pilots Association reunion will be held at the Gold Coast as the 17<sup>th</sup> reunion was in 2009. Register early and avoid the rush. If you register after March 26, 2011 a fee of \$25 will be charged. If you have to cancel please contact J.R. Alley at 702-363-9880 email [alleyoop3@cox.net](mailto:alleyoop3@cox.net), Jerry Johnson at 702-458-7863 email [jerdot56@cox.net](mailto:jerdot56@cox.net), Pat Hughes at 702-870-4600 email [hugpat@aol.com](mailto:hugpat@aol.com). **Make sure you get a verbal or written confirmation of your cancellation.** If you have last minute problems you may cancel up to 12:00 noon PST Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and get a full refund. No refunds after that time.

Making and canceling of room reservations is your responsibility. You can book your room reservation by calling the Gold Coast Hotel (888) 402-6278 or on-line, <http://goldcoastcasino.com/groups>. Identify yourself as a member of the "F-86 Sabre Pilots Association" and group code "1F86C04". Cut-off date for room reservations using our guaranteed group discount, \$49 per day (\$69 in 2009) is Wednesday, March 9, 2011. After that date, the rooms may cost more.

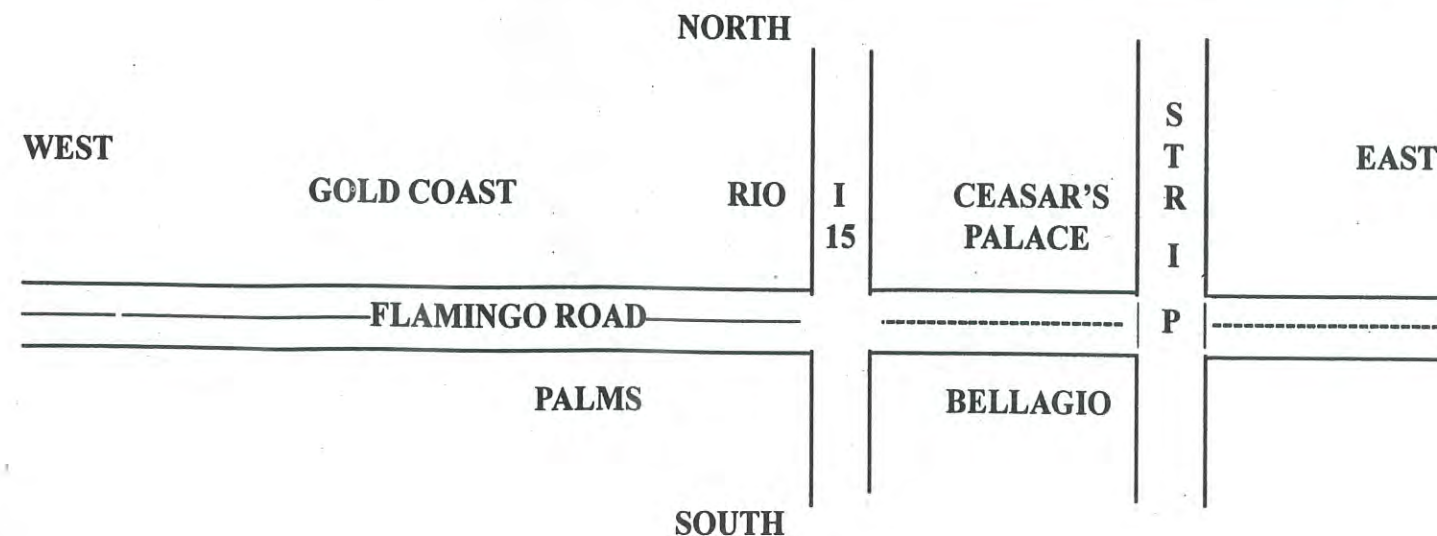
The cost of food and service has risen over 20%, but with the reduced room rates and other savings we are able to keep the overall cost of the 18<sup>th</sup> Reunion, to each of you, below that of 2009. There will be pay-as-you-go bars and drink tickets will not be provided.

Sign-in starts 10 AM Sunday April 10th, followed by a Cocktail Party 5PM to 7:00 PM. For other events see the registration form.

We will be voting on a new Board of Governors and President on Tuesday, so please attend the membership meeting. If you are interested in being on the Board of Directors contact Pat Hughes (702) 870-4600. If you are interested in running for President call J.R. Alley (702) 363-9880.

The Super Sabre Society reunion will be at the Gold Coast following ours as it was before. That arrangement worked well last time and many of our members, belonging to both groups, will again be able to participate in both events during the 2011 reunions.

**DON'T MISS THIS REUNION. BOB HOOVER WILL BE OUR GUEST SPEAKER!!!!**



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## 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 membership is due for renewal. Dues are \$25/1 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?** Since we ID'd one of our very tough "What Is It?" Sabres (see article inside), we decided to rerun another one that has escaped our research entirely. This F-86E, #51-2750, has a VERY large bulge under the forward fuselage. It is quite wide and has about a 4-6 inch hole in the front. On the fuselage is the ARDC badge with another badge on the tail. Interestingly, although the F-86E is unarmed, there are 3 B-29 'kills' painted on the old gun blast panel! So what is it? Send your answer to Editor, SabreJet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, OH 44721, or email [sabreclsx@aol.com](mailto:sabreclsx@aol.com).

