

Sabre Jet Classics



Volume 20, Number 2

Fall 2012



*inside –Reunion 19 Registration
Info & newsletter, Sabre Dancers Team,
F-86L/T-33 Collision, MiGs & T-Bird &
Zulu Birds, more!*

SabreJet Classics

Vol. 20, number 3
Fall 2012
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(front cover) A 514th FIS F-86D on the ramp at Manston RAF Base in the mid-1950s. The Sabre is assigned to the Squadron CO as denoted by the blue/white/blue bands around the fuselage. (credit - Drury Callahan)

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Larry Davis

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Alonzo J. Walter, USAF 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,
Phone: (330)493-4122,
email - 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 Association,
3737 N. Campbell Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89129
Phone: (702)363-9880,
email - alleyoop3@cox.net.**

the president's notebook

This year has passed quickly and it is time for the Winter issue of the SabreJet Classics to be out. Again, Kudos to Larry Davis for his momentous efforts to get back on schedule. I think I can say, positively, that you will be reading this issue before Christmas. With that said, I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and hope you all have a wonderful and Happy New Year. One thing that will make it a Happy 2013 is we will be having another great reunion this coming April 7, 8 and 9 and I hope as many of you as possible will attend this one.

As for my comments concerning the usual admin items, I was going to pass this time. However, I have had a flood of magazines forwarded by the P.O. after the Summer issue was mailed. I have received nearly thirty forward notices. I thought after the large

number of forwards after the Spring issue there wouldn't be so many this time. Anyway folks, in your moving plans make sure you send us your new address. It ensures you continue to get our great magazine and it saves us additional postage money.

I have had to make a major change in our Reunion 19 Schedule of events. The changes are required to accommodate our "Aces Over Vegas" event that cannot be conducted on Monday the 8th and will be on Tuesday the 9th instead. For the details of the changes see the centerfold pages of this issue. For those who have already registered, there will no change in events and prices, just the day. This change of events may be of interest to our members who belong to the Super Sabres and usually attend only on our banquet night. They can come a bit early and attend our "Aces Over Vegas" event at Nellis Tuesday morning.

For your convenience, Larry is posting those members who have

registered to attend the reunion. I urge all of you who are planning to attend and those of you who are not sure to make that decision to attend and register as soon as you can. That helps smooth out the work load and gives us better planning data to use for our events, especially our Nellis event which is the most complex. We will need to know for the number of buses, to determine the size of briefing room (Weapons School or Red Flag) and bleacher seats for the flight line show. Hope to see a whole lot of you next April.

God Bless Sabre Pilots
God Bless Our Troops
God Bless America

J.R. Alley
President

FOLDED WINGS

Paul Bennett, July 8th, 2012

Maj.Gen. Frederick C. "Boots" Blesse, October 31st, 2012

Jason R. Bretlinger, January 20th, 2011

Phillip Geib, August 27th, 2011

Charles E. Goodwin, October 14th, 2009

Emmet 'Sam' Herron, January 19th, 2012

Richard D. Moore, July 6th, 2012

Phillip A. Norton, February 13th, 2010

Arthur L. O'Conner, June 13th, 2012

Milton L. Riggs, February 2nd, 2012

Ernest H. Taylor, February 28th, 2012

Alton James Thogerson, July 12th, 2012

Chester L. Van Etten, April 30th, 2012

James G. Waugh, June 2nd, 2012

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from the editor

Good afternoon guys. It is Election Day and I'll be waiting on the results with the rest of you. I hope everyone is a winner.

Can you believe it? The Reunion is almost upon us. Please make sure you take the time to read JRs newsletter and then make your reservations for the 19th Reunion, which will take place April 7/8/9, 2013 at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas. I look forward to meeting with you guys again.

This issue of your magazine is just chock full of little anecdotes sent in by you the members. One of the stories – “8 Seconds To Go!” – will be continued next month as we hear the other side of the story from the F-86 pilot that hit the T-33.

But with that we are really getting to the bottom of the barrel regarding new stories. We were fortunate enough to have Houston Tuel broach a subject regarding the Sabre Dancers team that led to a full story about that team of 27th FIS pilots.

So if you have short story or even some notes about something that happened during you days of flying the F-86, send it along to me at the address in the front of this magazine. I can't do it without you.

Sadly, there is bad news as another of the Sabre Aces has passed away – MajGen. “Boots” Blesse. And another Ace and personal friend is in bad shape – Ralph Parr. He will be in my prayers as will the families and friends of all those that folded their wings and flew west.

That's all for now.

Larry Davis editor

An Ace and his record. This F-86A from the 71st FIS at March AB, set a World Speed Record when Capt. Dick Creighton flew from San Francisco to LA on Armed Forces Day, 30 May 1950, Capt. Creighton would become the 4th Jet Ace of the Korean War in November 1951. (credit – BrigGen. Robin Olds)



E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Board of Directors

Pat Hughes, Chairman
hugpat@aol.com

Glen Carus, Director
gcarus@falconsresidents.org

Sam Hollenbeck, Director
samhollenbeck@sbcglobal.net

Bob 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 & Treasurer
Jerdot56@cox.net

Bill Weiger, Webmaster
WEBMASTER@SABRE-PILOTS.ORG

Web site
SABRE-PILOTS.ORG

Polly Winesett
Computer Desk Center
pawinesett@aol.com

To the editor

From Garth Mawhinney

I received my issue of SabreJet Classics (vol 20, no. 2) today and just thought I'd comment on the article “Deep Sixing A Sabre 6”

I spent a few years flying the Canadair F-86 Mk VI (Sabre 6) at Zweibrucken, Germany, and in France during 1961-63. In the photos on pages 14 & 15 (aircraft N89FS), I see that the aircraft has wing fences. The RCAF Sabre VI did not have wing fences. It had leading edge slats. It also had a higher thrust engine.

Is this an anomaly with the aircraft at Tracor Flight Systems – a Mk 6 fuselage with a Mk 5 wing – or were the aircraft really Mk 5s?

A little research by JR Alley, our President and another former Tracor pilot, brought the following response.

Good question and observation. Bob Laidlaw, the boss at Flight Systems, Inc., did not want the slat wings on the Sabre 6s. He thought they would cause more problems than good when he bought them in Canada from Dave McEwen. I think Bob had a slat stick on a final approach turn and almost lost the bird. He had the wings changed to those of the Mk 5, i.e. wing fences on hard leading edges. Of course the Mk 6 still had the bigger Orenda 14 engine, 7250 lbs of thrust installed, not rated uninstalled as with many other engines.

I personally did not agree with the hard wing vs. the slatted wing change. The slats and the lower landing speeds would have made operations out of the shorter civilian runways much safer due to lower landing speeds. Also, they would have saved a lot of money replacing brakes. We had a very good maintenance team and they could well handle the lubrication and the need for smooth operating slats.

As a result of the wing changes that Bob made, we had to go into the Pilots Handbook and interpolate all the landing and performance data to get the correct numbers for the '6' with the more powerful engine. The owners of several of the Mk 6s that were bought from FSI, had the slats reinstalled.

JR Alley
1500 hrs flying Mark5s/6s with FSI

from David Menard & Andy Meyer

Re; the photo of Robin Olds' headstone in vol. 20, no. 2. It was taken by MGen. Craig Collins, (Ret), who was at the USAF Academy several years ago. He was attending his AFA Class Reunion. He and several classmates decided to visit Robin's grave and in the process they took the photo.

From Bob Faux

Great article (The F-86H Deployment, Berlin, October 1962 in vol 20, no. 2) by “Windy” as he was known then (Bob Windoffer). The group photo was posed at a reunion held on Cape Cod, 13-15 September 1998. It was a retake of the original photo taken at Phalsbourg in 1962.

From Dick Thurlow

My good friend Lt/Col Harry Payne, sent me the article concerning the paint job on Col. George Lavin's F-86H. Harry & I were stationed at George AFB and he remembered that I (a Sgt. At the time.) was the one that painted his airplane.

I believe that the plane you show it not Col. Lavin's as the striping around the center of his airplane was that of the three squadron colors. The planes that we painted with solid colors were that of each squadron. I remember Lavin's very clearly as I worked on it until 3am for his cross country trip the next day. I further remember that he got me out of bed that morning because his name wasn't painted on the canopy. I had to paint it on while he waited impatiently.

I also remember that while “ole George, as Frosty Sheridan states, was known as “Ravin” Lavin, but we enlisted men knew him as “slavin” Lavin. And yes, we did hear that the top brass were more than a little put out at the “Flying Circus” as some had come to see that bird.

The Sabre Dancers Team

After the photo of F-86A #48-184 was printed in the "What Is It? Section of SabreJet Classics 20-1, we received a number of notes and emails about the airplane and the Sabre Dancers team.

They included the following from **Houston Tuel**:

I was in the 94th FIS from 1950 until late 1951. At no time were the "Sabre Dancers" part of the 94th. They were organized by the 27th FIS and flown by 27th pilots.

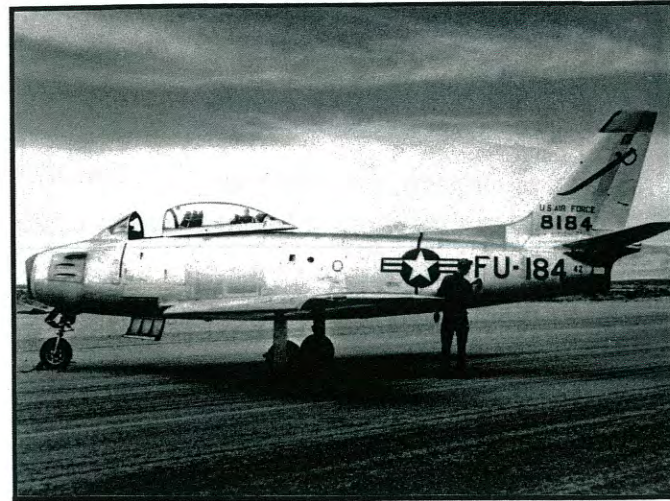
I'm sure the confusion arises from the fact that for many years a flight of four F-86As from the 94th in an echelon formation, were shown on the internet (and many publications) and wrongly identified as the "Sabre Dancers". I was no. 3 in this flight. The others were Capt. Donald P. 'Buck' Buchanan, Lt. Charles 'Peaches' Rinehart, and Lt. Ralph Ashby.

The notes from Houston Tuel resulted in research that brought the following results regarding the "Sabre Dancers" flight demonstration team.

Sometime in the Fall of 1949, the members of the 27th Fighter Squadron, 1st Fighter Wing, made the decision to form a flight demonstration team. There would be five members of the team – four would fly precision formation flight maneuvers, while a fifth would fly a single plane show. Since the aircraft that they flew was the North American F-86A Sabre, the name of the team was a natural – "Sabre Dancers". And all would be pilots in the 27th FS.

The first "Sabre Dancer" team was made up of the following – Capt. Dwight Beckham – Lead; Lt. Clement Bittner – Left Wing; Lt. Russell Taliferro – Right Wing and Solo; with Lt. Mervin Taylor in the Slot. Lt. Robert

The Sabre Dancers team during a December 1949 practice formation flight. The team was formed at March AFB in late 1949. All the aircraft and pilots came from the 27th FS, later designated an FIS. (credit – USAF)



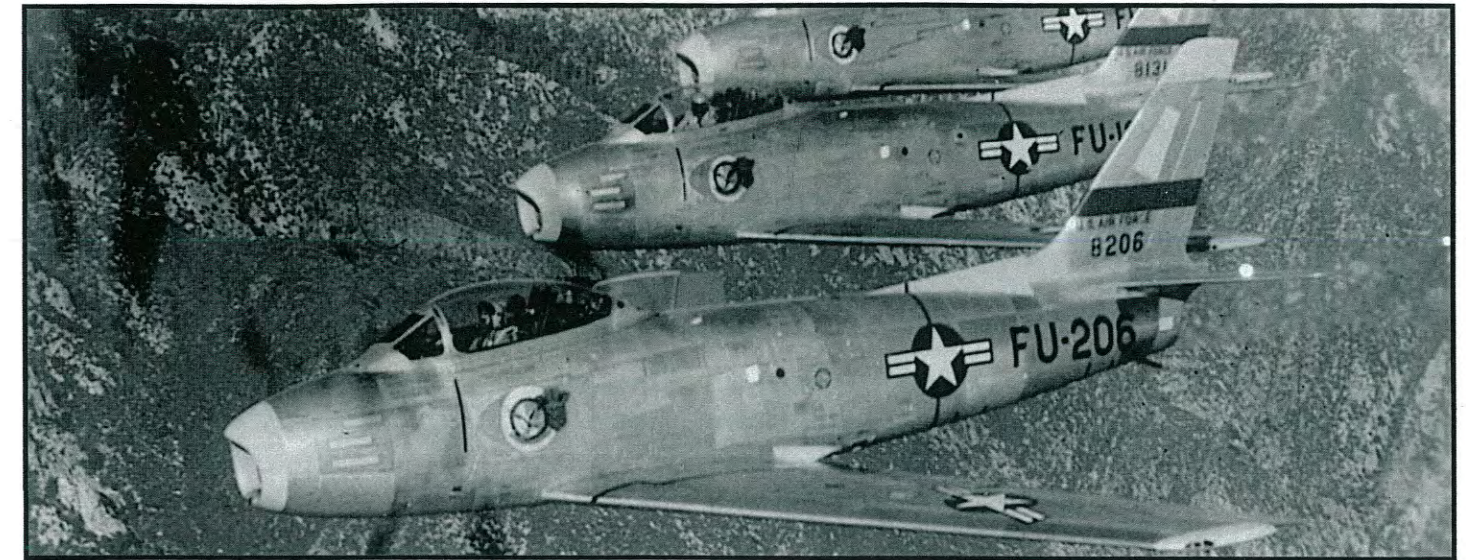
The photo that started it all appeared as the "What Is It? For issue 20-2. (credit – John Henderson)

McCormick flew the spare ship and filled in on Right Wing when Lt. Taliferro flew the Solo show.

Training throughout December 1949 and January 1950, the team practiced for hours on end. It was back-breaking work handling the F-86A in close formation at 650 mph. On Monday, 25 January 1950, the "Sabre Dancers" put on their first show for personell at March AFB. The initial show lasted for about 30 minutes, and ended with what is now the traditional "Bomb Burst".

The flight started at around 10,000 feet, when Capt. Beckham pushed over and started for the deck. Just above the March runway at speeds approaching the Sound Barrier, the flight pulled out and made a power ascent. At the top, all four Sabres suddenly peeled off in different directions, streaming smoke - an inverted 'bomb burst'. The crowd went wild.

And that was just the start. The first 'official' show for the public was 20 May 1950 for the March AFB Armed



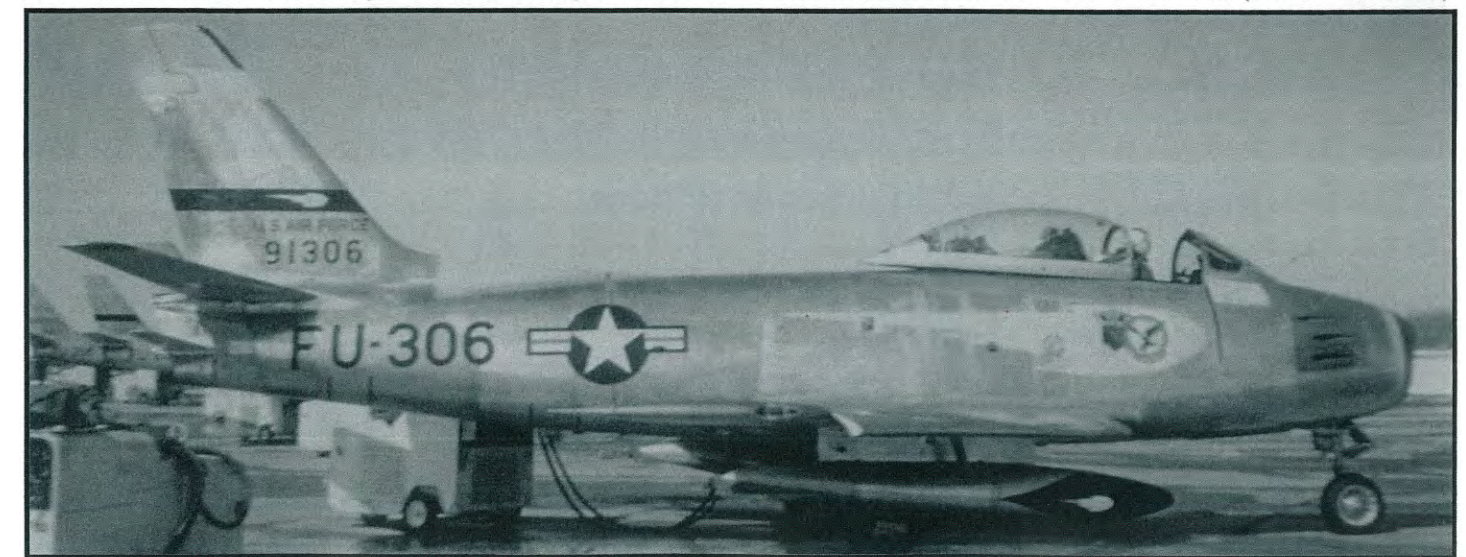
The Sabre Dancers over Southern California in early 1950. From the front – Capt. Dwight Beckham – Lead; Lt. Clement Bittner – L Wing; Lt. Russell Taliferro – R Wing; and Lt. Mervin Taylor flew Slot. All four Sabres are block -48 models with the gun "doors". (credit – USAF)

Forces' Day celebration. Then the team flew cross-country to Eglin AFB to take part in the Joint Operation Control Demonstration. In the stands was President Harry Truman, Louis Johnson, SecDef; Stuart Symington, Air Force Secretary; the Secretary of the Navy; Mr. Brooke Claxton, Canadian Minister of Defense; 12 congressmen; and all the Cabinet members. When the team landed, they were given a standing ovation by everyone in attendance.

And so it went throughout the Spring of 1950, until North Korea invaded South Korea on 25 June 1950. On 15 August 1950, the 27th (now) Fighter Interceptor Squadron moved to Griffis AFB, NY. And this is where the story gets a bit muddy.

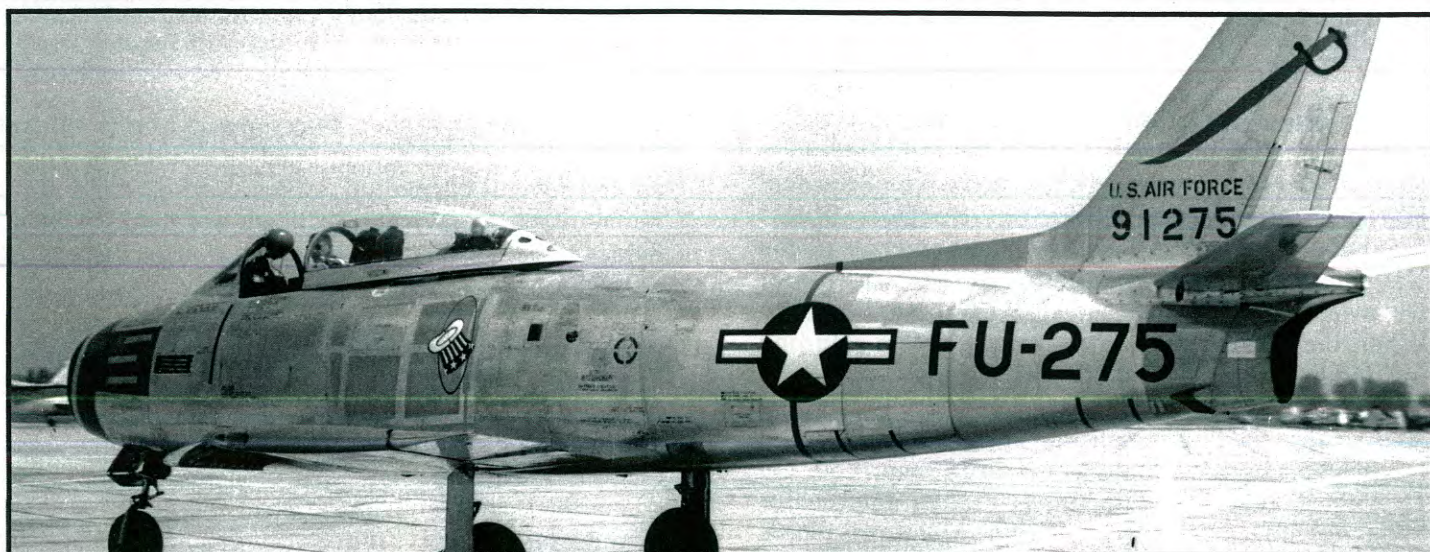
When the 27th went to Griffis, the personell in the 71st FIS decided to try their hand at the aerobatic team thing. They formed a team and even took the name "Sabre

A 27th FIS F-86A at Griffis AFB, NY, in 1951. Following the start of the Korean War in June 1950, USAF moved the 27th FIS to Griffis AFB, near Rome, NY, where Capt. Beckham attempted to restart the Sabre Dancers team but it was short-lived. (credit – Irv Clark)





Members of the 27th FIS pose in front of a very gaudily painted 27th FIS F-86A at Griffis AFB in 1951. The 27th FIS remained at Griffis until 1959, at which time they moved to Loring AFB. (credit - Larry Davis collection)



A 94th FIS F-86A taxis to the active runway at George AFB in 1951. The red sabre painted on the tail is what is confusing to Air Force historians, who normally assume that to be the marking of the Sabre Dancers team. (credit - Peter Bowers)

This photo was always 'assumed' to be the Sabre Dancers, but Houston Tuel flying no. 3 in the formation, notes that was incorrect, and that the 94th FIS had nothing to do with the Sabre Dancers team. He notes that this flight was (from the front) Lt Ralph Ashby; Houston Tuel; 'Peaches Rinehart; and Capt. 'Buck' Buchanan. (credit - USAF)



SAVED BY THE ZULU BIRDS-1955

By Milton McWilliams

The 514th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, based at RAF Manston, began transition from the F-86F to the F-86D around January 1955. About June 1956, the 514th went to Wheelus AB, Libya, for rocketry training. The deployment had gone pretty well and the squadron returned to Manston. The return route transited Fiumicino, Marseille, then to Manston. One of the 86Ds needed repair at Marseille, and when the bird was repaired, it needed to be flown to IRAN at Erding, Germany.

Capt. John Hunt and I were assigned to take the aircraft to Erding. We flew to Marseille where Capt. Hunt was to pick up the 86D and fly it to Erding. I was to follow him in a T-33 to pick him up for return to Manston. Capt. Hunt, being a senior pilot, was briefed by Paris Flight Service Center on the weather, then filed his flight plan and was on his way.

I had to call Paris Flight Service Center, be briefed on the weather, and then get clearance for the flight. I spent at least an hour getting clearance and getting started. My route was north to clear the French/Swiss border, then east to Erding. I had trouble tuning in the Erding Low Frequency Beacon. And enroute, I had more trouble tuning in another low

An F-86D from the 514th FIS at RAF Manston in the mid-1950s during an Open House celebration. The 514th would deploy at least once a year to Wheelus AB, Libya, for the annual rocketry practice, very similar to the Yuma AFB rocketry Meets in the US. (credit - David Menard collection)



frequency beacon. But no sweat, the rule was fly to your EAT plus three minutes. As I was whizzing along I got to thinking I would be pretty close to the border, read Iron Curtain, and I was having some UHF problems.

Not too much before this, the Russians had shot down one of our planes for violating Eastern Airspace. My IFF wasn't working, so I set up flying a triangle pattern that indicated to the GCI stations that I was having radio problems. As I was flying my pattern, I switched to Guard Channel and transmitted a "May Day!" I received a response from RACECARD radar station. They did not have me on their radar! But then, they weren't looking for me to the east. The controller said he was adjusting his scope to the east. Suddenly he exclaimed that he found me and gave me a heading to the west.



A flight of 512th FDS F-86F "Zulu birds" taxi back to their parking spots at Soesterberg AB, the Netherlands in 1955. All USAFE units had "Zulu" flights standing 5 minute alert for incidents such as described by the author. (credit - USAF)

Shortly, the RACECARD controller came back on, and excitedly told me I had "Bogies at 6 o'clock, range 20 miles!" I was at 41,000 feet and had the T-Bird at 8.3 Mach. As I was trying to coach a couple of more Mach points out of the T-Bird, the ailerons were buzzing and the bird was starting to porpoise slightly. RACECARD called again, "Bogies still at 6 o'clock, range down to 6 miles with about 10 miles to the border."

RACECARD scrambled the Zulu birds which were headed towards me. I hoped they would get to me before the bad guys behind me could close the range enough to fire. When I saw the Zulu Flight starting to contrail, I felt like I was going to make it to Erding. RACECARD announced that the bogies were turning 180 degrees, and then vectored me to Erding. I guess the Russian radar saw the Zulu birds on their radar and didn't want to tangle with them.

I landed at Erding and they discovered the aileron cables were stretched. I spent the next six months writing reports on what happened. My weather briefing by Paris Flight Service missed the winds aloft forecast. When I had turned east towards Erding, I picked up an additional 100 knot tailwind that hadn't been forecast. If any of those Zulu guys are still around, I want them to know how grateful I was for their help that day!

Three flights of 514th FIS F-86Ds overfly Big Ben, during the Battle of Britain celebration in September 1955. (credit - Frank Snook)



THE
F-86 SABRE PILOTS
NINETEENTH REUNION
APRIL 7, 8 9, 2013
NEWS LETTER



The Nineteenth reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association is shaping up to be another outstanding reunion. As in the past two reunions, it will be held at the Gold Coast Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas located just off the strip, but with free access to the strip (Caesars Palace and the Strip). Complimentary shuttle service is continuous every 30 to 45 minutes beginning at 0900 am till 30 minutes after midnight every day. Additionally, the Gold Coast Hotel room rates for our members at \$49 per night are not beatable by any major hotel-casino in Las Vegas and definitely better than almost any location throughout the U.S. The Gold Coast food, beverage and hospitality service has been exceptional for our Association in the past and it should continue to be the same.

I mentioned in the Presidents Notebook that we had to change our usual three day format to accommodate our Nellis "Aces Over Vegas" event. It appears that the day we had planned, Monday 8 April, 2013 will not work. The new F-22 Demo Pilot will be performing a certification flight at Tyndall AFB on the weekend of 5-7 April. To meet our request, the Team would have to leave Tyndall for Nellis and be able to conduct a required orientation flight at Nellis on Monday the 8th before they can perform for us. That leaves, Tuesday, our final day, for the Nellis event. To accomplish that some of our Monday and Tuesday events had to be changed around. I decided to make the changes now to let you know in this issue as the Spring one may not be out before the reunion. With the above said, it does not mean we have final approval for the Demo Team to perform for us. If we are denied, we will continue with the revised schedule of events and not go back to our original one. For all the changes, see the revised schedule and registration form in this centerfold. For those of you who have sent in your registration forms and paid your money, don't worry. The events have not been changed, just the days.



For events at this reunion:

We will have our usual cocktail evening get-together event Sunday evening with an abundance of hors de' oeuvres. Bar service will be a pay-as-you-go for that evening and throughout the reunion.

Monday morning we will breakfast to the Gold Coast's Grand Buffett followed by our Association Business Meeting. The rest of the afternoon will be open to get-togethers in the hospitality suite and any TBD events. Monday evening we will dine to the GC's Hawaiian Buffett. The next morning, the gents will be off to Nellis hosted by the USAF Weapons School for the "Aces Over Vegas" event. It should be a great exchange between all of you and our young weapons instructors and students with briefings, static displays and a mini "Air Show". If all approved, the F-22 Demo, the Thunder Birds and a Heritage Flight fly-by will perform for us. This event, taking place in 2013, the 60th anniversary of the Korea War, may be the only tribute to those of our members who flew and fought in that war. While the gents are at Nellis, the ladies will be entertained by the "Happy Hoofers" that they have enjoyed so much before.

After our Nellis trip, and a well deserved "Combat Nap" it will be time to get ready for our final banquet night dinner. It will be kicked off with our usual welcome, toasts and the presentation of the colors by the Nellis AFB Honor Guards and accompanied by our own Erik McMillan singing "God Bless America." Our guest speaker (pending) will be M/Gen. Jeffrey G. Lofgren, Commander of the U.S. Air Force Warfare Center, Nellis AFB. We always look forward to hearing about the latest war fighting technology that is going on in Tactical Aviation. The evening will be wrapped up with our usual raffle drawing for one hundred dollar bills followed by a few comments by our president. Erik McMillan will close our ceremony with his version of "God Bless the USA." The Carl Grove Combo will provide that easy to listen and dance to music for the remainder of the evening.



GOD BLESS AMERICA
GOD BLESS OUR TROOPS
GOD BLESS SABRE PILOTS

19th F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

Reunion April 7, 8, 9, 2013

Gold Coast Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

The 19th F-86 Sabre Pilots Association Reunion will be held again at the Gold Coast Hotel & Casino. Register early and avoid the rush. If you register after March 23rd, 2013, a fee of \$25 will be charged. If you have to cancel, please contact President J.R. Alley at (702) 363-9880, email alleyoop3@cox.net; or Vice President Jerry Johnson at (702) 458-7863, email jerdot56@cox.net; or Chairman of the Board Pat Hughes at (702) 870-4600, email hugpat@aol.com. You may cancel up to 10:00am PST Saturday April 6th, 2013, and get a full refund. No refunds after that date.

Making and canceling of room reservations is YOUR responsibility. You can book the room reservation by calling the Gold Coast Hotel at (888) 402-6278; or go online at <http://goldcoastcasino.com/groups>. Identify yourself as a member of the "F-86 Sabre Pilots Association" and use the group code "AF86SPA". Cut off date for room reservations using our guaranteed group discount of \$48 per day for the newly remodeled premium rooms, and \$36 per day for the Deluxe rooms, is Wednesday, March 4th, 2013. After that date the room may cost more.

The cost of food and service has increased significantly since the 2009 and 2011 reunions, which has forced us to increase your costs. Please note the Registration Form included in this issue. There will be pay-as-you-go bars. Drink tickets will not be provided.

Sign-in starts at 10:00am, Sunday, April 7th, followed by a Cocktail Party from 5pm to 7pm. For other events, see the Registration Form.

We will be voting on a new Board of Governors and Association President on Tuesday afternoon, so please attend the Membership Meeting. If you are interested in being on the Board of Directors or running for Association President, contact Pat Hughes at (702) 870-4600

The Super Sabre Society reunion will again be held at the Gold Coast following our reunion, beginning on (April 2013, and continuing through April 10, 11, and 12. This will allow our members that belong to both Associations, to participate in both events.

**REGISTRATION FORM
F-86 SABRE PILOTS ASSOCIATION
NINETEENTH REUNION, April 7, 8, & 9, 2013
GOLD COAST HOTEL & CASINO, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ MI _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____

ZIP _____ PHONE () _____ E-MAIL _____

SPOUSE/GUEST, (FIRST & LAST) _____

EVENT	FEE	NO. IN PARTY	TOTALS
SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 2013:			
REGISTRATION: Starts at 10 AM (REQUIRED FOR ALL)	\$55.00	x _____	= \$ _____
RAFFLE TICKETS (6 for \$5)	\$5.00	x _____	= \$ _____
COCKTAIL PARTY (5PM to 7PM) Hors D' Oeuvres & Cash Bar	\$18.00	x _____	= \$ _____
MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2013:			
NELLIS: "ACES OVER VEGAS" (TBD) (Be at Bus for Departure @ TBD)	\$15.00	x _____	= \$ _____
LADIES LUNCHEON (11:30 to 2PM)	\$25.00	x _____	= \$ _____
BUFFET (6PM TO 8PM) cash bar	\$35.00	x _____	= \$ _____
TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2013:			
BRUNCH (9AM to 11AM)	\$18.00	x _____	= \$ _____
BANQUET (6:30PM to 11pm) cash bar Petite Filet Mignon & Chicken Breast	\$48.00	x _____	= \$ _____
REUNION FEES - TOTAL			\$ _____

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 "AF86SPA" to receive the Premium \$48 room rate (Deluxe room rate - \$36.00). All reservations must be received by the GOLD COAST by Wednesday MARCH 6, 2013. Mail completed form and check to:
F-86 Sabre Pilots Association
P.O. Box 34423
Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423

REUNION ATTENDEE LIST

1. ADAMS, MICHAEL
2. ALLEY, J.R.
3. BARNETT, ROBERT
4. BLAKE, LOUIS
5. CHAPMAN, JAMES L.
6. DAVIS, LARRY H.
7. DRUEN, DAN
8. GEIGER, RICHARD
9. FOSDICK, JIM
10. GRUVER, NEIL
11. HAMILTON, RICHARD
12. HOLLINGSWORTH, DONALD
13. HOSMER, WILLIAM
14. IVINS, NEIL
15. JOHNSON, JERRY
16. LEHOSKI, MAJ. DANIEL
17. LINDENMUTH, LESLIE
18. LOFGREN, JEFFREY, M/GEN.
19. McMILLAN, ERIK
20. NORDIN, GLENN
21. PAGE, PETER
22. PEMBERTON, VAL
23. REDDINGTON, IVAN
24. SHERROD, CLIFFORD
25. SMITH, ROBERT
26. SPANNAUS, HARRY
27. STAMSCHROR, CHUCK
28. TESTAGUZZA, LOUIS



The 13th FIS Rocketry team at Yuma in 1954. (front) Capt. Wm. Schauer & Capt Jim Smith; (back) Lt. Ralph Cassada, Col. Wm Tope, Maj. Walter Waclawski, Capt. Richard River. (credit - Wm. Schauer, Jr)



NOT WIDE AWAKE!

By William A. Schauer, Jr.

Stories abound about some of the dumb things that unknowing commanders command men to do. For example, early on, pilots were ordered to wear 'spurs'! I suppose that the commander thought the pilot would use them to urge on 'his aerial steed'.

This story starts in 1954 at Selfridge AFB, Michigan, where the Eastern Air Defense Force had assigned interceptor aircraft to defend against any enemy bomber threat whose target would be Detroit. We were in the 13th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, and flying the first single seat, all weather, radar equipped electronic fuel controlled, afterburning fighter aircraft - the F-86D Sabre 'Dog'.

Our job, as pilots, was to be ready to intercept and shoot down that bomber. To that end, we had to become 'combat ready', and were assigned to the alert barn for a 24 hour tour of duty. The airplane was pre-flighted, loaded and armed, and ready to be airborne in five minutes or less. Boring? You bet it was. BUT, the otherwise intelligent commander had declared that we pilots must remain awake for all 24 of those hours! Needless to say, Mother Nature demanded that for eight of those hours, homo sapiens would be asleep each and every day.

This particular night had an interesting program on the telly so no problem for the pilots until after 2300 hours. Then the screen had less interesting items and I soon nodded off - which was against the commanders dictum!

0 dark 30 hours, the bell rings, the horn blares yelling "Scramble One!". Fast forward, I 'came to' about 8000 feet, heading 360 degrees, still in burner and indicating

Mach .92! I was scanning with the radar looking for an errant DC-3, which was way off his intended course. I was conversing with the GCI (Ground Control Intercept) controller just as though it was 1000 hours on a sunny Monday morning!

I could not, and still do not remember jumping up, running down the stairs, climbing the ladder into the cockpit, strapping in, firing up, taxiing out, taking off, retracting my gear, and changing radio frequencies, etc. Of course, I told no one of my miraculous flight. That would have been the kiss of death for my future in the Air Force. What I did do was sit down and write a letter to my squadron commander about how that MIGHT HAPPEN with more disastrous results. Shortly thereafter, we were allowed to sleep, fully clothed of course, on our beds.

Amen brothers!

Capt. Wm. Schauer, Jr, at Selfridge AFB, MI, in 1954. (credit - Wm. Schauer, Jr)

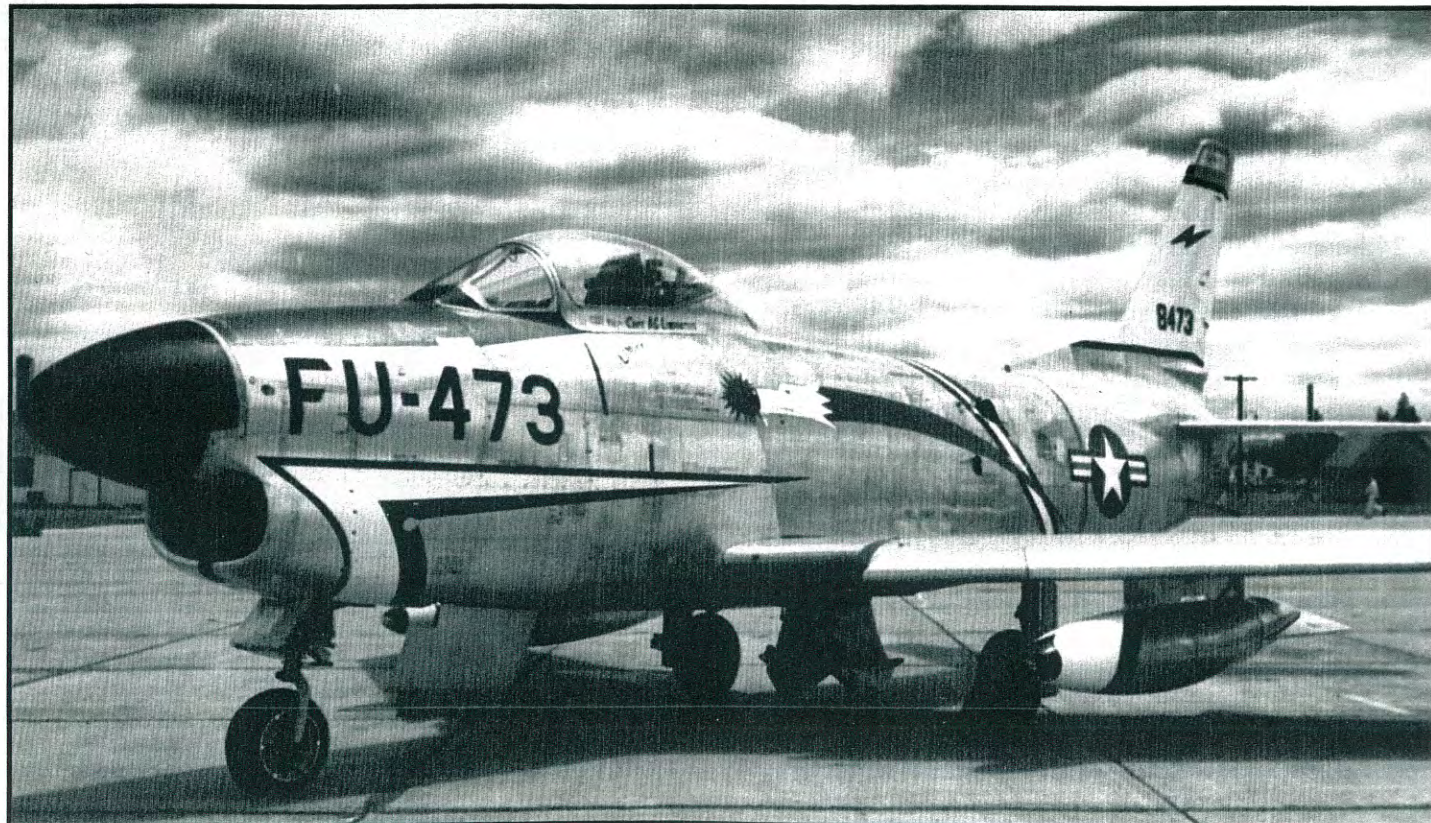


this'n that



The 497th FIS Rocketry team at Yuma in the mid-1950s. Gene Bures holds the plaque and wears a regular flight suit. Capt. A.G. 'Limpy' Limpansis is on the left. (credit - Gene Bures)

Capt. A.G. "Limpy" Limpansis, flew this F-86D when he was assigned to the unit at Geiger Field, Washington in 1954. Under Project Arrow, the 445th FIS became the 497th FIS. (credit - 'Limpy' Limpansis)



This is the Armament Section of the 445th FIS during the Yuma deployment for the Rocketry Meet of 1954. Project Arrow sent the 445th FIS number to an F-89D Scorpion unit at Wurtsmith AFB, MI in August 1955. (credit - Larry Davis collection)

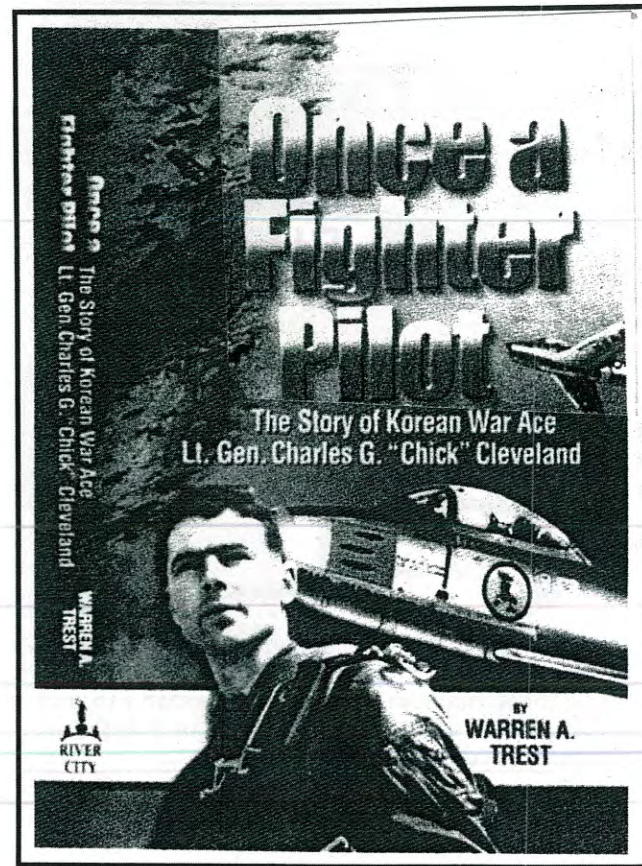
LtCol. Mike Quirk in the cockpit of his F-86D when he commanded the 87th FIS at Sioux City, Iowa in March 1954. LtCol. Quirk was a double Ace with 11 confirmed victories when he was flying P-47D Thunderbolts with the 56th FG, the famous Zemke's Wolfpack. (credit - Frank Snook & USAF)



COMING SOON

A new book about the career of the latest ace of the Korean War, Sabre Pilot member Lt.Gen. Charles 'Chick' Cleveland. LtGen Cleveland was crowned the 40th Ace of the Korean War in January 2008 after the Soviet Union declassified the files on their air force's involvement in that war. It was confirmed that (then) Lt. 'Chick' Cleveland's Probable claim on 21 September 1952, was indeed confirmed as a victory by the Soviet records.

Author Warren Trest has written the story of LtGen. Cleveland's career and his long fight to get that elusive fifth victory that made him an "Ace". The new book "Once A Fighter Pilot" is available in both hard cover and on Kindle from places like Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble and any decent bookstore.



Book cover

FOLDED WINGS

Frederick C. "Boots" Blesse

Major General Frederick C. "Boots" Blesse, 19th jet Ace of the Korean War, passed away doing what he loved, playing golf, on October 31st 2012. General Blesse was one of a handful of pilots to become a double Ace, finishing his tour in Korea with ten victories – 9 Mig-15s and an La-9. He flew two tours in Korea, with 67 missions in F-51Ds, 35 missions in F-80Cs, and flew 121 missions in F-86s during his second Korea tour, During the Vietnam War, General Blesse flew an additional 156 missions on two tours. He retired from the Air Force in 1975, after thirty years. He had over 6500 hours in fighters, that included over 650 combat hours.



Maj. Frederick C. 'Boots' Blesse, at Kimpo AB, Korea in 1952. (credit – USAF)



How many of the membership ever worked or visited one of the Air Force Filter Centers during the height of the Cold War. Your editor worked at the one in Canton, Ohio, in 1955/56, when he was 14 years old. Many cities around the nation had these Filter centers, which were connected to the many Ground Observer Corps volunteers, that watched the skies over America during those years. Everytime the GOC spotter would see or hear something strange in the skies, he would call the Filter Center on a land line phone and inform the Filter Center operator what he saw or heard, and which direction the unknown was heading. The 'operator' would then plot the unknown and often would Scramble an interceptor from the nearby Air Defense base, who would check out the "unknown". Very happily, none of these 'unknowns' turned out to be Soviet bombers enroute to targets in the United States, although more than a few were listed as UFOs. (all credits – Larry Davis collection)



8 SECONDS TO GO!

By John W. Johnston

It was a beautiful blue sky day at Stewart AFB, NY, as we briefed for a routine intercept training mission. I was to fly a T-33 target aircraft for a flight of three F-86L Sabres. I was flying back seat with a recent flying school graduate on his local field checkout in the front.

On our climb-out to target altitude, we checked in with the controller at the ground radar site directing the mission. We leveled off at 42,000 and I heard the F-86L pilots check in with the controller, who positioned the first F-86 for a 90 degree beam attack on the target.

The interceptor pilot was to make his pass at the target by responding to the ground controller until he was within range of his own airborne radar. After that, he would maneuver his bird to 'lock on' to the target aircraft and complete the intercept by crossing behind the target a programmed distance at about 300 feet.

The first 'intercept' was a success – "Splash One!" As the second Sabre bore down on the target aircraft with a closing rate of about 800 knots, the airborne radar gave the pilot periodic indications of 'time to go.' The intercept progressed normally as I spotted a tiny dot in the distance to my right at about 45 degrees forward angle. The interceptor pilot called "20 seconds!", to which I responded "Roger!". His next report was "8 seconds!", at which time I advised him to "Stand by!" because his airplane did not appear to be moving rearward on my canopy as it should have during a safe intercept. We were on a collision course! However, he was about 1000 feet below me so we would be safe if he stayed at that level.

The wrecked T-33A that Johnston was flying when he collided with the F-86L. The collision took off 1/3 of the right wing, plus pieces of the tail and stabilizer. But the T-Bird brought both pilots back home to Stewart AFB NY. (credit – John Johnston)



I called him – "You are low. Stay low!" It was too late! He'd already pulled back on the stick to correct for the altitude error. I shoved the control stick of the T-bird into the upper left corner of the cockpit to start a diving turn away from the approaching Sabre. At the same time I screamed "Break left! Break left!" He'd already begun to roll his airplane onto its back in an attempt to pull it under my flight path.

As I looked over my right shoulder and saw this maneuver taking place, I was certain we'd be hit. There was the sound of a "Thud!" that lasted a fraction of a second as the F-86L sliced through the T-33. I heard myself say aloud – "My God, we're still alive!" We immediately went into a spin to the right. I pulled the power off and instinctively began a standard spin control procedure. But the airplane was not in normal configuration. I extended the speed brakes and the slower speed allowed me to stop the rotation. I pulled out of the dive at about 15,000 feet and climbed to about 17,000 where the airplane fell off to the damaged right wing. I regained control at 15,000 and began to evaluate the situation to determine if we should bail out or try to take the airplane home.



A 329th FIG F-86L gets a tow to its parking spot at Stewart AFB in the late 1950s. The tail marking came about as a result of the coming of the maintenance squadrons within the 329th Group

I looked out the right side and saw torn sheet metal, wiring and hydraulic lines hanging from the torn wing. About a third of the wing and part of the nose was GONE! The maximum speed we could attain with 100% power was 200 knots. As I pulled the power back, the airplane would begin to shudder and roll to the right at 180 knots. I began to visualize the landing. Normal approach to the 8,000 foot runway was about 120 knots. No question about it – we'd have to take the barrier which was designed for such emergencies.

I called the Stewart tower for landing instructions. No answer – radio dead! Only the intercom was working. I told the other pilot that I would fly the airplane and we would shut down the engine as soon as we touched down.

I lined up with the runway at an altitude of 2,000 feet about 3 miles out. We'd be on the ground in a couple of minutes. But wait! One of the Sabres was making a final

Both the horizontal and vertical stabilizer of the T-33A were extensively damaged following the collision with the 330th FIS F-86L. (credit - John Johnston)

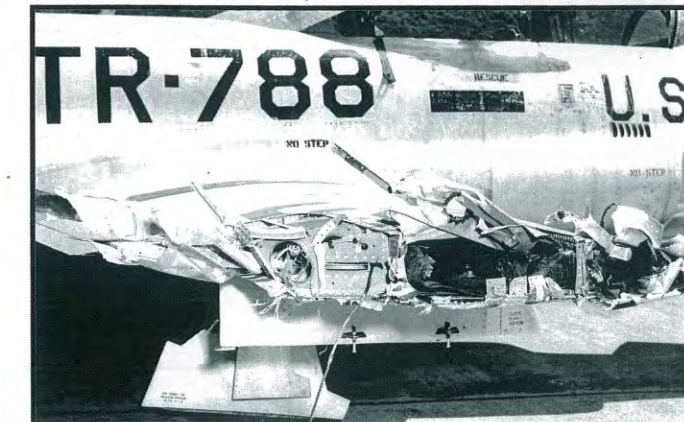


turn to the runway right in front of us! He hadn't seen us making the straight-in approach. There was nothing to do but go around. The go-around took what seemed an eternity. I'd been holding the stick to the far left for about 20 minutes.

Finally, we were lined up with the runway again, holding a gradual descent at a steady 100 knots. It was a very low approach just skimming over the trees. I must have touched down in the first 100 feet. We both jumped on the brakes instinctively, shut down the engine, and brought the bird to a stop with tires and brakes smoking, without taking the barrier. We were safely on the ground!

The F-86L pilot had ejected as it had come apart at the wing roots. He was picked up by the New York State Police as he landed in his chute near the New York State Thruway. The controller at the ground site completed his report of the mission with the remark – "One splash, one crash, one no target available!"

A full 1/3 of the outer right wing of the T-33A was sheared off during the collision with the F-86L. Despite the heavy damage, the two pilots in the T-bird wrestled the airplane all the way back to Stewart AFB and made a safe landing. (credit –John Johnston)



SALUTE TO THE BIG KAHUNA MAJ.GEN. JOHN C. GIRAUDO

BY TAI HONG

John Girauo was the senior af advisor to the Hawaii ANG from 1956 to 1958. while at Hickam AFB, he exposed the pilots to 'dissimilar air combat tactics' against the Marine FJ-4 Fury's at Kaneohe MCAS. Due to his combat experiences and his role in advising the THANG, the 199th FS was selected as the most operational ready Air Guard unit for the year 1957.

Those pilots that flew with him found out that he had been shots down and captured by the Germans when he was promoted to captain. When he was promoted to major, he was shot down and captured by the North Koreans, who beat him every time his wingman flew overhead.

During his time as a prisoner, he followed the Code of Conduct, giving only his name, rank and serial number. Only when his health deteriorated to the point where he thought he would die, did he answer some of his captor's question, who then relented and gave him medical assistance.

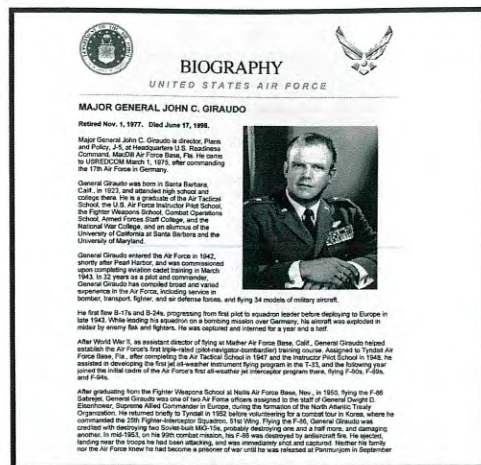
When I first met him, he showed no evidence of this harsh treatment. In fact, he was a movie star because he was muscular, tanned and handsome. After my tour was over in the 429th FBS at Clovis AFB, I joined the THANG and LtCol. Girauo was the IP who checked me out in the F-86E.

General Maguire, a former commander of the Hawaii ANG, said that John Girauo was a born leader, a friend, and humble gentleman. Maj. Paul Duvauchelle, one of the leaders in developing the THANG during its infancy, called him "an excellent fighter pilot, as well as being knowledgeable, caring, and an outstanding individual.

So I salute Maj.Gen. John Girauo, who helped establish the foundations of the Hawaii ANG while transitioning from props to jets.

(editors note - Maj.Gen John Girauo, folded his wings and flew west on June 17th, 1996.)

"Ardith Ann", a 199th FS, Hawaii ANG, F-86E. starting up prior to a flight from Kaneohe MCAS in 1957. Col. Girauo was Senior AF Advisor to the 199th FS when they transitioned from F-47N Thunderbolts to F-86E Sabres in 1954. (credit - Tai Hong)



Maj.Gen. John Girauo - "Big Kahuna"
(credit - USAF)



199th FS pilots examine the 'rag' during a gunnery competition vs the Marine squadron at Kaneohe MCAS, circa 1957. (L-R) A. Harris, Col. Girauo, Robt. Duncan, and Jim Ashford. (credit - 199th FS)

Sabre Reunions

19th Reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association will be in Las Vegas on April 7th, 8th, and 9th, 2013. Watch for full information and details Start making plans NOW!

NOTICE: The Super Sabre Society reunion will again be tied together with the F-86 Sabre Assn 19th Reunion. The Super Sabre Society Reunion is set for 9, 10, 11, and 12 April 2013 at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino, Las Vegas, NV. Contact their Society for full information.

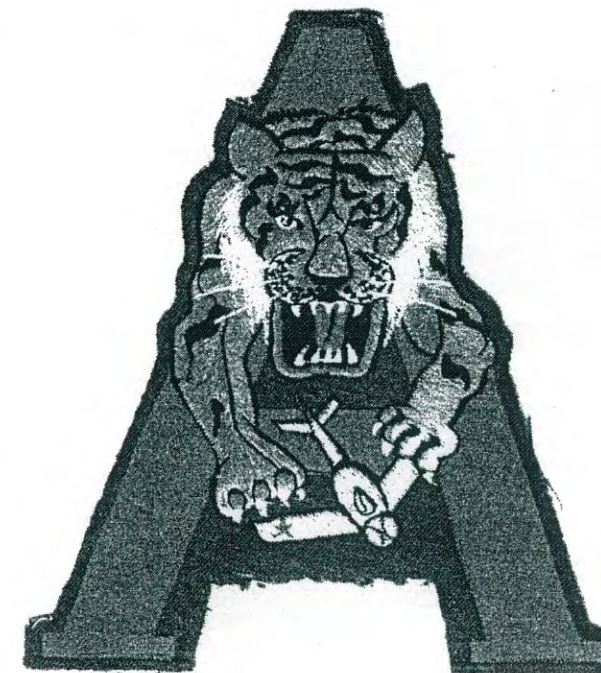
388th FBW Reunion
30 May-2 June 2013 in Fairborn, OH.
Contact Don Rahn, 5902 Lynnaway Dr,
Dayton, OH 45415; ph (937)278-4390

4th FIS Reunion
10-14 April, 2013 in Fairborn, OH.
Contact Bob Ettinger, 2122 Via Pacheco,
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274,
ph (310)541-8625; email rsetting@aol.com

Class 50 Baker
Ron Murphy wants to touch base with any member of Class 50 Baker at Williams AFB.
Contact Ron Murphy,
16874 Stoneridge Ct., Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

Stanley P. Krajewski
Larisa Krajewski, granddaughter of Col. Stanley P. Krajewski would like to hear from anyone in the Association that might have flown with or knew him. He died (1980) before she was born. Contact Larisa Krajewski, 19300 Collins Ave, #506, Sunny Isles Beach, FL 33160; phone 305-332-8600, or email larisk@gmail.com

Anyone with any information regarding this patch, is asked to contact the Editor, Larry Davis, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, OH 44721, or emailsabreclsx@aol.com. All we know is that it is from Korea, thought to be a flight patch, maybe from the 51st FIW at Suwon.



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F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423.

WHAT IS IT? Does anyone know what the significance is of this photo of a large number of F-86A Sabres lining an air base in May 1949? The F-86As all appear to be brand new aircraft, 1948 models with the (then new) gun “doors” installed, and have the 200 gallon non-droppable underwing ferry tanks. Contact the Editor, Sabrejet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE, Canton, Ohio 44721; or email sabreclsx@aol.com

