

Sabre Jet Classics



Volume 21, Number 2

Summer 2013

Aces Over Vegas



**F-86 Sabre Society
Reunion**

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

SabreJet Classics

Vol. 21, number 2
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Boots Blesse story, the
Kumph Brothers, more!**

SabreJet Classics is published by the F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn. The F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn. is a non-profit, veterans organization, with membership limited to individual pilots who have flown the F-86 Sabre aircraft. The goals of the Association is to "perpetuate the history of the F-86 Sabre, the units to which it was assigned, and the men that flew the Sabre"; and to perpetuate an accurate, patriotic portrayal of our national, military, and Air Force history and heritage. If you are NOT a member, but meet the membership qualifications, you are invited to join. Application forms are available on our website or at the Las Vegas address. Dues are \$25/year, \$50/3 years. SabreJet Classics is published solely for the private use of association members. No portion of SabreJet Classics may be used or reprinted without permission from the President of the Association, and the Editor of the magazine. SabreJet Classics is published three times per year. Extra copies of an issue can be ordered at \$3.00/copy. Subscriptions for non-members are available at \$25/year. All payments should be made payable to "F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn.", and sent to the Las Vegas address.

SabreJet Classics

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the president's notebook

Our 19th Sabre Pilots Reunion is over and I want to share with you the Association's business items that were addressed. For the other reunion activities, you can read them in my "After Action Report."

In the Fall issue of the Classics, I passed on to you that Lon Walter resigned as a Director of our Board. Since then Glenn Carus stepped down from many years of great service to our Association that were highlighted by his efforts to bring to fruition our F-86 Sabre Pilots Wall of Fame foil at the Udvar-Hazy Center at the Smithsonian Museum. We are extremely fortunate to have Dan Druen come back into the arena and join our Directors again. We are equally as fortunate to have Bob Smith, our former V.P. for many years, join us as well. Both were elected by a unanimous vote.

The recent 2013 Membership Roster contained one glaring error on the inside of the front cover page. It listed the roster as 2011 instead of 2013. That error will not happen again due to better quality control. Also, my name, phone number, email and mailing address will be listed on that page for contact purposes.

It was proposed and passed unanimously to remove our Constitution Article IX, Para B, Financing stipulation that reunions be financially self-supporting and not financed from the treasury. This will permit the Board to spend more on our reunions and keep the cost lower to our attendees. Along with that the Board approved a measure to reduce the reunion registration charged to spouses and guests from \$55.00 to \$25.00.

The Association incurred some additional costs this past year that included a new laptop computer for Polly and Duke Winesett to maintain our data management. The original one was thirteen years old, difficult to use and was intermittently displaying some serious malfunctions. Additionally, Larry Davis

upgraded to a new computer after his old one crashed with his Sabre Jet Classics archives on it. The Board approved giving Larry \$600.00 to help him out.

In the area of Association membership, Sam Hollenbeck, in an attempt to offset our downhill slide in reunion attendees, suggested each member check the magazine for the list of inactive members and those not attending the reunions. The biennial roster is a good vehicle used to contact active members. In the next issue 22-3(Fall issue) we will publish part of our entire list of names and last known contact information. More of the list will be published in following issues. If our members would contact and encourage anyone they know to become active and to attend the reunions, it would be a big help to us.

For those of you who have computers and like to surf the web, it has been suggested at times to take the site down and reduce that administrative cost. Again, I presented this position to the reunion attendees and they unanimously voted to continue our sabre-pilots.org web site. Bill Weiger, who has been our Web Master for many years and has done a great job of keeping important and appropriate information available for us agreed to continue.

Now I am down to the last item and that is our "Reunion 20." There will be a major change from our past few reunions. The Super Sabre Society will not dove-tail with us at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas 2015 as they have in the past. They have elected to go to Dayton, Ohio on 9, 10, 11 and 12 of April. Our Board of Directors was in full agreement that we would remain at the Gold Coast for 2015. The G.C.'s service has been great and their prices are the best in town. They have agreed to keep our present room individual room rates to within a couple dollars per night. Besides, Las Vegas is the "Reunion Town." This split between our two organizations will definitely have an impact on our reunion attendees. To lessen that impact, I have negotiated with the G.C. to slip our reunion one week from what I had planned, 19, 20 and 21 April, to give more time for those who want to attend both. Our 20th reunion will be held on 26, 27 and 28 April 2015.

While I'm talking about reunion "20," let me give you a sneak preview of what is in the mill as far as our Nellis Day event. The Weapons School, in the past, has provided us with two great Nellis events in spite of sequestration and the cancelling of the planned flying events. So the bar has risen to top them. Well, the USAF Adversary Tactics Group and the 64th Aggressor Squadron have agreed to host us for our Nellis Day in 2015. They say they will even out-do the Weapons School. That is a long way down the road, but I will say it will be equal to or better than the Air Force Museum at Dayton, Ohio and we still can come back to Las Vegas and have fun.

For my final comments, let me say a few words about Sabre articles for the Classics magazine. We are getting down to the very bottom of stories to print. Larry Davis tells me he has only one or two available. Many of you have told me you have a story but just haven't written it. We have a great magazine thanks to Larry's dedication to our Association, his wealth of archival information (a lot lost in computer crash) and his efforts. Well, it's time for you to step up to the plate and write that story. It means a lot to all of us to read your stories and for those of you who have written a story or more, you are leaving a bit of your legacy to your children and grand children; pretty nice memory to pass down.

With all the above said, have a great summer.

**God Bless Sabre Pilots
God Bless Our Troops
God Bless America**

**J.R. Alley
President**

from the editor

Well guys, from what I hear I really missed a great 19th Reunion. A Nellis show, opening of the No Guts, No Glory Lounge, an 'up close and personal' look at the F-35 Strike Fighter. WOW! Plus all the normal fun of meeting and greeting old friends at the Hospitality Suite. But I will be in attendance at the 20th Reunion in April 2015.

What really surprised me was the amount of new material that has been steadily flowing in for articles in SabreJet Classics. It's much appreciated. Right now I have enough material for the Fall 2013 issue. Which means I still need to hear from anyone that has a Sabre story to tell.

Remember guys, they can be about anything, combat, training, or just rat racing – as long as it has a Sabre theme I want to hear it. They can be funny or serious, long or short. I once had a guy jot down three paragraphs about an F-86 subject. I turned that into 4 pages of material for the magazine. So don't worry too much if you have a really short story.

I've been contacted by the National Museum of the US Air Force regarding an airplane they're trying to restore. It is a combat veteran F-86E, #50-600, which was assigned to the 16th FIS, 51st FIG when the unit transitioned to the F-86 in late 1951. They need to hear from anyone with photos of the airplane so that they can restore it as accurately as possible. The name that it initially carried was "Joyous Joyce". If you want, you can email your photos to me and I'll forward them to the people at NMUSAF.

I'd also like to hear from anyone that was part of any aerobatic team that flew F-86s. I know of a few – Silver Sabres, Sabre Knights, Skyblazers, Sabre Dancers, etc. But I also know that there were many non-official teams in F-86s also. So contact me with your stories and photos. The Fall issue will see a story on the F-86D-equipped Sabre Knights out of Hamilton AFB.

That's all for now

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FOLDED WINGS

Oakley H. Allen, November 15th, 2012

Robert W. Casey, 2012

Roger A. Christgau, October 5th, 2012

Gibbons G. Cornwell III, February 3rd, 2013

Lawrence D. Damewood, October 5th, 2010

Arthur W. Day, February 2nd, 2013

John W. Field, May 8th, 2013

Richard D. Fisher, May 9th, 2013

William G. Gregory, April 22nd, 2013

Wayne N. Hungerford, November 3rd, 2009

Ronald D. Long, May 17th, 2013

Richard A. Lucas, June 3rd, 2013

James J. Malone, July 16th, 2012

N.B. 'Bud' Miles, April 24th, 2013

Dolphin D. Overton III, March 25th, 2013

Richard O. Ransbottom, December 15th, 2012

Harry V. Runge, May 17th, 2012

Michael Svisco, February 17th, 2011

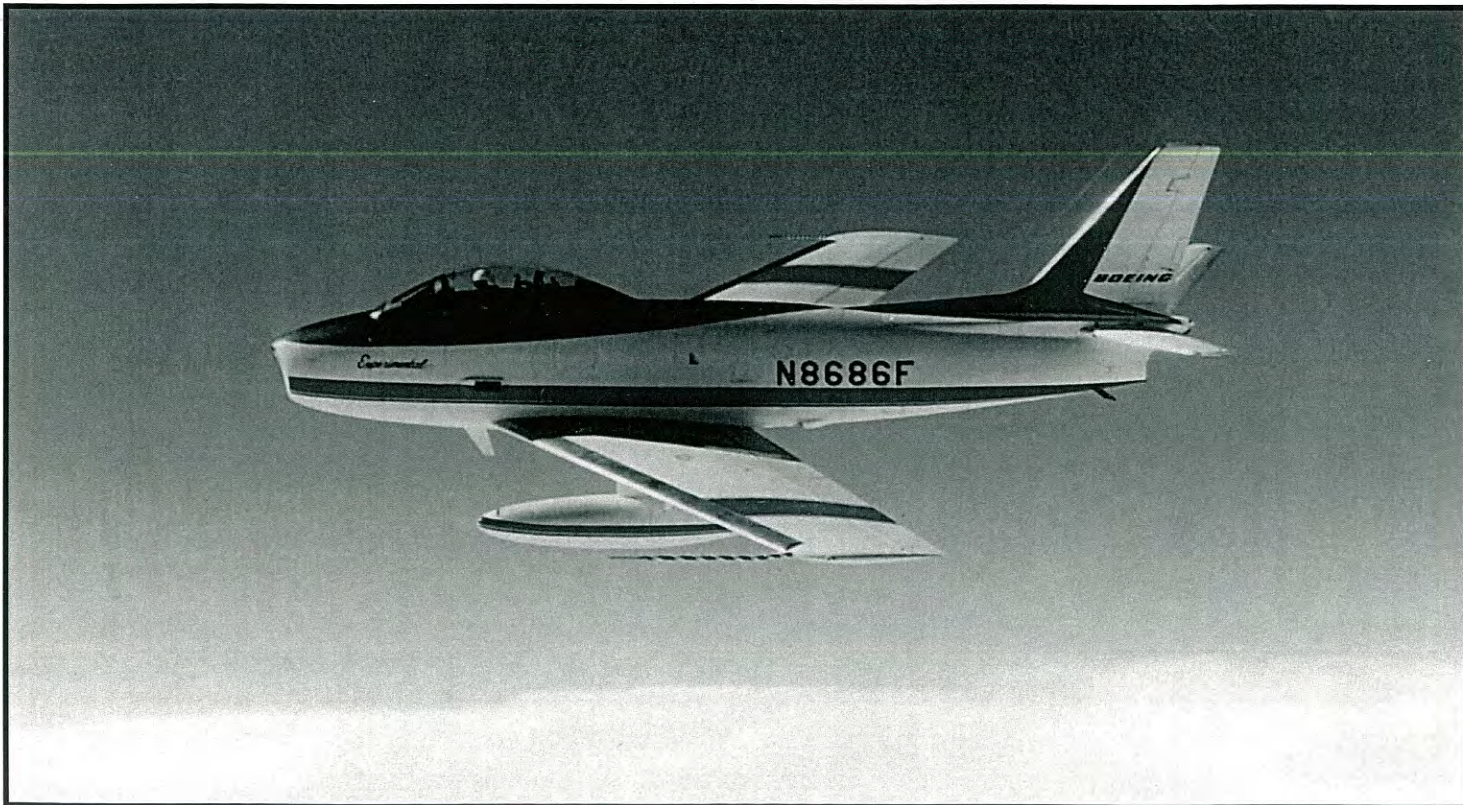
William Stuart Taylor, June 27th, 2011

This F-86L was recently restored as a "gate guard" by Moody AFB personnel and is on display at the entrance to the base. It is marked as the aircraft of Maj. Lyn McIntosh, and carries the insignia of the 23rd FIG. (credit – Sr. A. Meier)





The F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn. has answered a request from the members with the sale of this new ball cap. Those attending the 19th Reunion in Las Vegas this past April, received one of the ball caps as part of their 'package'. The Association has about 80 of these caps left which are for sale to members at \$15 plus \$7.00 postage. Send a check to the Association and they will get one in the mail to you. Send to: F-86 Association Cap, PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423



What Is It? Our mystery airplane from vol. 22-1 is the Boeing Aircraft Company chase aircraft, N8686F. The Sabre was built originally as a Canadair Sabre mk.6 but was being used to fly 'chase' for things like the Boeing 747. (credit - JR Alley)

MiG ACE DOWNED

by Frank Robison

Colonel William Shaeffer (USAF Retired) got in touch with me about a mission we flew on the 17th of January, 1951 in Korea. He emailed a copy of a biographical article about Major General Sergei Kramarenko from the Wikipedia, referenced the General's book: "Air Combat over the Eastern Front and Korea - A Soviet Pilot Remembers. The referenced article contained the following quote:

I was still watching this plane falling when I felt a sharp blow and my plane suddenly began spinning rapidly. I was pressed against the portside and the controls went dead. I had the impression that one of my wings had come off! I decided to abandon the uncontrollable, spinning and vertically falling plane. Still pressed against the portside I barely manage to reach the ejection handle and press it. It went dark before my eyes from a sharp kick, and I had no sensation at all of being shot out of the plane. Coming to my senses, and understanding I was falling down with the seat, I unfastened the seat belts and pushed myself away from the seat with my feet. After seeing the clouds underneath were quickly approaching me. I pulled the parachute ring and jerked it. The parachute opened - it jolted me brashly and I was hanging on the straps.

Above me was blue sky, below - about 800 meters away - were the clouds. I looked around and saw a Sabre rapidly approaching me. Several seconds went by and smoking threads of burst from its six machine guns reached out toward me. Death was rushing toward me and I was simply expecting it to pierce my body. Fortunately the distance to the Sabre was 800-1000 meters and the curving trace was passing below me. But with each fraction of a second it was getting closer to my feet and now it was flying past only a few meters from me. I remember that at the very last moment, I even pulled my feet up, but I dearly sensed that in a moment the bullets would start hitting them, but at that moment the tracer disappeared. About 500 meters from me the Sabre abruptly listed nearly 90 degrees. Rapidly turning, it passed about 500 meters from me - I was even shaken by the wake it created in the air. Then I saw how this Sabre made a tum and closed in again to attack me.

Now I understand that he wanted to avenge the death of his leader but back then I wasn't thinking about that, just silently waiting for my end. 'He won't miss



Lt. Frank Robison in the cockpit just after starting the engine at K-14 in Sept. 1951. Lt. Robison was assigned to the 336th FIS at the time. (credit- Frank Robison)

a second time,' I was thinking. I glanced down" the clouds were just below me - there were only 50 or 100 meters left. I thought 'What'll come first, then...' But when about 800 meters remained between me and the Sabre, and the first tracer stretched from him, I dived into the clouds. It became dark and wet straight away, but the feeling that I was safe and that no one could see me and I couldn't see that bloody Sabre and its tracers - it was marvelous!

Another **Wikipedia** reference was from a book by Yefin Gordon and Vladimir Rigmant titled: "MiG-15 Design, Development, and Korean War Combat History," describing the same fight:

Again a rendezvous with F-86s. They attacked in a pair. I attacked one aircraft and my wingman the other. It had been a custom with me to cast a glance after an attack to the rear hemisphere, from which the enemy could deliver blows. This time, I did not glance back for some reason. Having shot down one aircraft, I made a correction turn to attack the other. At this moment, I felt my MiG-15 get hit. I am caught. I thought, but I was already late; a burst of Sabre gunfire took my controls out of action and damaged my fuel system. I had to abandon the aircraft by parachute. And though there is an international agreement banning firing at an unarmed pilot, the F-86s attacked me while I was descending by parachute. They made firing runs twice, but did not have a chance for a third try; I had plunged into clouds.

Another Article by Flight Safety Foundation (www.flightsafety.org) stated:

176th GIAP. MiG-15bis of the 176th GIAP (324th IAD) shot down by the F-86E flown by Frank P. Robison (51st FIG. 16th FIS). 176th GIAP reported two MiG and one pilot loss this day. Kapt Kramarenko was rescued, ID of the second pilot unknown.

I first met William Shaeffer (Colonel, USAF, Retired), a few days after arriving at Selfridge AFB near Detroit, Michigan. He was on crutches with one leg in a cast because of a bail out in an F-80 "Shooting Star" which lost the entire aft section from fire. He was a captain and Flight Commander. My roommate in the BOQ was 1LT Fred Hudson who was flying his wing and witnessed the event close up. He told me that Captain Shaeffer had downed three German fighters while flying a P-47 Thunderbolt with the 51st FS, 405th FG. As a result, I asked Captain Shaeffer about his tactics. He not only explained his maneuvering in combat, he later demonstrated in simulated combat (rat racing).

As a result of our association in the 56th FG, Maj Shaeffer told Col. Gabreski he wanted to fly with me on his first combat mission in Korea. We were scheduled as Green 3 and 4 on each of three days in a row. Each day there were only 13 aircraft available for the mission. The result was no aircraft for Green flight. Major Shaeffer went to Col. Gabreski and explained that he was in Korea on a short tour for Project "Honest John" and he needed to begin flying. The next day we were Red 3 and 4, so if only 4 aircraft were available, we would fly!

LT Col George L. Jones, the 51st FIG Commander, was leading the 16th Squadron and conducted the briefing. We would have 18 aircraft available and he explained that he wanted to try something. Our standard "low fuel" word was "bingo," and it meant we had only enough fuel to get back to our base safely. He wanted the pilot of the first aircraft to empty his drop tanks to call "Bingo," hoping the MiGs would attack thinking we could not stay and engage in extended combat. MiGs tended to cross the Yalu River when they knew we were running low on fuel.

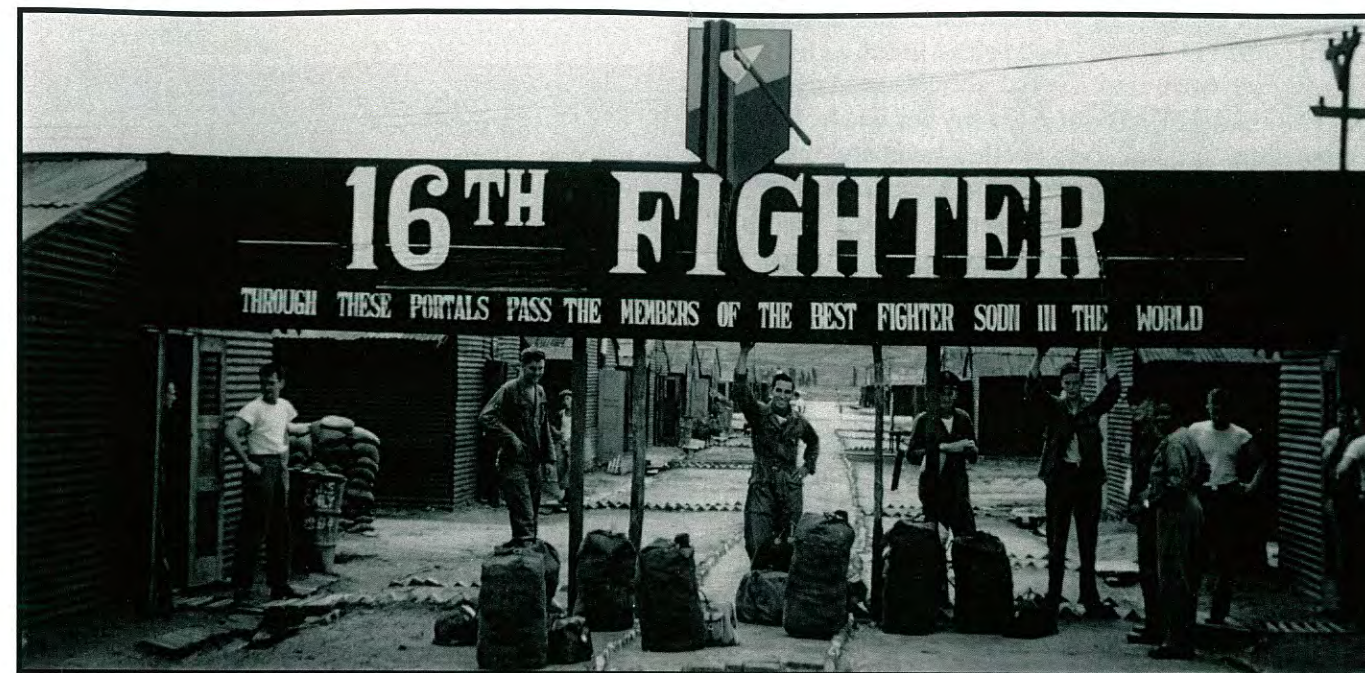
Take off and join up were uneventful. As we crossed the Chong Chon River north of Pyongyang, a layer of clouds covered the mountains to the north and west with tops near 21,000 feet. The squadron was in four, four aircraft flights (finger four of finger fours), with two spares. No one had aborted so the squadron was



Crew chiefs remove the exhaust plug from one of the new F-86Es that equipped the 51st FIG in October 1951. Some pilots were transferred from the 4th FIG at Kimpo, to the 51st FIG at Suwon when the 51st re-equipped with Sabres. Lt. Frank Robison was one of those pilots. (credit- USAF)

full strength with 18 aircraft. About 50 miles north of the ChongChon, Green 4 called "Bingo" meaning his drop tanks were empty and he had full internal fuel. I glanced at my fuel state and saw that I had used most of my internal fuel. My drop tanks apparently did not feed. I called, "Red 3, fuel malfunction, real Bingo." Red Leader replied, "Roger 3. Red 4 stay with Red 3. Spare 1 and 2 join with my flight." Upset and angry at myself, I pulled up and made a 180 degree turn as the squadron continued. I saw a flight of MiGs at their eleven o'clock position and called, "Red 3 here, MiGs, eleven o'clock level". Red Leader called, "Drop Tanks," and the 16 Sabres cleaned 32 drop tanks. As I rolled out, I slapped the stick sharply for a faster roll out and stopped the roll quickly from frustration. Glancing at the fuel gauge, I saw the needle on the fuel indicator instantly bounce up to full. I realized the drop tanks had failed to feed until the internal tanks were very low and then began feeding, but the float, located in the main tank was stuck down, indicating extremely low fuel. I called Red 4 to drop tanks and told Red Leader that we were staying.

At that moment, an element leader of the 4th FIG called that his element had four MiGs on its tail and he was crossing the Chong Chon going toward the Yellow Sea. I spotted the two Sabres and the four MiGs in pursuit at 11:30 o'clock right below us. I called, "Ninety right," and rolled into 70 degree dive. The



The sign says it all. This is the portal to the living quarters of the 16th FIS at Suwon AB in 1952. Soviet pilots like Capt. Kramerenko will attest to the second part. (credit- Clem Koselke).

two Sabres appeared from under the nose followed by the four MiGs. I turned to scan the sky behind Red 4 as we approached mach 1. When I turned back, no aircraft were visible. Shaeffer called, "Red 3, do you think we ought to pull out of the dive?" "Roger, speed brakes, now," I replied and started a 4g pull out.

The 4th FIG element leader called that he was clear, so we turned north, dimbing back to 36,000 feet. Most of the Sabres were going home, but we continued north almost to Kangye. No luck! I called a 180 degree turn left and rolled out about 50 miles east of the Yalu River. I could see several flights of MiGs on an easterly heading nearing the Yalu River. Counting flights of 16 and 24 MiGs, I stopped when I got to 360. I shifted my shoulders and leaned right to check Shaeffer's 6 o'clock. Just as I started to look ahead again, two MiGs in a steep dive were coming down and closing fast on Shaeffer. The cloud decks below had tops near 20,000 feet. I held the controls very lightly so I would not "bobble" as the aircraft usually did when the pilot spotted bandits closing fast. If we broke at once, the MiGs could cut us off, so I waited until they were nearing firing range. They appeared to be experienced pilots because they didn't start firing out of range.

"Red 4, break left," I called, holding my course straight. The instant that Shaeffer broke, the tracers from the MiG began. As Red 4 turned, he started a shallow dive. I rolled hard left and dove a little steeper. Red 4 was slightly ahead of me so that I was flying his right wing. I could see the disturbed air of our flight path and judging the path of the MiGs, they

were headed for our jet wash. The MiGs cannon fire was arcing about fifty feet behind Red 4, but creeping closer to his tail and the MiG was "burbling" (very near a high speed stall), so I told Red 4 to pull in "just a little tighter." As Shaeffer increased the G force, the MiG pilot in apparent desperation, pulled in tighter.

Col. Francis "Gabby" Gabreski presents the Air Medal to Lt. Frank Robison, as Lts. Anthony Kulengaski and friend are witnesses. Lt. Robison was awarded the medal for the actions of 17 January 1951 when he downed two MiG-15 jets without firing a shot. (credit- Frank Robison).



At that instant the two MiGs were each about to hit our flight path. The leader snap rolled twice as he hit Red Four's jet wash and almost simultaneously the second MiG snap rolled as he hit my jet wash. Both MiGs ended up in a flat spin. I rolled level and pulled up quickly. Red four called, "Watch him Robby, he's tuming into you." Roger," I answered, "They're both in flat spins." I pulled up and put the piper on the closer MiG's cockpit. Just as I started to pull the trigger the pilot ejected. I put the piper on the other MiG's cockpit and that pilot ejected. The first MiG pilot's chute opened fully, but the second pilots' chute streamed. He entered the cloud deck with the shroud lines apparently tangled.

We knew Soviet Pilots were flying many (if not most), of the MiGs. One squadron of MiGs had blown a ditched MiG and its pilot to pieces in the Yellow Sea to prevent our ship from recovering the pilot or the aircraft. Looking at that parachute floating down, I wondered if I could slow down in a climb and stick the pitot tube into the shroud line. No! "The most likely result not acceptable". However, we had not even test fired our guns so I decided to take a picture with the gun camera.

Getting turned directly toward a parachute is a little disconcerting, but I finally got the Sabre's nose pointed at the chute and put the piper on the pilots head, closing. As I started to pull the trigger, I realized the guns and camera were on! I reached down and switched to "camera only" while looking at the switch. When I looked back at the pilot, I had closed to about 150 feet with my aircraft fuselage passing about ten feet to the right of the pilot; the Sabre's wing was about even with his waist! Fast wing drop! I missed his feet by about two feet. His head was turned right,

Lt. Robison with the houseboy during a pheasant hunt south of Suwon in 152. North Korean troops were hiding in the railroad tunnel to the left in the picture. (credit- Frank Robison)



16th Squadron crew chiefs manhandle an F-86E on the PSP ramp at Suwon in late 1951. At this time, the Sabres of the 51st FIG did not have the distinctive checkerboard tail markings. (credit-USAF)

looking at me and he pulled his feet up. He snapped his head to the front as I passed. The pilot was wearing an oxygen mask and leather helmet. Our altitude was 22,000 feet. I turned quickly 230 degrees to come back. I started the camera early to be certain the guns were not firing. I moved the piper to the pilots head and closed. I hoped that the film would help prove who was flying that MiG. I went closer than intended, pulled the stick back and the chute filled the sky in front of me. My aircraft mused slightly and the aft area of my Sabre brushed the top of the parachute. Looking back, I saw a huge white, "Bra" shape. The chute regained its umbrella shape quickly. Shaeffer called, "Bingo". No more MiGs descended from the large gaggle. We went home.

I'd only used 12 feet of film, so I took the film magazine to the photo processing trailer and told the Sergeant to "hand process" that twelve feet. He said, "Yes sir." When I picked up the developed roll, the Sergeant told me that my film had been in the bottom of the machine when it had to be stopped. As a result the pictures were over developed and very dark. When I ran the film on the projector, just black. However, at the point where I pulled up, a parachute shape of gray went down the screen. We were told our claims were confirmed. Two attacking MiGs destroyed and one pilot probably killed but not one round fired from either Sabre!



THE F-86 SABRE PILOTS NINETEENTH REUNION (2013) AFTER ACTION REPORT

By JR Alley, President

The dust has settled since the closing hours of Reunion 19 and after thirty two years since the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association was first conceived. As is the usual case, many weeks, days and hours are spent by those responsible for producing a reunion every two years. Until the final hour one wonders how it will come off. I, as President of our Association can, unequivocally, say this reunion rates up there with the best of them. With that said, nothing goes perfectly as planned and this one didn't either. Just a few days before the reunion, we, and the nation were notified that the national budget sequestration act that we dreaded did take effect. That had a big impact on our "Aces Over Vegas" event that the USAF Weapons School at Nellis AFB had planned for us. The flying portions that were approved and funded, the F-22 Demo Team, a Heritage Flight fly-by of three Sabres and an F-22, and a Thunderbird flight demonstration were all cancelled.

The second item wasn't a planned thing, but one we hoped for; greater turnout. Our reunion attendance at our 18th reunion in 2011 was over 350. The attendance for this one was just over 270 total. We were hoping for a greater turnout. With that said, the enthusiasm of those attending this one was outstanding. Several reasons were for that as I will go into as I progress through this report.

Even before the doors opened at 10 AM for registration on the first day, many members were in line and eager to register and get started meeting old friends and make new ones. We, on the Board agreed to have a give away to each member this


year. That resulted in a new F-86 Sabre ball cap (see picture on page 6). The design was enthusiastically accepted and many of our members purchased more hats. Some bought three, four and up to ten extra hats (\$15.00ea). Fortunately, we had more than enough extras to meet that demand. In fact, we still have hats left over for anyone who would like to order one at the same \$15.00 price plus \$7.00 S/H. Just send your order and check to our Association address.

Before I progress further, there was an accident which happened to one of our members wives that pretty well destroyed their plans for an enjoyable reunion. Shirley Matasick, the wife of Bob (a long time Board member), took a bad and painful fall at the registration desk that first afternoon. That resulted in an ambulance trip to the hospital and to find out Shirley had broken her right hip and injured her right shoulder. Shirley and Bob spent the rest of the reunion and more days at a Las Vegas hospital followed by an Air-Evac flight back to Decatur, Alabama. To complicate things more, they had driven their car out to Las Vegas and they had to have the car shipped back. Fortunately, all the logistics worked out well and Shirley and Bob are back in Decatur where Shirley is recovering.

Back to the reunion activities, as I have said in previous Sabre Jet Classics, I had to make some changes in the daily activities, brunches, luncheon and buffets, to accommodate our originally planned flying activities at Nellis. Our day one evening cocktails went as planned and as usual there was no shortage of great food. The next morning we had the Gold Coast Grand Brunch. The food Chef Mark presented was excellent.

UNCLASSIFIED


Aces



*Lt Gen(Ret) "Chick"
Cleveland*

*40th Jet Ace
5 Victories*


☆☆☆☆☆



*Lt Col(Ret)
Cecil Foster*

*23rd Jet Ace
9 Victories*

☆☆☆☆☆
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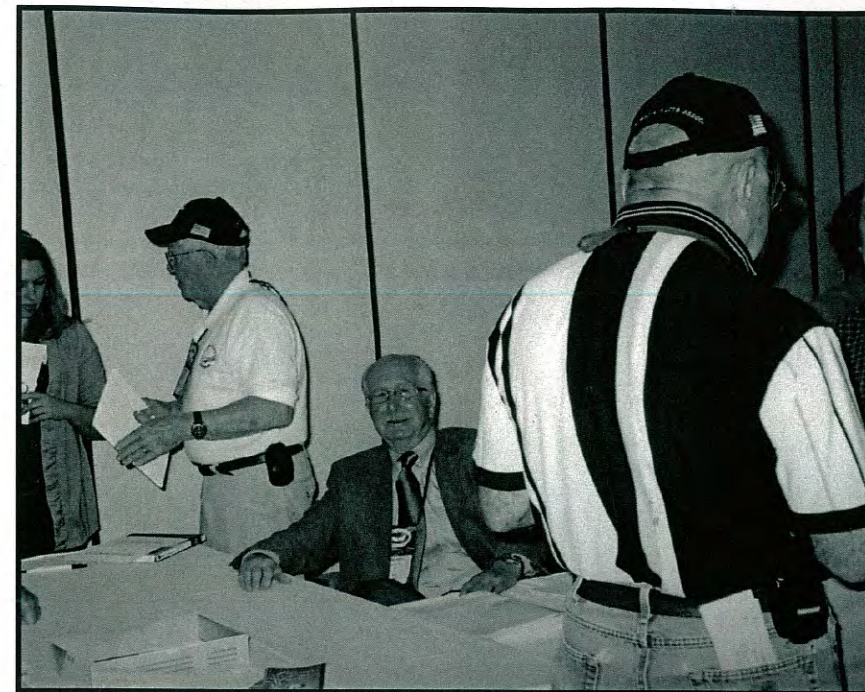
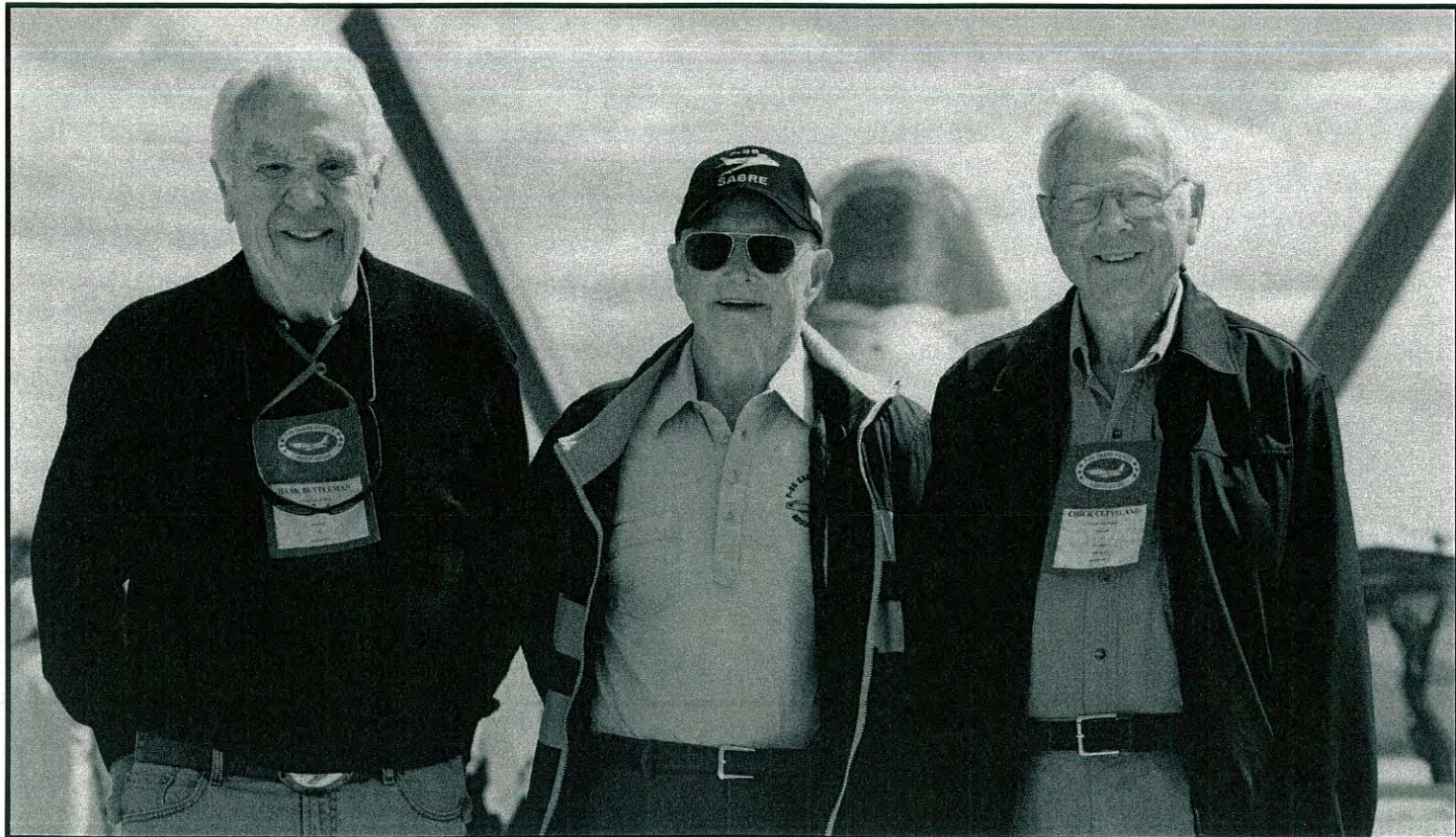
*Lt Col (Ret) "Hank"
Buttlemann*

*36th Jet Ace
7 Victories*

☆☆☆☆☆
☆☆

UNCLASSIFIED

(L-R) Hank Buttlemann, Cecil Foster, and Chick Cleveland, in front of the F-22 Raptor on the Nellis AFB flightline.



Registration opened at 10am on Sunday April 7th and Bob Smith made sure everything went off like clockwork.



The wives are hard at work keeping the registration line moving along on Sunday afternoon.

It took three buses to take everyone out to Nellis AFB for the Sabre Association plaque ceremonies in the new No Guts, No Glory Lounge.

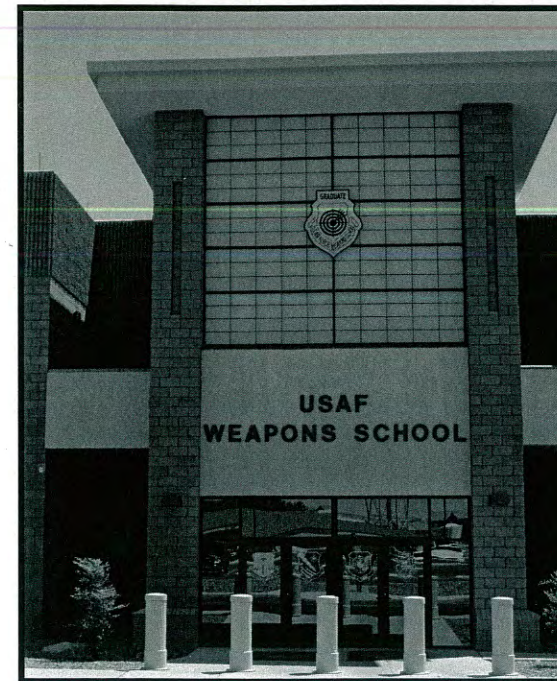




Inside the brand new No Guts, No Glory Lounge, is full of images from the history of the Air Force and the pilots that went through the Fighter School at Nellis. There were plenty of F-86 memorabilia in the lounge.



A ceremony was held inside the new lounge that was dedicated to the memory of LtGen. 'Boots' Blesse, author of the tactics manual for which the lounge is named.



The entrance to the Weapons Schools at Nellis AFB



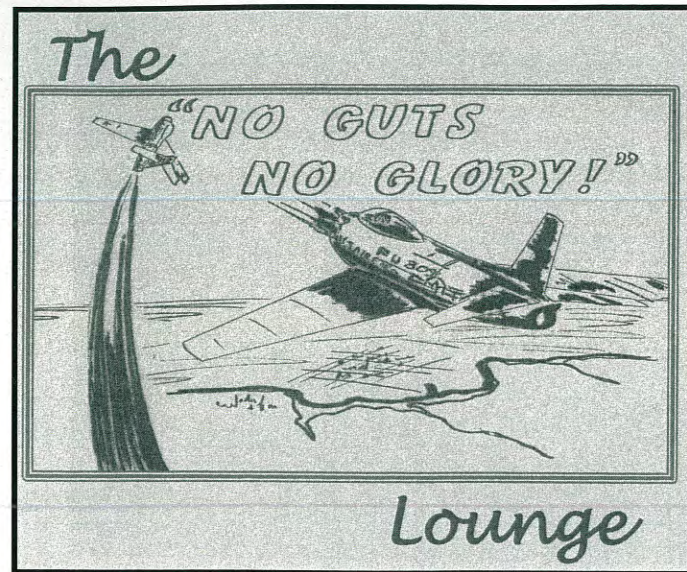
The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association plaque hangs in the place of honor inside the No Guts, No Glory Lounge.

The food at the Gold Coast throughout the reunion was outstanding as well the service they provided us.

The Association business meeting usually held on the last afternoon was conducted on Monday, the second day. I will not go into the actual business conducted here as you can read that in my President's Note Book comments. I will say that I was strongly urged to keep the meeting to forty five minutes or less. I hit the gavel at forty six minutes.

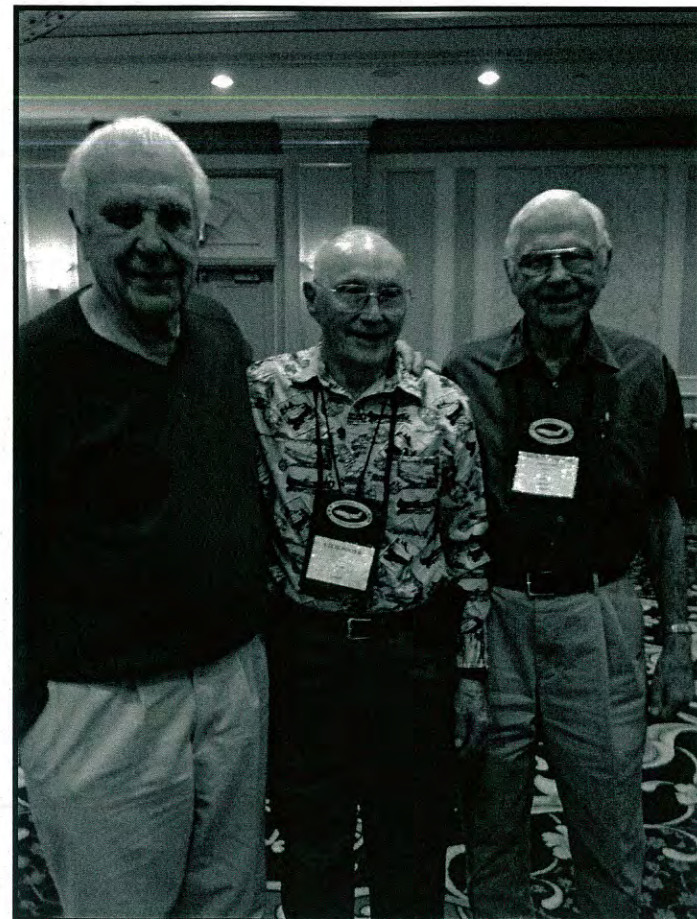
Our dinner buffet was Monday evening. Nearly one hundred and seventy of our members, some wives and family members boarded the buses for our "Aces Over Vegas" Nellis event on Tuesday morning. We were met in front of the Weapons School entrance by Maj. Lehoski and several of the 433rd Weapons School instructors and ushered into the main briefing auditorium minus our cameras. Three large screens set the scene with continuous videos of WW II and Korean War aerial engagements with gun camera film. Colonel Garland, the Weapons School Commandant welcomed us all to the "Aces Over Vegas" event followed by an overview of the mission and the structure of the USAF Weapons School. Then he told us that the former named Weapons School Heritage Room, informally known as the World Class Lounge, would be dedicated to Boots Blesse and called the No Guts, No Glory Lounge and there would be a

The entrance to the No Guts, No Glory Lounge.



The plaque outside the entrance to the lounge is a reproduction of the cover for the tactics manual that "Boots" Blesse authored in the mid-1950s.

Hank Buttelmann, Cecil Foster, and Chick Cleveland back at the reunion hospitality room in the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino.



Mike Freebairne chats with Major Lehoski about the capabilities and performance of the F-22 Raptor on the flightline at Nellis.

plaque hanging ceremony in the lounge following our flight line tour. That got a rousing reception from our entire group. Following that, Col. Garland announced that the former Air Force Association's Hoyt S. Vandenberg award for the outstanding Weapons School Instructor of the year would now be the Major General Frederick C. "Boots" Blesse Award. That parallels the Brigadier General "Robbie" Risner Award for the outstanding student graduate each year. At that point, I presented Col. Garland with our F-86 Sabre Pilots Association mahogany plaque with a request that it be displayed along with the other of Boots Blesse's memorabilia in the lounge. Next came the main part of our Nellis event.

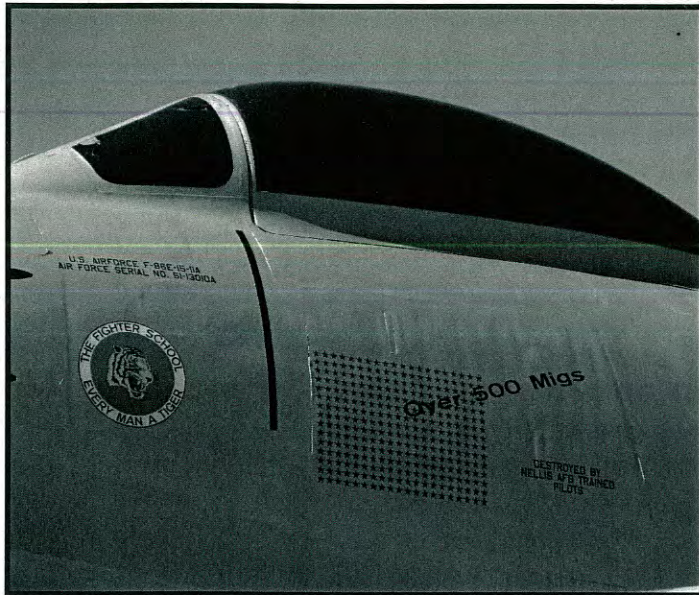
The attendees for the 19th Sabre Pilots Reunion were treated to a view of the Nellis AFB flightline that included one of the Thunderbird F16s. The Thunderbirds have been grounded due to sequestration.

Major Lehoski fielded many questions about the 'new' Air Force and the new aircraft and systems that are being used against the various enemies of today.





The F-86 Sabre at the entrance to Victory Park. The Sabre was dedicated by the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association during the 9th Reunion in 1994.



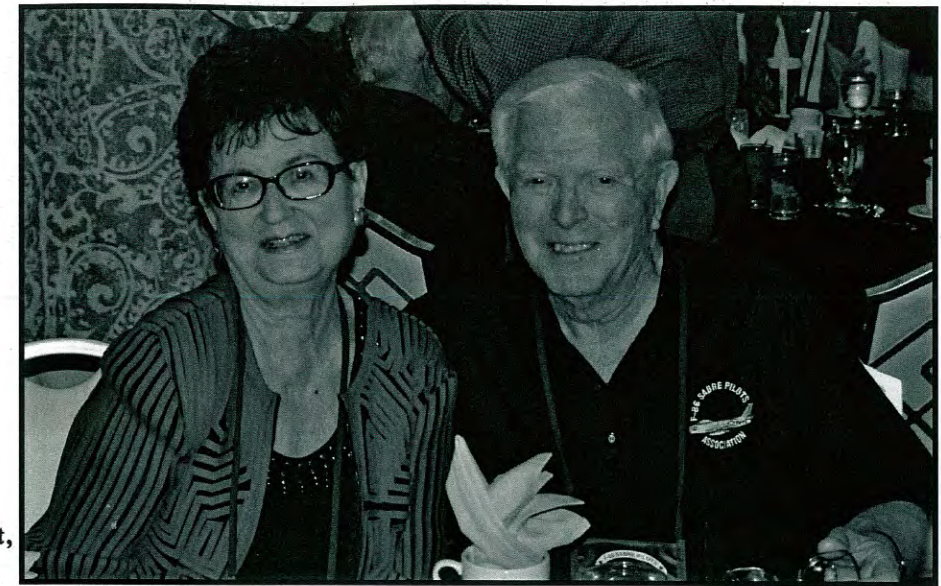
The 'kill board' on the side of the Freedom Park Sabre carries the logo "over 500 MiGs destroyed by Nellis AFB trained pilots", and has the markings of the Commander of The Fighter School.

Major Lehoski asked our three aces attending to come forward to be seated facing the audience. Each ace, Chick Cleveland (5 victories), Cecil Foster (9 victories) and Hank Buttelmann (7 victories) then shared with us one of each's most memorable air engagements against Mig 15s at the Yalu. Each gave a well told presentation of their engagements which captured the entire audience including the 433rd Weapons School instructor pilots. Following the exchange, Maj. Lehoski gave us an impressive F-22 Capabilities Briefing. Then the entire group was

ushered out onto the flight line, with cameras, to view two things. Since the flying portions of the event were cancelled, Maj. Lehoski arranged for a four-ship of F-22s (student mission) to perform high performance take offs for us to observe. Normally, they do not use the afterburners for takeoff as they want to save fuel and they have plenty of thrust without them. For us, they were directed to make single ship take offs, thirty second separation between each, in full afterburner, hugging the runway to the far end and rotating into a vertical climb to out of sight. That was impressive and certainly got the blood flowing in all of us old fighter pilots. Maj. Lehoski told me that each takeoff would be a graded element for the mission.

After we came back to earth, we were provided the opportunity to inspect three static display aircraft, an F-22 Raptor, a Thunderbird F-16 Fighting Falcon and a newly arrived at Nellis F-35 Strike Fighter. A lot of oo-ing, aw-ing and picture taking took place and it was time to all gather back inside to the No Guts, No Glory Lounge. All one hundred and seventy of us packed into the lounge along with many of the Weapons School I.P.s. The beer taps were opened and the hanging of a plaque showing the cover page of Boots's No Guts no Glory Air Tactics Manual and our own Association plaque hanging ceremony took place. It was special for us to be a part of the dedication for Boots that was long overdue. Following that ceremony, we boarded the buses and drove down to Freedom Park where we all got to wander around and

Avis and JR Alley at the Hospitality Suite.



The opening of the 19th Reunion banquet, Tuesday evening April 9th.



take pictures of the F-86F, recently repainted, that our Association was a partner in bringing to Nellis years ago. Finally, it was time to return to the Gold Coast Hotel to get some lunch, a combat nap and get ready for our banquet night and final event of the reunion.

Approaching 6 PM Tuesday evening the foyers adjoining the Nevada Ball Room were filling up with our members. All were anxiously waiting to get into the ball room to find a good table and be ready to enjoy an evening of good times, good food and an impressive guest speaker, M/Gen. Jeffrey G. Lofgren, Commander of the USAF Warfare Center at Nellis AFB. After the presentation of colors by the Nellis AFB Honor Guards, our traditional series of toasts and recognition of our special guests as well as our allied Sabre pilots attending, one all the way from South Africa, dinner was served. Then Gen. Lofgren

took the stage and presented a full picture of the vastness of the Warfare Center's areas of responsibility and its importance to tactical aviation and Nellis AFB. As sequestration was and still is the hot topic, he addressed that very clearly, the good and the bad. The bad certainly kept everyone on the edge of their seats.

At the completion of the General's speech, our traditional raffle drawing for ten \$100.00 checks followed by a special auction of a bottle, of Jack Daniels "Single Barrel" bourbon, provided by Dave Fruchauf was conducted. The bottle was labeled at the distillery especially for the lucky fighter pilot winner, David Vesowate with his winning bid of \$200.00 with "CHECK SIX" on the label. Our own Erik McMillan closed the formal activities of "Reunion 19" by singing God Bless the USA.

As during past reunions, the floor was opened for dancing to the easy swing music of the former Carl Grove Combo now led by Charlie Shaffer since the passing of Carl in May of 2012. The conclusion to Reunion 19 was the turning out of the lights by Chick Cleveland and his Rat Pack of players: Ginnie Rybos, Earl Lively, Jim Ramsey, Pete Carpenter and his guest Mary Elam, Andy Meyer, Chuck Toynbee and Victor and Alice Figalan. A great time was had by all!

As a final note, our membership numbers are dwindling rapidly and we won't be having many more reunions. If you can possibly attend, start planning for REUNION 20, at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino on 26, 27 and 28 April 2015.



(L-R) Chick Cleveland, Pete Carpenter, Victor Figalan, Jim Ramsey, Andy Meyer, and Les Elmer.



The RCAF was well represented. (L-R) Roger Hebert, Lionel Dixon, Ruth Dixon, Larry Mosser, Terry Herbert, and Beverly Mosser.



The brand new F-35 Strike fighter was on display for all to see up close and personal.



Ginnie Rybos and Andy Meyer attended the 19th Reunion.



Helga and Rich Geiger at the banquet.



Nancy and Bob Smith took time away from the registration tables to partake in the sumptuous food of the Gold Coast Hotel.

President JR Alley at the podium during the Sabre Pilots business meeting on Monday. JR kept the meeting to 46 minutes. His report of the meeting can be found in "the President's notebook" column on page 3.



The Millers and the Fruehaufs had a great time.



The South African Air Force contingent at the banquet. The Springbok no. 2 Squadron flew F-86Fs during and after the Korean War.

Avis Alley and Alice Figalan enjoyed themselves while the husbands were at Nellis.



Chick Cleveland, Ginnie Rybos, and Pete Carpenter at the banquet.



Chick Cleveland and Victor Figalan share a moment during the banquet.

Nora & Pat Hughes at the banquet.



(L-R) Ron Exley, Pat McGirl, and Mike Freebairne at the banquet.

Hank Buttelmann, Cecil Foster, and Chick Cleveland on the flightline at Nellis. Together they accounted for 21 MiGs.



M/Gen. Jeffrey G. Lofgren, Commander, USAF Fighter Weapons Center at Nellis AFB was the main speaker at the banquet.



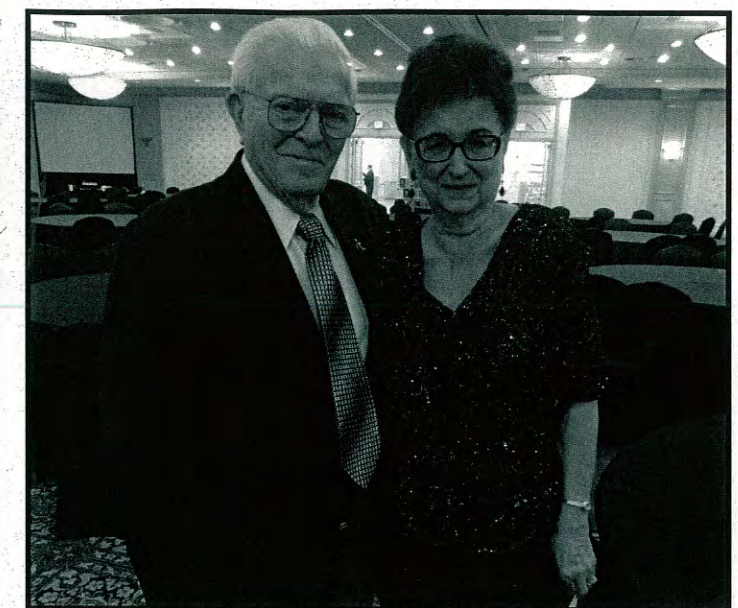
(L-R) Edith Lomax, Alice Figalan, and Ardith Freebairne in the Hospitality Room at the Gold Coast- Reunion Headquarters.



M/Gen Jeffrey Lofgren holds the Sabre Pilots Association plaque as Jerry Johnson shoots the photos, while Tom Weeks looks on.

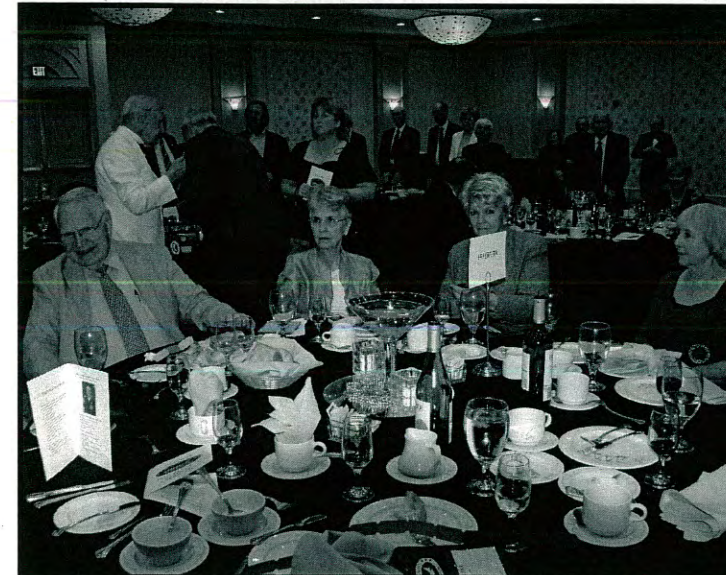


Chick Cleveland and his 'rat pack' at the Monday evening buffet dinner.

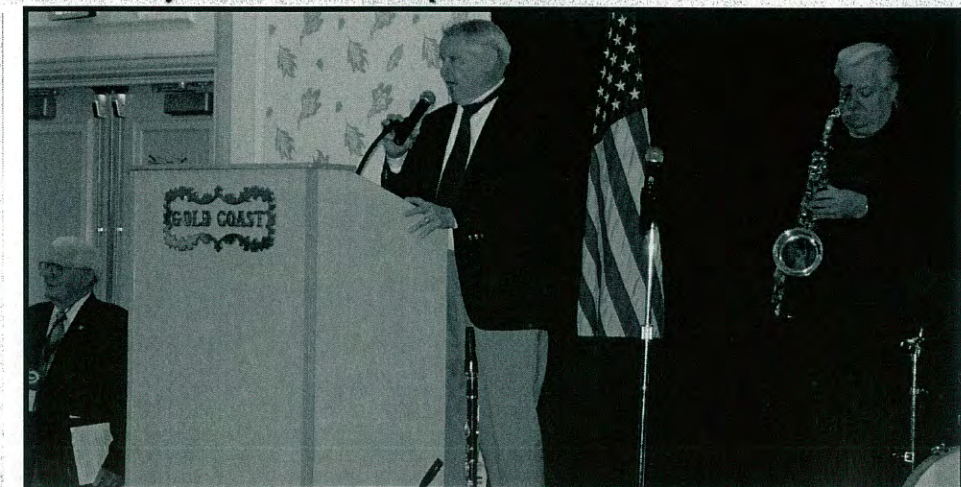


Avis and JR Alley

Everyone had a good time at the 19th Reunion and are looking forward to the 20th.



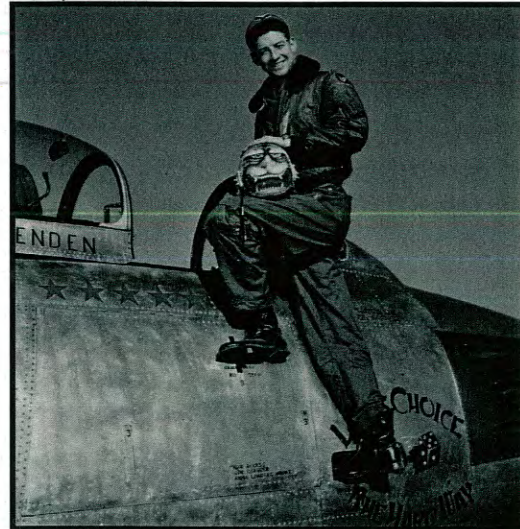
Eric McMillan leads the crowd in singing God Bless America at the finale to the 19th Reunion. See you all at the 20th in April 2015.



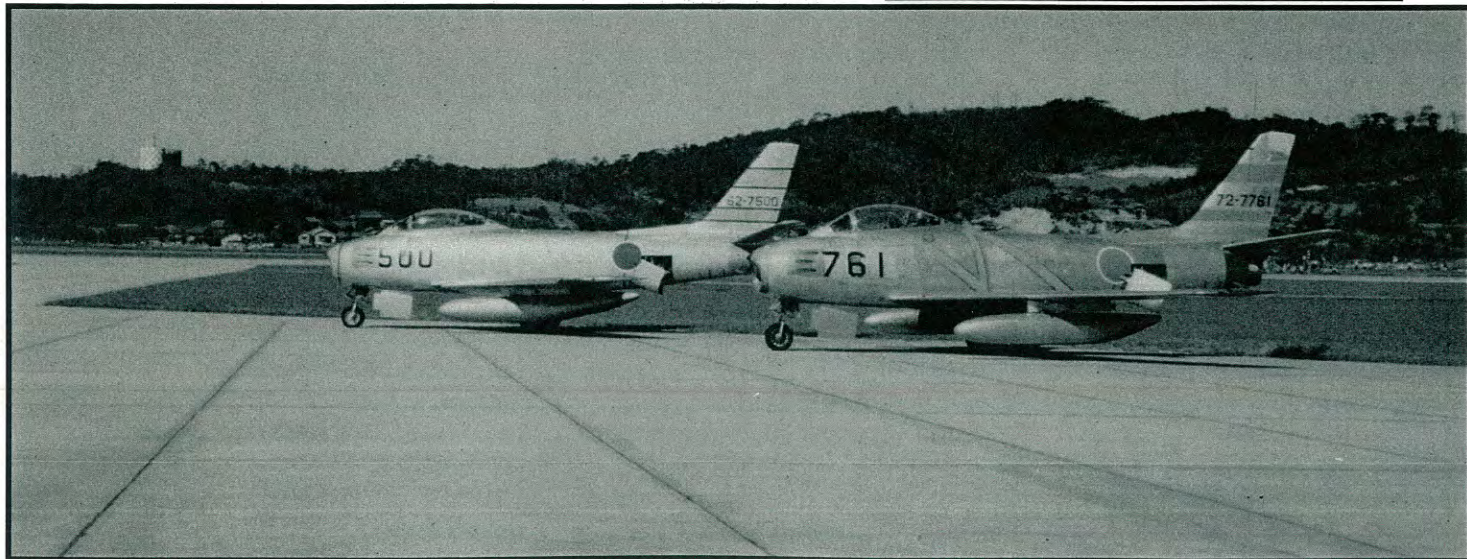


A 51st FIG pilot sits in the shade of an umbrella on the alert ramp at Suwon. As cold as the Korean winter was (-40 degrees!), the Korean summer was hot, often topping 90+ degrees, which could make the cockpit of the Sabre very uncomfortable. Does anyone recognize the pilot in the photo, which was taken at K-13 in 1953. (credit - USAF)

Lt. Lee Donny, 25th FIS at Suwon 1952, climbs into the cockpit of his F-86E for the day, FU-735. The aircraft, "Ladies Choice, The Hard Way," was originally assigned to Maj. Bill Whisner, an ace during WW2 and in Korea. (credit - Bob Lysgaard)



A pair of JASDF F-86Fs stand Runway Alert on the 68th FIS alert pad at Itazuke AB, Japan. The 68th FIS transitioned from the F-94B Starfire to new F-86D Sabres in 1953. The JASDF F-86Fs were at Itazuke to work with the local GCI site for day interceptor training. (credit - Richard Barros)



Sabre Reunions

Sabre Pilots 20th Reunion April 26/27/28, 2015 in Las Vegas.

Start planning now to make the trip. More details to follow in future issue of SabreJet Classics!

86th FBG Reunion

Sept.18-22,2013, in Ft. Walton Beach, FL.
Contact Dallas Lowe, (850-319-3047)
Or email fighterbomberpilot@yahoo.com

444th FIS Reunion

Sept.29-Oct 1st, @Sheraton Charleston Airport
Hotel in North Charleston, SC. Contact Jon
Mathews, email jrmathews05@aol.com

526th FIS Reunion

Oct.10-13, 2013, in Tucson, AZ. Contact
Joe Shambo (520-572-4636) or
email eshambo618@gmail.com

Merry Christmas from the 68th FIS at Itazuke AB, Japan, 1954. "Santa's helper" was a Japanese model that used a 68th FIS F-86D Sabre instead of the traditional reindeer and sled. I wonder how many stops she made at the Itazuke O-Club? (credit - Richard Barros)



F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

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What Is It? Now this is a true “what the heck is that thing?” Sabre. Two things jump out at me when I saw this photo in an old Japanese magazine. First is the very long fairing on the fuselage side that covers the entire gun bay and futher onto the aft fuselage. I can see the RF camera bulges under the fuselage so the bird is definitely an RF-86F. Second, look at the length of the canopy and the extra tall bulge. I have heard of that modification on other F-86F and the reason was to counter the bad aerodynamics of the fuselage bulges. The photo was taken at North American’s Inglewood plant in the mid-1950s. Does anyone know anything about this airplane and/or the modifications? Contact your editor at Sabrejet Classics, 6475 Chesham Dr NE Canton, OH 44721, or email at sabreclsx@aol.com. (credit – NAA)

