

# Sabre Jet Classics



Volume 22, Number 3

Winter 2014



*Inside - MiGs at UIJU,  
20th Reunion News,  
1949 Thompson Race - More!*

*Publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association*

# SabreJet Classics

volume 22, number 3

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# SabreJet Classics

Published by  
The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

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## 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,  
e-mail- sabreclsx@aol.com

Questions and/or comments regarding the  
F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn., its members, memberships,  
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be directed to the President, F-86 Sabre Pilots  
Assn., PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423  
Phone 1-702-363-9880.

**Front cover – This F-86F from the 53rd  
FDS, 36th FDG at Bitburg AB, Germany, is  
decorated with the fact that the 36th  
Group had flown 14,377 Accident Free  
hours over the past 3 years.**

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.

## the president's notebook

When this issue of the Classics gets out, winter will be well on its way. I'm sure many of you will experience a Whiter Christmas than usual. Stay in, stay warm and stay healthy.

I'm sorry to have to keep bringing up admin items, but the U.S. Postal service is giving me fits with many returned magazines. The addresses we have in nearly all cases are correct and I have been able to resend most to the affected members. Much of this problem is beyond me and our Post Master here in Las Vegas. If you don't receive your magazine let me know, but you must work the problem at your end. It is the postal department at your end that is sending your magazine back to us even with the correct address. Also, it more than doubles the cost of getting a magazine to you.

Now, let's address another area of concern. Larry Davis has been appealing to all of you ever since I became president back in 2009 and before. WE NEED YOUR STORIES. Larry has worked hard to get this issue to you as he was down to his last story and he has had to fill in with whatever he had. It may seem he and I have been yelling Wolf for some time, but this time the wolf is right outside the door. We need your help!

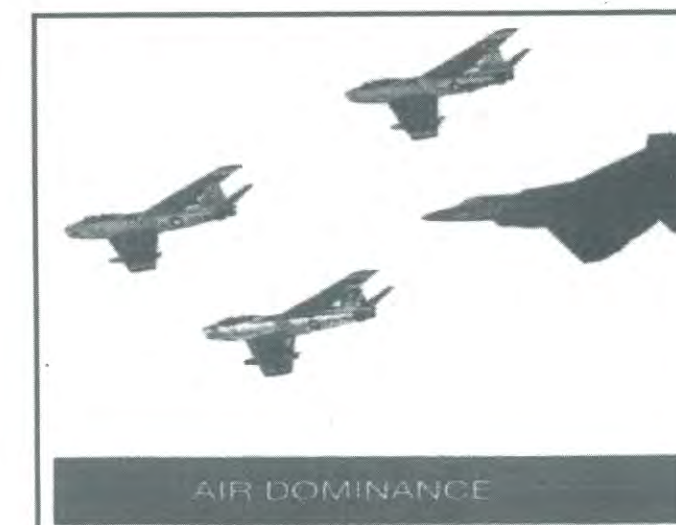
Many of you are still asking about those great looking F-86 hats. My order of 200 arrived and I have shipped out nearly forty so far. As I said before, these hats are the same as before, except the tail flash is the checkerboard of the 51st Wg. I have no more of the 4th Wg. I have to order in batches of 200 and cannot miss and match. Four hundred is too many to order. See the details in the magazine for price.

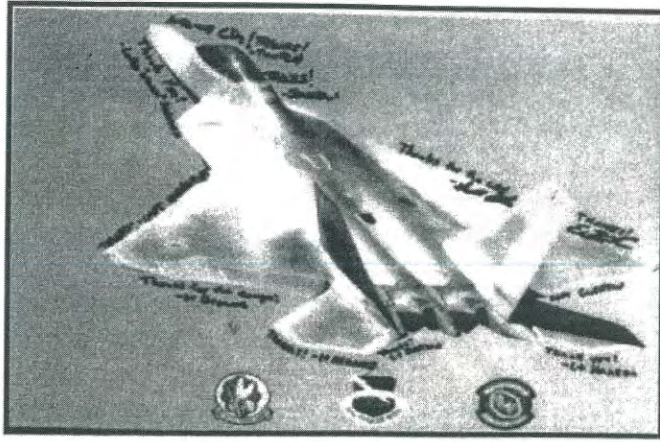
With the above said, let me get to the prime issue coming up. Reunion 20 is fast approaching and very few of you have signed up to attend next April. We have worked hard to have another quality reunion, with lots of activities; see the updated reunion news letter further back in this issue. It appears official that the Super Sabres will be holding their reunion at Dayton, Ohio a couple weeks before ours. That will have an impact on our total reunion attendees and we need to work harder to get more of our members to attend.

couple weeks before ours. That will have an impact on our total reunion attendees and we need to work harder to get more of our members to attend.

Now, I have something special that I want to share with you. Many times the small things in our lives get overlooked, but some mean more than we would think. Those of you, who attended our reunion in 2013, had the pleasure to experience a great Nellis Day even though Government Sequestration cancelled the flying activities that were planned. That entire effort was done by Maj. Daniel "Lager" Lehoski, the Weapons Instructor at the 433rd Weapons Squadron. Lager went on to a year at School in D.C. and was fortunate to be reassigned to Tyndall AFB and get re-blued as an IP in the F-22. He recently asked me if I had the words to any of the old fighter pilot songs that he could share with a new class of lieutenant F 22 pilots as they knew only a couple of them. Fortunately, I had a set of Dick Jonas's fighter pilot song books and CDs. I sent those to Lager and hoped they would help him in his effort to reactivate the enthusiasm and patriotism of fighter pilot generations of the past. Lager responded, that he received them and thanked me very much as that was just what he needed.

Some time passed and one night as I drove into our driveway, I noticed a very large package leaning up against our front door. After hauling this box into the house, I could see it was from Maj. Lehoski at Tyndall AFB. After I opened the box I could not believe what I was seeing. It was a beautifully framed picture of and F-22 Raptor in a full pull-up mode. That was not all. The Raptor was surrounded with the signatures of all the lieutenants.





I had to sit down and just soak this all in. Along with the picture, Lager attached a note card showing the three Sabres of the Planes of Fame Air Museum, The Horsemen, flying with the F 22 in the Heritage Flight that he had planned for our 2013 reunion. The picture with all the signatures with thanks for the all the songs was great, but Lager's comments on the back of the card struck me the hardest. He said, referring to the Lieutenants, "For the longest, they only knew a couple songs and did not understand the role songs played in the history of Fighter Pilots - the stuff you sent has helped them on both fronts." I think we all need to think about that a moment. Many of the small things in our generation of fighter pilots are being lost in this new world of political correctness that our younger fighter pilots are living.

In closing, let me remind all of you that at the next reunion Dick Jonas will be there to help us re-live a bit of the old fighter pilot era with a good batch of fighter pilot songs. Hope to see you there.

*God Bless America*

*God Bless Our Troops*

*God Bless Sabre Pilots*

*J.R. Alley, President*

### E-Mail Addresses Board of Directors

Pat Hughes, Chairman  
hugpat@aol.com

Dan Druen, Director  
Druens@aol.com

Bob Matasick, Director  
rmatasick@bellsouth.net

Bob Smith, Director  
rsmith957@cox.net

### Association Officers

JR 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

## FOLDED WINGS

Larry B. Burns, May 23rd, 2014

Robert J. Depew, April 12th, 2014

Richard E. French, November 17th, 2014

Richard S. Holland, August 15th, 2013

Lee S. Huoni, September 28th, 2003

John W. Johnston, September 12th, 2014

Dale W. Leatham, October 8th, 2014

James B. McCain, September 1st, 2014

James O. Miller, June 27th, 2013

Milton 'Nellie' Nelson, September 11th, 2014

John P. Pedjoe, March 1st, 2013

Robert J. Rankin, September 14th, 2013

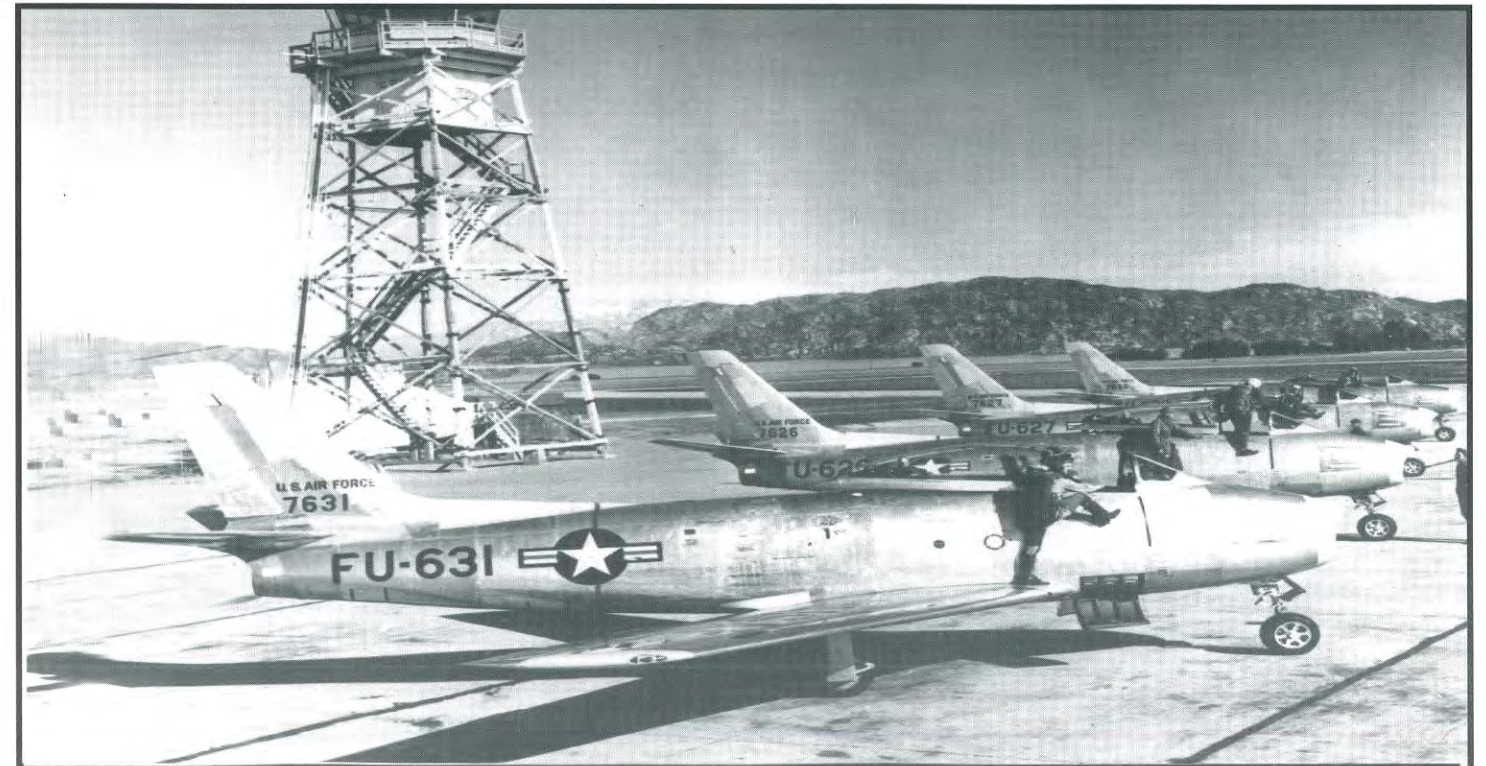
William T. Schwab, December 5th, 2013

Lloyd C. Ulrich, April 8th, 2014

John H. Ziegler, April 20th, 2014

### Letters to the editor

What Is It? The significance of this photo is that it is a shot of the first four Sabres delivered to the Air Force. These F-86A-1s are all destined for the 1st Fighter Group based at March AFB, CA, and the date is February 1949. Some of these airplanes will be seen (GORGEOUSLY! in full color) in the John Wayne movie "Jet Pilot", which also starred something else 'gorgeous' - Janet Leigh. (credit - NAA)



### F-86 Association Hats

As I mentioned in my Presidents Notebook comments, we have ordered another 200 hats that should be on hand shortly. There will be a slight difference. The tail flash will be the checker board of the 515t Wg. The price is still \$15.00 per hat plus \$7.00 for shipping. If ordering more than three hats, another \$7.00 will be required for S/H.

Send your hat orders and your check made out to F-86 Sabre Pilots Association to: F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, attn.. Sabre Hat, PO Box 34423, Las Vegas, NV 89133-4423.





Lt. James Ford is seen pulling the tail and 'riding' the tiger 'mascot' in front of the 53rd FDS Operations Building at Ramstein AB, Germany in the mid-1950s. The tiger was originally a black panther that was 'liberated' from the Nazi High Command at the end of WW2. (credit - James Ford)



This painting was sent to the Association recently. It is a painting by Wilfred Hardy of F-86s in action against MiG-15s in the Korean War. Very nice painting. However it is not available to our knowledge.



Lt. Warren Brown is describing to LtCol. Glover, CO of the 53rd, and NAA Tech Rep Frank Weage, how he was shot down by Soviet MiGs during an ill-fated routine patrol in an F-84E. Brown says he wants a return engagement now that he's flying a new F-86F with the 53rd FDS at Ramstein, Germany. (credit - NAA)

## MiGs ON THE RUNWAY

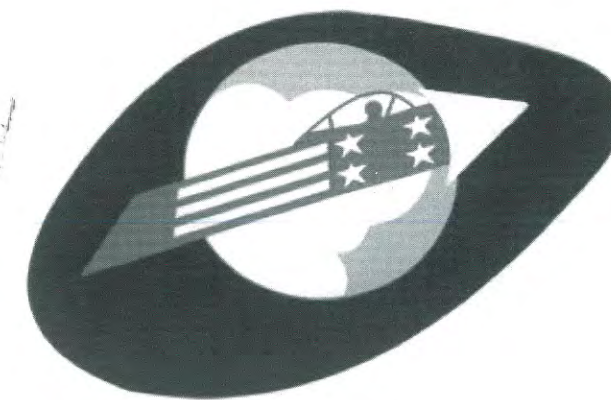
Excepted from Ken Rowe's  
"A MiG-15 To Freedom"  
and  
Larry Davis' "The 4th Fighter  
Wing In Korea"

It's the middle of November 1951. The 4th Fighter Interceptor Group (FIG) had been fighting in Korea for almost a year. They would fly north to the Yalu River, then patrol up and down hoping the MiGs would come up to ply. They usually didn't. Such was the afternoon of 18 November 1951.

The MiGs were based across the Yalu at several bases, the main one being Antung just north of the River. The Russian pilots were based there under the premise of 'training' both Communist Chinese and North Korean pilots how to fly and fight using the Soviet-built MiG-15.

But on 7 November, the Communists tried to move MiGs inside North Korea at Uiju, an airfield just across the Yalu about 10-15 miles SE of Antung that the Reds had recently renovated and made ready for MiG-15 operations. The B-29s had cratered the runway several

A pair of F-86As from the 336th FIS leave Kimpo AB, bound for MiG Alley in the Fall of 1951. At this time the 4th FIG was the lone F-86 unit in Korea. At full strength, the 4th could put up a maximum of 75 Sabres to combat over 500 MiGs. (credit-USAF)



### 336th Fighter Squadron

times but the Reds were very adept at repairing it. By 18 November, two squadrons of North Korean MiGs were in place at Uiju.

On that day, like many other days in November, the 4th FIG had put several flights of F-86s into the air looking for combat with the MiGs out of Antung. Two members of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn. were flying that morning - Capt. Ken Chandler and Lt. Dayton Ragland. MiGs had been sighted both Chandler and Ragland had not been engaged. They had dropped their tanks and were starting for home at Kimpo some 200 miles away.





Map of MiG Alley showing Uiju about 40 miles NE of Antung.

Capt. Ken Chandler after the Korean War when he won the Bendix Trophy. (credit - USAF)



A flight of four F-86As buzzes the base at Suwon in the Summer of 1951. The 4th ID bands were black & white at this time, but FEAF changed them to yellow and black in early 1952. (credit - "Bones" Marshall)



This photo was taken the following day after B-29s had cratered the runway. (credit - USAF)

Lt. Dayton Ragland at Kimpo in the late Summer of 1951 when he flew with the 336th Squadron, 4th FIG. (credit - JR Alley)



A 4th FIG Sabre peels off to start down on a target in North Korea during the winter of 1951. (credit - USAF)

Their return took them directly over the base at Uiju. Looking down they saw the base crowded with shiny MiG jets. It was too good a target to pass up. Both still had a full load of ammunition and they talked - "no sense in bring it back to Kimpo. They banked over and started down from 30,000 feet.

Lt No Kum Suk was one of the North Korean pilots at Uiju. On this day he was sitting runway alert at Uiju. "It was about 10am when I was relieved of Runway Alert. We knew that American Sabres were in the area as we'd been listening to the radio and heard about a fight somewhere over the Yalu.

Suddenly, our regiment commander started waving his arms and screaming for us to get out of the way! I turned my eyes skyward and looked toward the north end of the runway. There they were! Two jets screaming down at us at a very high rate of speed. The telltale stream of black smoke identified them as SABRES!

The approaching Sabres were completely silent, like a supersonic whirlwind. The noses flashed as both pilots opened fire with their six .50 cal. Machine guns. Their bullets tore up the flightline full of MiGs. I flung myself to the ground, pressing my face into the earth as hard as I could. But many of my fellow pilots were

trapped in their airplanes.

As quickly and silently as they came, the Sabres exited. The scream of their engines mingled with the screams of men dying, and the explosions of many airplanes destroyed in their wake."

Twelve MiGs had been on the alert ramp at Uiju that morning. With one pass, Chandler and Ragland had destroyed four MiGs, probably destroyed another, and damaged three more, decimating the North Korean 2nd Air Regiment. The remaining Migs were evacuated that afternoon. No further attempts were made to activated Uiju or any other air bases outside of Manchuria until after the ceasefire went into effect on 27 July 1953. It was a good day!

Ken Chandler finished the war with 1 confirmed MiG kill air to air, plus four on the ground at Uiju. Dayton Ragland had one confirmed in the air, plus one Probable on the ground and several Damaged. Lt. Ragland was later shot down and held prisoner until the wars end in July 1953. Sadly, Col. Ragland was shot down over North Vietnam and remains MIA to this day. Lt No Kum Suk, who took the name Ken Rowe, later would become famous as the NKAf pilot that would defect to Kimpo bringing a MiG-15 with him in September 1953.



**THE  
F-86 SABRE PILOTS  
TWENTIETH REUNION  
APRIL 26, 27, 28, 2015  
NEWS LETTER**



The twentieth reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association is shaping up to be another outstanding reunion. As in the past three 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.

**Events at this reunion:**

As noted in our registration form, registration starts at 10:00am Sunday morning at our hospitality suite. That evening, we will have our usual cocktail evening, get-to-gether, with an abundance of hors de' oeuvres. Bar service will be pay-as-you-go for that evening and throughout the reunion. To add to the enjoyment of the evening, Dick Jonas, a fighter pilot, ballad writer and singer, will perform for us by singing those famous Korean War fighter pilot songs; songs he wrote during his tour in the 8<sup>th</sup> Fighter "Wing Wolf Pack" during the South East Asia War and more. I'm sure he will encourage a good sing along.

The next morning, Monday at 0800am, the gents will be off to Nellis and will be hosted by the 64<sup>th</sup> Aggressor Squadron members. They will present to us their adversarial expertise and the vital role they play in preparing our fighter pilots to meet the threat. It should be a great exchange between all of you and our Aggressor pilots with briefings and static displays. We should be back at the G.C. by noon or shortly after. The ladies will have their luncheon from 1130 until 1400. It's not final as this time, but we're working on some great entertainment for them.



In the past, during our Monday buffet dinner, we had only an evening of good food and casual get-to-gethers. This year, after dinner, Kim Furst, the producer/director of **Bob Hoover's** documentary movie, "Flying the Feathered Edge" will present the full length movie to us. At this time we are not sure if **Bob** will be able to attend, but he certainly will be in the fore front of our thoughts.

Tuesday morning, day three, the Gold Coast Hotel Chef will serve us our breakfast buffet starting at 0900. That will be followed by our biennial membership meeting at approximately 1200. The afternoon will be free to get ready for our final banquet dinner that evening. For those desiring individual table reservations, they can be made in the hospitality suite. They must be made by the end of day two, Monday and must include at least six persons. Additionally, any remaining open seats will be available to other members.



**M/Gen Jay B. Silveria** comments by our president. The Charlie Shaffer Combo will provide that easy to listen and dance to music for the remainder of the evening.

**20<sup>th</sup> F-86 SABRE PILOTS  
ASSOCIATION REUNION  
26, 27 and 28 April, 2015**

**GOLD COAST HOTEL CASINO, LAS VEGAS NEVADA**

The 20<sup>th</sup> F-86 Sabre Pilots Association reunion will be held at the Gold Coast. Register early and avoid the rush. 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), or Pat Hughes at 702-870-4600 email [hugpat@aol.com](mailto:hugpat@aol.com). You may cancel up to 10:00AM PST Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015 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 "AF86SAB". Cut-off date for room reservations using our guaranteed group discount, \$48 per day for the newly remodeled premium rooms and \$36 per day for the Deluxe rooms is Wednesday, March 23, 2013. After that date, the rooms may cost more.

The Board has agreed to reduce the costs of the reunion to our members by: reducing the registration fee to \$50.00 for the member and \$25.00 for the spouse and/or guest (note the registration form). The menu prices for food always increase. This year, we have reduced all buffet and dinner prices. There will be pay-as-you-go bars. Drink tickets will not be provided.

Sign-in starts 10 AM Sunday April 7<sup>th</sup>, 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 Monday afternoon, so please attend the membership meeting. If you are interested in being on the Board of Directors or running for President, contact Pat Hughes (702) 870-4600.

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**F-86 SABRE PILOTS ASSOCIATION**  
**TWENTIETH REUNION, April 26, 27, & 28, 2015**  
**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 26, 2015:**

REGISTRATION: Starts at 10 AM MEMBER \$50.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE/GUEST \$25.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

RAFFLE TICKETS (6 for \$5) \$5.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

COCKTAIL PARTY (5PM to 7PM) \$15.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Hors D' Oeuvres & Cash Bar

**MONDAY, APRIL 27:**

NELLIS DAY WITH THE 64<sup>TH</sup> AGRESSORS \$15.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(Be at Bus for Departure @ TBD)

LADIES LUNCHEON ( 11:30 to 2PM) \$18.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BUFFET (6PM TO 8PM) cash bar \$30.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2015:**

BRUNCH (9AM TO 11AM) \$22.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

BANQUET (6:30PM to 11pm) cash bar \$36.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Petite Filet Mignon & Chicken Breast

**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 "AF86SAB" to receive the Premium \$48 room rate (Deluxe room rate - \$36.00) except Friday and Saturday nights. All reservations must be received by the GOLD COAST by Wednesday MARCH 23, 2015. Mail completed form and check to:

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

## BRUCE CUNNINGHAM AND THE 1949 NATIONAL AIR RACES

by Larry Davis

Throughout the first half of the 20th Century, the skies over many parts of the US thundered with the roar of powerful aircraft engines. It was known as the National Air Races (NAR). It was a 10 day extravaganza that drew crowds in excess of 50,000 people, often topping 100,000 which would jam the downtown streets of Cleveland to watch the show going on overhead.

Within the NAR were several different races like the Bendix and Thompson Trophy Races. In 1929 the NAR moved to Cleveland Municipal Airport, now Cleveland Hopkins Airport. The Bendix Trophy was a cross-country race, while the Thompson Trophy Race had airplanes flying laps around the field in a 10 mile circuit.

Most of these races were flown by highly modified aircraft at speeds that were phenomenal at the time. In 1932, Jimmy Doolittle would win the Thompson Trophy in a specially constructed airplane for the race that performed in front of the crowd with an incredible speed of 250 mph!. However, with the end of World War 2, there were hundreds of excess military airplanes that were available to the public for the princely sum of \$100. (Try to buy a vintage P-51 today for less than \$100,000!)

There were modified P-51s, T-6s, P-38s, Spitfires. These airplanes were routinely capable of speeds over 400 mph combat loaded. And the pilots were usually combat veterans from the recent war. Names like Bob Love, Bob DeHaven, George Ruddell, and Jim Hagerstrom were among the many that competed.

The Air Force jet fighter forces were in attendance at the '49 NAR. They included F-84Bs from Turner AFB, 4th FW F-86As, 1st FW F-86As, and Training Command F-80Bs. The Sabre on the right is the aircraft Bruce Cunningham flew in the Thompson Trophy Race - FU-263, which carried no unit markings for the race. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh Jr.)



1949 Logo

National Air Race logo 1949



4th Fighter Wing badge





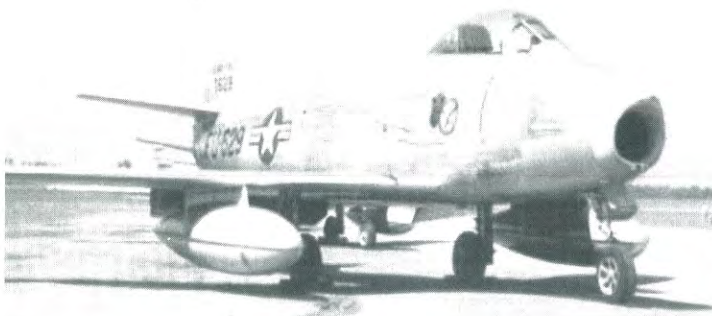
Capt. Martin Johansen flew this 335th Squadron F-86A in the Thompson Trophy Race, finishing 2nd to Bruce Cunningham. The aircraft carries the markings of the 335th "Chiefs", which were also the markings of the 4th FG aerobatic team, the Silver Sabres. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh, Jr.)



The Acrojets were the first "official" Air Force jet aerobatic team. Major Howard 'Sweed' Jensen, brought the team to Cleveland from their home at Las Vegas AFB for the Cleveland NAR. (credit - USAF)



Capt. Bruce Cunningham in full flight gear prior to the Thompson Trophy Race. Check out the fancy flight suit. (credit - USAF)



The 1st FG sent a pair of F-86As from their home base at March AFB, CA. One of the Sabres dropped out of the race for mechanical problems. The other Sabre had a malfunctioning seat but the pilot finished the race. (credit - USAF)



The 4th FG also sent two additional F-86As from the Silver Sabres team to perform some high speed maneuvers to the delight of the Cleveland crowd, which was estimated to be over 100,000. (credit - USAF)

The Cleveland NAR was put on show continuously from 1929 through 1939. The war stopped the NAR until 1946. With the advent of jet propelled airplanes for the military, the various races began instituting programs to include the jets. And when the first post-war NAR was held, it would have several classes including a "J" Division for the military jets.

"J" Division was won by a P-80A from the 1st FG in 1946 at a speed of 494 mph, which was increased to 507 mph in the winning entry for 1947. In 1948, the Bendix Trophy was won by a Navy FJ-1 Fury at a speed of 489 mph. What happened to the Air Force? They were not asked to participate. The 1948 NAR was to be an all-Navy affair.

But 1949 would see two things happen. The Air Force was again invited to compete in both the Bendix cross-country race and the Thompson Trophy "J" Division race. Four F-84E Thunderjets from the Muroc Dry Lake Test Division, made the cross-country flight at an average speed of 529 mph.

But it was the Thompson Trophy Race where Bruce Cunningham was the leader. Bruce was a captain with the 4th FG based at Langley AB, Virginia. Cunningham and three other 4th FG pilots - JO Roberts, 'Mac' McCarthy, and Martin Johansen - would bring four shiny new F-86A Sabre jets to Cleveland for the Thompson Race. JO and 'Mac' would fly an aerobatic "Silver Sabres" show at Cleveland; while Cunningham and Johansen were entered in the Thompson Trophy race against two Sabres from the 1st FG at March Field.

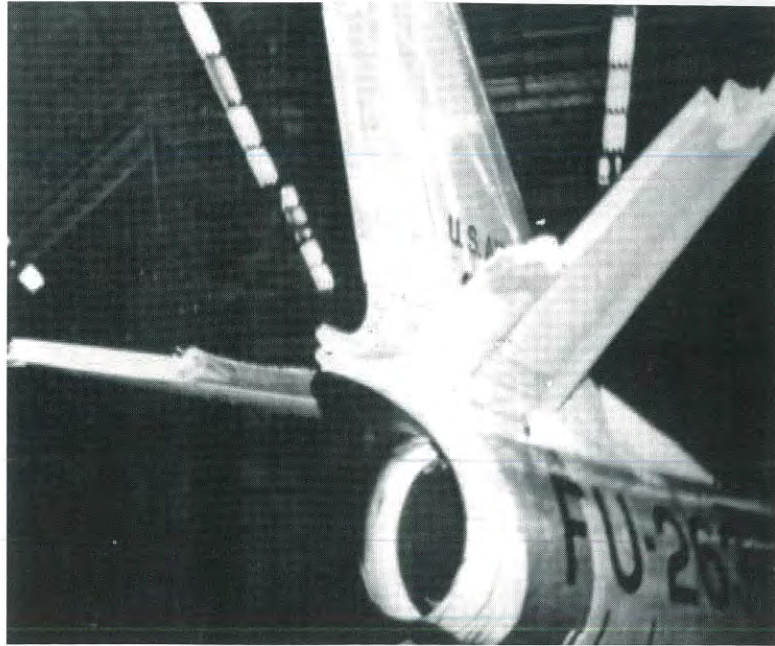
The Thompson course ran around seven pylons over a 15 mile course. Total mileage was 225 but Cunningham actually flew outside the course an additional 25 miles. When the race started one of the 1st FG Sabres would not start. And on the second lap the other 1st FG Sabre pilots seat broke forcing him to retire.

But the two 4th FG Sabres raced each other. Johansen flew the fastest lap EVER at 635.4 mph but he finished

Capt. Bruce Cunningham gives the OK sign to the camera after winning the Thompson Trophy with a speed in excess of 586 mph, despite losing over half of both elevators on the last turn. (credit - USAF)







Two photos showing the damage to Bruce Cunningham's elevators. The high sustained Gs of the race broke off both elevators during the final turn of the Thompson Race. This airplane now resides in the MAPS Museum at the Akron-Canton Airport, Ohio. (credit USAF)

second to Cunningham's winning speed of 586 mph. Johansen's speed was 580 mph.

But the biggest thrill for Cunningham came on the last lap when he suddenly heard and felt a loud bang. Capt. Cunningham briefly thought about ejecting but the airplane seemed to be flying fine so he continued the final lap and landed as the Thompson Trophy winner. Getting out of the Sabre he was astonished to see that both elevators on his Sabre - F-86A #48-263

- were only half there! All the rivets on the trailing edge of both elevators had popped off and the elevators themselves were gone. In addition, the skin around the tailpipe was badly wrinkled.

North American engineers found that the sustained G force exerted on the tail of the Sabre during the race was the cause of the loss of the elevators. But both they and the Air Force were elated that the Sabre could and did, take such punishment and was still able to bring the pilot home. One year later they would need those characteristics when they took the Sabre to a "land of temperate climate for an indefinite period of TDY".

That "temperate climate" was Korea and a war against the best aircraft and pilots in the Soviet Air Force, the MiG-15. The entire 4th Fighter Inceptor Group, including Bruce Cunningham, Martin Johansen, and JO Roberts, was sent to Korea, arriving in early December 1950. They would write a historic page in the annals of Air Force history, scoring a victory margin of at least 10-1 over the MiGs.

Another Sabre pilot that took part in the National Air Races was Jim Hagerstrom, who flew this P-38. Maj. Hagerstrom would later be an ace with 8 MiG kills in Korea, flying with both the 4th and 18th Wings. (credit - Wm. J. Balogh, Jr.)



this 'n that



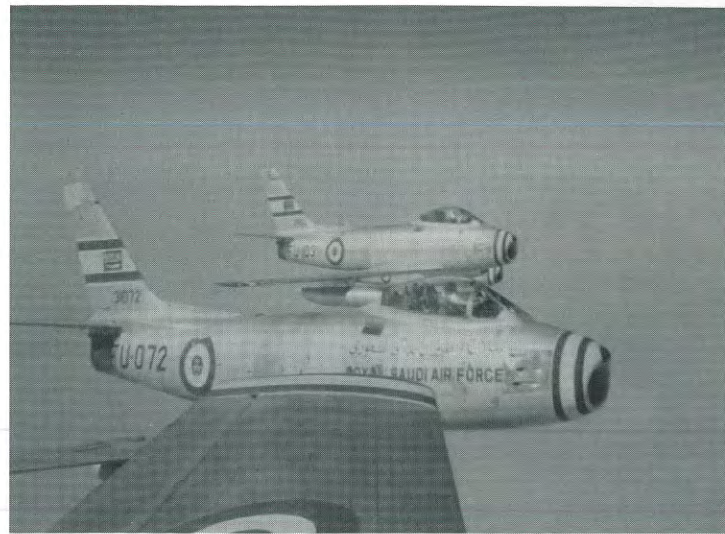
Mark Loudy shared these photos that his father took while he was stationed in Japan in the mid-1950s. His father in the 6036th Fighter Training Sq, which was charged with training the air and ground crews that would receive the first F-86F jet fighters in the Japanese Air Self Defense Force. (credit - Mark Loudy)



This 8th FBW F-86F suffered major damage when the engine exploded on the Suwon ramp in July 1953. The compressor failure took place during normal run-up on 14 July. Of special interest to historians is the fact that the airplane bears the logo "U.S. Air Force" on the fuselage, which was thought not to be carried until after the end of the Korean War. (credit - USAF)

The 62nd FIS Rocketry Team pose for the camera with the trophies that were won at the Yuma Rocketry Meet in 1955. The 62nd FIS was based at Orchard Park AFB (now O'Hare Airport) during the mid-1950s.



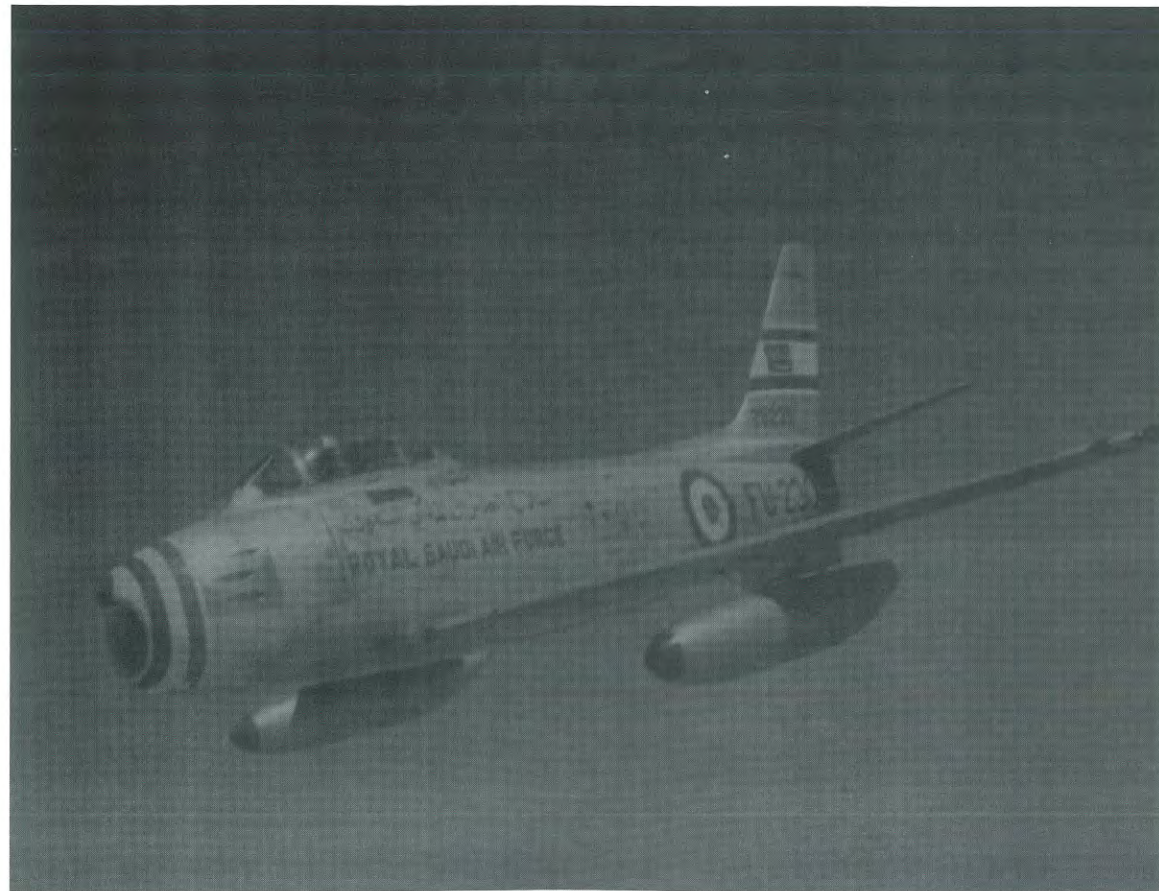


A trio of F-86Fs being delivered to Saudi Arabia in the Summer of 1958. The Sabres that were delivered to the Royal Saudi Air Force, were all ex-USAFE aircraft and delivered by USAF pilots. (credit - BGen. J. Ralph)

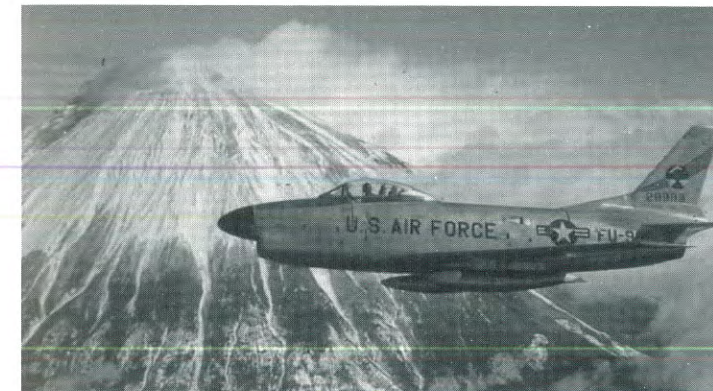


USAF personnel was charged with training both the air and ground crews for the RSAF, as well as maintaining the airplanes initially. This photo is dated November 1966 when many of the airplanes still bore US national insignia. (credit - Frank McDonald)

Jim Ralph was one of the pilots that delivered the re-built ex-USAFE F-86Fs to Saudi Arabia in 1958. Most of the Sabres bound for Saudi Arabia came from the 36th FBW, which had just transitioned into the F-100 Super Sabre. Note the airplane is painted silver and still carries the USAF serial number (52-5230) and buzz number. (credit - BGen. J. Ralph)



LtCol. Alvin Goddard shared these photos with us. This photo shows 'A' Flight, 444th FIS at Charleston AFB, SC in 1955. Lt Adolph Palma (2d from left) won the contest to design the new squadron insignia painted on the nose of LtCol Sam Wilkerson's F-86D. (credit - Alvin Goddard)



Alvin Goddard flies past Mt. Fuji, Japan at 12,000 feet during 1956. He was assigned to the 41st FIS at Komaki, Japan at the time. (credit - A. Goddard)

Goddard and Lt. Brunson letting down for a landing on Iwo Jima in August 1956. Note Mt. Suribachi to the far left. Goddard and Brunson were enroute to Anderson AB, Guam where the 41st FIS was based beginning in August 1956 as Top Cover for the SAC B-47s that were based there. (credit - A. Goddard)



Goddard was transferred to Niigata, Japan in 1956 with the 41st FIS, with Lts. Taylor, Smith, and Tullett, and Maj. Manning. (credit - A Goddard)



Alvin Goddard coming off alert shift at McGhee-Tyson AFB in Knoxville, TN in 1953. Note the low cut street shoes. (credit - A. Goddard)

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**What Is It? Can anyone help identify this unit. all we know about this photo is that the airplane may have been in one of the training squadron somewhere. If you can help ID these markings. Please contact the editor, Larry Davis, Sabrejet Classics, 6475 Chesham Drive NE, Canton, Ohio 44721; or email at [sabreclsx@aol.com](mailto:sabreclsx@aol.com)**

