

# SABREJET CLASSICS

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

Volume 23, Number 1

Fall 2015



► Inside: 20th Reunion Coverage, World's Oldest Jet Returns, F-86D/L/K history, More!

# SabreJet Classics

Published by:  
The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

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## Front Cover:

The F-86D flown  
Col. Albert Evans, CO of the  
86th FIW at Ramstein AB,  
West Germany in 1958.  
(credit - Jerome Burton)

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# SabreJet Classics

Volume 23, Number 1 • Fall 2015

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# The President's notebook

It has been a long time since I last talked with you as we did not publish a Spring issue of the Classics. The reasons being, I will go into later, but first I want to say a few words about our 20th reunion held this past April at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas. I refer you to the reunion review further in this issue for the details, but it was a great success and said by many that it was one of our best. Our attendance exceeded our expectations in that we had nearly three hundred attendees.

A lot has happened with our Association in the past six or so months and I will start with our Sabre Jet Classics. Larry and I have urged and pleaded over the last few years for your stories. As time passed, Larry's back log has dwindled to one, two or three stories. This is not unexpected as Larry has been publishing the Classics for over twenty four years and seventy some issues. With a dwindling membership as ours, that is understandable.

With that, Larry had serious heart bypass surgery a couple years ago. Even in his reduced state of health and energy, he refused to skip any issues during his recovery. His love and dedication to our membership cannot be more commendable. He said it was always fun to be the editor and publish great stories. As that reservoir tended to dry up and Larry had to come up with more of his own Sabre stories, the fun element began to disappear. To add to the situation, the printer Larry has used for so many years went out of business with little notice and he scrambled to get the last issue and the 2015 roster published. All added, the situation has taken its toll and Larry informed me this past winter as our reunion time was approaching that it was time for him to step down as editor. After some serious discussions and assurance that we would get Larry more stories and make his efforts more fun, he agreed to stay on for a while longer. We are not out of the woods altogether, as the pressure is on you and me to get our stories to Larry. Along with that, it was decided by our Board of Directors and Larry to publish two Classics a year instead of three.

Now, for the long dreaded news of a decision made by our Board of Directors to determine our Association's future. After the reunion, our situation was assessed at length and it was determined to "Stand Down" the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, the greatest fighter pilot organization of all times, after our 21st reunion in 2017. As for the reasons and rationale for that decision, I refer to the News Letter posted in this issue and on our web site, sabre-pilots.org. It was a difficult decision to make, but after over thirty five years of operation the time has come. With that said, we will continue for the next two years to keep the fire burning to the last day and the lights are turned out.

To meet that pledge, we are already in the planning for our Reunion 21. It will be held on 23, 24 and 25 April, 2017 at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas. Of special note, the Super Sabre Society will be coming back to the Gold Coast on 25, 26 and 27 April, 2017 following ours as was prior to 2015. That is good news to many of those who are members of both organizations. Back to our Reunion 21; our Directors agree that we need to subsidize, from our treasury, as much as possible our member's reunion costs. I don't have the details yet, but it will be substantial. We plan to go all out to make our final reunion one to remember for all times. However, no matter what we do, that goal is up to you. There are always those who are able and do attend our reunions and there are many of you who for medical, financial or personal reasons cannot attend, but I urge all of you to seriously consider, if at all possible, to join us in this monumental final event.

As for keeping the fire burning during our last years, we recently offered the opportunity to purchase two limited edition and framed lithographs of Boots Blesse's last victory, "There Goes Number Ten" and Ralph Parr's, "Shooters Odds" from Mike and Ardith Freebairn. When they made this offer, I immediately thought of two ideal places where we could donate these pieces of art to further the legacies of both Ralph and Boots as well as enhance each facility; the "Parr Club," formerly the O'club at Randolph AFB and the Weapons School "No Guts No Glory Lounge" at Nellis AFB. Our Board of Directors agreed with the purchase and the presentations suggested.

The "Shooters Odds" lithograph was presented at the "Parr Club" on May 29, 2015 By Glenn Nordin and Dan "Firecan" Walsh before an attendance of distinguished personnel and was well received. Our presentation at Nellis is in work and hoped to be equally as well received. For further details on these presentations see story on page 14.

I always say I will keep my presidents comments short, but with all the information I need to pass on to our members, it is difficult. Now, for further clarification of issues I have discussed and to read more great stories, read on and think Reunion 21, 2017!

**God Bless Our Troops!  
God Bless Sabre Pilots!**

**J.R. Alley**  
*President*

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, or \$50/3 years. SabreJet Classics is published solely for the private use of our 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 approximately three times per year. Extra copies of an issue can be obtained at \$3/copy. All payments should be made payable to "F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn.", and sent to the Las Vegas address.

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# F-86 ASSOCIATION HATS

We still have a limited number of F-86 Association hats available. The tail flash will be the checker board of the 51st Wg.

# \$15<sup>00</sup>

PER HAT

**PLUS \$7.00 FOR SHIPPING**

*If ordering more than three hats, another \$7.00 will be required for S/H. Send your check to the Association address listed on the back page.*



▼  
Chuck Yeager (3rd from right) visits the McDonnell plant in 1948. He flew in a new F-86A-1 Sabre. Mr. McDonnell is immediately to the left of Yeager. Yeager was there to check on development of the new McDonnell XF-88 aircraft that was still on the drawing boards.



# Folded Wings

Charles E. Adams, June 17th, 2014  
Leon E. Balfour, December 13th, 2013  
William R. Beaver, November 1st, 2014  
Oaul E. Boeck, August 20th, 2014  
Donald C. Campbell, October 15th, 2014  
William 'Bill' D. Cooper, December 10th, 2014  
Kenneth C. Ewing, November 28th, 2014  
James A. Fleming, RAAF, February 11th, 2015  
Richard 'Dick' Griffin, July 14th, 2015  
Edgar R. 'Gris' Grischkowski, May 29th, 2015  
Harold L. Harris, October 22nd, 2012  
James H. Kasler, April 24th, 2014  
Dick Kenney, December 11th, 2014  
Richard M. Linton, November 12th, 2014

James R. List, December 17th, 2014  
William A. Matheny, April 2015  
James E. McNerny, October 14th, 2014  
Robert H. McIntosh, December 2nd, 2013  
Charles M. McSwain, June 11th, 2012  
Kenneth P. Miles, April 27th, 2014  
Marcus R. Oliphant, September 21st, 2013  
Robert E. Railey, March 28th, 2015  
Robert Hood Reeves, June 15th, 2015  
William E. Schmidt, August 16th, 2014  
Dale W. Smiley, January 14th, 2015  
MajGen. Thomas S. Swalm, January 15th, 2015  
Alvin Ray Turner, September 9th, 2015  
Joseph H. Turner, June 10th, 2015  
Jack E. Wilhite, January 26th, 2015

## No. 2 Squadron SAAF (The Flying Cheetahs)

The historic name of the "Flying Cheetahs" was conceived during WW2 during the East African Campaign in May 1940 where the Squadron received 2 Cheetah cubs as mascots. It is not known what the fate was of these original mascots. This tradition of having a Cheetah as a unit mascot was re-established in 1960 when a Game Ranch of the Eastern Transvaal donated a Cheetah cub to the Squadron. The picture below shows the full grown Cheetah as it grew into a magnificent specimen.



# Planes of Fame Air Museum

## Korean War Memorial Update



In past issues of our Classics, we have informed you of the Korean War Memorial that the Planes of Fame Air Museum at Chino, California is in the process of building. Initially, they thought they would have it completed by the end of 2013. Due to very expensive construction criteria required by the state of California and the lack of donations, progress has been slow. The land has been prepared for some time. A big obstacle has been getting the twenty foot deep whole and the foundation plan for the pedestal to mount the F-86 approved by the state. That has been done and the hole and foundation have been completed. But there is much work yet to be done and the money to support that effort is not available.

Since perpetuating the F-86 and its history is part of our constitutional charter, our Board of Directors has approved that we donate \$5000.00 to the Planes of Fame for that worthy effort. As a point, all \$5000.00 will go toward that project.

To further help move this project toward completion, we fully encourage any of our members who would like make a personal donation to this project. You can do so for whatever amount you feel you can make. Be sure you note on your check that your donation is for the Korean War Memorial project. By doing that, it guarantees one hundred percent of your donation will go to that project.

### Contact information:

Jerry Wilkins, Executive Director,  
Planes of Fame Air Museum, Chino Airport,  
7000 Merrill Ave., 17 Chino, CA 91710.  
PH is (909) 597-3722 and web site is  
[planesoffame.org](http://planesoffame.org).



# THE F-86 SABRE PILOTS



NEWSLETTER

MAY 26, 2015

## ASSOCIATION BREAKING NEWS!

*Our Association Board of Directors made a monumental decision on May 22, 2015 to Stand Down the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association as of April 25, 2017.*

That will be the final day of our 21st Reunion at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas, 23, 24 and 25 April, 2017. It will have been a run of thirty six years since our first reunion conducted by Bill Deming, Frank Satterfield and Warren Thompson at Little Rock, Arkansas in 1981. During that time the Association has accomplished much to continue the camaraderie among Sabre pilots and perpetuate the history of the greatest day jet fighter ever built. To accomplish this goal, the Association established an F-86 Sabre memorial at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, was instrumental in organizing and paying for the transportation of the F-86F that now proudly stands on its pedestal in Freedom Park at Nellis AFB, Nevada, has supported F-86/Mig-15 air show flying demonstrations at Nellis AFB and established our own Wall of Honor foil with 817 names of Sabre pilots at Udvar-Hazy Center of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. The Association has wisely spent over \$80,000 in supporting one of its main organizational purposes: to perpetuate the history of the F-86 Sabre.

In addition to conducting reunions and advancing the heritage of the F-86 Sabre, the Association was fortunate to find an aviation historian and writer with more historical knowledge of the Sabre than anyone, Larry Davis, to take over and publish our own magazine, the Sabre Jet Classics. The Classics consisting of personal stories by our members, technical and historical stories written by Larry himself, continued on in 1994 from our previous editor of nine issues, to the present. During that entire period from 1992 to the present, seventy one issues have been published. There are more Sabre stories in those volumes than can be found anywhere in the world.

As for the rationale behind the Board of Directors decision to Stand Down the Association, there were several reasons. One is what we all know and that is the age of our membership. Our WW II/Korea Sabre pilots are now in their early nineties. Our Korean guys are approaching ninety. When we look at

continuing on to 2017, it sounds reasonable, but to continue to 2019, four more years, that makes the dynamic more difficult. Two key elements that have been the binding glue that has made the Association so successful for the past many years are our biennial reunions and the Sabre Jet Classics magazine. With the ages of our membership as noted above, our re union attendance will drop significantly for several reasons: medical situations, difficulty and lack of desire to travel in this day and age and more. As for publishing our Sabre Jet Classics magazine, that depends on stories provided to our editor. After twenty five years of stories from our members and those by Larry, our supply is down to only a few. It may be difficult to continue publishing the Classics even until our 2017 reunion. Also, Larry has recently expressed his desire to step down as editor of the Classics. After some serious persuasion and guarantee of providing him with more stories, he has agreed to remain our editor for a non specified time. Then there is the human side of running the Association. We have been extremely fortunate to have Polly and Duke Winesett maintain our data base since the late nineties which allows us to maintain contact with our members for our reunions, the Classics and our roster. We can't expect them to continue too many more years. Finally, our leadership has dwindled to just a few. Through the eighties and nineties our leadership was replaced with a new president and new board members every two to four years. Since the time Jerry Johnson took over the reins in 2001, he remained president until 2009 when J.R. Alley was elected and is our present president and re-elected to be president until 2017. We are fortunate that Jerry and J.R. have been willing to take on this task for so many years.

With the above picture presented to our Board of Directors, it sadly became clear that the time has come to Stand Down the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, the premiere fighter pilot association of all times. It has been a great run and be assured that the last two years finalized by our 21st Reunion will be as good or better than before. We will not let down.



# THE F-86 SABRE PILOTS 20<sup>th</sup> Reunion



The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association held its 20th biennial reunion at the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada on April 26, 27 and 28, 2015. Considering our ageing and diminishing membership, we had a greater attendance than was expected with nearly 300 members present. That was especially gratifying since the Super Sabre Society who usually dovetails behind us moved their reunion to the Air Force Museum at Dayton, Ohio. To make up those expected losses, we had a considerable number of new members and members who haven't attended before join us. Some of those new members included Bill Mills, Lloyd Skaalen, Roger Hebert and Barney Hopkins from Canada and members of SPAADS/ Sabre Pilots Association of the Air Division. There is more. One of our more recent new members, Chuck Zeitner who normally holds a mini reunion each year for former F-86 pilots of the 388th FBW formerly stationed at Clovis AFB and Etain AB, France, recruited several of his group to join us at our reunion. Now, let's look at what went on during those three action packed days.

April 26, Day One: As usual, day one is registration day and initial get together time for old buddies and friends. The registration function with the dedicated efforts of our ladies Avis Alley, Dorothy Johnson, Nora Hughes, Helge Geiger and lead by Ardith Freebairn went smoothly. In addition to the usual registrations, Bob Smith and Polly Winesett handled all the walk-ins and any registration difficulties. With this great effort, the registration moved quickly and our members could get to what they came for: getting together again or meeting new Sabre friends. In each registration package, the Association had a special gift for each member consisting of two sand coasters with a custom picture of the only flying F-86A Sabre on it. That special order turned out great and of the 400 ordered, nearly 300 were given in the packages and many of the remaining 100 were sold for \$5.00 ea.

Speaking of selling remaining coasters, we conducted mini sales of certain items for reunion attendees. Rich and Helge Geiger and Jack Seaman set up shop for several hours during the day selling the F-86 coasters, F-86 hats that



**Sand Coaster Available while they last**

were a big hit at the previous reunion, a limited number of 22 carat gold plate F-86 lapel pins, Association challenge coins, bumper stickers and previous issues of our Sabre Jet Classics. This mini sale was so well received by our members, family and guests and that we decided to extend operations into the afternoon free time after our business meeting the next day. By the way, we have about 40 of the coasters, a significant number of 86 hats and challenge coins left over. They can be purchased from the Association by mail, first come first serve.

Normally, on the evening of registration day, a cocktail hour of heavy hors d'oeuvres is conducted as our first social get together. This year we added a special feature by having Dick Jonas, fighter pilot, ballad song writer and singer, to sing and lead us in fighter pilot songs during the evening.



**Dick Jonas Singing our Fighter Pilot Favorites**

To make Day Two work with all the activities planned, nearly 150 of our members, family and guests had an early get-up to grab a couple Danishes/donuts and coffee before loading up on the buses at 0700 am for our Nellis Day event set up by Maj. Nicholas Hamilton. The 64th Aggressor Squadron hosted us and kicked-off the event with the 64th Cmdr, L/Col. Gordon giving us a detailed briefing on the Aggressor role and mission followed by a lengthy question/answer period. At the completion of Col. Gordon's presentation, J.R. Alley presented the squadron with our hand carved mahogany Association plaque. No cameras were permitted in the briefing room.

The second part of our Nellis Day Event was a tour of what they call the "Petting Zoo," a compound of formally classified Soviet military equipment including aircraft, missiles, radars, guns and much more. This tour now declassified and open for public view was professionally conducted and much more extensive than we had expected. Any tour of Nellis AFB activities should include the "Petting Zoo."



Next and last on our Nellis tour was our visit to the Weapons School, "No Guts No Glory Lounge." Our Association was instrumental in getting it dedicated to Boots Blesse during our 2013 reunion Nellis Day. Some old fighter pilot stories were passed on to the younger fighter pilots and before long it was time to load up on the buses and get back to the hotel for a special event.

In the past, we had always had a luncheon for the ladies with entertainment while the guys went to Nellis. Over the last two reunions, more of the ladies joined the gents at Nellis and the ladies luncheon was withering away. With a stroke of luck, helped by Jack and Sheila Seaman, we were able to have a professional Las Vegas pianist entertainer, Wes Winters, perform for us during that afternoon. Being that this was a much bigger production, it was decided to open it to all and the event was renamed the "Guys and Dolls" luncheon. Our attendance was outstanding with over 170 attending for a lunch of Chicken Cordon Blue followed by Wes's playing and singing for two hours. Wes, a self taught play "by-ear" musician is one of the most versatile entertainers in Las Vegas. He has a repertoire of over 2000 songs he plays and sings from Jerry Lee Lewis to Barry Manilow, big band, country and Rachmaninoff and he captivated our audience.





With just a three hour break, the action began again with our usual evening buffet dinner, after which we were able to kick back and watch the Bob Hoover documentary “Flying the Feathered Edge.” The screening was presented by Kim Furst, Director of the Bob Hoover Project. This was a natural home run for every fighter pilot to see this documentary of Bob’s life and flying career. Intermingled within the documentary, Kim recorded short clip interviews of well known’s in our Association, Dan Druen, Bill Hosmer and Jim Brasier. At times, for some, the presentation became rather emotional bringing back some great memories of watching Bob perform over the years. Seeing “Flying the Feathered Edge” was the perfect follow-on to having Bob attend our reunion for the three days back in 2011.

Day three and the final day of our reunion after a delightful and filling breakfast buffet, it was time to conduct our Association Business Meeting. After his opening comments, J.R. Alley shared a few items of interest with us. One was extra special and should be conveyed to all of our members. As discussed before, two former Sabre pilots from the South African Air Force, Butch Bester and Cappy Broderick joined our Association and attended our reunion in 2013. They were so impressed, that Butch, after returning home, conducted a recruiting campaign to get more South African Sabre pilots to join us. Through his tireless efforts, we now have twenty eight South African members on our rolls. As time came closer to this reunion, it became apparent that due to many circumstances and the long travel distance, Butch and his team of Sabre pilots would not be able to attend. With their regrets, Butch penned a letter and sent to us for our members to read. See the pages in this issue dedicated to the South African Air Force.

Upon completion of the usual protocol items consisting of the minutes of our meeting at the previous reunion and our treasurers report, we had our election of Board of Directors/President for the next two years. The results are as noted on the leadership page in this issue. We are now back up to our full complement of Directors and for administrative convenience, they all live in Las Vegas.



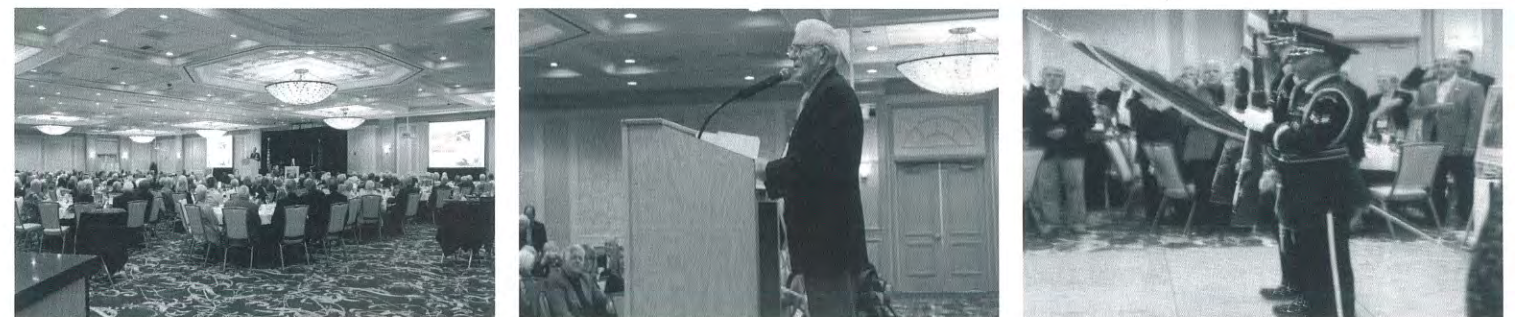
The next item of business was the planned presentation of the Boots Blesse and Ralph Parr lithographs the Association purchased. For details, see the President’s Notebook comments in this issue.

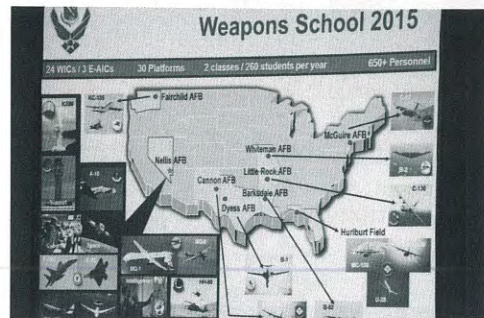
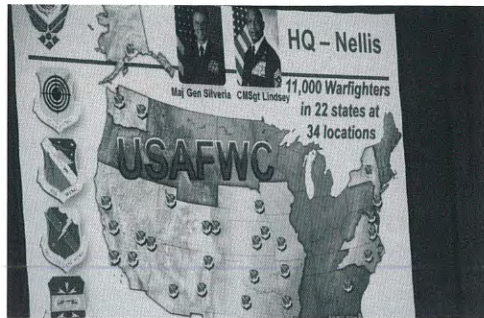
The last item of business was when and where we conduct our 2017 reunion. It was unanimous among our Board members that the Gold Coast Hotel/Casino in Las Vegas is the ideal place for our reunions. That position was presented to our reunion members and supported overwhelmingly. Due to Easter falling in the middle of April, 2017 we would have to schedule our reunion in early April or at the last of the month. It was decided later in the month would be better. April 23, 24 and 25, 2017 were suggested and approved. Other than questions and answers, our business meeting was adjourned and the rest of the afternoon was free time. Post adjournment, Chuck Zeitner, who I mentioned at the beginning of this review as to bringing his 388th FBW Sabre pilots to our reunion advised me that they would no longer conduct their annual mini reunions, but instead attend ours.



*Finally, the major event of our reunion and that was our banquet dinner and activities.*

Our banquet commenced at 1830 with the presentation of the colors by the Nellis Honor Guard, our customary toasts and the recognition of honored and special guests. A major change to our evening program was our guest speaker. Originally, M/Gen Jay Sylveria, USAF Air Warfare Center Commander, was to be our speaker. Due to last minute changes to his schedule, he was not able to attend and B/Gen Christopher Short, Nellis’s 57th Wing Commander, stepped up and accepted that task. We were extremely thankful to Gen. Short for joining us. He was accompanied by his executive officer, Maj. Craig Rumble. Additionally, we were honored to have Col. Gary Rose, the 57th Wg Adversarial Tactics Group Commander join us as well as Maj. Nicholas Hamilton, our 64th Aggressor Squadron Nellis Day project officer. Col. Rose, representing the Weapons School, sponsored our Nellis Day event during our reunion in 2011 and has been especially helpful in providing our Association with any assistance we need at Nellis. After a great meal of expertly prepared Filet Mignon and Chicken Breast with all the trimmings and wine, it was time for Gen. Short to take the podium. He spoke to us about the 57th Wing and its vast and wide array of organizations, missions and its impact on our tactical air forces. He was informative and articulate with his presentation that kept everyone totally interested. It was more than obvious at the end of the General’s speech that we all had a much greater understanding of the 57th Wing mission and how much Nellis AFB means to the success of our Air Force and the challenges we face and will meet in the future.



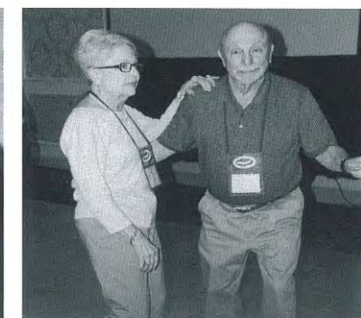
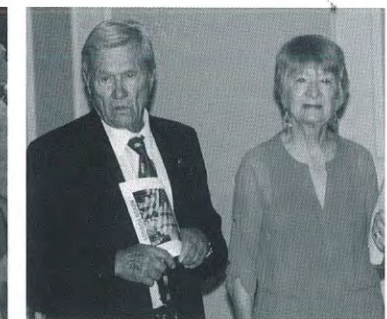
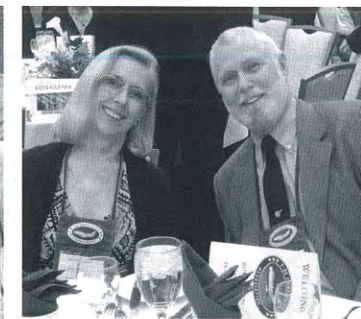
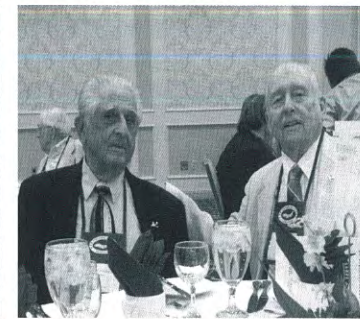
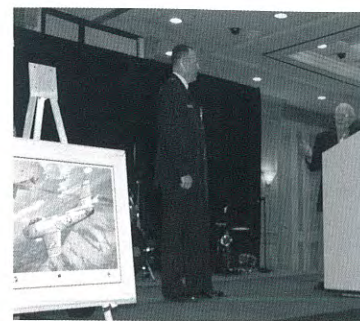


**Polly & Duke Winesett Become Honorary Association Members**

**Rich & Helge Geiger, Bob Smith and Jack Seaman: raffle drawing**

**Tom and Angie Slee. Thanks Tom for your monumental reunion picture taking effort.**

After Gen. Short's speech and presentation to him of our prestigious Association F-86 plaque, we entered the final portion of our evening's activities. J.R presented Polly and Duke Winesett, Computer Services Managers, with a long time overdue Association Honorary Membership. We had our customary raffle of ten \$100.00 checks to those lucky ticket holders and closing remarks by our president. Then the evening was open to dancing to the music of Charlie Shaffer's Combo and overall socializing among members and our Air Force guests.





Finally, as Charlie Shaffer and his combo played the last notes of, "Save the Last Dance for Me," a quiet began to fill the ballroom. Old buddies, new ones, wives, families and guests looked at each other, hugged, shook hands, said their good-byes and began to slowly walk out. The ball room emptied and the lights were turned out. REUNION 20, 2015 was over and it would leave many great memories for all of us.

## The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

### Ralph Parr Presentation



On Friday, May 29, 2015, the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association presented a signed limited edition lithograph picture and a plaque to the Parr Club at Randolph AFB, Texas. The club is named after Col. Ralph Parr, a Korean War double ace with 10 MIG kills. The large picture depicts then Capt. Ralph Parr flying combat in an F-86 Sabre and attacking 10 of the 16 enemy MIG's he encountered in that engagement over North Korea. The Association was represented by Col (Ret) Glenn L. Nordin and Col (Ret) Daniel O. "Firecan" Walsh. Glenn is a former President of the Association and resides in San Antonio and Dan is a current Association board member and lives in Henderson, NV. Also in attendance were Gen. Rand, AETC/CC, B/Gen Cherry, 19th AF/CC, Col. Mathew "Knocker" Isler, 12th Wg/CC and Col. Dave "Magnum" Drichta, 12th OG/CC. Additionally, there were Daedalians, River Rats, active duty members, reserve members and cross country crews from Vance and Sheppard AFBs. Col. Drichta accepted the picture and plaque

and extended a sincere invitation, "Anytime F-86 Sabre Assn Pilots who are in town, you have a DV red carpet ticket courtesy of the 12 OG." The lithograph and the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association plaque will be displayed in the Auger Inn at the Parr Club.

## The Night "Balls Eight" Bought the Farm

F-86D S/N 53008

By Tad Foran

In the 1950's and '60's the 181st Fighter Interceptor Squadron had twenty four hour runway alert, as part of the U.S.A.F. program to protect the Continental U.S. from penetration by Soviet bombers, primarily the long range four engine turboprop "Bear". The pilots were primarily full time civilians and part time interceptor pilots. I was an engineer and had a five day a week job during the day and flew interceptors a couple of nights a week.

The crew that was to take over for the next shift showed up and it was a very dark night. The weather was clear but there was little if any moon light. I left the "alert shack" and went back to operations to change out of my flight suit and go home. Just as I was leaving, the phone rang in the operations office and I answered the call. It was the tower operator at NAS Dallas and he advised me that the two F-86's that had just "scrambled" for an intercept were in trouble.

He requested that since I was an '86 pilot, maybe I could get on the radio and talk to the pilot that was in trouble and see if I could help figure out what was wrong. I immediately fired up the radio in the office and contacted the pilot that was having a problem. The two pilots in the flight were Charlie Lewis and Tommy Carter. Tommy was the flight leader and the guy in trouble. Tommy's airplane had a locked control stick that was stuck in the aft position. This caused the airplane to want to climb at a very steep angle and only allowed side to side movement or roll, not pitch control. Rather than do a "loop" after take off, Tommy rolled the airplane on its side and was doing very steep circles over the airbase. His wingman, Charlie, was doing a great job of staying in formation as they proceeded to do tight circles over the area.

After many attempts trying to figure out the problem, i.e. pulling circuit breakers, etc.etc. I decided the only option was for Tommy to try and aim the airplane for an uninhabited area and bail out of the airplane. (this was an easy decision on my part because I was warm and drinking coffee in the ops office). Tommy commented that it was "dark and cold" outside and he really wanted some other options. I could hear Tommy and Charlie discussing various plots to try and land at the long runway at Carswell, etc.etc. and I didn't think that was a good plan. About the time we were discussing option x or y, the aircraft went into a steep dive and Tommy had to eject into the cold, dark, night.

While drifting down in his parachute, his trusty wingman, Charlie, decided to see if he could find out where Tommy had gone. During this process he came by Tommy so close that Tommy could see the instruments and rivets on Charlie's airplane as he flew by Tommy helplessly hanging in his 'chute.

The airplane was all spruced up as the Group Commanders personal airplane, with the last serial number digits of "008". We always referred to it as "Balls Eight". Well, that night, old "Balls Eight" went straight into the ground and the hole it made burned for about a day. Tommy ended up walking a mile or two to the Arlington Airport and asked them for a ride back to NAS Dallas. He had a backache and a few choice words for his wingman's nearly running over him in the dark.

This incident prompted me to write the following "poem".



1. *Navy Dallas Tower  
This is Air Guard OH, OH Eight--  
The Engines Running Fine--  
But My Tail Is Full of Weight!*
2. *The Radar is a Winner  
The Clock is Really Swell,  
But If The Nose I Can't Get Down  
I'm Headed Straight for Hell!*
3. *Well Roger Air Guard OH OH Eight,  
This is Navy Dallas Tower  
Our Maintenance Advises  
That You Add a Little Power--*
4. *Operation's In An Awful Flap  
And Adcock's Out to Lunch  
The Mobile Says There Is No Sweat  
But Please Head South To Crunch*
5. *Now Tommy Does, As You All Know,  
Exactly What He's Told  
He Nosed Her South And Cracked An Oath--  
I'll Face That Dark And Cold!*
6. *While With The Controls Tom Battled,  
His Cool Wingman Did Say--  
"Boards Out Leader, Let The Canopy Go!"  
Alpha's Bird Was O.K.*
7. *As His Seat Sailed Out And His Helmet Flew  
Fearless Leader Wasn't Sour  
Old Balls Eight Had Bought The Farm--  
But He'd Make Happy Hour!*







◀ Ben Hall buzzes the Duxford ramp in August 1992, flying F-86A-5 #48-178, the world's oldest airworthy jet. The Sabre is now back in the US and being restored to flyable condition.

## World's Oldest Airworthy Jet Returns To The US



December 11th, 2014 – A unique F-86A Sabre that has the distinction of being the world's oldest flying jet recently arrived back in the United States after decades in Europe. And the primary goal of its new owner is to bring it to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2015.

The jet, serial 48-178, was built in February 1948 and was the 50th F-86A-5 off the North American Inglewood assembly line. The early pioneer of the jet age is considered an excellent example of a true machine-age icon as it doesn't have a single semi-conductor.

The airplane was released to the US Air Force Air Material Command in February 1949, and was delivered to the 1st Fighter Group at March AFB, California.

The only surviving F-86A currently flying, its service history includes missions with Strategic Air Command, Air Defense Command, and the California Air National Guard. It flew in defense of the Los Alamos nuclear facility with the 93rd Fighter Squadron. The Sabre was later transferred to a technical college in Fresno, California, and then sold to a local scrap dealer. Thankfully, it was not scrapped. It and another F-86A in the same scrap yard, were purchased by Ben Hall of the Sabre Pilots Association in 1970, and the extra parts helped to

restore 48-178 to airworthy condition four years later.

The airplane flew again on May 24th, 1974, and continued to fly regularly in North America. It was sold in October 1983 and operated by John Dille of Fort Wayne Air Services through 1990. It was then that Robert Horne, founder of the Golden Apple Trust, acquired it and brought it to the United Kingdom. The F-86A has flown on the European air show circuit for the past 22 years operated by the Golden Apple Operations Ltd.

Dr. John Swartz, EAA Life Member, of Afton, Oklahoma, recently acquired the aircraft, had it disassembled and shipped to Heritage Aero in Rockford, Illinois, where the airplane is as of this date.

"We're going to take a breather for the rest of December and reassemble the bird in January or February," Willewski said. "We plan to have her flying in March." The goal is to complete assembly and achieve FAA certification in time for Oshkosh 2015.

America's gain is Europe's loss. This was the only flying Sabre of any kind on the continent and was based at Imperial War Museum in Duxford, England.

## DUAL QUALIFIED? Sabre Pilots or RR Train Drivers

by Bruno A. Giordano, Col. USAF ret.

This story begins with the fact that when, during the Korean War, an F-86 Sabre received battle damage from MIG-15 cannon or ground fire and was deemed "un-safe to fly in combat", and couldn't be repaired in Korea, the AF in its infinite wisdom decided to have the "battle damaged" F-86's fly across the Sea of Japan to the Southern tip of Kyushu (Japan's southernmost Island) to the little town of Tsuiki where a large A.F. maintenance base was located. The damaged aircraft would be traded for repaired ones and they would be flown back to Korea.

Naturally, flying across the Sea of Japan in aircraft considered "unsafe to fly" was viewed with some trepidation. Therefore, the A.F. asked for volunteers. Since the trip entailed staying overnight it promised availability of good Japanese beer, Kobe beef and assorted additional pleasures. The group that volunteered for this particular endeavor was Bruno A. Giordano (AKA "GIO") your humble ??? author and leader of the flight, Alfred Cox (AKA "AL"), William Lloyd (AKA "Wild Bill") for good reason, and Kurt Johnson (AKA "Kurt").

When we landed at Tsuiki and de-planed, a Lt. Col came running up to me and said, "Lt. you have to turn around and leave ASAP". "What's the rush Col," I asked, and he said, "There's a typhoon on the way and if you don't get out of here before it strikes, you'll be stuck here for 3 or 4 days." "REALLY!"

We tried the best we could, but we didn't make it. Now what? Tsuiki was too small to handle the egos and personalities of this group for 3 or 4 days. Then Kurt had an idea. Being

1/2 Hawaiian he knew a lot about this part of the world. He said, "Why don't we go to BEPPU? It's about 150 miles North of here and is known as the Miami of Japan." On checking, we found out there was rail service to Beppu and the decision was made. We checked the schedule and sure enough there was a train scheduled to leave for

Beppu is an hour from a little town nearby. I'm not sure of the name, I think it was Shida, We realized we would need supplies for the trip so I tasked Wild Bill to get some appropriate beverage, Al to get ice and Kurt to get glasses. I would stay and make sure the train didn't leave until we were all back together.

As luck would have it, when the train was ready to leave, all the troops weren't back yet. What to do?? I decided to stand in the middle of the track, in front of the train, with my right arm raised, palm forward, in the universal sign of STOP! It worked!

I don't know how long I held up the train, probably just a few minutes, but it seemed like a very long time. Finally, they all arrived and we boarded the train and went to our compartment. Turns out, Wild Bill's idea of "beverage" was a couple of bottles of Seagram's VO. The train started and so did we.

About an hour later, at one of the station stops, Al said, "I've always wanted to drive a train." Wild Bill answered, "Why don't we drive this one?" Then they de-trained and rushed forward along the platform. I looked at Kurt and he shook his head as if to say, "Not a chance."

A few moments later, the train started with a violent lurch. Oh! Oh! I thought, and like a good leader, got up and proceeded forward to assess the situation. I worked my way through the cars and remember as I passed through the baggage car, the Japanese guys all smiled and waved at me. Then I came upon the coal car and climbed up to the top of the pile. I looked down into the cabin and there was Al on the left side of the cabin, at the controls, leaning forward, left hand on the throttle. Wild Bill was shoveling coal like crazy into the boiler, probably trying to get the train to go faster. Unfortunately, all of the coal was piling up in front of the boiler. The routine was; get a shovel full of coal, stomp on the lever to open the boiler doors, then throw the coal in. An easy routine to accomplish, Shovel, Stomp, Throw. Wild Bill was slightly out of phase. His was. Stomp, Shovel, Throw and the coal would hit the closing doors. Thus the coal was piling higher and higher. The train was slowing down, they may never make it to Beppu. Finally with a quick refresher from the real fireman Bill was back on stride, Shovel, Stomp, Throw. Beppu here we come.

The Japanese crew was all smiles and welcomed me down. They placed me on the right side of the cabin and via sign language instructed me to watch several gauges and make sure the needles didn't go past their red line. Simple enough. Then they assigned me as "whistle tooter". Evidently there are different toots for curves, bridges, downgrades, etc. I performed admirably.

After awhile we came to the town of USA, where they made lots of toys (made in USA, get it?).

Al slowed the train with the manual braking system, but he was too gentle and we overshot the station, which was on our right, by about 50 yards. From my vantage point I was able to look out the window and see this crowd of Japanese people running down the track, some of them balancing these large baskets of stuff on their heads. A sight I'll never forget. Then we were on our way, next stop Beppu.

Meanwhile, Kurt stayed in the compartment and probably took a nap. He was what the kids of today would call "super laid back". Some even suggested that dictionaries put his picture next to the word "phlegmatic".

When we arrived at Beppu, Al, just as you would expect from an experienced F-86 pilot, absolutely greased the landing. As we de-trained the Japanese crew was all smiles once again.

The story of the incident soon spread throughout the F-86 ranks, only it got labeled as "When Gio stole the train". I guess I got the blame (or credit) because I was leading the flight.

In the late 1970's I took my new bride, Susan, to an F-86 reunion. While there, at least 4 or 5 F-86 pilots came up to us, with their wives in tow, and announced, "Honey, this is the guy that stole the train."

There was much "splainin" to do.

## from the *Editor*



You're probably all wondering "What happened to my SabreJet Classics magazine? Well the truth is that I had decided to step down as editor last December. Obviously this didn't happen due in great part to the efforts of your President, JR Alley. But that's not to say that this may or may not be the last issue.

Why? Well a number of things happened that made my decision a little easier. First off, with issue 22-3, Winter 2014, we were, for all intent and purpose, without articles to fill another issue. This was rectified somewhat by President Alley with coverage of the reunion. And with a few stories that he helped generate through begging and pleading at the reunion.

Second and equally as important, was the demise of Zephyr Press here in Canton, which left us without a print facility to do the magazine. One would think that that situation could be easily handled but most print facilities do not want to handle a 'job' as small as ours has become, and as complex.

Third, for the past several issues I have been writing many of the articles about various subjects interesting to you, the membership of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association. It was becoming more of a 'job' to me than it should have been. Part of that was my fault as I simply enjoyed writing about the various aspects of flying and maintaining the Sabre. It was fun! But now it had become work.

So I sat down and talked with my wife and daughter about the situation and the fact that things didn't look much brighter as regards to members stories being submitted. And with the closure of Zephyr Press, I would now have to find another print facility that would do at least as good a job as Zephyr, and at a similar cost. With that it seemed like the right time for me to step down and let someone else take over the editorship of SabreJet Classics.

I informed JR of my decision and he was shocked to say

the least. The Classics was the major communication effort between the Association and its members. Without the magazine, it would be very difficult to contact the membership about upcoming events within and without the Association. Things like the reunion, or F-86 oriented events that would require a membership presence, and of course, the necessary reporting of all members that had folded their wings.

But JR was insistent and asked if I would stay on for at least one more issue. I agreed because we would have at least one more story, the report on the 20th Reunion coming in April 2015. Since I couldn't make the reunion, JR agreed to 'write it up', and to make a last minute plea for stories. This he did, and did a good job of it too.

A few stories filtered in and all are printed in this issue. I also promised JR that I could, if possible, stay for a 2nd issue to be printed later this year. We agreed that we should plan on ONLY two issues for the future of the magazine.

So that's where we stand. I did find a local print facility to handle the job. Actually two. But that led to another problem. Bob Janson at Zephyr Press just took what I gave him and ran with it, putting out the quality production you are all familiar with. The new printer didn't quite know how to 'make do' with what I was used to turning in. Thus I had to redo the initial setup of the magazine - twice! Then my wife, bless her soul, had some minor health problems that left me with very little time to redo the redo of the magazine. And redo it again.

But now it looks like I'm on the road home and this issue will go to press sometime next week - hopefully. Will there be a vol. 23-2? I think so. I hope so. I have truly enjoyed working with all you guys over the years. With your help, we had a great magazine devoted to the airplane and the guys that flew and maintained her.



◀ The rollout of the F-95A came on 28 November 1949 at the Inglewood North American plant. The F-95A/YF-86D shared the v-shaped windscreen and sliding canopy with the still new F-86A. (credit – NAA)

## SABRE DOG The F-86D/L/K

by Larry Davis

Over the years your editor, me, has been asked several times about the various versions of the F-86D “Sabre Dog” interceptor. Some thought the cannon-armed version was the F-86L. Others were confused about what exactly the various types did, who flew them, where they were stationed, etc. I mentioned this to President JR Alley and he told me that it would be a good idea to write it up.

The F-86D was a North American Aviation development to meet an Air Force requirement for an all-weather interceptor. In company histories, it is known as NA-165. The production version initially was designated the F-95A, but was changed to F-86D to procure approval, and funds, from Congress. Subsequently, the ‘Dog’ was further developed to the F-86L and the F-86K.

The initial project used many components of the day fighter airframe such as the wings, landing gear, basic engine (the GE J47), and the flight control systems. But to meet the all-weather requirement, the F-95A would have an all-weather search radar and an afterburner for greater speed to climb to altitude. And the engine and fire control system would be tied together with various ‘black boxes’ and ‘computers so that a second pilot, or radar intercept officer, would not be needed.

The radar selected was the APG-36 search radar tied in with the Hughes E-4 fire control system. And the F-95A engine would be the afterburning version of the GE J47, the J47-GE-17 with an electronic fuel control. However, Congress would not fund an ‘all-new’ aircraft like the F-95A. Thus on 24 July 1950, Air

Force re-designated their all-weather interceptor as the F-86D.

Initially, Air Force only contracted for 39 aircraft – 2 YF-86Ds and 37 F-86D-1s. Since the engine and fire control system were still under development, an interim E-3 FCS and -17 engine rated at 6650 lbs thrust in A/B were installed. The production -17B engine would have 7500 lbs thrust in A/B. The YF-86D rolled out on 28 November 1949, and George Welch made the 1st flight on 22 December.

Besides the all-weather radar and afterburning engine, the other major change was its armament. Instead of the

*continued on page 23*



▲ An unidentified North American secretary poses with the brand new F-95A interceptor. F-95A was the original designation for the ‘Dog Sabre’, but it was changed to F-86D so that Congressional funds could be had. (credit – NAA)



◀ The F-86D had an all-rocket armament in a retractable tray under the fuselage that could fire up to 24 2.75 inch rockets. The firing of the rockets left the pilot in a cloud of smoke. (credit – NAA)



▲ North American Aviation was rightfully proud of their new creation and ran several ads in the major media publications. (credit – NAA)

George Welch, NAA Senior Test Pilot sits in the cockpit of the F-86D simulator, noting that “every pilot who is going to fly the F-86D should have at least 5 hours in this simulator before he ever flies the airplane!” (credit – NAA)





◀ Capt. Slade Nash lands the F-86D that he set a new World Speed Record on 19 November 1952. Capt. Nash sped across the Palm Springs dry lake at 699.9 mph to set the record. (credit – USAF)



◀ Not to be outdone, LtCol. William Barnes broke Capt. Nash's record in July 1953, and broke the 700 mph barrier. His new record was 715 mph. (credit – NAA)



▶ Since no F-86 of any type was capable of inflight refueling, the US Navy brought the type to faraway shores like Japan. This is the USS Sitkoh Bay with a deck full of F-86D-45s bound for the 339th FIS at Chitose AB, on Northern Japan. (credit – Ed Levering)



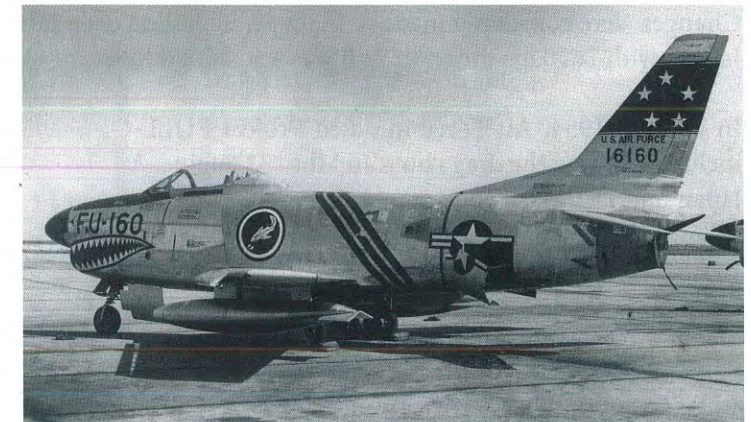
◀ A nighttime "Scramble" of a 71st FIS F-86D, leaves a fiery trail in the night sky as the pilots lights the 'burner' at Pittsburg Airport in 1954. The 71st FIS left Pittsburg in August 1955 under Project ARROW. (credit – Wm. L. Shields)

standard .50 machine guns, the F-86D would fire 24 2.75" Mighty Mouse FFAR rockets that were housed internally in a retractable housing. The rocket 'tray' was deployed in 4/10s of a second, and could be fired in volleys of six or all at once. The 7 1/2 lb warhead was more than enough to knock down any Soviet bomber.

Outwardly the production F-86D was easily distinguished from any other F-86 day fighter by the deeper fuselage, which was 3 feet longer than the F-86A/E/F. Most of that increase was in the radome. And the canopy opened upward instead of sliding aft. Air was inducted to the engine through an opening under the radome. No one could mistake the 'Dog' for any other type.

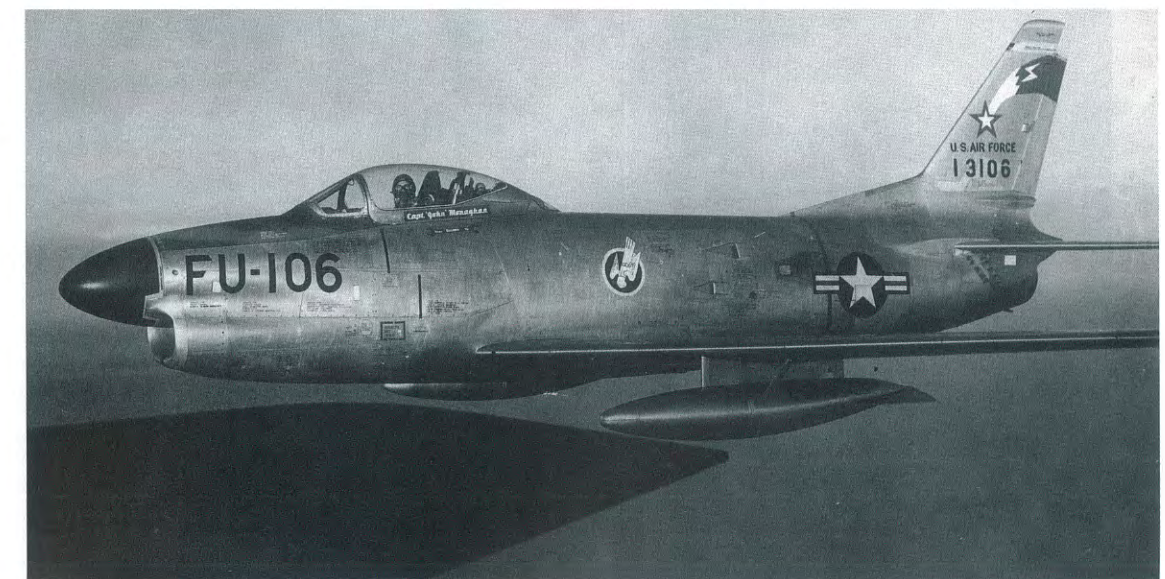
How good was the 'Dog'? Air Force accepted no less than 2504 F-86Ds of various subtypes, equipping no less than twenty of the thirty interceptor wings in Air Defense Command.

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▲ Sharks teeth and blue tail and fuselage bands identify this F-86D as being from the 75th FIS based at Suffolk County AFB, Long Island in 1954. The three fuselage bands identify the aircraft as being the squadron Cos airplane. (credit – Emil Kotalik)

▶ Captain John Monaghan of the 71st FIS forms up on the squadron T-Bird for a little photo session. (credit – USAF)





◀ An F-86D from no. 726 Eskadrilleskold based at Solingen, West Germany in April 1961, as part of the NATO air defense forces. Danish Air Force F-86Ds were modified to carry the AIM-9 Sidewinder missile after they were delivered. (credit – Merle Olmsted)



◀ The F-86L could be distinguished externally by seeing the SAGE antenna blade protruding from the fuselage in front of the wing. The other identifier was the longer and wider wing that was adapted from the day fighter types. (credit – NAA)

Changes were constantly made in the type, including drop tanks added to the D-25; a drag chute was added to the D-45, and the J47-33 with 7650 lbs thrust in A/B was also added to the last few D-45s.

In January 1954, Air Force initiated Project PULL-Out, which standardized all existing airframes to that of the D-45, which included adding the drag chute and the -33 engine. All electronics and flight control systems were also brought to D-45 standard. Japan and Denmark were among several nations to receive ex-USAF F-86Ds for air defense. And beginning in April 1958, the F-86D was transferred in the Air National Guard, being replaced by supersonic Century Series types in the air defense mission.

#### F-86L

The F-86L was the final variant to be operationally used by USAF and ANG units. The F-86L had an electronic data link system known as SAGE for Semi-Automatic Ground Environment. The SAGE system tied the pilot to an air defense ground controller, and allowed the pilot to have instant access to any and all information available to the ground controller.

It was called Project FOLLOW-ON. In addition to the SAGE equipment, Air Force authorized use of the larger and longer wing then being added to the day fighters still in service. North American modified a total of 1027 F-86D airframes to F-86L specification beginning in 1956. The first ones went back into service with active Air Force squadrons, but many of the F-86Ls went directly to Air National Guard unit. The Guard operated 26 squadrons of F-86D/L aircraft before California retired the last aircraft in 1965.

*continued on page 26*



◀ During Project FOLLOW-ON that converted over 1000 F-86Ds to F-86L, the aft fuselage sections were removed and sent to Fresno for modification that included addition of the drag chute if it hadn't already been so equipped. The many squadron tail markings indicate that airplanes from throughout the D inventory were chosen for modification. (credit – NAA)

▶ One of the first units in the Air National Guard to convert to the F-86D was the 196th FIS, California ANG at Van Nuys Airport. Their mission was protection of the many defense plants in and around Southern California. (credit – R. Crossley)



▶ A California Air Guard F-86L from the 194th FIS, flies high over the Pacific Ocean in August 1962. The California Guard began conversion to the F-86L in 1958 and was the last unit to operate the L before conversion to F-102As in 1964. (credit – Robert F. Dorr)





◀ Engineering Test Pilot Ray Norris talks with Flight Engineer Ray Richter prior to the first flight of the F-86K on 15 July 1954. The K model Sabre retained the all-weather radar of the D but substituted four 20mm cannon for the rocket armament. (credit – NAA)

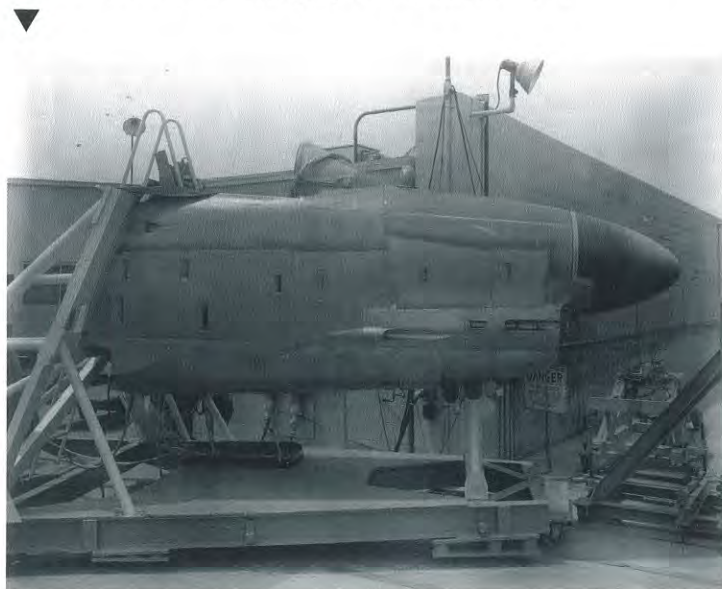
### F-86K

The F-86K was the Pentagon's answer to a growing need for an interceptor aircraft for NATO. Basically, the F-86K was an F-86D that was simplified for use by NATO units to counter the Soviet threat at the time. In place of the sophisticated Hughes E-4 FCS, the F-86K would use the MG-4 FCS, retaining the APG-36 search radar of the D, and the -17B engine. But the armament was changed to four M24 20mm cannons in place of the all-rocket armament of the F-86D/L.

North American built 120 F-86Ks before transferring the design to Fiat of Italy. The first flight of an F-86K came on 15 July 1954. The first Fiat-assembled F-86K flew on 23 May 1955, with deliveries to many NATO nations beginning in 1955. Italy, France, West Germany, and The Netherlands were among the NATO air forces to fly the F-86K. Before the end of the 1950s, many of the Ks had been fitted with both the long span wing of the L and were capable of firing the Sidewinder air to air missile. Following service with NATO, many F-86Ks found their way to South American nations such as Venezuela and Honduras.

*And now you know the 'rest of the story'.*

▼ A forward fuselage from an F-86D-30 was used as the test bed for the new 20mm cannon armament of the F-86K. The cannon armament required an extension of the forward fuselage by 8 inches. (credit – NAA)



▲ This F-86K from the Netherlands Air Force, sits Ready Alert at Hahn AB, West Germany armed with a pair of AIM-9 Sidewinder air to air missiles. In addition to the Sidewinder armament mod, many Ks also had the extended wing added for better performance at altitude. (credit – RNAF)

## F-86 Engine Failure

by Charlie Friend

It was the 14th of March, 1985 and I had been flying for Flight Systems Inc. for almost a year. A big part of the FSI business was the dart tow program. I had been flying dart tow missions out of Myrtle Beach AFB (MYR) for the F-16s from Shaw AFB. We would hold the flight brief over the telephone and then rendezvous in the overwater restricted area in the Atlantic. We used the Canadian built MK 6 Sabre for the dart tow missions. The reason for towing from Myrtle Beach was to avoid the longer flight from Shaw and thus give the tow ship more time on station. We did not have the centerline tow mod at that time so we only carried one 200 gallon drop tank on the right wing with the dart tow rig on the left wing.

The shoot area that we used was fairly close to Myrtle. With good weather, you could see the airfield from the dart pattern. It was Friday afternoon and this particular sortie was the last of the scheduled ten tow missions of the deployment. As luck would have it, the first F-16 element shot the dart off on the first combat dart engagement. Frequently when the dart is shot off, the shooters may ask us to set up intercept engagements. The shooters decided to do their intercept training between their two elements and thus released me to RTB. Since I was still pretty fat on fuel, I would normally carve out a corner of the area with the shooters and do a little acro to burn off some fuel. But since this was the last sortie of the deployment and the crew chief (along with a little help from me) would have to reconfigure the aircraft for ferry to the next location, I decided to RTB immediately. The dart tow rigs were located at each tow location. This allowed us to ferry with both 200 gal drops installed. Once arriving on station, the left drop would be replaced with the tow rig and then the process would be reversed before departing for the next scheduled tow location.

After dropping the dart cable and getting confirmation from the F-16 element that the cable was gone, I turned north toward Myrtle. I retarded the throttle and started the gradual descent to the airfield. Several times during the descent, I thought I saw some movement at the lower part of the instrument panel. But when I looked down, all looked fine. Myrtle was landing to the South so, talking to the tower, I descended to an outside downwind. The tower told me that I was number one in the pattern and gave me the surface winds. I don't remember what the winds were but they were nothing to cause concern. Just after "Rodgering" the tower's wind report, an A-10 reported that the winds at pattern altitude were 40 knots out of the West which would be pretty much a direct crosswind. I arrived at overhead pattern altitude about half way along the outside downwind. Checking the gauges, my timing was such that I at last observed what that movement was that

had been just out of my direct view during the descent. The oil pressure gauge momentarily went to zero and then right back to an acceptable reading.

"MMMMMM". Well it was probably just an electrical problem with the gauge since the flux was so rapid, not like decreasing oil pressure. Anyway, at this point, there was nothing to do but fly the overhead pattern. Just to be cautious, I would plan to fly an idle power overhead pattern, which you can do in the 86 as long as you keep it in nice and tight. Of course now I'm watching that oil pressure gauge pretty closely. In the pitch I went to idle power, now the gauge is spending more time at zero but it still comes back up. Final turn, since it is a left hand pattern I'm now east of the runway and that stiff wind out of the west is blowing me away from the runway. I had been at idle power since the pitch, but I was obviously going to have to add power to make it to the runway. A peek at the oil pressure now shows it spending more and more time at zero. Well maybe it isn't the gage after all. As I add power in the final turn, it becomes very apparent that the gauge is not lying. To get any RPM, the throttle has to go way further forward than normal. EGT, "holy cow", the EGT is way higher than normal compared to the throttle setting. As I roll out over the overrun the EGT is out of limits, when the landing is assured, I retard the throttle to idle. I touched down on the first brick, a little aero braking, check the gauges. With the throttle in idle, the RPM is decreasing (below idle RPM) and the EGT is increasing. I stop-cocked the throttle. The engine RPM immediately unwound to zero.

The F-86 (OK, MK-6 Sabre) has no backup brake power, so when the utility hydraulic pressure went to zero, the brakes still work but the only thing applying pressure to the brakes is the pilot's toe pressure on the pedals. Pushing on the brake pedals was like pushing on cinder blocks. I had maybe 8,000 foot of runway remaining and I used every bit getting slowed. On the other side of the coin, I didn't want to stop on the runway because I would then shut the runway down. I needed to leave enough forward momentum to clear the active. I turned off the active at the end, again using the very stiff brakes for steering since there was no utility pressure for the nosewheel steering. I only got turned maybe 30 degrees off of the runway heading since that is all I could get with the "manual" brakes. I got completely stopped short of going into the grass because there was no way I could muster enough brake to turn completely onto the taxiway. I then called clear of the active with the tower and changed channels to ground. Everything had developed so quickly that I had never declared an emergency so no one was aware of my problem.

*continued on page 28*

I called ground and just told them that I had to shut the engine down and to call my crew chief and have him come out and tow me in. Ground asked if I needed any further assistance and since all was under control, I declined any further help. Maybe 10 minutes later here comes the crew chief with the towbar. After he connected the towbar to the nose wheel, I could at last climb out of the bird. There was oil dripping from the front of the engine and puddling in the intake. The tailpipe was a bright pink. This was a sure sign that the engine had been badly overtemped. Reconfiguring the bird for ferry was now the least of our problems. An engine change would obviously be required.

At a later date after the engine was taken to Mojave (the FSI maintenance center) and torn down, the cause was apparent. The F-86 has a motor/generator mounted on the nose of the

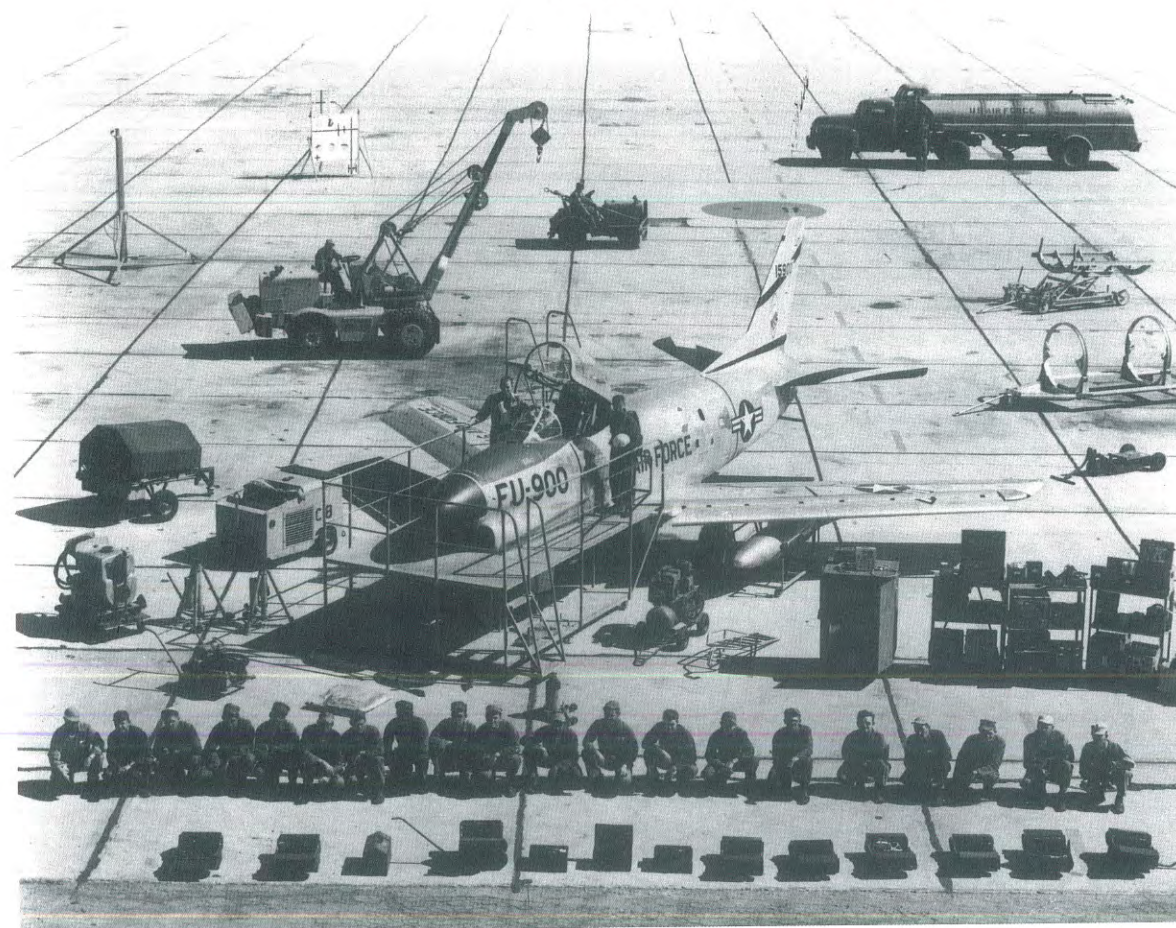
engine. The drive to this unit is included in the engine oil system. When the motor/generator was last rebuilt by an outside company, a snap ring was reused instead being replaced by a new one as called for in the tech order. The weaker snap ring had popped off and was then ground up by the motor/generator gears. The debris resulting from this plugged up the oil screen to the #1 bearing. The resulting lack of oil caused the bearing to fail also destroying the seal. This allowed oil to leak past the seal and run the engine out of oil.

Needless to say, if the dart had survived that first engagement and I had set up for a second engagement, I very possibly could have ended up making a nylon letdown in the Atlantic. The Canadian built Orenda 14 engine lived just long enough to save the aircraft and allow it to fly another day.



▲ A Flight Systems Incorporated Canadair Dabre mk.6 over Southern California in the 1980s. This Sabre 6 is very similar, if not the same airplane, to the one that Charlie Friend flew in the story. FSI operated a fleet of both F-86F and Sabre 5/6s for many years. (credit – FSI)

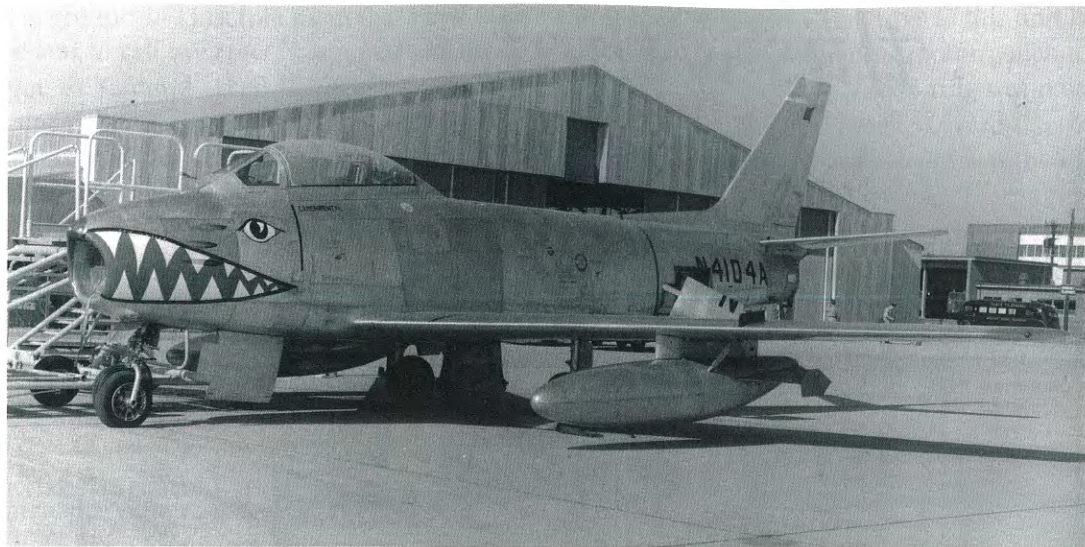
## this n' that



◀ An F-86D from the 94th FIS based at George AFB, California in 1953, shows all the equipment and manpower necessary to maintain an F-86D for the air defense mission. The mission of the 94th FIS was air defense of the Los Angeles area, including the North American Aviation plant. (credit – USAF)

Even though the F-86D was an "all-weather interceptor", it still needed a 'garage' to park in during inclement weather. The 'garage' most widely used was the Butler Hanger which had huge hinged doors that open front and rear to allow the Sabre to both "Scramble!" to meet an unknown threat, and simply taxi back in from the rear. (credit – USAF)





◀ This shark-mouthed F-86F was operated by the Raytheon Corporation as a chase aircraft in the 1980s. (credit – David W. Menard)



◀ This F-86A was assigned to the 27th FIS when that unit transferred to Rome AFB, NY in 1950. The three squadrons in the 1st FIG – the 27th, 71st, and 94th FIS – were sent to bases far from their California home, to bolster the air defense of the Eastern US during the Korean War. (credit – Sabrejet Classics)



▲ This F-86E was operated by the Eglin Armament Test Center to test the possibility of inflight refueling of the Sabre through the drop tanks. Member B/Gen. Lon Walter flew many of these tests. It is seen at Ladd AFB during cold weather tests. (credit – Sabrejet Classics)



▲ The sad end to almost all F-86 operations was similar to that of this Texas ANG F-86L that was flown to the boneyard at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, waiting to be stripped and scrapped. (credit – David Menard)

▶ "Gal O My Dreams" was the F-86A flown by the Commander of the Oregon ANG during the 1952 Air Guard Gunnery Meet. The large "T" on the fuselage was a meet competition indicator. (credit – David Menard)



▶ This is the flightline of the 56th FIS when it was based at Wright-Patterson AFB during the mid-1950s. The 56th was actually based on the Patterson AFB side of the complex. Anyone having further photos of 56th FIS Sabres, please contact the editor. (credit – Sabrejet Classics)



◀ This very gaudy F-86H-10 was flown by the Commander of the Massachusetts ANG during the 1961 Berlin Crisis. Both squadrons in the Massachusetts ANG, were sent to bases in Europe to bolster the forces that might have to counter an anticipated Soviet attack. (credit – David Menard)



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### ◀ **WHO IS IT?**

Does anyone know what the significance is of this civilian Sabre mk. 6, and/or who flew it. The photo was taken at Reno Air Race in September 1972. The answer will come in the next issue of SabreJet Classics. But if anyone knows, please contact Larry Davis, Editor, 6475 Chesham Drive NE, Canton, OH 44721; or email [sabreclsx@aol.com](mailto:sabreclsx@aol.com) (credit – Mick Roth)

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