



SabreJet Classics

Volume 3 Number 1 Winter 1994

A publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

9th Sabre Pilots Reunion!

KOREA - On The Lighter Side
Sabres In Miniature

GOLDEN HAWKS
MORE!



Sabre Dedication At Nellis

SabreJet Classics

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The *SabreJet Classics* is published by the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, PO Box 97951, Las Vegas, NV 89193. The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association is a non-profit veterans organization, with membership limited to individual pilots who have flown the F-86 Sabre aircraft. A goal of the association is to 'perpetuate the history of the F-86 Sabre, the units to which it belonged, and to the men that flew the Sabre'. A second goal is to 'link Sabre jocks with their old comrades'. The *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 Editor of the magazine. The *SabreJet Classics* is

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Published by
 The F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn

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on the cover; Major General Thomas R. Griffith addresses the crowd at the F-86 Memorial Ceremonies in Freedom Park at Nellis AFB. The F-86E-15 memorial aircraft actually flew with the Nellis AFB squadrons in the mid-1950s. (credit - Dee Harper)

In The Next Issue

All-Korea Issue - RF-86 Program, 1955
 MiG Kill, Casey Jones & The Eagle,
 More!

published twice a year. All members of the Association are encouraged to forward stories for publication, with appropriate photographs, to the Editor, Larry H. Davis, 4713 Cleveland Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44709. All photographs will be handled with care and returned to the donor individual. If needed, the Editors will work with the donor to polish your article. You will be credited in the *SabreJet Classics* for both your articles and photographs. Extra copies of *The SabreJet Classics* can be ordered at \$4.00 per copy, providing copies are still in stock. Since this is an all volunteer, non-profit organization, there will be no monetary reimbursement for submitted materials. Board of Governors.

THE PRESIDENTS NOTEBOOK

Our Association fully supported the Sabre Jet Historical Society, and on occasion subsidized their operation. We considered their magazine, *Sabre Jet Classics*, to be a quality product and an outstanding way to achieve our stated goal, "to perpetuate the history of the F-86 Sabre, the units to which she was assigned, and the pilots that flew her." When the Sabre Jet Historical Society ceased operations, we were determined to rescue the magazine. Luckily, Hank Buttlemann's negotiations with Rick Mitchell, publisher of the magazine, resulted in our association obtaining the copyright.

Commencing with this issue, *SabreJet Classics* is being published under the banner of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association. We are determined to maintain, even improve the quality of the magazine. Our success in this endeavor, is fully dependent upon input from you, the members.

From the period when we were F-86 jocks, everyone has a minimum of 10 stories he has put to memory simply by telling those stories to his buddies or family on numerous occasions. Now is the time to put those stories in writing and forward them to our Editor Larry Davis, along with appropriate photographs, for use in the *Classics*. If you do not have photos for your story, contact a buddy who was an avid photographer, and request that he provide you with photos to accompany your article. Just be sure to advise the Editor of the name of the person that took the photos so we can give proper credit. Without input from you, this project will certainly fail.

Do not be concerned about the quality of your writing. *It is your story and photos that we want.* We have a staff who will fully cooperate with you in editing and re-writes which your article may require. Just give the *Classics* staff the chance to do their thing. The staff consists of qualified, proven authors, with extensive background on the subject of the Sabre and Korea. I know you will be proud of your finished product. When you see how much your family, particularly your grandchildren, appreciate seeing YOUR story in print, with photos, you will realize

that your time and effort was very worthwhile.

I recently visited the Directors of the libraries at the US Air Force Academy and the Air University. I gave them a complete set of all past issues of *Sabre Jet Classics*, and will forward each future issue to these institutions for archiving. Our timing couldn't have been more perfect as Air Force Chief of Staff, General Merrill McPeak had expressed concern that the recent reorganization of the Air Force may result in lost air power heritage. He directed all commands to take preventative action.

At the Air Force Academy, *Sabre Jet Classics* will be archived in their Special Collections, which is quite an honor! Duane J. Reed, Archivist and Chief of Special Collections, also indicated he was interested in memorabilia from both WW2 and the Korean War. He can be contacted at Hq USAFA/DFSELSC, USAF Academy, CO 80840-5701. We will initiate a similar action with the National Library of Congress at a later date. These actions are appropriate since many of the articles have historical value.

The publication of this issue of *SabreJet Classics* is another milestone in the development and polishing of our Association. At the very least, it is a bold, new venture. Together we can make this work.

It is with deep regret that we note the death of General Charles L. Donnelly, Jr., plus 8 other members of the Association in 1994. Included in this list are 3 Korean War aces. Of the 39 Korean War aces, only 21 are alive today. Time is taking its toll. The FOLDED WINGS box in this issue will be a permanent fixture to the *Classics*. Please inform us on the death of any member you become aware of, so our response can be consistent and timely.

From a humble beginning in 1981, when our membership numbered 35 jocks. Today, we total 1407 members, including 3 astronauts. All three will be entered in history books for as long as they are published. M/Gen Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin were two of the three man crew to make the first trip to the moon; while John Glenn was the first American to orbit our planet. All three were SabreJet jocks before being astronauts. Eighty two members were dropped

from our roster as of 1 October 1994 as being delinquent in dues payments in excess of three years.

We want to compile a list of all flyable F-86 aircraft with the USA, to include the owners name and location. This will include all aircraft undergoing restoration. Forward all data to our PO Box in Las Vegas. To be of value, any sources of spare parts, etc., should be included. For the 1997 AFA Celebration of the Air Force, we would like to have a minimum of four F-86s in the airshow. To make that happen, we have to start NOW! Again, the success of this effort will be dependent upon the input we receive from you, the members. If this project flies (no pun intended), we will put a group together to handle the work load.

Membership certificates and logo decals are currently being developed. They will be in the mail when available. We hope you like them. The membership certificates just scream "Hang Me". Please note we made them size 8x10 so you can find a frame in any drug store. The decals will be equally as striking.

Congratulations to all those involved in organizing the 18th Fighter Bomber Wing Reunion (Korean War Era). The reunion was held in Colorado Springs on 14 September, and proved to be a good show with over 300 attendees.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at our 10th Reunion, 17 September 1995. Until then, the best to all of you!

Dee Harper, President
 F-86 SABRE PILOTS
 ASSOCIATION

10th REUNION

F - 8 6 SABRE
 PILOTS 10TH
 REUNION, 17, 18,
 19, 20 SEPT. 1995 AT
 SANDS HOTEL IN LAS
 VEGAS. FULL INFO -
 F-86 SABRE PILOTS
 ASSN., PO BOX 97951,
 LAS VEGAS, NV 89193

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following letters are in response to the article "My Favorite Fighter-Bomber Sabre Story" by Dee Harper, which appeared in the *Sabre Jet Classics*, vol 2 #4.

I want to thank Dee Harper for telling a story too long untold. I confirm the story with real pride. Our confidence in promoting Dee to Major was surely vindicated with this mission. Our two squadrons performed superbly. Our third squadron - 2 Squadron, South African Air Force, had been withdrawn from combat in preparation for its return to South Africa. Colonel Pappy Stell proved his qualification for command by knowing not to ask questions. Dee Harper did what had to be done. God don't we hope that in this day of instant communications and micro-management, that such initiative and leadership does not perish? Had Dee not acted there is no way to evaluate the consequences. There were hoards of Chinese troops headed south.

My memory of what happened at 5th AF Headquarters is one of staff and command embarrassment, covered neatly with a good 'chewing' - Perigo and Martin retaining the teeth marks. That we were ordered to Tokyo together - the Wing and Group COs, speaks volumes for the mind set in those last days of the Korean War.

Lastly, Dee is much too kind to an old, retired Colonel. Combat crew training at Nellis AFB started with the Korean War, as an outgrowth of World War 2 experience. Thankfully, it has grown and matured with our

world-wide experience. Its realism and world recognition today is a tribute to Air Force leadership.

Too, thanks and Hi to all you old friends and 86 jocks who make this heritage and your publication GREAT! One correction however. The USAF Gunnery School is an outgrowth of the Fighter Weapons Research and Development Squadron that moved from Williams AFB to Las Vegas AFB, now Nellis AFB, when that base was re-opened in 1949.

Col Marry Martin
18th FBG CO 1953

I was reading the story by Dee Harper it had all the ingredients of combat flying in the Sabre. It also had a discussion of a busted link in the normally ever-present chain of command control in the military system. In this case, a junior officer, Capt. Dee Harper, finds himself high and dry, with no immediate help from

his superiors to approve a command decision he had made and committed to action.

Most if not all of us have made the decision to press on in the heat of battle or crisis. It may be easier to jeopardise the assurance of our safety, in a spur-of-the-moment decision, than to jeopardise our career. And after you have made the decision that puts your career in harms way, often it is to the advantage of all concerned that the details are little discussed or documented.

Dee Harper made the decision, took the action, then stood by his decision and actions in silence until he realized that his comrades in the 18th FBG did not really know what happened on 15 July 1953.

I concur with Col Marry Martin, Maj Harper's group CO, Dee Harper did make the RIGHT decision!

John Henderson, SOLE-CPL
North American Aviation, Inc (Ret)

FOLDED WINGS

Robert D. Baldwin - April 1994
51st FIW, 35th Ace in the Korean War
General Charles Donnelly Jr. - July 1994
Neil Fossum - February 1994
Vermont Garrison - February 1994
Eagle Squadron & 4th FG WW2 Ace
4th FIW, 32d Ace in the Korean War
James Hagerstrom - June 1994
49th FG WW2 Ace
18th FBW, 28th Ace in the Korean War
James Jasper - September 1994
Emory Lavender - May 1994
Lt General Robert H. Moore - May 1994
51st FIW, 9th Ace in the Korean War
Alexander Strange - October 1994
Floyd 'Buckshot' White - May 1994
E.W. TSCHAN Jr. July 1993



The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association held its 9th Reunion in Las Vegas from the 24th through the 27th of April 1994. The highlight of this reunion was the dedication of an F-86 Sabre Memorial in Freedom Park on Nellis AFB. Here's the whole gang in front of the F-86 Memorial after the formal ceremonies. (credit - Dee Harper)

O U R 1994 REUNION

The 9th Reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association was held at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, 24 through 27 April 1994. This reunion was to be a very special one as the Association and the Air Force were to unveil an F-86 Sabre monument at Freedom Park on Nellis AFB. It was more memorable than anyone anticipated.

The Reunion opened at 1300 hours in the Man 'O War Room at the Sands when Julius Hegeler popped the top of the first beer. It wouldn't be the last! By the time the last name was entered on the sign-in sheet there were more than 351 F-86 jocks on the list, including at least 9 Korean War Aces and 18 General Officers. With wives and guests, 553 people participated in the Reunion activities. The first day ended with a nice cocktail reception and dinner at 1730 hours, followed by a return to the hospitality suite for many.

For those who had closed the hospitality suite at 0200, Day 2 began much earlier than most jocks would have like - 0600! More than one jock complained that maybe the 'mission' wasn't worth it! But they had a tee time all set up for 0700 at the Nellis AFB Golf Course. Let the Tournament begin! Those not playing golf re-opened the Hospitality Suite at 0900, enjoying

a continental breakfast that helped wipe some of the cobwebs from their heads.

A business meeting was convened at 1430 hours. Several items were on the agenda including one of the final speeches from our out-going President Hank Buttlemann, and the first speech by our newly elected President Dee Harper. The prime item on the agenda was amendment and approval of the Association By-Laws. Several items in the document generated vigorous debate.

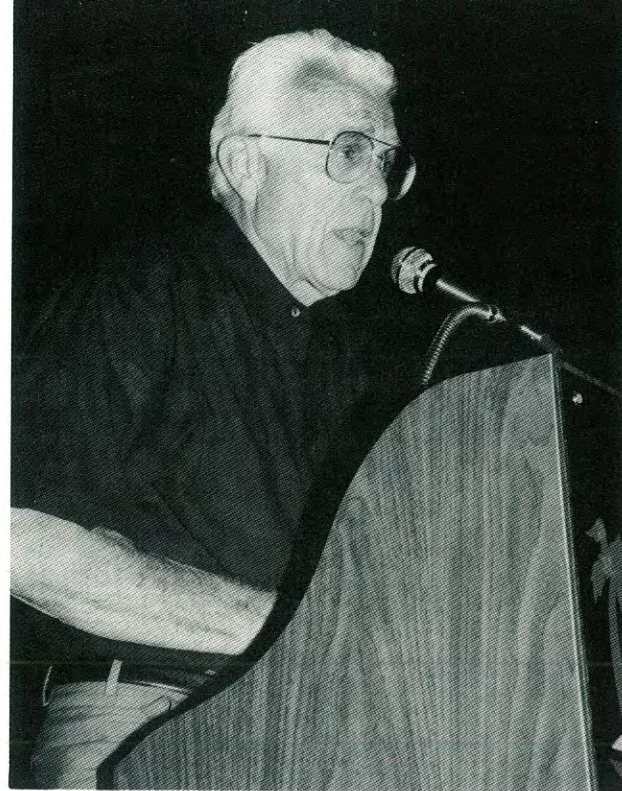
Of major interest were: 1) Life Memberships were authorized for \$200.00; 2) Regular Dues were reaffirmed at \$25.00/year or \$50.00 for 3 years; 3) Charter Membership in the Association was limited to pilots who have flown the F-86 aircraft; and 4) an Associate Membership category was authorized for non-F-86 pilots. The Associate Membership will be limited to those few individuals who have in the past, or can no contribute to achieving the goals of the Association. Copies of the approved document will be mailed to all members in the near future.

A large majority of the Membership approved obtaining the copyrights to the *Sabre Jet Classics* magazine and continuing its publication under the banner of the F-86 Sabre

Pilots Association. *Sabre Jet Classics* was originally published by Mr. Rick Mitchell. When he decided to fold the magazine's operation in 1992, Hank and Dee decided it would be a good idea to take over the operation lock, stock, and barrel. The goal of the F-86 Association is to 'perpetuate the history of the F-86 Sabre and the crews that flew her'. What better way to do this than with our own magazine dedicated to this very same goal.

Rick Mitchell was agreeable to passing the copyrights to the Association. The *Sabre Jet Classics* will become the official vehicle of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association. It was decided to have a minimum of two issues per year - more if there is enough material and funding to permit. Mr. Larry Davis of Squadron/Signal Publications, was asked and volunteered to be Editor of the Classics. A minimum of two issue per year will be published - more if there is enough material and funding permits.

It was announced that over the next three years the F-86 Pilots Reunion will take place twice at 18 month intervals. This was done to take advantage of the 50th Anniversary of the United States Air Force in 1997. The next Reunion will be held 17-20 September 1995, with



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Hank Buttlemann, President of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association from 1990 through 1994, brings the Business Meeting to order. The business of the day went from Life Memberships to the purchase of SabreJet Classics. (credit - Dee Harper)

THANKS HANK!

The enthusiastic crowd numbered well over 300, with congresspersons, local dignitaries, Nellis AFB personnel, and many, many Sabre Jocks and their guests. (credit - Dee Harper)

the 50th USAF Anniversary Reunion to be held 22-26 April 1997. Both Reunions will again be held at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas.

Hank Buttlemann formally handed over the reins of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association to Flamm 'Dee' Harper at the close of the 1994 Reunion. Dee Harper gave a heartfelt thanks to Hank for the fine job that he did as President. Everyone in the Association owes a lot to Hank as he was a prime mover in the F-86 Memorial being dedicated at Nellis AFB, and in increasing the membership roll some 260% in slightly over 2 years. THANKS HANK! (Thanks also to Colonel Charlie C. Carr, Chairman of the Recruiting Committee.)

Day 3 again began at the ungodly hour of 0600 for the golfers. The competition was hot and heavy with over 90 golfers falling out for the 36 hole Scramble at Nellis. Several troops wanted to know how many places were going to win. Man you should have heard the crying when it was announced that only one winner was going to be crowned. Hey guys, you're fighter pilots. How many winners are there in combat? You either win or lose!

Well after a lot of begging and pleading from the Jocks for more winning places and more strokes, this from the same guys who wouldn't give their own grandmothers extra strokes, we decided to pay three places. First place team would get a trophy and

money, while 2d and 3d Places got only money. The 1st Place Team was Jim 'Dad' Low, Jeff Low, and Pat Hughes.

A great time was had by all and noone was a loser as everyone received a sleeve of golf balls in addition to breakfast at the course, and of course all the camaraderie of being with friends. Friends, did I say friends? There were no friends during actual play! Some said there was blood on some of the greens! But it was loads of fun. Thanks to the staff at the Nellis AFB Golf Course for their support.

The main event of Day 3 was what everyone had been waiting for - the F-86 Dedication at Nellis. The buses left the Sands at 1100 bound



Hank Buttlemann, President of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Assn., addressing the crowd prior to dedicating the F-86E that was beautifully restored by 57th Logistics Group at Nellis. (credit - Dee Harper)

Mr. Ed Horkey, Chief Designer for North American Aviation on the F-86 Project, talked about development of the F-86. Mr. Horkey brought out the fact that the XP-86 actually broke the Sound Barrier 6 months before it was officially announced to the world. (credit - Dee Harper)

Major General Thomas Griffith and President Hank Buttlemann remove the cover from the plaque on the pedestal of the F-86 Memorial. (credit - Dee Harper)





for the O-Club at Nellis. Following a quick reception and light lunch in the O-Club, it was back on the bus for a quick trip to Freedom Park near the entrance to RED FLAG.

The park is dedicated to the men and aircraft that were trained at Nellis and served during the hot and cold wars since World War 2. Aircraft displayed include an F-117 Stealth, F-5 Freedom Fighter, F-4 Phantom, F-105 Thunderchief, F-111 Aarvark, and F-100 Super Sabre, all wearing camouflage paint of some type. As we entered the park we were struck by the beautiful new addition - a shiny, silver-grey F-86 Sabre.

At 1315 hours 1st LT James Baxter, USAF Weapons & Tactics Center, welcomed the Association and the many guests. Although the skies were grey and cold, the stands were full of jocks, their wives, Air Force personnel from Nellis, and local dignitaries - all with warm smiles at the sight of the beautifully restored Sabre.

The F-86 was gorgeous in its glossy silver-grey paint. It was an F-86E-15, tail number 51-13010, that had previously served with the Fighter School at Nellis in the 1950s before transfer to the Colorado Air

National Guard. After retirement it had been a gate guard display at Buckley ANG Base. When the F-86 Association began its quest for a suitable memorial, this airplane was located with the help of the people at the U.S. Air Force Museum. Hank worked with Mr. Tom Brewer at USAFM and Major General Thomas R. Griffith to obtain the F-86E for the memorial.

The airplane was finally acquired in mid-1993 and plans were laid for its restoration. The F-86E was disassembled at Buckley and trucked down to Nellis, where the 57th Logistics Group began a lengthy process of restoration. After determining that the F-86E would be better suited in paint as a memorial rather than the natural metal finish it originally wore as an active Air Force fighter, the 57th Log Grp applied an overall silver-grey paint job to combat the effects of the Nevada weather.

Now how to mark it. Everyone wanted it painted in their squadron colors. Finally it was decided to paint it as something almost every F-86 Jock could associate with - The Fighter School markings of the SabreJet era at Nellis. So it was that the multi-color fuselage bands were applied representing the 7 training squadrons based at Nellis during

that era. Additionally, the aircraft is marked as the personal F-86 Sabre of Colonel Clay Tice, who commanded the 3595th Flying Training Group at Nellis in 1953-54. The 'Over 500 MiGs' and red stars on the fuselage represent victories in Korea by Nellis-trained pilots. Everyone was happy with that decision.

At 1320 hours Lt. Baxter introduced Major General Thomas R. Griffith, Commander of the Weapons & Tactics Center at Nellis. General Griffith opened his speech by informing the crowd that when he asked the current crop of Air Force fighter jocks - "What airplane that you have not flown would you like to fly? All replied the F-86 SabreJet!" To those F-86 Jocks in attendance, General Griffith added - "We Envy You!"

General Griffith went on to explain the F-86s place as it pertains to world and Nellis history. He noted that there were 6,353 F-86s built by factories in four nations throughout the world. The last F-86 flew at Nellis in 1966, with the last F-86 (an H model) being retired from the New York ANG in 1970. General Griffith noted that "many are still flying front line duty with air forces throughout the world as we speak." He also recognized their

use by defense contractors at NAS China Lake and Edwards AFB.

General Griffith then recognized all those individuals responsible for making the F-86 Memorial a reality. They included Maj Gen John L. France, Brig Gen Mason Whitney, and CMSgt James Ortiz of the Colorado Air Guard; Dee Harper and Hank Buttleman of the F-86 Association; Blake Morrison and Marty Isham from the staff of the USAFWS Fighter Weapons Review magazine for research. The actual restoration was performed by MSgt James Oschlager, TSgts Philip Bonachita, Anthony Whitten, and Joseph Lowndes, SSGts Roger Fickle, Wayne Rozzi, Michael Smith, John Herd, Thomas McGuire, Gaylon Turner, Joseph Coudron, SRA David Cassidy, A1C Joseph Baltazar, Amn Robert Stimmel, and WG10 Kenneth Muller. The pedestal was built by members of the 558th Civil Engineer Squadron at Nellis including 1Lt Brett Blank, Mr. Ken Tuttle, Mr. Norm Whitman, and Mr. Frank Wertin. **THE F-86 SABRE PILOTS ASSOCIATION SALUTES YOU!**

Our esteemed President Hank Buttleman then gave a short talk about the overall history of the F-86 before noting "The F-86 should be judged *in its own time frame*. It did its job in the combat in Korea

and during the Cold War."

The next speaker was Mr. Ed Horkey, North American Aviation's Chief Aerodynamicist and Engineer on the F-86 project. He first talked about the good old days when "people worked together and it was a great team effort" He also thanked the North American Tech Reps for their role in making the F-86 the great airplane that it was.

Mr. Horkey went on to note "The F-86 was a milestone in aviation history. It was the first airplane to have a true swept wing, and that idea was NOT adapted from German intelligence. It was completely

North American Aviation in origin. The F-86 was also the first with an 'all-flying tail' Since then all transport aircraft have the same system."

A previously secret item was then revealed for the first time when Mr. Horkey talked about the first supersonic flights. "On 21 November 1947 the XP-86 first flew Mach 1.02 and 1.03. It was the first true airplane to go supersonic and it ushered in the supersonic age." Previously the first supersonic flight was said to have been on 26 April 1948 but Air Force security had never released the earlier date. Mr. Horkey finished his remarks by

The crowd at the Memorial Ceremonies was enthusiastic in spite of the chilly weather. (credit Dee Harper)



saying "I am proud to say I was part of the team" to bring the F-86 out.

With a little help from Mother Nature, General Griffith and Hank then unveiled the plaque on the pedestal base which reads "to be filled in", and official program came to a close. Group photos were then taken as time and the weather allowed. There were shouts of 'get in here!' as various units posed together. Old unit rivalries were re-kindled and remarks that were overheard included "How did you guys know about MiGs at Mukden?" and "Fourth But First!"



Six of the nine Korean War aces in attendance at the 9th Reunion pose in front of the F-86 Memorial, (l-r) Hank Buttlemann (51st), Dolph Overton III (51st), Cecil Foster (51st), Frederick Blesse (4th), Dick Becker (4th), and Steve Bettinger (4th). Not pictured were Hal Fischer (51st), Jim Low (4th), and James K. Johnson (4th). (credit - Dee Harper)

Following the memorial ceremony, the Association group was again split up as many of the members went through the Threat Facility and attended a RED FLAG presentation. Others returned to the Hospitality Suite for a little more BS, beer, and to get ready for the banquet. Those that attended the Red Flag Tour were treated to films of DESERT STORM (very impressive indeed), and a tour of the various threats on display inside and outside the RED FLAG buildings. They saw the latest in MiG designs, Soviet SAMs and Russian tanks. More than one pilot was seen sitting in the cockpit of his former adversary.

The Banquet for the 9th Reunion was one of the most memorable this author has ever attended. Hank opened the program by describing the problems he had getting a Sabre for the memorial. He was getting nowhere fast when Maj Gen Griffith came to Nellis. Hank pulled strings with his old squadron-mate and got Gen Griffith on our side. Still the problems seemed insurmountable.

Hank - "It was still a no-go until Gen Griffith came on-board. Gen Griffith called in more than a few chits before finally succeeding in obtaining the airplane. The Project Officer was Lt Jim Baxter. I had to threaten him with telling his father (a member of our Association) or having General Griffith send him to some rockpile for a few years if he screwed this up. It worked! And the

credit goes to General Griffith." Hank presented General Griffith with a small memento as gratitude from the Association.

Hank then introduced the guest speaker for the night, US Army Colonel Joseph A. Schlatter Jr. Col Schlatter is Deputy Director of the Defense Department POW/MIA Office in charge of Korean War

affairs. Col Schlatter got off to a rousing start by exclaiming that "We didn't lose a damn thing in either Korea or Vietnam, and anyone that believes we did is sitting in the wrong room!" He was one of us!

Col. Schlatter then described his office and their mission. "We've known for years about MIAs from

Major General Thomas Griffith talks with Major General Frederick Blesse (Ret.) about comparison of tactics in Korea and those employed by today's generation of pilots. (credit - James Ramsey)



Many old friends were brought back together at the 9th Reunion. Former President John Giraudo laughs with Dick Becker during one of the photo shoots in front of the F-86 Memorial. (credit James Ramsey)

WW2, Korea, Vietnam, and even the Cold War. What happened to them? There were over 78,000 MIAs unaccounted for from WW2, and 8100 MIAs in Korea. What do the Russians, Chinese, and North Koreans know about these people? The answers lay in Moscow, China, and North Korea."

"Presidents Bush and Yeltsin agreed to form a joint US/Russia Commission on POW/MIAs. Our side was staffed with Russian linguists and intelligence experts which would begin a search of Russian archives for any mention of US personnel. Additionally, veterans of the Korean War from the Soviet side would be interviewed to see if they could shed any light on the subject."

Col. Schlatter then related the story about F-86 pilots and the Soviet air ministry. "We know the Soviets collected F-86 parts from crashes inside North Korea. After all, it was THE state of the art aircraft and they wanted to learn any secrets they could. There was even a story going around about a Soviet attempt to 'capture' a flyable F-86. The idea was to send several flights up and 'surround' an F-86, forcing him to land at a Soviet base. This didn't work to well and a great many Red pilots didn't return to the base. The Soviet advisors that came up with the plan also didn't return."



Members of Class 51-H were reunited during the 9th Reunion banquet, including (l-r) John Kumpf, Justin Livingston, Jim Low, and Jim Kumpf. (credit - Jim Low)

"Because of the Soviet interest in the F-86, many captured F-86 pilots were interrogated by Soviet intelligence people both in China and possibly inside the Soviet Union itself. There is no hard evidence that our people were not returned but--. Still there are serious questions about the 30+ F-86 pilots listed as MIA. These questions have been presented to the Russian Commission."

Col. Schlatter then mentioned his primary reason for attending the 9th F-86 Pilots Reunion. He wanted to probe the memories of the attendees, whose minds are still "as sharp and clear as ever"! Col. Schlatter wants to hear from any member of the Assn. who has any information about any F-86 pilots that were shot down over North Korea or Manchuria and never returned. Any member with questions or comments should direct his remarks to Colonel Joseph Schlatter, USA, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense/POW-MIA Affairs, 3100 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201; telephone 1-703-284-1297.

Col. Schlatter finished his remarks by saying "We have a moral and ethical imperative that we find out what happened to these people. The day we turn our back on the people that have sacrificed their lives for our flag is the day

we should go into the trash bin of history!" This brought an immediate standing ovation from all those in attendance.

Hank then presented Col. Schlatter with a small gift and a model of the F-86. Oddly, the F-86 was decorated with the markings of the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, which Hank proudly proclaimed "The #1 day fighter group in the Korean War!" Cat calls immediately erupted from those proud members of the 4th FIW which didn't exactly see it that way. Jimmie J- Johnson, former CO of the 4th in Korea, immediately got on the stage to declare "Hank, you have made one small technical error" on the markings. Jimmie then went into a small talk about the qualities of the Red pilots that they fought against in Korea, something about "nothing being so stupid and easy a target as the g-d--- MiG-15!"

With that Hank closed the Banquet shouting "See you in a year and a half!" I'll be there! Hope to see all of you there too. Let's make the 95 Reunion the biggest and best ever - but only half as good as the 97 Reunion!



Colonel Al Kelly, CO of the 51st FIW, leads his wingman off the runway at K-13 for another sweep of MiG Alley in the late summer of 1952. Col. Kelly is officially credited with 2 1/2 MiG-15s shot down during his tour with the 51st FIW. (credit - USAF)

KOREA - ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

by Albert S. Kelly

SabreJet Classics is becoming more interesting with each edition. Personally knowing so many of the contributors brings the magazine closer to home with many fond memories. As a matter of fact, I remember several incidents that happened while I was C.O. of the 51st Fighter Interceptor Group in Korea.

We had Major Hap Harris, a former B-17 jockey in World War 2, who became a Captain for National Airlines before being recalled for the Korea fracas. Hap always wanted to fly fighters, even during World War 2. But fate had it the other way and he ended up in, of all things, a BOMBER! Anyway, when Korea came Hap volunteered and worked it so he could go to jet fighter school at Nellis. He came to Korea as a 'rookie', but turned into a super great fighter jock. Hap was a Flight Leader and flew a bunch of combat missions. He was also an instructor pilot in our group. Well, now my story;

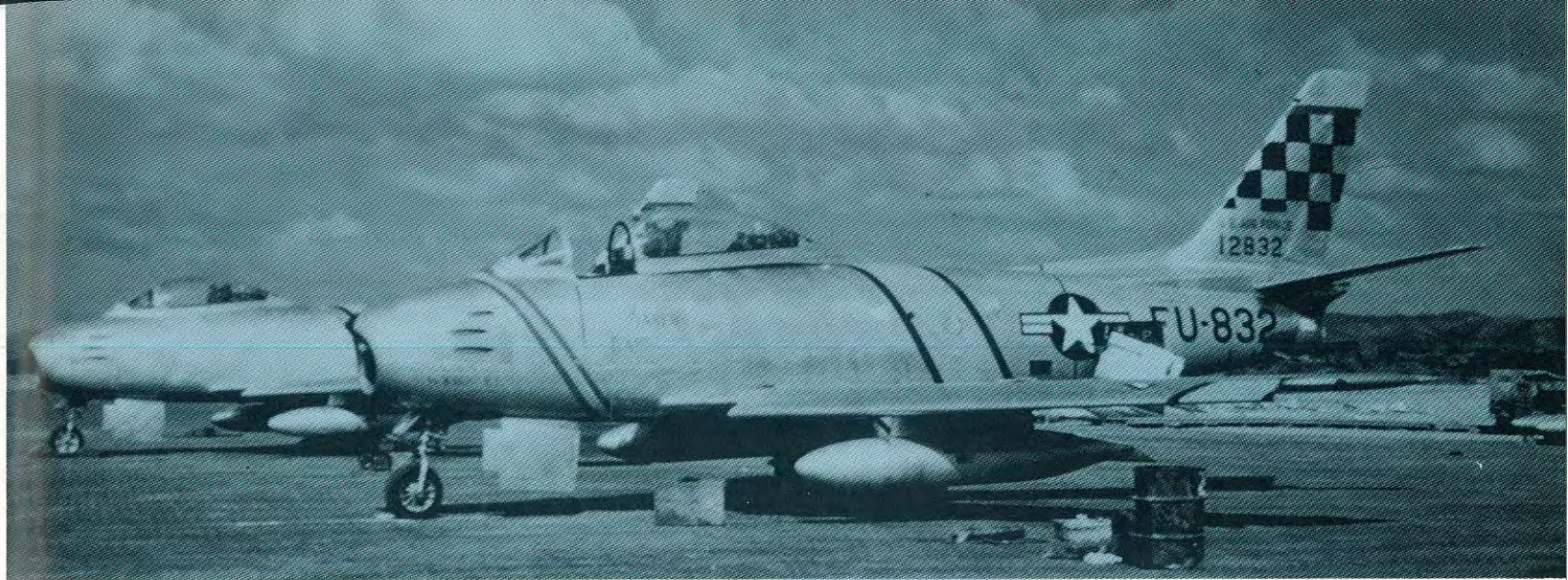
With some of our new pilots came a young man named McCarthy. I cannot recall his first name as he was always just Mac! Mac had beaucoup time flying AT-6s, but none in jets. Mac bugged the hell out of everyone to

teach him to fly in the T-33. Each squadron at Suwon had a T-33 assigned. Mac would fly tow target or anything else to get in some jet time! And so it would be. He finally talked me into letting him check out in an F-86. Hap Harris agreed to work with him until he eventually checked out to fly combat in the 86. That was a day of Great Celebration for Mac!

He started flying combat on Major Harris' wing. It also seemed that whenever Mac got a sortie, the flight

ran into MiGs. One day they got into a big hassle with a bunch of MiGs over the Yalu, and a few snagged onto Mac's tail and started shooting. Being ever the Mother Hen to his flight, Hap Harris started yelling to Mac over the radio - "Mac, Mac! Break right, break right!". Hap kept yelling at Mac over and over. Suddenly came a reply from Mac. The ever cool McCarthy calmly said - "Heck Major, I can't! The stick is HUNG UP IN MY BEADS!!!" And he was laughing the whole time.

The 51st Wing Chain of Command in early 1953 included, (l-r) Maj. Herman Visscher, 25th FIS CO; Col. John Mitchell, 51st FIW CO; Col. Robert Baldwin, 51st FIG CO; LtCol. George Ruddell, 39th FIS CO; and Maj. Sam Herrick, 16th FIS CO. (credit - Dee Harper)



KAREN'S KART was the personal aircraft assigned to Col. Al Kelly when he commanded the 51st FIW at Suwon in 1952. The airplane, an F-86E-10, was a good one, also being assigned to Col. Bob Baldwin when he took over the 51st in January 1953. (via Warren Thompson)

Mac was always a jolly, fun loving guy, loved and respected by all the jocks in the group. He was always joking and playing pranks on his fellow pilots. It was not long until once again Mac was flying Hap Harris' wing and they were bounced by another bunch of MiGs near the River. One of the MiGs seemed to have Mac tattooed and was firing long bursts of cannon fire. Major Harris again could be heard screaming at Mac over the radio - "Suck it in Mac, suck it in!" After what seemed like an eternity, finally came that dry drawl from Mac - "Aw Major, don't worry. He's all fired out!" Now that's what I call really COOL.

I don't know what happened to Mac after the war but I'm sure he was great fun with his friends and loved ones. Major Harris returned to National Airlines as a Captain and resumed his career. But not too many years later I learned that he had suffered a heart attack and joined the other great fighter pilots in the sky.

There are a lot of other lighter stories about Korea. How many of you recall the Kemchi pots, the garlic smelling barbers, or a lovely Korean princess named Moonface, who served show at our mess hall at Suwon. I'd love to hear more of these great stories from the rest of you guys.



LtCol. Al Kelly sits Ready Alert in the cockpit of KAREN'S KART, while Col. Bob Baldwin leans on NINA II, the same F-86E-10 51-2832, flown previously by Col. Al Kelly and still later by John Giraud when he was assigned to the 16th FIS. (credit - Dee Harper)





The GOLDEN HAWKS were the official aerobatic team of the Royal Canadian Air Force, flying Canadair Sabres in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Alfred McDonald was HAWK 6, seen on the ramp at Andrews AFB during May 1952. (credit - Robert Mikesh)

MY FAVORITE GOLDEN HAWKS STORY

by Alfred McDonald

HAWK 6

The year 1959 marked a significant anniversary for aviation in Canada. The Royal Canadian Air Force was celebrating its 35th Anniversary, and Canadian aviation was marking its 50th year of powered flight since the SILVER DART flew at Baddeck, Nova Scotia in 1909. To mark these milestones, the RCAF formed the GOLDEN HAWKS, an aerobatic team equipped with Canadair hard-winged Sabre Mk 5s. The HAWKS were scheduled to tour Canada for only this one year. But because of their popularity, they became a permanent team at the end of the 1959 tour.

By the time I joined the team in 1961, the Sabre Mk 5 had been replaced by the more powerful, and slatted winged Sabre Mk 6. After two years the HAWKS were performing a spectacular and very polished show. They drew huge crowds of aviation

enthusiasts to watch their displays in both Canada and the United States.

On one particular occasion the unforeseen happened. We were performing at Sydney, Nova Scotia during August 1961. During the 'bomb burst' maneuver before the spectators watching from the hangar line, four of the HAWKS were doing a low altitude crossover. HAWK 3, Norm Garriock, while flying toward the hangar and the crowd, did not see a tall pole supporting an anemometer directly in front of him. His right wing hit the pole at a speed of 400 knots. The pole did considerable damage to the Sabre's leading edge. The other three aircraft quickly checked him over and monitored the Sabre during the immediate emergency approach to landing. Garriock landed the Sabre without further incident.

I landed shortly afterward and investigated the area of the hangar Norm had just flown over. During this time I overheard the following conversation from a young woman who had been 'perched on the throne' inside the hangar during the incident with Garriock's Sabre - and directly beneath the support base for the anemometer pole - "Well", she said excitedly to a friend, "I heard this great thundering noise as the aircraft passed over, then this loud bang directly above me. Just then some debris from the roof fell right beside me! You know, I darn near s--t!" The two of them suddenly realized where she was sitting and broke up into uncontrolled laughter. The accident had lost its seriousness for the moment and further investigation soon flushed out the cause!



Looks real, doesn't it? The F-86F in the photos is actually a hand-built model with a wingspan of almost four feet, and weighing about eight pounds. The 1/2 cubic inch engine drives the model at well over 100 mph!



SABRES IN MINIATURE

by TONY KAMEEN

It has been 45 years since I built my first model airplane. Back in those days plastic kits were unheard of, and radio controlled models were only a dream! The radio controlled model era began for me in 1975 when I used a windfall tax refund to buy one of the first affordable radio control sets for \$200.00. There were times over the next few years when I was sure I would *never* learn to fly radio controlled airplanes! I stayed with it though, and managed to climb high enough on the learning curve to at least bring my model home in one piece! Since then I have built more than 40 R/C models. I have even been fortunate enough to take 11 1st Place and 4 Best In Show trophies in 27 contest entries. A few of my models are in aviation museums around the area.

My latest model is an F-86F Sabre, and I'm about ready to test fly it. The F-86F spans 45", weighs about 8 pounds, and is powered by a one-half cubic inch model airplane engine that burns alcohol and castor oil! The engine drives a 5 inch diameter phenolic epoxy ducted fan at 24,000 rpm! The thrust generated is seven pounds, enough to drive my F-86F through the air at well over 100 mph! All the flying controls work, i.e. ailerons, elevators, rudder, throttle,

and flaps. Even the landing gear retracts after takeoff.

The Sabre is my fifth ducted fan R/C ship. In the past I have built a Heinkel HE-162 (one of the first German jets), a T2J Buckeye, an Israeli C-2 KFIR, and another F-86. My first F-86 was another F model trimmed in the colors of the 84th FIS out of Hamilton AFB in the mid-50s. That model logged over 100 flights before becoming the victim of a drainage pipe. The pipe was sticking up in the air about 3 feet - I was flying the Dabre at 2 feet 6 inches! My new Sabre model uses the tail surfaces, engine, radio, and accessories from the original.

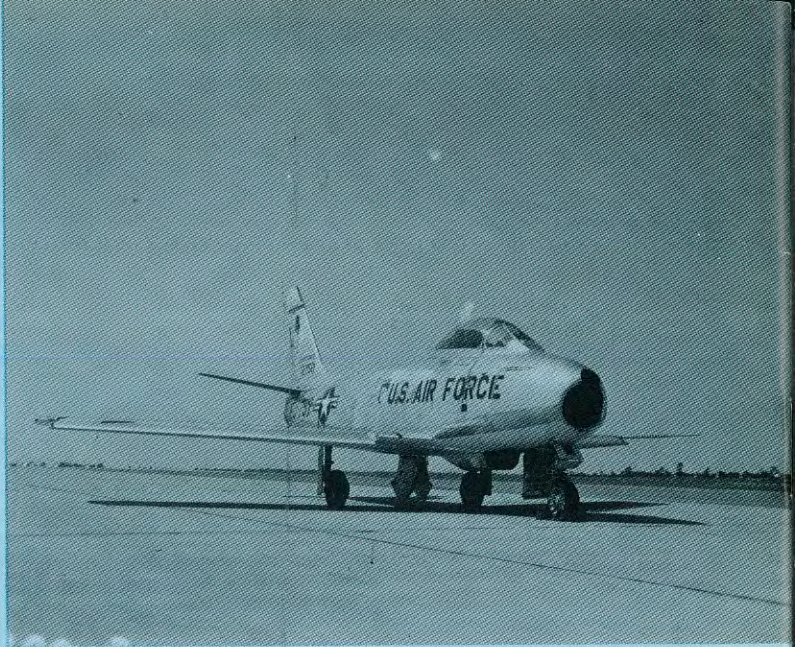
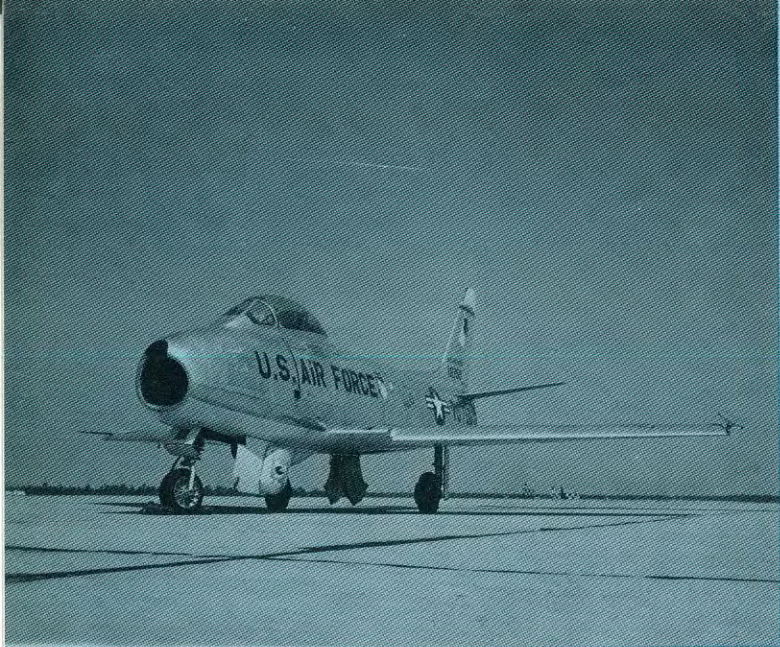
I am now retired after a 20 year career in the Air Force. I spent all my time flying the SD-4D, Steel Desk, type 4 Drawer). In 1962, while on first assignment with the 498th FIS, the Geiger Tigers, at Spokane International Airport, I met Colonel Vermont 'Garry' Garrison. At the time he was the air advisor to the Washington Air National Guard. It was a great pleasure for a brand new Second 'Balloon' to associate with someone with such a distinguished combat record. Col Garrison served with the Eagle Squadron and 4th FG

during WW2, shooting down 7 1/3 German fighters before being shot down and becoming a POW. In Korea Col Garrison added 10 MiG-15s to his total, while serving again with the 4th But First.

When I started building my second Sabre model last year I thought of Colonel Garrison. I contacted him through the Retired Officers Affairs Office. He was very helpful in verifying data about his F-86 and correcting errors that had been made by historians through the years. The markings on my new Sabre are a tribute to the memory of the late Col Vermont Garrison.

This past Spring my Sabre was shown at the Toledo, Ohio Scale Model Aircraft Trade Show. The kits manufacturer asked if he could display my F-86F. My prior F-86 model won 2nd Place in the Sport Scale category at the International Modelers Show in 1987.

Now with 300 hours involved in the construction of the F-86F behind me, I hope to complete another hundred flights and three years of contest and fun-fly time with the new Sabre. It is great to fly Vermont Garrison's 'Ol 953' again - even if only in miniature.



WHAT IS IT?

Does anyone remember anything about this F-86E-10 that was photographed on the ramp at Eglin AFB in the mid-1950s. What is the strange bulge under the forward fuselage, extending onto the nose wheel door? It carries the Air Research & Development Command badge on the fuselage, and an Eglin Proving Ground badge on the tail. On the left forward fuselage are 4 B-17 silhouettes - kill markings? Perhaps an armament test aircraft of some new gun system? Send all known info on this airplane to the Editors desk at the PO Box in Las Vegas.

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