



SabreJet Classics

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Spring 1997

A publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association



NASM F-86A, RALPH PARR, 330TH FIS
F-86 RAT RACE, FLYING THE 'L',
REUNION UPDATES, MORE!

SabreJet Classics

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The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

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(front cover) The Air Force 50 exhibit at National Air & Space Museum (NASM) highlights the Sabre. Several members sent us news clippings covering the exhibit. Member Jim Campbell said it should be on our cover. Publishing was delayed while Jim turned Washington upside down, finally succeeding in getting original photographs and NASM releases to use them. Our thanks to both Jim and the NASM.

We will go to press with the 1997 Membership Roster April 1, 1997, (Over 1700 members.) If you desire to have your FAX number or E-Mail address included in the roster, forward same to our PO Box in Las Vegas **TODAY !!!**

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

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.

THE PRESIDENTS NOTEBOOK

1996 proved to be a big year for our association! We added 146 new members to our rolls during the year for a total of 1,655 members. Also 90% of the member dues payments were current at year's end, which is a major improvement over past years. We have 97 life members on our roster. The membership includes 88 general officers, including 4 with four star grade, 3 astronauts, and 2 members of the US Congress. On the down side, 55 members were dropped from the association because their dues were delinquent for over 3 years.

Starting this year, dues will be handled just as newspaper or magazine subscriptions. The date your dues expire will be shown on your mail label. Please check this out every time you receive our correspondence. If your dues become six (6) months overdue, you'll be dropped from our mailing list - i.e. no more SabreJet Classics! This won't happen if you simply pay your dues before the expiration date. Dues payments remain the same, i.e. \$25 for 1 year, \$50 for 3 years, and \$200 for a lifetime membership.

SERIOUS REUNION BUSINESS: We need the information requested in the Reunion Bulletin attached to our letter to all members dated 15 January 1997. Big bucks are involved in knowing how many people to plan for at these events. Responses have been trickling in, so please make sure you have answered the mail on this one. This is our 3rd request for that info. Do not delay on this one. If you wait until the reunion to provide these data, you will find the staff and myself *difficult* to deal with.

It is important that you let us know on which date you intend to use the bus tickets you purchase, and the number in your party who will attend the continental breakfasts on Wednesday and Thursday. Make a notation of these items in the margin of your registration form. If you have not responded to our requests for this info, please do so today. *It is essential in planning this event and Big Bucks are involved.* If you intend to come to the reunion, please don't delay sending us your registration form. Get your hotel and airline reservations NOW! There are five (only 5!) volunteers working our reunion here in Vegas, and it's a real challenge. Your cooperation and understanding are vital!

Back to that "Event of a Lifetime". We hope to stage a live replay of a "typical" event as it might have happened during the Korean War. The show will start with ground attacks, complete with pyrotechnics, by F-51 Mustangs and B-26 Invaders. Then MiGs (Boo, hiss!) arrive to harass our friends. They are having their way until a flight of beautiful Sabres arrive to save the day (Hooray!). There is a furious air battle, and the MiGs disappear over the horizon trailing smoke. How about that troops? The whole thing will take about 20 minutes, and several of our members will pilot the Sabres. But read on —

In our January 5, 1997 letter, we said we will *STRIVE* to have bleachers on the flightline at Nellis AFB, reserved for members of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association. We also intended that our buses deliver and pick up our members at the flightline. As the finale to the mock air battle, the Sabres and MiGs will make a low, high speed pass as a salute to our association, with appropriate announcements on the PA system. Thanks to the great folks at Nellis AFB, the above is now in the Nellis AFB airshow program. For an event of this type and size, we are being given as close to VIP treatment as anyone could expect. Again, read on —

NOW FOR THE REALLY IMPORTANT STUFF - The above proposed air show will happen *ONLY IF* we receive the full hearted support from you, the members. We know we can make this happen. This is a minor effort for such a "get-it-done" group. Our January letter requested each member donate \$25 in support of the air show project. If you have not responded, I request you reconsider. We can and will make this "One in a Lifetime Event" happen!! Put your check in the mail today! Decision time is rapidly approaching. **WE MUST REACH OUR GOAL OF \$20,000 BY MARCH 15, 1997.** Remember to write 'AIRSHOW' in the memo on your check.

For those of you who like to surf the net, try following URL: <http://www.fightertown.org>. This is "Bones" Marshall's "AFA Hawaii Calling" page on the WWW. There is a wealth of Air Force information there, with photos, including selected stories from the American Fighter Aces Assn. magazine, The Daedalus Flyer, and our own SabreJet Classics. Great reading! You can also access the AFA home page (Air Force Fifty info there) from Bones' page.

In about a month we'll be printing a new roster. We intend to include e-mail and fax addresses/telephone numbers. Send me your data as well as any corrections you desire and we will publish it. The ball is in your court.

DEJA VU ITEM. This magazine has to have inputs from you - stories and photos - if we are to stay in business. Send any contributions to Larry Davis, Editor, SabreJet Classics, 4713 Cleveland Ave. N.W., Canton, OH 44709-1858.

DEE HARPER

from the Editor

Hello again guys! Here we are at the start of volume 5. First thing I must do is apologize to those of you that have been waiting on the article about the Geiger Tigers. It will not appear in this issue due to many reasons, the main one being that it simply didn't get finished in time. But believe me when I tell you, the wait will be worth it. It will be the feature article in vol 5, no. 2.

This issue is perhaps the most varied issue that we've done so far, with articles on Korea, F-86Fs in Air Defense Command, the NASM F-86A-5 display, and the story of how Ralph Parr 'cornered' 24 MiGs in Korea. We even have a photo of an Air Force rescue BOAT! Now that's something I'll bet not too many of you guys flew!

I'm looking forward to the Air Force 50 doings in Vegas next month, and the reunion of the Sabre Pilots Assn. I always come away from the reunions with many more airplane tales than I can ever recall and put into print. But we'll try. However, it's better if you put your memories into words, type them up, and give them to me. We'll do the rest.

We still need more stories and photos on air defense units and anyone that flew the F-86H. If you have stories, photos, or color slides that you wish to loan us, send them direct to LARRY DAVIS, EDITOR, SABREJET CLASSICS, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709; or call 1-330-493-4122. Let's keep SabreJet Classics the best it can be.



A HEART BREAKER - On 6 October 1996, Stu Everhardt experienced hydraulic failure just prior to touch down after completion of his airshow performance at Salinas, California. We know he is breaking his back and his pocketbook, to get the bird back in the air by 1 March 1997, so he can fly in the Nellis AFB airshow in April. The necessary parts have already been located. Jack Rosamond and several other Association members will also be in the airshow at Nellis. Jack is leading this effort. *These gentlemen deserve and need our help to make this show possible. Please support our request for donations to the Airshow Fund.* Having Sabres in the air during the Air Force Fifty airshow is certainly worthy of our full support. For us, yes it will be a "Once in a lifetime event". Have you forwarded your airshow donation? These funds must be deposited by 15 March 1997. (credit - Robert Scott)



WHAT IS IT from vol. 4, no. 3. Several members offered explanations on what unit the above aircraft belonged to when it was camouflaged. The aircraft did belong to the 461st Fighter Day Squadron. Frosty Sheridan mentioned that the 527th FBS was re-designated the 461st FDS "Deadly Jesters" in February 1956. Why the Mauer Mauer history of Air Force squadrons didn't pick up on the change is unknown. What the reason for the aircraft being camouflaged also remains a mystery. A future article in *SabreJet Classics* on camouflaged F-86 aircraft (pre-Vietnam) is in the planning. Anyone with information or photos on camouflaged USAF Sabres (Korea, USAFE, etc.), please contact Larry Davis, Editor, 4713 Cleveland Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44709, 1-330-493-4122.

Have you sent in your donation to support the airshow planned for the next reunion? Without your support, the Sabre will not be a part of the show. We must have all funds banked by 15 March 1997, so that key decisions can be made. If you have not mailed your check, please do so today!!

NEXT ISSUE

The Geiger Tigers,
7 Different Sabres
In One Day, Mission To
Mukden,
MORE!

FOLDED WINGS

DONALD E. BORTLE MAY 6, 1996
 JAMES CARLYLE AUGUST 24, 1994
 RALPH E. CRAYCRAFT NOVEMBER 22, 1996
 JAY A. DEMMING MAY 20, 1996
 THOMAS D. KENDRICK August 28, 1996
 ROBERT MYRANN 1993
 WALTER E. NAYLOR JANUARY 27, 1996
 GARTH E. REYNOLDS NOVEMBER 25, 1996
 CHARLES O. RIESTER AUGUST 23, 1995
 SAMUEL G. WARD III NOVEMBER 7, 1996

SABRE REUNIONS

REUNION BULLETIN: The following information has repeatedly been requested and the majority of our members have responded; but, *there is always those few who never get the word.* The events cited below will be in concrete prior to your arrival. We do not have a crystal ball so we are dependent upon your input. If you have not responded, do so now!

BUS TRANSPORTATION TO THE AIRSHOW: We have to know the date you intend to use the bus tickets you purchased. If you do not let us know your intentions, we will arbitrarily issue you tickets for the Saturday airshow. The airshow will be the same on both dates.

CONTINENTAL BREAKFASTS ON 24TH AND 25TH OF APRIL:
Participation is a freebie however tickets will be issued for both events.. We have to give the hotel a head count prior to your arrival. If you do not let us know you plan to attend this function, you will be excluded. Big \$\$\$ are involved..

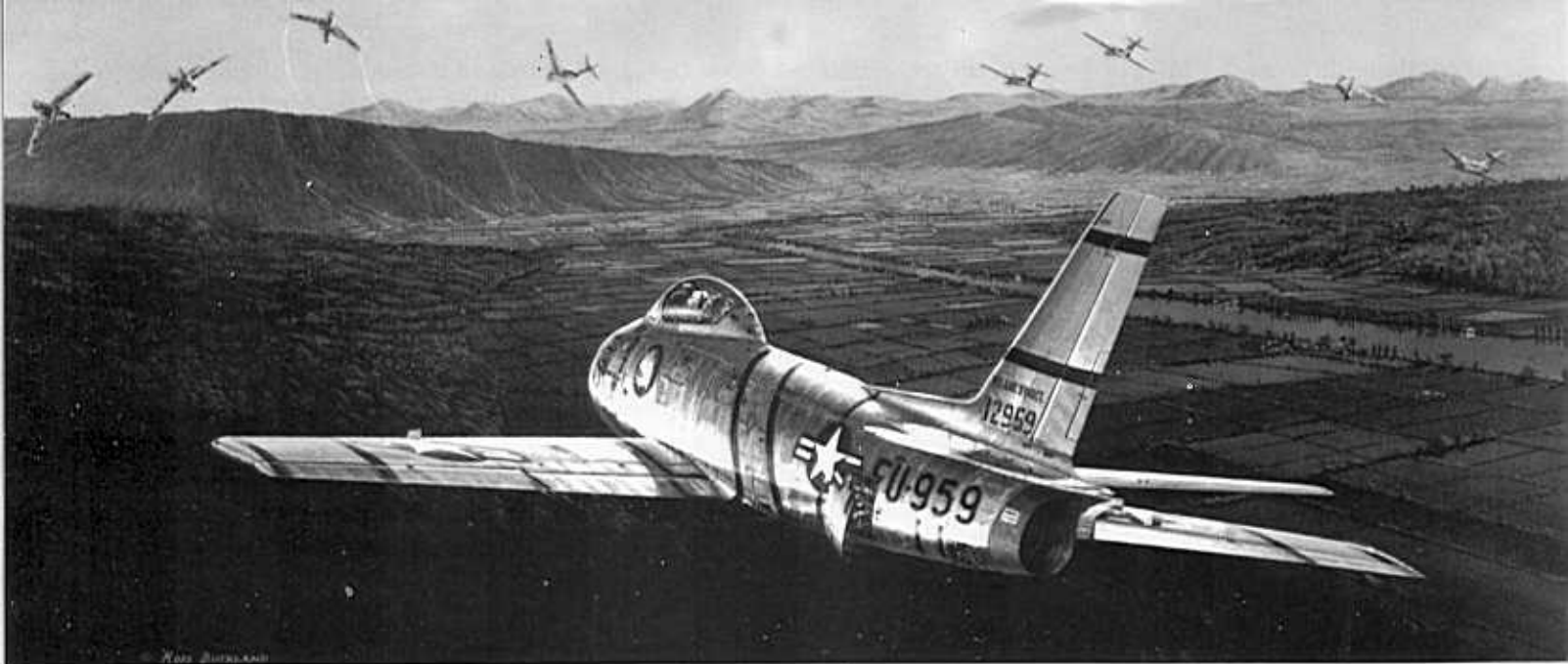
These events will be set in concrete when you arrive!!

ATTENTION!

The Nellis AFB Air Show for Air Force Fifty is the same on both Friday, April 25th and Saturday April 26th.

To obtain accurate, up-dated information on "Air Force Fifty" AFA activities or to obtain AFA registration documents, please contact AFA at the following address or telephone numbers. The AFA "Air Force Fifty" staff can be reached at (800) 552-5427 or call AFA's Fax on Demand System (800) 232-3563 and order document number 1997. Mail should be directed to Air Force Fifty, Air Force Association, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. Your association is not in the inner loop in their planning. We get the bulk of our information from the Air Force magazine, just as you do.

Sorry Gentlemen, due to the workload involved in preparation for the International Air Show, Nellis AFB will be unable to host our tour of the Red Flag/Threat Facilities during the next reunion. This event is canceled.



KOREA

SHOOTER'S ODDS

by ROSS BUCKLAND

This story has been copied from the 'Certificate Of Authenticity' for the lithograph "SHOOTER'S ODDS". The story and photo are published with the permission of Aerodrome Press, 3121 So. 7th St., Tacoma, WA 98405. The lithograph portrays Capt. Ralph Parr's first encounter with the MiG-15 - sixteen of them! This lithograph and Boots Blesse's "There Went Number Ten!", in gallery quality frames, are among the great prizes in the raffle at the '97 Reunion.

Cruising at 43,000 feet, twenty miles south and parallel to the Yalu River, John Shark Flight of the 335th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 4th Fighter Interceptor Wing, had already armed their guns and checked their sights. In the lead was 1stLt. Mervin Ricker, with Col. Robert Dixon as No. 2, followed by the second element with 2ndLt. Al Cox as No.3, and No. 4 Capt. Ralph Parr on one of his early missions in F-86s. The weather was CAVU (ceiling and visibility unlimited) - perfect for hunting MiGs this 7th day of June 1953.

With the first call of 'bandit tracks' from ROMEO, the GCI controller at the forward radar station, Ricker called "Drop tanks!" On the flight's second swing to the northeast, Parr spotted a flight of MiGs coming from the upper left at an incredible closure rate. "John Shark, break left! MiGs close and firing!"

Fortunately, the MiGs, coming in from 90° off, went through 'hit and run' without causing any damage. Ricker had turned after them, but they flashed away and disappeared. With the two flights separated, Ricker told John Shark 3 to start a withdrawal. Cox decided to complete a final orbit and nurse his element back up to 41,000 feet, having lost several thousand feet in the break.

Glancing to his right, down at the Yalu, Parr noticed some movement and called it out as very low. Cox

radioed back, "I can't see it! You take it, I've got you covered." During the briefing that morning, Al had told Ralph, who had extensive experience in fighters in a previous Korean combat tour in F-80s, that if Ralph called bogies Al couldn't spot, he would clear him and Al would follow.

Rolling over slowly, Parr began a split-S with full power, and headed straight down to intercept what he thought would be a couple of MiGs going south. Cox, seeing Parr roll over toward him, entered a right bank to pick up the Sabre visually as it crossed under him. But it never came by since it was going straight down. Shark 3 asked which way 4 had gone. Ralph replied, "Straight down. Come on down and find me."

With his G-suit fully inflated as the Sabre leveled off at 500 feet under maximum G, Parr tried to gulp some air as his near Mach One jet closed on the MiGs. "I had found my MiG...two...nope four...Whoops eight! NO SIXTEEN!" Ralph Parr, who had lived for nothing more than to fly fighters, now found himself alone in the middle of an angry hornet's nest, a whole squadron of 16 enemy aircraft - and he had them cornered!

Rapidly gaining on two flights of four MiGs, Ralph pulled the throttle back to slow his closure rate. Without hesitation, Parr thought to himself, "This may be my last chance with the war winding down. So as long



CAPT Ralph Parr, 335th FIS, Kimpo, Summer 1953.
(credit - North American Aviation)

as I'm going to do it, I may as well take the leader and turn the peasants loose!" Ralph lined up on the apparent leader of the eight MiGs as he closed inside of 3,000 feet. Out of the corner of his eye he noticed another eight MiGs to his left, then all hell broke loose as the eight in front broke in all directions.

Still closing, Parr jerked the throttle to idle, popped his speed brakes, and tracked the MiG leader as he pulled the trigger. The sharp curve of the tracers, and the slowing rate of fire got his attention - he was pulling Gs for all he was worth. Before he could let off, the gunsight fuse blew at over 9 Gs, and now he had no working sight.

Slowly overshooting, Parr watched the MiG leader reverse until they were canopy to canopy in a rolling scissors, each looking straight into the other's cockpit. Watching for an opportunity, Ralph saw the MiG pilot make a slight change. With a little forward stick and some rudder, Parr slid his Sabre behind the MiG so close he thought he would hit him with his nose. He backed off to point blank range...about 10 feet...and on the deck. Gunsight or no gunsight, he couldn't miss. But each time he fired, the '86 would stall out due to the extremely tight turn and the vibration of the guns. Parr would then have to work his way back through the MiG's jet wash and into position.

On the fourth or fifth burst, Parr's fighter was soaked with fuel as he again stalled through the turn. The next short burst resulted in flame streaming from the MiG back around both sides of the F-86 and over the canopy. Then the MiG's engine quit. The Sabre shot past as the bandit hit the ground. Parr rolled into a left turn just as a MiG closed in steeply from the left. An immediate overshoot allowed Ralph to reverse...he simply held the trigger down and walked the tracers through before the MiG could get out of range.

Looking rapidly to his rear again, Parr saw five MiGs trying to cut inside him. A hard left turn kept them at bay, but he was being hosed with cannon fire as each MiG started shooting..."There were five of them firing at me and coming close!" Shooting at anything in front of him as he turned and maneuvered, flat on the deck, Ralph caused another MiG to hit the ground and explode. Whether from gunfire or not Ralph wasn't sure. But the others gave up and broke toward the Yalu as Al Cox showed up.

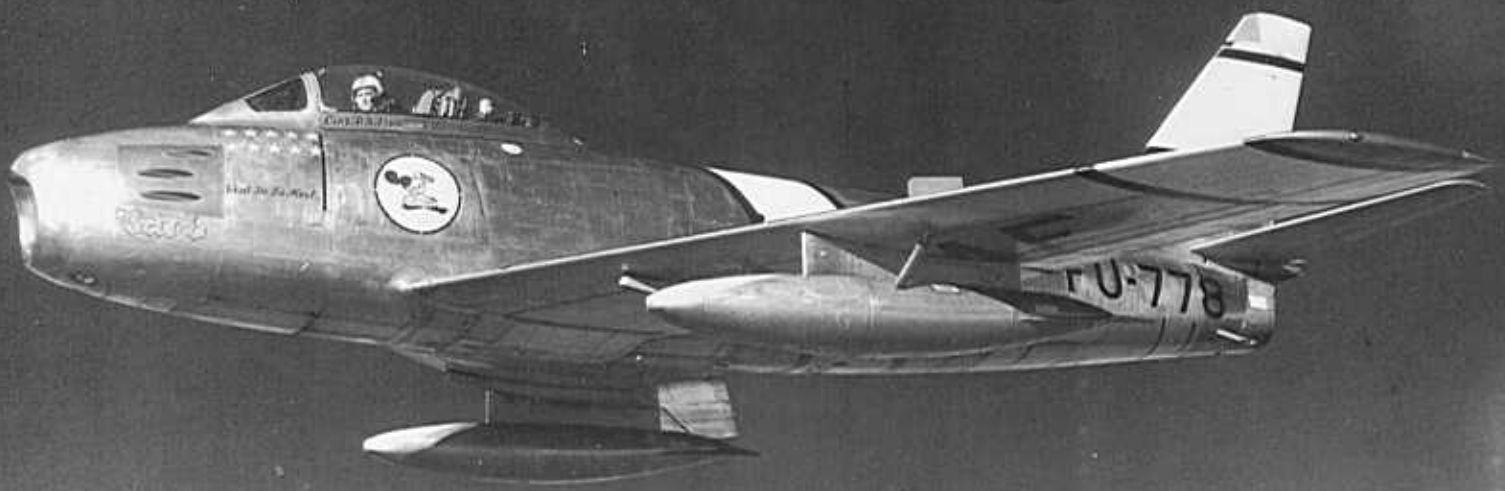
Both Sabres turned for K-14 (Kimpo) at extreme minimum fuel. Incredibly, throughout this engagement, Parr's Sabre sustained no damage, in spite of the fact that up to seven MiGs literally emptied their guns at him. After assessment of the gun camera film and Cox's account of the battle, Ralph Parr was given credit for two Migs destroyed and one damaged.

Parr's record in Korea stands as one of the most remarkable, a testimony to what aggressiveness in combat means. Ralph Parr finished his Sabre fighter tour in Korea with ten victories, a total equaled by only ten other Korean War fighter pilots. He made all of his kills in a span of 30 missions during the last seven weeks of the war, a time span no other Korean War ace was able to equal.

Col. Ralph Parr's full military career spanned 34 years and three wars, giving him a total of 641 combat missions, including two tours and 427 missions in Vietnam. With over 60 American and foreign decorations, Col. Parr has the further distinction of being the only man ever to be awarded both the Distinguished Service Cross and its successor, the Air Force Cross - the nation's second highest decoration for valor.

Summer 1953, this group of pilots cost the communists dearly, accounting for 55 victories. (l-r) CAPT Lonnie Moore - 10 MiGs, MAJ Vermont Garrison - 10 MiGs, COL James K. Johnson - 10 MiGs, CAPT Ralph Parr - 9 MiGs & 1 IL-12, MAJ James J. Jabara - 15 MiGs. (credit - Ralph Parr)





CAPT Ralph Parr over North Korea in his 334th FIS F-86F *BARB*, in the late summer of 1953. The legend behind the gun panel reads "Vent de la Morte" (Death From Above). The Sabre has 10 red stars under the cockpit indicating CAPT Parr's victories in Korea. (credit - E. Sommerich)



CAPT Ralph Parr talks with another pilot while pre-flighting a 335th FIS F-86F at Kimpo in June 1953. (credit - North American Aviation)



A group of 4th FIG pilots recall today's mission in the "Ting Ling Lounge" at Kimpo in 1953. (l-r) 2LT Thomas Griffin, CAPT Ralph Parr, 2LT Jack Givens, and 2LT Sandy Zevin. (credit - USAF)

SOME SERIOUS BUSINESS: Your mail label gives the expiration date for your last dues payment. Currently, 337 members are delinquent in their dues. Are you among these delinquent members? If your dues remain delinquent over one year, you will be dropped from our mailing list. If delinquent for over 3 years, you will be dropped from the Association. You can make dues payments in advance of your expiration date. We just extend your expiration date for the appropriate number of years, just as magazine and newspaper subscriptions are extended.



The 330th FIS flew F-86Fs out of Stewart AFB, New York, in the 1954-1955 time frame, before transitioning into the F-86D all-weather interceptor. (credit - J.R. 'Bud' Conti)

SYLVIA TWO THREE

BY JOHN POWELL

My home in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, is near the Willow Grove NAS. As I passed the base a few weeks ago, I noticed two old 'friends' from my USAF past. There on display were an F-80 Shooting Star and an F-86 Sabre. I couldn't pass without stopping to get reacquainted with those beautiful old fighters. As I sat on the bench in front of them, my thoughts took me back to the early 1950s, shortly after the Korean War ended. I had just been assigned to the 330th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Stewart AFB in Newburgh, New York. This was a lovely place to be after eighteen months in pilot training and all-weather interceptor schools. During pilot training, I had become very proficient in flying the F-80, an aircraft I dearly love to this day. I developed complete confidence in its ability to get me home, and it always did - even through two dead stick landings.

The 330th FIS was the only fighter unit at Stewart AFB, and we fighter pilots were looked upon as akin to football stars or 'jocks', a status completely new to me. There at Stewart, my USAF wings gave me instant recognition as a real, live jet pilot, during the days when jets were new and thrilling, always drawing crowds of onlookers.

After six months at Stewart, we were being re-equipped with F-86s, as they were returned from Korea. These were not new aircraft, but were somewhat tired and combat-worn. At first, I didn't think they were as 'user friendly' as my beloved F-80. I loved the '80 as one loves a beautiful mistress - and she loved me. She had

always taken care of me. Because of this, I volunteered to ferry our F-80s to the Air National Guard units which were picking them up. Finally, however, we ran out of F-80s, and I had to make friends with the famous 'MiG-Killer' of Korea, the F-86F - the glamorous lady starring in all the war movies from Hollywood. As I transitioned into the Sabre, I found it much more comfortable than the '80. The cockpit was spacious and well designed for my 6'2" frame.

The 330th shared its aircraft with senior officers assigned to headquarters, Eastern Air Defense Force, which was located on the hill above the flight line. Most of these officers were of WW2 and Korean vintage, fresh from the latest war and now assigned to desk duties, which they disliked but recognized as essential to advancement. One of these was a lieutenant colonel named Robin Olds, an ace in WW2 and married to a movie star. He would later become the only pilot to score victories in both WW2 and Vietnam (12 in WW2 and 4 in Vietnam). He loved flying, and had put out the word that he would buy steak dinners for any pilot and his lady IF the pilot could 'shake him off his tail when Olds 'bounced' him.

I thought I was as good as most of my squadron in the role of aggressor or evader, and needless to say, even without the diner offer, to 'wax' such a formidable foe would be a feather in any pilot's cap. Then, one crisp February day, as I was flying an F-86 at 25,000 feet practicing my assigned aerobatics and feeling in love



An F-86D assigned to the 330th FIS at Stewart AFB, NY during 1956. The 330th FIS flew the F-86D "Sabre Dog" from 1956 to 1959. (credit - Paul Andrews)

with the sky and my ability to fly, I felt quite alone with the deep blue above and the pure white clouds below. The F-86 and I were becoming real friends! Just as I entered my last maneuver I became aware of another '86 right on my tail!

"Sylvia Two Three (my call sign), this is Jumping Jack (Olds' call sign) on your six! Commence evasive actions now, no holds barred!" Since this was a direct order, and since I fancied myself a cool fighter pilot, I proceeded to try all kinds of things to shake Olds off my tail. But he remained fixed there, no matter what.

Unfortunately, with my limited experience in the F-86, I had lots to learn about swept wing flying characteristics and slats. I was pulling far more 'g' forces than I had ever done before, and was careless about keeping the aircraft from yawing while turning. My old friend the F-80, was very forgiving about uncoordinated flight. I had been told by the operations officer that in uncoordinated flight during high 'g' loads, the slats on the F-86 might not operate together. One might extend while the other remained closed, producing some very unexpected and nasty results. If this happened, I was to 'unload' the g's, which would reduce the angle of attack and result in a return to more or less normal flight conditions. This had never happened to me, so I forgot all about it in my effort to get Jumping Jack off my tail.

I was determined to do this, however, and as a last resort I extended my speed brakes and reduced power to idle, hoping he would fly right under and past me as I pulled up into a vertical position. When the aircraft had slowed almost to a stall, I retracted the brakes and applied hard left rudder to execute a 'wing-over'. As I did so, I checked my six o'clock and observed Jumping Jack still on my tail!

Suddenly I felt my Sabre enter a violent maneuver such as I had never experienced. The nose began swinging around in a wild circle, and I saw earth and sky rapidly changing places. All sorts of debris from the cockpit floor was floating around. I was bewildered and frightened, and might have bailed out, except that I figured the gyrations might preclude a successful ejection. I was headed for the ground - fast - and had

just about given up hope of recovery. Then I heard, "Two Three, extend your speed brakes, advance your power to 100%, and neutralize your controls."

It was Jumping Jack, and his voice reassured me. Following his directions, the cartwheeling stopped, and the landscape (much too close now) settled down. I was under 5,000 feet, and Jumping Jack calmly said, "Reduce your power now, and start a 3 'g' pullout!" I did, and soon resumed level flight - an older but wiser fighter pilot. Jumping Jack got landing clearance for the two of us and suggested I write up the aircraft for an 'over g' inspection.

After landing, I sat in the pilots lounge, drank a Coke, and tried to assess all that had happened to me that day. Jumping Jack had been the spokesman, but it was Divine intervention that had saved me, I felt sincerely. I was just about to go home for the evening when I was told that our CO wanted everyone to report to the Officer's Club at 1730 hours. I wanted to call my wife to let her know I'd be late but there was no time and I headed for the club.

When I arrived with three of my buddies, we were directed to a large private dining room. As we entered, my entire squadron came to attention. And our CO introduced me to Lieutenant Colonel Robin Olds and Mrs. Olds. Next to Mrs. Olds sat my wife of six months wearing a million dollar grin. As I was ushered to a seat beside my wife, Colonel Olds called for a toast: "A toast to First Lieutenant John Powell, the first pilot in this group to outfly me and shake me off his tail!" Modestly, he continued that it was not the first time he had been bested, and probably not his last. But because I had so little time in the '86, I had earned the promised steak dinner. As my squadron mates congratulated me with applause, cat-calls, and whistles, I noticed that I had once again taken on the demeanor of an ice-cool jet fighter pilot. Inside of me, however, I knew there was a frightened young pilot who had almost 'bought it', but for the sake of God and Robin Olds.

Back at Willow Grove, with nostalgia sweeping over me, I realized that over forty years had passed. I recalled feelings long forgotten. And as my eyes filled with mist, my right hand formed a fist, and I beat softly on my arm rest. "Ah God, if I could only fly one of those magnificent machines again." And with that wish, "Sylvia Two Three" slipped back into my memory once again.

330th FIGHTER



GETTING THE "L" HOME

by the late NEIL FOSSUM

In December 1956, I was a junior first balloon flying F-86Ds at Tyndall AFB in Florida. I was getting plenty of flying, fishing and golfing. And yes, my wife was eight months pregnant. About the middle of the month, my boss asked if I would fly to Fresno, California to ferry our first F-86L back. I told him my wife was expecting within a month. But he assured me I would be home for Christmas. As my bride was not having any problems, I agreed to go.

The next day I was asked by maintenance to ferry one of their F-86Ds, a hangar queen, out to Fresno so North American could modify the bird into an 'L'. I agreed and they worked day and night to make the airplane flyable. I gave it a test hop on December 18th. Right after takeoff, when I retracted the flaps, the bird started rolling to the left. I pulled some power off and put the flaps back down in a takeoff position. After gaining a little altitude I discovered three things: first, the flaps were not coming up on both sides; second, the airplane would not fly with its wings level above 200 knots; and finally, I was not going anywhere in this beast in that condition! Maintenance jumped on it after I landed, and the next day I started my ferry flight with my first refueling stop at Greenville, Mississippi.

While getting lunch in Greenville and working out my next leg, the weather rolled in and the field dropped below minimums. The next day the weather was still lousy, but I think they were tired of my hanging around Base Ops and they temporarily *jacked up the ceiling* and let me go. Clearance delivery gave me an awfully complicated departure with several crossing restrictions. But after figuring out where they were, I cranked her up and called for taxi instructions. I went on the gauges immediately after takeoff. At 500 feet I was informed of two things: one, Greenville had again gone below minimums; and two, if I continued my flight I would be under violation! I asked them what the problem was and they calmly informed me that Flight Services said I had insufficient fuel to reach my destination at Big Spring, Texas.

The weather was bad to the west but I remembered that Dyess was forecast to improve. I informed Flight Services that Dyess AFB was my new destination. That satisfied Greenville, but when I approached Dyess they informed me that Big Spring was VFR and I landed there as planned. A check with the Airdrome Officer to see if a violation had been filed (or if the flying



An F-86D assigned to the 3625th CCTW at Tyndall AFB, FL in 1955. Many F-86Ds were subsequently modified to F-86L under Project FOLLOW-ON. (credit -W.T. Balogh)

evaluation board had convened and was waiting for me) revealed I had not violated any rules. So I gassed up and headed for George AFB, with another fuel stop at Tucson.

It was great to get into the BOQ at George and then hit the club. After a tough day I was looking forward to some rest before heading to Fresno the next day. Next morning, December 21st, I arrived at Ops only to learn that the whole San Joaquin Valley was socked in and Fresno would be below minimums all day. By the next day, the 22nd, the weather at Fresno came up a bit and I snuck in that afternoon - at last! The troops at North American told me that my F-86L would be ready by 1000 hours the next day. But it was closer to 1230 hours before I finally got airborne.

The F-86L was an improved F-86D with a Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) data link system. The L also had the extended '6-3' wing with slats. (credit - North American Aviation)





A lineup of F-86D aft fuselage sections at the Fresno North American Aviation conversion facility, await modification to F-86L. In addition to installation of the SAGE equipment, the aircraft were completely re-wired, and all necessary TCTOs were complied with. (credit - North American Aviation)

One of the strange things about this particular F-86L was that its gear would not retract. So after burning out some fuel for about thirty minutes, I landed back at Fresno and returned the 'L' to North American. Rather than carry my chute, helmet, and flashlight around, I left them in the cockpit. The North American people started working on the bird. They finally had it ready on Christmas Day and I took off about noon. By now my attitude needed a major adjustment as my clean clothes had long been depleted, as well as most of the contents of my wallet. I was concerned about my wife and it WAS Christmas Day!

I filed a flight plan for George AFB as they had maintenance if I needed it. During the flight my attitude did not improve because when I engaged the autopilot I immediately got my head banged against the canopy! The *autopilot* wanted to do rolls all the way to George! I also noticed my oxygen was leaking at a rate of about 200 pounds per hour. At George I didn't mention any of these problems, nor the leaks that I saw. It was time to get the 'L' home, and I didn't want any delays because of a few *stupid oxygen, fuel, and hydraulic leaks!*

After refueling, I filed a flight plan for Big Spring with a stop for more fuel and oxygen. Departing Big Springs my takeoff roll seemed much longer than usual. But the bird finally started flying. I pulled the gear up and moved the flap handle to the 'up' position. But my flaps were already up! I had forgotten to place them in the takeoff position. It was now sundown and it had already been a long day. But at least I knew now why my takeoff roll had been so long. I made a mental note to be more careful and continued on to Alexandria AFB, Louisiana.

While I was going by Ardmore, Oklahoma I made a position report. Because it was Christmas night, and almost everyone was where they wanted to be, I had not heard any radio chatter for about thirty minutes. When Ardmore Radio called with a current altimeter setting, the operator was slurring his words so badly I could not understand him. I just replied - "Roger. It sounds like you're having a little party!" He replied - "Yeah, ha, ha! We've made a few trips to the parking lot!" I said - "Well, have one for me!", and he replied "Yeah, OK!" A few seconds later I received a very clear, very sober transmission with a current altimeter setting. I suspect the Ardmore boss overheard our conversation as his voice sounded more than a little agitated.

By the time I landed at Alexandria, my Sabre didn't have enough oxygen left to keep a canary alive. But there was only one short leg left so I didn't mention it. I also noticed that my flashlight was missing. It was probably at Fresno in someone's tool box.

There was a Major on duty in Base Ops at Alexandria. He was in a really foul mood, probably because it was Christmas and he was stuck with A.O. duty. Because I did not have my own clearing authority, and I was a First Lieutenant, I treated him with kid gloves. When I placed my flight plan on the counter for his signature, he said - "You're ferrying this airplane, aren't you?" I said "Yes Sir!" He said "You're not supposed to ferry a plane at night or in weather, are you?" He was correct on both counts. I then said "You're not going to stop me, are you?" He replied "You're not going to crash on my airdrome, are you?" I quickly said "No Sir!". He looked at me for a moment, signed my flight plan, and I was out the door.



A group of pilots walk down the ramp at the North American plant to pick up their 'new' F-86L aircraft. North American modified 827 F-86D aircraft to F-86L between 1956 and 1959. The final F-86L mission was flown in May 1965 by the 196th FIS, California ANG. (credit - North American Aviation)

On the way out I turned to the Major and asked if he knew where I could buy a flashlight? He said "You don't have a flashlight?" Realizing I had just goofed, I mumbled something about it being stolen, but all my cockpit lights were working OK. As I walked out I heard him say - "I've heard about all I want to hear about this flight --!"

When I arrived at transient alert, the buck sergeant informed me that I had a severe oxygen leak, which had lost 200 pounds since he had topped it off. I said "That's OK. But I would appreciate it if you would top it off again after I crank her up." He looked at me a little strange but said "OK".

After getting clearance, I fired the engine up. About this time a Convair twin-engine landed - maybe a Southern Airlines bird. I didn't think anything about it. Finally, the sergeant topped off the oxygen, pulled the wheel chocks, and the tower cleared me to taxi.

As I approached the active runway, the tower asked if I was going to use the afterburner for takeoff? I replied I hadn't planned on it because of its high fuel consumption and I was flying all the way to Tyndall on this leg. When I asked why, he said the two commercial pilots in the Convair had seen me getting ready to go and had stopped in the tower to watch my afterburner. As it was a very black night in that part of Louisiana, and the flame pattern from my afterburner was so obnoxious, I said "Sure. I'll plug it in!" The tower cleared me for takeoff. As my speed rapidly increased I decided to give them a max performance takeoff. While I was at it, I held the Sabre down until I thought

the tire treads would peel off! Then I rotated her and sucked up the gear.

I was looking into a black hole with no stars, no clouds, and no city lights. My artificial horizon at the bottom of the instruments was of no use at all. Looking out over the canopy rails provided no clue as to my altitude. It was as black as a Louisiana swamp! My airspeed held at 140 knots. I couldn't get it out of 'burner until I got the nose down. So my only course was to ease the stick forward. As soon as the artificial horizon provided some useful information I pulled it out of afterburner.

At this point I had scared myself, and my knees were shaking. Realizing that my voice would probably be several octaves higher than normal, I consciously lowered it and asked the tower - "How did they like that?" The answer was - "They loved it and wished they could change jobs with you!" After considering this entire trip and the headaches, I replied "I *might* be talked into that about now!"

After landing at Tyndall I parked, filled out the log, left my chute and helmet in the cockpit, closed the canopy and went home. My wife was fine. But Christmas Day was long gone. She asked how it went and I replied "It went all right." Now she knows the truth because she typed this!

Two months later a Captain Howard flew the second F-86L into Tyndall. The base photographers took pictures, and he arranged for a nice article in our base newspaper about how *he* flew the *first* F-86L into Tyndall. Oh well! Anyway, it was nice to get the 'L' home!



A 25th FIS F-86F on the PSP ramp at Suwon in late Summer 1953. Although the Korean War ended on 27 July 1953, Sabre pilots continued to fly missions near the borders of North Korea escorting reconnaissance aircraft that were watching for violations of the truce agreement. (credit - USAF)

KOREA

A LETTER HOME

1/LT Donald L MacGregor Jr.
51st FIW 25th FIS
K-13 Suwon, Korea

Dear Family,

August 12, 1953

Now that you all know that I had to bail out of an F-86 Sabre Jet on the last day of the war, I will fill you in on all the details. I thought it would worry Mother too much if she found out about the incident, and that's why I sent a short note to Dad at the office after being rescued and very briefly told him what had happened in case the story got in the newspaper or somehow you heard about it. In that event you would know I was allright from the letter I wrote to Dad. But now that you have been informed, which is what I probably should have done in the first place, I will try to fill in all the details that I left out in the letter to Dad.

On July 27th, the Korean truce was signed. The truce, among other things, called for a twelve hour grace period when a physical count of all aircraft on both sides was supposed to be made by some sort of neutral commission. After that no more aircraft would be allowed into Korea by either side. This caused our side quite a problem since most of our major maintenance was done in Japan, and we had a lot of aircraft over there. Consequently, we had to get those aircraft back into Korea that night.

Our squadron was scheduled to fly missions that day to help prevent the communists from bringing in aircraft and other items that were never in Korea, and as it turned out, that's exactly what they tried to do. Every pilot in the squadron wanted to fly a mission that day because we thought, now that the war was over, the number of missions each of us had flown, would determine when we could go home. In "A" Flight, the way we decided who would fly a mission or who would go to Japan to fly one of our aircraft back to Korea, was by flipping a coin. I flipped a coin with my good friend, Julius "LW" Hegeler, from Danville, Illinois, and Julius won the mission, and I got the trip to Japan.

When we landed at our maintenance base in Japan, things looked pretty hectic on the flightline because the maintenance people were racing the clock to get our aircraft ready for flight. My F-86 was finally ready, after an engine change and when my flight plan had been filed and cleared, I departed for Korea at seven p.m. which was about an hour before dark. Everything appeared normal as I climbed on course to 21,000 feet where I leveled off. Usually we climb to around 40,000 feet for better fuel consumption, but on this particular flight, I didn't have far to go and decided I would have plenty of fuel for the trip at that altitude. It's probably a lucky thing that I did decide to cruise at that lower altitude since at higher altitudes bailouts are far more dangerous due to a lack of oxygen and extremely cold temperatures.



11.T Don McGregor, 25th FIS, Suwon, July 1953. (credit - Don McGregor)

Don McGregor stands in the crater created when his 25th FIS F-86F crashed near Izuhara on Tsushima. (credit - Don McGregor)

My first indication of trouble was an engine vibration lasting only a few seconds. On checking my engine instruments, I saw I had no oil pressure. I knew I had a serious problem, and decided to land at the nearest suitable field in Korea which was located near the town of Pusan, on the southern tip of Korea. Next, I contacted the tower at Pusan, advising them of my problem and told them I would keep them posted on my progress. I took up a heading to Pusan and had just tuned in the Pusan homer on my radio compass when I noticed that my tailpipe temperature was increasing and my engine rpm's were decreasing. This indicates an engine seizure, and I knew I was now in real trouble. In a few seconds, I felt an explosion in the engine compartment behind me, and at that moment, the aircraft began to vibrate as though it would shake itself to pieces. Then the fire warning light came on indicating an engine fire, and the cockpit began filling up with smoke. I quickly turned my oxygen to 100%, so I wouldn't be overcome by smoke. It was pretty obvious by now that the airplane and I would soon part company. The next step was to advise Pusan that I was planning to bail out so they could take a fix on my position and alert Air Sea Rescue. I began preparations to eject from the aircraft. First, I unfastened the navigation log from my leg, lowered the windblast shield on my helmet over my face, leaned forward to prevent the canopy from hitting me in the head, and pulled the lever that blew the canopy off the aircraft. I figure I was traveling at a true air speed of around 560 miles per hour, without a canopy, so you can probably imagine the windblast that hit me as I sat erect in the seat to eject. As soon as I felt I was sitting correctly in the seat, I squeezed the trigger on the seat which violently shot me out and over the top of the aircraft. I might add here, that both the seat and the canopy are equipped with powerful explosive charges which make high speed bailouts possible, and needless to say, it is quite a boot in the pants when the seat fires. At any rate, it may sound that this sequence of events covered a long period of time. Actually, from the time I experienced the first vibration, until I ejected, was no more than a very few minutes.

After leaving the aircraft, my helmet and oxygen mask were torn off my head, and I began to tumble over and over, backwards. Due to the altitude and very cold temperature, I decided to free fall down to a lower altitude where it wouldn't be so cold and where there would be plenty of oxygen. Here is where I made my first mistake which probably should have cost me my life--I forgot to unfasten the seat which was still strapped to me. I guess I was so intent on watching a rock out-cropping in the ocean to give me some idea how high I was and when to pull the rip cord, that getting rid of the seat never crossed my mind. When I felt I had lost sufficient altitude, I tucked in my chin, put my feet together and pulled the rip cord. The chute opened with quite a jolt since the heavy seat was still attached to me. As soon as the chute was fully opened, I noticed that many of the panels had been ripped out. I noticed for the first time that I was still sitting in the seat, and so, I unfastened my seat belt and watched the seat fall away toward the ocean. I looked at my watch in order to time my descent, but it had stopped due, I imagine, to either the opening shock of the parachute or probably the jolt of the ejection seat.

I was pretty happy to be alive after all that, but I still wasn't safely on the ground. I began to look around to see where I was going to land. I noticed that I was over the coast of an island but the wind was carrying me out to sea. This concerned me quite a bit, but was probably for the best since the island was very hilly and

covered with trees which might have caused some broken bones on landing. I could see several small boats below me, and I felt certain they could see my parachute and would come to my rescue when I landed in the water. However, the wind was carrying me farther and farther away from the boats.

At first, the descent in the parachute was rather enjoyable. I had no sensation of descending at all. In fact, I felt as though I was suspended in mid-air. But, about the time I got comfortable, the chute began to swing me from side to side, and I was certain the chute would collapse. It continued to oscillate periodically during the rest of the descent, and at times, I would swing almost parallel with the canopy, which would momentarily start to collapse. But, the badly torn chute managed to stay open in fine shape all the way down.

Since I have the additional duty as personal equipment officer of the squadron, I am pretty well acquainted with all the emergency equipment. I had been sent to a course on the use and maintenance of emergency equipment, and I often was called on to give briefings on the subject to pilots in the squadron; so, there wasn't much doubt in my mind as to how to make a water landing, using some of my own techniques as well as standard operating procedures. While I was still descending in the chute, I slid back in the sling and unfastened all the harness straps so that I would be able to get free of the chute simply by raising my arms when my feet touched the water. Next, I partially inflated the rubber raft and mae west. As soon as my feet hit the water, I released from the parachute harness and was free of the chute. Since the dinghy was attached to me, it was floating right beside me, and it was easy to pull myself into the raft. After I was in the raft, I fully inflated the raft and mae west. The procedure worked so well that I didn't even get my hair wet and was in the water for only a matter of seconds.

The ocean swells were fairly high, cutting down on lateral visibility and making it impossible to see any of the small boats that I had seen on the way down. I used one of my signal flares, that I carried with me, to attract their attention, but I still didn't see any boats. By this time it was dark, and it looked as though I would have to spend the night at sea in my little rubber raft. I had quite a lot of survival equipment with me and a few more flares to attract the attention of any rescue parties that I felt certain were already on the way. So, while I was a little concerned about my situation, I was confident I would survive.

About an hour later, I saw a light bobbing up and down off in the distance and fired off the rest of my flares. As the light moved closer, I fired my .45 pistol a few times to attract attention, and in a short time I was on board a small fishing boat. The crew spoke no English and were dressed in striped T-shirts, looking right out of "Terry and the Pirates". I sat in the bow of the boat under a light and without being conspicuous, kept my pistol ready to fire.

After about an hour's ride, we landed at the little fishing village of Izuhara on Tsushima Island. The whole village was waiting on the dock when we landed, all talking excitedly in Japanese. The editor of the village newspaper was the only one that spoke even a little English, and I managed to ask him if by any chance were there any Americans on the island. He said there were and that he would contact them. While he was off looking for the Americans, I began to think of something I could give the fisherman for picking me up. I decided the only thing I had of value was the nylon canopy of the parachute which they seemed overjoyed to receive. I was becoming somewhat embarrassed with all the villagers staring at me as though I was from another planet, and I was relieved when an army jeep appeared on the dock. An army lieutenant stepped out

F-86 aircraft line the ramp at the Tsuiki Rear Echelon Maintenance Combined facility (REMCO) in Japan during 1953. The Tsuiki REMCO performed all major maintenance on Korea-based Sabres, including combat damage repair, no matter what unit the aircraft was assigned to. (credit - Bill Grover)





Few realize the Air Force was also in the Navy business during the Korean War, operating several converted PT boats with their air-sea rescue operations during the war. (credit - USAF)



Don McGregor - present Day. (credit - Don McGregor)

of the jeep, introduced himself, and told me my plane had crashed next to the last house in the village, scaring the town half to death. He thought I had landed on the island and had been searching the island ever since the plane crashed. It struck me as ironic, that with all that open ocean, not only did the plane hit the only island, but also the small village on the island. I was very thankful that no one in the village was killed or injured.

Air Sea Rescue had arrived on the scene by this time and were dropping very bright flares out in the ocean hoping to spot me. I contacted the plane with an army radio and told them I was on dry land and asked them to send either a boat or chopper to pick me up the next day. The army lieutenant took me to the crash scene which was nothing more than a large hole in the ground filled with water at the bottom as if it had been a bomb instead of an airplane. What was left of the aircraft was scattered in a million small pieces in a large radius around the crash scene.

The army lieutenant is in charge of a signal corps detachment consisting of eleven soldiers and has the best duty I've ever seen. The army has taken over a beautiful feudal estate overlooking the harbor, and he eats like a king in a private dining room. The other day I received a letter from him inviting me to spend a few days on the island during my next R&R which I may do, if we ever get any more R&R's.

The next afternoon a PT boat, converted to rescue service, arrived to take me back to Korea. I had hoped to spend a few days on the pretty little island and hated to leave but I had no choice in the matter. Also, now that the war was over, I really didn't want to spend any more time in Korea but instead would have preferred to spend the rest of my tour in Japan, possibly at our maintenance base. Anyway, hours later the PT boat dropped me off on a very dark dock at about eleven pm and told me I was on an airbase near Pusan. They backed out and left me standing there. I was awfully stiff and sore by now but managed to walk around until I found a building with some lights on which turned out to be the officers club. I was a little hesitant to go in because I didn't look so hot with a beard, ripped flight suit, and an open parachute on my back with the nylon cords hanging down where I had cut off the canopy. But, I did go in, and spotted a lieutenant colonel sitting at the bar. I told him what had happened and suggested that I was back in Korea illegally in view of the armistice and should be sent back to Japan. My request was denied, and the next day I found myself on board a C-119 bound for my base at Suwon.

A few days later I was sent back to Japan to meet with the accident investigation board. I felt very uncomfortable because they were not very friendly and from the line of questioning, they seemed to want to hang the cause of the accident on pilot error, meaning me. As of this writing, I haven't been told what conclusion the accident board reached, but I did hear from someone in the know, that maintenance had failed to put any oil in the engine after it was installed, but the board felt there was probably enough sludge in the system to give me at least a minimum oil pressure reading on takeoff.

Well that's the whole story. Enclosed are two Japanese newspaper accounts of the crash along with translations--please hold on to them for me.

I hope to be home for Christmas, but will just have to wait and see what happens.

With love to all,

Don



F-86A #48-260 on the 335th FIS ramp at Kimpo AB, Korea in the summer of 1951. (credit - USAF)



An OD Camouflaged F-86A #260 flew STOVEPIPE missions, i.e. weather recon, from K-14 in the Fall of 1951. (credit - Arthur O'Neill)

NASM HONORS THE F-86

Welcome back, Sabre 260!

The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association is proud that the National Air and Space Museum (NASM) has chosen an F-86A as the featured display of their "U.S. Air Force 50th Anniversary" exhibition. The museum provided the following press release:

"As a separate military force, the US Air Force fought its first war in 1950 in Korea. Air power proved critical when North Korean forces swept into South Korea and US Air Force and Navy aircraft stemmed the tide. Later, the North American F-86A Sabre played a key role. Rugged, fast, and powered by a single turbojet engine, the Sabre quickly dominated its principal rival, the Soviet-built MiG-15. Equipped with excellent handling characteristics, the Sabre could exceed the speed of sound in a shallow dive. During this conflict, Sabres destroyed almost 800 MiG-15s, while losing fewer than 80 of their own. The Sabre will be on display through May 5, 1997. It bears the markings of the 4th Fighter Wing (as used) during the period prior to June 1952."

This particular Sabre (#48-260) is familiar to many members of our association, having appeared ("NASMs F-86A-5") in the very first issue of Sabrejet Classics (vol 1, #1, Spring 1992). A reader discovered a personal photo showing #260 on the 335th Squadron flight line at K-13 (Suwon) in the spring of 1951, and the photo was published in our Fall 1992 issue. Lon Walter, an Associate Editor, recalls visiting NASMs Garber Restoration Facility in 1980, and seeing #260 awaiting her finishing touches. Lon told the NASM guide that he had flown that aircraft, and when the guide asked "The F-86?", Lon replied, "Yes, and THAT VERY F-86!". Lon then explained the markings were incorrect for the time period, and soon provided NASM

with color slides of correctly marked Sabres. It is believed that NASM used these slides to paint their restored F-86A.

Our Association takes great pride as well, that one of our members, U.S. Representative Sam Johnson (R,Texas), is now a member of the Board of Regents of The Smithsonian Institution. He will be our featured speaker at the reunion banquet in April. The director of NASM is Vice Admiral Don Engen, a three war Navy pilot who is well-versed in the role played by air power in our nation's history. The "USAF 50" exhibition is a credit not only to USAF and the Sabre, but to the Smithsonian as well. It is a clear sign that the problems of the controversial ENOLA GAY exhibit are not likely to be repeated. We urge our members to visit the NASM to say Hello to our old friend, F-86A-5 #260.

F-86A #260 is on display at NASM in a realistic setting resting on PSP matting, with a crew chief and pilot. Nice Job NASM! (credit - NASM)





Box art for the 1/48 scale Hasegawa F-86F shows a 21st FBG CO's F-86F. The kit retails for \$39.98.

The Hasegawa kit builds into a very impressive model. This one is marked as COL Royal Baker's "THE KING" as it would have appeared in late 1952.

SABRE IN MINIATURE

The latest release from Hasegawa Model Company, Tokyo, Japan, is a 1/48 scale plastic kit of the F-86F Sabre, something we are well acquainted with. The kit represents an F-86F-30, with the '6-3' solid leading edge wing with vertical fences. The kit is comprised of 92 pieces, and although mildly inaccurate, builds into a truly outstanding model. The inaccuracies come from the fact that Hasegawa's engineers used a Japanese Air Self Defense Force F-86F-40 for their master, which has several additional engine cooling scoops that USAF aircraft did not have. The wing is, however, correct for any F-86E/F modified with the '6-3' solid wing.

Interior details abound, including a separate seat, highly detailed instrument panel, and control stick. Wheel wells and dive brake bays can be shown open or closed, and are very well detailed. Even the engine intake and exhaust pipes have false engine fronts and burner cans, in case you want to look in there. Underwing ordnance includes two types of drop tanks, for the early and late F-86Fs, plus a pair of AIM-9 Sidewinders and launch rails which were not used on USAF aircraft.

The decal markings are for two wing commander's aircraft - COL Robert Rowland's 21st FBW F-86F RAMP RAT, and COL Woodrow Wilmot's MISS TENA, an F-86F-30 fighter-bomber at Suwon in late 1953. And the markings include every stencil the Sabre ever had, many of which were removed from combat aircraft by wear.

The model builds into an impressive display piece, with a wingspan of slightly over 9 inches - just the right size to sit on your desk or display in a bookcase. With a retail price of \$39.98, it isn't cheap. (Remember when you bought a plastic model for 98 cents?) But the price of a state of the art kit rarely is these days. I highly recommend this kit to anyone that would like to build a model of the Sabre he flew 'in the good old days'. The kit is available from your local hobby shop, or by mail through Squadron Mail Order, 1115 Crowley Drive, Carrollton, TX 75011-5010, or e-mail @ mailorder@squadron.com.

WANTED - INFORMATION, PHOTOS, AND/OR COLOR SLIDES FROM THE AIR FORCE WORLDWIDE ROCKET MEETS HELD AT VINCENT AFB IN YUMA, AZ. FOR SABREJET CLASSICS STORY. CONTACT LARRY DAVIS, EDITOR, SABREJET CLASSICS, 4713 CLEVELAND AVE. NW, CANTON, OH 44709 (330)493-4122

Larry Davis, our Editor, wants to hear from anyone that either flew the Air Force air rescue mission or was rescued at any time. Did any member fly JOLLY GREEN choppers or A-1 SPAD Skyraiders in the Vietnam War? To be used in a history of the air rescue mission. Contact Larry Davis, SabreJet Classics Editor, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709, (330)493-4122.

WANTED - INFORMATION AND PHOTOS OF USAF F-86 AIRCRAFT AND CREWS. CONTACT DAVID MENARD, ASC. EDITOR, SABREJET CLASSICS, 5224 LONGFORD RD, DAYTON, OH 45424 (513)236-8712



AROUND THE WORLD IN (THE) F-86 DAYS

Few people realize that Sabres were operational in the Vietnam War, albeit not US Air Force aircraft. The Royal Australian Air Force committed 8 Avon Sabres to the conflict in SouthEast Asia in May 1962. The aircraft were assigned to 79 Squadron and based at Ubon from May 62 through July 68, flying top cover for the strike and recon forces operating from Ubon. Armed with Sidewinder missiles, they did penetrate North Vietnamese air space on several occasions. However, there is no evidence they encountered any NVAF MiGs. The photo shows a 79 Sq Avon Sabre CL-13B being refueled at Ubon in the mid-1960s. (credit - USAF)

ATTENTION MEMBERS: It is essential you keep us informed as to address changes. We make about 6 mailings each year to all members via 3rd Class mail. If your address is not valid, this mail is not forwarded but goes in the trash can. The postal service then notifies us of (1) the new address, is one is still on file, or (2), advises us the address is not valid. If the address is not valid, your name is removed from our mailing list. On this one, the ball is entirely in your court.

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