



Sabre Jet Classics

Volume 6 Number 3

WINTER 1998

A publication of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

*F-86Hs In The Vietnam War,
Bedcheck Charlie Raid, Hal Fischer's
10 MiGs, '99 Reunion News, More!*



SabreJet Classics

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With 'Mac', More!***

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". A third goal is to perpetuate an accurate, patriotic portrayal of our national, military, and Air Force history and heritage. 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. Since this

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(front cover) An F-86H-5 from the 138th TFS, New York ANG, "The Boys From Syracuse", enroute to a gunnery meet in April 1965. The 138th was the last unit to fly any type of F-86 in squadron service. (credit - James McLennan)

As an all volunteer, non-profit organization, there will be no monetary reimbursement for submitted materials. The SabreJet Classics is published three times a year. Extra copies of the current issue of SabreJet Classics can be ordered at \$5.00 per copy, providing copies are still in stock. A subscription to SabreJet Classics is available for non-members of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association at a rate of \$15.00 per year, plus \$2.50 mailing and handling fee. Back issues, any issue prior to the current issue, are available to members and non-members at a rate of \$3.00 per issue plus the mailing and handling fee. All payments should be made payable to "F-86 Sabre Pilots Association" in care of the Las Vegas address.

THE PRESIDENTS NOTEBOOK

A bit more than a couple of months back I accepted, with a great deal of pride and humility, the position of President of our organization. I will do my best to fill the shoes of those who have preceded me in this important position.

Since then, the board members and Association officers have been ever more absorbed in the arrangements for our 12th reunion next April in Las Vegas. In August, we finalized those arrangements at a meeting with officers of the Monte Carlo Hotel, the location of our most successful reunion in 1997. The enthusiasm of the hotel officials toward hosting the Sabre Pilots was a great indicator of the hospitality we expect to enjoy.

Another key occurrence has been the acceptance by Colonel Glen Nordin of the position of Vice President of our Association. His experience and warm personality

bring assets of great benefit to the Sabre Pilots, and will provide much needed depth at the executive level.

Now to try to clean up some items in preparation for the April meeting. First, for the business meeting, all members are invited to provide comments or suggestions for the improvement of the Association for inclusion on the business meeting agenda. Please forward these to our secretary, Jerry Johnson, at our Las Vegas address.

While we're thinking about this, please check the expiration date of your membership and send in a renewal if in doubt. Our constitution provides for the dropping of anyone with an expiration date in 1996 or 97 on 1 January 1999. We don't want to have to do this, and won't you really miss Sabrefet Classics and the brethren of the Sabre?

A service of our organization that's been drawing interest, has been the "Country Store" operation. Items you may have considered desirable, but have put off buying (jackets, golf shirts, caps, etc.) may not be available much longer. Without a

sign of strong interest by members, this could be a going, going, gone situation. And the Store may close at the end of the 1999 reunion. Let us know how you feel.

If you favor continuing the operation, please tell us if we should continue the Store just as it is, or would you prefer limiting the items and/or colors that we've offered. Should the Store continue stocking all the items in all three colors (red, white, blue), or cut the choices to just one? If just one color, which color would you prefer? Please drop us a card at the Vegas address, with your thoughts on this matter.

An early reminder for everyone planning to attend the '99 reunion: Please register on time to avoid a late fee of \$25.00. We acknowledge that this is a rather hefty fine, but it is our only means of keeping the workload manageable for our all-volunteer reunion staff. If you'll send in your registration by the deadline, it will help a lot.

Cheers, and keep your airspeed up!

Bruce Hinton
President

YOUR EDITOR IS #1 IN A HOT JOB!

Sabre pilots and F-86 maintenance guys share not-so-fond memories of steamy flightlines and maintenance work on the still-hot J47 engines. Your editor, Larry Davis, is not to be out-done by all that, and "moonlights" as a fire fighter with the City of Canton (Ohio) Fire department. Actually, it is Larry's chosen profession, and we are proud to report that he has been named "Firefighter Of The Year" for the City of Canton.

This award recognized his efforts at a double house fire and in a double shooting incident. As to the latter, Larry says he took charge because "no one else seemed to want to". As you can see, Larry has a true fighter pilot mentality.

Larry has won this award previously, and is the only Canton fire fighter to have been recognized twice. Canton is justly proud of his heroic services, and we are proud of our outstanding editor.

The F-86 Sabre Pilots Association

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Editor Lon Walter sent in this photo of his granddaughter in front of the RF-86F 'gate guard' at Bergstrom AFB. Miss Kim Myers, 8 years old when the photo was taken, is now a beautiful 16 year old young lady. The airplane, RF-86F #52-4492, served with the 67th TRW in the post-war era. The airplane is currently awaiting restoration at the US Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. If you served in the 67th TRW and have photos of this airplane, you are asked to contact David Menard in the Museum Research Division, phone (937)255-4644, ext. 730.

Member Tom Weeks wants to hear from anyone that is interested in attending a reunion of Class 55-H. If interested contact Tom Weeks, (800) 231-1056

**IT'S ALMOST HERE!
THE 12TH REUNION OF THE
F-86 SABRE PILOTS ASSN.
18-21 APRIL 1999 AT THE
MONTE CARLO HOTEL, LAS
VEGAS, NEVADA. BE THERE!**

DO YOU KNOW - According to the book, "Inside Hanoi's Secret Archives", by Malcolm McConnell, published by Simon & Schuster in 1995, of the fifty six F-86 Sabre pilots shot down during the Korean War (their numbers, not ours) an estimated forty seven survived the shoot-downs. Only fifteen F-86 pilots and the remains of one other, were repatriated in the 1953 prisoner exchanges. Thirty one Sabre pilots disappeared in North Korea. Pentagon investigators in the archives of the 'new' Russia, have discovered strong evidence that these thirty one Sabre pilot POWs were transferred from Korea to the USSR. However, no record of their captivity as American POWs could be found in the former Soviet Union archives.



It seems our photo of member Ron Anderson's F-86 license plate has generated plenty of competition. From the top we have Ron Lang's Virginia plate, followed by Howard Chilton's Texas plate, and two more Texas plates sent in by Lon Walter. We'll try to print as many of these as possible, space permitting.

FOLDED WINGS

Bruce W. Carr, April 25th, 1998
Marvin E. 'Deke' Childs, March 29th, 1998
Charles W. Maultsby, August 1998
Walter C. Rew, September 4th, 1998
Donald P. Streich, February 25th 1998

BEDCHECK CHARLIE HITS K-13!

TWO WOUNDED, ONE SABRE DESTROYED



On 17 June 1951, a North Korean Air Force PO-2 night raider destroyed one 4th Fighter Wing Sabre, damaged eight other aircraft, and wounded two personnel - Capt. J. E. Smith and Leo Fournier of the General Electric Company. (credit - John Henderson)

by Leo Fournier
GE Radar Tech Rep

(with notes by John Henderson,
North American Aviation Tech Rep)

The night of 16 June 1951 is one that I'll never forget. Several of us had just seen the first movie shown on the outdoor screen at K-13 (Suwon AB). After the film, we started to walk back to our tent to hit the sack. I was in a 8 man tent at K-13 that sat right next to the parking ramp. The parked airplanes were right on the edge of that same ramp

The guys in my tent included Captains, Sandy Hesse, Bert Gray, and Bruce Cunningham, Lt. Cmdr. Jim Ellis (a Navy pilot on loan to the 4th FIW and the guy that gave me my first jet ride in a T-Bird from K-13 to Tachikawa), Capt. Paul Kaminsky (formerly a C-54 pilot on the Berlin Airlift, and now the PIO Officer at K-13), Irv Clark, the GE jet engine tech rep, and 1Lt. Paul Bryce.

On the way back to our tent after the movie, we stopped off in another tent, where the pilots were listening to Radio Peking. The Chinese announcer, who spoke very good English, was telling us how they had bombed Suwon a couple of nights before, and that they would be back! The tent exploded in laughter at the 'threat'; and with that, we walked back to our tent and hit the sack.

Around 2 AM of the morning of 17 June, which just happened to be Fathers Day, I was rudely awakened by a loud noise. An explosion! Bedcheck Charlie was indeed, hitting K-13 again, just like the Chinese announcer said.

Bedcheck Charlie was a Polikarpov PO-2, a small Russian biplane that was able to come in under our radar at night and bomb with relative impunity. No one had been able to knock him down up to this time. The Sabres were day fighters and much too fast. 5th Air Force tried everything, F-82 Twin Mustangs, armed T-6s, even scrambling a B-26 Invader. But no one could get at him. He just flew too low and too slow. Later the Marines would send in a

Leo Fournier, General Electric radar tech rep to the 4th FIG at Suwon AB, June 1951. (credit - Leo Fournier)





The 'class 26' aircraft of the 4th FIG were placed at the end of the runway at Suwon after being stripped of all useable parts. It was the hope that these aircraft would draw the attention of 'Redhook Charlie'. "Charlie's" first bombs landed in the decoys, but the rest of the string went right down the flight line. (credit - Larry Davis)

detachment of Corsair night fighters, which got the job done. But not on this night.

Old Charlie would penetrate the base perimeter and throw small bombs over the side from the rear cockpit. He hadn't hit anything vital up to this night. Maybe our luck would hold. There was no air raid alert tonight, because the power had been turned off to the siren! And the 40mm anti-aircraft guns hadn't opened up because the crews had been given strict orders not to fire the guns until their CO gave them the OK. And of course, their CO wasn't anywhere around when Charlie made his strike.

The first bomb exploded near the end of the runway where we had several scrapped F-86s sitting on oil drums as decoys. (Col. Glenn Eagleston's Sabre was one of these 'decoys. See *Sabrejet Classics*, vol. 3 #2) The decoys worked but 'Ol Charlie was flying straight down the flightline towards us. The third bomb landed about six feet outside my tent, so close that Capt. Paul Kaminsky had the legs of his cot shot off by bomb fragments.

With the first explosion, we all grabbed our gear and headed for the nearest foxholes. Irv Clark later told me that he 'knew' I was OK because *he could hear me cursing* in the night. I was dressed just in my shorts, and I grabbed my helmet, ran out of the tent and jumped into the first convenient hole.

There were already two or three other guys in the trench, including Capt. J.H. 'Jig Easy' Smith, saying "I'm hit, I'm dying!" (J.H. - 'Jig Easy' Smith was evacuated to Yongdungpo, and went back to the States. He'd been hit in the tent next to Fournier's tent. *He fully recovered and was put back on flight status with the 33rd FIG at Otis AFB.*)

Around this time I thought I'd better take a close look at myself. I felt OK but ---. As I looked down at my stomach I was startled to discover a hole in my abdomen with blood spurting out. I think it was John Henderson, the North American rep, who ran out and notified the medics. (J.H. -

When I found the right slit trench, Irv Clark was holding Leo, wrapped in a blanket. Irv was certain that Leo was going into shock and wouldn't leave him. So I made it my task to find the medics and get Leo to the base dispensary for medical attention.)

In the meantime, there were lots of fireworks going on all over the base. The anti-aircraft had finally opened up (evidently someone had found their CO and gotten the OK), and the night was filled with tracers. One of the F-86s had been hit and its guns were cooking off sending still more tracers around the base. But these were at head level!

In a few minutes the medics showed up inside the trench, put a dressing on the wound, and carted me off to the base sick bay. *The surgeon on duty was a big guy, smoking a big fat cigar, who hadn't shaved in several days and looked like Hawkeye Pierce of the MASH TV show. He took one look at me and calmly said, - "We can't do anything for this guy!"*

Immediately, I asked him in not too calm a voice, - "What the hell do you mean, you can't do anything for me?" He then told me that since I had an internal injury (aren't they all?), I would have to be transported by ambulance to the emergency hospital at Yongdungpo. They had x-ray equipment there and the necessary surgeons to patch me up.

The people at the MASH unit at Yongdungpo were really great. Within three or four minutes after my arrival, they had several IV bottles hooked up to me, and had wheeled me into their x-ray room for pictures of my leak. After another ten minutes or so, they gave me something called sodium pentathol and asked me to start counting. I only remember getting up to four or five.

(J.H. - By the time we had Leo clear of the foxhole, I could see the flames of the burning Sabre lighting the sky over the 335th area. It was a frenzy of effort around the burning airplane. Trying to move it was literally impossible. So we moved those Sabres close by. The heat



The third bomb that 'Charlie' dropped hit F-86A #49-1334 on the left wing, totally destroying the Sabre, and showering eight other F-86s with shrapnel. The second bomb hit near the tent line, and was the one that wounded Leo Fournier and 'Jig Easy' Smith. (credit - Leo Fournier)



was terrific, and molten aluminum was starting to run out from under the airframe. As the jet fuel fire increased in intensity, the ammo started cooking off.)

(J.H. - As I came up to the wreck, it would be unkind to say there appeared to be a 'court jester' in charge. But that's what it looked like. It was Capt. Casey Riley, 4th Maintenance Squadron, and all he was wearing were his long Johns, GI boots with the tops tied, and his steel pot. And he was directing traffic and getting people organized. He had people taking inventory of casualties and tent conditions. He was also trying to organize some sort of defense in case Charlie followed up with another attack.)

The next morning, or it might have been 24 hours later, I awoke. I had a big bandage on my stomach, and didn't feel the best. When the surgeon came around, I asked him if I was going to make it. He told me that I was the luckiest guy around. The shrapnel from 'Ol Charlie's bomb had gone almost completely through me. And it hadn't hit anything vital except for my liver. A liver injury was a bad one, and the surgeon calmly told me that "with an injury like that, you either live or die in the first 24 hours!" Oh great! Then I found out that I had already slept through the first 24 hours. Yes!

I was kept in Korea for another week, then airlifted to Tokyo General Hospital. The Surgeon General at Tokyo General told me that I was the first civilian he'd seen at that hospital. A month went by before they sent me back to the States, with stops at Tripler Army Hospital in Hawaii, Travis Field, and San Antonio, before finally arriving at Valley Forge Army Hospital in Pennsylvania.

Interestingly, when I was wounded, the Pentagon initially notified my wife that I had been "Seriously Wounded In Action". Then they discovered that I was a civilian and sent her another message saying that I was "Seriously Injured In Action".

About a year after Bedcheck Charlie had ended my tour in Korea, I was completely recovered and back at work with General Electric. One morning I was notified to report to the Commanding General at Hancock Field near Syracuse, New York. Much to my amazement, the General pinned the Purple Heart on me in front of the TV and press people.

I didn't know a civilian could be awarded the Purple Heart! But there it was - "By direction of the President, under the provisions of AER 30-14, and Section VII, General Order 63, etc, etc, the Purple Heart is awarded to MR. LEO EDMUND FOURNIER, Civilian Technical Representative, for wounds received in action against an armed enemy on 17 June 1951." I understand that Capt. Sandy Hesse was the guy that put me in for the decoration. Many thanks Sandy!

(J.H. - The morning after the attack, when the sun came up and we had relaxed a bit with a cup of coffee, it was cleanup time on the burned area of the flightline. There was nothing salvageable on -1334, I picked up a cold piece of melted aluminum and carried it around as a souvenir. But it lost its attraction, even as a paper weight, and I eventually tossed it away. The third bomb Charlie had dropped, had hit the top of the left outer wing, setting the airplane on fire. A nearby C-22 starter cart was also destroyed. Eight other Sabres were damaged by shrapnel, heat, and .50 caliber rounds cooked off by the fire, four of which required major repairs.)

Some time after the award ceremony, someone told me that a month or so after I was hit, a Marine night fighter had shot down one of the Bedcheck Charlie raiders. The pilot had a diary on him that confirmed that he was the guy that bombed K-13 on the night of 17 June 1951. He had written in his diary that he had damaged three airplanes, which according to John Henderson was actually eight! Funny, he didn't even mention me. But I'll never forget him!

Lt. Guy Bordelon from VC-1 aboard USS Princeton, shot down 5 night raiders, becoming the only non-Sabre ace in the Korean War. (credit - Larry Davis)



MILLIE'S RECORD RUN

BY TOM MACKIN
North American Aviation



Captain Willard Millikan scored 13 victories against the Luftwaffe when he was assigned to the 4th Fighter Group in World War 2. (credit - Dick Martin)

In January of 1954, I was assigned as an F-86F tech rep to the 18th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at World-Chamberlin Field in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

One Sunday evening I received a phone call from my boss, John Casey, in Los Angeles, asking me if I could get to Offutt AFB in Omaha, Nebraska by 10 AM the following morning. It seems that Colonel Willard Millikan, CO of the District of Columbia Air National Guard, was going to attempt a record breaking flight from LA to New York in an F-86. He was planning a stop for refueling at Offutt. John thought it would be a good idea if North American Aviation could be represented and help the Guard if any troubles arose.

I was able to make the connection and arrived at Offutt about 9:30 AM. The refueling crew was already set up at the end of the runway. Plans were to have Millikan land into the wind, fill the internal tanks, hang new 200 gallon drop tanks, and take off downwind. It was a rather mild January day for Nebraska, about 40° with a brisk 30-35 knot wind. I also found out quickly that Millikan was flying a "slick wing" F-86F-25 (i.e. the '6-3 hard wing') without leading edge slats.

When I became aware of the plans I became more nervous about the safety of a 35 knot downwind takeoff with a heavily loaded "slick wing" F-86F. I sought out the officer in charge of the refueling crew, identified myself, and expressed my thoughts on their plans. I apologized for not bringing performance charts with me, and again expressed my misgivings. They decided to take my advice and moved the refueling crew to the other end of the runway. Col. Millikan was now set to land and takeoff into the wind, sacrificing the time it would take to taxi to the crew.

Millikan arrived at Offutt 30 minutes late on his flight plan, landed, and taxied back to the crew and stopped with the engine tailpipe into the wind. The crew went to work, hanging the drop tanks and sticking the four different fuel receptacles with the hoses. Listening to the engine, I knew Millikan did not have the engine at idle. I jumped up along the cockpit and

told him to pull the throttle back to idle. "No! No!", he said, "I'll overtemp the engine with the wind coming from that direction!" Which was of course, wrong. But there was no use to argue.

By this time everybody was through refueling except for the forward cell. I ducked under the airplane and asked the crewman what was wrong? "I can't get it filled!", he said. "Of course not", I told him, "The engine is using fuel faster than you can put it in! Just put the cap on and let him go!" And we waved Colonel Millikan on.

After jettisoning his empty drop tanks over Lake Michigan, Colonel Willard Millikan dead-sticked his Sabre into Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York, with a new Los Angeles to New York speed record despite my ministrations in Nebraska.

Further information about the finish of Col. Millikan's record flight came to us from member Grover Wilcox, who served with 'Millie' several times over the years.

Col. Millikan flew straight to New York City, where he was supposed to land at LaGuardia Airport. Arriving at LaGuardia, he thought it was the right thing to do to buzz the LaGuardia Tower. But that used up all his remaining fuel. Pulling up from the buzz job, his Sabre suffered a flameout from lack of fuel. He was completely dry!

Col. Millikan elected to land at nearby Floyd Bennett NAS, where military crash crews were standing by. He dead stuck the Sabre into Bennett, and promptly blew a tire during the



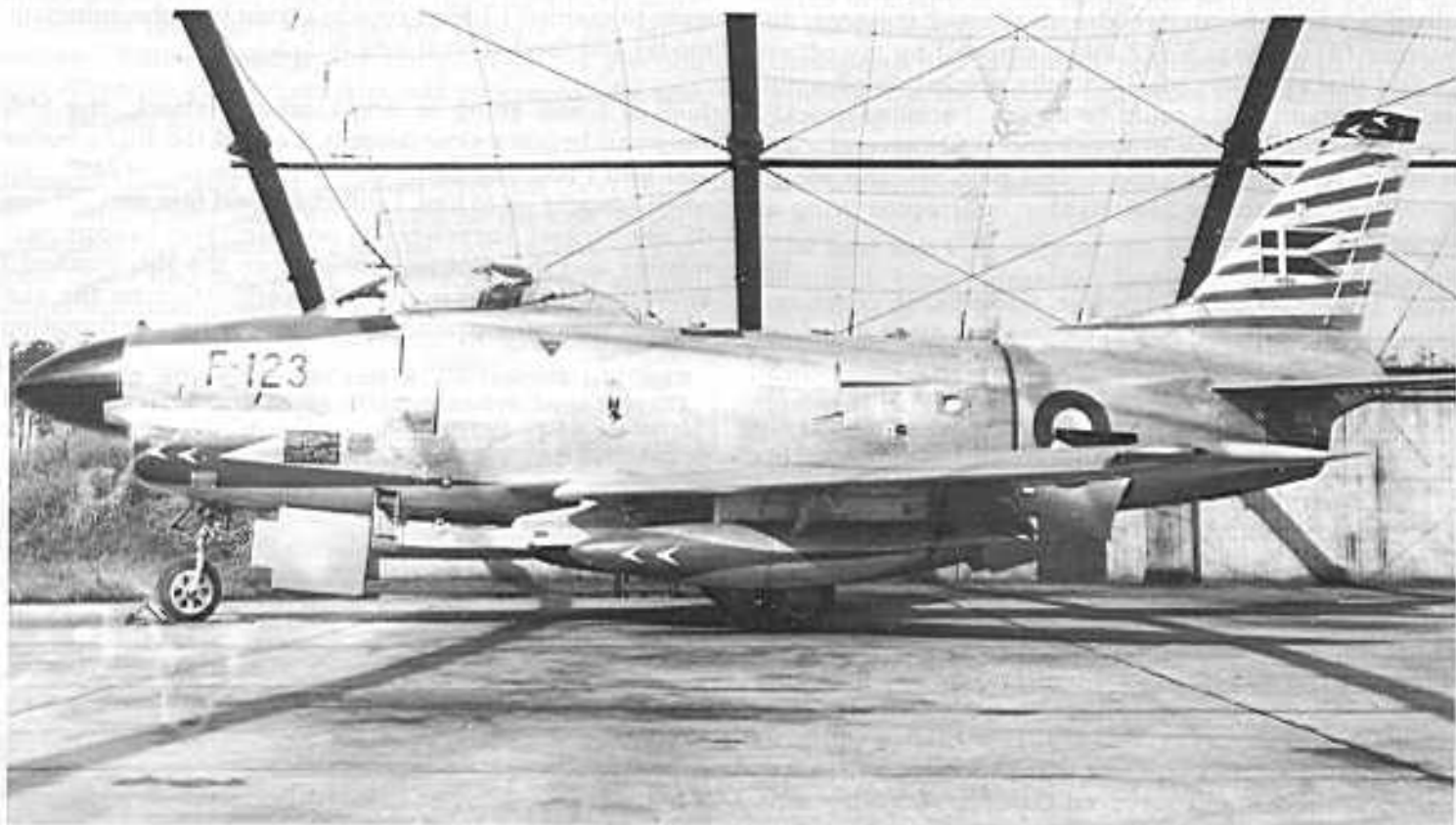
Colonel Willard Millikan set a new coast-to-coast speed record flying this F-86F-25 borrowed from the 47th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Niagara Falls Municipal Airport. The "DCANG/"Minuteman" logo was added for the Millikan's record flight. (credit - Larry Davis)

landing. His touchdown speed was much too fast. Very quickly, a new tire was put on the Sabre and it was refueled. Within 30 minutes, Col. Willard Millikan flew back to LaGuardia Airport, where he was the center of attention at the record breaking ceremonies.

Ed. note: I met Brig. Gen. Willard Millikan in the later stages of his career at Homestead AFB, when he flew in an F-4 Phantom. He had failing eyesight then, and had 'invented' "flip-up/flip-down" reading glasses for his helmet visor. I liked the idea so much, that I had my equipment guys copy it for my own helmet. It worked fine, but scared the hell out of the young wingmen. Lon Walter

AROUND THE WORLD IN (THE) F-86 DAYS

The Royal Danish Air Force was one of the relatively few nations to operate the F-86D interceptor, due to the very sensitive nature of the F-86Ds E-4 Fire Control System. On 26 June 1958, the first of a total of fifty nine F-86Ds were delivered to Denmark, where they served as part of NATO's northern air defense structure. This F-86D-30, USAF serial 51-6123, assigned to No. 726 Squadron photographed at Solingen AB, Germany in April 1961, has both the Martin-Baker ejector seat and AIM-9 Sidewinder rails, which were added in 1959. Three Danish squadrons, Nos. 726, 727 and 731 squadrons, operated the F-86D until 31 March 1966. (credit - Merle Olmsted)





Captain Harold 'Hal' Fischer, waves from the cockpit of "the Paper Tiger", the F-86F he flew with the 39th FIS at Suwon AB. Capt. Fischer scored 10 victories between 26 November 1952 and 21 March 1953. He was shot down following his 10th victory, and held in a communist prison camp for an additional two years. (credit - John Stanaway)

MY TEN MIGS

By Col. Harold E. Fischer, USAF
(Retired)
America's 22nd Jet Ace

Nearing the end of my F-80 missions, I volunteered to go to Headquarters, Far East Command, to work as a personnel officer in the Combat Crew Branch. After I was in the job for awhile, the lure of air combat and all the talk of "jet aces" began to excite me. One of the aces, Bill Whisner (51st Wing, 5 1/2 kills), stopped by my office. He said that experienced pilots were needed desperately, and he thought that I could be an ace. I applied quickly for another combat tour in Korea and made several visits to 'court' the F-86 units there. This paid off, and soon I received orders to the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing at Suwon.

After six hours and forty-five minutes of check-out flying, I began flying combat missions. After a few of these, I was assigned to a flight commanded by an RCAF exchange officer, Squadron Leader Douglas Lindsay. He was one of those rare individuals who was truly dedicated to getting the job done. And because of his beliefs - that the results are more important than the methods - he was viewed with disfavor by some. But without a doubt, he was the best fighter pilot I had ever seen or flown with.

As my mission total increased, so did my desire to get a kill. Soon the moment came that I had been dreaming about. I was number two in another flight with Lindsay, when the sky was suddenly filled with MIGs - everywhere. I called that I was going to make a 'bounce', turned to the left and surveyed the scene for a moment.

From the south, about 1500 feet below me, two MIGs were heading north. I eased down and fell in behind them about a mile in trail. I don't think they saw me, and I pulled up the nose of my aircraft, moved the radar gun sight to manual (I felt I couldn't trust it in the automatic mode) and fired several long bursts.

Just as I was going to break off the attack, the MIG wingman began a slow descent. I called the flight leader and said I had one going down. I followed the MiG, and when I caught up to him, I rolled around him and got one of the biggest surprises of my life. The canopy was missing and the pilot was gone! When the MiG crashed I knew that there was no positive verification on the gun camera film, so I strafed the wreckage for confirmation.

Capt. Hal Fischer flew a tour in F-80Cs with the 80th FIS at Suwon before going to the 51st Wing in F-86s. (credit - Larry Davis)





Capt. Hal Fischer is congratulated by his crew chief, Sgt. Sims, and many other 51st Wing pilots and ground personnel, following his 5th MiG kill. (credit - Larry Davis)



Three 51st Wing pilots equals 24 MiGs destroyed. (l-r) Capt Cecil Foster, 16th FIS, 9 MiGs, Capt. Hal Fischer, 39th FIS, 10 MiGs, and Capt. Dolph Overton, 16th FIS, 5 MiGs. (credit - Hal Fischer)

purposes. That evening Lindsay told me that it would probably be impossible to sleep. He said that after his first kill in Spitfires during WWII in England, he couldn't sleep a wink. He was right.

In another engagement, I was flying as element leader and made an attack on a MiG by positioning myself about 600 feet directly behind him at 40,000 ft. Before I could fire, the MiG entered and completed a perfect loop. My F-86 floundered over the top, and the MiG proceeded into a series of loops. With each successive loop, my advantage increased slightly because of the 'loop' at the top. This way, I was squaring a corner of our circle, and the flying tail helped out at the bottom. I had presence of mind to fire only short bursts, so as not to dissipate air speed at that altitude. Over the Yalu River, the MiG straightened out for a moment and I prepared to fire a long burst when I observed an object going by my canopy - the MiG's canopy - followed shortly by the pilot in his ejection seat. When the gun camera film was processed, the seat could be seen going by.

Numbers three and four followed over the next thirty days. Number four had '341' painted on the side. When I commenced my attack on him the closure rate was so great that I had to execute a displacement roll around him to maintain nose-to-tail separation. As I rolled, I hit the MiG's jetwash. The jolt was so great that my binoculars hit the stick grip and were broken. (Binoculars were carried by all serious students of MiG-killing. Just for one chance to get a 'first sighting'.)

In addition to all the activity going on trying to recover the aircraft and myself, the gunsight quit while I was firing and the guns also stopped. For a heartbeat I thought of ramming, striking the horizontal tail which I could see was just inboard of my left wing. I missed by about six inches. Rolling over the MiG, which was rapidly losing airspeed, I recycled the gun switch to 'guns, sight, and camera' and it came back on. I popped the speed brakes, squeezed the trigger, and literally blasted the MiG out of the sky.

The fifth kill was one of both anguish and jubilation. I ended up in a tail chase about 4000 feet from the MiG. Again, I turned off the radar and computing gunsight, elevated the nose and fired. The tracers made a small halo around the MiG. Gradually a fire began to grow in the rear of the MiG, and about the time I had closed to an ideal firing range there was no need to expend any more ammunition. It was a dying aircraft, with the entire fuselage serving as a flame holder.

I pulled up alongside, the pilot was beating on the canopy, trying to escape. Seeing me, he tried to turn and ram me. I thought the humane thing to do was to put the pilot out of his misery, so I slid my Sabre back onto his tail. Molten metal from the MiG rained on my aircraft. Firing a few short bursts, the sounds suddenly changed, three of my guns quit firing, my left rudder pedal went to the firewall, and I thought for sure I had been hit. I disengaged and cautiously returned home to find after landing that the intense heat from the burning MiG had caused a misfire of a .50 cal. round. The exploding cartridge shut down the guns, severed the rudder cable, and subsequently dumped my pressurization.

The next two kills were in the best fighter tradition of Mannoek, Udet, Nungesser, and other heroes of the first dogfights in World War I. I found myself and the MiG at the same airspeed, altitude, and going in the same direction. Immediately we got into a flat scissors maneuver trying to get on the other's tail. Dropping my speed brakes and using aerodynamic braking, I fell in behind the MiG at a range of about 600 feet. This time the radar gunsight was working marvelously and the first burst of a few seconds caused my opponent's aircraft to light up almost wingtip to wingtip. Before I could fire again, the canopy went by, followed by the pilot.

As we were leaving Mig Alley, my flight had to break to avoid an attack. I fell in trail behind my wingman and told him to take us home. As we climbed out I spotted a MiG closing behind my wingman at about 3000 feet. I

dropped in behind the Mig at about the same range but he must've seen me. He turned left and I zoomed into a yo-yo. He continued and I ended up behind him at about 300 feet almost in full stall. I fired a burst that struck right behind the canopy and the MiG immediately snapped into a spin. There was nothing else to do but spin with him. Both of us entered the spin at about 30,000 ft. I would take short bursts when my F-86 pointed at him. He spun all the way into the ground.

The victory which held the most danger and which was fraught with the most mistakes was my next. It began with a new wingman, who had been a professional musician and could play a mean clarinet. Our flight was late getting into the area and battles had already begun. The fight was taking place about fifty miles northeast of the mouth of the Yalu River. We came into the area climbing through 40,000 feet, dropped our tanks, and spotted four MiGs in a fingertip formation. There were four F-86s behind them at a great distance. As we jockeyed for position, we almost collided with the other Sabres, since neither formation wanted to give way and lose the advantage. No one was firing because the range was so great, but the Migs appeared to be aware of us.

We were now over China. We were above a solid layer of clouds and the Migs were letting down into it. Guessing where they were going, I continued down with my element and occasionally could see the MiGs going in and out of cloud layers. Then we all broke out. The Migs were to our left and in a turn. We could've joined up with them. In fact, my joinup with number two MiG was too good, and I was too close to open fire effectively. My wingman called me clear to fire, and as I got into position, a volley of cannon tracers went by my right wing and canopy. Immediately my wingman called me clear again, and I thought he had negated whoever was shooting at me.

I continued my attack, but once again a burst of fireworks passed my right wing and canopy before I could fire. Still I didn't look back, and once more my wingman called me clear. I was very nervous by now, but not once did I look around to my six o'clock. I suspect the reason I wasn't nailed was because I was so close to the Mig in front of me that his buddy couldn't get a good shot at me without hitting his friend. Finally I thought I was clear to fire, and it was no problem to dispatch the aircraft in front of me once I got my mind settled down. A few good bursts and the battle was over. The MiG was on fire and the pilot ejected.

My next kill was a relatively easy one. I saw a MiG firing on an F-86 and dove on him. I fired and got his attention. He disengaged and headed north. I fell in behind him and easily got him burning. The pilot bailed out. Shortly thereafter my tenth kill was official.

My last mission of the war was both successful and unsuccessful. I set up a pass on two MiGs in formation. My speed was such that I rolled over the number two man and fired a long burst that stopped his engine. Devoting my attention to the leader, I fired from about 1200 feet



Capt. Hal Fischer is all smiles after scoring his 5th MiG kill on 24 January 1953. (credit - Larry Davis)

and this tore apart the MiG. Debris came back at my aircraft in large pieces. I instinctively ducked as parts came by my canopy. Some of them went into my engine and it came to a stop. I smelled smoke and stepped over the side and into captivity. The date was 21 March 1953. Two years later I walked home across Freedom Bridge.

(Postscript: Years later it was revealed that the Soviet Air Force supplied at least three air regiments to support the North Korean Air Force. Based north of the Yalu River in mainland China, the Soviet units included many veteran fliers from World War II. In 1990, Hal Fischer learned that the two Migs he chased on his final mission were indeed flown by Soviet pilots. One of them, Major Dmitri Yermakov, was a WWII ace with 26 victories, who claimed that Fischer's F-86 was one of two he was credited with in the Korean War. Hal Fischer acknowledges that he could have been hit by Yermakov's cannon. At the time, however, he assumed it was debris from the exploding MiG ahead of him. Yermakov survived the war and has corresponded at length with Fischer.)

Hal Fischer has evidence of two additional kills to which he may be entitled, and has petitioned the Office of Air Force History to correct his records. This process is ongoing.)

Capt. Hal Fischer's aircraft, "the Paper Tiger", March 1953. (credit - Earl Shutt)



On The Light Side

by John F.R. Scott, Jr

Several times each year I had occasion to visit a nearby Navy base to attend flying safety meetings or to coordinate and schedule air-to-air gunnery ranges over the Atlantic Ocean. Coincidentally, my mother lived only a few miles from the Naval air station and I would take the occasion to call her when I was scheduled for a meeting. She would meet me at the air station, and sometimes I would spend the night at Mom's house and fly back home the next morning.

In the course of her visits to the air station, Mom became acquainted with some of the Navy folks on the flight line, so much so that in anticipation of my pending arrival, they would often invite her up to the control tower where she could hear the conversations between the tower and the arriving and departing pilots. She really enjoyed these visits, and I believe the tower folks enjoyed her company as well.

On one occasion I was flying a newly acquired F-86H and, anxious to show off for the Navy types, I zipped across the field at an extremely high rate of speed, pulled the airplane up in a vertical climb, threw in a few barrel rolls for good measure, and called the tower for landing instructions.

Tower, - "Roger, Air Guard 849. You are cleared to land on Runway 22. The wind is from two-eight zero at fifteen knots, and the altimeter is 30.12. And be advised that your mother says you are going entirely too fast!"

THANKS MOM!

WANTED - Information regarding an F-86E assigned to the 334th FIS, 4th FIG in Korea, that was experimentally armed with a pair of 20mm cannon at Tachikawa. This was NOT part of the GUNVAL program! CONTACT LARRY DAVIS, EDITOR, SABREJET CLASSICS, 4713 CLEVELAND AVE. NW, CANTON, OH 44709 (330)493-4122

WANTED -Contact with F-86F fighter-bomber pilots serving with the 8th and 18th FBGs during the Korean War. Material to be used in a book on fighter-bomber operations. Contact Warren Thompson, 7201 Stamford Cove, Germantown, TN 38138, or e-mail <migaley@ibm.net>

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Member Robert Johnson of Derby, Kansas sent this photo of the recently restored F-86L on display at McConnell AFB. The Jayhawks operated the F-86L from 1958 to the Spring of 1961, when they converted to F-100s.



F-86H Called Up During Vietnam War!

by Ron Lang

The year 1968 was one of the most memorable in the history of the United States. On the 30th of January 1968, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong launched the infamous Tet Offensive, effectively canceling all chances for a peaceful settlement of the war. President Lyndon Johnson stepped out of the Presidential picture, setting the stage for the victory by Richard Nixon in November.

But the problems actually began before the Tet attacks. On 23 January 1968, North Korean Navy torpedo boats captured the US Navy intelligence vessel USS Pueblo, along with its entire crew, forcing the Pueblo to Wonsan harbor. These actions by the North Korean government, might have been the beginning of a second Korean War. President Johnson reacted the following day, by activating a large number of Air National Guard squadrons into federal service.

With tensions still running high in the Spring of 1968, several more ANG squadrons were called up, including the 104th TFS, Maryland ANG, and the 138th TFS, New York ANG - both were equipped with F-86H Sabres. It wasn't the first time the 138th had been activated during a world crisis. "The Boys From Syracuse" were called to active duty during the Berlin Crisis of 1961, deploying to Phalsbourg AB, France on 1 October 1961, with a fighter-bomber mission. They remained at Phalsbourg until 20 August 1962 when they were returned to state control.

But this time, they would not be serving in the front lines of the actual war, be it hot or cold. On 13 May 1968, both the 104th (Maryland) and 138th (New York) were called to active duty. Both squadrons were deployed to Cannon AFB, New Mexico, home of the 27th TFW, one of the last F-100 equipped wings in the US Air Force.

The mission of both squadrons while at Cannon, was operation of a Forward Air Control and Air Liason Officer Tactical Training Wing school. The purpose of our units was to take crew conversion people (i.e. B-47, B-52, C-130, crews) and give them 30-some check rides in the T-33, then 30 rides in the F-86H. Thus they earned "entry level fighter pilot AFSC", and could go to Vietnam as Forward Air Controllers for the Misty FAC program. But the Inspector General of the Air Force didn't think too much of the program and it was cancelled after 6 months.

The bulk of us '86 drivers were then slated to go to George AFB to be checked out in the front seat of the F-4 before going to Vietnam. But Air Force changed their minds again and we all stayed at Cannon, which meant that the instructor pilots now outnumbered the students 3-1. It then became a 'make work'



Captain Ron Lang, 138th TFS, NY ANG, Cannon AFB, 1968. (credit - Ron Lang)

operation, and we were handed all types of small jobs around the country.

One of the fun jobs was that of tow target aircraft for the F-4s out of George AFB. The Air Force was just getting the F-4J with the internal 20mm Gatling gun. After a couple of rides, the George students got pretty sharp with the Gatling Gun and would shoot the dart off the tow line. You have plenty of fuel and aggressiveness left. Now what do you do?

Well it's 4 to 1 in favor of the F-4s, and it would soon be time for a little extra curricular activity, i.e. a 'rat race' - and I was the target! A couple of the students tried to turn with me and lost big time. Soon I was camped at their 6 o'clock with the piper on the F-4 in perfect textbook sight picture.

One of my favorite memories regards a 'Major Dudley'. I'd been towing the dart and no one had hit it. Procedure was for the tow pilot to bring the dart over the air-ground range at about 100' AGL. The Range Officer would call to 'Cut cable now!', and the dart would crash on the desert floor, where the weapons people would retrieve it and salvage any parts they could.

A pair of 138th TFS F-86Hs enroute from Cannon AFB to George AFB during the 1968 callup. The 138th TFS was to have been part of a Forward Air Controller school at Cannon during the call-up. (credit - Stephen Pabs)





The 138th TFS, NY ANG was activated during the 1968 crisis involving the USS Pueblo. The 138th took their F-86Hs to Cannon AFB, where the aircraft had the tail code "CS" applied, and served with the 104th TFS, Maryland ANG. Following the cancellation of the FAC school, both the 104th and 138th TFSs went to George AFB, where they served in a variety of roles before returning to state control on 20 December 1968. (credit - Stephen Pabis)

This time, Major Dudley was flying with me in an F-4. He was a nice guy, who had gotten a MIG in Vietnam, and who just loved to needle the single-seat types about how nice the F-4 was, since you could shut one engine down and still get home on the other one.

As we came across the range, the Range Officer called for me to cut the cable. I did, and immediately started a high G barrel roll, coming up very quickly on Major Dudley's 6 o'clock. Now Mama Dudley didn't raise no dummies, and as soon as he realized the position I was in, he popped that F-4 into 'burner' and was gone. My radar sight was unwinding at one helluva rate and I never did catch him.

I sure wish I'd had some film in the gun camera that day. A 20x24 blowup of my pipper right on that F-4 tailpipe would have made for one great present at the going away party.

Both squadrons returned to state control on 20 December 1968. In 1970, both squadrons transitioned to a new aircraft - the Cessna A-37B. The 104th (MD) made the transition on 25 April 1970. The 138th (NY) was the last F-86 unit in the Guard, converting to the A-37 in late Summer 1970.

The F-86H - "Last Of The Sport Jobs" - had finally been retired from the Air Force inventory.

(Editors note: *Sabrefet Classics* would love to hear from any New York pilot that served during the 1961 Berlin Crisis, for a story.)

A pair of F-86Hs from the 104th TFS, Maryland ANG, on the ramp at George AFB in October 1968. Following activation with the 138th TFS, NY ANG, the aircraft were flown to Cannon AFB where Air Force tail codes were applied, "CT" being assigned to the 104th TFS. At George, the mission of the 104th was the same as the 138th, towing DART targets for the F-4s assigned to George AFB - and teaching the F-4 pilots that messing with the little Sabres could prove embarrassing to your image. (credit - Merle Olmsted)



GLIDING THE F-86

The Ultimate Range Extender Part 2

By Robert W. Smith



Bob Smith and the NF-104A at Edwards AFB in 1963.
(credit - Bob Smith)

Ed. note: This installment completes Bob Smith's account of how he practiced an unorthodox, but highly successful cruise control technique during an extensive career flying the F-86. Part 1 was published in the Summer 1998 issue of SabreJet Classics.

After leaving Korea, I was assigned to the 93rd Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. Once again, I was flying the trusty F-86A. Major W.W. 'Bones' Marshall, my old squadron commander and an ace from Korea, was the 93rd commander. One of our favorite assignments was to fly to Yuma, Arizona, for air-to-air gunnery practice. But this was a long haul, Albuquerque to Yuma, for a clean Sabre, and drop tanks were in short supply stateside because the Korea groups were dropping them regularly and naturally had priority for resupply.

One fine day I was scheduled to fly to Yuma with Bones and Captain Ken Chandler, another Korea veteran and a great pilot who had performed stunts with Chuck Yeager for the 1950 movie "Jet Pilot", which starred John Wayne, Janet Leigh and the Sabres of the 1st Fighter Group (if anyone noticed). My radio failed on takeoff, so Bones and Kenny pressed on while I returned to Kirtland for a new radio.

This was accomplished in short order, and I headed for Yuma. The headwinds were pretty strong, so I found it necessary to shut down my engine once again and dead-glide to the maximum in order to make Yuma. Bones and Kenny had stopped at Williams to refuel, so I was waiting for them when they finally got to Yuma. I think to this day, Bones can't figure out how the headwinds had died so suddenly.

After graduating from Test Pilot School in 1956, I was assigned to the Air Force Armament Center at Eglin AFB, Florida, flying the F-86F and H on gun test projects. After about a year, AFAC was absorbed by the Air Force Operational Test Center, also at Eglin, and my new commander was Brig. Gen. Ernest Warburton, a well-named man of Native American descent. I had not met him, but soon would.

One Friday I was instructed to ferry a clean F-86H to Bradley Field, Connecticut, for transfer to the Air National Guard. I had never been to Bradley, but approached the flight with some urgency since my good wife had invited about 85 people to our house for a party that night.

At the airline ticket office I found that the only way I could catch a flight home was to make it to Bradley non-stop. Wasting no time departing, I grabbed a map, checked the weather, and noted that Bradley was on the south bank of a large river. I calculated the distance and weather (CAPB) would allow me to make the non-stop if I used my cruise-climb and engine-out descent.

I never even unfolded the map from the moment I picked it up. I saw the plant on it and the letters 'BRA' disappear behind the fold line. Things went well, and visibility was unbelievable. My progress showed it would be tight, but I'd make it with a power-off glide from cruise altitude. I made all the necessary radio calls enroute, shut down the engine and began my slow glide. Someone had told me that the field was right across the river from the Pratt & Whitney engine plant, and I was sure I saw it from way out.

About fifty miles out - still gliding. I tried to call Bradley, but got no response from the tower or anyone else. No radio! So I continued to an IP for a power-off 360, and planned to start my engine at the last possible moment, saving about 30 lbs. of fuel for use if required. Suddenly my full attention was focused on a light aircraft on an extended downwind. I didn't have enough fuel for a go-around, but was able to cut inside him for a short but unbelievable final approach view. There was a high earthen dam at the approach end of a runway that now seemed more like a short country lane. It proved to be somewhat less than 2500 feet in length, and about 75



F-86As assigned to the 93rd FIS, line the ramp at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico in the early 1950s. When the 81st Fighter Group deployed to bases in England in 1951, the 93rd Squadron remained behind, the sole remaining unit from the original 81st Group. Bob Smith was assigned to the 93rd at that time. (credit - Larry Davis)

feet wide, with grass growing through the blacktop. Of course, all my other options had been abandoned at 38,000 feet, but I landed successfully. Because I had been practicing short field landings in the F-100, stopping was no real problem.

Before I could dismount, an Army National Guard jeep pulled up. I hollered, "Is this Bradley Field?" "Nope, this is BRAInerd - BRADley is 30 miles up the river!" The kind Army lieutenant happened to have access to a UH-1, and after I grabbed the aircraft documents, we helicoptered over to Bradley. Unfortunately, I had to leave the '86H where it was because there were no taxiways at Brainerd. (Fortunately, there wasn't much traffic either.) At Bradley, I hurriedly got the Guardsmen to sign for the airplane, and felt sure they would recover the Sabre and forget the matter.

The party that Friday night back at Eglin was a great success (Yes, I made it back in time!), and was a catharsis for my lingering concerns about the consequences of my most recent Sabre sortie.

Early Monday morning, I was summoned to Gen. Warburton's office and learned first hand about an Indian on the warpath - and how! I decided my best defense was stupidity, since grounding was the alternative. It seems the Air Force advisor at Bradley had called the Eglin command section to ask what kind of idiot pilots they had. I will never forget the anger of that general, and I stuck by my story that I had landed there because I thought it was Bradley. And yes, the field looked OK to me. I still contend that this answer was close enough to fact that I have never outright lied to a superior officer.

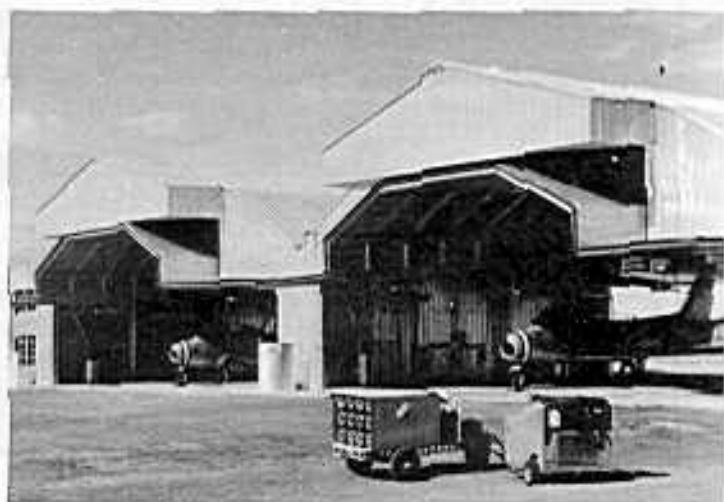
As luck would have it, I was soon back in Gen. Warburton's good graces. At the next Joint Civilian Orientation Conference, one of Eglin's famous 'fire power demonstrations', I was chosen as the alternate shooter in a new event. An F-100 was to shoot down a towed "Redbird" target (very tiny), on time and right in front of the grandstand full of VIPs. It hadn't been done before, and I had some trepidation that if I became the

primary shooter and failed, my position on Gen. W's hit list would advance to Number 1.

Sure enough, on the day of the show, the primary had to abort and I became the designated shooter. Thankfully, I was able to blast the target to pieces. At the flying suit beer party after the show, Gen. Warburton came over and gushed to the primary about his great 'kill'. My good friend modestly pointed to me and told the general that I had done the shooting. The general's smile faded, and he wheeled about and also faded into the crowd without a word. But thereafter, he treated me as if nothing bad had ever happened. And I truly don't believe that he had an ulterior motive when he helped get me transferred in response to an invitation by the Thunderbirds leader.

Shortly after my chewing out from the general, Captain Lon Walter, the assistant fighter ops officer, presented me with a nameplate for my desk, which properly included my correct initials, "Rong Way Smith". Things picked up even more when I received a clipping from a Connecticut newspaper that reported the first jet to land at Brainerd Field - and how they took the wings off to truck it to Bradley!

A pair of 93rd FIS F-86As in the alert barns at Kirtland in 1952. The mission of the 93rd was air defense of the atomic bomb facilities at nearby Alamogordo. (credit - Larry Davis)





The last times I used my F-86 dead-glide proficiency were in a test program at Edwards with a highly modified NF-104A with a liquid fuel rocket engine and reaction controls. In the NF-104A, I reached 120,800 feet for a world record in 1963. On over 100 flights I had many occasions to make an engine-off reentry. But only once in the NF-104A and the Sabres, did I have to actually dead-stick.

For a long time, Lon Walter and another great friend, Lt.Gen. Howard Leaf, retired Air Force Asst. Vice Chief of Staff, tormented me about my only mistake in twenty years of flying. Well, except for the times when.....

(upper left) Lt.Col. Bob Smith (center) about to present the ceremonial 100 mission drink to Major W.M. Blakeslee at Korat AB, Thailand in 1968. Bob Smith was the commander of the 34th TFS at Korat. (above) The NF-104A was flown by Bob Smith to a world altitude record of 120,800 feet. (credit - Bob Smith)

LAST CHANCE!

The mailing label on all mail directed to the membership, shows the date your dues expire. Dues are \$25 for one year, \$50 for 3 years, and \$200 for a life membership. All dues payments are credited on the date we deposit your check, and handled like a subscription to a magazine. Paying dues is simple - just make out your check for the desired amount, and in the memo block enter 'DUES', and then mail same to the return address on the back cover of this magazine. It's not a difficult task. Be advised, if the dues expiration date on your address label is in the year '1996', this is the last mail, hence the last issue of SabreJet Classics, you will receive unless your dues are paid before the end of this year (1998). You will then be dropped from the association. It is decision time for some of you.

HEADS UP!

The registration form for the twelfth reunion of the F-86 Sabre Pilots Association, April 18-22, 1999, is part of this issue of SabreJet Classics. Please use this form to register for the coming reunion since there will not be any other forms mailed.

WANTED - PHOTOS AND INFORMATION ABOUT F-86D/L OPERATIONS IN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND, ESPECIALLY LOOKING FOR COVERAGE OF THE USAF ROCKETRY MEETS HELD AT YUMA BETWEEN 1953 AND 1957. FOR THE SUMMER 1999 ISSUE OF SABREJET CLASSICS. CONTACT LARRY DAVIS, EDITOR, SABREJET CLASSICS, 4713 CLEVELAND NW, CANTON, OH 44709

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Cross Country With 'GB'

by James 'Skinny' McLennan

We launched from Syracuse as a flight of two F-86Fs, bound for Willy Patch (Williams AFB, AZ) near Phoenix, "Garbage Belly" Miller in the lead. We scheduled a refueling stop at Scott AFB. But on arrival at Scott, we were informed the field was closed to jet traffic due to repairs on the long runway. "GB" informed the tower that we'd take the short runway and land anyway. And that's exactly what we did!

In Base Ops we ran into our second obstacle, the Airdrome Officer, who calmly informed us that we were going nowhere. "The base is closed to jet traffic!" But "GB" looked him right in the eye and said, "We're in the Guard! But you can watch us take off!" The stunned Airdrome Officer did as "GB" said - he watched.

Our climb to 41,000 feet, our best cross-country cruise altitude, took about 20 minutes. At this altitude, we indicated 200 KTS, which gave us a 470 KT TAS. With 200 gallon drop tanks, maximum range was about 1,000 miles. But we seldom planned more than 800 depending on the winds. The time enroute was usually an hour and a half to two hours. Anything more and we really started sweating fuel.

We navigated between radio beacons using the ADF, which was less reliable if there were any thunderboomers about. At each fix, we gave a radio position report which included an estimate of our arrival at the next 'fix'. It was all done in our head. We had no calculators, computers, or even an autopilot to we could use a pencil and paper. In '61 it got a lot easier. We had TACAN installed, which was more reliable and gave us both distance and heading to or from the station.

So there we were, at 41,000 feet, above an overcast, with about 30 minutes of fuel left. "GB" called Oklahoma City Control to tell them "We haven't enough gas to get to Willy." He took their suggestion to go to Altus AFB, which wasn't too far away. Switching to Altus Approach Control, they informed us that the weather was very bad. They were recovering several B-47s and we would have to hold at the fix for an hour before they would clear us for the approach. "GB" calmly tells them "No problem."

Now I'm really confused. How can we hold for one hour with less than 30 minutes of gas? As we hit the 'fix', "GB" called Approach Control and announces that we will cancel the IIR and let down VFR. We roll upside down into a split S, change to tower frequency, plunge straight down into the soup for our 'VFR descent'.

With the altimeter unwinding at breakneck speed, I feel my G suit inflate as "GB" starts his pull-out. I'm hanging on for dear life! Rain is pelting the canopy as we break out at 500 feet, moving at over 575 KTS. One mile from the end of the runway, "GB" calls "Two Sabres in the break for full stop landings!" And the tower calmly responded "Cleared to land." That night at the O-Club bar, "GB" told World War 2 Mustang stories til they closed. And you know what? I believed all of them!



71st FS Christmas card courtesy of Dick Rivers.

(Anyone with other F-86 Christmas cards is asked to forward them to Editor, Sabrejet Classics, 4713 Cleveland Ave NW, Canton, OH 44709 - for use in future issues.)



WHO IS IT? These two photos were sent to the Editor many years ago, with no description or identification as to who the pilot of "Kentucky Rifle" is or what unit the F-86D is from. The only data known about both photos was that they were taken at the 1956 Air Force Worldwide Rocket Meet held at Vincent AFB, Yuma, Arizona. Anyone with information about the pilot or F-86D shown is asked to contact the Editor. *SabreJet Classics* plans a large article on the Yuma Rocket Meets, and would like to hear from any member who has information and/or photos or color slides of the aircraft and crews that participated in the Yuma meets. Please contact your *SabreJet Classics* Editor, Larry Davis, 4713 Cleveland Ave. NW, Canton, OH 44709, (330)493-4122, or e-mail >Sabre Clsx@aol.com<.

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