



TAC Tanker Tales



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Soaring to the Heights of Albuquerque—Are You Ready?

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In the last issue we shared with you the itinerary for the May 19-22 Annual TAC Tanker Reunion in Albuquerque, so we won't repeat it here. However, you will find it in more detail in the attached Registration Form. Please read it over carefully and be sure to indicate meal choices and number of people attending each activity.

You will note that Tram Flight is not recommended for those of you who have heart problems, trouble breathing, claustrophobia or fear of heights. Also, it is suggested that a walker or wheelchair is planned for those who need the assistance. If you can't bring the latter, contact the hotel to see if one is available during your stay.

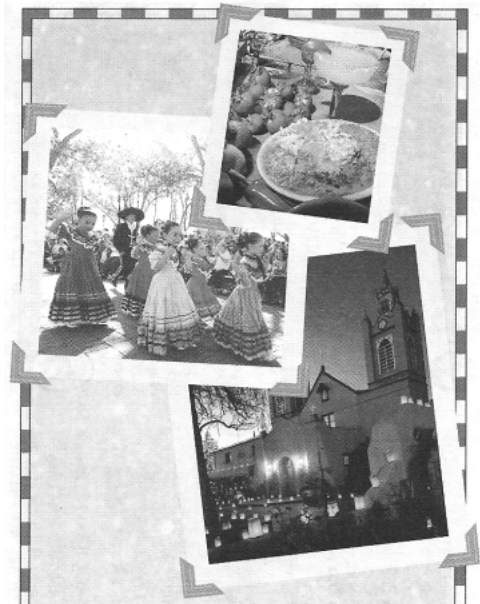
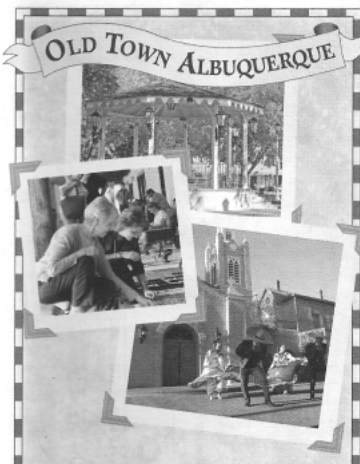
Nate and I are really looking forward to this reunion because of the variety of colorful activities. Dave Scott has sent us a very informative article regarding "Amazing Albuquerque" and directions to the hotel (from all sources). He also has prepared a list of Restaurants and Attractions around the Old Town area where we will be located. On Friday evening, you will have free time to select wherever you wish to dine.

I recently checked with the Catering Dept. of the Hotel Albuquerque to see if there were any changes on the dinner menus they sent me last year when the contract was signed. No changes, but I also noted that the prices are a bit higher than previous hotels we've used. Thus with there is an increase with gratuity and tax. There will be two different prices listed on the form instead of just one. Prime rib is a big favorite, so we kept it as an option. Your choice.

Many of you may be interested in surfing the internet to learn more about this fascinating city and also extra tips from various attractions.

Here are our selections:

- www.HotelABQ.com
- www.ToursOfOldTown.com
- www.rainbowryders.com
- www.ftstours.com
- www.atomicmuseum.com
- www.sandiaresorts.com
- www.sandiapeak.com
- www.cabq.gov/biopark
- www.stclairvineyards.com
- www.sunportshuttle.com
(airport transportation)
- www.indianpueblo.org
(cultural center)
- www.balloonmuseum.com



President's Corner by Art Belenzon

The subject that comes to my attention most often since I became President has been, "Why do we pick certain locations for our reunions." I also have questioned the method and the results.

This past November, I joined Nate and Nat in Jacksonville FL in attending a conference sponsored by the Reunion Friendly Network. One purpose of this organization is to assist military associations' Planners in conducting reunions. What an eye opener for me!

Let's take a look first at our last reunions. When we arrived at those destinations there was Nat, Nate and Jake, everything was set up, tours, buses scheduled, banquet arranged, hospitality room open and ready to go, and the best possible price for our room++++. How easy for us, but a BIG task for the Planners.

At the conference 55 attendees spent 36 hours learning how to plan and conduct reunions. We were informed of the latest laws, trends and sites++++. Because of the experience, Nat and Nate were constantly being asked by other attendees for advice on how to run a successful reunion.

As I said earlier, "it was an eye opener for me." There are nine steps that must be fully addressed in order to conduct a reunion. As "location" generates many comments from our members, I will address that step only. Every city suggested by the membership, are considered by the Planners. Availability and quality of the hotels, room rates, access to transportation, Airline rates, parking, tours that are of interest to our group, cost of busses, food quality and cost, ++++ and above all "is the city Air Force Friendly?"

For example, in Jacksonville, we were told by a retired Navy Officer that "Air force & Army planners might as well go home as this was a Navy town." (They are still trying to revive the Hotel Managers that heard his speech.). Planning and conducting a reunion is a laborious task. Our Planners have done an excellent job.

I want to remind you that we have great reunions planned for Albuquerque in 2010, Savannah in 2011, Seattle 2012, and St. Louis in 2013.

I hope all of you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and will have the best holiday season ever. Stay well. Happy New Year! See you in Albuquerque!

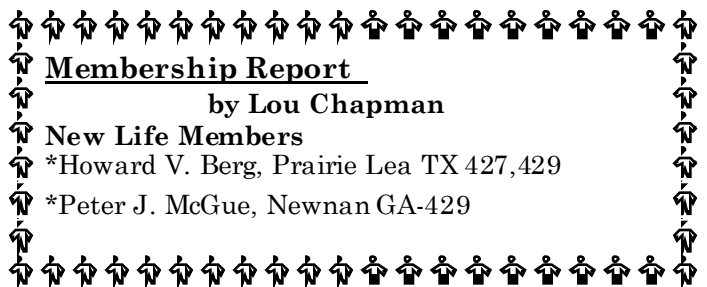
Update on the KB-50 Move

By Nate Hill

Some of you may have read the internet update (AFA Magazine) of 11 Aug concerning the final disposition of the KC-135E. For those of you who didn't, here it is: The KC-135E that flew the final operational refueling mission was delivered to the AMC Museum at Dover AFB on 7 Aug 09. A call was placed to Mike Leister, Director of the Museum to congratulate him on its' receipt. He passed on the fact that there are two more KC-135E's left which are destined for the "Boneyard" within the next 60 days.

OK! What is the status of our aircraft as it relates to the KC-135E's? Nate has had two conversations with Mr. Joe Burns, Director of Staff, at the 6th AMW at MacDill. Mr Burns was asked during the first conversation why none of the KC-135E's had been sent to MacDill so that our KB-50 could be moved to Dover. The answer was that when we decided that we wanted to move the KB-50, the Commander at MacDill sent a letter to the powers that be, stating that when they got a KC-135 (note; no "E") to replace the KB-50 it would happen. When we started seeing KC-135E's moving to the "Boneyard" we thought our airplane was on the way to Dover. **WRONG !!!**

What the MacDill letter should have said was that when a **KC-135R** was provided to replace our airplane then, and only then would we get our bird. Actually during the second referenced conversation with Mr Burns the fact surfaced that **any** aircraft which had flown from MacDill operationally would suffice for a replacement including the B-18 Bolo, P-51, B-24 etc. Mr. Burns said that the past two commanders and the current commander had been adamant about their desires. This decision includes **NOT** taking a -135E now and then a -135R when they start replacing them in many years. This summarizes our plight.



Membership Report

 by Lou Chapman

New Life Members

 *Howard V. Berg, Prairie Lea TX 427,429

 *Peter J. McGue, Newnan GA-429

Chaplain's Corner

By Pastor George Burrows

Greetings from Florida! Never been here at this time of year, but I'm learning what it's not like to have snow. Rain, Yes, Snow, No! Every time I see or hear the story of Christmas, and there are many, and I know you have your favorite, I only wish and long for the things of my youth: The star and story of Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary and their love for each other and for God, the shepherds as they heard the angels sing and proclaim the good news, and the magi and their visit to the Holy Child.

Even though I love the music and the modern things that man has brought to this year's end, I think most of each of you, your lives and your families, your good fortune and sadness for your days of sorrows. So, here I kneel praying for you and yours.

In this season of love, I leave you with these words of my Savior:

"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!!



PS My gift to you is this-The Gospel of John: Chapter 15. Please read it!

The Board Chairman's Corner

By Bill Wolford

Hi Y'all! It really is encouraging to us just communicating with you folks. I'm sure it means a lot to many of our Tanker Family just keeping up to date with everyone. I know it means a lot to us. Here's our short note.

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving, as we did. We are looking forward to a wonderful Christmas and New Year. We want to wish all of our Tanker friends and families the very, very best and Happy New Year. This has been a very busy fall season for us here in Vermont. However, we have not had any snow, even though the south seems to be getting our share.

The Vermont Guard is leaving this week for a year in Afghanistan. There have been many surprising acts of kindness and compassion towards the troops and their families. We see this as a very positive sign of the times. Vermont seems to have weathered this recession better than most areas and we are in hopes for a much better 2010.

On a personal note, I was in the hospital in October with blood clots in my lungs, but after massive doses of blood thinners, I am on my way to recovery. Shirley has had a terrible battle with a flu-like cold that just doesn't seem to be clearing up. We hope you will keep us in your prayers as we do keep you all in ours.

I hope you are all planning to be at the reunion in Albuquerque. Looking forward to seeing each and everyone of you there.

Bill

Bits & Obits

Learned that former member, Paul Sabo of North Charleston SC (429, 622) died at home on 28 March 2009 of Cancer.

John Halm sent us notice that Bob Hinsley had died of cancer around September 13th. this year. Bob was a Life member and attached to the 421, 429, & 431 and lived in Las Vegas NV.

W.O. Taylor's son Mike called with word that his dad had passed on 7 October 2009 of lung cancer and heart problems. W.O. was a former flight engineer with the 421st. He is survived by an active family of wife Bea, sons Mike and Russell and grandson, Jeremy who have been to our San Antonio and Charleston reunions. Mike even became a Life member in 2008.

An email from Ingrid Foxwell's daughter, Karen Bedenbaugh, relayed the message to TP Fowler, that her mom had passed away on 13 October 2009. Many may have known she was sick and "fought hard and her usual wonderful, pleasant, optimistic self up until the end."

The Fowlers and the Foxwells were close friends from their 421st days in Yokota. Ingrid, who was living in Rome NY, will be buried next to her husband, Jim in the Arlington Nation Cemetery on 21 December.

Another email, this time from Janet Chamberlen, informing us that hubby Bob (421, 429) passed away peacefully on 15 October 2009 while under the care of Hospice. He had renal failure and his cancer had metastasized to his liver. His memorial service was held on the 18th at the Peace Lutheran Church in Charlottesville, VA.

Lou O'Dell, wife of Jim (431st) passed on 27 October 2009. He shared with us that she is in a better place and with no more pain. She was his soul mate for 43 years (and would be 44 in November).

One of our Life members, who has been seriously ill for several years, Kenny Roberts (431) succumbed to his ailments on 28 November 2009. Word was sent by squadron mate, Ward Bryant, who had recently visited with him. Kenny was hospitalized with a brain aneurysm shortly after the Hampton reunion.

Letters Received From New Members

Donald A. Selby of North Canton OH (June 2009)

I served at RAF Sculthorpe between 1956 and 1960 with about 2 years with the 420th AREFS as the morning report and personnel clerk and then was transferred to the 47th Bomb Wing still as a personnel clerk. Spent most of my free time in Hunstanton or Fakenham with weekends and leave time in Eastbourne.

After discharge, worked for several loan companies, a furniture store as a credit manager. Moved on to office manager and warehouse manager before opening my own wood shop, making children's wooden pull toys, restored antiques and building custom made furniture.

Spent 14 years in the Boy Scouts in every job from Cub Den Leader to Order of the Arrow advisor at council level. Had several president positions non-profit groups and currently am active in a Military History group. We do local parades, static displays, our own three day event that has re-enactments. On Veteran's Day plus seven, since we start three day before to give talks to local schools which means talking to everyone from first grade to seniors in high school covering a period of 7 to 8 days.

I have finally retired and that gives me the time, plus a very understanding wife, to be a kid again. Thank you for the fantastic job you are doing on the web site. It is great.

Peter J. McGue of Newnan GA (October 2009)

Was part of the 429th from Mar 62 until November 1963, then flew C-130's from 63-66. Was an Eastern Airlines pilot from 1966 to 1989 and then was an FAA Aviation Safety Inspector until 2004.

Howard V. Berg of Prairie Lea TX (November 2009)

Joined the Air Force in 1960, flew KB-50s as a reel operator through 1963 in the 427th and 429th AREFS at Langley AFB, VA. Crossed trained to C-130 loadmaster and transferred to Dyess AFB, TX. The TAS was moved from Dyess to Taiwan, flew out of Nha Trang AB, Vietnam, and transferred to Dover AFB, DE, assigned to aerial port, and qualified on C-124 and C-141s. Attended rigger school at Ft. Lee VA, assigned to El Centro, CA conducting C-5A airdrop testing using the C-130 as a test bed. After the C-5A was brought on line, continued testing using the C-5A, was initial cadre on C-5A at Dover.

Headed to Hickam AFB, HI attached to 75th MAS at Travis AFB CA for flight currency. Transferred to Little Rock AFB AR. Transferred to Travis assigned to 22nd AF Combat tactics, maintaining currency on C-5A and B-747 cargo aircraft in the CRAF fleet.

Then went to HQ MAC at Scott AFB, IL assigned to DOC in charge of coordination of world wide airlift control elements. Retired from the Air force and hired by Lockheed Aerospace Arabia to fly c-130s with the Saudi AF, then hired by Saudi Aramco as an aircraft dispatcher. Nine years later to their Project Dept., coordinated all logistic requirement for deep desert construction sites. I retired from S.A. in 2003 and presently am cattle ranching in Prairie Lea, TX, until I spend all my money.

Book Review

By Jim "Pappy" Boyington

If you're half the Air Force History buff I am, this biography of Curtis Lemay is a must read. My healthy regard for the General has grown to awe stricken. His rise from such humble beginnings to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs reflects his genius, determination and true sense of what it is to serve. Like most of us, he had an intense desire to fly. The Army Air corps was in dire straights in the early and mid twenties. Both the Army and the Navy blocked every effort to fund new aircraft. There were few slots for pilot training.

Lemay crafted a plan and executed that plan with perfection and was commissioned and rated a pilot in 1928. In 1934, he served as an Air Mail pilot. After 65 aircraft crashed and 12 pilot's deaths, Roosevelt called the disaster off. Later that year, Ford offered Lemay a position demonstrating the Trimotor at a salary of \$1200 per month, nearly six times his military pay. He turned it down, lucky for us and that means US.

Boeing filed a proposal for a multi-engine bomber in August 1934. The original contract July 1935 for 65 aircraft was cancelled, after the prototype crashed on its second flight due to failure to remove the gust lock. The Air Corps awarded Douglas a contract for 133 twin engine B-18s.

Generals Andrews and Westover were able to keep the dream of the B-17 alive with a contract for thirteen aircraft. The B-17 had just entered service on March 1, 1937 at Langley. Lemay had been stationed at Wheeler Field in Hawaii flying pursuit aircraft. In 1936, upon his return, he was assigned to Langley, under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Robert Olds. Lemay gained a keen sense of the need to prepare for the coming war.

He had established himself as perhaps the first, certainly the best navigator in the service. In the air arms struggle for recognition, he was chosen to demonstrate aircraft which were capable of coastal defense by intercepting ships at sea (the USS Utah off California in 1937-the report was classified and buried- and a year later, the USS Rex off of New York). With the invention of the Norden Bombsight, he was convinced the bomber was the weapon of choice for what was to come.

In 1938, he planned and made two record making demonstration trips to South America as the chief navigator. When Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, Army Air Corps had begun the first leg of a huge expansion from 11,000 to 300,000 personnel. In 1940, Lemay was promoted to captain and began to fly the B-17 as a pilot. He subsequently was assigned to Westover and the 34th Squadron, a paper only organization.

(Continued on page 8)

622nd Crew – Barr of Arabia

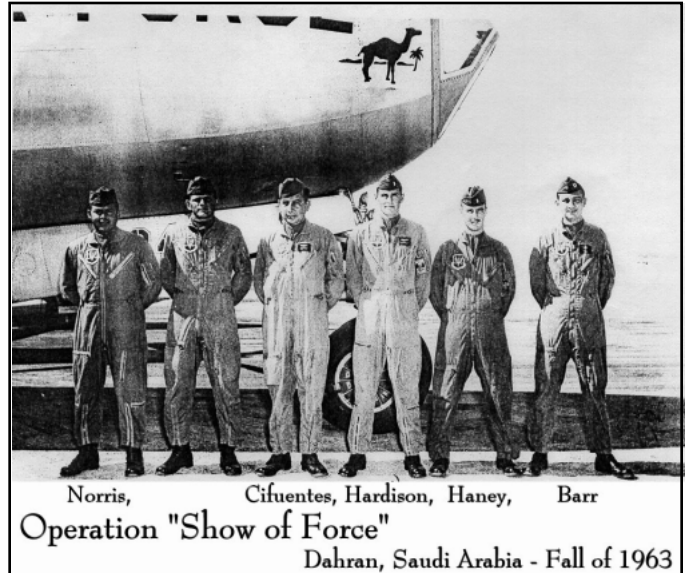
In the September 2008 issue of the Tanker Tales we reported the passing of John Barr, aircraft commander from the 622nd, on 26 June 2008. He was by all accounts one helluva pilot and leader. By coincidence, I recently came across an article (on the 622nd AREFS CD) he had written back in 2001 about his experiences during Operation Hard Surface, a show-of-force operation involving three KB-50s and eight F-100s which had deployed to Dhahran AB, Saudi Arabia, beginning in June 1963 to bolster the Saudi government against Egyptian and Yemeni incursions across the Saudi border with Yemen. The 429th had made the initial KB-50 deployment, and in late August, as the 429th faced inactivation, the 622nd sent several aircrews to continue the mission. John Barr wound up being one of the ACs. Here, lightly edited, is his story:

“I got a call one weekend from the ops officer at England AFB and was told that Jerry Theunissen had orders to go to Vietnam, and I could either take his place on those orders or replace him in Saudi. Guess which one I chose?”

“Jerry’s crew was at Dhahran, along with Marvin Stowe’s crew, supporting a squadron of F-100s that were TDY at Jidda, Saudi Arabia... They flew me to Langley AFB the next day and I got on a C-130 taking supplies to Dhahran. I arrived there almost a week later and took over Jerry’s crew. This was in the fall of 1963.

“On one refueling mission we made a rescue in the middle of the desert. It started out as a “show-of-force” mission where we were to meet two F-100s over the desert, hook them up, and make several low passes over some sensitive areas. Unfortunately, as the F-100s came in for the hookup, the lead F-100’s turbine froze and he started down. Fortunately our rendezvous was over a settlement called Wadi Bishah which had a concrete runway, and the F-100 made an attempt to land there. Unfortunately, it was a two-seater and the pilot had a doctor on board who panicked and the pilot felt it best to eject. They made a successful ejection, and we followed them down and made contact with the pilot on his emergency radio. The F-100 crashed and all that fuel and ammunition on board made quite a spectacle.

“The pilot reported that the runway had rocks all over it because it was hardly ever used – cost too much to land there. They were picked up by the local emir’s armed guards, who patrolled the runway with them to remove any debris in preparation for our landing there. We finally got permission from the command post at Dhahran



to land, and thought it would be a routine pick-up and go. But we were surprised to see armed military with bandoliers of ammo across their shoulders waiting for us. They were not unfriendly, but made it clear that the emir wished to see the pilots and doctor.

“They escorted us to a mud palace where a middle-aged man with a beard stained with henna greeted us. He was accompanied by a Pakistani doctor who spoke English. The emir had tea brought in and announced that we were to stay for a dinner of goat. I explained that our boss in Dhahran would be concerned if we did not depart and contact him by radio to let him know that everybody was OK. The emir, through the doctor, let me know that he was bigger than my boss was. We stayed for the “goat grab.”

“We had goat, rice, and fruit. The US doctor begged off eating any goat or rice because of a little cut on his lip. The rest of us knew we were doomed to diarrhea in a day or so.

At one point the emir brought in one of his lieutenants and told me that he was the commander of the anti-aircraft battery that was firing at me as we circled the landing strip waiting for clearance to land from the command post. Rather than upset the emir, I didn’t mention that we never knew we were being fired at. A good thing the bad guys never attacked Wadi Bishah, or the defenders would have been in deep trouble.

Several hours later we were allowed to leave and immediately contacted the command post. They had become so concerned that they had launched a C-54 to fly to Wadi Bishah to see what had happened to us. We returned the F-100 pilot and doctor to their base at Jidda. (Go to pg.6)

Historian (continued from Page 5)

More Info on “Aerial Defueling”

In the last issue I mentioned a 1955 British aviation magazine article noting incidences at Langley AFB, VA, where F-84Fs responded to KB-29s having emergencies because they had a major problem, had to land immediately, but were grossly overweight. Fred Gardner, aircraft observer/radar operator from the 429th at the time, responded with the story of his crew during one of these incidents. Here it is, lightly edited (there, I said it again):

“The incident happened at lift off from Langley, and the number 3 engine went into overspeed/uncontrollable prop. We were fully loaded and could not get above 750ft AGL. Declaring an emergency, we flew a pattern over the James River...The story was related to us later that BGen Chickering, commander of the 405th FB Wing at Langley, was in a staff meeting when the emergency was broadcast, and that he was one of the first F-84Fs to get airborne. I do know that he was among the first (if not the first) to hook up & offload fuel. There were no replacements for the bomb bay fuel tanks, and if we had jettisoned them the KB-29 would have gone to Edgewood Arsenal as an artillery target.

“At any rate, prior to this helping hand BGen Chickering had been referred to as the “boy general with an atomic bomb.” This related to his stature (being somewhat short in height) and the fact that the F-84F had been certified to use the over-the-shoulder delivery of an atomic bomb. After this refueling incident he was identified with great respect and admiration.

“The compounding part of the story was that our nose wheel had stuck in a cocked position, and we had to use the ditching brace from the forward bomb bay door to muscle the wheel straight so we could retract it, all the while flying at 750 ft with a very loud screaming engine...It was not uncommon for the nose wheel to get cocked in a crosswind takeoff. In this instance I think the crewmember who climbed down into the wheel well was the radio operator.

“His actions and the rapid response of the 405th FB Wing saved our bacon that day.

“The KB-29P models used by the 429th were “presents” from SAC when they upgraded to the KC-97, and the airborne fuel jettison finger on the flying boom did not work (I think it was fleet-wide). Thanks LeMay!

“Ah, the life of a combat-ready 2/Lt (butter bar) Aircraft Observer (soon to be reclassified a NAVIGATOR!”

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