



TAC Tanker Tales



Volume 4 Issue 2

December 2003

Time to Begin Planning for Colorado Springs

By Nate Hill

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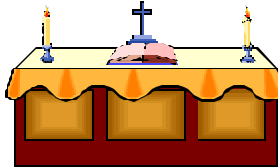
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Greetings to you all. It would certainly be nice to be able to have one huge sit-down dinner in a very fancy place for all of you during these holidays. The longer that Natalie and I communicate with all of you, the more I realize how much we have grown to love each of you and your significant others. We both wish that these feelings had been real to us 50 years ago only if they had, then we would be a lot more "soppy" when we think about you now. I can't help remembering the first Memorial Service at the Davis-Monthan Chapel in 2000.

There were few dry eyes including mine; I felt such a sense of fellowship with all the attendees that I wanted to shake hands with each of you as you left. I stationed myself outside the door and began doing just that. I put out my hand to one of you that I have known since my first ride in a KB-50 and we were both overcome with feeling which welled up during the memorial service.



Then it happened. This big guy wrapped his arms around me and said "I don't want any of those wimpy handshakes, give me a hug." From that day on I have realized that it's OK for guys to hug and it does a great job of showing respect and manly love.

That having been said I will explain our thoughts about the Colorado Springs Reunion and the theme. The KB-29/KB-50 began flying operationally just about fifty years ago. We thought what a wonderful place the home of the U.S. Air force Academy would be to celebrate *A Gathering of Golden Eagles*. One of our chaplains, George Burrows, has contacted me and indicated how impressed he is to be delivering our message from the pulpit in the Academy Chapel and he and Jerry Lewis will work closely to see that the Memorial Service is as meaningful as they both have created in the past.

I know some of you started fly-

ing more than fifty years ago and some less, but never the less all of you are Golden Eagles to me and Natalie. We just came back from a river cruise on the Columbia River and Natalie spent most of her waking moments looking for eagle items for all of you and she found some very unique ones and the ones she couldn't find, she will make.



in an airplane that wouldn't climb to the top of Pike's Peak and we will be riding a train up there.

For you "kids" who always wanted to be cowboys, we will be having at least one chuck wagon meal and listen to some western swing. Keep your eyes open for Indians too, in the caves and cliffs at Manitou Springs and the Garden of the Gods. May see some Indian women at the Trading Post there.

Also, please note that I will be much thinner when you next see me as Natalie has quit cooking in favor of making projects for this grandest reunion of them all. Don't miss this one!



Look forward to loads of door prizes, drawings and super tours. Imagine, when most of us started flying, it was

The President's Corner By Dan Weber

'Tis the Season, Tra La La and all that. As this is written we are all busy shopping, decorating our homes inside and perhaps outside as well. For most of us in America it is once again the joyous Christmas Season while for a few others, those wishing to be politically correct, it is simply the Winter Solstice Season. Well, a Happy Winter Solstice Season to you. It really does not have a ring to it, does it? Oh, well. At any rate many of us will be with family and close friends this Christmas as we should be and so it will joyous. But let us keep in mind that there are some who are not as fortunate as some of us; perhaps they have lost a spouse or other close family member this past year, or are ailing a bit, so let us keep them in our thoughts and prayers. TAC Tankers has wrapped up another successful year; our membership remains high, our finances are in good shape, and we had another successful reunion, this one in the Wine Country in September. I was pleased that we had so many participants from the eastern part of the country. We all had a chance to learn a little about wine, some of us bought some to take home, and perhaps some of us are now

buying wine with a little more understanding or perhaps a favorite label.

Our upcoming reunion in Colorado Springs will also give us a chance to visit and learn more about the Rocky Mountain region and I for one really look forward to that area. I have some family history in the Cripple Creek area and I hope to spend a little time there. As the new year progresses we will hear more about that reunion both in the newsletter and with mail-out flyers. Nate and Natalie are keeping busy with this project and Natalie tells me that on their late November Sternwheeler Cruise tour of the Columbia River she was able to scout various shops along the Columbia River as they made their landings and picked up some table decorations/door prizes for the reunion. She is always busy!

As we bring 2003 to a close Barb and I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and hope it is a fun time for all of you. In addition we hope that 2004 will be a happy, healthy, and prosperous year for all of you.

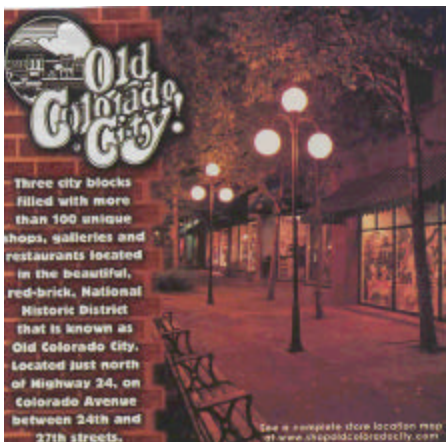
Dan Weber.

A view of Colorado Springs in a beautiful mountain setting. We hope that you all will join us in May and see this area in person, visit with friends and have a good time exploring the many attractions as well as the United States Air Force Academy.



Scenes of some of the places we will be visiting during the May reunion. Left: A street in Old Colorado City's historic district. Top right: Manitou Cliff Dwellings and the Miramont Castle.

Check your yellow Registration form for a description of all tours and schedule.



New Life Members

Leroy Cunningham,, Hampton VA-420, 427
 Boyce W. Mayo, Duncan OK-622, 431 James
 O'Dell, Fairfield CA- 431 Clarence
 Veino, Suisun City CA-421

Welcome New Members

Eugene Desaulniers, Newport News VA-427
 Gerald D. Peterson, Caldwell ID-431 James
 R. Sandusky, Orlando FL-431 Grant L.
 Thompson, Anchorage AK-431

2004 Dues Notices:

Tucked away in this newsletter are the Renewal Notices for all those out there whose dues expires at the end of 2003. All told there are about 150 members we hope to hear from when they open their newsletters and find the half sheet there.

Last year's renewals were returned in grand fashion and we hope that this year ahead will be the same. We also had a tremendous number of Life members from that group. (They obviously didn't want to keep getting more notices.)

So IF you plan on getting the March newsletter, please get "Your Check in the Mail."

-Nate



Meet Anne M. Mills, Author

By Natalie Hill

Anne M. Mills joined the TAC Tankers this year and came to Sonoma on a special mission. She is an aspiring author who is presently finishing her second novel entitled Sheba 80 which were the call letters of Captain John Marshall Moore, known as Curley. His aircraft c-117 went down at Kindley, Bermuda on October 20, 1963. At that time Anne was a school teacher at Lajes Field in the Azores and knew Curley from a 30 day TDY of the 622nd AREFS from England AFB, Alexandria, LA.

While in Sonoma, Anne introduced herself in our Hospitality Room and encouraged anyone who knew Curley to share their recollections. She was most appreciative of all the information that was given.

The chapter of the crash was by-lined by William T. Tilton, the co-pilot on the final mission. Anyone who missed the California reunion, but could add to Anne's fact sheet, please contact her at KB50_SHEBA80@hotmail.com or her office, 33 West Main Street, Strasburg, PA 17579. She is looking forward to meeting up with us once again in Colorado in May.



Advice Sought on a Career as a Fighter Pilot

(This email apparently originated from a young kid who sent it to AETC (Air Education and Training Command) wanting to know how to prepare himself for a future career as a fighter jock. Can you imagine?)

To: Lt Col
Sir,
Van Wickler:
I am DJ Baker and I would appreciate it if you could tell me what it takes to be an F16 fighter pilot of the USAF. What classes should I take in high school to help the career I want to take late in my life? What could I do to get in the academy?

Sincerely, DJ Baker

From: Van Wick-

ler Kenneth, Lt Col, HQ AETC

Anybody want to help this

poor kid from Cyberspace? "Vee Dub"

(A worldly and jaded C-130 Pilot, Maj

Hunter Mills rose to the task!!)

Dear DJ,

Obviously, through no fault of your own, your young, impressionable brain has been poisoned by the superfluous, hyped-up, "Top Gun" media portrayal of fighter pilots.

Unfortunately, this portrayal could not be further from the truth. In my experience, I've found most fighter pilots pompous, back-stabbing, momma's boys with inferiority complexes, as well as being extremely over-rated aeronautically. However, rather than dash your budding dreams of becoming a USAF pilot, I offer the following alternative:

What you REALLY want to aspire to is the exciting, challenging, and rewarding world of TACTICAL AIRLIFT. And this, young DJ, means one thing...The venerable workhorse, THE C-130!

I can guarantee no fighter pilot can brag that he has led a 12-ship formation down a valley at 300 ft. above the ground, while trying to interpret a 9-line to a new DZ, avoiding pop-up threats, and coordinating with AWACS, all while eating a box lunch, with the engineer in the back taking a piss and the navigator puking in his trash can! I tell you, DJ, TAC Airlift is where it is at!

Where else is it legal to throw tanks, HMMWVs, and other crap out the back of an airplane, and not even worry about it when the chute doesn't open and it torpedoes the General's staff car! No where else can you land on a 3000' dirt strip, kick a bunch of ammo and stuff off the ramp without even stopping, then take off again before range control can call to tell you you've landed on the wrong LZ!

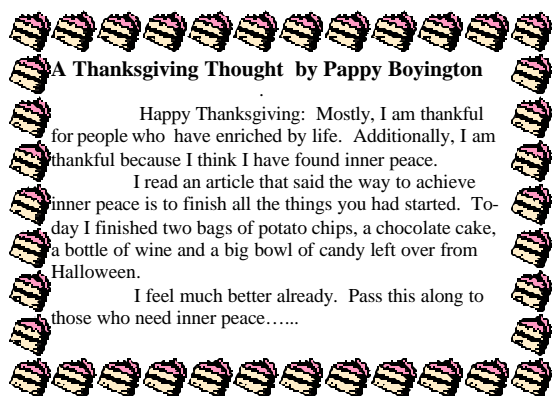
And talk about exotic travel- when C-130s go somewhere, they GO somewhere (usually for 3 months, unfortunately.) This gives you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture enough to give any natives a bad taste in their mouths about the USAF and Americans in general, not something those strat-lift pilots can do from their airport hotel rooms!

As far as recommendations for your course of study, I offer these: Take a lot of math courses. You will need all the advanced math skills you can muster to enable you to calculate per diem rates around the world, when trying to split up the crew's bar tab so that the copilot really believes he owes 85% of the whole thing and the nav believing he owes the other 20.

Health sciences are important, too. You will need a thorough knowledge of biology to make those educated guesses of how much longer you can drink beer before the tremendous case of the shits catches up to you from that meal you ate at that place that had the belly dancers in some God-forsaken foreign county whose name you can't even pronounce!

Social studies are also beneficial. It is important for a good TAC Airlifter to have a cultural knowledge to be able to ascertain the exact location of the nearest topless bar in any country in the world, then be able to convince the local authorities to release the loadmaster after he offends every sensibility of the local religion and culture.

A foreign language is helpful, but not required. You will never be able to pronounce the names of the NAVAIDS in France, and it's much easier to ignore them and go where you want to anyway. (cont. pg 4)



A Thanksgiving Thought by Pappy Boyington

Happy Thanksgiving: Mostly, I am thankful for people who have enriched by life. Additionally, I am thankful because I think I have found inner peace.

I read an article that said the way to achieve inner peace is to finish all the things you had started. Today I finished two bags of potato chips, a chocolate cake, a bottle of wine and a big bowl of candy left over from Halloween.

I feel much better already. Pass this along to those who need inner peace.....

Note from Gil Switzer dated 7 December

Subject: Enlisted Crew members who have bailed out of a Refueling Aircraft

Last evening at the local boom operators Christmas Party, a representative from the Airmen Memorial Museum at Gunter AFB/Annex presented a tape on the museum and its purpose, etc. His name is Jim Harris (jimsharris@aol.com), phone (334-567-6521), and he is interested in enlisted crew members who have successfully bailed out of a KB-29, KB-50, KC-97 or KC135.

The museum was started in 1998 and is very nice. I knew of one crew who bailed out at Clovis NM in, I believe, 1957; also one from the 622nd near Bermuda around 1960. Anyway, any TAC Tanker enlisted who fits the bill might want to contact Jim.

(Editor's Note: Our Tales would like those stories, too)

1955 Charity Auction At Yokota - Were You There?

Last summer a very kind couple, Dan and Gaye Christmus, contacted Nate with an unusual offer. They had acquired, at an auction, an old cigar box with various papers in it. Among them were five raffle ticket stubs for a Consolidated Charities Fund Drive at Yokota AB, Japan, to be held on 7 August 1955 at "the carnival." The tickets had obviously been sold by a 421st AREFS member, because the list of buyers were all from the 421st! And here they are:

James C. McCaig
Egbert H. Campbell, Jr.
A.A. Allman
Charles E. McCoy
W. S. Cary (1st Lt.)

The cigar box also contained some old postcards, with surnames Campbell and Scott, with addresses in Kentucky and Missouri. Phone numbers listed were 77158 and 77246. None of these names appear on our present roster. Does anyone out there recognize any of these names? What were their jobs? Would the holder of the stubs be a Campbell or a Scott? Does this evoke any memories you might want to share with us? Please contact Nate Hill or John Bessette.



Incidentally, here are the prizes up for grabs that year:

1st : 1955 Austin Healy 100 sports car
2nd: Rolleiflex camera
3rd: Zenith Transoceanic radio
Did any of our guys win? Let us know!

The raffle

ticket stubs now reside in our archives, thanks to the Christmus's initiative in contacting us.

MERRY CHRISTMUS



Advice.... (Cont. from page 3)

As a rule of thumb: Waiters and bellhops in France are always called "Pierre" in Spain it's "Hey Pedro," and in Italy, of course, it's "Mario." These terms of address also serve in other countries interchangeably, depending upon the level of swarth of the addressee.

A study of geography is also paramount. You will need to know the basic location of all the places you've been when you get back from your TDY and are ready to stick those little pins in that huge world map you've got taped to your living room wall, right next to that gigantic wooden giraffe statue and beer stein collection.

Well, DJ, I hope this little note inspires you. And by the way, forget about that Academy thing. All TAC Airlifters know that there are waaay too few women and too little alcohol there to provide a well-balanced education. A nice, big state college would be a much better choice.

Good luck and see you on the SKE scope!
Maj. Hunter Mills (no relation to Anne)

Air Refueling Display at Air Mobility Command Museum

As you all know, I have been working with the AMC Museum (Dover AFB, DE) to get our history into their upcoming display. So last Friday (10/24), Carol & I journeyed there and met with Mike Leister, the director. Several good developments have taken place, and more will take place soon.

The display will be basically a timeline of the development and operation of air refueling since the 1920s, concentrating mainly on USAF. It will be mounted on a 12'x28' vertical board, with photos and accompanying text to illustrate the action. Above the display will be a series of models of refueling aircraft (including a KB-29 & KB-50), just out of reach of the spectators! Mounted about 5' above them will be two basic artifacts: A KB-50 reel and drogue, and a KC-135 boom. There will also be a video display, showing relevant movies of the various air refueling types in operation. The display is scheduled to open in about 30 days. The museum already has the KB-50 reel and will get the drogue shortly. Source is presumably a man who was with Hayes & collected all sorts of their goodies.

A few weeks earlier, Mike had given me the chance to review his contractor-provided "timeless" text, and add or revise material related to Tactical Tankers. I combed through the material thoroughly and did as he asked. Furthermore, I made a lot of grammatical changes to the whole text, making it a lot clearer. Mike said he was taking my revised text as "the gospel." It has, I believe, the proper weight among the various commands and eras, and got us our rightful place in the mix.

Jim Meyers had offered his flight suit as part of the display. Mike was interested, but hesitated on taking it as a loan. His museum, as a governmental agency, has problems with loans of such material. He would be interested if it were actually donated to the museum. He didn't know whether he would keep the suit on a mannequin for the entire run of the display, but thought it would be a highlight only for the initial stages of the display. He didn't say exactly why, but I suspect he wouldn't want it on display indefinitely because it would deteriorate more rapidly. The AMC Museum already has a lot of uniforms & flight suits in a climate-controlled storage area. (Jim-contact me about this).

This display should be really good. The "grand opening" should be around the turn of the year. Mike has promised to let me know when the date is fixed. I then plan to get the word out to the hierarchy so we can get some representation there. We have a lot of members within a decent "combat radius" of Dover, so maybe we can make our presence felt as air refueling gets its place "in the sun."

Check out the AMC Museum's website at www.amcmuseum.org.

A Trip to Kitty Hawk for Wesley "Rufe" Mewborn

Received an email from our Hampton Banquet MC about a trip this month to Kitty Hawk where he will be participating in the 100 Year Celebration of the Age of Flight. His part will be as a spectator, but he noted how interested he was having been able to visit the hanger in Warrenton, VA where they built the replica. Two pilots have been selected to fly the bird on December 17. "The female, Kathy, had it up on a test hop last month and broke the front skids. Her one second flight was ugly!!"

Letters Received From Our Members

Editor's Note: This is a continuation of the column begun a few issues back.

Eugene R. Desaulniers of Newport News VA (November 2003)

Retired from USAF May 1, 1982 as Dir. Of Contracting at TAC Hdqtrs, Langley ARB. Attended Air War College (1973-74) and served in Vietnam (1968-69)-Thailand. After retirement worked four and half years in Saudi Arabia for a private company. Then spent 10 years in the National Lab system in facilities at Newport News and Argonne National Lab in Chicago. Retired in 1996 and do consulting work in government procurement, contracts and project management for the Dept. of Energy, several National Laboratories and private firms doing business with govt. Enjoy golf and traveling. My wife Joan and I have been married 48 years with two grown children.

Boyce W.

Mayo of Duncan OK (November 2003)-a renewal

Served 9 years refueling operator, 9 years flight engineer (C-130) and retired April 1974. 17 years flying a flight engineer on civilian aircraft (L-188s, L-382s-C130 and 707s). Retired again 1991 with 80% hearing loss. It was about time. Since then, living the American Dream of being retired.

James M

O'Dell of Fairfield CA (November 2003)

Went to Panama 1964-66 and worked on T-29s, C-131s, and C-47s. Then to Travis 66-68 worked on C-124. Next two years to Thule Greenland and on to San Antonio back working on C-124. Went to Viet Nam in 1970 and to K.I. Sawyer MI in '71 on KC-135. Ground Crew until 1975 and retired. Moved to Fairfield and went to work for Ball Corp making cans as mechanic. Retired again in 1999 with 21 years with them. Now I golf and travel in my motor home.

Ge-

rald D. Peterson of Caldwell ID (December 2003)

After the squadron was closed down in 1964, I went to Torrejon AB Spain for 8 mos. Then on to Tripoli AB. Was discharged in Nov. 66. Had received a private pilot license while in El Paso, so went on to pilot school under the GI Bill. Ended up flying a spray plane for 15 years and in 1986 got a job with USDA Wildlife Services in Utah-transferred in 1995 to Idaho and will be going to Pendleton OR in the next few months. Hope to finish my flying career and retire. Still have kids in college so have to keep working.

James R. San-

duky of Orlando FL (December 2003)

I had an inter service transfer to the US Navy, received my Naval Aviator Wings and was assigned as an air to air gunnery instructor. I requested sea duty and went on back to back cruises. I got out of the Navy and flew with Eastern Air Lines for 24 years. When we went on strike, I went to Saudi Arabia and flew a sheikh's B-727 for his family for another 5 years.

Ronald

J. Taylor of Ocala FL (September 2001)

Retired from USAF in 1987 with 32 years. Worked Civil Service for 10 years at NWS, Goose Creek, SC; Canteen Manager, VFW 4781, Ocala FL Totally retired now, play golf and love it.

Bryce H. Terrell of Melbourne FL (February 2002)

Retired from Scott AFB, IL, as Director Command and Control for MAC in 1975. Fishing and golfing ever since. Prior to that flew B-57s in Viet Nam (1965-66), at the Pentagon (67-70) and in T-39s. To Charleston AFB in C-5s from 1970-73.

Grant L. Thompson of Anchorage AK (November 2003)

Retired from the Air Force in 1981. Been living in Anchorage since 1977. Hope to retire soon. My wife and I plan to travel some in the motor home to the lower 48 states. Maybe become snowbirds: live in Alaska in summer and south in winter.

Dal-Jean Whitley of Sherrills Ford, NC (January 2002)

Assigned to the 421st (1956-60) and 441 OMS (62-65) as Crew Chief for the 421st. After two tours in Japan I was stationed in New Mexico, Vietnam, California and Charleston, SC. I retired in 1976 and have lived in NC ever since.

Robert A. Whittier of Winterport, ME (January 2001)

Was a boom or reel operator during my flying ye ars. Attached to 427 & 429 at Langley with the KB-29P in 1954. Then to Yokota from 54-56 with the KB-29M and KB-50s (421st). Was a CCTS instructor in the KC -97 at Randolph AFB, TX from 1957-62 and same aircraft at Pease AFB, NH. Then to KC-135 at Wurtsmith AFB, MI, Fairchild AFB, Spokane , WA and again to Pease. Retired November 1976. The last year I flew I was an enlisted navigator on the KC-135 in a test program. When I retired I worked in a window business with my father for approx. 5 years. I worked the business as owner another 5 years. Since then I have had only part time jobs. Right now I am just retired, but probably will get a part time job for winter.

Rufus B. Wil-

loughby of Tampa, FL (June 2001)

Air crew member of the 421st AREFS with KB -29s and also C-119. Was employed by the US Postal Service, and the Tampa International Airport.

Al

Zambrano of Fair Oaks Ranch, TX (April 2002)

Retired as a Colonel, active duty 4/61-7/67 and Texas Air Guard 8/67-10/88. Flew KB-50s (427th), C-130s, C-123s (Ranch Hand Operation, Viet Nam '64-65), IP on T-37s LRD, F-102s, F-101s and T-33s. Retired from Continental Airlines "Line Flying" and Check Pilot, April 1997. Continued with Continental Airlines as a B-727 and DC-10 Test Pilot and ferrying these aircraft until January 2001. Presently flying once a month with Pegasus/Cole Aviation as a Test Pilot and moving aircraft worldwide.

Remember these days, guys?



Turbines are Ruining Aviation

Sent in by Joe Lanza, Sr., 431st AREFS

We gotta get rid of turbines, they are ruining aviation. We need to go back to big round engines. Anybody can start a turbine, you just need to move a switch from "OFF" to "START," and then remember to move it back to "ON" after awhile. My PC is harder to start. Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesse and style. On some planes, the pilots are not even allowed to do it. Turbines start by whining for awhile, then give a small lady-like poot and start whining louder.

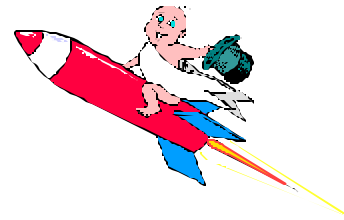
Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click BANG, more rattles, another BANG, a big macho fart or two, more clicks, a lot of smoke and finally a serious low pitched roar. We like that. It's a guy thing. When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead.

Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan: Useful, but hardly exciting. Turbines don't break often enough, leading to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it's going to blow at any minute. This helps concentrate the mind. Turbines don't have enough control levers to keep a pilot's attention. There's nothing to fiddle with during the flight

Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman lanterns. Round engines smell like God intended flying machines to smell.

I think I hear the nurse coming down the hall. I gotta go.

ATTENTION TO ALL WHO SERVED IN THE 463RD TCW/TAW Word has recently come our way that a reunion is underway for those of you who transferred to the 463rd after your KB-50 years. Charles Spicka of Oceanside CA noted that the bases were Sewart AFB, TN (60-65), Langley AFB, VA CCK, PI, and RTAFB Ubon (68-69) etc. There is a web site which you may log onto for more information: <http://hometown.aol.com/blndbat/463.html>.



"Been There, Done That" — A Varied Career

By Donald L. Taylor of Ocala, Florida

I was a member of the 431st AREFS at Biggs from 1958 to 1962. I lived in base housing and enjoyed my stay there. I liked El Paso. I worked in the maintenance shop for a year or so and they made me a work control NCOIC. I didn't like being inside so I volunteered to go to the flight line. I was asst. flight chief and crew chief on the KB-50J 49-372. It's a wonder I remembered the tail number.

Anyway I soon got the reputation of having the only airplane on the ramp that you could walk up to and it was ready and would fly safely. Soon a couple of the engineers took me under their arm and taught me all of the operations of the KB in-flight, as I was with them every mission. I learned all the manuals and how to figure all the power settings and usually spent the whole mission sitting in the FE seat while they slept on the nose gear hatch.

While on a mission to Wake Island, my engineer got too sick to fly. The AC asked me if I would ride the panel while he laid on the hatch and watched me and I agreed. To make a long story short, I flew the remainder of the missions at Wake and flew the bird home. Upon arrival the crew asked me to stay with them, which I did and flew like that for about 4 or 5 months.

We had a TAC ORI and when we taxied out for the twenty aircraft mission we lost a flap motor. So when we taxied in, the TAC team inspected our records and they found out that I hadn't been to flight engineer school and all hell broke loose. The Ops officer had the First Sergeant make arrangements for me to attend FE school at Sheppard AFB starting the next Monday morning, and then I could rejoin the 431st as a legal engineer.

While in school, I received different orders and only returned to Biggs to load up my household and move to Dover AFB, DE. At that time I checked out in the C-124-C and flew for six months and when they needed engi-

neers in the C-133 program I moved over to them. By that time I was a Flight Examiner and progressing well. Four years later I headed to Tinker AFB, OK for C-141 training and I was a good teacher so they kept me and I taught the bird for four years there.

When the C-5 was coming off the assembly line, they sent me to Dobbins AFB, GA, to the factory where I was the #2 Air force man to fly it. I spent the next six months at Edwards as a Flight Test Engineer on the bird. Returning to Altus AFB for the 1st arrival of a line aircraft. I spent four years there teaching and light checking.

In the meantime I learned to fly airplanes as a pilot and received my Commercial Pilot rating with Single engine, Multi engine and Instrument ratings. I wanted to know at that time if the guys up front were really working as hard as they said! I also was qualified as a Flight Instructor for all my areas.

Kelly AFB, TX received the overhaul and up date contracts from the AF for the C-5 and needed a Flight test crew so away I went. Spent the next four years there getting the birds flyable and delivering them to their home bases. Had a great time. During that time we had much trouble with the bird. The 12,000-man work force didn't know anything about the C-5 so I spent many hours showing and teaching them how to put it together. I retired from Kelly on 1 February 1975. That was a sad day for me. I really loved the Air Force and still do.

After retirement I spent some time in the Dallas area flying at odd jobs and finally moved to Florida and took some flight instructor jobs when a neat corporate job came up. Have you heard of Conair? Well, I flew for an outfit here in Florida

(Continued on page 8)

Bits and Obits

Joan Bourguignon sent in a note that her husband Wendell of Rockledge, FL died 30 August at home. "He was a former Tail Gunner in WWII, POW in Stalag XVII-B, Korean War Veteran, member of the 429th and 431st AREFSs, and a Purple Heart Recipient. After retirement from the AF, the family moved to Copenhagen for 5 years and he worked for the US Embassy. Upon return to the States he attended the U. of Central Fla., graduating with a BA. He then worked for the State of Florida. Wendell became an avid sailor in the 80s racing in inland and ocean events." He and Joan have two sons, Michael and Wendell and daughter Deborah. Burial was at Fla. National Cemetery in Bushnell.

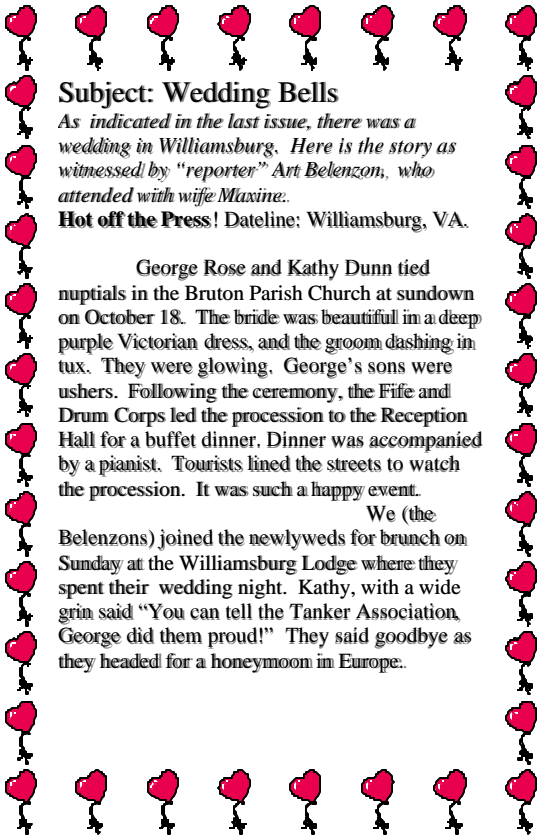
This notice from Bob and Betty Padden was omitted in the last issue. They had word from the wife of Doug Smith that he had passed away on June 5th from lung cancer which he apparently had for two years. They certainly didn't know of his condition. He was buried at the Riverside National Cemetery on June 10th. Doug was an in-active member who lived in Riverside, CA.

Several memos have arrived from the "Chairman of the Hampton Committee Merry-men" regarding the status of some of his group. On December 1, John Morello contacted him about some health problems. His left leg wouldn't work and he was told he needed back surgery for another situation. He was sorry to miss the next Post-Reunion meeting set for that week.

Next Carel heard from Don Smock who had a back operation at Hampton Sentera, but is doing fine according to wife Susan. He was due home the next day. Thirdly, came word that Maylo MacDonald had a slight stroke on Thanksgiving Day. His wife says he is doing OK, but can't get out for now.

A nice gesture was made to our TAC Tanker President, Dan Weber from Stanley C. Thalacker (427) who wrote "Just received the latest issue of the TAC Tanker Tales and noticed your reference to the passing of Clarence (Rocky) Weishar and his intended memorial service at a military cemetery in South Dakota. I live in Rapid City which is twenty miles from the Black Hills National Cemetery. I do not know if this is where he will be buried. I did not know or do not remember the man, but if there is anything I can do please do not hesitate to let me know."

Gil Switzer alerted us in late November that Darwin Edwards, 67, had passed away on the 22nd after a long illness. Originally from Whigham GA, Dar served four years enlisted prior to being selected for the fourth class at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He later earned degrees from the U. of Georgia and the U. of Arkansas. He was a highly decorated veteran, with 33 years of honorable military service, retiring in 1989 and 14 years of service to the Robins AFB Museum of Aviation as curator. He was responsible for establishing, collecting and caring for the Museum's collections of vintage aircraft, historical documents and memorabilia. Lt. Col. Edwards is survived by his wife, Sheila, their sons, Richard and Howard, Howard's wife, Wendy and granddaughter Jeilyn. He was buried at Anderson National Cemetery.



Subject: Wedding Bells

As indicated in the last issue, there was a wedding in Williamsburg. Here is the story as witnessed by "reporter" Art Belenzon, who attended with wife Maxine.

Hot off the Press! Dateline: Williamsburg, VA.

George Rose and Kathy Dunn tied nuptials in the Bruton Parish Church at sundown on October 18. The bride was beautiful in a deep purple Victorian dress, and the groom dashing in tux. They were glowing. George's sons were ushers. Following the ceremony, the Fife and Drum Corps led the procession to the Reception Hall for a buffet dinner. Dinner was accompanied by a pianist. Tourists lined the streets to watch the procession. It was such a happy event.

We (the Belenzons) joined the newlyweds for brunch on Sunday at the Williamsburg Lodge where they spent their wedding night. Kathy, with a wide grin said "You can tell the Tanker Association, George did them proud!" They said goodbye as they headed for a honeymoon in Europe.

A Letter From Darwin Edwards' Son, Chris

Hello,

I know you all are busy, but I got a call from Robert Dorr from the Air Force Times. He wants to do a story on my dad for the newspaper. If you know anyone that has been stationed with my dad over their career, please send this request to them. I do not know how many people I will be able to get in touch with. Thanks!

Chris Edwards
Trane
Macon, GA
478-784-2529

Robert Dorr
Air Force

Times
phone more than email
702-264-8950
robertdorr@aol.com

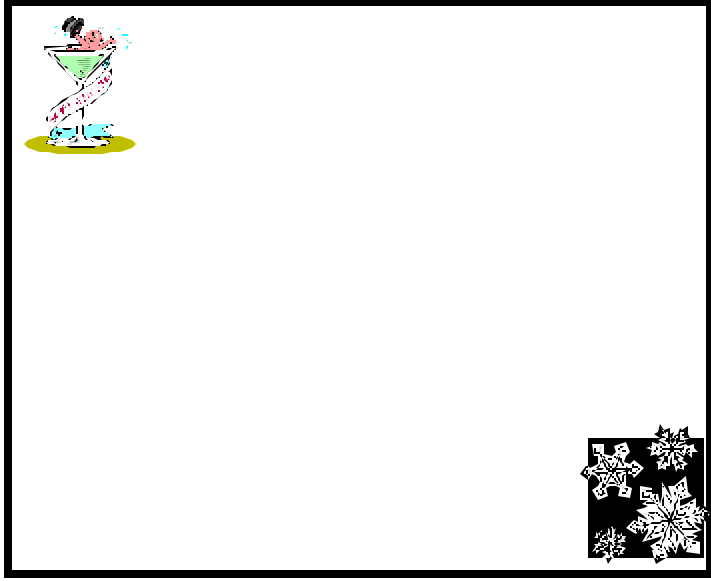
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OOPS! Please note the following corrections to the YELLOW Registration Form which is enclosed. On Tour 2 it should read to ...bring a jacket or sweater. Also if you have any problems with altitude check with your doctor before signing up with this one. Thin air up there and quite cool. But a great view. (Below-Pike's Peak Cog Railway) Then on Tour 6, it should



read ...We traverse the Gold Camp Road. (Below-Garden of the Gods Trading Post)



Continued from Page 6- "Done That"

did the same kind of job. Hauling prisoners all over the US. that After a year of that my Bishop in the Church asked me if I was getting tired of flying and wanted to stay around home for a while and of course after 14,000 hours bolted to an airplane, I said yes. My Bishop was an engineer for NASA at Kennedy Space Center. He asked me to be there the next Monday morning for an interview and I did. Rockwell hired me on the spot. I spent the first four years as an electrical and mechanical technician on the Shuttle working in the crew module (cockpit). When the shop supervisor found out my background, he assigned me to the launch/recovery crew as a "Space Craft Operator." What a joy that was! Working with the Astronauts on a daily basis. I was on the launch and recovery team for the first 55 shuttle launches and recoveries. I have to correct that-I launched 55 and only recovered 54. I lost Challenger on my shift. In 1986, I got sick and had open-heart surgery, a few by-passes and six weeks later, when I returned to work they transferred me from the shop to engineering and sent me to school to finish my engineering degree. (They paid for it.) I attended at night and after four years, I graduated at the age of 60. I spent 15 years taking the shuttles apart and putting them back together as an engineer. What a great time again.

So you can see, I have had some great jobs, retiring at least three times. Again, to make a long story short, I retired for the last time in 1995 after twenty years there. Before Biggs, I spent time in Korea. When I went to Biggs, I had 150 combat missions as a FE on the B-26, so flying was pretty well engrained in the old guy by that time. All in all I have flown in the Air Force the following: C-45, C-46, C-47, C-54, B-17, B-25, B-26, KB-50J, C-124, C-133, C-141, and the C-5s. While at Kelly AFB, I had the opportunity to ride as an observer on the B-52s that were being test flown after overhaul and on the F-106 and T-38 chase planes. All in all I have had a wonderful time with all the different aircraft and space vehicles I have associated with in one way or another. I don't fly any more since the surgery. I am retired here in Florida and stay busy in Church work and still keep some of my engineering skills up doing design work for some people I know here in the church. I still love to go to the airport and just watch airplanes. I still look up anytime I hear someone pass overhead. That's about it, my whole life's history, hope I didn't bore you, I had no intentions of doing that but a lot has happened in my life and when you try to put it on paper, I guess a person rambles on a little. I can't remember any names from the 431st. Alas, 72 is a bum age. Donald L. Taylor, USAF Retired



Rockwell International, Ret.
 Lockheed Martin, Ret.