

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Number 47 For all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska November/December 2005

President's Column Six, er, that is, FIVE Month's Warning

For a variety of reasons, our professional Reunion Coordinator, AFRI, has been a little slow out of the chocks this time, so we're a bit late in getting our customary "Six Months Out" newsletter to you. Rest assured, though, that the planning is well underway for our Tenth Standup at Charleston, SC, from April 23—27, 2006. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you'll find the options available for organized touring developed by AFRI and our Reunion Chairman, Flip Latham. Note that some of the tours require a minimum number of participants or they will be scrubbed, so plan now to join as many of them as pique your interest.

We are publishing in this issue as much additional information on the hotel, registration procedures, daily schedules, etc. as is available at this time. Complete details will follow in the next issue early in the New Year, to include all you'll need to make your choices and the forms to send in for registration. Besides organized touring, our schedule will allow plenty of time for disorganized shopping, individual poking around in the nooks and crannies of historic Charleston, or simply hanging out with old friends.

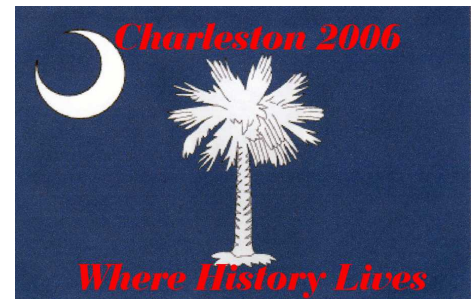
As yet, there's no information available

on possible cruise options, either before or after the main reunion. Informally, I'm told that most cruises of likely interest to our members would depart from a Florida or Texas port, but we'll continue to forward further information as we get it from the project officer and anyone else with late breaking news.

As Yogi Berra is reputed to have said, "If the people don't want to come out to the ballpark, nobody can stop them." I hope that won't apply to the 307th Bomb Wing Association members. We're hoping for a good turnout, because the more people who come, the better party we'll all have. I know Charleston is a long way to travel for many of you, but it will be worth the trip to see old friends again and to let them see you! Conversely, for those of you east of the Mississippi, especially on the eastern seaboard, it ought to be a piece of cake, and this is your big chance to join us. Please circle those dates on next year's calendar and plan to meet us to "Share the History"!

Wendy and I wish you and your families a most joyous holiday season, and a healthy, happy New Year.

Pete Todd



The Tenth Standup Charleston Reunion April 23rd to 28th 2006

Well, gang, it's now not long at all until we gather in Charleston. Here's our schedule as it now stands.

Sunday 23 April

Registration 1300 - 1900

Hospitality Room 1200 - 2100 (bar from 1500 - 2100)

Monday 24 April

Registration 0800 - 0900; 1600 - 1800

Hospitality Room - 0900 - 2100 (bar from 1500 - 2100)

0930 - 1500 - City Tour/American Military Museum

1800 - 2200 Dinner Cruise

Tuesday 25 April

0830 - 1230 Charleston Harbor

Tour/Ft. Sumter National Park

1245 - 1430 Bubba Gump Shrimp Company (lunch)

1500 - 2100 Hospitality Room/bar

Wednesday 26 April

0930 - 1530 Patriots Point Naval Museum Tour w/Crabhouse Lunch

1000 - 2100 Hospitality Room (bar

(Continued on page 2)

Back in Touch

Louis R Durham, 811B White Horse Pike, Oaklyn NJ 08107-1223.
Paul D Szczerbinski, 1291 Wejegi Dr, Hubertus WI 53033-9730.

307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association

Officers of the Association:

President: Pete Todd, 1250 Big Valley Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80919-1015. Phone 719-531-5874. Email: petetodd@adelphia.net.

Vice President/Newsletter: Mike Gingrich, 2527 Greenlefe Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45431. Phone 937-426-5675. Email: mikegingri@cs.com

Secretary: Larry Boggess, 4304 Ridgecrest Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Phone 719-548-8024. Email: larryjan@att.net

Treasurer: Tony Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

Association Founders:

Billy Williams, 5546 Enterprise Drive, Lincoln, NE 68521. Phone 402-438-6061. Email: wjwbdw@juno.com

Betty C Pelletier, deceased 29 November 2004.

The Association is strongly reliant upon key members who have volunteered their time and effort to keep the wheels running smoothly. They are:

Membership: Jan Boggess, 4304 Ridgecrest Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Phone 719-548-8024. Email: larryjan@att.net

Membership: Bev Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

Co-Historian: Robert Loffredo, 6004 SW 2nd St, Des Moines, IA 50315. Phone 515-285-3445. Email: mustang51h@mchsi.com

Co-Historian: Ernie Pence, 1301 Lincoln Mall Skypark, Ste 101, Lincoln, NE 68508. Phone 402-317-1180. Email: erniepence@yahoo.com.

Charleston 2006 Reunion Chairman:

Jarvis "Flip" Latham, 1424 Woodlawn Ave, Columbia, SC 29209-1433. Phone 803-776-4294. Email: K4JHL@earthlink.net.

The Association is a non-profit Veterans Organization. All contributions to the organization are gratefully received, but presently are not deductible under IRS Code. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are elected by majority vote of all members at each business meeting.

(Continued from page 1)

from 1500 – 2100)

Thursday 27 April

0930 – 1200 Business Meeting

1200 – 1700 Hospitality Room (bar from 1500 – 1700)

1800 – 1900 Cash Bar Reception and Pictures

1900 – 2400 Banquet

Friday 28 April

Depart after breakfast – Y.O.Y.O.

In case you didn't make note of the possible tour descriptions in the July issue of the newsletter here they are again:

Historic Charleston Tour /American Military Museum

Begin the day with a two-hour guided tour of the Holy City, named for its many picturesque churches. Favorite sites include the Battery overlooking Charleston's harbor, and Fort Sumter, colorful Rainbow Row, the Citadel, and White Point Gardens. Enjoy lunch and shopping on your own in the Market Area, Charleston's historic marketplace surrounded by restaurants and eateries of all types. During the tour we will visit the American Military Museum, dedicated to our Armed Forces. View hundreds of uniforms, artifacts, military miniatures, covering all branches and all periods, including Iraq, Vietnam, World Wars, Civil War and the Revolutionary War.

0930 board bus, 1500 back at hotel. \$39/Person includes bus, guide, and admissions. Lunch on your own.

Dinner Cruise

Discover the history, beauty and fun of cruising Charleston Harbor while having dinner aboard the *Spirit of Carolina*. The evening will consist of great food, entertainment, and fun under the stars as you cruise Charleston's historic harbor. Enjoy a classic four-course dinner starting with the Traditional Charleston She-Crab Soup, SpiritLine Salad, and a choice of five different entrees which could include Grilled Beef Tenderloin, Stuffed Chicken Breast, Fresh Fish Selected, Carolina Crabcakes, or a vegetarian entree. (menu changes seasonally).

1800 board bus, 2230 back at hotel. \$71/Person includes bus, escort, and dinner cruise.

Fort Sumter Cruise / Bubba Gump Shrimp Co.

Begin Tuesday experiencing a relaxing 30-minute cruise through Charleston's historic harbor out to Fort Sumter. The tour is fully narrated and explains many points of interest and historic significance. You will learn about the major events, which led to the outbreak of America's bloodiest war. At Fort Sumter National Park, historians will provide detailed information about Fort Sumter and its pivotal role in the War Between the States. There is a museum with fascinating exhibits and a small gift shop for your enjoyment. After one hour at the Fort, you will cruise back to port, enjoying panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean and Charleston's bustling harbor. Arrive for lunch at the well-known Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. You'll be given a lunch voucher to exchange for a BBQ Pork Sandwich, Southern Charmed Fried Shrimp, Fish & Chips or Charbroiled Chicken Breast. All lunches are served with Garden Salad, Garlic Bread, beverage and their famous "Strawberry Dream" dessert. Enjoy additional time for shopping after lunch in the Market Area.

0830 board bus, 1500 back at hotel. \$63/Person includes bus, escort, cruise, and lunch.

Patriots Point / Charleston Crab House Restaurant

Start Wednesday morning touring Patriots Point, home of the largest naval and maritime museum in the world. Visit the carrier USS Yorktown, the destroyer Laffey, the submarine Clamagore, the Coast Guard Cutter Ingham, or the Vietnam Support base. Re-board bus for lunch at the Charleston Crab House. You'll be given a lunch voucher to exchange for a Crab Cake Sandwich, Grilled Chicken Sandwich,

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Fried Shrimp & Flounder Platter, or Grilled Salmon Salad. All lunches are served with French fries, crab hushpuppies, beverage and dessert. 0915am board bus, 1415 back at hotel. \$51/Person includes bus, escort, admission, and lunch.

Our Reunion Hotel

We'll be headquartered at the **Clarion Hotel (843-572-2200)**

The Clarion is located at 7401 Northwoods Boulevard, Charleston, SC 29406. The hotel is just three miles from Charleston International Airport and twenty minutes from historic downtown Charleston.



Popular nearby attractions include landmark homes, churches, plantations, spectacular gardens, forts, and museums. Charleston is cloaked in three centuries of history. The hotel offers the Southern charm of a quaint suburban inn. The Clarion Hotel is located within a half mile of the area's largest shopping mall. Each guest room includes television with remote control and premium channels, coffee maker, hair dryer, iron, ironing board, microwave, and refrigerator. Guests may also enjoy the indoor heated pool with whirlpool, outdoor pool, and exercise room. Complimentary newspapers are available Monday through Friday. Room rates include full hot buffet breakfast each morning.

Handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel

reservation. Parking is complimentary to overnight hotel guests. Check-in time is 3:00pm; check-out is 11:00am. **The Lighthouse Restaurant** offers Lowcountry specialties and has a cozy lounge where folks can enjoy a cool drink and snacks. The Restaurant is open for breakfast and dinner daily. Room service is available.

The hotel provides complimentary airport shuttle service to Charleston International Airport. Please call the hotel from the baggage claim area of the airport to arrange for shuttle transportation. Shuttle service is available from 6:00am to 11:00pm.

The hotel offers limited parking for RVs. Should you require full hookups, Oak Plantation Camp Ground is located about thirty minutes from the hotel. Please call 843-766-5936 for rates, information, and reservations.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair, please contact Scootaround rents for both manual and power wheel chairs by the day and week. Call their toll free number at 888-441-7575 for details. All prices quoted include delivery fees. The Clarion has one wheelchair for use at the hotel.

You can phone your reservation to the Clarion at 843-572-2200. Identify yourselves to the hotel as part of the 307th. Our reunion planner, AFRI, says individuals are responsible for their own reservations, and the **cutoff date for making reservations is March 3rd, 2006.** 307th people will be able to check in three days early or stay three days after the event for the reunion rate of \$79.00 per night.

As we go to press, our banquet plans are still being formulated and will be included in the next issue. The next newsletter will be published in February and will contain registration forms for you to send in as well as any additional information about **THE TENTH STANDUP.**

Come and Share the History...

Jarvis "Flip" Latham



The Last Flight

Oliver W Ellington, ARS, Wilbraham MA, 11 August 2001.

Evelyn D Ellington, Wilbraham MA, 16 August 2004.

Garland G "Bud" Gee, 370, 371, 372, 424 BS, Cabot AR, 3 June 2005.

Florence R Gottlieb, Ft Myers FL, July 2005.

Keith Hill, Lawrence KS, 13 May 2004.

Lois Holbrook, Sequim WA, 2000.

Richard A Mitchell, 370th, 424th, Ormond Beach FL, date unknown.

A E "Butch" Nollenberg, AEMS, Ft Worth TX, 10 September 2005.

Clifford K Roberts, 424th BS, Phoenix AZ, 24 June 2005.

Gerald M Rossow, ARS, Plattsmouth NE, 31 August 2005.

Gerald Sabin, 1986.

Barbara Szczerbinski, Hubertus WI, 23 October 2002.

Eunice Taylor, Dayton OH, 1 July 2005.

James R Yandle, OMS, Conway SC, 2004.

Andrew J Vangalis, Las Cruces NM, 19 June 2005.

Helen Vangalis, Las Cruces NM, 29 September 2003.

The verse on the SAC Chapel Memorial Window says it best...

And God said who shall we send. I answered I am here, send me." Isaiah 6:8

Newsletter Schedule

The 307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association Newsletter is published for the benefit of all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing of Lincoln AFB, Nebraska. It is expected to be published three times a year in March, July, and November.

Contributions for publication in the newsletter are encouraged, and are essential for the success of this newsletter.

Around the Wing

Several issues ago, **Bud Flanik**, tongue firmly in cheek, proposed that we have a reunion at our old R&R haunt of Palma de Mallorca, Spain. Continuing in that spirit, we can report that the Palma Convention and Visitors Bureau evidently took Bud's suggestion at face value, and sent us a proposal from the Nixe Palace Hotel, along with the nearby photo to entice us to come reune with them (They offered complimentary motor scooters)! All in favor say Aye.

We are privileged on this issue to have permission to reprint an article by **Col Walter J Boyne**, an eminent aviation historian, writer and novelist. Walt, who can be seen frequently on the History Channel, describes his experience with the B-47, and other SAC birds; his way with words makes all of his writings a "good read". We hope you enjoy.

Every once in a while we are reminded that we all had a life before that portion of our existence which was devoted to SAC. A newspaper article sent to us by **Bill Rogers**, taken from the Medford Mail Tribune, tells us such was the case for **Lloyd "Bud" Timmons**, who excelled as a high school athlete. The nearby reprint fills us all in on Bud's doings, both before and after Lincoln.

Attention all ye BombCompers!

A recent issue of the Air Force Museum Foundation's Museum's *Friends Journal* contained an article putting forth a B-36 crewmember's recollection of the 1956 bomb competition. We have all heard riveting stories coming from our own 307th participating ground and flight crewmembers, but none has been set down as history. So listen up, all you guys with graying heads (or less gray, but shinier, as the case may be), it's high time to put your gray/shiny matter to work and put down your stories before the memories become too dim. If you don't do it, future generations will never know what we did to keep the Peace. So, pick up that pencil or pull out that keyboard and just **DO IT!**

Each issue of the Air Force Museum's *Friends Journal* contains the "Museum's Wish List" where they identify items they are seeking for restoration or future exhibits. It currently includes "SAC Bomb competition memorabilia, including custom uniform items, insignia, and patches." Contact Mr Terry Aitken, Senior Curator, National Museum of the United States Air Force, 1100 Spatz St, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433-7102. Email: ter-rill.aitken@wpafb.af.mil

From **Earl Hill**.

"On another matter, has anyone considered the addition of a personal contact page to the



307th web site? A sort of interactive space made available for more or less real time inquiries and dissemination of information. Just a thoughtentailing more effort and cost. Heh, heh."

Hey Everybody, let us know your thoughts and ideas on this. How about someone setting up a Blog independent of the website? We can link to it from our website.

Earl also directed us to www.B-47.com/Dahler.htm for some interesting B-47 maintenance material.

*In the following message, **Bob Merick**, of Wappello, Missouri tells of his recent experiences at the VA Central Blind Rehabilitation Center at Hines, Illinois. This is of critical importance and encouraging to any of our members who may be faced with severe vision problems. More info, and a computer link to the Hines Center can be found in the Bulletins section of the 307th BW web site.*

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Something else to do if we go to Palma de Mallorca

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The Blind Center has moved into a new building that was built for that purpose only. The living rooms are on the first floor with classrooms on the second floor. It is very compact, the living rooms are large enough for four beds should it be necessary to use it as a hospital. At the Blind Center you have a private room and shower, they clean the room daily but you are required to make your bed and replace the sheets on a weekly routine.

The people there are the greatest group of people I have ever seen working together. There was no bickering. We went to the dining room for our meals, everyone was assigned a table as the food was served and about 50% of the people are also in the low vision group. They are doing a great service for the blind. There was one gentleman came in on Sunday about two weeks before I left, he was totally blind and they had him coming to the dining room by himself in three days. Most of the patients were there for "orientation and mobility". This is what I went through the first time to teach you independence, and I was there 6 weeks.

This time I went for training on the computer using zoom text. This is a program that will read to you and you can blow the text up 16x so if you have any vision you can make it big enough that you will be able to read. We were given a scanner and printer along with the computer. I am now able to scan in a whole book and have the computer read it to me. I was taught how to do all this using the keyboard, but I can still see well enough to use the mouse. I really had a very good instructor who is a former English teacher and he knew the computer and how to make it work for you. As you can see I have a problem with grammar and he finally gave up on that part of my troubles.

They have a new program they are starting. It is called the laser cane this is a four-week course and it is something else. What is it? You are familiar with the white cane with the red tip, the laser cane looks the same but has a laser which emits a sound and the sound gets louder as you approach a danger zone. I did not get to talk to any one about how it works but I will say that it does.

I know there are a few people who need to be made aware of this program as I called one of the people up in Wisconsin before the last reunion and he indicated to me that he could not go because of his low vision.

But there really is life after lost vision, I cannot express it any greater. If you are not a believer, just go down to the Blind Center at Hines. The things you will see there are unbelievable!

When I left there the first time I was given a closed circuit TV and several hand held magnifiers. This time I came home with a new computer complete with scanner and printer and with a lot of knowledge of how to use it and make it do a lot more than I did before I went there.

Here is one I bet few people know, if you are working on a project and lose the text go to `ctl+z` and most times it will bring it back.

Jack Polski writes:

I'm searching for an item. Once upon a time, I had a center from the steering yoke on a B-47, remember the neat black one with "Boeing B-47" on them. I think my kid re-assigned it; but he says no. Anyway if I lifted one, I'm sure somebody else must have too. If you know how I could get one, please let me know.. I do have a coffee cup from the NCO club at Lincoln, God knows I spent enough time there!!! Especially that morning after that one augured in at the end of the runway. I had been parked right next to them and we had sat on the ramp and smoked cigarettes with Capt. Suddeth and his crew. *Incidentally, Jack says he launched the last B-47 from Lincoln, 53-1941, on 7 December 1965.* He goes on to say "When I first got to Lincoln, I was a A/IC and they made me a Crew Chief, at first it scared me to death; but as I got to know the airplanes really well, I was way more confident. I have to tell you the truth tho, I was scared to death to fly on those things. Good things didn't happen to the 4th man when they tried to get out."

Tony & Bev Minnick seek your help in relocating a few of our people who have recently had their newsletter returned as undeliverable by the Postal Service. They are:

Lawrence C Arundel-Shreveport LA, Tommie Dove-Bossier City LA, Ruth A Grimwood-Tucson AZ, William C Howell-Chattoay WA, Bertha Kennedy-Blue Springs MO, Willard Ownsby-Livington TX, Phil Parks-Springfield OH, Reginald M Underwood-Verdi & Henderson NV.

Tony also says: We will be printing a new roster early in March 06 to hand out at the Reunion in Charleston. If you have changed addresses, area codes or phone numbers; zip codes or added 4 digits to your zip, send corrections to 307th Bomb Wing Assoc, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68506-2364, or E-Mail tonym@inetnebr.com

Offspring Department. We recently received a email from the Castle Air Museum, inviting us to consider their location as the venue for a future reunion. It was sent by the museum president, Jeff Pennington, who identified himself as a 307th brat. His father is **Harold E Pennington**, KC-97 flight engineer and standboard engineer who crewed with Dodd.

Frank & Dee Kisner report that their son, Brig Gen (select) Frank J Kisner, has been appointed as Deputy Director, Strategic Planning and Policy, at Hq PACAF, Hickam AFB. Father and son recently enjoyed a two day elk hunt together in Colorado. However, there were no reports on mission success.

Fern Pettengill, widow of **John E Pettengill**, wrote in to provide an identification of an individual in the photo of **Major Cragun's** KC-97 crew that appeared in the March 2005 issue. According to Fern, the person in the front row middle is

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Clarence E "Swede" Wolfgram, a good friend who passed away some time ago. Swede was a flight engineer, as was Pettengill.

Joe Guerra updated us on his post-Lincoln life. Joe, an enthusiastic pheasant hunter, was an AC in the 424th from 1959 to 1963 with Larry Miller and Tom Cain on his crew. Joe went on to B-58s, SAC HQ, and retired at Beale in 1971. Since then he's taught, counseled, and supervised student teachers. His son is director of training for a business school and his daughter is a newspaper editor.

Expressing his thoughts for future reunion sites, **Louis Durham** has nominated Lincoln, the Air Force Museum, and Davis-Monthan (site of the Boneyard). *What ideas do you have?*

Ray L Long, former flight line coordinator in the 372nd, asks that anyone who knows anything of the flight line accident on 14 November 1958 in which he was injured, to please contact him at 1105 Jones Trail, Vernon Hill, VA 24597-3263. There are discrepancies between the "official" records in the possession of the VA and what actually happened to him.

Bob Byrom tells us he has transferred his headquarters to a house in Harrisonburg, Virginia in order to be close to the care facility where wife Pat is located. Bob is substitute school teaching and flying to fill the few idle hours that come his way.

Don and Sue Ivie write:

For those of you who have not heard yet, we have relocated to a place in Missouri near the town of Zalma, population 93. The whole county is only 12700. We have a nice place in the country with one-acre "more or less", the way the deed reads. We have a few neighbors, all of which are good as gold. They have been so friendly and helpful that we feel that we must be in the right place. We are still trying to locate things that we know must be in one box or the other, but they always seem to be in the other.

We have been slow to get on the computer because we have so much that requires some attention and we keep spreading it around. We have had to deal with losing our DSL and have had to resort to using DIAL UP. We hate it but are learning to live with it very slowly. I would ask that you not send me forwarded attachments for they take so long to download and there's a good chance I've seen them before. We are looking forward to hearing from everyone.

Seeking info on Grandfather:

Hello my name is Larry Lechot, I am Edward Warren Lechot's only grandchild. He died when I was 2. I was wondering how I could find more about his service, just curious about him. You have him in your list of crewchiefs as "Warren Lechot B-47 52-4236". I heard he flew missions in Korea that's about all I know about him. Thanks-Larry, email: refusefntk@hotmail.com. *Although we have Lechot listed as one of our former crewchiefs, that's all we know about him. If anyone remembers, please contact Larry by email - he will be most grateful.*

Glen Hesler's daughter, Nancy, wrote:

I am pleased to inform you that Glen Hesler's book, *Heart of a Tiger*, has been republished, and we still have several copies. Dad is wheelchair bound now, but he and Mom are happy and living in Sevierville, Tennessee. Their e-mail address is glenlucy@charter.net. My daughter discovered this wonderful website (307bwassoc.org). I don't know whether Dad knows of it, but I shall show it to him very soon. Nancy Hesler Ryder, email: chiggerlick@aol.com.

According to a recent newsclip from the Lincoln Journal Star, **Billy and Jean Williams** celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on October 15th past. Congratulations! We wish you many many more.

All's well that ends well ...**Wally Whitehurst** tells of having a no-notice triple bypass on 16 November at Bryan

Hospital in Lincoln. But, ya can't keep a good man down! Within a few days, thanks largely to the ministrations of wife Peggy, Wally was back in front of the computer dispensing wisdom and Cornhusker football news to his friends.

Tony Minnick credits **George Nigh** for putting him on to an excellent new book on the B-47. Tony is impressed enough that he recommends it to us all. To order, go to specialtypress.com or call 1-800-895-4585. Order # SP071 "Boeings B-47 STRATOJET". The cost is: \$ 39.95 + shipping.

Sedge Hill, of the 307th, and his son **Mike**, have collaborated and professionally published several history books on different Air Force units. Mike, an enthusiastic military historian has gone on to write and publish a number on his own. Mike is now turning his attention toward the 307th, has secured the interest of a publisher and is now starting information gathering and research. Since this is sort of late breaking news, we'll have more to tell you in our next issue. Most importantly, to make this really fly, the project will need inputs from YOU.

Other folks we've recently heard from include: Loyd Bray, Jesse Sears, Ken Wikle, Dale Christians, Ed Eggert (306th BW), Al Masserini, Ed Godec, Dave Avery, Willie Paxton, Bill Bathurst, and Ernie Pence.

Donations

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of those who have recently made donations to the Association's General Fund.

Phillip J Bicak
Dallas S Crosby
Rolland L England
Jose A Guerra
William H Hastings
Ralph S Krigsvold
Wilmington E Y Paxton

An Inside Look at the USAF's First Jet Bomber by Walter J Boyne

Walt Boyne retired from the Air Force in 1974 after a career of 23 years, which included being aircraft commanders in both the B-47 and the B-52. He went on to become director of the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution, Chairman of the Board of Wingspan, the Air and Space Aviation Channel, and President of his own firm, Walter Boyne Associates. The author of 38 books, he is one of the few persons to have had best-sellers on both the fiction and the non-fiction list of the New York Times. He can frequently be seen on the History and Discovery Channels. His web site may be visited at www.air-boyne.com. This article is reprinted with his permission.

The XB-47 first flew on December 17, 1947, with test pilots Bob Robbins and Scott Osler at the controls. (Osler was the first pilot to lose his life in a B-47 in a freak accident with the canopy.) The few people watching that day had no idea that this \$13 million project would prove to be the most significant multi-Jet aircraft in history and would begin a dynasty of Boeing jet aircraft extending well into the next century.

With its 35-degree sweptwings and six podded jet engines, the radical XB-47 owed its configuration to American genius and the design data brought in from post-WW 11 Germany. Testing and development would not be easy, but the Air Force would buy 2,042 (some accounts say 2,032). It served the Air Force well as a bomber, a reconnaissance aircraft, a weather plane and a test bed, and it generated a host of stories about its quirks, hazards and accomplishments.

Only someone who had flown piston-engine bombers could really appreciate the wonderful qualities of the B-47. It was a mixture of advanced new design and Boeing's experience of many years of building bombers. It inspired the building of the B-52, of course, but perhaps more important, the success of the B-47 paved the way for both the KC135 tanker and the Boeing 707 transport, with all its follow-on designs.

For pilots who had flown the Boeing B-29 or B-50, the "Stratojet" (as it was never called by the people who flew it) was an impressive, damn near terrifying piece of super-modern hardware. We who were privileged to fly it in the Strategic Air Command knew that we were part of an elite strike force -the most powerful in history. The B-47 became our insurance

policy. If a nuclear war had come while we were flying B-50s, we knew that few of us would have made it back. My own B-50 crew had essentially a one-way mission, with instructions to bail out over the Ukraine on the way back from the target and seek out "friendly natives." We didn't count on finding any. If, as was feared at the time, the Soviet Union launched its armies into Europe, we were confident that with the B-47, we would roll the Soviet Union up like a cheese blintz and bomb it in concentric circles from the outside in. We would have won the war in six days and cut the invading Soviet armies off from their devastated motherland. There would have been few B-47s lost. The Soviets knew this, too, and there was no invasion.

B-50 days

I won my wings on December 19, 1952, and graduated from advanced multi-engine training at Reese Air Force Base, Texas. Having finished high enough in the class rankings to be able to choose my assignment, I elected to fly four-engine equipment and chose the 93rd Bomb Wing at Castle Air Force Base, California, as my first operational unit. I was lucky enough to be assigned to the 330th Bomb Squadron-a happy outfit that flew B-50Ds.

Of course, the B-50 seemed huge at first, but it was a pleasant aircraft to fly and, I was told, much nicer than the B-29. There were usually 10 in the crew-aircraft commander, pilot, radar observer, navigator/bombardier, flight engineer, radio operator and four gunners. The flight engineer was indispensable because he kept watch over the big Pratt & Whitney R-4360 engines. By using an engine analyzer to spot an ailing spark plug or failing valve, he could ask that an engine be shut down as a preventive measure. Three-engine flights were routine but usually called for precautionary landings. Takeoffs were long, and both the climbout and the descent were relatively slow. Flight altitudes depended on the missions, which ranged from seven to 14 hours in length and usually included inflight refueling, celestial navi-

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Treasurer's Report			
307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association			
Ending Balance from last report June 15, 2005:		\$4,900.90	
	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	
General Fund Balance			\$4900.90
Expenses:			
Admin/Equip/Supplies	87.96		
Web site	54.01		
Memorabilia shipping	117.95		
Postage	217.40		
Printing	<u>596.74</u>		
	1074.06		-1074.06
			3826.84
Income:			
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gation and practice radar and visual bomb runs. We generally operated at around 25,000 feet, although many missions were flown at higher altitudes.

I had just become adjusted to the B-50, and in fact, had just flown my first full flight as an aircraft commander when the word came down that we were converting to B-47s. There was a mixture of joy and panic, for the B-47 had only a three-man crew: aircraft commander, pilot and radar observer. The radar observer also performed the navigator/bombardier functions. In the early days of the B-47, Gen. Curtis E. LeMay intended that every member of a B-47 crew be "triple-rated"; that is, all should have the training and wear the wings of pilot, radar observer and navigator/bombardier. When the B-47s began to stream into SAC—as many as in service at one time—this was no longer possible. The advent of the B-47 had a strange effect on the squadron. LeMay had introduced the concept of the spot promotion into SAC for especially well qualified crews. In the B-47, the radar observer would be the key to high performance, and there began an immediate jockeying among the senior aircraft commanders to get the best radar observers for their own new crews. This resulted in a lot of hurt feelings as former crewmembers were abandoned, and it led to at least one fistfight; in short, it was like the first round draft in the NFL.

For me personally, it was bad news: I was still about 100 hours short of the minimum flying time required to enter B-47 training. I watched in dismay as the crews were rapidly formed and reconciled myself to getting some sort of staff job while building flying time in the base flight aircraft, which had Lockheed T-33s, North American B-25s, Douglas C-47s and Beech C-45s. In those fine old days, you could be current in a number of aircraft, and the base Ops people were delighted to let you have one to fly on the weekend just to log flying time.

But being young and foolish, I got ticked off and went into the little Quonset hut where the squadron commander had an office. Fortunately, the CO was away; he would have thrown me out on my ear. But I cornered the adjutant, pounded on the desk and demanded to be sent to Wichita for B-47 training, regardless of the flying time requirements. Shrugging his shoulders, the adjutant cut orders for me to go to McConnell AFB to the 3520th Flying Training Wing.

I was placed with a new crew: Maj. Harold McCarty as aircraft commander and Capt. John Rosene as radar observer. They were WW II veterans and very nice guys, although both probably had reservations about having a low-time first lieutenant as a pilot on a plane as sophisticated as the B-47.

For me, it was love at first sight of the B-47. The ramp at McConnell was filled with what seemed like hundreds of those beautiful aircraft, and I could not believe my good

fortune in being there to fly it. McConnell had an impressive operation, with three flight sessions every day and a continuous line of B-47s taking off and landing. The ramp would shake as scores of engines were run up, sending out dark, rolling clouds of oily JP-4 exhaust that would have made an environmentalist faint. It was a hot, dry summer in Kansas, and ramp temperatures often rose well above the 100-degree mark. You could burn your hand on aircraft metal as you were pre-flying, and by the time you were ready to taxi out, your flight suit was soaked with sweat. The heat caused lots of problems, including long takeoff runs, but training continued unless cockpit temperatures rose above 140 degrees.



Flying the B-47

Most of us learning to fly the B-47 had been given a little T-33 time to become familiar with jet aircraft, but nothing could really prepare us for the performance of the B-47. First, the small crew made life and discipline much easier, but it meant much more work. The entire day before a sortie was spent planning the mission so that all three crewmembers knew exactly what was required of each man. You reported three hours before takeoff, and although the aircraft preflight was much easier than that of the B-50, it still took about an hour and a half to complete. Inspecting the drogue and brake parachutes was sometimes a little difficult, as the B-47B trainers at McConnell were pretty beat up, and hatches and hinges did not always work without a little "chock maintenance" to get them firmly latched. The bicycle-gear arrangement made taxiing strange to us at first, but it quickly became second nature.

In the summer, the B-47 cockpit got inordinately hot, for after we closed the canopy, the sun's heat quickly raised the already high temperature. Sweating so profusely that the oxygen mask slipped off your face, you taxied out to perform the required pre-takeoff checks, which were vastly simpler than those of the B-50. Operations at McConnell were typically at fairly light gross weights, for most missions ran only about four hours. The takeoffs took some adjustment, for power came up slowly on the

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General Electric J47 engines, and acceleration seemed agonizingly slow for the first part of the takeoff run. But about two-thirds of the way down the runway, the airspeed began to pick up, and then we were airborne, accelerating swiftly and pulling the nose up to keep a 310-knot climb speed-faster than we flew the B-50 in level flight. Right after the gear came up, the air conditioner kicked in, and a welcome blast of frigid air rapidly brought the cockpit temperatures down to a comfortable level.

One month, eight flights and 33 hours later, we were graduated from McConnell and sent back to Castle to begin operations with the B-47-flying 30 to 60 hours a month and beginning to learn just how advanced the aircraft really was. In the air, the B-47 was a beautiful, sensitive aircraft. You could roll it -and some pilots did -but it was stupid to do so, and more than one dished out to leave a triangular scar in the ground. Much has been said about the infamous "coffin corner" where the high-speed and low-speed stalls coincided. It is true that such a point existed in the flight envelope, but you would have had to work hard to put yourself in that position on a normal mission. The requirement to maintain exact speeds right down to the knot during the approach and landing phase has been overemphasized as well. The B-47 required an extraordinarily long, flat pattern. At typical landing weights, you'd turn final at "best flare plus 15" -say, 146 knots at 105,000 pounds -and you would be aiming to touch down at 123 knots. You did need to control speed, but just a caress on the throttles could raise or lower speeds a knot at a time. And, on an instrument approach, you could use differential throttle on the number-one and number-six engines to keep you on the ILS track. Because the J47, like all early jet engines, was slow to accelerate, Boeing had devised a drogue chute that was deployed in the landing pattern and allowed you to maintain the engine at a relatively high power setting from which a go-around could easily be made. Once on the ground, the brake chute assisted the excellent anti-skid brake system to get you stopped. The brake chute had another use: if you hit front-wheels-first and bounced on landing, you could -if you knew just when to do it -deploy the brake chute and bring the airplane down to a perfect rear-wheel-first landing.

The precise power control made formation flying relatively easy in the B-47. We rarely practiced it, for the B-47 was intended to be a lethal penetrator, flying alone, or in well-spaced cells of three or more aircraft.

Perhaps the most critical situation in the B-47's flight regime was the loss of an outboard engine after you were committed to a high-gross-weight takeoff. You had just 1.7 seconds to make the control inputs necessary to prevent an uncontrollable roll-due-to-yaw situation. If you failed to react correctly by shoving in full opposite rudder, you would lose directional control, and the aircraft would cartwheel. There are too many films of B-47s doing just that, and they all end in massive explosions.

The Boeing KC-97 tanker was still in widespread use, and the speed differential between the two aircraft made in-flight refueling difficult at higher gross weights. The tanker would be flying along at full power, with the B-47 coming in to connect at just above its stall speed. As the B-47 took on fuel, it would have to increase its airspeed, and this meant that the tanker would have to begin a descent to increase its own airspeed. In just such a descent, I once looked up to see a big puff of black oil as the KC-97 blew its number-one engine. The KC-97 seemed to accelerate in reverse as it whipped back overhead, unable to maintain airspeed because of the loss of power. We dived under it, lucky to have avoided a catastrophic midair collision. The swift, swept-wing KC-135 was much more compatible for refueling in flight.

My aircraft commander was a conscientious guy who made sure I got my share of takeoffs and landings, along with in-flight refueling experience. There was plenty of flying time that included some 24-hour missions -long enough to spend in an ejection seat.

In SAC, every crew position was evaluated continuously during dreaded spot checks by instructors in the squadron, by members of the Wing Standardization Board and by visiting firemen from SAC headquarters. Because of this, your performance had to stay sharp; otherwise, you could be unceremoniously removed from a crew. It turned out that we were doing pretty well as a crew, and we were given Lead Crew status -a step toward the coveted Select Crew designation, which in turn led to the possibility of spot promotions.

Despite this, I have to say that my most memorable experiences in the B-47 at Castle were bonehead mistakes I made and was lucky to survive. The first one came on a unit simulated combat mission, during which the entire wing was launched, just as if war had been declared. On one of these, an aircraft crashed on takeoff and sent huge black clouds boiling up off the end of the runway. The mission went on, with airplane after airplane taking off over the burning crash site -each one giving a mental salute to the poor guys who had died. (And you knew your own family would be terror-stricken because although news of the crash would spread instantaneously, the identities of the crewmembers would not be released for hours.)

On the day in question here, the mission was to be a long one, and fuel management was critical, as it always was in the B-47. During the climb-out, the radar observer reported that the bomb-bay doors position indicator showed that they might not be fully closed and locked. This was bad news, for if the doors were even slightly open, the increased drag would increase fuel consumption to a point at which we would not be able to complete the mission as planned. McCarty leveled the plane off at 25,000 feet, and I volunteered to go down and take a look. This involved getting out of my seat, edging a few feet down the narrow, equipment-filled aisle, opening the entrance door and then climbing down the entrance ladder to the crawl-way that

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led back about 15 feet to the bomb bay. We had to depressurize to open the door to get to the passageway, so I hooked up the emergency oxygen walk-around bottle, which had a nominal 10-minute duration -just enough to get down and back, or so I thought.

I got all the way to the point at which I could see that the bomb-bay doors were indeed up and locked, when all of a sudden, things went black. McCarty saw that my legs had stopped moving, so he made an emergency descent. I came to at about 10,000 feet, climbed back up into my seat, and we landed. Afterward, I had a private interview with Director of Operations Col. Pat Fleming, a 19-victory ace for the Navy during WW II. He had a reputation as a disciplinarian, and I expected him to tear off a piece of my tail, but he was as kind as he could be, making sure first of all that I was really OK. He then made notes on the incident, which showed that a walk-around bottle might have a 10-minute supply when sitting in an altitude chamber but not when you were crawling around the inside of a B-47. (Col. Fleming died just two years later in the first crash of a B-52.) When word came down that the 93rd was to be the first wing to transition to B-52s, another scramble began to get the best crews. This time, the requirement to be a copilot had been raised to 1,000 hours, and I knew there was no way I'd be able to talk my way into a slot.

A decision was made that the Wing would retain its combat status through the transition and keep the B-47s in operation as the B-52s came on line. This gave me time for one more adventure.

We were coming back from a long mission with the fuel "right on the money," meaning that we had enough to make the high-speed penetration, land and then shoot a few touch-and-go's, a couple of which would be mine. In a normal B-47 descent, about 50 miles out, the aircraft was slowed to 305 knots indicated, and the landing gear was extended to provide some drag.

We did that-and got a series of red lights on the landing gear. McCarty leveled off at 10,000 feet and decided that we had better use the emergency gear-extension system to get the gear down and locked before we ran out of fuel.

I left my seat and went back to the left hand side of the cockpit, where the four levers used for emergency gear extension were. McCarty slowed the airplane to about 200 knots, and I began to pull the levers. The first full stroke unlocked the up-locks and allowed the gear to free-fall. Then I had to operate the emergency extension levers with full strokes, back and forth until the gears were down and locked. After a lot of huffing and puffing, I got green lights, and McCarty reported the gear down and locked. Breathing hard, I got up to crawl back into the ejection seat and get ready for landing.

As I started to step up and move forward to climb in, I heard a bang; the aircraft had depressurized. I realized at once that the D-ring on my parachute handle had caught the left ejection-seat handle and initiated the ejection process. I stopped and stared down at the seat, not knowing what was going on. I prayed that the rest of the ejection sequence would not follow because if it did, the upper half of my body would be blown out of the cockpit, putting a crimp in my future plans.

The next 10 seconds seemed to take about two hours, but I finally realized that the left-hand grip was all that had moved and that neither the seat nor my upper body was going anywhere. I got the safety pin in the ejection seat, strapped myself in, and we landed. This time, I only had to talk to the squadron CO.

Despite my two misadventures, I had learned to love the B-47 and wanted to keep flying it, but first, I took the opportunity to go back and pick up my degree at the University of California at Berkeley. Then I was sent to the 4925th Test Group (Nuclear) at Kirtland Air Force Base. It was a small outfit, with two B-47s, two B-52s and a handful of Century Series fighters. The other pilots were all veterans of WW II, and most of them were high time B-47 instructor pilots from McConnell. They were superb professionals -the very finest pilots and the finest radar observers I had ever met. The missions included the live drop of nuclear weapons, which we did in Operation Dominic, the last series of live nuclear drops in history.

I was quickly checked out as an aircraft commander and began to enjoy the B-47 even more. It was hot at Kirtland during the summer, and the field's altitude of 5,000 feet made heavyweight takeoffs seem impossibly long. You would sit with the throttles bent forward and watch the runway markers ease by, waiting for the end of the runway, all the while knowing that after a short overrun area, there was nothing but a big rough patch of rocks and a cliff. But the B-47 would gradually accelerate, the numbers would be just right and at the last moment, the gear would lift off and you would be flying.

Most of the missions at Kirtland were shorter than the typical SAC mission. They usually involved taking off and flying to a bombing range -White Sands, Tonopah, or the Salton Sea were used most often -and setting up a pattern. The bombing range would get its telemetry set up, we'd fly a practice run or two and then come in and drop whatever it was we were carrying, bomb, missile, or test vehicle.

When things went well with the telemetry, we had often finished our mission within an hour of arriving at the range. This meant we had to bum off some fuel before landing, so we often dropped down to about 10,000 feet and cruised through whichever mountain range was nearby to check out fishing spots and even watch herds of antelope run. Then we'd go back to practice some instrument approaches and shoot a few touch-and-go's before calling it a day.

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The more I flew the B-47, the better I liked it, and I eventually felt completely comfortable in it, no matter what the mission was. It was a time when new weapons and tactics were being introduced, and we were tasked to drop everything from spiked runway penetration bombs to simulated nuclear weapons to strange shapes that were picked up in midair by Fairchild C-119s using recovery gear. We had no way of knowing it at the time, but this was the technique used to recover capsules from the Discoverer (Corona) series of spy satellites.

Of all the missions, the most fun was the low-level work done in tests of the "pop-up" technique. The mission called for a low-level approach, 55 feet or less-across the desert floor at 450 knots indicated. This posed a bit of a challenge because at 440 knots, your roll rate dropped to zero due to aileron reversal. The flexibility of the wing allowed a downward-deflected aileron to produce an upward force that caused a nose-down twist of the wing. Essentially, you had no ailerons at 450 knots; if anything went wrong, all you could do was chop the throttles and pull back on the control column to climb.

It didn't help much that the handbook noted that the flutter limit for the B-47 was 440 knots indicated. But having said all that, there was nothing more exciting than to be cleared into the range, drop down to sagebrush level and send a 450-knot blast of wind through the sand until you began the pull-up. As speed bled off, the ailerons came back into play; then, you would level off, the radar observer would drop a simulated bomb, and it was time to do it again.

I checked out as an aircraft commander in the B-52 at Kirtland and enjoyed it very much, even though it flew like a truck compared with the B-47, which was being retired. The B-47 had a relatively short service career by today's standards; SAC phased out its last two B-47s on February 11, 1966. A few soldiered on as weather planes or test beds for a few years after that.

For some reason, the B-47 never captured the public's imagination and was quickly forgotten except by the people who flew it, for it made an invaluable contribution to aviation and to the defense of our nation. Fortunately, you can still see just how beautiful the B-47 was in flight in the film "Strategic Air Command," which, despite its silly love story, portrays SAC and the B-47 in their finest hours.

The Chief's Corner Supervision is never easy. By Ernie Pence

After being immediately shipped from boot to tech school without a break it would seem one was in the regimented environment forever. Arriving at Amarillo, then known as Little West Point, because of its everyday inspection policy and a parade every Saturday, we were prepared to return to Lackland. Our D.I. was trained in Dachau.

Due to a fraudulent enlistment I was still almost 5 months from legal enlistment age. I soon found myself rooming with the Dorm Chief and his assistant, both big burly farm boys. I came in at about 120 pounds and 5'-6" tall. I wasn't there a week and was made the D-Wing latrine chief. What a lovely job! We glass waxed everything in the room except the floor. Needless to say after 3 months of tech school, endless inspections, and parades, the troops were getting a little salty. My father had been a professional horse trainer and I had been raised in what one could consider a rather mobile environment. Net result being I had to deal with every bully in every new school I attended, which at last count prior to service entry amounted to no less than 11 different schools. It must have cost a fortune to pay for my secret security clearance.

To say I was used to combat at an early age is an understatement. It came to pass that as time passed in the training squadron, tempers became a little short. I had one man on my 6 man crew, (counting myself) that began to enter the latrine to help clean every night a little later every night. Of course that meant we all had to do more than our fair share. By the third night no one said anything but I was getting the look. NO choice but to deal with the situation.

I paid a visit to the errant airman's room and told him we were starting our nightly duty

and he needed to get in and do his share. His reply was that he would be down in a little while. I stated "a little while" did not feed the bulldog! He restated that he would be down in a little bit. This dude was about 6'1" tall and went about 175 to 180, at this stage of the exchange size was not a consideration. I told him to get his lazy butt into the latrine and hit it right now. He looked up at his skinny antagonist and said the magic words, "Get out of my room or I will whip your sorry little ass!" At that point in time that was a poor choice of words, I told him to get his behind off the bed and get it on right now!

Let me preface this by telling all you big folks that little guys don't buy into an altercation as others may, we are fighting for our life! When his behind was a mere 2 inches off the bed I nailed him in the eye with everything I had. Before he hit the floor I had already scheduled and delivered 3 more well aimed shots. Looking in his dazed eyes I knew it was time for the kill. I raised up, aimed at his temple, and delivered a killing blow. Fortunately the God above smiled on me. Hearing the loud words and the loud crack of fist striking face, the Dorm Chief and his burly assistant came running. Just as I triggered the finishing shot the Assistant Dorm Chief grabbed me by the waist and yanked me up before I could make contact. My errant punch struck the Dorm Chief in the knee-cap dislocating same. The Dorm Chief dropped like a poll axed cow howling in pain. I was screaming at the dazed airman on the floor telling him to get to the latrine right now or he was a dead man.

He arrived in the latrine sporting 2 black eyes, a badly bleeding nose, and some huge lips. The rest of the crew were looking on in shocked amazement when I arrived. I was still roaring mad, everyone went immediately to work. The Dorm Chief was taken to the base hospital and returned with a badly swollen knee, bags of ice, and a major wrap job on the knee. The next morning the D.I. having read a report stating his Dorm Chief had inexplicably damaged his knee at 2000 hours the night before.

At formation he asked our limping Dorm Chief what happened to his knee. The Chief replied it was a long story, the D.I. retorted, "he had all of the time in the world." The red faced Dorm Chief replied, "Airmen Pence hit me in the knee.!" The D.I. roared, "Pence is short, but he is not that damned short!" The incident was closed at that point.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

LLOYD 'BUD' TIMMONS

MEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL, 1948

By **TIM TROWER**

Mail Tribune

Lloyd "Bud" Timmons was a track star who could fly—literally. Whether as a member of a record-setting Medford High relay team or as a young pilot over the Rogue Valley and, later, around the world, he made haste.

"As a kid, I was just always interested in flying," says the 75-year-old Timmons, who lives in Brookings with his wife of nine years, Darlene.

He remembers getting his first plane ride from Tommy Culbertson, a colonel in the reserve, at age 6.

"I was hooked," says Timmons. "I vowed then that I would fly airplanes, and I did."

Timmons, who did four tours of Viet Nam, had a 20-year career in the Air Force. He logged 13,000 hours of flying time and flew more than 450 combat missions. Sometimes, things got hairy.

"A lot of times," says Timmons. "But you'd always just say, 'If I ever get this thing on the ground, I'm never flying again.' Then the next thing you know, you're up flying again the next morning."

Combat wasn't the only time flying got dicey. He also logged 4,000 hours of weather time.

"I flew over Oshima Island in Japan for almost a year before I ever saw it," says Timmons. "That was kind of unique."

Timmons retired in 1972 and went into business as a massage therapist, which he did until 1997. He learned the craft in the

service to help fight soreness and fatigue from long missions.

That therapy might have come in handy when he was starring for Medford. Timmons was an occasional starter at fullback and left halfback on the Black Tornado football team and ran track.

In football, he remembers the talented teams of the era, the tough players and the tougher coaches, like head man Bill Bowerman and assistant Ed Kirtley.

Kirtley would "straighten us out in no uncertain terms," says Timmons. Along with Bowerman, "They would flat get in your nest, and it was a good thing. I condone that very highly."

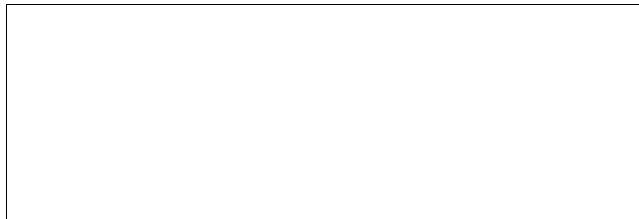
Maybe that's why Timmons and Co. ran so fast for Bowerman's track team. As a senior, Timmons ran the anchor leg on the 880-yard relay team that set an all-time state-meet record of 1:31.2, a mark that stood for 10 years.

Timmons honed his flying skills after high school, serving for a time as a crop duster. He married the former Doris Matheus, and they had two children in their 28-year marriage. She now lives in Texas.

He's fighting emphysema and doesn't get out as much as he'd like, "But you do with what you've got," says Timmons. "And you enjoy life."



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