

## ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 63

For all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska

July 2011

### President's Column

#### Outer Marker Inbound

Billy Williams and company continue to lead the charge toward what could be one of our all-time best reunions. Our Lincoln reunions have always been well attended, so we're hoping for a renewed surge of interest now that we're within a year of the event. (Our members who are Nebraska residents alone could put us over the top!) You guys who don't buy green bananas need to roll the dice and start making firm plans to join the stampede into Lincoln next May. Please print/clip the interest survey on page 11 of this newsletter and mail to Billy so he can get a feel for the numbers and interests of those who even *might* attend.

The happiest surprise from among the early returns has been the strong support of our tanker buddies from the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS. Kudos to George Nigh for his leadership and energy in encouraging so many ARS members to join in this reunion (including some latter-day 307<sup>th</sup> ARS guys who never even served at Lincoln). Not only will their participation swell the num-

ber of attendees ("The More, the Merrier"), but also their war stories and shared experiences will add immeasurably to the richness of the camaraderie of the event.

Despite my optimism about the 2012 Reunion, I'm forced to return now to a familiar theme (and one of my deepest worries): how to sustain the membership and vitality of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing Association in the face of inexorable age and health issues and our ever-diminishing numbers. The discussions at last year's business meeting in Dayton pretty much set to rest the hope that the second and third generation offspring from the Lincoln years might be willing and able to pick up the reins of leadership.

In the aftermath of that debate, a new idea has been put forth, namely, that we (and possibly other similar B-47 wing organizations) should consider merging with the B-47 Stratojet Association. I encourage everyone to consider this proposal se-

riously and to discuss the pros and cons with your colleagues. I have some fairly strong views about the merits of the idea, but I'd prefer not to influence the discussion prematurely. I'd appreciate hearing from you after you've had a chance to mull over the idea and, if it proves to have traction, we will discuss it officially and unofficially in May of 2012.

Meanwhile, Wendy and I send our best wishes to you and yours for an enjoyable, relaxing and healthy summer. See you next May!

Pete Todd



At the Air Force Museum, a memorial to the WWII POWs held at Stalag Luft III, from which the "Great Escape" came.

Several of our senior leaders were unlucky guests of the Luftwaffe there, including C R Moore and Glen Lally.

## 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: petetodd59@comcast.net.

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**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: bwilliams17@neb.rr.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.  
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**Membership:** Bev Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

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### Lincoln 2012 Reunion Chairmen:

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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.

## Around the Wing

From **Roger Bender**

(roger.bender@gmail.com) I was stationed at LAFB with the 307th AEMS from Jan 2 1959 to June 2 1962. I was a radio repairman (30150) in the Com-Nav section and a member of the 1961 Bomb-Comp team shown in the "Photos from Member 1" webpage. The photo is not large enough or clear enough to make out faces, but I believe that I was one of the guys in the front row. My father-in-law, Bill Smith was also at this competition, but with the 98th AEMS. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who was in the 307th AEMS during that period.

Roger later sent a news clip describing the faceoff against his father-in-law, Bill Smith, who was there with the 98<sup>th</sup> A&E. It appears nearby and serves to describe this familial confrontation in greater detail.

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Also in later pages are several photos of interest to us. One may be the last photo taken of Paul Koski before his passing. Earl Hill snapped it on board the Branson Belle during the 2008 reunion. Back in the 2005 time period, Paul went on a writing binge, putting about 45 pages of tales on paper. We have been drawing upon them for the newsletter, but our page limits being what they are, it would be a long time before all see the light of day through the newsletter venue. So, we'll try to get them up on the website so they can be more thoroughly enjoyed. Also, shown on page 4 & 5 are three old ops related photos dating back to the late 1950s. After shaking the dust off, they look pretty good. Maybe someone can tell us what they are about.

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From: DawnSwobda1982@yahoo.com.  
Date: February 7, 2011 Subject: 307th Website Inquiry  
I am looking for an old friend who served in the 307th bomb wing from 1956-1960. His name is Kenneth Charles Becker. Approx age 71-73. If you have any info of how I can reach him, please call me at 402-781-2158 or my work # is 402-423-8799. My name is Tammy Kennedy.

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From **Bud Flanik, politically incorrect humor** with UK funny guy John Cleese "On The Middle East Situation":

The **English** are feeling the pinch in relation to recent terrorist threats and have therefore raised their security level from "Miffed" to "Peeved."

Soon, though, security levels may be raised yet again to "Irritated" or even "A Bit Cross." The English have not been "A Bit Cross" since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out. Terrorists have been re-categorized from "Tiresome" to "A

## Family 'Feud' Spices Combat Competition

By a Staff Writer

Spokane, Wash.—The 1961 combat competition has brought out a friendly family argument.

T. Sgt. Billy S. Smith, 33, of the 98th armament and electronics radio section at Lincoln Air Force Base and his new son-in-law, A.1C Roger N. Bender, 21, of 307th A and E section were selected to compete against each other.

The first half of the competition Bender watched his father-in-law's unit place 3rd in overall scoring.

However, on the second night of flying, the 98th slipped back to 9th place and it was Smith's turn to watch the 307th climb to 5th place.

The 307th ended the competition as the top B47 bomber unit in SAC.

Maj. William Stringfellow, commander of the Second Air

Force "best crew," was the top B47 crew in bombing.

Smith, a veteran of more than 15 years in the Air Force from Oklahoma City, lives at LAFB with his wife, Lois, and son, Ronald, 14.

Bender, who entered the Air Force in 1958 from St. Paul, Minn., lives with his June bride, Ramona, at 702 Plum.

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Bloody Nuisance." The last time the British issued a "Bloody Nuisance" warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The **Scots** have raised their threat level from "Pissed Off" to "Let's get the Bastards."

They don't have any other levels. This is the reason they have been used on the front line of the British army for the last 300 years.

The **French** government announced yesterday that it has raised its terror alert level from "Run" to "Hide." The only two higher levels in France are "Collaborate" and "Surrender." The rise was precipitated by a recent fire that destroyed France's white flag factory, effectively paralyzing the country's military capability.

**Italy** has increased the alert level from "Shout loudly and Excitedly" to "Elaborate Military Posturing." Two more levels remain: "Ineffective Combat Operations" and "Change Sides."

The **Germans** have increased their alert state from "Disdainful Arrogance" to "Dress in Uniform and Sing Marching Songs." They also have two higher levels: "Invade a Neighbor" and "Lose."

**Belgians**, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels.

The **Spanish** are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

**Australia**, meanwhile, has raised its security level from "No worries" to "She'll be alright, Mate." Two more escalation levels remain: "Crikey! I think we'll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!" and "The barbie is can-

celed." So far no situation has ever warranted use of the final escalation level.

-- **John Cleese** - British writer, actor and tall person

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**More Milk Bottle...Earl Hill** notes upon reading an old accident report... On 21 March 1958, as a result of overstress from a pull-up, a B-47E disintegrated in midair near Avon Park, Florida. This aircraft had a total flight time of only 1,129 hours and 30 minutes." Probably one of the last aircraft to suffer the dreaded "milk bottle" failure, it involved my son in law's father. He was the A/C. Daughter and future son in law met in Oregon 30 years later. It's a small world.

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From **Betty L Lowe** (hullobetz@msn.com) Hello! My father was the pilot of the USN MATS plane that was reported missing on 10/11 October, 1956, with 50 men of the 307th, and 8 other Navy men. After a lifetime of searching, I was overwhelmed when I browsed into the report and a list of names on your history site. I want to search for the families of the 2 officers and 48 airmen, and I am considering the best way of going about it. I so appreciate any assistance you may be able to provide.

*Ed: We were able to put her in touch with 2 daughters of our casualties and the accident report. Betty responded...*

Dear General Todd,  
My thanks are beyond words. This is an incredible discovery and it finally gives me a tangible association with the



Our last visit with Paul Koski during the Branson reunion, 2008

deaths of my father and 58 other men. We were told nothing, and I am sure that is true of all the families. My hope is to bring together as many of us as possible for a combined memorial service.

I have considered placing announcements in the hometown newspapers or even employing a professional to help find families. If you have further suggestions, please advise me.  
Sincerely,  
Betty

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(Continued on page 4)

### 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.

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On Mar 21, 2011 **William P Johnson** (wpjmmj@mchsi.com) wrote:

Question: Is there available 307th BW Association Shirts or T shirts?

If yes what would be their costs? If No has it ever been discussed?

Pete Todd answers: No such products exist. To my knowledge, this idea has never come up before, which probably results from either a lack of interest among the members or a failure of imagination on the part of the president. It would probably be easy enough to procure some with wing/squadron patches on them provided there were enough demand to cover the costs. I'll ask our trusty newsletter editor to put a blurb in the next issue to see if this idea sparks any interest. If not, I'll raise it again at our reunion next year.

Meanwhile, I'll need a volunteer to research potential sources, costs, minimum purchases in each size, etc., etc. Hmm. I guess that would be you. :-)

Cheers,  
Pete Todd  
President

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Hale Dodge and others mission planning circa 1958. Can you identify those in the photo.?

From **Terry Worley**:

terry\_worley@comcast.net

I was at Lincoln until the base closed. I refueled 6244 on the pits on the day she left Lincoln to WPAFB. I too visited the Aircraft at Wright Pat when she was stored outside. I wanted to see my name on the bomb bay door as I had

signed it the day she left. The doors were closed. Later I returned and the plane was gone. I too asked where she was and was told two stories. One she was put back in service as a RB and shot down over Nam. The other about she would not fit under the highway bridge when the new museum was built and burned for practice. Now I know. It always bothered me as I thought it would be displayed forever. The other plane that left before 6244 was supposed to go to Kansas to the Boeing Plant for display; the other 118 aircraft went to the bone yard.

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Gentlemen,

Just finished reading the March News Letter and I have a little information about people you ask about in the article 'Around the Wing'.

I arrived at the then 308th ARS (soon to be changed to the 307th ARS) in the summer of 1954. The squadron was just forming at that time; no aircraft, few people and very little of anything else. There were two crews in the squadron who were transferred from Smoky Hill to be our standardization crews and to check out the incoming new crewmembers, of which I was one. Those crews were commanded by Capt. George Fletcher and Capt Nick Smoltz.

The rest of the pilots had been at West Palm Beach AFB where MATS ran their C-97 training program. I was the co-pilot on T-06 commanded by 1/Lt Len Sheffer. We were fortunate that we got all flying time (about 40 hours) at West Palm and no simulator time. The Air Force was evaluating the value of simulator training time versus actual flying time. So when we arrived at Lincoln we were the crew closest to check out and got to fly as soon as an



Jim Pumford, Lynn Johnson & Bob King mission planning circa mid 1950s.

aircraft arrived. We were the first crew qualified in the KC-97 at the 307th.

The crew was composed of Lt. Sheffer A/C, myself as co-pilot, Norm Weinlien navigator, Harold Lemme engineer, James Hay radio operator, Malcolm Chisholm boom operator, and Charles Marsh assistant boom operator. Norm, our navigator, had just returned from the B-29's at Okinawa. Most of the navigators in the squadron, like the co-pilots, had just graduated from flying training.

There were other navigators who like Norm, had just returned from Okinawa. I probably can't recall all of them but some of the names are; Robert 'Moon' Miller, George (I think!) (Sam) Sanregret, and Dave Searing. There may have been others, but if so their names escape me.

I hope this information is of some use to you.

Stay Well,  
Art Craft

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The last newsletter asked about those of us who were on Okinawa or at Tachikawa just prior to assignment to Lincoln. I was a Nav in the B-29, 19th Bomb Wing, 345 Bomb Squadron, from June 1953 to May 1954, and then assigned to KC-97's at Lincoln, arriving in June 1954. There were three of us (all prior B-29 Navs) arriving at the same time (George Sanregret was one, the other escapes me at the moment).

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All three wings (two on Okinawa, one at Tachikawa) brought their B-29's to the grave yard at Davis Monthan at the same time, in June 1954, and we scattered to the winds. At Lincoln, there was no place to report to when we arrived, no squadron in place, and no one even knew for sure what buildings we would occupy. The 307th ARS Commander, L/C Thurlow, drove up a few days later while we three were standing outside where somebody thought our Hq might be. He asked us if any of us could type, he needed someone to act as Adjutant for a few days until the real one arrived. George said he could type a little bit, and he was still Adjutant two years later. I left in July 1956 for an AFIT assignment & lost touch with everybody.

I'm hoping the 2012 reunion fits my schedule. I'll come.

**Clayton W Robson, Vida, OR**

*Thus far, we have identified the troops listed below as having been with the 307th BW on Okinawa who stayed with the 307th at Lincoln AFB when the wing returned to the US in 1954.*

*Art Craft, George "Sam" Sanregret, Robert "Moon" Miller, David Searing (deceased 10/09), Norm Weinlein, Steve Mattick (deceased), Tom Saltsman (deceased), Paul Trudeau, Wally Whitehurst, Don Nigro (deceased), Jerry Worthly, Albert E Scott.*

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Jim Pumford, Jim Forgas, and Bob King receive an award from Raleigh D Smith

Back in 1988 when we were beginning to organize the association, we went

through all the old orders we could put our hands on looking for names of 307th troops. One name recorded in our database was **Mike Goul**, a pilot with the 370th BS, but we had no address and were unable to locate him. Well, in March 2011 he located us through the website and he is now an association member. He wrote and filled us in on things...

On Mar 30, 2011, <mikegoul@att.net> wrote:

I am one of a group of brand new pilot graduates, 13 of us, who were drafted into SAC after the B-47 school had closed down, there were 500 of us overall in SAC, 13 of us to the 307th and 98th Bomb Wings. We had to upgrade and become HQ combat ready by receiving all training locally, flying with instructor pilots from standboard, working with Navigators at night on the tarmac shooting the stars and plotting fixes on our E6Bs. The celestial NAV course had been deleted from the pilot training program. I was the first of our group to become combat ready and was assigned as a co-pilot with Capt. Courtney E. Weissmueller. My squadron Cmdr was Hale Dodge. We closed down the 307th and went to the 509th at Pease AFB and I crewed up with Leroy McMath up until they wrongfully closed down the 509th rather than the 100th BW.

They eventually re-opened the 509th and shut down the 100th. The B-47 was one hell of an Air Plane, and I was a very proud SAC combat crew member.

Michael R. Goul, Pensacola, FL

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From **Carl Jewett** Thanks to all the airmen and wives who established the association and have kept it functioning. I truly regret not being aware of the association until 2009, when I read a reunion announcement in the Air Force Museum Magazine. My wife and I, God willing, plan to attend the May 2012 reunion in Lincoln.

I plan to prepare an article regarding the May 2012 reunion for publication in the Military Affairs Section of the Fort Myers Florida News-Press. Hopefully it will garner the attention of the 307th Bomb Wing veterans living in South West Florida,

Also heard from: Gene Hickman Jr, Bert Vorchheimer, Les Shobe, & Jim Villa.

## Donations

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

Everett C Caudel  
Mike DeCarlo in Memory of "Padge" & Joyce Padgett  
Richard F Delaney  
Asa L Evans Jr  
Karol Franzyszen  
Donald L Gosting  
Russell M Heller  
David W Horner  
Carlton H Jewitt  
William P Johnson  
Jean Kent in Memory of James B Kent  
Gene Lee  
Donald D Nigro  
Franklin D Ott  
Lou A Paller  
Robert S Patterson  
Clark W Peterson  
Clayton W Robson  
Royal G Schrubbe  
David H Shaver  
James Villa



A Memorial to a lost Coast Guard crew commanded by our 371st BS comrade, Cliff Hanna. More in a future issue.



## Welcome Back to Lincoln in 2012 May 1st to May 5th

The May 2012 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 LAFB Reunion is officially underway. The response to the first survey was quite successful. The committee realizes there are a lot more of you still contemplating your decision about coming or you may just believe the survey is not necessary. FYI the survey is important as it provides the information needed to estimate the reunion head count. The survey shows us what events interest you. The survey form on page 11 of this Newsletter will be the last newsletter form until the final reservation form in the last newsletter next March prior to the reunion. So, if you haven't filled out a survey, please do so now, it is not a commitment - - it just helps us put on a better reunion. A young man has been located who is "really" into the history of Lincoln AFB. His name is Robert Branting and if he accepts, will be attending the reunion. Rob is the creator and operator of the LAFB Online Museum website at [www.lincolnafb.org](http://www.lincolnafb.org).

With the information received to date it appears there is enough interest in each of the suggested events. We will be making a brief trip the Veterans Memorial Garden, UN of NE Athletic Facility, Strategic Aerospace Museum, and the Casino. What a person participates in will be strictly a personal choice. The idea was not to plan too many big events, but to let those who come back to Lincoln have time to visit our growing city. There is lots of shopping for the ladies, plus the International Quilt Museum, and many antique shops. In

addition, there are great restaurants in the city. Perhaps your "ole stomping ground" is still standing. Who knows! Taste remains in the same location and same building at 48<sup>th</sup> & Holdrege Street. The original Valentino's also remains in the same location at 35<sup>th</sup> & Holdrege. Should you make the trek to Valentino's, go across the street and have homemade ice cream from the UNL Dairy Store at the Ag College.

To date 107 folks have indicated their intentions to attend the reunion. This is a pretty good start but let's make it even higher, perhaps 250-300. I would very much like to "thank" George and Wauneta Nigh for their hard work. My wife put together a letter for George to mail. The letter was a personal invitation to attend the reunion. From the letters mailed, the response from the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS personnel has been great as well as from "folks" who have never attended a reunion. Let us remember none of us is getting any younger and the end of the reunions could be soon. That is why the reunion in Lincoln is important because this is where it all began in 1954. There are some who may feel the Hotel rate is too expensive, but the cost covers free parking (\$7.00 per day), free full breakfast (\$10-\$15), Hospitality Room and Banquet Room. The parking lot is an enclosed garage attached to the Hotel. The "girls" have been collecting great door prizes to be given during the reunion in the Hospitality Room.

The 307<sup>th</sup> Roster was checked to see just how many members reside in Lincoln, and throughout the state. If each of them would attend we would really have a great reunion. My question to

each of them "Are you interested in coming to the May 2012 Reunion?"

See ya' in Lincoln,  
Billy Williams, Reunion Chairman

**Those Planning To Attend The Reunion Are:** George Nigh, Frank Ott, Jerry Otten, Robert Patterson, Roger Peterson, Jim Rusher, Edward Sennett, Daniel Swift, Eileen Rich, Stan States, Melvin Schultz, Jim Sine, Les Shobe, Jo Tuin, Lionel Woods, Les Walrath, Phillip Walters, Wally Whitehurst, Virgil Jacob, Frank Wanek, TR Taylor, Willard Owensby, Norb Hansen, Donald Fudge, Donn Kimmel, George Brannon, William Bedinger, Larry Boggess, Dick Arens, Dave Bowersock, Tom Cain, Dallas Crosby, AJ Cinnamon, Virgil Domino, Billy Williams, Mike Gingrich, Robert Eells, Bud Flanik, Carlton Jewitt, Alan Kulikowski, Robert Jorgensen, Larry Hall, Sue Lampell, Harold Leppi, Marilyn McKenzie, FC "Mac" McMillin, Wally Mitchell, Bob Matich, Ralph Conner, Dix Howard, Robert Corti, William Crane, Reginald Underwood, Ivan McKinney, Dick Amenell, Hans Lagerloef, Jon Butler, Gene Lee, Earl Bullock, Ronald Monk, Helen Fish, Lois Gallenberger, Roger Beamer, Rudy Nieman, Tony Minnick, Robert Lofredo, Tom Mills, Hank Grogan, Pete Todd.

### INFORMATION FOR CAMP- GROUNDS LO- CATED NEAR LINCOLN



I have received several requests about Camping sites from those who plan to bring their Motor homes/Campers to the 2012 reunion. There are several sites within Lincoln and the county, which will be convenient for you campers. Each site has been checked to verify the services available as well as the price.

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1. Lincoln Race Course Camp-ground: 2400 North 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Phone 402-475-4287
2. Camp-a-Way Camping Park: 200 Campers Circle (Exit 401-A from I-80), Phone 402-476-2282
3. Pawnee State Recreation Area: 3800 NW 105th Street, Phone 402-796-2362, Ngpc.pawnee@ne.gov
4. Branced Oak State Recreation Area: 12000 West Raymond Road, Raymond, NE, Phone 402-783-3400, ngpc.branced.oak@ne.gov

For the Reunion Attendees requiring additional information on Camping, directions or maps, please let me know and I will send the info to you. **We suggest you make your reservations at least 6 months in advance.**

Hopefully we'll see a great number of campers utilizing our local camping facilities. There are two Camper Businesses in Lincoln for supplies and service should there be a need.

... Billy Williams  
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## COLD WAR CORNHUSKERS By Mike Hill

March 18, 2005, I remember it well. While surfing the internet, I ran across the website for the 307<sup>th</sup> BW Association. I just had to see what was inside. I spent several hours going through the site. It was an emotional trip down memory lane. Just before closing out my session, I realized that I found the site exactly 40 years to the day since I had arrived at Minot, after dad was transferred from Lincoln. Perhaps it was an omen.

I found that the Association had tried to put together a unit history book. Sadly, the effort was canceled after several pleas for help. Unit history!!! That seemed right up my alley,

since I had already written several books for Schiffer Publishing. The seed had been planted.

So started an exchange of emails with the officers of the Association to determine if it was feasible to try the project again. Assured that there was plenty of "good stuff" in the Association achieves, I thought we should give it a try and see what we could come up with. The next step was to contact Schiffer Publishing and see if they were interested in publishing the work when finished. Their answer was very positive.

Shortly after getting the "go code", I found myself spending hours in front of the microfilm viewer. Each of the thirteen rolls of official Air Force history of the 307<sup>th</sup> contained more than 2,000 pages. Each page had to be read, and careful longhand notes transcribed. I took over a week to go through a single roll of film. These notes were then put into the computer and printed out. Now, I had two large notebooks of raw history to work with.

Now, if you have ever read "official" military history, then you know that it is about as interesting as watching paint dry. So we had to bring a more personal touch to the history. I started reaching out contacting as many of you as possible, asking for help. The response was better than I had hoped for. There were several members who went "above and beyond" just answering emails from the SAC BRAT. They wanted to be sure that we had as much material as possible.

Writing a history is like putting together a ten year jigsaw puzzle. There were times when I would get an email that sent us off on a tangent to try and pin down something that wasn't found in the "official" history. These were well remembered incidents that no specific date attached. There was the tragic loss of a crewman, when he accidentally walked into a propeller on a KC-97. The NAVY jet that careened into a hanger. The F-80 that crashed into two B-47s on the flight line.

I am from the old school; everything goes on legal pads in longhand, then into the computer. When the first draft was finished, I gave a copy to my dad, Sedge Hill for Christmas. His job was to read it and make suggestions. When I got it back, it was obvious that

he went through at least nine or ten red pencils. Changes were made, updates added, new material placed in the appropriate places. The next draft went out to Pete Todd and Mike Gingrich. I'm sure they didn't know what they were getting themselves into when they "volunteered" to help. They now suffer acute eyestrain and writer's cramp.

The printed page tells the history of the Wing. It bring it back to life we needed photos and diagrams. We literally had hundreds of photos to work with. Almost all of which had never been published in books. The photos were easy to work with, just make a copy and it's ready. The diagrams were, should we say another matter.

The diagrams showing the routes flown by the Wing on various operations were taken from the microfilm. The routes and distances flown were plotted on a large Jet Navigation chart. The results were then redrawn on a smaller map with small silhouettes of aircraft showing the direction of flight. Other diagrams used the same technique to illustrate mass gas refueling and rendezvous for refueling. Other items were taken directly from the Dash 1 for the B-47 and KC-97.

By the time the Wing ventured to Dayton for the Reunion, I was hoping to have word that we had a signed publishing contract from Schiffer Publishing. None the less, my son Jason and I had a wonderful time. We spent the days at the Air Force Museum gathering more photos. The evenings were spent attending the official functions with special folks like Sedge and Wilda Hill, T.R. Taylor, and George Nye and his wife, along with all my new friends in the 307th. By the way, the contract arrived two days after I got back from the reunion.

So there you have it. A short look at how COLD WAR CORNHUSKERS came about. What began on March 18, 2005, turned into a six year trip into the past. And what a trip it was!!! I rekindled friendships that I had when I was a young SAC BRAT at Lincoln and made a lot of new friends along the way.

COLD WAR CORNHUSKERS is the eighth book that I have done

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with Schiffer Publishing. I can truthfully say that I enjoyed doing the book more than any of the others. For the first time, I wrote about people and incidents that I remembered and experienced firsthand as a youngster. It was not only a learning experience it was a personal trip down memory lane.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy the history of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing at Lincoln Air Force Base. Within the covers you will find a lot of memories, good and bad. Hopefully, you will find yourself transported back in time to those hectic days of serving in SAC. Perhaps get a smile or chuckle, maybe shed a tear. If you do, then I have accomplished my mission. My sincere THANKS to all of you for your help and support on this project. Thanks to you, your legacy will live on for future generations. You were the COLD WAR CORNHUSKERS !

*The book is now available from the publisher at Schifferbooks.com and at discount from Amazon.com and Overstock.com. More info is available on our website at 307bwassoc.org.*

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## Now it can be told

### By Anonymous Copilot

#### Proper Names Are Important

The pilots on a B-47 crew shared a recurring extra duty which lasted from dusk until dawn. The Aircraft Commander would sit in the tower with the controllers and basically observe things. The copilot's duty post was downstairs in base ops where he was known as the Airdrome Officer. His duties were to review and sign flight clearances and every four hours to patrol the runways in a government car and look for foreign objects and check braking action. On nights when there is very little transient aircraft action things could get very boring and the regular staff might start telling war stories to amuse themselves.

One story overheard is as follows. It seems that one quiet night a transient T-33 came in and was led to a parking spot by the Follow Me truck, which then gave the pilot a ride to base ops. The pilot intended to remain overnight so he was in need of transportation to the BOQ. He called the base taxi office and said "This is Major Generali and I need transportation to the BOQ". The transportation folks responded that they had a taxi in

the area and would pick him up in 3 minutes and wait out front. He then met the taxi was hustled off to the BOQ.

About 5 minutes later a squeaky clean blue staff car bearing a two star general's flag pulled up in front of base ops followed by the base commander and a retinue of his horse holders.

The base commander looking very upset at being called away from his after dinner cocktail, stormed into base ops, looked around and saw no one other than the usual staff and shouted "Where the hell is Major General Lee?"

It seems that somebody in transportation had misunderstood the name of the individual calling and had called the base command post, and alerted them to a transient major general and had thus activated the welcoming committee and the protocol people. The fallout from this is unknown but knowing SAC it's certain corrective action was taken.

#### Drive Carefully on Runway Patrol

One of the tasks assigned to copilot/Airdrome Officers to make them feel important in their boring overnight tour was that of runway patrol every four hours. This task was performed using the assigned sports car, otherwise noted as the standard Air Force Blue Ford four door sedan. The prescribed course of action was to drive the length of both runways at 30 miles per hour, simultaneously checking for foreign objects on the runway (potential FOD)

and making and recording braking action measurements.

This was done under control of the tower by a radio query and a radio response reinforced by a colored light signal- Green light meaning cleared to the runway, and red meaning get off the runway or hold in place. Braking action was measured using an accelerometer, a 8 inch diameter somewhat circular five pound device that one placed flat on the floor. One would drive along and slam on the brakes. One then read the dial on the face of the meter recorded the reading and also reported it to the control tower. This function was very boring unless there was ice or snow on the runway, then it would be FUN. Naturally, we all drove our patrol at the prescribed 30 MPH, but every copilot in the wing could tell you what the Blue Canoe maxed out at (it was somewhat less than 100 MPH). The task of looking for foreign objects was mostly fruitless: only once in many runway passes did I find anything – a 20 inch screwdriver! Who would carry such a tool a half mile into the middle of nowhere and drop it was beyond me. My usual sequence was to run the main runway from south to north and then take the short diagonal runway southeast toward the civilian terminal. Having done that one cold winter night I drove out the taxiway and stopped at it's intersection with the main runway. I then made a radio call giving my position and asking permission to cross the runway to the LAFB ramp in order

(Continued on page 9)

<b>Treasurer's Report</b>			
<b>307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association</b>			
<b>Ending Balance from last report February 15, 2011:</b>			<b>\$10,817.60</b>
	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	
<b>General Fund Balance</b>			<b>\$10,817.60</b>
Expenses:			
Postal	253.25		
Printing	608.05		
Admin/Equip/Supplies	81.9 0		
Seed money Lincoln reunion	<u>2000.00</u>		
	<b>2943.20</b>		<b>-2943.20</b>
			<b>7874.40</b>
Income:			
Donations	1310.00		
Interest on account	<u>8.63</u>		
	<b>1318.63</b>		<b>+1318.63</b>
<b>Ending Balance June 15, 2011</b>			<b>9193.03</b>
<b>Tony Minnick, Treasurer</b>			



(Continued from page 8)

to return to base ops. The tower gave me a red light – Hold. So I held and turned up the car's heat to counter the cold. I heard a sound in my left ear and turned my head to see a huge snarling dog scratching at my window glass waiting to devour me. Several feet behind Fang I saw an AF Security Guard with his weapon at the ready pointed at me...in the distance I could see the rotating red beacons as security reinforcements were streaking toward me.

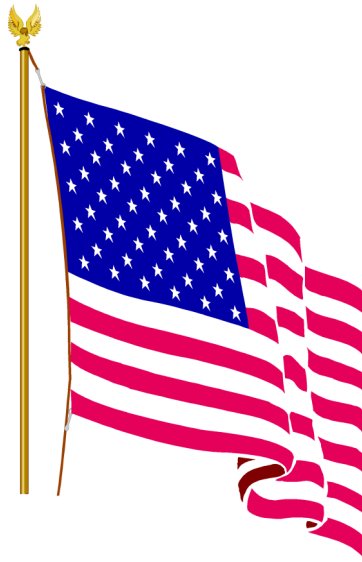
After a deep breath, I cracked the window and managed to communicate with the guard who restrained Fang and apologized, telling me the tower had reported a civilian intruder vehicle on the runway.

A few minutes later after I returned to base ops without bite marks, I phoned the tower to find out what the H was going on. I could hear my aircraft commander laughing deliriously in the background and was told he thought he'd play a joke on me by reporting a civilian vehicle on the runway. Lesson learned: the Aircops were on their toes.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Puns to Forget

King Ozymandias of Assyria was running low on cash after years of war with the Hittites. His last great possession was the Star of the Euphrates, the most valuable diamond in the ancient world. Desperate, he went to Croesus, the pawnbroker, to ask for a loan. Croesus said, "I'll give you 100,000 dinars for it." "But I paid a million dinars for it," the King protested. "Don't you know who I am? I am the king!" Croesus replied, "When you wish to pawn a Star, makes no difference who you are." ...Back in the 1800's the Tate's Watch Company of Massachusetts wanted to produce other products, and since they already made the cases for watches, they used them to produce compasses. The new compasses were so bad that people often ended up in Canada or Mexico rather than California. This, of course, is the origin of the expression -- He who has a Tate's is lost!...Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. Unfortunately, all the Swiss league records were destroyed in a fire, ...and so we'll never know For whom the Tells bowled.



### The Last Flight

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

*I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here I am; send me. Isaiah 6:8*

**Elmer R Andrews**, ARS, Port St Lucie FL, 28 October 2010.

**Audrey M Andrews**, Port St Lucie FL, 2004.

**James E Armstrong Jr**, ARS, Colorado Springs CO, April 2010.

**Marion Bedinger**, Hampton NE, 2004.

**Paul Blinkensop**, ARS, Colorado Springs CO, 12 October 2010.

**Robert D Crooks**, 370<sup>th</sup> BS, Sierra Vista AZ, 1 November 2010.

**Paul V Crotty**, ARS, Vallejo CA, 12 February 2010.

**William H Davern**, ARS, Tucson AZ, 1 March 2011.

**Norman Doland**, ARS, State Hill NY, 10 March 2011.

**Paul F Dostalek**, 371st, Hacienda Hts CA, 26 July 2002,

**Sue Dostalek**, Tucson AZ, 15 March 2010.

**Leo D Finfinger**, Dover DE, 5 February 2011.

**Darrell Raymond Franco**, 2003, Riverside CA.

**Darrell A Gallenberger**, 370, 371, ARS, Wichita Falls TX, 26 March 2011.

**Thomas R Gibbons**, 370<sup>th</sup> BS, Kalispell MT, 18 March 2011.

**Jack Gore, Sr**, ARS, Victorville CA, 22 November 2010.

**Merle Hahn**, 371<sup>st</sup> BS, Saratoga CA, 26 August 2010

**Robert P Hansen**, 424<sup>th</sup> BS, Ft Walton Beach FL, 8 January 2011.

**William C Hathaway**, 372<sup>nd</sup>, San Antonio TX, date unknown.

**Gene Jerew**, ARS, Haines City FL, 27 June 2005.

**Marcella Jones**, Hampton VA, August 1991.

**James L Kent**, 371<sup>st</sup> BS, Ft Worth TX, 6 December 2010.

**William W McLennan**, ARS, Crockett TX, Date Unknown.

**Donald D Nigro**, 424<sup>th</sup> & 372 BS, Scott LA, 14 April 2010.

**Marvin Nystrom**, FMS, Sioux falls SD, 23 October 2007.

**Eleanor Nystrom**, Sioux Falls SD, 1 January 2008.

**Richard H Paul Jr**, AEMS, Winton CA, 16 December 2010.

**Charles L Percell**, 370<sup>th</sup> BS, Portland OR, 11 July 2010.

**Richard P Russell**, ARS, St Petersburg FL, date Unknown.

**Lonnie P Shoop**, FMS, Clovis CA, 2 February 1996.

**Alan Simpkins**, 372<sup>nd</sup> BS, HQS, Hawaii, 4 December 2009.

**Wayne Stout**, AEMS, Bellevue NE, 2 April 1996.

**Carl E Reinke**, 370<sup>th</sup> BS, Oshkosh WI, 2006.

**Bernice Reinke**, Oshkosh WI, 21 April 2010.

**Gerald D Rotter**, 371, 372, 424, HQ, AEMS, Austin TX, 10 February 2011.

**Lois Rotter**, Austin TX, 20 October 2008.

**Sylvia F Tarakanoff**, Sacramento CA, 21 March 2011,

**Harold E Werner**, AEMS, Lincoln NE, 2 June 2011.

**Kristina Werner**, Lincoln NE, 2008.

**James W White**, 372<sup>nd</sup> BS, Allendale NJ, 8 November 2010.

**Robert G White**, HQS, The Villages FL, 13 August 2009.

**Harry Zimmerman**, MMS, Blue Hill NE, 13 August 2009.

## The Meeks Trophy



The N V Meeks Jr Trophy shown here was established by the 307th BW in honor of Major N V "Soldier" Meeks who, in March 1963 sacrificed his life to save his crew and to avoid a school house when his B-47 crashed shortly after takeoff. It was to be awarded for outstanding operational achievement every six months to an aircrew selected by the Wing. The crew names were to be engraved on the trophy.

The first crew to win the award was S-97: Maj. Alfred Hunt (AC), Capt. Roger Beamer (CP) and Capt. Richard Boykin (Nav). They were presented the Trophy on Aug 15, 1963 at a formal Dining In.

The only other awarding of the trophy that we know of was on August 15, 1964 when it was awarded to Maj Glen Hesler's crew.

This trophy and the events it symbolizes are part of the wing's historical heritage for which there is renewed interest with the newly reactivated 307th BW at Barksdale AFB. Consequently, we are anxious to learn of any other awards of the trophy and what may have happened to it following deactivation in 1965.

## Reflex Operations by George Erkes

*(George Erkes is the past president of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group/Wing 1946-1954, a group of valiant B-29 warriors in the Korean War)*

During my five (1,000 hours) of flying the B-47 and nine years (2,000 hours) of flying the B-52, I cannot recall any unusual or exciting experiences that you could write a story about. After a while everything got to be routine - - even flying with nuclear weapons on board and waiting for the 'go-code'. So, what I thought I would do is give you what I can remember about a typical "Reflex" mission and maybe you can make something of it.

Reflex, was the long arm of the Strategic Air Command, (SAC). It was necessary because of the limited range, seven hours, of the B-47. In the 1950s the B-47 was the primary strike force. The three man crews were stationed at state side bases but when on alert status, armed and ready to deliver their bomb load they were deployed to overseas bases in North Africa, England and Alaska. These deployments were of three week duration, before flying back to the States. Usually the crew was home for three or four weeks doing routine training before doing the Reflex trip again.

To fly the Reflex mission the crew and all three crew members had to be combat ready or CR. To become CR a crew member had to go through the pipe line which was over a year of ground and flight training. If selected by SAC your training started with six months of ground and flight training at McConnell AFB, Wichita, KS in the B-47 where you checked out in your crew position. Next was three months of special weapons training on the handling and arming of nuclear weapons. Then, depending on the time of year, you went to Stead AFB, NV for three weeks of winter survival or Avon Park AFB, FL for tropical survival training. In both these locations we were given a parachute and a survival kit like the kind we would normally have during bailout. So, we did have the chute for a tent and in the survival kit along with other survival items, we had a pamphlet

on survival and a .22 caliber rifle. The rifle gave us the ability to kill small game if we could find them.

With this training behind us we were ready to start our final check out at our home base. This consisted of more flying with SAC instructors to qualify us in day and night air refueling, bomb run procedures and working as a crew. Along with more ground training and intense study of our assigned targets with the intelligence section and when they considered the crew ready we had a stand up briefing with the Wing Commander who had to certify that we were Combat Ready.

The day before the crew was scheduled to fly on a Reflex mission was a flight planning day. On this day we prepared maps, filled out performance charts, had a review of target study and received the latest intelligence data on the world situation. Normally three crews were scheduled to fly over in formation so we would have a cell briefing by the flight commander.

On the day of the scheduled flight the crews would arrive at operations three hours before takeoff time to check for any last minute changes and then proceed to the aircraft to load any gear and preflight the aircraft. The TO was in order with #1 lead going first and #2 and #3 following at 30 second intervals. Once airborne they would join up in enroute formation which was echelon to the right at 45 degrees and one mile separation. The lead aircraft would navigate for the flight but each crew would do their own navigation in case the lead had to abort or they had to abort and divert to an alternate airfield. The flight from most state side bases to bases in Africa or England were about eight hours in duration and since the B-47 had only seven hours of fuel it always required in-flight refueling to make the flight nonstop. Flights out of Homestead AFB, FL usually departed around 1900 hours (7PM) to take advantage of the celestial navigation. No GPS at the time. Tankers were pre positioned at Kindley AFB in Bermuda and Lajes AFB in the Azores to give refueling support each way.

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The bombers out of Homestead at 1900 hours would arrive at the air refueling rendezvous point near the Azores about sunrise looking right into the sun. That was always a problem. The rendezvous with the tanker would start about 100 miles separation when the bomber flight would receive a beacon from the tanker leader. Coming together head on at 12 miles a minute at 23 miles separation the tanker formation would start a 180 degree turn and if all went right they would roll out three or four miles ahead of the bomber formation. The bomber lead would start his formation descending to be at one thousand feet below the tanker formation at that point. It was always confusing at that point with all the flashing red and green lights and the sun in your eyes to know if you were lining up behind the right tanker. But with a tanker turning off and on his lights for identification we would get it worked out. It was always a good feeling to hear the boom operator say, "you have your fuel, disconnect on my count of three". A normal fuel transfer of 55,000 lbs. would take 25 minutes of contact time. After the refueling everyone was much more relaxed and unless a sand storm blew in over the destination we had this trip made.

Once on the ground it was sleep for the flight crew - - it was always a long night. While the flight crew slept the ground crew was busy getting the aircraft configured for alert status. Any maintenance had to be corrected, the aircraft refueled and the weapons loaded. The next morning three aircraft would takeoff and return back to the States and the new flight crew would assume alert status with their aircraft. That meant they had to be capable of being airborne with their aircraft within 15 minutes for the next seven days. To do this the crew had to live in what we called the "mole hole", a bunker type building located at the end of the runway right next to where the aircraft was parked. Each day the aircraft was pre-flighted and each switch positioned for a fast start and quick taxi as soon as the engines had power. One pilot would buckle in while the other got the aircraft moving to the runway. When not in the aircraft the crew would eat and sleep in the mole hole and during the day accomplish what ground training they could do so as to give them more free time when at home. There was always the heart stopping sound of Klaxon going off and not knowing if this one was the real thing or just another SAC practice alert.

After seven days of alert the crew was always scheduled for seven days off. This made life as a SAC crew member livable. A C-54 aircraft was usually available for the crew to use for "Rest and Recuperation". Depending on the weather the crew could use the aircraft for a trip to Italy, Europe or England. It was always nice to see something new and do "shopping" at these faraway places. Generally the wives or girlfriends had a list of items they wanted.

The second week of alert always seemed to go much faster. The anticipation of going home was always on your mind. We sweated out the crews, our replacements, coming over. We watch the weather, we hoped all the tankers would make the rendezvous and no one would abort and once they got here the aircraft would be able to be put into alert status. Everyone met the crews when they landed. They always had news from home and most of all they had mail from home. If the aircraft could be put on alert we would be relieved of alert duty the next morning after the incoming crew had their crew rest from the flight over. Once we were relieved we were clear to leave for home and if three aircraft were ready we flew in cell formation, if not we

(Continued on page 12)

### Interest Survey for the 307<sup>th</sup> BW Reunion in Lincoln, May 2012

Please fill this out, clip it, and mail to **Billy Williams at 5546 Enterprise Drive, Lincoln, NE 68521**. Phone 402-438-6061. Or, email to [bwilliams17@neb.rr.com](mailto:bwilliams17@neb.rr.com).

- Do you plan to attend the 2012 reunion?    Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you plan to stay at the hotel?            Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- How many nights are you likely to stay at the hotel (1 to 5)?    \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you need local campground info?            Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Will you drive or fly?                            Drive \_\_\_\_\_ Fly \_\_\_\_\_

Which excursions would interest you? Please circle your interest yes or no.

- Short trip to the Lincoln Veterans Memorial Gardens (location of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bench dedicated in 2000).    Yes No
- Special tour of the Nebraska Athletic Facilities (not many tours are given).    Yes No
- Bus trip to the Strategic Aerospace Museum.    Yes    No
- Day trip to Horseshoe Casino, meal and "free money" from the Casino.    Yes    No
- Free day to visit "ole" friends in the area. Lots of free time for the Ladies to do some shopping, visit the International Quilt Museum, or other interests.    Yes    No
- Would you be interested in dedicating a Bench at the Strategic Aerospace Museum, subject to Museum approval?    Yes No

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Anticipated number of people in your party \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*(Continued from page 11)*

could go individually. A tanker was usually ready for us out of Kindley AFB in Bermuda, if not we would have to land there and refuel. Arriving home was always wonderful. The wives usually met us at the flight line gate and a big hug was in order. Once the hugs were rendered it was "what did you bring me?"

The next thing was to check the schedule - - see if you had to fly the next day or maybe go on home alert. It always depended on the world situation as to what might be scheduled. That was the life of a SAC combat crew during the many years of the "Cold War".



## My Father Who Flew In The Sky Paula (Webber) Coldren

Red White and Blue, my father was true

As he flew oer land sea and sky.

Missions accomplished he landed his planes, only to fly once more.

Hello and good-bye and then I would cry, for my father- who flew in the sky.

Now we are older, time has long passed

Others now fly in his stead.

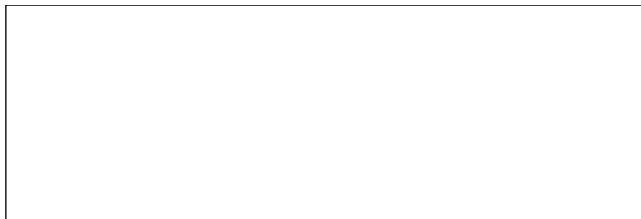
Hello and good-bye they'll say with a sigh as their planes roar over-head.

God was true to my Red White and Blue

My father-who flew in the sky

I am the daughter of Ret. Col Louis A. Webber. He served at Lincoln Air Force Base from 1954 to 1960. He and I often relive memories from his years in the Air Force, especially. Lincoln. I was happy to have been a pre-teen while living on base housing, just across the highway from the base.

There was never a time that I wasn't proud of my dad and will always be grateful and proud that he served our great country. Never once did I hear him complain or show any disrespect for the assignments he carried out, or for those he worked with. I'm also proud to have been part of the 307 th, if only as a dependent. On the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift, which Dad flew 300 missions, I wrote a poem and had it published for him.



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