

THE

The Official Publication of the TAC Recce
Reunion Association — www.tacrecce.org

Spring 2008

RECCE READER

News and Views of TAC Recce from WWII to the Present



Supporting Scotty Schoolfield in his hosting of the 2008 Voodoo/Recce Reunion were daughter Karen Brown, son-in-law Tim Brown, Butch Thomas, son Kevin, secretary Cindy Thomas, daughter-in-law Jennifer Schoolfield, daughter Jennifer Schoolfield, grandson Spencer Schoolfield, daughter Julie Daniel (standing beside Scotty), and Nolen Stanford.

← Two of our WW II Recce vets:
Cecil Rigsby (P-38) and Clyde East (P-51).

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TAC RECCE REUNION 2009

MAY 28 – MAY 31, 2009

HOTEL EL TROPICANO

110 Lexington Ave, San Antonio, Texas
Toll free 866-293-1842 or 888-465-4329

Tell operator group code is TRR
or say "Tac Recce Reunion"

Room rates \$102 — Good two days before and after.

The hotel has a 72 hour cancellation policy.

Hotel information is on line at
<http://www.eltropicanohotel.com/>

HOST: GEORGE WEHLING

512-328-2391 or 512-238-2392

gweh@sbcglobal.net

The combined reunion, which includes all Tactical Reconnaissance Aircrews, will be held from May 28 - 31, 2009 in San Antonio, Texas. Please mark these dates on your calendar and pass the word to those that you know. The registration form will be in next issue of *The Recce Reader* and available for download at www.tacrecce.org.

RECCE ROSTER

A printed copy of the Recce Roster is available by mail for \$5 pp. It's free by email in PDF, Word or Excel. Send your requests to: Bob Gould, 15918 Meadow Lane, Stanley, KS 66224-9741; gould@earthlink.net.

The Recce Reader Spring 2008

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Air Scoops

Recce Reader scoops. Bob Gould gets those once in a while. An example is the story in this issue about why McDonnell ended up producing more than 5,000 Phantoms. For our Reconnaissance fleet, McDonnell built 503 RF-4Cs. The scoop? Read about the central role played by Cecil Rigsby in the Air Force's initial battles swirling around which fighter type to buy.

Some of you were part of other inside stories about major decisions made during our Air Force years. How about sharing some of those stories? Your story does not have to be earth-shaking or breath-taking; just interesting. Tell it like it is (or was), put it down in your computer, and send it in. Short little episodes that bring back memories work fine, too. Or maybe some of the things you did or you knew about, that not many others knew. For example, did you know there were some missions flown by Recce crews in Vietnam that were on a strict need-to-know basis? They were so strict that the pilot "hid" from fellow pilots to do his flight planning for those missions, and never talked about them to other crews.

You've probably been promising yourself for decades you're going to write a book. Where is it? Now's the time to record at least a few of your favorite stories. Write 'em up and send 'em in, while you can still remember 'em, and the rest of us can still fully appreciate 'em.

Of This and That

Bob Gould had a lot of first-rate help in the photography department, judging by the photos from our Chattanooga Reunion (below and on pp. 8-11). We owe much to Scotty Schoolfield, family and friends for putting together an outstanding reunion. Scotty and family are shown on the front page. And no, Nolen is not part of that family. It's just a case of "See camera - jump in." (This compulsion may be a symptom of Phocalphobia - too many close encounters with phrigging phlares in his Recce night-phlying.)

Our next reunion will be in San Antonio, hosted by George Wehling. That one is beginning to look like it will be well-attended, so read about it in this issue and make your plans (and reservations) early. With George at the helm, how can it not be another dandy?

—Carlos Higgins

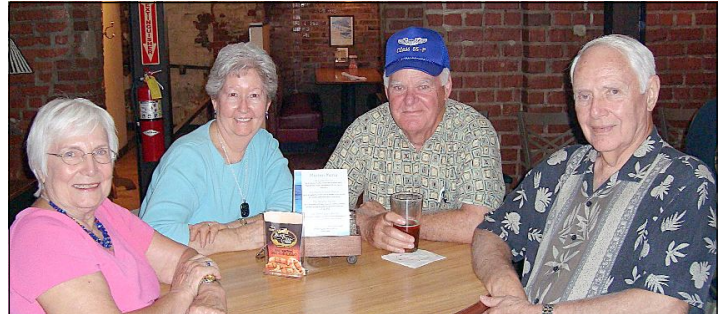


The humor boys, Marv Reed (left) and Al Magazine (right), with "Griff" Griffin. Griff was host of the reunions at The Dells and Branson, He's been known to tell a joke or two himself.

Time Rolls On

Searching thru the 300 plus photos of the Chattanooga Reunion sent to me from various sources really made me sad, but only because I wasn't there. Our granddaughter, Sarah, was graduating about the same time from the University of Hawaii.

Life hasn't been a total bore here in Kansas. In August, Carlos and Katherine Higgins were in Kansas City and we had a grand dinner with them at Cafe Des Amis in Parkville.



Marj, Katherine, Carlos and Bob at the Power Plant Brewery

Roger and Dolores McLain's son, Kurt (he and wife, Kim, live in Lawrence, Kan.) called to say Mom and Dad were visiting and suggested we meet for dinner. We agreed and so it happened at Jack Stack Barbecue in Martin City.



Kim & Kurt McLain



Roger and Dolores McLain

About a week later, I received a call from Charlie Bukoski. He was a navigator in the RF-4 in my squadron at Sunny Zwei, but is now a pilot and big shot in Quiet Birdmen. The QBs were having their annual Governor's Conference at the KC Hangar and Charlie and Judy would be arriving in their Greyhound bus/travel home. We met them at the Airline History Museum and gave them a tour and dinner in Kansas City's festive Power & Light District.



Marj & Bob Gould with Charlie and Judy Bukoski

It was a real pleasure to see Charlie walking and driving the bus after his near-death experience in Utah last year.

—Bob Gould

Pentagon Battle for the RF-4C

It turned out to be a battle royal

By Cecil Rigsby
Col. USAF (Ret)

With an RF-4C Reunion pending in Austin, Texas, some of you pilots and others who flew or were associated with this magnificent flying machine may want to know how it came about to be selected by USAF. I was there and participated in what turned out to be a battle royal so here is my experience in the Pentagon with the RF-4C decision.

In 1959 I graduated from the Air Command and Staff Course at The Air University and was assigned to AFOOP, Air Force Operations, Reconnaissance Group, in the subbasement of the Pentagon. I thought my best fit would have been Reconnaissance Requirements because I had extensive reconnaissance experience; 91 photo recon combat missions, P-38, WWII; First jet photo recon squadron, P-80 and RF-80, 1945; Chief Pilot aerial survey company, 18-months 1946-47; 100 tactical reconnaissance missions, RF-80 and RF-86 Korea; RF-100 overflight mission in Europe, 3-years. Unfortunately, I had a bad relationship with Colonel Fred Dyer, Commander, Reconnaissance Requirements, ever since I was a member of his accident board that charged him with pilot error. However, one of my best friends, Major Bert Dowdy, a fellow 1959 ACSC classmate got the requirements job and we worked closely together.

I was the lowest ranking Major in the Reconnaissance Group when I reported in for duty. The Commander told me that I would be responsible for all day tactical reconnaissance squadrons: active, National Guard and Reserve. And another officer was responsible for all the night squadrons. The rest of our officers were managing highly classified world-wide reconnaissance projects. The first paper I picked up indicated that on the day before, Colonel Dyer, Reconnaissance Requirements, had signed off on the RF-105 as the follow-on tactical reconnaissance replacement.



When I went through the document I found the RF-105 offered little if any advancement over the RF-101 that was in the pipeline. The cameras and sensors had to be in a bathtub affair that provided very little space. The forward shooting camera arrangement did not show the horizon and there were not enough stations to provide the necessary configurations. Also, the F-105 was old technology and the radar provided little if any low altitude navigation assistance and was primarily an air-to-air radar. I told my boss that the RF-105 was not the answer for a follow-on tactical reconnaissance airplane and pointed out the deficiencies. He agreed, and told me to prepare a briefing for the AFOOP Commander (a Major General who later became a full General (but I can't recall his name)

When I finished briefing the AFOOP Commander, he said to me, "You have told me why you don't believe the RF-105 will be a suitable follow-on tactical reconnaissance aircraft, but you have not told me the airplane you want to replace it. Come back with a replacement and we will talk. How can you fault that kind of logic? It hadn't even occurred to me to include a recommended aircraft. I looked around to see what was available. There was the North American Navy R-5A that had a limit of five Gs max, and another limited bathtub arrangement for sensors and a very poor sensor selection. I dismissed it out-of-hand. Then there was the McDonnell F-110 being marketed as an

interceptor. These two were the only aircraft available.

I called the local McDonnell representative and asked him if he would come in and give us a briefing on the reconnaissance version of the F-110 if he had one. Again, the cameras suggested by McDonnell were nothing new but I was really surprised by the performance of the airplane. It was a 2.25 Mach airplane with a 60,000 foot altitude service ceiling, good range, two cockpits, and a very large nose compartment when the radar was removed. I lost no time in getting all the information down and prepared my briefing for our Commander.

When I briefed the General I got another dose of his logic. He asked me how many aircraft we needed for tactical reconnaissance. I told him the first buy would be for 87-airplanes. Then he said, "The Air Force is not going to purchase 87 completely different airplanes compared with the rest of the inventory. If you want this McDonnell airplane you better get the fighters involved. If they also want the airplane you have a good chance of getting it for tactical reconnaissance. Go brief them."

The AFOOP Tactical Division was the largest in our Directorate. They had four full Colonels, and about 20-Lt.Cols. and Majors. I arranged to brief their Commander, a Colonel who later became a three star general and the Commander of Ninth Air Force.

I briefed him on why we didn't like the RF-105 and why we wanted the reconnaissance version of the McDon-



▶▶ nell F-110. I also told him that the AFOOP Commander had told me to brief them to see if they had any interest in a fighter version of the F-110. Bear in mind that they had already signed off on about 600 additional F-105s even though they were getting more and more dissatisfied with the airplane. The first combat wing was yet to become combat ready, it was a maintenance nightmare and far too many manual systems for a single pilot. On top of that the airplane had a terrible accident record. I believe he was more surprised than I was at the performance factors of the F-110.

"Are you sure those figures are right?" he asked me. I told him I got them from McDonnell. He got up from his desk, thanked me and said that he was going to Edwards Air Force Base and fly the F-110 in the near future.

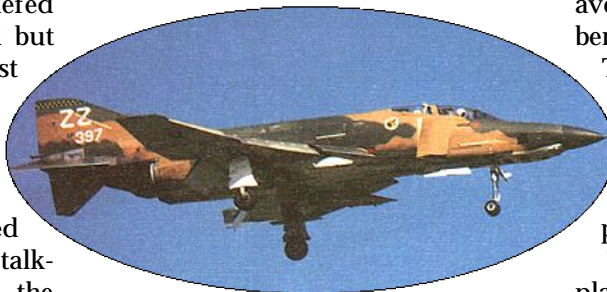
After this briefing I got my friend Bert Dowdy involved in Reconnaissance Requirements and I briefed Colonel Dyer. He was interested but not ready to go back on his first decision. We were committed to the RF-105 unless something happened. We made several trips to Republic Aviation to see the mockup of the RF-105 and started switching to modern sensors and talking about different cameras. At the same time we were calling McDonnell in and working with them on a reconnaissance configuration. When McDonnell sensed that there was a possibility of selling the F-110 for tactical reconnaissance they immediately put 85 engineers on development of the reconnaissance version of the airplane. Bert Dowdy and I flew out to the plant to talk about the early phase of a reconnaissance configuration.

Here is a little background of interest: President Eisenhower told the armed forces, as the Cold War was heating up, that the US and NATO would go immediately to the use of nuclear weapons if attacked. Our tactical fighters stopped gunnery training and concentrated on delivery of small nuclear weapons. But when President Kennedy came into office in January 1961, he told the armed forces that he wanted a conventional weapons response capability. Our entire Air Force had to switch back

to aerial gunnery, ground attack with iron bombs and what a shock to SAC. They had to train all their B-52 and B-47 crews to drop iron bombs. This conventional weapons policy also meant an increase in tactical forces including reconnaissance.

When General LeMay became Air Force Chief of Staff the word went out that he wanted a second source to produce fighter and reconnaissance aircraft. Buying more F/RF-105s didn't appeal to him. At this point the fighters said they wanted the McDonnell F-110 and the designation of the airplane was changed to the F-4. The reconnaissance decision makers said that they wanted the RF-4. At this point the Pentagon battle began but we didn't know it yet. The Air Council approved the F/RF-4 and McDonnell put about every engineer they had on these weapon systems and hired more.

There was a reorganization of the



AFOOP Reconnaissance Group and I was the only tactical reconnaissance officer transferred to the Tactical Division. I was to remain there for three years and I was responsible for all day and night, active, National Guard and Reserve, tactical reconnaissance matters for our Directorate. The Reconnaissance Group was now called Special Activities and went completely classified. I got a seat on the Reconnaissance Board in the Requirements Directorate and I only had to convince my fighter pilot boss that my recommendations were good for tactical reconnaissance.

Bert Dowdy and I began to work closely together. We called in representatives from all the major commands to make recommendations for the configuration of the RF-4 which was given the designation of RF-4C. Major Paul Vanderhoek from USAFE made a number of important recommenda-

tions. One was for a single-sideband communication capability for low altitude communication and several more. The configuration of the RF-4C was to be based on a general war in Europe, the most demanding scenario. All the sensor and camera development people on the Air Staff met to discuss the latest developments that could meet the production schedule of the RF-4C. AFSC, responsible for development of reconnaissance equipment, did not have much to offer. Every idea: new cameras or sensors, side-looking radar, night capability, terrain-following radar, navigation system, etc. was passed on to McDonnell who responded on feasibility within a very reasonable time. So the aircraft configuration was beginning to take shape.

Would you expect Republic Aviation to sit still with this second source decision? They pulled out every stop to avoid losing millions on the great number of F/RF-105s that were planned.

Their opposition was almost a hundred percent political with their Senators and Congressmen complaining to the Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara and probably the President.

They were not the only ones to complain about the F/RF-4C decision. The Navy had ordered 100 North American A-3J Vigilantes (A-5) to use as nuclear bombers. The nuclear weapon was stored internally and ejected through a long chute out the rear of the airplane. The concept did not work so the Navy was stuck with 100 airplanes and no mission. It was decided to turn them all into Navy reconnaissance aircraft, the RA-5C.

North American, seeing a chance to sell even more RA-5s and F-5s too, also complained bitterly to Secretary McNamara and more or less demanded a competition or equal consideration between the F/RA-5, the F/RF-105 and the F/RF-4C. The Navy would have been delighted to diminish their big error in purchasing the 100 North American airplanes that didn't work and Republic claimed to have already done considerable work on the RF-105. At this point the battle began between the three weapon systems. Not only did ▶▶

▶▶ we have to justify the RF-4C but we had to shoot down the other two systems.

The RF-4C was hands down the superior weapon system but Republic and North American kept copying all the advances we had made with the RF-4C configuration. We had McDonnell burning midnight oil in keeping up with our demands, but when we improved our capability the other two systems added it to theirs.

One day the Air Force received a letter signed by Secretary McNamara directing the Navy RA-5 as the follow-on Air Force tactical reconnaissance aircraft. Many felt defeated at this point but we didn't give up. We found out that the letter was written by a member of McNamara's staff who was a former Vice President of North American. This made us believe that McNamara had not been given the full story. Also, we knew that the decision was political so we called upon the Air Force Secretary to intercede. In addition, our generals went to bat for us; then the Marine Corps came out in our support. The Marines wanted the RF-4B but had not made much noise until this letter came through. They supported the RF-4C and we finally got the Army to support the selection of the RF-4C. With the fighters firmly behind the F-4, we were now assured of the decision in our favor.

In some respects the fighters decided some basic configurations that we went along with. One was full pilot controls in each cockpit. They were so fed up with the F-105 situation that they wanted two pilots, one to be called the systems operator. In addition this would be an easy upgrade to move the pilot from the back cockpit to the front. To get two sets of pilot controls they had to specify two pilots. This also doubled the pilot training program. That came in handy when Vietnam came along and we went to Navigators in the rear cockpit. They wanted the tail hook the Navy used and made other modifications to the Navy version. I discussed at length the value of the single-sideband, low altitude, communication capability we were getting but for some reason they

didn't believe it was of much value. Were they ever wrong?

For every weapon system the contractor must receive summarized aircraft configuration guidance from the government. Bert Dowdy and I were given the task of writing this document. We came into the Pentagon one weekend, sat in my office and prepared these instructions. Each camera, sensor, etc. and other requirements had already been discussed time and again with all concerned but this was an opportunity to let the contractor know how the Air Force was going to



employ the RF-4C. Here are some of the important capabilities that you RF-4C lovers already know about:

1. The aircraft must be capable of day and night, all-weather tactical reconnaissance and have a 90 percent probability of successful sensor and aircraft operation on the mission before takeoff.

2. The side-looking radar was only capable of a 50-foot resolution but we decided that 50-feet would show the ground zero of a nuclear weapon and be valuable with bridges and other targets when encountering zero or poor visibility. We called for side-looking radar, the most expensive sensor at \$175,000, on every aircraft but later a Pentagon money man came to me and requested that we change the requirement to every other airplane so he could manage the funding. I told him that it would be okay for the first buy but after that all the aircraft should receive the sensor. It never happened so we ended up with the side-looking radar on every other aircraft.

3. All film was to be five-inch except for the mapping camera that was a precision camera, using nine-inch film in a controlled vertical camera mount.

Some questioned the mapping capability but the world was not very well mapped in the early 1960s. Also, we wanted to eject a roll of film to an Army unit using the mapping camera where the film was developed in the magazine. The Army continually claimed that we could not get intelligence to them fast enough. McDonnell never could make it work.

4. We called for the very best infrared sensor available, the best panoramic cameras under development and were disappointed that no high altitude panoramic camera was on the horizon. The only thing suitable was a 12-inch focal length precision pan camera with over 100 lines of resolution. This proved unsatisfactory but years later they would develop a high altitude panoramic.

5. We were amazed that Texas Instrument came up with a terrain following radar that worked and permitted the RF-4C to safely penetrate weather over mountainous areas to fairly low altitudes.

6. When we told McDonnell we wanted flash cartridges of both sizes they gave the aircraft the capability.

7. We didn't put enough priority on the viewfinder for the pilot and the first few production airplanes had to be retrofitted.

8. Bert Dowdy and I went through every possible combination of cameras ending up with a series of camera combinations that we listed in the requirements document. This listing also resulted in the determination of how many cameras and magazines of each type the squadron of 18-RF-4Cs should be authorized.


9. We submitted the document to AFSC who sent it to McDonnell. After a couple of weeks and after studying their guidance, McDonnell requested that Bert Dowdy and I come to their factory and answer questions. We were on the stage looking at about 50-McDonnell engineers, representing various capabilities wanting more details in some areas and giving us their interpretation of some of the requirements. At that time McDonnell was also in the manned space business so they knew exactly how to ensure that the Systems Operator could test all of ▶▶

▶▶ his capabilities from his station and meet that 90-percent requirement for success. The USAF had previously told McDonnell that we wanted to keep the nuclear strike capability already built into the airplane and to wire off the folding wings. Aerial refueling was the same for all F/RF-4s.

I haven't mentioned it but price was also a factor in deciding between the RF-4C and the other two competing aircraft. As a result that first buy from McDonnell for 138 airplanes was about as cheap as you will ever purchase a first line aircraft. We paid 3.4 million dollars program-cost for each airplane. That included all the simulators and support equipment. I'm sure the second and third buys were more expensive.

Did we know at the time that the RF-4C would be the last tactical reconnaissance aircraft purchased by the Air Force? We did not and before I left the Pentagon we had a long range requirement in for the RF-15. We also had one in for the RF-111 but the RF-4C had so much capability and performance that none of these long range programs materialized. We decided to phase out the RB-66 (night-recce version) first and replace the squadrons with RF-4Cs. After that the RF-84s were replaced by the RF-4Cs leaving the Air Force with RF-4Cs and RF-101s. Because of the buildup in conventional forces our active duty squadrons went from 12 to 14.

Now you know more about the RF-4C than you wanted to know but all of you who have served on the Air Staff in the Pentagon know that most of the work is done by the Majors and Lt. Cols. So you are not surprised by what I have written. When I left the Pentagon for the Air War College I had no idea that it would be four years before I got to fly the RF-4C. General Blood latched on to me when I graduated and I spent three years in NATO and 4ATAF flying T-33s. I checked out at Shaw in both the RF-101 and the RF-4C and split my 148 combat missions in Vietnam between the two airplanes. These Voodoo pilots swear by the RF-101 but nothing can compare to piloting the RF-4C.

What an airplane. 

Letters and Email

Mrs Ingrid Stockreiser

I have received several letters and phone calls from Ingrid regarding her husband, Emile "John" J. Stockreiser. I've not personally met her in person, but it's been a pleasure to talk to her.

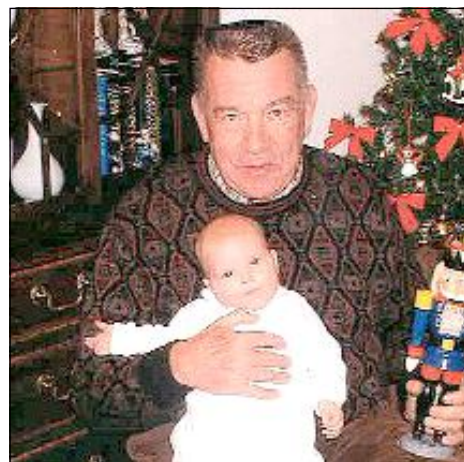
Emile passed away October 14, 2006 while he and Ingrid were visiting in the United States. They were in a hotel in Atlanta when Emile apparently had a heart attack. Fortunately, Sam and Dale Stuckey were nearby and were able to assist Ingrid in making final arrangements made doubly difficult because they were in a foreign country.

John checked out in the RF-4C at Shaw AFB in 1966 and then was shipped to RAF Alconbury to the 32 TRS. John went to Tan Son Nhut in 1967. He joined the 17th TRS at Zweibrucken in 1969 and that is when I first knew him.

John was a confirmed bachelor and everyone was shocked when Ingrid convinced him to get married. They have a daughter Christine and a granddaughter Laura. They have lived in Garmish where John worked with the Armed Forces recreation program.

Ingrid has been trying to learn about John's flying hours and has been unable to locate his Form 5. I have sent her some sources for obtaining information - a member of Congress and the National Records Center - and hopefully she will be successful.

Ingrid's address is Box R293, Unit



E.J. "John" Stockreiser with granddaughter Laura born Aug. 23, 2002.

Photo courtesy Sam Stuckey

24514, APO AE 09053-R293. Her phone number is 011-49-8821-59125.

— Bob Gould

Al Ziemba's little boy

This was taken in about 1964. Dad would have been 35 and a Captain and I was 4!

—Richard Ziemba



Reunions

RAF Alconbury/Chelveston Reunion

Sept. 24 - 27, 2009

Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport, Washington, D.C.

Contact: Art Modgling — irmamm@stx.rr.com

People who served at either base in England are invited.

We had a 1st TAC (RF-4C) reunion all from 1965 - 1970 time frame, in Las Vegas in 2005. We had about 90 attend. In 2007 we met in Tucson, (found my aircraft in the boneyard) and had 27 attend. I decided to put together a reunion to include everyone from Alconbury/Chelveston from beginning to base closing. I have 44 signed up now hoping for more.

RAF Alconbury
1st TAC Crew Chief 1966 - 1969
12th TAC Crew Chief 1970 - 1971

Art Modgling
102 Aspen Drive
Kerrville, TX 78028



Voodoo/Recce Reunion 2008



By Scotty Schoolfield

The 2008 Voodoo/Recce reunion was a highly successful event, if the emails and letters that I received are any indication. We had 215 people who came, had a good time, and left. As always, people started arriving on Wednesday and departed on Sunday. By noon on Sunday, the Choo Choo Hotel looked as if nothing had ever happened.

I was very fortunate to have many people volunteering to assist in the various chores. Donna Martin started in December preparing to send out registration forms and processing the completed registrations as they came in.

We were very "hi-tech" in that the bank I selected in Chattanooga has a branch in Austin where Donna lives. She deposited the money in Austin and I spent it in Chattanooga. She also prepared name tags prior to coming to Chattanooga. Bob Gould spun his computer magic, as he always does, and sent post cards to those who don't have e-mail capability, sent many notes and updates, and even kept an up to date list on the web site of people as they registered.

Arrangements for the hotel, tours,

meals, etc. were fairly slow and methodical up until about three weeks before the reunion date. At that time things began happening at a fast pace. Fortunately for me, my very talented and enthusiastic secretary, Cindy Thomas, was always available when I needed her. Most of the attendees probably remember her bubbly personality during the reunion. John and Linda Duquette, the web masters, brought lots of food and youthful

Carolyn Rogers, Diane Tschida, Jane Reese and others did the dining decorations; Murph Lustig, Jane Linihan and others operated the registration desk; Murph also got up early every morning and made coffee for the masses;

Don Karges collected photos taken and put them on the discs that the attendees should have received by now. And, as usual, Chuck Lustig, Mike Tschida, and John Linihan supervised the whole operations and

made sure that their wives did their jobs properly (yeah, sure). I'm sure that I have omitted others who assisted; for this, I apologize.

Recce Emeritus pilots, Clyde East and Cecil Riggsby were ever present at the reunion. They related stories of their vast and interesting experiences with Recce versions of the P-51, P-38, RF-80, RF-84 and RF-4C. What a pair!

I was in flying school class of 55-H with Recce pilots Bud Beadles, Nolen Stanford, and Ken Ekberg. (I haven't seen Ken in several years). I regret not having spent more time with them and other friends in attendance. The Polka Dots were there in force as they always are.

I look forward to going to San Antonio next year. I hope that everyone will support George Wehling, as they did me, in his role as host of Voodoo/ Recce Reunion 2009.



Scotty Schoolfield (third from left) poses with WW II vets Cecil Riggsby and Clyde East along with Voodoo speed demon Bob Sweet.

enthusiasm to the event. Their support was greatly appreciated.

As reunion day arrived, Hank and Harriet Scherer stepped up to the plate and managed the hospitality bar and snack tables throughout the entire reunion. I can truthfully attest that this bunch of Recce Pukes and their spouses are still able to swizzle large quantities of adult beverages and partake of the chips, dips and "horse d'oeuvres."

Jerry Rogers handled the tours;



Voodoo/Recce Reunion 2008 Scrapbook

Thanks to Cindy Chamblee, Roger Brockhoff, Virginia Hare, Nolan Stanford and George Swagel for the Reunion photos



George Swagel with Martha & Jim Fosdick



Ginny & Rabbit Hare in their railway car.



Is Dick Bidlack ignoring the warning?



Joyce Sweet, Rabbit Hare and Bob Sweet



Hank Scherer managing the bar.



Fran Brockhoff, Ray Tiffault and Murph Lustig



Harriet Scherer and Murph Lustig



Scotty with our webmeister, John Duquette, and his wife, Linda Suttlehan.



Chuck & Murph Lustig



Carolyn Rogers and Hilda Swanson



George & Jo Jo Edwards



Homer Lee and George Edwards

Voodoo/Recce Reunion Scrapbook



Hank Curry and Doug Tingley



Jo Jo Edwards and George Hall



Dick Johnson and Carlos Higgins



"Goldie" Goldfein always has a smile.

Posing around the RF-101 model are: Fran & Roger Brockhoff, Janet & Jack Langille, Don & Evy Hunt and Katherine & Carlos Higgins.



Mike & Diane Tschida



Toni & Dick Newbury



Ray Hinely and John Linihan



Donna Lee chats with BJ & Donna Martin.

Three lovely Recce ladies: Joy Stanford, Katherine Higgins and Jo Jo Edwards.



The Recce Reader, Spring 2008

Voodoo/Recce Reunion Scrapbook



The 45th TRS Polka Dots pose for their traditional photograph. I was a proud member of this squadron before they had the jackets. - bg



Nolen & Joy Stanford with Dan & Phyllis Waddle



Jerry Rogers, Ray Tiffault and Cecil Rigsby



*Webmeisters present and past:
John Duquette and Charlie Bukoski*



Train Station



Remembering our POWs

When the Brockhoffs and Langilles got together at Upper Heyford -- beware!



Final Flights

Richard "Dick" Campbell,

Richard Allen Campbell, 85, passed away Friday, Aug. 1, 2008, following a brief hospitalization.

Dick was born Feb. 1, 1923, in Newark, N.J. He joined the Army Air Corps and graduated from cadet training.

During World War II, Dick flew transport aircraft in North Africa.

He was later selected to fly the Berlin Airlift. In 1949, he was reassigned to the Strategic Air Command's 301st Bomb Wing, first in Salina, Kan., and then at Barksdale AFB, La. There he met his future wife, Eva Evelyn Stuart. They were married in the Barksdale AFB Chapel on Nov. 25, 1950. Dick subsequently flew KB-29 tankers and the RB-47.

In 1960, Dick was selected to fly the B-58 Hustler. When the B-58 program was terminated, Dick went to a tactical unit in England where he flew the RF-4C. Near the end of his tour of duty there, his plane malfunctioned and he bailed out into the North Sea, where he was rescued by a Dutch frigate.

Dick's final assignment was with a B-52 bomb wing at Wurtsmith AFB, Mich., where he retired in 1974 after 31 years in the Air Force. He is survived by his wife, Eva Stuart Campbell; daughter, Cheryl Widmer Campbell; son, Richard Stuart Campbell, three grandchildren, a sister, and several nephews.

Charlotte E. Woodyard

Charlotte E. Woodyard passed away July 21, 2008 in Austin, Texas, at the age of 78.

She was a very patriotic American and supporter of the military through numerous activities and participation of organi-



Dick Campbell



Charlotte Woodyard

zations and volunteer groups supporting her former husband, Col. Jean K. Woodyard retired Air Force, (deceased) over the past 53 years. She was a member of Redeemer Lutheran Church and lived in Austin for 37 years. Charlotte is survived by her daughter, Carol Wilson and husband Gary; a son, Curtis Woodyard and three grandchildren.

Lenadelle Ream

Lenadelle Ream, 83, wife of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Clyde W. Ream, died Tuesday, August 19, 2008 at the home of her son in Blythewood after a long illness. She was born in Rockwood, Penn. March 21, 1925. She married Clyde Ream in 1946, and after his retirement from the US Air Force, they made their home in Sumter.

She always found enjoyment in life, especially in her family. She made homemaking and gardening an art and took much pleasure in volunteering for 30 years at Shaw AFB Hospital. She was a member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church, participating actively until recent years when incapacitated by a stroke.

Mrs. Ream is survived by her husband; a son, Jeffrey L. Ream a granddaughter and a grandson.

Clyde Ream lives at 5450 Oakland Dr, Sumter, SC 29154; jeffream46@hotmail.com

Col. Travis Billingsley

Retired Col. James "Travis" Billingsley, USAF, 69, of Signal Mountain, died Sunday, Aug. 3, 2008.

A native of Chattanooga, he was a 1957 graduate of Red Bank High School and a member of its Hall of Fame. He earned MBA and also master's degrees in political science, science systems management and science education. He attended Air Command and Staff College and Air War College. Travis served 31 years with the Force as a pilot flying 200 combat missions and serving as an instructor pilot, plans and training, squadron commander, organization commander, director of operations and director of NATO Air Board.

Travis was a member and past president of the Signal Mountain Lions Club. The Lions Club International Foundation named him a Melvin Jones Fellow for dedicated humanitarian service.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Mildred Agee Billingsley, and his first wife, Linda Roberts Billingsley.

Travis is survived by his wife, Dixie Billingsley; two daughters, Sarah Henry Coble, and Alexis Henry; a sister; two brothers; a granddaughter and several nieces and nephews.

Janie "Mimi" Wagner

Janie "Mimi" Wagner passed suddenly on May 31, 2008 at her home in Lago Vista, Texas, after a full life of delivering joy to those around her.

The story of her life began on Halloween in 1925 where she grew up in Somerset, Penn. with her two brothers, who spent most of their time keeping her out of trouble. Mimi was a role model for how to live life. She moved with grace, class and kindness in everything she did and her presence lit up the rooms she dwelled in.

In 1950 she married Joseph Wagner of Central City, Penn., and together they shared 55 years together. She lived all over the world and her spirit touched everyone along the way. She served on the Lago Vista School Board, and throughout her life she participated in organizations that promoted education and support of the Nation's military.

Her husband, Joe Wagner, spent many years in Recce flying the RB-66. He passed away in 2006..

—Gerry Parker gparker@pmkc.com

Phil Harvell

Phil Harvell died August 27, 2008. He was 78. Phil flew the RF-101 from 1965 - 1968 in the 17th TRS at Laon, France and Upper Heyford, England (where he was Ops Off). From there he ▶▶



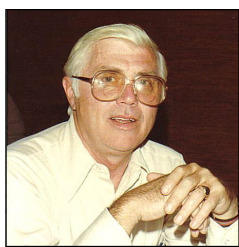
Janie Wagner

▶▶ went to the 45th TRS at Tan Son Nhut where he continued to fly the RF-101. Following the SEA tour he was at Shaw AFB.

Among his survivors are his wife Gretchen who lives at 14

Camden Ct., Fairfield Glade, Tenn 38558; phone 931-484-4464.

—Carlos Higgins
carlostm@sbcglobal.net



Phil Harvell

Les Alumbaugh

It is with sadness that I must tell you that our good flying buddy and friend, Les Alumbaugh passed away on 27 July 2008. It has been one year since his brain tumor was discovered, and with all the surgery and treatments since, his body just shut down.

Les was in the Air Defense Command flying F-86Ds and then F-102s. His Recce experience began in the 19th TRS at RAF Bruntingthorpe in England flying RB-66s.

Les was the 363rd Wing project officer for the RF-4Cs introduction into USAF and was CO of the 4415th CCTS Combat Crew Training Center at Shaw. He was in the 16th TRS at Shaw and then deployed with the first RF-4C unit to Vietnam. After Vietnam he was TAC Headquarters DOO. Following retirement from the military he had a long career with FAA Washington Center (Vienna).

Pat Alumbaugh lives at 1430 Filene Ct, Vienna, VA 22182; lstralm@aol.com.

—“Soupy” Campbell SupyC@aol.com

Mike Gebren

Mike Gebren, (LTC USAF Ret), a former Recce pilot died on Saturday, July 26th after a long battle with colon cancer. Mike is survived by his wife Sue, their twin daughters Maggie and Katy, their son Stephan and respective spouses.

Mike attended pilot training at Webb AFB and then was stationed at Shaw AFB for RF-4 training. In December of 1972 he was transferred to Zweibrucken AFB in Germany to join the 17th TRS. It wasn't long after that that he

and Sue were married. Jim (Doc) and I lived in the same village of Kirrberg, a few blocks from Mike and Sue.

We traveled together on occasion, including trips to Belgium to "antique." A few months ago when I visited Sue and Mike in Bedford, Texas, he reminisced about one such trip, wanting to know if I still had that massive old stove that he and Jim had struggled to get into the trunk of our car. He laughed, remembering what a sight we must have been as we "limped" our way back to "Sunny Zwei," bumper almost scraping the ground.

After leaving Germany, Mike and Sue were stationed at McDill AFB and later went on to Bergstrom. It was at that time that Mike left active duty and accepted a position at Lockheed Aircraft in Fort Worth, Texas. At Lockheed he worked as an electrical engineer with a career that spanned 25 years. He was attached to the Reserve Wing at Fort Worth Naval Air Station.

Sue and her family may be reached at 255 Somerset Ter., Bedford, TX 76022; sgebren1@tx.rr.com.

—Pat Doherty
speech_lady2000@yahoo.com

Winifred Mahan Nelson re: Libby Nelson Singleton

"Wyn" Nelson, 88, a 38-year resident of Colorado Springs, passed away on 9 July 2008. Wyn was born March 22, 1920 and married Daniel Jack Nelson on June 5, 1945 upon his graduation from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, and committed the next 58 years to her husband until his passing on February 18, 2004.

For many of those years, she was an Air Force wife and mother facing the challenges of frequent moves throughout the United States and overseas and raising their six children while Jack was often deployed.

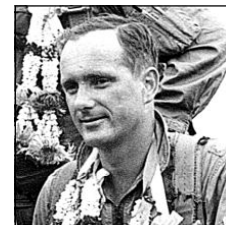
She is survived by her children, Mary Ellen Spahr, Libby Singleton, Daniel Jr., Trish Nelson, William Nelson, and Terri Lujan; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



"Wyn" Nelson

Bobby Joe "BJ" Martin

Col. Bobby Joe "BJ" Martin made his last flight Sept. 7, 2008 in Austin, Texas at the age of 74. Col. Martin was born on Jan. 27, 1934 in Vera, Texas to Goldie Bell and Johnny Martin, the youngest of 11 children. He graduated from East Texas State Univ. in May 1955 with a Bachelor of Music Education and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force through the AFROTC program.



BJ at completion of
100 RF-4 missions

BJ spent the majority of his Air Force career as a Tactical Reconnaissance pilot and Instructor pilot flying over 4000 hours in the RF-84F, RF-101C and RF-4C. He participated in many missions during the Cold War including the 1958 Lebanon Crisis and 1962 Cuban Crisis. During the Vietnam War he completed 100 combat missions over North Vietnam flying the RF-4C. After 29 years of active duty, he retired from the Air Force - the passion of his life.

Over the course of his career he was stationed in many places including Kadena AB, Okinawa, Udorn AB, Thailand; Incirlik AB, Turkey (as Base Commander); Ramstein AB, Germany; Chanute AFB; Shaw AFB and Bergstrom AFB (as 12th TRS Commander). Among his many military decorations and awards are: two Distinguished Flying Crosses; three Meritorious Service Medals; 12 Air Medals; and the Joint Forces Expeditionary Medal.

On Feb. 14, 1959 BJ married Carolyn Baker of Sumter, S.C. Two children were born to that marriage (Deborah and Jeffery).

He was predeceased by his parents, son Jeffery, sister Geraldine Caldwell and brothers EJ, Leroy and John, five infant siblings and exwife Carolyn Martin.

He is survived by his loving wife of 12 years, Donna Frazer Martin; daughter Debi Martin Luckenbill, stepdaughter Dana Bush; five granddaughters; brother; Bill Martin; sisters-in-law Tommye Martin and Pat Martin; nieces, nephews and friends.

Health Reports

Pat Hollarn

It has just been a week of hell for my daughters, but all three have really done the family well! I don't really know what we would have done without them.

For some who may not have heard, Pat was in a head-on collision on the morning of the 12th. She was on her way to Crestview, to her main office, when another driver hydroplaned into her northbound lane. The other car was so far into the southbound lane, her passenger side collided with Pat's car. It also hit the passenger side of Pat's car, which saved Pat's life! Both cars had deployment of the airbags, but only Pat was wearing a seatbelt!

Our major concern was her head injury, as there was internal bleeding around the brain. Thankfully, that trauma was short-lived; and she has gained full use of her faculties.

All of Pat's ribs, on both sides, are broken; her sternum is fractured, as is her right hand, some fingers, her foot and her "Great Italian Nose." The foot was operated on yesterday, to remove some chips and set some bones, having a few pins to hold it together for a while. Her nose (which I love, but don't ever tell her I told you) will have to wait -- she has been under enough sedation for too long. They just removed the hose from her mouth this morning, and she is mending very well, but it may be a while before she is fully recovered.

She is still at the helm, running things as best she can from her bed. Actually, her staff is so well trained that the public can be assured the elections, will run as smoothly as if she were there.

—Tom Hollarn

139 Poquito Rd

Shalimar, FL 32579

850-651-1543; f-4@cox.net

Later reports indicate that Pat is recovering and is back at work in her office. —bg

Ruffin Gray

On Monday, 9 July, Ruff doubled over in pain and was rushed to the hospital. During several hours of testing it was determined he had a blood

clot that was blocking the major artery feeding his lower abdomen and small intestines. About 8 hours after the onset of his pain, they went up through a groin artery and attempted to remove as much of the clot as they could. Although mostly successful, he lost a lot of blood and we were in very real danger of losing him throughout most of the night.

Yesterday they removed approximately 100 cm of his small intestine. He did well for a second night but when they opened him up this a.m. did not like what they saw and removed another 150 cm of his small intestine. This leaves him with approximately 1/3 of his small intestine intact. So, his single biggest hurdle has been overcome.

—Gary Gray aka, "Grazer"

What sad news to the greatest Cotton picker of them all. Ruff and I go back to Coffeyville, Kansas (P-38s) 1944. He was my CO in the 15th TRS, Korea, 1952, and we served on the same base several times.

—Cecil Riggsby

Latest update

My father, Ruff Gray is improving at the rehab center taking physical therapy twice a day and may possibly be released in a couple of weeks. My husband and I are visiting from Myrtle Beach for a week and are thrilled to witness his "fighter pilot" spirit as he takes on the rigors of his physical therapy. Also, his sense of gratitude and faith are inspirational to all of us.

My brothers have printed many of the emails you have sent which has been such a boost to Dad. Even yesterday he was talking about his experiences with you all and it's evident what an important part of his life you are. He cherishes your emails, cards and prayers and looks forward to coming home when he can be in contact with you again.

—Deb Gray Mayfield

franNruff@aol.com

You can contact Ruff and Fran Gray at 24422 Bay Hill Blvd., Katy, TX 77494; email franNruff@aol.com. —bg

Harold Burgeson,

Colonel Harold Burgeson, OXCART Standardization Officer and pilot is currently in the hospital in Dallas with kidney failure and congestive heart problems. He is undergoing daily dialysis and would appreciate your prayers. You may reach him on his cell phone at 972-754-5777 or by mail at his daughter's address: 4317 Shady Lane, Rowlett, TX 75089. —Roadrunners Intl

Thanks for these updates on Burgie Burgeson's assignments

When I arrived at Misawa AB, Japan in Oct, 1957, Burgie was an established member of the 45th TRS flying the RF-84. He later became one of the first 45th pilots to check out in the RF-101.

He became an instructor pilot in the Training Squadron at Shaw AFB, SC. While at Shaw he received an assignment to the initial Blackbird program at area 51. —Dewey Hemphill
dkhemphill@comcast.net

Burgie was on the RF-101 with the 45th TRS in the late 1950s (see Voodoo Warriors, p.105 where he is pictured) and thereafter a flight commander on the 4414th. —Nigel Walpole
nandm@metronet.co.uk

He was with the 45th at Misawa and then he and Dick Roselle went to area 51 in Bs.

—Jon Gardner

jon@txgardner.com

Frank Meyer

In June 2005 I had brain surgery and a Deep Brain Stimulus was inserted into my brain to control tremors. One incision never healed and there was infection at the right cathode.

On Aug. 28, 2008, the neurosurgeon removed the entire DBS system and I seem to be sans tremor. The next morning the Dr. making the rounds checked my strength. I over powered his push each time he pushed against my legs and arms. He said he hoped he was that strong when he was 80. I remarked you are dealing with a "Fighter/Recon Pilot."

—Frank Meyer

F86Meyer@aol.com

Mission: BDA north of Hanoi

It was just another routine recce mission over North Vietnam

Lt. Col. Tony Weissgarber

On October 5, 1965 Major Tony Weissgarber and Captain Robert W. Pitt flew a bomb damage assessment mission north of Hanoi in unarmed RF-101 Voodoos, a single place twin-jet reconnaissance fighter. Their task was to photograph a bridge and an ammunition storage area. The fighter-bombers had bombed the targets a few minutes before Pitt and Weissgarber were to fly over the targets with their cameras running to bring back valuable intelligence information as to the bombers' success. Pitt was the flight leader; Weissgarber was his wing man. Pitt and Weissgarber took off from Udorn, Thailand, their home station, and proceeded as a flight of two. Their planned route would take them over the Gulf of Tonkin. They would then proceed on a westerly heading to their target area, north of Hanoi, at low level, one hundred feet above the ground, and at 600 knots air-speed. Their planned mission was to split after they penetrated north of Hanoi. Pitt was to fly over and photograph the ammo storage area and Weissgarber the bridge. After completing their mission, they planned to reform the flight, and fly east to the Gulf of Tonkin.

After flying over North Vietnam a short time they saw a uniformed soldier on a knoll. Pitt exclaimed, "He's their early warning 'radar.' He's probably calling now to alert their gunners that we're coming." Reconnaissance flights were always scheduled over the target 10 to 15 minutes after the last bomber dropped his bombs. No element of surprise on their part, time-wise.

Flying over the first paved road, they encountered heavy anti-aircraft guns. The sky lit up more brightly than any Fourth of July fireworks display. North Vietnam's concentration of anti-aircraft guns was very heavy. Both Pitt and Weissgarber's aircraft were hit hard. Pitt's aircraft was burning. The flame behind Pitt's aircraft was twice the length of the 101. Weissgarber told Pitt

he was on fire. Pitt asked, "Which engine?" Weissgarber said, "Looks like your left." Pitt shut down fuel to his left engine and stopped the flame. Pitt then said, "I'm headed to the coast." Reversing his course and headed east. Weissgarber glanced at his instruments, looked in his rearview mirror, saw no fire lights or flame and continued on.

Weissgarber could have also turned his battle damaged aircraft about and headed back with Pitt. Instead, he now knew he was responsible for the entire mission; he had to get both targets on his own. He turned south, over flew the bridge with his cameras running. Then he proceeded northwest toward the ammo storage area. Again the sky lit up like a "Fourth of July" celebration. As Weissgarber over flew his target, he felt his aircraft take another heavy hit, much like a heavy sledge hammer pounding up against the bottom of his seat. Again, he looked in his rearview mirror, saw no flame and checked his instruments, and saw no fire or over-heat lights. Good, he stood a good chance of bringing back the valuable intelligence film of the bridge and the ammunition storage area damage.

He still had to over fly the same road where he took his first hit. Again, he saw the "Fourth of July" fireworks in front of him as he headed east and to safety. Wham! Another hit. Check rearview mirror ... no fire ... instruments okay ... proceed on to find Pitt.

Over the Gulf of Tonkin he spotted Pitt's aircraft. Weissgarber pulled alongside Pitt's left side and immediately pulled away. Pitt's aircraft was gutted from the leading edge of the wing, along the fuselage to the tail section. Weissgarber thought the aircraft should not have been flying. Pitt asked, "How do I look?" Weissgarber lied and said, "You look okay. Some burn damage, but okay" Pitt was headed toward Danang, the closest American air base.

Pitt was running low on fuel. They called a tanker. The tanker came further north than he was supposed to go. Pitt got behind the tanker and tried to

take fuel. Pitt's hydraulic system, which opened the boom receptacle, was inoperative. He could not take on fuel. Weissgarber said, "Move over. Let me get some." He on loaded some, not knowing he was constantly spilling fuel overboard from the battle damage. They proceeded toward Danang. As Pitt made his descent into Danang, he asked Weissgarber, "How much fuel is in the fuel lines? My gauges show empty." Weissgarber said, "Don't know. Trim nose down. When your engine stops, punch out."

Pitt lowered his gear using the emergency extension system. Pitt touched down neatly on the end of the runway. He had no nose gear steering. His aircraft drifted off the left side of the runway, skewed sideways and hit a small building. Weissgarber, flying high formation saw Pitt's aircraft hit the building with a cloud of dust. There was no fire. Pitt was out of fuel. Weissgarber looked down and thought, "You poor SOB, you come back from hell; then land and get killed on an American air base. Damn." Then the tower called, "One oh one in the traffic pattern, you buddy is okay, we have him running away from the airplane." Weissgarber thought, "Thank God," immediately applied power and headed to his home base of Udorn, 320 nautical miles to the west. He had to get the film in the hands of the intelligence people quickly.

After landing at his home station and turning off the runway, he pulled to a stop. The ground personnel would unload his film and rush it to the lab. The ground people were frantically gesturing to cut engines, cut engines. Weissgarber cut his engines, jumped out, and saw the bottom of his aircraft leaking like a sieve. Why it didn't catch fire no one knows. The aircraft was so badly damaged it never flew again.

Weissgarber's unit recommended he receive the Air Force Cross for his accomplishments on this three hour mission. The award was downgraded to the Silver Star and awarded on 12 November 1965.

Letters and Email

Two beautiful ladies



Sachiko and my home built - N25DS - but Sachiko hasn't gone for a ride yet. When it comes to airplanes and boats she likes to keep both feet on a golf course.

*—Duane Seymour, 210 Rue Grand Dr.,
Lake St. Louis, MO 63367.*

A Tribute to Travis Billingsley -- 1939-2008

I am deeply pained and saddened by the death of Travis. I was very fortunate to have served with Travis as his Director of Operations, 38TRS, Zweibrucken, Germany in 1979/80. As a RF-4C WSO it was indeed an honor for me to be offered this position and I credit Travis and Col. Bruce Matthews for the opportunity that was presented to me. Serving with Travis was indeed a pleasure. He was always there if I needed advice, a wonder-

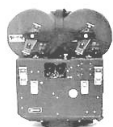
ful instructor, a kind and generous man and a great friend. Under his guidance the 38th TRS excelled in every area completing an ORI in 1980 with one of the highest ratings in USAFE.

Travis was so dedicated to the mission, the squadron, the Wing and the Air Force. If ever there was a military person who should have been promoted to General, it was Travis Billingsley. With Col. Hoot Gibson as our Wing CC we were blessed with support, care, freedom to make our decisions, pride and love for our fellow military members. Travis was a friend to Officer and Enlisted alike and without a doubt, knew that our success was dependent on the enlisted men and women serving in the Wing. He loved you all.

I will always remember those I served with and those I had the privilege to lead. I was blessed with the best Flight Commanders a DO could wish for. Without them I would have crashed and burned. Most of all I will remember Travis for giving me such a great opportunity. He was my friend, mentor and inspiration and I will never forget him. To his family, Dixie and daughters, I say hold your heads high for Travis was one of the best. Silver Wings to you Travis. You were the Man!

*—Lt Col (Ret) Bill "BZ" Clements
bclements@clearwire.net*

*Lt. Col. Travis
Billingsley and
Lt. Col. Bill
Clements landing
at Zweibrucken
AB, Germany
1979.*



The Recce Reader

15918 Meadow Lane
Stanley, KS 66224-9741

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