

A/TQ

AIRLIFT/TANKER QUARTERLY
Volume 25 • Number 3 • Summer 2017



Return to Avenger Field

Women Airforce Service Pilots
Celebrate 12th Annual
National WASP WWII Museum Homecoming

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2017 A/TA Convention & Symposium Registration Form

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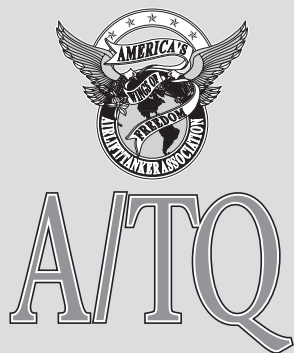


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AIRLIFT/TANKER QUARTERLY
Volume 25 • Number 3 • Summer 2017

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On the Cover: A "Fifinella" WASP patch superimposed over a photo of A/TA Hall of Fame WASP Nancy Harkness Love. (A/TA Photo montage by Collin R. Bakse).

A Salute to Determined Women

Young Nancy's ride probably cost about a dollar when a traveling aviator visited her hometown early in 1930, offering to take passengers on joy rides – for “a penny a pound.” She loved it, and determined to fly again, Nancy Harkness begged her parents for aviation lessons. Despite her mother's belief that “nice young ladies don't do such things,” her parents reluctantly agreed to send her to flying school, and on 30 November 1930, the sixteen-year old Harkness earned her private pilot's license.

To modern eyes, the requirements seem meager. She spent 13 hours in the air with her instructor – an 18-year old named Jimmy whose first student was Harkness – 10 hours in the sky by herself, and she passed one examination. With that, the Aeronautics Branch of the Department of Commerce informed her that she had earned her license and she flew into the history of aviation, becoming instrumental in the founding of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) of WWII, for which she was inducted into the Airlift/Tanker Association Hall of Fame in 1996.

At the age of 20 Nancy Harkness married the president of Inter-City Air Lines, Robert Love, and, as the *Boston Globe* reported, “The pair enjoyed a honeymoon to California; they of course flew themselves there.”

The cover story of this issue of A/TQ is about the courageous, skilled and dedicated women known as the Women Air Force Service Pilots – the WASP. This remarkable group of determined women rose to the challenge during WWII, proving that women can serve their country by taking to the sky.

It was absolutely critical to Nancy Love that both men and women believed that members of either sex had something to contribute. The presence of one sex – even in non-traditional occupations such as flying – should not be viewed as diminishing the contributions of the other. That she convinced others – both in the military and the civilian worlds – of this idea represented her most profound and lasting legacy. The gender debate in the military has never been the same since. And that makes Nancy Love one of the more productive historical figures of the first half of the 20th century – a heroine with the ‘real stuff.’

As you read the pages of this issue you will notice that it is filled with stories that reflect the importance of women to the Air Force and Air Mobility missions. From Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson – to Lt Gen Michelle Johnson, the Superintendent of the U.S. Air Force Academy – to Colonel Laurel Burkel, a C-130H Hercules navigator – to SSgt. Jannelle McRae, Secretary of the Air Force PA – to SrA Shannon Hall, 7th Bomb Wing PA – women now serve at every level of the United States Air Force – also with the ‘real stuff.’

Collin Bakse, editor



A/T&A UpFront

Announcements & Stories
from, and/or about
Association Business,
Members and Chapters

Chairman's Comments



Gen Duncan McNabb
USAF, Ret

ing and we hope you are all coming. Our A/T&A Convention and Symposium are always one of the highlights of my year, and this one is shaping up to be one of our best ever. Thanks to the great work of our cohost, Gen Everhart, and his AMC staff, the Air Force has already approved the convention...so we are on our way.

Our new Secretary of the Air Force, the Honorable Heather Wilson, our Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General David Goldfein, and our new Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, CMSAF Kaleth Wright, have accepted our invitation to deliver major addresses. Given the state of world affairs and challenges we face as we rebuild our Air Force, it will be amazing to get their first hand thoughts on the state of our Air Force and their vision for the future. This is also their first A/T&A and I know they will be impressed by our mobility warriors, our excellent major address speakers, our 36 professional development seminars, our outstanding Air Mobility Technology Exposition, and, most importantly, the outstanding camaraderie, war stories, and excitement that always surrounds A/T&A. It is what makes our convention truly world class.

Joining Secretary Wilson, CSAF Goldfein, and CMSAF Wright as major address speakers are our own General Darren McDew, Commander of USTRANSCOM, General Mike (Mobile) Holmes, Commander of the Air Combat Command, GEN Robert Abrams, Commanding General of Army Forces Command, Lt Gen L Scott (Catfish) Rice, Director of the Air National Guard, and Lt Gen Maryanne Miller, Chief of the Air Force Re-

Hello from Colorado and hope you are having a marvelous summer.

Our 49th Annual Airlift/Tanker Association Convention and Air Mobility Technology Exhibition and the Air Mobility Command and A/T&A Symposium is fast approach-

***“Our membership is what makes
our convention so successful.
Our Chapters are the lifeblood of our
membership and our organization.
To all our chapters, thank you
for all you do.”***

serves. Our cohost and the Commander of AMC, General Dewey Everhart, will wrap up the convention with his “State of the Command.” What an outstanding line up to go with our 36 professional development seminars.

This year we will honor our 29th Hall of Fame recipient, Maj Gen Paul Williams. One of our true Airlift pioneers, he was the Commander of the Ninth Troop Carrier Command in 1944 -1945, and was responsible for the airlift for the mass landings and air-drops in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Holland, and Germany. His C-47s were largely responsible for the air supply support of General Patton's Third Army's drive to Berlin. He is most deserving and is truly one of the Giants that laid the foundation on which we now stand. We will honor him at the Saturday Night Hall of Fame banquet

when we unveil his bust that will take its rightful place in the Mobility Memorial Park at Scott AFB, IL.

Our membership is what makes our convention so successful. Our

Chapters are the lifeblood of our membership and our organization. To all our chapters, thank you for all you do. We want to note the membership drive contest is in full swing and we are heading for the finish line on Wednesday night, 25 October. Our winning Chapters will be named and receive their monetary awards at the Chapter Presidents' meeting at the convention.

We got to see first hand the power of our Chapters when our A/T&A Board visited Altus AFB on 2-3 June. The Red River President Mark Watson and his folks and Col Todd Hohn and the 97 AMW did a superb job taking care of us...including a shrimp boil with A/T&A members (and perspective members) and their families. Amazing how much fun kids can have when cut loose on a putting green. It was awesome. Joe and Kim Leverett, Brian Bush, and the Altus Civic Leaders went above and beyond, to include hosting a superb barbecue dinner at the Leverett's...with included lots of war stories. I'm just glad I was there to defend myself.

We are also looking very forward to our upcoming Board visit on 18-19 August at Joint Base Charleston, hosted by the Low Country Chapter and the 437 AW. It will be

continued on page 4 >>>

President's Message



CMSgt Mike Kerver
USAF, Ret

for 26-29 October 2017, and plan on attending what promises to be another great gathering of those who care about the Air Mobility mission and the exceptional Airmen executing that mission.

For those of us who have attended past conventions, consider bringing a friend or colleague who has not had the opportunity. I think you will all agree that while our convention may be equal to some, none are better! Our convention also remains one of the very best ways we can showcase our commitment to both Mobility Airmen and our Industry Partners. My first convention was in 1999 and I have not missed one since.

Make no mistake that beyond our keynote speakers, professional development seminars, and other official business lies the real strength of our convention and those valued intangibles best described as comradery, fellowship and the bond built from shared sacrifice and service to our nation.

I have no idea where the summer has gone, and by the time you read this short article, we will be within two months of our 49th Convention and Symposium in Orlando, Florida! If you have not done so already, be sure to mark your calendars

My golf hat is tipped to the 97th Air Mobility Wing, the Red River Chapter, and to their President Capt Mark Watson for hosting our Spring Board meeting. We especially appreciated the hospitality offered by the Altus Chamber of Commerce and their President Mr. Brian Bush, the Military Affairs Committee, and personally to Dr. Joe Leverett for opening his home and hosting us for a delicious BBQ dinner.

At this year's Convention, we will formally induct Major General Paul L. Williams as our 29th Hall of Fame (HOF) recipient.

General Williams led United States Army Air Forces troop carrier forces in the Mediterranean and European theaters of operations during World War II, and his influence on air power continues to shape the organization, tactics, and doctrines directly benefiting today's generation of Mobility Airmen. Gen William's selection clearly demonstrates one of A/TA's key objectives of Preserving the Air Mobility Culture, and is one more example of a Hall of Fame inductee of whom we can easily say,

"We stand on the shoulders of these great leaders."

Now that the 2017 HOF process is complete, please start thinking about potential nominations for 2018. Look for an announcement in early January and a call for packages. The nomination guidelines are currently in revision, but will be available for review in plenty of time. More to follow on that.

In mid-August, we will meet at Joint Base Charleston for our Summer board meeting and complete final planning for the convention. My thanks to the Low Country Chapter at Joint Base Charleston for hosting us!

Visit the A/TA website, atalink.org for further details concerning convention registration. I look forward to seeing you all again in Orlando.

Remember to look around your squadron and consider bringing that new Airman to the convention. Enjoy the rest of your summer, go out of your way to thank someone for their service, and don't forget that sunscreen!

See you on the turn!
Best/Mike



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR THE
2017 A/TA CONVENTION
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ORLANDO, FLORIDA
AND THE
2018 GOLDEN
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
24-28 OCTOBER IN
GRAPEVINE, TEXAS!**



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STRENGTHENING OUR BONDS**
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Chairman's Comments continued from page 2

great to be back at Charleston to see and talk to our members and to work the final details for our upcoming convention.

One of the big areas we are focused on to enrich the A/TA convention experience this year is the Heritage Room. We want to make it a place where attendees look forward to stopping by, having a drink, and sharing their best war stories. I know first hand the transformation of what Air Mobility has brought to the fight since 9/11... including Aeromedical Evaluation critical care and surgery in the air, sustained night operations using NVGs, sustained combat air refueling operations, expeditionary basing, intricate operations into semi-prepared strips, and precision airdrop. No one in the world does this better than us and sharing and celebrating our contributions is a big part of A/TA...it is a critical ingredient to the magic of our Convention that makes it the best of its kind. I have a few stories and look forward to sharing them and hearing yours. We will definitely have some fun with this.

So this convention promises to be "a happening" and is setting the stage for our 50th Anniversary celebration in Dallas in 2018. So get ready. Register early and beat the rush. Bring your families to Orlando and enjoy it all. We look forward to seeing you at the convention...it promises to be an amazing experience.

See you around the flagpole,

Gen (ret) Duncan McNabb, Chairman



Upcoming Conventions:

2017:

A/TA 49th Anniversary Convention & Symposium

25-29 October

Marriott World Center • Orlando, Florida

2018:

A/TA Golden Anniversary

Convention & Symposium

24-28 October

Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center

Grapevine, Texas

Reunion Notice

I am seeking the members of Undergraduate Navigator Class 78-19 for a possible 40th anniversary reunion in 2018. At this time, I am seeking contact information and to poll the class members to determine a site for such a reunion. I would appreciate your assisting me to reach out to our class members.

Richard M. Cole, Major, USAF (Ret.)

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Fairfax, VA 22033-3711

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Secretary's Notes



Col Mike Cassidy
USAF, Ret

Thanks to Red River Chapter President Capt Mark Watson, from the 97th Air Mobility Wing, the Altus Chamber of Commerce President Mr. Brian Bush, plus Dr. Joe Leverett and the Altus Military Affairs Committee for their great support of our Spring Board meeting on 3 June 2017. I'd also like to offer a special thanks to Col John Lamontagne who represented Air Mobility Command during the board meeting.

Well done and thanks Red River Chapter!

On 19 August the Low Country Chapter at Joint Base Charleston will host our summer board meeting – please keep an eye on the web site for details. If you are interested and able to attend it would be great to have as part of the discussion. At the board meeting we will continue preparations for the 49th Annual Convention and Symposium in Orlando Florida.

You'll notice in our second installment of our Smooth Transition series we have a second article highlighting the work of an Air Mobility professional in the film industry. It would be great to get your input on how you have used the skills you honed as a Mobility professional in your life after active service. Do you have a great story or do you know someone who does? Please let me know.

Remember, invite someone you know (Guard, Reserve, Active, Retired, Civic Leader, aircrew, maintenance, port, support, etc.) to join this great organization and get involved with your local chapter.

Thanks for all you do, every day!

Mike

Happy Birthday to the United States Air Force!



With 70 years of experience under its belt, the Air Force is celebrating its birthday with a website showcasing each generation of airmen since the service's inception in 1947.

Starting with 1947 to 1960, the Air Force's birthday website, <http://static.dma.mil/usaf/70/>, will highlight stories about each generation of airmen, including heroes and technological innovations, according to the Air Force.

The "Breaking Barriers" series will feature 10 videos throughout the year discussing the social and technological barriers that were overcome.

The site will be updated each month until September, when the Air Force celebrates its birthday on the 18th. The time periods featured are: March 24: 1947-1960; April 22: 1960-1970; May 20: 1970-1980; June 18: 1980-1990; July 17: 1990-2000; Aug. 17: 2000-2010; and, Sept. 16: 2010 and Beyond.

"The joint war fighting excellence our nation expects and gets today from our Air Force was built through 70 years of tenacity and innovation," Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Dave Goldfein said in a statement. "Our incredible Airmen continue raising the bar to provide our nation the asymmetric advantage only airpower can bring."

Smart Donations

We have all been bombarded by requests to donate to this or that. Some organizations will happily take your car. The Airlift/Tanker Association (A/TA) happily accepts donations as well, just not your car.

A/TA is a 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Organization. A/TA is run by volunteers. This makes us unique. Among

our key programs, we offer Enlisted Educational Grants, donate to other organizations like the Air Mobility Command Museum and cosponsor the annual symposium and convention with seminars as an educational and professional development event. Our AFROTC scholarship and Enlisted Education Grant programs have helped more than 700 young leaders achieve their educational goals.

The *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly* (A/TQ) magazine provides interesting, educational and entertaining articles thanks to the efforts of Collin Bakse, our editor. Our awards program recognizes Air Mobility's exceptional performers. We help preserve our heritage with our support of the Air Mobility Command Museum at Dover AFB.

We appreciate your support a members and ask that you consider furthering that support via donations.

The best way to maximize your donation is to use an employer-matching donation program. Many employers match employee donations; some require a minimum donation and match at 50 or 100 percent of your donation. If your employer will match your donation, please let us know what information is required for the donation match. Verification at the IRS web site may be enough or they may want to register A/TA with your company.

The IRS classifies us as a tax-exempt organization that is eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. As a public charity, you can donate up to 50% of your income to us and take that as a deduction. Yes, 50%, depending on your tax situation. (I don't know anyone that can afford to do that, but if you can, *thanks!*)

For individual donations, we added a "Donate to A/TA" link on the top right side of the home page to allow you to charge a donation to your credit card. You can earmark your donation for the education fund, as a memorial to someone or allow us put it in the general fund.

There are other types of donations. Members have generously donated corporate stock to A/TA which continues to grow and provide long term benefits. Placing A/TA in your estate via your will or trust is another way to help us. If you are interested and able to do this, please contact us to work out the details.

For some, donation timing can make a difference. As you approach the end of your tax year, ask your accountant or tax advisor if a donation to A/TA could enable you to move to a lower tax bracket. If you are just barely into a higher tax bracket, a small donation could save on your taxes. Even if this isn't true for you, we will still appreciate any donations.

Thanks for taking time to consider donating to A/TA.

Doug Lynch is the Association Business Manager responsible for Advertising and Convention support. To coordinate your donations, he can be reached via email at advertising@atalink.org.

***A/TA is a 501(c)(3)e Tax Exempt Organization.
A/TA is run by volunteers.
This makes us unique.***



A/TA President Presents the Core Value Award at Air Force Academy Awards Ceremony

The Airlift/Tanker Association is the proud sponsor of the United States Air Force Academy's Core Value Award. A/TA's President, CMSgt (Ret) Mike Kerver, was privileged to present the award to Cadet Squadron 3 at a graduation awards ceremony 22 May 2017. This prestigious award is based on leadership and character development through the performance of community service. Cadets First Class Jake R. Serrate and Tyler M. Dietrich accepted the award on behalf of Squadron 3 (the Dogs of War). The Academy's Superintendent, Lt Gen Michelle Johnson, and Commandant of Cadets, Brig Gen Kristin Goodwin, participated in presenting the award.



Lt Gen Michelle Johnson, USAFA Superintendent; A/TA President Mike Kerver, C1C Serrate; C1C Dietrich, Brig Gen Kristin Goodwin, USAFA Commandant of Cadets (Courtesy Photo).

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The museum is open
Tuesday - Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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1301 Heritage Rd, Dover AFB, DE 19902

Return to Avenger Field

Women Airforce Service Pilots

Celebrate 12th Annual

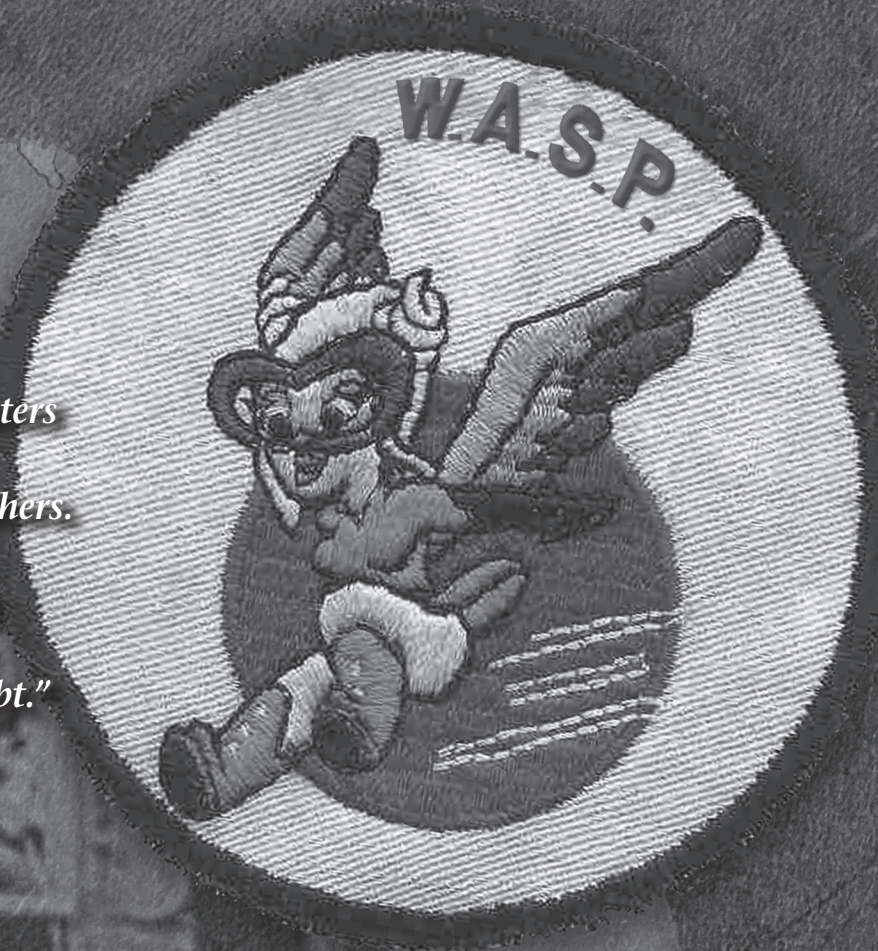
National WASP WWII Museum
Homecoming

by Collin R. Bakse, editor

The National WASP WWII Museum, located at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, celebrated its 12th Annual Homecoming over Memorial Day weekend, 27-29 May 2017, welcoming eleven Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) back to the place they trained to serve our country during World War II.

*"You and more than 900 of your sisters
have shown that you can
fly wingtip to wingtip with your brothers.
If ever there was a doubt in
anyone's mind that women can
become skillful pilots,
the WASPs have dispelled that doubt."*

—Gen. Hap Arnold, USAAF,
in a speech to the last class of WASPs, just before
the program was disbanded in December 1944.



Avenger Field, destined to be known as the largest all-female air base in American history, dates back to the 1920s as the Sweetwater Municipal Airport where a small flight school operated with World War I surplus Curtiss JN-4s and Curtiss Robins.

In the spring of 1942, the flight school was taken over by the Plosser-Prince Air Academy, which moved to the airport from California. Plosser-Prince was contracted by the Royal Canadian Air Force to train British and American volunteer pilots and became known as British Flying Training School No. 7. On June 15, 1942, about 100 male flight cadets began a course that included primary, basic and advanced training. Just before they arrived, the Sweetwater Airport was renamed "Avenger Field," the winning entry of a contest won by a Mrs. Grace Faver.

In August 1942, the United States Government closed the private flying school and took the airfield over as a United States Army Air Force (USAAF) military installation. Avenger Field was to be turned over to the Air Transport Command as a transition school for experienced airline pilots in single-engine Vultee BT-13 Valiant basic trainers. From Avenger Field, the graduates would be sent to twin-engine school and subsequently for overseas duty as USAAF pilots.

In February 1943, Avenger Field, after being chosen due to its multi-phase training capability and other assets, became an all-female installation except for a few male instructors and other officers. The field was officially assigned to the 318th Army Air Forces Flying Training Detachment, 31st Flying Training Wing and training began for the Women Airforce Service Pilots, the WASP. Avenger Field

remained a WASP training base until it closed in December 1944. More than a thousand women pilots were trained at the facility including thirty-eight who gave their lives while in the service of their country. On December 20, 1944, the Army Air Forces disbanded the WASP program and the WASPs returned to civilian life, and Avenger Field, determined to be excess by the military, was turned over to the local government for civil use. The field would be used again by the The United States Air Force Air Defense Command during the Cold War, but that's another story.

The National WASP WWII Museum Homecoming

The National WASP WWII Museum is housed in an old Sweetwater Municipal Airport hangar (circa 1929) at Avenger Field affectionately known as Hangar One. The west hangar doors overlook the old runways where the WASP learned to fly.

In 2003, WASP Deanie Parrish, her daughter Nancy, and a group of Sweetwater citizens, presented the Sweetwater City Council plans for a Museum to preserve the legacy of the Woman Airforce Service Pilots who trained at Avenger Field. The city granted the group a 200 year lease on the old hangar and 55 acres adjacent to the airport.

These were the humble beginnings for a museum that has continued to grow. For more than a decade now, the WASP have been gathering each year to remember their days at Avenger Field; the long hot days of training and study, the rare leisure time, sometimes spent at Lake Sweetwater, and those 38 fallen who gave their lives in service to our nation.



ABOVE: AVENGER FIELD, SWEETWATER, TEXAS - The National WASP WWII Museum located at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, celebrated Homecoming 2017 over Memorial Day weekend, welcoming eleven Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) back to the place they trained to serve our country during World War II. The attending WASP (alphabetically, not as pictured, with their class numbers) were Roby Anderson 44-W-4, Nell Bright 43-W-7, Edna Davis 43-W-5 (not pictured), Barbara Heinrich 43-W-4, Mildred "Jane" Doyle 44-W-4, Kay Hilbrandt 44-W-10, Shirley Kruse 44-W-6, Dorothy Lucas 44-W-7, Florence Mascott 44-W-10T, Shutsy Reynolds 44-W-5, Millicent "Millie" Young 44-W-10. The WASP in the photo are seated in front of "The Trainee," a sculpture by WASP Dorothy "Dot" Swain Lewis 44-W-5. (Photo Courtesy WASP WWII Museum). OPPOSITE: A "Fifinella" WASP patch superimposed over a photo of A/TA Hall of Fame WASP Nancy Harkness Love. (A/TA Photo montage by Collin R. Bakse).

At Avenger Field, on Memorial Day weekend, 27-29 May, 2017, eleven WASP were in attendance for the 12th Annual National WASP WWII Museum Homecoming. The attending WASP (alphabetically with their class numbers) were Roby Anderson 44-W-4, Nell Bright 43-W-7, Edna Davis 43-W-5, Barbara Heinrich 43-W-4, Mildred "Jane" Doyle 44-W-4, Kay Hilbrandt 44-W-10, Shirley Kruse 44-W-6, Dorothy Lucas 44-W-7, Florence Mascott 44-W-10T, Shutsy Reynolds 44-W-5, and Millicent "Millie" Young 44-W-10.

American Airlines generously assisted these WASP and their families to Texas, then the Brazos River 99s and host families at Pecan Plantation in Granbury, Texas, flew the WASP to Sweetwater.

Lana Kraeszig, a member of the Board of Directors of the National WASP WWII Museum and a woman pilot, lives at Pecan Plantation and is passionate about giving WASP a chance to reunite with old friends. "These women gave of themselves at a time when they were not even considered a true military unit. They tested experimental military aircraft, towed targets for ammunition practice and some gave the ultimate sacrifice. The hospitality we show is only a small way we say *Thank You*," Kraeszig said. The female pilots of the WASP ended up numbering 1,074, each freeing a male pilot for combat service and duties. They flew over 60 million miles in every type of military aircraft.

Accompanied by military escorts carefully selected from a competitive application process, the WASP returned to The Wishing Well, where they gathered for a reunion photo and saw each other, some for the first time in years. Barbara "Bobbie" Heinrich, celebrating her 101st birthday, made her first trip to National WASP WWII Museum Homecoming.

Ann Hobing, Executive Director of the Museum, said, "What an honor and privilege to lead hundreds of people in singing Happy Birthday to a living legend. This is my inaugural Homecoming and I am overjoyed to be in the presence of such amazing women."

Homecoming 2017 also welcomed two contemporary women pilots to share their stories and give homage to the WASP who blazed the trail for those after them.

Major Heather "Lucky" Penney, most recognized for her service to our nation on September 11, 2001, brought a luncheon audience of 300 to tears as she recalled the morning she scrambled into a fighter jet in Washington D.C. to protect our skies over the Pentagon. "Because of WASP who broke the mold so many decades ago, I was able to serve the idea of freedom and democracy we call America," Penney said.

She now serves as National Chair for the Commemorative Air Force's RISE ABOVE program, educating thousands of students across the nation about the Women Airforce Service Pilots.

Dinner guest speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Jade Reidy, Inspector General of the 7th Bomb Wing at Dyess AFB, gave a tribute laced

with gratitude. "We cannot thank you enough for being tough, smart, pioneering women who answered the call of duty.

"Gratitude to you will live on in us women who continue to fly, face challenges, serve our country and make our marks on the next generation," said Reidy, to 500 dinner guests in Hangar No 1, the new addition to the Museum's complex.

In addition to the fully sold out luncheon and dinner, Homecoming 2017 provided fun for the entire multi-generational family. Nearly

40 youth, some taking their first flight, were generously flown by the EAA Young Eagles. Well known author of an award-winning WASP novel *Flight to Destiny*, Sarah Byrn Rickman was at the Museum autographing her books for fans – she has penned several books about the WAFS and the WASP. Plus, more than a dozen warbirds landed at Avenger Field to provide entertainment and education, including a Stearman, a beloved WASP flown plane.

Bill Johnson, member of the Museum Board of Directors, said, "As a pilot, I always remember that aviation is based on teamwork; it takes mechanics, navigators, engineers and technicians to make a flight safe and successful. We want to educate the

next generation that they can be part of aviation in many different ways."

With nearly 2000 people in attendance, Homecoming 2017 set a new attendance record for the WASP WWII Museum. Some attendees flew into Avenger Field in private aircraft, and one family drove over 1200 miles from South Carolina to show gratitude to WASP.

"WASP came from across the United States, to serve our nation, to defend our homeland and to protect our freedom. And so, we are here today to celebrate and remember a group of veterans so groundbreaking in their service that their footprint on women who came after is deep and permanent," said Hobing.

The A/TA and the ATA/ATC/WAFS/WFTD/WASP

The road to using American women as wartime pilots took a rather tortured flight path through the alphabet of military initialisms, acronyms and abbreviations. With four inductees, including a WASP, into its Hall of Fame, it will be easy to spot the WASP connection to the Airlift/Tanker Association (A/TA). As for an explanation of the other abbreviations, the ATA, sans the slash mark, is the best place to start.

Before U.S. forces entered the fight in World War II, Florida native Jacqueline "Jackie" Cochran,

as part of "Wings for Britain," an organization that ferried American built aircraft to Britain, became the first woman to fly a bomber (a Lockheed Hudson V) across the Atlantic. In Britain, she volunteered her services to the Royal Air Force. For several months she worked for the British Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), recruiting qualified women pilots in the United States and taking them to England where they joined the ATA.

The American women who flew in the ATA were the first American women to fly military aircraft. They flew the Royal Air Force's



Jacqueline Cochran in the cockpit of a Curtiss P-40 Warhawk. She was a pioneer in the field of American aviation, considered to be one of the most gifted racing pilots of her generation. She was an important contributor to the formation of the World War II Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), the establishment of the 319th Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD) and was the Director of Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). (USAAF Photo Circa 1942).



Nancy Harkness Love in cockpit of a Fairchild PT-19A. She was a trailblazing WWII pilot and commander who was instrumental in the founding of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) of WWII, and was inducted into the Airlift/Tanker Association Hall of Fame in 1996. (USAAF Photo Circa 1942).

frontline aircraft – Spitfires, Typhoons, Hudsons, Mitchells, Blenheims, Oxfords, Walruses, and Sea Otters – in non-combat roles, but in combat-like conditions.

Before Cochran left for England she and test-pilot Nancy Harkness Love, the 1996 inductee into the Airlift/Tanker Association Hall of Fame, had independently submitted proposals to the USAAF to use women pilots in non-combat missions after the outbreak of World War II in Europe. Their motivation was to free male pilots for combat roles by employing qualified female pilots to ferry aircraft from factories to military bases, and to tow drones and aerial targets. Prior to Pearl Harbor, General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, commander of the USAAF, had turned down both Love’s 1940 proposal and that of the better connected and more famous Cochran, despite the lobbying by Eleanor Roosevelt. But he essentially promised the command to Cochran, should such a force be needed in the future.

Meanwhile, the U.S. was building its air power and military presence in anticipation of direct involvement in the conflict, and had belatedly begun to drastically expand its men in uniform. This period led to the dramatic increase in activity for the U.S. Army Air Forces, and made the obvious gaps in “manpower” that could be filled by women. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, to compensate for the manpower demands of the military, the government encouraged women to enter the workforce to fill both industrial and service jobs supporting the war effort.

To those most involved within the new Ferrying Division of the Air Transport Command (ATC), the numbers were painfully obvious. Col. William H. Tunner, the 1989 and first inductee into the Airlift/Tanker Association Hall of Fame, was in charge of acquiring civilian ferry pilots. He decided to integrate a civilian force of female pilots into the AAF, after speaking with Major Robert M. Love, ATC staff officer, and his wife Nancy. Convinced of the feasibility of the program by Mrs. Love, a Commercial Pilot Licensed test pilot, he asked her to draw up a proposal, unaware that Arnold had shelved a similar proposal by Tunner’s superior, Maj. Gen. Robert Olds.

By the mid-summer of 1942, Arnold was willing to consider the prior proposals seriously. Tunner and Love’s plan was reviewed by the ATC headquarters, and forwarded by commander Gen. Harold L. George, the 1991 inductee into the Airlift/Tanker Association Hall of Fame, to Arnold, who was fully aware of it and gave it his blessing, after Mrs. Roosevelt had suggested a similar idea in a newspaper column. The Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) was headed by Mrs. Love, and went into operation on 10 September 1942. Soon, the Air Transport Command began using women to ferry planes from factory to airfields.

Upon learning of the newly minted WAFS, Cochran immediately returned to the United States and confronted Arnold for an explanation. Arnold claimed ignorance and blamed the ATC staff,

in particular George’s chief of staff, Col. (and former president of American Airlines) C. R. Smith, the 1992 inductee into the Airlift/Tanker Association Hall of Fame. Due to the highly publicized WAFS, the program could not be reversed, and so, on 15 September 1942, Cochran’s training proposal was also adopted.

Cochran and Love’s squadrons were thereby established separately. The 319th Women’s Flying Training Detachment (WFTD) at the Municipal Airport (now Hobby Airport) in Houston, Texas, with Cochran as commanding officer, and the Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, the 2nd Ferrying Group at New Castle Army Air Base, in New Castle, Delaware (now New Castle Airport). By June 1943, Love was commanding four different squadrons of WAFS at Love Field, Texas; New Castle, Delaware; Romulus, Michigan and Long Beach, California. The WAFS’ number had greatly increased because of the addition of graduates of Cochran’s Women’s Flying Training Detachment (WFTD) at Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas.

Though rivals, the two programs and their respective leaders operated independently, and without acknowledgment of each other until the summer of 1943. When Cochran pushed aggressively for a single entity to control the activity of all women pilots. Tunner, in particular, objected on the basis of differing qualification standards, and the absolute necessity of the ATC being able to control its own pilots. But Cochran’s preeminence with Arnold prevailed, and in July 1943 he ordered the programs merged, with Cochran as director. The WAFS and the WFTD were combined to form the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Love continued with the program as executive in charge of WASP ferrying operations.

As director of the WASP, Cochran supervised the training of hundreds of wom-

en pilots at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas from August 1943 to December 1944.

Love, as the executive for all WASP ferrying operations commanded a field of female pilots who flew almost every type military aircraft then in the Army Air Forces’ inventory, and their record of achievement proved remarkable. Love herself was certified in 19 military aircraft, becoming the first woman to be certified to fly the latest military aircraft, including the Douglas C-54 Skymaster, North American B-25 Mitchell, and along with Betty Gillies, the first to fly the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress. In Dallas, Love was also checked out on the North American P-51 Mustang, the USAAF’s “hottest” fighter.

Rough Flight into History

Nineteen groups of women underwent WASP training: *The Originals*, the WAFS led by Nancy Love, and *The Guinea Pigs*, Jacqueline Cochran’s first of 18 classes of women pilots. They were required to complete the same primary, basic, and advanced training courses as male Army Air Corps pilots and many of them went



Jacqueline Cochran, co-founder of the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASP, inspects WASP assigned to Maxwell Field, a former military airfield now known as Maxwell Air Force Base, in Montgomery, Alabama, with Maxwell’s base commander during World War II. The WASP was formed when the Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, formed by well-known American female aviator Nancy Harkness Love, merged with Cochran’s Women’s Flying Training Detachment on 5 August 1943. (USAAF Photo Circa 1942).

on to specialized flight training.

The WAFS each had an average of about 1,400 flying hours and a commercial pilot rating. They received 30 days of orientation to learn Army paperwork and to fly by military regulations. Afterward, they were assigned to various ferrying commands.

The Guinea Pigs started training at the Houston, Texas, Municipal Airport, now William P. Hobby Airport on 16 November 1942, as part of the 319th Army Air Force Women's Flying Training Detachment (AAFWFTD). This was just after the WAFS had started their orientation in Wilmington, Delaware.

Unlike the WAFS, the women that reported to Houston did not have uniforms and had to find their own lodging. The "Woofed-dies" (WFTD) also had minimal medical care, no life insurance, crash truck, or fire truck, and the only ambulance was on loan from the Ellington Army Airfield, along with insufficient administrative staff, and a hodgepodge of 23 types of aircraft for training. As late as January 1943, when the third class was about to start their training, the three classes were described by Byrd Granger in *On Final Approach*, as "a raggle-taggle crowd in a rainbow of rumpled clothing," while they gathered for morning and evening colors.

This lack of resources, combined with the foggy and wet Houston weather, delayed the graduation of the first class from February to April 1943. Conditions included wet, sticky, clay soil everywhere, and worse, a scarcity of rest rooms, which made the potential for morale problems significant. To minimize this, the *Fifinella Gazette* was started. The first issue was published on 10 February 1943. The female gremlin "Fifinella" was conceived by Roald Dahl, a pilot for the Royal Air Force who would later author several children's books including *Charlie and Chocolate Factory* among many others. Fifinella, sporting wings, goggles and flying attire, was drawn by Walt Disney, and used as the official WASP mascot that appeared on their shoulder patches.

The first Houston class started with 38 women with a minimum of 200 hours. Twenty-three graduated on 24 April 1943, at the only Houston WASP graduation at Ellington Army Air Field. The second Houston class, started in December 1942 with a minimum of 100 hours, finished their training just in time to move to Sweetwater, Texas, and become the first graduating class from Avenger Field on 28 May 1943. The third class completed their advanced training at Avenger Field and graduated 3 July 1943. Half of the fourth class of 76 women started their primary training in Houston on 15 February 1943, and then transferred to Sweetwater.

On 7 March 1943, the Houston classes incurred their first fatality. Margaret Oldenburg of 43-W-4 and her instructor, Norris G. Morgan, crashed seven miles south of Houston and were killed on impact.

By the end of May 1943, the Houston 319th AAFWFTD was history as later that summer the WAFS and WFTD were combined into the WASP.

The WASP was considered civil service and therefore they did not receive military benefits, unlike their male counterparts. On the other hand, they were not administratively tied to the Army Air Forces and could resign at any time after completion of their training, although reportedly, few, if any did.

On 30 September 1943, the first of the WASP militarization bills was introduced in the United States House of Representatives. Both Cochran and Arnold desired a separate corps headed by a woman

colonel (similar to the WAC, WAVES, SPAR, and Marine heads). The War Department, however, consistently opposed such a move, since there was no separate corps for male pilots as distinguished from unrated AAF officers. Instead, it preferred that women be commissioned in the Women's Army Corps (WAC), and added to some 2,000 "Air WAC" officers assigned to flying duty.

On 21 June 1944, the House bill to give the WASP military status was narrowly defeated. Cochran who had been pushing for a resolution of the question delivered, in effect, an ultimatum to either commission the women or disband the program. Civilian male pilots lobbied against the bill, reacting to closure of some civilian flight training schools, and the termination of two male pilot training commissioning programs. The House Committee on the Civil Service, also referred to as the Ramspeck Committee, reported on 5 June 1944, that it considered the WASP unnecessary and unjustifiably expensive. The committee recommended that the recruiting and training of inexperienced women pilots be halted.

As a result of the committee's recommendation, coupled with the AAF having developed an excess of pilots and pilot candidates, Arnold (who had been a proponent of militarization) ordered that the WASP be disbanded by 20 December 1944.

On 7 December 1944, exactly three years after Pearl Harbor, General Hap Arnold, in a speech he delivered at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, said, "The WASP has completed its mission. Their job has been successful. But as is usual in war, the cost has been heavy. Thirty-eight WASP have died while helping their country move toward the moment of final victory. The Air Forces will long remember their service and their final sacrifice."

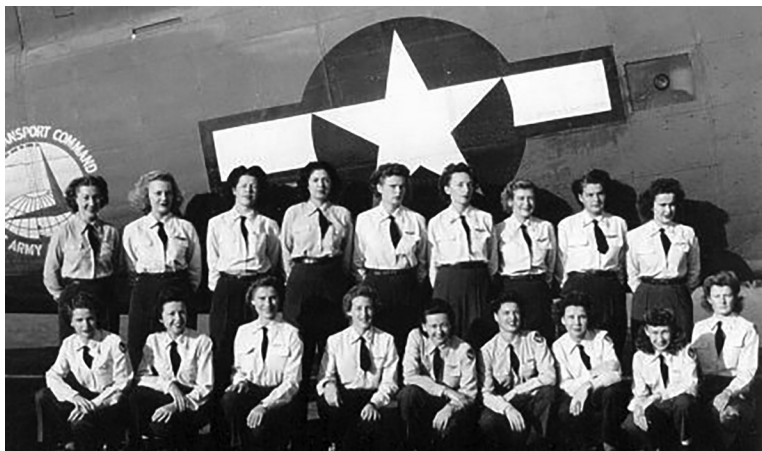
On 20 December 1944 the final class of WASP pilots, 71 women in total, graduated from their training regardless of the plan to disband the WASP program within the following two weeks.

At the conclusion of the WASP program, 915 women pilots were on duty with the AAF: 620 assigned to the Training Command, 141 to the Air Transport Command, 133 to the numbered air forces in the continental United States, 11 to the Weather Wing, 9 to the technical commands and one to the Troop Carrier Command.

All records of the WASP were classified and sealed for 35 years, so their contributions to the war effort were little known and inaccessible to historians. In 1975, under the leadership of Col. Bruce Arnold, son of General Hap Arnold, the WASP fought the "Battle of Congress" in Washington, D.C., to have the WASP recognized as veterans of World War II. They organized as a group again and tried to gain public support for their official veteran recognition. Finally in 1977, the records were unsealed after an Air Force press release erroneously stated the Air Force was training the first women to fly military aircraft for the U.S.

The WASP continued to lobby Congress and finally, with the important support of Senator Barry Goldwater, who himself had been a World War II ferry pilot in the 27th Ferrying Squadron, they were successful. President Jimmy Carter signed legislation, P.L.95-202, Section 401, The G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 1977, providing that service as a WASP would be considered "active duty" for the purposes of programs administered by the Veterans Administration.

In 1984, each WASP was awarded the World War II Victory Medal. Those who served for more than one year were also awarded American



A WASP class gathered for a group photograph in front of an Air Transport Command aircraft. (USAAF Photo circa 1943).

Theater Ribbon/American Campaign Medal for their service during the war. Many of the medals were accepted by the recipients' sons and daughters on their behalf.

Because of the pioneering and the expertise they demonstrated in successfully flying military aircraft, the WASP records showed that women pilots, when given the same training as men pilots, were as capable as men in non-combat flying.

On 1 July 2009 President Barack Obama and the United States Congress awarded the WASP the Congressional Gold Medal. Three of the roughly 300 surviving WASP were on hand to witness the event. During the ceremony President Obama said, "The Women Airforce Service Pilots courageously answered their country's call in a time of need while blazing a trail for the brave women who have given and continue to give so much in service to this nation since. Every American

should be grateful for their service, and I am honored to sign this bill to finally give them some of the hard-earned recognition they deserve." On 10 May 2010, the 300 surviving WASPs gathered at the US Capitol to accept the Congressional Gold Medal from then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Congressional leaders.

On New Year's Day in 2014, the Rose Parade had a float with eight WASPs riding on it.

Commemoration, Remembrance, Honor, Recognition, Respect

On 20 May 2016, the the Women Airforce Service Pilots Arlington Inurnment Restoration (WASP AIR) Act, was signed into law. The bill signing capped off a 20-week fight led by U.S. Senator Joni Ernst and U.S. Representative Martha McSally to restore the eligibility of women World War II pilots at Arlington National Cemetery.

"Today, honor has been restored to some of our country's greatest heroes," said Rep. McSally. "With this signing, generations of Americans will be able to come to Arlington and see how the WASPs served during a time of great need and, in doing so, paved the way for all women to serve in the military. I thank the thousands of Americans who gave their support to this fight and especially recognize the family of WASP Elaine Harmon, whose relentless efforts have won justice for their grandmother and all the WASPs. I look forward to the day when we can be there at Arlington to welcome these pioneers home."

"Today is a victorious occasion for a revolutionary group of women who deserve to be celebrated and remembered by all," said Senator Joni Ernst (R-IA), who co-sponsored the bill in the Senate. "The Woman Airforce Service Pilots were early pioneers in military aviation. They willingly put their lives on the line in service to our great country, and made tremendous sacrifices to join a ground-breaking flight program to free up their male counterparts for combat duty, during World War II. Restoring what was once the right of the WASP to have their ashes placed at Arlington National Cemetery is undoubtedly the right thing to do in honoring these extraordinary women for their remarkable military service. The WASP stand in his-

tory as role models for women in the military, proving their strength and fortitude in the missions they carried out. I'm thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with Senator Mikulski and Congresswomen McSally and Davis to honor the legacy of these truly remarkable female trailblazers within our military."

"This bill has always been more than just access to Arlington; it's been about the respect and recognition for the role these amazing

women played in winning World War II," said Congresswoman Susan Davis (D-CA), Ranking Member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee and co-sponsor of the House bill. "Arlington has always been considered a special place of honor. If you are laid to rest in Arlington, it is known that you sacrificed to protect and preserve our democracy."

"I cannot thank Representative McSally and her staff enough for all the work they put in to ensure success," said

Erin Miller, granddaughter of WASP Elaine Harmon. "Overturning the decision of the Army seemed like an insurmountable obstacle just six months ago but now my grandmother will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery. Representative McSally tackled this problem head-on with as much dedication as she would have for her own grandmother and for this my family and the women of the WASP will be forever grateful."

Visit and Support the National WASP WWII Museum

The story of WASP needs to be cherished and remembered and the National WASP WWII Museum at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, is dedicated to keeping the legacy of the WASP. The museum features displays highlighting planes flown by the WASP plus actual WWII training aircraft. Along with the trainers is the original layout of Avenger Field in 1943 and 1944. Models of the planes that were used for training at Avenger Field are on display, as well as a timeline of WWII in regards to the WASP, handprints of WASP who have visited the museum and vintage vehicles.

Around the hangar walls is a film strip featuring WASP in their class photos. In the lobby are current pictures of WASP who have been interviewed by *Wings Across America*, a cutting-edge, digital, multi-media project, blazing a trail into the future of education, where digital information will explode into learning adventures, and where history will come alive through the colorful and unique eyewitness accounts of surviving Women Airforce Service Pilots.

There is also a superb collection of WWII planes housed at the Museum: a Stearman PT-17, a Fairchild PT-19 and a UC-78 Bamboo Bomber, a priceless WWII plane and the last known Bamboo Bomber used at Avenger Field to train WASP, and a completely restored, air-worthy Vultee BT-13.

The National WASP WWII Museum is located at 210 Avenger Field Road, Sweetwater, Texas 79556. The museum is open from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is free. ■



Women Airforce Service Pilots pass in review at Avenger Field, Sweetwater, Texas. Hangar One at Avenger Field is now the home of the National WASP WWII Museum dedicated to preserving the legacy of the WASP. (USAAF Photo 1943).

SMOOTH *Transitions*

Smooth Transitions is a recurring feature highlighting the interesting work, stories or adventures, of Mobility Airmen outside or after their 'traditional' service. Col Mike Cassidy, USAF (Ret), the A/TA Secretary, is in search of more of these great stories, please contact him at secretary@atalink.org with your adventures.

"The Last Full Measure"

by CMSgt James W Wilton USAF Ret

Most of you will know the story of Staff Sergeant William H. (Pits) Pitsenbarger and his final mission on 11 April 1966 at Cam My, Vietnam, while serving as a Pararescueman (Pararescue Jumper or PJ) with Detachment 6, 38th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Bien Hoa Air Base, Vietnam. That day the Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) dispatched two Huskies (HH-43s) to recover the casualties of the "Mud Soldiers" of the Army's 2/16th Infantry Battalion in a battle near Cam My, close to Saigon. Pits was lowered through the dense forest, where he aided the wounded before having them extracted to the helicopter by cable.

Pits stayed with the Army troops, sending wounded up the cable, and refusing to leave the ground, facing certain death. He continued to treat wounded and take ammo to those still alive. Pitsenbarger's body was recovered the next day by his hooch buddy and fellow PJ, Harry Obeirne. When he was found he'd been shot four times, the final shot was from a Viet Cong sniper. Thirty-four years later, on 8 December 2000, Pitsenbarger's father was presented with his son's Medal of Honor by then Air Force Secretary Whit Peters in a ceremony at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

LtCol Obeirne, along with the Mud Soldiers, who had continued to pursue the Medal of Honor to honor Pit's ultimate sacrifice, had also always felt that the Bill Pitsenbarger story should be told. And, now, a major motion picture, "The Last Full Measure," written and directed by Todd Robinson, will tell that story. The movie features a star studded cast including Ed Harris, William Hurt, Peter Fonda and many others. As actor Grant Gustin, who plays Pits says, the story of SSgt. William Pitsenbarger "is a story that *deserves* to be told." Pit's story truly does deserve to be told and it was an honor to be there and to be a part small part of the movie.

Early in my long military career I was assigned to a Tactical Airlift unit. With under two years service I was transferred to Air Rescue and Recovery, which was assigned to Military Airlift Command (MAC), the forerunner of Air Mobility Command (AMC). I found Air Rescue to be a smaller and closer world, and in the true sense of the word, a family. Although I moved to the Airlift world later, back to Air Rescue and then to Air Refueling I always remained part of the Air Rescue family. I was regularly updated on the status of the Pitsenbarger Medal of Honor status, and there was talk of a movie for years as well.

Then, in 2012, Pits was honored by installation into the Airlift/Tanker Hall of Fame and I was privileged to work on this project, as a member of the Airlift/Tanker Association.

When the movie production was initiated I received an invitation from my old friend PJ Harry O'Beirne to participate in the cast as

a member of the Rescue Family. We were considered priority cast members, were in a specific part in the holding area and had special wrist bands. Also, we were seated closest to the front of the movie set. Proof that a career in air mobility can lead to some incredible things in your post Air Force life!

As our first rehearsal began, the bagpipes sounded for the posting of the colors, and slowly, each person began to stand. Christopher Plummer and Diane Ladd, who play the father and stepmother of Bill Pitsenbarger, were standing on the stage. Secretary of the Air Force, F. Whitten (Whit) Peters, played by Linus Roache, stood quietly at the podium prepared to speak. When the pipers had retreated, "Secretary Peters" began his comments leading up to the presentation of the Medal of Honor. As he presented the medal to Pitsenbarger's parents the crowd burst into applause. It was much like we were living through the real ceremony, and I was struck by the attention to detail.

Then Secretary Peters acknowledged the Mud Soldiers. It started from the cue of the actor Samuel L. Jackson, who was playing the part of an Army soldier. First, he gazed around then slowly stood. Then another soldier, played by Max Gail, stood, followed by the rest of the Mud Soldiers of the battle at Cam My. The Pararescuemen in the front, then other groups of veterans who were in the audience scene. As I watched, each person rose, as I did, slowly.

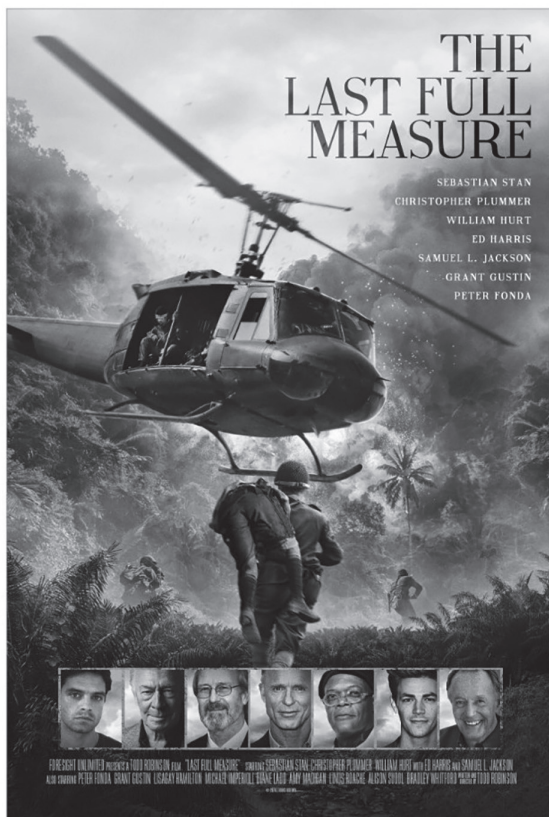
The film shooting was two long days of practice, lasting into the late evening, so we would get it exactly right.

The corsage worn by Mrs. Pitsenbarger, played by Diane Ladd, was adjusted a number of times to get that exactly right.

The beginning portion of the movie shoot was at a small airport hangar near Hiram, Georgia. The weather was sunny but it was still quite cool. When we weren't working on the set we spent time in a large holding area, a giant tent, and waited to be called back to the set. We had lunch, mingled, spent time with old friends and met new friends. We chatted and listened to the bagpipers practice. We talked among the Air Force Rescue people and the Army Mud Soldiers as they told of their experiences. There was lots of joking and laughing and stories about one another.

Early on the second day my old friend PJ Harry O'Beirne came into the tent and asked what I was drinking, I said "Irish Coffee." Harry said "I'd like one Jim!" I responded "I'll be right back." It was good quality time and we took note that we're losing people at our age.

I met Harry many years ago and knew of his experience as a PJ, then as a Lt Col, he served during the Gulf War. He grew up in Dublin, Ireland and came to the US at nineteen and joined the Air Force. My wife refers to Harry as the Irish poet for his story telling



and his writings. And, old friend Harry had invited us to be part of the movie cast.

When "The Last Full Measure" makes it to theaters nationwide I highly recommend that you make it a priority to see this important piece of our history.



Me, on the right, with PJ Harry O'Beirne. (Photo Courtesy James Wilton).



Christopher Plummer and I met outside the hanger and I mentioned his work in play casts in Stratford, Ontario, Canada. We talked quite some time. (Photo Courtesy James Wilton).



A photo taken from the back of the hangar toward the stage set. (Photo Courtesy James Wilton).



Medal of Honor Citation Staff Sergeant

William H. Pitsenbarger

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Airman First Class Pitsenbarger distinguished himself by extreme valor on 11 April 1966 near Cam My, Republic of Vietnam, while assigned as a Pararescue Crew Member, Detachment 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. On that date, Airman Pitsenbarger was aboard a rescue helicopter responding to a call for evacuation of casualties incurred in an ongoing firefight between elements of the United States Army's 1st Infantry Division and a sizeable enemy force approximately 35 miles east of Saigon. With complete disregard for personal safety, Airman Pitsenbarger volunteered to ride a hoist more than one hundred feet through the jungle, to the ground. On the ground, he organized and coordinated rescue efforts, cared for the wounded, prepared casualties for evacuation, and insured that the recovery operation continued in a smooth and orderly fashion. Through his personal efforts, the evacuation of the wounded was greatly expedited. As each of the nine casualties evacuated that day was recovered, Airman Pitsenbarger refused evacuation in order to get more wounded soldiers to safety. After several pick-ups, one of the two rescue helicopters involved in the evacuation was struck by heavy enemy ground fire and was forced to leave the scene for an emergency landing. Airman Pitsenbarger stayed behind on the ground to perform medical duties. Shortly thereafter, the area came under sniper and mortar fire. During a subsequent attempt to evacuate the site, American forces came under heavy assault by a large Viet Cong force. When the enemy launched the assault, the evacuation was called off and Airman Pitsenbarger took up arms with the besieged infantrymen. He courageously resisted the enemy, braving intense gunfire to gather and distribute vital ammunition to American defenders. As the battle raged on, he repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to care for the wounded, pull them out of the line of fire, and return fire whenever he could, during which time he was wounded three times. Despite his wounds, he valiantly fought on, simultaneously treating as many wounded as possible. In the vicious fighting that followed, the American forces suffered 80 percent casualties as their perimeter was breached, and Airman Pitsenbarger was fatally wounded. Airman Pitsenbarger exposed himself to almost certain death by staying on the ground, and perished while saving the lives of wounded infantrymen. His bravery and determination exemplify the highest professional standards and traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Air Force. ■

Book Review

by Capt Murdock Moore, USAF Ret

RUNWAY VISIONS, **An American C-130 Pilot's Memoir Of Combat Airlift Operations in Southeast Asia, 1967-1968**

by David Kirk Vaughn, McFarland & Company, INC., 1998

Vietnam was the C-130's and USAF Captain David Kirk Vaughn's first war. There would be others...

Captain Vaughn was a SAC KC-97 pilot when his prime receiver, the B-47, went south to Davis-Monthan. Having only a *slight* need-for-more-speed, he transitioned to C-130Es at Dyess AFB, Texas. Though the Texas skies were big and bright the trade school grad (US-AFA, 1962) knew that true adventure (and promotion points) lay in the sodden skies of Southeast Asia. In late 1967 he volunteered for Vietnam. His February entry into the South East Asia (SEA) air war was less than dramatic. Homeported at Ching Chaun Kang (CCK) Taiwan, his would be a rotational war.

Though Aircraft Commander-qualified, Vaughn was not SEA Aircraft Commander-qualified. His first flights around, and then into Vietnam, were in the right seat. When finally flying in the left seat his copilot was usually a bored CCK staff officer flying into Vietnam for the combat zone monthly bonus. More attentive were "checkriders." Routine stuff until he flew into the An Key "Golf Course." The field was short but he flew in long. The runway was fast disappearing when the checker added his feet to the brakes and yelled, "Stop this Goddamned airplane!" Though a practical tactical lesson was learned, follow-on "bonus" fliers were considerably less relaxed. Still, a few weeks later, Vaughn was "chopped" as SEA AC qualified.

Uploads varied daily. Ammo came in four pallet increments. When flying four footed freight you used 463IL pallets as a alternate floor, it being easier to wash down a pallet than scrub down a deck. You could "floor load" Viets, but not Allied troops. One cargo load was Military Police (MP) escorted to the aircraft, flew with an armed MP escort, then off loaded to more MPs. Crypto gear? Jungle busting black boxes? New military script? No, something more critical to the war effort - *American booze!*

One lighter load carried a heavy burden. A severe mortar attack on Da Nang produced 60 wounded for a night medevac to Clark Air Base. Though he had an inop radar and semi-inop auto-pilot Vaughn's C-130 was "waivered" as he carried an experienced navigator (Captain Al Williams). Not waiverable, a tropical thunderstorm across their route. On the positive side near continuous lighting made spotting a path between the towering CBs easier. On final a hot engine was shut down, yet a three point landing was still achieved! A gentle insult came when proud Vaughn asked a nurse, "How was the flight?" The unwinged angel replied, "Not bad, the last part was smooth." The Clark SOF offered to waiver them right back to Vietnam. Let's just say the offer was declined.

One cargo dropped morale, body bags. Usually they would pick them up at a forward airstrip for transfer to coastal mortuary affairs unit. No banners, bugles or moving words, just strap them to the ramp for downloading ease. At the end of their final Vietnam journey a recycled baggage cart awaited - Vaughn felt they deserved better.

Was their sacrifice paying off? Saigon HQ said, "Yes! Just look at the stats!"

Late in 1967 the airlifter began flying to a expanded "listening post" near the Ho Chi Minh trail called Khe Sanh. At KSCB some 6,000 marines, plus artillery, had wired themselves into a semi-valuable (it had a matted airstrip) piece of vulnerable real estate. It made no sense to Vaughn. But his was not to reason why, his was but to resupply.

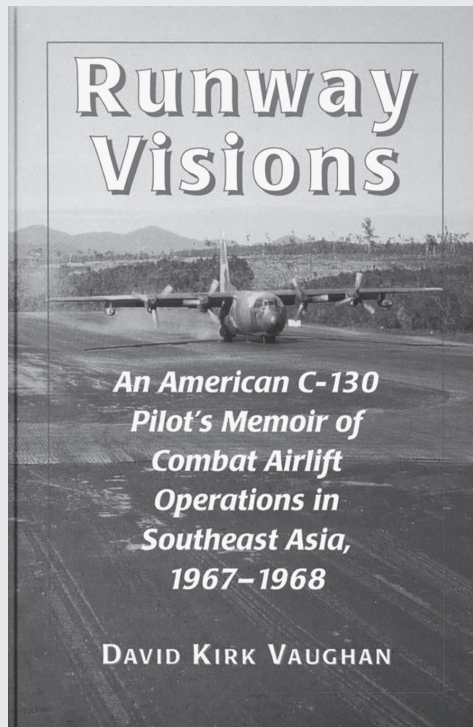
The chief reason why - too many silver coffins going back to the US without a telling victory. Washington wasn't happy. Army General William Westmoreland decided he would offer NVA General Nguyen Giap a Dien Bien Phu II, Giap's wire entangled regiments would then be decimated by airpower. A Hollywood style armored relief column then ran down the remaining running Reds. BUT, despite Saigon Intel telling of battalions by the score around Khe Sanh, the only thing moving across the wire were hot artillery rounds. Underfire moving EROs became the norm. For Vaughn's crew January 30th was not a normal day. While kicking out pallets, #2 engine began to wind down. Established procedure: Throttle Back to Zero RPMs... Shut Down...Restart. But you weren't in Texas anymore, three derelect C-123s and a C-130 attested to that. Vaughn slammed the overhead START button. The engine rose to the occasion. As did the C-130 a few moments later. No Exlax needed that night!

The next day, New Year's Eve on the Viet calendar, was a down day. Vaughn's Army brother dropped by Tuy Hoa. When they parted both were well liquored. As he stumbled towards his hootch in the darkness the ever observant airlifter noted early celebrants on the perimeter were already popping flares. Yes, Tet-68 was going to be a good day to be in Vietnam!

As Vaughn slept soundly Tuy Hoa, like a score of other bases, had its perimeter breeched. But the SPs, backed by maintainers and logistic troops, were not going to be kicked off their own base! By 0300 when Vaughn awoke the battle was basically over. His disheveled crew at preflight briefed him on what had occurred! More situational awareness was gained flying south to big Nha Trang Air Base. Its runway was still closed...Back to Tuy Hoa, then north to Da Nang for three ammo runs into Khe Sanh (a fourth was canceled). They returned to Tuy Hoa to see F-100s taking off to shuttle bomb the village where the infiltrators had come from. It was not a hearts-and-minds day!

Two months after "Tet," Vaughn, still a captain, exited Southeast Asia with 500 combat hours gained over Vietnam.* It was back to the Academy to teach English and flight instruct fledglings, no doubt using Olde English terms during the latter. He exited the Air Force a LTC with a PhD. Gas Passer to Pallet Pusher to Professor to Publishee - *Airlifting, A Great Way Of Life!* ■

* Multiple hours over "Suzie Wong" are also briefed in the book. A debrief on being unbriefed? Welcome to Southeast Asia!



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Mattis Welcomes New SecAF Home

By Master Sgt. Bryan Franks, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis ceremoniously swore in Heather Wilson as the 24th Secretary of the Air Force at the Pentagon 16 May 2017.

"If we wanted to do one thing to Webster's Unbridged Dictionary to define a Patriot with no words, we could put up Heather Wilson's picture right next to the word, and we would explain what a patriot truly is," Mattis said. "On behalf of the entire Air Force community, on the behalf of the Department of Defense – welcome home."

Wilson, who had been administratively sworn in as secretary on 12 May 2017, has more than 35 years of professional experience in a range of leadership and management roles in the military, higher education, government and private industry.

Mattis called Wilson well suited to lead the Air Force and said he needs her ideas and wisdom as the Air Force begins a new chapter.

Mattis said he, Wilson and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein are committed to restoring the readiness of the force, modernizing and advancing new capabilities to meet future threats, and developing exceptional leaders to command the finest combat force in the world.

"History is not predetermined or static. History hangs on a hinge. Air supremacy is not America's ordained right and there are other hands pushing on history's door," Mattis said. "By Secretary Wilson's

leadership, by the superior service of America's Airmen...they push in vain...the U.S. Air Force must be better than anyone else."

Goldfein and Wilson first served together as cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy where they both took the oath of office for the first time as members of the same class.

"Here we stand together again as you repeat these same sacred words. What a journey it has been, and what a journey it will be," Goldfein said. "We follow in the footsteps of service secretaries and chiefs of the past who have put their heart and their soul into building the most combat capable and lethal Air Force the world has ever known."

From the start, Wilson said she is focused on not taking air and space power for granted.

"We have got a lot of work to do under the guidance of Secretary Defense Mattis and with the support of the United States Congress we will restore the readiness of the force so that we can win any fight, anytime, any-

where," Wilson said. "We're going to cost effectively modernize the force and drive innovation to bring new capabilities to the service of liberty, and underpinning it all will be a commitment to people. Thank you to the Airmen who protect the freedom we enjoy. You and your families represent the best of what it means to be an American."



Newly sworn Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson thanks family, friends and colleagues during her ceremonial oath of office as the 24th secretary, at the Pentagon event, on 16 May 2017. (U.S. Air Force photo by Wayne A. Clark)

Air Force Major Honored for Bravery in Battle

On 15 May 2017, Air Force Major William J. Mendel was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in a ceremony at Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis, New Mexico.

Major Mendel was a captain back in December of 2013 when he was serving in Djibouti, Africa. According to the special order by the U.S. Air Force, then Captain Mendel, an aircraft commander of the 8th Expeditionary Special Operations Squadron, the "Green Hornets," was piloting a CV-22 in order to evacuate American citizens in Central Djibouti, Africa, when the aircraft "came under heavy, effective gunfire."

Mendel was able to navigate away from the gunfire and assess damages caused to the aircraft, which included "ruptured fuel tanks, complete loss of the largest hydraulic system and an inoperable emergency lubrication system," according to the order.



Brigadier General William G. Holt, left, pins the Distinguished Flying Cross on Major William J. Mendel on 15 May 2017 during a presentation ceremony at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico. (U.S. Air Force Photo).

"It really is a testament to the aircraft and the people who fly it," says Mendel, "we put ourselves through some really bad situations in training so that if something bad actually does happen, like it did on that day, we can perform to the utmost of our abilities."

Only 79 people have been given the Distinguished Flying Cross award in Air Force Special Operation Command history. Men like Charles Lindbergh and former President George H. W. Bush and Buzz Aldrin.

The first Distinguished Flying Cross award was awarded in 1927 to Lindbergh when he completed his flight across the Atlantic.

Major Mendel's brother Benjamin has been stationed in Qatar

for the last four months but made it home just in time for the ceremony. Major Mendel's wife Catherine and two children, Alexandra and Barrett, were also in attendance.

C-130 pilot receives 60th Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy

By SSgt. Jannelle McRae, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson presented the 2016 Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy to Maj. John Hourigan, a 123rd Operations Support Squadron C-130 Hercules pilot, at the Pentagon, 17 May 2017, for not only saving the lives of five crewmembers, but also identifying a worldwide C-130 propeller issue.

During a training sortie on 15 July 2016, Hourigan's aircraft began vibrating so badly that crewmembers were unable to communicate with each other through their headsets, read gauges or flight instruments. Hourigan quickly determined the source of vibration, implemented corrective action and executed an engine-out landing.

"The fact that the crew is here today is remarkable," said Wilson. "It took extraordinary skill, experience and dedication. This is a fantastic award for a remarkable aviator who well deserves this award."

Hourigan, assigned to the 123rd Operations Support Squadron, Kentucky National Guard, identified that one of the four propellers had become a speed brake while the aircraft was low to the ground at a high-bank angle.

"This was absolutely the first time I've ever been scared in the airplane," the guardsman continued.

During the ceremony, Hourigan took a moment to recognize his team and stated it takes a whole crew to bring a C-130 home safely.

"I have been fortunate to be a part of the Kentucky National

Guard," he said.

The annual trophy was established in 1958 to memorialize 1st Lt. Koren Kolligian Jr., an Air Force pilot declared missing in the line of duty when his T-33 Shooting Star disappeared off the California coast on 14 September 1955. The award recognizes aircrew members who, through extraordinary skill, exceptional alertness, ingenuity, or proficiency, averted accidents or minimized the seriousness of accidents in terms of injury, loss of life, aircraft damage or property damage.

Since the award's inception, the Kolligian family attends and sponsors the award presentation ceremony.

"For the 60th time, we are privileged to attend this ceremony and recognize the accomplishments of an outstanding pilot," said Koren Kolligian II, Lt. Kolligian's nephew. "Every year we meet remarkable pilots, spend time with them and their families, sharing stories and creating memories."

Koren Kolligian II admires the precision, pride and professional-

ism of Airmen. "What may have been another day in your life, we view as an act of heroism resulting from the Air Force's commitment, education and training and from your skill, composure and resiliency as a pilot," he said. "This award celebrates each of those values and qualities and it reminds us all what it takes to be a pilot in the United States Air Force."



Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson presents the Koren Kolligian Trophy to Maj. John Hourigan, a 123rd Operations Support Squadron C-130 Hercules pilot, during a ceremony in the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., on 17 May 2017. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Andy Morataya).

Maintainers Build C-130 Part, Save Air Force Thousands of Dollars

by Airman 1st Class Kevin Sommer Giron, 19th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

As the workhorse of the U.S. Air Force, the C-130 dominates the open skies here and so do feathery allies.

However, as spring begins and birds migrate across the country, collisions between birds and aircraft become more prevalent. When they do, the 19th Maintenance Squadron Aircraft Structural Maintenance Airmen at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas are tasked with repairing the C-130 airframes.

"We repair the physical damage to the aircraft's infrastructure," said Tech. Sgt. Anthony Duffin, 19th AMXS Aircraft Structural Maintenance Shop day shift lead. "From cracks to tears, we fix it all and repaint it."

A recent collision challenged the structural Airmen to perform a higher-level repair that would make an aircraft serviceable 270 days ahead of schedule.

Their task was to create a leading edge for

a horizontal stabilizer from scratch, using base resources and saving the base thousands of dollars in repairs.

The leading edge is the front section of the

"This is yet another mark that shows the expertise and professionalism of the maintenance shops in enabling Global Combat Airlift [at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas]"

—1st Lt. Deanthony Johnson, 19th AMXS Fabrications Flight commander.

C-130J back wing. It's a piece that allows aircraft to keep its lift during flight.

"This one was challenging because the horizontal stabilizer doesn't usually get hit," Duffin said. "It's harder to fix because it's more compressed than the wing."

Due to the uncommon damage, ordering a replacement part would've taken more than 250 days and cost over \$150,000.

Despite the obstacle, the Airmen used their ingenuity and initiative to build the essential piece and saved Little Rock AFB \$127,000.

"We patched the outer layer of the structure and completely remade the inner-skin of the part that allows gas to come through and keeps the wing from icing over," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Lاهی, 19th AMXS aircraft structural maintenance craftsman.

"We've never done anything to that shape or that radius before which was challenging until we got the proper tools made from the Aircraft Metals Technology shop."

The structural Airmen worked closely with metals technology, employing their resources and manpower to create new tools and strengthen the structural integrity of the newly overhauled part.

Through a shared dedication for their work and 504 manhours, the technicians restored the leading edge of a once unserviceable aircraft.

Talisman Saber – U.S. and Coalition Partners Demonstrate Global Defense Capabilities

by 1st Lt. Allison Egan, Joint Base Charleston Public Affairs

Four U.S. Air Force and one Royal Australian air force C-17 Globemaster IIIs loaded with more than 300 American and Canadian paratroopers took off 13 July 2017 from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska, for Shoalwater Bay, Australia, for exercise Talisman Saber.

Every two years, U.S. and Australian military forces partner to conduct a month-long exercise to enhance global readiness in a realistic training environment. This year's exercise involves over 33,000 troops, 21 ships and more than 200 joint aircraft. The exercise prepares the U.S. and its coalition partners for rapid assistance and delivery of personnel and equipment.

Both countries' mobility forces make the training possible. The aerial refueling and transport of Soldiers demonstrates both countries' abilities to deliver Army paratroopers to any location at any time.

"What we're doing with our C-17s in Talisman Saber is practicing for joint forcible entry operations," said Air Force Capt. Chris Mahan, lead C-17 planner for Talisman Saber 2017, weapons officer and evaluator pilot for the 15th Airlift Squadron. "What makes the C-17 so valuable in a mission like this is the fact it's diverse. It is air refuelable, airdrop capable and has the ability to fly great distances."

The distance spans the length of the planet's biggest ocean. Each globemaster traveled more than 8,000 miles to reach Australia.

"The C-17 is one of the few aircraft that has a perfect balance of strategic and tactical airlift capabilities," said Mahan. "It allows our crews to execute a direct delivery from Alaska all the way to Australia and demonstrates the capabilities this aircraft has when we're enabled by our KC-10 and KC-135s refuelers in order to employ combat power."

The aerial refueling process demonstrates the importance and necessity of partnership in the realm of global mobility. When conducting a mid-air refueling, precision and confidence are key to the C-17's ability to travel great distances.

Flying the length of the largest ocean on Earth requires a consistent supply of fuel. Each C-17 had to refuel twice during the 17-hour flight to Shoalwater Bay, making sup-

port from KC-10 Extender and KC-135 Stratotanker air refuelers vital. The C-17s can't

weight [during] training scenarios."

The tankers were pre-positioned at Eielson AFB Alaska, and Wake Island, a small atoll in the western Pacific Ocean, allowing the C-17s to refuel exactly when needed. Altogether, the tankers offloaded more than 700,000 pounds of fuel.

"This is what the KC-10 was made to do," said Lt. Col. Stew Welch, 9th Air Refueling Squadron commander and the Ultimate Reach tanker mission commander. "Getting a large package of C-17s with their Army payload from one continent to another is not going to happen without air refueling. This is the bread and butter of what we do in the KC-10 world and it is a privilege to do it [for Talisman Saber]."

Working together is important both mid-air and on the ground. With the C-17s and paratroopers kick-starting exercise Talisman Saber, service members of all branches and nationalities come together to maintain regional security, peace and stability.

"It's very important for us as Airmen to participate in something like this because it opens up the aperture for every Airman who is involved because they realize quickly that it's not all about the Air Force," said Canlas.

"In fact, we're a very small part of this whole exercise. It's us supporting the Army, we're also supporting the Navy, and we're also supporting the Marines. We provide the transportation to execute strategic insertion."

Once the C-17s receive fuel, the paratroopers are ready for their drop. With 58 jumps under his belt, jumpmaster and Army 1st Sgt. Bill Ables of Easy Company, 6th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 4/25 Airborne, leads 54 paratroopers in the Ground Force Component of the exercise.

"When I'm jumping out of a C-17 I'm primarily going through my first five points of performance, which is getting the six-second count of the way, making sure my parachute is deployed, and focusing on my tasks to get to the ground safely," said Ables. "The purpose in practicing a jump like this is to prepare myself and my unit for airborne operations in response to any kind of contingency operations we



A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III from Joint Base Charleston, S.C., sits on the ramp at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska prior to takeoff on 12 July 2017 to participate in and provide airlift support for Exercise Talisman Saber 2017. The purpose of TS17 is to improve U.S.-Australian combat readiness, increase interoperability, maximize combined training opportunities and conduct maritime prepositioning and logistics operations in the Pacific. TS17 also demonstrates U.S. commitment to its key ally and the overarching security framework in the Indo Asian Pacific region. (USAF Photo).

make the flight without that support.

"What's very important about an air refueling is that we are a smaller part in a bigger puzzle," said Air Force Col. Jimmy Canlas, 437th Airlift Wing commander and Talisman Saber mission commander. "We couldn't accomplish this mission without



A U.S. Army airborne jumpmaster from the 4th Brigade 25th Infantry division signals "one minute" to drop while he looks out of the open troop door on a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III from Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina on 12 July, waiting to airdrop in support of Exercise Talisman Saber 2017. (USAF Photo).

air refueling. It's very challenging because unlike a training environment, we are receiving a large load of gas, 65,000 to 80,000 pounds of gas and the aircraft reacts differently when its heavy weight versus light

Team Dyess Activates 317th Airlift Wing

by Senior Airman Shannon Hall, 7th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

may have to face.”

As soon as they hit the ground, their operations begin.

“My mission while on the ground during this exercise will be to locate any kind of resupply items and to get those items to designated areas for the ground forces and resupply them with water and food,” said Ables.

Also supporting the Army’s Ground Force objectives are RAAF C-17 pilots. Working

“What makes the C-17 so valuable in a mission like this is the fact it’s diverse.

It is air refuelable, airdrop capable and has the ability to fly great distances.”

—Capt. Chris Mahan, lead C-17 planner for Talisman Saber 2017

closely together with the U.S. military is beneficial to both nations involved in the exercise.

Flight Lieutenant James Tockuss, assistant main co-pilot of a RAAF C-17, is responsible for assisting the aircraft captain with fuel planning and the airdrop exercise in Shoalwater Bay. For Tockuss, working with the U.S. Air Force for the first time is instructive.

“It’s been really interesting to see how the U.S. Air Force works as an organization, especially the differences between the U.S. and us back in Australia,” said Tockuss. “I look forward to learning how the U.S. Air Force conducts their operations and seeing what lessons the Australians can learn from working with them.”

By conducting planning briefs, air refuelings and airdrops together with coalition partners, the U.S. and its allies strengthen their military relationships and prepare to provide security around the globe.

Exercise participants said the sheer size of the mission and wide range of backgrounds for troops involved add the greatest value to the training.

“The greatest thing about Talisman Saber that we don’t get to do very often is we get to work with so many different services, components, major commands and nationalities,” said Mahan. “Complex exercises like Talisman Saber allow us to expose the crews to what joint operations are going to entail when we go into combat with a coalition, so our military forces can know what to expect and what it’s going to look like.” ■

The 317th Airlift Group deactivated and then reactivated as the 317th Airlift Wing at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas on 6 July 2017.

The 317th AG began its journey during World War II in San Antonio, Texas. It was deactivated in 1942 at Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, and in 1997 was reactivated at Dyess AFB, under Air Mobility Command. During its 20 years of service, the 317th AG has earned six Meritorious Unit Awards and ten Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards.

The 317th AG’s scope and size warranted its designation as an operational wing as it continuously generates and employs C-130J Super Hercules combat power. The redesignation will greatly improve leadership and resource management.

Col. David Owens took command of the 317th AG before it was deactivated and then activated as the 317th AW. Prior to this assignment, Owens was the 62nd Operations Group commander at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. Owens ensured the combat readiness of approximately 800 authorized personnel, four C-17 Globemaster III airlift squadrons and an operations support squadron

to conduct all aspects of C-17 operations to include mission planning, command and control, life support, airfield operations and much more. Today he commands the largest

C-130J unit in the world.

Lt. Gen. Giovanni Tuck, 18th Air Force commander, presided over the ceremony. He said this activation comes at just the right time.

“It is a really big deal that we’re here,” Tuck said. “The significance of today’s activation has been in the works for some time. In future conflicts, we need to be prepared. And you need look no further than Dyess Air Force Base and the partnership we have with the 7th Bomb Wing. We will need to operate transregionally, across all domains. It will involve coalitions and be international. Standing up this wing at this time, when our nation needs it, couldn’t be timed more perfectly.”

The newly activated 317th Operations Group, commanded by Col. James Hackbarth and the 317th Maintenance Group, commanded by Col. William Maxwell, Jr., will fall under the new 317th AW. The wing also includes nine staff agencies with approximately 1,100 authorized personnel.

With the activation of the 317th AW comes new challenges, but more importantly it’s a new beginning to continue its dedicated partnership

with the 7th BW and Abilene community.

“Today Mobility Airmen will continue to project rapid global mobility to wherever they are sent around the world,” said Owens.

“In future conflicts, we need to be prepared.

And you need look no further than Dyess Air Force Base and the partnership we have with the 7th Bomb Wing.

We will need to operate transregionally, across all domains.

It will involve coalitions and be international. Standing up this wing at this time, when our nation needs it, couldn’t be timed more perfectly.”

—Lt. Gen. Giovanni Tuck, 18th Air Force commander ■



U.S. Air Force Col. David Owens, left, 317th Airlift Wing commander, hands a guidon to Col. James Hackbarth, 317th Operation Support Group commander, at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas on 6 July 2017. The 317th OSG was created in support of the newly activated 317th Airlift Wing. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Alexander Guerrero).



U.S. Air Force Airmen from the 317th Airlift Wing render a salute during the 317th Airlift Wing activation ceremony at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, on 6 July 2017. Under the 317th AW, the 317th Operations Group and 317th Maintenance Group were also established. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kedesha Pennant).

Air Force Expects 2 Month Delay in KC-46 Program

"It's a combination of the contractor not anticipating some of the challenges with FAA certification, a little bit in the testing and getting the data points that are required."

—General David Goldfein, Air Force Chief of Staff

On 6 June 2017, the Air Force announced that KC-46 fuel tanker will probably be delayed "a couple of months" more. The Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson and Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein told the Senate and an Air Force spokesperson confirmed that the Air Force expects that the contractor, the Boeing Company, will miss the December deadline to deliver the first aircraft — but a Boeing spokesperson insisted that they'd meet the schedule.

Wilson came to the hearing on the 2018 budget after just a month on the job and just a day after her first public speech as Air Force Secretary. The former Air Force officer, NSC staffer, and congresswoman calmly held her own during the hearing.

Senator John McCain noted with satisfaction that the fixed-price contract for the first 18 planes had kept Boeing from charging the taxpayer for cost overruns. However the Air Force still has to suffer the program's delays, McCain asked: "When will the first aircraft be delivered and when will the eighteenth be delivered?"

"Senator, there's a meeting this morning in the Pentagon about the risk on the schedule," Wilson said. "We think there's some risk, particularly in the testing schedule; and Boeing does not believe, does not agree with that risk."

"The meeting's actually going on right now," Wilson went on. "We did an independent assessment on timing and we may see a couple of months' slip, is what I'm hearing informally."

General Goldfein added more detail later in the hearing. "Right now, this morning, our [acting] service acquisition executive [Darlene Costell] is actually holding a schedule review and looking at exactly where we are. We think that there may be a couple months (that) we're delayed," he said. "It's a combination of the contractor not anticipating some of the challenges with FAA certification, a little bit in the testing and getting the data points that are required."

KC-46 basing should not be delayed, however, Goldfein reassured the senators: "Our best estimate right now is we're going to be

able to absorb the delays at McConnell [AFB in Kansas] and Altus [AFB in Oklahoma] and we'll be back on track by the time we get to Pease [ANGB New Hampshire]."



Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson testifies to the Senate Armed Services Committee during a budget hearing on the morning of 6 June 2017 (Courtesy Photo).

An Air Force spokesperson made it clear that Wilson now believes Boeing will miss its December 2017 deadline to deliver the first aircraft, which will instead be delivered to the Air Force early next year.



Two KC-46 aircraft under construction at the Boeing Everett Modification Center in Everett, Washington, in May 2017. A Boeing technician uses a lift to get onto the wing of the KC-46 Pegasus aerial-refueling tanker. (Boeing/USAF Courtesy Photo).

Boeing acknowledged that there have been delays. Indeed, the contractor and the Air Force already agreed to slip the delivery of the first KC-46 from September of this year (the end of the fiscal year) to December (the end of the calendar year).

Boeing Defense plans to complete certification flight testing and begin delivering the first KC-46 Pegasus tanker to the U.S. Air Force by late this year. After encountering problems during the program's developmental phase, the manufacturer expects

to deliver the first 18 tankers on a compressed schedule by early next year, initially without their wing aerial refueling pods (WARPs).

In May, during a media visit to the manufacturer's facilities at King County International Airport, popularly known as Boeing Field, south of Seattle, Washington, KC-46 program manager Mike Gibbons informed reporters, "We're in the tail end of flight-testing on this aircraft."

The engineering and manufacturing development (EMD) contract the Air Force awarded Boeing (Chalset 332/335) in February 2011 called for the manufacturer to deliver the first 18 of 179 planned tankers, nine sets of WARPs and two spare engines by August of this year [2017]. However, problems Boeing encountered in wiring the airliner derivative,

a fuel-system contamination mishap and the need for a refueling boom fix discovered during aerial refueling demonstrations caused the parties to stretch the flight-test phase and compress delivery of the first 18 tankers from the planned 14 months to six months.

While the KC-46 program was meeting cost and performance targets, its schedule presented an ongoing risk due to potential delays Boeing faced in securing design certifications from the Federal Aviation Administration and completing flight-test points, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported to the U.S. Congress in March. Earlier this year, the manufacturer and the Air Force modified the schedule to allow Boeing to separately deliver the first 18 aircraft by next February and the WARPs by October 2018—14 months later than originally planned.

Caroline Hutcheson, a Boeing spokeswoman, emphasized the the company is "confident" it will meet the December deadline saying, "we hold firm to that end of the year delivery date...for the first aircraft." As for the other aircraft on the initial contract — aircraft numbers 2 through 18 — she went on to say, "we agree there is risk until flight testing is complete and [we] are working to make sure we're aligned [with the Air Force] on the delivery schedule."

Mobility Airmen Ingenuity Quickly Reopens Naval Air Station Rota Airfield

Air Force Expeditionary Center Public Affairs

Airmen assigned to the 725th Air Mobility Squadron quickly and safely responded to a C-5 Galaxy landing incident on 23 May at Naval Station Rota, Spain, assuring minimal disruption to the airfield's operations in support of Rapid Global Mobility.

During approach, the C-5's nose landing gear would not descend. The aircrew was able to land safely. However, after the crew and passengers were off the plane, the large aircraft remained stuck on the runway – essentially, shutting it down on a day when more than double the average air traffic was transiting Rota and several critically important missions hung in the balance.

"There were a handful of jets on the ramp that were presidential support missions departing the next day," said Col. Eric Hook, 521st Air Mobility Operations Group commander. "It was absolutely crucial to reopen the runway. Not only to support the presidential mission, but also aircraft, cargo and passengers transiting to European Command, Central Command and even down to Africa Command."

While the cause of the incident is still under investigation, the team from the 725th had the diverse experience and training necessary to respond. Airmen assigned to Naval Station Rota consistently work with joint and coalition partners, which allowed them to collaborate for the situation.

"We had just table topped this [type of scenario] with our Navy counterparts about a month before, so we knew what roles we would all have in an aircraft recovery along with what equipment we had," said Master Sgt. Kory Newgard, a production superintendent for the 725th AMS. "They were super responsive and supportive throughout the event."

With time ticking, Marcus Carrion, 725th AMS technical advisor, assembled a team of maintainers based on areas of special expertise to remove the aircraft from the runway.

"We had one guy who is really good at using aircraft jacks, and one who is good at towing," said Carrion. "We assembled the best of the best."

That team included Master Sgt. Michael Bartlett, a 725th AMS production superintendent, who reviewed the technical manuals and suggested they use a process

called kneeling. Kneeling uses hydraulics and the aircraft's weight to raise or lower the body, tail or in this case, the nose of the C-5. Using this method instead of aircraft jacks or airbags saved up to twelve hours from the usual expected recovery time that day.

"One of the most important things to do during a situation like this is be very decisive because if not, you burn up a lot of time, and that's one thing we didn't have," said Carrion.

"The success of this whole recovery was because of that kneeling procedure and our team members who carried it out flawlessly."

While time was of the essence, safety was a top concern for the team.

"This team did a great job of making safety a top priority and for making the recovery happen in a short time," said Newgard. "They put Rota on the map for having some top-notch maintainers."

While some focused on removing the C-5 from the runway, others focused on continuing the daily mission. The squadron relies on experience and training to expeditiously transport mission-essential equipment and personnel to combatant commanders worldwide.

Because of the teamwork, the safety focus and the dedication to excellence displayed by the mobility Airmen, the airfield returned to a mission capable status in just 12 hours.

"They had the right maintainers to go out and take care of that jet," said Hook, the group commander. "They were able to get it safe, secure and in a configuration where they could lower the gear and tow it off of the runway in an incredibly short amount of time."

Hook said the team demonstrated the passion enroute Airmen have to work safely and quickly, while minimizing downtime on airfields and enabling AMC aircraft to rapidly deliver cargo and personnel to combatant commanders worldwide.

"I am an AMC Airman and I'm extremely proud of what the men and women here in the fixed enroute do," said Hook. "The Air Mobility system continues to move along and through our locations to benefit the joint warfighter downrange and it's because of our Mobility Airmen."

"They had the right maintainers to go out and take care of that jet. They were able to get it safe, secure and in a configuration where they could lower the gear and tow it off of the runway in an incredibly short amount of time."

—Col. Eric Hook, 521st Air Mobility Operations Group commander

AMC Commander Directs C-5 Stand-Down at Dover AFB

On 17 July, the Air Mobility Command commander directed a stand-down of C-5 flying operations at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, following a second malfunction of C-5 nose landing gear within the previous 60 days.

"Aircrew safety is always my top priority and is taken very seriously," said Gen. Carlton D. Everhart II, Air Mobility Command commander. "We are taking the appropriate measures to properly diagnose the issue and implement a solution."



A U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy from the 436th Airlift Wing flying over New Jersey. The C-5, one of the world's largest military aircraft, provides the Air Force with heavy intercontinental strategic airlift capability. The 436th Airlift Wing is located at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Matt Hecht/Released).

During the C-5 stand-down at Dover AFB, inspections will occur and steps will be taken to ensure the proper extension and retraction of the C-5 nose landing gear.

AMC will work to ensure worldwide mission requirements are minimally impacted during the stand-down.

Eighteen C-5 aircraft, including primary and backup aircraft inventory, are assigned to Dover AFB. Twelve primary aircraft are assigned to the Base. There are 56 C-5 aircraft in the Air Force fleet. The stand-down only impacts Dover AFB.

Mark your calendar for the
49th Annual
Airlift/Tanker Association
Convention & Technology
Exposition
and the
Air Mobility Command
& A/TA Symposium
25-29 October
Orlando World Center Marriott,
Orlando, Florida

Extraordinary Story of Courage, Heroism Inspires at Magazine Day

By Master Sgt. Amaani Lyle, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs Command Information

Col. Laurel Burkel has no recollection of her first meeting with Air Force civil engineer Greg Gangnuss.

But some 20 months after a British Puma Mk 2 helicopter crash at the NATO base in Kabul, Afghanistan claimed the lives of five coalition members, injured five others and nearly decapitated her, Burkel finally met, in person, the man who helped save her life.

The two shared their story for reporters from major print and online publications at the Pentagon for Magazine Day 21 June 2017.

"I had talked to [Greg] on the phone, we exchanged emails, but I'd never met him before," she said. The events surrounding the crash, both from memory and as told to her by rescuers, she described as "amazing, powerful and tough."

Col. Burkel (an A/TA Life Member) was serving as an advisor to the Afghan Air Force and deployed to the 438th Air Expeditionary Wing, as part of Resolute Support Mission.

She recounted that after a few months living and working on the forward operating base in the capital city, she had just finished a major project on the fateful day, 11 October 2015, having revamped the Afghan air force's manning documents to bolster their force structure.

She and three of her teammates would take a short, routine flight from Kabul International Airport to NATO headquarters to meet with the defense minister the next day.

The Crash

"The enemy dictates that we fly in a helicopter because it's not safe to drive," Burkel said. With their planned overnight stay they figured they'd take a little time to shop and have dinner with U.S. embassy friends at the dining facility before their meeting.

But as the two-ship of helicopters approached, things went awry when the pilot lost sight of the lead helicopter after each had to divert from their original landing zone, which about 40 Afghans used as a soccer field that day.

Within seconds, the helicopter pilot found his rotor entangled with a surveillance and reconnaissance balloon tether – which though only about half-an-inch thick – managed to grow taut and render the aircraft unable to fly. Within a few seconds, things went from bad to worse aboard the aircraft.

"We hit the ground at over 4,000 feet per minute," Burkel told reporters, showing them an image of the mangled wreckage soaked in almost 800 pounds of fuel upon impact. "This is what Greg ran out to. This is what I was inside of."

Gangnuss had a voluntary role as a senior environmental adviser to the Afghan Min-

istry of Defense. From his small office, the hum of rotors was typically no cause for alarm. But that day, he recounted, the noise seemed a little too close for comfort.

In an instant, his worst fears were realized, as he scrambled outside to witness hell on Earth – a dizzying haze of dust and debris that encompassed the crushed aircraft.



Col. Laurel Burkel, a C-130H Hercules navigator, survived a broken neck during a helicopter crash in Afghanistan, 2015. She tells her story to a group of writers from various publications during the "Real Airmen, Real Stories" portion of the Air Force's third annual Magazine Day at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., 21 June 2017. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Wayne A. Clark)

"Many folks there said to me, 'Why'd you do it?'" Gangnuss recalled. "They had basically vacated the area; they really thought the helicopter was going to blow up with the amount of fuel [that had spilled]. I just knew when I saw it there were people hurt, they needed immediate help...and I was there."

Of the nine people aboard the helicopter, the pilot, door gunner, a French contractor, and Burkel's teammates, Maj. Phyllis Pelky and Master Sgt. Gregory Kuhse, perished. On the ground, a Turkish colonel sustained injuries.

During the harrowing rescue, Gangnuss and two other rescuers risked their lives to crawl into the cramped, suffocating space to retrieve Burkel, a Lithuanian soldier and two others from the wreckage. Covered in fuel, fire extinguisher chemicals, blood and dirt, Gangnuss, and the others who helped, made desperate efforts to pull the survivors out – over the bodies of the deceased.

The Aftermath

Burkel was air lifted to Kabul for further medical evacuation aboard a C-17 to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany. As news of the crash trickled out, and Burkel regained consciousness en route, the colonel said she leveraged the power of social media to respectfully let friends and

family members know her status.

"How do you tell your family you're okay when there's people's families we haven't told yet that their family members have been killed," she lamented.

From Landstuhl, where she'd remain for the next several months, Burkel posted a photo of her and the former Bagram Air Base vice wing commander. Her caption was a clever play on words based on her rank and circumstances: "One tough bird."

Road to Recovery

Months later, NATO and coalition officials erected a monument at the crash site honoring those who lost their lives as Burkel fought to regain her strength, sense of normalcy and return to flying status.

But she faced a damaged C2 second vertebrae, a crushed C5 disc and a spinal cord incursion, which doctors described as a near complete internal decapitation.

"I have friends whose husbands looked at this picture and went, 'She's probably not going to survive, and if she does, she's probably [going to] be in a wheelchair,'" Burkel said.

For three months she wore a halo for stabilization and endured large screws in her head and neck to facilitate healing of her spinal injuries which she said definitely took some adjustment. "To this point, I'd never even had an IV or surgery in my life."

Friends and family arrived to Landstuhl and took shifts to help her with mundane tasks such as washing her hair. But soon, Burkel returned to her fitness regimen, even completing four-minute planks during her recovery. "I didn't let some freakin' halo get in my way of getting some workouts in," she said.

In July 2016, she moved to Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, where, just over one year since the incident, she became fully qualified to fly again. While most in her situation would've opted to retire or at least get on a medical profile, Burkel said she instead carries the cloth ranks and career field badges of her fallen colleagues in her pocket, and wears similar pins on the inside of her flight cap.

"It's about respecting, honoring and celebrating them every day," Burkel said in gratitude for their sacrifices and the unwavering support of her friends and family. "Support is such a powerful thing; you have no idea during the day that something you say or do for somebody can empower them to reach into that resiliency and courage."

As their stories to the magazine reporters concluded, Burkel and Gangnuss stood up and faced each other.

"I'm going to break protocol here, I've never hugged a colonel before," Gangnuss said as they embraced. ■

From TAC to MAC – Recollections on a Briefing

Transferring the C-130 Hercules from Tactical Air Command to Military Airlift Command

by General Alfred G. Hansen, USAF, (Ret)

In the fall of 1974, I was stationed at Pope AFB and had completed my assignment as 41 TAS Squadron Commander. At that time I had just pinned on my 06 rank and was performing “odd job wing Colonel duties.” The 317 TAW Commander had informed me that I would be accompanying the Air Division Commander, BG Crichton, and Colonel Coverdale to Langley AFB. The Tactical Air Command Commander, General Dixon, had ordered them to immediately attend a special meeting with him at TAC headquarters.

We arrived on a Tuesday morning and were told by the receiving Colonel that General Dixon wanted us to proceed immediately to his office. In our group Brigadier General Crichton was the senior officer and upon arrival he and Colonel Coverdale took seats in front of General Dixon’s desk and I found a chair in the back of his office. General Dixon explained that he and General Carlton, the Military Airlift Command (MAC) Commander, had several meetings and agreed to transfer the Tactical Airlift C-130 mission to MAC. General Carlton would arrive on Friday and General Dixon wanted Brigadier General Crichton to give a briefing on the transfer details and actions. At that time I almost fell out of my chair when they agreed that I would prepare the briefing. General Dixon said, have your Colonel put the briefing together and present it to me on Thursday. Later, I was told the meeting was scheduled for 1600 Thursday.

The Headquarters TAC Airlift Directorate under Colonel Ed Brya was to provide the necessary administrative support to develop the briefing.

I also met with senior headquarters staff members of Operation, Logistics, Personnel and other staff functions and requested that they assign a member to my working group to pull together the necessary briefing information. They agreed.

Wednesday was hectic with researching the data and developing the briefing slides. We needed personnel data, aircraft numbers, and logistic/readiness status and base transfer information and then develop the transfer plan and associated dates. General Dixon stated units would not stand down and they would continue to perform their mission during the transfer.

It was chaotic with the room full of people; information/data continually changing – everyone had their own ideas on the slide presentation and little progress was being made. Late Wednesday, I released everyone with the exception of the Airlift Director personnel and told them we would call if additional information was required. We then verified the data, filled in the blanks and roughed it into briefing slides.

Early Thursday morning I started to develop the final briefing slides. Fortunately, graphics said we were their top priority and they developed slides very quickly.

By early afternoon, we had a finished briefing and I was preparing myself to brief General Dixon. General Dixon was known to be a difficult person to brief with lots of questions and he expected nothing less than outstanding performance from the briefer. As a result, I spent considerable time with the presentation and considered all and any questions he might ask. I arrived early at his conference room, provided the briefing slides to his graphic team and discussed the briefing sequence. I familiarized myself with the podium slide controls and stood behind it, waiting for his arrival. In attendance was a small group, mainly his senior staff members. I had Ed Brya attend to take notes.

I was fully confident and ready to start the briefing when he ar-

rived and took his seat at the head of the conference table. I pressed the button for slide change and then my briefing fiasco started. I pressed the button several times but nothing happened. I could see the head graphic person directly behind where General Dixon was seated and waved my hand to proceed – nothing happened. General

Dixon looked at me and said, “Colonel, stop waving your arms, the graphic team works for me, not you, and when I want the slide to change they will do it.”

Over the next hour, he went through all the slides making comments good and bad. At the end he said, “alright, rework the briefing and I will

see you in an hour.” My team went into a small conference room and, since there was not enough time for new slides, we rearranged the sequence and put in paper slides with rough outlines. In about an hour he came into the conference room, I went over the briefing and new slides that included his comments. He was pleased and said I will look at the finished briefing tomorrow morning at 7 a.m. We went back to the Airlift Directorate Conference Room and went to work for what was to be an all night session. I notified staff members who would provide information and graphics that we would need their support all night. The next morning I gave the finished briefing and, other than a few minor sequence changes, General Dixon approved the briefing. Before he left the room, he looked at me and said “Colonel did you get any sleep?” I said no sir, we have been at it all night and with that he gave me a smile and left.

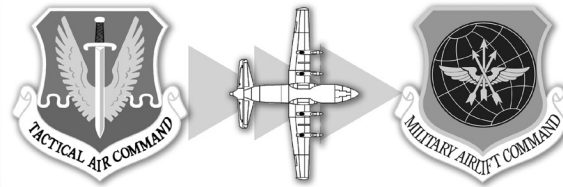
We went back to the Airlift Conference room and made the changes to the slides and sent them to graphics. BG Crichton arrived and was more than a little concerned about not having a completed briefing. I went over the entire briefing with him and answered all his questions. Then new slides arrived and he went over the briefing several times.

We received word that Gen Carlton had arrived and we went to the Commanders Conference room. With the conference room filled with both MAC and TAC senior members, General Crichton gave the briefing. At the conclusion of the briefing, General Carlton said, “Ted, great job. That was an outstanding briefing.” General Dixon turned and looked at me and again gave me a big smile. General Crichton’s face was beaming when he acknowledged General Carlton’s comment. Unfortunately, he did not recognize or thank the team who worked so hard on putting the briefing together.

The Generals all left to go to lunch and after I thanked everyone who helped me I went looking for a ride back to Pope AFB. I later accompanied General Crichton to MAC Headquarters where he gave the briefing again to the MAC Staff. I also served on the TAC to MAC transition team for visits to the affected bases. Overall, it was quite an experience.

Over the next few months, the plan was successfully executed and the C-130’s were transferred from TAC to MAC. ■

General Alfred G. Hansen, USAF, Ret., is a former Chairman of the Airlift/Tanker Association. In June 1985 he became director for logistics, J-4, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C. In this position he was responsible for worldwide logistics in support of theater commander’s war plans, was a member of the Senior NATO Logistics Forum and directed the study that resulted in the formation of the United States Transportation Command. He assumed command of Air Force Logistics Command in July 1987. He retired from the Air Force on 1 November 1989.



INDUSTRY PARTNER *Spotlight*



Technologies

L3 Mission Integration

As a highly respected provider of aircraft maintenance and modernization services, L3 Mission Integration (MI) is an industry leader that provides onboard communications systems to Very Important Person Special Airlift Mission (VIPSAM) specialty aircraft for senior executive and government officials. The company, with state-of-the-art facilities located in Greenville, Texas, is a leading systems integration organization with more than 65 years of experience in developing complex intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems; command and control systems; and secure communications. Known industry-wide for the modernization and maintenance of aircraft and ground systems, Mission Integration is part of the L3 Aerospace Systems business segment within L3 Technologies, Inc.

The L3 Mission Integration organizational structure and quick-reaction culture co-locate program management, engineering, manufacturing, installation and test capabilities for rapid response to urgent mission needs. The company also provides worldwide logistics support, including leased services, enabling it to serve any fleet of aircraft anywhere, at any time. As with all customers, L3 Mission Integration is dedicated to meeting the mission of the U.S. Air Force's Air Mobility Command (AMC), headquartered at Scott AFB, Illinois, in providing comprehensive air mobility services to customers when and where they are needed.

Currently, L3 Mission Integration provides support for multiple aircraft operated by AMC. Specifically, the company provides system modification, updates and operational field support to the VC-25, C-32, C-37, C-40, and C-17 Globemaster III. These efforts build on a successful heritage dating back to 1973, when legacy company LTV Electrosystems, Inc. performed extensive work for the Special Air Mission (SAM) Fleet Program. The SAM Fleet Program initially involved performing programmed depot maintenance for two VC-118, three VC-131, five VC-135, five VC-137 and 14 C/VC-140

aircraft. A decade later, the company, then E-Systems, continued that work and also modified C-20A aircraft (military versions of the Gulfstream III aircraft) to replace the aging VC-140 aircraft in the SAM fleet.

The original Airborne Information Management Systems (AIMS) capability, which provides secure/nonsecure voice, data and

Wideband System (CWS), which provides high-speed Internet and data to and from the aircraft. Real-time situational awareness and an "office in the sky" environment was provided with the CWS system. Further upgrades included the addition of Wi-Fi, high-definition TV and unique Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services to the original modification program.

For the C-17, L3 developed AirView360™, a trademarked roll-on/roll-off mission capability product to meet an urgent U.S. Army Special Operations Forces requirement. AirView360 consists of four high-definition monitors, IP-based marquees and built-in microphones and speakers – all approved to operate on a C-17 during all phases of flight. Team members can swivel the display screens for ease of viewing, listen to audible messages from four compartment locations, and read messages from the night vision-compatible monitors and marquees.

The system quickly adapts to changing operational environments, with the capability to distribute full-motion video to the aircraft so that users can be briefed in real time for warfighter air-drop and airland missions and humanitarian support.

L3 Mission Integration has delivered 12 C-17 AirView360 systems to the U.S. Army and five to the Royal Australian

Air Force. L3 also designed and built the same capable AirView360 product for the C-130 aircraft, and has delivered four C-130 AirView360 systems to the U.S. Army, supporting AMC and Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) missions.

To learn more about L3 Mission Integration, please visit www.L3T.com/MID.

Headquartered in New York City, L3 Technologies employs approximately 38,000 people worldwide and is a leading provider of a broad range of communication, electronic and sensor systems used on military, homeland security and commercial platforms. L3 is also a prime contractor in aerospace systems, security and detection systems, and pilot training. ■



video, was fielded on the two VC-25 aircraft in 2012 and 2014. The AIMS system is an open-architecture, Internet Protocol (IP)-based network with a fiber-optic backbone that provides high-speed data to all passengers throughout the aircraft. The AIMS system also provides the communication system operator (CSO) with full control and robust situational awareness of the data links, processing status and usage of the aircraft's MCS throughout the threat spectrum. L3 Mission Integration was engaged by the Air Force to install similar capabilities across the Operational Support Aircraft, Executive Airlift (OSA/EA) fleet of C-32, C-40 and C-37 aircraft. Along with the AIMS modification, all aircraft received the Commercial

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A/TA Industry Partners

(As of 2 August 2017)

Industry Partner HIGHLIGHTS



**Col Cary Walgamott
USAF (ret)**

The Airlift/Tanker Association team is in the final stretch with preparations for the 49th Annual A/TA Convention, Symposium and Exposition in Orlando. Another world-class program has been planned and preparations are coming together nicely. Once again, an outstanding lineup of senior Air Force leaders including the Secretary and Chief of Staff as well as an impressive list of seminars on a wide variety of mobility topics are at the heart of the symposium program. Early indications are there will be even more exhibitors at this year's Air Mobility Technology

Exposition than last year and we are estimating attendance to be around 2000 attendees (includes 1300 military personnel). Similar to last year there will be a number of AMC mini-conferences held before, as well as integrated into, the symposium. These are designed to meet and enhance the professional development requirements of the air mobility community.

We will again have several industry-focused seminars that will include panel discussions and specific speakers focused on industry matters. In addition, the Chairman's Luncheon – always a very popular event – will feature a government speaker to address industry specific subjects. For the second consecutive year, the Air Mobility Command (AMC) and the Airlift/Tanker Association (A/TA) are hosting an AMC Industry Day in conjunction with the AMC and A/TA Symposium. The Industry Day will take place the afternoon of Thursday, 26 October. The objective of this event is to discuss and share the acquisition portfolio AMC has planned for the future, in a symposium-like atmosphere. USTRANSCOM representatives will be in attendance as well. More details about the Industry Day will be announced via FedBizOpps.

When you go to the Airlift/Tanker Association website to register for this year's event, you will also find something new. Our IT team and A/TA administrative staff have been working diligently over the past year and a half to outline the necessary requirements and develop a new, streamlined registration program. Their efforts have been exemplary and we hope your registration goes very smoothly.

It is always a joy to be at the World Center Marriott in Orlando, Florida. We hope you will join us, 26 - 29 October, for the 2017 A/TA Convention & Symposium and Air Mobility Technology Exposition. The 49th Annual Airlift/Tanker Association Convention will be another memorable time – come and be part of another historic air mobility event.

Warm regards,
Cary Walgamott
Vice President Industry

A/TA Industry Partnership remains a bargain at the annual rate of \$1700. Industry Partner benefits include a reduced exhibit rate, opportunity to select your exhibit location (based on established criteria), a write-up with your logo in the convention issue of the *Airlift/Tanker Quarterly* (as well as a listing on our website) and five "free" individual memberships. A new and exciting benefit for our Industry Partners is our Industry Partner News page on our website. This is a place where you can share information about new products/services or company news. Contact Sondra Hart at ata@atalink.org or 423-902-2297 to become an A/TA Industry Partner today.

**Thank You All
for Your Support!**

AIR MOBILITY *Classics*

Air Mobility Classics is a recurring feature contributed by Lt Col Douglas H. Lloyd, USAF Ret.

The concept of the combat assault glider was one that was essentially conceived, implemented, and then largely abandoned, within the short span of World War Two. It was an experiment that all the major powers, Allies and Axis alike, took part in. Although there can be no denying the dedication and courage of the glider crews, the record of airborne glider operations during the war, on all sides, is spotty at best. However, at the end of the war there was still a glimmer of promise in the concept, such that in the immediate post-war period, both the United States and the Soviet Union fielded new designs for assault gliders. One of the American designs was the CG-18, built by the Chase Aircraft Company.

The high wing, all-metal CG-18 was a vast improvement over the mostly wood and fabric Waco CG-4 that had formed the basis of the U.S. glider force during the war. It could carry 30 troops or 9,400lbs of cargo...more than twice the capability of the CG-4. It's more aerodynamic design allowed it to be towed at much higher speeds (216mph vs 110-130mph). The tricycle landing gear had fixed main wheels but a retractable nose wheel. An auxiliary power unit provided electrical power for operating the gear and flaps. The up-swept rear fuselage incorporated an interlocking and hydraulically operated loading ramp and cargo door. First flight took place at Chase Aircraft's West Trenton, New Jersey, plant on 18 December 1947, and subsequent testing went well; the CG-18 meeting all of its performance and operational test specifications.

Despite these successes, the young United States Air Force had lost interest in the idea of transport gliders. They did, however, appreciate the value a simple, rugged, powered aircraft could have, one that was able to operate in austere conditions and deliver men and equipment directly to the front lines. Chase complied by fitting one of the YCG-18A service prototypes (47-641) with a pair of 1,350hp Pratt & Whitney R-2000 radial engines. The engines were designed with a "quick disconnect" feature, and all the fuel was carried in the engine nacelle. The nacelle itself could also be easily removed, effectively allowing the aircraft to be quickly returned to glider configuration. The new aircraft, now designated the YC-122 (and christened "Avitruc" by her manufacturer) first flew on 18 November 1948. Two pre-production YC-122As were built in 1949 with minor refinements, one of which (48-1370) was later re-engined with 1,425hp Wright R-1820s to become the sole YC-122B.

Although the YC-122's performance was marginal (particularly with an engine out) the design held enough promise that the Air Force ordered the aircraft into limited production (nine built) as the YC-122C, the definitive service trial version. All nine YC-122Cs were sent to Sewart AFB, Smyrna, Tennessee where they were assigned to the newly activated 16th Troop Carrier Squadron (Assault, Light). Activated on 5 October 1950, the squadron was tasked to conduct service trials with the aircraft and develop operational standards and tactics. While at Sewart, one aircraft was written off in a landing mishap.

In early October 1954, the unit was relocated to Ardmore AFB in Oklahoma and re-designated the 16th Troop Carrier Squadron (Assault, Fixed Wing). Within months of that move, however, the USAF decided it no longer needed a small assault transport, and the 16th TCS was directed to fly its aircraft to the bone-yard at Davis-Monthan AFB. The last YC-122C was delivered there on 30 August 1955 and the 16th TCS was inactivated. The three earlier models (one YC-122, one YC-122A, and one YC-122B) stayed in service in utility roles until 1957.

With their low airframe hours and utility value, the YC-122s found ready buyers when offered on the civilian market. Commercial operators used them to spray for mosquitos, haul fish, fight forest fires, drop skydivers, and a myriad of other tasks. One even performed the earliest tests of the Fulton recovery system, ultimately used on specialized versions of the C-119 and C-130. But by far, the most unique follow-on career of any YC-122 was that experienced by tail number 49-2883. In 1955, the Hiller Aircraft Corporation received a USAF contract to build an experimental cargo transport aircraft as a testbed for V/STOL technology. Designated the X-18, the aircraft was powered by twin turboprop engines, each with dual contra-rotating propellers and utilizing a tiltwing to transition between horizontal and vertical flight. To speed development, it was decided to use the fuselage and empennage of the YC-122 as the basis for the aircraft. The X-18 made 20 test flights of the concept, and can be considered the forerunner of the modern V-22 Osprey.

Though its military service was relatively short, the Chase YC-122 Avitruc did validate the concept of the assault transport, which came to full fruition with the highly successful Fairchild C-123 Provider, itself originally a Chase design. ■

CHASE YC-122C AVITRUC



Fairchild Aircraft Company Photo

Mark Your Calendar & Pack Your Clubs!

The 2017 A/TA Convention Golf Tournament

Thursday 26 October
at the beautiful

Hawk's Landing Golf Club
at the
Orlando World Center Marriott

TOURNAMENT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Single Hole Sponsorship: \$200

This opportunity includes 1 - 18"x24" sign with your company Name/Logo
(image depends on the artwork you provide) located on the hole tee area.

+

An image of your sign which will pop up on the Golf Cart GPS as the cart approaches the hole.
This has to be acknowledged by the golfer to continue.

Double Hole Sponsorship: \$350

This opportunity includes 2 - 18"x24" signs with your company Name/Logo
(images depend on the artwork you provide) located on the hole tee area.

+

Images of your sign which will pop up on the Golf Cart GPS as the cart approaches the each hole.
This has to be acknowledged by the golfer to continue.

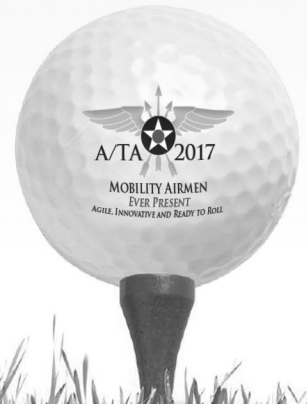
You may choose to place both signs on the same hole or split between two holes.

**For more information
and/or
to purchase hole sponsorships
please contact:**

Miles Wiley: ProgramsVP@atalink.org

or

Doug Lynch: Advertising@atalink.org



REGISTRATION FORM

2017 A/TA Convention and Air Mobility Technology Exposition
and AMC & A/TA Symposium
Orlando, Florida • 25-29 October

Online Credit Card Registration (Secure) Preferred: www.atalink.org

NO ONE ON AIR FORCE-FUNDED ORDERS MAY USE THIS PAPER FORM.

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CANCELLATIONS: Call Sondra or Gary Hart (423) 902-2297 before 1700 EDT on 25 October. Cancellation fees bottom right. Room cancellations must be done separately.

CHANGES: Call or email to Sondra or Gary Hart at 423-902-2297 or ata@atalink.org



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26-29 OCTOBER 2017

ORLANDO WORLD CENTER MARRIOTT
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

FIRST NAME: _____ MI: _____ LAST NAME: _____ NICKNAME: _____	
NATIONALITY (If not US Citizen): _____	
HOME ADDRESS: _____	
CITY: _____ ST _____ ZIP _____	
HOME E-MAIL: _____	
HOME PHONE: _____ DUTY PHONE: _____	
JOB/DUTY TITLE: _____ RANK ABBREVIATION: _____	
ORG NAME/SYMBOL: _____ BASE/LOCATION: _____	
WORK MAILING ADDRESS: _____	
CITY: _____ ST _____ ZIP _____	
WORK E-MAIL: _____	
SOCIAL GUEST: <input type="checkbox"/> Guest is my spouse.	
FIRST NAME: _____ LAST NAME: _____	
FULL REGISTRATION: (Includes everything except Hotel and Golf)	
➔ A/TA Membership (Required for Member Rate for member and guest) 1yr/3yr/Life	
>>> AIR FORCE-FUNDED REGISTRATIONS MUST BE DONE ONLINE <<<	
➔ Early Registration (Must postmark/email by 18 September)	
➔ Pre-Registration (Must postmark/email by 18 October)	
➔ On-Site Registration	
BANQUET SEATING PREFERENCE (base, group, company, etc.) _____	
SOCIAL GUEST REGISTRATION: Guests (a social friend, family member or spouse) register at the same Full Registration rate as the attendee they are accompanying. These events are all included in a Full Registration, but are available for guests who might want to attend a single event or two. If a guest wants to attend more than three events it is likely to be more cost effective to do a Full Registration.	
Check Box for Social Guest Only:	
Per Person Fee for Social Guests	
➔ Thursday Evening Reception Refreshments/Exhibits	
➔ Friday Program Seminars/Exhibits/Refreshments	
➔ Friday Evening Reception Refreshments/Exhibits	
➔ Saturday Program Seminars/Exhibits/Refreshments	
➔ Saturday Evening Banquet	
➔ Sunday Farewell Brunch	
GOLF (Includes Lunch):	
Requested 2. _____ 3. _____	
Foursome: 4. _____ Handicap(s) _____	
Check Box for SELF GUEST	
\$135	
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE NOW: Make Checks Payable to: The Airlift/Tanker Association \$ _____	
Register on-line at www.atalink.org;	
or E-Mail to ata@atalink.org;	
or copy this form and mail, along with	
check or credit card info to:	
Airlift/Tanker Association	
655 Julian Road	
Chattanooga, TN 37421	
Registration form must be received on	
or before 21 October 2017.	
VISA • MASTERCARD • DISCOVER • AMEX	
By transmitting this form, I certify I have read and understand the cancellation instructions and, for the member rate, my National membership must be current through November. Otherwise an additional \$40 may be assessed on this card to update my membership. Registration Cancellation fee is \$30 if by 18 Sept; \$40 if by 18 Oct; \$50 thereafter.	
Org. Card #: _____ Exp: _____ CVV: _____ Amt:\$ _____	
Personal Card #: _____ Exp: _____ CVV: _____ Amt:\$ _____	
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A/TQ

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The Airlift/Tanker Association

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C-130



C-130 IPECO
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Upper Crew Bunk

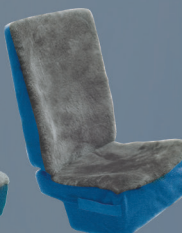


C-130
Lower Crew Bunk

KC-135



KC-135
Pilot/Co-pilot



KC-135
Navigator/Observer



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C-17



C-17
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