



UN-SCRAMBLE

Official Bulletin of the Valiant Air Command



APRIL 2006

<p>VALIANT AIR COMMAND <i>Dedicated to the restoring military aircraft</i> A 501c(3) Non-Profit Organization 6600 Tico Road Titusville, Florida 32780-8009 Phone: 321-268-1941 FAX: 321-268-5969 Email: vacwarbirds@bellsouth.net Website: www.vacwarbirds.org</p>	<p>VAC WARBIRD MUSEUM Open 7 days a week, 10:00 AM-6:00 PM except Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Years Day. Admission Adults \$9.00 Seniors/Military \$8.00 Children 4-12 years \$5.00 Special Tour Rates available Gift Shop open</p>
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Valiant Air Command was formed to perpetuate the history of aviation, to encourage gathering of men and women in camaraderie, research and Warbird restoration. To serve as an educational tool for young and old alike and to assure that the memory of those who gave their lives in service to their country shall not perish.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Day: May 9th, 2006
Time: 12:00 Noon
Place: VAC Board Room

UN-SCRAMBLE NEWSLETTERS

A copy of the Un-Scramble newsletter will be available on the VAC Web site
www.vacwarbirds.org

EMAIL CHANGE

Please note that our Email has changed to:

vacwarbirds@bellsouth.net

This photo was taken of the last remaining F-104 "Starfighter" flying in the world! Making it really "special" is the fact that "our own" member, Larry Sietsma, is riding in the back seat, with Rick "Comrade" Svetkoff at the controls!



Pictures from the Airshow 2006

After the Airshow several people emailed us pictures. Here are of few of the shots that involved the people behind the scenes. Who do you recognize?



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EDITORS CORNER

I just wanted to write a quick note to thank everyone who helped me pull this newsletter together on such short notice. Thank you for getting the information to me quickly, the pictures, and the brainstorming around the “technical” difficulties. This is definitely the product of a combined team effort.
So applause to you team!
Ruby



**Wyatt's F86 landing at the Airshow.
Wyatt we feel your pain for your injured craft,
but we applaud your pilot skills and the fact that you're ok.**

OFFICERS REPORTS
COMMANDING OFFICER
Lloyd Morris

Hello, everybody out there in video land and cyberspace!

Well, another Great Airshow! No accidents, everybody had a good time, so that means it was a success.

So, question one... Did we make or lose money? I can tell you right now it looks like we are going to be on the positive side of the number line. As to how much, I don't know yet; but, at this time, it looks very good. Stay tuned for updates as they come in.

I would like to thank all of you that helped make this Airshow a great success.

Special thanks to

Bob James, Airshow Co-Chairman, and his wife, Ann James *for all their help*

Ken Terry and Bob Boswell (BORN TO GET AIRPLANES) *for an outstanding job with our pilots and military (great job, dudes!)*

Bob Frazier and Kevin Quinlan *for a great auction, as always*

Bud Evans and Augie Holmquist *for what was one of best press days ever (also, a great job on the advertising in media, radio and newspaper)*

Marilyn and Phil Bettencourt *for a great job with the ticket sales*

Bobbi Trenor *for counting the money*

Jenny Baker and George Baker *(thanks, Jenny, so much. You remind me of the Energizer Bunny, you just keep going and going and going)*

Bob Stewart and Pat Stewart *for picking up the loot (money)*

Norm Lindsay and Bob Bixby ("Doc") *for moving the aircraft and putting them back in the hanger (good job, guys!)*

The girls upstairs, **Joanie, Sue Best, Martha Vetterl, Ruby, and Jo Lynne**

You girls had a firm grip on the office. Thanks.

The girls downstairs, **Ginger and Crystal** *There's not enough room on this page to thank you girls. Here's a great big thanks to you!*

Melissa and Marty McDonald *for the rooms, food, car rentals, and the list goes on and on. Melissa, I know you were about to snap by Saturday night, but you managed to pull back and held it together under all that pressure! Thanks, girl. You did an outstanding job!*

Tommy and Lester *for the golf carts and radios*

Frank and Betty Pound *for a beautiful Airshow poster. Frank, I had a lot of praise for the poster this year.*

Art Pylar and his crew,

Ed Rodig and Mae Rodig, David Fairmont, Stephen Sherbin II, Justin Hondsman, Paul Conconnon *for Flight line Security*

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COMMANDER'S REPORT CONTINUED

Darrell Fisher (Leader of the Pack) and **Ken Wood, Jim Black, Roger Fuller & rest of the pack** *otherwise known as the sound people. Thanks, guys.*

George and Verna Wolf, John Kirk, Diane Frazier, Dick Barker, Nola and Stewart Davis
Flight line gate

Bob and Betty Cushman and their crew: Tony Tiepietraroia, Rick Mathews, Sam Norris, Clarence Yoder, Harvey Hall, Allan Proksel, Dick Childs, Ray Huff and Jim Rennie for *Flight line history. A class act.*

Serge English, Frank Fleck, Rich Smith, Pat Dauer, Dennis Pearson, John Chroninger
As always, Serge, you and Fleck do one heck of a good job moving the military and placing them. Thanks ever so much for a job well done.

Lou LaFond for helping to set up the field. *This is a thankless job, but a job that is very, very important. I hope Lou will help next year.*

Robert McCullough for securing the gate. *Thanks, Bob.*

Sam Bettenfield for tending bar.

Thanks, Sam. I'm looking forward to your doing this job next year.

Tom Phillips for repairing the tugs and making a set of wheels for the UH-1.

Tom thanks for all your hard work.

Steve and Shirley Zatroch

Steve, thank you for being able to multi-task so well. Let's see what all you did...

- (1) Burn offs*
- (2) Picking up and returning the ground support equipment for the military*
- (3) Picking up ground crews*
- (4) Military fuel (not just getting the fuel, but coordinating the fuel for the military aircraft(s))*
- (5) Setting up and printing the Scramble*

NOT BAD FOR A GUY WITH ONLY TWO ARMS!

Well, I guess that's all for right now. Stay tuned for further developments.



Augie caught living it up at the Luau by Steve. Do you recognize these fine fellows?

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PERSONNEL OFFICER

Norm Lindsay

Alice Iacuzzo the Valiant Air Command Personnel Officer, for longer than we can remember, has decided to move on. Everyone at the VAC would like to thank her for the many years of service and wish her well in the years to come.

As the newly appointed personnel officer my main goal will be to increase our Membership base. Currently we stand at around 625 members. In the near future we will be sending “ Return To Flight “ letters to our most recent list of inactive members asking that they rejoin. Your effort in contacting inactive or potential new members is appreciated. If you are new or renewed your membership recently and have not received a new membership card by the end of April please call Ruby at the VAC office, and she will check on the status of things. Also if you could check the “New and Renewing Colonels” list for your name. We apologize in advance if your name should be there and it’s not. We didn’t mean to forget you; we are still updating the list. In the meantime thank you for your patience as we get adjusted to new responsibilities.

Reminder our new e-mail address is:

vacwarbirds@bellsouth.net

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Hal Larkin

Now that vacation is over, it is back to my favorite past time, restoration.

F9F-5 Panther – The right main landing gear is leaking hydraulic oil. We’ll have to jack up the Aircraft and remove the lower half of the strut and check the ‘O’ rings. We also have a hydraulic leak in the only hydraulic system that functions the canopy open/close cylinder or one of the two lines that operate it.

F-5E is in the final stage of restoration. We are painting by hand all the screw heads that were never painted. We have a list of 12 missing items, the rocket rails that form the wing tips, and the rest are cockpit items. We hope to move the F-5E to the main display hangar the first week of May. This makes a total of four aircraft that the restoration crew has completely restored at no cost to the VAC.

T-4J – We now have a full crew working on the TA-4J. All flight controls are in the repair and prime cycle. Still polishing the leading edge of the slats, vertical fin and stabilizer. These items are being polished to a high gloss bare metal finish. This requires removing all paint and anodize. The missing kick plates for the forward and aft cockpit have been fabricated and primed. There are countless small jobs to be worked on. The fuselage and wings started a list of missing parts, have two full pages and I am still in the cockpit. All of the flight instruments are in the forward and aft cockpit. If you have any aircraft instruments, give us a call. Looking forward to the arrival of the Grumman F11F BuNo 141882.

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MAINTENANCE OFFICER
Robert James

C47-Thanks to the determination and hard work by our C47 crew the "Tico Belle" had both engines mounted for the air show! All the accessories have been installed. However, the process of making and installing all new hoses in the engine compartments will take some time as well as fitting up the engine cowling. There are many other bits and pieces to connect in the cockpit area under the floorboards, not to mention repair of the seat mounting rails and the pilot and copilot seats.

I did spend one day at Sun-N-Fun and was delighted to see the Cavanaugh Museums C47 done up in Normandy invasion stripes and it looked terrific in the air making fly-byes. It certainly made my day to see how ours will look once again when our project is completed.

They also had a fresh **TBM3** done up in sea blue gloss the same as what our TBM will look like. Of course they have a slightly larger budget to work with I'm sure.

My deepest thanks to the C47 crew that made a terrific effort to bring the C47 to this point.

We've come a long way!

TBM-The TBM had a fresh coat of sea blue gloss paint for the tow over to the air show static display line and it looked great. The exterior details, lettering, placards, stars & bars are in work and will probably be finished by the end of the month (April). However there is still a lot of internal work to be done such as painting the pilot cockpit area, bomb bay and aft fuselage. All the electrical wiring will be replaced as well as the main pilots switch and circuit breaker panel and basic radio comm./nav/transponder/encoder. Then all the instruments will be sent out for overhaul.

The control surfaces have to be painted as well as the inboard and out board portions of the flaps (after their sheet metal repairs are completed). Other remaining items are the engine accessories, hydraulic hoses and system components that will have to be replaced or overhauled.



PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
N.C. “Bud” Evans

The Air Show is over for this year although a lot of work must be completed by the “Bean Counters”. I have had more praises about the fantastic show by so many people who have attended many of our past air shows. It is all because of the combined efforts of you members who perform and to those hard working volunteers who make it all happen. Lloyd is already working on the effort for 2007 along with Ken and Bob James to mention a few. Our hat’s off to all of you and lets do it once again next March!

With the help of the Augie Holmquist, the press, radio and TV were well covered. The Red Barons did an outstanding job of supporting our advertising effort and were a great addition to the Air Show as was the F-104 Starfighter. We need to hire the same weatherman again next year!

Debriefing for the Show is scheduled for the Saturday in April 29th at noon.

PROCUREMENT OFFICER
Robert H. Frazier

The highlight of the last couple of months was the Air Show that was the best we’ve had in recent years. Specifically in arranging the Auction with most interesting and largest number of items we’ve had. However most importantly were the efforts of all the supporting people. My thoughts are to list and Thank those people. Since there were 10-12 of them listing by name is to long. Other activities is that we are negotiating with the Navy Museum and the Pensacola International airport for a Grumman F11F, A4D drop tanks, and a brand new canopy for our Grumman F9F. A big Thanks is due to all.



The Auction has begun.



Our Guest Navigators were a big hit.

OPERATIONS OFFICER

Ken Terry

First of all, from my standpoint we had a GREAT Air Show this year!

It appeared to me as though the crowd was considerable bigger than last year, especially on Friday and Sunday. Maybe it was just from my limited view as I was mainly looking at the aileron/flap junction and the rear cowl latch of Dick Russell's airplane as we were going around and around.

However, I had reports from several people of comments from the crowd such as: "Boy, there is a lot more variety this year!" "Those Red Baron Steersman's are really neat!" "How many people ever get to see a real Starfighter up close and personal?" "That Lee Lauderback and Tom Reilly get better every year." "Everybody is sure smiling."

There were very little glitches in the show and even then, just minor blips and someone always jumped in and solved the problem immediately. A special thanks goes to Sue Best and her cohorts. Everything ran very smooth this year.

We only had two aircraft left behind, however neither one will be inexpensive fixes, both have engine problems. One is probably at least one cylinder change and the other a starter change, sorry guys, good luck on getting your mounts home quickly. Don't forget the VAC is full of knowable volunteers that are skilled knowledgeable and capable.

The Red Baron Squadron is donating .05 (up to a maximum of \$3,000.00) for every pizza sold in the area during the Air Show to our Scholarship Fund. I approached MS Annette Benson of DeBenair and asked if she would help us in this endeavor. She very graciously suggested that she; DeBenair would pay for one half the cost of a Private License if we would pay the other half. So that program is well on it's way to becoming a Community endeavor well worthwhile!

Applications are made for the Scholarship by written request to the VAC BOD as the first step in the process. The applicant's ability to complete the requirements for the Private License is the main item in the decision making process.

We have started planning for next year's Air Show, so send in your ideas.

It seems as though my boo boo in January is still haunting me.

There still has been no change in the long- standing VAC Pilot payout.

The policy is:

Everyone is treated equally.

All fuel and oil during the show is furnished.

Hotel allowance is \$50.00 per night up to a maximum of 3 nights, Thur, Fri, and Sat nights ONLY.

Enroute fuel up to a maximum total of \$500.00 per aircraft, including the above expenses.

Any other payments require Board of Director approval in advance.

So if you have three nights in a hotel (3 X \$50.00 = \$150.00) and fly all three days for 1 ½ hours at 15 gallons per hour X \$3.00 a gallon = \$67.50 show fuel and fly the media day events for another hour = \$45.00 totally up to \$262.50 you now have \$237.50 left for enroute fuel allowance.

Let's take this a step further:

2003 our total pilot payout was approximately \$16,000.00 for about 80 aircraft.

2004 our total pilot payout was approximately \$20,000.00 for about 70 aircraft.

2005 our total pilot payout was approximately \$28,000.00 for about 65 aircraft

2006 has not yet been completed WE DO NOT HAVE BUT ABOUT 25 requests for reimbursement at this time and it is already approaching \$12,000.00. I think we had about 55 aircraft at the show this year.

If all 55 requested the full \$500.00 allowance that would equal \$27,500.00.

Many of you pilots simply do not request any reimbursement (by the way it sure makes it easier when you tell us that you are not going to do so) many others sign the check and return it to the VAC as a donation. Of course, the smaller aircraft that do not travel very far make the numbers a little smaller also.

When you factor in the additional fuel price increases over the last few years it is easy to see what is happening. Costs are raising and doing so rapidly! That is also why we are getting fewer and fewer aircraft every year. Each of us has to spend more to simply own and operate any aircraft! That is what started the email that got me into trouble, an effort to try and find an answer to this horrendous problem! Any ideas any of you have that will help would sure be appreciated, but in the meantime, rest assured – THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THE POLICY AND NONE IS FORTHCOMING AT THIS TIME. With your help maybe we can come up with a policy that will assure the future of the VAC and still be fair with those who bring their aircraft to TICO and make the show possible.

I just got back from Sun N Fun and the only thing they pay for is fuel burned, on site, at their rates. I tried all week to get some smoke oil and came home with my smoke oil tank empty! I just donated another \$65.00 to the success of Sun N Fun without the privilege of deducting that or any other expenses!

We realize the above expenses are but a very small part of what you spend to fly at the VAC. The reminder we are an approved 501 (c) 3 organization, is an additional benefit for you. The UN-reimbursed expenses may result in an income tax deduction for you.

Sorry for the confusion.

The VAC Board of Directors has NOT even been approached for any change in the above policy. It was at the suggestion of several pilots at the 2005 Air Show that I started a dialog to make improvements in the way all of us VAC pilots are paid that started the emailing back and forth. And it is continuing as of this date. I hope we (collectively, all VAC pilots) will, come up with a better way. I will continue to try. If you still have questions, please let me know.

Now for a re-statement of Ken Terry's personal policy statement:

1. No one will get preference over anyone else! For any reason!
2. Every VAC member will be treated with equal respect and consideration! No matter what kind of aircraft they do OR do not own.
3. The best interest of the VAC is single most important factor in my decision making process. I will do my best to prevent the personal interest of any individual to over rule the interest of the VAC Membership!

On a brighter side, on Friday March 31 the aircraft started arriving at George Baker's for the Annual T-34 fly-in and formation practice. There were 22 T-34's and four others that showed and flew until Tuesday morning when 16 T-34's left for LAL. We made it as far as Leesburg where the WX went sour and Bill Cherwin did a great job of getting us all on the ground. We had a reception of first the local TSA reps, then the Fire Dept. I have no idea what they thought was going on, but they sure did not waste any time in checking us out. The nice thing about the fire truck they brought out – it had a very long ladder that was raised to take a picture of us taking up the entire ramp area! After waiting out the scud we made it on to Sun N Fun. There were several check rides and patches awarded over the weekend. But most of all everyone had a blast. I personally flew 5 sorties one day, at least 3 – 4 everyday.

I am planning another weekend soon at the VAC so those of you who are interested, please send some suggestions for dates and desires, Lead/Wing check ride/training, etc.

Blue side up

Ken Terry

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NEW AND RENEWING COLONELS

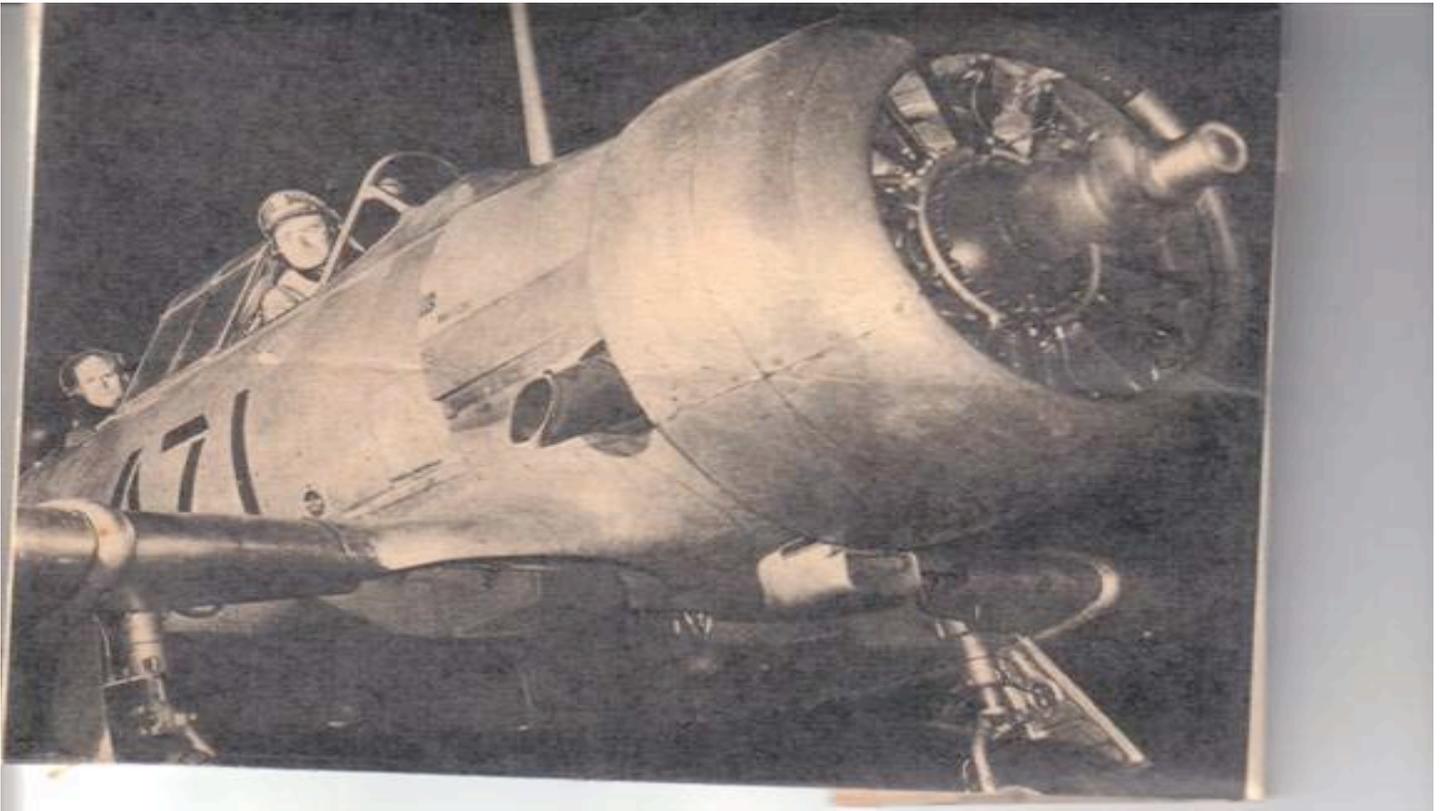
NAME		SPOUSE	CITY	STATE
NEW COLONELS				
Davis	Mark	Scarlet	Melbourne	FL
Doty	William	Cynthia	Hillsborough	NC
Goding	Vern	Vern	Melbourne Village	FL
Jones	William H.		Altamonte Springs	FL
Pesante	Walter	Amber	Titusville	FL
Reno	Claudia		Winter Garden	FL
Vogt	Jerry		Gaizna	MD
Wilcoxon	Charles		Belpre	OH
Wilder	Barbara		Melbourne	FL
Moore	Ivan	Virginia	Merritt Island	FL
Allen	Bob	Maria	Cocoa	FL
Boyett	Tracy	Alberto Silva	Titusville	FL
Krugman-Kadi	Eilon		Gainesville	FL
Sciano	James J		Orlando	FL
Woodell	Claire		Viera	FL
RENEWING COLONELS				
Ackerman	Scott	Jill	Goose Creek	SC
Anderson	Alan	Denice	Green Cove Springs	FL
Avezzie	Harland		Westfield	MA
Bishop	Don	Sherry	Kissimmee	FL
Bixby	Robert	Louise	Titusville	FL
Bobst	Bruce	Sharon	Homosassa	FL
Boyce	Frank		Titusville	FL
Brady	Jim		Jacksonville	FL
Brady	Robert		Boca Raton	FL
Callahan	Dennis		Pnte Vedra Beach	FL
Camp	Donald	Dalton Mundy	Leesville	SC
Carnley	Joe		Destin	FL
Caverly	Donald	Shirley	Sorrento	FL
Chroninger	John	Denise	N. Lakeland	FL
Crews	Al		Satellite Beach	FL
Crile	Vaughn	Gayel	New Smyrna	FL
Crosier	Stanley		New Port Richey	FL
Davis	Robert	Robert Sr.	Powder Springs	GA
Dexter	Linc		Arcadia	FL

RENEWING COLONELS	(Cont'd)			
Dorrell	Edward	Mary	Jacksonville	FL
Dorris	James	Pat	Ocala	FL
Ellison	Richard	Nancy	Orlando	FL
Fisher	Darrell	Dorothy	Marion	IA
Fisher	Pat	Michelle	Titusville	FL
Fleck	Frank		Cocoa Beach	FL
Fritzler	Gary		Wellington	FL
Geisler	Don		Salt Lake City	UT
George	Tom		Merritt Island	FL
Gifford	Chriss		Cocoa	FL
Goolsby	James		Crescent City	FL
Grant	Steven		Indialantic	FL
Green	Lawrence		Manchester	NH
Greist	David	Rose	Fern Park	FL
Halcomb	Ronald		Tallahassee	FL
Harris	Walt	Lynne	Port St. Lucie	FL
Healan	Jack	Jack III	Amelia Island	FL
Hernandez	Felix	Linda	Miami	FL
Hofbauer	Jack	Janie	Daytona Beach	FL
Hogue	Doug	Darcy	Rockledge	FL
Horner	Rick		Titusville	FL
Huff	Ray		White Post	VA
Hunt	Ken	Teresa	Valrico	FL
Iles	Bud		St. Augustine	FL
Jeffers	Jerry		Asheboro	NC
Kasevich	Alexander	Savi	Ft. Lauderdale	FL
Keith	Robert		Titusville	FL
Kelley	Jim		Charlotte	NC
Kirk	John	Carmen	Rockledge	FL
Knepper	Dave		Cocoa	FL
Kramer	Frans		West Melbourne	FL
Krauser	Peter		Clearwater	FL
Lauff	Sam	Linda	Ocala	FL
Leazer	Lonnie	Janet	Port St. John	FL
Lockler	Donald M		Tampa	FL
Lumley	Bill		Delray Beach	FL
Mann	Hiram		Titusville	FL

RENEWING COLONELS	(Cont'd)			
Matthews	Max		Santa Rosa Beach	FL
McCullough	Robert	Camille	Orlando	FL
McNamara	Harry		Titusville	FL
Metcalf	Paul	Lucia	Pittsfield	NH
Mohrbacher	Robert	Lorraine	Titusville	FL
Morris	Lloyd	Gayel	New Smyrna Beach	FL
Morrison	John	Shirley	Cape Canaveral	FL
Nelson	Kent		Orlando	FL
Pacetelli	Bob		Deltona	FL
Patterson	Randy		Palm Coast	FL
Perdue	James	Ria	Melbourne	FL
Phillips	Pat	Barbara	Apopka	FL
Pound	Frank	Betty	Cocoa	FL
Proksel	Allan		Longwood	FL
Pylar	Art		Orlando	FL
Quinlan	Kevin	Karen	Titusville	FL
Razzini	Tony	Nancy	Viera	FL
Roberts	Ray	Michelle	Rockledge	FL
Rueda	Orlando	Maria	Bogota, Columbia	S. Amer.
Sadar	Kelly		Ft. Lauderdale	FL
Shaw	Larry	Kim	Richmond	VA
Sherman	Kent	Patty	Atlantis	FL
Shumate	David	Vickie	Indialantic	FL
Simpson	David	Jean	Ocean City	NJ
Stanger	James	Nancy	Titusville	FL
Steinwedel	Norbert		Cornelius	NC
Talley	Thomas	Daryl	Melbourne	FL
Tanner	Chuck	Nancy	Greenville	SC
Templeton	Cal	Bonnie	Titusville	FL
Treanor	Bobbi		Palm Bay	FL
Van Den Berg	Alexander	Jennifer	Winter Park	FL
Van DeVoorde	Rene		Sebastian	FL
Wavra	Bob		Indian Harbor Beach	FL
Wheeler	James	Leta	Louisville	KY
Wilms	Fred		Melbourne	FL
Yoder	Eddie	Mabel	Silver Springs	FL
Zatroch	Steven	Shirley	Cocoa Beach	FL

AVIATING WITH EVANS

By "Bud" Evans



AT-6 Incident

Following my service in WW-II I was attending The George Washington University when the USAAF initiated a Reserve Flying Program at Andrews AFB just outside Washington, D.C. I immediately joined the unit and began flying every chance I could. I was going to college on the G.I. Bill which paid me \$75.00 a month and paid for my tuition. Living at the Sigma Chi Fraternity House and working part time at the U.S. Senate Office for two Senators, First for Senator Nolan from California and then for Senator Cooper from Kentucky made it easier to survive. I was spending all my time studying, catching up on my lost social life, making enough money to live on and flying every chance I could. The U.S.A.A.F. did not pay us anything for flying so the cost of driving out to Andrews Air Base cut deeply into my tight budget. This was particularly tough as I was only able to fly on an average of once every four trips. I always called in advance to make certain my scheduled aircraft was in commission. However the aircraft was usually in the air when I called and often it was written up when it landed for problems that put it out of commission. On the particular day that my unexpected event occurred I had scheduled an instrument training flight and had also scheduled one of the fellows who lived in the fraternity house to fly with me. Johnny Melhope had been a fighter pilot during the war and I talked him into joining the A.A.F. Reserve Squadron with me. The 443rd Aviation Reserve Squadron at Andrews. The Reserve Unit had AT-6's, AT-11/C-45's and P-51's. The usual drill was to schedule your next flight when you landed from a flight or call in when you knew you would have free time. You then hoped they had space for you on the schedule. On this occasion I had been approved for an instrument training flight and that required a safety pilot to fly in the front seat to act as "Safety look-out pilot. Johnny filled that spot.

We were both elated that the scheduled aircraft was in commission and filed our clearance, performed the walk-around and got into the AT-6 as soon as we could. That might seem a little strange being as the Army Air Forces had many thousands of trained mechanics and many surplus aircraft after the war ended. Johnny and I

were good examples of what happened to most of those men. As soon as we had a chance to go back home and try to catch up on all of the quality time with family and friends, start a new life and forget about the uncertain day-to-day life in the military. Our Reserve Squadron aircraft were short of spare parts and trained mechanics to keep them in commission. There were also times when the Base Refueling trucks were out of fuel. All of these problems were frustrating to those of us who took time off from school or work and after driving all the way to Andrews only to find that the aircraft we were scheduled to fly was out of commission.

I was flying from the back seat under the instrument training hood. I made the take-off, climbed to the assigned IFR altitude and flew to Baltimore where I performed an instrument let down followed by a "missed approach". After I began the climb away from the Baltimore Airport, Johnny took control and gave me a break from the stress of my "Under the hood" blind flying. He climbed to 4,500 feet, a VFR altitude on the airway between Washington and Baltimore. And I was relaxing and enjoying looking around at the scenery. As all good Fighter Pilots do, I checked my Six o'clock and there was a four engine Transport aircraft at our altitude gaining on us. I didn't say anything but kept checking until it was so close I could see the pilots heads through their windscreens. It was obvious that neither one of them was looking out front for other aircraft. They were flying at a Visual Flight Rules altitude and had no assigned space and should expect that other aircraft could be flying at that altitude on their course. This confirmed the old standard joke about transport pilots. We accused them of always having a coffee cup in front of their eyes or looking back at the Stewardesses instead of out the front of the aircraft. I decided to see how close they would come to us before they changed their course to pass us as required by regulations. They continued right undeterred towards us until at the last minute I shook the control stick to take control of our AT-6 and pushed it forward descending about 100 feet.. Johnny didn't understand why had taken control for a few minutes until we were covered by a shadow that enveloped us. The Douglas DC-4 passed directly over us so close that we could easily hear the engines roar above the noise of our own P&W 650 HP engine. We watched as the airliner passed on ahead of apparently unaware that we were there. After it was safely ahead of us I shook the control stick to return the control of the aircraft to Johnny. I returned to relaxing and enjoying the beautiful Fall afternoon.

We continued towards Washington for a short time and then we began a slow descending right hand turn over the Maryland farm country north of Washington. The turn tightened up and our speed increased as did our rate of descent. I wondered what was going on in the front seat but I knew Johnny had been dating a girl from Maryland so I rationalized that she must live on the farm that we were in the process of buzzing. The airspeed needle was right on the red line and he had not pulled the power back at all. We rolled out and passed the farm house at an altitude that was low enough to de-feather any hens or roosters below us. It was about as perfect a "Buzz job" as I could expect. Even a little better than I believed he was capable of performing. After passing the house I expected him to pull up and get the hell out of there. Much to my discomfort he continued straight for a large strand of Birch trees. My discomfort level reached the screaming point and when I could make out the white bark on the limbs of the trees I grabbed the stick and hauled it rapidly into my lap. My concern about over-loading the aircraft was overruled by my greater concern about wearing the limbs of the trees on our machine. It was the last thing I expected I would do. You never took control away from another fighter pilot but I knew that we were going into the trees if I hadn't. As soon as we were safely climbing for the heavens, I picked up the mike and asked if he had seen the trees. I thought that maybe he had been looking back at the farm house to see if his girl friend had come out to see us. He said, "yes, hadn't I seen them?" The light came on in my head and probably his at the same time. He asked if I hadn't been flying. I responded by saying I had turned the aircraft over to him after the airliner had passed us. He said that he didn't feel my signal and the realization that the beautiful buzz job was made without either of us being in control of the aircraft. Before landing we decided that we had better report the incident, in case anyone had reported us and gotten the number off the aircraft during the uncontrolled pass. As I was getting out of the rear cockpit the crew Chief handed me a couple pieces of Birch bark with a questioning smile on his face. He pointed to the elevator hinge and said it was stuck there but there was no indication of any damage! We made the report and got that "Yea we know" look from the Regular A.A.F officer commanding our unit. I don't believe they ever believed us but that little voice that seems to have made me make quick decisions all of my life pulled me out of the fire once again.

VAC Family News

Our "Get Well" wishes go out to **James Bond, Marilyn Bettencourt, Louise Bixby and Melissa McDonald.** We all miss you and hope to see you "flying high" real soon?

Our Sympathies go out to:

Jim Mitton and family in the loss of his wife in February, and also to **"Bomber" Herb and family** in the loss of her husband **Howard** on April 10, 2006.

As a reminder May 7, 2006 will be the one-year anniversary of the tragic accident that befell three of our members.

On May 7th 2005, a C-47 collapsed while two museum volunteers were working underneath the aircraft. Our dear friend and co-worker Mike McDonough, was fatally injured and our newest and youngest volunteer Joshua Payne, was seriously injured. Our maintenance officer Bob James was also injured while attempting a rescue. Please continue to keep these men, and their families, in your thoughts and prayers in the days to come

