

COMBAT

AIR MUSEUM PLANE TALK

January-March 2024
Vol. 40, No. 1

Chuck's War

By Kevin Drewelow

Charles "Chuck" Atherton spoke at our December membership luncheon about his experience as a U.S. Army infantryman in Vietnam in 1968-1969.

Chuck was raised in Abilene and played football. He acquired the nickname "Moose" due to his size and attended Butler County Community Junior College on a football scholarship. A fractured shoulder ended his sporting career in 1967, and he moved to Topeka to attend Washburn University in May.

Six months later, the Abilene draft board told Chuck's mother that they planned to draft him in early 1968. Chuck enlisted in the U.S. Army and on April 1 began the induction process in Kansas City, where he narrowly averted being sent to the Marine Corps! He completed basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri and Advanced Infantry Training at Ft. Ord, California. Chuck spent two weeks leave with his family and then left for South Vietnam. He arrived in South Vietnam in August of 1968 as an individual replacement and was soon assigned to Company D, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

The 1st Air Cavalry made history three years before Chuck joined the Army. It was the first fully committed division in

country...and it would be the last to leave. In November of 1965, elements of the 1st Air Cavalry conducted the first major battle between the U.S. Army and the People's Army of Vietnam; it was also the first large helicopter air assault of the war. The book by Joe Galloway, "We Were Soldiers Once...and Young" and the 2002 movie "We Were Soldiers" starring Mel Gibson as Lt. Col. Hal Moore, tells the story of that battle.

Upon arrival at Camp Evans, Chuck met several veteran soldiers who took him under their wings and taught him how to survive his year-long deployment. Chuck specifically credited New Yorker Larry Anguish for saving his life with the things Larry taught him.

Chuck carried a camera with him but didn't take a lot of photos; however, he showed some of the ones he took, such as a school house and a church, things people back home in Kansas would recognize immediately. One photo was taken in a rubber plantation, where the tall trees were in neat rows. Chuck said his unit was not allowed to dig foxholes while in the plantation to avoid damaging the roots of the trees!

After Chuck had been in-country for some time, he was one of a dozen soldiers handpicked by their commanding officer, Major Henson, to go behind enemy



Chuck in Vietnam 1968 (C. Atherton photo)

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PLANE TALK

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THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COMBAT AIR MUSEUM
COMBAT
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We welcome your comments!

Newsletter Layout by Megan Garner

MUSEUM HOURS

January 2 - February 28/29

Mon.-Sun. Noon - 4:30

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

March 1 - December 31

Mon.-Sat. 9 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.

Sun. Noon - 4:30 P.M.

Last Entry Every Day is 3:30 P.M.

Closed

New Year's Day, Easter,
Thanksgiving, Christmas Day

Your membership is important to us! Join the
COMBAT AIR MUSEUM



Let me begin by filling you in on our latest information concerning the Museum's attendance for 2023. In 2022, we reached a new high in paid attendance with 11,682 visitors. It had been our long-range goal this year to reach a final total of 13,000. Halfway through the month of December of 2023, we were up to 12,700 paid admissions to the Museum, almost 1,000 ahead of 2022.

Crossing our fingers, we only needed to attract a couple of hundred additional people to close December with a bang. Kevin Drewelow, our Museum Director, placed a challenge on the CAM Facebook page, mentioning a free entrance for our 13,000th guest. We lucked out and two weeks of great weather and school vacations boosted our attendance so much that we were experiencing close to 50 paying visitors a day, a daily record for the start of winter.

On December 27th, at 1:15 pm, two young men, visitors #13,000 and #13,001, arrived at our gift shop admissions desk. I wish you could have been here for the celebration, what a joy! The winner, by coincidence a member from Wellsville, Kansas, and his friend, received some gift shop CAM swag to mark the occasion. By the end of the year, we recorded a grand total of 13,391 paying visitors for 2023!

I am going to ask each of you to come and visit again so that we can set our sights on over 14,000 in 2024. Just imagine how much those extra thousand patrons will add to our financial success and continue a winning streak that started after the terrible 2020 COVID year.

I am extremely encouraged that 2024 will see the Museum engaging in a variety of new and very exciting endeavors. For me that would include bringing the Boeing CH-47D Chinook back to life with transmissions and rotor blades hanging in the sky. Who knows, we could possibly see the presently deployed Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) from Fort Riley return with their paintbrushes in hand and help paint the historical bird. The last time they were here on a CAB volunteer weekend, they did a marvelous job of decontamination on the Chinook, as well as power washing it back to life. Army Reservists from Delta Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment (*see related story in Museum Notes, "Chinook Support" for details*) based in Olathe, Kansas, have already been installing the transmissions and plan on returning to complete the installation of various parts when time allows.

Another project which should see completion next summer is the painting of the F-15A Eagle. It is going to be a glorious sight all decked out in its original McDonnell Douglas experimental colors. The orange-colored marking should be seen by planes flying in, from south of Forbes Field to the Topeka Regional Airport, for miles away. If you don't know, this plane, #7 off the production line in St. Louis, was used to test Sparrow missiles at

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INTO THE FUTURE WITH THE AIR FORCE & SPACE FORCE

By Kevin Drexel

Our speakers at the October membership luncheon were two officers currently attending the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort. Leavenworth, Kansas. Their stories underscored the importance of intelligence, surveillance and communication in today's uncertain world.

Major Benjamin Shoptaugh and Major Kenneth Jenkins II took time away from their coursework to tell us about their careers and experiences. Major Shoptaugh began the presentation; he graduated from the Air Force Academy in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science, Space Operations degree. As a cyberspace operations officer, then-Lieutenant Shoptaugh was involved with base aviation communication and navigation systems at Tinker Air Force Base. He transferred to Offutt Air Force Base (AFB) in 2013 and served as a communications/cyber watch officer at US Strategic Command. He transferred to the Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick Space Force Base in 2016 and worked in various roles there until he became commander of the 7th Communications Squadron at Dyess Air Force Base in late 2018.

Major Shoptaugh spoke about current events in today's Air Force. The number of Airmen currently serving is down slightly from recent years with over 321,000 in the active-duty Air Force; over 105,000 in the Air National Guard; and over 99,000 in the Air Force Reserve, for a total of over 526,000.

The US Space Force, created in 2019, adds another 8,600 Guardians. From the Space Force website: "While the Space Force is a separate and distinct branch of the armed services, it is organized under the Department of the Air Force in a manner very similar to how the Marine Corps is organized under the Department of the Navy." The Air Force was conducting 70% of the nation's space business; now the Space Force is responsible for all of it.

The Air Force currently has about 58,000 aircraft, of which 2214 are fighters, 647 transports, 498 tankers and 141 bombers, among others. The Air Force is reducing the number of some aircraft to pay for newer ones. A-10 Warthogs, B-1 Lancers and KC-135 Stratotankers numbers are slowly coming down as F-35 Lightnings and KC-46 Pegasus become available. The venerable B-52H will soon receive new engines and other capabilities and become the B-52J. The B-21 Raider just made its first flight and will begin replacing the B-2 Spirit stealth bomber.

Major Shoptaugh described his experiences while assigned to the Air

Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC). Their mission is monitoring compliance with nuclear treaties around the world, reporting to both national authorities as well as treaty signatories. Their methods of compliance include satellites, seismometers, hydroacoustic and infrasonic sensors and the last remaining WC-135 Constant Phoenix in service which takes air samples after interesting events to check for radiation. AFTAC operates a 24-hour operations center at Patrick Space Force Base in Florida to monitor worldwide events.

Our other speaker, Major Kenneth M. Jenkins II, is the first Space Force Guardian to speak at the Combat Air Museum. He commissioned through the Reserve Officer Training Course upon graduation from Fayetteville State University, North Carolina in 2010. He served as a nuclear operations officer for almost five years at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming, crewing Minuteman missiles in their silos. Major Jenkins said that while standing watch in the missile silos, they could feel tremors induced by oil fracking! He cross-trained into the intelligence field in 2015 and found himself in Korea working with linguists, photographers and an interesting range of sensor operators. During this tour the North Koreans tested an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach any location in the continental United States.

His next stop was Ramstein Air Base in Germany in 2017, where he was part of the 603rd Air Operations Center (AOC). The 603rd AOC website describes their mission: "The 603rd AOC provides planning and directing initiatives, and assesses operational level command and control of integrated air, space, and cyber power in support of two combatant commands. The 603rd AOC responds to U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command requirements to fulfill airlift missions, planning and execution support in current, long, and near-term efforts, aeromedical missions, coordinating diplomatic clearances with 127 countries, and performing command and control of missions spanning over a 32 million square-mile region in two continents.

The 603rd AOC sustains 24-hour operations for combat endeavors, air mobility, intelligence, and functions as the USAFE - AFAFRICA Combined Coordination Center." Major Jenkins worked in intelligence collection and later, data collection for the joint force. He explained that future warfare will depend heavily on data management. Major Jenkins said the amount of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) resources in Europe had declined after the end



Gene Howerter, Major Jenkins and Major Shoptaugh (l-r)
(K. Hobbs photo)

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Sunday Funday: 2023 CAM Car Show

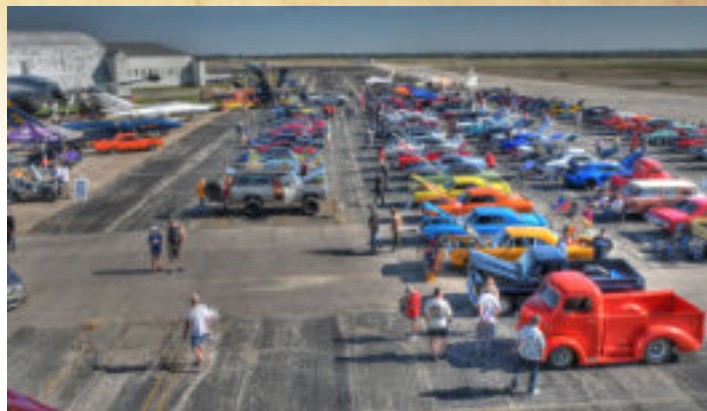
By Kevin Drexelow

Perfect weather greeted the Combat Air Museum's third annual car show on October 1! Members of the Topeka Mustang Club thought moving the show to a Sunday would increase the number of registered cars and they were right, as a record 126 cars filled the flight line at the Combat Air Museum. This was the first time we had a motorcycle division and we couldn't resist displaying our Trench Cat faux-World War One minibike with sidecar!

219 people visited the Museum that day to see the cars on display. Other attractions included food trucks, vendors, a deejay, a selection of current and historic military vehicles along with a fire truck and patrol vehicle used by the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority. Our friends from the 4th Marine Logistics Group were here to raise awareness and donations for Toys for Tots and left us a donation box for toys.

Members of the Topeka Mustang Club and the Combat Air Museum put considerable time and effort into planning the show. Mustang Club members rounded up great items donated by area merchants for raffle items and improved the registration process. Sam Gomez once again created his unique imaginative trophies to award to class winners. Car collectors like to photograph their cars next to our aircraft, so we towed some aircraft out that had not been out of hangar 602 in many years: our Grumman F11F Tiger, MiG-21 and MiG-15 joined our usual Grumman F9F Panther, McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II, Republic F-84 Thunderstreak and Vultee BT-13 outside where lots of collectors took advantage of getting a rare photo with their favorite cars.

The car show was the third of four events held at CAM in four consecutive weekends; it put a great demand upon our member volunteers but they came through, as always. Topeka Mustang Club members took care of registration, parking, awards and many other things. The club puts on several car shows to benefit area organizations and the Combat Air Museum is fortunate and grateful for their support of our Museum. After the show, the club presented CAM with a check for \$2753! We look forward to making our next car show even bigger and better! ♦



Most of the cars on display (K. Hobbs photo)

Chairman's Desk *Continued from page 2*

Edwards Air Force Base in California and holds the distinction of firing more Sparrow missiles than any other F-15 in history. Approximately 50 were fired and during one of the first experimental testing flights, the missile flew off and struck the right wing while the aircraft was flying at Mach 2. Incredibly, the plane survived. This historic aircraft is truly a classic and we are very proud to be the Museum to bring it back to life. The public should enjoy learning about its storied past and history while it served at Edwards AFB.

Another special project the Museum plans on undertaking this spring is all new landscaping at the entrance to hangar #602. A border barrier was installed in December and now we need new fill dirt to be spread, weed control laid, along with planting new perennial plants and shrubs, as well as spreading mulch. I know there are local members who will want to call and say, "count me in, I will help on this project." On the other hand, the Museum would be pleased to have donations of all kinds, if you care to help financially or otherwise. Please consider this, especially if you are one of the members who told us you don't volunteer actively because you don't have aircraft mechanical skills, etc. Everyone loves beautiful landscapes and getting their hands dirty while gardening. Remember, you can always brag about doing your part if you choose to buy into this undertaking.

I hope to see you volunteering at the Museum in 2024. We are always looking for more tour guides and gift shop workers, or possibly you would like to help keep the planes shiny and clean. How about filling in the void with your job of choice? Please let us hear from you, I know you will have a grand 2024 volunteering at the Combat Air Museum! ♦



Quite a pair! (K. Hobbs photo)

Fly Kansas Air Tour Returns to CAM!

By Kevin Drewelow

The Fly Kansas Air Tour returned to the Combat Air Museum on Saturday, October 7, the final stop on the three-day journey across the Sunflower State. The Air Tour began two days earlier in Hays and participants flew to Goodland, Colby, Scott City and finally Dodge City, where they spent the night. On Friday, the Air Tour visited Great Bend, Wellington, Hutchinson and Salina. Early Saturday morning, participants flew to Emporia.

By 10:30 a.m., we were watching a flight-following app on our phones and saw them departing Emporia for Topeka Regional Airport and the Combat Air Museum. By 11 a.m., 18 aircraft arrived over the capitol city nearly simultaneously. Ed Thompson was the air traffic controller on duty in the Topeka Regional Airport control tower and he did a great job of handling the group, getting them on the ground and over to our museum. Kevin Drewelow, Gary Naylor, Danny San Romani and Joe Wulffkuhle parked the aircraft while Museum visitors waited patiently behind the flight line rope.

The aircraft that flew in were a mix of factory and experimental aircraft. The most intriguing aircraft was an open cockpit autogyro, flown by a British woman who lives and farms in central Kansas!

The aircraft owners invited our visitors to tour their aircraft and ask questions. After sharing their aircraft, the Air Tour participants enjoyed box lunches in our Bob Dole Education Center and then toured our museum. Our neighbors at the Kansas Army National Guard had one of their Sikorsky UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters on our ramp and open for tours.

The Kansas Department of Transportation Aviation Division and the Kansas Commission on Aerospace Education (KCAE) sponsor the annual Fly Kansas Air Tour to help introduce children to aircraft, meet pilots and learn about aviation. It is also an opportunity to help people understand the job opportunities and economic growth that aviation brings to Kansas. The KCAE provided a grant to CAM to allow free admission for the day at our museum. CAM had the privilege of hosting the final stop on the Air Tour in 2016, when

we combined our first Girls in Aviation Day with the Air Tour. We look forward to hosting a stop again in the future! ♦



18 aircraft arrived at CAM (K. Hobbs photo)

In Remembrance

Eric Walther

August 20, 1931–October 4, 2023

U.S. Air Force veteran

CAM #3936

Eric's career in the Air Force began in 1953 after graduating with a degree in chemistry and secondary education. His first orders were to St Louis for two years to earn a master's degree in meteorology. He then spent a year in Korea as a meteorologist for the Air Force after which he was sent stateside to serve as a meteorologist at Oxnard Air Force Base (AFB) in California. Flight training followed with stops at several bases and finished at Reese AFB in Lubbock, Texas, where he graduated with certification to fly multiple types of aircraft. Eric was then sent to Anderson AFB Guam, where he flew 22 typhoon penetrating missions. His next assignment was Pease AFB in New Hampshire where he served as a classified weather forecaster, often flying the C-47s he knew so well and later flew at the Combat Air Museum on numerous occasions. His next tour was at Randolph AFB in San Antonio, Texas flying T-33s, his first jet plane followed by a stint in England where Eric provided weather briefings to NATO command posts. Eric then served at McGuire AFB in New Jersey teaching instrument training plus serving as security police squadron leader and airport manager. In 1971, Eric received orders for Vietnam. While there, Eric flew "Scatback" missions in C-47s, primarily flying VIPs but also cargo, including armament. After completing his tour in Vietnam, Eric returned to McGuire AFB where he retired in 1973 after 20 years of distinguished service to the Air Force.

Eric married his college sweetheart, Ethelyn "Lin" Roy in 1952 and together they raised three sons, Eric, Michael, Mark. Just imagine all the packing and moving they encountered over 20 years! After leaving the Air Force, Eric had several notable jobs, but you may remember the family's new business was always his greatest love: Strawberry Hill Christmas Tree Farm west of Lawrence, Kansas. ♦



A chance to get close to aircraft (K. Hobbs photo)

A Visit to the USAF Museum

By Keith Fulton

I have visited aviation museums in the past including the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum at Ashland, Nebraska and the National Museum of the United States Air Force (USAF) at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. None of these facilities at the time of my previous visits had a Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker on display. However, the Air Force Museum obtained a -135 on April 30, 2022. Since I was a KC-135 inflight refueling operator (or boom operator) for 28 years, I was interested in traveling there again to view the new display.

My wife Teri and I were a little disappointed when we first arrived in the parking lot of the museum, as the -135 was displayed outside on the parking ramp a distance from the museum buildings, along with several other recently obtained aircraft just sitting there with very few museum visitors to view them.

So, the outside displays were our first stop and as I approached the Stratotanker, I saw that it was last assigned to the 154th Wing, a Hawaiian Air National Guard (ANG) composite unit consisting of fighter (Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor), airlift (C-17 Globemaster III), and air refueling (KC-135 Stratotanker) squadrons. As I read the placard placed in front of the aircraft, it indicated that this was the -135 that performed the first and only tri level refueling.

Let me explain.

The Boeing KC-135A Stratotanker was first delivered to the U.S. Air Force Strategic Air Command (SAC) in 1956 as a jet powered aerial refueling tanker specifically designed to refuel the Boeing B-52 Stratofortress. A total of 803 were produced and the new -135 later replaced the aging propeller driven tanker aircraft, the Boeing KC-97 Stratofreighter and the Boeing KB-29 Superfortress, as the primary USAF tanker. The -135 is capable of refueling several different Air Force aircraft utilizing the flying boom located at the rear of the tanker. Maneuverable "V" shaped ruddervator wings located at the end of the boom help guide the flying boom into the refueling position as the receiver aircraft flies up and under the -135. The boom is operated by an enlisted crew member flying it into position and extending an internal tube with an end nozzle into a refueling receptacle of the receiving aircraft creating a seal before fuel transfer is initiated.

The KC-135 is also capable of refueling other USAF, U.S. Navy, and NATO aircraft by removing the nozzle and installing a drogue

attachment at the end of the inner tube of the boom, to become what is referred to as probe and drogue refueling. The -135 boom-to-drogue adapter kit is made up of nine feet of flexible hose with a coupling mechanism and a large cone shaped basket to help direct the receiver aircraft's probe, an extension tube installed on the receiver aircraft for refueling, into a contact position to take on fuel. The installation of the drogue-adapter has to be accomplished on the ground by maintenance personnel prior to the flight and only probe and drogue type refueling can be accomplished during the mission while the drogue kit is installed.

For the probe and drogue refueling process the operator lowers the flying boom and extends the drogue out full extension holding the boom steady as the receiver pilot makes the contact. Once contact is made the boom operator presses a "contact initiated" button for the transfer of fuel to begin.

As mentioned before, KC-135s were initially designed and purchased by the USAF for SAC, refueling the strategic bomber fleet for their global reach objectives during the Cold War. However, as the war in Vietnam progressed, the more advanced tankers were required in-theater to deliver the much-needed fuel to all the USAF fleet involved in the war effort. The B-52 was also staged at various airfields in the Pacific, some as far away as Guam.

Fighter aircraft flying from airfields in South Vietnam could now be loaded with more ordnance and less fuel and meet a tanker to be topped off with fuel for their combat mission. They now could remain over the target area longer knowing they had the opportunity to top off their tanks again before heading to their home base (known as pre- and post-strike aerial refuelings).

In 1967, the early stages of the war, USAF tankers only supported USAF assets and the US Navy supported their own carrier-based aircraft. Most of this was due to the different grades of jet fuel the two services used. At that time the Air Force primarily used JP-4 which has a lower flash point and is more available world-wide. The US Navy used JP-5 which has a higher flash point, believed chosen for its safer storage capabilities for carrier operations. Both fuels can be used for jet aircraft operations.

On May 31, 1967, a crew stepped to KC-135A, 60-0329. They were Major John H. Casteel, aircraft commander; Captain Richard L. Trail, copilot; Captain Dean L. Hoar, navigator; and Master Sergeant Nathan C. Campbell, boom operator. Their mission that day was to takeoff from their temporary base at Okinawa, Japan and refuel two USAF Lockheed F-104 Starfighter aircraft providing them fuel for their pre- and post-strike mission. The F-104 was developed years before the wide use of the tanker boom system for air-to-air refueling so it was fitted with a probe for inflight refueling. At that time the tankers would depart their base carrying a full load of fuel—approximately 200,000 pounds or 32,000 gallons—depending on runway and weather conditions.

The KA-3 was the Navy's tanker variant of the Douglas A-3



Tri-level refueling (K. Fulton photo)



Boeing KC-135R 60-0329 (NMUSAF photo)

Skywarrior, initially designed as a carrier based twin jet engine strategic bomber. The KA-3 was crewed by two or three members consisting of a pilot and navigator/extra crewmember. Lieutenant Commander Don Alberg piloted the KA-3 on this day; he was #2, a wingman of a flight of 4 KA-3 tankers from the Navy carrier USS Enterprise stationed in the Gulf of Tonkin, patrolling just off the coast of Vietnam. The Navy tanker's mission was to support 16 Douglas A-4 Skyhawks, single seat carrier-based attack/fighters, during a mission to bomb targets in Hanoi, North Vietnam. Once the Skyhawks received their pre-strike fuel the four KA-3s entered into a holding pattern just off the coast to await the fighters to complete a post-strike refueling, then the return to the carrier.

During their attack over enemy targets one of the A-4s received a direct hit from ground fire and the pilot had to eject 50 miles from Hanoi. The commander of the KA-3 tanker flight, Lieutenant Commander John Wunsch, ordered #3 and #4 to remain on station as the remaining 15 A-4s egressed from their targets to refuel while he and #2, piloted by Alberg, assisted the downed A-4 pilot's recovery by refueling a flight of four Vought F-8 Crusaders who were in the area, acting as a Rescue Combat Air Patrol (RESCAP) over the downed pilot until his recovery could be completed by helicopter support.

Mechanical problems then began to hamper the rescue mission. The first two helicopters dispatched for the rescue had to turn back to their support ship due to systems failures. A third chopper, a Sikorsky SH-3 Sea King, was launched but the flight inbound from the carrier Enterprise would be over an hour. Wunsch and Alberg, with their two KA-3s, remained on station continuing to refuel the F-8s. As time ticked by, Alberg began computing his own internal fuel capacity. As he witnessed the SH-3 rescue chopper head inland to the downed pilot, Alberg reported to his lead that he had 10 minutes of fuel remaining and Wunsch replied with 6 minutes remaining. However, they both still had fuel available for offload as their external fuel, stored in drop tanks mounted under the wings, was not available to the tankers. An emergency call was transmitted over a common frequency by the Navy tankers to be heard by all US forces monitoring this emergency frequency.

Casteel and his crew of the KC-135 (tail #0329) heard these emergency radio transmissions of the need for extra fuel. They were close by flying at 28,000 feet waiting for the post-strike

refueling mission of the F-104s they were assigned to refuel. Without any hesitation Casteel responded to the Navy tanker call and told them he would descend to their altitude of 1,500 feet.

The Air Force crew had never refueled a U.S. Navy aircraft before; in fact, it was not even listed in their publications.

As soon as the -135 leveled off at 1,500 feet above the water, the lead KA-3, piloted by Wunsch, hooked up to the large Air Force tanker and took several thousand pounds of fuel extending his flight time by 30 minutes. Then it was Alberg's turn after Campbell, the Stratotanker boom operator, reset the boom system to accept another receiver.

Alberg made three attempts to "plug" his probe into the basket of the KC-135's drogue. The Navy system and Air Force drogue system differed slightly as Alberg attempted to make gentle contacts with the drogue. The Navy system would not accept a hard "push" into the basket; however, the Air Force system demanded a final "push" to complete the contact into the coupling mechanism before fuel can be transferred. After receiving a short procedure description over the radio, Alberg was extremely relieved as his fourth attempt at contact found the fuel gauges indicating that he was taking on fuel.

The rescue attempt of the downed pilot proved fruitless. As the SH-3 Sea King approached the landing zone (LZ) the North Vietnamese ground forces captured the American pilot.

Now several Navy aircraft involved in the rescue attempt were still short of fuel. Each of the F-8s, acting as RESCAP, only had ten minutes of fuel remaining as they departed North Vietnam to head back to their carrier—not enough to make it. While Alberg was still taking fuel from the -135 he could not yet disconnect as he was still short. However, the F-8s could not wait, Alberg deployed his length of hose with the drogue at the end and the F-8s started taking fuel from the KA-3 as it was still taking fuel from the -135; the first and only "Tri Level Refueling." Luckily, Alberg was taking on fuel slightly faster from the -135 than he was offloading to the fighters. The F-8s departed after receiving the fuel necessary to make it safely back to their carrier. Alberg then disconnected from the -135, and Wunsch made an additional contact to receive what fuel he needed to get back.

The Stratotanker's job was not done after the six aircraft involved in the RESCAP mission departed. The -135 crew received another radio call of additional Navy aircraft needing fuel. Two McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom II fighters departing Vietnam

Museum Notes

By Kevin Drewelow

CAM sets all-time paid attendance record...When two visitors entered the Combat Air Museum on Wednesday, December 27 at 1:15 p.m., they had no idea that they set an all-time record for paid attendance. When Maverick Adams of Wellsville, Kansas and his friend, Todd Browning of Gardner, Kansas, entered the gift shop, Maverick was the 13,000th visitor in 2023, setting the record for most paid visitors to CAM since its founding in 1977. Gene Howerter, CAM's chairman, welcomed the two and gave them a range of Museum gifts to mark the occasion. Maverick, a CAM member, visits our Museum at every opportunity. CAM had been mentioning the chance to set a record over the last few days after Christmas on social media; we were surprised and delighted at the interest and comments received. CAM's final paid attendance count for 2023 was 13,391. Let's see if we can increase our paid visitor count in 2024!

Tooned Up Chinook...We had the pleasure of meeting Jay Eddy while planning our last car show. Jay is a talented and creative graphics artist and car enthusiast who produces custom caricatures of classic cars; you can see many examples of his work on his Facebook page, "Tooned Up Cars." Jay provided excellent ads which we displayed on our Facebook page during the week prior to the car show. Jay offered to Toon Up our Chinook and produced an outstanding work. He then presented it to CAM and Deb Lamere, former crew chief on our Chinook and its restoration leader, was only too happy to accept it! It will soon be framed and on display. Jay will soon Toon Up one of our aircraft—we can't wait to see what he does next!



Maverick Adams, Gene Howerter and Todd Browning (l-r)
(K. Drewelow photo)



Deb (l) and Jay (r) (K. Drewelow photo)

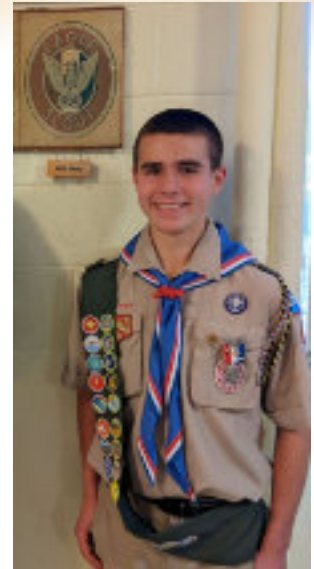
190th firefighters train at CAM...Firefighters from the 190th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) responded to the Combat Air Museum on October 5, not to put out a fire but to train on our McDonnell Douglas F-15A Eagle. Many types of military aircraft stop at Topeka Regional Airport for fuel and food during cross-country trips, and if an emergency ever arose, firefighters from both the 190th ARW and the Metropolitan Topeka Airport Authority (MTAA) would respond. The 190th doesn't get to spend much time around F-15s, so they asked if they could train on ours; of course, the answer was yes! They discussed and practiced where to locate their ladders to extricate an injured pilot, locations of fuel, oil, weapons (if carried) and other potential hazards. They plan to return with other firefighters to train on our Eagle and Chinook, and we've invited the MTAA to do the same.

New artifacts...Science Museum Oklahoma decided to divest some of their aviation artifacts and Gene Howerter arranged to acquire a World War II vintage OQ-19 drone and a later model Link instrument trainer. Gary Naylor drove to Oklahoma City to retrieve them, returning on October 10. The Radioplane OQ-19 first entered service in 1948; the company produced over 70,000 examples and they remained in service into the early 2000s! Several members of our Saturday restoration crew have already been at work repairing and replacing parts. The Link is a fixed-wing variation of one of the two Link trainers we have and appears to have served with the Federal Aviation Administration. Our research on its background continues.



(l-r) John Plumb, LaJora Smith and Kevin Drewelow (K. Drewelow photo)

CAM members honor veterans...Two of the youngest CAM members honored some of CAM's veterans at a ceremony at Washburn Rural High School on November 7. Noah Fewell and LaJora Smith are members of the school's Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps; Noah serves on the honor guard and LaJora is in her freshman year and just joined the program. CAM members and veterans Mike Fewell (Noah's father), John Plumb and Kevin Drewelow attended the Veteran's Day ceremony where Noah and the honor guard put on a flawless display and LaJora (and another cadet) read the President's Veteran's Day proclamation. LaJora looks forward to becoming a tour guide at CAM. We're fortunate to have these and other young people interested in volunteering at our Museum!



Eagle Scout Carter Vincent (K. Drewelow photo)

Eagle Scout Carter Vincent...Five days later, Museum members Chuck Watson and Kevin Drewelow had the privilege of attending Carter Vincent's promotion to Eagle Scout. Only 7% of Scouts attain this, the highest rank in Scouting. Carter is a freshman at Topeka's Shawnee Heights High school and an avid volunteer at CAM who leads tours, runs the flight simulator and anything else he can find to do when he is here. Another outstanding example of youth setting and reaching a high bar in their lives while making an impact at the Combat Air Museum!

Chinook support...Army Reservists from Delta Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment visited CAM on Sunday, December 3 to gain valuable training while helping Museum volunteers make progress on the restoration of our Boeing CH-47D Chinook. Readers may recall our Chinook, serial number 85-24346, last served with the 7/158th until an unrepairable structural crack several years ago ended its flying days. Delta Company helped arrange the donation of 346 to our Museum and it arrived here on September 11, 2019. Deb Lamere was the crew chief on 346 while it served in Iraq in 2005-06 and she is now leading our restoration effort. Reservists don't get many opportunities to install any of the five transmissions that drive the rotors, so Delta Company senior leaders arranged to bring some Reservists to install the aft transmission on 346. Deb was understandably delighted to be in the presence of currently serving Chinook maintainers and the group got busy. They discovered a discrepancy that prevented completion of the transmission, but Delta Company plans to correct the problem and then bring the Reservists back to complete the task.



Army Reservists work on our CH-47D (K. Drewelow photo)

Volunteers making a difference...In addition to the members who routinely volunteer for many tasks at CAM, several of our members spent time here on special projects. Sharon Nolde and her friend Lynn Bourne put up Christmas decorations and prepared our kitchen for the December membership luncheon. They returned to help Betty Frantz, Pat Kozubek, Judy Murray and Marlene Urban run the potluck lunch. Gary Naylor and Tim Felks closed and secured the McDonnell Douglas F-15A Eagle canopy; Gary and Bob Eichkorn hung our Republic F-84F Thunderstreak external fuel tanks on a wall in hangar 604; and Gary and Kevin Drewelow replaced the right main tire on the F-84F. Stu Entz has been working on a new display about the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird; he and Tom Gorrell prepared a large showcase in hangar 604 for the display by painting it and installing a new light. Museum member Megan Storm is working on her master's degree in museum studies at Oklahoma University; to satisfy a course requirement, she has recorded short scripts about many aircraft and engines on display at the

Continued on page 13

Chuck's War Continued from page 1

lines for four days at a time. The soldiers became known as "Henson's Hellions." Their mission was to set ambushes at night, using flares and claymore mines. Chuck said they set trip wires on flares on trails and placed claymores along the trail. Claymore mines, when detonated, spray the area with ball bearings at leg height and are extremely lethal. Once a flare went up, Chuck and the other Hellions would command-detonate the claymores and then count the bodies in the morning. This proved to be an effective and efficient way to disrupt Viet Cong (VC) operations while raising the VC:U.S. kill ratio to the 10:1 target. Major Henson took very good care of his Hellions, treating them to steaks, corn and beer when they returned from their missions.

After a particularly grueling 12-day period of enemy contact, Chuck's unit was withdrawn to a relatively quiet site on Hill 54, near the coast and south of Da Nang. The hill was the site of a radar and searchlight and had seen no enemy action in the last six months. The hill was devoid of basic defenses like concertina wire, flares or claymores, but there were a few bunkers around the base of the hill. That afternoon, a helicopter delivered mail and beer to the troops. One of the sergeants received a Dear John letter from home and was so upset he wasn't fit to lead a team at a perimeter listening post to watch for enemy infiltrators; they would radio the main force on the hill if they detected enemy soldiers advancing during the night. The commanding officer asked Chuck to take his place. Chuck led four soldiers to their listening post and another team went to the other listening post. The soldiers would each stand a one-hour shift watching and listening while the other soldiers slept.

The evening started well but that quickly changed. After Chuck served his shift, he was awakened by the sound of explosions—an enemy attack. The soldier whose shift

followed Chuck fell asleep at his post and the VC passed by them and began their attack. Chuck immediately led his team up the hill, fought through the VC soldiers they encountered and joined the fight on top of the hill.

They immediately realized their two mortar pits had taken direct hits, killing the occupants. Many VC soldiers had died during the attack which continued around them for an hour. After the VC withdrew, Chuck and some other soldiers went through the bunkers where they found several dead and wounded soldiers. He led a team to check on the other listening post where they found four dead and one badly wounded.

Chuck was later severely injured but survived his tour in Vietnam. He returned to Kansas, and was being treated at the hospital at Ft. Riley when he met his future wife, Elaine. They were married for 48 years until she recently passed.

Chuck closed his presentation by telling us how he went through a hard twenty years until he sought treatment at the Veterans Administration (VA) hospital in Topeka. He detailed his list of physical ailments—shrapnel in his left foot and chest; Agent Orange-related kidney and prostate cancer; and Post Traumatic Stress. His therapist told him he was actually 260% disabled! He resisted VA treatment for years because he perceived it to be "charity money." People at the VA helped him understand it wasn't charity; he'd earned it. Chuck praised the people and treatment he's received from the VA but would give it all back if he could be a healthy human being again. Chuck gave away many copies of his book, "Our War" and autographed them when asked. This writer has not yet read Chuck's book but has seen that Chuck just scratched the surface of his experiences during his presentation. There is nothing like hearing history from those who made it. ♦



Gene Howerter (l) and Chuck Atherton (r) (K. Hobbs photo)

Next Membership Luncheon

The next Combat Air Museum membership luncheon will take place on Monday, February 12 at 11:30 a.m. Retired Kansas Army National Guard Brigadier General Jonathan Small and others will tell the story of Wallace Buford and then reveal our newest display. Buford attended the University of Kansas before he flew B-24s over Europe in World War II. He later flew for Civil Air Transport, an airline operated by the Central Intelligence Agency in Asia, resupplying Allied anti-communist efforts and the occasional covert mission. Please bring your brown bag lunch and a drink before hearing an amazing story! ♦

The Vigilante

By Dennis Smirl

Another airplane that fits into the list of aircraft not in the Combat Air Museum inventory is North American's A3J Vigilante. At a time when a supersonic bomber seemed more than a bit exotic, the folks at North American built and flew a twin-engined carrier-capable Mach 2 bird.

The Vigilante could carry and deliver one large nuclear weapon in a tubular structure positioned between the engines and opening to the rear of the aircraft. In tests with dummy bombs, the delivery mechanism only worked some of the time. Problematic because of the unreliable bomb delivery system, the Vigilante came at a point in national history when tough budgetary decisions were being made and the aircraft was almost relegated to the bone yard as a 'not ready for prime time' jet bomber.

Emerging requirements came to the rescue. The conflict in South Vietnam all but negated the need for a nuclear bomb capability. A more pressing need was high-speed reconnaissance and with a photographic 'canoe' fastened to the airframe, the former nuclear bomber (A3J) morphed into a fast recon bird (RA-5C) with a high survivability quotient.

At the time these changes were being made, the Department of Defense, under Robert S. McNamara, decided on a more logical and efficient system of number-designating airframes so that modified and newbuild A3Js became A-5s. Across the U. S. Navy, the A-5s were further redesignated with a leading 'R' for reconnaissance.

Expensive and reputed to be difficult to maintain, the Vigilante was nevertheless a world record holder for both time-to-climb and high average speed over long distances.

First flying on August 31, 1958, the Vigilante was a product of North American Aviation's Columbus, Ohio plant. The basic design might remind one of the Boeing F-15 series with a large, swept wing mounted high on the fuselage, angular air intakes, and swept horizontal stabilizers. Where the designs differ most is in the vertical surfaces with the F-15 having two tails and the RA-5C having only one.

The RA-5C was powered by two General Electric J79 engines, a similar power package as was incorporated in the F-4 Phantom series—both of which aircraft were ahead of their time performance-wise. All-out, the Phantom had a bit more top speed, but it was a smaller, lighter airframe and possibly enjoyed a better realization of Whitcomb's Area Rule.

The Vigilante only remained in fleet service until the mid-1970s. It was just too large and expensive to operate, and its capability loss to the fleet was handled by reconnaissance versions of the Phantom.

Still, the Vigilante was a good-looking, performance-oriented aircraft that, especially during the Vietnam years, got the job of high-speed reconnaissance done better than any other bird.

There are very few Vigilantes left as museum pieces. Any of them can be seen, and admired at Lexington Park, Maryland; Pueblo (Colorado) Air Museum; Memphis, Tennessee; Castle Air Museum, California; Glensville, New York; Pensacola, Florida; Naval

New & Renewing Members

New:

Kristen Duncan & family | Michael Grammer & family | Darrell Jones | Paul Williams & family

Renewing:

Neal Baughman & family | Nathan & Beth Benfield | Col Jon & Peggy Boursaw | Michael & Candace Bush | Debra Butz | Bradley & Star Caywood | Duane Coash | John Dietrick & family | Donald & Rebecca Duncan | Spencer Duncan & family | Leonard Faulconer | Chris Fien & family | Angela Francis | Frank Holsburg | Ed O. Lee | Ron Lutz | Larry & Nancy Mann | Jerry & Karen Milbradt | Luke Medcalf & family | William G. Morgan | Todd Morgenstern & family | Bruce Nall & family | Mary Ann Naylor | George Orff | Loren Otis | Floyd Palmer | Dr. George & Linda Parkins | Wade Salley & family | Dennis & Galene San Romani | Dick & Sharon Starks | USAFA Cadet MSgt Remington Stiles | Don Thun | Marlene Urban | Steve Wodtke

New Lifetime Members:

Thomas Davidson



North American RA-5C Vigilante (US Navy photo)

Air Station, Fallon, Nevada; San Diego, California; and Patuxent River, Maryland.

Another recommendation for a look at the Vigilante is to spend a moment with the model collection in CAM Hangar 602, where an excellent Vigilante model shares space with other aircraft used by the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam years. ♦

Pilot's Notes: a Book Review

“What’s Your Call Sign?”

by Ben “Lobo” Taggart

Reviewed by Chuck Watson

All of us who read much about aviation, naval aviation in particular, know how naval aviators love call signs, though not always their own. Ben “Lobo” Taggart, Major, United States Marine Corps, served 29 years with three combat tours flying both fixed and rotary wing aircraft. While the author’s jacket photo bears a rough resemblance to Tom Skerritt of “Top Gun” fame, as you read the book you might think you’re reading the ramblings of a wild frat boy’s life.

After detailing early on how call signs developed and why they play a big role in naval operations, Taggart spins 250 pages of humorous backgrounds on hundreds of call signs, some reluctantly told by the aviator bearing a moniker that a majority of the time is assigned to the Sailor or Marine for something much less than a stellar screwup, bodily feature or function, or as a group humiliation. The book will probably not be on any church reading list or read to elementary classes, but it is still a wild and funny exploration of how call signs are assigned or earned, delivered with a twisted sense of humor that any 12-year-old boy would roar at but not repeat at home.

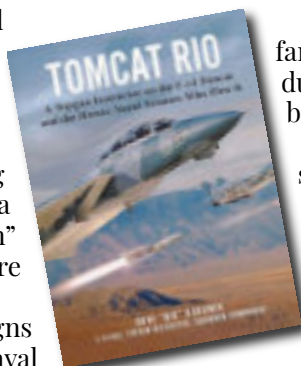
Chapter titles give a little warning of what to expect...sex, booze, toilet humor, and good old salty sailor slang. If you’re easily offended, then skip the reading and enjoy the scores of beautiful naval aviation photos the talented “Lobo” took himself and includes throughout. Reading this book will prove two things about Navy fliers: they are very intelligent and daring souls, but with the twisted take on life of a high school locker room or college beer bust. Being of a rather twisted mindset myself, I found the book a three-hour humorous and yet informative read. My former Navy Blue Angel friend, Commander R.C. Hirn, would most likely tell me it’s too rough reading for lightweight Air Force types, but he’d tell you about it with pride. ♦



“Tomcat RIO”

by Commander Dave “Bio” Baranek,
US Navy (Retired)

Reviewed by Chuck Watson



Any naval aviation fan or reader is probably familiar with the name Dave Baranek, call sign “Bio” due to his many articles, fine aviation photography, books and movie credits over the past 30 years.

Commander Baranek retired in 1999 after serving in numerous Grumman F-14 squadrons, teaching at Topgun, flying in the first “TOP GUN” movie, and eventually becoming a skipper of the famed VF-211 unit. With 2,500 hours and 688 traps as a Radar Intercept Officer (RIO) in the rear seat of the vaunted Tomcat, “Bio” brings to life the humorous and sometimes frightening episodes he experienced in his 20-year career.

From his early days as a junior officer learning the basics of the radar intercept job in the F-14 Replacement Air Group, Baranek regales the reader with tales at sea, fun times on the many port calls, life as a married aviator, and most of all, what it was like in the back seat of the F-14 during its heyday. He doesn’t gloss over the losses, the long separations from home and the boring extra duties outside the cockpit, but paints an honest and heartwarming look at a career he had dreamed of since childhood. As he matured and rose through the ranks, “Bio” took on more responsibility for both newer RIOs and pilots as well, and the wild experiences that came with it. By the end of his career, he was one of the first backseaters honored with command of a fighter squadron, although one with many problems which he led them through to become a top unit in the fleet. Mixed in with his excellent narrative are dozens of wonderful photos taken while at sea and in the air.

“Tomcat RIO” is a great addition to any aviation library, especially for those who are curious about life flying from ships. ♦

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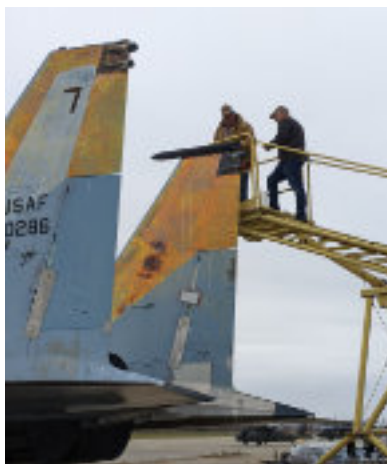
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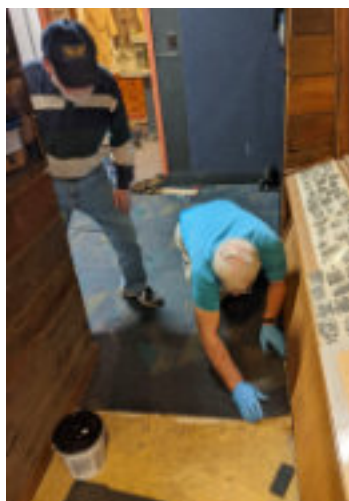
2024 Calendar of Events

Museum Notes *Continued from page 9*

Combat Air Museum which visitors will soon be able to hear by scanning QR codes that will be placed on exhibit signs. Our Fix-It Friday team is back to work on a list of projects to improve Museum infrastructure. The team meets on the first and third Fridays of each month. They've recently worked on landscaping at the main entrance to hangar 602 and built a new ramp for the personnel door on



Gary and Tim working on the Eagle (K. Drewelow photo)



Dave and Mike install carpet (K. Drewelow photo)

the flight line side of the same hangar. The most significant improvement has been to our flight simulator room, where the team removed the deck which has been a trip hazard and a barrier to people using wheelchairs. Mike Madden has led this project and, with help from several members, even removed the old carpet from the adjacent area and replaced it with carpet squares. ♦



Gary breaking the bead on the F-84 main tire (K. Drewelow photo)

February

- 1—Winter hours continue through the end of the month
- 12—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag
- 15—Aviation Day at the Capitol

March

- 1—Normal hours resume, Museum open Mon-Sat 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., no visitors admitted after 3:30 p.m.; Museum open Sun noon-4:30 p.m.
- 10—Daylight Savings Time begins
- 31—Easter Sunday, Museum closed

April

- 8—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag
- 27—Celebrity Pancake Feed

May

- 27—Taps Across America

June

- 10—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag
- TBD—Young Aviators Class

July

- TBD—Young Aviators Class

August

- 12—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag

September

- TBD—Girls in Aviation Day
- TBD—Be Filled/CAM Truck Pull

October

- TBD—CAM Car Show
- 14—Membership Luncheon, Brown Bag

November

- 3—Daylight Savings Time ends
- 28—Thanksgiving, Museum closed

December

- 9—Membership Luncheon—bring a covered dish
- 25—Christmas, Museum closed

Visit USAF Museum Continued from page 7

also requested emergency fuel. Now that the -135 was under the radio control of Navy flight controllers they were vectored to rendezvous with the F-4s to give them just enough fuel to make it safely "home" as well.

Now finished with the Navy, the -135 still had an obligation to complete the post-strike refueling of the two F-104s they were originally assigned to support. After climbing back up to their original altitude they met up with the F-104s and provided them with just enough fuel to make it back to their home base in South Vietnam.

After offloading over 50,000 pounds of fuel, the -135 was at minimal fuel itself and could not make it back to their base in Okinawa. Da Nang Air Base, located in South Vietnam, was suitable to accommodate the large KC-135 and they headed that way. Once they landed and taxied to parking, the base command staff met Casteel and his crew and escorted them to a facility for a 3-hour debriefing. Initially all indications leaned toward disciplinary action as they had left their assigned mission without Air Force approval.

Alberg indicated the Navy got word that the Air Force crew who had saved him was to be court martialed on charges of "abandoning their assigned post." Naval commanders contacted the Air Force higher command and informed them the KC-135 crew of 60-0329 saved six Navy aircraft and 10 crew members participating in the RESCAP who would have otherwise had to ditch in the Gulf. They went on to say two additional F-4 aircraft and their four crew members were also able to recover on the carrier after declaring emergency fuel status.

The Air Force had a change of heart and dropped the court martial plans.

The crew of 329 returned to their home base in the United States after completing their Vietnam tour. There they received the Distinguished Flying Cross, a medal awarded to each individual who distinguished themselves by single acts of heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. The citation reads in part: "In recognition of a unique refueling mission they performed during the Vietnam War. The crew members are Major John H. Casteel, Aircraft Commander; Captain Richard L Trail, Pilot; Captain Dean L Hoar, Navigator; and Master Sergeant Nathan C. Campbell, Boom Operator. During Operation "Daisy Chain" they performed the first ever three-level aerial refueling operation that saved six carrier-based U.S. Navy aircraft critically low on fuel, over the Gulf of Tonkin. Each crew member is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross by SAC Commander in Chief, General Joseph J. Nazzaro."

An additional award to the crew of 0329 was the 1967-year recipient of the Mackay Trophy. This annual award is presented by the National Aeronautic Association at a fall awards dinner. The criteria to receive this prestigious Air Force award is as

follows: "The trophy is given for the "most meritorious flight of the year" by an Air Force person, persons, or organization (first consideration given to individuals) for gallantry and intrepidity; and for unusual initiative and resourcefulness and achievement of outstanding results with unusual presence of mind under combat or non-combat conditions."

The citation reads: "For their exemplary courage and outstanding aerial accomplishments by performing the first multiple air refueling between a KC-135 aircraft and an A-3 Navy tanker which simultaneously refueled a Navy F-8 Crusader under emergency fuel shortages and combat conditions."

The Air Force KC-135A, tail number 60-0329, continued its service for several more years after this event over the Gulf of Tonkin. The aircraft received all the typical upgrades as other -135s did, advanced avionics and navigational systems. 329 changed from a KC-135A to a KC-135R by the replacement of its original Pratt & Whitney J57 turbojet engines to the larger General Electric CFM International F108 high bypass turbofan engines. In 1993, 329 was transferred from the Air Force to the Hawaii Air National Guard where it remained an active unit asset until its retirement flight to the USAF Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB in 2022. The museum has future plans to properly display the KC-135 in a more appropriate setting. I look forward revisiting the museum when the display is completed.

Note: The pilot of the downed A-4 Skyhawk was Lieutenant Commander Arvin R. Chauncey, flying his 57th combat mission. He spent the next 2,104 days as a prisoner of war before being repatriated on March 4, 1973. Chauncey continued his career in the U.S. Navy returning to flight status and received promotions to the rank of captain before he retired in 1986.

The KC-135 remains an active asset for the USAF, the Air National Guard, and the Air Force Reserve. There are currently 396 of these tankers still flying after the first one came off the production line in 1955, now 68 years ago.

Source documents include a story from the book written by Thomas McKelvey Cleaver titled "The Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club," the biography "Veteran Tributes Honoring Those Who Served" for Captain (R) Arvin R. Chauncey, and an article titled "Vietnam Veteran Shares Story of First Tri-Level Refueling" written by A1C Alan Ricker of the 22nd Air Refueling Wing, McConnell AFB, Kansas.

During my research I found that some source documents differ slightly. There may have only been two F-8 Crusaders involved in the RESCAP and other sources indicate the F-104 Starfighters provided top cover escort for the KC-135 against enemy fighters during the emergency refueling provided to the Navy. Nevertheless, Casteel and his crew provided an outstanding performance on that day in May, 1967 under combat conditions and were properly recognized. ♦

Ways You Can Support the Combat Air Museum

Dillon's Community Rewards Program



If you shop at Dillon's and have a Plus Shopper's Card, you can help support the Combat Air Museum with just a phone call or a few keystrokes. Dillon's Stores donates millions to non-profit organizations. Our Museum benefits from CAM members who have registered with Dillon's Community Rewards Program. Enrolling in this program will not increase your grocery bill and will not affect your fuel points.



Enrolling in the Community Rewards program is a one-time event and no longer requires annual registration. If you've already signed up, no further action is required. Go to <https://www.dillons.com/i/community/community-rewards> to create a Dillon's account before enrolling in the Community Rewards program. You can also call **800.576.4377** and the Dillon's customer service representative will register you. You'll need to provide them with the Combat Air Museum's new five-character Non-Profit Organization (NPO) account number, **GA302**. Thanks to your generosity, each quarter the Museum receives a check from Dillon's that really helps us maintain the collection and facilities and provide the classes and service our visitors enjoy. Last year, Dillon's donated \$815 to CAM; that amount is less than the previous year because we have fewer donors than before. If you haven't joined, why not take a few moments now to do so: Dillon's and CAM will do the rest!

Volunteer

The Combat Air Museum exists solely upon the money we raise from admissions, donations and gift shop sales. We rely on volunteers to run our gift shop, and the need for these volunteers has become even more urgent. We'll train you for this crucial and enjoyable task. If you could spare one day a month, please call the Museum Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and noon at **785.862.3303** and ask for Nelson, our office manager and volunteer coordinator.

Into the Future Continued from page 3

of the Cold War, but quickly expanded after Russia invaded Crimea. Data management led him back to Korea to command a Space Force unit. He gave a great description of how different kinds of space-based sensors are deployed in several different types of orbits, based on their purpose and targets. He discussed the various interests and methods Russia, China and North Korea have in space and pointed out that China recently surpassed the United States in numbers of launches recently.

After he completes his courses at Ft. Leavenworth, he will participate in the Air Force Vanguards program, where cyber, data and cutting-edge weapons are developed and expedited to bring rapid change and improved warfighting capabilities. One example is rapid transportation of critical supplies by rocket as near-peer adversaries will not sit back and allow a long buildup of weapons and supplies during a conflict. It almost sounded like science fiction but Majors Jenkins and Shoptaugh are leading the way in these new forms of communication and warfare! ♦

Visitors

1,139 people from 33 states, Washington, D.C., Brazil, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, Sweden and Türkiye visited the Combat Air Museum in October.

In November, 1,054 visitors from 36 states, Puerto Rico, France, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Türkiye and Venezuela toured your Museum.

1,166 people from 34 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Chile, Cuba, France, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria, Taiwan and Venezuela visited the Combat Air Museum in December.



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PLANE TALK

Visit the Combat Air Museum for fun, information and an educational experience.

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM **16**

Fighter Boy



Drink-but with an unsoured stomach;
Girls-but with a young man's touch;
Cards, but with no care for money,
Scarred by life-but not too much.

See him go, with footsteps scraping;
Soaking flying boots worn down,
Oil-stained, tattered, coat misshaping
Athlete's figure into clown;

Hair untidy-tie a bootlace,
What a marvellous disguise,
If you couldn't guess his true place,
If you couldn't read his eyes!

Smooth that hand on stick and trigger,
Tiger-like in air that tread!
Gun-kid with a thousand horses,
And a price upon his head!

-Air Commodore Sir Nigel Norman, RAF, 1897-1943

COMBAT AIR MUSEUM • PLANE TALK