



Skyhawk

Association, Inc.

NEWSLETTER

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"A-4s FOREVER"

Fall 1997

OOPS (Story Inside)

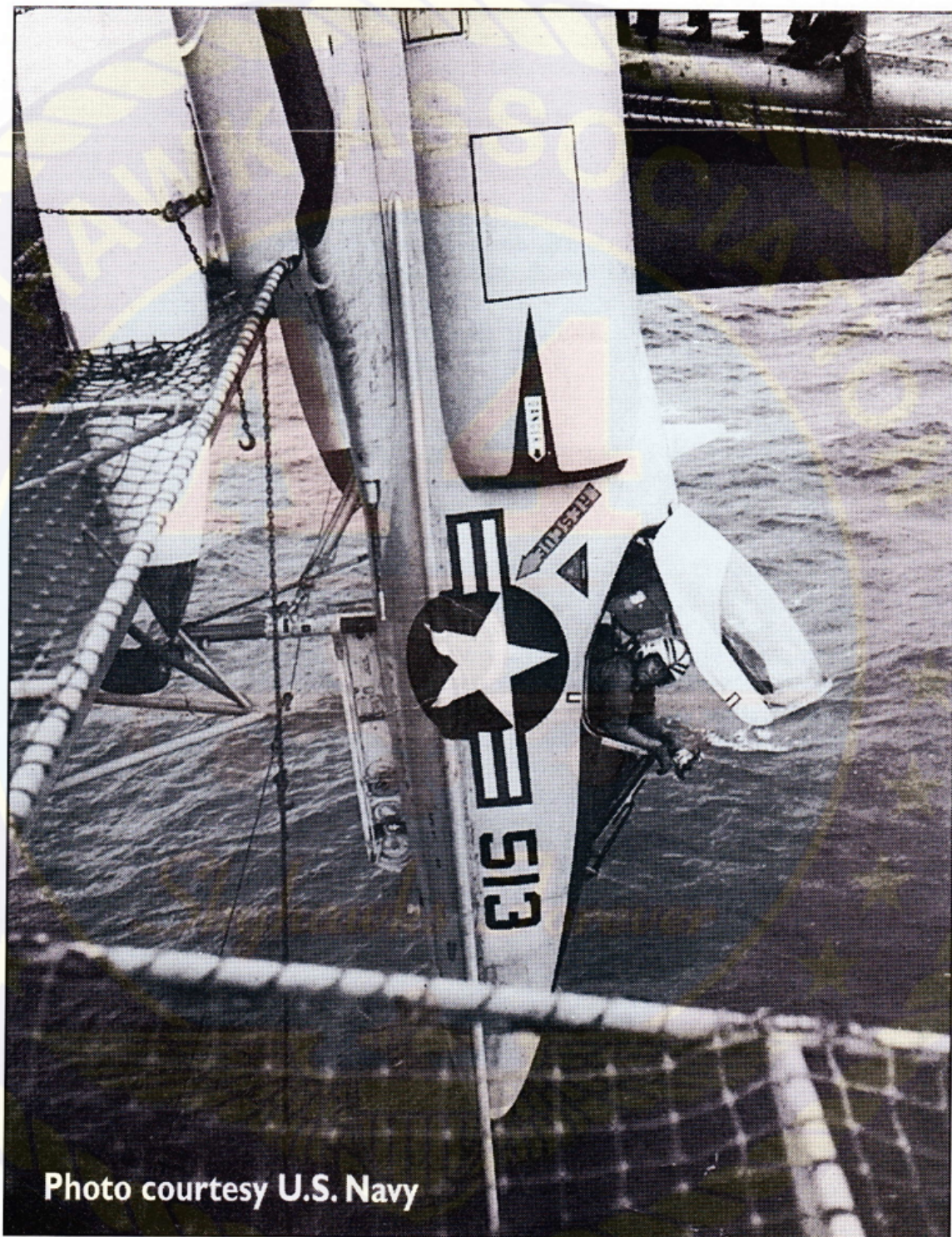


Photo courtesy U.S. Navy



OOPS (See front cover)

During the 1967 Med cruise of USS *America* (CVA-66), what normally would have passed as just another day of flight ops turned into a literal "cliff-hanger" for LTJG Karl Leuffen of VA-36.

After trapping on board *America*, Leuffen routinely added power to taxi forward out of the arresting gear, only to discover that he'd lost hydraulic pressure and had no brakes. Following that discovery, in short order he made two contributing errors. He forgot to drop his hook (the pilot signal to deck crew indicating loss of brakes) and he failed to shut down his engine. As a result, the aircraft continued to move forward on the flight deck toward the bow.

Alert members of the deck crew recognized what was happening and threw wheel chocks and tie-down chains beneath the wheels in an attempt to stop the aircraft, but too late and to no avail. The thrust of the idling engine provided sufficient momentum to overcome the attempted blocks. Leuffen's *Skyhawk* reached the round-down at the forward end of the flight deck and over the side he went – almost. As the nose of the slow-moving aircraft dropped between the catapult bull noses, the drop tanks speared and became entangled in the deck-edge personnel safety net structure. The *Skyhawk* was stopped, hanging over the bow in an almost vertical position.

LTJG Leuffen was in an extremely precarious position with only minimal support being provided by the relatively flimsy safety net piping. If that support gave way, the aircraft would fall into the sea and almost certainly be run over by the ship, probably with a fatal result. The deck crew hurriedly attached tie-down chains. To help "hold" the aircraft in position, the captain kept the ship into the wind with 30 knots blowing over the bow.

The *Skyhawk's* main landing gear were still on deck, so the problem was to disentangle the aircraft from the personnel safety net rigging. A catapult hold-back fitting (designed to hold the aircraft on deck until the catapult is fired during the launch sequence) was attached to the rear fuselage of the *Skyhawk*. Then, the "Cherry Picker," the flight deck crane, was attached by cable to the hold-back fitting. The *Skyhawk* was eased backward until it was again in a normal three-point stance on the flight deck, and quickly secured. LTJG Leuffen's only injury was to his pride and damage to the aircraft was minor. After thorough inspection, the drop tanks were replaced, the nose wheel door and wing slats were repaired, and the aircraft was back on the flight schedule the next day.

As Shakespeare wrote, all's well that ends well. Or, as humorist Will Rogers said, "Everything is funny, as long as it is happening to someone else."

(Thanks to Skyhawk Association member Ted "Bear" Langworthy of Kingsland, TX for story documentation.)

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Contributions by members – "There I was..." sea stories, unusual personal experiences involving the A-4, etc., for possible publication in this newsletter, are welcome and encouraged. Send snail-mail or E-mail to the editor (addresses above).



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Otto Krueger

I'm honored to be President of Skyhawk Association for this next year. It's great to be associated with a group of people whose love of Country and the Navy is well known; but, moreover, who share a mutual love for one little airplane. A love springing from and abiding in the A-4 *Skyhawk*! She has been called the "Scooter", the "Tinker Toy", and "Heinemann's Hotrod." But we're not mad. We smile! We know they're just jealous, and if pressed, they will grudgingly admit they know it, too. The *Skyhawk* has taken us over every ocean on the planet, we've ridden her to war, and she has brought us home again.

Think of the *Skyhawk* history and legend. Some forty-three years plus after the A-4 first flew with Bob Rahn at the controls, our Scooter is still in service around the world – in VT-7 at NAS Meridian, the only active *Skyhawk* squadron left in operation in the Navy, and in several foreign countries. To my knowledge, no other military or naval combat aircraft can even come close to that record. And it's still counting!

The kudos for our little love just keep on coming. A recent Aviation Week and Space Technology production, "Attack Aircraft Showdown," selected the A-4 as the best attack aircraft of the 1960–1970 era, ranking it over the F-84 "Thud" and the F-4 "Phantom"! (For those who want to argue, selection was based on survival, endurance, armament, accuracy, and effect on the "Grand War"). We all knew that anyway, didn't we? Can anyone question why every one of us is proud to be or to have been a "Scooter Driver"?

There is one person to whom I want to express my personal thanks, and I speak for the whole membership as well. We owe a great debt to Whizzer White! He single-handedly started the Skyhawk Association. He brought it into being. With help from some great people who have worked with him, the Association has become international. Furthermore, there are similar associations now underway, trying hard to emulate the Skyhawk Association. We're leading the way! Whiz started something that will last long after many of us are gone. Our job now is to make it better.

For this year, I've boiled our goals down to just two things: (1) Increase membership and membership value, and (2) Have fun while accomplishing number one.



In this regard, we're working on a number of things. Membership cards will soon be in your hands. A Skyhawk Association logo is in being. We're working on a patch and investigating possibility of an Association pin. We'll see a continuing improvement in our already outstanding *Skyhawk* web page on the internet (www.skyhawk.org). Also, we are exploring ideas of making available a toll-free number for member use, and a system for dues payment using personal credit cards. Increased participation and activity by widening the organization through regional groupings is a topic that will receive a lot of attention.

The Skyhawk Association is blessed with a great number of people with incredible talent. Our task is to find better ways to make use of those talents so as to bring the fun of the Skyhawk Association to a lot more people, and to upgrade the activities of those already on board. Anyone who has some ideas in these areas, please share them with me. I'll guarantee you'll get an answer!

Your Board of Directors has been expanded by two, to nine members. Both the recent additions bring new and different talents: Bud Southworth, our *Skyhawk* Webmaster extra ordinaire; and Jim Ritchie, talented as a graphic artist as well as imbued with abundant enthusiasm. The hold-over Board members – the inimitable Puresome, Boom Powell, Captain Hook, Jay Hubbard, and Tom Brown, as well as the Whizzer, will continue what they have been doing so well.

Finally, please join me in a drive to increase our membership by personally inviting aboard everyone who ought to be a Skyhawk Association member. Please take the little time needed to write, phone, e-mail, or drive over – whatever it takes – to encourage your friends and acquaintances to become members. Tell them they are wanted. Invite them to look at the web page, show them the Newsletter, share a sea story – but ask them to join. Seniors or juniors, officer or enlisted, no matter! "Call one, get one!" Better still, have another Skyhawk Association member join you, and both write or call. You will be renewing old friendships or making new ones. Your contacts will like hearing from you, and you'll be doing a favor for somebody you care about!

We owe it to anyone who flew, worked on, or just likes the A-4, to bring him or her on board. Your Skyhawk Association is thriving and, with your help, it will be better still.

A-4s Forever!

Otto



SO LONG, FAREWELL, ADIEU

The only thing lonelier than a Maytag repairman is a Past President of the Skyhawk Association. In stepping down from that job, I wish to thank a lot of folks: Captain Hook for giving my epistles an enemas necessary to make them readable in the newsletter; Newly installed President Otto, and Tom Brown for their valued counseling, support, and guidance; Bud Southworth for putting together our incredible web site (www.skyhawk.org); and the hundreds of others who volunteered their time and efforts at annual meetings, raffles, hospitality suites, TINs sessions, and in numerous other tasks that have helped to make these past four years a success. Thanks to all of you, you who are the Skyhawk Association, for making the beginning steps in our Association's history one of the most enjoyable experiences of my adult life. I left out mention of all kinds of people, not by design but because of space limitations, but I will single out one other person for special thanks – Miss Becky. In addition to being my best bud, my lover (pre-prostate surgery ☺), mother of my children, and "Memaw" to our grandbabies, she is my pillar of support and the reason I wake up each morning.

What can one say about an Association where excellence is expected and, when you're in pain, friendship and a helping hands are given for the asking? Gene Hackman's line in the movie *Uncommon Valor* said it all when friends were dividing up their group at the river's edge, ready to approach a suspected POW camp deep in SEAsia. 'Twas a line from Julius Caesar, somewhat paraphrased: "...suffice to say this day will end and this path will be known. If we meet again, we will smile. If not, then this parting was well made."

This is A-4's FOREVER... and it is *good*! Good luck to Otto and the new SA officers.

Whizzer

FOLDING WINGS, CONTINUED. . .

Thanks to Walt Ohlrich of Virginia Beach, VA for snooping out yet another "folding wings" *Skyhawk* (right). This one, the hulk of probably an A-4B, lies a-wasting in the "boondocks" at NAS Oceana, Virginia. Magnified, squinty-eyed examination of the aft fuselage reveals a Bureau Number (154893) but, alas, that's a fake because no *Skyhawk* of that serial was produced. Several early models of the *Skyhawk*, all stripped shells of their former selves, were modified with folding wings, and sometimes folding vertical stabilizer, to provided road and overhead clearance during transport. They were used for public relations purposes as Naval Aviation recruiting enticements in parades, at air shows, and the like.





SKYHAWKS ON DISPLAY

Back in November 1995, with a goal of identifying the location of all A-4 *Skyhawks* on public display throughout the world, we published a "Where Are They Now" list. Since that issue, the list has been expanded and parlayed it unto the "Skyhawks On Display" section of the Skyhawk internet web site (www.skyhawk.org).

The "On Display" list now numbers 109 and is growing. Association members and web site visitors (potential members, all) have been helpful by providing photos for illustration of the listed *Skyhawks*. To date, we have 32 such photos and we'd like more.

An updated list of *Skyhawks* on display is shown below. Every effort has been made to ensure the list is as accurate as possible, but some data has not been verified. Skyhawk Association member assistance is requested in adding to or correcting the list of static display *Skyhawks*. The only criteria is that the aircraft must be generally accessible for public viewing. If you know of (or come across) an "A-4 on a stick," a museum piece, or other static display *Skyhawk* not listed, take a snapshot the next time you're in the vicinity and send it to us. We'll scan your photo, display it on the web site, and give you photo credit.

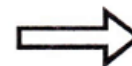
When reporting display *Skyhawk* info, it's most helpful to specify the aircraft Bureau (serial) Number, if available, and the location of the display. In case you need a reminder, if an A-4 *Skyhawk* on display is painted in original service colors, or if it has been accurately repainted, the model and serial number can be found on the aft end of the fuselage near the tailpipe, beneath the horizontal stabilizer. Occasionally, the last four digits of a serial number are also painted elsewhere on the fuselage. A three digit "side number" (usually painted on the side of the aircraft nose section) is a locally assigned squadron, unit, or station marking and is not meaningful in accurate identification of a particular aircraft.

Skyhawks on display to date are as follows; Bureau Numbers of aircraft for which photos are already viewable at the web site are underlined:

A4D-1/A-4A – BuNo Unknown, Hickey Park, Lemoore, CA (Recently restored by VFA-25 personnel.); BuNo Unknown, Baker Aviation School, Lejune Blvd, Miami, FL; 137813, National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, FL; 137814, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, CA; 139947, Octave Chanute Air Museum, Rantoul, IL; 139956, Naval Air Station Atlanta, GA; 139968, Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD (Possibly 142176, q.v.); 142176, Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD ("2176" painted on tail. See 139968); 142219, New England Air Museum, Bradley Airport, Windsor Locks, CT; 142226, Carolinas History Museum, Charlotte, NC; 142227, Southern California Historical Aviation Foundation, Muni. Apt., Hawthorne, CA.

A4D-2/A-4B – BuNo Unknown, Naval Air Station, Alameda, CA; 142094, Naval Air Station, Lemoore, CA; 142105, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8076, Hartwell, GA; 142106, Naval Air Warfare Center, Lakehurst, NJ; 142675, Lexington Museum on the Bay, Corpus Christi, TX; 142678, City of Purdy, MO; 142717, City of Beeville, TX; 142741, City of Ackerman, MS; 142833, Intrepid Sea-Air Museum, New York City, NY; 142848, Naval Air Warfare Center, Trenton, NJ; 142871, Australian Naval Air Museum, Nowra, Australia (Painted as 154906); 142879, Command Museum, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, CA; 142905, San Diego Aerospace Museum, San Diego, CA; 142928, Pima Air & Space Museum, Tucson, AZ; 142929, USS Lexington Museum on the Bay, Corpus Christi, TX; 144992, Gateway National Park, Brooklyn, NY; 145011, Flying Tigers Air Museum, Brookston, TX; 145050, Argentine Navy Museum, Tigre, Argentina.

A4D-2N/A-4C/L – 145063, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Tucson, AZ; 145072, Air Victory Museum, Naval Weapons Center, Dahlgren, VA; 145074, Aerospace and Science Museum, Denver, CO; 145082, American Military Heritage Foundation, Metairie, LA; 145113, Naval Air Station, Kingsville, TX; 145122, Savannah State College, Savannah, GA; 145133, Marine Corps Base, 29 Palms, CA; 145135, City of Thief River Falls, MN; 147702, Fred E. Weisbrod Museum, Pueblo, CO; 147708, Aviation Museum of Kentucky, Louisville, KY;





147727, City of Porterville, CA; 147733, Arkansas Air Museum, Fayetteville, AR; 147772, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, SC; 147787, USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park, Mobile, AL; 147788, Naval Air Station, Cecil Field, FL; 147790, Quonset Air Museum, North Kingston, RI; 148314, National Air & Space Museum (Smithsonian), Washington, DC; 148490, I-10 rest stop, Santa Rosa County, FL (East of Pensacola); 148492, Command Museum, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, CA; 148517, San Diego Aerospace Museum, San Diego, CA; 148571, Pima Air & Space Museum, Tucson, AZ; 148572, Cumberland County High School, Crossville, TN; 148592, Florida Military Aviation Museum, Clearwater, FL; 148600, Aerospace and Science Museum, Denver, CO; 148609, Experimental Aircraft Association, Oshkosh, WI; 148610, Encinal High School, Alameda, CA; 149508, City of Covington, TN; 149516, New Zealand Air Force Museum, Christchurch, New Zealand; 149518, Royal New Zealand Air Force (?); 149635, Mid-America Air Museum, Liberal, KS; 150586, Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, AZ; 150598, Industrial Airport, Johnson County (Olathe), KS.

A4D-5/A-4E – 148613, Oriskany Memorial Park, Village of Oriskany, NY; 149623, Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, Mt. Pleasant, SC; 149656, National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, FL; 149964, Israeli Air Force Museum, Hatzerim AFB, Beersheba, Israel; 150001, Port of Tillamook Bay, OR; 150033 -- Naval Air Station, Lemoore, CA; 150058, National Maritime Center, Naval Air Station, Norfolk, VA; 150076 -- National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, FL (Blue Angel #1); 150092, Israeli Air Force Museum, Hatzerim AFB, Beersheba, Israel; 151030, Pacific Coast Air Museum, Windsor, CA; 151074, U.S. Naval Air Station, Atsugi, Japan; 151095, Tokushima Airport Museum, Tokushima, Shikoku, Japan; 151186, Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia Beach, VA; 151194, Pacific Coast Air Museum, Santa Rosa, CA; 152061, Hawaiian Historical Aircraft Foundation, Dillingham Airfield, HI; 152080, Command Museum, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, NC.

A-4F – 154180, Museum of Flight, Seattle, WA; 154200, Army Airfield Museum, Millville, NJ; 154204, Command Museum, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, CA; 154217, National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, FL (Blue Angel #4); 154983, National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, FL (Blue Angel #2); 155009, Empire State Aerosciences Museum, Scotia, NY; 155010, Israeli Air Force Museum, Hatzerim AFB, Beersheba, Israel; 155025, Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, San Diego, CA; 155027, Quonset Air Museum, North Kingston, RI; 155033, National Museum of Naval Aviation, NAS Pensacola, FL (Blue Angel #3); 155036, County Airport, Accomack County, VA; 155049, Naval Air Warfare Center, Patuxent River, MD (displayed as an A-4M).

A-4H – 155289, Israeli Air Force Museum, Hatzerim AFB, Beersheba, Israel.

A-4M – 158148, Quonset Air Museum, North Kingston, RI; 158182, Delaware Valley Historical Aviation Association, Willow Grove, PA; 158195, Western Aerospace Museum, Oakland, CA; 158430, Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base, Ft. Worth, TX; 159789, Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base, Ft. Worth, TX; 160024, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, NC; 160255, Grenada High School, Grenada, MS; 160264, Command Museum, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, CA.

A-4N – 159816, Israeli Air Force Museum, Hatzerim AFB, Beersheba, Israel.

TA-4F/OA-4M – 154638, Marine Corps Station, Iwakuni, Japan.

TA-4J – 154291, Texas Air Museum, Rio Hondo, TX; 156904, Independent School District, Kingsville, TX; 158087, Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, TX; 158073, Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base, Fort Worth, TX; 158467, Command Museum, Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, CA; 158490, Mustin Beach Club, Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL; 158526, Naval Air Station, Meridian, MS; 158722, USS Lexington Museum on the Bay, Corpus Christi, TX.



SKYHAWK VOLKSWAGEN

Back in the 1972-74 time frame, Skyhawker Hugh "Busy Bee" Magee was Aircraft Maintenance Officer on the staff of Commander Light Attack Wing, Pacific, at NAS Lemoore. One day whilst Busy Bee was out flying with VA-127, the staff aircraft maintenance personnel "borrowed" his 1965 Volkswagen and moved it into the AMD hangar. In short order, the crew "remanufactured" the "bug," installing a surveyed A-4 fueling probe and chromed tailhook, and decorating the gray-painted vehicle with VA-127 markings.

Magee's surprise on returning from his flight and seeing his "new" VW was exceeded only by a later experience.

One weekend, Magee loaded his sons, ages 9 and 10, into the VW for a San Francisco jaunt to see a 49er's game. The merry trio's cruising on the freeway in the Bay area en route to the ball game, however, was suddenly interrupted by a siren and flashing lights in the rear-view mirror. A Highway Patrol vehicle pulled along side and, in no uncertain terms, the officer signaled for Magee to pull over. When the vehicles were stopped, the CHP officer approached the VW "in an unpleasant mood, with a drawn weapon." In view of his two astonished sons (and, no doubt, much to his own surprise), Busy Bee was ordered out of the car, sprawled face down against the car roof, and frisked for weapons.



Hugh Magee ponders his "remanufactured" Volkswagen, c1972

When Magee asked what was the problem, the officer pointed to the refueling probe and asked "What in the hell is that?" The officer's mood lightened considerably as Magee told the story – the alteration of the VW, which had become "sort of a squadron mascot" – and showed his Navy ID card, driver's license, and vehicle registration. The CHP officer then apologized for the "rough handling," explaining that he'd responded to a call by another motorist who reported that a grey Volkswagen *with a cannon mounted on the front* was cruising the MacArthur freeway! The officer added that, given what was going on at the time around the UC Berkeley campus, the report was not surprising.

And, the Highway Patrol incident was not the end of the story. Magee drove the A-4 Volkswagen to Las Vegas in Spring 1973 to attend a River Rat reunion. The VW made such a hit that it was moved into the hotel lobby where it remained on display for the weekend.

Magee retired from active duty in 1974 and, three years later, decided to sell his then 12-year-old VW. He removed the fuel robe and tailhook, and had the car painted powder blue. But, he kept the license plate and, during a 1979 Pensacola visit, had it nailed to the wall in Trader John's.

It's still there today, proudly proclaiming "A4 HAWK."

WELCOME ABOARD! (Roster additions, 22 June through 09 October 1997)

Francis E. Babineau	c/o 920 Larchmont Cres.	Norfolk	VA	23508-0000
Paul D. Barrish	P.O. Box 5782	Carmel	CA	93921-5782
James D. Binger	24885-138th Place SW	Vashon Island	WA	98070-7414
Jack Christiansen	P. O. Box 1740	Coupeville	WA	98239-1740
Kevin P. Donohue	22421 Silver Spur	Lake Forest	CA	92630-4342
Emerson Y. Gilman	15000 Broili Drive	Reno	NV	89511-0000
Dan E. Glenn	10100 Morning Glory Dr.	Norman	OK	73071-0000
Don M. Herriott	3234 Wellesly Avenue	San Diego	CA	92122-2335
Ken R. Holthaus	7112 West Shore Drive	Edina	MN	55435-4041
Gordon A. Jobe	13250 Stoney Brook Dr.	Reno	NV	89511-0000
David J. Kargul	4 Knoll Court	Pawcatuck	CT	06379-2070
Jeffrey W. Knowles	23506 Clearidge Drive	Valencia	CA	91354-1619
James R. Koehn	803 Aberdeen Way	Southlake	TX	76092-0000
Michael Kopanski	734 Bode Circle, #306	Hoffman Estates	IL	60194-2918
Dennis A. Korenchuk	4358 Falcon Place	Pinckney	MI	48169-0000
Marshall W. Lefavor	2228 Tanglewood Trail	Virginia Beach	VA	23454-2127
Frederick A. Lewis	144 Berwick Street	Berwick	ME	03901-2702
Jack Lousma	2722 Roseland Street	Ann Arbor	MI	48103-2137
Peter T. Meyer	30 Hemlock Circle	Sandown	NH	03873-2409
Richard J. Morgan	3404 Flint Hill Place	Woodbridge	VA	22192-0000
Michael L. Morrison	22316 Itasca Street	Chatsworth	CA	92311-4743
Michael Jon Niccoli	8563 E. Saratoga Place	Denver	CO	80237-2937
James E. Rogers	560 W. Ashbourne	Eagle	ID	83616-6425
James F. Roth	18 White Pine Lane	Poquott	NY	11733-3960
C. Kenneth Ruiz	9 Hummingbird Lane	Henderson	NV	89014-2152
James V. Smith	32 Villa Lucia	La Luz	NM	88337-0000
Leighton P. Smith	911 Veritain Court	Fairfax	VA	22032-0000
S. L. Spear	3200 NW 46th Street, #107	Fort Lauderdale	FL	33309-6805
Bruce E. Stevenson	6952 S. Lamar Street	Littleton	CO	80128-3912
Peter A. Triolo	118 Woodbridge Drive	Saunders town	RI	02874-0000
Rick A. Turner	1730 Maunta Lane	Jackson	MI	49201-0000
Donald F. Walsh	644 Branscomb Road	Green Cove Springs	FL	32043-0000
Martin Weissman	332 Edgewater Drive	Pensacola	FL	32507-1333
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