

THE A-4 EVER

SKYHAWK ASSOCIATION JOURNAL
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*Winter Board Meeting
March 15-18, 2018
Monterey, CA*

Winter 2017-2018
www.a4skyhawk.org



THE PREZ SEZ

By Pete Cole

In this edition of *The Prez Sez*, I will keep my Association business remarks brief, focusing on a winter/spring 2018 recruitment drive for new members, recurring call for SDO volunteers, and putting out the word on upcoming Association events and dates of note.

Membership

As of 1 December, we had 770 active members. There has been a relatively steady flow of new or returning members over the past year, and that is encouraging. Re-up rate has remained relatively stable at around 75%. Recruiting and retention remain high on the Board of Directors' goals list, and we are always looking for recruiting opportunities.

Recruiting new and inspiring former members to re-up is a task in which **all members** can help! Find your squadron/shipmates out there that need the cattle prod or at least the reminder! It's your Association, let's keep it vibrant, alive, well, and, most importantly, growing.

In that regard, I am calling for a membership recruitment drive during this winter/spring, and I ask all members to join me in that drive. As a start, I urge each member to forward the access announcement on the Skyhawk Association home page of this digital journal edition to former squadron and shipmates, as well as anyone you think might be a potential member. If you think a print edition would be more motivating, contact the journal editor, Bob Hickerson, rhickers@beecreek.net. He has ordered some extra copies of the fall edition of *The A-4ever* Journal. As a special effort to get former shipmates and potential members to join, Bob can mail a copy of the fall 2017 issue to them with a note explaining how to join. We have done this in the past on a smaller scale when the directors were asked to provide the names and addresses of potential members, so that Bob could send them a printed copy of the journal. It has been a successful recruitment tool. Please help out the Association and participate in the winter/spring 2018 recruitment drive.

SDOs

As a reminder, our Squadron Duty Officers are key people in keeping us connected and helping to get the word out when required. And, I once again put out the call for volunteers. The official list of squadron SDOs is posted on the Skyhawk website 'FAQ - Research - Contact' page, <http://a4skyhawk.info/page/faq-research-contact>, and while

the majority of these are filled, there are still some units that need an SDO. Once again, I ask you to review the list on the website and see if there are any open units for which you would consider accepting the SDO responsibility. Several of our SDOs have agreed to host more than one unit, and we greatly appreciate their additional efforts. For Navy units please contact George Blosser, Navy SDO coordinator, george.blosser1@gmail.com, and for Marine and Foreign Service units contact Steve Linder, VP Marines, steve.linder@1969.usna.com.

Since you are accessing this digital journal edition through the Skyhawk Association web site, please take the time to visit your squadron's web page. If you can add or correct information, that would be appreciated. Contact Dave Weber, twidget55@nomonitor.net with changes and/or requested additions.

Now Hear This!

The word on upcoming events and dates of note:

- Skyhawk Association Winter Board Meeting is being planned for 15–18 March 2018 in Monterey, CA. Plans are still being finalized. POC is Director Terry Cooney, Skyhawkasn@gmail.com. More details will be in the POD on the web page as they become available, or contact Terry. Join us! Remember, all members are welcome to attend Board meetings and social events.
- Plan ahead: Hook '18 is 6-9 September 2018. Skyhawk Association events will be provided in a later announcement.
- The Marine Skyhawkers are working on a 2018 reunion in Pensacola, FL. Tentative dates are 1-4 November 2018 for the Blues Homecoming and the Florida Arts Festival weekend. The Pensacola Grand Hotel has been selected. Planning is in the initial stages; more details will follow. POCs are Directors Todd "Hun" Frommelt and Mark "Senator" Williams.

If you have an upcoming reunion planned, please send me or the Journal editor an announcement to be included in this segment. Also, if you have a reunion, send us a short debrief to immortalize the event in *The A-4Ever* Journal.

A-4s Forever!



The Prez Pete Cole



IN MEMORY OF
M. DAVIS "WHIZZER" WHITE, D.D.S.
(1939-2007)

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BOMBS AWAY!

• Winter 2017-2018 •

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Contributions

We actively seek contributions from members, including news, photos, historical documents, anecdotes and other items of interest. Submissions may be edited due to space limitations in the newsletter. Contributions may be emailed to the Journal Editor at sa-journal-editor@a4skyhawk.net or mailed to Bob Hickerson, 1222 Balcones Drive, Fredericksburg, TX 78624.

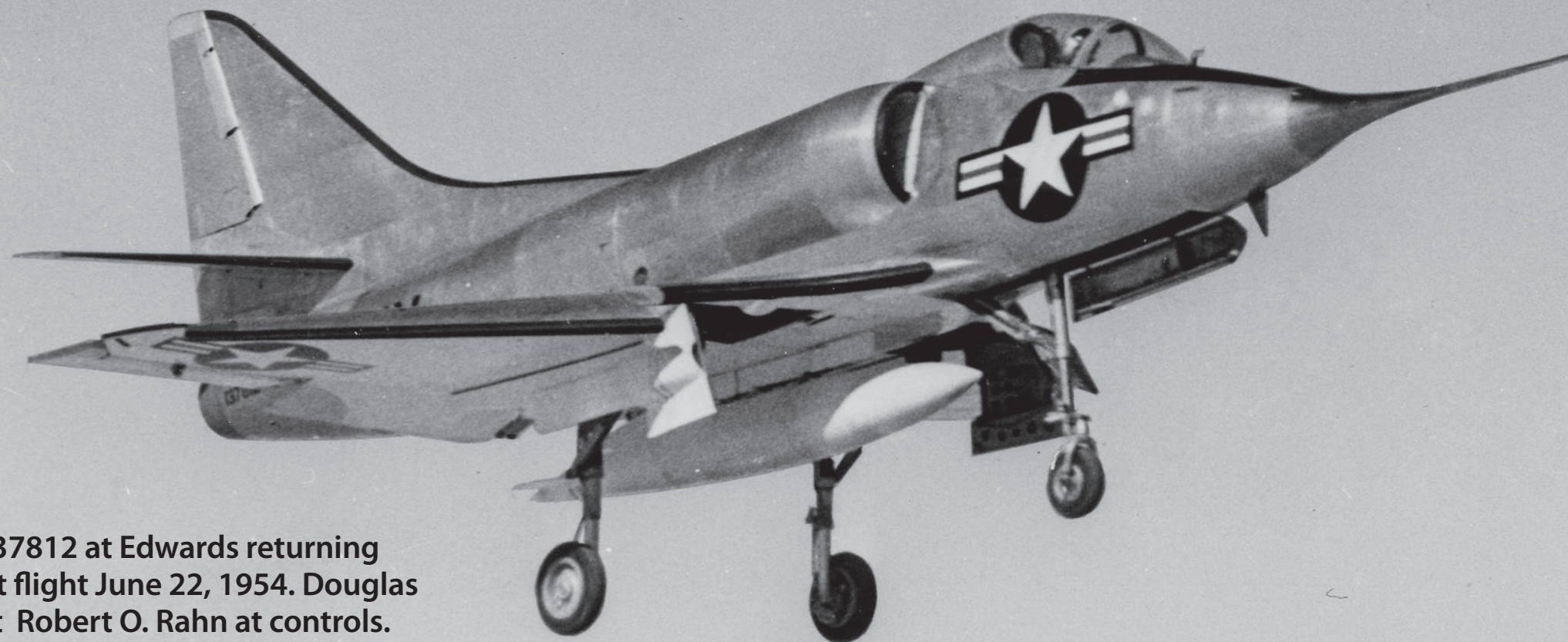
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On the Cover: Flight of VA-205 A-4Ls circa 1973. Pilots are Joe Coughlin, Stan Tommasello, Doug Cutter, Russell Rajani, John Goodman.
Photo provided by Doug Cutter.

TESTING THE X AND YA-4D

By MajGen Hal W. Vincent, USMC (ret)
MajGen Vincent passed away on April 28, 2015.

The history of the A4 development is interesting from the first X and Y models in 1955 through the final project, the A4M, some 20 years later. I flew the first YA4D in test work starting in November 1955, followed by VX-5 in weapons development, and at each level of command for 26 years until separation in 1981.



A4D-1 137812 at Edwards returning from first flight June 22, 1954. Douglas test pilot Robert O. Rahn at controls.

Test flights discussed here include Navy Preliminary Evaluations (NPE) at Edwards AFB; early flight tests in the Flying Qualities and Performance Branch of Flight Test at Patuxent River, Maryland, and work with Douglas Aircraft Company (DAC) test pilots Bob Rahn, Cal Shoemaker and Drury Wood at Edwards AFB. The majority of the test flights were flown out of the Flight Test branch at Patuxent River in 1955-1958, following my graduation from Test Pilot School training.

I was assigned to the Flight Test Branch in July 1955, after completion of six months training at the Test Pilot School. Test Pilot School curriculum was evenly split between flying and class work, with test flights usually scheduled in the afternoons. After each flight the student was required to write a detailed paper on flight results, including graphs. Each pilot was issued an Ames Gauge to measure stick forces, a stopwatch, and given specific requirements to observe and record.

My first flight was a “time and data to climb to altitude” exercise. All information, such as time, RPM, temps, airspeed, fuel flow, etc., had to be recorded. I quickly found that the secret to being a good test pilot was to be left-handed, i.e., able fly the plane with the right hand while writing and taking data with the left hand. I rushed to get my first flight report in with a really smooth curve graph and lots of data, detailing the climb to altitude in an F9F-8. My performance instructor was LT Jim Stockdale (later Vice Admiral and a POW), and he gave me a *C plus* due to two misspelled words, in spite of excellent data. It was his first paper and my first submission. In spite of this lousy start, I managed to be sent to Flight Test in July 1955.

continued...

TESTING THE X AND YA-4D CONT...

Douglas technician works on XA4D-1
137812 at El Segundo in early 1954.



There were ten pilots in the branch, including Al Shepard (later astronaut); Tom Hayward (later CNO); Don Engen (later FAA head); Lynn Helms (a Marine, later head of Piper Aircraft and the FAA); Gordo Gray (later a 3k world record holder in the A4); George Watkins (2nd tour and first Navy pilot with 1000 CV landings); Bill Lawrence (later Vice Admiral and POW); Hank Hancock (Annapolis classmate and TPS classmate), and branch head CDR Larry Flint, who had previous tour with VX-3.

Upon arrival in Flight Test as the “new boy,” I was given prime responsibility for the F7U3M and the S2F, and assigned as assistant on the new YA4, YF8, and YA3D. In Flight Test it was the policy for each of us to fly *ALL* the airplanes so we could better evaluate new planes on NPEs, etc., when they became available. However, each pilot was given specific responsibilities for certain aircraft.

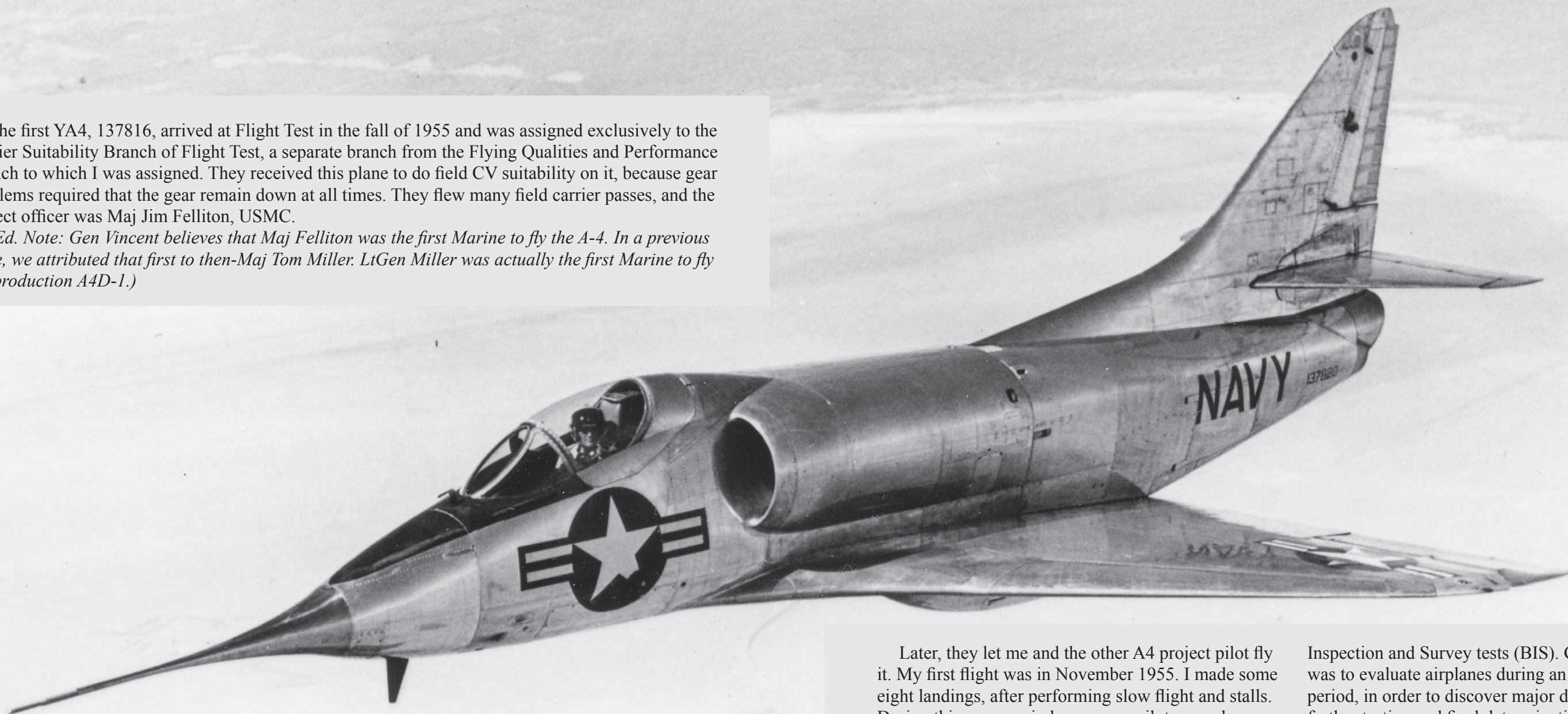
Some of the pilots, including Gordo Gray, had gone to Edwards before my arrival in early 1955 to fly the first NPE on the A4. Mr. Ed Heinemann, Chief Engineer at Douglas Aircraft, had convinced his company that there was a requirement for a simple plane that could carry a special weapon on the centerline with wing tanks on the two outboard stations. Douglas built the prototype with its own money, and we were to evaluate it.

continued...

TESTING THE X AND YA-4D CONT...

The first YA4, 137816, arrived at Flight Test in the fall of 1955 and was assigned exclusively to the Carrier Suitability Branch of Flight Test, a separate branch from the Flying Qualities and Performance Branch to which I was assigned. They received this plane to do field CV suitability on it, because gear problems required that the gear remain down at all times. They flew many field carrier passes, and the project officer was Maj Jim Felliton, USMC.

(Ed. Note: Gen Vincent believes that Maj Felliton was the first Marine to fly the A-4. In a previous issue, we attributed that first to then-Maj Tom Miller. LtGen Miller was actually the first Marine to fly the production A4D-1.)



A4D-1 137820 in flight on October 14, 1955.

Later, they let me and the other A4 project pilot fly it. My first flight was in November 1955. I made some eight landings, after performing slow flight and stalls. During this same period, company pilots were busy expanding the envelope. Douglas pilot Jimmy Verdin was doing stick force per g (Fe/G) near the Salton Sea, which required increased g up to the stall when he encountered one of the serious problems with the early A4, which was that one slat would hang up during accelerated stalls. He snap-rolled the plane and hit his head on the side of the canopy rail so hard, it was rumored that eye tissue was found on the side steel canopy frame. The plane crashed, and he was killed. In any case, the test planes we received had the standard heavy, green padded covering on the frame that you are all familiar with.

The first YA4 plane assigned to our branch was 137818, which arrived in early 1956 for the Bureau of

Inspection and Survey tests (BIS). Guidance from BIS was to evaluate airplanes during an accelerated 60-day period, in order to discover major discrepancies before further testing and final determination of configuration. Gordo and I, and others in the Flying Qualities and Performance Branch, flew the plane a lot, exploring stick force per g, minimum distance take-offs and landings, flying qualities, fuel specifics and maximum performance runs. For the maximum speeds, the pilot would fly at 2000 feet and the engineers would reduce the data to sea level and standard conditions. A photo panel with selected flight and test instruments was installed in the "hell hole" of the test airplane. The pilot would only have to record frame numbers when he recorded data, and the engineer would read and reduce the data upon landing. This was far easier than the methods used during Test Pilot training.

continued...

Later that summer, the Fleet Introduction program (FIP) was conducted at Service Test, and I believe that Maj Tom Miller (later LtGen) was the first Marine to fly a “production” model, although this plane still didn’t have many of the fixes we had recommended. These first four aircraft were really challenging. They weighed some 9800 pounds empty, and everything seemed to go wrong on test flights. During these early flights we discovered that the speed brakes cracked in a high speed dive, that the metal flange alongside the vertical tail peeled back in high speed runs and that the slats tended to hang up, resulting in terrible accelerated stalls. In addition, the oil pressure gage was only a simple flip gage, with barber poles being the only indication of pump/oil failure.

As the failures were encountered, the failed part was removed, put on an airline flight to Douglas and returned quickly to be re-installed by one of the many Douglas techs for further tests. The plane had been built very close to the “structural margin,” so there were many parts that failed. We worked closely with the company test pilots, and sometimes on NPEs they would give us “back door” info on discrepancies that the company was not taking care of. For example, on one NPE, a company pilot briefed us on the conditions which would result in Pilot Induced Oscillation (PIO) in the plane. The company would not acknowledge the problem, and it wasn’t until we military test pilots duplicated the condition that it was fixed. This back door info, which we kept confidential, helped immensely on NPEs as we military pilots normally got only a maximum of three flights each to determine discrepancies.

Back in Flight Test, we continued with the testing to include minimum distance takeoff and landing performance, climb performance, speed at altitudes and carrier suitability. We received another plane, 137826, for further data accumulation, and in September 1956, we received 137819 for fuel testing and specifics. We continued to find fault with many features of that early A4, most of them structural failures and low g availability. Two of us were dispatched to Edwards AFB to evaluate two X models. One had a “potato chip washed out wing” (WOW) that stopped some span-wise air flow and gave us 0.5 more g. We also evaluated another aircraft with a cambered leading edge, similar to that installed on the FJ-4. Unfortunately, neither modification helped much. While there, we also tested the first YA4D-2, 142082. It was a great improvement over the first YA4D-1, both structurally and from a flying-qualities standpoint.

continued...

TESTING THE X AND YA-4D CONT...

A4D-1 137816 participating in carrier suitability trials on September 19, 1956.



TESTING THE X AND YA-4D CONT...



A4D-1 137822 on test flight July 20, 1956.

During the testing, enough unfavorable comments were written about the A4D-1 to cause CNO and BUAER to send Lt Hank Hancock and me to North American Aviation at Columbus, Ohio, to evaluate the FJ-4 with a Mk 28 Special Weapon on the right wing as a possible replacement for the poor-performing A4. As it turned out, in the FJ-4 we had to attain 156 KIAS with the stick/aileron full to the left side to have enough control effectiveness to raise the wing on takeoff-- then, in a steep dive with speed brakes out, the plane went supersonic due to little speed brake effectiveness. The plane, designed as a fighter, had only about three pounds per g versus some seven-eight pounds per g required in an attack plane. At approximately 560 KIAS, the FJ-4 had little or no aileron control. One could see the vapor on the wings as the ailerons attempted to turn the plane, but it rolled about 3 deg/sec opposite to the control input. There

was just not enough pressure available in the aileron when deflected to produce a rate of roll under those conditions.

North American responded quickly to put an additional set of speed brakes on the FJ-4, to fix the control system and to put spoilers on the plane (which gave a reasonable rate of roll of 40 deg/sec at high speed with the asymmetric Mk 28 on the right wing). After all of this, Ed Heinemann saw that we were seriously considering termination of his plane. Douglas finally worked really hard to fix the problems demonstrated by the A4 during testing, and it was chosen as the plane to buy in numbers.

My tour in Flight Test concluded when I left to go to the first USMC West Coast F8 squadron in 1958; however, in 1960 my involvement with the A4 continued with my assignment as Conventional Weapons Development Officer and Test Pilot at Air Development

Squadron 5 (VX-5) at China Lake. At VX-5, I relieved Bill Fitch (later LtGen Fitch) who had invented the Multiple Carriage Bomb Rack (MCBR). I was given the CNO Conventional Weapons Project O/V5.

A change in National Strategy happened soon thereafter, when President Kennedy read Maxwell Taylor's book, *Uncertain Trumpet*, which concluded that the U.S. needed a conventional weapons capability rather than relying solely on the Eisenhower strategy of nuclear weapons only. Overnight, VX-5 expanded my project, and we tested all the new conventional weapons and developed the Conventional Weapons Delivery Supplement (CWDS) so familiar to pilots. We also developed delivery tactics for all the weapons, including sight settings and procedures. It wasn't long before President Kennedy came to China Lake for demonstrations of all our tactics and weapons, so he

could see what his money had accomplished.

At various commands, I later flew all models of the A4 through the M, including #2960, the last production A4 (Easter Egg) which is now on static display at the Flying Leatherneck Museum, Miramar, CA. All in all, it was a great 26 years with the A4. *What a plane – FINALLY.*

(Ed. Note: In a future issue, General Vincent will report on his work at VX-5, China Lake.)

MajGen Vincent retired from the Marine Corps in 1981, following a 31-year career in which he commanded aviation units from squadron (VMFA-314) to wing (2nd MAW). A 1946 graduate of the Naval Academy, General Vincent was associated with the A-4 from the mid-50s to the early 80s, encompassing flights in the X and YA4D-1s to the last production A-4M in 2nd MAW. He has agreed to provide a sequel relating his experiences in early weapons testing for the A-4 at China Lake.



MORE ON FLIGHT TESTING

• The Early A-4D Prototypes •

From Hal Vincent and Drury Wood

“The article by my good friend, Bob Rahn, is not the way we in Flight Test saw the early plane. As you can read why, with PIO (pilot-induced oscillation), cracked speed brakes in dive, metal on tail peeling off, low “g” available, etc. Ed Heinemann had built so close on structural margin that in many cases it was lacking (in strength).”

Ed. Note: We received an email from MajGen Hal Vincent, USMC (ret), author of an A-4Ever feature article on testing the first A-4s (Testing the X and YA-4D, Fall 2006). Gen Vincent was responding to Bob Rahn's article (Heinemann's Hotrod, Parts I and II, Summer and Fall 2008) to make the point that the A-4 prototypes had lots of problems that were identified and fixed (mostly) before we flew the Skyhawks in the fleet. His main point is that the company test pilots (like Rahn) saw a prototype aircraft through a different lens when compared to the active duty test pilots who evaluated the aircraft to determine suitability for service use.

He shared his thoughts via email with Maj Drury Wood, who contributed to the A-4Ever in Spring 2005, relating his experiences testing a prototype version of the A4D-2 modified for use by the Army!

Both Vincent and Wood are members of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and during their careers logged years of experience flying experimental aircraft. MajGen Vincent, though never assigned to an A-4 squadron, flew the A-4 for over 25 years, beginning with the YA4D-1 and ending with the last production A-4M (160264). He logged 33 combat missions in the A-4 while flying with VMA-311 at Chu Lai.

We thought these experiences recorded by two of our most experienced aviators should be shared. Excerpts from their exchange of emails follow (editor notes in italics.)

Vincent (11/27/2008):

Just reread your great Fall '08 journal. A first class, pro job. The article by my good friend, Bob Rahn, is not the way we in Flight Test saw the early

plane. As you can read why, with PIO (*pilot-induced oscillation*), cracked speed brakes in dive, metal on tail peeling off, low “g” available, etc. Ed Heinemann had built so close on structural margin that in many cases it was lacking (*in strength*). Initially they (*Douglas*) would overnight repair parts, and we Navy and Marine pilots would evaluate the plane, but would not get the company test pilot's (i.e., Bob's) salary. *Ha!* But then, nice old Ed Heinemann thought he had it made, so he didn't do much (*to fix the aircraft*). We complained, but he thought he was in charge.

They then sent me and Lt Hank Hancock up to NAA (*North American Aviation*), to evaluate their FJ4 (*as an alternative to the A-4*) with a MK7 on the wing. Had to fly to 156 knots before enough aileron to control wing; speed brakes so ineffective that we went supersonic in a dive; and stick force per “g” only 4 versus 8 for attack use. They (*NAA*) really responded with additional speed brakes, higher stick force/“g” and spoilers, which gave us 40 deg/sec at 560 knots with store on right wing. *BOY*, this sure got Ed Heinemann's attention, and he really started to listen.

The YA4D-2 that arrived later was more like it. From there on, all the way in flight test, and then on to VX-5, the A-4 did things right. Bob Rahn, bless him, did not cover the bad parts. Drury Wood, former Marine and test pilot with Bob at same time, can fill you in!!!

Wood (12/4/2008):

A-4D stories: I was not primary in the A-4. I moved up to Edwards after it had started, and Rahn was doing the major moves, while (*Cal*) Shoemaker

was doing pickup. I was still down at El Segundo when Jim Verdin was killed. He and I were at TPT the same time and became good friends. The story was on the front page of the LA Times. I doubt that it would make it now.

The comment on his death is at odds in some respect with what I remember, and was told. At the time, there was no other story. He was doing max yaw at some point of the envelope, and one would expect there to have been a chase plane if it had been scheduled as a structural point, but there was none. At the time, I was not as knowledgeable about the X models as Rahn and Shoe, and was told that A-4 did not have baffles in the wing tanks, but was free to slosh all the way across. The yaw put all of the fuel in the left wing, and it stayed there, making the airplane uncontrollable. His ejection was therefore as broadside to the airstream as full rudder and unsymmetrical flight would make it. The bottom left corner of the canopy definitely hit him in the eye and was the fatal blow, because we had a full time pathologist who matched the tissue. A full time pathologist? *Ja*, we did, and we called him Digger Odell. I never saw the official accident report, but it is surely in some ancient Navy file somewhere.

We lost a lot of flight test folks at Douglas in those days. There was an interesting development from his ejection and death. Because he did not have a chase plane, he just disappeared. The flight card that he was working from could not have been classified as a risk flight. It had to be approved and signed by the lead engineer of that project, the pilot, and the manager of flight test ops, (later me.) If it was a risk, it had to have a chase and that's what EAFB (Edwards Air Force Base) OPS did for a living.

The airplane was found easily enough, but his body was not. He was separated from the seat and fell down face first and flat. He was also wearing the brown flight suit that we wore at the time, and was only found because the searchers were walking close together. He blended right in with the desert. So we had this clever personal equipment guy at Santa Monica and *Voila!* The orange flight suit! We actually put dummies out in the area and had our Aero Commander (with observers, of course) look for them. It worked. No one else had them at the time except Douglas, because the company ordered

and paid for them. USAF test guys started clamoring for them, and our EAFB personal equipment had an inventory of dozens of orange suits with only 23 pilots. But I diverge.

I did some odd flights that turned out to be pretty interesting. There was the flight from El Segundo in the electronics tester (routine, huh?) I was headed out on a radial when I began to feel queasy. This queasy feeling increased to a point where I wanted to upchuck (in an oxygen mask?), so I aborted and returned to 25L at LAX. Control of my four appendages was weakening when I chopped the throttle and sat there. The crew chief climbed up to help me, and together we got me out of the gear and cockpit. The clinic doc came, and I was dragged to the first aid station where after some preliminaries, I began to improve. The investigation as to why I was so ill began. Turns out that there was a leak in one of the engine bearings, and that delightful synthetic oil was being pumped into the cockpit. Against my earnest protests, they sent me home in the company ambulance, and it took me several days to convince my wife that I should continue in that line of work.

Hal, I got started on this thing and then began to write a book. I had better ask if this is what is wanted and if I should continue. I have several more items like a bit more about the PIO, the engine quitting with negative “g”, waking up in a 60-degree dive from 35 thousand, doing flame-out approaches, and flying the version (A-4D) with double wheels and an A3D drag chute on a dirt strip. Actually, the A3D, “all three dead” was my main event.

Vincent (12/5/2008):

Drury, would love it if you wrote a book, but send info to Bob and Margaret, and they will put it in their great magazine. Let me know if there are any questions that I might answer. Sure interested in how you passed the back door info on the PIO in the A-4 during our evaluation at Edwards. No one else could find it, but with your description, we did. Then Ed Heinemann had to fix. *Ha!*

Wood (12/10/2008):

Hal, roger your last. Glad to. The PIO: Checking for flutter was pretty primitive in those times. It consisted of pulsing the stick with a fist, hands off, and waiting to see what happened. I did it almost

continued...

FLIGHT TESTING CONT...

unconsciously, and randomly, at times when I was in a part of the envelope that we hadn't checked before. I had just finished something routine and was coming back into the pattern at Edwards. Pretty fast, as I remember - 400 knots? The instrumentation was still on, and I gave the stick a punch forward. I was slammed up against the canopy and a few cycles continued that rattled my cage. I knew the procedure, having had some previous experience, and kept my hand off the stick.

I reported it to the project engineer at Edwards and called the flight controls engineer at El Segundo. What surprised me a bit was how calmly he took the news, and (with data) said "We thought that there might be a possibility but we can fix it with a

bob-weight." *They knew the possibility, but we had no plans to check it?* Just to make sure that they did, I ratted them out and told you guys who I knew were coming for the NPE (*Navy Preliminary Evaluation*). PIO did get some chaps that didn't know what to do. Charlie Richbourg from my class at TPT was killed over San Diego Bay that way in the Sea Dart. I also found flutter (deliberately) in the A3D-2. A 13-cps movement laterally made a dishrag out of the horizontal stabilizer.

I was doing a flight card for some routine data on the dash one (*A4D-1*). Routine flight, no chase. The test altitudes were 35, 25 and 15 thousand at different CGs. I climbed to 35K and checking the fuel, had the right CG and airspeed. I decided to take a nap. I woke up in a 70-degree dive and straightened out into the 25 K test because I was now out of CG

and thought that I could save some data. I stabilized, and then decided to take another nap. I woke up in a steep dive and repeated the effort for 15K. Then I said, "To hell with it, I've blown the flight, I might as well go home." I did all the right things and landed.

Turning off the runway, I raised the canopy, and suddenly it was as if someone had just turned on the lights in a dark room. I was suddenly not sleepy. In the post flight, I related the sequence of events and the search for an answer focused on the oxygen system. The ship was an early test model with an old diluter-demand system that was put together to save time. I made the entire flight without enough oxygen to keep me alert, but just alive.

I had other adventures with the new LOX system in the A3. Last A-4 fun flights: BuAer (nonexistent

now, I hear) laid on the requirement that they would accept no deliveries of the A-4D or the good old AD without a flame-out (dead engine) procedure for getting on the ground or runway. Again with no chase, I started at some safe and high altitude that I don't remember, dropped the gear and flaps and idled. After doing a lot of approaches, I found a minimum altitude that an A-4D would need to make a controlled landing on an airfield with a dead engine. And I did it for a finale.

From the handbook: "To make a safe landing on a runway with gear and flaps down and no engine power, the approach should be started at NO LESS THAN 8000 feet above the terrain when beginning over the center of the airfield." Translated, that says that it takes 8000 feet to make a 360 (*degree turn*) in a dirty configuration with no power. I also did a bunch of dead sticks in the AD and it was a glider compared to the

Scooter. If you could see the airfield, you could probably make it. Well that's about all I have, hope that some of it is useful and maybe even interesting. Drury

Vincent (12/11/2008):

Here is the last on the testing of the X and YA4. You have the long article on the testing from my standpoint and know that DAC (*Douglas Aircraft Company*) was slow to fix anything. DAC was holding close the fact that the A-4 had a PIO problem, until we went out to Edwards to further evaluate the plane. Drury gave us a heads-up on it, and we found it also and reported it.

Drury makes an important point that one needed 8000 feet (I felt 9000 feet) to make a safe FOA. If you decide you wish to make an article on the testing and have any questions, then we will all try to help. I was just going to write a letter to the editor that my friend Bob Rahn was much too optimistic on his write-up on the A-4. It had lots of problems, and it took a kick in the rear for DAC to get with it.

I also forgot to mention that we considered that the "g" available was too low, so DAC built two prototype wings, and we went out to evaluate them at EDW. First was a "potato chip" or washed out wing which had a wave at the end of the wings, and the other was a CLE, cambered leading edge-type wing. Both gave us only .5 more "g" so neither was bought. Somewhere in the world, there should be a picture of these. For some reason in test, I felt it was bad luck to have any pictures taken, and darn, now I don't have any, Period!

Ed. Note: Responding to a question about the acronym EDW, Gen Vincent replied: "EDW is Edwards Air Force Base. We did most of our experimental flying out of there on what they called Navy Preliminary Evaluations, or NPEs, and did just a couple out of PMD, Palm-dale. As an aside, one of our greatest coups was to come back to Flight Test (*in Patuxent River*) from one of those trips, with NEW ORANGE HI-VIS FLIGHT SUITS. Boy, were the others jealous! DAC fitted us for them, as they bought them for their pilots after Jimmy Verdin was killed and could not be located. But we still gave them hell about their weak airplane!

ALL THE BEST---CHEERS !"

(Ed.: Copies of the A-4Ever issues referenced may be ordered for \$5/issue by emailing the editor at sa-journal-editor@a4skyhawk.org.)



YA4D-1 Bu. No. 137814. U.S. Navy photo.

Broken Arrow!

By Jim Winchester

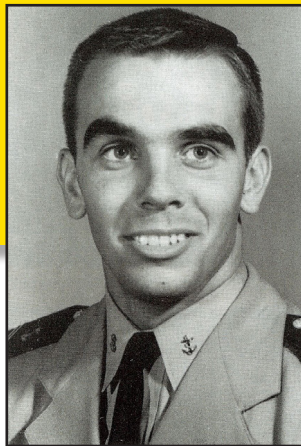
Nearly 47 years ago, during the early stages of the Vietnam War, an A-4 and pilot were lost at sea in circumstances that remain murky even today. Although aircraft and crew losses were sadly not uncommon, the presence of a nuclear weapon on the accident aircraft made it unique and led to a cover-up that caused distress to the pilot's family and an international incident when details emerged in the 1980s.

USS *Ticonderoga* left San Diego on 28 September 1965 for Vietnamese waters. Embarked was CVW-5 comprising attack squadrons VA-52 (A-1s), VA-56 and VA-144 (both with A-4s), F-8 outfits VF-51 and -53, and detachments of VAH-4, VAW-11, VAW-13, VFP-63 and HC-1. After port calls in Hawaii and the Philippines, 'Tico' spent fifteen days on Dixie Station and ten on Yankee Station, where CVW-5 flew missions against North Vietnamese bridges and other infrastructure targets.

On 5 December, 'Tico' was en route between Yankee Station, to Yokosuka, Japan for a well-earned period of rest and recreation. Despite the air wing's participation in a conventional shooting war, one that had seen four aircraft lost since it entered combat in early November, CVW-5 as designated in official documents was as an "Attack Carrier Air Wing for support of conventional and nuclear war in all weather conditions." This day they were going to test that second capability by staging a weapons loading exercise under the code-name 'Crew-cut'.

The drill was supposed to go like this: weapons would be assembled and brought up from Tico's Special Aircraft Service Stores (SASS) spaces under Marine escort, then loaded aboard the A-4Es of VA-56 'Champions'. With a pilot aboard, each of the seven or so participating aircraft would then be pushed onto Elevator No.2 on the forward port side and raised to the flight deck. From there it would be towed to one of the two catapults and the procedures for a launch, up to but not including the cat shot itself, would be run through before the jet was towed to the forward elevator and lowered back to the hangar.

The lead aircraft, A-4E 150122, Modex 472, was not connected to a tug, probably for space reasons, but was moved by the muscle power of a dozen or so blueshirts



Douglas Webster. This photo comes from the Japanese book on the accident. I don't know where the author obtained it, but it is one of only two photos I have seen of Doug. The other is the wings ceremony photo that the Association has used on the site.

to the edge of Hangar Bay 2. A tug awaited on the flight deck, but another human effort would be needed to clear the slight hump between the metal hangar floor and the wooden elevator deck.

One pilot had been assigned to the A-4 for the evolution, which was delayed by a fire in a stateroom, but in actuality a trainee plane captain took his place, riding the brakes as the Skyhawk was pushed to its loading position by the blueshirts. A pilot then emerged from a hatchway in flight gear, climbed the ladder and connected his harness with the help of a plane captain. He put his helmet on his knee or the stick top and concentrated on the preflight checklist while the tie-downs were removed.

The planepushers pushed on the wing leading edges but the 10-ton Skyhawk, with full wing tanks and a 2,100lb bomb on the centerline, failed to clear the hump and rolled back towards them. They gave it an extra push the second time.

Accounts differ at this point. Some witnesses remember a 1MC announcement to standby for a turn to starboard, but no turn is mentioned in the Deck Log or the enquiry report. The seas were fairly calm with only a light swell, but whatever the cause, Tico listed slightly to port as the sailors pushed. The A-4 cleared the hump then started to pick up speed. It was supposed to stop with its nosewheel on the white centerline of the angled deck but clearly wasn't going to.

The safety directors blew whistles and the chock men threw their chocks at the mainwheels. Unfortunately they didn't land evenly and were knocked aside. The pilot looked up. Some say he then looked down

and tried to pump the brakes. Several sailors recall a look of puzzlement then terror on his face as the A-4 continued rolling backwards. He appeared to try and stand, but even though he was an accomplished gymnast he couldn't escape the secured straps.

The mainwheels jumped the six-inch guardrail then fell into the safety netting around the elevator's edge. The A-4E reared up and the canopy slammed shut, some say onto the pilot's fingers as they gripped the windscreen bow. The A-4 hung suspended for a moment then flopped backwards into the ocean. One sailor says he saw the bomb detach and bob around issuing smoke before it disappeared along with the aircraft, which sank very quickly, even before it had passed the fantail. Tico launched a boat and a UH-2 which returned only with a helmet and a piece of drop tank. The escorting destroyers searched until sunset, but the A-4, bomb and pilot, 24-year old Lt (jg) Douglas Morey Webster of Warren, Ohio were gone forever.

As soon as the accident happened, position and depth readings were taken and messages fired off to Washington about the lost weapon. It was a true 'Broken Arrow'

with a complete war reserve B43 one-megaton thermonuclear bomb gone from US custody.

From that moment on, the navy began covering up. A squadron memorial service was held at 2AM the next morning, the family and press were told that the pilot had just returned to the ship after a training mission when his aircraft rolled overboard, without mentioning the bomb. The location was fudged as "The Pacific."

A JAG enquiry was conducted over three days in Yokosuka and concluded that it was nobody's fault. It said that a 12-inch elevator-edge rail might have stopped the A-4 going overboard. NAVAIR decided fitting such rails was impractical for ordnance clearance reasons. A redacted version of the JAG report only appeared in 2010.

It seems that no explicit gag order was put on the crew about the incident, but they got the message not to write home about it and the secret was kept in their homes or amongst skeptical friends for nearly 24 years.

In 1981 the DoD released the barest details in a list of Broken Arrows, not naming the ship, pilot or weapon and stating the location as "500 miles from land."

continued...



Plane captain George C Floyd with 'his' A-4E 151022 on the 1964 *Ticonderoga* cruise. The Modex at the time was 406, and this is about the only known still photo of the accident aircraft. Photo via author.

Broken Arrow! cont...

Greenpeace researchers later combed through carrier deck logs in the National Archives and found more details of the accident and its exact location, which was in fact around 80 miles from inhabited Kikai-shima, part of Japan's Ryuku chain. Their May 1989 press conference and report caused headlines around the world and a diplomatic fuss with Japan, who concluded, rightly, that that nuclear weapons were being brought into Japan, in violation of the nation's post-war constitution.

After commissioning a radiation sampling mission and declaring that there was no environmental impact from the 5.5lbs of plutonium, the Japanese closed the matter, at least publicly.

The press reports prompted three of the many wit-

nesses to talk with their hometown papers, recalling what they could of the accident. The pilot's name either wasn't mentioned or was misreported as Daniel Webster in the published stories. Later Doug's father discovered the grave marker at Arlington was misspelled. His mother may have learned more details of the accident from a cab driver than she did from the Navy.

Doug's family and friends wondered why he was not commemorated on the Vietnam Memorial Wall and started writing letters to congressmen. The stock answer they have received is that his death occurred outside the war zone and did not qualify.

The information vacuum allowed rumors to spread among Tico veterans about the accident and the pilot: saboteurs were caught on board cutting aircraft brake lines and sent to Leavenworth; Webster and his CO didn't get on; he was disillusioned and writing home

against the war; that a B43 had been seen on a mess deck a few days before with significant damage.

These and other events have led some to believe that a conspiracy to rid Tico of a troublesome pilot and a damaged bomb was somehow hatched, carried out and covered up. That has to be considered far-fetched, yet there *had* been incidents of aircraft sabotage earlier in the cruise, some of Webster's diary entries expressed frustration with the war and how much effort was devoted to nuclear attack training, and crewmen who saw the mess deck bomb were sent for repeated check-ups.

Even if conspiracy theories can be disproved, there is still a lingering feeling that "something funny went on out there" and the whole truth has yet to come out.

More and more info has surfaced since the author became interested in the subject, but the story is incomplete.

Masayo Duus, a California-based author, doggedly tracked down VA-56 pilots and airmen and got a copy of Doug's diary from his mother, publishing parts in a book called 'Death of a Top Gun', which appeared in Japanese only in 1994. There is very little written in English and few official documents in the public domain. No copy of the original 'Broken Arrow' message has been traced so far, nor diplomatic messages between the US and Japan.

The author is writing a book on Tico's 1965-66 cruise and the Broken Arrow incident and would love to find more friends and colleagues of Doug Webster and anyone who was on Tico who remembers the incident or its aftermath or would just like to share memories of the cruise and life on a carrier at the beginning of the Vietnam War.

Jim Winchester
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Would love to hear from anybody with input into the story, particularly if they have documents or pointers on where to find them, and of course memories of Doug during his training, squadron service or any time during his life.

It is now 52 years since the accident and I am still writing my book! However, things have progressed and as of December 2017 I have an offer of a contract from a U.S. publisher, and the intention is for a 300-page hardback to appear in Fall 2018. It will cover not only the circumstances of the Broken Arrow but also *Ticonderoga's* incident-packed 1965-66 cruise, the revelation of the accident and the reaction in America and Japan, and the efforts to honor the memory of Douglas Webster.

Since the publication of this article, I have gathered much more information, including letters and diplomatic cables, spoken to numerous witnesses and veterans of Tico and VA-56 and obtained photos of BuNo 151022 as NF-472.

The text here is unchanged from the original, but some details would be revised in the light of later research if I wrote it today. To help me get the book right I would welcome memories of VA-56, sister squadron VA-144, CVW-5 and its other units, photographs, squadron newsletters, cruise reports and anything else about Tico 1965-66 and Naval Aviation's only official Broken Arrow that readers are able to share.

Jim Winchester
a4sforever@aol.com



Seen configured as a tanker, 151079 replaced 151022 as NF-472 within five days of the accident. This more fortunate *Skyhawk* went on to serve with the Israeli and Indonesian air forces.

THE AIR BARONS

The Other Navy Flight Demonstration Team

By Richard Shipman

Mention U.S. Navy flight demonstration teams and one name comes to mind: the Blue Angels. For years, the “Blues” have been thrilling crowds with their aerial exhibitions in a variety of fleet aircraft, including the A-4F. But there was another Navy flight demonstration team – flying the A-4, no less – that performed for thousands of people and brought credit to the U.S. Navy, Naval Aviation and the A-4.



continued...

AIR BARONS

Continued...

That team was the “Air Barons,” a group of Naval Air reservists based at NAS Glenview, Chicago, Illinois. Flying early model A-4Bs (later converted to A-4Ls), the Air Barons performed shows for more than 10 million people during their five years of existence.

The Air Barons started informally. In 1967, NAS Glenview had several Naval Air Reserve squadrons flying A-4B *Skyhawks*. One weekend, the Chief of Naval Air Reserve training staff received a request from officials at Toronto, Canada, to participate in an upcoming air show. The staff forwarded the request to one of the squadrons, VA-725, and its skipper, CDR Jim Mahoney, agreed to participate.

“We went up to Toronto for the show, and the first thing we did was to attend the briefing,” CDR Mahoney recalled. “This air show was a big deal. The Blues, T Birds and several international flight demonstration teams were performing. Each team had a representative who stood up to brief the others on their show. The first briefer was from the Royal Air Force, and he was the epitome of what you would expect. He was decked out in a tweed suit, sported a handle-bar moustache and puffed on a white Meerschaum pipe. He gave a detailed brief that covered times, locations, rendezvous points, etc., all in his crisp British accent. Very professional, very impressive. Then the guy we picked to do the briefing gets up and starts drawling ‘Well, if we can get all these oily sons of bitches started at the same time....’ I vowed then and there that if we were going to do this air show business, we were going to start doing it right!”

The briefing may not have been impressive at Toronto, but the flying was. Propelled by this success, the team continued to do air shows, funded to a great extent “out of the rear pocket” of Admiral Greer, the Chief of Naval Air Reserve. The Air Barons proved to be in high demand. And why not? They put on a great show, and were dirt cheap for the show sponsors. While the Blues and Thunderbirds required considerable sums of money to support their performances, the Air Barons asked for only \$25 a day per diem for each of the 14 team members. All team members, with the exception of the senior officer and enlisted man, shared hotel rooms, with a \$16 ceiling on the cost of the double rooms! This meant that a military jet flight demonstration team had become affordable for many smaller cities that otherwise could never dream of hosting such a popular event. For the Navy and Naval Air Reserve, it meant that its recruiting and public affairs efforts could be extended to many middle America locations that would never see the Blue Angels.

Another appeal of the Air Barons was their civilian/military status that helped them relate to the civilian audiences. The pilots that comprised the Air Barons were a typical mix of personalities and professions found throughout the Naval Air Reserve. The leader, CDR Jim Mahoney, was a self employed executive in insurance and finance. Other members of the team were airline pilots, bankers and businessmen. The right wingman, Phil Lockard, was the promotion art director for Playboy Magazine, a position that earned the Air Barons a lot of favors, recalled CDR Mahoney. All shared attributes typical of



1971 Air Barons team pictured left to right: Narrator/Officer-in-Charge CDR Jim Mahoney • Baron One/Flight Leader LCDR Phil Lockard • Baron Two/Right Wing LT C.D. Ewell • Baron Three/Left Wing LT Dick Brent • Baron Four/Slot CDR Terry Denton • Baron Five/Delta Left LCDR Don Wells • Baron Six/Delta Right LT Bill Underdown.

Naval Air Reservists: talent, experience and a desire to remain affiliated with naval aviation.

The Air Barons continued to improve their performance as they did more shows. They discovered a plot of land in Wisconsin that was designed to be a major airfield, known as Bong Field. The airstrip had been laid out, but was never developed. It proved to be an ideal practice area where the team could fly low and fast to practice its maneuvers.

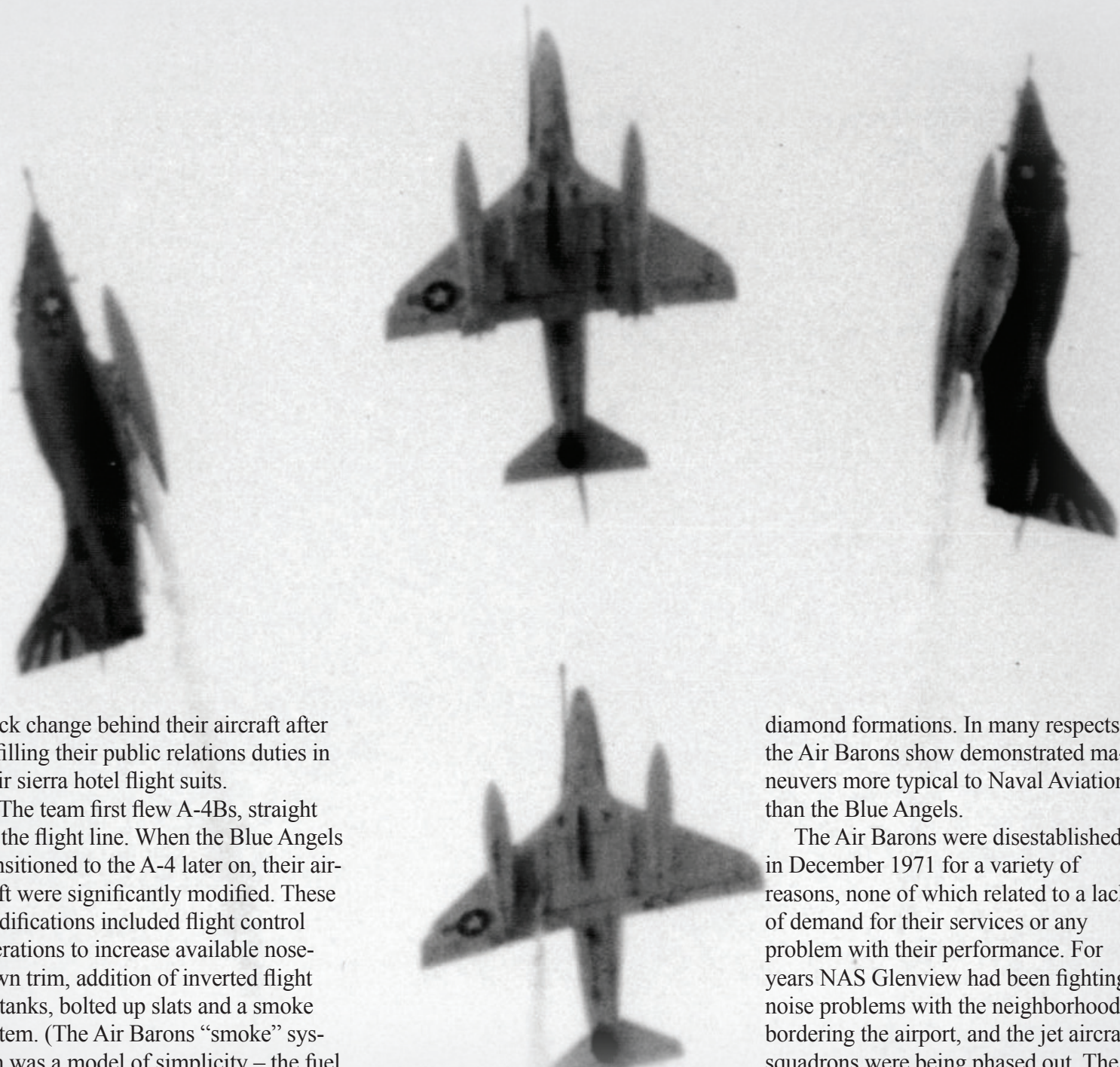
The team received another big boost with the addition of LCDR Dan McIntyre to the team. Dan had spent fifteen years on active duty and had been a member of the Blue Angels. When he

joined the team, he recommended that they fly the shows at 250- 275 knots instead of the 425 – 450 they had been flying before. (“I knew my arm came back awfully tired after an air show,” recalled Jim Mahoney.) Dan also directed the formation from the slot position, improving aircraft position and symmetry. Eventually, Jim Mahoney became team officer in charge, and Dan McIntyre took over as the lead.

Fielding a flight demonstration team required more than just airplanes and pilots. With a combination of ingenuity, hard work and good fortune, the Air Barons gradually

acquired the trappings that polished their image. Their slick red brochure, for example, was funded by Douglas Aircraft. In the late sixties, McDonnell Aircraft Corporation had not yet merged with Douglas, and the other flight demonstration teams were flying F-4s. Zeke Corneer, a former Blue Angel who was working at Douglas, saw an opportunity for some mutually favorable publicity through the Air Barons. Douglas offered to produce the brochure in exchange for a section devoted to their aircraft. The rest of the brochure described the maneuvers the team flew and the mission of the Naval Air Reserve.

CDR Mahoney also wanted to jazz up the appearance of the pilots. Initially, he purchased some industrial grade overalls and dyed them red. As time progressed, however, he wanted something better. They found what they were looking for on the West Coast from the same supplier that outfitted the Blue Angels. CDR Mahoney recalled paying an outrageous sum of money for the flight suits which were satin, beautiful – and totally unusable in the aircraft. CDR Mahoney threatened bodily injury to anyone who so much as climbed into the cockpit in these beautiful, but fragile flight suits, so the team members would do a



quick change behind their aircraft after fulfilling their public relations duties in their sierra hotel flight suits.

The team first flew A-4Bs, straight off the flight line. When the Blue Angels transitioned to the A-4 later on, their aircraft were significantly modified. These modifications included flight control alterations to increase available nose-down trim, addition of inverted flight oil tanks, bolted up slats and a smoke system. (The Air Barons “smoke” system was a model of simplicity – the fuel dump switch.) The Air Barons, on the other hand, flew stock – and old – A-4s. In a way, this was an advantage. If an aircraft went down for mechanical problems, the team simply called Glenview and another aircraft flew out to join the show. (“We left aircraft all over the country,” recalled CDR Mahoney.)

As it performed more shows, the team continued to gain respect and recognition. In 1969, the team gained a new respectability when it was officially recognized by the Department of Defense. This meant that the team had

official sanction and could be more out in the open than before. For the Navy, it meant they had another valuable recruiting and public relations asset that could be used to meet the never ending demand for air show performances.

The Air Barons performed a show that highlighted many tactical maneuvers flown in fighter/attack squadrons. High angle dive bombing, roll-ahead weapons delivery, opposed half-Cuban eights and aerial refueling were maneuvers incorporated into the show, along with the six plane delta and four plane

diamond formations. In many respects, the Air Barons show demonstrated maneuvers more typical to Naval Aviation than the Blue Angels.

The Air Barons were disestablished in December 1971 for a variety of reasons, none of which related to a lack of demand for their services or any problem with their performance. For years NAS Glenview had been fighting noise problems with the neighborhoods bordering the airport, and the jet aircraft squadrons were being phased out. The Air Barons were the last jet squadron based at Glenview and it became obvious to everyone that their days were numbered.

The second nail in the Air Barons’ coffin was one of the periodic budget crunches that hit the Naval Air Reserve in the early ‘70s, and forced it to cut bases, personnel and equipment. The Air Barons seemed a luxury in those austere times. Finally, Admiral Greer, the strong supporter of the Air Barons, was transferred from his job as Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training.



The U.S. Naval Air Reserve Tactical Flight Demonstration Team

AIR BARONS



The Air Barons flew a total of five years, three as an officially sanctioned Navy flight demonstration team. Their performances took the message of the Naval Air Reserve and naval aviation to millions of Americans. Despite the demands of precision formation and aerobatic flight, the Air Barons’ history was unmarred by accident or fatality. The Air Barons’ history was short, but its legacy was long. For the Skyhawk, it was one more chapter in the illustrious history of this versatile and capable aircraft.

CECIL FIELD NATIONAL POW/MIA MEMORIAL PARK

By Dave Dollarhide

November 3, 2017, marked the dedication ceremony for the *Cecil Field National POW/MIA Memorial Park* to be located at the former NAS Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Florida, now known as the *Cecil Commerce Center*. This project was conceived and is led by Mike Cassata, whose father served at the Navy Base. After roughly two years of planning and coordination, the city of Jacksonville has leased the former Chapel and 26 acres of land to the determined non-profit organization.

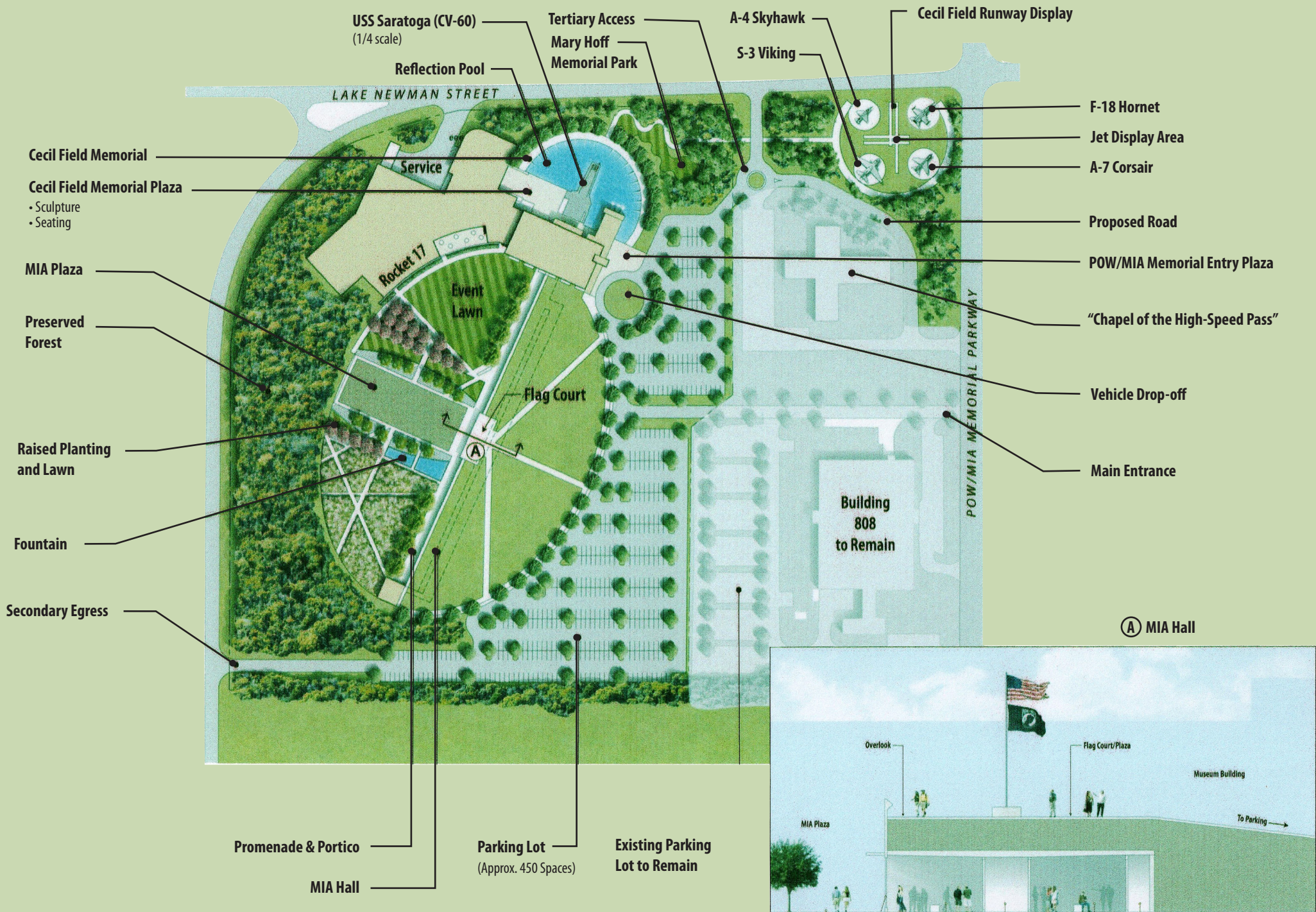
The former Light Attack base has seen many changes since its closure in 1999. The airfield, *Cecil Airport and Spaceport*, is a thriving joint civil-military facility, with well over 100,000 flight operations per year. There are numerous businesses and new structures in place and more planned. Outside the airport boundaries, on the Commerce Center, all the former barracks

and BOQ have been demolished, but other structures, old and new, are also occupied, productive and supported by new entrance roads.

Many former Navy types will recall the *Hero's Walk and Freedom Trees* constructed adjacent to the Chapel during the Vietnam War to pay tribute to those who were classified as missing in action (MIA) and prisoners of war (POW). Former Cecil sailors still drive onto the Commerce Center every now and then to walk that walk and conjure memories as they tour their former home. That still intact Hero's Walk provided incentive for Cassata.

The proposed Park will pay tribute and memorialize all from Cecil who have paid the price, while it preserves the history of this former Master Jet Base. The proposed site plan shows the magnitude of the proposed Park. This is an ambitious project, expected to draw the public, and with the loss of close to three hundred and sixty five A-4s during Vietnam alone, it's of great interest to the A-4 Skyhawk Association.

You can support the POW/MIA Memorial Park by going to <https://www.powmiamemorial.org>.



Spirit of Cecil Field
Hero's Walk and Freedom Trees

USS *Midway* “Meet the Pilots” Memorial Day Event

Hun reporting!

Each Memorial Day weekend, the USS *Midway* Museum on San Diego Bay conducts a “Meet the Pilots” event on board. Pilots volunteer their time to show off their particular aircraft to the masses the museum attracts...especially on the Memorial Day holiday. This year’s event was no exception! The A-4 gets set up with a work-stand next to its cockpit and the canopy opened. Marine and Navy Skyhawkers tell kids and their parents all about our Skyhawk, as we help them in and out of the A-4F’s cockpit. We had a long lineup of visitors throughout both days and enjoyed it as much as the kids did! Special thanks to Cary Branch, the Hun, Bob Wendt, Darryl Naegeli, Frank Nolte, Ken Fisher, Chuck Sweeney, Dave Pereira, Stephen Walker and Kevin Mac Donnell.



SoCal Marines Memorial Day 2017: To Your Brain Health!

Hun reporting!

Psychologically, did you know it's been pretty much proven that staying socially active, especially when you get old, is essential for mental well-being? As confirmed by the Global Council on Brain Health "people who are socially engaged have a lower risk for cognitive decline." Have I mentioned that our Skyhawk Association purpose statement

includes "...to provide an on-going fraternal-social affiliation of individuals..." who all happen to love the A-4? Well, KEEP AT IT GUYS AND GALS! It's good for you! In that vein, the SoCal Marine Skyhawkers are still meeting quarterly and having a blast at our breakfast get togethers. TINS, waving hands and great camaraderie prevail...and we can almost feel

the brain health improving each time! You can do the same where ever you are! We'll be glad to help you get started too. With some 800 Skyhawkers on our contact list, just let us know you'd like some local emails and we'll get them off to you. Once you get going, word of mouth keeps your gatherings expanding too. Try it...you'll be glad you did!



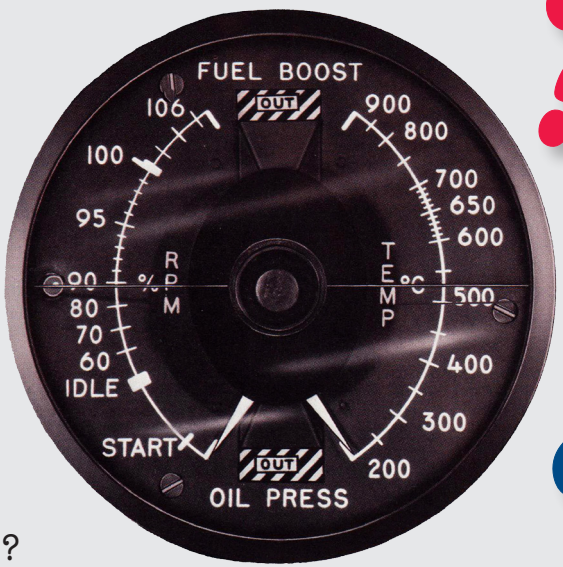
TRIVIA ANYONE

from Dave Dollarhide

Question?

J-65 Engine Instruments

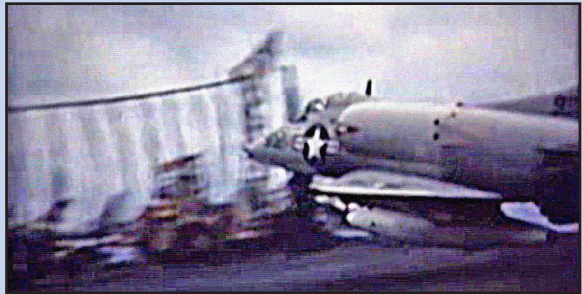
The J-65 powered A-4s used a single engine instrument gauge known as the Engine Performance Indicator (EPI). How did the EPI in the early prototype A-4s differ from the one installed in the production models as seen here?



MEMBER'S MOVIES

Dave Dollarhide

Our effort to preserve member's home movies is still moving along. With the recent addition of George Shattuck's A-4 digitized 8mm movies, we now have forty-eight movies documented on the Skyhawk Association's YouTube channel. This cool gear up barricade photo, taken from George's A-4 movies, is a great example of history being saved. Go to our YouTube channel to check it out.



I know there are more out there buried in your closets, attics and such. Tell your old Scooter pals and let's preserve more memories. I can be contacted at davedollarhide@msn.com.

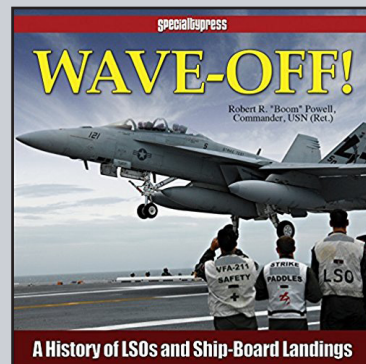
<https://www.youtube.com/user/A4SkyhawkAssociation>

FROM THE ATTIC

Mailbag



Boom Powell on LSO Platform on board Kitty Hawk ca 1970. Photo via member George Shattuck.



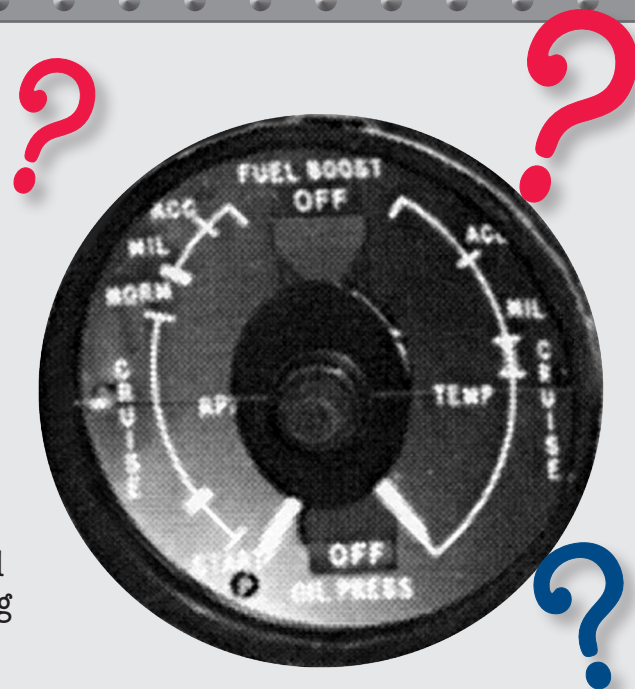
Powell is author of the much-anticipated book, *Wave-Off! A History of LSOs and Ship-Board Landings*. This book is a must have for any Naval Aviator, or fan of naval aviation. Available through Specialty Press.

TRIVIA ANYONE

from Dave Dollarhide

Answer: J-65 Engine Instruments

Ed Heinemann's "keep it simple" concept for the A-4 created the "all instruments in one," Engine Performance Indicator (EPI) for the J-65 engine. The initial version of the instrument installed in the prototype aircraft differed from the production models in that there were no numbers for RPM and EGT, just markings for the various engine operating parameters and limitations.



Puresome Unplugged

~ YP's Excellent Adventures ~

From The Hook magazine, Winter 1993 and Winter 2006

The Further Adventures of YOUTHLI PURESOME

by CDR Jack D. Woodul, USNR(Ret), artwork by Carl Snow



Jack "Youthly Puresome" Woodul

If Puresome's first skipper was the remote, Olympian Charles de Gaulle of Tinker Terror Naval Aviation, his XO was its absolutely straight-shooting, no bullshit Fred Astaire. Puresome had first noticed his future XO while learning the attack trade at the A-4 RAG at NAS Oceana. As one of several commanders going through training on the way back to the fleet after shore duty tours, the XO had blown a couple of mindless junior officers clean out of the water for not tendering proper respect due an elder. Pondering their effectively scorched beautocks, Puresome, a mindless J.O. himself, took note and resolved to be wary and squared-away and possibly avoid their fate. "You mess with the butcher, you get the cleaver!" was the clear message.

BUFFALO BILL

The second notice came during a big, dress-blue inspection of all hands — students and instructors. Most of the students, fresh from the Training Command, were proud enough to have their shiny, new wings on their chests. Some of the instructors and senior students headed back to squadrons wore a shiny trinket or two beneath their wings. And there was a sprinkling of Korean vets with collections of bright medals. But lean CDR Hardass had rows of major gongs that set off his cold, gray warrior eyes under his heavily-braided bridge cover.

"I heard he was in World War II and Korea!" whispered a wide-eyed, brown-bar ensign.

As the stomping and saluting commenced, bagpipe tunes of glory shrilled through Puresome's head. "When I grow up, I wanna be like that!" he thought.

It was not to be the last time.

Eventually, Puresome finished the RAG and the eternal scrutiny of instructors. Gratefully sacking up his flight gear, he humped it over to the next hangar for the big adventure of his first fleet squadron. The Snakes were conspicuous by the evil, fanged sidewinder poking out of their A-4Es' orange rudder and the "E's" with two hash marks on the fuselage. He wasted no time buying an orange ball cap and decorating his helmet in truly obnoxious orange reflective tape with black snakes on the sides. As one of two FNGs to the squadron, Puresome had to temper his wild, happy-puppy enthusiasms around elder god veteran fleet aviators to listen up and respectfully learn.

The very eldest gods, of course, were Rockets One and Two, known as "Skipper" and "XO." Skipper was a remote, funda-

mental force of nature with the alternating power of sunshine and calm skies or powerful winds and awesome storms in his smallest gesture. When he addressed the assembled officers at AOMs, it was like the Big Guy with the funny hat standing on the balcony addressing the throng in the square below. Puresome had no doubt that Skipper could zorch him with a single glance.

XO, as it turned out, was CDR Hardass from the RAG. XO, Puresome was to learn, translated Skipper's wishes and dealt directly with the troops to turn wishes into action. From Puresome's junior-junior officer perspective, it became obvious that the XO was happy to be back in the fleet. The squadron was his natural element, and his joy in his job showed in his straight-away, effective manner.

XO only shot people, it turned out, that really needed it. And the icing on the cake was that he loved to fly and had more time snagging three-wires and dropping bombs than Puresome had time out of diapers.

"Son," he once told an incredulous Puresome after punching multiple Mk 76 practice bombs through the eyeball of a target, "I've dropped bombs from Helldivers, F9Fs and now this A-4. The secret to getting hits is to get as steep as you can, press it till you can't stand it any more, then pickle and pull like a sonuv-abitch!" The logic of it all certainly appealed to the scientist in Puresome. And the proof was certainly in the puddin'.

What Puresome really admired was XO's no-nonsense headwork. Puresome had once flown as XO's wingman for a long, low-level flight over most of Robert E. Lee country. Whoostling along in the weeds through the Shenandoah Valley at a hundred feet and five miles a minute, they worked hard, thumbs following the minute elapsed-time hack marks on carefully constructed charts made for tiny cockpits as they searched for obscure checkpoints. They were careful of their timing, just like if they were carrying an actual doomsday device. Finally, the section had accelerated past a hysterically-jinking flock of Chesapeake Bay ducks and simulated a lay-down bomb delivery against the unsuspecting commie tobacco farm that ComFAirNorfolk had designated as their target.

continued...



Puresome continued...

“Yaahoo!” Puresome hollered as the pair climbed up for a nice, relaxing VFR stroll in the park back to home plate. The only problem seemed to be that a mass of thunderstorms had Oceana completely surrounded. When they switched over to Oceana Approach Control for some sort of instrument approach, the frequency was completely clobbered with hysterical, low-fuel-state aircraft demanding to land, now.

“They’ve got their problems, we’ve got ours,” XO said. “Besides, they are all trying to kill you and you just don’t let ‘em. You tell them what you are going to do — it’s your butt! Aviation is just common sense. If it makes sense, do it. If it doesn’t, frabb ‘em!” It made perfect sense to Puresome, and he etched it into the hard stone of his attack puke head as Aviation Rule Numero Uno.

When Puresome found out from the Child Bride via the Squadron Wives’ Intelligence Network that his squadron was saddling up for Vietnam, he was real glad XO was on the pointy end of the squadron spear.

When USS Independence (CVA-62) finally steamed into Subic Bay, Coral Sea (CVA-43) and her veteran air group, fresh from the Tonkin Gulf, were already there. The new guys wasted no time in looking up old pals to find out how things really were in the Big War.

“You guys take any hits?” Puresome asked an ex-NAVCAD pal from the training command, who was also flying Scooters.

“Yeah,” he nodded gravely, “we’ve taken some hits.” Puresome believed him. “Holy merdel!” he thought as his pal went through a litany longer than he cared to hear.

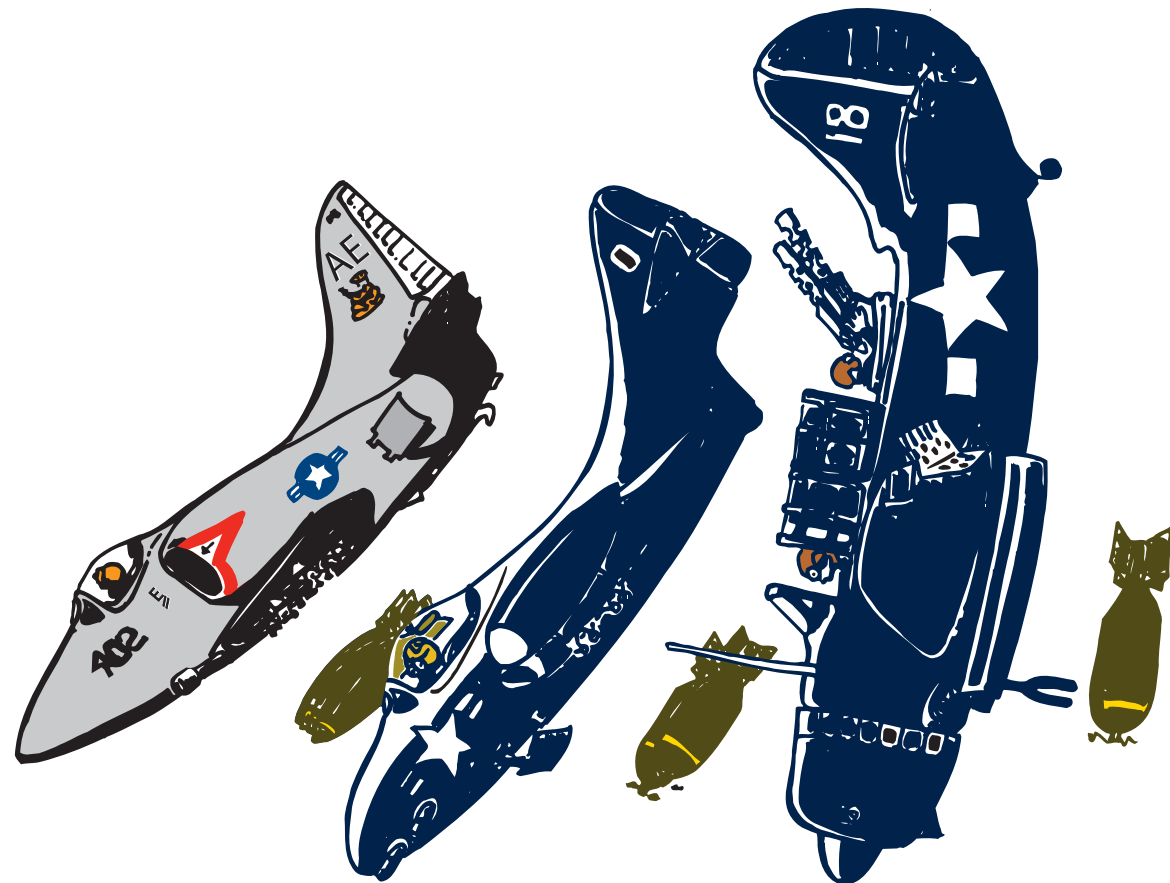
XO asked the same thing from a friend of his whom he later described as having the biggest canugies in Naval Aviation. “Yup,” he answered. “And of 22 planes hit, 20 of them were below 2,000 feet. Draw your own conclusions!”

He did, and Skipper issued the policy that nobody went below 3,000 feet when they were up North. Not only that, when some ambitious staff captain showed up aboard ship with a pet theory that the way to win the War was with the peace-time tactic of half-flap, 180-kt., low-and-slow bomb delivery, the

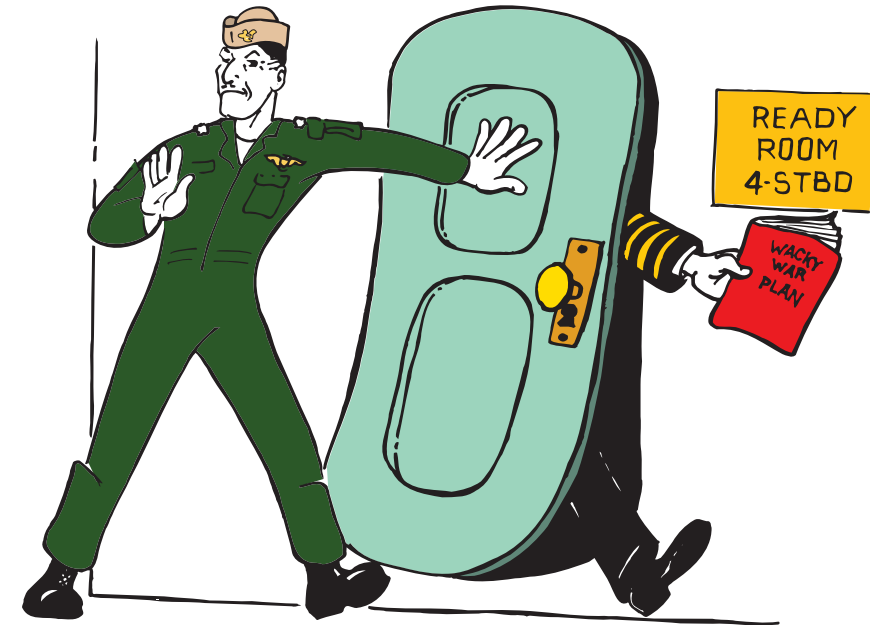
squadron pilots were forbidden to talk to him. Puresome didn’t realize it then, but Skipper, counseled by XO, saved lots of their young butts by not letting ambitious bastards kill them with stupid schemes designed to further their careers.

So, XO was fighting his third war. He had been a child ensign in the last part of WW II and had gotten a major gong for dropping a bomb on the battleship Yamato during the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Seemed that everybody knew the war was almost over and nobody much wanted to fly, so ... launch the ensign! Later, after they had sunk the ship and the powers that be were draping awards on everybody, the heavies were all asking, “How’d an ensign get in on this?”

“The Navy understands about sinking a ship,” XO explained. “You can bomb a land target all day — no big deal. But sink a ship and here come the goodies!” The intelligence pukes from the ship’s Integrated Operational Intelligence Center (IOIC) presented him with a different kind of goodie for performance above and



beyond the call of duty during warm-up flights in-country South Vietnam against the deadly water buffalo. According to a forward air controller, the bad guys in the black pajamas were using the beasts to further their evil plans, and would they please hose them with 20-mike mike? XO was happy to oblige, and Puresome got to help. The FAC’s damage report included some six WBs KBA (killed by air), which XO dutifully reported to the squadron’s air intelligence officer, who passed it along to Mr. Robert Strange MacNamara’s computers. This important war effort was acknowledged by IOIC, which awarded XO a small monkeypod water buffalo on a stand with a brass plaque — “The Buffalo Bill Award.” XO was, of course, touched.



Nonetheless, his first Alpha Strike on North Vietnam impressed him greatly. Looking down at clusters of radar-guided 57mm AAA sparkling up at him prompted him to tell Skipper, “I think we’d better dye our flight suits green!”

Attacks Up North also prompted him to try to shake up the awards system. It had been prescribed before the air wing got in the war zone that medals would be awarded on the basis of rank. COs and XOs, along with the odd division leader, would get the DFC while JOs would get the Air Medal and the Green Weenie (the Navy Commendation Medal) with a Combat “V.”

“Hell,” XO explained, “I’ve been there! Flak for me in WW II wasn’t anything. In Korea, there was the occasional flak trap, but that wasn’t the usual thing. North Vietnam is worse than anything I’ve seen, and we’ve got young guys routinely flying up there all the time and not getting squat!”

So, in typical fashion, he wrote a letter and sent it up through the chain of command. It caused quite a stir and even may have helped change things a little. The important thing was that the young guys knew the troops were being looked out for.

Puresome was too young and dumb to really appreciate his squadron leadership at the time. But during the following years of reading accounts of other air wings in Vietnam, he came to understand that the reason his air wing didn’t have the nickname “Bloody” stuck in front of it was because the squadron leadership stuck their necks out to protect their pilots from themselves, the self-serving and the merely stupid.

At a squadron reunion 25 years later, Puresome stood with a cold beer in his hand and toasted Skipper and XO, thanking them for watching out for them all. The two were embarrassed by the applause. “Ah, hell!” said Buffalo Bill, “we just did the best we could.”

Everybody knew it was more than enough.



NEW MEMBERS

Bauman, Albert • Emporia, KS
Byall, Thomas • Colorado Springs, CO
Chadwick, Edward • Banks, OR
Cochrane, Vance • Belmont, CA
Craycraft, Dennis • Monroe, NC
Douglas, Bruce • Palm Coast, FL
Ellington, Chuck • Rapid City, SD
Frost, Jefferey • Alexandria, NH
Geverkian, Alex • Lakewood, CA
Kelly, Robert • Penscola, FL

Lowry, Charles • Cartersville, GA
Luigart, Craig • Fairfax, VA
Murphy, Edward • Phoenix, AZ
Smith, John • Ellistown, UK
Spiel, Robet • Lindon, UT
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Read?

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FAMOUS RUSSIAN AIRCRAFT: MIKOYAN MiG-17, TACTICAL FIGHTER

by Gordon, Yefim and Komissarov, Dmitriy
Crecy Publications, UK, and Specialty Press.
Forest Lake, MN 55025. 2016.
480 pp. Ill. \$64.95.
Reviewed by CDR Peter Mersky, USNR (Ret.)

Anyone familiar with mid-to-late 20th century military aviation should be well-acquainted with the long line of Russian fighters, the premier series being that fostered by the MiG design bureau.* “MiG” is, of course, a colorful acronym created by joining the initials of the two last names of the two designers Artyom L. Mikoyan and Michail I. Gurevich. The warning cry of “MiGs! MiGs!” was as much a part of early jet warfare as was “Achtung, Spitfires!” in European skies during World War II. And with just as much reason and fear.

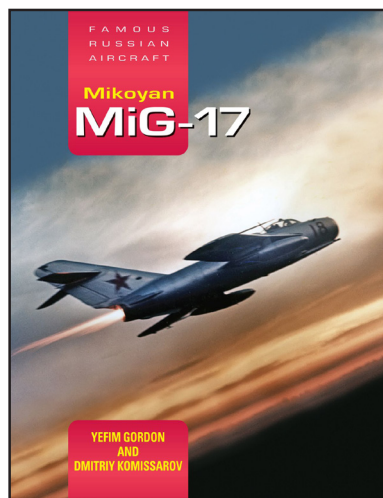
Although MiG fighters did not play a major role in WWII—the only truly operational MiG was the early, rather elegant little MiG-3 that had largely been replaced by 1943—the MiG bureau quickly took its place after the war as the Soviet Union entered the jet age with the MiG-9 as well as other designs from other bureaus. The world-beater MiG-15 followed and proved itself the equal of most of the West’s fighters, including the American F-86, which formed the major opposition the high-tailed MiG faced during the three-year Korean War. Flown by a competent pilot, the MiG-15 could

take the measure of the Sabre, its speed and heavy 3-cannon armament giving it advantages that U.S. Air Force pilots definitely had to respect.

It was only natural that the MiG-15 would be improved on and would soon give way to its near-big brother, the MiG-17, mid-way through the war, although the MiG-17 did not enter large-scale service until after the armistice that brought the war to an uncertain halt.

With that introduction, we consider this latest offering from Crecy and Specialty Press. At 8 ½ x 11 ½ inches, this is not a small book, and with nearly 500 coated-stock pages, it is particularly weighty. But nevertheless, it contains everything you ever wanted to know about the MiG-17. There is an all-encompassing collection of black-and-white and color photos, performance charts, pages of comparison tables discussing every MiG-17 produced, and every country for which it served. There is also a great number of color profiles that show every color scheme and marking the fighter ever carried as well as brief but informative synopsis of whatever combat missions each country’s MiG-17 might have seen. Those who flew against the MiG in Vietnam will find this section of special interest.

I don’t know how many scale models of the MiG are available. Even those of its predecessor, the MiG-15, are rather small in number. But if you can find a model of the MiG-17, this veritable encyclopedia will show you all the interior and exterior detail you need to make it one of a kind.



There are a few errors or typos or missing letters, probably because of the need to produce the book in English, but these are quickly negotiated. One that really sticks is the constant reference to American back-seaters as “WSOs” or weapons-systems officers. While this term is correct for the back-seat position of a Boeing F/A-18D or F/A-18F, as well as USAF F-4s, the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps used the term Radar Interception Officers, or RIOs, for the men in the rear cockpits of the F-4 Phantom and the F-14 Tomcat.

In general, however, the text is well and enthusiastically written. If you can get past the pricey fee, I highly recommend this unusually well-done book.

**A design bureau—Opytno-Konstruktorskoye Byuro (OKB) meaning experimental design bureau-- is mainly responsible for creating a particular aircraft (or other military hardware). The actual aircraft is built by various individual factories. As with most Soviet aircraft, the MiG-17 was built under license in other countries such as China and Czechoslovakia.*



Walter R. Peterson • Pensacola, FL



For lists of A-4 KIA and operational losses, members can sign into <http://a4skyhawk.info> and go to the “Ready Room.”

TAPS notices may be sent to Bob Hickerson, Journal Editor at sa-journal-editor@a4skyhawk.net or mail to Bob Hickerson, 1222 Balcones Drive, Fredericksburg, TX 78624

The A-4Ever Index Summer 2004 to Fall 2016

This index is sorted by Issue beginning with Summer 2004. Additional indices sorted by Author and Category (such as Skyhawk History or Skyhawk Operations), can be found on the Skyhawk website at www.skyhawk.org. We hope that this index will be useful to our members by providing a means to quickly locate articles and other items of interest.

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Sapp	Denny	Jim "Taco" Potter Remembered	Fall	2007	13.3	23	Skyhawk History
Tambini	Tony	Project Rainhat	Fall	2007	13.3	8	Skyhawk History
Turpen	Joe	Great New Models from Andrew Abshier	Fall	2007	13.3	6	Modeling
Weber	Dave	TINS X 2	Fall	2007	13.3	19	TINS
Weber	Dave	Twidget Goes Cyber	Fall	2007	13.3	12	Website
Woodul	Jack	Hosing Santini	Fall	2007	13.3	18	Puresome
Bartels	John	RAN A-4G During Operation Sand Grouper 82	Spring	2008	14.1	1	Cover
Miecznikowski	Bob	Playboy 11 is Down	Spring	2008	14.1	10	Combat
Patrick	Pat	Flame-out Stories, Part I	Spring	2008	14.1	17	Skyhawk History
Stanton	Duke	TINS X 2	Spring	2008	14.1	20	Skyhawk History
Tambini	Tony	Armed Forces Day: China Lake 1963	Spring	2008	14.1	16	Skyhawk History
Woodul	Jack	Adios, Whiz	Spring	2008	14.1	5	Memorial
Woodul	Jack	Bagging	Spring	2008	14.1	14	Puresome
Cupido	Joe	VMA-133 Dragons over Golden Gate Bridge	Summer	2008	14.2	1	Cover
Dollarhide	Dave	An Old Friend	Summer	2008	14.2	13	Restoration
Mersky	Peter	Rampant Raider: An A-4 Pilot in Vietnam (Gray)	Summer	2008	14.2	20	Book Review
Patrick	Pat	Flame-out Stories, Part II	Summer	2008	14.2	8	Skyhawk History
Powell	Boom	TINS X 2	Summer	2008	14.2	21	TINS
Rahn	Bob	Heinemann's Hot Rod Pt. I (from Tempting Fate by Bob Rahn)	Summer	2008	14.2	18	Skyhawk History
Tambini	Tony	A Simple Fix	Summer	2008	14.2	12	Maintenance/Ordnance
Turpen	Joe	Classic Airframes 1/48 TA-4J Skyhawk (Sneak Preview)	Summer	2008	14.2	15	Modeling
Woodul	Jack	High Country	Summer	2008	14.2	16	Puresome
Fuentes	Gidget	Honoring Admiral Stockdale	Fall	2008	14.3	20	Skyhawk History
Rahn	Bob	Heinemann's Hot Rod Pt. II (from Tempting Fate by Bob Rahn)	Fall	2008	14.3	14	Skyhawk History
Sapp	Denny	An Engine Fire in BUNO 154984	Fall	2008	14.3	13	Skyhawk History
Turpen	Joe	IPMS 2008 Best Skyhawk by Jim Clark	Fall	2008	14.3	22	Modeling
Veronico	Nicholas	Man on a Missile: Blue Angels Fly the A-4	Fall	2008	14.3	9	Skyhawk History
Verver	Gary	Blue Angel Split from Delta	Fall	2008	14.3	1	Cover
Woodul	Jack	Scooter Days at Yum'er	Fall	2008	14.3	18	Puresome
ATSI	Staff	Israeli A-4N Takeoff at Sunset	Spring	2009	15.1	1	Cover
Graham	Bill	Stolen Skyhawk! A LCPL Launches in 1986	Spring	2009	15.1	10	Skyhawk History
Olsen	Ken	The Oley Chronicles: Mishaps at Cecil Field	Spring	2009	15.1	14	Skyhawk History
Turpen	Joe	CARF Models' Large-scale Skyhawk	Spring	2009	15.1	22	Modeling
Vincent	Hal	More on Flight Testing: Early A4D Prototypes	Spring	2009	15.1	17	Skyhawk History
Wood	Drury	More on Flight Testing: Early A4D Prototypes	Spring	2009	15.1	17	Skyhawk History
Woodul	Jack	The Night Thing	Spring	2009	15.1	20	Puresome
Woodul	Jack	Kerosene Cowboys: Manning the Spare (Arrington)	Spring	2009	15.1	9	Book Review
ATSI	Staff	ATSI TA-4 Training Mission	Summer	2009	15.2	1	Cover
Gagne	Jon	Kingsville MWR Unveils the "King Kat"	Summer	2009	15.2	17	Skyhawk History
Gann	Harry	Besides, it's Fun to Fly, Part I of the series	Summer	2009	15.2	12	Skyhawk History
Mersky	Peter	The Rescue of Streetcar 304 (Fields)	Summer	2009	15.2	8	Book Review
Stratton	Dick	A Bad Day: Shot Down over North Vietnam	Summer	2009	15.2	18	Combat
Tullo	Frank	8 Thuds and a Scooter	Summer	2009	15.2	10	Combat
Turpen	Joe	TA-4J by Carlos Garcia	Summer	2009	15.2	23	Modeling
Woodul	Jack	The Tip of the Spear	Summer	2009	15.2	20	Puresome
Dollarhide	Dave	An Old Friend, continued	Fall	2009	15.3	11	Restoration
Gann	Harry	Besides, it's Fun to Fly, Part II of the series	Fall	2009	15.3	12	Skyhawk History
Marsh	Curt	Restoration: VMA-131's 158182	Fall	2009	15.3	23	Restoration
Mersky	Peter	Loud and Clear: the Memoir of an Israeli Fighter Pilot (Spector)	Fall	2009	15.3	19	Book Review
Rauch	Dutch	A-4A 139968 Display at USNA, Annapolis, MD	Fall	2009	15.3	1	Cover
Staff	Editors	Fund-raising Appeal - A-4A 139968 Annapolis	Fall	2009	15.3	2	Restoration
Turpen	Joe	IPMS 2009 Best Skyhawk by Wayne Bowman	Fall	2009	15.3	10	Modeling

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Arnold	Bob	A Trip to the Suburbs	Spring	2010	16.1	9 Combat
Carrara	Dino	ATSI: A-4 Skyhawks for Hire	Spring	2010	16.1	12 Skyhawk Operations
Mersky	Peter	Israeli A-4 Skyhawk Units in Combat (Aloni)	Spring	2010	16.1	20 Book Review
Shipman	Richard	Towing the TDU: The Mission No One Wanted	Spring	2010	16.1	16 Skyhawk Operations
Shlomo	Aloni	Excerpt IDF/AF A-4 Skyhawk Shootdown	Spring	2010	16.1	21 Skyhawk Operations
Snedeker	Sid	A-4B 142112 in Flight From Oshkosh to Waukegan, IL	Spring	2010	16.1	1 Cover
Staff	Editors	Skhawk Study Group: Restoration of WHF A-4B	Spring	2010	16.1	15 Restoration
Turpen	Joe	IPMS 2010 Preview	Spring	2010	16.1	22 Modeling
Woodul	Jack	Doggus Delicti	Spring	2010	16.1	18 Puresome
Filmer	Paul	McDougall Douglas TA-4J First Flight	Summer	2010	16.2	14 Restoration
Filmer	Paul	TA-4 N518TA in Flight Marana, AZ	Summer	2010	16.2	1 Cover
Rauch	Dutch	Aircraft Carriers at War (Holloway)	Summer	2010	16.2	22 Book Review
St. Pierre	Rick	Resurrecting an Angel	Summer	2010	16.2	9 Restoration
Staff	Editors	Skyhawks Are Still Going to Sea	Summer	2010	16.2	20 Allied Operations
Turpen	Joe	VF-126 TA-4J by Ricardo Ramos	Summer	2010	16.2	23 Modeling
Woodul	Jack	A Night on the Town	Summer	2010	16.2	18 Puresome
Young	Lucy	Scooter Soars over Middlebury, Vermont	Summer	2010	16.2	13 Restoration
Crist	Ken	A-4s Over Oshkosh at Airventure 2010	Fall	2010	16.3	1 Cover
Gann	Harry	The First TA-4	Fall	2010	16.3	6 Skyhawk History
Holloway	James L.	Tribute to the Tinker Toy Part I	Fall	2010	16.3	10 Skyhawk History
Kiely	Diej	U.S.Marine Corps Aviation Since 1912 (4th Edition) by Peter Mersky	Fall	2010	16.3	22 Book Review
Turpen	Joe	TA-4J Adversary Model in VC-8 Markings	Fall	2010	16.3	23 Modeling
Williams	Mark	Skyhawks Over Oshkosh	Fall	2010	16.3	16 Skyhawk Restoration
Woodul	Jack	Rockets in the Rain	Fall	2010	16.3	20 Puresome
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Carlson	Ted	Blacksheep Old and New	Spring	2011	17.1	1 Cover
Frommelt	Todd	Skyhawks Still Slipping the Surly Bonds	Spring	2011	17.1	16 Skyhawk Operations
Frommelt	Todd	Centennial Kick Off at NAS North Island	Spring	2011	17.1	20 Skyhawk History
Frommelt	Todd	Israeli Pilot's Last Flight	Spring	2011	17.1	21 Skyhawk News
Holloway	James L.	Tribute to the Tinker Toy Part II	Spring	2011	17.1	8 Skyhawk History
Stanton	D.R. "Duke"	Ah, Memories of the High Jinks	Spring	2011	17.1	15 Skyhawk History
Turpen	Joe	Fujimi 72nd Scale A-4B Maverick Kit	Spring	2011	17.1	21 Modeling
Verhegghen	Robert	A Skyhawk for Belgium	Spring	2011	17.1	12 Skyhawk History
Woodul	Jack	A Near Thing	Spring	2011	17.1	22 Puresome
Dollarhide	Dave	The Dollarhide Log: Restoration of A-4C 149606	Summer	2011	17.2	15 Skyhawk Restoration
Hickerson	Bob	Bury Us Upside Down: The Misty Pilots	Summer	2011	17.2	18 Book Review
Hock	R.G.	Operation Rip Tide 1963	Summer	2011	17.2	12 Skyhawk History
Munro	Pete	Letters from Yankee Station	Summer	2011	17.2	10 Combat
Roth	Jim	Special Pilot	Summer	2011	17.2	16 Skyhawk Operations
Sele	Tim	Build Them Rugged: Ed Heinemann's Vision	Summer	2011	17.2	9 Skyhawk History
Smith	R.G.	A-4 Spotting on the Waist Cat	Summer	2011	17.2	19 R.G.'s Art
Stedman	J.J.	TA-4K 157914 Passes Half Dome in Yosemite National Park	Summer	2011	17.2	1 Cover
Woodul	Jack	Reluctant Shellbacks	Summer	2011	17.2	22 Puresome
Dollarhide	Dave	Skyhawk Ventures A-4C 149606 Takes to the Air	Fall	2011	17.3	1 Cover
Dollarhide	Dave	Skyhawk Ventures A-4C 149606 Takes to the Air	Fall	2011	17.3	9 Skyhawk Restoration
Dollarhide	Dave	AAA Hit Pulling Off Target with Rick Millson	Fall	2011	17.3	11 Skyhawk History
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McBride	J.J.	The Last Combat Cruise of the A-4 Charlies	Fall	2011	17.3	15 Skyhawk History
Powell	Boom	Le Cielfaucou Francais - 1963	Fall	2011	17.3	12 Skyhawk History
Powell	Boom	Triple Sticks by Bernard Fipp	Fall	2011	17.3	18 Book Review
Smith	R.G.	High Flight	Fall	2011	17.3	17 R.G.'s Art
Turpen	Joe	Trumpeter 1/32nd Adversary A-4E Kit	Fall	2011	17.3	19 Modeling
Williams	Mark	Close Only Country in Horse Shoes, Hand Grenades and Nucs	Fall	2011	17.3	14 Skyhawk History
Woodul	Jack	Viva Espana!	Fall	2011	17.3	21 Puresome
Barnes	Jim	Remembering Bob Rahn	Spring	2012	18.1	13 Skyhawk History
Blair	David	Over the Side	Spring	2012	18.1	15 Skyhawk History
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Mersky	Peter	Scooter! The Douglas A-4 Skyhawk Story (Thomason)	Spring	2012	18.1	11 Book Review
Postlethwaite	Mark	1972 Iron Hand Mission (Painting)	Spring	2012	18.1	1 Cover
Sapp	Denny	Reflections - Viet Nam From Then to Now	Spring	2012	18.1	10 Skyhawk History

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Hickerson	Bob	Skyhawks: The History of the RNZAF Skyhawk (Simms & Lee Frampton)	Summer	2012	18.2	21 Book Review
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Simms	Don	RNZAF Skyhawks of Kiwi Red 1988	Summer	2012	18.2	1 Cover
Smith	R.G.	Royal Australian Navy A-4Gs over HMAS Melbourne	Summer	2012	18.2	17 R.G.'s Art
Stafford	Roy	Blues Photo Shoot (almost wipeout)	Summer	2012	18.2	16 TINS
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Turpen	Joe	Skyhawks in Styrene Part II	Summer	2012	18.2	18 Modeling
Woodul	Jack	Buffalo Bill	Summer	2012	18.2	22 Puresome
Cartwright	Allan	Dam Busters Photo Shoot	Fall	2012	18.3	34 Skyhawk History
Dollarhide	Dave	Skyhawks at Oshkosh 2012	Fall	2012	18.3	18 Skyhawk Operations
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Atwell	Gene	A-4s for Malaysia Part II	Winter	2012-13	18.4	11 Skyhawk History
Dollarhide	Dave	Skyhawk's Rocket-Powered Ejection Seat	Winter	2012-13	18.4	14 Skyhawk History
Mersky	Peter	On Heroic Wings: Stories of the DFC (Lanman and Wendling)	Winter	2012-13	18.4	10 Book Review
Smith	R.G.	Marine Tradition	Winter	2012-13	18.4	1 Cover
Smth	R.G.	TA-4 at Point Mugu	Winter	2012-13	18.4	9 R.G.'s Art
Turpen	Joe	Skyhawks in Styrene Part III	Winter	2012-13	18.4	18 Modeling
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Woodul	Jack	The Thrill of the Bagpipes, The Roll of the Drums	Winter	2012-13	18.4	22 Puresome
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Stratton	Richard	Tales of Southeast Asia: The First Day of the Rest of My Life	Spring	2013	19.1	7 Skyhawk History
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McCoy	Earl	Skyhawk Ventures' A-4C Cover Photo	Summer	2013	19.2	1 Cover
Williams	Mark	Northwest Members' Event	Summer	2013	19.2	4 Skhawk History
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Sweeny	Charles	Summer of '72	Summer	2013	19.2	10 Skyhawk History
Williams	Rusty	VMA-214 1965-66: Kaneohe Bay, HI, to Chu Lai, RVN	Summer	2013	19.2	14 Skyhawk History
Umbley	Helmut	Who Packed Your Parachute?	Summer	2013	19.2	18 Skyhawk History
Alcorn	Ray	Tales of Southeast Asia: Don't Ever Miss Lunch!	Summer	2013	19.2	19 Skyhawk History
Schneider	Bob	Restoration of Fanny Hill - H&MS-14 Det N	Summer	2013	19.2	20 Skyhawk Restoration
Verver	Gary	TINS! Splash Coy	Summer	2013	19.2	21 TINS
Woodul	Jack	Keeper of the Flame	Summer	2013	19.2	23 Puresome
Kolasa	Rick	Skyhawk Ventures' A-4C and F4U Corair Heritage Flight	Fall	2013	19.3	1 Cover
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Gray	Stephen	Scooter Memories: Flying the A-4 Skyhawk in Vietnam	Fall	2013	19.3	8 Skyhawk History
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Smith	R.G.	Kuwaiti A-4s Low Over the Desert	Fall	2013	19.3	21 R.G.'s Art
Woodul	Jack	Of Teeny, Tiny, Tinker Tankers	Fall	2013	19.3	23 Puresome
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Bertrand	J.T.	A Trip Back in Time: To Vietnam	Winter	2013-14	19.4	12 Skyhawk History
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Woodul	Jack	The Sound of Round Motors	Spring	2014	20.1 21 Puresome
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Woodul	Jack	Fabled Fifteen: The Pacific War Saga of CAG 15 (Cleaver)	Summer	2014	20.2 11 Book Review
Mares	Ernest	Shooting Stars	Summer	2014	20.2 12 Skyhawk History
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Frommelt	Todd	Skyhawks: Still Slipping the Surly Bonds	Summer	2014	20.2 15 Skyhawk Operations
Woodul	Jack	Hosing Santini	Summer	2014	20.2 22 Puresome
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Tillman	Barrett	The Breaks of Naval Air: The Further Adventures of Youthly Puresome (Woodul)	Winter	014-15	20.4 33 Book Review
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Crebas	Frank	Draken A-4K with F-35 and F-16 at Edwards AFB	Fall	2015	21.3 1 Cover
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Petersen	Stefan	Discovery Air Defence Skyhawk	Summer	2016	22.2 1 Cover
Egen	Bill	Prez Sez Summer 2016	Summer	2016	22.2 2 Prez Sez
Alcorn	Ray	Under the Eye of the Walleye	Summer	2016	22.2 7 Skyhawk History
Petersen	Stefan	In the Red Corner	Summer	2016	22.2 8 Skyhawk Operations
Pridgen	Norm	Midair Over the Target!	Summer	2016	22.2 14 Skyhawk History
Mares	Ernie	Lt. Eward Andrew Dickson, USNR	Summer	2016	22.2 16 Skyhawk History
Frommelt	Todd	USS Midway Museum Meet the Pilots	Summer	2016	22.2 18 Skyhawk Operations
Dollarhide	Dave	TINS - Nugget Night at the Boat	Summer	2016	22.2 20 Skyhawk History
Woodul	Jack	Youthly Puresome - The Shrill of the Bagpipes, The Roll of the Drums	Summer	2016	22.2 22 Puresome
Corsini	Gene	VA-153 A-4E Enroute to NVM Target circa 1967	Fall	2016	22.3 1 Cover
Cole	Pete	Prez Sez Fall 2016	Fall	2016	22.3 2 Prez Sez
Niccoli	Riccardo	Last Flight of the Eagle	Fall	2016	22.3 8 Skyhawk Operations
Carroll	Dennis	Do You Know You Have a Hole in Your Head?	Fall	2016	22.3 12 Skyhawk History
Hanche	Morten	Air Combat in the F-35 - An Update	Fall	2016	22.3 15 Skyhawk Operations
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Simms	Don	Reunion of No 75 Squadron, Royal New Zealand Air Force	Fall	2016	22.3 19 Skyhawk History
Hickerson	Bob	The Last Blacksheep - The Story of Ed Harper	Fall	2016	22.3 20 Book Review
Woodul	Jack	The Early Worm: A Personal Recollection - Youthly Puresome	Fall	2016	22.3 22 Puresome
Terrell	Jerry	VA-15 A-4Bs over the Florida Coast	Winter	2017	22.4 1 Cover
Bertrand	J.T.	The Tomcats of VMA-311 1964 - 1966 Part 1	Winter	2017	22.4 4 Skyhawk History
Bertrand	J.T.	The Tomcats of VMA-311 1964 - 1966 Part 2	Winter	2017	22.4 14 Skyhawk History
Patrick	Pat	Early Skyhawk Flame-out Problems Part 1	Winter	2017	22.4 22 Skyhawk History
Patrick	Pat	Early Skyhawk Flame-out Problems Part 2	Winter	2017	22.4 26 Skyhawk History
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