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1. 2011

1.1 January

January 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-01-04 18:17)



SECRET HEROES





JANUARY 2011 ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONALE NEWS

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-01-04 18:29:58)
Training Program, CIA A-12 pilots. by Frank Murray, A-12 Pilot

Frank Murray - Dutch 20

Introduction: All of the pilots selected to fly the A-12 were active duty Air Force fighter pilots prior to being transferred out of the Air Force to become civilian employees of the CIA. pilots This transfer stipulated that the Air Force pilots were required to resign their officer commissions for the duration of their CIA involvement. This was done with the understanding that they would be reinstated into the Air Force at the end of their contract with the CIA. Their compensation and insurance programs were similar to that afforded the CIA U-2 pilots. Of the eleven pilots selected, six were still on contract with the CIA when the Reconnaissance missions of Operation BlackShield started. The training program was not a rigid curriculum, but was based on typical fighter Squadron transition steps. Of course there were no A-12 experienced instructors at the beginning of the training program in 1962. One

Lockheed Test Pilot formed the core of experience to use as an instructor in the beginning. Particularly, Louis Schalk, the first man to fly the A-12, was the designated "leader of the pack". He was the Chief Lockheed Test Pilot on the A-12 Program, also serving as the first Instructor Pilot of the Blackbird era. A Flight Simulator was not developed for the A-12 program. A Flight Simulator would probably cost more than a production A-12. Early planning did establish a need for a dual control version of the A-12. The fourth A-12 built was a two-seat version with an elevated rear cockpit with almost full duplicate controls. The rear cockpit was used for first flight familiarization trainer for new pilots and as an supervisory location for the Instructor pilot on later training missions. The trainer version of the A-12, like the first built A-12's were equipped with the J-75 afterburning engine. The intended J-58 engine was not ready for flight when the airframes were ready. The trainer was never upgraded to J-58's. The trainer was the only airplane in the world to be equipped with a pair of J-75's. Before any flight training commenced, the airplane engineering ground school must be done to acquaint the trainee with the airplane mechanical systems. Note: the last pilot trained was not selected by the normal system. He was one of the on-site F-101 chase pilots, with additional duties as F-101 instructor pilot and test pilot. Pilot attrition led to a need to train replacements. His selection and training was done a few years after the first group started, hence all of the early group were his instructor cadre. Lots of experience in this group was impressed on the "New Guy" This "New Guy" is the author of this treatise on training, Frank Murray. 1: Ground training. The usual "Ground School" training for the A-12 pilot trainees was mainly performed by the engineers that were on hand at Area 51 to support the Lockheed development/test program. At the same time this training was on-going, the Flight Manual was being developed by a small group of Lockheed engineers and a few of the Air Force pilots that were assigned to perform the Standardization/Training function at the Area. The usual systems operation training was done every day in the early days of the Program. In the early days of the Program, it was not unusual to see "Kelly" Johnson attend the training sessions. "Kelly" of course is the Godfather of the A-12 design. The basic systems of the A-12 were not really new ideas for the pilot trainees, but, some new systems like the Cameras, Defensive Systems (Jammers), Inertial Navigation System (INS), system recorders, and the on-board telemetry system (Birdwatcher) were new items to all of the A-12 pilot trainees. The ground training was on-going after the pilots started flying the airplane. 2: Flight training. Before flight training can commence, the pilot must be fitted and trained to use the Pressure Suit. (See a previous treatise "Suit Up" on the Roadrunners website) The basic flight training program comprised a ten mission transition to the A-12. The experience requirements imposed on the A-12 pilot trainees, made learning to fly the A-12 an academic situation. The A-12 is not a difficult airplane to fly, but it has performance in speed and altitude that is new to even the most experienced fighter pilots. The A-12 Trainer was always used to acquaint the trainee with the flight characteristics, handling qualities, navigation system, air refueling and of course take-off and landing. The flight training regimen follows. Training Mission #1. This mission is a Familiarization flight with the student pilot in the back seat of the A-12 Trainer. The flight demonstrates normal take-off, climb, cruise, navigation, air refueling, flight characteristics with and without Stability Augmentation System (SAS), slow flight, single engine flight characteristics, and normal traffic pattern and touch and go landings followed by a full stop landing with the 40' drag chute. Training Mission #2. This mission is much the same as #1 except that the student pilot is flying from the front seat and he does most of the flying with the Instructor monitoring for safety. Several touch and go landings are made as well as simulated single engine approaches and single engine go-arounds. These followed by a full stop landing using the drag chute. Training Mission #3. This mission has the student pilot again in the front seat, this time flying in his pressure suit. This takes some getting used to due to the limited vision problem caused by the helmet visor and the general limits of mobility imposed by the pressure suit. The flight concentrates on the use of the INS, air refueling and general mission handling while in the pressure suit. The Instructor pilot is in the back seat for safety and evaluation. Training Mission #4. This mission is the first SOLO flight in the A-12 trainer. The back seat is buttoned up and the canopy is locked. The Instructor pilot monitors the flight from the chase F-101 or the

Mobile Tower at the end of the runway. The mission includes preprogrammed INS flight paths with at least two air refuelings. After let down to the home airport, several touch and go landings are made followed by a simulated single engine full stop landing, Training Mission #5. This mission is designed to prepare the student pilot with some of the flight parameters of the single seat A-12 equipped with the J-58 engines. The acceleration maneuver used to efficiently get the A-12 on to high Mach is a key step of training. The A-12 trainer does not have the powerful J-58 engines, but it can be used to demonstrate the flight regime necessary to accelerate the J-58 powered single seat A-12. The Instructor pilot usually flies in the back seat on this mission. Training Mission #6. This mission is a night time training exercise with the student pilot in the pressure suit and the Instructor pilot usually flying in his summer suit (non-pressure). This flight includes INS exercises with air refuelings and practice instrument approaches, and touch and go landings, simulated single engine approaches and a full stop with drag chute landing. Training Mission #7. This mission is the first flight for the student pilot in the single seat J-58 powered A-12. Before making this flight the student was required to observe several starts and launches of this model A-12. The Instructor pilot acts as chase pilot on this mission, flying from the F-101 chase plane from take-off to the landing of this A-12. a-12-ready Of course this is the big transition for the student pilot. A step by step approach is used to get the pilot to the point where he can handle the challenges of this more powerful airplane. On this mission an INS route is flown within the Special Operating Area (SOA) accelerating to approximately Mach 2. This followed by descent to air refueling. After refueling completion the pilot accelerates the airplane again on a track that will exit the SOA above Mach 2, usually leveling off at this speed and flying the INS route, arriving back at the home base after letdown. Normal landing follows with the Instructor pilot observing from the chase position. The A-12 was equipped with canopy mounted over-the-shoulder cameras to provide a record of the cockpit instruments and pilot actions during this mission. The Instructor pilot and student pilot review the footage for clues to pilot actions during critical phases of this flight. Training Mission #8. This mission is much like #7 except that the acceleration/cruise out is allowed to increase to approximately Mach 2.6. The Instructor pilot flies in the chase and provides mission review using the over-the-shoulder camera imagery. Training Mission #9. This mission is like #7 except that the speed/altitude schedule is flown to Mach 3.0. The Instructor pilot performs as in #8. Training Mission #10. This is the "Graduation Mission". Usually includes flying a "hot" leg at Mach 3 + with a refueling following, then another acceleration to speed/altitude followed by a recovery to home base. This completes the normal training regimen. Follow-on training in sensor operation, nighttime operation, ECM training is part of the concurrent operation at the home base. 3: Expanded mission training. After the basic check-out training phase, the new pilot is scheduled to fly local sorties with the rest of the assigned A-12 pilots. These missions varied from simple one toptoff refueling followed by a climbout/cruise at high mach/altitude along one of many routes pre-planned around the Western US. Theses sorties allowed the new pilot to experience the full envelope of the A-12 airplane, climbing to near maximum altitude, turns at maximum altitude/minimum equivalent airspeed. It was that flying in these conditions that the pilot occasionally experienced duct unstarts and the attendant difficulties of flight management. 4: Sensor operations. Up to this point in his training the new pilot had not operated the Sensor systems the A-12 is equipped with. Of course the reason for having the A-12 is to provide carriage of the high resolution cameras over denied territories in adversary countries. The normal operation of the A-12 airplane is relatively simple, fly the airplane to designated places, turn on the camera on cue, then turn it to standby at the end of the photo pass. Sounds simple, but couple this action with responses from the adversary like firing SAM's at you!! This will get your attention. The A-12 was equipped with one high resolution camera designed to take high quality pictures of the target from overhead. Some peripheral coverage is a part of this design but the main reason for being there is to not blink as you pass overhead. The camera systems were exercised on training missions flown over areas of resolution targets, usually painted on rooftops of bases. This exercise is important from a pilot training aspect, but is necessary for quality assurance and training of the camera company personnel. Several camera systems were exercised, each with

unique control panel features. The pilot was well briefed on the operation of each system. Camera system operation was routinely a part of pilot proficiency training. 5: ECM Training. This phase of training was designed to make the pilot aware and responsive to the needs to defend the A-12 while operating over denied territory. The various parts of the ECM suite (Defensive Systems) work in concert to defeat attacks by Surface to Air Missile (SAM) systems. The pilot was trained to use the few indicators that were installed for him to view. The names of the subsystems were cryptic, only explained as to what they were intended to do. A full up training/exercise mission would have the pilot overfly the target area for a photo pass, coupled with an activation of the simulated SAM systems. This action gave the new pilot the opportunity to see what the onboard ECM systems do during an attack. Sadly, not much of this training happened so the pilots had to wait until BlackShield to see the systems work for "REAL". The ECM system displays and controls were sparse, probably due to the CIA reluctance to let the pilot know how the system worked, for security reasons. It did make things simple. 6: Briefings/Debriefings. This phase of training and continuing operations was probably the best thing done to help the development/testing/training programs. Before each mission was flown, the operation staff/training cadre/and the contractor tech reps were present. In the first days of pilot training, the Instructor pilot would describe the mission to be flown. The chase pilot was present at this briefing. A staff officer would lead the briefing, making high notes of the flight area to be used, the refueling area/tanker Locations. The weather conditions for the flight area were described as well as the terminal area. Any contractor special conditions were discussed. In the early days of pilot training, the sensor company tech reps provided valuable insights into operation of their equipment, they were the only source of system knowledge in the early days of OXCART. Post flight training debriefings were an important followup. Many of the A-12 system sub-contractors attended the flight debrief to gain first hand reports of their system performance. The debriefing was usually conducted as soon as the pilot had his pressure suit removed. 7: Corollary training. 7: Corollary training. Several other areas of training were Parasail training conducted to help prepare the new A-12 pilot cope with his mission. Some basic survival training was deemed necessary, such as coping with landing in water while wearing the pressure suit, parachute landing, survival off-the-land, jungle survival, seacoast etc. Some of these training events were fun times, good stuff to know. Other things needed to learn, such as resistance to interrogation, were not so nice to experience...but necessary elements. pilot flight suit training in pool at Groom Lake Water survival training photos by Oxcart Helo pilot - Charlie Trapp The author has the greatest admiration of the people the Agency provided to conduct the Corollary training. They gave of themselves, never really having a good day either. Since this writing was intended to describe the flight training element, all corollary training description was intentionally sparse.

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-01-04 18:42:49)
HISTORY OF HELICOPTER OPS AREA 51, SEPT '62 - JUNE '67 Det 1 1129th USAF Special Activities Squadron By Charlie Trapp, Jr. Chief of Rescue and Survival Branch

Col. Charlie Trapp

There I was sitting in the office of a helicopter rescue detachment in Charleston AFB SC when I got a call from Rescue HQs. "Do you want a job flying an H-43 helo at a classified location somewhere in the USA?" OK, I was looking for some new thing to do so I said yes. I asked our H-43 factory tech rep if he knew where an extra H-43 was located and he told me there was one at Nellis AFB NV .in care of the local rescue unit. My "yes" was a good one. I packed up my family-wife and two kids-and headed out west. I stopped by the helicopter rescue outfit at Nellis and looked at my H-43. The Nellis folks couldn't get it in good flying condition. So, I flew it and confirmed it needed help. I called the Area 51 Command Post to advise that I was in Las Vegas and had a problem. Col. Holbury got on the phone and asked what I needed and why. He said we would be supporting a high altitude construction project and conducting rescue support operations. I recommended that factory maintenance folks and a test pilot come to Nellis and they flew in two days later from the Kaman factory in Connecticut. I was impressed with the level of pull this place had wherever it is!!! I worked with factory reps and our crew chiefs who fixed the helicopter and I flew with the test pilot who gave us info and adjustments

we could make to accommodate high altitude ops. The H-43 was previously used to snag in flight parachute payloads, which probably caused the chopper to be out of whack! I called the command post and told Col Holbury the H-43 was okay. He came to Nellis and we flew the H-43 to the Area. My first landing was on top of Mt. Baldy at 9,000 feet. After he showed me where we were going to do the construction project, we headed to the base and were greeted by the guys when we landed. It seemed like everyone was in a hurry to get us going. So we hurried. We trained fire fighters as aircrew members on how to fight fires with the 1,000-pound fire bottles carried to the fire by the helicopter dropping off the fire bottle and two firemen close to the fire. The helicopter would then hover over the firefighters, cooling the area, and clearing the smoke away while they laid a foam trail to the simulated airframe for the purpose of extracting pilots and crew members from crash sites. Also, we checked them out on hoist operations and other crew duties. We trained our Pararescue jumpers (PJs) as crewmembers and provided a platform to practice parachute jumps. Capt Keith Spencer, Crew Chief, MSgt Walters, and I worked with contractors to plan our Mt. Baldy construction project. The helicopter was the only way to get equipment and people to the mountain top construction site. We set up airborne alert procedures for the first few take-offs and landings of the A-12. Normally, we would be ground alert for A-12 ops and airborne for declared emergency landings. Our rescue and survival branch included pilots, crew chiefs, fire fighters, maintenance folks, and PJs. Our branch ran a survival school for the A-12 pilots and others, which included desert, jungle, seacoasts, and mountain training sites, parasail training at Lake Mead, water survival, and a pistol firing range. We worked with L. A. contractors, PJs and Capt Cravatta's folks on the contents of the A-12 seat survival kit. Capt Cravatta, MSgt Casto, and myself helped a Boulder CO contractor put together a walk-around sleeping bag with overlapping pockets to retain heat. The completed bags were pressure packed to fit in the A-12 survival kit. We flew security checks around the perimeter of the Area. We flew photo and security missions for the Atomic Energy Commission's underground testing events. The Indian Springs helicopters normally supported these tests, but when they were out of commission or transitioning to the new H-43s they asked us to fill in. When the bomb would go off, the ground would rise and then sink in the shape of a large saucer. On one test event, they blew up our access road, which caused us to detour to get to and from work. We also helped check out Indian Springs crews when they received their new H-43s and flew airborne alert for President Kennedy's Air Force One landing in Indian Springs. We provided occasional rescue recovery operations for the Nellis Range aircraft accidents and bailouts. One of our missions was to hover at 13,000 feet with 3 thousand feet of cable holding a metal ball. Guess they wanted a good separation between the helicopter and the ball so they wouldn't cook the crew! It was interesting lowering this ball to a safe landing with help from ground observers 3,000 feet below. The ground folks had trouble seeing the chopper at altitude so I asked "Flash" (MSgt Walters) to make something happen so they could see us. The next day he fixed it. He pressurized a large handheld fire bottle containing oil-ran a tube from it through the clamshell doors and up to the engine tail pipe. We demonstrated it by asking "twice" for a JATO assisted take-off using the taxiway in front of the tower. The tower answered with a questionable "OK, cleared.!!" We flew a few feet above the taxi way to our max speed (a scary 115 knots), hit the fire bottle release, pulled to a steep climb, and voila, thunder birds-a nice smoke trail. No problem seeing us on the next mission. We also picked up 1,000 lb drone pods dropped by parachutes all over the desert valleys and mountains. We picked up the pods with the cargo hook and flew them back to base. After the hook-up, the crew chief climbed up the side of the helicopter to fly back with us. We had to fly back with the smooth side of the pod facing forward. We moved it around while in a hover using the mirror mounted on the nose of the helicopter allowing us to see the hook and position the pod so we wouldn't wobble all over the place during flight. Our crews would train at Lake Mead doing water hoist pick-ups and PJ water jumps. MSgt Casto jumped out of a C-130 at a high altitude to test the A-12 pilots' pressure suit and was awarded a medal for his efforts. Our construction project on Mr. Baldy was a big one. All personnel, equipment, food, water, parts, tower sections, wet cement, conex box, welding equipment, generators, etc., had to be flown to the site by our helicopter. The contractor dug three holes which we filled with 30,000 pounds of wet cement transported by helicopter 1K at a time. The cement was embedded with four good-sized rods used to attach each pole base plate with matching holes. Because of the heavy weight of each of the poles and the high altitude, we had to reduce the fuel load with only the pilot on board. We used a hundred feet of intercom cable so the crew chief could direct the pilot from the ground to raise the poles from the horizontal to the vertical position to place the poles on the concrete bases. Hovering was made difficult with the high-density altitude, winds and poor visual reference to the ground because of the steep sides of mountaintop. Four ground

people tethered the pole with ropes until the bolts could be secured to the base. We were pretty much at the red line for power during the lift. Col Holbury was there to observe the first operation and he was very pleased at what he saw. We replaced the H-43 with a UH-1 Huey because it was faster and we were able to load and unload people and cargo from both sides of the cabin which made our job easier and safer. We maintained both helicopters until the crews were checked out in the UH-1. Both helicopters were used to support many other construction projects throughout the area. Flash and I picked up the UH-1 from the Bell plant in Texas and flew it back to the area. I was in Las Vegas with the UH-1 when I got a call that Walt was missing. I gathered our crew and a Nellis flight surgeon and started the search. Dark mountain terrain and high winds made it difficult. The H-43 searched from the Area. We called off search because the H-43 was low on fuel and there was no sign of a fire nor were emergency radio signals heard. We rescheduled a first light ops for the next day. We took an F-105 pilot and flight surgeon with us. The F-105 pilot thought he knew the approximate crash location. We flew the UH-1 to the area and found the A-12 very soon after arriving. The drag chute was deployed. The PJs were deployed to search the area and the aircraft, and discovered that the ejection seat and Walt were missing. We searched the rest of the day without success. We planned the next day's search with several agencies. We started at the point of impact and searched back along the flight path. My UH-1 crew flew past Walt that morning and did not see him due to shadows caused by the low sun angle. Later in the day, the C-47 guys saw a sun reflection from his suit or visor and they directed us to the site where we landed and picked up Walt. He was still in his ejection seat. We took him to Nellis and to his family. It was an honor to find and take Walt home to his family. Closure is so important to the families. Not finding him would not have been a good thing. We later returned to search for the canopy and camera—it took 15 days to find them. I don't remember who recovered them. We re-supplied search parties with food, drinks, and equipment. There were horses involved in the search as well. Our crews and searchers put in long days supporting a very important effort. A month or two before all this happened, the PJs and I took Walt and other pilots to Fort Myers FL for jungle and sea coast survival training. The only transport to the training site was by boat. The guys had to survive on land vegetation, fish, and turtles for several days. I provided the psychological stress by announcing at the end of each day that I was leaving for the night for a shower, a few drinks, and a steak dinner and they weren't. I had to run to the boat to avoid harm. All was forgotten when we brought a case of cold beer for the last night! Our guys spent a lot of time in the Area pool testing equipment pressure suits, floatation devices and survival procedures with the pilots. Someone suggested parasail training so Charlie Cravatta, Earl Casto, and I went to Randolph AFB TX for ground parasail training and on to Pensacola for water training with the Navy. We learned how to run parasail ops. We got the equipment and arranged with the Coast Guard at Lake Mead to use their boat. If the winds were less than five knots, the boat's slow acceleration made the launch difficult. Okay, so we dragged a few guys in the water before getting airborne. A five to ten knot wind was perfect. We didn't hurt or lose anyone, but we may have scared a few guys. Our first few launches, we used staff pilots as test dummies before launching the A-12 pilots. Just prior to the first ride while hooking up the pilots, we saw a lot of deer-in-the-headlight looks!!! I had left the area prior to all the fun with the pressure suits and the new boat. When we first arrived at Area 51, we were asked to be airborne for A-12 take-offs and landings. After a while it was decided that the A-12 was reliable enough so we could stand on ground alert. Although a couple of years later, one A-12 crashed on take-off and another crashed on final. Both pilots survived. Bill Park pulled off a low altitude ejection seldom seen!! We had only two helicopter pilots for a while so we didn't always get home every weekend and very few times during the week. We wouldn't know until late Friday if we had to stick around for a Saturday A-12 flight. We did however get three more pilots, Angle, Pinaud, and Scamardo. Spencer left after three years, became a Continental airline captain, and then retired. Ted Angle left the Area sometime after June '67 and became a test pilot at Edwards where he flew the U-2 and several other aircraft. Joe Pinaud became a logistician and retired from Warner Robbins AFB (deceased 2009). Don't know what happened to Sam Scamardo. The extra pilots made more time to work on all the projects, fly VIPs and emergency missions in the U-3B, C-180, and C-210. For example, I flew Kelly Johnson, Jim Irwin (Moon guy), and many other VIPs to Burbank, Van Nuys, LAX, Edwards AFB, and Las Vegas. We all kept in shape by using the sports facility, which included a basketball court, squash courts, bowling alley, swimming pool, and a hand made three-hole golf course. We ate very well in our mess hall. Our great cook, Murphy Green, had steak night, Mexican night, etc. We enjoyed outstanding cheeseburgers during our poker games. The first guy to fold in the "cheeseburger game" had to pick-up and deliver them. Big pots formed-nobody

wanted to fold and have to pick-up the burgers. I got called out of these games several times at 10 or 11 p.m. to fly folks with emergency problems to L.A. Seems nobody above the rank of captain could make the trip! I really didn't mind because it was a good thing to do. Some of us were lucky enough to officiate at the PGA Tournament of Champions hosted by The Desert Inn. We took turns escorting golfers from tee to green. I walked with Nicholas, Palmer, Casper, Rodriguez, Snead, and others. I was within a few feet of them for every shot and comment. It was pretty special. We were able to play free golf anytime at The Desert Inn, Tropicana, and Sahara courses. Denny Sullivan and I had many very competitive rounds of golf together (squash court also). I tried to find something he didn't excel at and couldn't!! Sgt. Lin Kelly (great guy) set all this up with a colonel that worked at the Atomic Test Site. I was a check pilot in the H-43, UH-1, U-3B, C-180, C-210, and co-pilot on the C-130. Other helicopter pilots flew some of these missions. When the Cessna Company delivered a new C-210 to Las Vegas, LtC (Black Bart) Barrett asked me to pick it up, fly it to the Area, and checkout other pilots. I picked up the keys, found the new airplane, and checked myself out on the way back to the ranch. I got some stick time in the A-12 trainer with Burgie who wouldn't let me refuel or land. After all, I let him land my H-43 with very close supervision. The C-130 guys needed a co-pilot so I got a local check out and flew a lot of missions with them. They were a fun and generous crew. I was able to fly pilot seat on most flights, which was helpful years later when I had a local check out in the HC-130 rescue tanker. I was very proud of our outstanding rescue folks—pilots, firefighters, PJs, crew chiefs, and maintenance guys. We were asked to do a lot of varied projects, some of which took a lot of effort and skill to pull off. The pilots had to be very skilled at landing, hovering, and balancing the helicopter while loading and off loading sometimes while one skid or wheel was on the ground or a rock while the other skid or wheel was in the air. Our aircrews were awarded ten Air Medals and several Air Force Commendation Medals for meritorious achievements while participating in aerial flights at the ranch. The maintenance guys and crew chiefs kept these aircraft in great shape and maintained a very high in commission rate. The aircraft were kept in alert status so we could readily respond to any contingency in minimum of time. The personnel at Area 51 were exceptional. They all worked hard to make the A-12 project successful. They also supported our branch and were very responsive to our needs and requests and did not get in the way and try to micro manage our projects. Our two bosses, Colonels Slip Slater and Bob Holbury did a great job of keeping all of us in check. Colonel Slater always displayed an exceptional sense of humor. Finally, don't forget our families. Their support and understanding that we were doing something very important even though we couldn't tell them what it was some how justified our being away from home so much and helped us do our job and deal with the separation. We were lucky to be home most weekends. In my case, during my five-year assignment I was home on most weekends and was able to take a rare week or two of leave at a time because I couldn't be away from the ranch too long—there was too much going on. My wife (at the time) did an outstanding job maintaining our home fires and raising three young children (one being born in 1964). Rescue and survival branch members:

Helicopter Pilots PJs Crew Chiefs Firefighters
Charlie Trapp Earl Casto Bill (Flash) Walters Unknown
Keith Spencer Gordon Bailey Tyndal
Ted Angle Fred Schneider McCloud
Joe Pinaud Coy Staggs Baker
Sam Scamardo Thomas

I arrived as a Captain in September 1962, promoted to Major in April 1967, and departed Area 51 in June of 1967. I went on to become commander of seven Air Force units. I was the 3rd Air Rescue Group Commander and on the staff of USSAG/7th AF staff in SEA 1975 at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Base where we planned and participated in the evacuation of 287 non-combatants from the embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and the Ambassador and 6,000 non-combatants from Saigon. Two Air Force helicopter units, four of my staff, and myself were deployed out of Thailand to the Aircraft Carrier Midway where we helped plan and execute the evacuation of the non-combatants. Our helicopters also participated in the recovery of the United States civilian container ship Mayaquez from the Cambodians. I commanded two flying squadrons, the 41st ARRSq (HH-53s and HC-130s) and the 37th ARRSq (52 UH-1Fs, 105 pilots, and 275 enlisted); the 450 man 11th ARRS Consolidated Maintenance Squadron; and three HH-43 local base rescue units (two in SEA and one in the conus). Sorry that I could not remember some of the names of our crew members or if I missed some names. Hey, it was 43 years ago. If someone knows who is missing, let me or T.D. Barnes know and we'll add

the missing names. If anyone can add to this history, especially after I left Area 51 in 1967, please send it to T. D. Barnes and info me. Charles E. Trapp, Jr. Colonel, USAF Retired (1982) [1] Major Trapp being presented Air Medal for his operations on Mt. Baldy. Burt Barrett presenting medal and Ray Schrecengost looking on [2] Capt. Trapp - H-43B Helo [3] Capt. Trapp - H-43B Helo [4] A-12 Pilot Ken Collins hanging above base pool prior to dunking. Capt Trapp on diving board with Capt. Cravada's suit tech, name unknown [5] Testing conex box tech flight prior to placing on Mt. Baldy Major Trapp being presented Air Medal for his operations on Mt. Baldy. Burt Barrett presenting medal and Ray Schrecengost looking on Capt. Trapp - H-43B Helo Capt. Trapp - H-43B Helo A-12 Pilot Ken Collins hanging above base pool prior to dunking. Capt Trapp on diving board with Capt. Cravada's suit tech, name unknown Testing conex box tech flight prior to placing on Mt. Baldy [6] Testing hook-up of conex box tech flight prior to placing on Mt. Baldy [7] Testing lift-off conex box tech flight prior to placing on Mt. Baldy [8] Mt. Baldy construction project [9] Mt. Baldy construction project [10] Site of Mt. Baldy construction project Testing hook-up of conex box tech flight prior to placing on Mt. Baldy Testing lift-off conex box tech flight prior to placing on Mt. Baldy Mt. Baldy construction project Mt. Baldy construction project Site of Mt. Baldy construction project [11] H-43B in flight [12] Ground view Mt. Baldy construction project [13] Helo view Mt. Baldy construction project [14] H-43B in flight Mt. Baldy [15] H-43B in flight Mt. Baldy H-43B in flight Ground View Mt. Baldy construction project Helo view Mt. Baldy construction project H-43B in flight Mt. Baldy H-43B in flight Mt. Baldy [16] Tower construction Mt. Baldy [17] Construction project [18] UH-1F construction project [19] H43B practice crew extraction from crash site - rotor wash cools area, spreads foam and clears away smoke [20] H-43B crew members Capt. Keith Spencer, Msgt Bill (flash) Walters, and two airborne fire fighters (names unknown) Tower construction Mt. Baldy Construction project UH-1F construction project H43B practice crew extraction from crash site - rotor wash cools area, spreads foam and clears away smoke H-43B crew members Capt. Keith Spencer, Msgt Bill (flash) Walters, and two airborne fire fighters (names unknown) [21] Parasail launches at Lake Mead [22] Parasail launches at Lake Mead [23] U-3B C-210 support aircraft (missing C-180 and C-130). Capt. Trapp was checked out in all of them [24] UH1F crew members Captains Joe Pinaud, Ted Angle, P.Js. MSgts Coy Staggs, (Beetle) Bailey; Tech Sgt Schnieder, Flt Engineer Sgt Baker, Flash Walters and unknown fire fighter. Parasail launches at Lake Mead Parasail launches at Lake Mead U-3B C-210 support aircraft (missing C-180 and C-130). Capt. Trapp was checked out in all of them UH1F crew members Captains Joe Pinaud, Ted Angle, P.Js. MSgts Coy Staggs, (Beetle) Bailey; Tech Sgt Schnieder, Flt Engineer Sgt Baker, Flash Walters and unknown fire fighter. A-12 Project Pilot Frank Murray adds: Once upon a time the powers that be in Ops at the Area decided that they ought to let our lead helicopter pilot check out in the T Bird (T-33) Not only that, they picked Frankie to be Charlie's Instructor Pilot. So I schooled Charlie on the airplane systems of the T Bird from the pilots manual. Then we went down to the ramp and stuffed Charlie in the back seat for a familiarization ride. He did well handling the airplane so the next ride was to be in the front seat. Boy, we had to grease his hips to get him into the front of this little airplane. I supervised his start and climbed in the back for his first front seat ride. All went fairly well with him doing all the flying, but when we got to looking at him in that seat it was apparent that on an ejection he would probably leave his knees and elbows in the cockpit. Just way too much man in the little T Bird front cockpit. So we gave up that effort on the spot. He probably would have fit OK in the F-101, but no one pursued that. If they had I bet I would have been his Instructor there too. This guy has great hands but ya gotta have the right size airplane for him to fly!! He would have had a size problem in the A-12, it was made for much smaller build guys. Size limit for flying the A-12 was 6' and 170 #. Just thought some of the people might like to know that we did try to let him fly other things up there. Charlie Trapp adds: Frank, remember we talked about all this in flight after about an hour. We called ahead to have Cravottas's folks meet us when we landed. They did some measurements an calculations and we all agreed I should get out of the T- 33 while it was still on the ground!!! Charlie.

2. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_bg.jpg
3. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_capt_h43b.jpg
4. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_collins.jpg
5. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_conex.jpg
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19. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_crew_extraction.jpg
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23. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_u3b_c210.jpg
24. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_uh1f_crew.jpg

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-01-04 18:54:32)

The CIA Lake Mead Parasail Exercise

Trapp Charlie Trapp recalls: Our rescue-survival section tested the suits in the area pool. (A-12 pilot Ken Collins shown in the pool at ``Sam's Place'' Trapp is talking to one of the assistants) Casto jumped out of our C-130 pressurized at high altitude, and during our parasail program at Lake Meade. We did a lot of things with our helicopters from construction, radar testing, and recovery of high value items dropped from the A-12. We ran a pistol range and survival training in Florida. Developed the walk-around sleeping bags. Helped make up the survival kits for the A-12, and a bunch of other stuff like flying support in the C-180, U3B, C-210, H43, UH1F and the C-130. [tn_trapp_collins_jpg.jpg] We also stood alert for all test flights with a fire bottle and firemen along with PJs with the H43 and UH1F. Also, they somehow found me to fly LATE night emergency flights to Burbank in the U3B and C-210. When Colonel Slater decided to conduct water survival evaluation and training for the

[tn_trapp_parasail21_jpg.jpg] A-12 pilots at Lake Mead, myself, Castro and Bailey set up the project with the U.S. Coast Guard assigned to Lake Mead. Col. Slater had the Coast Guard set up a secure area for the Oxcart projects pilots at Groom Lake to practice water survival in their flight suits. Arrangements were made for each of the pilots to be taken aloft on a parasail pulled by a Boston Whaler.

[slater_bio.jpg] Col. Hugh ``Slip'' Slater recalls that he went first and didn't get any water in the suit. Dennis Sullivan went second and he too remained dry.

After that the boondoggle went to hell due to high winds preventing the little Boston Whalers from keeping up. Layton's helmet filled with water, causing him to think he was still under water. Frank Murray kind of slithered off to one side while Layton floundered around with his helmet full of water, and Mele had a hard time deflating the chute. Slater canceled the exercise when the Whalers started having a hard time getting to the guys because the water had gotten rougher.

From Frank Murray: Sad to say I was one of the poor guys that endured the Pressure Frank Murray Suit/parasail exhibition in Lake Mead in 1966 I think.. I am not sure how many of the Project Pilots did the thing at the Lake.. It is no easy trick to get airborne on the Parasail with the full pressure suit on complete with survival kit and the parasail harness.. On one attempt I got drug on the rocky shoreline, on another I got drug through the water with a collapsed parasail, damn near drowned me. I was happy to see that effort done away with. It is like practicing getting hungry, like they do in the various survival schools I have attended over the years. I do remember that the Coast Guard furnished the boat used to get us up. I did get one successful launch and carry up to release altitude.. After that I was not going to do that again..
Nuf said, Frank

CAPTION:

Collins Layton Vojvodich
Ken Collins Jack Layton Mele Vojvodich

Dennis Sullivan recalls: I recall the parasail operation. I had my own boat and drove out to the bay where the parasailing was to take place. As I remember it, I believe I was Sullivan the first to go. There was little or no wind and in the pressure suit, the boat pulled me off the beach and into the air with no problem. When they released the rope I floated down and released the chute when I hit the water. The boat was there immediately and I had no problems so they loaded me up and hauled me in. Mele went shortly after. He went up OK but the old chute we were using had the stitching come loose on one riser. When they released Mele he sort of spun in, hit the water pretty hard and darn near drowned before he finally came up. I think the rest if it went OK. About that time the wind came up and the boat trip back in was pretty rough.

Aviation News January 6, 2011 :: N8JW (2011-01-06 01:55:43)

[...] are low. That begs the question: Is the Golden Age of air travel behind us, or are we in it? January 2011 Roadrunner News from Roadrunners of Groom Lake Museum adds Russian fighter aircraft - Tampa Bay Newspapers | At [...]

1.2 February

February 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-02-24 15:13)



SECRET HEROES





FEBRUARY 2011 ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONALE NEWS

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-02-24 15:17:43)

Suzi 2-24-2011 - The Roadrunners received devastating news this morning that Suzi Amundson Rogers, age 53, suffered a fatal aneurism. Suzi was the daughter of Col. Maynard "AM" Amundson, founder of Roadrunners Internationale and Deputy Commander of the 1129th Special Activities Squadron at Groom Lake during CIA Project OXCART and Kadena during the operational phase codenamed Operation BLACKSHIELD. The demise of Suzi hits the Roadrunner family especially hard as she and her husband, Lt. Col. Jack Rogers, also worked at Groom Lake and remained close to Roadrunners Slip Slater - 1129th commander, Roger Anderson with the 1129th, and RI President TD Barnes whose daughter worked with Suzi. Barnes reports recently contacting Suzi, residing in San Antonio, Texas, concerning the Roadrunner reunion this October where honoring her father and 1129th commanders BGen Robert Holbury and Col. Hugh Slater is the theme. Suzi is survived by 2 sons, 4 brothers, and a sister. Services will most likely be conducted at the Boulder City, Nevada Veterans Cemetery at a date to be announced on the Roadrunner website along with other details as they become available.

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-02-24 15:19:53)

2-24-2011 - Final Flight of Hervey Stockman, First American Pilot to Fly a Spy Plane over Leningrad
Hervey Stockman Hervey Stockman (Col. USAF, retired), 88, a long-time resident of Four Hills in Albuquerque, passed away at The Montebello nursing facility on February 22, 2011. He was preceded in death in May 2008 by his wife of 64 years, Sally. Hervey Stockman, born in Englewood, NJ., leaves behind a legacy of being the first man to pilot a dedicated spy plane over Leningrad. On 4 July 1956, Harvey Stockman flew operational U-2 mission in Art #347 (#6680). Taking the Lockheed U-2 into Communist territory in the middle of the Cold War, Stockman was able to collect data on the USSR while evading MiGs trying to intercept him. Stockman also happened to be the uncle of Giz reader Willy Pell, who has graciously shared some personal anecdotes told to him by Stockman.

Hervey was one of the six pilots who successfully completed conversion onto the U-2 at The Ranch (aka Watertown Strip, later aka Groom Lake) between January and April 1956. They deployed to the UK as part of the CIA's Detachment A in early May 1956, but moved on to Germany for political reasons six weeks later. On 20 June, Carl Overstreet took off from Wiesbaden on the first operational mission, which flew over East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland. The flight went well, and served as a test for the new film and ELINT processing and exploitation arrangements that had been set up. On 2 July, pilots Jake Kratt and Glen Dunaway flew two more missions over Eastern Europe, covering a lot more territory. But the CIA was obliged to return to the White House for permission to fly over the Soviet Union itself. This was because US Air Force chief of staff Gen Nathan Twining was in Moscow as a guest of the USSR in late June. He was invited to view the annual Soviet flypast over Tushino airport, and saw a formation of three Bison long-range bombers. This was the very type that was causing concern to US strategists, who feared that the Soviets had opened up a 'bomber gap.' On 3 July there was a top-level discussion in the White House, resulting in Presidential approval to start flying over the Soviet Union itself. Hervey was the next pilot 'in the barrel' for an operational mission, and so he was the one who headed up the Baltic Coast of East Germany and Poland and into the western USSR on the very next day - yes, US Independence Day. The rest, as they say, is history.

According to the CIA, Stockman began his career flying combat missions as an Air Force pilot in World War II. He left Princeton University to be a fighter pilot in the Army Air Corps during WWII. He flew P-51 Mustangs out of England, including interdiction and air-superiority over Normandy on D-Day. After the war he went to school for industrial design and became an automotive designer for GM, attending Pratt Institute to become a designer in the Cadillac division of General Motors. But after the Cold War ramped up in the 50s, Hervey returned to active duty in the USAF, sampling the radiation debris from nuclear tests in the Pacific.

When he returned to active duty, Lockheed was finishing up work on the first purpose-built spy plane, the U-2, an aircraft capable of flying at an altitude of up to 70,000 feet while maintaining subsonic speeds. It can embark on missions lasting over eight hours. However, because of its light weight and glider-esque design, the U-2 is extremely difficult to pilot.

Because of his experience flying fighter planes (more than 65 missions), the Air Force considered Stockman a suitable candidate to carry out the first U-2 mission in Soviet territory. When Stockman embarked from West Germany on July 4, 1956, he took the U-2 over the Belarus border, passing through Poland and East Germany in the process. Once in Belarus, Stockman piloted the plane over bomber bases and naval shipyards in Minsk and Leningrad before turning the plane around and heading back to safe skies. In the process, the Soviets were able to track Stockman, but the MiG fighters were not able to locate and intercept the U-2.

Here's what Pell had to say about Stockman's flight:

The first U2 flight took place on the 4th of July which was also his birthday. He bore no U.S. markings or identification, and was ordered to eat a cyanide pill if he had to eject. The Russians had him on radar the whole length of the Soviet Union but the U-2 was too high to hit. When he landed, his fuel tank was crushed from wind (the U-2 was basically made of tinfoil), and it leaked gas all over the

runway. The runway crew tried to drag him out of the plane before it caught fire and he would not move until he filled out his flight log. "I just flew the length of the Soviet Union," he said, "I'm not concerned about a leaky gas tank."

Between 1956 and 1958, he served in the first cadre of U-2 pilots in Europe and was the first American to fly over Russia on July 4, 1956. Ten years later, in Vietnam, Hervey flew F-4 Phantoms out of Da Nang, primarily in support of tactical air strikes. On June 11, 1967, he and Ron Webb, his back-seater, were captured by the North Vietnamese after their aircraft collided with another American plane over Hanoi. He was held in solitary confinement for 18 months and made friends with John McCain:

He was tortured every day by a guy they named, "Big Ug." Since he was the commanding officer, he was tortured the most. For 18 months he lived in solitary confinement and as he says, "lost his humanity." Eventually he was put back in a normal cell and some young private nursed him back to life. To remember how to read and write they made books out of t-shirts and underwear. To entertain the men he had contests to see which pilot had the highest ejection, the lowest ejection, the fastest ejection and the slowest ejection. They communicated these stats through morse code on the plumbing.

After 5 years as a POW, Hervey returned to his beloved Sally in April 1973. When he got back to the states he held no grudge against the Vietnamese. He said something like, "It was a war, what do you expect?" I think the only person he despised was Jane Fonda.

After he was released from the prison camp, he finished out his military career working for NATO and the Air Force. Following his last tour of duty in AFTEC at Kirkland AFB, he retired in 1978 with the rank of colonel to enjoy family, friends, and golf. His skill and courage have been recognized through numerous awards and commendations, including the Silver Star (twice), the Legion of Merit (twice), and the Distinguished Flying Cross (twice). Meanwhile, the Lockheed U-2 was used in CIA missions until the mid-70s and is still in use by the Air Force today.

He is survived by two brothers, Henry (Locust Valley, NY) and John (Morristown, NJ); and his sister, Pamela Proctor (Rowayton, CT). His son, Hervey, Jr. and daughter-in-law, Dyson, live in Delray Beach, FL and Baltimore, MD. He has three grandchildren, Allison, Robert, and Charles.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated for Hervey on Wednesday, March 2, 2011 at 3:00 pm at Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Church 811 Guymas Pl. NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108. Private burial, with military honors, will take place at Santa Fe National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Hervey's name to El Rancho de las Golondrinas (www.golondrinas.org) or the charity of your choice.

Please visit our online guestbook for Hervey at RememberTheirStory.com FRENCH 10500 Lomas Blvd. NE (505) 275-3500

Last month Hervey's memories of Groom Lake were posted at:[#](http://area51specialprojects.com/area51sp_blog/?p=195)

Rest in peace, Hervey Stockman.

SALLY STOCKMAN

Sarah Arkell Stockman (Sally), a longtime resident of Four Hills, Albuquerque, died in the early afternoon of May 7, 2008, from lung cancer. Her husband, Hervey, was at her bedside. Her last days were under the gentle care of the staff at Lovelace Hospital and the love of her extended family. All who knew her adored her. Sally was born on January 16, 1923 in Canajoharie, NY. She went to Sarah Lawrence and continued her education through avid reading. Sally enjoyed sports throughout her life. She had a longtime attachment to the

game of golf as a participant and spectator. She had a deep affection for sports commentators on both sides of the pond. Our house was alive with talk of golf, baseball, and, begrudgingly, basketball. Sally had busy hands. She painted landscapes and produced award-winning embroidery in mixed media found in shops along our travels. She looked forward to her weekly bridge games. Sally loved dogs, particularly Keeshounds, a breed that she was given in Philadelphia nearly forty years ago. Philanthropy became a major activity in the last decade of her life. Sally established the Stockman Family Foundation and its support of art conservation. She delighted in the success of the foundation and the letters of thanks from the recipients, including many New Mexico art museums and conservation programs. From a small beginning, the foundation has become one of the larger art conservation supporters in the country. Sally is survived by her husband, Hervey, her son, Hervey Jr. "Peter" (Baltimore) and wife, Dyson; and three grandchildren: Allison (Washington DC), Robert (Baltimore), and Charles (Seattle).

1. http://area51specialprojects.com/area51sp_blog/?p=195

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-02-24 16:21:14)

THE F-101s OF GROOM LAKE BY DON DONOHUE

Chief Tac Ops & Tng - 475 TFW

xx

"I arrived @ the Ranch in Feb 62 as maintenance officer and part of the support fleet consisting of 2 F101B's modified for Boom Refueling , one T33 , one H-43 and one C180 used in the Bay of Pigs. The maintenance techs had no F-101 experience.

I was the only one w/F-101 experience (Maintenance & Flying). Colonel Bob Holbury, Doug Nelson & Ray Haupt went to SC for 25 hrs of F-101 time. They brought Harold Burgeson, their instructor back w/them. I reviewed ejection procedures before the FCF.

I set up major maintenance support at Ogden for the F101's, T-33 and H-43. Warner Robins was used for the C-130. The F-101's had flown 192 straight sorties when Doug Nelson aborted the day (30-40) Congressman was in to see a flight. JFK flew into Indian Springs & then to the Area to see the A-12.

Nellis did not have a rescue copter so we brought ours to Indian Springs for support. We saw him deplane from Air Force One. Gen Lemay flew in on a C-135 to see an Article during a short stop on his way to Alaska for Fishing. I boomed the Base the 1st time they were working w/Ski. Scared the fuel folks - ask Harry.

One day the fellow who ran the Snack Bar broke down on the back road from Alamo. I was flying a T-33 & it took 2 passes to get him out from under the hood to wave. I called Security & monitored him until they arrived. That was good for a 6 Pak.

A B-58 from Carswell flew thru the Area when I was on a 101 flight. The Tower, the A/C, & I intercepted, identified, and got his attention with a burner pull-up from underneath across his nose. He was met by Security when he landed in Texas.

Two National Guard F-100's made low pass when the Article was out. The Tower identified, coordinated tracking, and had them met when they landed at Luke. Col Holbury & Charlie Whire landed about 30 minutes behind the 100's. After being locked up on landing and then debriefed by a Full Colonel & a Spook, they almost forgot their names.

Early on we were scheduled for a Saturday AM flight. We were told to stay inside until a Russian Sputnik, scheduled to launch at 0730 hours, was established in orbit so we could have a window. At 0700 we were cleared to go outside because the Sputnik aborted. Not bad Intel!!

I was first chase on Ken Collins flight when he ejected from Article 123. We flew a lot of flights w/an empty back seat. I always had an open Invitation 4 Pax. George, our Fire Chief, kept saying he wanted to fly.

One day I was going on a chase mission and had one engine started when he dove up, jumped out of his truck w/a parachute and helmet, and said he wanted to go. The Ground Crew got him strapped in & then I had to hurry 4 TO. As we taxied out, I asked if he was checked out on the Seat. He answered, " We weren't planning on using it, were we". I briefed him on the Pins & seat operation on the way to TO. He enjoyed a 2 1/2 hr Chase, Refueling Mission.

- On the Lighter side , I believe Tues was the REECO day for watering down the Dust.. We were in the middle of a Rain Storm when our ADF went off the Air. The Driver of the Water Truck hit the station because he could not see in the Rain.

- Early on, we had a movie for entertainment. Capt Courages w/ Freddy Bartholomew contributed to the Build-up of House 6.

-Some Poles, on top of Baldy, were set up by our H43. The H43 would hold the Pole upright while the people on the ground dropped the Bolts in place -@ 10,000ft.

- The day JFK was assassinated, I was on the Lake digging out a sunken 101. (No comment on cause of Burial) I do not remember who came out to tell us of the assassination. We were told to go home & we would be called "if" we were going to continue the Program. Lyndon B was not briefed on the Program & had to approve the continuation.

- A lot of interesting Chase Flights;

!st Flt of Lou

1st Flt of Bill Parks

Flt w/1xJ58 & then w/2x J58's

Due to lack of Instruments, early on weather set in & it was necessary to Escort Lou in from Alamo & drops him off for landing. I went around, landed, & flamed out on the Roll out. That is when Lou said you Chase Guys have the Dangerous Jobs.

Another item I forgot was the T-33 Tanker Flight to Wright-Patterson. Back Seat removed, (#) 5 gal cans of SK-1 strapped in, & a Flight where I was not allowed to leave the Aircraft until I delivered the Fuel to WP. That is not a non-stopper.

- Ops came up w/a 101 Profile @ 50,000 ft. Another Let Don try it .To keep from going Supersonic or Stalling was about a 5kt difference. I kept lowering the Altitude. It was comfortable @ 41,000ft so even SAC Pilots could handle it.

- At lunch 1 day, Cols Holbury & Nelson told me about a Movie they saw on a X/C to DC. I said that confirms what Bomber Pilots do X/C. I had to leave the Mess Hall to keep from discussing my comment.

- Col Holbury liked to fly Formation. I would always fly his Wing. 1 day he said he would like to fly my Wing .I told him I could not do it. In answer to Y, I told him my mother told me to fly low, slow, keep the nose hi in the turns & don't let Cols get behind you. Our last Formation Flt.

- When Underground Test "SUDAN" vented, we were required to Evacuate & commute thru Alamo for a couple of weeks. When we were permitted to go thru the Test Site, w were checked before entering, require to drive closed up no air or open Windows. When we got to the other side, we were again checked, washed down, & checked again before continuing w/air.

When we 1st arrived, our Wives had only a DC no. to call to get in touch . Shortly, they were briefed on location & given Ph Nos.

- It was hard for my Wife who had four sons 4 Company because she never knew where I was located. Nellis has an accident, 123, & I do not get home for 4+ wks. Every time Nellis had an Accident, She wandered until I checked in.

Famed Cold War Pilot Dies | UFO Parts (2011-02-25 08:41:33)

[...] friend and fellow Groom Lake veteran T.D. Barnes wrote a more comprehensive bio, which can be read here. Tagged with: Area 51 blog comments powered by Disqus [...]

Chris Pocock (2011-03-02 09:04:57)

QUOTE The death of Hervey Stockman and correspondence in the last newsletter regarding the Greek pilots who might have trained on the U-2 in 1956 prompts me to offer a few comments. Hervey was one of the six pilots who successfully completed conversion onto the U-2 at The Ranch (aka Watertown Strip, later aka Groom Lake) between January and April 1956. They deployed to the UK as part of the CIA's Detachment A in early May 1956, but moved on to Germany for political reasons six weeks later. On 20 June, Carl Overstreet took off from Wiesbaden on the first operational mission, which flew over East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland. The flight went well, and served as a test for the new film and ELINT processing and exploitation arrangements that had been set up. On 2 July, pilots Jake Kratt and Glen Dunaway flew two more missions over Eastern Europe, covering a lot more territory. But the CIA was obliged to return to the White House for permission to fly over the Soviet Union itself. This was because US Air Force chief of staff Gen Nathan Twining was in Moscow as a guest of the USSR in late June. He was invited to view the annual Soviet flypast over Tushino airport, and saw a formation of three Bison long-range bombers. This was the very type that was causing concern to US strategists, who feared that the Soviets had opened up a 'bomber gap.' On 3 July there was a top-level discussion in the White House, resulting in Presidentail approval to start flying over the Soviet Union itself. Hervey was the next pilot 'in the barrel' for an operational mission, and so he was the one who headed up the Baltic Coast of East Germany and Poland and into the western USSR on the very next day - yes, US Independence Day. The rest, as they say, is history. Regarding the Greek pilots. The CIA had already been using 'mercenaries' from Greece and Poland to fly covert missions over Eastern Europe in C-47s, dropping agents who might gather intelligence or stir rebellion in the Soviet-controlled territories. Headquarters evidently thought it would be a good idea to also have 'deniable' pilots available for U-2 missions. But as previously related in these pages by Bob Murphy and Lou Setter, their language

and flying skills were judged inadequate by the instructor group at The Ranch. I have told the story of the early U-2 overflights in my book, and also mentioned the Greek pilots. Since writing 50 YEARS OF THE U-2, I have learned that the Greek pilots were recruited as early as June 1955. Eight of them completed the USAF's T-33 jet conversion course in late December 1955, but only four of them moved on to The Ranch. UNQUOTE Chris Pocock author, 50 YEARS OF THE U-2 www.schifferbooks.com

1.3 March

March 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-03-02 08:59)



SECRET HEROES



MARCH 2011 ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONALE NEWS

Chris Pocock (2011-03-02 11:46:25)

Pocock Roadrunners Internationale President T.D. Barnes asked me to clarify the flight information of the first six U-2 pilots as the U.S. commenced overflights of the Soviet Union. The death of Hervey Stockman and correspondence in the last newsletter regarding the Greek pilots who might have trained on the U-2 in 1956 prompts me to offer a few comments. Hervey was one of the six pilots who successfully completed conversion onto the U-2 at The Ranch (aka Watertown Strip, later aka Groom Lake) between January and April 1956. They deployed to the UK as part of the CIA's Detachment A

in early May 1956, but moved on to Germany for political reasons six weeks later. On 20 June, Carl Overstreet took off from Wiesbaden on the first operational mission, which flew over East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland. The flight went well, and served as a test for the new film and ELINT processing and exploitation arrangements that had been set up. On 2 July, pilots Jake Kratt and Glen Dunaway flew two more missions over Eastern Europe, covering a lot more territory. But the CIA was obliged to return to the White House for permission to fly over the Soviet Union itself. This was because US Air Force chief of staff Gen Nathan Twining was in Moscow as a guest of the USSR in late June. He was invited to view the annual Soviet flypast over Tushino airport, and saw a formation of three Bison long-range bombers. This was the very type that was causing concern to US strategists, who feared that the Soviets had opened up a 'bomber gap.' On 3 July there was a top-level discussion in the White House, resulting in Presidential approval to start flying over the Soviet Union itself. Hervey was the next pilot 'in the barrel' for an operational mission, and so he was the one who headed up the Baltic Coast of East Germany and Poland and into the western USSR on the very next day - yes, US Independence Day. The rest, as they say, is history. Regarding the Greek pilots. The CIA had already been using 'mercenaries' from Greece and Poland to fly covert missions over Eastern Europe in C-47s, dropping agents who might gather intelligence or stir rebellion in the Soviet-controlled territories. Headquarters evidently thought it would be a good idea to also have 'deniable' pilots available for U-2 missions. But as previously related in these pages by Bob Murphy and Lou Setter, their language and flying skills were judged inadequate by the instructor group at The Ranch. I have told the story of the early U-2 overflights in my book, and also mentioned the Greek pilots. Since writing 50 YEARS OF THE U-2, I have learned that the Greek pilots were recruited as early as June 1955. Eight of them completed the USAF's T-33 jet conversion course in late December 1955, but only four of them moved on to The Ranch. Comments added by Roadrunner President Barnes: Historians, authors, webmasters, and the overall aviation community recognizes Pocock as being the "go to" authority on anything relating to the U-2 program and personnel. 50 years of the U-2 When the U-2 first took off in 1955, no-one involved in the top-secret project dreamed that this unique reconnaissance aircraft would still be flying today. The long story of the Dragon Lady is amazing, but complex. This book tells it all, in unprecedented detail. From the early days overflying the Soviet Union under CIA sponsorship, to the Cuba Missile Crisis, and on to the Vietnam War. The epic missions over Communist China, flown by nationalist pilots from Taiwan. How the U-2 was improved, enlarged and put back into production twice. How it led the real-time recce revolution with data links and high-tech sensors. And then how it played a key role in Desert Storm, over Bosnia and Kosovo, and most recently over Afghanistan and Iraq. The CIA historian said that Chris Pocock is the foremost authority on the history of the U-2. Before writing this book, he flew in the aircraft, conducted 250 interviews, and analysed more than 1,000 declassified documents. Chris Pocock is a British writer and consultant specializing in aerospace, defense, intelligence and the airfreight/express business. After graduating from Churchill College, University of Cambridge with a B.A. in history and political science, he entered the airfreight business. After 11 years with an international freight forwarder and two airlines, he became a self-employed writer. He contributed to various aerospace publications and edited two international business-to-business journals for the air cargo business. He is currently the defense editor of Aviation International News and the European editor of Cargo Facts. Pocock's interest in the U-2 spyplane started in the early 1970s with a visit to Davis-Monthan AFB, then the home of the U.S. Air Force wing that flew this unique aircraft. In 1989, his first book, *Dragon Lady - A History of the U-2 Spyplane*, received critical acclaim. He continued to follow the history and current operations of this long-lasting aircraft, and was instrumental in ensuring that an original U-2C aircraft was preserved and transferred to the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, UK. He was invited to fly in the U-2 in 1997 - the first foreign civilian to do so. His book, *The U-2 Spyplane: Toward the Unknown*, was published in 2000, after which the CIA's chief historian described him as "today's foremost authority on the U-2 and its development." His definitive work, *50 Years of the U-2*, was published in August 2005 to mark the aircraft's golden anniversary. His next book, *The Black Bats* (with Clarence Fu) is another story of aerial espionage during the Cold War, that has never been

told before. Pocock is also an occasional lecturer to postgraduate academic courses, on technical intelligence-gathering during in the Cold War.

t.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-03-10 09:16:17)

star dove

It is my sad duty to report the final flight of another of our Roadrunners, Lt Col Ralph William (Bill) Thomas on 8 March 2011. Lt Col Thomas was born in Council Bluffs , Iowa on September 4, 1923, the son of a Union Pacific [1]Bill Thomas at Groom Lake 1968 Engineer and spend his youth working on trains throughout the Midwest. In 1942 he enlisted in the Army and became a Radioman stationed at Ft Dix. He broke his back just prior to shipping out or he would have been in D-Day as as part of the 27th Division.

After the war he returned to collage, went into the Air Force where he served for over 30 years as Meteorologist . Thomas' duty Assignments included Harmon AFB, Newfoundland Canada - Langley AFB, Va. - Ramstien AB, Germany - Offutt AFB (SAC HQ) Neb. - Nellis AFB, Nevada (1129th Det 1 3rd Wx /CC Kadena AB, Okinawa Commander Det 6, 20th Wx - and Peterson Field, Co. →†Norad IG Team. He retired in 1974 and moved to Las Vegas where he remained until 2008 when his darling wife Ruth died and he was moved to Santa Clarita , Ca to be near his only child, Ronald. Bill died on March 8th at 2221, peacefully. His most remembered times were spent at the Ranch and though he only spoke of it briefly in later years with his son Ron, who was working at the Ranch for Lockheed, it was always with warmth and pride for the job and the people.

Thomas, while a USAF Major was assigned to the Air Force 1129th SAS contingent at Groom Lake, Nevada during the CIA Project Oxcart. Project OXCART was the building of a Mach 3+ plane capable of flying above 80,000 feet to replace the U-2 surveillance plane. Major Thomas was a member of the meteorology team at Groom Lake for the flights of the A-12 and the F-101 VooDoo support planes. Major Thomas deployed to Kadena, Okinawa during Operation Black Shield, the operational phase of Project OXCART where the A-12 flew sorties over North Vietnam to locate the SAM and surface to surface missiles of the enemy, and the missions over North Korea to locate the USS Pueblo seized by the North Korean navy. Major Powell resided in the Morgan Manor with the CIA project pilots and the Air Force support team, including meteorologist Weldon "Walt" King who was killed in the crash of one of the Blackshield F-101 planes.

Major Thomas served with the 1129th SAS from 1965 to 1968 and shared with all Roadrunners the consideration of his time at the "Ranch" being the best years of his 30-year Air Force career.

Colonel Thomas is survived by a son, Ron, who followed his footsteps 20 plus years later to work at the Ranch for Lockheed on another leading edge platform.

1. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/image/the_ranch_1968.jpg

Dick Clark (2011-03-27 18:11:20)

FEEDBACK from Roadrunner member Dick Clark re Roadrunner Ham Radio Operator stories carried in the past two editions of the Roadrunner newsletter: Hi T.D. I read the March newsletter with great interest. You outdid yourself on that one; I couldn't put it down (so to speak). I don't know if Frank mentioned to you that Dick Clark that's how we first met about 30+ years ago. I am N6DHD in the Ham world. I was known as the "drug hauling driver" by all of the hams that used to hang out on the old "Kingman repeater". I could access it from my home in Riverside, CA and of course, Frank could easily access it from his home in LV. I drove truck for the old "Thrifty Drug Store" chain (hence the "Drug hauling driver" phonetics). I made at least one trip each week, usually to stores in New Mexico. A close friend who is now a silent key, Stan Kraan W6TFE "two fried eggs" drove truck for Yellow Freight and we often ran together. We were constantly blabbing at each other on 2M, often through the Kingman repeater. It was a community where everybody knew everybody else.... and their business:) Stan introduced me to Frank on 2M originally. (Stan and Frank were both just learning

to fly RC helos) Frank was also just starting to build his new home up on the mountain in Flagstaff. Somewhere along the line, we all met for coffee and the rest is history as they say. It's been so long that I can't even tell you exactly how our first "eyeball" took place or where. Frank may remember but I doubt it. Frank and I hit it off immediately like long lost brothers. Since then, I consider Frank to be my "best friend", closer actually than I am with my own brothers. We both have a lot of the same skills, a lot of the same background...both Catholic and had both been alter boys in our youth (has he ever laid that one on you?) I know it is a hard stretch of the imagination:) Frank is about 14 yrs my senior and in the beginning I was still pretty young and crazy but we both had the same (sick) sense of humor. The first time Frank and my wife Ginger met was at what was loosely described as a Ham Fest. It took place twice per year out in the CA desert at a Ham friend's gold claim called the Lame Dog Mine (or the crippled canine diggings). There was no water and no electricity out there so everyone had to "dry camp" with their various RV's. We would spend several days out there in late October and again in early May when the desert was still tolerable. The main activities were shooting guns, drinking, flying model airplanes, drinking, telling tall stories of daring do and drinking. The women played cards at night in the house and drank while us men hung out mostly in Frank's old Airstream trailer and drank. Sometimes the smoke got so bad in there that we could hardly see each other. The women would come back from playing cards and gaggle up in another RV and drink. It was a wonderful time of our lives. Unfortunately, most of our closest friends from those days are silent keys, some, for a very long time. Basically, the two of us were rotten, with a mutual twisted sense of humor. We drank way too much but had a VERY good time.....and some MONUMENTAL hangovers that, as we talked about last week, would kill either one of us today! As a side note, our friend Stan Kraan (two fried eggs) was another kindred spirit who used to drive us crazy with endless stories about his sister's "kid" who played high school football. (I guess I was the target more than Frank because Stan and I ran together so much as part of our employment) All through the kid's high school days and then on to college. He got a football scholarship to USC. Then we had to listen to 4 years of that....on and on!! Turns out, his sister's kid's name was Troy Aikman. Stan looked enough like Troy that they could have been father and son. I just thought I'd throw that one in:) We stayed in touch on a daily basis for many years via ham radio. Several of those years in the beginning, via the old Kingman repeater. In those days, it covered a good part of FOUR STATES. It could be accessed with 10 watts from Catalina Island off the CA coast and in the early years when it was at it's peak, I could work it mobile from my truck with a 160-watt amp, from New Mexico! From the North, the guys in LV could work it with 10 watts from most parts of town, and to the South, it reached FAR into Mexico. When I lived in Riverside, CA, I could work it from my home BUT, I lived in a "hole" and behind the San Berdoo mtns. Frank found me a three section tower in LV which I drove there to haul it home (another story all in itself). I built an "H" frame and co-phased 4- eleven element Cushcraft Yagi antennae. I could aim the array at Quartz peak near Big Bear, CA and work the Kingman repeater from home via "rock bounce" with my 160-watt amp. Later, when I moved to Baja, Mexico in 2000, we stayed in touch twice per day via HF on a sched with several other friends.....most of them are gone now too unfortunately. Frank torments me pretty regularly to get back on HF. Now that I'm living in Illinois, it's not so easy. Both of my HF radios were pretty badly damaged by the damp salt air during the six years I lived at the beach in Rosarito Beach, Mexico. They're out in my garage stored but I think they're both history...especially the all-digital Kenwood 440 AT....now an antique and the even more antique Kenwood 130. I can't really afford to replace them right now and then I'd have to build some sort of "gonzo" antenna system to reach out that far and maybe a big "foot warmer" amp to boot. All of that when we can chat all day via email (which I had a very hard time getting him to participate in years ago!....I STILL can't get him to do the "Facebook" thing, even with the "Roadrunner" group). He's set in his ways even if some of them are a "bit quirky" :) I didn't intend to write a novel, just wanted to let you know that there were still more Ham members out here that hadn't made of point of telling you. Again, great job on the newsletter! Keep it up, I wish I were closer so I could do something to help out! 73's OM, Talk to you later, Dick N6DHD....ex- XE-2-N6DHD, ex- KA6JVZ

Lt. Col. Don Donohue (2011-03-27 19:24:35)

YF-12

YF-12 FLIGHT TEST PROGRAM

By. Lt. Col. Don Donohue

Chief Tac Ops & Tng - 475 TFW

To more appreciate the accomplishments of the YF-12 Flight Test Program, I will expand on details of various operations touched on in my [1]BIO.

xx I was notified that when I departed the Ranch, I would be returned to ADC & go to Edwards as Maintenance Officer on the YF-12. The YF's had been OUTED by President Johnson & were already in place @ Edwards.

I flew in to meet Col Henderson & check on housing prior to our PCS. During the visit, I asked Col Henderson if he would like to fly the F-101 & he jumped @ the opportunity. To his dying day, really, he was still complaining that I did not tell him that we did not carry Ballast. He almost over rotated but that is why I was an Instructor.

My 1st day on the Flight Line I met about every Civilian that had come with the YF's, from the Ranch. My Maintenance Troops said you sure know a lot of people for just coming on Board. I convinced them that I knew everyone from ADC.

Shortly after I arrived & 2 months before the 1st SR-71 was due @ Edwards, SAC pulled all of their Maintenance Personnel, to clean their Hanger. This was critical because the Joint Test Force consisted of ADC, SAC & Systems Command Personnel. Systems Command were Spies & non-workers who Reported everything to HQ. Being @ Edwards, Systems Command had the Lead on all Test Programs.

I was left with 5 Crew Chiefs for 2 YF's. It took 5 to Launch a Flight. ADC sent in the records of their Top NCO's for us to select the most Qualified. It was good long range but the Pipeline with Clearances, etc did not help the immediate problem.

Having been in Maintenance before everyone became Specialists, I knew that all of the Specialists had cross trained into Egress , Pneudraulics & even Radar from being Crew Chiefs. I reviewed the Records of everyone on Board & informed eveyone that would be Crew Chiefs in addition to their Specialty. We did not miss a Flight.

(8) World Speed & Altitude Records on 1 May 1965

We were to use the LAC YF for the Speed & Altitude runs & (1) of our Bluesuit YF's for the Closed Course with Payload. Everything was based on beating the Russians by 2 %. Speed & Altitude were restricted to 2000 MPH & Altitude to 80,000 FT.The closed Course carried 2000 Kilos in (5) compartments & I know of no Speed Restictions.

The French, who monitors & Verifies the Records, still use Visual references from the Ground. That is why we Painted White Crosses on the bottom of the Aircraft in order to visually follow the Aircraft @ 80,000+FT. In order to pick up the cross, a 5 second Dump Switch was installed. On a signal from Flight Test Ops the Pilot would activate the Dump Switch. The Fuel appeared like a Contrail @ the front of which was the white Cross.

Speed Run The 1st Flt was @ 0530 with the LAC YF & Systems Command COLs Fox Stephens & Dan Andre as the Crew. When LAC got ready to Launch, there were 32 White Shirt Engineers

@ the A/C checking their Systems. On the climb out over Las Vegas, they experienced a Fire Lite, shut the Engine down & returned to Edwards. Stephens over shot final & Kelly Johnson picked the same truck as I did to hide behind. Our Bluesuit Bird was ready to make a Closed Course run. Stephens & Andre pulled Daniels & Noel from our YF & took it for the Speed run. Systems Command COL's had to get the Glory

I told my Crew Chief, MSgt Stu Alexander that we launch with (5) personnel & no White Shirts. Kelly Johnson was next to me observing a Professional Launch. He turned to his CC & said that is how we better look on the next launch.

The Speed run was on a 15x25 Km course with (1) run East to West & the 2nd west to east. I believe there was a 300 foot restriction after the 1st run to keep from climbing & diving thru the 2nd run. We were slow on the 1st run so the crew was told to pick it up. They cut a Trail which left us over the 2000mph. The Observers from DC included a 3 Star General who had to call Pres Johnson to see if the speed was Ok or do we need to make a slower run. The speed was approved @ 2069.5 mph. By using the Closed Course YF, the Speed Record was set carrying 2000kilos in (5) compartments but not claimed.

The reason both the speed & altitude records were not set on the same flight was the altitude restriction. In order to get out to Mach, we had to exceed 80,000ft on the speed run.

Lockheed determined the Fire Lite was a faulty switch, so in the best of Flt Test corrective action, they cut the wire to the switch. They then got ready for the Altitude run.

In the meantime, our Sheetmetal Bluesuiters, repaired (19) Titanium Cracks on the turnaround.

LAC attempted the Altitude run but aborted the Takeoff due to a Brake problem.

While they were back @ the Drawing Board, we made (2) Closed Course World Record runs.

Lac was going to take another go @ the Altitude Record with a very late Takeoff.

I believe that was the 1st time, a Blackbird , had made (3) turns , @ Mach, in one day. We were turned for a 4th time in hopes LAC would not be able to make the Altitude run so we could get all of the Records with our Bluesuit YF.

Stephens & Andre did get the Altitude Record, measured by Radar @ 80,202 ft.

Weight procedures required certain type Scales & very current Certification. The Team observed the Loading & placed a Sticker on each compartment to insure the weights were not removed @ Mach 3+. After the 3rd Flt, they had their Magnifying glasses trying to determine if the seal had been removed or had burned off. They again weighed the Payload to insure it had not changed.

Lockheed presented a Plaque Saluting Bluesuit Maintenance for (7) Records to LAC's (1). It was signed by Kelly Johnson & his Staff.

Our Bluesuiters, who came to work @ 0300, did not leave @ Shift Change but stayed until all of the Records were confirmed - about 2030.

The 1st deployment of a YF was to ADC Wm Tell @ Tyndall & was a success although never approved. The deployment Plan, signed by Vern Henderson & Fox Stephens was submitted to Washington. There was no response so we deployed using ADC Airlift. After we returned, we discovered the Plan had not been approved because everyone who saw it was afraid their General had approved the Plan.

At that time , Air Refueling capability had not been released. We had a KC135 park in front of the YF, run an Engine & pump fuel thru the Boom to the YF. We did this on the Far end of

the Field where the procedure could only be observed from (5) states. More details on the Deployment are in my BIO. Drone

During our Testing @ Edwards, Russian Trawlers would sit off shore & try to pick up our Radar Frequencies. When we were going out over the Pacific Missile Range, we would call Pt Magu & request "Barcap". The Navy would put a Bird over the Trawler & put them out of Business so we could fly.

We accomplished several successful Missile Shoots without a Warhead.

- A direct hit on a QB-47 over the Gulf of Mexico.
- A direct hit on a Q-2 , 500 feet over water, from a 75,000 feet look down. The photo depicts G-20 Mission on 21 September 1966 at Holloman AFB, NM, Joe Rogers and Jim Cooney in YF-12 Article 936. The Aim 47/Gar 9 missile is visible in the photographs. Drone
- A Kill on a QB-47 , 500ft over White Sands. The Missile did not take it's Final Guidance but passed between the Nose & Wing.

The nite before the White Sand s Shoot, we were all up @ 0330 looking for a Bullet Hole in the YF. The Pfc AP guarding the Aircraft, tried to commit Suicide & missed both himself & the YF.

We participated in other programs than the YF. We flew F-104 Chase flts of SR-71s out of Palmdale. I chased Bill Weaver on his 1st Flt after his Mach 3 Ejection .

The most fun was playing Hound dog over LA. The B-52 that Edwards used for the X-15 Flts would fly over La, I would get up under the Wing & on Command, I would lite the Afterburner & blast out from under the B-52. This was the way Telemetry data was obtained in the Development of the Missile.

I was the Systems Command Base SEFE in the T-33. We flew numerous missions training Recalled Pilot for SE Asia.

Joannie & I Bowled in Lancaster & Palmdale with the LA Center Controllers based in Palmdale. I was able to get IFR clearance, discreet Frequencies, radar Vectors & Handoffs for practice Approaches @ March & Miramar followed by Vectors back to the Desert VFR. In the missile to the right is the results of a direct hit on Q-2 drone on March 18, 1965 traveling 500 feet over the water with the missile shot from the YF-12 at Mach 3+ from 75,000 feet look down. No warhead. damaged drone

One morning I had an early morning go after a late nite bowling so I asked my fellow Bowlers To arrange a Radar Vector to Kansas City so I would not have to make turns. When I called for clearance, I was given a Vector Direct & a discreet Freq with Flight following. The value of an Anchor man.

On the day Joe Rogers was to fly the YF, Systems Command pulled the F-104 because they did not want another YF Pilot. I said that I would chase him using our ADC T-33. They were not sure but after chasing Blackbirds for (5) yrs I could provide the Safety Chase. A little Yankee ingenuity & another YF Pilot.

I am the only one that did not fly in the Blackbird that was on the Program for over (6) yrs. They only offered a Backseat which I did not consider Pilot Like.

1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/donohue.html>

Walt Koopman (2011-03-27 19:32:37)

AREA 51 AND ITS (K-9 UNIT) SENTRY DOGS by Walt Koopman

By: Walt Koopman - AF K-9 handler, 1964 -1966

The CIA interviewed and selected the mostly Air Force K-9 handlers in Washington for Project OXCART at Groom Lake. In June of 1964, the Agency invited me to take the standard battery of tests, telling me [1] McMillion and Ceasar that if selected I would be going somewhere, but they could not be told where. I was then asked if I wanted to go, but before I could answer, I was told that it did not matter as I would go where the AF wanted me. The area turned out to be a great assignment that we felt privileged and proud that the Air Force and CIA selected us.

Area 51 had five K-9 handlers with their dogs along with an AF supervisor. After dark, one handler and his dog used an AF pickup truck equipped with a cap and locked grate for the dog. We would patrol the perimeter from dusk until midnight. The second handler then relieved us and his dog would work until daylight. We worked three days on and three days off. This was much better duty than any of our previous assignments. The dog kennel was located in a remote area away from civilization; as a result, I believe some of the residents were not aware that we existed.

We would stop occasionally for coffee and a quick snack at the 24 hr food shop. (In two years, I gained 35 lbs.) We parked our truck near by, where our dogs barked, growled and snapped their teeth at any unsuspecting persons walking near the truck. Not everyone appreciated this.

In 1966, the CIA made a determination to phase the K-9 unit out of the area. I often suspected that one of those unsuspecting persons that had walked behind our parked truck might have influenced this decision.

One other handler and I finishing our second tour of duty, elected to leave the AF rather than to reenlist. After our discharge from the Air Force, we crossed over to the government contract guard force at the area. The other handlers and supervisor requested their next assignments. What are the odds that anyone, let alone four would get their choice? Against all odds I believe all four went where they wanted to go. This organization was and I am sure still is number one. Everyone always looked out for its team members be it the dog handlers or those drivers doing the flying.

In the two years I worked with the dogs at the area I patrolled many hours. I saw coyotes, bobcats, swift fox, rabbits, mice, bats, and a saucer sized scorpion. One coyote distinguished by a saddle shaped marking, would often wait for our patrol truck on its way to the engine test area. We would shine our spotlight in the field, he would use our light to hunt mice, and other edible treats. During my two-year assignment, I never did apprehend or turn my dog loose on any human intruder. The other handlers I spoke with would or could not talk about their experiences. I will mention that our dogs did not like strangers and can only leave the reader to his or her own conclusions.

Security disallowed cameras in the area, thus the attached picture supplied by Alva McMillion of his dog, was taken before being transferred to the area.

The names of the other K-9 handlers as I remember them.

Handlers:

Ronald Stump

Cecil W. Hopper,

Alva E. McMillion

Cyrus W. Newton

Walt K. Koopman

Supervisor: T/SGT Ira Crowder

*Jack Starcher

*There was one other handler, Jack Starcher that lost his eye while watching someone press a bearing in the machine shop at the area. The bearing exploded, he did not have safety glasses on and another piece of the bearing hit him between the eyes.

1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/image/McMillon.jpg>

Alva McMillionn (2011-03-27 19:36:01)

THE K-9 HANDLERS OF GROOM LAKE

By: Alva E. McMillion

The OXCART legacy at the Groom Lake facilities includes the K-9 handlers and their dogs securing the area and patrolling the perimeter. Security forbade our taking [1]McMillion and Ceasar photo at Groom Lake, so the photo depicts my dog, Caesar and I taken during the Cuban Crisis at Homestead AFB. We actively patrolled the air base with about 20 K-9's in 1963 while pending deployment of our group to Vietnam for securing our bases there. Our entire group was in training at that time.

A special letter sent to our group under the 19th bomb wing of the Strategic Air Command requested one K-9 handler be selected with certain qualifications to be assigned for a highly classified project and to report to Washington, D.C. for an interview. I was the second one selected due to the first individual not being able to clear a background investigation.

At the news of being selected and given an arrival date to bring my K-9, Caesar, to Nellis AFB Nev. I turned Caesar over to my new Flight Sgt. Ira C. Crowder for transport to my new station at the Area while I prepared my family and our mobile home for the nearly 2,000 mile trip. Upon arrival in Las Vegas, Sgt Crowder and I proceeded to Mercury Nevada and on to the Area. I felt awe struck by what I would be responsible for patrolling to keep the area secure. I felt privileged with the Air Force and CIA selecting me from such a large number of candidates for the assignment.

Sgt. Crowder, Starcher, Koopman, Hopper, Stump and McMillion made up the K-9 group. We took our responsibilities seriously. We confronted many obstacles just to get to work as we lived in Las Vegas and commuted across the desert via the Widow Maker as the highway was known, and through deserts full of craters left after tests of nuclear bomb tests.

We were a group of airmen very dedicated to the cause to keep our country free from intruders as well as security of our test grounds for the Blackbirds. It was quiet around our area of patrol except for coyotes, jackrabbits, badgers, and snakes. The loneliest post was a guard shack in the middle of nowhere.

Occasionally an explorer of the deserts wandered into our area, which caused a little excitement and dispatch of us to check out and search the area for other individuals. We patrolled in a Dodge pickup with a secured cage for our K-9. It did not have an AM/FM radio visible, but we kept one hidden behind the glove box that kept us aware of the latest songs and happenings around the world. We also had a kennel area with six kennels for our K-9s almost a mile away from the base. The kennel houses kept our dogs out of the elements, and served as a brewery out of sight in the houses. We made our own home brew and Moon Shine for those who drank hard liquor. Very few felt the desire or possessed the bravery to try it. Big Luke, one of the maintenance men was brave enough to try it. This may sound as if we were there just for the excitement of being there.

Our honor shined through when we found ourselves face to face with an A-12 Blackbird crash just past the end of our runway during was take off. The Pilot managed to eject just a spit second before the craft crashed and burst into flames. We lost another flight several miles away from the air base where another pilot only married a few months lost his life when he ejected and the chute failed to deploy. Our Job was to search for the pilot over a vast area.

Even though we had tragedies, one of the highlights was to see one of our pilots, Sanders, show his talents for flying his C-130 around the desert chasing coyotes and giving us a tour of the Mt Rushmore's Presidents while on a courier trip. My fellow airmen were proud to have been a part of developing one of the greatest aircraft ever built for its time, All the men we worked with were proud to have served.

1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/image/McMillon.jpg>

1.4 April

April 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-04-30 10:26)



SECRET HEROES



APRIL 2011 ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONALE NEWS

OXCART FIRE DRILLS

The photos below were taken during fire drill exercises at Area 51's Groom Lake in the 1960s during CIA Project OXCART.

PLEASE HELP US IDENTIFY EVERYONE IN THE PHOTOS

Please identify the photo by its number and identify the individuals left to right
[1]Mail to Webmaster

1

[2] 026 _2.jpg

Firefighter training. Rotor wash cools area, spread foam, flattens flames, clears away smoke, and enables firefighters to remove folks from an aircraft crash 2

[3] 028 _2.jpg

Rotor wash 3

[4] 029 _2.jpg

Working w/fire truck to fight a training fire 4

[5] 030 _2.jpg

Show effects of rotor wash on a fire

5

[6] 032 _2.jpg 6

[7] trapp_uh1f_crew.jpg

UH-1 crew and fire fighters ??

Photos contributed by Colonel Charlie Trapp

1. mailto:roadrunners_intl@cox.net

2. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/026_2.jpg

3. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/028_2.jpg

4. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/029_2.jpg

5. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/030_2.jpg

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7. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/trapp_uh1f_crew.jpg

Thornton D. "TD" Barnes (2011-04-30 10:43:52)

The Lake Mead Parasail Exercise

Trapp Colonel Charlie Trapp recalls: Our rescue-survival section tested the suits in the area pool. (A-12 pilot Ken Collins shown in the pool at "Sam's Place" Trapp is talking to one of the assistants) Casto jumped out of our C-130 pressurized at high altitude, and during our parasail program at Lake Meade. We did a lot of things with our helicopters from construction, radar testing, and recovery of high value items dropped from the A-12. We ran a pistol range and survival training in Florida. Developed the walk-around sleeping bags. Helped make up the survival kits for the A-12, and a bunch of other stuff like flying support in the C-180, U3B, C-210, H43, UH1F and the C-130. Ken Collins in suit, Trapp and Casto We also stood alert for all test flights with a fire bottle and firemen along with PJs with the H43

and UH1F. Also, they somehow found me to fly LATE night emergency flights to Burbank in the U3B and C-210. When Colonel Slater decided to conduct water survival evaluation and training for the Casto A-12 pilots at Lake Mead, myself, Castro and Bailey set up the project with the U.S. Coast Guard assigned to Lake Mead. Col. Slater had the Coast Guard set up a secure area for the Oxcart projects pilots at Groom Lake to practice water survival in their flight suits. Arrangements were made for each of the pilots to be taken aloft on a parasail pulled by a Boston Whaler.

Colonel Hugh Slater Col. Hugh "Slip" Slater recalls that he went first and didn't get any water in the suit. Dennis Sullivan went second and he too remained dry. After that the boondoggle went to hell due to high winds preventing the little Boston Whalers from Parasailing up. Layton's helmet filled with water, causing him to think he was still under water. Frank Murray kind of slithered off to one side while Layton floundered around with his helmet full of water, and Mele had a hard time deflating the chute. Slater canceled the exercise when the Whalers started having a hard time getting to the guys because the water had gotten rougher.

From Frank Murray: Sad to say I was one of the poor guys that endured the Pressure Frank Murray Suit/parasail exhibition in Lake Mead in 1966 I think.. I am not sure how many of the Project Pilots did the thing at the Lake.. It is no easy trick to get airborne on the Parasail with the full pressure suit on complete with survival kit and the parasail harness.. On one attempt I got drug on the rocky shoreline, on another I got drug through the water with a collapsed parasail, damn near drowned me. I was happy to see that effort done away with. It is like practicing getting hungry, like they do in the various survival schools I have attended over the years. I do remember that the Coast Guard furnished the boat used to get us up. I did get one successful launch and carry up to release altitude.. After that I was not going to do that again.. Nuf said, Frank Collins Layton vojvodich
Ken Collins Jack Layton Mele Vojvodich

Dennis Sullivan recalls: I recall the parasail operation. I had my own boat and drove out to the bay where the parasailing was to take place. As I remember it, I believe I was Sullivan the first to go. There was little or no wind and in the pressure suit, the boat pulled me off the beach and into the air with no problem. When they released the rope I floated down and released the chute when I hit the water. The boat was there immediately and I had no problems so they loaded me up and hauled me in. Mele went shortly after. He went up OK but the old chute we were using had the stitching come loose on one riser. When they released Mele he sort of spun in, hit the water pretty hard and darn near drowned before he finally came up. I think the rest if it went OK. About that time the wind came up and the boat trip back in was pretty rough.

PLEASE HELP US IDENTIFY EVERYONE IN THE PHOTOS

Please identify the photo by its number and identify the individuals left to right
[1]Mail to Webmaster

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[2]012 _2.jpg

?, Earl Casto, Charlie trapp helping para sailer get airborne, 4-9 ? 2

[3]013 _2.jpg

Coy Staggs, ?, ?, ? 3

[4]014 _2.jpg

?, ?, ?, Joe Pinaud, Charlie Trapp, ?, ? 4

[5]015 _2.jpg

Charlie Trapp, ??, pre-launch meeting
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[6]016_2.jpg
Beatle Bailey Trapp, Col. Slater, a.k.a. Boss or Test Dummy One 6
[7]017_2.jpg
Coy Staggs, Dr. Ted Dake, Charlie Trapp, Earl Casto 7
[8]018_2.jpg
Charlie Trapp, ? 8
[9]019_2.jpg
Para sailor airborne w/one man raft & survival kit deployed
9
[10]020_2.jpg
Para sailor under tow behind Coast Guard whaler 10
[11]021_2.jpg
Touchdown 11
[12]022_2.jpg
Charlie Trapp, Dr. Dake 12
[13]023_2.jpg
Coy Staggs, Dr. Dake, Charlie Trapp, Earl Casto
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[14]024_2.jpg
Parasail survivor
Colonel Hugh "Slip" Slater
Commander 1129th SAS 14
[15]025_2.jpg
Charlie Trapp - look, no hands!
Capt. Charlie Trapp 15
[16]027_2.jpg
F-101 refuel KC-135 tanker 16
[17]031_2.jpg
H-43 water hoist pickup

Photos contributed by Colonel Charlie Trapp

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2. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/trapp/012_2.jpg
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SEVEN SISTERS SAGE RADAR

By: Colonel Sam Ursini
Fire Control Officer/ Reconnaissance System Officer

In 1962, the San Francisco Sector had an array of ground radars situated from Oregon to Southern Calif. They all fed radar data Colonel Sam Ursini to the central hub at Beale AFB who bore responsibility for the security of this west coast region so that no enemy aircraft or submarine-launched missiles could penetrate that air space. One day the Beale radar detected an unknown target at over 60,000 feet and less than 200 knots. Their available interceptor aircraft could not reach that altitude to make a visual identification of this possible intruder. General Tom McGehee, the sector commander, was the only person in the sector cleared for the Oxcart Blackbird program with A-12 aircraft located at Groom Lake, Nevada. General McGehee arranged for one of the A-12 Mach 3 aircraft to assist in identifying this very high altitude unknown vehicle. This was an unprecedented action. The General advised the SAGE weapons officer, Sam Ursini that a high-speed high altitude aircraft, with a call sign of Dutch, would contact him, the controller monitoring this "UNKNOWN". The Dutch aircraft checked in on radio frequency while between Tonopah, Nevada and Sacramento California traveling at three times the speed of Beale's interceptor aircraft. Ursini vectored him toward the unknown vehicle where he made visual contact with and identified an escaped weather balloon in the jet stream. The Dutch pilot was, Mele Vojvodich, one of the first CIA A-12 flyers flew the A-12 that day.

The sage (semi-automatic ground environment) divided into sectors. For example- The west coast had sectors as follows: Seattle Air Defense Sector Portland Air Defense Sector Reno air defense - Stead AFB San Francisco Air Defense Sector- Beale AFB Los Angeles Air Defense Sector-Norton AFB Phoenix Air Defense Sector-Luke AFB. Major Sam Ursini, stationed at Beale AFB-San Francisco Air Defense Sector 1961-1963, served as a sage Air Controller/Weapons Director. Air defense Headquarters liked to take guys out of the Interceptor squadrons, like Ursini, a F-101 pilot, and train them into the controller field. This was cross-training that really made a lot of sense. After a while in the controller field, they went back into cockpit jobs. The reason SAGE was semi-automatic is as follows: The system had a surveillance room and a weapons controller room. The Surveillance team took several radar sites inputs-search radars and height Finder radars-and established a radar track-done by a technician aided by the computer-thus semi-automatic- the track was then sent to the Weapons Director room, where the intercepts were conducted.

In early 1964, when Ursini joined the YF-12/SR-71 test force-it was obvious to him that with all the hundreds of intercepts scheduled for the YF-12 against our targets of choice, like the F-106 and F-104 aircraft assigned to the Test Force and a B-57 from Edwards operations— needed a controlling agency. Since he was a former Sage controller he arranged for Los Angeles sector, the southern California. Integrated Radar agency, located at Norton AFB, San Bernardino, to set up the intercepts for each sortie. He also integrated the Seven Sisters radar sites, except Beatty, into Los Angeles sector and Phoenix sector located at Luke AFB.

For every intercept sortie, either Gary Heidlebaugh (both former sage controllers) or Ursini would fly to Norton AFB in the blue bird (Cessna 310) to control the intercepts.

Ursini cleared into the Tagboard program because of this sage setup that he arranged. The authorities wanted the integrated radars of the sage system to be available to monitor the flight of the A-12 Tagboard missions. This was setup to augment the Seven Sisters radars.

On 1 May 1965, the famous speed and altitude records day, Ursini took a French official to Phoenix Air Defense Sage Sector to monitor the flights of the YF-12. The French required this to provide assurance by integrated radar coverage that the YF-12 that entered the chute for the 15/25 km and altitude records east to west and west to east was the same aircraft. This insured the Air Force not slipping in a second aircraft. The integrated radar system requirement insured coverage of the YF-12 due to the distance and large turn radius required. This enabled the French to say, "Yes the same aircraft that entered the course also exited it".

T.D. Barnes President/Webmaster Roadrunners Internationale (2011-04-30 10:59:39)

BEATTY RADAR TRACKING STATION

By: Thornton D. "TD" Barnes
Hypersonic Flight Support Specialist

[1] TD Barnes

Prior to joining the EG &G Special Projects Team at Groom Lake, Barnes was one of a ten-member crew operating the Beatty tracking station of the NASA [2]Beatty Station, NASA High Range, Nevada High Range approximately 65 miles from Groom Lake. Though their main objective supported flights of the X-15, they also participated in flights of the XB-70, the three Lifting Bodies, experimental Lunar Landing vehicles, and an occasional A-12/YF-12/SR-71 Blackbird flight. After President Johnson revealed the existence of the YF-12, and the project moved to Edwards, the YF-12 personnel moved in and shared control rooms with Barnes's counterparts at NASA Dryden.

Barnes was not the designated radar operator for the Beatty site. However, because of his recent Army security clearance, he was the only one at the site with the requisite level of security clearance to handle an "OXCART flight". That, factored with his being a competent savant in the operation and maintenance of almost any known radar system, made him the sole designated radar operator on the NASA High Range for secret flights of the CIA's A-12 at Groom Lake requiring special track data available only at the Beatty tracking station.

Though Barnes did not know and lacked a need to know at the time, in January 1962, an agreement with the Federal Aviation Agency expanded the restricted airspace around the Groom Lake. The CIA cleared certain FAA air traffic controllers for the OXCART Project, their function being to insure that aircraft did not violate the order. The North American Air Defense Command established procedures to prevent their radar stations from reporting the appearance of high performance aircraft on their radarscopes. Similar to posting Army ADA missile officers to Air Force units to coordinate activities and prevent inadvertent friendly fire, the FAA assigned personnel to Project OXCART at Groom Lake to prevent air controllers mentioning the occurrence of an A-12 flying Mach 3 through their sector at 90,000 feet. [3] High Range flt ops during flight test. Mod II radar operators. [4]Beatty Data Transmission System Plotting Board. High range operations during flight

Providing ground support for the Blackbird flights was a walk in the park for Barnes compared to the nail biting, hypersonic flights of the X-15 where in July and August 1963, pilot Joe Walker crossed the 100 km altitude mark. In doing so, he joined the NASA astronauts and Soviet

Cosmonauts as the only humans to have crossed the barrier into outer space. Soviet Yuri Gagarin was the first person in space, reaching 327 km in apogee of his orbital flight. Alan Shepard, the first American in space, reached 187 km during suborbital flight. Joe Walker became the first to exceed this threshold twice. On Flight 90, 19 July 1963, he reached a speed of 3,710 mph (5,970 km/h) and an astronaut-making altitude of 65.8 miles (347,441 feet) On his Flight 91 on 22 August 1963; he reached a speed of 3,794 mph (6,106 km/h) and a record breaking and his second astronaut-making altitude of 67.0 miles (353,674.5 feet). Pete Knight, during Flight 188 on 3 October 1967 reached a record-breaking speed of 4,519 mph (7,273 km/h) and an altitude of 36.3 miles; He earned the record of being the fastest man alive. It was from Barnes pioneering the radar track, telemetry, communications, and data transmission support for these types of flights that earned Barnes the rare job description at the time of hypersonic flight support specialist, a specialty that he later applied at Groom Lake during Mach 3 RCS recordings of the A-12 in overhead flight.

Typical of the CIA's modus of operation, very few knew about the Seven Sisters. With the FAA distinctly forbidden to track the ultra secret A-12 flights and to ignore any traffic above 60,000 feet, the CIA needed support radar besides that of the Groom Lake control tower in case the A-12 got into trouble. A birdwatcher system monitored the health of the A-12, but not its precise location.

Using a typical X-15 mission as an example, many things occurred behind the scenes to support the flight that few ever knew about. Weather flights in the T-33 trainer and an F-104 flew up range to check the emergency landing sites on designated dry lakebeds to ensure weather conditions were favorable and that no obstacles such as campers were on the lakebeds. The X-15 always dropped from the B-52 over one of the designated dry lakes for the event the X-15 failed to launch. At the same time as the weather flight, someone at NASA routinely flew C-130s up range to position emergency equipment and personnel on the lakebed in case of an emergency landing. Very few in the program ever knew of this part of the flight activities.

Similar to the example above, someone unknown today within the agency arranged for security, communications, and support we may never know about before any extended range flight of the A-12. For each mission someone in the chain arranged radar coverage for the event something went wrong during a flight of the A-12. Most likely, such arrangement was more of a heads up to ignore the flight showing up on radar, but take note of it just in case. No one told Barnes anything about what he was tracking or the purpose, and this was probably the case with all the other support sites. We know today that pilot Form 5 records never recorded an A-12 flight, always showing the flight being another type of plane, usually a F-101 VooDoo, and it occurring at another Air Force base. Thus, it stands to reason that no records exist of any radar support of an A-12 flight. This is typical of an ultra secret black operation.

Though the Beatty tracking station routinely tracked the YF-12, the site was like a black sheep amongst the other six radar sites known the Seven Sisters to only a few possessing OXCART level security authorization. Beatty was a NASA/Air Force facility whereas the remainder of the sites were SAGE sites of the United States Air Force Air Defense Command.

During the Cold War, the United States Air Force assumed a burden for the defense of the skies over the United States. To coordinate this defense, they put in place a detection and command and control system to guard against Soviet nuclear attack, One hundred forty-two primary radar stations and 96 gap-filler radar sites were built and operated throughout the United States and Canada from the late 1940s into the 1990s. In 1959 came the establishment of a Semi Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) Data Center (DC-16) at Reno AFB. The SAGE system network linked Air Force (and later FAA) General Surveillance Radar stations into a

centralized center for Air Defense, intended to provide early warning and response for a Soviet nuclear attack.

To the best of our knowledge, CIA most likely cleared only the commander of each sector into the OXCART A-12 program. The commander instructed the surveillance section not to process any radar tracks traveling at around 2,000 knots. Thus, those in the controller Section did not see any of the A-12 flights. Likewise, the FAA's ultra high controller group handled all U-2 and A-12 aircraft flights above 60,000 feet. However, only a handful of those controllers were aware of OXCART.

Most of the ADC sites operated the AN/FPS-27 search radar designed to succeed existing Semi-Automatic Ground Environment (SAGE) radar systems, which had served as the backbone of air defense of the CONUS. The Westinghouse-built SAGE system provided enhanced electronic counter countermeasures (ECCM) capability in the S-band with a maximum range of 220 nautical miles and search to an altitude of 150,000 feet, an altitude far lower than the capability of the Beatty radar.

AN/FPS-16A height-finder radar, AN/FPS-27 Search Radar the SAGE Direction Center where it was analyzed to determine range, direction altitude speed and whether or not aircraft were friendly or hostile.

AN/FPS-7C search radar, General Electric, the S-band AN/FPS-90 height finder radar The FPS-6 radar is capable of height determination of targets flying between elevation angles of - 2 and +32 degrees for any azimuth throughout 360 deg. The transmitter develops a peak power of 5 Megawatts at a frequency range of 2.7 to 2.9 GHz. The pulse width is 2 usec at a PRF of 400 PPS. Maximum indication range is 200 nautical miles with height measurement capability to 75,000 feet.

Barnes places emphasis on the height measurement limitations of the ADC radar systems, and the fact that their primary function was searching for aircraft whereas his NASA radar was a tracking radar that routinely tracked the X-15 directly overhead at hypersonic speeds. With the Beatty radar lying only 65 miles from Groom Lake, most tracking of the A-12 leaving and approaching Groom Lake required this type tracking for another unique capability of the Beatty tracking station. A primary data requirement for the NASA flight missions was accurate velocity recording and documentation. As the OXCART project advanced, accurate recording of the speed of the A-12 became a primary function of his tracking the A-12.

The testing phase reached Mach 2 of the A-12 after six months of flying, achieving Mach 3 after 15 months. Two years after the first flight the aircraft had flown a total of 38 hours at Mach 2, three hours at Mach 2.6, and less than one hour at Mach 3. After three years, Mach 2 time had increased to 60 hours, Mach 2.6 time to 33 hours, and Mach 3 time to nine hours; all Mach 3 time, however, was by test aircraft with detachment aircraft still restricted to mach 2.9.

Most A-12 flights were of short duration, averaging little more than an hour each. Primarily this was because longer flights were unnecessary at this stage of testing. It was also true, however, that the less seen of OXCART the better, and short flights helped to preserve the secrecy of the proceedings. Yet, it was virtually impossible for an aircraft of such dimensions and capabilities to remain inconspicuous. At its full speed, OXCART had a turning radius of no less than 86 miles and often extended up to 125 miles. (This created a problem during the overflights of North Vietnam where restricted by a lesser distance to the borders of China, Laos, and Cambodia.) There was no question of staying close to the airfield; its shortest possible flights took it over a very large expanse of territory.

The first long-range, high-speed flight occurred on 27 January 1965, when one of the test aircraft flew for an hour and forty minutes, with an hour and fifteen minutes above Mach 3.1. Its total range was 2,580 nautical miles, with altitudes between 75,600 and 80,000 feet.

Covering an OXCART flight never seemed to be a problem or conflict with NASA operations. Barnes does not recall his supporting any flight out of Groom Lake interfering with any NASA mission schedule. With the exception of the XB-70, almost all flights required transport by B-52, which required early morning flight to avoid the desert heat. NASA aborted any mission that failed to get airborne by 0900 hours. Anything later than that required the B-52 repeatedly circle the Edward area due to the heat making it difficult to ascend to 45,000 feet by the time the plane reached the launch lake up range. Once the B-52 (SN 0008 and affectingly referred to as "Balls Eight"), with the X-15 or lifting body tucked beneath its wing, passed Baker, California, they knew the mission was a go. Less than an hour later, the test vehicle dropped and if the mission went as planned, was on the ground at Dryden seven minutes later. Their day was done, so covering a Groom Lake flight was a welcome event for Barnes. On slow days at the tracking station, to maintain his radar proficiency, he often tracked the Groom Lake flights, mostly the chase planes, hoping to grab a brief skin track of the A-12.

Originally, the design of the Mod II radar on the NASA High Range allowed for tracking at a maximum range of roughly 40 miles. Thus, the two J-scopes displayed a baseline with a maximum of 40 miles. Modification of the Mod II system enabled beacon track of a target many times this distance, however the display remained at 40 miles max. During a mission, as the range extended beyond the visual display on the scopes, the range gate locking the transponder return would disappear off the end of the scope and start over at the beginning, repeating this occurrence repeatedly as needed to maintain track of the plane. Only the range dial provided true indication of range to the radar operator.

Seldom did Barnes have advance notice of an OXCART flight. NASA's station manager, Mr. Bill Houck, would usually motion him into the break room to inform him of a flight expected to lift off at Groom Lake or in some cases heading home to Groom Lake. (He referred to Groom Lake as Home Plate and the plane as an Article.) The event was always low key with Barnes merely informing the radar operator that he needed to borrow his radar for a while. Bill Houck casually maintained a position near the door to the radar room to restrict someone accidentally entering. The velocity recorder was situated in the control console area, so if a velocity recording was requested, he watched the recorder to secure it from being viewed. They made no mission plots on the DTS or data transmission to the rest of the range, which was another security concern of the NASA monitor, Bill Houck. The only physical evidence resulting from such a mission was the velocity strip chart, which Houck retrieved and shipped presumably to Dryden.

The one thing that Barnes remembers was his being required to guard the code to the A-12 transponder. From the start of this bit of covert activity, He knew to never interrogate the transponder unless invited to do so, knowing that the pilot and any other track radar operators tracking the A-12 transponder would see the transponder answering his radar interrogation of the transponder.

To explain this comment, during a routine mission on the High Range, the operators at Dryden, Beatty, and Ely ignored all pulses other than that of his radar, except to make adjustments of any pulse drifting close enough to his radar's range cursor to interfere. A count of the pulses or spikes indicated the number of radars tracking the transponder. Reverting back to a typical X-15 flight for an example, the radar systems at Dryden, Beatty, and Ely were all that showed on the radar scopes, and that was only if they were able to trigger the transponder. Once the transponder signal to the interrogating radar grew too weak, the pulse would become

sporadic and eventually disappear. Had the Seven Sisters been tracking radar systems connected by data transmission as was the Dryden, Beatty, and Ely sites, any radar out of range of the transponder would have merely ganged their radar to the data from the others. This prevented the radar from having to search for the location of the beacon; instead, it just passively followed the track of the other radars until it too could communicate with the transponder. The ADC radars however were search radar, so the need to gang to a track radar did not apply. The search radars merely followed the target as a blip appearing when painted in the rotating sweep. (As indicated earlier, they saw, but did not process) The Mod-II radar locked onto the target and knew at all times its range, azimuth, elevation, and velocity. (Beatty did not process the data either except to extent requested, and never processed it for transmission to the other sites)

1. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/td1968.jpg
2. http://area51specialprojects.com/images/beatty_nevada1.jpg
3. http://td-barnes.com/barnes/high_range_ops4.jpg
4. http://td-barnes.com/barnes/high_range_ops1.jpg

1.5 May

May 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-05-28 19:35)





SECRET HEROES



May 2011 ROADRUNNERS INTERNATIONALE NEWS

T.D. Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-05-28 19:41:32)

SICK CALL: Harold Archer has been down sick for the last three months, His in bed or sitting up . He can't walk. He has help around the clock. His phone number in the roster is incorrect. I have a number to reach him it is 951-696-2534. He sleeps a lot. so they don't like to wake him for calls. He is in good spirits and would appreciate hearing from some of the road runners.

Harry Martin - Reunion Committee Chairman (2011-05-28 19:45:12)

Reunion update by Harry Martin. The attendance for the reunion is looking good. We thank all of you who responded to let us know what to expect. We will send out formal announcements, and invitations in June to rope in the stragglers. By then, we hope to have the activity options nailed down so everyone can plan their days and nights. The registration form is available for download on the home page of the web site and under member activities. Many have already registered so now it's merely a race to see who will be the last one to do so.

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-05-30 19:45:30)

In September 2010 Roadrunner president and director of the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame Thornton D. "TD" Barnes and Mr. Peter DeForth organized a 10 day Oxcart Legacy Tour in the Washington, D.C. area that included Q &A panel discussions at CIA, DIA, the Air and Space Smithsonian Museum, USGIF, the International Spy Museum, and the Capitol Hill Club. The panelists consisted of A-12 Pilot Ken Collins, SR-71 pilots Rich Graham and Buz Carpenter, Lockheed Skunkworks manager Bob Murphy, Pratt & Whitney J-58 engine designer Dr. Bob Abernethy, Pratt & Whitney engineer Dennis Nordquist, Photo Analyst Art Beidler, AF ops officer Roger Andersen, Hypersonic flight specialist T.D. Barnes, former CIA radar and stealth engineer ESO office of OSI Gene Poteat, LL.D, and CIA Chief Historian Dr. David Robarge who moderated all the panels. The videos posted below have been cleared for public dissemination. Air & Space Smithsonian Museum [EMBED] DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency) [EMBED]

T.D. Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-05-31 22:43:31)

Miscellaneous news: Read about Sam Pizzo's colorful military career shared with a devoted wife www.nola.com/living/index.ssf/2011/05/sam_pizzos_colorful_military_c.html * * * Annie Jacobsen's book, Area 51 Uncensored. Some of us feel that if we can get past her last chapter and the hints leading to it, what Jacobsen published about a few of us Roadrunners is worth our attempting to salvage the book. In this regard, on 26 May some of the locals in Las Vegas participated in a Q &A panel to offset public questions about the author and publisher venturing into myths and DOE activities unrelated to Area 51. An account of this event may be viewed at: <http://td-barnes.com/blog/?p=70> As to the author, personally she and I have agreed to disagree. I will try to support the bit she published about the Roadrunners, but disclaim all the rest. Others have indicated that I am being too kind and that they will not support the book in any fashion. * * * On a more positive note, the National Geographic Channel documentary released on 22 May 2011 is one that we can be proud of. Details on the opening may be viewed at <http://td-barnes.com/blog/?p=36> If you haven't see it yet, it is being re-shown quite often. Note at the bottom of the page where one may purchase copies of the documentary from National Geographic Channel. * * * Sample video clips from the documentary can be viewed at: <http://td-barnes.com/blog/?p=81> * * * I have noticed that we've had over 10,000 hits on our video page, but few are from our members. In case you don't know, we have roughly 65 videos of our members posted at: [#p/u](http://www.youtube.com/user/NevAerospaceHOF?feature=mhee) We value your inputs so please let take opportunity to do so in the comment box below.

Mike Thompson - Caring for Article 132 (2011-06-02 08:30:07)

Hi TD - Frank I am letting you know that it was me writing a comment in that story from Nat Geo about the A12's. One of the post got to me. I just told him that he had no idea about what he was taking about. I don't like things like that and as long as I can talk about it I will. The info that I have came from the people who were there and who else should know better than all you guys. I hope everything is ok with you and I am getting ready to honor Jack this Saturday 4 June 2011. Still talking. Mike T.

Billie R. Holmes, CMSgt. USAF Ret. (2011-06-02 08:38:34)

T.D. As previously stated in my last communication, the National Geographic did and excellent job for history and those of you who participated in its production. I have finished reading Annie Jacobsen's Book and to me she should be writing for some rag such as the National Enquirer. Normally I donate all my hard cover books to our Library here at John Knox Village, but this time I donated it to the trash bin. Billie R. Holmes, CMSgt. USAF Ret. Area Medic

CC (2011-06-02 09:14:41)

TD: What a shame! Been thinking about it all day and I can only think that she felt that many will buy the book as is, but think of the multitude that will buy it when they hear it is a very serious book with many personal experiences from the key players and therefore the last chapter is also factual. Money talks, and corrupts. May she have the door slammed in her face next time she wants help from any participants in any other historical endeavor. Plug the book as you should and pan the last chapter, maybe the word will get out.. All of my contacts are now aware of your message.. CC

Dick C (2011-06-02 09:26:11)

"Anyone who missed it can go to "ABCNEWS/Nightline" and watch the whole thing there. It really amazing how she can LIE with a straight face....even when confronted with the fact that ABC interviewed her "source" for the alien BS and found him to be 90+ yrs old and "out of touch with reality"! They found Numerous contradictions between the "source" and what she actually wrote....what a SHOCK!"

1.6 June

June 2011 Roadrunners News (2011-06-05 14:33)

Mike Thompson (2011-06-06 13:35:05)

Mike Forty-three years ago Jack left on his final flight. He may be gone from this earth but he remains with us in spirit. It is because of Jack and others like him that we remain free today. Jack and others gave of themselves unselfishly and without any want for glory. On this day[1] Weeks we remember Jack and his family for their devotion to this country, giving and never asking for anything in return. Jack is missed as well as others and it is an honor to tell the public about his service to this country and the other ROADRUNNER's who gave as well. I will always hold the date of 4 June 2008 dear to my heart as that is the day I met a new set of friends and patriots, the ROADRUNNER's. Mike T

ARTICLE 132 AREA 251

1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/weeks/weeks.jpg>

MARTY KNUTSON CELEBRATES HIS 81ST BIRTHDAY

marty During the past month, daughter Kristin organized a birthday party for her dad, Marty Knutson. Though the venue was too remote for most Roadrunners to attend, Roadrunner photographer Mike Schmitz and numerous friends of Marty did so. Many of Marty's fellow members of the San Jose chapter of QBs, (Quiet Birdmen) attended. The QBs are one of the oldest continuously functioning aviator organizations in existence. Among those honoring Marty with their appearance were: John Arvesen - NASA, U-2, Program, Ron Blake - QB, Bill Bonnichsen - NASA, U-2, Program, Clayton Conrad - QB, Mr. Cummings - QB, NASA, Chuck Cutting - QB, Dick Deeds - QB & Wally birds, Arne Ericson, Son of Bob Ericson flew with Marty, Jeff Feng - Marty's Neighbor, Bill Glathe - QB, G. Warren Hall - NASA AMES Test Pilot, Jack Kennedy - NASA U-2 Program, Bob Lisbonne - QB, Bob Lindberg - QB, Ray Martini - QB, Jim McGreal - QB, Henry Santos - Alaskan Fishing buddy, and Geary Tiffany - NASA Pilot. (We apologize to those we missed. Let us know and we will add your name.) Martin (Marty) began his aviation career as an aviation cadet in the U.S. Air Force in 1950. Following service in the Korea conflict and participation in developmental test and operation missions in F-84s, he joined the CIA's Air Division flying U-2s. In July 1959, he flew into Soviet airspace to photograph the missile site at Tyuratam. He retired from the Air Force with the rank of Colonel in 1970, having logged over 6,500 hours of flight time. In 1971 Marty joined NASA at the Ames Research Center as manager of the Airborne Instrumentation Research Project. In 1975 he was named Chief of the Airborne Missions and Applications Division, and served in that position until assuming the position at Dryden. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, both from the Air Force. He has also received the Intelligence Star twice, NASA's Outstanding Leadership Award and the Presidential Rank of Meritorious Executive. He is an Associate Fellow of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and a charter member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service.

xx

[IMG _6803.jpg]

bottom row L to R, Brandon (grandson), Eric Jr. (grandson) Marty Sr. Samantha (granddaughter), Marty Jr. (son), back row L to R, Eric Sr (son), Kristin (daughter), Robin (daughter)

[IMG _6808.jpg]

[IMG _6812.jpg]

[IMG _6813.jpg]

[IMG _6816.jpg]

Frank Dewar (2011-07-01 15:10:21)

Just a quick note to inquire about Marty's health now. I was a mech on the U2 overseas with him. If he has an e-mail address that I could have I would like to send him a Happy Birthday card. Thanks
Frank Dewar

Mike Schmitz (2011-06-06 16:33:16)

Account of Marty's Birthday by Roadrunner Photographer Mike Schmitz

MS It was Saturday June 4th 2011, a nasty, rainy day in Elk Grove that was supposed to last all day and into Sunday. I was supposed to go to Marty Knutson 81st birthday party in Los Altos Hills. I checked the weather for Los Altos Hills. It was the same. I really didn't want to go but I had told Kristin Marty's daughter that I was going to attend and take pictures for TD Barnes, President of Roadrunners Internationale. As I left Elk Grove, the rain continued until I got to Stockton where it turned to drizzle the rest of the way to Pleasanton. At Pleasanton to the Dunbar Bridge it was raining so hard that with the wipers on high it couldn't clear the windows and the traffic slowed to 50mph. I was thinking I should have stayed home the weather is horrible. From the Dunbar Bridge to Marty's house the weather cleared and the sun was starting to come out. It was about time. When I got to Marty's house, I met some of his family and introduced myself to Kristin. Not all of Marty's family had arrived yet. Marty was on the back porch talking on the phone. What I first noticed about Marty was he wasn't using a walker, he could move around good with it. Sometimes he got help and other times he said he didn't need help to move around. I talked with his caregiver and I said he looked great since I had seen him and her at the RR (Roadrunners Reunion). She said that he had improved tremendously. I went over and told Marty who I was and why I was there. He said that "he was better, but he was still missing a couple of bricks and that he might never get them back". "But a lot of guys had passed before they reached his age". When I took some pictures of Marty he said "that he might break the lens". I told him I had other lens if that happened. One thing that everyone I talked with said about Marty was that "Marty was the best boss or guy that they ever worked with or for". They all had great things to say about Marty. The one thing that I notice was the great respect these guesses had toward Marty. The guesses had so much respect and admiration toward Marty. What a blessing to have so many friends come to your birthday party some driving several hours in terrible weather to be there. One guess was from Grass Valley and another from Auburn. Everyone that I talked with said that they wouldn't have missed this party no matter how bad the weather was. There were few with walkers and canes, all wanting to wish him a Happy Birthday. I am sure that there were many friends that wanted to attend but could not due to health reasons. There was plenty of great food and a bar for those that wanted drinks. I didn't get to take as many pictures as I wanted. I did not know Marty though I had talked to him at the 2009 Roadrunner reunion. I am glad I went to his party it was well worth putting up with the rain to see so many friends talking and sharing there experiences with Marty. I am sure that Marty enjoyed it as much as those that attended did. He is a very lucky man to have so many friends that think so much of him and such a loving and caring family. I am grateful to have been able to attend his party. This will be something that I will always cherish, being part of his 81st birthday. Missing the photos below are grandson Joshua and granddaughter Natasha.@TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-06-06 19:12:25)

On 2 June 2011, TD Barnes and Harry Martin organized yet another great evening at Ricardo's with twenty-nine local Las Vegas Roadrunners, wives, and widows, Connie Pardew-May from Reno, and three members from Langley. The food and hospitality was great and the camaraderie even better.

[EMBED]

Thomas N. Farrell (2011-06-06 20:24:43)

I've just posted a revised Web Site to honor those who flew the A-12 and SR-71 aircraft. I was on the receiving end of the product they brought back, and this is the first time I've had the opportunity to express my appreciation for a "Job well done." Thomas N. Farrell Senior Imagery Analyst National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) Retired

Thornton D. "TD" Barnes (2011-06-12 13:39:56)

Remembering my time over 45 Years ago at EG &G Special Projects and Area 51

October 1964 - June 1966

By

Jules Kabat

I was interviewed for the job at the Guys and Dolls Lounge (now part of Batista's across from Bally's) by Bill Barrett, manager of the EG & G Special Projects at the site. He could tell me nothing other than I would be flying to work every day and it would be interesting plus a 20 % bonus for flying, free food and board...if you wanted it. It sounded intriguing and I loved flying so I took the job.

While waiting for my clearances, I worked with a downtown engineer, Jim Labutti, on a bull gear for antenna tracking. After receiving my clearances, I reported to a pair of C-47's parked just south of the Vegas Airmotive facility on the West Side of McCarran. Take off time 6:30 a.m. (later changed to 6:00 a.m.) by married guys in an overwhelming vote against 4 single guys. There were about 45 guys going up everyday. The C-47's looked like they had seen a lot of service. 710Z and 811Z were hot in the summer and cold in the winter, they rode rough in turbulence, but we always took off no matter the weather or wind in Vegas. We didn't always get into Area 51.

When I arrived at the site now called Area 51 (AKA Groom Lake), I was very impressed by what I saw. Who wouldn't be; the Blackbirds (A-12's) and that 60' diameter dish.

I was introduced to Harry Phiffer who was in charge of the engineers at the site and Wayne Pendleton F-Systems (flight) manager and Jim Tarver G-Systems (ground) manager. I was assigned to be responsible for the two radar systems in the antenna building: the S-band radar with the 60' dish and the Navy Radar about (225 Mc). a-12 The organization got a little strange after I was introduced to Bill McCloud, Antenna Building lead tech. He and his people reported to Howard Schmit F-Systems senior technical supervisor. (Senior technical supervisor for G-Systems was George Percy).

G-Systems was a model range for detecting radar return hot-spots and F-Systems was to make radar cross-section measurements on the genuine article A-12 (Blackbird) in flight at the threat frequencies.

I shared an office, looking down the runway to the northwest, with Frank Harris, responsible for C-Band, PPA (70 Mc) and Clothesline (155 Mc). The runway at that time was 14,000 feet with a 10,000-foot over-run. You could not help looking up when a "Bird" took off as they rotated at about 211 knots with lots of noise. In late 1965, I witnessed one big explosion of an A-12 from the vantage point of my office window. The Blackbird taking off Northwest, I

observed it bank slightly to left, then slightly to the right, then a hard left bank. At that time the pilot ejected, his chute deployed with one swing before he hit the ground. The Blackbird hit the ground with a huge explosion from it being fully loaded with fuel. The test pilot, Mele Vojvodich, flew down to Vegas with us. I believe he had a dislocated shoulder and he told us how his controls were reversed.

I was informed that there wouldn't be much to do for me as we were, and I quote, "window dressing". All real engineering would be handled by "Downtown" engineers (read better) and the technicians. Of course, this did not sit well with me, so I set out to rectify this arrangement and met with quite a bit of hostility. We eventually got it sorted out and once McCloud was on my side, nobody else was allowed to touch the system without my ok, which was a real shock to the Downtown guys.

The head of Downtown engineering was Don White who was very skeptical of anything done by the people at the site, until I was able to make the measurements on Big Blast, an S-band noise jammer that the Agency requested. Two of the engineers from downtown, Tom Walsh and Lloyd Cohan were great guys and we worked well together.

The main task of F-Systems was to make radar cross-section measurements on the Bird using the S-Band radar and the 60' dish. The Bird was tracked using the Nike Radar with a transponder on the A-12. We calibrated the dish/radar to 1 square meter return, then we measured the returns from the Bird. The data was analyzed for different angles and altitudes and radar absorbing material was put in the chines to try to get reduced radar returns for minimum cross-section. Explaining that we had to calibrate the antenna in a fixed position, myself, McCloud, Cowan Dawson and Pezzini got to thoroughly investigate the Groom mine for several hours.

It was very important to have the smallest cross-section possible to give the gun-laying/missile guidance tracking radar as little as possible to work with. The threat was the Russian built SA-2 (Fansong) Track-While-Scan radar. It had been responsible for downing our U-2's over Russia, Cuba, later in the People's Republic of China and it became very effective over North Vietnam especially in the high-density missile and AAA areas in Route Package 6 (Hanoi/Haiphong). Even with the high speed (Mach 3 plus) and altitude (90,000 feet plus) (the A-12 was lighter and faster the SR-71), no stone was left unturned (ECM & low radar cross-section) to ensure maximum survivability of the Blackbirds. Although I don't think with the speed and altitude of the aircraft, the inability of the missile steering over 75,000 feet, and the fact you had to get a shot off coming in (once the radar slewed around the Blackbird would out run the missile which only had a 17-mile slant range) that an effective guided intercept could be made. However, there is always a lucky shot and it was a big missile/warhead. The SA-2 is still considered a threat to our aircraft to this day.

Eventually I took over all the radars at the site. The long wave (low frequency) radars could see the aircraft a long way off, but didn't have the accuracy for gun-laying or missile guidance. Shortly before I left we received a genuine made in Russia SA-2 at the site.

Some of my other fellow co-workers that I can recall are:

Dick Lampier - G-Systems Engineer

Stan Busby- G-Systems Engineer

Carl Newmiller - Drafting

Bob Funk - Nike Operator

Dick McEwen - G-Systems

Cowan Dawson - C-Band

Dick Wilson - Q-Bay

Robert Pezzini - Antenna building

Vern Williamson - PPA

Dave Haen - Q-Bay

Sam Gamble - Drafting

Jim Freedman - Admin

? Helbert - G-Systems (don't sit next to this one in turbulence...)

Jim Cates - G-Systems

Eddie ? - Admin

Rocky ? - G-Systems Tech Supervisor

Willie M? - Clothesline

CarCo out of Albuquerque, NM had the contract to fly the C-47's and allowed me to fly anytime I wanted. They were:

Roy Kemp - Chief Pilot

Tom Hall - Pilot

Joe Cotton - Pilot (gave me my checkride)

Hugh Starcher - Pilot

Tom Losh - Pilot

Flo Deluna - Mechanic (looked over my Swift before purchase)

We also had a football team and a softball team from Special Projects at the site. The softball team was good, but the football team was outstanding. The flag football team competed in the Las Vegas city sponsored league in 1965. Some of the teams were WMK Cement and Mayflower Movers. Needless to say, it got pretty nasty and evolved into tackle without pads because everybody was tying the flag to their belt loop. We won the championship undefeated thanks to our fabulous quarterback Dick Wilson and our very fleet of foot ends/pass defenders, Carl Newmiller and Bob Pezzini. Cowan Dawson and I did the grunt work of charging ends on defense and blocking back on offense. We even won the game against the all-stars from the other teams.

There were enough broken arms, legs, and noses that the city opted out the next year.

I learned a lot at EG & G Special Projects and other than the early get up, it was great fun.

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-06-20 14:07:47)

Meet the Pilots Day The Roadrunners are proud that the Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum invited one of our own to join top military pilots who flew some of the actual aircraft that are now proudly displayed at the Museum. This was a 'must' for aviation enthusiasts, an event that kicked off with a special panel discussion with the pilots in the Lutnick Theater from 11am-12:30pm. Starting at 2pm, the pilots were stationed by their aircraft, answering questions and sharing their flight experiences with museum guests. The line-up included pilots representing the following aircraft: FJ-3 Fury, A-4 Skyhawk, F11F Tiger, F-16 Falcon, and the A-12 Blackbird: Sam Folsom (FJ-3 Fury) Sam is a Marine Corps fighter pilot and saw extensive action in WWII, the Korean War, and as a test pilot. He currently volunteers as a docent at the Intrepid Museum. Sam lives in New York City Rollie Shea (A-4B Skyhawk) Rollie flew the very A-4B Skyhawk that is on display at Intrepid on dozens of missions over Vietnam in 1966. He is currently active as a professional tennis referee. Rollie will travel from Orlando, FL to join us for Pilots Day Lew Chatham (F11F Tiger) Retired Rear Admiral Lew Chatham had a long career and held many command positions. Lew flew as Blue Angel #5 from 1961 to 1963 in the very F11F Tiger that is currently displayed at the Intrepid Museum. Lew is from Tucson, AZ. Brent Richardson (F-16 Falcon) Retired Colonel Richardson had a long USAF career that culminated as Commander of the 174th Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard and flew the F-16A currently displayed at the Intrepid Museum during Desert Storm. Brent calls Clayton, NY home. Frank Murray (A-12 Blackbird) Murray Murray was a USAF/CIA pilot that is one of only 5 pilots that flew special operation missions in the A-12. These missions include 4 trips over Vietnam during the war as well as one flight over North Korea during the Pueblo incident in 1968. Frank will travel from Reno, NV for the event. Mike Barger (Event Co-Host & Panel Moderator) Mike is a former naval aviator and served as a Top Gun instructor. Following his Navy career, Mike became a founding member of JetBlue Airways. Mike served as event host and panel discussion moderator. Mike lives in Mamaroneck, NY. Eric Boehm, Curator, Aviation and Aircraft Restoration and member of Roadrunners Internationale provided the Roadrunners with the following photos taken during the event.

[1] Murray

Frank Murray

[2] Murray

Eric Boehm presenting Frank with a hunk of real Intrepid flight deck wood

[3] group

Eric Boehm and the pilots

1. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/frank-1.jpg

2. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/frank-2.jpg

3. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/group-2.jpg

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-06-20 22:26:06)

It is my sad duty to inform the Roadrunners of Groom Lake of the passing last month of Bernard Lipscomb. Bernard is remembered for his service with the 1129th Special Activities Squadron at Groom Lake during Project OXCART. As the family recalls below, we also remember SMSGT Lipscomb keeping us in stitches with his humor while serving in the supply room at Groom Lake. He served his country well and in retirement we could always depend upon Bernard attending our Roadrunners Internationale reunions in Las Vegas. His happy outlook on life was infectious to all who knew him. Our reunion this October will not be the same without Sgt Lipscomb. Rest in peace, Bernard. Our condolences to his family and many friends. Lipscomb

Don W Johnson (2011-07-03 16:59:17)

As a firefighter that spent many hours in close proximity to the A-12s during the testing and operations I am very interested in all the facts that are included in the news letters. As firefighters, we were very limited on any information outside of that needed to protect the birds and personnel so learning about the operations has given me a new pride in our contribution.

DIA & Smithsonian Videos of Oxcart Legacy Tour (2011-06-14 20:02)

OXCART LEGACY TOUR VIDEOS

In September 2010 Roadrunner president and director of the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame Thornton D. "TD" Barnes and Mr. Peter DeForth organized a 10 day Oxcart Legacy Tour in the Washington, D.C. area that included Q &A panel discussions at CIA, DIA, the Air and Space Smithsonian Museum, USGIF, the International Spy Museum, and the Capitol Hill Club. The panelists consisted of A-12 Pilot Ken Collins, SR-71 pilots Rich Graham and Buz Carpenter, Lockheed Skunkworks manager Bob Murphy, Pratt & Whitney J-58 engine designer Dr. Bob Abernethy, Pratt & Whitney engineer Dennis Nordquist, Photo Analyst Art Beidler, AF ops officer Roger Andersen, Hypersonic flight specialist T.D. Barnes, former CIA radar and stealth engineer ESO office of OSI Gene Poteat, LL.D, and CIA Chief Historian Dr. David Robarge who moderated all the panels. The videos posted below have been cleared for public dissemination.

Air & Space Smithsonian Museum

[EMBED]

Defense Intelligence Agency



National Geographic and Jacobsen's Book (2011-06-14 20:27)

The National Geographic Channel documentary Area 51 Declassified released on May 22, 2011 has generated acclaims worldwide, however the Annie Jacobsen book, Area 51 an uncensored history of America's Top Secret military base has generated a whirlwind of controversy and highly volatile debate. Listed below are various videos appearing in the media.

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

[EMBED]

Rob Huber (2011-06-15 21:01:41)

Hi guys! I loved the National Geographic special. All of you guys who appeared in the special were just great and I could have listened for hours! I originally looked forward to buying the book. After hearing about the kooky theories that the author has chosen to include, I just couldn't bring myself to buy it. I hope you guys can get together with another author (a sane one) at some point in the future to put together a proper book. Best regards from a fan, Rob.

1.7 July

July 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-07-01 16:10)

Frank Murray - Dutch 20 (2011-07-01 16:15:06)

This report is a brief summary of the happenings at the "Meet the Pilots Day" event at the Intrepid Air and Space Museum in New York City. This event was Murray planned and set up by Eric Boehm, Curator of Aircraft restoration and display at the Carrier Intrepid. I was one of five pilots invited to be parts of the one-day event at the Intrepid. Each of the pilots had flown the type aircraft they were assigned to be part of. In several cases, the pilots had flown the exact tail number bird that was displayed at the Intrepid. Those attending pilots were; Sam Folsom, retired Lt Colonel, US Marine pilot, attending as the pilot of the Intrepid's FJ-3 Fury. Sam lives in NYC. Retired Navy Captain Rollie Shea, pilot of the A-4B Skyhawk. Rollie actually flew this very airplane Rollie lives in Winter Park, Florida. Retired Navy Rear Admiral Lew Chatham, he flew the #5 marked Blue Angels F11F Tiger displayed there. Lew lives in Tucson, Arizona.

[1] Murray
Frank Murray

[2] Murray
Eric Boehm presenting Frank with a hunk of real Intrepid flight deck wood

[3] group

Eric Boehm and the pilots

Retired Air Force Colonel Brent Richardson, he flew the F-16 Falcon on display at the Intrepid. Brent lives in Clayton, New York. Retired Air Force Lt Colonel Frank Murray, he represented the Air Force and the CIA at the A-12 Blackbird that is on the flight deck of Intrepid. Frank lives in Gardnerville, Nevada.

The day started about 1000hrs on the Intrepid where Eric introduced the pilots to the staff of employed and volunteers that provide tour guidance throughout the Carrier. These docents were anxious to learn more from the pilots and they did! The next event was done in the Auditorium in the converted aircraft elevator section of Intrepid. This is a well appointed 250 seat theatre, much like you'd see in a modern movie theatre. Eric introduced the seated pilots to the audience, and co-host/moderator Mike Barger proceeded to read the bios with a accompanying picture slide show of each of the pilots. Mike and his brother co-founded JetBlue Airways. Following the introduction, the audience was invited to ask questions of the pilots. Part of this audience was a group of Boy Scouts seated at the first row. They asked many of the best questions of the day. This meet the pilots panel went on for an hour and was followed by lunch on the fantail for the pilots and selected guests. It was a picture perfect day, cool and calm for a change. After lunch the pilots made their way to their respective airplanes where they met an enthusiastic public. I was stationed inside the rope at the Intrepid's A-12. This being the number 2 produced A-12, Lockheed Article number 122. This airplane was the Radar Cross Section test article that spent a lot of time up on a pole in the West edge of Groom Lake, elevated to 100' on a pole, subjected to the study of radars and instrumentation measure in the early days of Project Oxcart. 122 was not flown very much, spending much time in the hangar being modified for various system tests. There was a continuous stream of people of all ages and genders asking very good questions of me about this airplane. The other pilots were at their appointed vehicles, and I am sure they were busy as was I. This part of the day was finished about 3:00PM. Attending with me was Tom McGuire, retired Air Force Lt Colonel. Tom lives on Cape Cod, Mass. Tom was my RIO in the years I was stationed at Otis AFB on the Cape. We flew the F-101B for several years there. BTW, RIO is the acronym for the Radar Intercept Officer that flies in the back seat of the F-101B. Sometimes called the GIB (guy in the backseat) or "gunner" as I used to call Tom. Tom drove me to the Cape after the "do" where we finished the trip back East. Follow-on traffic tells me that this was a success from the Intrepid's view. They plan more of this kind of meeting. Seems to me that the same sort of thing would be a good thing at the other Air Museums across the country. Intrepid started something I bet, I thoroughly enjoyed this venture. In retrospect, maybe an additional day to train the docents on a complicated airplane like the A-12 might have been a good thing. I did give Eric a CD copy of the A-12 Flight Manual. Tech info like this is important to keep the docent speaking the right stuff. Frank Murray A-12 pilot, Callsign "Dutch 20"

1. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/frank-1.jpg

2. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/frank-2.jpg

3. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/blog_images/group-2.jpg

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-07-06 09:31:07)

A-12 ARTICLE #132 Battleship Memorial Park - Mobile, Alabama

Maintaining the legacy of the CIA A-12 spyplane and the Roadrunners who built and flew it.

[1]132

Following the lead of the Central Intelligence Agency during its September 2007 dedication of Article 128 the Battleship Memorial Park pays tribute to the Roadrunners. who built and flew Article 132 during Project OXCART at Area-51 during the Cold War. Each June 5, the museum pays special tribute to Alabama born CIA Project Pilot [2]Jack Weeks who died in the loss of an A-12 during Operation Blackshield.

The Roadrunners extend their appreciation to Director Bill Tunnel and his excellent staff for keeping the legacy of the Oxcart veterans alive and associated to their great plane under the excellent care of the Battleship Memorial Park Museum. [3]More about this Article #132

retired in this great museum

Bill Tunnell- Museum Director
Owen Miller, Purchasing Agent/Property Manager
Mike Thompson-Aircraft Curator
curator Shea McLain - Aircraft Curator
Battleship Memorial Park
2703 Battleship Parkway
P. O. Box 65,
Mobile, Alabama. 36601
251-433-2703

1. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article132/IMG_5414_2.jpg
2. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/weeks.html>
3. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/article132.html>

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-07-06 10:56:52)

FINAL FLIGHT BILL D. CHOATE

We regret having to inform you of the final flight of Bill D. Choate of Palmdale, California. Bill was born on a farm in west Texas and moved to Phoenix at the age of 10. He enlisted in the Army for 18 months in October 1945 and spent a year on Okinawa. Choate was discharged in March 1947. He re-enlisted in the Air Force in 1948 and retired from the Air Force in 1969 after a four-year tour at Area 51 with the 1129th SAS during Project OXCART and Operation BLACK SHIELD. Bill Choate entered the United States Army in October 1945 with basic training at Sheppard Field, Texas. After basic training he was assigned to the 623rd AC &W Squadron in Okinawa as an aircraft mechanic. From there he transferred in 1948 to McChord AFB, Washington where he worked in supply. From July 1949 to February 1952, he served with the 78th Air Bus Group at Hamilton Field, California. In 1952, he transferred to the 44th Fighter Bomber Group at Clark AFB, Philippines. From 1954 to May 1958, he was assigned to the 5th Bomber Wing at Travis AFB where he was the NCOIC Flyaway Kit. In June 1958 he assumed the job of Supply Liaison at Chateauroux AB, France. From Chateauroux, He was re-assigned back to Travis AFB in June 1961. In September 1965 he returned to Travis AFB as a supply specialist. Choate spent three months on Okinawa in 1966 and again in 1968 on the CIA's Operation Black Shield. In January 1969 he retired from the Air Force and moved to Palmdale, California where he worked for Lockheed on the L-1011 until mid 1975. Opened a Gunsmith shop in 1975 (Choate's Rifle Shop). Sold out in 1983 and left the State of California for a return to Arizona. 1985 Opened another gun shop on the Mongollan Rim and retired in Oct 1997. At that time, he wrote two books, "From Time to Time" and then "Don't roll over" Steven has a son, Steven, and two daughters. Other survivors in his immediate family are his wife, Donna, sisters Ruth and Gene, and a half-brother Daniel. Services will be private.

1.8 September

The Search for A-12 Article #125 (2011-09-06 16:52)

Walt Ray

A-12 (60-6928 / 125) was lost on 5 January 1967 during a training sortie flown from Groom Lake. Its pilot, Walter L. Ray became the first CIA Project OXCART A-12 pilot killed in the line of duty and is so honored in the "Book of Honor", CIA Headquarters at Langley, Va. CIA pilots lost at Groom Lake prior to Ray are: CIA U-2 pilots Rose Grace and Carey were killed in 1956. CIA U-2 pilot Buster Edens in 1965 in Project AQUATONE.

More about Walt Ray is posted at: [1]Walt Ray< .a>

A-12 (60-6928 / 125) was lost on 5 January 1967 during a training sortie flown from Groom Lake. Its pilot, Walter L. Ray became the first CIA pilot killed in the line of duty and is so honored in the "Book of Honor", CIA Headquarters in McLean, Va.

In 1997, Jeremy Krans, a resident of the state of Wisconsin realized that no memorial had ever been erected at the crash site of Walt Ray and A-12 Article #125. He researched the location of the crash site, a site that remained secret for many years. If the location was every known, it had become long lost to the public over the passage of time. Krans made several trips to the high desert of Nevada in search of the site. Each time, his expedition grew in size as his family and friends joined to show their patriotic respect to a secret warrior of the Cold War. Krans and all concerned, are to be commended for this gallant show of American gratitude to the memory of Walt Ray.

[2]<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/ray.html>

Crash Site of Walt Ray and A-12 Article 125



[3]



[4]



[5]

Photos of the expeditions can be viewed at: [6]Story and Photos

1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/ray.html>
2. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/ray.html>
3. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/krans/2011Desert11.jpg>
4. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/krans/walt_ray_crash_marker.jpg
5. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/krans/walt_ray_crash_marker_chopped.jpg
6. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/search_125.html

NVAHOF 2011 Hall of Fame Selections (2011-09-13 21:14)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Dawn Barlow-Curtis, 702-561-6372 September 12, 2011

lvdb01@aol.com

ANNOUNCING THE NEVADA AEROSPACE HALL OF FAME
2nd ANNUAL INDUCTION CEREMONY and DINNER

CAPTION:



William A. Ivy George E. Crockett Patrick A. McCarran Florence J. Murphy Charles P. Winters
Willam M. Stead Jane A. Miller **Walter T. Varney

HENDERSON, Nevada - On Friday, October 14, 2011, at 7pm, the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame (NVAHOF) will hold its 2nd Annual Induction Ceremony. Much like last year's induction ceremony, this event will mark the official NVAHOF recognition of a select group of aviators, all with a special relationship to the state of Nevada. → The 2011 NVAHOF inductees are: William A. Ivy, first in flight over the state of Nevada (1910), Senator Patrick A. McCarran (submitted first bill for separate Air Force and multiple bills forming regulatory structure of aviation industry), Walter T. Varney (First Commercial Airmail Route), Florence J. Murphy (Commercial pilot and Bonanza Airlines executive), George E. Crockett (Founder of Alamo Air Field and Alamo Airways), William M. Stead (Founder of the Reno Air Races), Brigadier General Charles P. Winters (Test pilot and commander over multiple formerly classified programs), and Jane Miller (Flight Nursing Pioneer).

The past year has been an exciting and productive one for NVAHOF. While we have not yet settled on a permanent physical home for the NVAHOF, we continue our mission of increasing awareness of Nevada's unique aerospace history through public outreach and the on going development of our website. Originally organized as a student project of the Las Vegas Art Institute, the development of the site in 2011 included the launch of the "virtual museum" portion of the site. We invite the public to view the site at: [1]<http://nvahof.org/> .

Information on last year's inductees can be viewed at: [2]http://nvahof.org/?page_id=6.

NVAHOF public outreach and educational activities for the past year included: promotional presence at the Reno Air Races and the Nellis Air Force Base Open House, and Naval Air Station, Fallon. NVAHOF also participated in the reunion of the Atomic Curtiss Marines and meetings of the Daedalians Fighter Flight #62 at Nellis AFB. Last September, NVAHOF organized and participated in a 10-day, Oxcart Legacy Tour in Washington, D.C. Former workers of Nevada's Groom Lake facility gave presentations at the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF), the Smithsonian's Air & Space Museum, the Capitol Hill Club, and the International Spy Museum. Follow NVAHOF activities starting on our website at: [3]http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5, [4]http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5 & paged=2, [5]http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5 & paged=3

On September 23rd, NVAHOF will participate in an educational tour of Bigelow Aerospace in North Las Vegas. On October 4th, The NVAHOF has collaborated with the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering and UNLV Department of History to present a special edition of the College of Engineering's Dean's Conversation Series. Dr. David Robarge, Chief Historian at the CIA, NVAHOF Director T.D. Barnes, and former CIA A-12 Blackbird pilot, Frank Murray will lead a candid and informative discussion on the CIA's A-12 program. Panelists will field audience questions related to declassified activities during the CIA's Project OXCART. Later that month,

NVAHOF members will tour the Predator and Reaper programs at Creech AFB. This is a special tour arranged for officials from the Central Intelligence Agency at Langley VA, and local representatives from UNLV's College of Engineering and the Atomic Testing Museum.

About the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame

The Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame is a non-profit, educational foundation dedicated to preserving the legacy of the men and women who pioneered aerospace within the State of Nevada. The Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame established and maintains an ongoing means of honoring individuals who have contributed in a significant manner, to the development, advancement, and promotion of aerospace in the Battle Born State of Nevada, or elsewhere. NVAHOF also honors individuals who were not native to Nevada, but whose careers enhanced the aerospace climate world wide as well as in space. The mission of NVAHOF is unique as it especially recognizes and honors the men and women of the Cold War who worked within the CIA, USAF, and civilians, who worked in secrecy at Groom Lake, the Nevada Test Site, the NASA High Range, Tonopah Test Range, Nellis AFB, Creech AFB, the Fallon Air Station, Stead AFB, and related sites in the state of Nevada.

The goal is to foster, promote, and encourage a better sense of appreciation by the public of those persons' contributions and the role of aerospace, and to perpetuate the memory of those honored by means of public displays and announcements.

Except in cases involving national security concerns, archival materials collected in the course of researching the above mentioned individuals, will be filed for future historical reference. Exceptional and responsible consideration will be given to selection of nominees without compromising the secrecy of their deeds and accomplishments.

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*WHO: The Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame (NVAHOF)

WHAT: Second Annual Induction Ceremony and Dinner***

WHERE: Henderson Executive Airport, 3500 Executive Terminal Drive, Henderson, NV 89052

WHEN: Saturday, October 14, 2011 at 6pm

***Due to lack of sponsorship, dinner attendance is limited. Those wishing to attend this noble event are welcome. Please contact either of the NVAHOF Directors of Communication and Development identified below.

Reception 6: p.m.

Dinner 7: p.m.

Seats \$75.00 each

Dawn Barlow-Curtis 702-561-6372 kvdb01@aol.com Director Southern Nevada

Connie Pardew-May 775 530-2297 cpardew@att.net Director Northern Nevada

*Photo credit: Courtesy, History Colorado

**Photo credit: United Airlines Historical Foundation

1. <http://nvahof.org/>

2. http://nvahof.org/page_id=6

3. http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5
 4. http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5&paged=2
 5. http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5&paged=3
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September 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-09-15 21:26)

As some of you know, Frank Murray of A-12 Pilot fame is authoring another bit of our Roadrunner history that has never been published before. The subject of his latest contribution to our OXCART and BLACKSHIELD history and legacy is the secret moving of the A-12 Articles from the Skunk Works to Groom Lake. Many have seen the declassified photos of the convoy of California highway patrol, CIA security, etc. escorting semi trucks loaded with huge boxes containing the A-12 planes. What few realize is that this classified movement occurred for the transport of each of the A-12 and YF-12 Blackbirds we flew at the Ranch. (Two SR-71s were also delivered to Palmdale in these boxes). At the time, it was a really big deal. We have some photos of the boxes being constructed at the Skunkworks and those of that one trip to Nevada. Frank is seeking any additional photos, stories about the moves, details on the routes taken, security concerns, incidents, etc. How were the planes removed from the boxes; were the boxes torn down for transport back to the Skunkworks, etc. This is an unknown piece of our legacy and history, folks, so get those brain cells working and help Frank put this in the history books.

Along this same line, Col. Sam Pizzo has provided an excellent article about who all arrived when he did at the Area, how he was recruited by Col. Holbury, and a descriptive account of what the mission planners did at the Ranch during the OXCART flights. Sam is adding this chapter to his book that he will soon have available as an ebook for download on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. It is an excellent book and Colonel Pizzo is to be commended for his time and effort to record this for the sake of history. The added paragraph is being published by the Atomic Testing Museum for distribution on October 4 during the Roadrunners Internationale reunion.

Concerning the Roadrunner reunion (3-6 October, Gold Coast Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas), we are very happy to report a much larger turnout than previously expected. The registration count is now over 200. Initially, the Roadrunner reunion organizers planned two activities: A day at the Atomic Testing Museum similar to the last reunion where we would have conducted panel discussions before the public and the media (last reunion it was for C-Span). For a second activity, we planned a tour of Bigelow Aerospace, the company with two expandable modules in orbit, a concept that will eventually develop into human habitats in space. When the Roadrunners attending the reunion stated a lack of interest in either activity, the reunion organizers dropped both activities and are leaving it up to those attending to make their own fun.

The lack of Roadrunner interest in the Atomic Testing Museum event did not terminate the event. The Roadrunners were given the privilege of kicking off a 2-year exhibit titled "Area 51 - Myth or Reality. Details of this project were covered in previous newsletters and we thought that the Roadrunners would welcome being a part of it. Some of the Roadrunners do want to participate, so NVAHOF, the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame stepped in to assist the

ATM (Atomic Testing Museum) in making it happen. Several Roadrunners are participants in NVAHOF and support its efforts to maintain the legacy of the Roadrunners as well as the other aviation and aerospace activities occurring in Nevada. Next year, NVAHOF plans to conduct its Hall of Fame ceremony as part of the Reno Air races. While it already has a great track record, NVAHOF is still in the seeking grants and sponsorship stage. Check us out at:
2010 Hall of Fame Induction at the Henderson Executive Air Terminal

http://nvahof.org/?page_id=6

Recent activities

http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5

[http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5 &paged=2](http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5&paged=2)

[http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5 &paged=3](http://nvahof.org/?page_id=5&paged=3)

Roadrunner Jack Bassick of David Clark Co. made available to the Area 51 exhibit at the Atomic Testing Museum the duplicate pressure suit of A-12 pilot

flight suit Jack Weeks, whom we lost in the Pacific during Operation Black Shield. Several other Roadrunners are contributing to the exhibit as well. The Pratt & Whitney personnel are bringing back the great exhibits they brought to the last reunion. Associate member Joerg Arnu, Pete Merlin, and Dr. Paul Suhler are contributing their exhibits as well. The Roadrunner staff will also contribute to the exhibits.

As we mentioned in the previous newsletters, NVAHOF and Col. Allan Palmer, Executive Director of the ATM, and the ATM staff are striving for a permanent Area 51 exhibit at the ATM. The City of Henderson, Nevada is also talking to NVAHOF about it having a building within the future Space & Science Museum for exhibiting artifacts of Area 51. As most of you know, the state of Nevada did not retain any of the technology demonstrators first flown in Nevada, starting with the U-2 and A-12 that flew out of Groom Lake. We intend to persuade the state to adopt and modify the motto of Las Vegas to - ``What happens in Nevada stays in Nevada.' ' In this regard, besides the mentioned museums, Nellis AFB has expressed an interest in our obtaining a U-2 or A-12, however it appears that neither are available at this time.

Regarding the 18-month Area 51 exhibit that the Roadrunner members and others are kicking off on the 4th of October, this is not a one-time event. Each month, we plan to organize a public educational event where a group, our CIA security guards for an example, will field an informal Q&A session for the public visiting the exhibit. Each month will be a different team or declassified project occurring at Groom Lake. I emphasize educational as many of those attending will be organized school events to educate our youth. Both NVAHOF (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit) and the ATM are devoted to education. While NVAHOF will be participating in the ATM project, being an entity covering the entire state, NVAHOF will initiate similar activities with the Navy at Fallon, NASA, and the civilian sector. To explain the Oct 4th event more fully, the following is from the organizer at the ATM:

Hello All:

The museum is gearing up for the Men of Area 51 event on Oct. 4th and the Area 51 exhibit that will open in the Spring.

We are hoping that you will all participate in our events.

The Oct. 4th event will include meet/greet and talk segments. Rather than do panels that can only have a few participants we are doing a series of talks throughout the day. I am setting up the program so is you or a group you put together would like to give a talk on some aspect of Area 51 or project development let me know. If you want to participate in the meet and greet and need a table area - also let me know.

The exhibit on Area 51 will have a number of areas that spotlight the workers of Area 51. Visitors will receive an ID card with real peoples names, photos and job on them and that persons story will be woven into the exhibit. I want to spotlight you! If you are willing to participate in the exhibit please send me a photo (then or now), and information that includes}

Height, Weight, Hair Color, Eye Color, Job Title and brief description of your job.

The last event we did at the museum was incredible. This year, the Oct. 4th event will be bigger and better and is the kick-off for the Area 51 exhibit and 18 months of events. Already both the Travel Channel and the History Channel have been to the museum to do stories on the future exhibit. I really would like you to be a part of this event.

Thanks for your help,
Karen

Karen Green, Curator
karen.green@ntshf.org
Atomic Testing Museum
755 East Flamingo Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89119
702-794-5118

We hope our fellow Roadrunners will think of NVAHOF as a disposition of your memorabilia affiliated with Groom Lake or any other aviation/aerospace activity occurring in the state of Nevada. Speaking for NVAHOF, we hope you will consider supporting our goals. Besides honoring those who significantly contributed to aerospace in the state of Nevada, we are seeking to establish two student scholarships to assist our future engineers, astronauts, etc. In meeting their goals. We welcome you to visit the NVAHOF website being constructed by students: <http://nvahof.org/>. I am attaching our latest news release to enlighten you further on our activities to carry on the legacy of the Roadrunners and those serving after us at the Ranch.

Putting my Roadrunner hat back on, the Roadrunner staff has made great headway towards getting our aging house in order. The Roadrunner website is now being

administered by Associate Member, Joerg Arnu. Arnu was born in Hamel, Germany in 1962. He obtained his Masters degree in Electrical Engineering with a minor in Computer Science from the University of Hanover in 1986. He worked as a software engineer for Siemens in Berlin and then founded his own software company to develop control systems for stage lighting. Arnu lives in Las Vegas and is employed as a software engineer. He has assisted with the management of the Roadrunner website for the past 4 years. He and Barnes will continue to work together on the website with the intent for Arnu to continue it when Barnes no longer can. Arnu will be the prime maintainer of the site on non-personnel matters. Barnes will continue upkeep of the roster and technical matters relating to OXCART.

Frank Murray will continue as our historian as we establish and record the history of the Roadrunners known only to those with boots on the ground at the time. However, to maintain our legacy project, Associate Member Pete Merlin is taking custody of our association administrative records. Merlin was born in Hollywood, California. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Studies from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. Merlin is a member of the Flight Test Historical Foundation and Nevada Test Site Historical Foundation, as well as an associate member of Roadrunners Internationale. Merlin has worked as an archivist and historian at NASA Dryden Flight Research Center, under various contracts since 1997. He is the author of Mach 3+: NASA/USAF YF-12 Flight Research, 1969-1979 and co-author of Donald L. Mallick's autobiography The Smell of Kerosene: A Test Pilot's Odyssey, both NASA publications. He has written From Archangel to Senior Crown -- Design and Development of the Blackbird for the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, a technological case study of the design evolution of the A-12 and SR-71. With Tony Moore, he wrote X-Plane Crashes: Exploring Experimental, Rocket Plane and Spycraft Incidents, Accidents, and Crash Sites, a collection of stories about aerospace archaeology published by Specialty Press. As a freelance writer, Merlin has published numerous articles on the Internet as well as in a variety of periodicals, including AIR&SPACE Smithsonian Magazine, covering subjects from aerospace history to nuclear weapons accidents. He has also appeared on such television programs as Man, Moment, Machine: Shot Down -- The U-2 Spy Plane; Modern Marvels: Edwards Air Force Base; Inside Area 51; UFO: Down To Earth -- Retrieval; Return to Area 51; Mystery Hunters; and Atomic Journeys: Welcome to Ground Zero. A founding member of the X-Hunters Aerospace Archeology Team, he specializes in recovering historic aircraft artifacts from crash sites in the southwestern United States.

Fred White is our official Roadrunner photographer. For those events where Fred could not be present, Associate Member Mike Schmitz has been fulfilling this position. Schmitz covered our event in Mobile where we and the CIA paid remembrance to Jack Weeks on the 40th anniversary of his death. He participated in this capacity at the recent 10-day OXCART Legacy Tour in Washington, and covered the 80th birthday bash of CIA U-2 pilot and legend Marty Knutson. Schmitz has provided photographer services at all our last few reunions, and has designed and produced the legendary photos of the A-12 pilots grouped with the image of the A-12 that Roadrunners Internationale presented to the Director

of the CIA, top officials of the CIA, various museums, and dignitaries having interest in our proud legacy. Schmitz served in the Air Force as an enlisted man with the SR-71.

Each of these individuals are affiliated with the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame as historians to ensure the legacy of the Roadrunners is not forgotten. Associate Roadrunner Member Connie Pardew-May is the NVAHOF Director of Communications and Development for Northern Nevada. Dawn Curtis is the Director of Communications and Development for Southern Nevada. Jim Braum is the treasurer. Associate Roadrunner Mike Schmitz is the official photographer. Schmitz covered the inaugural induction last year. Associate Roadrunner member Robert Friedrichs is the co-founder of NVAHOF with Roadrunner president T.D. Barnes, the Director of NVAHOF. Friedrich recently retired from DOE where he served as Scientific Advisor for the National Nuclear Security Agency. Friedrich continues to consult for _ _.

Those attending the reunion, we'll see you very soon. We hope to see the rest of you at the reunion after this one.

Thornton D. (TD) Barnes
President/Webmaster
Roadrunners Internationale
<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/>
468 Palegold St., Henderson, NV 89012 (702) 566-4168
"You can delegate authority but not responsibility"
What did you do today for freedom?

AREA 51 SPECIAL PROJECTS (2011-09-19 11:17)

The public is invited to join NVAHOF and the Atomic Testing Museum as they kick off the 18-month Area 51 Myth or Reality educational exhibit by hosting members of the Roadrunners Internationale participants in CIA Projects AQUATONE (U-2 plane) and OXCART (A-12 Blackbird plane) in Las Vegas for their 22d reunion. The Roadrunners will be available at the Atomic Testing Museum to speak and meet the public from 09:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. October 4th.

flyer

[Oct 4 Press Release.pdf]

Archangel - CIA's Supersonic A-12 Reconnaissance Aircraft (2011-09-19 12:29)

On October 4, 2011, UNLV (University Nevada Las Vegas) College of Engineering and the History Department and NVAHOF (Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame) will sponsor and conduct a presentation and Q & A about the Archangel - CIA's Supersonic A-12 Reconnaissance Aircraft that flew at Nevada's Groom Lake to conduct reconnaissance missions over North Vietnam and North Korea in the 1960s. CIA Chief Historian David Robarge, Ph.D., CIA A-12 pilot Frank Murray, and Area 51 Special Project's Hypersonic Flight Support Specialist Thornton D. "TD" Barnes will conduct a question and answer presentation at the SED Auditorium SEB (Science & Technology Engineering Building) auditorium starting at 7:30 p.m..

flyer

29 September 2011 News Release (2011-09-29 17:05)

Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame
468 Palegold Street
Henderson, NV 89012
Phone: 702-481-0568
Email: lvdb01@aol.com
Website: <http://nvahof.org/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Dawn Barlow-Curtis, 702-561-6372
lvdb01@aol.com

September 29, 2011

THE NEVADA AEROSPACE HALL OF FAME (NVAHOF)
CONTINUES ITS EDUCATION INITIATIVE WITH SEVERAL KEY EVENTS HERE IN LAS VEGAS

HENDERSON, Nevada -- September 29, 2011 is Media Day to kick off several

exciting events leading up to the March 2012 opening of the Atomic Testing Museum's new exhibit, Area 51 Myth or Reality. NVAHOF Director, Thornton D. ``TD'' Barnes, MSGT Harry Martin, and retired atm USAF Lt. Col. Roger Andersen, all of Area 51 CIA Project OXCART fame, will join the Atomic Testing Museum for this special VIP Media Day where they will discuss their recently declassified activities at Area 51.

On October 4, 2011, at the museum, the NVAHOF will field a broad spectrum of former Area 51 CIA and Air Force pilots, project support personnel from CIA, FAA, USAF, and the civilian sector, to share their recently declassified accounts of the early projects at Area 51. This is a great kickoff for the Atomic Testing Museums Area 51 Myth or Reality exhibit, and an equally great opportunity for NVAHOF to educate the public and tomorrow's engineers and leaders about the exciting, state-of-the-art achievements emerging from beneath the shroud of secrecy that is Area 51.

The evening of October 4th, NVAHOF, the Central Intelligence Agency, the UNLV Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering, and the UNLV History Department will conduct the second lecture of the Dean's Conversation Series at 7:30 p.m. in the new UNLV Science and Engineering Building. Archangel: the CIA's Supersonic A-12 Reconnaissance Aircraft, will be presented by CIA Chief Historian, Dr. David Robarge and a panel discussion will take place veterans of the A-12 program, CIA pilot, Frank Murray of Gardnerville, CIA Special Projects engineer/technician, TD Barnes of Henderson, and CIA/Air Force pilot and Operations Officer Roger Andersen of Las Vegas. Dr. Robarge will give a brief overview of CIA activities in Nevada during the Cold War and particularly will discuss the generalities of the A-12 program. The rest of the evening will be a conversation between the historical program participants and the audience. Only recently declassified, many of these details and topics have rarely been discussed in open public forums.

On Wednesday, October 5th, capitalizing on the presence of Roadrunners Internationale members and the Lockheed-Martin sponsor in town for the 22nd biennial Roadrunners Internationale reunion, NVAHOF has organized an optional activity for those attending the reunion to meet in Rachel, Nevada for a fun-filled afternoon mixing with the locals. Members of the public are welcome to join the tour. An invitation has also been extended to the Air Force to join in the fun as three decades or more of myths about Area 51 vaporize into reality. Dr. Robarge, Chief Historian at CIA, and Cheryl Moore, with the CIA EAA Store, will join in the public relations and fun as the Roadrunners autograph Dr. Robarge's monograph and photos provided by NVAHOF photographer Mike Schmitz. Connie Pardew, NVAHOF Director of Communications and Development for Northern Nevada will generate an excellent account of this historical event. NVAHOF thanks Dreamland Resorts and Roadrunners Internationale webmaster, Joerg Arnu for organizing and managing this historic adventure. It has been said that controlling the Roadrunners on a tour is more challenging for the organizer than herding cats and chickens.

On October 7, 2011, following the Roadrunner reunion, Barnes, Friedrichs, Robarge, Moore, and Schmitz will join Nellis Public Affairs officer Gene Hill on a tour of Nellis AFB. After the tour they will be meeting to discuss plans for the organized collection and preservation of future declassified aerospace history to ensure that nothing is lost.

October 14, 2011, the NVAHOF will conduct its second annual Hall of Fame Enshrinement Ceremony and Dinner. Eight legends of aviation in the state of Nevada will be included this year. The event will be held at The Landing Restaurant in the Henderson Executive Air Terminal. The induction dinner and ceremony is open to the public. Those wishing information or wanting to attend can contact NVAHOF at [1]tdbarnes@navhof.org.

NVAHOF public outreach and educational activities for the past year included: promotional presence at the Reno Air Races and the Nellis Air Force Base Open House, and Naval Air Station, Fallon. NVAHOF also participated in the reunion of the Atomic Curtiss Marines and meetings of the Daedalians Fighter Flight #62 at Nellis AFB. On September 23rd NVAHOF participated in an educational tour of Bigelow Aerospace in North Las Vegas.

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1. <mailto:tdbarnes@nvahof.org>

kevin (2011-10-16 20:36:30)

Thanks for your help. And your autograph. going to laugland to help some elderly veteran get his stuff from his condo he sold. Be neat to go see this new museum. Hope to see you some time. Going to see Reg Blackwell and also Ezekiel M in Maui said to say hi. Regards Fergus. Also do you have a good copy of the movie. The hole story? I am going to try to find a camera guy to put all the beta tapes you looked at on a disk where I can edit and make a decent movie out of . Reg did not think he was up to it. And though it will take me some time I will try to do this. then I will send you a copy if you want it. Ask Marty Knutson if he cares? Thanks O yea i will try to not cry when i see reg and sit in the sled pilots seat again. wearing my sunglasses just in case. Hope they lower the lid and leave me there for a while. As Reg and I sit in the machine we will be going quite fast like we all are just as passengers on this planet. Though its not a big deal to many people who i have talked too. It means allot to me. Always did. And after I lost my dad even more. I'm still available if you need a fifty year old man in the roadrunners. By. me

1.9 December

Transporting the secret CIA A-12 to Groom Lake (2011-12-09 11:30)

The Challenge of Transporting the A-12's to Area 51.

By Frank Murray, A-12 Pilot and Roadrunners Internationale Historian

Foreword

In the Fall of 2011, it occurred to me that a piece of the development history of one of my favorite airplanes, the Lockheed A-12, had not been recorded for posterity. In the first step to write this piece, I asked TD Barnes to ask the Roadrunners members to contact me if they had any information on the transportation of the A-12s from the Skunk Works to Area 51. Several people did respond, Jim Noce, ex CIA Security Officer at Area 51, Bob Murphy, Skunk Works production manager, Sam Pizzo, USAF Navigation Section Chief were the principal respondents. Jim's message to me reads as follows:

To whom it may concern:

My name is Jim Noce, and I recall being on those moves from the "Skunk Works" to the ranch. We left the Area early in the morning taking turns driving until we reached Burbank. When we arrived, the Article was concealed in a huge crate and covered with a tarp on the semi ready to travel. We headed East on the Freeway, and the California State Patrol giving escort.

The CSP had long poles along the route to clear hanging power lines or unpin road signs hinged for clearance purposes. When we reached the CA/NV border we pulled to side of the road and ate sack lunches made-up from the mess hall at the Area. We also had igloo coolers of lemonade and thermos's of hot coffee or chocolate. We also had soda pop. Not bad for the 60's.

After we had lunch, we headed up Highway 95 until we reached Mercury that had security clearance for our entering the Atomic Proving Grounds. I may be wrong but I think that once we reached the Ranch, the Article was uncrated and put on a cart by something like a cherry picker. I do believe the box was broken down and loaded back on the trailer and sent back to Burbank. I never knew of anyone taking pictures from our group. I do recall the incident where a Greyhound bus barely scraped the side of the box, and the bus driver was given cash to fix the few scratches avoiding insurance claims.

Sincerely, Jim Noce

Former CIA agent Area 51.

Bob Murphy took on the work of looking for people with first hand knowledge of the movement of the A-12's to the Area. He told me that many of the people that did that work were deceased now. He was able to identify the names of those involved from living associates. He did relate how the transport boxes were built and by whom.

Sam Pizzo related how he saw the Articles arrive and how the operation went at the Area.

Introduction.

This is a brief history of some of the happenings almost fifty years ago, along the way to develop the Lockheed Family of Blackbirds, the A-12 and YF-12 airplanes, built in the Skunk Works in Burbank, California, then transported many miles to Nevada for final assembly and flight testing. Little has been recorded about these efforts; suffice it to say the transportation endeavor presented many perplexing tasks for Lockheed Corporation. After all, Lockheed is an airplane builder, not a moving company.

Home Base, Area 51.

From the onset of the OXCART Project, the need to test the new airplane in a secure place ruled out the Burbank Airport. Lockheed investigated places around the western states for secure basing, away from inquiring eyes. Lockheed Chief Test Pilot, Tony Levier was responsible for the search for a usable secure test site to test and develop the U-2 airplane. His recommendation was to use the Groom Lake area, within the secure area of the then Atomic Energy Agency (AEC) known as Area 51.

This Area had been built up, a runway and some shelter hangars built to provide a test/training base for the U-2 airplane. Area 51 facilities worked well in the mid 50's so further enhancements to support the A-12 development were started in 1960. Two shiftwork crews built a new runway, developed the hangar structures and shop spaces to support the final building of the A-12/YF-12's. Old family quarters (duplexes) were moved from the Naval Ordnance Base at Hawthorne, Nevada. Moving 85 old wooden structures was no mean feat. These buildings originally housed two families each. The buildings were modified by removing the separation wall inside the doorways, removing the kitchen facilities and configuring the living space for one rather spacious living room, two bathrooms, and four or more bedrooms. This author spent most of five years living in one of these houses.

Building the transportation system

As the A-12 airplane was being built in the Skunk Works; the transportation carriages (boxes) were designed and built alongside the A-12. (Photos 1,2,3,4)

The Lockheed team that

[1] Photo #1

Photo #1

style="font-size: 12pt">designed the transportation system was led by Mr. Leon Gavett. The construction was done by George Perkle and his crew. The exterior box frames were made off our inch aluminum tubing. The larger box was designed to carry the airplane on its own landing gear. The load carrying frame was made of steel with wheeled suspension and load bearing pads to suit the position of the A-12 landing gear. The airplane would be towed into position on the trailer, locked to that frame, then, the aluminum framework would be lifted into position over the airplane and its trailer. The aluminum frame mainly provided a structure for holding the fabric cover in place. The front of the boxes had metal skins to shield

[2] Photo #2

Photo #2

style="font-size: 12pt"the load from road winds/debris. The larger box was towed by the wider end, the airplane inside with the trailing edge going forward. The large box had steerable suspension wheels located at the narrow end for positioning.

Two boxes were built, one much larger to carry the mostly complete airframe and a smaller box to carry there movable parts such as the outer wing/nacelles and the rudders and other smaller parts. Engines were transported separately. The boxes were towed by Lockheed company tractors and drivers. Tom Richey and Stan Grants drove the trucks pulling the boxes.

Uploading the A-12.

The A-12 was prepared for loading into the transportation box as follows. The rudders and outer wing panels and outer nacelles were

[3] Photo #3

Photo #3

removed and stowed in the smaller trailer, the airplane nose section in front of the windshield was removed as well. A transportation fixture was built to support/steady the nose of the airplane in the box. This fixture is shown attached in photos #5 & #5a.

[4] Photo #4

Photo #4

The landing gear provided the necessary shock support for the ride on the highways. After the airplane was secured in the box, the aluminum tube frame was hoisted into position and secured to the trailer frame. Then the side and top covers were installed and the tractor could then be attached to move the box out of the Skunk Works and onto the road. Depicted in the photo #3 is an A-12 loaded on the box for a fit check. Note the small box behind the loaded big box.

The team required to move this convoy consisted of the following:

*Two California Highway Patrol (CHP) cars with at least two officers.

*The Lockheed truck drivers.

* Five Lockheed mechanics to handle obstacle removal duties, general support.

[5] Photo #5

Photo #5

*Two CIA Security officers for surveillance, these people came from Area 51.

Note: CHP escort ended at the Nevada state line North of Baker, CA. Nevada Highway Patrol did not escort the convoy.

Getting ready to roll.

[6] Photo #5

Photo #5a

The travel route was preplanned with coordination of the California Highway Patrol. Lockheed transportation leader Dorsey Kammerer and Bud Rice started investigating the travel route in June 1961 to ascertain the obstacles to movement, mainly of the larger box which measured 105 feet long and 35 feet wide. Kammerer and Rice configured a pick-up truck with a set of adjustable spreader and height poles to ascertain the needed clear path.

It was obvious early on that many sign posts along the planned path

[7] Photo #6

Photo #6

style="font-size: 12pt"must be removed to allow movement of the convoy, as well

as some grading of road sides. Many such posts were cut off and reinstalled with hinges to allow free movement, then replaced to upright after the convoy passes by.

A team of Lockheed mechanics accompanied the convoy to move obstacles to clear the path. The route to be used to transport the airplanes is shown on the attached map, Fig 1. The distance to be traveled oneway is approximately 260 miles.

[8] Photo #7

Photo #7

Consider that numerous trips were planned in order to deliver the fifteen A-12's and the three YF-12's. In all, eighteen trips were needed to carry these valuable cargos to the Area.

The first convoy with Article 121onboard departed the Skunk Works on 26 February 1962. The convoy arrived at Area 51 that day. A truly difficult task moving outsize cargos along existing roadways. Pictures 7and 8 show the convoy working its way along the route near Cajon Pass on

[9] Photo #7a

Photo #7a

style="font-size: 12pt"Interstate 15.

Traffic following this convoy must have been exasperated by the slow pace; little did they know that the fastest airplane in the world was in the slow moving convoy. Picture 8 shows the wide load of the bigger box moving across a narrow roadway overpass.

Once the convoy moved out to more wide open spaces it must have been better for

the drivers of these loads. Several months passed before the convoy reconvened to move the next A-12.

[10] Photo #7

Photo #8

Article 122 was moved to the Area on 26 June 1962, followed by Article 123 in August 1962. The two-seat trainer, Article 124 got to the Area in November 1962, then Article 125 before Christmas 1962. The other A-12's and the three YF-12's all arrived by mid 1964. After each delivery, the boxes were reconfigured into smaller packages for easier return to the plant in Burbank without Highway Patrol escort.

Downloading at Area 51.

The final leg of the journey to Area 51 was from Mercury, Nevada, the headquarters area for the then Atomic Energy Commission (AEC),

[11] Photo #7

Photo #9

on to Area 51. The main road thru AEC territory passes through historic nuclear weapons testing areas of Frenchman's Flat, Yucca Flat and on to the North gate post. Once outside the AEC controlled areas, the road winds eastward until you arrive at Area 51. The workers at the Nevada Test Site of AEC must have wondered what such a convoy would be carrying. Once at the Area, the boxes would proceed to the main hangar complex. These hangars were the ones that had been removed from some Navy Air base,

[12] Photo #10

Photo #10

style="font-size: 12pt"disassembled and reassembled at the Area for use as factory assembly points for the Blackbirds. Picture 9 shows the box entering the hangar at the Area. Picture 10 shows the fabric covering being removed. After this the tubular framework could be lifted clear and the airplane could be freed from the trailer and towed off the transporter.

The task of transporting an airplane was complete and the boxes could be disassembled and reconfigured for return to the Skunk Works without need for Police escort.

The last time the TransportationSystem was used was in 1964 when it was used to move the first three SR-71's to Palmdale for final assembly and Flight test. The mission of this system was now completed and so ends my rendition of the enormous efforts put forward to move these airplanes in secrecy without a hitch.

The people that did this work are some of the unsung heroes of the OXCART Program.

[13]

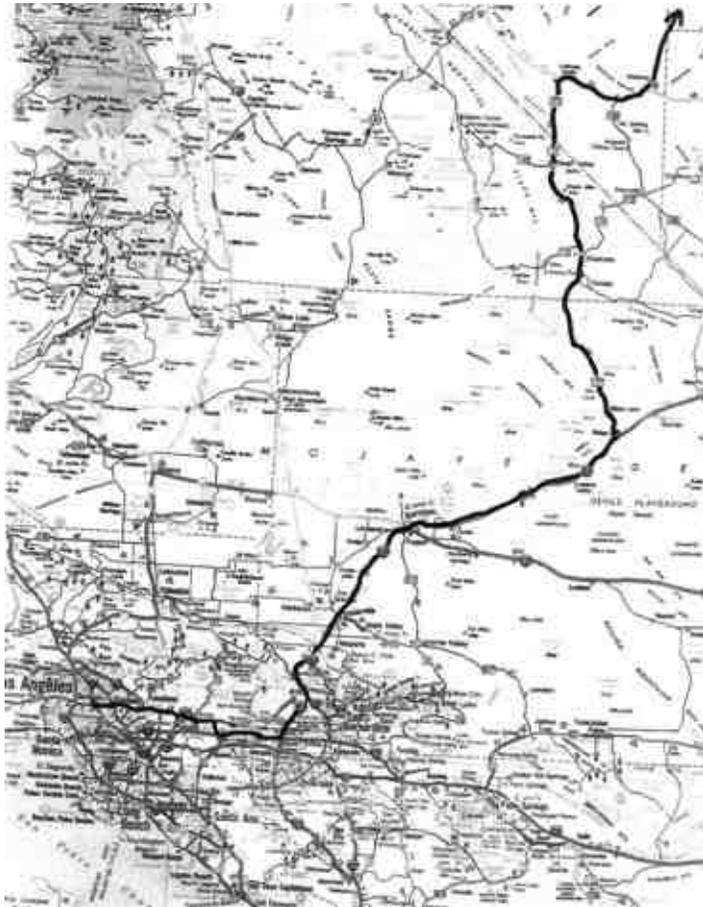


Figure 1

1. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/1.jpg
2. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/2.jpg
3. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/7.jpg
4. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/3.jpg
5. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/3.jpg
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10. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/8.jpg
11. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/9.jpg
12. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/10.jpg
13. http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/transporting_a-12/fig-1.jpg

Rafe Tomsett (2011-12-11 22:47:42)

In 1962 Interstate 15 from Ontario to Devore did not exist as the map depicts. The route travelled would have turned north in San Bernardino for the journey over Cajon Pass. A friend of mine drove

truck for E. L. Yeager Construction who had the contract to extend the existing U-2 runway (approx. 5000') to accommodate the new article. I remember him telling me, long after the fact, that they couldn't imagine why they were building this incredibly long runway in the middle of nowhere. Many years later, when the project was unclassified he was pleased and amazed he had played a small part in the endeavor.

TD Barnes, President Roadrunners Internationale (2011-12-12 08:39:21)

Rafe, this is the sort of input we hoped to receive so we can get it right. Thanks a million for taking the time to respond. We are also awaiting comment from the California and Nevada Highway Patrol. We welcome input and corrections to make our website a reputable source of information for the public, authors, historians, etc.

Frank Murray - Dutch 20 (2011-12-12 09:06:44)

Murray Hi Rafe, When I was told of the travel route, I did wonder what the exact roads would have been. Not a serious problem since we all know the A-12's did make it somehow. When the few SR's made the trip to Palmdale they went north on what was then I-5 route to a point where they could then head East for Palmdale. Bob Murphy told me that. After three SR's made it in the boxes, the rest were carried in pieces on trucks for final assembly at Site 2 Palmdale. Frank Murray - Dutch 20

Final Flight Col. "Gimo" Yang (2011-12-13 17:16)

Colonel Yang With deep regret I again must inform you of the passing of one of our Roadrunner members. Departing on his final flight, Colonel 'Gimo' Yang, former pilot and commander of The Black Cat Squadron on Taiwan, died at his home here in Las Vegas yesterday. Yang was one of the first six Chinese pilots chosen for U-2 training at Del Rio to fly for the CAF in Taiwan. Prior to that Yang was flying RF-84 photorecon missions at low-level over the mainland from Taiwan. At Taiwan, he then served in Project Tackle, a joint CIA U-2 operation that the ROC referred to as Project Razor. Many of the Roadrunners participated with Yang in Detachment H, known as the Black Cats, including Colonel Hugh Slater of Henderson, Nevada who served as detachment commander prior to taking command of the 1129th at Groom Lake. Colonel Yang advanced to deputy squadron commander of the while still one of the five operational pilots. Yang flew the second long penetration flight to the desert northwest of China plus numerous reconnaissance missions over China, eastern Tibet, and along the Burma/China border. Promoted to colonel, Yang frequently traveled to Washington with Chinese Air Force Chief of Staff General Yang Shao Lien to discuss U-2 business with OSA

The Roadrunner staff thanks Roadrunner Chris Pocock for this background information contained in his book, "50 Years of the U-2", and the photo from Gimo's album showing him with President Chiang Kai Shek, shortly after his first U-2 overflight mission of China in 1962.

Funeral services will be conducted at 10:00 hours on 21 December at:

Universal Chung Wah Funeral

225 N Garfield Ave,

Alhambra, CA 91801.

Phone 626-281-7887.

Yang

u-2 photo
Thornton D. "TD" Barnes
President
Roadrunners Internationale

CIA A-12 Pilot Ken Collins Enshrined in KAHOF (2011-12-21 14:35)

Collins USAF colonel and CIA A-12 Blackbird pilot Ken Collins inducted into the Kanas Aviation Hall of Fame

Rushing back from Paris, France where Colonel Collins spoke at the Aeroclub de France re the A-12, he honored all Roadrunners by his being enshrined into the Kansas Hall of Fame. His Hall of Fame plaque is on display at Topeka's Great Overland Station railroading museum at 701 N. Kansas Ave. in Topeka, Kansas. Following his induction, he returned to California where he spoke on Veterans Day in Redlands. The Kansas Hall of Fame selection of Colonel Collins to forever be enshrined as one of Kansas' aviation heroes and legends is well founded. Born in Leavenworth, Kansas, one of the oldest Army Posts of the new western frontiers, Collins has following in the esteemed tradition of his heritage. His grandfather, Sergeant Edward E. Collins of the 10th U. S. Cavalry, was sent out with the Troopers to fight in the Battle of Wounded Knee.

In 1953, Collins was flying out of Kimpo Air Base in Korea with the 15th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, "Cottonpickers" K-14, Kimpo, Korea. He departed Kimpo on a flight of two RF-86A's marking the target for F-80 Fighter bombers and strafing the North Korean radar site on a hill north of Pyongyang. On a starting run, Collins took fire and miraculously survived to bring his badly crippled plane back to Kimpo. Silver Star < It was reported that he was shot down behind enemy lines. For his heroics, Collins was awarded the Silver Star.

Ten years later, on 24 May 1963 - near Wendover, Utah. Collins was flying "a subsonic J-58 engine test flight in a ultra secret CIA A-12 when a icing problem caused the plane to stall and pitch up and over into an unrecoverable flat inverted spin. Having no positive idea of his real altitude, Collins was forced to eject from the inverted aircraft.

In 1967 Collins was one of six CIA A-12 pilots deployed operational with the A-12 to Okinawa where he flew six A-12 combat missions over North Vietnam to locate enemy SAM sites and to determine if the enemy possessed SSMs. For this he was awarded the CIA Intelligence Star for Valor. Collins' Military Awards include: Silver Star, xx xx Intelligence Star, Legion of Merit, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Air Medals, United Nations Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, Viet Nam Service Medal. More about Colonel Collins is

posted at: [1]<http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/collins.html>
Collins Induction 2011

1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/collins.html>

CIA Pilot BrigGen Dennis Sullivan enshrined in Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame (2011-12-22 10:34)

Sullivan

On 29 November 2011 BrigGen Dennis Sullivan was enshrined into the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame at the EAA AirVenture Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Born in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, in 1927, Brig. Gen. Dennis Sullivan is a 1950 Naval Academy graduate. In 1962, he was chosen for the Central Intelligence Agency's Project OxCart to pilot a Mach 3-plus A-12 reconnaissance airplane to replace the U-2. For five years he flew top-secret missions, including combat missions in ``Project Black Shield'' over North Vietnam to locate SAM sites. He returned to regular Air Force duties in 1968, accumulating 7,000 hours in dozens of aircraft.

General Sullivan holds the distinction of flying the only Blackbird surveillance, CIA A-12 or Air Force SR-71, to be hit by an enemy missile. During a flight on 30 October 1967, CIA pilot Dennis Sullivan detected radar tracking on his first pass over North Vietnam. Two sites prepared to launch missiles but neither did. During the second pass at least six missiles were fired at the OXCART, each confirmed by missile vapor trails on mission photography. Sullivan saw these vapor trails and witnessed three missile detonations. Post-flight inspection of the aircraft revealed that a piece of metal had penetrated the lower right wing fillet area and lodged against the support structure of the wing tank. The fragment was not a warhead pellet but may have been a part of the debris from one of the missile detonations observed by the pilot.

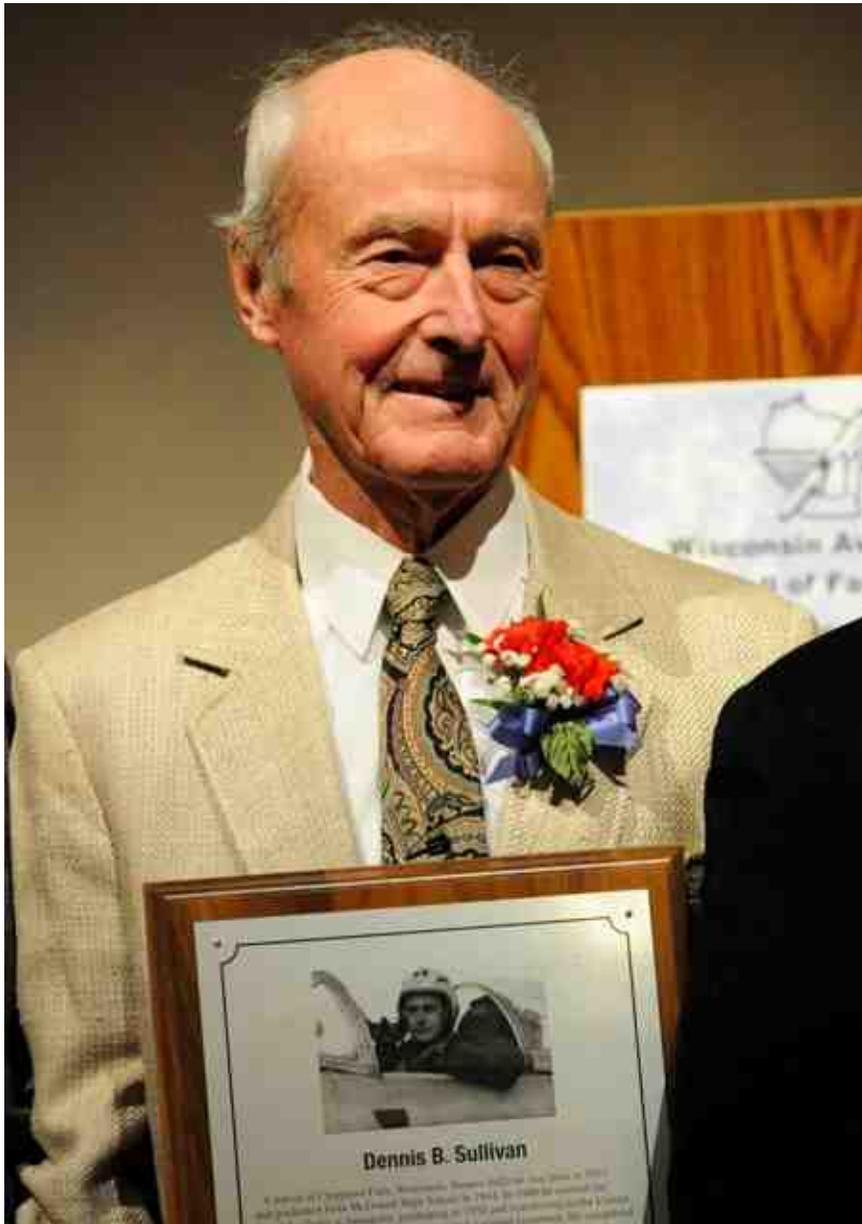


Awarded CIA Intelligence Star for Valor



[1][Click here for more about BGen Sullivan](#)

BGen Sullivan's Induction Photo



1. <http://roadrunnersinternationale.com/sullivan.html>

December 2011 Roadrunner News (2011-12-24 10:17)

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