



“Cleared Hot”

By Lon Holtz

FINALLY!!! 2021 is over along with all the disappointments, including health issues, travel restrictions, political events, etc. I’m sure that a good number of you have been affected by the events of last year in one way or another, with some of you facing the ultimate sacrifice. For those, I offer my condolences. Hopefully, we won’t see these conditions carry over into 2022. So instead of looking backwards, let’s address what is coming.

After one cancelation, we are pressing ahead to finally hold our 2021 previously scheduled reunion in sunny Florida this year. In that regard, Judy and Jerry have reconfirmed our hotel and event. Planning for other previously scheduled events is once again being finalized and, so far, is looking good.

Between 2019 planning, and the present, we have been working hard with the Robins Museum of Aviation to accept our membership to represent us, and our history, into their inventory. We in turn will accept that honor at the upcoming reunion by presenting them with several articles to start putting our touch on what will be displayed. But before we ask for donations, there are a couple of issues that need resolution, such as: how much space will be available, what will the museum offer as far as display cases, stands, and various other questions.

Looking at pictures of the current location of the aircraft at the museum, it seems a little crowded to start with so we will have to be careful with what we initially offer. To address this, we once again will go back and ask our points of contacts (POCs) at the museum what they would really like to see to support the message we offer in our stead long after we are gone. For those who have already

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We’ve been in an extended holding pattern

for over a year now with our 2021 reunion (now renamed 2022 reunion), telling approach control we’ve got just enough fuel to last five more months. That would make it like sometime in May, before we’ve got to set her down someplace, preferably our filed destination of Fort Walton Beach, so those of us left on the planet can get a drink with our brethren. An advance party has made arrangements for quarters so as soon as our head shed makes a final decision, we can start taking reservations.

In the meantime, to keep this publication on its schedule of being published once a quarter, we’re continuing to insert vignettes and photos of people from Vietnam days just so most of you can look at those young people and say, “I remember him!” Then you can comment on what you really thought about him.

I’m obliged to those who contributed material to publish in this edition. If you guys don’t send stuff, then I have to make up something, which wouldn’t be pretty. I did not, however, make up the poem on page 3 written by somebody named Anonymous. Shakespeare it ain’t, but it is from the heart and that’s what counts.

Speaking of the guys, one of our guys’ gal, Kathie Serlet, penned an article about Quilts of Valor, a distinctive non-profit whose sole mission is to make and



present quilts for the comfort of living veterans of our nation’s conflicts. Check out her article on page 2.

While you’re at it, you should know we’re running low on some of our memorabilia items.

They’re cute and look harmless, but they’re loud, incredibly expensive to keep, and absolutely untrainable! The other one is a kangaroo. I don’t know much about kangaroos.

....Jerry Sailors

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“The A-37 Association is for those who flew, worked on/with, were saved by, or have high admiration for the great little fighter.”



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The Dragonfly is a publication of the A-37 Association published quarterly (except when within two months of a reunion, then monthly), as a service to the membership, new contacts, and other interested parties.

The views expressed herein are those of the editors/authors and do not necessarily reflect any official position of the A-37 Association. The editors reserve the right to print any article/letter/email/photo deemed to be of interest to members.

We also reserve the right to edit any article to fit space available and to reject any material considered inappropriate. We invite and encourage members/contacts to submit articles/letters/emails/photos.

Member Update

New Member: Earle Combs (ebcombsiii@gmail.com)

Reunions: All FACS Reunion - Colorado Springs, CO, September 2022.

Emails

(From Barbara Holtz, 7 Jan 2022)

Attached is the quote that Judy had inscribed on a plaque as a gift for Vic (Grahn) this past Christmas. As I told you before, John McAlister developed this photo several years ago for our use if we wanted to use it. The two items seemed destined to be put together. I hope you like it and will find a special place in the newsletter for it. I'm calling it the "The A-37 Men Tribute."

I recently did some research on Google and discovered

...the smallest fighter... the fastest gun

that the author of the quote is Robert Coram from his book "Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War." I think she said she had received it in an email. (Ed. Note: see plaque wording on p. 4.)

War Story

Quilts of Valor

by Kathie Serlet

Quilts = healing: what one mom saw in her dream. In this dream she saw a man, a military veteran, hunkered over, sitting on his bed in utter despair. When wrapped in a quilt, his demeanor changed from that of despair to one of hope and well-being. From that dream in 2003, the Quilts of Valor Foundation (www.qovf.org) was created that has to date awarded almost 300,000 quilts to veterans and service members.

What is a Quilt of Valor? A QOV is a quality, handmade quilt that is machined or hand quilted. To earn being called a "Quilt of Valor," the quilt must be a specific size, labeled with required information, and awarded, not gifted. It is to be recorded by the QOV Foundation and is a civilian award only.

Eligibility: Those eligible for a QOV are active duty service members or living veterans who have served in any of the five branches of the military during a time of war. Guard members are also eligible along with living merchant marines activated between 1941-45. Only those with an honorable discharge qualify. A QOV is not given posthumously nor to a family member.

How is a veteran nominated for a QOV? Anyone may nominate a veteran to receive a QOV by filling out the nomination form online and working with a QOV volunteer quilter. Each state has a QOV coordinator to help with the process.

Designed to comfort and heal the living and to bring color and lively patterns into the lives of those who have served our nation, each quilt is printed with the statement, "Thank you for your service, sacrifice and valor in serving our nation."

The Quilts of Valor Foundation has partnered with the Vietnam War Commemoration Program. The program was created through the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act to honor all those who served during the Vietnam War.



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identified what they would like to donate, hang on and instructions will come out in future newsletters. In the meantime, I will go back to our POCs and ask for a more definitive listing of what they would like to make our display stand out. You could take some pictures of the item(s) you'd like to donate and email them to Jerry and me for review to speed things up when we get the final approval.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please let Jerry and me know what they are and we'll see if we can answer or use them.

In the meantime, have a Great New Year filled with prosperity, happiness, and good health until we meet again.

One quick word on the third printing of our book. The sample book should be in our hands shortly.

Remember the words of that famous old sage: “Meddle not in the affairs of dragons, for you are crunchy and taste good with ketchup.”

War Story 2

From a Kiddy Park

Anonymous

From a kiddy park, they say you were taken;
To fight in Vietnam... They must be mistaken!

You are quite small, this is true...
and you come in assorted colors: green or blue.

Plus being so light, so simple, so quick...
small wonder they think you must be some trick.

But a fierce fighting fire burns deep in your soul,
Defeating the enemy is your primary goal.

Having up to one-third of your weight in ordnance,
you really don't give Charlie much of a chance.

The bombs, rockets and nape you hold under your wings,
can demonstrate to Charlie some terrible things.

One little nose gun is all that you carry,
but its 6,000 rounds per minute makes his life pretty hairy.

One engine shut down, less fuel you burn,
allowing you to loiter, while others return.

Over the target on one engine you can wait,
persuading Charlie to decide his fate.

If he attacks Ranch Hand, outpost or convoy,
all your precision you will quickly employ.

To stop the enemy, repulse the attack,
and make him think twice about coming back.



Two comm radios, two nav radios too,
allow you to proceed when the sky isn't blue.

Low ceiling, bad vis... you maneuver so tight,
keeping the target always in sight.

Charles doesn't like you, this we know,
as his bullet holes in you this surely must show.

Back from the target, your mealtime is small,
then return to the enemy to give them your all.

Short runways, no barrier... doesn't bother you.
Unsophisticated ground equipment also will do.

No A-B, no drag-chute, not supersonic, I'm sorry,
It's for your big brothers to get all that glory.

Yes, from a kiddy park they implied you came,
but you're a determined fighter just the same.

And even though your parent hurt only the ear,
you've given Charlie his very life to fear.

So here's to you, O' little Dragonfly.

You've proven you're a fighter, So hold your head high.

Note: This little poem, published in both the overseas Stars and Stripes newspaper and the Cessna newsletter, was written by one of the RAP pilots between missions on the alert pad.

The writer wanted to somehow get the word out to FACs and other people who would be working with the little bird one way or another just what its capabilities were. It is believed to have accomplished its objective.

The poem maybe even had an effect on Charlie.

(Ed. Note: Can you guess who the author is? I know because I had to get his approval before putting his work in this rag. If you are the first, other than the author himself, to email the correct name to dragonfly67.72@gmail.com, you get a free A-37 lapel pin. The rest of you, even if you guess correctly, will get one "Attaboy!!")





...the smallest fighter... the fastest gun

War Story 3

John Bradley sent the photos on this page, both conveniently labeled with names. Unique to John's A-37 training class at England AFB, LA, in the summer of 1970 was the small makeup of the class: one rep for each rank from 2nd Lt through Colonel. Below is the 8th SOS in the spring of 1971 with those missing either on alert or flying.



Missing: Jones, Moore, Pueppke, Lamb, Moseley

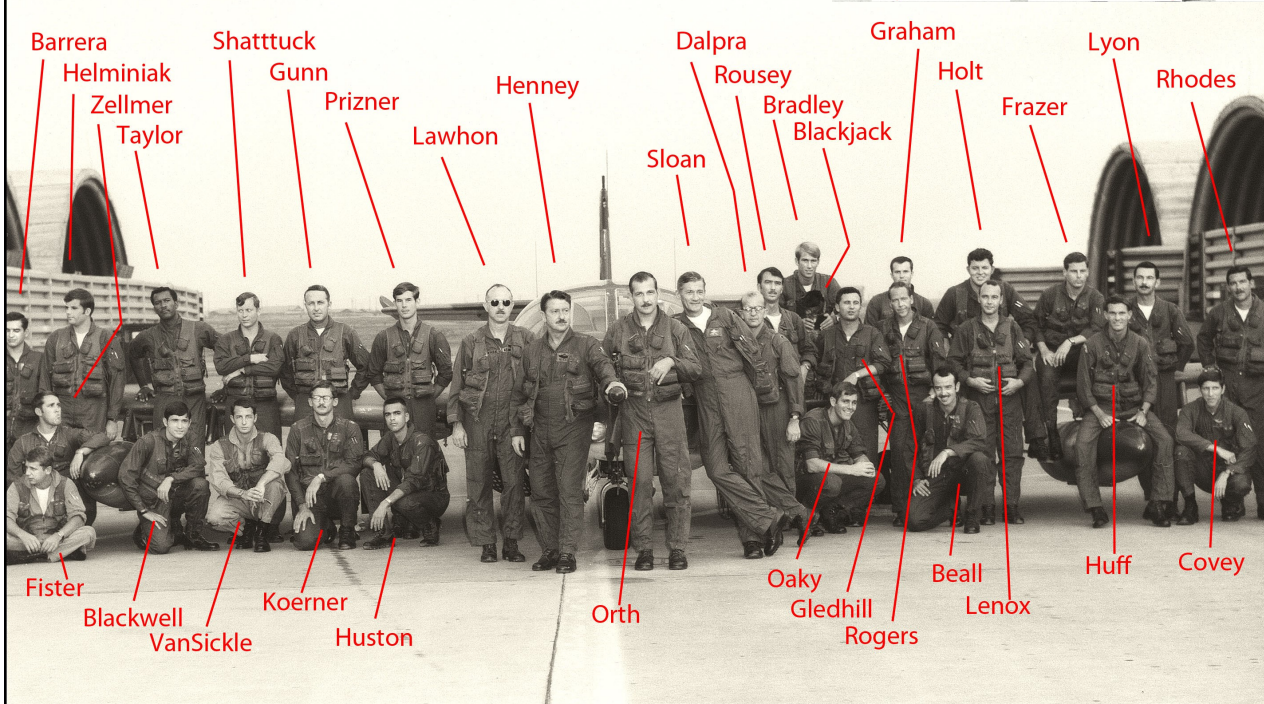


Photo designed by John McAlister

“There is no such thing as an ex-fighter pilot. Once a young man straps on a jet aircraft and climbs into the heavens to do battle, it sears his psyche forever. At some point he will hang up his flight suit—eventually they all do—and in the autumn of his years his eyes may dim and he may be stooped with age. But ask him about his life, and his eyes flash and his back straightens and his hands demonstrate aerial maneuvers and every conversation begins with ‘There I was at...’ and he is young again. He remembers the days when he sky-danced through the heavens, when he could press a button and summon the lightning and invoke the thunder, the days when he was a prince of the earth and a lord of the heavens. He remembers his glory days and he is young again.”— Robert Coram, *Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War*

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War Story 4

Don Loosley sent in this photo taken during his time as commander of the 8th SOS from June 1972 until 31 October when the unit was closed. These guys, veterans of An Loc and the last United States Air Force combat squadron to withdraw from South Vietnam, closed the book on five years of combat operations during which the A-37 Dragonfly logged over 75,000 combat missions.



A-37B

WARRIORS OF AN LOC

BIEN HOA AFB, RSVN

JULY 1972

LAST OF THE RAPS

- Deane "Flash" Gordon Bill "Willy" Harrell Dan "Oly" Olson
- Marty Cole Dudley Chewning Ken Llewellyn Don "Smoky" Wooten Dick Price Dave Craig Ted Hauret Ken Greene Skip Bennett Julian Shockley Max Hix John "Bones" Marshall Dale Holbrah Nick Nicolai Ron Haynes Grant Palfreyman
- George Farrington Thaddeus "T" Russell John "Wolfman" "Lurch" Rhinehart CC Don Loosley Bill "Dancing Bear" Rackley Dick Midkiff Jim Connally Herm Becker
- Dick Beland Frank Marano Doug Stockton

A-37 Association Memorabilia Items



T-shirt (X, L, XL, ~~XX~~) \$20
(includes shipping)



License Plate Frames
\$10 ea plus \$6 shipping



Koozie
\$2 (includes shipping)



A-37 Lapel Pin 1" sq \$8
(includes shipping)



50th Anniversary Patch \$6
(includes shipping)



2.25-inch SEA Decal
\$5 (includes shipping)

The memorabilia order form is enclosed.

-mailing label

Or if you prefer to receive newsletters by email, send email to dragonfly369@charter.net

b. Take me off the mailing list.

a. Change my mailing address to _____

Circle choice:

Inside is the January 2022 newsletter of the A-37 Association. You have indicated a preference to receive this publication by postal mail. If you wish to continue receiving the newsletter by post, you don't have to do anything. If you wish to change your preference, please circle option a or b below and send this page to the return address above.

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Memorabilia

..... T-shirts, koozies, pins, decals, patches, license plate holders

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For ordering information, see Memorabilia Order Page inside.

