



“Cleared Hot”

By Lon Holtz

Hurrah! 2022 is finally over and maybe now we can get on with our lives. Add to that, football season is almost over, and now I can get some work done on Sundays instead of being locked onto the TV watching game after game. With that summation offered, let’s get down to work.

Turning the page on a new year, it’s time for me to offer another riveting column for the newsletter. Easier said than done this time around as there are no burning-bush issues or blazing fires to put out. But I think I have landed on something you might enjoy.

I took a walk down memory lane about the time we spent together at Bien Hoa and what has happened since then. As you know, the bird set all sorts of records in our hands and convinced the naysayers that the Air Force needed a follow-on dedicated CAS aircraft. So, they gave us the A-10 to pick up where we left off and it’s doing a great job. Our personnel didn’t do too badly either. Four of our young lieutenants made it through the ranks and become flag officers, two became astronauts, several others got eagles, another went into law enforcement, and a group of us went back to that war for another shot at winning.

As far as outside recognition of the aircraft and its people, articles started appearing in the Air Force magazine and several other aviation publications. Plastic models of the bird became hotcakes to the hobbyists. Presentation of plaques and memorabilia pieces are now on display at the VFW Museum in Missouri; the National Air Force Museum in Ohio; a new presentation recently in the Air Force Museum at Warner Robins in Georgia; and

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The lull between reunions challenges your newsletter staff to come up with halfway interesting articles and relevant information in these interim editions. As Lon says in his column, there are no burning bushes or fires to put out... save one: our **2024 gathering will be in the Houston area.**

Such incidentals as pinning down the time of year, selecting a hotel venue, identifying attractive events/places to visit, and determining what’s for dinner are still being worked, but we’ve got some time, we think.

However, this edition of *The Dragonfly* contains a variety of emails and articles you may find of interest, starting with an offer from **Peter Pring-Shambler** of Temora Aviation Museum in New South Wales, Australia, to make one of his A-37s available for purchase. So if you have a yen to own an operational Dragonfly for your very own, Pete’s contact information is in his email on page 2.

The one War Story is on page 3 citing an online article published back in April 2021 describing the US Navy’s effort to recover land-based VNAF aircraft after the fall of South Vietnam in the spring of 1975.

And did you ever wonder what a “De-icer” is? Probably not, but you can find out and a lot more by referencing the Semi-serious Aviation Dictionary on page 4.

Back in July 2021, A-37 driver **Dee Friesen** suffered a stroke. You may recall Dee briefed our 2019 reunion in



“First things first ... Get your stomach off my desk.”

Wichita on A-37 operations during the 1970 Cambodia campaign. His wife, Ruth, has kept Dee’s friends and family updated on his rehabilitation through the CaringBridge website. Her posting just before Christmas contains excellent tips and lessons learned about caregiving. Well worth your read...Jerry Sailors

“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

Gone West:

Robert Downs, December 2022, Fort Walton Beach, FL.

Change of Address:

Charles "Tuna" Wilson, 30 Village View Drive, Chesterfield, MO 63017, Phone 636-733-0730.

Emails

(From Peter Pring-Shambler, 10 Oct 2022)

The Temora Aviation Museum (Temora, NSW Australia) wishes to sell its second Cessna A37B, 69-10805, as it is not being flown any longer. It is complete and basically airworthy, needs an annual inspection. All civil log books and some spares, engines, etc.

If you know anyone that might be interested, please let

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me know. I can then supply much more information. Could you add this email to your next newsletter please? Regards, Pete

Peter Pring-Shambler
Performance Fighter Rebuilds
PO Box 7247
Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650
0417 234626

.....
(From John Lamb, 24 Oct 2022)

Yesterday after putting groceries in the car and turning to push the cart across the lane back to the front of the store, there was this huge young fellow coming right at me. He looked like a possible defensive back for the Broncos; scared me. He said, in a serious voice, "I'm going to block traffic for you to cross." My response was a "Thank You?!", thinking he had possibly taken note of my somewhat unstable gait.

After a few steps it dawned on me that he had noticed my AF Vietnam Vet baseball cap and was trying to show his patriotism. Brought a tear to my beady li'l eyes. I turned and shouted a proud "THANK YOU!" to him. God Bless 'Merica!!

Later that afternoon called to check on one of my Nam buds who recently had 'thank you ejection seats' back surgery. After getting his report he asked how I was doing. My response was on the difficulty of my walking. He asked what was causing it. I said, "Carol bought me a pack of chewing gum; remember our flying days, you bastards always said Lambo couldn't walk and chew gum!" - - Rather be lucky than good any day.

.....
(From Don Piltz, 26 Oct 2022)



This A model showed up recently at the Reno Air Races on Rolls Royce North America's ramp. No further details. I thought someone might place it (no pins). Fwd'd to me by a retired RR V.P. Static display.

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at the top of the list, a plaque at the Plaza of Heroes at the USAF Academy in Colorado, installed right next to the FAC plaque, who were so much a part of our history.

The aircraft also went on to serve in the National Guard and Reserves in the U.S., was used in several allied countries in South America, and employed by the DEA to help counter drug running. Finally, three more aircraft are now owned by Association members.

A final word on current events. With the outstanding results we had with the 2022 reunion in Florida, we’ve already began work on the 2024 reunion to match that result. And after much ado, it looks like Houston with all its attractions is going to be our stamping ground. Once we get more information, we’ll pass it on.

Emails (Continued from p. 2)

(In response to my query, Charles Largay and Mark Peterson provided the following information about the aircraft in the Don Piltz photo.)

(From Mark Peterson, 29 Oct 2022)

That is Charlie’s aircraft on display at the Reno Air Races during the National Aviation Heritage Invitational event in September of this year.

(From Charles Largay, 30 Oct 2022)

Mark is flying. And it’s a B model, not A. Not a conversion. 4 pylons per side, pitot atop tail, not nose. Big engines, 2850#. 14,000 gross. And a 1000# lighter.

(From Don Piltz, 30 Oct 2022)

Sorry guys...2000 hours in the B and I blew it...only saw no refueling probe and went for A model. Thanks for your responses guys! Call me envious for sure!!!

Jerry, please thank them & fwd if you can (from a fmr Youngstown, OH Reservist 757th Sq., Wing’s bad boys).

(From Jerry Sailors To Derek Weidensee, Rapid City, SD, 29 Oct 2022, responding to his order of “Dragonfly: A-37s over Vietnam.”

Derek, this is to confirm receipt of your order of one copy of the “Dragonfly: A-37s Over Vietnam.” The book is printed by Lulu.com. Expect delivery in 16-17 business days. I will let you know when it is in the mail.

Thank you for your order. The A-37 Association held a reunion in Rapid City in 2017 and thoroughly enjoyed our visit.



(From Derek Weidensee, 30 Oct 2022)

Thanks Jerry, I am newly “enchanted” with the A-37. I assume you guys spent time at Ellsworth AFB during your reunion. Our firm is doing A LOT of work there. The base is spending 100’s of millions getting ready for the B-21.

As a service to our members, here’s an email from the Military Reunion Network.

Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in suicidal crisis can go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for free emergency health care.

WASHINGTON – Starting Jan. 17, Veterans in acute suicidal crisis will be able to go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost – including inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days. Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit. This expansion of care will help prevent Veteran suicide by guaranteeing no cost, world-class care to Veterans in times of crisis. It will also increase access to acute suicide care for up to 9 million Veterans who are not currently enrolled in VA.

For the complete press release from the VA, [click here](#).

War Story *(from wwiafterwwii.wordpress.com)*

The fall of Saigon in 1975, and along with it the fall of South Vietnam and final end of the Vietnam War, is most remembered in the United States for the dramatic helicopter evacuation of the American embassy.

Less known is the final chapter to the “Frequent Wind” story: how the aircraft carrier *USS Midway*, built to fight the Imperial Japanese Navy during WWII, ended up retrieving the remnants of the defunct VNAF (South Vietnamese air force) during the summer of 1975.

An article from April 2021 appearing on the website [wwiafterwwii.wordpress.com](#) provides a comprehensive account of those tumultuous days. [Click here](#) to view the article.



Aboard *USS Midway*
Filled with land-based aircraft from the defunct VNAF.

(Photo: [wwiafterwwii.com](#))



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Semi-serious Aviation Dictionary (From the website www.pad39A.com)

AILERON - A hinged control surface on the wing that scares the hell out of airline passengers when it moves.

AIR SPEED - Speed of an airplane. (Deduct 25% when listening to a retired fighter pilot.)

ANGLE OF ATTACK - Pick-up lines pilots use.

BANK - The folks who hold the lien on most pilots' cars.

CARBURETOR ICING - A phenomenon reported to the FAA by pilots immediately after they run out of gas.

CONE OF CONFUSION - An area about the size of New Jersey located near the final approach fix at an airport.

DEAD RECKONING - You reckon correctly or you are.

DE-ICER - De person dat puts de ice on de wing.

DESTINATION - Geographical location 30 minutes beyond the pilot's bladder saturation point.

ENGINE FAILURE - A condition that occurs when all fuel tanks mysteriously become filled with low-octane air.

EXCEPTIONAL FLYING ABILITY - Has equal number of takeoffs and landings.

FIREWALL - Section of the aircraft specifically designed to funnel heat and smoke into the cockpit.

FLIGHT FOLLOWING - Formation flying.

FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR - Individual of dubious reputation, paid vast sums of money to impart knowledge of questionable value and cast serious doubt on the coordination, intelligence, and ancestry of student pilots.

GLIDE DISTANCE - Half the distance from an airplane to the nearest emergency landing field.

HEATED AIR MASS - Usually found near hangar, flight lounge, airport cafe, or attractive, non-flying members of the opposite sex.

HYDROPLANE - An airplane designed to land long on a short and wet runway.

LEAN MIXTURE - Nonalcoholic beer.

MINI MAG LITE - Device designed to support the AA battery industry.

NANOSECOND - Time delay between the Low Fuel Warning light and the onset of engine failure.

OCCUPIED - An airline term for a latrine.

PARASITIC DRAG - A pilot who bums a ride and complains about the service.

PITOT TUBE - On long flights, something into which the pilot can pitot.

RICH MIXTURE - What you order at another pilot's promotion party.

ROGER - Used when you're not sure what else to say.

SECTIONAL CHART - Any chart that ends 25 nm short of your destination.

SERVICE CEILING - Altitude at which cabin crew can serve drinks.

SPOILERS - FAA Inspectors.

STALL - Technique used to explain to the bank why your car payment is late.

STEEP BANKS - Banks that charge pilots more than 10% interest.

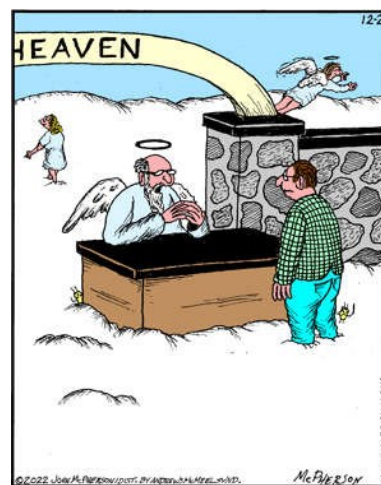
TAILWIND - Results from eating beans in the airport coffee shop; often causes oxygen deficiency in the immediate vicinity.

TURN & BANK INDICATOR - An instrument largely ignored by pilots.

USEFUL LOAD - Volumetric capacity of the aircraft, disregarding weight.

WAC CHART - Directions to the Army female barracks.

YANKEE - Any pilot who has to ask New Orleans tower to "Say again".



"Let's just say that what you DID in Vegas didn't STAY in Vegas."

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George Krumenacker provides periodic updates from the CaringBridge website on A-37 driver Dee Friesen, who suffered a stroke on July 30, 2021. This entry by Ruth Friesen provides some lessons and tips for any of us who are caregivers. Ruth's comments have been edited for space reasons.)

(From George Krumenacker, 9 Dec 2022)

Merry Christmas to all. We all have things to be thankful for. Here are the latest thoughts from Ruth and a few pics of Dee at the bottom: George

Nearly a year has passed since Dee came home from rehab on December 18, 2021, and 17 months since his stroke on July 30. It has definitely been a learning experience. I have learned:

- Transportation is key and can make life manageable.
- Friends and neighbors are valuable allies willing to assist when asked. I have learned not to be timid in asking.
- Some people who I thought and hoped would be strong allies are not. That is their perspective or choices and not a reflection of Dee or my worthiness. People have stepped forward in amazing ways I never expected.
- There is still humor in life. Dee threatens to call our local advertising litigating attorney, if I call him to task.
- We have traveled extensively down memory lane. Dee has an amazing memory for trips we've taken, food we've eaten, and flights he has flown. He is far better at that type of recall than I am.
- I am better at managing and maneuvering Dee than most medical professionals. Practice, practice, practice.
- Businesses such as Instantcart are my friends. Just about anything can be ordered online.
- Dee enjoys his twice a week out-of-the-house physical therapy, especially because he can talk baseball with his therapist Sledge. Sledge has him riding a stationary bike (Sledge straps Dee's left foot to the pedal and holds his leg in position), doing arm pulls and chest presses (same kind of assistance), and even has him standing to throw darts (lots of steadying assistance). Again, with lots of assistance, he can walk in therapy.
- Transfers are not easy and vary from day to day, with not a lot of change since a year ago. I have learned to use my quads and not my back to maneuver him into his wheelchair or into bed.
- Finding time for myself requires the discipline to just do it. I've read 15 books instead of the 52+/year that I had been reading, and I'm not doing my walks. But I resolve to up my game in 2023.
- Dee has listened to or read about 50 books this year. He especially enjoys reading magazines because they are easily managed with one hand, and the articles are short. He watches physics lectures and flying videos on You Tube.
- He has a wonderful upbeat attitude and expresses thanks many times a day. He enjoys seeing friends. I've dropped him off at a nearby brewpub, with \$20 tucked in his sleeve. I felt I was dropping a kindergartner off with a note for teacher pinned to his jacket...but Dee did fine and his friends take good care of him.
- I have enjoyed having a caregiver come in two afternoons a week, which allows me errand and social time away from the house. After much cajoling, threatening, and paperwork, long term care insurance with New York Life is finally paying what I have contracted for with many premium payments. They still owe me two days worth, though.
- The silver lining in this year has been seeing our daughters more frequently. They...will be here for Christmas. Friends pay regular visits weekly. We have enjoyed visits from out-of-family and friends and Zoom calls with members of Dee's pilot training class as well as his astronomy club.
- Every day I look for things for which to be grateful, and I am so grateful for each of you who care enough to read this long missive. Thanks for standing by us in this challenge of a lifetime.



Dee and Ruth
flanked by
Dave and Christie
Aschwanden (left)
Jill Friesen and Burt
(right)



Dee with his
therapist Sledge

A-37 Association Memorabilia Items



(New)
FWB T-shirt
\$21 (includes shipping)
(S, M, L, XL, XXL)



Dragon T-shirt
\$21 (includes shipping)
(XL)



Koozie
\$2 (includes shipping)



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



50th Anniversary Patch \$6
(includes shipping)



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



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

Go to www.a-37.org for order form.