



The Western Sky Aviation Warbird Museum

One of the events on the A-37 Association's schedule during our Vegas reunion is a visit to the Western Sky Aviation Warbird Museum, St. George, Utah, on Saturday, 25 October. The attraction for us is the appearance of two operational A-37s privately owned by Charles Largay and Mark Peterson, both members of the A-37 Association. Mark has flown Charles' aircraft at several fly-ins and airshows primarily in the western US and has been refurbishing his own A-37, which will be shown to the public for the first time at the St. George fly-in.

There's plenty to see at the fly-in, but this is a great opportunity for us old A-37 jocks and maintainers to greet and touch one of our birds that flew in Vietnam and to watch them fly once more.

Colonel Jack Hunter (USAF, Ret.), founder and president of the Warbird Museum, is enthusiastic about the variety of aircraft expected for the fly-in, including a MiG-17, an F-5, and a B-25 that will be offering rides. (Go to the Warbird's [Facebook](#) page for more information on the B-25.)



Photo: Warbird Website

Col Jack Hunter

On display among several other historic warbirds is a MiG-15, the first aircraft acquired by the Museum in 2006. In keeping with its mission of educating present and future generations about aviation history, the Museum features a C-54 refurbished as a classroom for all ages and a Link trainer. Other attractions include a display of aviation paraphernalia, a gift shop, and a few vintage automobiles.

Jack is an educator with a variety of experience in education and civil aviation. He graduated from Utah State University in 1966 with a degree in Aeronautical Engineering and Industrial Technology. After four years on active duty as a SAC ICBM Minuteman launch commander, he joined the Air Force Reserve and transferred to a career of logistics management.

Among his assignments in logistics management were as Commander of the 405th Combat Logistics Support Squadron at Hill AFB and Group Commander in the 419th Fighter Wing at Hill, from which he retired in 1996.

On the civilian side, Jack has owned and operated two FBOs, served as a manager of Production Control at Hercules Aerospace, and was the lead pilot for Rocky Mountain Healthcare Life Flight.



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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

Calendar of Events

A-37 Association Reunion, Las Vegas, NV, 23-26 Oct 2025

Rustics Fini Reunion, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 6-9 Nov 2025

Emails

(From Fred Long, 18 July 2025)

Excellent report on Ollie (in the July newsletter). I've thought of him a lot and wondered how he was doing. I look forward to the newsletters. You have done a really good job with them and I appreciate the hard work you put into them.

(From John Blaha, 18 July 2025)

Always enjoy the newsletter..... I have a pic of the A-37 replacement group at England AFB in Feb 1968.



Photo: John Blaha Collection

A-37 Pilot Replacement Class, England AFB, February 1968

L to R: John Gay, Casey Wright, John O'Kane, Jerry Glasser,
Jim Spittler, Albert Barnes, John Blaha

(From Peter Irzyk, 18 July 2025)

My name is Peter Irzyk. I was at Bien Hoa from January 1969 to January 1970 and a 604th SOS crew chief on the A-37 throughout my tour. I have enclosed a black & white photo of me wearing a green 604th SOS RAPS baseball style cap with gold lettering. Has our association ever produced a replica hat (?) and if not, is the hat something other members may have an interest obtaining? Notably in the most recent Dragonfly newsletter you mentioned "knockoff" Dragonfly patches, something most would want to avoid if knockoff hats are floating around? Any thoughts regarding producing a quality "green 604th SOS RAPS" hat?

(Response to Peter Irzyk, 21 July 2025)

Peter, we have not produced a cap specifically for the 604th SOS. We've had caps over the years for specific reunions, but those are long gone. We do have one cap that is available that was produced for our Galveston reunion in April 2024. Don't know of any attempt to develop a "green RAPS" hat? Hope this helps.

(From Claude Newland, 25 July 2025)

If any of our A-37 buds would like to attend our last Rustic reunion, I have attached our newsletter with all the info. This will be a historic event. (See p. 4.)

Give our best to our A-37 buds as you gather in Las Vegas and give our best to Lon Holtz. He was one of guest speakers at our 2019 reunion.

Cheers, Claude Newland, 2025 Rustic Reunion Coordinator

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War Story

Combat Dragon” Patches of the 604th ACS - Part II

by Erik Goldstein

My uncle, Capt. Ivan “Bernie” Bernstein, left for Vietnam in late July ’67 with the original cadre of the 604th ACS and served as the Squadron’s Intelligence Officer through July ‘68. Though I am not an expert on the Vietnam War, I have spent the better part of the last thirty years writing about old military items and weaponry as a museum curator at Colonial Williamsburg. So, in a small way I feel qualified to write about this unique part of the A-37’s history.

Part I covered the first generation of patches (Type I) made for the 604th ACS while the squadron was still at England AFB in early 1967. I believe a second generation of patches (Type II) was made, likely back in the States, when those ran out. I’m going out on a limb here since I only know of two examples of this patch, and I’ve never had one in my hands. But these have “merrowed,” or completely bound edges, which are pretty much a hallmark of military patches made in the US at that time.

Unlike the Type I, which has a white edge, the Type II patch has a distinctive black merrowed edge. Furthermore, it has the spelling “Dragon,” while the first generation has the word spelled in all capital block letters. It should also be noted that the letters of “Dragon” on this variant are uneven and dip down at the center – we’ll see this design quirk again later. There are also some detail differences in the dragon, the Type II’s being more detailed.

The example pictured below was acquired by Lawrence Stolk at Bien Hoa when he was there from July 1968 to 1969, according to his Facebook post of January 25, 2022 (I tried unsuccessfully to contact Mr. Stolk for more information.) I believe another is in the collection of Hank Hill.



Type II *Combat Dragon* patch, 1968-69.

Collection of Lawrence Stolk, from the A-37 Association Facebook page

Type I



Type II



Yet again I’m speculating, but I believe Type II was based off of the same source as the sign which hung on the staircase outside the Airmen’s Barracks at Bien Hoa. Note the same use of “Dragon,” and the uneven bottoms of the lower-case letters.



The *Combat Dragon* sign on the Airmen’s Barracks, pre-Tet.
From the A-37 Association Website



I think there’s a chicken-and-egg thing going on here. Did the sign inspire the Type II 604th ACS patch, or did these patches inspire the artist who painted the sign? Or is there another factor at play here?

I’m hoping one of you can shed some light on the creation of this amazing Squadron logo. Furthermore, does anyone know where this sign is now?

Part III will cover the “source” I alluded to above and some “one off” patches which were custom-made locally. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further information, or you’d like to tell me about your patch or patches. Or if you just want to let me know how wrong I am!

Enjoy Las Vegas, y’all. I really wish I could be there to shake some hands and listen to what’s being shared.

Erik Goldstein

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Senior Curator of Mechanical Arts, Metals, & Numismatics, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation





(Extract from the Rustics July 2025 newsletter)

THE RUSTIC'S FINAL REUNION IS FAST APPROACHING – NOV 6-9, 2025, IN FT. WALTON BEACH, FL

Don't miss this great opportunity to see your Rustic buds and their wives and families. This will be a truly historic weekend. Send in your Registration and make your hotel reservation now.

REUNION HOTEL IS THE HILTON GARDEN INN ON OKALOOSA ISLAND, FT. WALTON BEACH. 1297 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548.

The hotel is located ½ mile west of the former Ramada Plaza Beach Resort hotel where we held our previous reunions. This is a beautiful hotel with all the amenities needed for a great reunion.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY 10 OCT TO GET OUR REUNION RATE. Call the Hilton Reservation 24-hour line at 1-855-373-6897 and reference the "Rustic FAC Association Reunion."

Discounted room rates are good two days before and two days after our reunion dates, 5-9 Nov 2025.

Cancellations. Reservations not canceled **before 6:00 p.m., three days prior to the arrival date** will be billed to the credit card or against the advance deposit for one night's room and tax.

Check-in time: 4 pm; Check-out time: 1100 am

Room Rate, Non-Gulfside: \$110 + tax = \$128.15 (For up to 4-persons; with 2 queen beds.)



The Dragonfly



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A Checklist for Vegas

Hotel Reservations: 877-887-2261. Cite A-37 Association code 1025A37. [Tuscany Suites and Casino](#)

Air Travel: [Book a Flight](#) Southwest Airlines discount to the A-37 Association on airfares 21- 29 October.

Ladies Event: Want to be "In the Know," contact Kathie Serlet. 503-720-2759: pdxkwiltz@msn.com

While in Vegas, check the reunion Schedule of Events to determine when you may be able to fit in any of the many options available. You must make arrangements for the following on your own.

"Rat Pack Is Back" Dinner and show at the hotel. See flyer page 5. This show has gotten good reviews.

Other Vegas Shows and Venues

Make reservations now! These tickets go fast. A list of shows, tours, concerts, etc. available on this website. [Las Vegas Shows 2025 Deals & Reviews | Vegas.com](#)

Noteworthy shows:

Sphere or the Bulbous Wonder with numerous performances of "The Wizard of Oz." Great photo op venue with the wicked witch and the ruby red slippers protruding from under Sphere.

Earth, Wind, & Fire, 22, 24, 25 Oct, Venetian Resort.

The Smith Center/Reynolds Hall
Presenting "Stereophonic," 21-26 Oct.

UNLV Performing Arts Center, 22 Oct,
An intimate Evening with Jason Vieaux, "among the elite of today's classical guitarists" (Gramophone).

THE RAT PACK IS BACK!

Special Group Offer: A37 Association

October 23, 24, & 25, 2025

Show & Dinner

General Admission & Marilyn's Cafe Dinner

\$60.00 (Non-refundable)

To book your reservation contact Gilbert at (702) 947-5981

(Between the hours of 1:30PM - 7PM PST)

Mention Code : A37 Association



DINNER MENU



ENTREE (Choice of One)

1. 14" Pizza with 2 toppings
2. Angus Cheeseburger w/Fries
3. Chicken Caesar Salad
4. Spaghetti & Meatballs
5. Orange Chicken

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War Story 2

War Story

A-37



USAF Photo