



Nighthawks

President's Corner

This is the Stealth Fighter Association's mid year, 2003 semiannual update.

The 2002 Reunion Video is still a work in progress and should be available around December 2003. Email notices will be sent as soon as a firm date is established.

The Web site has been updated to include a **new** item of interest, a semi annual Newsletter.

We hope you enjoy the SFA "Nighthawks" content and would appreciate your comments and future articles. The Newsletter may be viewed on line at the SFA Web site www.f117.org and is available as a download (1 meg PDF). Hard copies will be mailed to those without electronic capability.

Planning for the 2007 Reunion has begun. Suggestions regarding this event are welcome from all members.

Thanks to all who have provided the SFA with address updates, enabling us to keep our member database up to date.



The annual SFA board meeting is scheduled for 15 August at Sam's Town in Las Vegas, NV.

The Web site is a continuous work in progress, so check it frequently for improvements and new information.

On a more patriotic note, Team Nighthawk has again distinguished itself in the defense of freedom. When statistics on F-117 wartime performance are released, they will be addressed in a future edition of this newsletter.

It's comforting to know the F-117 weapon system, now over 20 years old, "still has it" in the skies over Baghdad. Continued improvements to the "Black Jet" have kept it state of the art and far superior to the F-117s employed during Operations Desert Storm or Allied Force.

It's not your father's Oldsmobile. Lest we forget.....God Bless our troops.

Dave Wells
President, Stealth Fighter Association

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Upcoming Events

Air Show schedule for the F117 Nighthawks

The F-117 may be seen at the following locations.

4-6 Jul	Battle Creek, MI	Static (3) Flyby (3)
12-13 Jul	McChord AFB, WA	Static (2) Flyby (2)
17-20 Jul	RAF Fairford, UK	Static (4) Flyby (4)
17-20 Jul	Dayton IAP, OH	Static (4) Flyby (4)
26-27 Jul	Grissom ARB, IN	Static (2) Flyby (2)
9-10 Aug	Hickam AFB, HI	Static (2) Flyby (2)
16-Aug	Minot AFB, ND	Static (1) Flyby (1)



F-117 Program News

New Weapons certified for use in IRAQ War

The EGBU-27 was certified for use on the F117 Nighthawk in less than 24 hours by the F-117 Joint Test Force located at Plant 42.

F-117 Nighthawk and Korea

The F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighter arrives at Kun San Air Base, 200 kilometers (125 miles) southwest of Seoul, South Korea, Friday, March 14, 2003. At least six F-117 Nighthawk Stealth Fighters will take part in routine joint military exercises in South Korea, U.S. military officials said. The announcement comes amidst rising tensions between the United States and North Korea. On Monday, North Korea test-fired a short-range missile, in what analysts said was a widely

anticipated launch from a base on the country's east coast. After completing exercises in conjunction with the South Korean Air Force, the F-117 Nighthawks returned to their home base at Holloman AFB in New Mexico.

F-117 Depot performance

The F-117 Depot, located at USAF Plant 42-Site 7, is now incorporating Configuration Upgrade 7 (CU7) into fleet aircraft of the 49th Fighter Wing. CU7 incorporates improved, more maintainable Low Observable treatments and integrates GPS guided "smart weapon" delivery capability into the F-117. To date, the Palmdale Depot operation has achieved 61 consecutive on schedule aircraft deliveries.

Reunion News

Planning has already begun for the 25th Stealth Fighter Association Reunion, currently scheduled for the summer of 2007, in Las Vegas, NV. We look forward to all interested parties to make suggestions for a great event. Please send your comments to one of the addresses below.

The 2002 Reunion Video

We apologize for the delay, however the Video is still a work-in-progress. Notice will be posted on the Web site and an E-mail will be sent as soon as we have an availability date which should be around December 2003.

Current Board Of Directors 2002-2007

Dave Wells	President
Art Weyermuller	Vice President
Sherrie Laveaux	Secretary/Treasurer
Keith Pedersen	Web Master
Jay Tweed	Communications
Mike Harris	Board Member
Doug Robinson	Board Member

PLEASE SEND MAIL TO:

**F117 STEALTH FIGHTER ASSOCIATION
43629 37th Street West
Lancaster, CA 93536-6331**

**E-mail: info@f117reunion.org
www.f117.org**

New Members

Bev Anderson	George Borjon	Joe Greil
Samuel Bustillos	Lynn Welch	John Lindsey
Mark Dopson	Leonard Ward	Jeanette Silva

In Memoriam

Clyde E. Allen

Died September 7, 2002., No other information is available.

Bill Skinner

Was a Manager on the F-117 Program during the 1980s. Private services were held in Lompoc, CA, on 29 April. Bill died from complications with leukemia. Bill's wife is still in an assisted living home due to a couple of severe strokes.

Our condolences to all those that knew and loved them. They will be missed.

Membership By Location

NUM	LOCATION
1	SCOTLAND, AR, IA, IL, KY, MA, MD, MN, ND, NJ, OK, WY
2	DC, ENGLAND, NY, PA, WI,
3	APO EU, AL, CT, HI, ID, MI, OR, APO Pacific, MO, OH, TN
8	UT, WA
9	NC
11	GA
14	CO
18	FL
19	VA
20	AZ
25	TX
71	NM
113	NV
169	CA

News From Holloman

Nighthawks return home

Airman 1st Class Vanessa LaBoy
49th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

4/18/2003 - HOLLOWAN AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. (AFPN) -- Five F-117 Nighthawks touched down here April 16 after supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

“The tremendous support of the base and Alamogordo community provided the returning airmen with an outstanding homecoming”, said Lt. Col. J.L. Briggs, an F-117 pilot returning from his seventh deployment to Southwest Asia. He said it was great to be part of a mission that was an asset in the combat zone.

“When the crew received orders, they knew what they had to do to accomplish the objective of disarming and removing the Iraqi regime,” Briggs said. “Every unit was well trained for the job and ready to



HOLLOWAN AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. (AFPN) -- An F-117 Nighthawk pulls onto the tarmac here April 16, as it returned with four other F-117s from Southwest Asia after supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. This jet displays 16 combat mission marks showing the number of combat missions it flew during the deployment.

go. Even though each unit is trained individually, during combat operations, every element cohesively joins to become one team.”

Pilots are a very visible tip of the iceberg during combat operations, but without people from maintenance support, intelligence, services, supply, security forces and all other elements, the jets would not leave the ground, he said.

“Pilots fly the jet and execute a mission that's based on an overwhelming amount of effort,” Briggs said. “A lot of support goes unnoticed because people see pi-

lots dropping bombs, but they don't see the hours of labor that it takes to get the mission going.”

The Holloman support troops and F-117s played an important role in Operation Iraqi Freedom, ac-

News From Holloman (Continued from page 3)

According to Briggs. The F-117s were the first aircraft to drop bombs in Baghdad on March 19. They flew more than 80 missions and dropped nearly 100 Enhanced Guided Bomb Units, EGBU-27s. The Nighthawks also supported Operation Desert Storm in 1991, but enhanced weapons systems on current models allowed the jet to be even more lethal during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Briggs said.

While airmen are deployed, many spouses assume the role of single parent and manage the household. At the same time, in the back of their minds, they have an inevitable concern for the safety and welfare of their loved one in the combat zone, Briggs said. "Many families accept the role, which is one of the toughest in the Air Force," he said. "These families take on a tough mission that they keep going day after day. The Air Force offers a number of programs to support troops and their families, but Holloman and the Alamogordo community raise the bar. Our team is grateful for the outpouring of support, thoughts and prayers from the generous hearts of these communities." (Courtesy of Air Combat Command News Service)

Pilots receive Distinguished Flying Crosses for first strike of OIF

Combined Forces Air Component Command Public Affairs

4/21/2003 - OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (AFP) -- Two F-117A Nighthawk pilots from the

379th Air Expeditionary Wing at a forward-deployed desert air base were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross recently for extraordinary achievement while flying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. On the opening day of the air campaign Lt. Col. David Toomey

and Maj. Mark Hoehn flew the very first strike mission which targeted a senior Iraqi leadership compound in Baghdad where intelligence sources believed Saddam Hussein and other top regime leaders were staying.



On that day, the president told the nation in a televised statement that on his orders coalition forces had begun "striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war." The next day Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld told a full press room at the Pentagon that the mission was the first strike of the war to liberate Iraq and that the U.S. Central Command exercised flexibility in the strike by taking into account the "realities that you find in the world."

The pilots launched on the strike less than two hours after being notified of the mission, with minimal planning material available, officials at Combined Forces Air Component Command said. They met up with aerial refueling and electronic warfare aircraft on their way to Baghdad and coordinated the many details of the mission elements they needed in the air to support the attack formation. Hoehn faced another challenge when his aircraft developed a malfunction during the flight and had degraded communications ability, officials said. He was able to handle the aircraft through superior airmanship and was still able to achieve complete surprise in the heavily defended target area. Toomey also had to overcome a weapons system malfunction as daylight approached in the target area and the two aircraft entered into the heart of an Iraqi integrated air defense system with more than fifty strategic surface-to-air missile systems and more than two hundred anti-aircraft artillery sites.

Despite the malfunctions, both pilots penetrated the defenses and placed enhanced precision munitions exactly on target within one second of the planned time over target. Their performance in carrying out the mission was "in the finest traditions of our Air Force," said Lt. Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Combined Forces Air Component commander, on presenting the medals. They "made us all very proud," he added. The mission opened the air war by striking at the very heart of the Iraqi regime and began a continuous stream of what has now numbered more than 42,000 sorties.

Opening Night In Baghdad 2003

By David A. Fulghum

In what may have been one of the most rapidly executed missions of the war so far, two F-117s of the 8th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron planned, loaded weapons, flew to Baghdad and bombed a residence where Saddam Hussein was spending the night--all in 4 hours.

One of the two F-117s involved in the first night attack on Saddam Hussein and his sons returns to its Middle Eastern base after the no-notice mission.

For the Mar. 19 mission that kicked off the conflict, members of the target cell in the combined air operations center (CAOC) at Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia, chose the EGBU-27 1-ton penetrating bomb.

Two of the four bombs were dropped from an aircraft flown by Lt. Col. Mathew McKeon, commander of the unit.

"They had directed the use of those weapons, and we agreed," McKeon said. "That was a good choice because it took weather out of the equation. The EGBU-27 allows us to go ahead and drop with the [combined] GPS/INS guidance. But if we can see the target, we can also laser it [for even greater accuracy]."

However, the assignment must have come as somewhat of a shock because no one in the squadron had ever dropped one of those weapons.

"It had just been released to us in the last month or so," McKeon said. "There was a lot of hard work done by a host of people from Air Combat Command, the air staff and around the Air Force that helped [ready] the weapon for the platform."

Some of the targeting information came from the CAOC. Its J-2 intelligence organization offers a data bank of target information including imagery and GPS coordinates.

"It looked like a residential compound," McKeon said. "This particular structure just happened to be

underground, and there was nothing but an open field on top of it. That [field] was where we were aiming. The building above ground was offset from the underground structure. We aimed roughly 100-200 ft. from the building, [although] it's hard to judge distances from a photo."

All four bombs were dropped almost simultaneously to ensure a hit in the right underground chambers. "They were spread out," McKeon said. "I remember seeing the aim points on a photo. But on a photo you don't have much relative size to judge distances. I estimate maybe 50 ft. between bombs [in] a square pattern. We looked at some post-strike photos, and it appeared that the weapons worked as advertised. Much of the earth was undisturbed, so you had to look hard to see [the entry points]."

"The story is the team effort that went into [the mission] through the mission planners and the maintainers and the interface with the host wing," McKeon said. "We received indications that we might be tasked against that residential compound the day prior. We received enough information to allow us to do some of the initial key planning that takes a little time like pulling photos and going to directories for certain kinds of information. That's what saved us, because the next day when we did find out that we were on our way, we already had the information and could go through the normal [follow-on] planning process . . . at the last minute."

Initially, the mission was on for about an hour and then it was canceled. About 24 hours later, there was a 1-hour warning that the mission might be back on. And then the execute order arrived.

The mission "was a shot out of the blue," McKeon said. "We had no awareness of the target prior to

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Opening Night In Baghdad 2003 (continued from page 5)

the 19th. We had no indication we were going to do it up until 1:30 a.m. The attack was [scheduled for] around 5:30 a.m. We got the mission off the ground in 2 hours and hit the target 2 hours after that. After you begin to understand what happened, you gain an appreciation for the teamwork that went into it.”

The F-117 wing had prepared, in an unspecific way, for just such a mission during the prior year.

“We had trained ourselves to be more responsive and flexible to provide airpower in a more timely manner,” McKeon said. “Some of the training was self-initiated, and we were asked to participate in others by outside agencies. A lot of [the initiative came from] watching how the war in Afghanistan unfolded and the way airpower was needed there.”

During the 1990-91 Persian Gulf war, a mission may have required 4 hours of planning. By the time the squadron took off for Baghdad this year, planning was down to 30 min. or less.

“When we asked for the second aircraft to be loaded with weapons, the normal request process--which entails a great deal of time and paperwork--was done almost instantaneously,” McKeon said. “The weapons arrived at the aircraft within tens of minutes. That was one of the key strokes in that mission.”

“I would also point to the mission planners, the weaponeers [selection of the bomb, fuzing and programming of weapons support], the loaders and the

fact that they were already familiar with the target area and the target and were able to generate flawless products in less than an hour,” he said. Adding

to the last-minute crush was new data on the bombs' different modes and settings for the weapon and aircraft that have to be figured for an accurate attack. Some of that information came from the test of two bombs that were dropped only 4.5 hours earlier in California.

The attack on Saddam Hussein appears to have been a complete surprise

to the Iraqi air defenses.

“The only facts that I know right now is that there was some anti-aircraft fire shot into the air two or three minutes following impact of the weapons,” McKeon said. “Other than that, I can't comment on what the [Iraqis] may have seen.”

Through the first week of the war, the F-117s focused on static targets, but indications were that the target set would expand.

“We practice to hit targets using various pieces of information,” he said. “We don't train specifically for a certain type of mission. We practice skills--hitting targets, air refueling, being precise in timing and navigation. To us, it's not a function of what the target is, but how much good intelligence we have.”

Since the initial strike, F-117 sortie rates have reflected the pace of the campaign. “It depends on what the Army is doing, the weather, what the coalition air forces have done and what targets have been missed, but there hasn't been a pattern,” McKeon said.



F-117 Program Awards



TSPR 1999–98%

TSPR 2000–99%

1997 Welch Award

1989 Collier Award

TSPR 2001–99%

TSPR 2002–100%

Lightning Award

Shingo Prize

Award Stories

F-117 Program wins the 2003 Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing

In May, several members of the F-117 Nighthawk team accepted the 2003 Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing at an awards banquet hosted by Utah State University in Detroit, MI. This event culminated an effort lasting over a year, involving development of a complex achievement report that detailed the F-117 Program's Lean journey towards world class aircraft modification and sustainment operations, and an intense Palmdale site assessment by six Shingo examiners. The F-117 program is only the third entity within Lockheed Martin Corporation to achieve this distinguished honor, considered the "Nobel Prize of Manufacturing" by Business Week Magazine.

F-117 Total System Sustainment Partnership (TSSP) aka TSPR

LM Aero-Palmdale is now five and half years into a landmark eight year, \$1.8B sustainment contract with the Air Force, providing technical, logistics and management support to the F-117 weapon system. To date, LM Aero has sustained very high Award Fee and Incentive Fee performance, a significant enabler to the 49th Fighter Wing achieving some of the best readiness rates in Air Combat Command.

Join The Stealth Fighter Association (SFA)

For those folks reading this Newsletter who are not current members of the SFA, membership is open to everyone interested in the F-117 Stealth Fighter Aircraft. Info is available on the SFA web site :

www.f117.org

and hard copies are available to be mailed to interested folks. Just ask a member or drop a line to:

F-117 STEALTH FIGHTER ASSOCIATION
43629 37th Street West
Lancaster, CA 93536-6331

The F-117 Stealth Fighter Association was chartered as a non-profit corporation in the state of Nevada, to organize and coordinate periodic reunions celebrating key events in the history of the F-117 Aircraft, by those individuals involved in the creation and operation of the F-117 Stealth Fighter Aircraft.



Stealth Fighter Association Mission Statement

The Stealth Fighter Association is an affiliation of individuals brought together by the common bond of association with the world's first stealth fighter, the Lockheed Martin F-117, produced by the Lockheed Martin Skunk Works for the United States Air Force. Our mission is to preserve the memory of our struggles to attain a stealth combat capability second to none, maintain the legacy of the F-117 "Nighthawk," maintain the bonds of brother and sisterhood between those who contributed to make the awesome combat capability of stealth a reality, and act as a governing board to oversee the planning and execution of periodic reunions at either the five or ten year periods.

Web Site Info

The Web Site has new graphics, updated info, and lots of pictures from last years convention in Las Vegas. Be sure to check out all the info!

SFA News, tells you at a glance what changes have been made recently. You may also click on the **SFA Update** at the bottom of the page.

New Member registration forms are located in the **SFA Membership** section and are available in Word and PDF Formats.

Please remember to email us with your current address info in the **Membership Update** section, so that we may keep in touch.

Thanks to ALL that sent in photos. They have allowed us to share the Reunion experience with those unable to attend..

Address <http://www.f117.org/>

NIGHTHAWKS

Stealth Fighter Association

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SFA Update

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