Volume 3 Issue 1

December, 2005

Nighthawks

President's Corner

With the holiday season fast approaching, and another year drawing to a close, it's time to thank all the men and women who have contributed so much to continually make this program successful. The Program had another banner year with the Wing meeting all of its operational commitments with no aircraft losses or major incidents and Lockheed Martin meeting all their Depot deliveries on time.

Shortly after the last newsletter, Jay Tweed recommended we cut back to an annual publication due to the time and effort it takes him and the volunteer staff to research, assemble and edit all the articles and information. Since we did not receive any feed back from our membership, I agreed to the cut back.

The Stealth Fighter Association's 25 year Reunion will take place 22-24 June 2007 at Caesars Palace, in Las Vegas. Because the 20 year reunion was so successful we have decided to follow the same venue with only minor changes. After the last reunion, we had many people approach us stating if they had known about it they would have attended.

Jay has done a great job keeping up with the membership over the last three plus years but some of our members have moved to other programs or PCS'd overseas and we are still looking for some lost friends. For this reunion we are asking all members to contact their friends that were on the program or are currently in the program and have them join the Association.

We have found that word of mouth is still the best source of communication, so please pass this information to all of your friends. If you were at the 20th please tell them how much fun you had.

Look for a Reunion announcement on the Website http://www.f117.org by the end of April 2006.

On behalf of the Stealth Fighter Association Board of Directors and myself, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and have a happy holiday season.

With Regards,

Dave Wells
President, Stealth Fighter Association

Inside This Issue

SFA News

The annual Stealth Fighter Association Board meeting was held in Las Vegas, NV on 3 June 2005. In attendance were SFA Board Members Dave Wells - President; Art Weyermuller - Vice President; Sherrie Laveaux (now Bouché) - Secretary / Treasurer; Mike Harris and Doug Robinson - Board Members; and Jay Tweed - SFA Communications Director.

Dave Wells presented the meeting agenda and Sherrie Bouché presented the current financial status. Jay Tweed presented current SFA membership statistics, and reviewed a draft of the Dec 2005 Nighthawk Newsletter.

Items discussed pertaining to the 2007 Reunion were possible sponsor opportunities and selecting Caesars' Palace, Las Vegas, NV as the location. June 22nd thru June 24th, 2007, are the magical dates for the reunion, so mark your calendars and join us for a great weekend.

Please send your questions and comments and suggestions via email to:

editor@f117.org

or the ***NEW*** Postal mail address below.

Stealth Fighter Association
PO Box 902017
Palmdale, CA 93590

We look forward to seeing everyone and hope all enjoy a great event.

Letters to the Editors

From The Editors

Hello to all! This is the fifth edition of the SFA newsletter! Congratulations to newlyweds Sherrie Laveaux and Don Bouché. We hope their honeymoon in Hawaii was a blast.

In case you are wondering, we did not issue a July 2005 Newsletter, as there was a shortage of news to report.

We have added a new document to the History section of the WEB site called ***Nighthawks Over Iraq*** which documented the Chronology of the F-117 Stealth Fighter in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm (1990-1991).

General Colin S. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, commented: "You are showing the nation what it's all about, the combination of the very highest technology with the very best kind of people we can put together in the field as a team."

Check it out.

We have changed the format of the Newsletter, hoping it will make the articles easier to read.

Is there something additional we should be looking for? Items of interest? Jokes? Pictures??????

Please, let us know what you think of the format and articles.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Air Shows

The Current F-117 Air Show schedule can be found* at *http://www2.acc.af.mil/airdemo/

Nighthawk Newsletter Team

Editors — Jay Tweed, Jan Gould
Web Site — Keith Pedersen
Graphics — Dave Walker
Newsletter: editor@f117reunion.org

Contact us

F-117 Stealth Fighter Association
PO Box 902017
Palmdale, CA 93590
Web: www.f117reunion.org
www.f117.org
Info: info@f117reunion.org

F-117 Program Leadership

Diana Filliman is Director of F-117 Systems Squadron, Long Range Strike Systems Wing, Aeronautical Systems Center (ASC), Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

The F-117 Systems Squadron is selectively manned and responsible for cradle-to-grave acquisition management, development, test, modernization and sustainment of the world's only stealth fighter.

After graduating from Park College in 1984, with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Management, Ms. Filliman continued her education. She has earned Masters Degrees in Organizational Leadership - 1997; Human Resources Management - 1998; and, most recently, in National Resource Strategy.

In August 1980, Ms. Filliman began her career as a Logistics Management Specialist, Plans and Programs Directorate at the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma.

Ms. Filliman entered program management in April 1987 as Chief, ILS Management Division, Directorate of Acquisition Logistics, Space and Missile Center, California and has held a variety of management positions . Some of them include; Chief, Aeronautical and Armament Programs, Directorate of Requirements; Deputy Director, Warfighter Readiness Division, Directorate of Requirements; and Chief, AFMC Transformation Team & Transformation Directorate of Requirements all at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Prior to her assignment to the F-117 program, she held the position of Deputy System Program Director, B-1B System Program Office.

Cliff Williford is F-117 Weapon System Sustainment Senior Manager.

He attended VPI&SU for one year, then joined the Air Force as a Wideband Radio Relay Equipment Repairman, with assignments to Keesler AFB, Mississippi; Altus AFB, Oklahoma; Osan AFB, ROK; and, Warner Robins AFB, GA.

He was accepted into the Airman Education and Commissioning Program (AECP) and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from VPI&SU. From there, Mr. Williford attended Officer Training School at Lackland AFB, Texas and UPT at Williams AFB Arizona.

His assignments include flying with the 48th TFW at RAF Lakenheath, UK (F-111Fs) and the 27th TFW, Cannon AFB, NM (F-111Ds).

He served as a Flight Instructor, Functional Check Flight Pilot (FCF) and Standardization Evaluation Flight Examiner (SEFE).

Mr. Williford attended the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT), graduating with a Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering with a focus in Low Observables.

He served at the ATF SPO (later F/A-22) at Wright Patterson AFB, in the following capacities: Chief Engineer - Defensive Systems, Deputy Chief Avionics Engineer, and Chief Engineer Special Programs.

He returned to the 48th TFW at RAF Lakenheath as an assistant Sq. Ops Officer and was later selected as Commander of the Ops Group Squadron with 220 enlisted assigned.

He served in Saudi Arabia during both Desert Shield and Desert Storm deployments and spent most of his time working with the planning team in Rihad.

Mr. Williford retired after Desert Storm and went into the private sector. He has worked on the F/A-22 with Lockheed Martin Aero and at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control.

His various assignments included product development, Business Development and Program Management on several SAR, EO/IR sensor and weapon programs.

'With flying colors'

By Capt. Catie Hague
95th Air Base Wing Public Affairs
EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif.,
October 27, 2005

The F-117 Nighthawk tail number 782 passes over Edwards Open House and Air Show Oct. 14-15 bearing its true colors - red, white and blue. This particular aircraft was the oldest flying F-117 in the fleet of five prototype F-117s that were hand-made in the '80s prior to full-up production of the stealth fighter. In true historic fashion, F-117 Nighthawk, tail number 782, passed over show center Oct. 14-15 bearing its true colors - red, white and blue.

This flight test legacy was retired following the Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., Open House and Air Show with 20-plus years of service. “782 has been used for flight test ever since Lockheed Martin Aero pilot Tommy Morgenfeld first took off at the controls December 18th, 1981,” said Lt. Col. Robert McAllum, 410th Flight Test Squadron commander. “It's the original avionics test aircraft for the Nighthawk program.” Five prototype F-117s were hand-made in the '80s prior to full-up production of the stealth fighter. This particular aircraft, 782, is currently the oldest flying F-117 in the fleet - 780 and 781 have already been retired.

Once the aircraft flew its final flights this weekend, the majority of the original prototype, preproduction F-117s will be out of service, said Dennis Fernandez, 410th Flight Test Squadron Lockheed Martin flight test manager; only two of the five will remain operational - 783 and 784.

Of the five prototypes, 782 was the first with a complete avionics suite, said Mr. Fernandez. “It enabled us to test full integration of the weapons delivery system; the first two prototypes had steam gauge instruments and manual weapons delivery. 782 was also the first to be fully equipped with an Infrared Acquisition and Designation System,” he said; “the eyes of the aircraft.” As the Nighthawk program evolved, 782 was not upgraded past the second generation of technology improvements, and it became the squadron's test jet for "nuts and bolts" sustainment testing. But what this aircraft will be most remembered for was a flight it made in 1983. At that time, there were lots of rumors throughout the Air Force about a new plane being unveiled for high Department of Defense officials, said Dr. Raymond Puffer, Air Force Flight Test Center historian. “During a squadron change-of-command ceremony, four years before the F-117 was publicly acknowledged, 782 swept in low and then banked away suddenly, revealing the American Flag on its belly. The crowd went absolutely berserk, and the incident aroused intense excitement. The Cold War was at its coldest then, and the story (and the aircraft) was an incredible morale-builder for us all.”

“Aircraft 782 was repainted with the American flag for this air show to resurrect a piece of the 782s history for its retirement”, Mr. Fernandez said. “The squadron got together to paint the aircraft - a voluntary effort - and the paint was even donated,” Colonel McAllum said.

Many of the military and civilians working in the squadron today have been involved with this aircraft and the program since the '80s.

“When I first started working on this aircraft I was a young man,” Mr. Fernandez said. “I never thought about retirement at that age - the aircrafts or my own. Now, we've both reached retirement age at the same time ... it's hard to believe.”

The F-117 was flown Saturday by Colonel McAllum and Sunday by Lt. Col. Dwayne Opella, the 410th FLTS operations officer. The aircraft retires to Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., following the Edwards air show, Colonel McAllum said. As of Oct. 14 the aircraft had 1,202 flights and 1,532 flying hours.

9th FS commander reaches 1,000 hours

by Ms. Laura Hunt
Sunburst staff writer
Holloman Sunburst, Jan 14, 2005

A member of the 9th Fighter Squadron reached 1,000 flying hours in the F-117A Nighthawk when he touched down on Holloman's runway Wednesday. Lt. Col. Ward Juedeman, 9th FS commander, was the 18th person to reach this milestone.

"It is an impressive feat to achieve 1,000 hours in any aircraft," said Col. Matt McKeon, 49th Operations group commander. "Lt. Col. Juedeman's resume, with respect to the F-117 includes, operational flying, operational testing, and formal course instructor duties, which means he has made meaningful contributions to every facet of this important program."

In a family of about 500 F-117 pilots, few accomplish this feat because these pilots normally only serve one three-year tour. During Colonel Juedeman's 20 years in the Air Force, he has been at Holloman twice; from April of 1996 to March 2000, and from June 2002 until the present.

He has been assigned to every flying squadron - the 7th, 8th and 9th Fighter Squadrons as well as to Detachment 1, 53rd Test and Evaluation Group. "I have enjoyed flying the F-117 from my first flight," Colonel Juedeman said. "I believe the mission we train for, and carry out when directed, is one of the most important and relevant in the Air Force.

One thousand hours in the aircraft has meant staying with an aircraft and a mission I appreciate, as well as living in a location and community that my family and I enjoy."

Lt. Col. Ward Juedeman, 9th FS commander, was the 18th person to reach 1,000 hours in the F-117A.

Colonel Juedeman said he joined the Air Force because his father was a fighter pilot in the Marines, Air Force and Air National Guard, which helped him develop a love for flying and an appreciation for the military.

"I'll continue to fly the aircraft as long as the wing leadership and the Air Force will allow me," Colonel Juedeman said. "Unfortunately, I know that at some point, my military flying career will come to an end. It is my intent to delay that as long as possible."

F-117s Deploy to South Korea

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. (AP) - 5/26/2005

Fifteen F 117 Nighthawk stealth fighters are leaving Holloman Air Force Base this week for South Korea.

The 49th Fighter Wing announced the deployment of about 250 airmen and the stealth's on Monday. About two dozen stealth's and 300 airmen were deployed from Holloman to Kunsan Air Base in South Korea last summer. Officials wouldn't disclose where in South Korea they would be going. The deployment comes as North Korea threatens a nuclear weapons test. The White House urged North Korea. Monday. to return to diplomatic talks.

Weapon System Review keeps the F-117s flying

by 2nd Lt. Melissa J. Stevens
49th Fighter Wing Public Affairs
Holloman Sunburst, March 3, 2005

February 23 brought about the beginning of a new capabilities review process to Holloman. Team Nighthawk senior leaders focused on reliability and maintainability of the F-117A Nighthawk fleet that helped establish an aircraft baseline for the upcoming Operational Readiness Inspection.

"The Weapon System Review ensures all organizations concerned with the F-117 modernization and sustainment are kept abreast of the most pressing issues, and concur on the direction of proposed acquisition programs," said Maj. Stanton Hubbard, 49th Maintenance Group Low Observable Flight commander. "The bottom line is the WSR facilitates maintaining the combat capability of the F-117."

"This was a tremendous effort that shows the fantastic relationship we have on Team Nighthawk that includes the Systems Program Office, Lockheed Martin and the Air Combat Command Logistics, as well as Team Holloman."

Brig. Gen. Kurt Cichowski
49th Fighter Wing commander

The WSR was initiated by the F-117 Systems Squadron, the acquisitions program office that is responsible for full spectrum modernization and sustainment of the Nighthawk fleet. The F-117 Systems Squadron is a part of the Aeronautical Systems Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. "For the first time, a very specific weapon system review has been developed, allowing us here at Holloman to take the lead on what we feel is important on the F- 117," said Brig. Gen. Kurt Cichowski, 49th Fighter Wing commander.

"This was a tremendous effort that shows the fantastic relationship we have on Team Nighthawk that includes the Systems Program Office, Lockheed Martin and Air Combat Command Logistics, as well as Team Holloman."

General Cichowski said this review is the first of its kind and comes at an exceedingly important time, and that it directly addressed some of the reasons for the ORI re-do. "The review was broken down into two categories.

On the operations side, we are looking for increased capabilities to keep the aircraft relevant in what may turn out to be a representative in the 21st century Air Force," General Cichowski said. "In order for the F-117 to be a relevant platform, some additions must be made to the airframe."

On the maintenance side, he said there are two main issues. "Of the greater impact is maintaining the reliability and maintainability of the airframe, which is the long-term maintenance of the airplane," General Cichowski said. "But we also spent a lot of time directly addressing the issues of maintaining the low observable signature and addressing the radar absorption materials application and repair.

The WSR directly addressed how to document the issues, and how and when to repair certain problems that we've been having and how to address the overall low observable health of the fleet," he said.

General Cichowski said his short-term goal was to ensure we had the baseline to be evaluated against for the May ORI and his long-term endeavor was to ensure the F-117 program remains healthy and viable for modern conflict.

"All the cards are now on the table and we know the game we're playing," he said. "And while the outcome has caused us to do some increased effort, Holloman's never been afraid of hard work throughout our long and storied heritage." Major Hubbard said he believes the WSR attendees addressed a number of significant issues facing the F-117, and they did a fantastic job.

"A 'One Team, One Fight' mentality was highly evident," he said. "I'm happy that such diverse agencies as the 49th Fighter Wing, the F-117 System Squadron, Air Combat Command, Det 1, 53rd Test and Evaluation Group, and the 410 Flight Test Squadron can come together, wrestle with significant issues that impact the F-117, and then band together in an effort to make one of the Air Force's premier low observable platforms even better."

9th FS, 9th AMU and 49th MXS team up to drop bombs on target

Staff Sgt. David Pote, 49th MXS, connects the tail end to a bomb. The WSEP evaluation places operation units in combat scenarios against realistic targets and threats. The evaluation will help the 9th FS, 9th AMU and 49th MXS identify deficiencies, determine their cause and make improvements.

Airmen 1st Class Vanessa Overturff, Matthew Malinowsky and Michelle Sayco, 49th MXS, band together a crate of bomb tails.

Senior Airman Kyle Rider loads a bomb onto a F-117A Nighthawk. From Jan. 28 to Feb. 4 the 9th Fighter Squadron, 9th Aircraft Maintenance Unit and 49th Maintenance Squadron we reevaluated during the Air Force Air-to-Ground Weapon System Evaluation Program, also known as "Combat Hammer," by the 86th Fighter Weapons Squadron from Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Tech. Sgt. Michael Debaarr inspects a bomb on an F-117. The 9th FS, 9th AMU and 49th MXS performed excellently, dropping all bombs on target, to pass the evaluation.

RED FLAG

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin J. Gruenwald

49th Maintenance Squadron crew chiefs perform pre-flight procedures prior to a launch during Red Flag 05-03 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. More than 100 aircraft and 2,000 service members from active-duty Air National Guard, U.S. Navy and Army are participating.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin J. Gruenwald

Senior Airman Jacob Williams, 49th Maintenance Squadron structural maintenance journeyman, executes a wingtip light edge molding replacement prior to a launch during Red Flag.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Thomas P. Dougherty

Staff Sgt. Greg Slavik , 49th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, shines his flashlight into an air intake on an F-117A Nighthawk.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin J. Gruenwald

Staff. Sgt. Freddie Gandy, 49th MXS repair and reclamation craftsman, performs a canopy latch system operations check.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Thomas P. Dougherty

Airman 1st Class Jackie Wills, 49th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, connects an air condition hose to an F-117A Nighthawk prior to launch March 8. The aircraft participated in Red Flag, an exercise testing the war fighters' skills in real time combat situations before being deployed on their AEF rotation.

"We Own the Night"

by Brig. Gen. Kurt Cichowski
49th Fighter Wing commander
Holloman Sunburst, March 25, 2005

Positive attitude + Core values = Mission Success
Air Combat Command's Operational Readiness Inspection of the 49th Fighter Wing has only one objective; to inform USAF senior leadership that the 49th Fighter Wing is prepared and ready to execute "Global Combat Operations." ***"We Own the Night"*** is our mantra, and was born in the early hours of January 16, 1990, when a handful of American warriors changed the nature of modern conflict. Those warriors used an untested combat capability, flew into the heart of one of the most heavily defended geographic areas on the planet, and in just a few hours literally crippled the war making capability of the world's 4th largest military.

This historic accomplishment was no accident. It was the product of a very special team of people working for each other, and more importantly with each other to execute the orders of the President of the United States of America; despite the projected survival rate of that first combat mission using the F-117 Nighthawk being only approximately 50 percent. These are facts, the cold hard facts that every person involved in making that mission happen on the night of January 16, 1990 was aware of. Everyone involved, from the Airmen that served those pilots their pre-flight meal and drove them to the aircraft, to the back-shop maintainers ensuring that those F-117s were ready to fly, to the crew chiefs strapping those pilots in their aircraft for that mission, they all knew for certain that it might be the last time they saw those pilots alive. To say they were a little nervous would be a gross understatement. All of those people had one thing in common – a positive attitude; an attitude that they were the very best in the world at what they did and nothing, and I mean nothing, was going to stop them from getting the mission done. Moreover, these professionals knew their checklists and job procedures inside and out, and when there was something that just didn't seem right, they got the right people involved to fix it . They didn't believe in shortcuts, and most importantly they had personal discipline that drove them to do the right thing even if it did take a little longer, or that "someone" might be a little miffed at the extra work it created. In the end it just didn't matter because everything these Airmen did, they did it the only way acceptable to combat operations - the right way.

"We are the President's first choice because no one can do what the F-117 can do and the enemy literally fears us—as they should."
Brig. Gen. Cichowski

It was this attitude that enabled every F-117 pilot to make it home that night from probably the most dangerous mission ever flown. This attitude of excellence was a silent badge of honor that every person in the F-117 program carried with them in order to get through such a dangerous and stressful night. Their attitudes made the difference, and it's that type of attitude that is the very soul of a warrior; doing the right thing when no one is watching because someone's life depends upon it. Today we call that integrity, and character and service before self. You may ask, why the history lesson? Well, this nation is still at war, and we do still "Own the Night." We will demonstrate that to Air Force senior leaders when Air Combat Command's Inspector General comes back to reevaluate our preparedness to go to war in May. Each of you is part of the legacy we call "Team Stealth." It's part of something bigger than just being a fuel truck driver, or a crew chief or even a pilot. You're part of a unique capability that is directly responsible for protecting our great nation. The people of this nation depend on each and every one of us to defend them, and that is a solemn responsibility you cannot take lightly.

Since that fateful night in 1990, the 49th Fighter Wing and its stealth fighters have been called upon by the past three presidents to initiate combat operations across the globe – we have never let our nation down and we have always accepted that tremendous responsibility with the knowledge that we are the best. We are the President's first choice because no one can do what the F-117 can, and the enemy literally fears us-as they should. When we pack up and go somewhere, the world stops and listens because in our wake, we leave a defeated

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enemy and a safer world. All this is possible because of one thing, the outstanding attitudes of the "Fightin' Forty-niners." We need to begin work now to be proud of who we are in terms of dress and appearance. We must show the inspectors how good we are in the execution of our duties. Most of all, we must prove we are ready, willing, and able to fight and protect our great nation. I look at the Operational Readiness Inspection reevaluation as an opportunity to show everyone just that and to let our enemies know just one thing; you can run but you can't hide because the "Fightin' Forty-niners" are ready and we do ***"OWN THE NIGHT."***

AMXS Gets Facility For Weapons Training

by Airman 1st Class Stephen Collier
49th Fighter Wing Public Affairs
Holloman Sunburst, May 5, 2005

For more than 60 years, Fightin' 49er weapons loaders have helped to keep front-line fighter aircraft ready to deploy into combat at any time. To help sharpen their skills, these Airmen, assigned to the 49th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, will teach the next generation of weapons loaders in a newly dedicated training facility. The Weapons Load Training Program teaches specialized training to F-117 Nighthawk weapons loaders on how to quickly and safely load laser and satellite-guided munitions onto the stealth fighter, according to Master Sgt. Calvin McHarness, 49th Maintenance Group weapons standardization section supervisor.

The journey to having their own training facility didn't come without a bit of elbow grease. Once the decision was made to give the loaders their own facility, they joined together to renovate a section of building 868 that included shower stalls and a rundown infrastructure.

Senior Master Sgt. Clarence Perry, 49th Fighter Wing weapons manager, recalled how the MXG leadership recognized the need for a dedicated facility. "We recognized that since 1942, this was the only installation in the Air Force without a weapons facility," Sergeant Perry said. "With this facility, we can train like we would fight in a deployed location." Sergeant Perry said he remembered the attitude of his weapons troops during the Self-Help project. "The whole weapons community volunteered to work the project," he said. "The weapons troops had a sparkle in their eye, a smile on their face and a warm feeling in their hearts; it truly was a success story with a happy ending. The morale of the weapons community skyrocketed." Two months of hard work and self-help projects passed when the loaders laid the final piece of flooring. Coupled with their new facility, the WLT Program could now be maximized to its fullest potential, according to Sergeant McHarness.

Sergeant McHarness said the new facility allows weapons troops to train without sharing work areas with maintenance crews. "Our Airmen load munitions, plain and simple," he said. "We needed a facility away from outside interference and distractions. Part of becoming certified (to load bombs) requires all load crews to attend Weapons Academic Classroom Training.

"With this new facility, we now have a classroom to teach Airmen exactly what they need to know in their own environment." Col. Gary Bryson, 49th MXG commander, said munitions loaders need the proper time and facility to train to do their job accurately. "The bottom line is that this facility now provides both the proper atmosphere for training and for managing the training for loading crews," Colonel Bryson said. "Weapons are a critical piece to the F-117 mission bombs released and on target every time." The training program, unique compared to other fighter aircraft, such as the F-15E Strike Eagle and the F-16CJ Fighting Falcon, specializes on specific munitions.

Weapons systems loaded on the F-117 include the Guided Bomb Units 10, 12, 16, and 27. Other munitions include the GBU 29, 30, 31 and 32. Nighthawk weapons loaders also train on loading the EGBU-27 satellite-guided munitions that allows the stealth fighter to attack targets in bad weather, that the aircraft's laser-targeting systems would normally not be able to penetrate. Weapons loaders played a critical role during the first night of Operation Iraqi Freedom when they loaded the first-ever EGBU- 27s that were dropped on March 19, 2003, over Baghdad by the 8th Fighter Squadron.

8th FS wins Outstanding Unit Award with Valor

by Ms. Laura Hunt
Sunburst Copy Editor
Holloman Sunburst, May 27, 2005

For only the second time in history, the pilots of Holloman were honored with the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat Valor. The 8th Fighter Squadron received the award for participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom as a member of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, said Col. Matt McKeon, 49th Operations Group commander.

The award recognizes the squadron's outstanding performance during combat conditions. "The 8th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron was an integral part of the Combined Force Air Component Commander's arsenal," Colonel McKeon said. "Among the unit's achievements, the 8th EFS had the highest weapons hit rate of any platform in theater with 91.5 percent against the most heavily defended target areas in the country." The squadron also was the first to employ the all-weather EGBU-27 in combat and achieved a 96 percent weapons hit rate, the colonel said.

The first time the 49th Fighter Wing received this award was during the Vietnam War, said Master Sgt. Greg Henneman, 49th FW historian. During Operation Constant Guard, the 49th FW flew more than 10,000 combat missions for more than 22,000 combat hours, Sergeant Henneman said. They dropped more than 41 million pounds of ordnance with a 90 percent accuracy rate on targets in North and South Vietnam. "For their actions, the 49th received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat Valor," Sergeant Henneman said. "The Seventh Air Force sent a message saying, 'I congratulate the 49th on the outstanding bombing results achieved while participating in the last 19 Linebacker missions. Photography verified that at least 90 percent of the bombs were on target the high threat area to which you were committed demanded the utmost in aircrew discipline, capability and aircraft performance each member of the 49th can be justifiably proud.'"

According to Colonel McKeon, F-117 Nighthawk pilots have a mission unlike that of most fighter pilots. "For the most part, the Nighthawk is flown single ship during the tactical portion of a combat mission, which completely contradicts the traditional fighter pilot mindset," Colonel McKeon said. "Because they are few in number and fly a fairly specialized mission, Nighthawk pilots sometimes draw a little more notice than their counterparts in other weapon systems, especially from the opponent. However, it's the combined efforts of aviators from all platforms that help to make American airpower what it is today." Though the F-117 pilots are somewhat unique, winning the award was the result of a team effort, Colonel McKeon said. "Nothing that was accomplished during the deployment would have been possible had it not been for the solid cooperation within Team Stealth," he said. **"Unified in purpose and dedicated to mission success."**

RAF stealth fighter pilot serves with Flying Knights

by SPC. (Ret.) James Matise
Sunburst staff writer
Holloman Sunburst, July 29, 2005

America's relationship with our common-language friends across the pond has continually grown closer since the end of World War II. This friendship also extends throughout each country's military, to the extent that Holloman even has a British officer serving with the U.S. as an F-117 Nighthawk pilot. Royal Air Force Squadron Leader Charlie Cooke, 9th Fighter Squadron, holds a coveted British-American military exchange program position that puts him in the pilot seat of the stealth fighter. "I am the eighth exchange pilot in the F-117 program," Squadron Leader Cooke said.

The pilot exchange program was introduced in 1971 when the RAF and U.S. Air Force agreed to "swap"

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pilots to cross-train on reciprocal positions as a way to maximize the close relationship the United Kingdom shared with the U.S. The program now includes agreements with all branches of the U.S. military and includes a number of exchange positions including air transport, airborne early warning, research and development, engineering and force protection. There are now approximately 120 personnel in the program, 60 from each country.

"I've known about the F-117 exchange program for some time back in the UK," Squadron Leader Cooke said. "I had to wait a bit to apply because you need to be a major or equivalent." Squadron Leader Cooke found himself intrigued by the unique nature of the stealth fighter and applied for the position twice before getting accepted. He considers it an incredible opportunity. "This is definitely a career highlight," Squadron Leader Cooke said, "Flying the stealth, seeing how the USAF operates, and living in the U.S."

Squadron Leader Cooke arrived at Holloman last May and has been an active member of the 9th FS Flying Knights for more than a year. He has logged over 160 flying hours on the aircraft. "I'm still a bit in awe of it," he said. "It's a very unique aircraft-you look at the aircraft and it doesn't look very aerodynamic, but it flies like a fighter." Flying the British Jaguar fighter for a number of years, and developing an extensive background in air-to-ground combat operations, made it easier for Squadron Leader Cooke to learn how to fly the stealth fighter. The Jaguar is a single-seat aircraft with a top speed of around 1,000 mph, so he was not overly surprised by how the stealth fighter handled once he was up in the air, he said.

Upon arrival at Holloman, Squadron Leader Cooke underwent six weeks of ground school, 15 flights in the T-38 Talon trainer aircraft and a dozen flights in the F-117 with a T-38 chase aircraft before joining the Flying Knights. Squadron Leader Cooke said he spent a good deal of time in the U.S. prior to his assignment at Holloman. "I conducted a year of training at Sheppard Air Force Base, and my previous job was testing and evaluation, so I spent a lot of time here in my career," he said. U.S. Air Force units are very similar to their British counterparts, both in organization and spirit, Squadron Leader Cooke said. "The main difference in the UK is the maintenance element is owned by the squadron, instead of being separate," he said. "The esprit de corps element is very much the same." Squadron Leader Cooke flew the Jaguar on combat missions over Bosnia from 1996 to 1998 and also flew a number of missions over Iraq in support of Operation Northern Watch.

He has not deployed with the Flying Knights yet, but there is a high possibility that, in the event of a deployment, he could fly the stealth fighter in combat. "It would be very dependent on the scenario," he said. "I'm trained in the squadron to be combat-ready, so I'd hope and expect to get involved if we were to deploy."

Squadron Leader Cooke has found Holloman's layout and composition impressive. "There's such a diversity on this base," he said. "As a piece of realty, it's very valuable. There's not just the 49th Fighter Wing here." In addition to the various missions carried out on Holloman, he is also impressed by the various amenities offered on the installation, including the golf course and Sports and Fitness Center, he said. "Our bases in the UK tend to be a lot smaller than the bases here," he said.

Squadron Leader Cooke said his wife, Karen, and his twin three-year-old boys, Tom and Olly, love spending time outdoors in warm, sunny New Mexico. "They love it. The climate, with kids, is great," he said. "By the time [his sons] leave, they'll have spent more time in America than the UK and will have developed American accents."

When Squadron Leader Cooke leaves the Flying Knights in 2007, he hopes to get assigned to the RAF's new EU2000 Typhoon, a versatile fighter developed in a joint project between Britain, Germany, Italy and Spain, with a top speed of 1,300 miles per hour and able to fly interceptor and air-to-ground bombing missions. "That would be my first choice," he said, adding that he expects a large number of pilots to apply for a chance to fly the new fighter. "They'll probably see me as having a good deal out here," he said, "so they'll probably stick me behind my desk for a few years." *RAF Flight Lieutenant Dylan Eklund, 7644 (VR) Squadron, contributed to this report.*

Black Sheep train, prepare on Korean front

by Lt. Col. Chris Williams
8th Expeditionary Fighter Sq. Commander
Holloman Sunburst, July 29, 2005

Greetings from the front lines! No, not the front lines in Iraq or Afghanistan; these front lines have been manned for over 50 years and separate the Republic of Korea from North Korea. The United States protects them with all the branches of the military, including aircraft stationed at Osan and Kunsan air bases. Along with their contingent of F-16C fighters, the 8th Fighter Wing "Wolfpack" of Kunsan is currently hosting men, women, equipment and F-117's of the 8th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron "Black Sheep" as part of Air Expeditionary Forces five and six.

The AEF rotation of F-117's provides training for our wartime mission in a different environment. Its structure essentially takes a number of components from a unit, or several units, and places them where the component commander needs them.

The majority of this deployment to the Pacific theater consists of men and women from the 49th Fighter Wing; however, we also brought along active duty components from other Air Force bases, National Guard personnel and a contingent of civil servants and contractors.

To keep the Nighthawks flying, the Black Sheep and the 8th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit support each other in a similar manner to operations at Holloman. The Black Sheep EAMU, led by Capt. Phil Olson and Chief Master Sgt. Wendy Jones, is supported by Airmen from the 49th Maintenance Group. We have technicians and supervisors from the Maintenance Squadron, Maintenance Operations Squadron and Maintenance Support Squadron. Together with Airmen from the Logistics Readiness Squadron for supply and fuel, and civilian engineers from Air Force Engineering and Technical Services, the entire maintenance team ensures our F-117's remain combat ready.

The pilots come primarily from the Black Sheep Squadron. One of our challenges here is to become accustomed to flying the F-117 in Korean airspace with incredibly diverse conditions. Another challenge is to fit in with everyday flying operations in the Wolfpack, including scheduling, flying pattern operations, dropping live weapons and training with F-16Cs. The mission is also supported by 49th Operations Support Squadron members from Weather, Intelligence and Targets from Langley Air Force Base, Va., and a civilian contractor. Beyond Holloman, we've teamed with others from around the globe.

There are Security Forces from the Hawaii Air National Guard, personnel from Kadena Air Force Base, Japan, and Services Squadron support from Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. and various Air National Guard units. The 8th EFS arrived determined to improve our knowledge of the wartime mission in an environment in which we may actually fight, to improve ourselves physically and professionally, and to adapt and integrate into the Wolfpack. The 8th EFS maintenance and flying operations have taken lessons from previous years and incorporated them into our procedures. We've helped to identify a number of areas concerning our wartime mission and logistics. Airmen from the other Air Force units are experiencing the AEF construct in a different way. Although technically still part of the 8th EFS, men and women from Hawaii's 154th SFS and Kadena's the 18th CFS and the 18th LRS were almost immediately absorbed by the 8th FW.

They support extra security and infrastructure requirements due to the arrival of an additional 250 Airmen from our AEF deployment. More than a month into our deployment, the 8th EFS and the other AEF components from around the world can already consider this deployment an unqualified success. At our location, we have seamlessly integrated into the 8th Fighter Wing, standing up our operations and flying training missions within days of arrival. With the epitome of "excellence in all we do," Airmen on both sides of the Pacific have once again put the world's first stealth fighter where it is needed most.

Black Sheep stealth returns to flock

by Spc. (Ret.) James Matise
Sunburst staff writer
Holloman Sunburst, Aug 12, 2005

An F-117A Nighthawk, damaged almost beyond repair six years ago, has returned to Holloman AFB and is poised to return to operational status with the 8th Fighter Squadron. On May 19, 1999, Maj. Clint Hinote, a captain at the time, was starting his initial qualification check ride in F-117 tail number 790. He began the takeoff roll down the Holloman runway when the aircraft's left engine suddenly exploded. "It was very loud and violent the aircraft seemed to skid to the right when it happened," said Major Hinote, who is currently attending the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies at Maxwell AFB, Ala.

Photo by Spc. (Ret.) James Matise
Six years after nearly burning to the ground, F-117A number 790, recently returned from Lockheed Martin's Palmdale, Calif. plant, has been fully repaired and awaits the okay to return to mission status.

Major Hinote stopped the aircraft as his instructor ordered him to abort the takeoff. The tower told him to get out because the aircraft was on fire, so he initiated onboard fire procedures and evacuated the jet. "After I had run away about 100 yards or so, I turned around expecting that the airplane would be smoking, but not burning. After all, I thought I had cut off the fuel source from the engine," he said. "When I turned around to see what was going on, I could not believe how fierce the fire was. It was growing in intensity with each second after a few minutes, I saw that the pieces of the airplane were literally melting off onto the runway."

The fire, started by a malfunctioning cooling fan, caused significant damage to the engines, weapons bays and other integral parts of the aircraft, said Senior Master Sgt. Dale Witcofski, 8th Aircraft Maintenance Unit production superintendent. "There's cooling fans that go around the hot part of the engine," Sergeant Witcofski said. "One failed, fell on the [turbine section] of the engine and it exploded." Sergeant Witcofski said the problem that caused the fire had been detected earlier in F-16 Falcon engines and steps were taken to fix the problem in the F-117. "We removed the fans," he said. "They were just an extra precaution."

The damage was so extensive that the jet sat inoperative at Holloman for four years before the decision was finally made to fix it. The estimated cost of repairs was $3 million, Sergeant Witcofski said. "They didn't know what to do with it," he said. "There was a lot of damage, it would cost a lot of money and time to repair." In 2003, the plane was dismantled, packed into three trucks and sent to Lockheed Martin Aerospace Corporation's Palmdale, Calif. plant, where it underwent major repairs. "They had to, basically, rebuild the left wheel well, they rebuilt the left engine bay, both weapons bays and they had to do a lot of other stuff to it," Sergeant Witcofski said.

The rejuvenated aircraft was flown back to Holloman July 29. "It's flown four times since it was repaired," Sergeant Witcofski said. "It looks like a new plane. It's just missing its new car smell in the cockpit." Sergeant Witcofski said the aircraft is currently undergoing acceptance inspections to make sure it is ready to return to flying mission sorties. "We hope to fly it next week," he said Monday. "There were some small problems you would expect

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Holloman News (Continued)

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to find in an aircraft that hasn't flown in six years, but so far we haven't found anything serious."

The aircraft, the sixth operational Nighthawk built, has been in service since late 1982. It flew 30 combat missions in Operation Desert Storm under the nickname "Deadly Jester." Aside from the 1999 fire, it has seen its share of mishaps. On Feb. 10, 1991, the aircraft blew a nose wheel upon landing after returning from an attack against chemical bunkers at Samarra, Iraq. It only suffered minor damage to its nose sensors and flew 10 more missions. In another minor incident, the aircraft lost its canopy during flight because it was not properly latched. The pilot, stripped of his helmet and mask, successfully landed the aircraft and was later treated for severe frostbite. "The canopy was found and they put it back on," Sergeant Witcofski said. "That was before Desert Storm."

F-117A 790 suffered extensive damage from an engine explosion and fire during a takeoff roll May 19, 1999. ACC photo

More recently, while the aircraft was being rebuilt by Lockheed Martin, the hangar fire extinguisher system went off and the aircraft was hosed down with fire-retardant foam. "The biggest problems on the check flights after the rebuild was getting the musty smell from the fire retardant out of the cockpit," Sergeant Witcofski said.

Major Hinote said the communication and emergency procedures conducted during the incident were critical to the survival of the aircraft and his survival of the accident without injury. Both the flight examiner and the tower told him the aircraft was on fire while he was still trying to figure out what had happened, and once he decided to get out, he found himself going through the emergency procedures automatically.

"There is no doubt that, if I had been able to take off, we would have lost the jet. None of our emergency procedures could have extinguished the fire," he said. "I'm not really surprised that the airplane has been returned to flying status, but I am glad that it has, as each of these aircraft are irreplaceable."

Martian techs keep stealth's invisible

by Spc. (Ret.) James Matise
Sunburst staff writer
Holloman Sunburst 8-18-2005

One of the best-kept secrets on Holloman AFB is how the F-117 Nighthawk is able to drop out of the night sky and strike highly-defended enemy targets as if it deployed a cloaking device. The Martians do it. Of course, these Martians aren't visitors from another planet. They're the 100 Airmen assigned to the Aircraft Structural Maintenance flight. "We make sure the aircraft cannot be detected," said Staff Sgt. Eric Brennan, aircraft structural maintenance technician. The largest driving force in the ASM is the Material Application Repair Section.

The acronym for the section, MARS, is where the term "Martian" comes from. The MARS personnel maintain the delicate radar-absorbing material that covers the stealth fighter and helps it stay undetected by the enemy. The stealth fighter's radar defeating system utilizes both the aircraft's shape to deflect radar, and the material coating the fighter to absorb radar, said Staff Sgt. Kevin Borrow, a night shift supervisor. "As long as the system is working correctly, the radar is dispersed throughout the airframe," he said.

The Martians have to make sure a 65-foot-long aircraft appears on enemy radar as a small bird or

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large insect. The trick to maintaining the stealth's radar invisibility is to constantly make sure the radar-absorbing material is properly applied and replaced. "Some of the replacements come from the material getting old but by and large, it's due to maintenance," said Sergeant Brennan. "Any time they perform maintenance, they have to remove panels and they have to remove the coating."

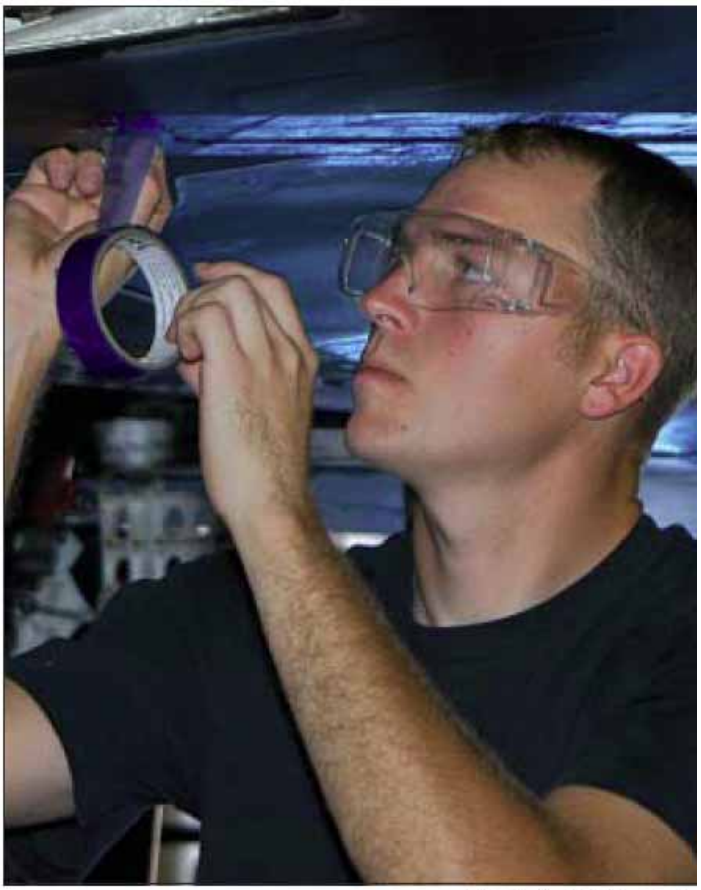
Taking off material and putting it back on seems simple enough, but each metal surface of the aircraft has to be properly primed, the material has to be precisely placed and every gap has to be filled with a special putty and no spots can be missed. Between maintenance and unexpected damage, keeping the stealth fighter stealthy is a round-the-clock job.

"Everything from lightning strikes, bird strikes, hailstorms even the sun can damage the [radar absorbent material]," Sergeant Brennan said. "It's durable, but it's the same as wearing a black shirt in the sun. You're going to get hot."

The Martians are also responsible for manufacturing many parts of the fighter as they need to be replaced. "The sheet metal [repair] includes everything on the aircraft repairing cracks, hydraulics tubing, and fiberglass panels," Sergeant Borrow said. "It keeps us quite busy." The Martians provide assessments on each aircraft every 14 days and document anything they come across that might need to be fixed. They can patch fiberglass, make new tubing and manufacture some parts entirely from scratch, sometimes even making the tool required to make the replacement part. "This shop is truly one of the last craftsmen shops left in the Air Force," said Master Sgt. Vernon Isbel, ASM shop chief. "They take metal and turn it into something that flies."

Once a year, each stealth fighter gets a new coat of black paint, further improving its stealth capabilities, preventing corrosion and improving its appearance. "It's a week-long process, from sanding to priming to painting," said Staff Sgt. Armond Cornin, structural paints supervisor. "It takes about nine gallons to paint the aircraft." Everything, including the tail number, unit identification and safety signs, is sprayed directly on the jet; no decals are used.

Two different types of paint are used, one for the body of the aircraft and another for the tail, Sergeant Cornin said. "The tails are painted with a silicone paint system that has to be painted separately. The rest is painted with polyurethane," he said. "The silicone keeps it from getting too hot [from the exhaust]."



Photos by Spc. (Ret.) James Matise

Airman 1st Class John Miller, MARS technician, tapes off radar-absorbent material on an F-117A Nighthawk prior to filling a gap between RAM with putty. MARS technicians ensure RAM is applied properly and is in good condition.

When all of the Martians' work comes together, the aircraft is put to the test by Air Force radar before it is exposed to enemy radar. At least once a year, and before and after any unscheduled maintenance, each aircraft is taken to the section's diagnostic imaging radar pad so the Martians can see the radar cross section exhibited by the aircraft and make any necessary repairs.

The radar takes approximately 100 images from different angles, and the smallest nick or protrusion, or not enough putty used between gaps in material,

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or any of a number of things that may not even be visible to the naked eye, can be detected by the radar. “When you make a mistake and [the aircraft] goes down there, suddenly it’s very obvious,” Sergeant Cornin said. When Sergeant Cornin first arrived at Holloman, he accidentally left a small amount of raw material on the rudder, and it was instantly detected by the radar. “It’s like you put a refrigerator on top of the plane,” he said. Martian maintenance is challenging, tedious and unending. Shifts work at all hours of the day and night, every day of the year, wherever the stealth fighters are stationed. “These guys are the only guys who work 24 hours, around the clock, to keep the aircraft in the air,” Sergeant Isbel said. “Nobody works harder.” The hard, often unrecognized work, the Martians agree, has its own reward. When the pilots take the Nighthawks on attack missions, alone, against targets protected by an armada of aircraft-killing materiel, unable to escape or fire back at sudden threats, Martian know how is what makes the difference between a successful mission and a downed aircraft. “When the jets come down and they came back successful, with no bullet holes, we know we did the right thing,” said Staff Sgt. Mark Lundervold, weekend shift supervisor. “We’re the ones that make the plane invisible.”

Senior Airman Arnold Carpio, MARS technician, scrapes old adhesive off the underside of an F-117A Nighthawk prior to laying down new radar-absorbent material.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. James Hart

Photo by Mrs. William M. Barrett

Fightin’ 49ers return

Oct 7 2005 Holloman Sunburst

Maj. Brian Collins, 8th Fighter Squadron, greets his family Monday after returning from Kunsan Air Base, South Korea. The 8th FS’s Black Sheep personnel and more than 250 Team Holloman members have been deployed since May in support of the United States’ national defense objectives in the Western Pacific region.

In the Photo above, families welcome home the 49th Materiel Maintenance Group Airmen to Holloman Sunday after building BEAR Base sets for Joint Task Force Katrina support personnel in New Orleans International Airport Maintenance Group Air and Gulfport, Miss.

Field representatives from Lockheed Martin link F-117 to its creator

by Spc. (Ret.) James Matise
Sunburst staff writer
Holloman Sunburst, Oct 28, 2005

The creators of the F-117 Nighthawks still keep an eye on the fleet more than a quarter of a century after the first aircraft rolled off the production line.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company, home of the legendary "Skunk Works" based at Palmdale, Calif. and the company that built the stealth fighter, continues to provide depot-level maintenance to the stealth fighter and maintains a field office at Holloman to ensure timely, efficient service is provided to the world's only operational stealth fighter wing.

Mr. Rex Romhild, Lockheed Martin field office operations site manager, oversees a team of highly experienced technicians to carry out Lockheed Martin's responsibility. Most of the field office representatives have previously worked on the stealth fighter, as military or Lockheed Martin employees.

"To do what you have to do as a field service representative, you have to have an understanding of the aircraft and an understanding of the organization," said Mr. Romhild, who spent 22 years as a maintenance officer at Tonopah Test Range Nevada, and retired prior to coming to Holloman. "It just stands to reason to have people who have prior experience on the weapons system."

Lockheed Martin has provided field service representatives for the stealth fighter since its "black project" days in the 1980s at Tonopah Test Range, Nevada. A number of field service representatives even deployed with the stealth fighters during Wing combat operations.

When the stealth fighters were assigned to the 49th Fighter Wing at Holloman in 1992, the Air Force had planned on fulfilling engineering and technical support through its own civil service engineers, so only three Lockheed Martin employees came to Holloman. Deprived of 15 years worth of maintenance experience gained at Tonopah, the wing had difficulty keeping the aircraft at a satisfactory level of operation," Mr. Romhild said.

"They got into trouble with the mission capability rates," he said. "It was at 50 percent -- way low."

The wing commander at the time, Brig. Gen. John F. Miller, Jr. (now a retired major general), formed a Combat Capabilities working group to figure out how to increase the aircraft's mission capable rate.

"One recommendation was to increase the number of Lockheed Martin service representatives," Mr. Romhild said. "In mid-'93, I came out with 12 service representatives."

Over the next few years, Lockheed Martin began taking a larger role in the upkeep of the stealth fighter. The field service representatives brought with them technical know-how of the aircraft and the ability to streamline communication between Holloman, Palmdale and the Air Force Air Logistics Center, the controlling authority for F-117 maintenance.

"Normal weapons systems are supported through Air Logistics centers and each one is responsible for different weapon systems and components, but the same Air Logistics center supported everything on the F-117," Mr. Romhild said. "That worked out because this is a one-base airplane."

In 1998, the Air Force F-117 systems program office and Lockheed Martin entered into an eight-year contract called the Total Systems Performance Responsibility program. This shifted responsibility for logistics support from the Air Force logistics center to Lockheed Martin.

The contract, valued at $1.8 billion, allowed the Air Force to reduce the size of the F-117 systems program from 242 personnel to 55, and significantly increased maintenance efficiency. The partnership was forecasted to save the Air Force $170 million over eight years, according to a 2001 article in Lockheed Martin's quarterly magazine ***Code One***.

"The Lockheed Martin field office representatives work closely with wing personnel -- in supply rooms, on the flight line and in the aircraft hangars -- to provide coordination, spare parts administration, logistics support, engineering technical assistance and subcontractor management to the wing," Mr. Romhild said.

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"In reality, we're an extension of the company," he said. "We're the eyes and ears, and are here to relay the customer needs and desires to Palmdale."

Palmdale is responsible for keeping the aircraft supplied with parts, and field office representatives coordinate and monitor parts orders placed with the plant. A Lockheed truck makes biweekly parts deliveries to Holloman and returns reparable parts to Palmdale. When the truck will not meet priority delivery, express shipping companies are used to make sure the parts get here quickly. The field office keeps in close contact with the Logistic Readiness Squadron's Maintenance Supply Liaison office allowing them to anticipate what parts are going to be needed and have them ready for shipment by the time the order is approved by the Regional Supply Squadron at Langley AFB, Va.

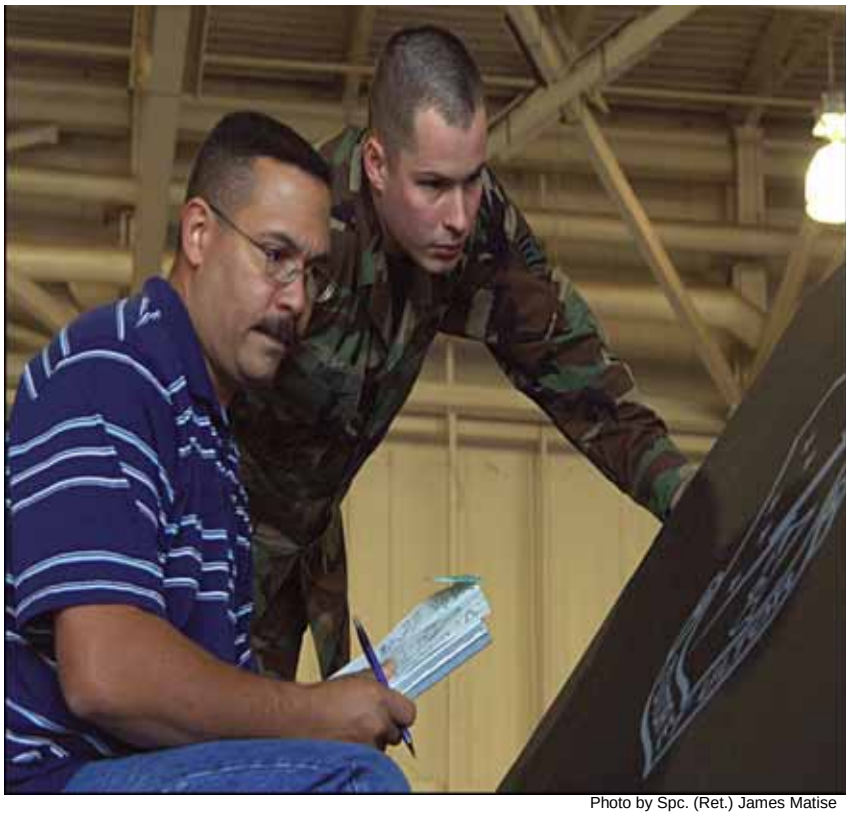

Photo by Spc. (Ret.) James Matise

Mr. Hans Maurice, Lockheed Martin aircraft maintenance engineer, and Staff Sgt. Scott Daniels, 49th MXG low observables flight NCO, perform an inspection Tuesday on an F-117 Nighthawk which returned Monday from Lockheed Martin's Palmdale, Calif. plant. Lockheed Martin provides depot-level maintenance for the F-117 and maintains a field office at Holloman to coordinate repairs and modifications, provide technical assistance and manage spare parts.

In order to further improve parts availability and delivery, the field office, in conjunction with Logistics Readiness Squadron, has also built up a stock of certain items not stocked by the Standard Base Supply System in what is called the "Annex," improving parts availability and issue efficiency, Mr. Romhild said.

"Now we already have the items here because base supply lets us forward position them," he said. "Now it takes about an hour to get these parts issued to the maintainers. The planes are fixed faster and it makes the aircraft more available to the Air Force to meet operational needs."

For modifications and major repairs, the stealth fighters go back to Palmdale for upgrades through the modification line, Mr. Romhild said. Lockheed Martin representatives and 49th Maintenance Group personnel conducted a joint inspection Tuesday of a stealth fighter that had just returned from Palmdale's modification line. "This aircraft just came back from the modification line, so we're doing an acceptance inspection," said Mr. Scott McKinlay, Lockheed Martin low observables field service representative. "It received a configuration modification for the radar-absorbent material."

The radar-absorbent coatings on the aircraft are inspected by the low observables flight the day after arrival, both visually and with a special diagnostic imaging radar, for nicks, gaps or other uncoated surfaces that could render the stealth fighter vulnerable, said Staff Sgt. Scott Daniels, 49th Maintenance Group low observables flight NCO.

"It's one of the best I've ever seen," Sergeant Daniels said. "Generally, they look real good upon return"

Mr. McKinlay also helps train Holloman

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personnel to apply radar-absorbent material, and his presence greatly improves the low observables flight's mission, just as other field office representatives do for other flights, Sergeant Daniels said.

"When we have a problem we can't solve in our unit, well call him in," he said. "It's a great help to have someone physically here to stand beside you."

The office is also coordinating a large replacement procedure for a faulty aircraft part. In February, a stealth fighter crew chief discovered the head of a hi-loc fastener for the elevon torque tube in one jet had separated from the fastener. Similar problems were found with Hi-locs on other aircraft inspected, Mr. Romhild said.

"The Air Force decided it was better to replace the fasteners in all the elevon torque tubes, as it's part of the flight controls," he said.

Sixteen aircraft were repaired by a depot field team at Holloman and the government has issued funding to stand up a "speed line" at the Palmdale plant to complete the replacements.

"Speed lines are used to accelerate certain repairs. The work package for this speed line has consolidated several outstanding maintenance requirements into an operation," Mr. Romhild said. "We coordinate the inputs and outputs. One aircraft is sent to Palmdale and we get one back."

The TSPR contract rewards Lockheed Martin based on its performance and customer satisfaction, which is evaluated each quarter by the Air Force's F-117 systems squadron, Mr. Romhild said.

"In a meeting, they decide which portion of the award fee to grant. They could award 100 percent or take away a certain percentage," he said. "It's a performance based contract. If you want more money, you have to do well."

Performance is measured by contract metrics and customer satisfaction. One of several metrics is delivery time for mission impacting parts - -the metric calls for delivery to Holloman within 72 hours. Another such metric is the aircraft not mission capable supply rate, which cannot exceed five percent of the wing's aircraft possessed hours.

Lockheed Martin also has to keep the wing's reserve spare parts kit fill rate at 96 percent, Mr. Romhild said.

It would be difficult to estimate how much the field office contributes, he said.

"There's so many people back at the Palmdale plant that factor into achieving the metrics and providing customer service functions," he said.

On Oct. 21, the Undersecretary of Defense awarded a Performance-Based Logistics system level award to the F-117 Nighthawk team, said Ms. Dianne Knippel, Lockheed Martin communications director.

The current contract expires at the end of this fiscal year and a request for proposal for a new contract is currently underway, Mr. Romhild said.

"It's going to be tailored after the TSPR contract," he said. "We are looking forward to many more years as part of Team Stealth."

RECOLLECTIONS

Roy G Reece CMSGT, USAF, Ret.

In September 1979 I was called upon to consider an assignment assisting in the building of a new Tactical Air Command organization which was to support a “quote” highly sensitive, and extremely high priority program which was also important to our National Defense structure. I was not told what this “THING” was or where I would be assigned. With all this information firmly in my grasp I was also told I must make a quick decision. The intriguing thought of building a new organization in support of “anything” made this an offer I could not refuse. Low and behold, after my “In Briefing,” I found out I was to be on the ground floor of the coordinated effort to design, produce and maintain the F-117 Stealth Fighter.

The time period after my “In Brief” at Lockheed's “Skunk Works” became very hectic, as we were on a fast track to meet program goals and provide an aircraft that was operational in a short time frame, as compared to other Air Force acquisitions.

The coordination and teamwork between Lockheed, Tactical Air Command, Air Force Systems Command and Air Force Logistics Command was unbelievable! As we marched thru the large number of tasks at hand, it became very clear everyone involved had the feeling we were involved in something special!

As the design and production efforts were really moving at this point, we at TACTICAL AIR COMMAND were busy deciding where and how to provide a “home” for this beast! I was moved to Nellis AFB to secure office space for the newly created 4450th TAC GROUP. As we continued to build the organizational unit and hire personnel to support the effort we always had one thing in mind, Security was of up most importance!

I will never forget Commander Bob Jackson and I standing on second base of the ball diamond in area “B” doing interviews of potential hires! The mystic was overwhelming. The Air Force personnel system gave us the highest priority in selection of personnel to meet our support requirements. The members of the support elements were “hand picked” after the selection criteria was met.

We were rigid in our standards, as we knew it would take a special group of people to fly and support this very unique aircraft we were producing. The decision was made to build a secure base at Tonopah test range in Northern Nevada, to house this new acquisition. It was very interesting to watch the operational personnel assist our own civil engineering people in the design, layout and construction of our future home away from home!

They built a city beyond my wildest expectations. The support requirements included personnel to be separated from their family and homes 4 to 5 nights a week for the length of their tour with this organization.

The secure city in the desert had to be something special to offset the negative aspects of this assignment. They did it right, and you can not imagine the benefits it provided in personnel morale.

Twenty-five years later I think back on what was accomplished in such a short time period, the unity and cooperation of everyone involved and the operational success of the F-117, and I realize I was involved in a very special program. The personnel involved from the very beginning as well as now, have a lot to be proud of. I know I am.

In Memoriam

Anthony J. Tolin , Brig. Gen. USAF (Ret.)
Died on Wednesday, June 22, 2005 at his residence. The general was born in London. He was commissioned through the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program at Louisiana Tech University.
He has flown combat in the Vietnam conflict and Operation Desert Storm. He has commanded two wings, the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing (F-117s) and the 57th Wing. He was a command pilot with more than 5,000 hours, principally in fighter aircraft.
Husband of Bettina R. Tolin; father of Dell (Kellie) Tolin and the late Jason Tolin; brother of Phillip (Laura) Tolin. Also survived by his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Richard R. and Gloria M. Ridolfi. Anthony was predeceased by his parents, Harold C. and Betty J. Tolin.
A memorial service was held Friday, July 8, at 11 a.m. at Fort Myer Memorial Chapel. Interment Arlington National Cemetery on Tuesday, August 16, at 9 a.m.
Memorial contributions may be made to Capital Hospice, 9300 Lee Hwy, Suite 500, Fairfax, VA 22031

Douglas A. Rosebrock
Speedway native Douglas A. Rosebrock, 55, of Valencia, California, passed away suddenly on Thanksgiving morning in Oak Park, Illinois during a holiday visit with family. The apparent cause was heart failure.
The second of four children and a member of the Rosebrock family active in the life of Speedway from the 1950's through 1970's, Rosebrock was a 1968 graduate of Speedway High School and 1972 graduate of Indiana University.
He moved to California in 1977 and worked for nearly 25 years in total quality management and technical writing for Lockheed Martin in greater Los Angeles.
A lifelong musician, he performed in local rock bands, Broadway musicals, and church ensembles for four decades. His lyrical tenor voice lent itself equally to the soothing ballads he penned, to sacred music, and to the classics of the rock era by The Beatles, The Who, and beyond.
His beloved band, The Wrags, formed during high school in Speedway, held reunions and made recordings and videos as recently as the week of his passing. Rosebrock's gift for songwriting, poetry, and comedy found him spontaneously making up songs for children and adults alike, delighting his daughter, her friends, and the offspring of relatives and friends, along with their grateful parents.
He loved to write humorous musical parodies on social and political subjects, but also applied these talents to converting modern popular standards to new works for performance in Valencia churches through his thoughtful, spiritual lyrics.
An avid "regular" at resale shops nationwide, he had an extensive collection of classic electric guitars and rare vinyl records that filled the family's two-car garage.
Mr. Rosebrock is survived by loving family members and fans from coast to coast, including his wife Mary (nee Terry) Rosebrock, daughter Darcy of Decatur, Illinois, mother Evelyn of Perry, Georgia, sisters Jere Smith of Bloomington, Indiana and Jana O'Brien (Wayne Parman) of Oak Park, Illinois, and numerous in-laws, nieces, nephews, aunts, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his father, Theodore L. Rosebrock, and earlier this year by his older brother, Dr. Steven T. Rosebrock.
Memorial services were held on December 15 at 2 p.m. at the Newhall Church of the Nazarene in Santa Clarita, California. A separate Memorial service will be held at Rosebrock's home town Speedway Christian Church early in the New Year.
In lieu of flowers, donations are suggested to ***The WRAGS Fund*** *("**W**e **R**eward **A**rts-**G**ifted **S**tudents")*, c/o Mary Rosebrock at Santa Clara Valley Bank, 28494 Westinghouse Place, Valencia, California 91355.

Program Awards

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 seven 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

For those folks reading this Newsletter who are not current members of the SFA, membership is open to all personnel currently or previously associated with the F-117 Stealth Fighter Aircraft program. Additional info is available on the SFA web site and hard copy of this newsletter is available to be mailed to interested folks. Please ask a member or drop a line to:

Stealth Fighter Association
PO Box 902017
Palmdale, CA 93590

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 five or ten year periods.

Web Site Info

The Web Site has new graphics, updated info and lots of pictures from the 2002 reunion 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.

Reunion Photo's 2002 Thanks to ALL that sent in photos. They have allowed us to share the Reunion experience with those unable to attend.

http://www.f117.org — *or* — http://www.f117reunion.org