

*the*

JOURNAL OF THE  
INTRUDER ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 1

# WINDSCREEN

SPRING 2016 ISSUE



## **SW HIGHWAY OF DEATH OPERATION DESERT STORM**



## **ON TARGET - ON TIME**

- The Last Low-Level A-6 Night Combat Missions
- Captured A-6 Crew
- VMA (AW)-224 Combat Operations in Desert Storm

[www.intruderassociation.org](http://www.intruderassociation.org)



## A MESSAGE FROM THE IA PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Intruders,

A busy year indeed, with two potential Intruder Tribute installation/dedications, a Reunion, and some great recognition in *Hook* magazine. There is no other aircraft community with such a mature presence, although many other groups such as Skyhawks, Phantoms, and Crusaders do occasionally come into view. Most of you are also aware that both the Prowler and Corsair communities have been getting our assistance to bootstrap their own community of alums, and several conversations with Tomcat folks have been in a similar vein. That speaks well of our Association, and yet we seek no praise – just that these other communities find success in their goals.

We have two topics which I think need greater emphasis, and I personally accept the blame for slow progress. TOPIC ONE, our website has a section labelled, “A-6s In Action”. It contains folders for various combat periods, but has not gotten the content we need to build it out. Many of you could offer some stories and pictures to share with us, and a modest number of such content offers can springboard us forward to make this a fabulous reference area, and a fun reading resource. Can you individually help? Please don’t assume someone else would be better than you, and let this request pass you by. Content should be sent to Cactus Jack Jordan, our tireless and most capable Webmaster. Stories and images shared should also assist Ken “Wads” Waidelich, as he plans out follow-on editions of *Windscreen*. A mix of news and history with images to enhance the stories, make for great magazine content. Both Wads and Cactus could really benefit from this personal initiative that I strongly encourage many of you to take. I am doing it, too!

TOPIC TWO is outreach. We have been blessed with a high engagement from our Marine Intruders over the past 18 months, with merging of mailing lists, Tribute memorials,

and membership engagement. We are so fortunate to see our membership numbers grow as they have. But our enlisted Intruders have been generally less active – with some great exceptions. I want to enlist many of them in a concerted effort to build their ranks, by personal outreach and a clear message that they remain very important to our organization, and are deeply cared for in our hearts. Again, I wish we were further down this path, but I am certain many of you maintain close friendships that cross all ranks, and I earnestly wish for a broad based effort by all IA members to think, “What can I do?” I want your ideas – send them right to me. Don’t mince words – get to the point! I plan to ask for a team to take on some brainstorming and to then develop a strategy. Are you interested in being on that team?

Even as many of us gather together in San Diego, your IA Staff and Officers are contemplating our next reunion venue. There are several obvious locations to consider, and thought will be given to each. One tool that is essential for success, is a locally active Intruder base who can assist and take key roles on the planning and execution of any Reunion. Talk with your neighbors, and consider offering yourselves and locations to us for consideration. We have time, but in general, hotel and facility planning must begin 18 months out. So, by October 2016, we need to be getting ourselves and a team focused on 2018.

I will await our next edition for TOPIC THREE. It’s enough for now! God Bless Our Intruder Family!

T. Ladson Webb, Jr., President

*Fuzed Bombs On Target First Pass*



T. Lad Webb



### Intruder Association Financials

1 Jan 2016 to 31 Mar 2016

#### INCOME

Dues .....\$7,555  
Dividend Income.....\$15  
Total Income.....\$7,570

#### EXPENSES

Web Site .....\$4,400  
Credit Card Fees.....\$393  
Legal Fees .....\$150  
Postage, Mailing Services.....\$7  
Reunion .....\$300

Windscreen.....\$1,705  
Total Expenses .....\$6,955

#### ACCOUNT TOTALS

Operations .....\$61,302  
Midway RR.....\$6,348  
Whidbey Gateway.....\$10,355  
Gateway Flags.....\$1,671  
Scholarship Fund.....\$2,750  
Intruder Tribute .....\$96,496  
Total All Accounts.....\$178,922

# AIR PLAN

Spring 2016 Issue



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Intruders:

I hope everyone who attended the San Diego Reunion is successfully winding down after what I'm sure was a great time for everyone on the West Coast. I know that Wads plans to put a spread in the Fall Edition of the *Windscreen* on how it all went, but I would like to offer my thanks now to the West Coast Reunion Committee for all their hard work. Having been on the P'cola Reunion Committee, I know what a challenge it can be to put on a good show. However, I also know how rewarding – and (most times) fun – it can be to work on one of these committees with a few fellow Intruders. I encourage everyone to take a hard look at TLad's request in his comments and to think about volunteering for the next one.

I also echo TLad's request for help in our continuing quest for new members from the Enlisted side of the family. We have been struggling with how to better engage our Enlisted Intruders for quite a while and, obviously, have not been as successful as we would like. Maybe this is a bridge too far, as other similar organizations have had little success in this area – but anyone with good ideas on this effort is 'strongly encouraged' (as we used to say) to step up and help us out. Everyone is still on the hook to reach out to former friends who have not joined yet – but we certainly do need some extra help on the Enlisted situation.

By the time you read this, another event will have occurred that touches on the A-6 community and certainly the B/N side of the house. On 31 March, Lt Col W.P. "Wooder" Donnelly, the last of 17 Marine COs of VT-86 (the Advanced NFO Training Squadron at NAS Pensacola), will have transferred his Command. As many of you already know, the Marine Corps is getting out of the NFO business as the F-18D and EA-6B are replaced by the F-35 and other unmanned options.

VT-86 will continue to train USMC NFOs to be WSOs in the F/A-18D for quite some time and will also continue to have USMC Instructor Pilots and Instructor NFOs (INFOs) for the foreseeable future, but the decision was made to move the Marine Command slot at VT-86 to VT-35 in Texas. VT-35 is the Training Squadron that is most involved in the final preparation of pilots for the Osprey. While many of us regret seeing the Marine Corps get out of the NFO business, "it is what it is" as one of my former bosses once said, and moving the Command slot to support the Osprey certainly makes sense for the Marine Corps and Naval Aviation.

Along with a change to the Command structure (which will now alternate Navy NFO and Pilot COs), this past year also saw the retirement of the venerable T-39 multi-place trainer aircraft which many of us had flown for many, many hours as students and instructors. With that retirement, the syllabus has been changed dramatically. All advanced flight training is now done in the single place T-45 trainer aircraft which is also used in advanced jet pilot training.

The advanced NFO syllabus now requires 40 flights in the T-45 and 44 simulators in the new state-of-the-art simulator (I've been in it, and it would make any B/N who

spent hours in the old WST cry). INFOs basically live in the Simulator Building now and, besides the FAM simulators which are taught by civilian Contract Instructors, all of the simulators are taught or administered by the INFOs. INFOs also run the Ground Station and provide the virtual red air and Airborne Intercept Control for the All Weather Intercept flights in the syllabus. Please read the article in this edition provided by Wooder and his folks on what is happening at VT-86 these days to get a much better idea on what the new training in the T-45 is all about.

SF/Buzzard

## VT-86 NFO Training

Contributed by LtCol William P. "Wooder" Donnelly, CO VT-86

**T**raining Squadron EIGHT SIX (VT-86), the "Sabrehawks," recently transitioned to the Undergraduate Military Flight Officer (UMFO) syllabus, allowing students to flow directly from the T-6 Texan II to the T-45C Goshawk, eliminating the T-39 Sabreliner from the training pipeline. Student Naval Flight Officers (SNFOs) in the Strike/Fighter pipeline now receive more comprehensive training and accumulate more tactical jet flight time prior to entering their respective Fleet Replacement Squadrons (FRS). "The UMFO syllabus provides a great opportunity for students to work with systems that are very similar to what they will see when they get to their fleet platforms, giving them a huge head start with basic tactics and system management compared to prior students," said LT Justin Porter, a VT-86 instructor pilot.

VT-86 received 17 modified T-45C Goshawk trainer jets and six Operation Flight Trainers (OFTs) since October 2013 to support the UMFO syllabus. The aircraft modifications include various cockpit and avionics changes created to support the new Virtual Mission Training System (VMTS). While the newly modified aircraft are visually very similar to other T-45Cs, the cockpits and avionics have been significantly improved. New throttle grips and an aft cockpit hand controller were added with "Hands on Throttle and Stick" (HOTAS) capability. Furthermore, new flight recording systems allow for more information to be analyzed during the debrief. Advanced debriefing stations take advantage of the increased data recorded throughout each flight, including a complete mission replay with all communications and tactical display information. The squadron's hangar has also received several



Intruders:

In this issue, our editor, Ken Waidelich, has deliberately focused on Desert Storm. I have very much enjoyed reading the proofs – I hope you enjoy the articles, too. My comments this spring will focus on a different theme, though, about an individual who had a profound influence on our Navy and our service careers.

Back in February, on the anniversary of his 2004 death, I chanced upon a lengthy article I decided to save for *Windscreen* and for our web site. It was about one of our great Navy leaders, from a generation before the Gulf War – Admiral Tom Moorer – whom many of our Vietnam-era Intruders will most likely remember (well) too. Admiral Moorer served as CINCPACFLT 1964-1965, as our CNO 1967-1970, and then was named Chairman of the Joint Chiefs – serving from 1970 until 1974 – all key years during the Vietnam conflict.

As Chairman he would have played a central role in Vietnam strategy development and implementation. I, though, had never read much about his tour as the head of the Nation's military, so when the article came across in my clips, I decided to save and mention in this issue of *Windscreen* because I have the sense many of you will both remember Admiral Moorer from your active duty days, and find his role in that conflict of real interest. The article, "Adm. Moorer's Last Warning," which includes the Washington Post obit, is too lengthy for *Windscreen*, but its preamble I am repeating to the right. We are posting the full article on the web site, [www.intruderasociation.org](http://www.intruderasociation.org), if you have interest once you've read what follows. I hope you enjoy.

Best regards to all of you,  
Tim

*"Without question he was correct about Viet Nam strategy. When I was there in 1964 and 1965 we recognized that the port of Hai Phong could be closed down by sinking the single dredge that kept open the highly silted Red River. At the time this could have been accomplished with minimal loss of life using gun fire from a Navy 8 gun cruiser. (Vietnam would have been over in about 5 weeks after sinking this dredge: *Strategy & Tactics 101*, day one hour one: you defeat the enemy by cutting off his food and ammunition. Then the conflict is over in about 5 weeks.)*

*McNamara would not allow it, for fear of offending the Soviets, who were furnishing most of the enemy's logistical support. Had we choked off this support at that time, in such economical and timely fashion, the conflict would have been terminated in short order. Instead, LBJ & McNamara let the North enlarge and spread out its logistical infrastructure to the point where use of conventional ordnance was like shooting BBs at a sponge.*

*However, once Admiral Moorer convinced the Nixon Administration to mine the port (there no longer being 8 gun cruisers available) the war was indeed brought to an end. Ironically, for me, immediately following the truce signing I became one of an advance party at Hai Phong to assess the mission for clearing those mines. They must have been effective, because that was about the first thing North Vietnam wanted us to do something about."*

*Editor's note: The dateline for Admiral Moorer's obituary was 2/4/2004. The commentator, Christopher Ruddy - the writer who forwarded the article/obit now on our website - was a staffer for Admiral Moorer at CINCPACFLT. Please click on the Intruder Association website, for the full article.*



building modifications to accommodate the ground based features and debrief capabilities. These modifications and additions have enabled the squadron to expand its training syllabus and greatly enhance the overall training environment.

Several features of VMTS now provide more efficient and cost effective training. At the heart of the system lies a synthetic radar simulating an APG-73 radar. This synthetic radar allows aircrew to see simulated targets on their radar attack displays, and to execute training missions without an actual radar and dedicated red air support. On deck, an instructor ground station can transmit virtual targets to the aircraft via data link and display the appropriate air-to-air, air-to-ground, or electronic warfare threat information. The system can also run in a stand-alone internal mode, without input from the ground station, for situations when the aircraft are operating away from their home base. "In the long run, the new VMTS system will save the Navy and Marine

Corps money by allowing students to become more proficient with tactical systems here prior to the Fleet Replacement Squadron, where cost per flight hour is significantly higher," said Capt Harry Roberts, USMC.

Since the first UMFO winging in October of 2014, VT-86 has winged 117 Naval Flight Officers (NFOs) under the new syllabus. VT-86 winged 90 NFOs during fiscal year 2015 and plans to wing 115 NFOs in FY16. Lieutenant Colonel William "Wooder" Donnelly took over as the 40th Commanding Officer of VT-86 in December 2014, and will be the squadron's 17th and final United States Marine Corps Commanding Officer. On 31 March 2016, Lieutenant Colonel Donnelly will relinquish command of the squadron to Commander Joseph Losievsky, USN, closing a thirty-six year history of U.S. Navy / Marine Corps shared command of VT-86. The Sabrehawks will continue to train U.S. Marine Corps NFOs for future assignment to the F/A-18D. ■

## FROM THE MARINE GENERAL OFFICER ADVISOR

*Editor's note: Our Marine General Officer Advisor, Maj General Marty Post, has contributed to this Desert Storm Edition by sharing his experiences in the Gulf where he deployed as the Maintenance Officer of VMA (AW)-224 Bengals under the command of LtCol William "Pig" Horne. His article, VMA (AW)-224 Combat Operations in Desert Storm, begins on page 12.*

## THE INTRUDER TRIBUTE VIRGINIA BEACH UPDATE

Following an extended negotiation, the Virginia Beach Intruder Tribute Committee has reached an agreement with the City Leaders on the location of the Intruder Tribute. The location will be adjacent to the Naval Aviation Monument Park and ocean boardwalk. This location will be absolutely ideal for maximum public exposure and it augments Monument Park. You can take a virtual tour of the Monument Park area at, <http://hrana.org/monument-webcam/>. Presently, the committee is planning for an official on-site tribute dedication on June 11th. The final dedication date will be listed on the Intruder Association website.



## FROM THE EDITOR

### A Tribute To Desert Storm

This Spring marks the 25th anniversary of the end of Desert Storm. It is hard to believe that so much time has already passed since the United States transitioned from a posture of Cold War defense to an assertive projection of power in the Middle East. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait stirred a sleeping giant and, unfortunately for Saddam and his forces, called for the strike capability of the mighty Intruder!

In the winter of 1991, America awoke to the sound of Headline News broadcasting the explosions of laser guided "smart" bombs in the heart of Iraq – delivered courtesy of the Grumman A-6 Intruder. Daily Pentagon televised news debriefings showed General Norman Schwarzkopf rolling footage of the previous days' attacks featuring Intruder FLIR (Forward Looking Infra-Red) tapes of enemy soldiers running from their vehicles too late as the laser-guided bombs from the deadly accurate Intruders made their impact. For those Intruder pilots and BNs flying strike missions, it also marked the end of the low-level to the pop-up attack, as we learned firsthand about the vulnerability of jets flying in the face of AAA and Roland Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs).

In previous issues of *Windscreen*, I asked you to share your stories of A-6s in action. You stepped right up and did not disappoint your fellow Intruders. In this particular edition of *Windscreen*, you will get to share three recollections of events surrounding Desert Storm. You will read author, Peter Hunt's account of the end of the A-6 low-level missions, and you will

share Major General Marty Post's days with the Bengals supporting Desert Storm from Shaikh-Isa airfield in Bahrain. Have you wondered what happened to the A-6 crew that were shot down and rescued in Iraq? The Iraqi general who rescued them and saved their lives has shared his story with us in this edition of *Windscreen*.

These personal accounts will rekindle your memories of the last of the fighting days of the Intruder. Hopefully, they will inspire you to send along your own perspective of the Gulf War. The A-6 was an integral part of the coalition's success in the Middle East, and your fellow Intruders will certainly appreciate any stories you care to share.

This edition of *Windscreen* also includes timely remarks from your Intruder Association Leadership who have added their keen perspectives on other events shaping our Intruder Association as well as Navy and Marine Corps Aviation. Please take the time to read their comments, and feel free to write back to add your own – you can contact me at any time at [windscreeneditor@Intruder-Association.org](mailto:windscreeneditor@Intruder-Association.org).

For the upcoming Fall 2016 issue, I want to call upon those Intruders who might not have seen combat, but still fought the Cold War for many years leading up to Desert Storm. Your Intruder buddies want to read about Cubi Point, Carrier Deployments, and the Far East. I also plan to review the highlights of our San Diego reunion – so please, send along your pictures and stories.

*Wheels Up! Wads*

## THE LAST LOW-LEVEL A-6 NIGHT COMBAT MISSIONS

By Pete Hunt

It was January 1991, and our strategic mission was unambiguous in place and time – Saddam Hussein needed to move his armies out of Kuwait and back into Iraq by midnight January 16 local time. The "or else" was also clear. The "line in the sand" deadline would be enforced by hundreds of thousands of U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen – mostly stacked up in Saudi Arabia alongside the forces of dozens of other nations, including Hafez Assad's Syria. It was only the second time the United Nations had authorized the use of force, the first being during the Korean War.

Only three men onboard *Ranger* had flown in combat, including our CAG, Rabbit Campbell, and the legendary "Bug" Roach, who had come out to the carrier as a last minute replacement for the CAG LSO. Their combat sorties had been over Vietnam fifteen years earlier. Some things never change on the ship, however: the JP-5 taste to everything, hot and cold water (never at the same time) for showers, and the rumbling violence of the catapult felt overhead from the "dirty shirt." The instinct was to fight as we had trained, which in the Intruder community meant "going low." But Iraq had fielded a one-million-man army, and that was a lot of guns pointing straight up when it was time to go feet dry.

Real world experience with the Soviet SA-6 missile system – ironically, learned through conflict with Syria and surrogates in the 1980s – was limited, but the overall impression of this SAM was of a near invincibility. At Fallon's Electronic Warfare (EW) range, the simulated SA-6 reached up to ingressing jets like a death ray. As *Ranger* approached the Straits of Hormuz, a definite cleavage was apparent between

*The instinct was to fight as we had trained, which in the Intruder community meant "going low." But Iraq had fielded a one-million-man army, and that was a lot of guns pointing straight up when it was time to go feet dry.*

the Attack mission strike leads: low or high? It was a tough call, and I seriously doubt that either camp was absolutely confident. The initial three strikes to launch from *Ranger* during the first 24 hours of the conflict were divvied up between the most senior Attack Squadron leaders: the first strike lead opted to go low, and the two follow-on strikes each decided to go high, above most of the triple-A. All three targets were different.

My B/N, Rivers Cleveland, was the alternate lead for *Ranger*'s first strike to bomb the Iraqi fleet of guided missile patrol boats at the Umm Qasr naval facility, 15 miles inland along the narrow waterway led to Basra. Two Carrier Battle Groups would be operating in the Persian Gulf – *Ranger* and *Midway* – on the opening night of hostilities, and the Soviet-made patrol boats needed to be neutralized before they could



Pete Hunt in Desert Storm.

sortie out to attack the fleet. Each of the four strike A-6s was loaded with twelve MK-20 Rockeyes, a "Bullwinkle" EW pod, and a centerline drop tank, leaving station four empty on all bombers. The plan was to attack from two axes, 60 degrees apart, each striker separated by thirty seconds at a nominal 400 feet.

At the eleventh hour, Intel had breaking news for our huddled group of strike planners: in addition to the three SA-6 sites confirmed in the target area, there was now also an SA-2. Unfortunately, all the strike's available High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARMs) had been allocated for the SA-6s, the "death ray," in an attempt to keep the SAM shooters continuously engaged if they chose to radiate. A HARM is like a Shrike on steroids. There was not a SEAD jet with an open station available to shoot a single HARM to at least keep the SA-2's crews heads down. The Prowler guys were highly confident of their ability to keep the SA-2 in a "soft-kill" status with jamming alone, but putting a HARM on it would make the bombers feel much better all the same. *continued...*

Our small group of strike planners looked blankly at each other for a moment, then Rivers chimed in, "We can shoot a HARM at the SA-2 on our way to the target," as if we were stopping at the convenience store for a gallon of milk on the way home from work. Rivers followed up with a "Right, Pete?" I nodded my best bobblehead JO "Yes sir!" trying to sound confident.

Shooting a HARM en route to bombing the target was strongly discouraged by the experts at Fallon due to the complexities involved. For us, the tactic required keeping the ACU set up for a HARM shot until 23 miles from the target. It would be the first launch of a HARM from an A-6 in combat. Once the missile was launched and its brilliant plume away from our night adapted eyes, Rivers would need to complete 13 steps to switch the ACU from the HARM shot to a bombing run to release the Rockeyes. Presumably, it would be during this time that we would first encounter triple-A and possibly SAMs. We would need to switch over the ACU, acquire the target, and avoid the threats while not running into the ground for about three minutes. Then we could lay down our 12 Rockeyes on the Iraqi boats, turn around, and go home.

...then Rivers chimed in, "We can shoot a HARM at the SA-2 on our way to the target," as if we were stopping at the convenience store for a gallon of milk on the way home from work.

Rivers and I spent most of the next 24 hours before the strike 'arm chair flying' the hop and going through the ACU switchology drill again and again. The strike had just started briefing when *Ranger's* Captain came up on the 1MC to let us know that Tomahawk missiles had launched, signaling the start of Operation Desert Storm. The cat shot and high altitude transit to the Iraqi early warning radar horizon went mostly as briefed. We launched our HARM on time and were surprised to find that the missile plume directed a bit of scattered triple-A in our direction while still over the water.

Switching the ACU from HARM to Rockeyes yielded a fleeting, "Oh s\*#@...reselect light" false alarm, but we were set up for bombs at 20 nm to the target. Mostly above the

fog in the target area, we accelerated for the final minute of the attack run at 450 knots. As we raced toward the red ropes and flickering barrage fire of heavy triple-A, I remember wondering, "How the hell are we going to get through this wall of s\*#@?" I pushed the stick forward and descended to 300 feet AGL. As we got closer, I could start to pick out and avoid the individual triple-A sites. There was a depth to the barrage fire, and we weaved a 3-4 G path around the thickest of the hail until 3 miles from release when we climbed to 400 feet and steadied up for the straight and level of "government time." Augmenting the light show were multiple unguided SAMS and corkscrewing shoulder fired IR missiles – all launched to distract us. The IP inbound to the target was the longest minute of my life.

The 12 Rockeyes came off of alternate sides of the jet, barely rocking the wings as each 500-pound bomb was released milliseconds apart. With the last bomb off, my eyes shifted to the instantaneous vertical speed and the baro altimeter as I turned to almost 90 degrees angle of bank and pulled a level, 5-G turn to starboard. Sensing we had passed 100 degrees of turn, I snapped the wings left

to level, dumping the nose against the lift as the wings came under us again. We dipped below 200 feet, setting off the RADALT's (radio altimeter) nightmarish alarm. I fought the urge to balloon, and coaxed the jet back above 180 feet in the darkness to extinguish the RADALT's loud "deedle-deedle."

The Iraqi boats were not there; they had sortied out to shoot at us over the water. Our bombs fell on the secondary targets of the Umm Qasr port buildings. The SA-2 stopped emitting at our HARM TOT and didn't radiate for the remainder of the conflict. *Air Wing Two* would fly one more traditional low-level Intruder mission the following night to mine the waterway to Umm Qasr. Charlie Turner and Tom Costen were killed in the target area; it was *Air Wing Two's* only loss of the 43-day war.

Other flights were made at low altitude, notably CAS and battlefield interdiction sorties during the four-day ground war. But to the best of my knowledge, *Ranger's* two Umm Qasr strikes, and those low missions flown by other battle group carriers during the first 24 hours of Desert Storm, were the last A-6 night low-level combat missions ever flown. Trapping onboard *Ranger* at dawn, I remember thinking, "I sure as hell don't ever want to do that again." And we never did. ■



On the carrier deck.



Pete and Rivers.

## CAPTURED A-6 CREW

By General Layth Z. Muneer, Iraqi Air Force

The First Gulf War (Iraqi War) was from 2 August 1990 to 28 February 1991 and was waged by a United Nations authorized coalition force comprised of 34 nations led by the United States against Iraq, in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait.

During that time, I was the Commander of the flying wing and also H3 Air Base (360 km west of Baghdad). H3 Air Base was one of the many targets that the coalition had identified as valuable and therefore, worthy of an air strike.

On numerous occasions throughout the war, my radar officer informed me that his radar screen was completely full of bogeys (enemy aircraft) and that these bogeys were heading toward our air base. Ultimately, I would give the order for all weapons to be authorized for firing, air base illuminations to be turned off, and to sound the air raid siren. H3 Air Base was now in an alert situation and was also considered in a negative air defense.

Typically, only minutes after my radar officer saw the bogeys headed our way, the raids from the attacking aircraft started. The bombing was very intense. They heavily targeted the aircraft shelters, weapons storage, air base headquarters, air base air traffic control, administrations spaces, squadron headquarters, and even the Officers' Mess. The bombing seemed to last continually for the days and nights that followed. The bombing continued in good weather and even in extremely bad weather, day and night. It made it impossible to sleep, eat, and shower in the cold days and nights at H3 Air Base.

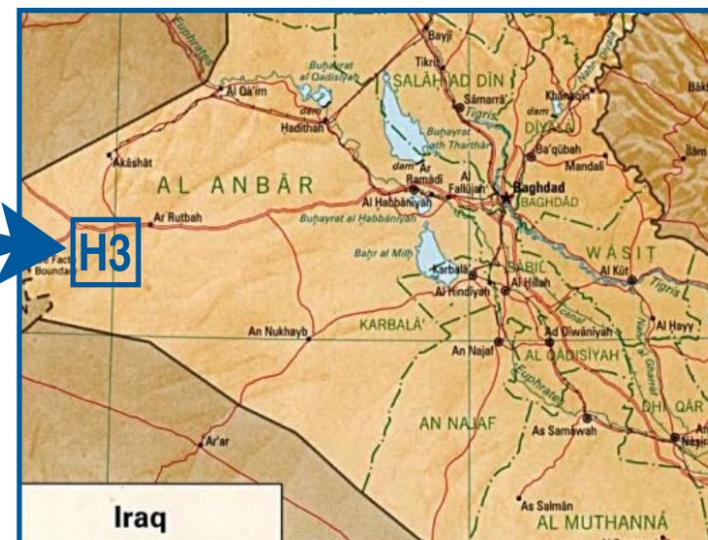
Throughout the war, immediately after the many air raids, my airmen and soldiers used to bring me pieces of what they thought were parts of aircraft that they had shot down. These parts included cluster bomb parachutes, a piece of a drop tank, and other parts that I quickly determined were not enough proof that they had shot down an enemy aircraft. My answer to them was always in the negative, and they would go away disappointed. However, on the night of January 17, 1991, two of my airmen brought to me the nose wheel of an aircraft. The aircraft's nose wheel was still hot. I immediately realized that my men had shot down an enemy aircraft. At that time, I decided to go and search for the aircraft. I

took the two airmen who found the nose wheel, my private driver, and some of my escort soldiers to search for the downed aircraft, and its pilot, or pilots.

The airmen led me to the place where they found the nose wheel. I divided my men into three groups and ordered each group to search in a different direction for the aircrew. After about an hour of searching, I heard a clashing of gunfire (a signal that we had previously decided upon to show that we had found something). I quickly went to the shooting area and found two pilots lying on the ground with their full flight gear and parachutes in a way that could easily be spotted from the air, and the radio beside them which was transmitting on. There was fear in their faces. One of the pilots was injured in his face, and the other pilot had multiple cuts and a broken arm.

I quickly loaded the two wounded pilots into my jeep and then transported them to the infirmary where they were given medical attention for their injuries. I asked them their names and ranks and I learned that they were flying the Grumman A-6 Intruder. It is a twin engine, two seat, all weather, night and day attack aircraft. It has the ability to operate from land and aircraft carriers and is equipped with advanced avionics. It can even carry a nuclear bomb and can be air refueled.

The pilot's name was Lieutenant Bob Wetzel, and the Bombar-dier/Navigator was Lieutenant Jeff Zaun. H3 Air Base was their target when they were hit by the Roland Surface to Air Missile (SAM). They ejected from their A-6 somewhere near the air base, where I found them. At the infirmary of the air base, there was a large mob crowd of soldiers, airmen, security officers, and soldiers from the air base guards (commandos) that were very angry and waiting to attack the two pilots, some even making it clear that they wanted to kill the two pilots. I continued to ensure their safety throughout the night by continuing to prevent the Iraqi mob from reaching the pilots. Throughout the night and the next morning, I was directly responsible for their safety and wellbeing. I am 100 percent certain, that if it were not for me, they would have been injured more than they were, or outright killed by the angry Iraqi mob.



## A SURPRISING REUNION

The next morning, as I expected, the commander of the air base guards came to meet me. He asked about the two US pilots and claimed that it was his responsibility to arrest and to interrogate them. I told him that I have already sent them to Baghdad (the Iraq Air Force Headquarters). He became mad and he told me that he will contact the main military director to inform him that I helped the two US pilots by sending them to Baghdad. I informed him that he should do whatever he wants to do. However, I already had talked to the Iraq Air Force Chief and told him that I was going to send the two US pilots to Baghdad) and he agreed with me. I had made that call when I was at the infirmary with the two US pilots.

Two hours later, the Security Officer of H3 Air Base came to meet me, too. His name was Nassir Altikreety (he was Saddam Hussein's cousin), and he said, "Sir, what you are doing is not right. Helping the enemy will affect your career, especially since you are well known as a brilliant officer and a good pilot with a lot of war experience." I did not pay him any attention.

Three days later, after I sent the two US pilots to Baghdad, my airmen brought to me, the body of a British pilot. He had ejected from a Tornado, a British Air Force fighter aircraft. His initials were, W. I., as it was written on the flight suit that he was wearing. He looked old and his rank was that of Major. His body was marked with a lot of pits by dogs or wolves, from his feet to his chest, I sent his body to Baghdad by special transportation.

When I arrived in the United States on January 22, 2012, I, tried to locate the two US pilots, Bob and Jeff, whom I assumed survived the war. However, I failed. I asked for help from my son, Zee, but he also failed. I asked for help from my lawyer, and he also failed. Finally, I asked my friend, Rodrigo Cruze. He is a high level tennis player and a very good chess player, too. He was able to find one of the US pilots, Jeff, through the Internet. Rodrigo spoke to Jeff's mother and then he found Bob, through Jeff.

We corresponded through emails with Bob and Jeff until we decided to meet them on November 15, 2012. Jeff came from New York City, and Bob came from Denver, Colorado. The Great Meeting, as I named it, was in Crystal City at Ted's Montana Grill at 6 p.m. I was excited to meet, in their home, the two brave US pilots who ejected in my home, after more than 21 years. They were supposed to be my enemy at that time, and now they have become my friends at this time. The world is too small!

In that Great Meeting, Rodrigo, Zee, Jeff, Bob, and I discussed the reason of how their Intruder was shot down, why they could not avoid the Roland Missile, and what they were feeling when they were surrounded by the angry Iraqi mob—did they feel that they could be killed by the Iraqi mob, or did they think that they could survive the angry mob?

I also discussed with them something that they were not aware of. I told them that after I found them, one hour later, H3 Air Base



Bob, Layth, and Jeff on 25th Anniversary.



Bob, Layth, and Jeff reunite.

was illuminated with flares by US aircraft that had come to rescue the two pilots. Their radio had been transmitting signals after they ejected from their A-6 Intruder. The US aircraft were striving to find the two US pilots. Their flares illuminated H3 Air Base from nighttime to daytime, as if it were 12 noon. Even we could hardly see because of the brightness of the flares that they had fired.

At the end of the Great Meeting, we exchanged gifts and took photos. Some of those photos were posted on Facebook. We still communicate with each other. ■

By Maj General Marty Post

The Bengals of VMA (AW)-224 were notified in early August 1990 to prepare to deploy to Southwest Asia (SWA), in support of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and I MEF, with a deployment date of late August. The squadron was commanded by LtCol William "Pig" Horne with Maj Tom "Goose" McElrath as the executive officer.

At that time, the A-6 community had G-limit restrictions on aircraft to include 4.5G and 3.0G limited aircraft. As 224 prepared aircraft for deployment, VMA (AW)-242 landed in Cherry Point on their way to SWA. Upon arrival in Cherry Point, 242 was notified by HQMC to transfer their unrestricted aircraft to 224 and then redeploy to El Toro to start the transition to the F/A-18D. The Bengal Maintenance Department worked 24/7 to transfer and accept aircraft, and would deploy with 10 A-6E TRAM equipped aircraft. VMA (AW)-224 departed Cherry Point on 23 August, and after 16 plus hours of flight time – with an enroute stop in Rota, Spain – arrived at Shaikh-Isa Air Base, Bahrain. Upon arrival in Bahrain, the squadron was assigned to MAG-11 which included F/A-18A, F/A-18D, EA-6B aircraft, and VMA (AW)-533 (an A-6 squadron that arrived from a UDP deployment in Iwakuni, Japan).

During the months of September through December, 224 conducted deterrent and training sorties as part of Operation Desert Shield. The training sorties included both day and night, high and low altitude training over southern



The Bahrain bomb farm.

Saudi Arabia and numerous night RABFAC (Radar Beacon Forward Air Controller) sorties in northern Saudi Arabia with Division Forward Air Controllers. As we closed in on 1991, the pace of training accelerated with numerous large MAG-11 strike package sorties that would mirror image the first several days of combat missions.

The A-6 (Grumman Iron Works) showed how tough it was when a 224 aircraft hit a radio tower during a night RABFAC training mission. The aircraft lost 3 feet of right outer wing panel and tore off the entire left engine inlet. With a FOD'ed engine and a hydraulic failure, the aircrew flew the stricken aircraft back to base and recovered safely.

The aircraft was repaired on site and flew the morning of the day that combat operations began.

Operation Desert Storm (DS) commenced on 16 January 1991 with VMA (AW)-224 assigned to fly night sorties for the entire operation. The initial nights of DS would find 224 flying night strikes into Iraq with bridges being the primary targets. The weapons loadout for these missions were 2 MK-84 (2,000lb) Laser Guided Bombs (LGB). Additional strike loadouts included 12 or 24 MK-82

continued...

(500LB) and 6 MK-83 (1,000LB) Low Drag bombs. After the first week of strikes, 224 was assigned single ship night road recon missions over Kuwait. The loadout for these missions was 11 MK-20 Rockeye Cluster Bombs and one or two MK-82 LGBs. 224 flew these missions every night right up until the ground forces pushed into Kuwait.

The nightly schedule would assign A-6s into Kill Boxes at thirty minute intervals with the A-6 using its AMTI Radar and TRAM FLIR to engage any moving or hot target that was found. The night before the ground forces pushed off from the line of departure, VMA (AW)-224 dropped MK-77 Fire Bombs onto the enemy trenches/fire pits in front of the I MEF Marines with each aircraft carrying eight MK-77 Fire Bombs. The last combat missions flown by VMA (AW)-224 were on 26 February 1991 over the "Highway of Death" as the Iraqi forces tried to escape from Kuwait.

Throughout the 41 days of combat operations, the squadron flew 422 combat sorties and dropped more than 2.3 million pounds of ordnance. During DS, 224 recovered several USN A-6 aircraft from deployed carriers to include a Navy A-6 with a 57MM AAA hole through its outer wing panel (OWP). The crew of Jeff Martin and Don Quinn from VA-65 had diverted from USS *Theodore Roosevelt*. Bengal maintenance changed the OWP and launched our sister-service A-6 back to the carrier the next day. (See attached photo.)

The Bengals departed Bahrain on 26 March 1991 and each jet logged over 18 hours apiece on the flight back to Cherry Point with a stop in Rota, Spain. Upon their return, the Bengals had a short turn around and departed



Captain Will "Wheels" Thomas demonstrates the size of the hole that was repaired overnight by Bengal Maintenance.



Cherry Point in September 1991 for a six month WestPac deployment to MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

Under the command of LtCol Harry "Prick" Spies these would be the last Marine A-6s ever to deploy to WestPac. On 24 May 1992, the Bengals celebrated their 50th anniversary. Not long afterward, the Bengals transitioned from the A-6E to the F/A-18D in March 1993.

Of an historical note, Bengal aircraft side number 507 (154167) that was flown by 224 in Desert Storm now resides in the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center of the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum located at Dulles Airport in Virginia. ■



Marine A-6 Intruders on Bahrain 'Carrier Deck.'



Bengals in Bahrain.

# DEPARTING



RDML Stephen H. Baker, USN (Ret)  
 CAPT Timothy "TJ" Block, USN (Ret)  
 LTGEN William H. Fitch, USMC (Ret)  
 CDR Richard Warren Hess, USN (Ret)  
 CAPT Gerald Herman Hesse, USN (Ret)  
 CAPT Kolin Jan, USN (Ret)  
 LT James W. Kennedy, USNR



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## 2016 SHOW SCHEDULE

MAY			AUGUST		
01	MCAS Cherry Point Air Show	MCAS Cherry Point, NC	06-07	Seafair Air Show	Seattle, WA
07-08	Guardians of Freedom Air Show	Lincoln, NE	27-28	Pocono Raceway	Long Pond, PA
14-15	Spirit of St. Louis Air Show	St. Louis, MO	<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
21-22	Lynchburg Regional Air Show	Lynchburg, VA	03-05	Cleveland National Air Show	Cleveland, OH
25	USNA Air Show	US Naval Academy, MD	10-11	NAS Oceana Air Show	NAS Oceana, VA
27	USNA Graduation Flyover	US Naval Academy, MD	17-18	National Championship Air Races	Reno, NV
28-29	Jones Beach Air Show	Jones Beach, NY	24-25	MCAS Miramar Air Show	MCAS Miramar, CA
JUNE			OCTOBER		
04-05	The Great Tennessee Air Show	Smyrna, TN	01-02	California Capital Air Show	Sacramento, CA
11-12	Syracuse International Air Show	Syracuse, NY	08-09	San Francisco Fleet Week	San Francisco, CA
18-19	Dayton Air Show	Dayton, OH	15-16	Maryland Fleet Week and Air Show	Baltimore, MD
25-26	Vero Beach Air Show	Vero Beach, FL	22-23	Wings Over Houston Air Show	Houston, TX
<b>JULY</b>			29-30	NAS Patuxent River Air Expo	NAS Patuxent River, MD
02-04	National Cherry Festival Air Show	Traverse City, MI	<b>NOVEMBER</b>		
09-10	Gary Air Show	Gary, IN	05-06	Birthplace of the Blue Angels Air Show	Jacksonville Beach, FL
16	Pensacola Beach Air Show	Pensacola Beach, FL	12	Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show	NAS Pensacola, FL
23-24	SD Air National Guard 70 <sup>th</sup> Air Show	Sioux Falls, SD			
30-31	Arctic Thunder Open House	Elmendorf AFB, AK			

## 99 Intruders: Listen Up!

- **Missing Intruders.** The number of fellow Intruders who have let their membership lapse has risen to 621. Please make an effort to bring these folks back. The offer is still out there – for every three members you get reinstated, you will get a year added to your paid membership.
- **New Look For Our Web Site.** Cactus Jack Jordan has completed an extensive overhaul to our Intruder Association web site. We now have the capability to use it on smart phones and tablets. Navigating between tabs is much smoother. Give it a try!
- **Verify Your Contact Information.** While you are visiting the new web site, please take the time to verify your email address and contact information. During the preparation for our San Diego reunion, we learned that a significant percentage of Intruders were unreachable due to expired or incorrect contact information. Even if you believe that the IA has the correct information on hand, please take another look to be sure that we have the exact address!



## ★ Membership Report

Fellow Intruders

We have gotten our active membership up to 1111 members. Unfortunately, the number of fellow Intruders who have let their membership lapse has risen to 621. I have two initiatives underway and ask your help in accomplishing the task of getting these folks back. Our webmaster is in the process of posting the list on the website. For that effort, we will send out a 99 asking you to look at the list and contact those you know. For those attending the reunion we will be providing all attendees with a copy of the list.

The offer is still out there – for every three members you get reinstated, you will get a year added to your paid membership. Send me an email with the names to [membership@IntruderAssociation.org](mailto:membership@IntruderAssociation.org), and when I confirm they have re-upped, I will update your membership accordingly.

The reunion is happening now, and the number of attendees is great. Tail Hook is right around the corner, and IA will have our booth there, share the Attack Ready Room, and have our World Famous Breakfast up by the pool. Help “preserve the memory”. Help get our lost brothers back!

V/R Clyde Cain  
Membership Chairman



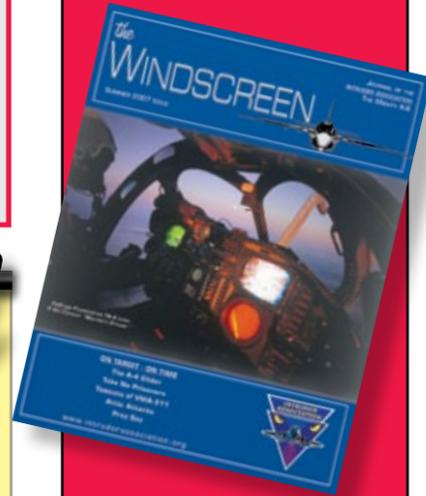
## Welcome Aboard

### NEW MEMBERS

Joseph Allison .....	Callaway, MD	Elbert McKay .....	Memphis, TN
Melvin Baertschi .....	Havelock, NC	William Meier .....	Camarillo, CA
Stephen Baker .....	Salem, VA	Laurance Merritt .....	Ojai, CA
Philip Blair .....	Greer, SC	James Messing .....	Heathsville, VA
Bob Hinman .....	El Paso, TX	Terry Metler .....	Klamath Falls, OR
Bob Champney .....	Dallas, TX	Charles Myers .....	Benton, KY
Randy Cheston .....	Lakeland, TN	Ronald Olson .....	Cairo, NE
Mark 'Stick' Converse .....	Tall Timbers, MD	Jeffrey Ploof .....	Warroad, MN
Tom Dacey .....	Round Hill, VA	Richard Postera .....	Anacortes, WA
David Deist .....	Colorado Springs, CO	James Purgason .....	Bartonville, TX
Michael Dunn .....	Dallas, OR	Donald Pursley .....	Watkinsville, GA
Richard Dunn .....	Orlando, FL	John Roberts .....	Seattle, WA
Abe Ellis .....	Franklin Park, NJ	Dale Robinson .....	Winchester, VA
Raymond Evans .....	Willimantic, AL	Bryan Scurry .....	San Diego, CA
Tim Golike .....	Fredericksburg, VA	Steve Shapard .....	Park City, UT
Thomas Grennan .....	Georgetown, OH	Chuck Shaw .....	Walpole, NH
Jack Grimes .....	Chapin, SC	Norman (Nick) Sheridan ..	Willis, TX
Johnny Guzman .....	McAllen, TX	Cliff Strote .....	Woodland Hills, CA
Larry Hogue .....	Evans, GA	Michael Summers .....	Lemon Grove, CA
Brian Huber .....	Bristow, VA	Jerome Szwczynski .....	Ramona, CA
Ernest Hugo .....	Fort Worth, TX	Jay Taylor .....	Lantana, TX
Michael Jenkins .....	Round Rock, TX	Will Thomas .....	Lorton, VA
Charles Jewett .....	Seven Park, MD	Bill Trevillion .....	Austin, TX
Don Jillisky .....	Dublin, OH	Thomas Vance .....	Oklahoma City, OK
Timothy Johnson .....	Lancaster, CA	Allen Wadington .....	Chandler, AZ
Terry Kraft .....	San Diego, CA	Bill Walters .....	North Richland Hills, TX
Charles Krotz .....	Chesapeake, VA	Don Wenger .....	Charleston, SC
John Lamberti .....	West Babylon, NY	Mark Whitson .....	Indian Harbour Beach, FL
Dave Legas .....	Phoenix, AZ	Robert Wilkes .....	Bellevue, WA
Rob Leslie .....	Houston, TX	Edward Witt .....	Oak Harbor, WA
Thomas Mardis .....	Winston Salem, NC		



New members will receive



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Name \_\_\_\_\_  New Applicant  Renewal Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Tel ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Your call sign or nickname \_\_\_\_\_

Military Service: Retired  Active Duty  None

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Pilot  B/N  Maintainer  Ordy  Support  Associate

War Veteran of: Korea  Vietnam  Gulf

Service Dates (YY-YY) \_\_\_\_\_ Squadrons \_\_\_\_\_

Carrier Air Wing/Marine Air Wing \_\_\_\_\_

Membership:  1Yr \$25  2 Yr \$45  3 Yr \$65

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**The Intruder Association**  
 c/o Clyde Cain  
 18407 Rangeland Rd.  
 Ramona, CA 92065

For questions, contact Clyde Cain at [membership@IntruderAssociation.org](mailto:membership@IntruderAssociation.org).

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