

1st Fighter Association Newsletter



27th



71st



94th

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PETE'S REMARKS



Happy New Year! 2017 looks to be a great year for the Association. Save the Date for the most important event of the year – the 2017 1st Fighter Association Reunion, September 7 – 10 in Dayton, Ohio, The Birthplace of Aviation. We have booked the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Downtown Dayton for the reunion. This centrally located hotel near the revitalized restaurant night club district, provides newly renovated rooms at a great rate and a meeting location with a view of the city. The reunion provides the venue for renewing old friendships and, a chance to be “Re-Blued”, as well as, the forum for the election of Association Officers to serve the next two-year term.

We will have our traditional banquet on Saturday, September 9th under the wings at the Museum of the United States Air Force. Prior to the Banquet we will have a short ceremony at the 1st Fighter Association Memorial on the museum grounds to commemorate our brothers and sisters in arms who have served in the 1st Fighter Wing since its inception 99 years ago.

The 27th and 94th Squadrons were actually formed 100 years ago this year and the Association will be working with them on a celebration most likely in late summer. Stay tuned for more information.

Finally, this year looks like the long-held goal of establishing a 1st Fighter Wing History Room will finally come to fruition. The Wing has identified space in the Headquarters Building and serious planning will start to take place next month. The wing will be looking to the Association for donations/loans of memorabilia, monetary help in procuring display cases, help with write-ups in support of displays and possibly the establishment of a docent corps to support visitors. I will keep you informed on the progress.

Cheers, Pete

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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 7 - 10, 2017 - 1st Fighter Association Reunion, Dayton, OH

We are in the planning stages and have locked in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dayton for our accommodations and The Museum of the Air Force as the location of our Banquet on Saturday, September 9th.

TAPS

Bob (Smokey) Vrillakas – 94th Fighter Squadron

LT ROBERT "BOB" MCINTOSH COMES HOME



On 12 May 1944, 1st Lt Robert L. McIntosh, of the 27th Fighter Squadron, 1st Fighter Group, disappeared during a combat mission in Italy. His P-38 aircraft, departed Foggia Airfield #3 on a strafing mission against a target in Piacenza, Italy. After a brief air battle over Bologna, which 1st Lt McIntosh emerged apparently unscathed, the weather worsened and the flight began to climb through the overcast. Although flight leader instructions were acknowledged by 1st Lt McIntosh, his aircraft was observed to dive through the clouds, and he was not seen or heard from again. Missing Air Crew Report (MACR) 4765 documented that he was last seen near Imola, Italy.

After the cessation of hostilities, American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) searches failed to locate his crash site and his remains were declared non-recoverable. In September 2013, Italian citizens excavated a crash site in Santa Cristana, Italy, and found material evidence which correlated with MACR 4765. Possible human remains, consisting of a single bone fragment, were turned over to U.S. representatives on 11/19/13, and positively identified on 2/12/14. A DPAA team excavated the site with assistance from an Italian non-profit group in August-September 2015 and the DPAA Lab ultimately identified the additional remains of 1Lt McIntosh on 3/22/16.

1Lt McIntosh was brought back to his home town of Tipton, Indiana and buried next to his parents on Aug 13 2016, with full military honors.

For the full story go to the Association Website www.1stfighter.com.

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WE HAVE FRIENDS IN FRANCE

By Pete Marty

Thanks to the internet, I now correspond with Nicolas “Nico” Courtine, a French WWII historian. Nico has kept me up to date on the events in France that commemorate US support of France in WWI and WWII. Last year marked the 100th Anniversary of the Lafayette Escadrille. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the 1st Fighter Wing and F-22s from Tyndall (pictured) participated in the flyover.



Although the Lafayette Escadrille celebration was significant and got international attention, there is a little know ceremony that touched my soul. Nico is a prime mover of an annual ceremony near Orange Caritat AFB at Travaillan, France. Every spring people from the Province and dignitaries from the Country gather around the Plan de DIEU 15th US Air Force Memorial (pictured) to remember the sacrifice of the young pilots who gave their lives in the skies over the Plan of God in the summer of 1944 for their liberty.

Among the five names on the memorial are:

2nd Lt Hugh B. Crandall, 94th FS, 1st FG, June 15, 1944

1st Lt Harold V. Duggleby, 94th FS, 1st FG, June 15, 1944

Let us never forget.



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CALL FOR INFORMATION

F-102 Drivers and Maintainers

Tom Docherty is an aviation historian and writer based in the UK and would like to make contact with ex-F-102 pilots and maintenance men of the 1st FW. He is in the early stages of researching the Convair F-102 Delta Dagger for an article, hopefully to be published in a UK aviation magazine.

- He needs responses from F-102 pilots about:
- The flying characteristics of the F-102.
- Was it an easy aircraft to fly?
- Was it an effective interceptor?
- What were the dangers of flying the type - could you get into trouble easily on the edge of its flight envelope?
- Was the cockpit ergonomically easy to work in or was it a bit like being a one-armed paper hanger?
- What was its strongest virtue?
- What was its greatest vice?
- What type of targets would you have been assigned to defend against during the Cold War?

He would also appreciate stories of Cold War European operations, exercises, and close calls in training and/or poor weather. Also, any photos, particularly air-to-air shots you may have. As well as anything liked or disliked about the F-102.

From maintenance men, he would like to know about the ease or difficulty of maintaining the aircraft. What was the worst job to complete? What became unserviceable most often keeping the aircraft on the ground? How easy was it to arm with a weapons load? Tales of high pressure operations for the ground crew during the Cold War. Tom's email: tomdocherty72@hotmail.com .

Vietnam Aircrews

Brian Laslie, a historian for the Air Force, is writing a book on the Air Wars in Southeast Asia. He is reaching out to aircrews and asking if they would be willing to discuss (probably via email) their experiences.

If you're willing to chat with him please respond to brian.laslie@gmail.com and he will be in touch.

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NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

Dear 1st Fighter Members and Friends

On behalf of our leadership team, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who contributed to our Annual Membership Campaign and give a special salute to those nine members who also made an extra special contribution to the Heritage Endowment Fund. As of this writing, we raised \$2500 in membership dues and \$340 in new contributions to the Heritage Endowment fund.

Currently, we have 87 Life members including four new members gained during this campaign. I would like to welcome Bruce Gordon, Brian Maki, William Shields and Steve Smitherman as new Life Members.

During the 2016 campaign we mailed renewal applications to 151 current and former members with about 30 linked to years 2014/2013/2012. We received 81 member updates/renewals: Life (4), Sustaining (72 including 2 brand new members), Honorary (4) and Friends (1). I would like to welcome Ed Flynn, his wife Karen, and Brad Richmond, his wife Cindy, as our new members. This brings our total current paid memberships to 164.

Unfortunately, we have lost contact with Phyllis Mullins, Kerrville TX, so if anyone knows her contact information, please send me a note.

We are running just over 50% response to our known member renewal requests. I would ask that you each continue to seek new members or renewals from our former members. The strength of the organization depends on membership. I would also ask the 30+ members that have not provided an email address to consider sending me an update as this too will help lower our operating expenses.

I would also like to mention that the 1st Fighter Association made a \$750 Heritage contribution of matching funds to the 27AMU as they build a new Heritage Room and that our organization will be recognized in a significant lasting tribute in the room. We also recently contributed \$500 to the First Wing to provide Morale Fund support for the Langley October Fall Festival.

Stay healthy and safe!

Gresser