



Official Bulletin of the VALIANT AIR COMMAND, INC.  
 (a 501(c)(3) Non-profit Organization  
 Space Coast Regional Airport, Titusville, FL 32780-8009

# UN-SCRAMBLE

Volume 25, Issue 9

October 2003

## Painted on a Rock Somewhere in Iowa



P-80 taxiing out... See the feature article on page 8.

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# Valiant Air Command

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The VALIANT AIR COMMAND was formed to perpetuate the history of aviation, to encourage gathering of men and women in camaraderie, research, and Warbird restoration, to serve as an educational tool for young and old alike, and to assure that the memory of those who gave their lives in service to their country shall not perish.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

OCT 14, 2003

12:00 NOON

VAC MUSEUM BOARD ROOM

NOV 11, 2003

12:00 NOON

VAC MUSEUM BOARDROOM

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Meet your new *Unscramble* editor, Dawn Gorrell



## Commander - *Lloyd Morris*

It's that time year again when we start to prepare for the 2004 Tico Airshow. Lou Lafond has volunteered to be the Co-Chairman of the Airshow, so you will be hearing from him. Our first Airshow meeting will be in November and I hope you all will attend. We need volunteers, especially Chairman/woman. Since this is a two-day airshow instead of a three-day airshow there will be some changes. We would like to see you come early and enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow members. It will also be an opportunity to see the Museum before we set up on the other side of the field.. There are many projects going on before the first planes fly. Remember this is your airshow..be a part of it.

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## Executive Officer - *Hal Larkin*



Update on "The Search for Flight 19": The first Avenger we located, BuNo 23990, is a TBF-1, built by Grumman and delivered on May 20, 1943. As we acquire additional information on the Avengers, we will pass it on.

The rework of the Panther windshield is complete. The side panels that were formed from our molds fit perfectly. The windshield is now installed on the airframe. The left/right consoles in the cockpit contain 23 separate engraved panels. The panels are with an engraving vendor with the 2/3-scaled drawings, which were made from photos, some out of focus. After we get them back from engraving, we have to install all the toggle switches (47), flight controls, DZUS buttons, etc. Then we can install the panels in the cockpit.

The machine shop is busy, making parts for the cockpit, bomb release, flap control, rudder and aileron trim controls, just to mention a few—and parts for the Avenger. We are in the process of installing the L/R inboard flaps. However, we will have to fabricate bushings (machine shop) for the dive brake portion of the flaps. After flap installation, the fuselage will be ready for prime.

## Executive Officer - *Hal Larkin* - cont.

Thanks to restoration volunteer Andy Martingano, Restoration now has mobile gantry with an electric hoist. Thanks, Andy.

The tops of the L/R wings of the ME-208 have been painted their final color. The first color of the German insignias has been applied. This final color will be applied next week. The mold for the top piece of the windshield is in work and requires a compound curve. The rest of the windshield we can make in-house.

The Panther and Me-208 are 80% complete; however, most of the work yet to be done is in the cockpit area.



More photos from Hal Larkins expedition. TBM ball turret.



Frontal view. Where's the propeller???



## Operations - Mike McCann

In my last article I brought you a synopsis of a talk I attended given by MGen Frederick 'Boots' Blesse, a double ace from the Korean War. He talked extensively about both his first and last mission in Korea. I'll give you a brief recap of the last mission here. Gen Blesse, having filled the requisite 100-missions for a complete tour of duty, volunteered to extend for another 25. By the time of his 123rd mission, he had scored 9 victories, and was the leading active ace in Korea. On mission number 124, he had a new wingman and was eager to get him into some action quick. After a good while of uneventful trolling for Migs, their 4-ship was reduced to a 2-ship due to fuel problems from #4. During the last turn to the south, 200 miles from home plate and approaching bingo fuel, Boots spotted 4 Migs at 6 o'clock, 2 miles. The lead Mig started firing (well out of range), and the roman candle like tracer from the 37mm canon so startled the new wingman that he broke into the direction of fire. The lead Migs started chasing the wingman, Boots reversed into them, and the last 2 Migs latched onto Boots. He was able to get Mig # 2 in his sights and fire a burst which scared him enough that he decided to run for home.

As # 3 and # 4 closed, he reversed and dove for the ground, losing sight in the process (a definite no-no in this business). Now in a fuel-critical situation, Boots leveled and started for home. During the climb, and all alone, he spotted a lone Mig at 10 o'clock. Time for a gut check. Let him slide and glide home on fumes, or dispatch another God-forsaken Commie to his well-deserved end? Of course, he rolled up underneath him and let him have it.



There went number 10

There went # 10. But also his only chance of gliding home. As it became apparent that he wasn't going to make it, Boots coordinated with the rescue amphib for an ejection just offshore of the North Korean coast. And eject he did, at 1,200 feet. Quickly rescued, he was whisked back to Kimpo and subsequently to the US, lest anything happen to the Air Forces latest hero.

## Operations - Mike McCann - cont.

All of this and more is detailed in his autobiography *Check Six - A Fighter Pilot Looks Back*. It is a good read and well worth the time.

We are starting to plan for several events here in the late fall, including a round-robin fly-out to the four major warbird museums here in central Florida on December 6th and the VAC's own 100 Years of Flight Celebration here in Titusville December 13th. More details will be forthcoming in the next issue of the *Unscramble*.

*Flying the airplane is more important than radioing your plight to a person on the ground incapable of understanding it.*

### UPCOMING AIRSHOWS OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS:

**October 3-5, 2003:** EAA Southeast Regional Fly-In. Evergreen, AL (GZH). [www.serfi.org](http://www.serfi.org).

**October 4, 2003:** Moody AFB Air Show. Moody AFB, Valdosta, GA. Richard Cutshall (813) 828-2902.

**October 8-9, 2003:** North Florida Airshow. Lake City, FL. J. Michael Lee (904) 752-1822.

**October 18-19, 2003:** Wings Over Houston. Ellington Field, Houston, TX. Jack Amuny (713) 644-1018. [www.wingsoverhouston.com](http://www.wingsoverhouston.com)

**October 25-26, 2003:** NAS Mayport Airshow. NAS Mayport, FL. Thomas Cosgrove (904) 270-7126.

**October 31-November 2, 2003:** N'awlins Air Show. New Orleans, LA. Pam Menesses (504) 678-3710. [www.mwrneworleans.com](http://www.mwrneworleans.com).

**October 30-November 1, 2003:** AOPA EXPO. Philadelphia Convention Center, PA. (888) 462-3976. [www.aopa.org/expo](http://www.aopa.org/expo).

**November 7-8 2003:** Blue Angels Homecoming Airshow. NAS Pensacola, FL. Lt. Dave Zervas (850) 452-8161. [www.mwr-pcola.navy.mil](http://www.mwr-pcola.navy.mil).

**November 7-9 2003:** Celebrate Freedom Festival. Columbia, SC. CW Randall (803) 788-6837. [www.celebratefreedomfoundation.org](http://www.celebratefreedomfoundation.org)

**November 8-9, 2003:** Wings and Waves. Embry-Riddle Celebrates Centennial of Flight. Daytona Beach, FL. Darryl Niemeyer (386) 226-6823. [www.erau.edu](http://www.erau.edu).

...continued.

**November 8-9, 2003:** Stuart Air Show. Stuart, FL. Walt McGlynn (772) 223-6722. [stuartairshow.com/](http://stuartairshow.com/).

**November 15, 2003:** Naples, FL. "Celebrating Aviation - Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow." [www.NaplesAviationDay.com](http://www.NaplesAviationDay.com).

**November 22-23, 2003:** The Great Orlando Rotary Air Show. Orlando International Airport. Pat Phillips (407) 425-7676.

**December 7-10, 2003:** ICAS Convention. Wyndham Anatole Hotel. Dallas, TX. (703) 779-8510. [www.airshows.org](http://www.airshows.org).

### CANCELLATIONS

ICAS has received notification of the following air show cancellations:

10/11, Maxwell AFB Open House, Montgomery, AL  
11/1-2, Lake Havasu Land & Sky Powerfest, Lake Havasu City, AZ

## Good news for the Tico Belle!!

A few days ago we received two freshly overhauled propellers, donated by Mr. Paul Gaither, president of Aviation Propellers of Opa Locka, Florida. This donation is a major one and goes a long way towards helping the VAC C-47 restoration team meet its goal of returning the "Tico Belle" to flight status. Mr. Gaither took the time to deliver the props personally. If any aircraft owners in our membership need a prop overhauled please consider giving Aviation Propellers a chance to do the work. Below is a picture of Paul delivering the props.



## Maintenance - Bob James

The summer heat is still with us but the afternoons are full of cooling thunderstorms that bring some relief from the high temperatures. The noise is terrific in these storms and working in the hanger is like being inside a drum! The workers often have to be within a few feet of one another in order to communicate. Even with a minimum number of volunteers we're still making steady progress with the Tico Belle. Gordon Briggs is one of the most consistent workers. He shows up rain or shine just like the mailman. Sometimes he has to settle for my help as he has no other choice. Today (8/21/03) we were blessed with the return of Ivan Gomez who returned from Columbia after his mother's funeral. Ops officer Mike McCann also is a consistent worker when he is not off touring the world for American Airlines.

The work on the aft fuselage reached another small milestone with the installation of the tail wheel shroud and the tail wheel vertical support. The final few aft sections of sheet metal will be completed within a month or less. The tail wheel assembly will also be installed in the next few weeks.

Al McQueen is working on the wing center section. He is alternating his time between the C47 and several other outside projects and so is with us for four days every other week. He is also making slow but steady progress in the replacement of several wing frame sections one of which supports the left main gear drag link strut. The repairs are complicated and take a lot of careful layout and fit checking. They are key elements in the process to allow the main gears to be installed.

The UTVA is undergoing the mounting of the intercom mike and phone jacks at all four pilot and passenger stations and some wiring cleanup work.

Thanks to member Harland Avezzie (who is also restoring a TBF) I have finally obtained one of the two forward bombay door attach fittings. I have requested our resident machinist to make a duplicate. Once that is completed the great majority of the components to make the bombay doors functional will be in hand. Further work on the TBM will probably await the return of additional volunteers from vacations or the return of our snowbirds.



## Personnel - Alice Iacuzzo

Kudos to Bob McCullough for making all the contacts and arrangements to acquire a WW II mortar. The mortar has wheels and can be operated by one man. It was used by the Russian Army and then captured and used by the German Army during the war. We received the logbooks written in German that gives some of the history of the Mortar. Bob and his wife Camille picked up the Mortar in Orlando and delivered it to the museum. The Mortar is now in the restoration hangar and Hal Larkin has someone with experience to restore to its original condition. It will make a great addition to the museum. Thanks to Robert Skinner (non member) for donating this Mortar to the Valiant Air Command.

As we start planning for the 2004 Tico Airshow, I would like to remind the volunteers to sign up early. There are benefits for officially signing up. If you travel, stay overnight it can be a big help when you are filling out your next years tax forms. Remember that donating to the Valiant Air Command is tax deductible (recognized by the IRS) so if you have any items to donate bring them with you. Memorabilia items are great but we can use other things too, books, military clothing etc. Sometimes some items do not go on display immediately but are rotated in the Memorabilia Hall and other parts of the hangar by Frank Pound and Art Christensen.

Sal Ladho and his helper Guido Franchini have just completed the shelving in the hangar to display the WWII radio collection. Sal has been a versatile volunteer completing many of the much-needed repairs and new projects around the museum. At the present he is rebuilding our "Pump House." that was in disrepair.

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### C47 donations

Lester Badger	Cocoa, FL	\$1,000
James Bond	Richmond Hill, NY	\$200
Joshua Eiting	Versailles, OH	\$500

### TBM

Lester Badger	Cocoa, FL	\$200
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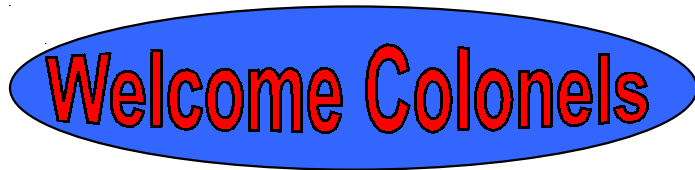
## VALIANT AIR COMMAND HONORS VIETNAM VETERANS

The Valiant Air Command invites all Viet Nam veterans to visit the museum FREE the week of FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3rd thru THURSDAY OCTOBER 9th, 2003.

Please bring VVB card for identification or DD 214 and sign up. We look forward to honoring these veterans.

- Alice





**New Members**

Luis & Lorinda deZayas  
Lawrence Beilfuss  
Rockledge, FL  
Schaumburg, IL

**Renewals**

Aldo & Sophia Alelivnos	Titusville, FL
William Bagwell	Merritt Island, FL
George & Ginny Baker	New Smyrna Beach, FL
Winn & Carolyn Baker	Darien, GA
Ronald Barrett	Auburn, AL
Preston Beck	Melbourne, FL
Lawrence Beilfuss	Schaumburg, IL
Ed Booth, Jr.	Jacksonville, FL
Bob & Sandy Boswell	Melbourne, FL
Leo Bottari	Melbourne, FL
Pat & Lenor Callaghan	Lighthouse Point, FL
Russell Chamberlain	Crestview, FL
Dorothy Douglas	Fernandina Beach, FL
Joshua Eitling	Versailles, OH
P.W. & Polly Elliott	Daytona Beach, FL
Ray Gage	Daytona Beach, FL
Walter Gay	Canandaigua, NY
Robert Graveline	Titusville, FL
Joan Johnson	Bushnell, FL
Leo Kordick	Titusville, FL
John Koss	Bushnell, FL
Glenn Legge	Melbourne, FL
Pieter & Betty Lenie	Melbourne Beach, FL
Norm & Gaye Lindsay	Titusville, FL
Sam Lorino, Jr.	Cocoa, FL
David & Michael Marco	Atlantic Beach, FL
Mike B. McDonough	Vestal, NY
Michael & Laurie McDonough	Titusville, FL
Chuck McElwee	Potomac, MD
Anthony & Marian Mercurio	Punta Gorda, FL
Walter Ohlrich	Virginia Beach, VA
Francis Paciello	Sterling, MA
Jennie Ping	Potomac, MD
Robert Reynolds	Ponce Inlet, FL
Shirley Roll	Versailles, OH
Chuck & Robin Sodaro	Paramus, NJ
Jim & Margaret Towe	Cocoa, FL
Wold, Frances	Titusville, FL

[Note from Alice](#)

If any corrections to this list are necessary please notify me at the VAC (321) 268-1941 or e-mail at [vacinformation@aol.com](mailto:vacinformation@aol.com)

I had the opportunity to attend the Florida Association of Museums annual conference this month. The meeting, in Jacksonville, was very well organized and highly educational. The emphasis of the sessions was museum management, funding, and U.S./Florida grant sources. The amount of grant money available was a tremendous surprise to me; however, there is no single route for an application or requirements.

You may have noticed from our recent "UNSCRAMBLES" that while I had visited the Warner-Robbins Air Museum, the New England Air Museum and Kitty-Hawk (first powered flight), Bud Evans had visited and reports on his fly-over at Kill Devil Hill (50 years ago) and Mike McCann and Bob James had recently visited the Fantasy of Flight and Sun-N-Fun Museums. I mention this only to show we have a Board of Directors that are dedicated to aviation.

T-2C Buckeye reassembly has been completed, washed, and moved into the Display Hanger. It looks good and is a standout with its contrasting paint scheme (training glow orange).

VAC logo and the ATTRACTIONS sign on I-95 are still on hold for dry weather. The state Dept. of Transportation will not install the large attractions sign until we have 3 to 4 straight dry days.

The Florida General Services Administration (Federal materials) has requested photos and status of all GSA loaned items for their annual inventory.

Don Hussey is finalizing the grant applications to Buehler Foundation and Boeing. The Buehler application is for funding for the TBM restoration and the one to Boeing is for funds to repair the *Tico-Belle*. Both are matching fund type grants.

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**Public Relations - Bud Evans**

The Valiant Air Command is participating in a joint Aviation Museum advertising project with The Fantasy Of Flight, Flying Tiger Warbird Restoration and Florida Aviation Museum. The kick-off will begin on 6 December with a "Doughnut and Coffee start at The V.A.C. museum and a flight to The Flying Tiger Warbird Restoration Museum for breakfast. This will be followed by a flight to The Fantasy of Flight Museum for a press luncheon. The Florida Aviation Museum was committed to a prior program on that date and will not participate in the "Flight of Four" kick-off publicity flight. They will, however, be an active participant in the advertising project. Basically each museum will sell a package ticket, which includes admission to all four museums and discounts in the souvenir shops. We should gain Central Florida advertising to the people interested in aviation history.

## Aviating with Bud Evans

There are so many memories that men who have been in combat would just as soon forget. Unfortunately most of us are not raised to a life of violence and when we are placed in a position of "kill or be killed", we fight to survive. War is such a case in point. It causes normally gentle people to be forced to kill an enemy who is trying to enforce his will on people friendly to our country. The one solace we have which somewhat eases our conscience, is that those people we were shooting have the intent and ability to kill us! Unfortunately in war, animals are used for many purposes to support the military efforts. This was particularly true in Korea. The North Koreans and the Chinese used horses, water buffalo, donkeys, etc. for much of their off-road hauling. They were primarily "pack-animals" carrying ammunition, food, disassembled artillery pieces and the like. The "Gooks" were very inventive in finding ways of getting their heavy artillery pieces into areas where we didn't think they could possibly be. The animals and men made unbelievable treks through mountains and other seemingly impassable areas.

The mission I'm describing in this article was to fly to the Yalu River about half way along the border with China and proceed down a very narrow valley between two high mountains. The pass ran almost all the way from the Chinese border to the Sea of Japan just north of Wunghnam. Our Marines had made a successful landing and had advanced well up the East Coast of North Korea but had suddenly run into some very tough unexpected resistance from the Chinese. They were withdrawing back to Hungnam and Ultimately to Wansan where they were to be evacuated by ship should they not be able to defend the port city from the Chinese onslaught. It was difficult for our Intelligence folks to understand how anyone could bring such a powerful Army Force down from China through what seemed to impassable terrain. At least for the kind of heavy artillery such as was being used against our Tenth Corps and 8<sup>th</sup> Army. We had established an area in the northeastern part of North Korea by landing troops at Wansan on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 1950 and further north three days later. The Chinese began their invasion into North Korea the day before the Wansan landing but I don't believe our military leaders believed it was a serious threat to our forces. Whatever their beliefs were, the outcome is history.



## Aviating with Bud Evans - cont.

As a fighter pilot I was trying to do what I was sent to accomplish; destroy the enemy anywhere we found him. It was his supply lines that were our main concern at the time of the mission I am about to describe. I flew at high altitude from our base at Teagu and descended to 10,000 feet as we arrived at the Yalu River about in the middle of North Korea's border with China. My route as briefed, was to

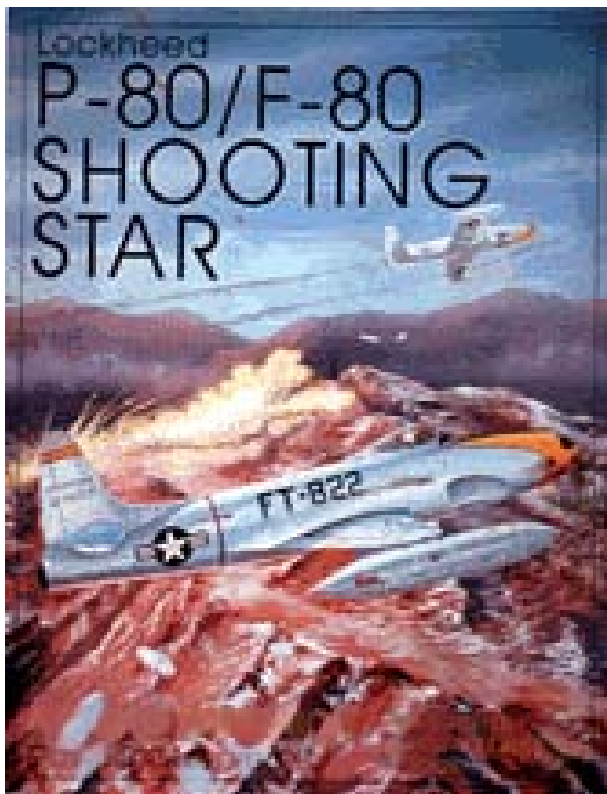


follow a very steep narrow pass that ran mostly South towards Hungnam. The mountains were very high and the pass was very narrow with a sharply winding river running through it. I began my search down to the South but found that the pass was so narrow that I had to fly at 6,000 feet altitude just to have enough room to keep my 4-ship flight together without running into the rocks on either side of us. My wingman was spread out from my right wing about 50 feet and slightly behind. My number 3 and 4 ships were stacked up 200 feet above and 3,000 feet behind me. It was obvious from the terrain that there were no roads or railroad tracks running along next to river. What did catch my attention as a narrow path that seemed to be cut from the solid face of the right hand side of the valley at an altitude of 5,500ft. It was just slightly lower than I was flying and although it was much too narrow to drive any type of vehicle along it did seem to be well traveled. I wondered at the time if it could have been there during the time of Ghengis Khan or even before, used as an ancient road traveled by caravans taking goods to the ports along the Sea of Japan. Several times I had to pull up suddenly to avoid hitting the side of the mountain as I came around a sharp turn in the valley. This maneuver created some interesting comments from the rest of the flight as we had to perform a modified loop to clear the top of the mountain before circling back to continue our search for signs of enemy activity. Rounding a bend in the pass, I found myself almost level with an un-



## Aviating with Bud Evans - cont.

ending line of Chinese troops and a large number of pack animals of all kinds. This was a sudden leap back in time for there in front of me was truly what could be a picture from thousands of years ago. The narrow path was occupied by a caravan of elephants, camels, horses, oxen and men. As far ahead as I could see there was this thin line of ancient military warriors looking much like I imagine Hannibal's hordes looked crossing the Alps. I flew for at least half-mile, just feet from the side of this strange force of enemy soldiers almost transfixed at such an unexpected sight. The poor souls' heads snapped around to look at me as they heard the sound of my F-80 streaking past them. I can imagine what went through their minds. There was no place for them to hide or run and very little room to fire anything at us but their weapons they were carrying. Pulling up sharply in a left climbing turn to roll out above the mountain ridge I directed my flight to follow me with spacing enough to begin firing at the caravan at the point where my attacks ended. There was only one path and it was filled



with our targets! What followed was a memory I would like to forget but never will.

I rolled in for my first pass slowing to a comfortable 300 mph and started firing at the last part of the column. We were carrying only four 5-inch rockets and six 50-caliber machine guns each. I chose only to use the machine guns at first. My pass was similar to that of an aerial gunnery pass on a tow target, except that I couldn't roll out and pass behind the target, I was in a slight dive pulling "g's" and firing. Concentrating on turning tight enough to keep from

## Aviating with Bud Evans - cont.

flying into the solid Rock Mountain along which their trail was carved. Hitting my targets took all the flying skill I could master! The carnage was devastating. As the bullets tore up the road and the soldiers on it, they also ricochet off of the rock wall and knocked men and animals off of the cliff. During my first pass I almost flew into some of men, animals and cargo that my bullets had knocked out into space from the path. We each took turns picking up the destruction of the column where the aircraft ahead left off from his firing pass. I don't remember how many passes we each made but we ran out of bullets and used our rockets on the remaining remnants of the caravan. We fired them into the rock face of the cliff just above the path letting the rock avalanches do their damage.

You would think that having flown over 100 missions at that time and having seen so many enemies killed that I would not have let this mission stick so vividly in my memory but it does. First of all I knew that if I didn't destroy the caravan that was on its way to attack our forces in the Hangjin/Pujan areas of North Korea they would soon be killing our men. That was what I did and for that I feel no regret. Seeing the innocent animals (elephants, camels etc.) being pushed off into space by their handlers as they leaped to their deaths and seeing my guns kill and knock them off of the path into mid-air was not a pleasant experience. As we left the mountains we left very little on the narrow trail along that ancient high pass route as almost all signs of the attack were lying thousands of feet below in that inhospitable river valley. I know I didn't place the animals in harms way. It was the choice of the Chinese to use them and I'm sure they had found it a safe way to transport troops and artillery from the Yalu to the Sea of Japan without being spotted. Someone in Intelligence and Mission Planning must have suspected that they might be using those old trails and scheduled my mission to recce that route. I wish they had chosen someone else but I can't regret doing what I was trained and expected to do. I only regret having to destroy men and animals when they were placed in an inescapable position by their leaders. I have never intentionally mistreated a dumb animal and have always found my dogs to be a great comfort to my family and me. However badly I feel about the killing of elephants, and Camels I have never wanted to have one to care for. I have however owned horses for my daughters riding pleasure.

Never let anyone tell you that there is anything glamorous in War. Even if you fight it from the air!



## Yesterdays Battles - Jeff James

August 1943-Operation "Husky," the allied invasion of Axis held Sicily, would be one of the largest and most controversial amphibious campaigns of World War Two. To the Americans it was a waste of time, causing a delay in the real invasion, which would be launched from England into German occupied France. To the British, it was a way to get the most out of their limited manpower and resources. Not only would it be much less costly than an invasion of France, it just might knock Italy out of the war. So after the last Axis forces surrendered in North Africa in May, the attack on Sicily became inevitable.

The allies assembled an awe-inspiring force that included 3,300 ships! These would land seven divisions in the first wave alone. The Germans and Italians fielded eleven divisions with about 230,000 men. Roughly 800 Luftwaffe aircraft were within range of Sicily, and the battered but still potent Italian fleet might send its four remaining battleships and their escorts out to counter the invasion flotilla.

The invasion began on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1943, spearheaded by glider and parachute attacks. These attacks ended up being widely scattered, but they also served to confuse the Germans due to reports coming in from numerous locations of allied attacks. When the sea born invasion force arrived, all went well at the British beaches near Syracuse. However, American forces on their left ran into stiff German resistance at Gela, including German tanks. American forces were shoved back toward their own invasion beaches, but managed to hold off the Germans, thanks in part to naval gunfire. Although the German tanks were well armored and tough, they proved to be no match for the six-inch naval guns of allied light cruisers.

Unfortunately, friendly fire incidents occurred in World War Two much like they do even today. In order to strengthen the American positions, 2,000 paratroopers of the 82<sup>nd</sup> airborne division were flown in on the night of July 11<sup>th</sup>. That day Luftwaffe attacks had already sank an American destroyer, a Liberty ship and an LST. The Douglas C-47's carrying the paratroops arrived during nighttime German air raid. Although allied ships had been informed of the C-47's scheduled arrival, they blasted away at everything in the sky, both allied and German. Tragically, 23 C-47's loaded with paratroopers were shot down. A further 37 were badly damaged, although one was able to fly back to North Africa despite 1,000 holes!



## Yesterdays Battles - Jeff James - cont.

Back on the ground things began to look up. Hot-tempered American General George S. Patton chaffed at guarding the British left flank in a supporting role. Thus he sent a portion of his forces west to capture the important port of Palermo. The American 2<sup>nd</sup> armored division covered 100 miles in only four days. Not to be outdone, the 3<sup>rd</sup> infantry division marched 54 miles in a 36 hour period! Despite the Germans sinking 44 ships in Palermo harbor in an attempt to render it useless, hard working U.S. Army engineers got the port up to 60% capacity in a mere seven days! After taking Palermo, Patton turned east and raced his arch rival, British General Bernard Montgomery for the city of Messina, on the northeast coast of Sicily.



Battling rugged terrain and stubborn German rearguard units, Patton's forces reached Messina on August 17<sup>th</sup>, a few hours ahead of the British. Unfortunately, some 40,000 German and 70,000 Italian troops had already escaped to the mainland. The 38-day campaign had cost 19,000 allied casualties. Although it had not knocked Italy out of the war, it put dictator Benito Mussolini in a very uncomfortable position. One month later, when allied troops invaded Italy itself, Mussolini was overthrown and put in jail. Unfortunately, he would not stay there for long.

## C-47 TICO BELLE REPAIR FUND

As of 31 August 2003 dollar donations to the fund totaled \$55,950 with a remaining balance of \$1,690. We are most appreciative of the very significant donations this month particularly a set of propeller assemblies. The newly overhauled propellers were donated and transported to the VAC by Paul Gaither of Aviation Propellers Inc. of Miami. Props represented the second greatest hurdle to repairing the C-47. The first and greatest (in terms of cost) is a pair of P&W R-1830-92 engines. If anyone has or knows of a source of a couple of R-1830's or someone that might donate one please let me know. They can be mid- or so time engines.

- Bob Frazier

### Additional Notes from Bob James, Maintenance Officer:

On the C-47 work scene, the aft section exterior sheet metal repairs have been completed thanks to the great work by Gordon Briggs and Ivan Gomez. See the pictures to the right.

This team has worked steadily for the last nine months and done a superb job, thanks guys for your dedication and hard work. Work on the main gear and tail wheel is continuing. The work on the mid wing section is progressing well. Al McQueen is working this effort four days a week on a every other week basis. The primary structure work is nearing completion and Al will be moving to the sheet metal work in the left engine compartment in a short time.

UTVA: The radio and intercom work is completed. Some minor clean up items are remaining (read seat hold down/mounting, battery, ELT, etc.). Unfortunately we are losing Jim Towe to the Space Center. Seems he got an offer he couldn't refuse so he is going back to play an active part in the Shuttle program.



Thought you might like to see the progress

Before:



After:



Before:



After:







Space Coast Regional Airport  
6600 Tico Road  
Titusville, FL 32780-8009

Phone: 321-268-1941  
FAX: 321-269-5969  
Email: [vacinformation@aol.com](mailto:vacinformation@aol.com)

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PERMIT No. 129  
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32780-8009

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION  
VALIANT AIR COMMAND, INC.**

6600 Tico Road, Titusville, FL 32780-8009 (321) 268-1941 or 1942

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

My Name Tag should read \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Tag \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Ph \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Children \_\_\_\_\_

Armed Services Time: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Dates \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in: Restoration \_\_\_\_\_ Warbirds \_\_\_\_\_ Museum \_\_\_\_\_ Airshows \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteering \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ M/C \_\_\_\_\_

This Application is subject to review by our General Staff. **YOUR INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL**  
Single (1) \_\_\_\_\_ \$75/yr Family (2) \_\_\_\_\_ \$100/yr **(DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A PILOT OR WARBIRD OWNER TO BELONG TO THE VAC**