



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 26, Issue 8

August/September 2004

2004 ELECTION UPDATE

The following change was made in September 2000 to the VAC Bylaws:

Addition to Article III, the following new item:

(3) In the event that all positions open for election are uncontested, ballots shall not be distributed or mailed out to the General Membership, unless there are other changes/propositions to the By-laws to be voted on by the General Membership.

Accordingly, as there have been no letters of intent to run submitted to the VAC by the cutoff date of August 15th, the election originally scheduled for October 11, 2004 (for the positions of Executive Officer, Operations Officer, and Transportation/Facilities Officer) will not be held.

Hurricane Charley Update



See Page 6 for details...

Tuskegee Airman Hiram Mann to
Speak at VAC Membership Meeting

Saturday, September 11th



See page 2 for more information on this meeting and this great American hero. Call the VAC and let us know you are coming so we can get an accurate count for dinner. We hope you can make it!

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Valiant Air Command

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| | |
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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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

SEPTEMBER 14, 2004

12:00 NOON

VAC BOARD ROOM

OCTOBER 12, 2004

12:00 NOON

VAC BOARD ROOM

Fall VAC Social Events:

September 11, 2004 (Sat): Membership dinner with speaker: Lt Col, USAF (Ret) Hiram Mann, Tuskegee Airman. He flew the P-51 (Red Tail Angels), P-40 Warhawk, P-47 Thunderbolt, and co-pilot time in B-25's, the C-47 and C-45.

5:30 Cocktails
6:30 Dinner
7:00 Program

All members and guests welcome. VAC hangar. VAC members - dinner \$13. Non members - \$15. **Please call museum for reservations.**



See his bio on page 8 of this issue.

October 30, 2004 (Sat): Membership dinner. Wear those UNIFORMS AND COSTUMES of the 40's. Dress as your favorite flying hero, or Movie Star! PRIZES AWARDED - be creative!

5:30 Cocktails
6:30 Dinner
7:00 Awards presentation

November 13, 2004 (Sat): Airshow Meeting.

1:00 VAC Library. Refreshments.

December 10, 2004 (Friday): CHRISTMAS PARTY & DINNER

5:30 Cocktails
6:30 Dinner



Executive Officer - Hal Larkin

On Sunday August 8, we finished painting the F9F-5 Panther. Between the weather, rain or cold and volunteers vacation, it seems that painting was an endless task. Now we have to put the star and bars on each side of the fuselage and install the remaining 43 decals. The cockpit is 75% complete. The instrument panel and the reflector panel have been fabricated, instruments collected and installed. The left and right sub-panels have been repaired, proper instruments in place and installed. All the 13 panels for the right console have been fabricated and installed. On the left console there are 12 panels of which two are installed and three are ready for installation, including the throttle quadrant. The seven remaining panels are with the vendor in Daytona Beach. We are also doing the final fit of the tail cone and tail pipe, which we fabricated for the J-48 engine. As soon as the tail cone and tail pipe fitting is complete, we will remove the tail section and install the J-48 engine. After reinstalling the tail section, all we have left is the cockpit. We have located a gun sight for the panther, all we have to do is work out a trade.

We have started some of the sub-assemblies for the TA-4J in the rework cycle. The airframe is still outside on support-structures that we fabricated. All the paint has been removed from the airframe and sub-assemblies.

The Northrop Grumman F-5E BuNo 741 519 arrived, the fuselage in July and the wings/center section in August. We did receive two CD disks from the Navy that contain the entire maintenance manual. Now we are in the process of reviewing the CD's and printing the pages that show the special handling fixtures required and the correct assembly procedure. When the center section and wings (that contain the main landing gear) are installed we will put the F-5E in the restoration hanger. While we are waiting for the printouts from the CD's, we are fabricating an adapter so that we can use our tow bar to move the F-5E. Although Northrop made hundreds of F-5's, this aircraft is one of a kind. In 2003 the entire nose section was re-worked by Northrop-Grumman to a configuration to investigate the possibility of suppressing the sonic boom. The last flight of this F-5E was in January 2004. When restoration is complete, the F-5E will be an asset to our museum. Another interesting fact about the Northrop-Grumman F5-E is that the nose section (including the cockpit of an F-5A) was used to build the Grumman X-29 forward swept wing aircraft. The X-29 was the first X series experimental aircraft built in over a decade. First flight was on December 14, 1984 with Grumman test pilot Chuck Sewell. The aircraft made a total 242 flights and at last report it was in storage at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

The ME-208 is waiting for the top curved section of the windshield, which is at a vendor in Rockledge. After installation of the curved section of the windshield, the fuselage will be painted. The wings have already been painted.

Executive Officer - Hal Larkin - cont.

We also have a Pratt Whitney R-2800 engine that came out of a Grumman Hellcat. We are removing all the parts installed by Grumman and will display it as an engine delivered by Pratt & Whitney. In the meantime we are trying to swap Grumman parts removed for a gun sight and other items for the panther.

Operations - Mike McCann

Well, the content of this article and indeed this whole *UnScramble* issue has changed dramatically as a result of Hurricane Charley, which swept through Florida on August 13th. I was not here to witness the wrath of this storm, having a trip that originated in Miami that evening. The results that you will see here are a result of conversations with the individuals and organizations involved, which took up a majority of my time this week.

We here at the VAC went largely unscathed, as did the field here. Winds were clocked at 80 mph at nearby Kennedy Space Center. Orlando witnessed substantial damage. MCO had winds of over 100 mph. The terminal sustained roof damage. Orlando Exec and Sanford received major damage, with planes thrown all about (including a DC-3 that was in the process of being restored and which several members considered purchasing) and hangars destroyed. The eye of the storm passed right over Kissimmee airport, and our friends there did not fare well. Stallion 51 sustained some minor hangar damage due to shrapnel but the facilities and Mustangs are OK. However, over 12 days later they were still without power. Tom and Sue Reilly at the Flying Tigers Warbird Museum and restoration facility lost about 40 feet of hangar and the airplanes inside received some damage. No word yet on the almost-completed B-17. Warbird Adventures right next door put their 2 T-6's and 2 Bell 47 helicopters inside the newest hangar on the field, and it collapsed completely, destroying everything inside (no doubt this severe damage was due to imbedded tornados). Their other 2 T-6's fortunately were off station in Illinois.

The grounds and facilities at Lakeland came out relatively unscathed. Likewise with Fantasy of Flight in Polk county. Farther to the south, things were worse off. Linc Dexter, of N. Fort Myers, reports his and Earl Walsh's T-28's are OK, but they are trapped inside his hangar at Arcadia Field, which received substantial damage. He also has Pete Krauser's T-28 there undergoing a restoration. The field has now been taken over by FEMA, and access for private residents is severely restricted. Denny Labbe reports the 4 O-2's at Page Field came thru OK. There will be 2 or more pages of coverage and pictures elsewhere in this issue.

Operations - Mike McCann - cont.

On a brighter note, I would like to recognize a huge undertaking by T-34 driver Ken Terry, of Spruce Creek, who has taken it upon himself to put together a comprehensive formation training manual for the VAC. We are looking at ways to have this 90-page document economically printed. In conjunction with this effort, we are looking at expanding our formation training efforts to pilots of other than strictly low-wing bubble-canopy type warbirds. He believes a significant market exists for this training, and we are going to explore holding either a ground school or a full up clinic later in the fall. My thanks to him for his efforts.

— *It is a tacit, yet profound admission of the preeminence of flying in the hierarchy of the human spirit, that those who seek to control aviators via threats always threaten to take one's wings and not one's life.*

UPCOMING AIRSHOWS OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERS:

October 9 - 10, 2004: The Great Georgia Airshow. Falcon Field, Peachtree City, GA. Jerry Cobb (678) 478-4630. www.thegreatgeorgiaairshow.com

October 9 - 10, 2004: Suncoast Airfest 2004. Albert Whitted Airport, St Petersburg, FL. Steve Tolliver (813) 917-1967. mail@suncoastairfest.com. www.suncoastairfest.com

October 16 - 17, 2004: Ft. Myers Beach Offshore Grand Prix and Airshow. Chris Moskal (941) 540-0097 www.fmbairshow.org

October 30 - 31, 2004: NAS Jacksonville Airshow. Jacksonville, FL. Amy Cimino. (904) 542-3577.

November 6 - 7, 2004: NAS Key West Airshow. Key West, FL.

November 11 - 13, 2004: Blue Angels Homecoming Airshow. Pensacola NAS, FL. Lt Mike Hanson. (850) 452-8161.

November 13 - 14, 2004: Celebrate Freedom 2004. Woodward Field, Camden, SC. Mr. Phillip L Catham (803) 530-8687. csloll@aol.com. www.celebratefreedomfoundation.org

November 13 - 14, 2004: Stuart Airshow. Walt McGlynn. (772) 286-1844. www.stuartairshow.com

February 24 - 27, 2005: NWOC - National Warbird Operator Conference - 2005. Seattle, Washington. This is a must attend event for all operators, owners, technicians and enthusiasts. National Warbird Operators Conference. For more information, please go to www.warbirdconference.com. More details posted soon.

Maintenance - Bob James

C-47 - I know that we all are all being deluged with requests for funds from numerous worthy causes this summer season from charitable, political and many other organizations. However I must repeat my plea for donations to allow us to secure at least one engine. I have proposed that \$10,000 dollars from the Tico Air Show of 2004 profits be transferred to the engine account. This was approved narrowly at the July board meeting. We have also been able to sell the nose section of our parts donor C-47 (N8040L) for \$2,750 dollars. This leaves us, counting all the other funds in the C-47 account, about \$8,000 dollars short of the funds required to obtain the first engine from the Basler Aircraft Co. I hope that we can make up this short fall in the next 30 days to avoid losing our option money (\$1,000 dollars) to hold the engine for a ninety-day period. Again, my deepest thanks to all of you that have supported the Tico Belle with your donations and those of you who will do so in the future.

This past month the C-47 stabilizer has had considerable attention with the repair of a prior damaged section that needed some "reconstructive surgery". Thanks to Dick Hart and his continuous effort on this repair and Norm Lindsay & Harry McNamara for their work on removing the old paint, prepping the surfaces and etch priming same. James Bacay has been continuing his work on the control cables in the fuselage. I had the two cross bars that tie the upper engine mount structure together magnafluxed to ensure that there were no hidden cracks or flaws resulting from the crash. Thankfully both of the cross bars passed the check with no deficiencies observed.

TBM - We received the TBM parts and so far have inventoried 78 different items with a number of those multiple items. Inventorying the items is a time consuming task as many of the items lack part numbers and/or do not show up in the illustrated parts book. We do have a couple of nose bowls, ignition harnesses, fuel selector valves etc., so if any of you TBM owners out there need some odd item or two check with me as we just might have it.

Our lead technician, Al McQueen is working several other projects so we see him about nine or more days a month when he usually works several days in a row. The current work area is the aft bulkhead in the bomb bay. The old fire bomber configuration had a solid bulkhead that did away with the bombardier's window. It is being returned to its original state.

UTVA - Joe Hinge is nearing completion of the boost pump electrical cable/wiring. He has been limited on the time he can devote to the project due to other weekend commitments. Hopefully it will soon be flyable.

Personnel - Alice Iacuzzo

Welcome Colonels

NEW MEMBERS:

| | | |
|---------|----------|--------------------|
| Charles | Castro | Melbourne, FL |
| Richard | Williams | Fredericksburg, VA |

RENEWING MEMBERS:

| | | |
|-----------------|------------|----------------------|
| Winn & Carolyn | Baker | Darien, GA |
| Preston | Beck | Melbourne, FL |
| Phillip | Blaha | Cape Canaveral, FL |
| Ed | Booth, Jr. | Jacksonville, FL |
| Bob & Sandy | Boswell | Melbourne, FL |
| Mike & Carmen | Brooks | Orlando, FL |
| Luis & Lorinda | de'Zayas | Rockledge, FL |
| Linc & Lynn | Dexter | N. Ft Myers, FL |
| Dorothy | Douglas | Fernandina Bch, FL |
| John | Duffy | Sumter, SC |
| Billy | Foster | Fernandina Bch, FL |
| James | Goolsby | Crescent City, FL |
| Fred & Julie | Johnson | Ocala, FL |
| Donald | Leathers | Dedham, MA |
| Jimmy & Dirk | Leeward | Ocala, FL |
| Glenn | Legge | Melbourne, FL |
| Don | Leiser | Port St. Lucie, FL |
| Al & Dory | Martin | Cocoa Beach, FL |
| Mike | McDonough | Vestal, NY |
| Gene | McNeely | Daytona Beach, FL |
| Walter | Ohlrich | Virginia Beach, FL |
| Robert | Reynolds | Ponce Inlet, FL |
| Ken & Judy | Seifert | Acworth, GA |
| John | Strickland | North Ft. Meyers, FL |
| Lee | Tannenbaum | Cocoa Beach, FL |
| Jerry & Deborah | Trachtman | Merritt Island, FL |
| Jerry & Marion | Walbrun | Ocala, FL |
| Paul | Woodard | Sebastian, FL |

C-47 DONATION LIST

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------|
| William | Bagwell | Merritt Island, FL | \$100 |
| Bill | Dillard | Palm Bay, FL | \$1,000 |
| Frank | Fleck | Cocoa Beach, FL | \$500 |
| Bob & Diane | Frazier | N Palm Bch, FL | \$500 |
| (for Memorial Fund, Bill Frazier) | | | |
| Don | Hussey | N Palm Bch, FL | \$50 |
| John & Dorothy | Ingersoll | Wilton, CT | \$200 |
| Robert & Ann | James | Merritt Island, FL | \$500 |
| David | MacCulley | Melbourne, FL | \$150 |
| Mike | McDonough | Titusville, FL | \$500 |
| Lloyd & Gaye | Morris | New Smyrna Bch, FL | \$500 |
| Donald | Riggle | Titusville, FL | \$200 |
| Walter | Yocum | Titusville, FL | \$5,000 |

Procurement - Bob Frazier

F-5E(SSBD) — The wing for the Shaped Sonic Boom Demonstrator has finally arrived. Truck company administrative confusion and thunderstorms hindered delivery. Next is getting a fixture to install the wing.

GALLERY OF AVIATION MUSEUM — Inventory and appraisal of the Museum's contents continues after their break for Oshkosh Air Show. Contents may be less than expected as Wisconsin History Museum and relatives have requested a few items. End of September is likely packing date.

U.S. ARMY — The Tank/Automotive and Armament Command again confirms that our Museum has been approved and certified, but staff problems have delayed formal confirmation letter.

C-47 TICO BELLE REPAIR FUND

We passed the first big hurdle in our appeal for funds to buy engines for the C-47. There was a great outpouring of donations in JULY totaling \$11,750. We now have a 31 July balance of \$26,435 (including a \$10,000 transfer of VAC funds), which will cover the first engine. A HUGE THANKS to members and friends of Tico Belle. Donations from the beginning of the Fund project now total \$84,054 or a little over half of the original repair estimate.

BOB FRAZIER

Place Your Ad Here

Get your message to a specialized audience whose interests are primarily in preservation of historical Warbirds. Sell or buy a Warbird or Warbird parts and/or services through our monthly newsletter, the *UnScramble*.

Advertise in the monthly VAC *UnScramble* any "Warbird Aircraft or Parts for Sale" or "Wanted to Buy" Thirty (30) words for \$10.00 per month. You provide the artwork (if any). Contact VAC Headquarters at (321) 268-1941 or FAX the ad to (321) 268-5969 or e-mail mikewizmcc@aol.com.

Hurricane Charley Devastates Central Florida....

Charley makes landfall at Punta Gorda

Summary of Florida AOPA Airport Support Network volunteer reports from Hurricane Charley

Daytona Beach International, Daytona (DAB) — ASNV Seth Young: “The airport is open for business. Several light aircraft at some FBOs and flight schools were damaged, and there is some hangar damage. Embry-Riddle lost a Diamond trainer aircraft.”

Marco Island Airport, Naples (MKY) — ASNV Dave Gardner: “MKY did not receive any property or aircraft damage due to Charley, even though the winds were sustained at 90 mph. The airport is open and normal conditions prevail.”

Arthur Dunn Air Park, Titusville (X21) — ASNV Larry Gilbert: “The status of Dunn Airpark is pretty good. A few doors blew off of hangars and one airplane was damaged.”

Page Field Airport, Fort Myers (FMY) — ASNV and *AOPA Pilot* columnist Mark Twombly: “At Page Field in Fort Myers, two aircraft flipped and were destroyed, eight to 10 others were damaged. There was some minor hangar and storage shed damage. Power was restored at 7 a.m. Monday, August 16. The FAA contract tower is in full operation.”

Peter O. Knight Field, Tampa (TPF) — ASNV Ralph Swank: “TPF was originally the target of Charley, but the airport escaped with no damage. Many planes were moved elsewhere, mainly those in the open or in shade hangars, but we had no major wind or rain or flooding.”

Spruce Creek Airport, Daytona Beach (7FL6) — ASNV Tony Crawford: “No injuries, no aircraft damaged, just house, car, and tree damage, but nothing serious.”

Lakeland Linder Regional Airport, Lakeland (LAL) — ASNV Malcolm Warren: “Although LAL had high winds due to the center of the storm passing close by [Lake Wales], there have been no reports of damage at LAL that I know about.”

Sebring Regional Airport, Sebring (SEF) — ASNV Robert Wood: “SEF had only very minor damage. A couple of buildings had roof damage but none of the commercial or T-hangars were damaged nor was the terminal. Service continues here. Our neighboring airport at Avon Park did sustain some damage that I observed



from a distance. One new commercial hangar and one large business jet hangar were damaged, the latter severely.”

Kissimmee Gateway Airport, Kissimmee (ISM) — ASNV Kathryn Budde-Jones: “Kissimmee Gateway Airport (ISM) was hit hard with damage to each of the five FBOs, and I estimate damage to 70 percent of the airplanes on the field. A tornado collapsed

two of Ranger Aviation’s three hangars, destroying many of the planes stored inside of them for safekeeping from the storm. The Warbird Adventures T-6 operation based at the field lost two T-6 Texans and two Bell 47 helicopters in



that hangar. Kissimmee Aviation had substantial damage to its hangars and aircraft. Marathon Aviation lost its South Hangar; Sunstate Aviation lost its maintenance

hangar and a dozen or more of its flight training planes. The Flying Tigers Warbird Restoration Museum lost 40 feet of its hangar and restoration facility, but the B-17 and B-25 survived intact. The C-47 sustained damaged when it lifted up during the storm and then landed on the three trucks that were weighting it down.”

Warbird Adventures

Update Aug 21, 2004

Blown down, but NOT out...

As you have probably seen on TV, on Friday Aug 13 we were hit by Hurricane Charley. We had prepared for the storm by placing two of our airplanes and both our helicopters in the largest and newest hangar at the Kissimmee

Airport. Unfortunately, the hangar collapsed on top of our aircraft and they were all severely damaged.



We are temporarily suspending operations in Kissimmee due to the lack of aircraft. We still have two more operational T-6's in Aurora Illinois. The summer tour will end Sept 12, but we will try to return one aircraft about one week early to re-start operations in Kissimmee ASAP. Please call (800) 386-1593 for the latest scheduling information.



The recovery process will take several weeks since it is a very delicate operation to remove tons of steel and mangled aircraft without further damage. We have not yet determined what can be salvaged and what will be a total loss. We are however hopeful that it looks worse than it actually is. Our goal is to return one helicopter and one T-6 to service by Christmas. We have received a lot of phone calls from former customers asking how they can help and assist us in this situation which is very appreciated. The best help right away would simply be to return and fly with us again. We have not laid off any of our staff and we will try our best not to. Once the aircraft are in our possession and we can evaluate what can be salvaged, assistance in the maintenance department will probably be needed.

Sincerely,
Thom Richard, Warbird Adventures, Inc.

Stallion 51
HURRICANE CHARLEY UPDATE:



Although Hurricane Charley caused much devastation on the Kissimmee Airport we are happy to report that the Stallion 51 flight and maintenance facilities came through

with minimal damage. All of the Mustangs and other warbird aircraft were untouched by the 120 mile an hour hurricane winds and unknown wind velocity caused by a tornado that touched down on the airport.

We are without electrical power and unsure when we will be able to establish normal operations. Please be patient. Thank you all for your thoughts and your continued support through this time. If you need to get into contact with us please call (407) 973-0546 (Angela's Cell) or you can email at Angela@Stallion51.com as we can pick those up during various times.

Wachula Municipal, Wachula (CHN) — ASNV Bill Mulcay: "No damage to runways, taxiways, etc., but found hangar doors blown away, aircraft exposed."

Orlando Sanford Airport, Sanford (SFB) — ASNV



Robert Caimie: "Falcon Flight Center had five upside-down planes; Delta had one upside-down plane and several with wing damage; Avion Center had seven aircraft in the hangar damaged; 20 T-hangars damaged. SFB was closed for 18 hours. The FAA had no ILS for three days. There was no damage to the control tower. The StarPort Center is heavily

damaged. The estimate of damage at SFB is \$4 million to \$5 million."



Tuskegee Airman Lt. Col. Hiram E. Mann, USAF, (Ret)



Hiram E. Mann (Lt. Col., USAF, Ret.) is a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, who were the first black military airmen in the United States. These airmen fought two wars - one against a military force overseas and the other against racism at home and abroad. The legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen was the eventual desegregation of the United States Air Force and the recognition that black pilots were equal to white pilots.

Mann entered the Army Air Corps as a Pre-Aviation Student in 1942. He became an Aviation Cadet and completed Single-Engine Combat Pilot Training at Tuskegee Army Air Field (TAAF), Alabama, June 1944. Initially assigned to the 302nd Fighter Squadron, he was reassigned to the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group (The Red Tail Angels) in Italy. Mann flew combat missions with both squadrons in the P-51, "MUSTANG," aircraft.

The 332nd Fighter Group, who became known as the "Tuskegee Airmen," eventually received the Presidential Unit Citation for its longest bomber escort mission to Berlin, Germany, March 24, 1945. They destroyed three German ME-262 jet fighters and damaged five additional jet fighters without losing any of the bombers or any of its own fighter aircraft to enemy aircraft.

Mann returned to Tuskegee Army Air Field Jan '46, transferred to Lockbourne AAF (LAAF), Ohio, and the 477th Composite Group. He attended the Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, (MAFB), Alabama, Command and Staff College, Class of '57, and went on to serve at various Air Force Installations. His last assignment was as an Admissions Counselor for the US Air Force Academy. Mann is active in numerous organizations and has served as the keynote

speaker at a variety of prestigious events. He is also co-author of *Forever Dreaming*, a book dedicated to impressing minority youth on the need to set goals, persevere, work hard and obtain a high level of education in order to achieve those goals.



Military History:

Graduated from Tuskegee Army Air Field Flying Training Program 27 June 1944 (Class 44-F) as a Single Engine Combat Fighter Pilot.

Attended the Air University, Command and Staff College, at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., Class of 57. Flew Combat Missions in the P-51, "MUSTANG," aircraft with the 332nd Fighter Group (The Red Tail Angels) in the European-African Theater of Operations. Initially assigned to the 302nd Fighter Squadron, and reassigned to 100th Ftr Sq when the 302nd was deactivated. Flew the P-40, "WARHAWK," and



Quote from Hiram Mann,

"No man survives when freedom fails, the best men rot in filthy jails, and those who cry appease, appease are hanged by those they tried to please."





the P-47, "THUNDERBOLT," fighter-type aircraft; and has co-pilot time in the B-25, "MITCHELL," bomber; the C-47, "GOONEY-BIRD," and the C-45, "EXPEDITER," cargo planes. He has no JET flying time because he could not get into a flying unit with jets, because he had no jet flying time! (CATCH-22.)

Member of numerous organizations including:

- Charter Member - The Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated (TAI) (National-since 1972)
- Charter Member - Gen Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr, Chapter TAI, Fla.
- Honorary Member - HIRAM E. MANN Chapter TAI, Walterboro, SC, The Forty-First Chapter Chartered (Named after him)

Citations:

- Presidential Unit Citation (Mar 45); Air Medal w/3 Oak Leaf Clusters; Rhineland, Po Valley, North Apennines, Balkans Campaigns.
- European-African; Middle Eastern Campaign Medal (EAMECM); ACM (American Campaign Medal); World War II Victory Medal (WWIIVM); Armed Forces Reserve Medal (AFRM); Korean Service Medal.
- Retired from the military as a Lt Col, 26 July 1972. He completed twenty years and six months of military service, including reserve time.
- Retired from Federal Civil Service 31 August 1974 as a Supervisory Management Analyst.
- Worked with youngsters as Cub Scout Den Dad; Advisor for Junior Achievement; Civil Air Patrol.
- Speaker at Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI)
- Keynote Speaker at the Tony Jannus 34th Award Luncheon on September 26, 1997 when General Charles "Chuck" Yeager was presented the award.
- Grand Marshal and Speaker, Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration Parade, Walterboro, SC, 16 January 1994
- Keynote Speaker at the HIRAM E. MANN, TAI Chapter's First Scholarship Banquet, Charleston Air Force Base, SC, 16 October 1998



ESCORT TO BERLIN

Memberships:

- Life Member - Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity
- Life Member - The Retired Officer Association (TROA)
- Life Member - National Ass'n. of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE)
- Life Member - Pilot Classes of 1944
- Life Member - P-40 WARHAWK Pilots Association
- Life Member - P-47 THUNDERBOLT Pilots Association
- Life Member - P-51 MUSTANG Pilots Association
- Life Member - Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum COMMANDER'S CLUB
- Charter Member - The Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated (TAI) (National since 1972)
- Charter Member - Gen Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr, Chapter TAI, Fla.
- Honorary Member - HIRAM E. MANN Chapter TAI, Walterboro, SC
- The Forty-First Chapter Chartered (Named after him)
- Honorary Member - The Retired Enlisted Ass'n (TREA) Chapter #117
- Member - F & A M, Prince Hall Masons
- Member - Air Force Association (AFA)
- Member - Nat'l. Ass'n. for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Member - Valiant Air Command (VAC), Titusville, Florida



Hiram E. Mann, right, with fellow Tuskegee Airman graduate Samuel L. Washington pose in front of a P-40 Warhawk.

CO-AUTHOR - "FOREVER DREAMING" A book dedicated especially to impress Minority Youth on the need to set goals, to persevere, to work hard, and to obtain a high level of education to achieve their goals.

Aviating with Bud Evans

One of the on going test programs that was in effect when I reported to my assignment in Fighter Test Operations at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio in 1954, was known as FICON. It was a program designed for large long-range bomber aircraft to carry the shorter-range fighter escort planes with them. The first program attempt was to attach an F-84D (straight wing) to each wingtip of the B-29 Super Fortress at which point the fighters shut down their engines until they were in enemy airspace. They would fire-up their engines and detach themselves from the bomber and provide defensive support while the bomber carried out their bombing mission. Following the bombing and when they were out of enemy airspace the F-84's would hook up to their respective bomber and fly back to home base (provided the bomber that towed them there was not crippled or shot down). The program ended abruptly when they attempted to hook up modified F-84's to each wingtip of the B-29. The first F-84 attached his wing tip to the tow apparatus on the bomber and turned on his test autopilot. The aircraft suddenly began pitch oscillations which translated into roll motions causing the fighter to suddenly roll over onto the top of the bombers wing tearing it off and within seconds both aircraft plunged to the ground killing all of the test engineers and crew plus the F-84 test pilot.

The other project test pilot, Capt. C. E. "Bud" Anderson, who was just about to hook-up on the other wing when the accident occurred, was the first project test pilot for the next FICON program. This was a system where the B-36 carried its fighters in the bomb bay. There was a trapeze arrangement in the bomb bay, which extended downward when the modified F-84G flew in under the B-36. The test fighter had a swept wing with some negative dihedral and sweptback tail configuration of what eventually was on the F-84F. The horizontal tail however had extreme

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negative dihedral, (much the same as the F-4H had years later). The nose had a large hook arrangement, which the pilot flew into the trapeze and after hooking up was stabilized by the system, and lifted into the bomb bay. This program was successful but with the phasing out of the B-36's it was short lived. The McDonnell XF-85 Goblin was a company-flown project that was also short lived. The Labs at Wright Field provided data from the test that had been run by Fighter Test Ops at Wright-Patterson AFB and the XF-85 was designed with the same goal in mind but suffered the fate of no mission with the phasing out the B-36's.

Not to be discouraged, the engineers "Think Tank" came up with another crazy plan. This time they had North American Aviation Company and McClellan AFB in Sacramento, California modify two F-86D's for a "wing tip tow" project. This was to allow one fighter to tow another fighter home if it lost an engine or ran low on fuel. Those of us who were going to have to fly the tests considered it to be a senseless program. First of all the F-86D had a swept wing which required the pilot look back towards the wing tip in order to make the hook up. Secondly, it seemed obvious to us pilots that as soon as the two aircraft became joined at the wing tip they would try to roll towards each other. Never the less the labs had their way and two F-86D's were modified. All radar and weapon systems were replaced by a large winch in the nose with a cable wound around it. One wing tip had a retractable "eye" that could be extended out a few feet and rotated 90 degrees to receive a hook, which could be extended from the wingtip of the aircraft to be towed. When the hook was inserted into the eye the a/c being towed was to reduce power and the aircraft would drift back pulling the cable with it.

I was ordered to McClellan AFB to pick-up one of these modified aircraft and fly it back to Ohio. The day I arrived, the airport was fogged in and remained so until late the next afternoon. The aircraft had not been test flown after the modifications so I planned to stay in the vicinity of Sacramento while checking all of the systems and then flying to Luke AFB in Phoenix, Arizona for my first stop en-route back to Ohio. After checking all the normal systems I actuated both the hook and the eye and then let the cable out a few feet and retracted it back into the wingtip. Everything seemed to operate properly and with McClellan fogging in again I headed for Luke AFB, arriving just before dark. The pattern was empty so I made a fast initial overhead approach. Without drop tanks the F-86D was a "fast mover" at that time. I rolled out on the downwind leg and lowered the landing gear. I felt and heard the gear doors open and the thump of the landing gear locking down as well as the



F-84G hooking up to the mother-ship B-36 during early FICON tests

Aviating with Bud Evans -cont.

Hawaii ANG F-86D



obvious drag of it extending into the air stream. This was confirmed by the three gear safe indicators and the red gear handle light going out.

I made my tight descending turn to final approach while lowering full flaps. I was going to show the F-84 pilots at Luke how a pattern should be flown. It seemed that I was a little faster when I rolled out on final but I was set to touch down directly in front of the Mobile Control tower. As I flared for landing the tower made a frantic call for me to "Go Around". I eased the throttle forward and couldn't believe it when they added: "No landing gear". Checking my indicators I was sure they were down and locked and when I raised the gear handle I felt and heard the landing gear retract and all the indicators registered "Up and locked". I pulled up onto the downwind leg and carefully monitored all systems as I once again lowered the "gear". Everything happened as it had before and I told the tower I would make a pass over the mobile control trailer. I made a very low pass just in front so they couldn't make any mistake about my gear being down as all my indications showed. I couldn't believe their report: "The landing gear is up and clean". Immediately I raised the gear handle and all signs of the landing gear actuation once again were heard and felt. Then mobile control reported



F-86D like the one Bud was testing

Aviating with Bud Evans -cont.

seeing the gear extend and then retract!! This really confused me so the next thing I did was to make a long final approach and asking the controller to watch as I lowered the "gear".

The same action was reported. Gear extended and then retracted, yet I had all "down and locked" indications in the cockpit. My next attempt was to pull the landing gear circuit breaker

and try to pull the emergency lanyard to lower the gear. I couldn't budge the cable as I was fighting 3350 psi hydraulic pressure. I was down to 300 lbs of fuel and it was almost dark so I had run out of ideas. I asked the tower to light an inactive runway as I was going to have to make a gear-up landing! All kinds of thoughts ran through my mind as to how I should make the touchdown. I wanted to inflict the least amount of damage to the test equipment on each wingtip but with a swept wing aircraft it seemed impossible without touching down at I high pitch angle but that would cause the nose to slam down hard probably causing severe aircraft damage. I wanted the runway foamed but I was too low on fuel to delay any longer so I steeled myself for a night gear-up landing. With all the thoughts rushing through my mind I kept asking myself if there was anything I hadn't tried?

Almost as a last desperate and automatic move, I place the gear handle "down" Just as the hydraulic pressure gauge reached its lowest point, I put the handle in the gear-up position. I then pulled as hard as I could on the "Emergency Gear Down" cable using both hands. The unexpected and unbelievable happened! The cable moved and I felt three distinct notches as it did so. The drag was obvious and the noise of the landing gear and doors were constant. My gear handle was "up" with the red unsafe light illuminated. All three gear indicators showed "Unsafe" and the tower couldn't see the gear because of darkness. I made the approach just as I had planned for wheels-up landing and was extremely happy to feel the tires touch, hold and roll as I made a normal landing. I braked to the stop at the end of the runway and as the crash crew arrived I handed one of them my landing gear locking pins. After they were installed I shut down the engine, helped hook up the tug and rode on it to the transient hangar.

After dinner at the club with some old friends and a good nights sleep, I was back at the hangar first thing next morning. They had already checked the gear system and found that it repeated what had happened in the air. It was obvious that they would have to get North American Aviation and the depot at McClellan to send experts to Luke to resolve the problem. I caught a flight back to Dayton. (Continued next month)



Hurricane Charley wreaks havoc at "Flying Tigers Warbird Restoration Museum"



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