

# The Aero Historian



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February 2002

## And now, for something *not* completely different....

Next month is the big month. We all anticipate the change of newsletter editorship with dread, except for Dave Pluth and Jim Kaltenhauser who lately have been going around humming "Born Free". But all good things end... Dave's editing, and my pretense of building kits. To help ease the pain of transition for all of us (though I'm particularly concerned about me) a few words about the new maladministration. I will introduce changes only reluctantly and slowly. I intend to provide you "Classic Newsletter" not "New Coke". I'll announce a change in procedure when and if one becomes necessary. I will not announce changes in quality, and will hope they will go unnoticed.

Of course there is one major change that will take place immediately upon publication of this issue. Where you send your materials. All materials should be sent:

Via e-mail to:

Via snail mail:

George Mellinger

ATTN: TCAH Newsletter

5212 West 47 Street, Apt. 2

Sioux Falls, SD 57106

Sorry, but I have only a single phone line and no FAX machine, so faxing will not work.

Text documents should be sent in either MS Word, or WordPerfect, or RTF formats, ASCII as a last resort. If you have to use some obscure format, check with me and allow extra time in case it doesn't work. Graphic materials preferably should be sent in .JPG format.

Of course good-old-fashioned hard copy can be sent as text, photograph or drawing. If you mail me a photo or other graphic work for inclusion, be sure to let me know whether or not you want the original returned to you. And yes, submission deadlines remain unchanged, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month.

-George Mellinger, Newsletter Editor

## From the President

By Steve Erickson

Happy President's day. Remember our current President was a pilot as was his father. Well that's the only tie I could think of between February and airplanes. January's meeting at Fleming Field went well, the attendance was good in spite of changing sites, so some of you must read the news letter.

We were supposed to meet at American Wings in Blaine for February, but that's been changed. Due to my schedule and American Wings reduced winter hours I was unable to reconfirm our reservation in time for the newsletters publication. So the officers decided at the business meeting to cancel. American wings has always been a great host but we were worried about getting in with their reduced hours and it takes more work to get 50 or members together since we went mobile. So we will be meeting the third weekend in February "2-16-02" instead at Fleming Field. Ken Hornby meet with the civil Air Patrol and they kindly offered to switch weekends with us starting in March. So keep your eye on the news letter and web site for further info. The library was never a permanent site. Its reserved on a monthly basis, and not available for Feb. or March. Its also closed during the summer.

Remember the Banquet as of 1-25-2002 we had 37 dinners sold we are obligated to pay for 50. We have about two weeks left so send your checks to Tom Norrbohm. Dave has promised food this year and since his wife has helped him I sure of it. See you 2-16-02 at Fleming.

## Zumbro Valley Scale Modelers Model Contest Saturday February 16th

For more information contact  
Barry Brown  
[castawayales@altavista.com](mailto:castawayales@altavista.com)  
507-281-3843

## Meeting Date and Location have Changed!

We will be meeting at  
Fleming Field  
on **Saturday February 16th**.

Fleming Field is located in the southernmost extremity of the city of South St. Paul on the bluffs above the Mississippi River, south of Highway 494, west of Concord Street, and East of Highway 52. It is most easily accessed from Highway 494.

### If coming from west Twin Cities on eastbound 494

- Exit at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave exit (Exit No. 65)
- Turn right (South) on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave and go approximately .6 miles to a 4 way Stop sign. This is South St. W. To your left front there will be a McDonald's; to your right front there will be a Walgreen's.
- Turn left (East) at the 4-way Stop onto South St. W. and go approximately .6 miles. Along the way you will encounter three more Stop signs - the third Stop sign (Henry Ave) will be a "T" intersection. At the "T" intersection on your left will be private homes, on your right there will be softball fields.
- Turn right (south) onto Henry Ave. and go approximately .2 miles toward the Fleming Field airport terminal building.

### If coming from east Twin Cities on westbound 494

- Exit at the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Ave exit (Exit No. 65)
- Turn left (South) on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave and go approximately .6 miles to a 4-way Stop sign. This is South St. W. To your left front there will be a small strip mall; to your right front there

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<p align="center"><b>TCAH Officers</b></p> <p><b>President</b>, Steve Erickson 763-521-9948</p> <p><b>Vice-President</b>, Pat Butler 612-915-1569</p> <p><b>Secretary</b>, Ken Sallman 763-753-3783</p> <p><b>Treasurer</b>, Tom Norrbohm 612-881-5763</p> <p><b>Historian</b>, Tom Norrbohm 952-881-5763</p>	<p>craft</p> <p align="center">***</p> <p>September TBD—"Flying billboards" Commercial airliners October TBD</p> <p align="center">***</p> <p>November TBD—Club Auction. No Theme.</p> <p align="center">***</p> <p>December TBD—"Linebacker II-30 year Anniversary". Vietnam era aircraft</p> <p align="center">***</p> <p>Do you have something to include on the club calendar? Please let us know</p>	<p align="center"><b>Treasurer's Report</b> by Tom Norrbohm</p> <p>I'm Baaaack! After a two year hiatus, and being a glutton for punishment, I have taken the reins of this job once again. I want to thank Pat Butler for his two years of service as 'Holder of the Cash' and for not skipping town with the funds! Thanks Pat!</p> <p>Now down to business.....As of January 21st, we have 72 members paid up for the year 2002. By the time you read this, I hope a few more will have renewed. I hope to have a new club roster ready by the March meeting. Our club balance as of January 21st is \$6,483.02. This figure includes \$900.00 of banquet reservation money paid by the membership. As of this date also, we have 36 paid persons for the Club Banquet on February 23rd. We need a minimum of 50 attendees, so you have until Feb. 9th to pay up! Cost is 25.00 per person, N.Y. Steak or Chicken Marsala. Make checks payable to TCAH and send them to me at: 9936 Columbus Ave. So., Mpls., MN 55420. Any questions call me at: (952) 881-5763.</p>
<p align="center"><b>Newsletter Info</b></p> <p><i>Article Submission Deadline: 22nd of each month.</i></p> <p><i>Editors</i> <b>George Mellinger</b> (melli004@gte.net) 5212 W. 47 Street Apt 2 Sioux Falls, SD 57106</p> <p><i>Distribution Editor</i> <b>Bernard A. Kugel</b> 2080 Ivy Ave. E. St. Paul, MN 55119</p> <p><b>Send articles to:</b> Via E-mail: newsletter@aerohistorian.com Via Snail-mail: <b>George Mellinger</b> (melli004@gte.net) 5212 W. 47 Street Apt 2 Sioux Falls, SD 57106</p>	<p><i>(Directions —Continued from page 1)</i> will be an Amoco gas station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn left (East) at the 4-way Stop onto South St. W. and go approximately .4 miles. Along the way you will encounter two more Stop signs - the second Stop sign (Henry Ave) will be a "T" intersection. At the "T" intersection on your left will be private homes, on your right there will be softball fields.</li> <li>• Turn right (south) onto Henry Ave. and go approximately .2 miles toward the Fleming Field airport terminal building.</li> </ul> <p>The terminal is on the right with a 40+ space parking lot in front. There is also more parking available to the left near the line of hangers across the street.</p> <p>Because the streets you will be travelling on form inter-city boundaries between South St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights, it is not advisable to attempt to navigate by street names as the names change at the corners where you will be turning.</p>	<p align="center"><b>TCAH Memories</b> by Tom Norrbohm</p> <p><b>FEBRUARY 1992:</b> Club celebrates its 25th year at the club banquet with 76 in attendance at Steak &amp; Ale in Bloomington. At the club meeting, President Mark Copeland thanked Dave Galbraith for his outstanding work on the club's 25th Anniversary History. Don Soderlund, Contest Committee Chairman, gave an update on the upcoming club contest in April. Ed Kueppers mentioned that a TCAH Silver Anniversary mug will be available. Restoration of the recently acquired A-12 by the MNANG Museum would begin by the end of February, with a dedication possibly in May. Mark also will organize an event to remember the passing of Custom Model Hobbies.</p>
<p align="center"><b>TCAH Calendar &amp; Events of Interest</b></p> <p><i>February 16th at Fleming Field —"Red Torches", Soviet Jets</i> ***</p> <p><i>March TBD—"Coming out of the Closet", Other hobby interest</i> ***</p> <p><i>April TBD- Club Contest (tentative)</i> ***</p> <p><i>May TBD—"Weekend Warriors". ANG and Reserve Aircraft</i> ***</p> <p><i>June TBD—"Floats". Float planes and amphibians</i> ***</p> <p><i>July TBD—"Olive Garden Specials". Italian aircraft</i> ***</p> <p><i>August TBD- "P.O.Ws". Captured air-</i></p>	<p><b>IN MEMORY.....</b></p> <p>Former Club member Bob Lemm passed away on New Years day after a long illness. Bob first joined the club in 1977 and was Vice President in 1979 and President in 1981. He was also co-editor with Ed Kueppers in 1982, 83, 87 and 88. One of Bob's hobbies was aviation art that he enjoyed doing in ink and other media. He supplied artwork for many of the club newsletters in the form of cover art and filler. He also supplied artwork for the front and back covers of the book 'The Long Campaign' The History of the 15th Fighter Group in WWII, by John W. Lambert.</p>	<p><b>Officer's:</b> President- Mark Copeland; Vice President- Don Soderlund; Secretary- Bill Halverson; Treasurer- John Roll; Editor- John Valo.</p> 

## General Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2002

By Ken Sallman

The first meeting of the new year was held at Flemming Field in South St. Paul. This is one of several sites which will be evaluated; next month's meeting will be held at the American Wings facility at Anoka Regional Airport on 9 February 2002. Check the newsletter and web site for directions.

There were no new members or guest at the meeting.

### Old Business:

- Axel Kornfeuhrer announced his book company (Periodical Exchange Germania) is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary!
- Banquet is scheduled for 23 February. 32 of the necessary 50 tickets have been sold. This will be the last banquet until 2007 as it was decided to hold the banquet every 5 years rather than annually.
- Newsletter: George Mellinger will resume editorial responsibilities for the *Aerohistorian*. He can accept articles and notices for the newsletter in any format. George does not have a fax and therefore the articles must be sent by either email (preferred) or snail mail.
- Luftwaffe SIG will be held at 7:00 PM on the first Friday in February (1 February) at the home of Jeff Frieze. Call Jeff for directions.
- Tom Norbohm announced that this was the last month for dues. If not paid by the end of January, your name will be deleted from the roster. You have until February 9 to pay for the banquet tickets.

### New Business:

- George Mellinger brought in a CD with photos from Russian aircraft and military museums. These will be added to the web site.
- Ken Hornby announced that if the Flemming Field facility is selected, we could hold meet-

ings on the second Saturday of the month.

- Tom Norbohm will be the IPMS representative replacing Jack Mugan.
- Terry Love is the AAHS representative.
- Steve Hustad announced that Jack Bruno (Regional IPMS rep) is looking for a site for the 2003 R5 contest. He suggested that since we already have a 1-day event (Nordicon) scheduled in September of each year, an offer should be made to Jack for TCAH to host the 2003 (almost as good as a National) R5 providing the September date is acceptable to Jack. This information has been presented to Bruno and the issue as to whether or not R5 make a formal bid to be discussed and voted upon at the January Business meeting.
- The January Business Meeting will be held at Pat Butler's home on Friday, 25 February at 7:00 PM. Call Pat for directions if you didn't pick up a map.

## Business Meeting Minutes

January 25th., 2002

By Tom Norrbohm

Hosted by Patrick Butler. In attendance: Dave Pluth, Tom Norrbohm, Steve Erickson, Jim Kaltenhauser, John Roll and John Bernier. Meeting called to order by Steve Erickson. Subject of club banquet brought up and notified by Treasurer Tom Norrbohm that 37 people have paid, with 13 to go to reach the 50 minimum. Door prizes are being collected and gift certificates will be handed out to the ladies.

Tom informed us that we are now current with IPMS with our chapter dues. Payment was delayed in that our club chapter contact, Jack Mugan, had moved to Florida.

Trophy Packages for IPMS Fort Crook and Great Plains chapters was discussed and \$30.00 will be donated to each chapter.

Discussion of our February meeting place at American Wings in Anoka was brought up. Steve Erickson has been having a hard time reaching the head

volunteer of the museum to confirm our meeting date and time for the February 9th meeting. Messages were left and none returned so far. As this could pose a problem for future meeting dates, we decided to move on, and Dave Pluth made a motion to hold future club meetings at Fleming Field, making this our new home. He further amended this motion that we do this only if we can switch with the Civil Air Patrol guys to the 2nd weekend of every month. John Bernier seconded the motion and all were in favor with one member abstaining. We discussed the possibility of doing something for the C.A.P. guys such as buying pizza or something to that effect for making the switch with us.

Tom Norrbohm would post the Fleming Field decision on the TCAH Groups that night. If all works out the club will have to only meet on one more 3rd Saturday in February then be back to its normal schedule of the 2nd Saturday, beginning in March. Meeting adjourned.

## Web Sites of the Month

By Terry Love

This month's theme will be the U S Air Force. Here are some web sites about the USAF-

[WWW.NASM.SI.EDU](http://WWW.NASM.SI.EDU)

This is the official web site for the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC. of the Smithsonian Institute.

[WWW.AF.MIL.SITES](http://WWW.AF.MIL.SITES)

This web sites connects you to all of the AF Bases world wide. Not a bad site.

[WWW.AIRFORCEHISTORY.HQ.AF.MIL](http://WWW.AIRFORCEHISTORY.HQ.AF.MIL)

This is the official page of the U S Air Force History office, you could spent hours here, so beware!!

[WWW.AU.AF.MIL/AU/AFHRA](http://WWW.AU.AF.MIL/AU/AFHRA)

This web site connects you to the U S Air Force historical research office at Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

[WWW.REFDESK.COM/AIR.HTML](http://WWW.REFDESK.COM/AIR.HTML)

This is the U S Air Force on the internet using the virtual reference desk. This site has great links to all things related to the USAF.

There are lots of other USAF sites that you can connect to from the above web sites.

## Mini-Contest Rage Continues T-6/SNJ/Harvard/Wirraway/ Boomerang

John Higgins and Mark Krumrey have stepped up to the plate and taken the mound to pitch the latest in the "Mini-Contest" rage. As you know, this started a few years back with the out of the box contest, and has progressed to a "no holds barred" sort of "Battle Royal." The only stipulation is there will be a referee and the model has to be finished this year. (2002) Initially it was proposed that the Boomerang not be allowed, but the championship committed voted on allowing this foreigner to participate, so dig out your boomerangs. This should be fun; how many boomerangs have been entered in any display as of late? There is a rumor rife in modeldom right now, that there may be a "Phantom" entrant of a T6 converted to a Zero! Holy Hinamarus Herr Fledermaus!!

So.....add all the goodies you want; PE, Resin, etc., and the scale of your choice. There are a lot of models of the SNJ/T6, and a few of the Boomerang and Wirraway, with no shortage of decals for that most esoteric model.

Let your creative juices flow. The categories will be: 1<sup>st</sup> Place; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, and Peoples Choice. Awards by "Bloomington Sign"

## Free Russian SIGnals

By George Mellinger

Last month I reviewed *Wings, Women & War, Soviet Airwomen in World War II Combat*, which I judged a flawed book containing some worthwhile information. This month the situation is almost the opposite. *Attack of the Airacobras, Soviet aces, American P-39s & the Air War Against Germany*, by Dmitrii Loza, HSU, translated by Jim Gebhardt is an outstanding book with a number of minor flaws. But then no book is perfect.

"Airacobras" is a remarkable book in a number of respects, not least being the background of its author who was neither an aviator nor an enthusiast. Dmitrii Loza was a tankist. During the war he was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union and rose to command a tank brigade, fighting against both the Germans and the Japanese. Previously he has written two books for the American market about his own war-

time experiences, both of them, like this one, translated by James Gebhardt. This book shares with those earlier books a common theme. Loza fought his war in Valentine and Sherman tanks. He was an *inoma-rochnik*, one of those stigmatized for having fought with lend-lease equipment. After the war, he and Aleksandr Pokryshkin became friends while studying together at the Frunze Military Academy, and Pokryshkin spoke bitterly that they were unable to proclaim their deeds or speak of the equipment they had used. The common theme of Loza's books is the use of lend-lease weapons. In researching it he used not only the major memoirs, and military histories, familiar to those who can read Russian, but also interviews with Mikhail Petrov, a 16 victory Hero, and others, and also was able to make use of previously unavailable unit records in the archives. Colonel Loza died in Moscow in May leaving behind an incomplete manuscript for his next book, on the Douglas A-20. There is reason to hope it will be completed by his friend and translator. Major James Gebhardt, retd. is a former infantryman in Vietnam, tank commander, and Soviet military specialist, all of whose previous writing concerned the ground forces. The background of both men is a fact which magnifies their accomplishment and mitigates the few mistakes. I should mention that Jim Gebhardt is also my friend, and I received a complimentary copy of this book. I do not believe that has influenced my judgement.

While this book's title suggests a general review of Soviet Airacobra use, actually it focuses exclusively on the 16, 100, and 104 Guards Fighter Regiments (GIAP), which comprised the 9 Guards Fighter Division (GIAD). This division was the VVS equivalent of JG 52 or the USAAC 56 Fighter Group, containing a widely disproportionate share of the top Soviet aces including Pokryshkin, Grigorii Rechkalov, the Glinka brothers, and others, and from early 1943 till the end of the war flew the P-39. Of course we meet the major aces, but also the secondary ones, men such as Vadim Fadeev, who flew the P-39 only a few weeks in 1943 before being killed in a battle evoking Werner Voss. But his record in that short time suggested that had he lived,

he might have surpassed Pokryshkin and Kozhedub. He was also the colorful pilot known for his dog Kitty (from Kittyhawk, which he flew briefly), and for his beard which gave him his call-sign. To my surprise and delight, I learned the identities of several minor aces, previously unknown to me, men such as Captain Aleksandr Rumm with 8 individual and 1 group victories. Of course we do not learn as much about these men, but previously they "did not even exist" in any catalog of aces.

But the accounts of the aces and their combat careers is not all. Less thrilling, but even more important are the chapters about ground support. Though oft taken for granted, it is when this infrastructure collapses that an air force is grounded. Sergeants study tactics, and lieutenants dream of strategy, while the colonels study "command, communication, and control"; but the field marshals busy themselves with logistics. And Loza's chapters on VVS logistics and maintenance procedures are the first serious attempt in English to address these vital matters. In fact, Loza's account is the clearest treatment of this obscure and difficult topic which I have yet found in *either* language. Equally good are his chapters on navigation and command and control. Navigation is important because this was one of the matters in which the Russian pilots were generally most inadequately trained, and each unit, from squadron to division had an individual designated as *the* navigator, who knew the subject better and was responsible for the other pilots. Command and control of course describes, among other things, the system of forward observers and early warning systems, and the eventual introduction of radar systems. The first entry in the notes section at the back is an extended discussion of how victories were scored and confirmed, how records were kept in the air units, and reported to higher headquarters, and awards nominated. Skipping this section would be a serious mistake; for the historian by itself it justifies the cost of the book.

For all these topics, *Attack of the Airacobras* would be a significant book. But for me, perhaps the *most* significant virtue is the quality of the translation itself. This book reads like a Rus-

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sian book, except in English. By now I've read dozens of memoirs in Russian, and I find there is a particular common style and feel which Gebhardt manages to capture admirably. Little details help. He gives a literal translation of "fuel cells" instead of fuel tanks, which does not detract from the understanding, but adds to the sense of Russianness. Otherwise, there is the tendency to draw lessons from air battles described, a sometimes ardent and inspirational tone, and overt patriotism. There is a strong tendency to glide over problems and to emphasize accomplishments, balanced by evocation of the particularly heroic or poignant losses. The main deviation in this regard was at the publisher's insistence that names be given in the usual western - first & last - style, instead of the Russian manner of giving either the full first name and patronymic, or just the initials. Thus we get Aleksandr Pokryshkin instead of A. I. Pokryshkin, or Aleksandr Ivanovich. While the publisher is wrong to believe that westerners can't learn to handle the Russian style, it is not a major distraction. So for all who are curious to read a Russian view of the air war, this book is the answer. An English translation of Igor Kaberov's *Swastika in the Gunsight* is the only other option, but that translation not only puts the Russian into British colloquial, but is also shot through with significant omissions and gross mistakes which often reverse the meaning of the original book, and giving a very inadequate result.

As I found that the best part of last month's book was the appendix, that is where I found most of the disappointments in "Airacobras". I really had hoped for serious information in the form of comprehensive unit rosters listing all the pilots, with information about the dates of their service, victory scores, rank, etc., and specifying the changes in regiment and squadron command. Or at least a list of pilots who scored victories. Instead, we got a list of Soviet aces who flew the P-39 and scored 15 or more victories. Unfortunately, this list was abstracted from a Russian book by Bodrikin, by selecting out those names associated with Airacobra regiments. Unfortunately, that book was also incomplete, and the technique gave Loza and

Gebhardt no way to weed out pilots who transferred to other units before arrival of the P-39. The result is that the list includes a number of pilots (Bashkirov, Galchenko, Matsievich, Semenov, Shchirov) are included erroneously, while quite a number of other pilots are omitted, such as Vasilii Adonkin, Vasilii Bondarenko, Nikolai Iskrin and Ivan Likhobabin, some of whom were actually profiled in the text. In fairness, this was a difficult task, and the list includes the names of three aces (Kobyletskii, Melnikov, Timofeev), well-known to me, whom I inexcusably failed to include in the list from my Airacobra Aces book. Gebhardt has a legitimate excuse, I have none.

One further mistake was the misidentification of the UTI-4 fighter trainer as a two-seat modification of the P-39. Actually that was the two seat version of the I-16. But that is minor.

Another difficulty cannot be held against the translator, but reflects a peculiarity of Russian writing. During the early chapters there were repeated references to the 42 and 57 fighter regiments which were assigned to the division for a while in early 1943 - except that the 42 regiment was flying on the Northwest Front and the 57 regiment did not exist. Then I remembered the old trap. Russian authors often neglect to include mention of "Guards" when they presume the reader will know. Much the way an American author might presume that when he writes about the 1<sup>st</sup> Division his reader will understand whether Infantry, Armor, Cavalry or Marine is meant. And yes - the 42 *Guards* and 57 *Guards* regiments were right where Loza indicated. Actually, this adds to the "Russian character" of the book, though it will be lost on the average reader.

Another disappointment for me is that Loza failed to explore the "awkward parts" of the story. In spite of the successes of the 9 Guards Division as a whole and of its individual regiments, one might say they were not a completely happy family. During early 1943 there was serious personal conflict between Pokryshkin and his regiment commander, who tried to send him before a military tribunal. The reasons for this conflict are unclear, and Loza only hints even at its existence, suggesting it might have had something to do with Col. Isaev's non-flying

status. (Actually the result of serious wounds received in air combat the previous autumn.) Likewise there is only a single early mention of friction between Pokryshkin and Grigorii Rechkalov, due to Rechkalov's lack of formation discipline and his tendency to ignore command responsibilities in favor of increasing his personal score. In the spring of 1944, when Pokryshkin assumed command of the 9 GIAD, Rechkalov succeeded him in command of the 16 GIAP, but after only a few weeks, had to be removed from command. Then when his replacement, Boris Glinka, was shot down, Rechkalov was given another turn as commander, but shortly removed from command a *second* time. The circumstances surrounding these incidents are kept hidden away. Likewise, a number of other controversies and problems, hinted at elsewhere, are carefully ignored. Once again, this is entirely within the Soviet tradition, though some of the new Russian historians have been probing these "dark corners". But it is not only the Soviet approach. In the Luftwaffe literature it is very similar. All focus on a few great names, Galland, Hartmann, Bär, and no mention of the gefreiter pilots who got shot down before scoring a single victory. And no almost mention of anything controversial - beyond scapegoating Göring for everything since he's both a convicted war criminal and long dead. Nothing such as Gollob being a nasty martinet on the ground, or that somebody else was a real Nazi, and a third known to steal victory credits from others. (Only now is a little of this sort of information starting to leak out.) In fact only now are we even hearing about Werner Mölders' protests against Nazi atrocities on the Eastern Front, and how he ceased wearing his awards in protest, or the allegations that he was not killed in the bomber crash as publicly announced, but actually was "Rommeled" for protesting. And you have to hang out around aviation historians for some time and listen very attentively before hearing the private gossip and innuendo that some of our own great heroes were also great assholes. So I cannot judge Loza too harshly for this, even if I had desired otherwise. Only

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one or two specialists, such as myself will know the difference. Even for the experts this book has enough new information to make it mandatory reading. For everyone else, there is more than enough reason to rush out and get *Attack of the Airacobras*. It is arguably the most significant aviation book of the past year.

## U S Army Reconnaissance Aircraft in Vietnam - Part 2

by Terry M. Love

In part one of this series, we discovered most of the regular or standard Army reconnaissance or monitoring systems utilized in Vietnam. Now, we will discover the rotary-wing systems, and some of the most bizarre and highly classified systems that the Army used, with the assistance of the Navy.

The most unusual unclassified fixed-wing reconnaissance system of Army aircraft, and far and away, the largest, most involved system, was CEFLEIN LION or also called CRAZY CAT. Early in 1966, ASA proposed an airborne/ground communication jamming system for use in Southeast Asia. The initial system, was so large that it would not fit into any current existing Army aircraft, so the Army was "loaned" some Lockheed P2 Neptunes. The system included three jammer aircraft, two control aircraft and one ground communications command and control aircraft. On August 29, 1966 the program was approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Also approved at the same time, was a follow on program called CRAZY DOG, that was to be installed in Army RU-21 aircraft. This program was so important, and classified, that the ASA mission was wavered by the USAF/Army agreement about the operation of fixed-wing aircraft. CV-2 Caribous went to the USAF as C-7s, and the armaments were removed from OV-1 Mohawks (supposedly), although some Mohawk units were VERY slow at doing this.

The CRAZY CAT aircraft were the largest, and heaviest Army fixed-wing aircraft to that date. They were ex-U S Navy SP-2E Neptune Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) aircraft, that were refurbished and equipped with extensive electronics. The principal elements of the aircraft

were components of the AN/MLQ-29, while the passive segment consisted basically of RACAL receivers. In November of 1966, Convair of San Diego began to convert the aircraft. They were finished in June of 1967, and were deployed to Vietnam in September of 1967. The CV-2 Caribou would probably have worked very well, but the Air Force was already strenuously objecting for the removal of all Caribous from the Army inventory.

It seemed pointless to extensively modify an aircraft that would, in all probability, soon have to be handed over to the USAF. It appears that the name CRAZY CAT comes from the call sign of the 1st Radio Research Company - the unit that operated the Neptunes. Originally there were five aircraft authorized. They were taken out of storage from Davis-Monthan AFB, near Tucson, Arizona. All of the ASW gear was removed, and all of the "special" equipment installed. The Navy Bureau of Aeronautics numbers were 131485, 131531, 131526, 131429, and 131496. Numbers 131429, 131526, and 131531 were operated by VP-5 previously. Neptunes 131485, 131531, and 131526 were configured for jamming only, active EW, while 131429 and 131496 were capable of intercept operations only, passive EW. All had their glass nose replaced with a black fibreglass radome. Also there was an extended black fibreglass radome added to the wingtip fuel tanks with a six-foot rigid-type antenna. The aircraft had about 20 to 25 additional various type of antenna all over, but mainly on the belly. Later, a sixth Neptune, 131492, was added. This sixth Neptune retained its ventral radar dome and glass nose. This aircraft was, apparently, used for flight proficiency training. All six aircraft carried personal "nose art." Aircraft 485 was called "The Burbank Boomerang," 492 was called "The Hog," and the others were called "Ole Faithful," "The Birmingham Bounce," "Miss Carriage," and "miss Conception." "The Burbank Boomerang" (131485) is presently on display at the Army Aviation Museum at Fort Rucker, Alabama. The other five aircraft were

all scrapped in 1972. The last CRAZY CAT mission was on March 31, 1972. Standard missions carried a crew of 13 or 14 men. Missions were usually up North (DMZ, over the Ho Chi Minh Trail, etc.). Actual on-station time was around 8 or 9 hours at altitudes of 8,500 feet to 11,000 feet, mostly around 10,000 feet, so no oxygen was needed. Radio call sign was "Cats Paw." On April 14, 1968, aircraft 131531 took a hit from a 37mm AA round behind the left engine. It returned to base, and landed safely. By mid-1970, the 1st Radio Research Company's AP-2E Neptunes had accumulated 46,500 accident-free flight hours. The designation of these aircraft has been confusing. Originally they were designated as RP-2Es. In 1969, the designation was changed to AP-2Es. This AP-2E designation did not conform to the post-1962 Tri-Service aircraft designations, since the letter A would indicate "Attack," and these were Reconnaissance aircraft and not Attack aircraft. The Army insisted that the "A" stood for "Army." It is probable that this was done to help disguise their true function or mission, avoid upsetting the Air Force, and, for deception purposes as the U S Navy operated a squadron (VAH-21) of AP-2H attack Neptunes, which happened to be stationed at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam until 1972. Therefore, the 1st Radio Research Company was stationed there also. It is probable that the Army wished to hide the reconnaissance missions of the aircraft. All other Army aircraft wore the "R" designator at the time - Ru-1A, RU-6A, RU-8D, RU-21A, etc. However, there were some rotary-wing systems, also. They were called LEFT BANK. On February 5, 1967, ASA advised the EWL that five heliborne HF DF systems would be required using the code name LEFT BANK. These systems would intercept the 1 to 30 MHz frequency ranges and DF in the 3 to 8 MHz region. The system would also be capable of radio "fingerprinting" using a system originally known as SHORT SKIRT but later changed to

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LEFAIR KNEE. Five Bell UH-1D aircraft were configured to LEFT BANK specifications by EWL. They were the first helicopters to be used for this purpose and they were utilized extensively in Vietnam. Three of the UH-1D aircraft (66-16344, 66-16335, and 66-16336) were assigned to the 371st Radio Research Company in July of 1967. These three aircraft had nose-art on them. They were called "The Good," "The Bad," and "The Ugly." They supported the 1st Cavalry Division. In 1969, these systems were put into newer airframes. Two were Bell UH-1H (68-15246 and 69-15684), and they were both later shot down, resulting in eight deaths. The other two LEFT BANK Hueys (66-16489 and 66-16491) were assigned to the 374th Radio Research Company supporting the 4th Infantry Division. The system worked very well. No unique aircraft designator was ever applied to these helicopters. These aircraft monitored and identified various NVA and VC units that were targeted for B-52 ARC LIGHT missions.

LEFT BAK II was a replacement system for LEFT BANK. Bell Aircraft built some specific UH-1s for his mission, but the withdrawal from Vietnam began before this system could be deployed. Therefore, this project was terminated. The LEFT BANK II equipment was used to develop TRAILBLAZER systems and later the QUICK FIX systems. These were dangerous missions that these Army reconnaissance aircraft operated over Vietnam and other Southeast Asia countries. They usually operated alone, and unarmed and unescorted. Therefore, we did lose a few of them, however, we lost surprisingly few. An RU-6A from the 138th Aviation Company (Radio Research) disappeared on November 15, 1966. A WINEBOTTLE RU-8D, also from the 138th Aviation Company (RR), crashed near DaNang on December 29, 1967. LAFFING OTTER or CAFÉ GIRL RU-1A, 55-3271, from the 146th Aviation Company (RR) was shot down over Cambodia on February 12, 1969. LEFT BANK UH-1H, 68-15226, was shot down on November

29, 1969 near LZ Buttons. All Crew members were lost. They were from the 371st RR Company. RU-6A, 53-3724, of the 156th Aviation Company (RR) collided with a VNAF UH-1H near Can Tho on November 24, 1970. All were killed. LEFT JAB U-21A, 67-18065, from the 138th Aviation Company (RR) was shot down by a SAM over North Vietnam on March 4, 1971. All five crew members were killed.

Although not strictly Army reconnaissance aircraft, the 1st Signal Brigade (author flew with the 1st Signal Brigade) operated four EU-21As (67-18000, 67-18013, 67-18027, and 67-18058). They were used as radio relay aircraft. In addition, the Brigade also operated at least two normal U-21A aircraft. The 3rd Radio Research Unit evolved into the 509th Radio Research Group and the 224th Aviation Battalion (RR). The 224th had four Aviation Companies (RR) - the 138th at DaNang (call sign Lonely Ringer), the 144th at Nha Trang, the 146th at Tan Son Nhut, and the 156th at Can Tho. All ASA fixed-wing assets in Vietnam were assigned to the 224th Aviation Battalion (RR). However, the 1st Radio Research Company had their huge RP-2Es. They reported directly to MACV. The 156th Aviation Company (RR) flew over 16,000 missions and accumulated more than 60,000 flight hours. RU-6A, 58-2012, had "Kazac" nose art on the cowl, RU-6A, 56-0380, had "Weakened Warrior" (not "weekend") on the cowl. Another RU-6A Beaver had "Vicky Lea" on the nose. The unit stood down on April 27, 1972. All flight crew members of ASA aircraft had to have Top Secret/Crypto security clearances to fly. Some RU-1As had the cabin roof painted white for cooling, and at least one RU-1A had ram air cooling scoops for the Doppler. Some of the U-21As of the 1st Signal Brigade also had white tops that extended down to the windows on the side of the aircraft - all for cooling of electronic gear and personnel. In June of 1969, the 224th Aviation Battalion (RR) reached it peak in terms of aircraft assigned to it -

eighty. This consisted of 18 RU-6As, 38 RU-8Ds, 16 RU-21Ds, 6 Rp-2Es, and 2 RU-1As. The LEFT BANK helicopters were OPCON to the 371st and the 374th Aviation Companies (RR). Which were attached to, but not assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division (An Khe), and the 4th Infantry Division (Pleiku) from 1967 on. Far and away, the most unusual reconnaissance missions flown by the Army was FARM TEAM. FARM TEAM was a TELINT system manned by Army personnel from ASA. They were members of the 1st Special Activities Detachment (SAD). They were attached to the U S Navy's Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One (VQ-1). This was one very special unit! The special missions of SAD-1 were, and still are classified. The detachment composed of about 20 Army personnel attached to VQ-1. VQ-1 provided the crews and flight equipment - the Douglas EA-3B Skywarrior reconnaissance/attack/bomber aircraft reconfigured into a one-of-a-kind special reconnaissance aircraft. It was Bureau number 146449 (code PR-9, later PR-16). Later EA-3B BuNo 142673 (code PR-13) was added. It had a very "unique" antenna array on them. Usually there were four Army personnel aboard monitoring and running the electronic equipment. SAD-1 was based at Atsugi NAS, Japan, but very few missions were conducted from there. They were gone for about six weeks at a time, and flew "around Asia and the Pacific."


They were a bunch of Army "intel-types" flying Navy jets around Asia, and operating highly classified missions. One of the hardest things for the Navy people, was that Army people could not say anything about their missions, and that they called "two bar" officers Captain. The Army people earned Navy Aircrew member wings, and that raised a lot of questions, but they were valid awards.

It is not known how many SAD aircraft that there were, but each one was very unique. There were only 25 Douglas A3D-2Q aircraft built, and there were SAD detachments with

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<p>(Continued from page 7)</p> <p>VQ-1 in the Pacific and VQ-2 in the Atlantic. The FARM TEAM project stood down in November of 1974. They were activated in the 1963-64 time frame, even though Army personnel had been setting in ELINT positions in VQ aircraft since 1958. One interesting characteristic of the early monitoring equipment, was that to get a Signal Of Interest (SOI), you had to fly directly toward the signal source! It did not take long for "the opposition" to figure that one out! Today's Army SEMA aircraft are mostly developments of the systems used in Vietnam. For example, the present day GUARDRAIL I, II, III, IV, V, etc. are all derived from the RU-21 LEFT FOOT equipment. Presently, RC-12 aircraft are being used. These are upgraded and larger aircraft in the U-21/C-12 series of aircraft built by Beech. Also today, there are a few EH-1 and EH-60 helicopters operating various QUICK FIX systems. Due to advancements of computers and electronic equipment in the last few years, the current capability of Army reconnaissance aircraft are many times so more capable, faster, and more compact and efficient than the systems mentioned above.</p>	<p>Albatross and Fokker designs, but top speed for the initial Benz Bz.III powered models was low, about 114 mph. The speed problem was improved with the D.VIb, which was equipped with the 'high compression' Benz Bz. IIIau of 200 HP, producing a higher climb rate, a better service ceiling, and a top speed of 122 mph, although the later engine had a tendency to overheat. About 350 D.VI's were built, arriving at the front starting in May 1918. The D. VI flew in lower intensity sectors of the front, with some navy as well as army units, until the end of the war, equipping Jastas 23b ,32b, 33, 35b and making up some of the equipment of Jastas 30 and 34b.</p>	<p>The second letter indicates the company that was responsible for the original design of the aircraft. The company designations were as follows:</p> <p>A - Aichi B - Boeing C - Consolidated D - Douglas G - Hitachi H - Hiro He - Heinkel J - Nihon Kogata K - Kawanishi M - Mitsubishi N - Nakajima P - Nihon S - Sasebo Si - Showa V - Voght-Sikorsky W - Watanabe Y - Yokosuka Z - Mizuno</p>
<p><b>"A Viking Ship With Wings"</b> <i>By Merrill Anderson</i></p> <p>The LFG Roland D.VI was one of the late war fighters that was beaten out by the Fokker D.VII in 1918. Although a good design, and reportedly more maneuverable and easier to fly than the Fokker D.VII, it was relegated to second line service, and equipped with a second line engine, the troublesome Benz Bz.III.</p> <p>The Roland D.VI had a unique type of construction for its fuselage, the "klinkerrumpf" method, which used laminated wood strips, producing an extremely strong and light structure with a "planked" look. (Thus the Viking ship quote). Roland had always been an innovator in design and assembly techniques, introducing the fabric/plywood lamination system used in the C II, and later Roland D types, and used by Pfalz in their D III and D XII.</p> <p>The D.VI had a good rate of climb, and could be dived harder than</p>	<p><b>Japanese Naming Conventions Navy Short Designation System</b> <i>By Dave Pluth</i></p> <p>So what do the letter and numbers mean that are associated with Japanese Navy aircraft? Actually, it's really quite simple.</p> <p>The short designation was a combination of letters and numbers that helped to designate the type of aircraft, the model, manufacturer etc.</p> <p>The first Capital letter indicated the function of the aircraft.</p> <p>A - Carrier fighter B - Carrier attack bomber C - Reconnaissance Plane D - Carrier Bomber E - Reconnaissance Seaplane F - Observation Seaplane G - Attack Bomber H - Flying Boat J - Land Based Fighter K - Trainer L - Transport M - Special Floatplane MX - Special Purpose Aircraft N - Fighter Seaplane P - Bomber Q - Patrol Plane R - Land Based Reconnaissance S - Night Fighter</p> <p>The first number indicates how many different model aircraft of this function have been made. For example, the A6M2 was the sixth in the Carrier Fighter series.</p>	<p>Example: The D3A1 was a Carrier bomber (type D), the third in the carrier bomber series, made by Aichi.</p> <p>The final number indicates the model of the aircraft. This number changes with each major change (engine, airframe etc), a small letter such as the "c" in A6M5c was used to designate a minor change in the aircraft. These minor changes were generally related to armament and weaponry.</p> <p>Additional letters were added to the end of some aircraft. The -K designation in aircraft such as the A6M2-K meant that the aircraft was modified to be a trainer aircraft.</p> <p>References: 1) Japanese Aircraft of the Pacific War by Rene' J. Francillon. Putnam Aeronautical Books, 1970</p> 



<b>Japanese Army Naming Conventions</b> <i>By Dave Pluth</i>	(you gotta buy this book!)	<b>Contest Calendar</b>
<p>The Japanese Army used a combination of methods in their naming of aircraft. The system consisted of a K-tai or airframe numbering system that began in 1932 and remained in use throughout the war. Also some of the aircraft received a "popular name". Research aircraft, gliders and rotary wing aircraft were given special designations. Also, any aircraft that was built previous to 1932, but still in service at the time of implementation of the new Kitai system were also included in the airframe numbering system. These K-tai numbers were assigned in numerical order until 1944 when the Japanese tried to confuse allied intelligence by assigning numbers in a less sequential order.</p> <p>Models with the same airframe kept the same Ki number and were differentiated by a roman numeral to show a change in model. Different versions of the same models received an additional Japanese characters. These consisted of Ko, Hei, Otsu and sometimes supplemented by a Kaizo or Kai.</p> <p>An example of the Ki-61 Tony, taken from Rene' Francillon's book called Japanese Aircraft of the Pacific War</p>	<p>Ki-61 Designation of the project and prototypes.          Ki-61-Ia First production version of the first model.          Ki-61-Ib Second production version of the first model.          Ki-61-I KAIc Third production version of the first model.          Ki-61-I KAI d Fourth production version of the first model.          Ki-61-II Prototypes of the second model.          Ki-61-II KAI Modified prototypes of the second model.          Ki-61-II KAIa First production version of the second model.          Ki-61-II KAIb Second production version of the second model.          Ki-61-III Projected third model.</p> <p>Gliders initially worked under this system, but were later moved to Guraida (Ku) numbers.</p> <p>References:          1) Japanese Aircraft of the Pacific War by Rene' J. Francillon. Putnam Aeronautical Books, 1970</p> 	<p>2-16-02 IPMS/Zumbro Valley          "Rochester Contest 02          Dept of Public Safety          Rochester, MN          Contact: Barry Brown          507-281-3843          castawyaes@altavista.com</p> <p>3-2-2002 IPMS/Ft. Crook          American Legion Hall          Millard, NE          Contact: mcavel@tconl.com</p> <p>3-23-2002 IPMS Great Plains          KC CON 2002          Holiday Inn Express          Overland Park, KS          Ed Bjes Bjes@umkc.edu</p> <p>4-13-2002 IPMS/Plastic Surgeons          Contact: Greg Metge          817 Grand Avenue          West Des Moines, IA          50265          GMGHA@aol.com</p> <p>5-3-2002 thru 5-4-2002 IPMS R5CON          Hosted by IPMS/Gateway          May Community Center          DePaul Hospital          Bridgeton, MO.          Mike George          Ontrak33@aol.com</p> <p>9-7-2002 Nordicon          Thunderbird Hotel &amp; Convention Center          Bloomington, MN          Contact: Steve Hustad</p>

## TCAH Banquet Registration

The annual TCAH banquet is February 23, 2003 at the Hilton Garden Inn (Eagan). Cost is \$25. Social hour will begin at 6 pm with dinner being served at 7 pm. **Registration deadline is February 9th.**

Choices	Number of Dinners
New York Strip Steak	
Chicken Marsala	
Total	

*Both entrees include: Mixed green salad, choice of potato or rice pilaf seasonal vegetable, rolls and butter, coffee or iced tea.*

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form and your check (made out to Twin Cities Aerohistorians) to:

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The group is open to aviation enthusiasts from teenagers on up who are interested in aviation modeling, photography, collecting, art and writing. For more information contact Steve Erickson at (763) 521-9948

The Twin Cities Aero Historians (TCAH) meet the second Saturday of every month at 1:30pm.

See above for the new meeting locations and directions.

Mail Newsletter material and address changes to the editor.

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Attn: Tom Norrbohm  
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