



## Welcome to the EC-47 History Site Newsletter

### 6994th Security Squadron Reunion Recap

Nearly 150 squadron veterans and family/guests attended the annual reunion held this year in San Angelo, TX, 20-23 September. There were 29 first-time attendees. Goodfellow AFB hosted an activity day that included a complimentary breakfast and a remembrance ceremony held in front of the EC-47 ARDF static display aircraft. About 35 members from the USAFSS Roll Call group on reunion in San Antonio also attended. The 17th Training Wing Commander



JC Wheeler and Rick Yeh read the names of the ARDF crew members that lost their lives

welcomed the veterans and their families, and congratulated them on their achievements. During the ceremony, Rick Yeh and JC Wheeler read the names of all 36 EC-47 crewmembers

who lost their lives during the war. A ceremonial bell was rung in their honor as each name was read. After this ceremony, attendees toured the ARDF History Exhibit and observed a firefighting demonstration at the fire academy. A bus tour of the base included seeing the six Goodfellow buildings named in honor of 6994th SS members lost during the war. After lunch, a shadow box containing the awards & decorations earned by Sgt Peter R. Cressman was unveiled at the newly renovated dining facility named in his honor. Retired MSgt Tom Crowley, Pete's roommate in Danang, was guest speaker and recapped Cressman's career. Cressman was one of eight crewmen killed when "Baron 52" was shot down on 5 February 1973.

On the final day of the reunion, 24 veterans met with over 200 Intel students at Goodfellow in panel discussions about the ARDF mission.

The evening reunion banquet featured a 50<sup>th</sup> Vietnam War Commemoration ceremony presented by the EC-47 History Site Commemorative Partner Program committee.



Chris Conover pins the Vietnam War Commemorative pin on Rich Miklaucic

Guests from San Angelo and the 94th Intelligence Squadron helped present lapel pins to 75 veterans. See more info and photos in their report at: <http://ec47.com/commemorative-partner-program>. The squadron's next reunion is planned for August 2017 in Dayton, OH.

**50 Years ago...** Throughout this past year, we have used the website to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the activation of the squadrons responsible for the EC-47 airborne radio direction finding (ARDF) missions during the Vietnam War. The year 1966 was filled with many "firsts" and we would certainly miss some of those most important to you personally if we started trying to formulate such a listing. But, looking back is still educational and a bit of fun worth a few minutes.

By the end of 1966, the then 360th Reconnaissance Squadron at Tan Son Nhut had 11 Phyllis Ann and 2 Drill Press aircraft assigned that were being operated by 20 combat ready crews. On December



4th, a Viet Cong rocket attack struck aircraft 42-93166, putting it out of operation for 18 days.

By December 2, 1966, the 361st Reconnaissance Squadron at Nha Trang had 9 Phyllis Ann aircraft assigned that supported Operations Pickett, Paul Revere, Byrd, Prairie, Adams & Thayer. Morale was good as evidenced by behavior at a squadron beach party that included grilling steaks, downing liquid refreshments, and involuntary swimming.

At Pleiku, the first Det 1, 361st Reconnaissance Squadron aircraft arrived on December 8th and flew their first operational mission on December 12th. The unit logged a total of 48 missions their first month. The squadron commander, Lt Col Jack A. Crook, wrote a succinct accounting of the unit start-up in a paper titled The First Days. Check out pages 11-12 in this link, it is a great read: [362nd Quarterly History](http://362ndQuarterlyHistory). This paper clarifies the reasons for the scheduled activation of the 362nd TEWS on February 1, 1967.



For the back-enders, the USAF Security Service (USAFSS) entered into the tactical intelligence support operations as early as 1962 with the C-54 Hilo Hattie mission. Next came the prototype C-47 ARDF project, Hawk Eye, initially deployed to Vietnam in 1964. In late 1965, two Drill Press Airborne Emergency Response



First Hawkeye Patch

Unit C-47s were ordered to Vietnam. A good number of Security Service non-commissioned

officers on temporary duty from other 69xx units handled the new equipment and flying duties with the best possible results...almost two years before the 6994th SS was activated.

Activations of the 6994th headquarters squadron and the detachments are described in detail in the first 6-months of their 1966 unit histories: [angelo.edu/content/files/22879-a](http://angelo.edu/content/files/22879-a).

Of particular note is the specific success of the Hawk Eye ARDF missions...and the extension in-country requested by the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam and Seventh Air Force. These first histories also call attention to coordinated operations and the very often "unmentioned" close relationship between Hawk Eye, Drill Press, and the eventual addition of the voice and Morse collection positions (Z1 & Z2) on the Phyllis Ann aircraft. The two links above provide a gateway to specific history reports; if you get really hungry for facts, go directly here: [ec47.com/electric-goon-the-ec-47-story](http://ec47.com/electric-goon-the-ec-47-story). This article finishes our emphasis on the unit activations in 1966. Next year, we will do more to highlight mission accomplishments.

Please let us know if there is an operation of particular interest to you.

*Merry Christmas - Joe & Tom*

# Welcome to the new EC-47 History Site Newsletter

## The EC-47 History Site, a work in progress...

JC Wheeler started the EC-47 History Site website and the EC-47 Association in 1997. The website grew to more than 90,000 entries over the next 20 years. Due to health issues, JC relinquished management of the website to Joe Martin and Tom Nurre on August 14, 2014. Here is a recap of some of our work, starting with the revised website mission statement:

**To compile and disseminate a complete and accurate history of the EC-47 aircraft and its role in the Vietnam War, based on contemporary squadron histories and other official documents and enhanced by contributions from the veterans who flew and maintained the aircraft.**

Joe and I have divided the website responsibilities into administrative and research & writing tasks. The website domain name has been secured and registered. We opened a Wells Fargo bank account and secured email and analytic programs. The Guestbook and Donate/PayPal services were added in early 2015. The website contract costs (through October 2017) and other fees totaled \$816.86. Operating on donations, the current balance is \$505.14.

The ARDF History Exhibit Virtual Tour software was uploaded to the website, and we donated a stand-alone copy to the 94<sup>th</sup> Intelligence Squadron Heritage Room at Ft. Meade, MD.

Joe Martin researched, wrote and uploaded many papers in the *History of the EC-47*, *Tell Your EC-47 Story*, *Odds 'n Ends*, and the *EC-47 Newsletter* menu items. His "cyber history" articles are easy to read and understand...and receive the most "hits" by website viewers. He answers all the "research needed" emails too.

When we lashed up with Angelo State University (ASU) and participated in the Vietnam: Through the Lens Display project, we re-learned the historical importance of oral histories and photos. Also with ASU, we registered in the 50<sup>th</sup> Vietnam War Commemorative Partner Program (CPP) and developed recognition and "Welcome Home" ceremonies throughout West Texas and some other states. The committee now totals 14 organizations that have helped host 20 CPP ceremonies attended by 2,250 veterans and their families...and we have collectively presented more than 525 commemorative lapel pins to eligible Vietnam War era veterans. Joe summed up what we are most proud about in doing this work at the reunion in September, "Remember guys, every time one of these ceremonies happens, it is your service in Southeast Asia that is also being commemorated. . .because it's you, via our partnership with the national organization, who are...in effect...sponsoring the pinning of other veterans. . .and boy do they appreciate it."

We have again partnered with the ASU Department of History in a new war history research grant through the Library of America in partnership with Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and the National Endowment for the Humanities. In support of the ASU West Texas Collection, we submitted a Letter of Support that was included in their nomination and subsequent selection for the [2016 Archival Award of Excellence from the Texas Historical Records Advisory Board](#).

It was our honor to host the commemoration ceremony at the 6994th SS reunion in late September. And we just successfully negotiated the Vietnam Memorial - The Wall That Heals display travel dates to San Angelo, November 16-19, 2017.

We appreciate your support for the website and our on-going programs. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Please stay in touch. **Tom Nurre**



## What a great 362nd TEWS party!

**Ed Diehl reports:** "Just a note to let you know that our reunion, October 4,5,6, 2016, was great. Didn't have quite as many attend this year for a couple of major reasons, first the hurricane caused some to cancel and one couple decided to leave after the first day. Second, we're not getting

any younger and had at least 6 cancel due to illness or surgeries, still had a great group of 44 total people. I feel the group really enjoyed themselves this year. As I've said in earlier messages we don't schedule much as Branson has so much to offer - and when we set up this 362nd reunion 10 years ago, that's the way they wanted it. This was our 10th reunion in Branson and the group voted to go back October 3,4,5, 2017 for number 11." [Please check our website for the group photograph.](#) For more information contact Ed: eteddiehl@gmail.com

## A Gallic Gooney Bird, by Joe Martin

**We get letters.** Well, actually, we get email. A recent inquiry came from France. Alain Bodel asked if we knew where the serial number might be located on a Gooney Bird that's part of the *L'Épopée de l'Industrie et de l'Aéronautique*, a private collection located in Albert, in the Somme region, 100 miles or so north of Paris. (A rough translation of the museum name might be "The epic tale of industry and aeronautics.")

According to the mother of all Gooney Bird resources\*, the C-47 in question began life as C-47B-25-DK. Along the line it has been painted as a Gooney Bird which dropped paratroopers in the D-Day invasion, 6 June 1944. The picture to the right shows the airplane now in storage.



Tracing the pedigree of vintage aircraft can be tricky business, particularly if the bird has changed hands a number of times. By the mid-1930s or so, U.S. manufacturers attached a metal data plate, usually on a fuselage bulkhead, stamped with the "constructor's number" (C/N) and other relevant data. Unfortunately, these data plates can be removed, swapped, or, worse yet, replaced with counterfeit ones.

The picture below shows examples of a Douglas Aircraft data plate and the accompanying Air Corps serial number ID for an early C-47, Douglas C/N 4733/USAAC S/N 41-38630. (The initial model designation did not include an alpha suffix; therefore the C-47A was actually the second model produced.) Note that the Douglas plate is labelled Oklahoma City Factory. But on-line and other sources show this aircraft as a C-47-DL, indicating Douglas Long Beach. However, one source shows that 17 C-47s, serial numbers not listed, were produced at Oklahoma City. Confusing? You bet! Alain promises to let us know what he finds

after looking for the data plates. For a comprehensive listing of EC-47 serial numbers and configuration as of August, 1969, click [here](#).

\* A truly comprehensive - approximately 1,000 pages - reference for the Gooney Bird is the Air Britain publication *The DC-1, DC-2, DC-3: The First 70 Years*. A third volume celebrating 75 years has been added.

