



THE 49TH FIGHTER SQUADRON ASSOCIATION



From the Commander June 2020

Dear 49ers,

Coming to you with the first mini Hangman newsletter - a new way to maintain contact with Association members. Greetings and all good wishes to you. I don't know if any member has been directly affected by the corona virus, but any such effect on a member affects us all. That said, I wish you all continued health and fulfillment. As the country reopens and stores and restaurants take it a step at a time, hope rebounds as we're incrementally getting back to normal (now finally I can get a haircut).



In our last email blast you read that several events on our calendar were canceled due to the virus. These are Columbus AFB Airshow and the memorial service in France for our WW II pilots. I am told that these events will be rescheduled next year and we look forward to participating. The memorial service in France was not entirely dismissed this year. The photo shows our friend and colleague Adjutant Christophe on 16 April at the Plan de Dieu memorial for 5 US pilots who paid the ultimate sacrifice in this region in 1944.

Christophe is saluting the memorial as Mirage 2000 aircraft fly overhead in formation. We very much appreciate the efforts of our French colleagues and believe what they say - "The French never forget".



As you know, we have been winding down our Association. We've had our 'Last hurrah' and there are no further reunions on the horizon. Our finances are down to a point where we've stopped publication of our formal Hangman Newsletters, but we are continuing with our website, the annual memorial services in France, and funding the nametag purchases for new students at the 49th Fighter Training Squadron - thanks to the generosity of several members. To maintain our connectivity, we will also continue with these mini-newsletters on a quarterly basis, but I need your help to maintain and continue with this publication.

My suggestion is for members to share a short (one paragraph) story about past members, or your personal experiences while stationed with the 49th. Random but relevant photos such as you see in this edition would be a great plus. With our



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collective experience, I'm sure that there are ample entertaining and informative stories out there. Here are a few examples I received recently:

From Ron Morrisette about his early days at the 49th (1960)..

I made \$78.00 a month. After I got married Verlie got \$96.90 and I got \$39. My rent was \$52.50 a month for one bedroom and shared a bath with two other couples. Meals were sometimes a baked potato. Two kids in the first two years. I was in T-birds, T-33s. They were used for targets and flight hours. Did I ever put you up? I did a lot of that. Ground crew. In February 61 I went to Bomarc Missiles. In 72 minuteman. Retired in 82



Dave Stiteler shared the following:

I was assigned to 4713 Revron at Griffiss in May 59. The whole bunch of us were assigned to the 49th FIS just a month later. I got married in June 59. The F-89s were there on the West side of the double hanger. The F-101s came in to replace the 89s. And about that time a helicopter crashed right outside the hanger. About this same time a 101 blew both main gear tires on takeoff. Flew around to burn fuel and the instructor in the rear seat landed it on the main gears. The magnesium wheels looked like a half circles and were on fire. The pilot failed his check ride and was given a desk to fly.

In May I received a surprise email from Sue Ramsey. *She wrote to offer what she could to preserve the memory of our fallen heroes. Her Dad , "Bud" Elliott, now 97 served in the Navy in WW II. One of his best friends was Oliver 'Ollie' Bryant, who died in 1988. Ollie, a P-38 pilot served in Italy with the 49th during the war. A photo of Ollie appears on our website (1940s photos). Sue's Dad told her about a mid-air collision with Ollie's aircraft and another P-38 over the target area (Munich). Both managed to get back to base. Ollie lost about 6 ft of his left wing due to the collision. Ollie is credited with downing at least one enemy aircraft.*

So with these examples, the challenge is out to you. There must be many short but interesting stories 'out there' concerning your days at the 49th when we flew the P-38, F-86, F-101, F-106, and AT-38B. Send your choice memories to me and I'll include them in subsequent mini-newsletters, Please consider this request as it is a great way to help sustain our pulse. Family members could also contribute as I'm sure they have a lot to remember.

We'll close off with best wishes for continued health and fulfillment - not, only for our members, but for our great country as well. Lady Liberty and Uncle Sam are weathering a great storm like no other in our history; but as in the past I believe we will learn lessons and rise to new heights. God Bless America.

