



*"A MISSION OF HISTORY, EDUCATION, AND REMEMBRANCE."*

Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation

# NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP NEWS

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD SUPPORTING THE SPIRIT OF FREEDOM

TO: FOUNDATION SUPPORTING MEMBERS, BERLIN AIRLIFT VETERANS, HISTORIANS, EDUCATORS AND PATRIOTS OF THE UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY

VOL 1

2008

## CONTINUING OUR "MISSION OF HISTORY EDUCATION AND REMEMBRANCE"



## THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS FOR HELPING US TO FULFILL OUR MISSION



## RETURN FROM A 5 YEAR HIATUS: LOOK AT THE CHANGES!

A report from Tom Munley, LVFC-45

Back in October of 2007, I placed a telephone call to the Foundation President, Tim Chopp, to explain some issues, both personal and professional. The result was Tim and Foundation Vice President, Kevin Kearney, agreed to see me to discuss these issues. At the meeting, I tried to put in prospective my absence from the organization which had been for over 5 years. I never advised Tim or the Foundation to withdraw as a flight crewmember and, without warning or any notification I simply vanished, to the bewilderment of many foundation members and friends. Upon the close of my meeting, I was given the privilege of returning to flight crewmember status, pending acceptance of the many changes that have taken place during my absence.

Being my old self, I immediately accepted the opportunity to make the trip to Floyd Bennett Field to help with the maintenance work detail on the C-97. There is where I was shocked. The foundation had grown from the "in the trenches" operation to a professional organization. Being a foundation member for so long, leaving and then returning, I can give a perspective that no other Foundation member can see. I'll try to make this brief but I'm still in awe.

When arriving at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York, I looked around the hangar and immediately I saw the vast improvements. Equipment such as forklifts, maintenance stands, tugs, jacks, and a crane, were neatly positioned and ready for use. Most of the member volunteers who were present that day I had never met before. These were all new members of the maintenance work force and at first glance, I could tell they were a very professional crew. I didn't even know their names, but they all greeted me with the utmost respect and the feeling I got was one of "welcome back to your family, Tom. Let's get the tool boxes and get to work". It felt good to be back.

The day in the hangar began with a organization and safety briefing in the upstairs training room given by Tim Chopp. The brief consisted of what work needed to be accomplished that day plus need to know information regarding procedures and safety, as well as what manuals would be available for consultation. As there would be 4 maintenance teams working on 4 separate areas, Tim pointed out who the team leader would be for each area. All the team leaders, (Tim Chopp, Kevin Kearney, and Joe Tesoriero) are certified A&P Mechanics. If you are not a certified A&P mechanic, you can't even loosen a bolt unless directed to do so by a designated A&P mechanic. That is the law and Tim runs a tight ship when it comes to the Federal Aviation Regulations and proper procedures to follow. Following the brief, we all assembled on the hangar floor with our assigned team to begin work. One team performed compression checks, another team was assigned to brake removal for inspection, another team was on engine maintenance, and the last team was on oil changes. Tim, being a certified A&P mechanic, not only did his share of maintenance, but also checked on each team leader to insure all was running smoothly with their area of work. Needless to say, I went home that night with a great sense of pride and accomplishment.

Not long afterwards, a flight crewmember cancelled from a mission due to family problems and I was given the privilege to fill the slot, not as a first officer, but as a general crewmember. The mission was an educational trip to Elizabeth City, N.C. and then on to Kitty Hawk, N.C. for the last mission in 2007. It was a great feeling to once again fly aboard the "Spirit of Freedom". I could see how much more professional the entire crew was. I could also see how much more I would need to learn in order to get up to speed and return as first officer. The demands on each crewmember are greater than ever, including wearing the uniform properly. On the morning of December 17th, the anniversary of the Wright Brothers first powered flight, at precisely the time they flew, there I was looking down at the Wright Brothers Memorial from inside the "Spirit of Freedom". What a feeling. I'm very happy to be back and can tell you the Foundation is growing into a most worthwhile organization with purpose and direction.



*Foundation President Tim Chopp (R) with  
Foundation Volunteer Tom Munley  
standing in front of the Wright Brothers  
Monument at Kitty Hawk, NC*

### **Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation**

P.O. Box 782  
Farmingdale, NJ 07727

Phone: (732) 818-0034 • Fax: (732) 818-0456  
E-mail- Airlift48@aol.com

#### **Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation Officers:**

**Timothy A. Chopp, President**  
(732) 818-0034  
**Kevin M. Kearney, Vice President**  
(732) 521-6068  
**Jeff DeKonty, Secretary**  
(610) 662-3415

**Website: [WWW.SPIRITOFFREEDOM.ORG](http://WWW.SPIRITOFFREEDOM.ORG)**

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## GROWTH BRINGS ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES AND DEMANDS

by Timothy A. Chopp, Founder and President of BAHF

Here we are in 2008, the beginning of what may be our most challenging year ever due to continued rising fuel prices and new demands this year that will be placed on the Foundation by the Federal Aviation Administration. I hate to see the event season begin with challenges that exceed the normal problems that always occur this time of year such as, aircraft maintenance and inspection, reports to the IRS, reports to the State of New Jersey, reports to the State of Delaware, writing a comprehensive news letter, and creating an event schedule. All of these take an enormous amount of time to complete. As the organization grows, it takes more and more time each year to comply with these demands. As our C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" mission of history, education, and remembrance, is being recognized by more people throughout the US, it is our obligation to continually improve our mission and change accordingly to provide the best educational tool possible with our available resources. If we don't do this, then we will simply wither on the vine and die.

As our mission improves, the demands increase in primarily three areas of our operation. These are; aircraft maintenance, flight crewmember performance, and support contributions. The Foundation staff has always made it a top priority to continually improve our aircraft maintenance and flight crew performance by encouraging self discipline, knowledge, and a sense of pride among our mechanics and flight crewmembers. While it has taken time, performance in these areas has improved considerably since the early days 15 years ago, thanks to the attitudes and dedication of our team players. As for support contributions, as our mission improves, the need for funding also increases. Many of our dedicated supporters have recognized this fact and have responded throughout the year with their generous gifts. So at this time, the Foundation wants to say a sincere thank you to everyone who has responded to our efforts to continually help to improve our primary mission of history, education, and remembrance. Together we have made a good team. Bring on 2008.

## FAA POLICY CLARIFICATION MAY BRING MAJOR CHANGES TO OPERATIONS

by Tim Chopp, Foundation President



Without trying to make this complicated, I will do my best to explain what is happening. The Foundation has had the privilege to operate and maintain our Douglas C-54 by complying with the Federal Aviation Regulations. When operating a transport aircraft the size of the C-54, technically the operator is to comply with a set of the Federal Aviation Regulations known as FAR Part 125. Part 125 was implemented for the purpose of operators using large aircraft when non-common carriage was involved. In more simpler terms, if you used a large airplane for purposes other than a airline or charter operations where compensation was involved, then you would operate under the rules of Part 125. There was, however, written into Part 125 regulations, certain kinds of operations that a deviation from Part 125 might be granted. This is how the Foundation operates today. We were granted a Letter of Deviation Authority from all of the rules of Part 125 and operate our C-54 under the General Operating Rules as a private aircraft owner. This full deviation from the rule is what is now being

clarified by the FAA.

The Foundation's original Letter of Deviation Authority is being recalled and a new Letter of Deviation Authority (known as a LODA) is to be issued that will not give the Foundation full deviation from all of Part 125. This means when the new LODA is issued, the Foundation will now be responsible for complying with certain Part 125 regulations . As this article is being written, it is still too early to see what regulations will effect the Foundation's operations. Each FAA office must examine each operator in their region to determine what regulations the operator may be granted a deviation.

These changes may effect corporate flight departments and operators such as ours across the nation, so we are not alone. Technically, the new LODA is to be reissued by March 31, 2008. In the meantime, the Foundation's staff is cooperating with the FAA Safety Inspectors in Philadelphia to comply with the new clarification of the rules. There will be an updated report on the results of the final interpretation of what rules will effect the Foundation's operations.

## MISSION TO BERLIN DOUBTFUL IN 2008, POSSIBLY 2009?

What a glorious mission it was to fly the "Spirit of Freedom" to Berlin, Germany, in 1998 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. We certainly wanted to make a return trip in 2008 to celebrate the 60th anniversary. Unfortunately, the world has changed significantly in the past 10 years reducing the resources needed to one word, and that is "funding", and lots of it. At today's prices, the amount of fuel and oil required for the round trip is very near \$200,000 (aviation gasoline sells for \$11 per US gallon) in Germany. In addition to the direct fuel and oil expenses, there is also the cost of preparing the C-54 for the crossing, lodging for the crew, travel expenses, insurance, funds for emergency maintenance, and income to the Foundation. To make the return again will require several hundred thousand dollars. With the Foundation staff buried in administrative demands, maintenance, and scheduling, we simply have not been able to pursue a course of action to obtain resources for the return mission. There is some good news. The mayor of Berlin made the announcement that all 60th anniversary celebrations of the Berlin Airlift would take place in 2009, and not 2008. Possibly with the right kind of support, we can once again return to Berlin in 2009. We certainly will make a valiant effort.



C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" posing in front of the terminal at Berlin's Tempelhof Airport in 1998



## GERMAN EMBASSY RECOGNITION / JOINT PLANS FOR 2008



Due to the respect and admiration the Foundation has for the Veterans of the Berlin Airlift, it was imperative that the "Spirit of Freedom" honor the veterans during their 2007 reunion held at Norfolk, Virginia, from September 28 to October 2. The plan called for a fly by and candy drop at the Wright Brother Monument on Saturday, the 29th of September, where the veterans planned to be as a side trip. The veterans would make the trip by bus. The "Spirit of Freedom" would depart Norfolk to arrive over Kitty Hawk at 10:45 AM. On the departure from Norfolk, the "Spirit of Freedom" carried on board several VIP guests. One of these guests was Dr. Georg Schulze Zumkley, Deputy Director of the German Information Center, a division of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Washington, DC. Dr. Zumkley enjoyed the day which also included a landing at the Dare County Regional Airport to allow the veterans to tour the "Spirit of Freedom", have a catered lunch with the crew, and then the return flight to Norfolk that evening. Dr. Zumkley was quite impressed with the Foundation's operation and the mission of the "Spirit of Freedom".

In the weeks that followed, a common bond has been established between the Foundation and the German Information Center that has resulted in the following:

1. The German Information Center will re-supply the Foundation with 2000 of our main Berlin Airlift History Book in 2008, plus 100 of Gail Halvorsen's book, the Berlin Candy Bomber. The Foundation will place a German Information recognition sticker on each book. The books may be used in any manner to benefit our mission of history, education, and remembrance.
2. In the last months of 2007, the German Information Center re-supplied the Foundation with C-54 models. 250 from the Minicraft Model Company and 100 from Herpa in Germany, through the Aviation Center in Berlin. The Foundation will place a German Information sticker on each model. The models may be used in any manner to benefit the mission of the Foundation.
3. During the Joint Service Open House Air Show at Andrews Air Force Base scheduled for May 16, 17, and 18, 2008, the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation and the German Information Center will join forces to provide the public with a great static display and information to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. The displays will be an extension of the "Spirit of Freedom" exhibits. The Candy Bomber, Gail Halvorsen, will be there to greet the public.
4. Other similar joint events with the German Embassy may take place during the year.



The Foundation wishes to say a sincere thank you to the German Information Center, and to Dr. Georg Schulze Zumkley, for their unexpected and generous support to help the Foundation preserve the history of the great Berlin Airlift of 1948 and 1949.

## PRESIDENT AND VP INVITED TO U.N. GERMAN HOUSE TO DISCUSS FUTURE

On February 5th, 2008, Foundation President Tim Chopp and Vice President Kevin Kearney, were invited by the German General Consulate for a meeting to discuss the possibilities of a joint venture to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. As this year is the 60th anniversary year, the invitation states, "We are very interested in building up an event with the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation". The meeting is to take place at the UN Plaza at the German House. As of this writing, the time and date have not been finalized. The Foundation is honored to have this opportunity to expand our mission and to work with the German General Consulate.



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## C-97 "ANGEL OF DELIVERANCE" PROGRESS

On July 18, 2007, Foundation maintenance volunteers descended upon Floyd Bennett Field. Their purpose? Performing a landing gear retraction test on the C-97 and practice some emergency landing gear extension procedures. Present at this time were Tim Chopp, Kevin Kearney, Bill Rumpf, Dan MacManus, Walter Henry, Frank Benson, Cedric Morrison, Joe Tesoriero. The following pictures tell the story of this exciting day:



Setting the jacks. We used 6 of them! It took some coordination to keep the airplane level as she went up.



She's just high enough to conduct the tests.



*The two-tire Nose Gear ascending neatly into its well.*



*The right main gear retracts into the wheel well. Not much room for stowaways in there!*

It takes 11 seconds for the main gear to retract, but, with the help of gravity, only about 3.5 seconds to extend, and that's without a slipstream. Man that's fast!

These tests were repeated on November 17, 2007 and a video is available on our website at [www.spiritoffreedom.org](http://www.spiritoffreedom.org).

What we gain from this is we are becoming more familiar with the airplane and its systems, we are practicing vital emergency procedures and also developing crew coordination. These signify another major step along to road to airworthiness. Way to go guys!





# HANGAR HAPPENINGS: C-97



Our C-97 maintenance team positioning the jacks in preparation for landing gear retraction and extension checks on the C-97 "Angel of Deliverance".



Gerry Kenna installing a sparkplug in the massive P&W R-4360-59B engine. This is the #4 engine. It has 56 sparkplugs. You only have 55 more to go, Gerry.



Frank Benson tracking down an electrical glitch on the R-4360. Frank is a key man on our maintenance crew and is mutli -talented. Frank has been with the Foundation since June of 1995 and does a great job.



From left to right, Tom Munley, Dan McManus, and Frank Benson, with new main landing gear tire for the C-97. This is one of two tires donated to the Foundation by the good patriots of Good Year.



Foundation Corporate Secretary, Jeff DeKonty on the right, and Frank Benson, checking the brake assembly on the C-97.



**OUR C-97 MAINTENANCE TEAM:** (Standing L to R) Tom Munley, Walter Henry, Frank Benson, Bill Starr, Steve Grubesich, Joe Tesoriero, Cedric Morrison, Dan MacManus, Gerry Kenna, Art Kunhardt, Sean DeKonty, Bill Rumpf. (Kneeling) Kevin Kearney, Tim Chopp. (Not Shown) Photographer, Jeff DeKonty



# HANGAR HAPPENINGS: C-54

Winter Maintenance is underway. Our dedicated volunteers are once again enduring the cold temperatures to ensure that the C-54 is ready for the 2008 display season starting in mid-March. If you are interested in helping out and are a registered Foundation Supporting Member, please contact Foundation President Tim Chopp or Vice President Kevin Kearney to get involved. Below are some scenes of C-54 maintenance taking place at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, NY.



*Foundation Volunteers Steve Grubesich and Gerry Kenna preparing the #3 engine for a compression test.*



*Foundation Volunteer and A&P Mechanic Joe Tesoriero removing a bearing from the left main landing gear axle.*



*Foundation Vice President and A&P Mechanic Kevin Kearney working on the #4 exhaust collector while Foundation Volunteer Bill Rumpf assists.*



*Foundation Volunteer Tom Munley assists in the removal of the cockpit overhead panel in the C-54.  
Welcome back, Tom! We missed you!*



*Foundation President and A&P Mechanic Tim Chopp working in the cockpit overhead panel in the C-54.*



*Foundation Volunteers Kevin Kearney, Frank Benson, Joe Tesoriero and Bill Rumpf install a main landing gear wheel on the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom".*



## “SPIRIT OF FREEDOM” MAKES A CALL TO THE BERLIN AIRLIFT VETERANS REUNION



Norfolk, Virginia, was the 2007 site for the Berlin Airlift Veterans Association Reunion (BAVA). It had been several years since the Foundation was able to participate by having the C-54 available to our honored patriotic friends. With the many improvements to the on-board museum / exhibits inside the C-54 since our last visit several years prior, we were delighted to have the opportunity to host our many friends in the BAVA organization so they could see these improvements. This visit was unique because for the first time, the veterans could see the "Spirit of Freedom" flying. This was made possible by coordinating a memorial flight with the C-54 during the veterans' visit to Kitty Hawk, NC on Saturday, the 29th of September, 2007. The following report, submitted by Airlift Veteran and Foundation Flight Crewmember Bill Morrissey, gives a detailed account of that flyby mission that included special guests and the Candy Bomber himself, Gail Halvorsen, as co-pilot. At this time, we want to thank Fred Hall of BAVA, for making his magic work to adjust the activity bus schedule and include a visit to the C-54. Fred has a way to make it work. A special thanks to Dr. Earl Moore, President of BAVA, and to the entire BAVA organization for their generous \$2000 contribution, presented to BAHF aboard the C-54 at Manteo, to help keep the "Spirit of Freedom" flying. It was a marvelous reunion and great to see many of our honored friends as well as make new friends. Rest assured, the Foundation will continue to find ways to preserve your patriotic effort and sacrifices that made the Berlin Airlift a Triumph for Peace.

### ***SPIRIT OF FREEDOM MEMORIAL FLIGHT AT BAVA REUNION, A REPORT BY WILLIAM MORRISSEY***

Last year, (2006) at the annual BAVA reunion held at Albuquerque, NM, BAVA member Tom Harrison made a proposal to invite the BAHF Douglas C-54/R5D to the next reunion to be held at Norfolk, Virginia in September of 2007. Tom got the ball rolling with a generous donation towards that goal. As the 2007 reunion drew closer, the proposal became a reality. Fred Hall of BAVA, and Tim Chopp, of BAHF, were well aware that the visit would require close coordination. They produced a primary mission that far exceeded the expected static display only as was the mission in the past.

The plan: While visiting Kitty Hawk, the C-54 would make three(3) memorial flybys at the Wright Brother Memorial. Following the completion of the flybys, the C-54 would proceed to the Dare County Regional Airport at Manteo, NC, and prepare the "Spirit of Freedom" as a static display for the veterans who would arrive by bus several hours later. It was a good plan. Saturday, September 29, 2007, was chosen as mission day.

The Mission: In Norfolk, following the morning BAVA Business meeting, the veterans, wives and guests, boarded the buses for the trip to Kitty Hawk. At the same time, The crew of the "Spirit of Freedom" and guest passengers, departed by van to the Norfolk Airport and Landmark Aviation Business Aircraft Terminal where the "Spirit of Freedom" was parked. Upon arrival at the beautiful Landmark Aviation facility, the crew made all preparations for getting under way while the guest passengers enjoyed the comfort and facilities of our patriotic friends and supporters at the Landmark terminal. When the departure time arrived, crew and passengers boarded the "Spirit of Freedom" and departed for the 25 minute flight to Kitty Hawk.



*The Wright Brothers Monument as seen from the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom". This photo was taken by David Brightwell on Friday, December 14, 2007, on the inbound flight to the Dare County Regional Airport after completing the first half of the mission at Elizabeth City, North Carolina*



C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" as it looked on the morning of September 29, 2007 at Kitty Hawk, NC, on a flyby to honor the fallen heroes of the Berlin Airlift.

Upon sighting the Wright Brothers Monument, which is like seeing an old friend to the "Spirit of Freedom", the crew lined up the C-54 for the first pass. As the target drew nearer, the crew could see the 3 buses and Airlift Veterans in the grass area located between the monument and main building.

First Pass- The first pass was a wing salute to the Berlin Airlift Veterans Association to those veterans on the ground below able to answer the roll call and to those who are no longer here to answer the call.

Second Pass- The second pass was to honor Major General William Tunner and Airlift veterans of all nations with special remembrance of the 39 British Airmen who lost their lives during the Berlin Airlift. On this pass, a single parachute with a white carnation was released.

Third Pass- The third and final pass was made to honor and remember our 31 American Heroes who lost their lives in aviation related accidents during the Airlift.

During this pass, BAVA President Dr. Earl Moore and officers conducted a remembrance ceremony that included reading the names of the fallen 31 and tolling the bell as each name was read. On this pass, 31 parachutes with white carnations were released.

With the Kitty Hawk Mission complete, the "Spirit" departed the area for landing at the Dare County Regional Airport. Our Manteo Angel, Karen Edmond, was there to greet us as she has done many times. Karen and family prepared a wonderful lunch for crew and guest passengers. For those who don't know, Karen is a Berliner and was a young girl living in Berlin during the Airlift. On this particular mission, one of our guest passengers, Helga Johnson, was also a young girl living in the British Sector of Berlin during the Airlift. Helga said she never had a chance to get a candy chute. These many years later she had a parachute experience for it was Helga who released the single parachute on the second pass.





*Foundation President Tim Chopp and Berlin Candy Bomber Gail Halvorsen pose with the President of the Cold War Museum, Francis Gary Powers, Jr. at the BAVA Reunion in Norfolk, VA. Mr. Powers is the son of ill-fated U-2 Pilot Francis Gary Powers, who was shot down over Russia on May 1, 1960.*

It is worth reporting there were five BAVA Officers aboard the flight. Our readers may not be aware that several key people serve in both organizations. BAHF Pilot and President, Tim Chopp is also the Civilian Representative for BAVA, Loadmaster and Foundation member, Joe Groetsch, is also the US Army Representative for BAVA, Co-pilot and Foundation member, Gail Halvorsen, is also a Director at Large for BAVA, and myself, Bill Morrissey, also Loadmaster and Life Member of BAHF, and Nominating Committee Chairman for BAVA. The fifth officer was Tom Flowers who is also a member of BAHF and serves as the US Navy Representative for BAVA. During the return flight to Norfolk from Manteo, Tom occupied the observer seat in the cockpit which brought back great memories when he flew with the Navy during the Airlift. On board also was his daughter Deborah. What a wonderful scene to see father and daughter in the "Spirit of Freedom" enjoying the flight together.

For Tom Harrison, you planted the seed for the "Spirit of Freedom" mission and it grew to maturity. For the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation and the Berlin Airlift veterans Association, it was "mission accomplished". Kudos to BAVA, BAHF, and to Tom Harrison, who was Assistant Loadmaster on the flight. For the reunion attendees, it will be a memorial flight that will long be remembered.



**VIP'S** L to R First Officer Scott Hinton, Longtime Friend Sven Johnson, Former Berliner Lothar Zeidler, Former Berliner Helga Johnson, Director of the Airlift Gratitude Foundation, Henz-Gerd Reese, Foundation President, Tim Chopp



**Berlin Airlift Veterans Association President Dr. Earl Moore** presents a \$2000.00 check to Foundation President Tim Chopp as a gift from the Airlift Veterans to help keep the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" flying. To the right of Dr. Moore is Berlin Candy Bomber Gail S. Halvorsen, Airlift Veteran Bill Morrissey and Airlift Veteran Joe Groetsch. Gail, Bill, and Joe are all active members of the Foundation as well. This photo was taken on September 29, 2007 at Dare County Regional Airport, Va.



**CHUTES AWAY!** Candy-Laden Parachutes depart the "Spirit of Freedom" in tribute to the fallen airmen of the Berlin Airlift



ED JOHNS WILL ALWAYS FLY WITH THE "SPIRIT OF FREEDOM"



*An officer and a gentleman, Ed Johns, as he appeared in World War II as a pilot with the 7th Air Force in the Pacific Theater.*

Recently, the Foundation received the news from Candy Johns, that her husband, Ed Johns, the patriot who was the former owner of our Douglas C-54, had passed away on September 21, 2007. Ed Johns graciously sold his C-54 to the Foundation on December 22, 1992. Candy was a constant companion to Ed and a major influence in his life.

Foundation President, Tim Chopp, had the good fortune to meet and deal with Ed and Candy Johns in October of 1992 when he learned that their Douglas C-54 was for sale. Although the C-54 was parked in Toronto, Canada, Tim made the trip to Pontiac, Michigan to meet Ed and Candy at their home. They all went out to dinner to discuss what Tim was trying to accomplish by creating a Berlin Airlift Museum / Exhibit, inside a flyable Douglas C-54. By the end of the meal, Tim, Ed, and Candy, had the terms of a purchase agreement for the Foundation to buy their C-54, tail number N500EJ, the "EJ" stands for Ed Johns. Tim will tell anyone that Ed Johns was a Godsent Angel to sell his C-54 to the Foundation. Tim had searched for a suitable C-54 for 4 years and doubt was beginning to creep in that possibly none were available. Tim can recall that in his dealings with Ed and Candy, he really wasn't sure if a deal could be made

until Ed made a statement that caught Tim's attention. Ed said to Tim, " I'm a World War II veteran, and I'm not sure if I want to sell my airplane to someone who would take it out of the country, tell me again what you are trying to do"? It was the way Ed said he was a World War II veteran that Tim realized he was dealing with a true patriot. Ed and Candy agreed to terms that would allow the Foundation to make payments over a 2 year period, and allow the C-54 to be flown from Toronto to New Jersey after a fixed amount of money was paid towards the terms of the agreement. It was the heart of Ed Johns that made it possible to secure N500EJ which was to become the "Spirit of Freedom".



*Ed Johns sitting in the Captain's seat when he was the owner of Douglas C-54E, tail number N500EJ*

Ed Johns served in the Pacific Theater during World War II as a bomber pilot with the 7th Air Force. As an officer, Ed was assigned additional to oversee various construction jobs and soon his talents as a builder that he learned from his father were recognized by the military and he was assigned the responsibility of constructing many and varied projects throughout the Pacific Islands. Following the war. Ed returned to Michigan where he began a long and successful career as a commercial builder throughout the Michigan and Ohio areas.

The Foundation, and especially Tim Chopp, will always be grateful to Ed Johns, and his wife Candy, for the opportunity and cooperation to buy their Douglas C-54. It should be mentioned that prior to signing the purchase agreement for our Boeing C-97, Tim went to Ed and ask him for his advise. Ed didn't even hesitate to say " go for it" it will be well worth the effort when you get it flying".



*This photo was taken in Miami, Florida in 1995. From right to left is: Foundation President, Tim Chopp, Candy Johns, Ed Johns, and Foundation Director Alberto Herreros.*

We offer Candy and their surviving family our deepest sympathy for the loss of Ed Johns. We hope Ed is listening when we say a sincere, "Thanks Ed".

REMEMBERING RANDY MCCONAHY: FIRST IN MANY WAYS  
BY TIM CHOPP, PRESIDENT

My wife and I were visiting my son in Tampa, Florida, when I received a telephone call from New Jersey with the bad news that our friend, Randy McConahy, had been in a one car accident several days earlier and was not expected to live. The accident occurred on the Garden State Parkway on May 9th, 2006 when Randy was returning home from Atlantic City. He was ejected from his Jeep and sustained severe injuries. Sadly, Randy passed away at 3:15 AM on the morning of May 14th, 2006. We lost a good friend and the Foundation lost a good patriot.

For those of us who had the good fortune to know Randy, it was common knowledge that Randy marched to the beat of a different drum and was unique in many ways. During those early years when the Foundation was nothing more than an idea, it would take a man of Randy's talents to hold the position of Vice President. When asked to jump on board as our first VP, he accepted and then put his talents and qualities to work. While in 1988 the Foundation had absolutely nothing, in Randy's mind, we were a Fortune 500 household name. He was very enthusiastic, very confident, and an eternal optimist. Randy could, and probably did, sell snow balls to the Eskimos. Despite his numerous health problems caused by Lyme Disease and an industrial accident, he very seldom complained and always gave a 100% effort to stay in the game. Randy also was selected as a member of our flight crew and always did a fine job. If you knew Randy, then you knew he would never give up and would always be finding a way to make things happen, and he did just that.

In addition to being our first VP, Randy became our first supporting angel in our Boeing C-97 Program by being the first to contribute \$5000. We now have 12 Angels in the Program. While Randy remains Angel # 1, his mother, Marjorie Armstrong of New Castle, Pennsylvania, became Angel # 4, because of Randy's dedication and support of the Foundation's purpose. Marjorie remains a strong supporter of the Foundation. I have had the pleasure to spend time with Marjorie as well as Randy's two daughters, Krysten and Lauren. I'm happy to report they all have had the opportunity to fly aboard the "Spirit of Freedom" in honor of Randy so they, too, could experience what Randy was so enthused about. Somehow, we felt Randy was aboard as well.

Randy was a good man and he certainly had an impact on my life. I learned a lot from Randy's example to forge ahead regardless of your circumstances. I often miss my telephone calls to Randy to get his point of view on Foundation issues. He always brought up ideas I never thought of. Our heart felt sympathy and prayers go out to Marjorie, Krysten, Lauren, and the remaining family members. Randy's spirit will always fly with us aboard the "Spirit of Freedom". We salute our friend and patriot, Randy McConahy. Thank you for being there when you were needed.



*Randy McConahy and his mother Marjorie Armstrong, both "Angels of Deliverance" for our C-97 program. We miss you Randy!*



## LOSS OF RUSS STEBER



*"Vittles" and his master, 1st. Lt. Clarence Russ Steber. Vittles was a 1-year old boxer pup when he first began flying with Lt. Steber during the Berlin Airlift.*

One of the contributors that added a brighter side to the history of the Berlin Airlift passed away on January 3, 2008. Russ Steber became well known as the owner of the one year old Boxer dog named, Vittles, who flew with Russ, as well as other crews, during their flights in and out of Berlin. He also was noted for the most number of flights flown into Berlin by a military pilot by flying over 400 missions, as well as one of the elite few that had to use his parachute during the Berlin Airlift. Russ and his copilot both bailed out from their C-47 on their way to Berlin when the aircraft developed trouble with both engines. It was a dark night and Russ tried to nurse the C-47 to stay in the air. When Russ made his jump from the aircraft, he was only 700 feet above the ground and his parachute just opened seconds before he hit the ground, hard! The impact rendered him unconscious. During his ordeal, his C-47 had strayed out



*Russ Steber and the Porcelain Boxer Dog, who plays the role of Russ' dog Vittles in the "Spirit of Freedom"*

of the designated corridor and he was now in the Russian Zone. When he came to, he found himself a guest of the Russian army. He was interrogated for 3 days and then released. His dog "Vittles" was not with him that night. Russ often said that if Vittles had been with him that night, they both would probably not have made it due to the time it would have taken to prepare Vittles for the jump. Vittles had his own parachute specifically made for him by order of General Curtis LeMay. A replica of Vittles parachute is on display inside the "Spirit of Freedom". The original is in display at the USAF Museum in Dayton, Ohio.

Russ, noted for his quick wit always brought smiles to those around him with his many humorous jokes and remarks. He and his wife, Cameron, loved to golf and enjoyed many outings during their retirement years. Cameron passed away about one month prior to Russ. Over the years, Russ was very generous to the Foundation and not only helped with his financial support, but also helped with the onboard educational display inside the "Spirit of Freedom" about the flying dog "Vittles". The display is located near the entrance door on the "Spirit of Freedom" and is spotted immediately by children and dog lovers as they enter the airplane. The names of Russ Steber and Vittles are spoken many times by our flight crewmembers as they pass on the legacy of the dog that could fly and Russ's daring leap from his C-47.

We will miss Russ and Cameron. Our hearts and sympathy are with their families. We salute Russ Steber and will always preserve his legacy.



*Russ and Cameron Steber presenting a contribution to Foundation President Tim Chopp at Sun N Fun 2003 at Lakeland Florida.*

## RICHARD YANIK DONATES AVIATION BOOK COLLECTION

Last October, the Foundation received a telephone call from Richard Yanik of Woodbridge, New Jersey, stating he would like to donate his aviation book collection to a museum. As the Berlin Airlift Historical Foundation was the first name listed in the telephone book, we were his first call, and, of course, we accepted his gift. We were very thankful that Richard telephoned us first because his lifetime collection of aviation books dates back to 1909 and is a most impressive collection. The collection includes a total of 487 books of which 453 are hard covered and 34 soft covered. In addition to the books, there were 18 vintage flight instruments dating back to the 1940's.

As a result of this unique contribution, the Foundation is creating a library in the briefing/training room on the 2nd floor of the hangar at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, New York, where our work crews can increase their knowledge on virtually any aviation subject. Our gratitude and thanks goes out to Richard Yanik.

Coincidentally, a smaller box of books was also donated to the foundation by Mark Seeman of Edison, NJ. Mark is an aviation enthusiast, pilot, aerial photographer and has visited the C-54 at several events over the years. Thank you, Mark!



*Foundation Volunteer Gerry Kenna taking inventory of the large book collection donated by Richard Yanik of Woodbridge, NJ.*



## MAINTENANCE SUPPORT VEHICLE DONATED



**Bob Horn of Island Heights, New Jersey, giving the title of his truck to the Foundation at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn, New York. (From L to R) Joe Tesoriero, Frank Benson, Bob Horn, and Tim Chopp.**



*Inspecting the 427 Cubic inch V-8 engine are Joe Tesoriero, Bill Rumpf, and Frank Benson.*

For several years the Foundation has received many donated tools from one of the local Snap-On Dealers by the name of Bob Horn, more affectionately known as Snap-On Bob.

Foundation President Tim Chopp had the opportunity to become acquainted with Bob as they both attend the same church in Island Heights, New Jersey. Bob has always been a supporter of our aircraft maintenance program and has provided the Foundation with whatever tools were required over the years to get us through some difficult jobs. On New Years Eve of 2007, Tim received a telephone call from Bob and stated he had retired as a Snap-On Dealer and would like to donate his truck as a maintenance support vehicle for the Foundation's C-97 and C-54. Tim had seen the truck many times before and knew this was simply a Godsent gift as the idea of a maintenance support vehicle had been discussed by our maintenance crews for several years. Here was the answer. The truck is a 1990 Chevrolet chassis with a Lynch Display Van body. The engine is a 427 cubic inch V-8. The gross vehicle weight of the truck is 25,200 lbs. The truck has a built in generator system to provide 120 volt power supply as well as dual air conditioners. It took Tim about 3 seconds to say yes, we will make good use of this generous gift. The truck is valued at \$22,000.

The Foundation will outfit the truck with tools, equipment, and spare parts to help in the repair of our transports should they require special maintenance when away from home. To our friend, Bob Horn, we want to say

a sincere thank you for your patriotic generosity and your patriotic heart for this unexpected and most appreciated gift. In addition to donating the truck, Bob also donated his time and all the fuel to deliver it to the hangar at Floyd Bennett Field. It should be mentioned that the name "Snap-On" will be removed from the truck as soon as weather permits. To Bob Horn, we salute you.



**Three of the Foundation's most valuable assets, our Boeing C-97G, our Douglas C-54E, and now our maintenance support truck.**

## REFLECTION ON OUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IN 2007: PUERTO RICO

As we take on the challenge of 2008 and all of the unknown obstacles that await us, let us not forget our greatest accomplishment that kicked off our 2007 event season, the mission to Puerto Rico that began on March 20th. This joint mission with the Ramey Air Force Base Historical Association and the US Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen certainly was a challenge of the highest order. The fact that the mission was a big success demonstrates what we can accomplish when we work as a team. On behalf of the Foundation, thank you to one and all who continue to support our mission of history, education, and remembrance. Our mission is growing and improving because you care.



**NEVER A FINER TEAM.** The Crew of the "Spirit of Freedom" at CGAS Borinquen (Formerly Ramey AFB), Puerto Rico in March 2007.  
(Back Row L - R) Joe Tesoriero, Earl Block, Michael Shay, Jim Reed, Steve Grubesich, and Frank Benson.  
(Front Row L - R) Tim Chopp, Scott Hinton, Kevin Kearney, Bill Morrissey, and Berlin Airlift Candy Bomber Gail Halvorsen.



*Foundation Volunteer Steve Grubesich leads a group of children from the Ramey School in a parachute tying activity*



*C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" is the center of activity at CGAS Borinquen.*



*Foundation President Timothy Chopp and Foundation Volunteer Joe Tesoriero working with Ramey School Children at CGAS Borinquen.*



## OUR YOUNG LIONS: BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

It takes an average of 2 event seasons before a new flight crewmember can truly become an effective member of the team, and that depends on how many missions they participate in during the season. After a few missions, the common statement is, "there is more to this than I thought". This is very true as there are many demands placed on our flight crewmembers to help make a mission successful. The Foundation is proud to list a few of our young lions who have the dedication and desire to be a member of the team that brings the "Spirit of Freedom" to life and fly it safely to the next mission. Each of these young crewmembers all share one common trait, they all have good attitudes and want to do a good job. May we introduce them to you?

### JASON CAPRA FROM WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA



Jason became a supporting member of the foundation in 1997 when he was 14 years old after seeing the "Spirit of Freedom" at the Beaver County Air Show in Pennsylvania. He would help out each year as general crewmember at events close by his home. Jason attended Kent State University and then Robert Morris University and graduated in 2006 with a BS Degree in Business Logistics Management. After demonstrating his total dedication to the Foundation's purpose, he was selected by the Foundation as a First Officer in January of 2005. Today, at the age of 24, Jason has 2300 flight hours and holds a Airline Transport Pilot Certificate. Jason currently flies for a Regional Airline. He now has 130 hours flight time in the "Spirit of Freedom". Jason is not afraid to get his hands dirty and has on many occasion, detailed the C-54 inside and out, in preparation for a mission. The Foundation is blessed to have Jason Capra in our ranks.

### JEREMY AARON FROM WASHINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

Jeremy became a supporting member of the Foundation in 2007. He was, however, aware of the Foundation's activities for some time. Upon becoming a member, Jeremy immediately demonstrated his enthusiasm by helping with aircraft maintenance and detailing, which is a key part of our operation. He is now a student at the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics pursuing an Associates of Specialized Technology Degree in Aviation Maintenance Technology. He is scheduled to graduate in October of 2008 as a certified Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic. At the same time, Jeremy is also enrolled in a pilot training program. While now completing his Private Pilot Certificate, he wants to continue his flight training to obtain a commercial pilot certificate with multi-engine and instrument ratings. At 24 years old, Jeremy has a lot to offer the Foundation. He was accepted as a flight crewmember in August of 2007.



### DAVID BRIGHTWELL FROM CINCINNATI, OHIO



At 19 years old, David knows what he wants out of life, and aviation is at the top of his list. David grew up with aviation in his blood, learning much from his grandfather who flew as a pilot in World War II as well as after the war, and from his Dad who flew primarily for fun with some corporate pilot experience. David knew of the Foundation for four years before he became involved directly. We would often see David when we were in the Cincinnati area as he would often want to help in whatever we needed, especially in aircraft maintenance. At his young age, David now holds a commercial pilot certificate with an instrument rating and is now working on his multi-engine rating. He is enrolled as a student at the Cincinnati State Technical College and is scheduled to receive an Associates Degree in Aviation Science by the end of July, 2008. In addition to being qualified as a pilot, David will graduate as a certified Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic. A perfect combination to fly with the Foundation. David was accepted as a flight crewmember as well as lifetime member of the Foundation in January of 2008.

### JEFFREY GRUBESICH FROM WEST MELBOURNE, FLORIDA

Jeffrey Grubesich became an active member of the Foundation one year after his father, Steve. Jeffrey has expressed great interest in the Foundation's activities as an extension of his incredible desire to learn about large engines and mechanical devices. As with Jason Capra, Jeffrey was only 14 years old when he got involved proved quickly that even at 14, he was a valuable asset to the Foundation's mission. Demonstrating his talents, a good attitude, and an eagerness to learn, he was accepted as a flight crewmember. In his second year of high school, Jeffrey began touring the US as an active member of the flight crew and again proved his worth as an effective member of the team. Jeffrey, 21, is now finishing his Junior year at Florida Institute of Technology majoring in Mechanical Engineering. His plans include pursuing a Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic certificate in the future.





## COLONEL CHARLES L. PATTERSON: AIRLIFT VETERAN AND ANGEL # 12

We have had the honor and privilege to have known Pat Patterson for over a decade. Although his real name is Charles, he is known by everyone as Pat. As a veteran of the Berlin Airlift, Pat has supported the Foundation's purpose and mission for many years, to include being our 12th Angel in our C-97 Program by contributing \$5000. While Pat lives in Hamilton, Montana, over the years he would visit relatives that live in New Jersey. While making his visits to NJ, he would stop in at the Robert J. Miller Airpark to see the C-54 and to say hello. During the many conversations he would have with Foundation President, Tim Chopp, we learned more and more about Pat during each of his visits. We discovered Pat was not only a C-54 pilot during the Berlin Airlift, but also experienced a phenomenal career with the United States Air Force. Tim also discovered there was in print the memoirs of Pat Patterson and he was able to secure a copy. We thought our readers would enjoy learning where the Berlin Airlift fit in the career of this unique pilot. Here is the short version of Pat's flying career with the US Air Force.



*I'm just going to take her for a spin around the pattern..OK Tim? Airlift Veteran and longtime Foundation supporter "Pat" Patterson sitting in the cockpit of the "Spirit of Freedom"*

Charles L. Patterson was born in Cumberland, Maryland on December 22, 1922. He grew up in the Cumberland area and graduated from High School in June of 1941. He began to take flying lessons at the Mexico Farm Airport near Cumberland and soloed on December 7, 1941, the same day the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Anxious to do his part, Pat joined the US Army on March 16, 1942. He was accepted to attend flight school and reported to the Santa Ana Army Air Base in California on April 12, 1942 to begin preflight schooling before receiving actual flight training. Upon completion of the preflight schooling, he began primary flight training at Visalia, California, flying the Ryan PT-22 trainer. On August 28, 1942, he was sent to Merced, California, to begin basic flight training flying the BT-13 trainer. He completed the basic flight training on October 22, 1942 and was sent to Luke Field, Tucson, Arizona, for advanced flight training flying the famous AT-6 Texan. He graduated and was now a 2nd Lieutenant wearing gold bars on his shoulders and sporting shiny silver wings on his uniform. He was then sent to Mather Field, California, for instructor training and then on to Pecos Army Air Field, Pecos, Texas, to instruct basic flight training to cadets in the BT-13 trainer. While at Pecos AAF, the base transitioned to a multi-engine training base and Pat found himself instructing in the Cessna UC-78 twin engine trainer, often called the Bamboo Bomber. Also during his stay at Pecos, Pat received 6 weeks of advanced instrument training at Bryan, Texas, flying the AT-6 Texan. On February 28, 1944, Pat was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. On August 17th, 1944, Pat was sent to Hobbs Army Air Field in New Mexico to transition to the B-17. As the war in Europe was winding down, Pat was sent to Roswell, New Mexico, to transition to the B-29 Bomber. His transition to the B-29 included training at Lincoln, Nebraska, and by May 15, 1945, training at Gulfport, Mississippi, for bombing practice. On July 31, 1945, Pat departed Gulfport and arrived at Kearney Army Air Field, Nebraska, on August 3rd, 1945. On August 4th and 5th, he and his crew were issued new equipment and assigned a brand new B-29 which they were to fly to the war zone in the Pacific. On August 6th, the Enola Gay dropped the Atomic bomb, and his orders were cancelled following the surrender of Japan. On August 23rd, Pat was sent to Davis Monthan Field near Tucson, where he remained until November 15th, 1945, when he was sent back to Roswell, New Mexico. On February 14th, 1946, Pat became inactive and returned home to Cumberland, Maryland, to go to college at the University of Maryland. He remained with the Air Corp Reserves and kept his flying skills at Andrews AFB, flying the AT-6 trainer and twin engine AT-11. On the 13th of July, 1948, Pat returned to active duty status with the now separate branch of the service, the United States Air Force. By the 16th of September, 1948, Pat found himself at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines, assigned to the 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron, equipped with Douglas C-54 transports. Two days later, on September 18th, 1948, Pat and the entire 22nd Troop Carrier Squadron were on their way to Germany to fly in the Berlin Airlift.

During the Berlin Airlift, Pat flew the C-54 out of Fassberg, then Celle. He flew 179 missions into Berlin until April 4, 1949. He then returned to Clark Field in the Philippines and remained there flying missions throughout the Pacific. Then when the Korean War began, Pat was sent to Tachikawa, Japan, to fly medical air evacuation flights from Korea to hospitals throughout Japan, flying the C-54. He returned to Clark Field in the fall of 1950 and returned to flying throughout the Pacific and main land Asia in the C-47, C-46, and VB-17 for the Wing Commander. On January 16, 1951, he was promoted to the rank of Captain. On April 17th, 1951, Pat was transferred to Fairchild AFB near Spokane, Washington. While his duties were as a Tech Supply Officer, he continued to fly the C-47 on missions and as a flight instructor. During this time he transferred to MATS and was reassigned to Westover AFB reporting on February 14, 1952. During his time at Westover, Pat flew the C-54 on missions to Thule, Greenland, Europe, Azores, and Africa. He transitioned to the Douglas C-118 in 1953 and was promoted to Major on February 21, 1955. His next assignment was Wiesbaden Germany. Pat arrived there on June 8th, 1955, and once again, in addition to his other duties, flew the C-47. He continued his duties in Germany until 1958. In January of 1958, Pat was awarded the rating of Command Pilot, the highest aeronautical pilot rating in the USAF. To qualify, one must have 15 years of service and 5000 Hours of flight time. Pat's next assignment was Andrews AFB, Washington, DC. He arrived in June of 1958 and continued to fly the C-47 for the AACS (Airways and Air Communications Service). While at Andrews, Pat was transferred to the MATS 1298th Air Transport Squadron. This is the unit that is designated SAM, or Special Air Missions. They fly the President, Vice President, and other government VIP's on missions around the globe. He flew the VC-118 and C-123 in support of the VC-137 Presidential aircraft (Air Force One). He also flew as additional crewmember on several VC-137 missions. On November 22, 1963, the day President Kennedy was assassinated, Pat was at Andrews AFB, and waited at the hangar for the return of Air Force One from Dallas.



*"Pat" Patterson and Foundation President Tim Chopp are no strangers to their surroundings, the cockpit of a Douglas C-54*

On July 15th, 1964, Pat was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In early 1965, Pat's next assignment was to Lajes Field, in the Azores. His duties included flying a C-54 from Lajes to Europe, once a week. His next assignment was Wright-Patterson AFB and reported in August of 1967. He continued to fly the C-118, then was sent to the Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. His studies at the War College began on August 7th, 1968. Pat graduated from the Army War College on June 16, 1969. His next assignment, Saigon, Viet Nam, reporting in on July 11th, 1969 as the Chief Supply Officer for Tan Son Nhut Air Base.



Flying for Pat while in Viet Nam was limited. In July of 1970, he was assigned as Chief, Depot Operations Division, at Cameron Station, Alexandria, Virginia, then reassigned to Fort Ritchie, Maryland, with the Alternate National Command Center. In August of 1971, Pat was promoted to Colonel. A year later, in August of 1972, Charles L. Patterson, retired from the United States Air Force after serving 30 years and 4 months. He accumulated over 7000 flying hours during his long and busy career.

We are most thankful and honored to have Pat Patterson in our ranks. Truly a dedicated American and Patriot. We salute Colonel Charles L. Patterson, USAF, retired, for his life long accomplishments.

**CANDY DROP FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE**

Our beloved Airlift Veteran, Bill Morrissey, first signed on with the Foundation back in 1993 as a supporting member. Over the years he moved up to a general member, then lifetime member, then was accepted as a general flight crewmember, then after gaining flight experience, moved up to a key position as a load master on the C-54. Being a veteran of the Berlin Airlift as a member of the AACCS (Airways and Air Communications Service), Bill served with the US Air Force as a Air Traffic Controller based at Celle. With Bill's experience in the Berlin Airlift and his ability to communicate well with the public, and especially school students, he is the Foundation's best speaker to stand and deliver the Berlin Airlift Legacy. As the Foundation mission demands flight crewmembers have capable of multi-talents, Bill is certainly a good example. The series of photos was taken during our 2007 mission to Manteo, North Carolina, where the mission includes tours for school students, fly over of the Wright Brother Monument, lying in Santa Clause, and a Candy Drop. You can see in these rare photos, a dedicated Bill Morrissey doing his job as load master, releasing the candy laden parachutes to the waiting children at the Dare County Regional Airport. His assistant in the photos is David Brightwell from Cincinnati, Ohio. David not only makes the parachutes, but is one of our newest flight crewmembers. This was a excellent drop with 100% of the parachutes opening and 100% landing in the drop zone. This speaks well of the talents of Bill Morrissey and David Brightwell.



*Bill Morrissey showing the box of prepared parachute*



*Bill Morrissey and David Brightwell wait for the signal to drop the parachutes*



*Chutes away! Bill drops the parachutes right on cue!*



*Bill watching to see if all the paracutes have been dropped*



*Bill Morrissey and David Brightwell have a post-drop discussion about the finer points of dropping candy parachutes.*



## Kids still love the Berlin Airlift Candy Bomber

By Frederick A. Johnsen

Gail Halvorsen is the grandfather of 24 and the friend of countless kids from here to Germany. His place in history will always be as the Candy Bomber, the Berlin Airlift pilot who dropped candy bars to German children via tiny parachutes when the Soviet Union blockaded Berlin in 1948.

But a visit with Colonel Halvorsen at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2007 quickly reveals him to be more than a one-time, good-deed phenomenon. Just as his parachutes dispensed cheer to the children of blockaded and war-torn Berlin, Halvorsen continues to hand out goodwill in the form of a compliment, a cheery greeting, a hearty handshake.

During World War II, Halvorsen trained to fly fighters, then ferried brand new B-24s from the Ford construction plant to a modification center in Alabama, subsequently piloting four-engine C-54 transports across the south Atlantic route to Europe.

When the Soviet Union blockaded roads and rails leading into Berlin in 1948, the United States and other western powers took a bold chance and surmounted the blockade with airlift. A round-the-clock stream of transport planes brought food and supplies into Berlin, a city still recovering from the devastation of World War II. With conditions sometimes bordering on starvation, the German population was eager for any signs of hope.

Halvorsen said he was moved by the sight of German children at the airfield fence quietly watching his C-54 being unloaded during the airlift. They did not beg for candy or gum that he and other American fliers could give away as trifles. The children's polite stoicism in the face of need impressed Halvorsen. Soon, he began tying candy bars to small parachutes made from handkerchiefs and raining them down where he figured kids would be as his C-54 passed low over Berlin on its way to landing at Tempelhof airfield.



The C-54 at AeroShell Square is the type of aircraft from which Colonel Halvorsen dropped candy over Berlin. Photo by Frederick A. Johnsen

For a brief couple of weeks, this included candy drops over portions of communist-held East Berlin. "We got into trouble with the Russians," he chuckled. "I saw a soccer match going on in East Berlin and dropped" candy, he recalled. His last view of that game was as the soccer ball went one direction and the kids went another in quest of the parachutes. Halvorsen was instructed to stop the East Berlin drops as a diplomatic measure.

From an impromptu gesture, Halvorsen's candy drops gained worldwide media attention. Soon, service clubs in the United States were clamoring to send candy and parachutes cut from whole cloth. A retired fire station in Chicopee, Massachusetts, became an assembly line where volunteers attached candy to parachutes, delivering 15 tons of the goodwill bundles by the time the Berlin Airlift ended in early 1949, Halvorsen said. Other donation sites added to the total. Halvorsen figures about 25 pilots in his squadron adopted the mission of airdropping candy while delivering vital supplies to Berlin.

Just before Christmas 1948, with shortages hampering much of Berlin, Halvorsen was shown a guarded railroad car at Rhein-Main Air Base in Frankfurt, Germany. It was filled with 6,600 pounds of chocolate bars he could distribute. With no time to lose, this candy would be delivered to Berlin for ground distribution. "Each of my guys in the squadron took 100 pounds extra," on subsequent flights, ferrying the candy to West Berlin before Christmas, where other volunteers ensured it was given out at many German Christmas parties, a sweet gesture as the Cold War soured.

The test of wills over Berlin ended in success for the airlifters as the Soviets relented on their blockade in 1949.

Halvorsen went on to a career in the Air Force as an engineer, ultimately playing a role in the development of missile systems including the mighty Titan I and III, plus a stint back in Berlin in the early 1970s as Air Force commander there. An elementary school on the American base at Rhein-Main was named for Halvorsen.

In civilian life, he worked as an assistant dean at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and now lives in rural Spanish Fork, south of Provo. Anyone spending even a little time with Gail Halvorsen is bound to conclude he found his stride early, making others happy with kind gestures.



Always a hit with kids, Gail Halvorsen chats with three-year-old Meagan Bracknell during a book-signing at AirVenture this week. During the Berlin Airlift, Colonel Halvorsen earned the nickname Candy Bomber for dropping candy bars tied to small parachutes that were retrieved by the children of Berlin. Photo by Frederick A. Johnsen



Colonel Halvorsen shows a candy drop chute used as a gesture of goodwill during the Berlin Airlift. Photo by Mark Forman



## ELIZABETH CITY EDUCATIONAL EVENT, THE BEST EVER.

Each year in December, the Foundation ends the event season by participating in an event called "Celebrating Christmas the Wright Way". This event, in North Carolina, encompasses two airports, Elizabeth City and the Dare County Regional Airport at Manteo. Educational activities are offered the opportunity to bring students to see the "Spirit of Freedom" at both locations. The Daily Advance Newspaper at Elizabeth City reported our visit so well, with their kind permission we are adding their newspaper article to our newsletter. Thanks to everyone who continues to support the Foundation, our mission of history, education, and remembrance continues to grow and improve.

### DRS TECHNICAL SERVICES, INC. SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL VISIT AT ECG



The Foundation is happy to report that our educational visits to Elizabeth City Regional Airport, NC have reached a new level of success. This good news would not be possible if it weren't for the generous support of DRS Technical Services, Inc. For the past 2 years, DRS, as they are commonly referred to, has sponsored the "Spirit of Freedom" so hundreds of the local school students could have the opportunity to learn about our nation's history. Prior to that, DRS contributed along with other local businesses to help make the mission possible.

DRS Technical Services, Inc. is a large aircraft maintenance and overhaul facility at the Elizabeth City Regional Airport. Their primary function is to overhaul U.S. Coast Guard C-130 aircraft. The facility is managed by Jeff Berry, Vice President of Coast Guard Operations, who's responsible for ensuring that each C-130 is overhauled to all specifications. Over the next few years, more hangars will be added to accommodate their operation. The Foundation, along with Jeff Berry, and Scott Hinton, Foundation lifetime member and Elizabeth City Regional Airport manager, would like to see the number of students double, from almost 1000 this past year to 2000, possibly by our next visit. DRS is again coming through to help the Foundation reach the goal of 2000 kids. Presently, the students arrive at the airport and receive their briefing in the lounge area before boarding the C-54. We were lucky in 2007 because the weather was perfect. If the weather had not cooperated, it would have been very difficult managing 1000 students as they made the walk from the terminal to the C-54. Jeff is currently constructing the 2<sup>nd</sup> 80,000 sq. ft hangar at the DRS facility. Scheduled for completion in November 2008, the possibility exists to use part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> hangar as an assembly area where students could receive a presentation about the airlift with the aid of a big screen TV. Following the presentation, the students would then proceed to board the "Spirit of Freedom", also located in the heated hangar. With the patriotic spirit and continued support of DRS Technical Services and Jeff Berry, all of this is possible. The Foundation offers a sincere thank you and salute for supporting our visits to Elizabeth City, NC.



STAFF PHOTO BY BRETT A. CLARK

Area school students listen as Bill Morrissey explains how C-54 transport planes delivered food and other supplies to Germans living in West Berlin during the Soviet blockade of 1948-49, at the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Regional Airport Tuesday. Morrissey, an air traffic controller during the Berlin Airlift, is part of the crew of the Spirit of Freedom, a flying Cold War museum visiting the airport this week.

## Spirit of Freedom helps history take flight for area students

### Kids tour Berlin Airlift museum

By ZAC GOLDSTEIN  
Staff Writer

Nearly 60 years ago, Bill Morrissey was tasked with the impossible.

The Soviet Union, the former name of the nation now known as Russia, had shut down ground access to West Berlin in 1948, hoping to starve into submission the 2.5 million Germans who called that sector of the city home.

The United States, Great Britain and France, who controlled West Berlin, faced two options: submit to the Soviet Union and hand over that part of the city or fly in supplies to the West German people.

They chose the latter course.

Morrissey, who was an air traffic controller at



STAFF PHOTOS BY BRETT A. CLARK

Above, left: Ron Pegano (left) shows Jeremy Gilroy, 13, and other students the workings of the cockpit inside the Spirit of Freedom, at the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Regional Airport, Tuesday. Above, right: Students walk across the airport runway after visiting the Spirit of Freedom.

the time, remembers skeptics at the time saying a massive, continuous airlift of coal and food stuffs over occupied Soviet territory just wouldn't be possible.

"They said it cannot be done," Morrissey told a group of schoolchildren in Elizabeth City on Tuesday.

But Morrissey and hundreds of other U.S. Air Force personnel didn't listen to the naysayers. They



[www.DailyAdvance.com](http://www.DailyAdvance.com)

would take part in what would become known as the Berlin Airlift.

Between June 1948 and May 1949, hundreds of Allied aircraft flew 278,228

missions over Berlin, delivering more than 2.3 million tons of food and supplies, including more than 1.5 million tons of coal.

Unwilling to contest the airlift, the Soviets would later lift the blockade of West Berlin in 1949.

Although a success, the airlift was fraught with danger: Thirty-one U.S.

See SPIRIT on Page 7A

## SPIRIT

Continued from Page 1A

servicemen lost their lives in aviation accidents, Morrissey said.

Students from area schools got a hands-on lesson Tuesday about the Berlin Airlift and the type of transport plane that made the supply runs to Berlin possible. The Spirit of Freedom, a fully restored Douglas C-54-E transport plane converted into a Cold War museum, landed at the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Regional Airport earlier this week.

As it has for the past three years, the Spirit of Freedom will be open this week to tours



STAFF PHOTO BY BRETT A. CLARK

Students tour the interior of the Spirit of Freedom Berlin Airlift Museum Tuesday.

of area school children.

Inside the aircraft, students got a feel for the experience of the Berlin Airlift by sitting in the seats, looking over the equipment and touring the cockpit. The aerial museum also featured newspaper clippings, photographs, maps,

sacks of flour and a tribute to Vittles the Dog, a frequent passenger/mascot during the airlift.

The plane was a hit with students, who seemed fascinated by the historical exhibits inside. Several students said they were learning about the Berlin

Airlift for the first time.

"It was interesting, historical and it shows us what goes on," said Dannie Glass, 16, a member of the Northeastern High School JROTC. "Movies can tell you things, but seeing in person is more exciting."

Glass said hands-on exhibits like the Spirit of Freedom help build interest not only in history, but in the mission of the armed services as well.

"I thought it was really cool," said Elizabeth Spence, a 13-year-old at Elizabeth City Middle School.

She said it would probably be a very different experience flying aboard a C-54E during a supply run versus flying on a modern plane because of the changes in technology.

"I'd be scared," added Laureale Roach, 13, a fellow eighth grader at ECMS.

"It probably would be pretty hard to learn this stuff," said Tyler Whedbee, 13.

About 1,000 students from

Elizabeth City-Pasquotank and Edenton-Chowan schools are expected to tour the Spirit of Freedom at the airport through Friday.

(Contact Zac Goldstein at [zgoldstein@coxnc.com](mailto:zgoldstein@coxnc.com))

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
INCLUDING A VIDEO OF THIS  
EVENT, VISIT THE WEBSITE OF  
THE DAILY ADVANCE AT**

**[WWW.DAILYADVANCE.COM](http://WWW.DAILYADVANCE.COM)**



## EAA CHAPTER 960, GREENVILLE, NC, HAS THE RIGHT STUFF



Late October, 2007, our event season was winding down with only a few events remaining. The Foundation still had a few vacant weekends in October and was fortunate to receive a telephone call from Hilton Carson of EAA Chapter 960 located in Farmville, NC, which is very near Greenville. Hilton proposed to the Chapter the idea of having the C-54 visit the weekend of October 27, and 28. The chosen date was excellent as it fit between the events at Chesterfield, Virginia and Elizabeth City, NC. Hilton and the Foundation worked together to improve the Greenville mission by including a special educational day for the local schools, so an extra day was added to have the "Spirit of Freedom" open for school students on Friday, the 26th of October.

Following the excellent event at Chesterfield, Virginia, the C-54 arrived at the Pitt-Greenville Airport on Monday the 22nd of October, and would remain parked until the mission that began on Friday the 26th. Upon arrival, the crew was met by members of EAA Chapter 960 including Chapter President Monty Clark. Over the years, the Foundation has worked with several EAA Chapters and has always found EAA members to be friendly, courteous, and knowledgeable. These members, however, must have received a double dose of those traits because of the warm welcome and cooperation given to the flight crew. The same applies to the staff of the Pitt-Greenville Airport as well as the professionals at Dillon's Aviation where the C-54 would remained parked during our week long stay. All top notch patriots of the first order.



*Students from Oakwood School pose in front of the "Spirit of Freedom" with Foundation President Tim Chopp and Airlift Veteran Bill Morrissey*



*Schoolchildren tour the interior exhibits of C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" at Greenville, NC*

When Friday arrived, the day began with some rain. This did not hamper the enthusiasm of the EAA Chapter 960 members who gave their time to help with the school students. As this event was arranged to have the Chapter 960 members help with the mission, the Foundation provided several history books so Chapter members could learn about the Berlin Airlift and be able to pass on this information to students and members of the public. When the school buses arrived, our veteran flight crewmembers began their normal greeting to the students, then boarded the "Spirit of Freedom" for the routine educational tour. Here is where the transformation began for Chapter 960 members. With their knowledge gained during the week from the history books, and by watching our flight crew, they quickly jumped in and instantly became a very effective part of the team by talking to the students and teachers. They did such a marvelous job that our crew could have taken the day off.. It was this way for the next 2 days when the general public visited the "Spirit of Freedom" and the 960 Chapter members conducted tours. One could see the enthusiasm and pride in their talks given to the visitors. We all enjoyed the mission as well as each others company. On

Sunday afternoon, the Foundation wanted to thank those members who worked hard and gave their time to make our first visit to Greenville a success by having them aboard for a local flight around the Greenville area. It was a very enjoyable flight and well deserved.

The mission was a success and the Foundation was pleased to have the opportunity to help EAA Chapter 960 with their purpose of promoting aviation. This was a joint mission that worked well. Plans are being made to return to Greenville for the weekend of October 24, 25, 26, 2008. We want to say a sincere thank you to EAA Chapter 960 President Monty Clark, and Vice President Hilton Carsen and all the members who supported our visit. Your Chapter certainly has the right stuff. We also want to say a sincere thank you to all the local sponsors who so graciously provided the resources for what it takes to bring in a thirsty 1945 four engine transport. Thank you for inviting us. We arrived as strangers and departed good friends. We hope to see you again in October. We salute you.

### EAA CHAPTER 960 PRESENTS PLAQUE AND CONTRIBUTION

It was in late October of 2007 when the "Spirit of Freedom" visited Greenville, North Carolina, for a successful educational joint mission with EAA Chapter 960. In mid December, the "Spirit of Freedom" was still in North Carolina participating in the final event of 2007 at Manteo. While on the ramp at the Dare County Regional Airport, on the morning of Saturday, December 15th, 2007, the crew received a surprise visit from Monty Clark, President of EAA Chapter 960, along with Vice President, Hilton Carsen, and Chapter member Tom Little. The purpose of the visit was to present the Foundation with a special recognition plaque and a generous contribution of \$500, as a token of appreciation from the patriotic members of EAA Chapter 960. This was a most pleasant surprise.

It is a beautiful plaque and the Foundation will take pride when it is on display. The financial contribution is more than appreciated and will be used wisely. Thank you Monty Clark, Hilton Carsen, and Tom Little, for taking your valuable time to make the drive from Greenville, NC, to Manteo, NC., to present the Foundation with your generous gifts. We thank all the members of EAA Chapter 960. Thank you for your patriotic support, but more importantly, thank you for caring.



*Crew of the "Spirit of Freedom" proudly displaying the appreciation plaque presented to the Foundation by EAA Chapter 960 from Farmville, NC. The plaque was presented on Saturday, December 15, 2007, at Dare County Regional Airport, NC. In the photo from L to R in the front row are: First Officer Bill Starr, Aircraft Commander Tim Chopp, Load Master Bill Morrissey. Standing L to R are: Capter 960 VP Hilton Carson and Chapter President Monty Clark.*



C-54 45-453 ARTIFACT OBTAINED

Over the course of the last year, we have been in communication with Nick Wotherspoon of the Lancashire Aircraft Investigation Team based in Lancs, England. We first became aware of Mr. Wotherspoon when searching for additional photos to enhance the Airlift Heroes Display inside the C-54. His website contains a summary of details leading to the demise of C-54 45-453 and its six occupants on January 7, 1949.

The following is taken from Mr. Wotherspoon’s website  
<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/lait/site/C-54%2045-543.htm>:

“The first C-54 aircraft arrived at the American Rhein Main Air Force Base in Germany in mid-November 1948 to join the massive effort supplying Berlin during the harsh winter of the Russian blockade. The new Skymasters had double the cargo capacity of the C-47s and were sorely needed. By January 1949 they had been instrumental in increasing the tonnage from approx. 3000 to some 5,500 tons of supplies a day flown into the city, though the toll on men and machines of this non-stop effort was beginning to show. Even though the USAAF aircraft were only inspected every 200 hours, compared to 100 for the RAF, the American servicing facilities in Germany were stretched to the limit. To cope with the workload, the wartime base at Burtonwood was selected to undertake inspection and overhaul of some of the overworked aircraft taking part in the airlift. One such aircraft was C-54 45-543 which took off from Rhein Main en route for Burtonwood for its "Vittles" 200 hour service, on board were four crew and two passengers and cargo believed to comprise of a number of aircraft engines also being returned to Burtonwood for major overhaul. What should have been a routine flight became a struggle for survival as the aircraft encountered poor weather conditions over the North of England, with low cloud and heavy rain and it drifted from its intended course, ending up over the high ground of the Trough of Bowland.

The aircraft had taken off at 13.12 hours from Rhein Main AFB near Frankfurt, after a delay due to loading difficulties, for the two hour forty five minute flight via Amsterdam, Horsham St Faith and Shawbury. Although slightly over-loaded, this was not considered a problem and at 16.28 the aircraft was over the Shawbury and was given a bearing for Liverpool and told to contact Liverpool Approach Control, but contact could not be made and at 16.30 contact was made with Burtonwood. The pilot estimated his position using his instruments and the following conversation with Burtonwood tower was recorded after the Tower operator had gained clearance from Liverpool Control via the telephone.

"Burtonwood Tower this is 45543, over"  
"45543 this is Burtonwood Tower, What is your present position and what are your flying conditions?"  
"Tower, I am approximately two miles South of the field and have just broken clear of the clouds at 2200 feet. I will be completely VFR in a few seconds, over"  
"Roger 45543, this is Burtonwood Tower. Liverpool Control advises they have no known traffic in Control Zone and you are cleared into the Control Zone, over"  
"45543 to Burtonwood Tower, Roger I am now completely VFR at 1700 feet"  
"Burtonwood Tower, Roger. You are cleared to make a VFR approach. Advise tower before you encounter instrument conditions. For your information the Burtonwood Range may be used for homing purposes only on 214 kcs, over"  
"Roger, 214 kcs"

The time was 16.42 and the operator then handed over the mike for the local weather report to be given to the pilot, but the aircraft could no longer be raised. At approx. 16.45 witnesses on the ground near Garstang heard the aircraft's engines as it descended through the cloud and then it appeared out of the mist only some 80 feet above the ground. Seconds later and probably before the pilot realized the danger of his situation, the aircraft was seen to strike the face of Stake house fell as there was a flash through the mist as it exploded on impact. Subsequent investigation found that a strong signal from commercial radio station North of the Burtonwood base was interfering with the Burtonwood Range signal, causing the radio compass on board aircraft to continue to indicate that the base was to their North even after they had passed to the North of the Range Station - following this incident the frequency was changed and the problem did not reoccur. “

Mr. Wotherspoon is part of a project to build a memorial to honor the six fallen airmen. During our communication, he indicated that he had sought and obtained permission to visit the crash site so some artifact from the airplane could be acquired for their memorial. After a brief conversation, Mr. Wotherspoon agreed do the same for us. As a result, we now have an actual piece of Douglas C-54 45-549 to add to our display honoring the airmen who gave their lives during the Berlin Airlift.



Main Landing Gear struts and an engine firewall are among the larger pieces remaining of C-54 45-543 at the crash site near Garstang, England (Lancashire Aircraft Investigation Team)

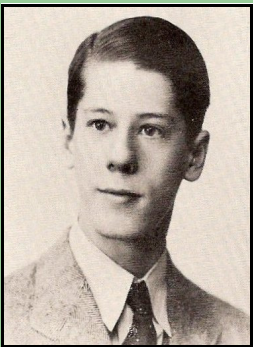


The large nose gear of C-54 45-543 lying at the crash site near Garstang, England (Lancashire Aircraft Investigation Team)



We have obtained a small piece of one of the 4 firewalls of ill-fated C-54 45-549 will provide a fitting tribute to the 6 servicemen lost in the crash of January 7, 1949

FALLEN HEROES OF C-54 45-549



1st. Lt. Richard M. Wurgel



1st. Lt. Lowell Wheaton, Jr.



Capt. William A. Rathgeber



Sgt. Bernard J. Watkins



Cpl. Norbert H. Theis



PFC Ronald E. Stone



## ***The Airlift Photos of Cpl. Joseph Brouillet, USAF***



*View of a C-54 maintenance dock built for the cold German Winters at Rhein Main Air Base*



*A closer view of the dock, as an Airman exits the C-54 in maintenance.*



*A great view of the #3 and 4 engines of a front line C-54 from the inside of a maintenance dock at Rhein Main Air Base.*



*Mechanics work on an R-2000 inside a maintenance dock at Rhein Main Air Base.*



*#39 Departing with 10 tons for Berlin!*



*Mechanics preparing to remove a #3 engine on the ramp at Rhein Main Air Base.*



*Old #3 gets another load for Berlin at Rhein Main Air Base.*



*Mechanics performing a double engine change on the ramp at Rhein Main Air Base.*





*The lone Douglas C-74 Globemaster used on the Berlin Airlift preparing for another flight to Berlin*



*The Bombed damaged Reichstag building would have to wait another 50 years to be the center of German Government again.*



*2 rare Fairchild C-82 Packet airplanes wait for another load at Rhein Main Air Base. Only 5 of these purpose built airplanes were assigned to the Airlift.*



*A Great View of the Rhein Main Airbase PX circa 1949*



*Even the harsh German winter cant prevent #3 from being loaded for Berlin*



## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PRODUCT SUPPORT FRIENDS

It would be tough going for the Foundation to remain in operation without the generous product support from several patriotic corporations. Over the years, we have become accustomed to the fine and reliable products and services that help keep the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" flying, and soon our Boeing C-97 the "Angel of Deliverance".

We thank the following for their continued support when help was needed and wish them all a great year for 2005. We salute each



**Consolidated Instruments and Avionics of Teterboro, New Jersey** - Not only professionals in their work, but outstanding and pleasant people to talk to. The Johannessen Family has worked hard to make **Consolidated Instruments and Avionics** a trusted name for quality service. They have supported the C-54 for the past 8 years.



**Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company** - In the history of the Foundation, the first company to provide product support was Goodyear when they most generously donated tires for the C-54 in 1994. Tires that are best in quality and reliability come from Goodyear. ***The "Spirit of Freedom" is on the roll with Goodyear tires.***

**Propeller Service of Miami, Inc. / Aviation Propellers, Inc.** - Paul Gaither, an icon in the aviation propeller industry. Paul and his professional technicians have supported the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom" for the past 11 years and is happy to help with the C-97 as well. Paul and his family have provided reliable propeller service for many years. You can depend on their quality of workmanship and integrity.



**Snap-On Tools** - For the past few years, Snap On Tools Dealer, Bob Horn of Island Heights, NJ has donated tools, compression testers, and tool boxes for the C-54 and C-97. Bob continues to be a patriotic supporter of the Foundation and the **Snap On** products he has donated have proven themselves to be the best!



**Champion Aerospace of Liberty, South Carolina**- The spark for the "Spirit of Freedom" is provided by Champion Spark plugs. The kind patriots of Champion Aerospace have provided sparkplugs to the Foundation for the past 8 years for the C-54 as well as a supply for the C-97. How good is the Champion Sparkplug? Consider that there are 112 sparkplugs on the C-54 and the Foundation has never experienced a sparkplug failure of any kind since we began using Champion Sparkplugs 8 years ago. ***Dependability when you need it comes from Champion Spark Plugs!***



**PRC DeSoto, Inc.** - PRC DeSoto has provided sealant and adhesives to the maintenance of the C-54 for the past 11 years. Their fine products are used for sealing the C-54 fuel tanks. PRC DeSoto also donated all of the paint for the C-97 and recently donated all of the paint for the repainting of the C-54 "Spirit of Freedom". ***PRC DeSoto: Fine products from a patriotic company.***



**Narco Avionics, Inc.** - For the past 11 years, Narco Avionics, Inc. of Fort Washington, Pennsylvania, has provided servicing and product support for the Narco Model 910 Emergency Locator Transmitter installed on the "Spirit of Freedom". An inspection, battery replacement, and operational check is required every 2 years by the FAA. John Pagan and his professionals have the patriotic spirit to help keep the "Spirit of Freedom" flying.



**Garmin AT**- Updates to the DATA Cards and repairs to our two GX55 GPS Receivers in the C-54 will continue to be provided by the Garmin AT Corporation. Their kind and patriotic support began in 1998. We hope, in the future, to find a way to upgrade all of our avionics in the "Spirit of Freedom".



**AeroShell Aviation Products** - For over 12 years AeroShell has provided fresh oil during the winter inspection cycle to prepare the C-54 for the event season. A most important contribution from a great company. Thank you AeroShell, your support is : ***THE name in Aviation oils.***



**Royal Lubricants** - Has donated necessary hydraulic fluid to the Foundation for the past 10 years. Since the Douglas C-54 has an extensive hydraulic system, this product support is vital to the operation of the "Spirit". We appreciate their patriotism and support over the years, thank you **Royal Lubricants!**

## ATTENTION ADVERTISERS!

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PLACE AN ADVERTISEMENT OR A MESSAGE IN THE **NATIONAL SUPPORT GROUP NEWS**, PLEASE CONTACT THE FOUNDATION AT 732-818-0034 OR EMAIL [AIRLIFT48@AOL.COM](mailto:AIRLIFT48@AOL.COM)



CAPT. JOEL MUNROE DEVOLENTINE - AIRLIFT HERO

This past year, the Foundation has had the honor and privilege of meeting Joel M. DeVolentine Jr, son of fallen Berlin Airlift Pilot Capt. Joel M. DeVolentine. Mr. DeVolentine has been kind enough to share the story of Capt. Joel M. DeVolentine:

Excerpt from: **One Family's Story: The Berlin Airlift**

Captain Joel Munroe DeVolentine, USAAC

Born: 2/1/1917, Lawrenceville, Ga.

Died: 8/24/1948, enroute to Wiesbaden while returning from Berlin during the Berlin Airlift

The Berlin Airlift: From June 1948 through September 1949, the United States and Britain flew 2.3 million tons of food, coal, and other necessities to war-shattered Berlin in more than 277,500 flights. Early in the Lift, all available pilots were recruited to begin the mission. Captain DeVolentine, head of Special Services in Wiesbaden, working out of the Kerr Haus, was there, willing and ready. As Russia blockaded Berlin in the first salvo of the Cold War, Americans, Britons, French and others were ready to stand or in this case fly against the new oppressor.



As a young child in 1920's, Joel DeVolentine and his family moved to Coral Gables, Florida. Growing up in the far south he learned to enjoy the outdoors and sports. He was a Boy Scout and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. He attended Ponce de Leon and then went to Miami High School, the first major high school in Miami. In high school he excelled in journalism, politics, his studies and school sports. The 1936 Miami High School Year Book lists Joel DeVolentine as:

President of Senior Class, Lettering in football (lineman), basketball & track, Captain of the Track Team, Member of Student Council, Member of Quill and Scroll, On the staff of the Times (newspaper) writing the columns "Sports Sputters" and "We Cover the Corridors", Joel also held SE Javelin high school championship.

Edith Edwards met Joel when she was in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade; he was in the eleventh grade at the time. Edith was only fourteen at the time and graduated when she was 16. They had a strong loving relationship that was stormy and fragmented up until their marriage. Edith was on the Student Council and a class monitor in high school.

Joel graduated in 1936 and attended Duke University on a full football scholarship. While playing at Duke, during the 1938 season they went on to be undefeated, unscored against and un-tied. However, they lost in the Rose Bowl in January 1939 to USC in the final minutes, 6 – 3.

Joel graduated from Duke in 1940 and became a Vice president of Sertel-Reduka Insurance Company in Miami. He and another friend, Don Brooks, took flying lessons at Embry Riddle. Joel enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1941 and began his training to become a military pilot. His basic training included stints at Randolph Field where he graduated as a cadet, officer and pilot.

Joel and Edith were married on August 3, 1942, in Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

Various assignments followed during the war, but he remained stateside, against his wishes, writing manuals and training pilots. Every three months he requested to be transferred to a combat unit, however, the military apparently felt he was needed more as a trainer. They were stationed in Fort Worth and later transferred to El Paso, where he trained as a Captain of a B-29, designed for long range bombing missions in the Pacific Theater.

The War ended before he was shipped overseas. His bags had already been shipped out and he was ready for deployment from San Francisco. He was very disappointed that he never got overseas during the war. When the War ended, Joel was waiting for deployment in California. He stayed in California and then decided to stay in the service. Redurka Insurance was very disappointed that he did not return to his management position in Miami. A decision that would affect his life and his family.



Capt. DeVolentine (Standing Left) and his crew in front of their B-29 at Biggs Field, El Paso TX.

Stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany in 1946, he was studying law at the time and was given the option of choosing to be part of the legal Adjunct Staff or to be in Special Services. He chose the latter and was put in charge of the Wiesbaden Special Services operation. Edith and his son joined him in Wiesbaden in January 1947. While in stationed in Wiesbaden, Joel and his family traveled to the Swiss Alps, Holland, Brussels, France, Luxembourg and Prague. Joel went boar hunting, fishing and deer hunting in the German country side. His son still has a set of antlers taken by his father hanging in his house.

Then the Russians blockaded all land routes in and out of the City. This meant the only access, in or out of Berlin, was by air. As a result, Captain DeVolentine was called up as one of the first pilots to fly in the Lift. He also was designated to certify co-pilots on the return runs so they could eventually handle their own trips.



Capt. Joel and Edith DeVolentine

The Lift began in June 1948 and on May 29, 1948 his daughter was born. Edith stayed in Wiesbaden with a young son and a newborn daughter.

The night before his last mission, he called home at 2:00 am, which was very unusual since he rarely called home for any reason. This was four months into the lift, and he said "I'm taking off now; I'll see you in the morning about 9:00 am."

By noon, August 24, 1948, Edith had heard nothing from him, so she called Captain Don Brooks, a dear friend and also a pilot in the Lift. He said well maybe it's because of bad weather and maybe they were diverted elsewhere, but she knew. All of Captain DeVolentine's staff knew a tragedy had occurred, even though the details were not known, and began gathering at his house. At 6:00 pm, a Chaplain and two other officers came to her house and told Edith that a mid-air crash had occurred, that one was Captain DeVolentine's plane and that there were no survivors.

She doesn't know who was flying when the planes collided. The more experienced pilot, like Captain DeVolentine, usually made the flight into Berlin due to the heavy loads and the treacherous approach at Templehof. It was customary to allow the co-pilots to handle the return trip as part of their training. The weather, as it was frequently, was inclement and the ground control and adequate radar was still being assembled. Early in the Lift, radar and ground control was still very rudimentary and pilots flew C-47s instead of the C-54s that had to be redeployed to Germany from around the world.

A big group gathered at the Brook's home along with her three month daughter and her young son. It was a chaotic time. Edith's obvious emotions, an infant and a young son to deal with. Packing and shipping out. She shipped home to Miami with the two children. A military service was held at Woodlawn Cemetery in Miami a couple of months later.

Captain Joel DeVolentine was a brave military pilot, a writer, a poet, an athlete and artist, a father, a student and he never stopped learning unit that last fateful day. A few degrees difference on a compass, a few hundred feet difference on an altimeter or a delay of a few minutes for take off and one can only wonder what difference he would have made to his family and perhaps our society. Edith always said he had enough ambition to be President. Nevertheless, Joel Munroe DeVolentine laid down his own life to help secure the freedom of 2.5 million people from oppression. We shall never forget your sacrifice!



# ☆ A SALUTE TO FALLEN HEROES ☆



1st Lt. George B. Smith  
Tuscaloosa, AL



1st Lt. Leland V. Williams  
Arlene, TX



Mr. Karl V. Hagen  
New York, NY

1st Lt. George B. Smith, 1st Lt. Leland V. Williams and Civilian Worker Karl V. Hagen died July 8, 1948 when their C-47 crashed into a hill NE of Wiesbaden, Germany enroute to Wiesbaden Air Base.



1st Lt. Charles H. King  
Britton, SD



1st Lt. Robert W. Stuber  
Arlington, CA

1st Lt. Charles H. King and 1st Lt. Robert W. Stuber died July 25, 1948 when their C-47 crashed into an apartment house while on approach to Tempelhof Air Base in Berlin.



Maj. Edwin C. Diltz  
Fayetteville, TX



Capt. William R. Howard  
Gunnison, MI



Capt. Joel M. DeVolentine  
Miami, FL



1st Lt. William T. Lucas  
Wilson, NC

Maj. Edwin C. Diltz, Capt. William R. Howard, Capt. Joel M. DeVolentine and 1st Lt. William T. Lucas died August 24, 1948 when their two C-47's collided in midair near Hanau.



Capt. James A. Vaughan  
New Haven, CT



1st Lt. Eugene S. Erickson  
Collinsville, IL



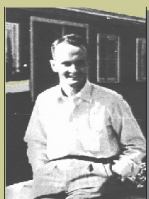
Sgt. Richard Winter  
Seattle, WA

Capt. James A. Vaughan, 1st Lt. Eugene S. Erickson, and Sgt. Richard Winter died October 18, 1948, when their C-54 crashed on approach to Rhein-Main Air Base.



PFC Johnnie T. Orms  
Colleyville, KS

PFC Johnnie T. Orms was killed by the propeller of a taxiing C-54 on October 2, 1948 at Rhein-Main Air Base.



1st Lt. Robert P. Weaver  
Fort Wayne, IN

1st Lt. Robert P. Weaver died July 18, 1949 when his C-54 crashed on final approach to Fassberg, Germany.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF  
THE MEN WHO MADE  
THE ULTIMATE  
SACRIFICE  
TO SAVE THE PEOPLE  
OF BERLIN



Capt. Billy Phelps  
Long Beach, CA



1st Lt. Willis F. Hargis  
Nacadoches, TX



TSgt. Lloyd G. Wells  
San Antonio, TX

Capt. Billy E. Phelps, 1st Lt. Willis F. Hargis, and TSgt. Lloyd G. Wells died December 5, 1948 when their C-54 crashed during takeoff from Fassberg, Germany.



AMM Harry R. Crites, Jr.  
Lafayette, IN

Aviation Machinist Mate Harry R. Crites, Jr. died December 11, 1948 when his R5D (Navy designation for the C-54) crashed near Koenigstein enroute to Rhein-Main Air Base.



1st Lt. Royce C. Stephens  
San Antonio, TX

1st Lt. Royce C. Stephens died March 4, 1949 when his C-54 crashed north of Fulda.



1st Lt. Ralph H. Boyd  
Fort Worth, TX



1st Lt. Craig B. Ladd  
Minneapolis, MN



TSgt. Charles L. Putnam  
Colorado Springs, CO

1st Lt. Ralph H. Boyd, 1st Lt. Craig B. Ladd and TSgt. Charles L. Putnam died January 12, 1949 when their C-54 crashed on approach to Rhein-Main Air Base.



Cpl. George S. Burns  
Caldwell County, NC

Cpl. George S. Burns died October 29, 1948 while working to construct Tegel Airport, Berlin.



1st Lt. Robert C. von Luehrte  
Covington, KY



2nd Lt. Donald J. Leamon  
Greenville, WI



TSgt. Herbert F. Heinig  
Fort Wayne, IN

1st Lt. Robert C. von Luehrte, 2nd Lt. Donald J. Leamon, and TSgt. Herbert F. Heinig died January 12, 1949 when their C-54 crashed in the Soviet Zone in Berlin.



1st Lt. Richard M. Wurgel  
Union City, NJ



1st Lt. Lowell A. Wheaton, Jr.  
Corpus Christi, TX



Capt. William A. Rathgeber  
Portland, OR

1st Lt. Richard M. Wurgel, 1st Lt. Lowell A. Wheaton, Jr., Capt. William A. Rathgeber, Sgt. Bernard J. Watkins, Cpl. Norbert H. Theis, PFC Ronald E. Stone died January 7, 1949 when their C-54 crashed enroute to Burtonwood, England.



Sgt. Bernard J. Watkins  
Lafayette, IN



Cpl. Norbert H. Theis  
Cunningham, KS



PFC Ronald E. Stone  
Mt. Sterling, KY



Eng. Off. John Anderson • Nav. Off. Edward Ernest Carroll • Nav. Off. Michael Edwin Casey • Capt. William Cusack • Fg. Off. I.R. Donaldson • Sgt. F. Dowling Sig. II A. Dunsire • Rad. Off. Peter James Edwards  
Capt. Robert John Freight • Eng. II R.R. Gibbs • Nav. II L.E.H. Gilbert • Gd. Eng. Patrick James Griffin • Sig. II L.E. Grout • Capt. Cecil Golding • Capt. Reginald Merrick Watson Heath •  
Flt. Lt. G. Kell • Capt. William Richard Donald Lewis • Sig. III P. A. Lough • First Off. Henry Thomas Newman Gd. Eng. Edward O'Neil • Nav. I.W.G. Page • Eng. Off. Henry Patterson • M. Sig. A. Penny •  
Flt. Lt. M.J. Quinn • Fg. Off. K.A. Reeves • Rad. Off. Dornford Winstan Robertson • Flt. Eng. Kenneth Arthur Seabome • Nav. Off. James Patrick Lewin Sharp • Gd. Eng. Theodor Supernatt • Capt. Cyril Taylor •  
Flt. Lt. H.W. Thomson • Sgt. J. Toal • Sig. II S.M.L. Towersey • Pilot I.F.I. Trevona • Eng. II E.W. Watson Flt. Lt. J.G. Wilkins • Rad. Off. Kenneth George Wood •

## THE BERLIN AIRLIFT 1948-1949

BERLIN  
HISTORICAL



AIRLIFT  
FOUNDATION