

MILE HIGH FLIGHT 18

Order of Daedalians

Newsletter

Aug 2006

Jack's Jeffco bash is Wed 6 Sep-Cool!

2006 Flight Schedule

Flight 18 normally meets on the third Friday of each month. Exceptions are announced in the newsletter and through the caller phone tree. Your caller should contact you via phone/e-mail 7-10 days prior to each meeting. If not, please advise Flight Adjutant Ron Smith.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Speaker/activity</u>
20 Jan	Aurora Hills*	BG Lassen, COANG
17 Feb	Aurora Hills*	Bombing of UA-629
17 Mar	Aurora Hills*	Paul Tibbets IV – B-2
21 Apr	Aurora Hills*	Ed Dwight, astr. trainee
19 May	Platte Valley	Lunch with wives
16 Jun	Aurora Hills*	E.C. Hoagland
21 Jul	Aurora Hills*	Bill Zinser-Volcanoes
18 Aug	Aurora Hills*	POW Mike McGrath
6 Sep (<i>Wed</i>)	JeffCo Airport	Lunch with wives
20 Oct	Aurora Hills*	TBA
17 Nov	Aurora Hills*	Ann Business Mtg
15 Dec	Aurora Hills*	Christmas Party

* Aurora Hills Golf Course Tin Cup Bar & Grill

Wilhite to host catered BBQ with wives; MIG-17, P-51 among display aircraft

Besides the fact that it's always a fun time when we picnic with our wives (or significant others) at Jack's Jeffco Airport hangar, the important thing to remember about this year's event is the date: **WEDNESDAY, 6 September**. In the past it was held in July, but was moved to September this year to avoid the heat of mid-summer.

Just so there's no confusion, we will not be meeting the third Friday of September as we usually do; this will be our September function. Please mark Wed 6 Sept on your calendar in big red letters.

Plan of the Day

While details were still being finalized at press time, we understand there will be a social hour at 11:00 and a catered lunch at 12:00. At some point, Jack Wilhite will present a briefing on (and there will be plenty of time to observe close up) the MIG-17, Gnat, P-51 and T-33 that will be on static display. Details to be provided via call list prior to the event.

See **MAP/DRIVING DIRECTIONS** to Jeffco on page 6.

Mile High Flight 18 marks anniversary number 41

Not only is the 4th of July Independence Day, it's also the anniversary of the day in 1965 when Flight 18's charter took effect. The Flight turned 41 on July 4th this year.

For the first 29 years, meetings took place at the Lowry AFB O'Club. When Lowry closed in 1994, they were moved to Buckley's Camana Club, which closed its doors in Dec 2002. Meetings have since been held at Aurora Hills. Flight 18 hosted the Daedalian National Convention in 1977 and was named the best Daedalian flight in 2003.



Jack Wilhite's Mig-17



Mike Bertz's P-51

Mock 3



Fellow
Daedalians,

Here is attempt number three at keeping you posted.

Four of us attended this year's Daedalian National Convention in San Antonio: Dale Boggie (his 30th consecutive convention), Ray Rider, Bill Meyers and me.

The highlight of the convention for me was the Airpower Symposium held Saturday morning. The speakers were young warriors who "operated the equipment of war." They told it like it is. Most enlightening!

The highlight for my wife Gail was to fly a 1941 Meyers OTW biplane Thursday afternoon at the Kingsbury Aerodrome. The three-day program was packed with a wide variety of events and the time flew by!

Next year our sister flight in Colorado Springs will host the event 13-16 June. Mark your calendars now.

I hope you are giving some thought to adoption of a Life Membership program for Flight 18 (see articles on page 5 of this issue and in the May Newsletter). We will formally address the issue at our November business meeting.

Meanwhile, new Memberships continue at an excellent pace. I hope the trend continues. Many of our fellow flights are experiencing difficulty in acquiring new members and the ultimate outcome for them is predictable!

Our meeting at Platte Valley Airpark/Lafayette Foundation with Andy Parks and our wives was a great success. How about E.C. Hoagland our June speaker. Some wonderful insights as to the beginnings of the Army Air Corps cadet program in World War Two. I'm looking forward to POW CAPT Mike McGrath in August and our annual visit to Jack Wilhite's hangar with our wives in September.

Please remember that meeting is Wednesday 6 September. We're still looking for a speaker for our October meeting.

I really look forward to visiting with you at our monthly meetings. Please keep those suggestions coming to improve the activities.

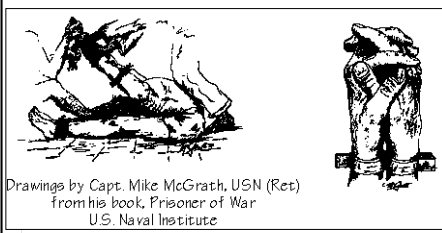
Volabamus Volamus

Bob

Robert K. Mock, COL, USAF (Ret)
Flight Captain

Aug speaker endured six years as POW in Hanoi

On June 30, 1967, Mike McGrath launched in his A4-C Skyhawk from USS *Constellation* (CVA-64) on an armed recon mission over North Vietnam, his 178th mission. After bombing one target and while rolling in on a second, his jet was hit and became uncontrollable. Mike ejected. Immediately upon reaching the ground, he was jumped by a crowd of local farmers and militia, the beginning of six years of fiendishly brutal torture, degradation, isolation and despondency as a POW of the North Vietnamese. He was imprisoned throughout in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton."



Drawings by Capt. Mike McGrath, USN (Ret)
from his book, Prisoner of War
U.S. Naval Institute

Mike chronicled his ordeal in his book *Prisoner of War: Six Years in Hanoi*, published in 1975 and still readily available on line.

Today he serves as Director and Historian of NAM-POWs, the leading fraternal organization of Vietnam-era POWs. Its web site home page is dubbed "Three's in..." which signifies a pilot's return to formation after per-

forming the Missing Man maneuver. Its 4th Allied POW Wing logo (below) reflects the fact that Vietnam was the fourth conflict in which Americans were held overseas. More important, however, are the words in the banner on which the logo rests:

"RETURN WITH HONOR"



"Mike is a courageous tiger, but he is a great deal more. I know him to be an exemplary professional officer and a gentleman of education and refinement who, in the darkest hours, drew on the totality of our national heritage to survive and return with honor. I think time will tell that he, and many young men like him in the prisons of Hanoi, added something to that heritage."

-- RADM James Stockdale

Buckley sets Military Retiree Appreciation Weekend 19-20 August

Buckley AFB will host its eighth annual Military Retiree Appreciation Weekend Aug 19-20, 2006, to honor military retirees and family members from all Services.

The event starts with a breakfast from 6 to 8 a.m., Aug. 19, at the High Frontier Dining Facility. Reservations are required.

Scheduled from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. are speakers and exhibits at the Colorado Air National Guard Hangar 909. These include: Legal, Tricare, exhibits, ID cards, pharmacy, Delta Dental, Social Security, veterans benefits, vehicle registration, casualty assistance, survivors benefits, medical screenings and Veterans Administration.

The event will end with a Prayer Breakfast in the High Frontier Dining Facility from 7 to 8 a.m. on Aug 20. There is a nominal charge for this event and reservations are required.

Welcome Aboard

Mitchell A. Neff, MAJ, ANG

This is one of those cases where “no introduction is necessary.” That’s because we already know Mitch—recipient of Flight 18’s 2005 Distinguished Pilot Award—and his wife Beth (see our May 2006 newsletter). We are pleased that, subsequent to being named last year’s Distinguished Pilot, he opted to join The Order of Daedalians and Mile High Flight 18, as did prior DPA recipients and ANG pilots Mike Loh and Floyd Dunstan. Our cadre of active duty ANG pilots who are Flight members also includes Capt TenEyck LaTourrette, who was first to join. Congratulations, all. Glad to have you aboard.



Robert E. Ritter, LCOL, USAF (Ret)

Bob earned his wings at Vance AFB in 1951. A couple of years worth of training later, he found himself flying out of Clark AFB in the PI. During that tour, his wife Betsy contracted polio and became paralyzed from the waist down, which forced Bob to transfer from the active Air Force to the reserves in 1959. He retired from the reserves in 1978 after serving in a variety of assignments and accruing flight time in the B-25, C-45, C-47, T-29, B-29, T-33 and H-13. After retirement, he served with the Indiana CAP. A widower for about a year, Bob resides in Fishers, IN, so he can remain close to his five children and “half-million” grand-children. He plans to attend meetings whenever his travels bring him to Colorado to visit his old friend Paul Maul.



Charles G. Wilson, CDR, USN (Ret)

Chuck earned his wings of gold at NAS Corpus Christi in 1971, then remained at Corpus for two years as a “plowback” flight instructor in the Advanced Training Command before heading to Moffett Field, CA to fly P-3s. The next three years plus saw deployments to Adak, AL, Guam and points west. After completing his obligated service, Chuck transferred to the reserves in Chicago flying P-3s. He vividly recalls his last flight in the reserves—prior to his retirement in 1987—engine failure after takeoff from Buckley in a snow storm and a three-engine landing in Chicago also in a snowstorm. Having worked for Merrill Lynch for the last 25 years, he now heads the Wilson Group, financial advisors. He and his wife Sally live in Centennial.



Larry Wagner, COL, USAF (Ret)

The highlight of his career, Larry says, is that he never served a tour in the Pentagon and that he got through 27 yrs, 3 mos of a 31-year career before he ever saw the building. On the other hand, he spent two tours and 7 years on the CincPac staff in Hawaii. After graduating flight training with Class 67E, it was off to Vietnam where he would complete 255 combat missions in the F-100. He continued flying the F-100 at Lakenheath until it was time to fly the airplane across the pond to CONUS (9 IFRs) and retire it. In 1990 he retired from Hawaii, after which he and a partner would run their own FBO at Front Range Airport. Having since sold all of his airplanes, nowadays, Larry instructs in aircraft owned by others. He and his wife Patricia live alongside Heatheridge Golf Course in Aurora.



See **WELCOME ABOARD** - page 6, column 2

STILL HAVEN'T PAID YOUR 2006 FLIGHT DUES?

Please cut out and mail this coupon along with a check for your 2006 flight dues plus any unpaid flight dues for which you have received a blue delinquency notice. Add any amount you desire to donate to the Scholarship Fund. *And, remember, even if you are a Daedalian Life Member, you still owe annual flight dues. If you are not a LM, your annual Order of Daedalian membership dues are billed by and paid separately to National in San Antonio.*

Name: _____ Daedalian # _____ Home Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____ e-mail: _____

Amount enclosed for: 2006 Flight Dues \$12.00 + Flight Dues for prior years @ \$12.00/yr _____
 + Scholarship Fund _____ = Total Enclosed _____

** Make check payable to: **DAEDALIAN FLIGHT 18**

** Mail to: **Treasurer, Mile High Flight 18, P.O. Box 472976, Aurora, CO 80047-2976**
(Note new address)

USAF IFS goes to Doss Aviation



Doss Aviation of Colorado Springs has been awarded a \$178 million contract for U.S. Air Force Introductory Flight Screening (IFS), which will become operational in October 2006. Under this ten and a half year Air Education and Training Command (AETC) contract, Doss will screen between 1300 and 1700 pilot candidates—active duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve Officers and ROTC cadets—annually for acceptance into undergraduate pilot training (UPT). The screening will take place at a new Doss training facility in Pueblo adjacent to Pueblo Memorial Airport.

This facility will become a mini-air force base in that candidates will be housed, fed, and trained in a military-style ground and flight academic environment. Students will be exposed to a flight curriculum similar to what they will experience at a UPT base and will fly the Diamond DA-20 aircraft (pictured below).

The 25-hour IFS program has replaced the 50-hour Initial Flight Training (IFT) Program, through which students earned private pilot's certificates from any number of private pilot schools around the country. The IFS will be single site at Pueblo and will not provide private pilot certificates. However, the idea remains to weed out UPT candidates who might prove aeronautically inept.

The Pueblo City Council recently approved spending \$11 million to bring the IFS program to Pueblo. The money will come from a new half-cent sales tax. Roughly \$3.5 million of the authorized funds will be used to purchase the vacant Lockheed Martin plant near the airport for the training.



What's the difference between a northern fairy tale and a southern fairy tale?

A northern fairy tale begins, "Once upon a time..."

A southern fairy tale (like many a pilot tale) begins, "Y'all ain't gonna believe this shit..."

Anti-terror ship made of WTC steel

With a year to go before it even touches the water, the Navy's amphibious assault ship USS *New York* has already made history. It was built with 24 tons of scrap steel from the World Trade Center.

USS *New York* is about 45 percent complete and should be ready for launch in mid-2007. Katrina disrupted construction when it pounded the Gulf Coast last summer, but the 684-foot vessel escaped serious damage, and workers were back at the yard near New Orleans two weeks after the storm.

It is the fifth in a new class of warship designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It will carry a crew of 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft.

"It would be fitting if the first mission this ship would go on is to make sure that bin Laden is taken out, his terrorist organization is taken out," said Glenn Clement, a paint foreman. "He came in through the back door and knocked our towers down and the *New York* is coming right through the front door, and we want them to know that."



Steel from the World Trade Center was melted down in a foundry in Amite, La., to cast the ship's bow section. When it was poured into the molds on Sept. 9, 2003, "those big rough steelworkers treated it with total reverence," recalled Navy captain Kevin Wensing, who was there. "It was a spiritual moment for everybody there."

Junior Chavers, foundry operations manager, said that when the trade center steel first arrived, he touched it with his hand and the "hair on my neck stood up."

"It had a big meaning for all of us," he said. "They knocked us down. They can't keep us down. We're going to be back."

The ship's motto? - *'Never Forget'*

On 9 September 2004, the Secretary of the Navy announced that two of her sister ships will be named *Arlington* and *Somerset*, also to commemorate the attacks.

*Flying Fort
plus
Stratofort*