

USAF: 25 Ye

Compiled by Frances McKenney, Deputy Managing Editor

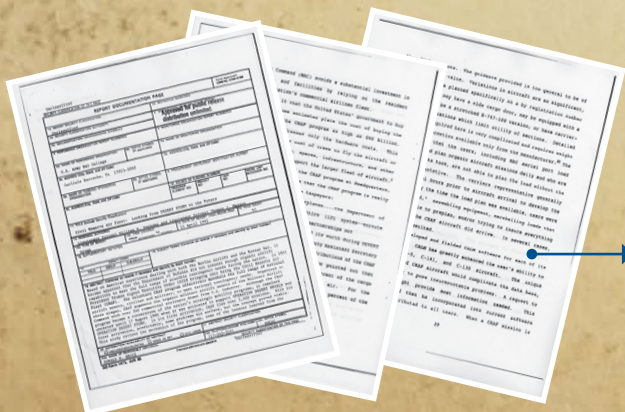
OPERATION DESERT SHIELD

Operation Desert Shield began on Aug. 7, 1990, after the forces of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait. Desert Shield sought to defend Saudi Arabia and other neighboring countries from a possible Iraqi invasion.



Lt. Gen. Charles Horner, head of 9th Air Force and also US Central Command Air Forces at Shaw AFB, S.C., became the air boss of Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He commanded US and coalition air operations from August 1990 to April 1991. Horner described this snapshot as preflighting an F-16 AIM-9 at Shaikh Isa, Bahrain. He is a member of the Eglin Chapter, Fla.

The commander in chief of US Central Command, Army Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, asked for development of an air campaign, and in the Pentagon, airpower theorist Col. John Warden led a think tank called Checkmate in planning it. Here, Warden (right) and the air campaign's principal attack planner, Lt. Col. David Deptula, discuss the plan in Checkmate. Today, retired Lt. Gen. Deptula heads AFA's Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies. Warden sent this photo from his strategy development company in Alabama, where he is a Montgomery Chapter member.



Many of the 430,000 troops arrived in theater via the Civil Reserve Air Fleet, commercial airplanes "called up" to augment military airlifters. Lt. Col. William Sessoms commanded the 1680th Airlift Control Squadron (Provisional) at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, while Lt. Col. Thomas Maxson led the 63rd Aerial Port Squadron, Norton AFB, Calif., a West Coast embarkation point. Both men attended the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., where they wrote this paper on CRAF's role in war: 5,400 missions ferrying troops and cargo. Sessoms is a member of the Charleston Chapter, S.C. Maxson belongs to the Strom Thurmond Chapter, S.C.

ars at War

Commentators often say the US has been at war since 9/11/2001, but the Air Force has been flying and fighting nonstop for a full decade longer than that.

With Operation Desert Storm in January 1991, the US military began combat operations in Southwest Asia. Twenty-five years later, the Air Force continues to respond to what has been an unbroken string of contingencies worldwide.

These photos and mementos from personal collections tell stories of operations and exercises many Air Force Association members have supported.

These snapshots reveal that AFA counts among its members significant figures in Air Force history—and airmen who quietly performed their missions, out of the spotlight, with professionalism.

OPERATION DESERT STORM

Operation Desert Storm began on Jan. 17, 1991, Baghdad time, after Iraq ignored UN Security Council resolutions and did not leave Kuwait. Nearly 2,000 US aircraft took part in the 42 days of operations before the cease-fire on Feb. 28.



F-117 pilot Maj. Gregory Feest dropped the first bomb of Desert Storm, releasing a 2,000-pound laser guided GBU-27 on a hardened bunker housing a radar-intercept operations center. He was some 50 miles inside Iraq. Feest had flown the Nighthawk from Khamis Mushait, Saudi Arabia. He was with the 415th Tactical Fighter Squadron at the time, deployed from Tonopah Test Range, Nev. Retired Maj. Gen. Feest is a Nation's Capital Chapter, D.C., member.

On Day One, F-16 pilot Capt. Michael Boera (right) clasps the hand of Lt. Col. Ed Houle, 10th Tactical Fighter Squadron commander, at Al Dhafra AB, United Arab Emirates. Both had just completed their first combat missions, bombing targets “east of the lakes,” southwest of Baghdad. They had deployed from Hahn AB, Germany. “We left our families in a foreign country to go fight,” points out now-retired Maj. Gen. Boera. He belongs to the Ute-Rocky Mountain Chapter, Utah.



OPERATION DESERT STORM (CONT. NEXT PAGE)

OPERATION DESERT STORM (CONT.)



In Saudi Arabia, Schwarzkopf meets with Brig. Gen. Eugene Santarelli (right), who commanded the 4404th Composite Wing (Provisional). Today, retired Lt. Gen. Santarelli is a member of the Tucson Chapter, Ariz., an AFA national director, and a consultant.

A US team at the Royal Saudi Air Force Headquarters building in Riyadh worked in “The Black Hole,” nicknamed because once people reported here for work, they seemed to disappear. Brig. Gen. Buster Glosson (seated), US Central Command Air Forces director of campaign plans, led the air campaign’s development and implementation. Maj. Mark Rogers is on the phone in this photo. He explains: “This was a late night retargeting of the F-111Fs and F-117s due to weather.” Standing second from left is Brig. Gen. Glenn Proffitt, 15th Air Division commander. Retired Col. “Buck” Rogers belongs to the Alamo Chapter, Texas.



“Revenge of the Warthog,” by artist Mike Machat of the General Doolittle Los Angeles Area Chapter, depicts OA-10 pilot Capt. Jon Engle on Feb. 6, 1991. As a forward air controller, Engle confirmed for A-10 pilot Capt. Robert Swain that a “black dot” they saw flying below them was an Iraqi helicopter. Swain downed it, scoring the Warthog’s first aerial kill. Engle commissioned this art work from Machat, who has more than 20 paintings in the Air Force Art Collection.



OA-10 pilot Jon Engle's photo of "The Mall" at King Fahd AB, Saudi Arabia, shows the tent city's chow hall at the center, the laundry tent at right. "We lived in tents, with about eight officers per tent," wrote Engle, "and built our own sandbag bunker outside our tent for protection during Scud attacks." He was assigned to the 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron. Today, he belongs to the Charleston Chapter.



A1C John Hamilton Jr. (third from left) loads bombs onto an F-16 at King Khalid Military City, Saudi Arabia. Today residing in Rome, Ga., Hamilton was with the 17th Fighter Squadron, Shaw AFB, S.C. Notice two Mk 84s hanging off the wings? Then-Lt. Col. Gary North (see Operation Southern Watch) and 363rd Fighter Wing weapons and maintenance leadership devised a plan to get more bombs on target: Drop the wing tanks, double the weapons load, and do three quick-turn sorties. So instead of one jet on one sortie, carrying two 2,000-pound bombs, a four-ship completed 12 sorties daily carrying 48 bombs.



At King Fahd, SSgt. Frederick Schlenker of the 355th Aircraft Maintenance Unit removes a strut while rebuilding the C-sump section of the No. 1 engine in an A-10 from the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing. He was deployed from Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C. Retired SMSgt. Schlenker belongs to the Central Florida Chapter.

JOINT TASK FORCE PROVEN FORCE

Joint Task Force Proven Force conducted some 5,000 sorties flown by the US from Incirlik AB, Turkey, against strategic targets in northern Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War. US European Command had organized the task force, with the air component coming from US Air Forces in Europe.



F-15C pilots Lt. David Sveden (left) and Capt. David Prather (next to him) scored the first USAFE air-to-air victories of the war. On Jan. 19, they each destroyed an Iraqi Mirage F1 with an AIM-7. Prather sent this photo of 525th Tactical Fighter Squadron pilots from his four-ship that day. Capt. Larry Ludwig is to his left. Capt. Steve Dingee (far right) would later get a helicopter kill on Feb. 11. Today, retired Lt. Col. Prather belongs to the Harry S. Truman Chapter, Mo.



OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT

Operation Provide Comfort began when Kurds in northern Iraq fled the country after the Gulf War. Those along the border of Iran and Turkey needed food, water, clothing, and shelter, and the UN authorized relief efforts in April 1991. Provide Comfort I ended in July 1991.

Chaplain Lawrence Keith (right) baptizes an airman in the tent city at Silopi, Turkey, in summer 1991. Maj. Keith had deployed in April from RAF Alconbury, UK, to this humanitarian services support base “five clicks” from the Iraqi border. He recalls that firemen constructed this baptism pool from rubber sheets lashed to a frame. Retired Lt. Col. Keith belongs to the Alamo Chapter.



Danger! C-130s dropped leaflets to warn people to stay on the road and avoid setting off a land mine.



Money dropping from the skies? The reverse side of this "bill" gave instructions on how to surrender, but to grab attention, this side was purposely designed to look like money.

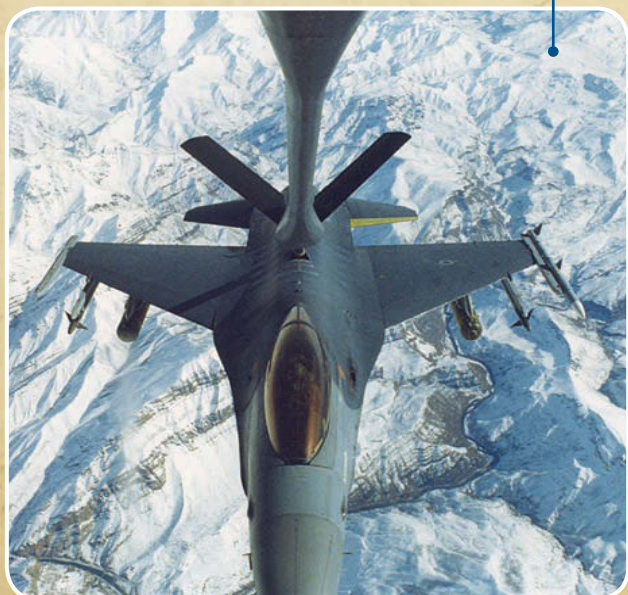


At Incirlik, Capt. Judith Fedder paints an F-111's bomb with a message for Saddam from her husband's family, the Fixes of Acra, N.Y. She was a logistics officer stationed at Ramstein AB, Germany. Today Fedder is a member of the Donald W. Steele Sr. Memorial Chapter, Va. She retired last summer as a lieutenant general, the deputy chief of staff for logistics, installations, and mission support.

OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT II

Operation Provide Comfort II dovetailed with the previous one, running until December 1996. The mission by this time had evolved into enforcing a northern Iraq no-fly zone.

An Iraqi MiG-23 tested it on Jan. 17, 1993, and came up against Lt. Craig Stevenson. "Trigger" Stevenson launched an AIM-120 AMRAAM from his F-16, scoring Provide Comfort's only kill. A boomer sent Stevenson this photo, showing him refueling afterward. Note the missing AIM-120 and fuel tanks, writes Stevenson, today a member of the Billy Mitchell Chapter, Wis. During Provide Comfort, he was with the 23rd Fighter Squadron, Spangdahlem AB, Germany.



F-15 pilot 1st Lt. Brian Simpler (foreground) refuels from a KC-135 over northern Iraq in 1993. He was assigned to the 32nd Fighter Squadron, Soesterberg, Netherlands, deployed to Incirlik. Today he commands the 125th Fighter Wing based at Jacksonville Arpt., Fla., where he belongs to the Falcon Chapter, Fla.

OPERATION PROVIDE PROMISE

Operation Provide Promise began in July 1992, delivering humanitarian supplies when Bosnia and Herzegovina became engulfed in a civil war after declaring independence from Serbia. The operation delivered nearly 160,000 tons of supplies, sometimes under hostile fire, before ending in January 1996.

14 EUROPEAN NEWS

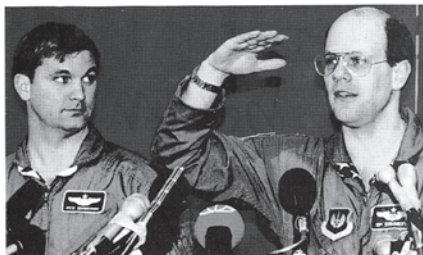
THE TIMES TUESDAY MARCH 2 1993

Heightened threat to Americans delivering supplies undermines shaky East-West accord

Moscow makes secret deal to send Serbs tanks and missiles

By DENISE PERINIS, INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT, and OTHO THOMAS

WASHINGTON — The United States and its allies are alarmed that Moscow has secretly agreed to supply tanks and missiles to the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, undermining the recent agreement. The 220,000-ton deal has...
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Flying start: Captain Peter Schweitzer, left, of the US Air Force, head pilot of the humanitarian mission that dropped 22 tonnes of food into eastern Bosnia, watches his wingman, Tip Stinnette, as he describes the airdrop operation on their return to Frankfurt yesterday.

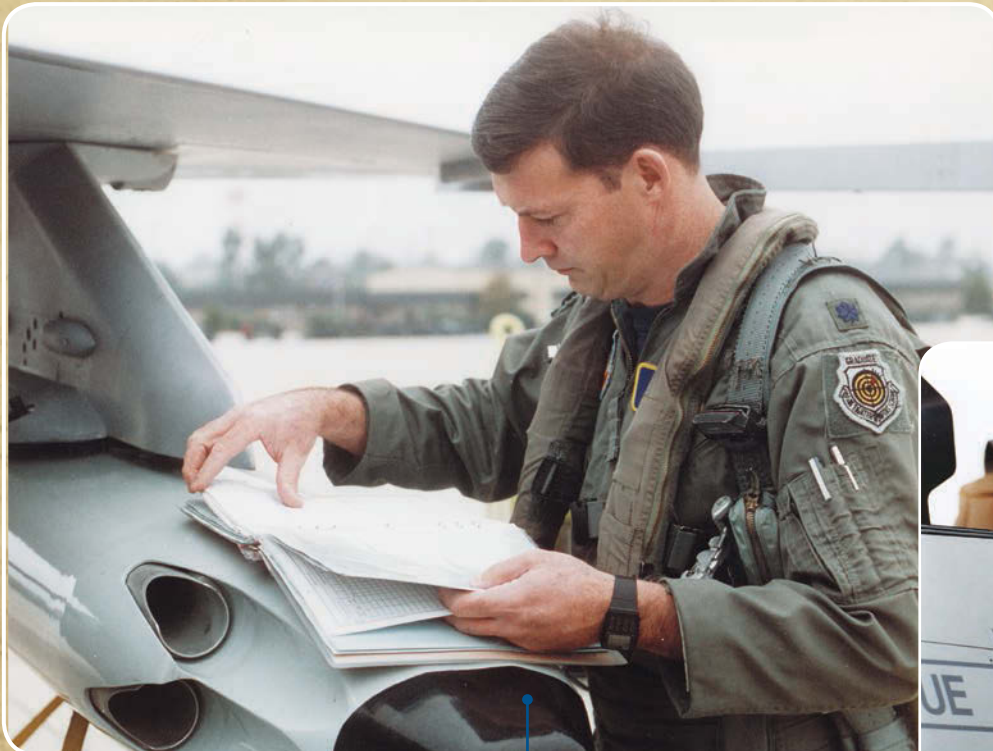
Maj. Murrell "Tip" Stinnette of Rhein-Main AB, Germany, received AFA's David Schilling Award in 1993 for developing airlift and airdrop procedures as the 435th Airlift Wing's chief tactician for Provide Promise. C-130 aircraft navigator Stinnette saved this photo from *The Times* of London, showing him (right) describing the first airdrop of 22 tons of food into eastern Bosnia. The retired colonel is a member of the Gen. Charles A. Gabriel Chapter, Va.

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OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH

Operation Southern Watch, launched in August 1992 and lasting until early 2003, responded to UN Security Council Resolution 688 and enforced a no-fly zone in southern Iraq. It protected Shiite Muslims from attack by military forces of Saddam and discouraged Iraqi moves against Kuwait or Saudi Arabia.



At Shaw Air Force Base, Lt. Col. Gary North, 33rd Fighter Squadron commander, reviews maintenance forms while training for the upcoming deployment. North would make history in Southern Watch: On Dec. 27, 1992, he shot down an Iraqi MiG-25 that had crossed below the 32nd parallel. It was the first MiG kill by a USAF F-16 pilot and the first combat kill with the AIM-120 AMRAAM. Retired Gen. North is an AFA National Director.

OPERATION PROVIDE RELIEF

Operation Provide Relief in August 1992 was a UN response to starvation in Somalia, brought about by drought and a civil war.



Col. Richard Mentemeyer presents soccer balls, donated by Lithia Springs Elementary School in Florida, to an orphanage in Mogadishu in 1992. Mentemeyer was the joint task force director of operations. He was also to restart the Somali police force. A *New York Times* article that he saved states: "Restoring the police force is the latest example of a broadening of the United States' mission, which has grown from protecting delivery of the relief supplies to patrolling roads, seizing weapons, and repairing some of the damage caused by civil war." Retired Maj. Gen. Mentemeyer belongs to the Denton Chapter, Texas.



At Al Jaber AB, Kuwait, Lt. Col. Gary Woltering, 8th Fighter Squadron commander based at Holloman AFB, N.M., poses with visiting journalist Ross Simpson. The F-117s deployed to Kuwait as part of a buildup that began in November 1997, after Baghdad balked at UN weapons inspections. Retired Col. Woltering is a member of the Tidewater Chapter, Va.



In 1997, now-retired TSgt. Tim Darrah took this photo of flight line expeditors at Al Jaber. Their truck's sign refers to pilots who grew mustaches on this deployment. Darrah deployed with the 74th Fighter Squadron, 23rd Fighter Group, Pope AFB, N.C. He now lives in Sumter, S.C.



Call sign Xena: A-10 pilot Michelle Vestal (far right) and other new captains stand at Al Jaber, with a Warthog and a hardened aircraft shelter—damaged during the Gulf War—as a backdrop. Vestal was with the 354th Fighter Squadron, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., on her first of four combat deployments. Lt. Col. Vestal retired in 2014, with more than 2,000 A/OA-10 flying hours. She is from the Tucson Chapter.

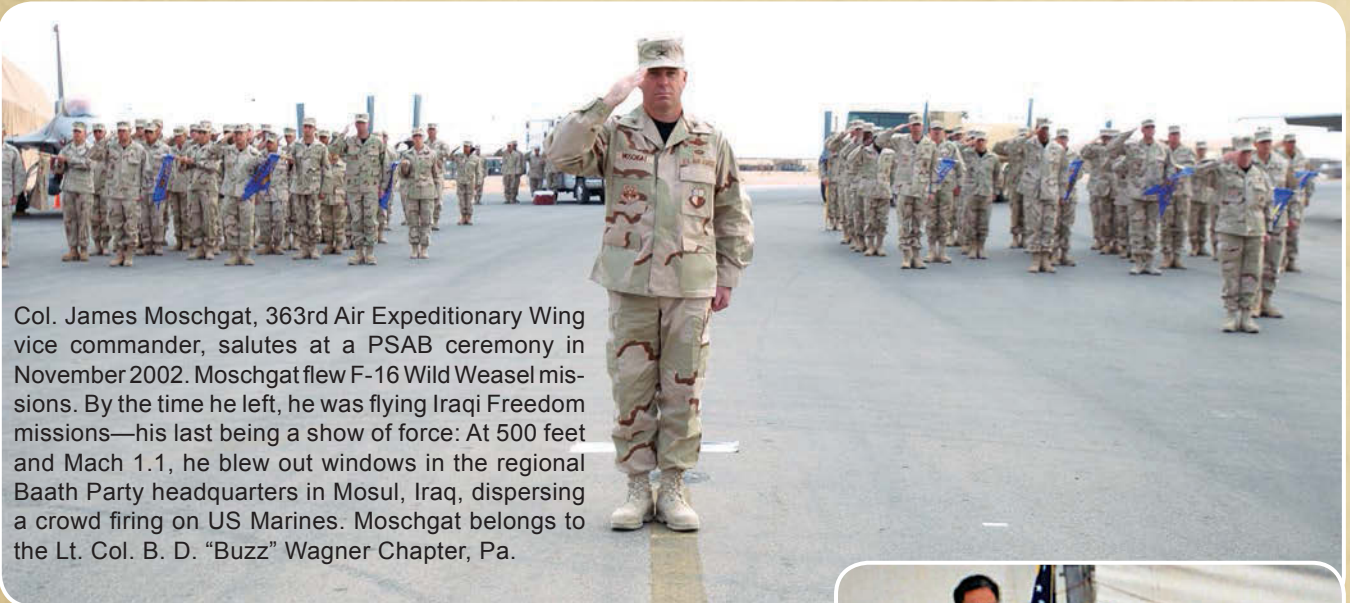
OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH (CONT. NEXT PAGE)

OPERATION SOUTHERN WATCH (CONT.)

In 1999, Lt. Col. Merrick Krause stands in front of “a hooch” at the Joint Task Force–Southwest Asia headquarters in Riyadh. He was the Pentagon Air Staff Checkmate strategist assisting Lt. Gen. Hal Hornburg, 9th Air Force and Central Command Air Forces commander, in planning how to “hold at risk enemy assets.” The assets? Iraqi weapons and C2 nodes. Retired Col. Krause belongs to the Steele Chapter.



This group at the Combined Air Operations Center, Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia, in 2002 includes: Brig. Gen. David Robinson (standing, fourth from left); Lt. Gen. Walter Buchanan III, the JTF-SWA commander (kneeling, left); and Lt. Col. Martha McSally (standing, right of the sign). Robinson—today a retired major general and a Hawaii Chapter member—was the CAOC’s director. He sent this snapshot from his home on JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam. Buchanan belongs to the Gen. Charles A. Gabriel Chapter, Va. US Rep. McSally (R-Ariz.) was the first female fighter pilot to fly in combat, retired as a colonel, and belongs to the Tucson Chapter.



Col. James Moschgat, 363rd Air Expeditionary Wing vice commander, salutes at a PSAB ceremony in November 2002. Moschgat flew F-16 Wild Weasel missions. By the time he left, he was flying Iraqi Freedom missions—his last being a show of force: At 500 feet and Mach 1.1, he blew out windows in the regional Baath Party headquarters in Mosul, Iraq, dispersing a crowd firing on US Marines. Moschgat belongs to the Lt. Col. B. D. “Buzz” Wagner Chapter, Pa.

On deployment at PSAB in March 1999, TSgt. Franklin M. Newman III receives the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, presented by Maj. Mark Syzdek, 363rd Expeditionary Supply Squadron commander. Newman is a member of the Mount Clemens Chapter, Mich.



OPERATION DENY FLIGHT

Operation Deny Flight, beginning in April 1993, was NATO's first combat operation. It enforced a no-fly zone over Bosnia, then in the midst of ethnic violence. Control of the operation fell to Allied Air Forces Southern Europe (AIRSOUTH).



The Lion of St. Mark decorates this pocket tab. Lt. Col. Lowell "Rick" Boyd wore it on his uniform at AIRSOUTH in Naples, Italy. He helped plan and implement Deny Flight and served as head of the Response Cell, coordinating between AIRSOUTH and the NATO CAOC at Vicenza, Italy. Retired Col. Boyd belongs to the Langley Chapter, Va.

CMSgt. Nicholas Davis—with snow-covered Vandenberg Hall in the background—was senior enlisted advisor at the Air Force Academy, 1993-97. Academy graduates from those years include A-10 pilot Michelle Vestal (see Operation Southern Watch) and Lt. Col. Nicole Malachowski, the first female Thunderbirds pilot. Malachowski belongs to the Steele Chapter. Davis served in USAF for 30 years and is a member of the Lance P. Sijan Chapter, Colo.



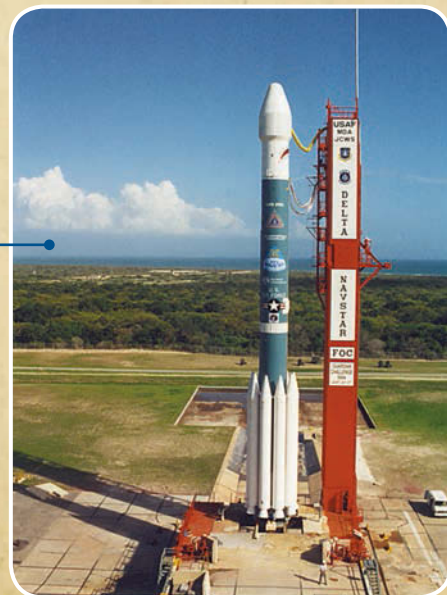
OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY

Operation Uphold Democracy in September 1994 used a multinational peacekeeping force to restore democracy in Haiti. The operation transitioned to a UN mission that lasted officially until 1996. Three years later, in June 1999, US Rep. Ben Gilman (R-N.Y.) stated in Congress: "I imagine that many Americans are not aware that we still have troops in Haiti."



That month, Capt. Edwin Hurston deployed to Haiti from Travis AFB, Calif., as a hospital administrator with the 60th Medical Group. Among their duties: medical civic assistance programs for local residents. Hurston says, "Haitians would be in lines of as many as 1,000." This is the view from a hospice where a MEDCAP took place. Retired Col. Hurston is president of the York-Lancaster Chapter, Pa.

Lt. Col. Joe Wysocki's colleague photographed this Delta II, with its GPS II-24 payload, at Cape Canaveral, Fla., in March 1994. Wysocki was launch director for this shot, his last as commander of 1st Space Launch Squadron, Patrick AFB, Fla. Navstar GPS satellites were first used in combat in Desert Storm, enabling navigation, maneuvering, and firing, even during sandstorms. US forces later relied on it for humanitarian operations, like Haiti in 1994. Retired Col. Wysocki is a member of the Sijan Chapter.



OPERATION DELIBERATE FORCE

Operation Deliberate Force, a NATO-launched air campaign on Serb-held Bosnia-Herzegovina targets, lasted from August to September 1995. It helped persuade the Serbs to agree to peace terms that December.



Maj. Robert Beletic flies the lead F-16 on a mission to Bosnia. Two French Mirages joined his two-ship for this photo. Beletic was the 31st Fighter Wing's weapons standardization and standardization and evaluation OIC at Aviano AB, Italy. He earned the 1995 Lt. Gen. Claire L. Chennault Award as USAF's outstanding aerial warfare tactician, having planned tactics for Deliberate Force raids where F-16s used laser guided bombs in combat for the first time. Retired Brig. Gen. Beletic is a member of the Mile High Chapter, Colo.

OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR

Operation Joint Endeavor implemented and enforced the December 1995 peace accord signed by Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia.



It was called an unmanned aerial vehicle back then, and MQ-1 Predator prototypes had already proved their capabilities before they began collecting intelligence for peacekeepers in the Balkans. After USAF received responsibility for the program in 1996, Col. James Clark, from the assistant vice chief of staff's office, went to assess its operations. Pictured here in Taszar, Hungary, Clark always tells people how those first pilots operated the Predator from a converted NASCAR transporter trailer. He's been a force behind the Predator's development as a sensor-shooter ever since. "Snake" Clark was the AFA 1993 Member of the Year, the award's only Active Duty recipient.

CMSgt. Jim Finch, then Air Combat Command's senior enlisted advisor (a position now called command chief master sergeant), addresses airmen of the 27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, N.M., in 1996. During the 1990s, the wing was assigned to ACC and deployed to Southwest Asia for training exercises, expeditionary rotations, and enforcement of no-fly zones over Iraq. Finch became the 13th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force in 1999. Today he belongs to the Alamo Chapter.



OPERATION NORTHERN WATCH

Operation Northern Watch transitioned from Provide Comfort on Jan. 1, 1997, becoming enforcement of the no-fly zone in northern Iraq above the 36th parallel. It lasted until 2003.



During two 336th Fighter Squadron deployments, Capt. Eugene Anderson developed tactics to organize fighter and attack aircraft into coordinated formations to destroy Iraqi SAMs. This enabled flexible responses to Iraqi challenges. Anderson received the 1999 Chennault Award as USAF's top aerial warfare tactician. This photo shows him (seated, center) with F-15E pilots from Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., deployed to Incirlik that year. Retired Lt. Col. "Geno" Anderson is a member of the Eglin Chapter.

TSgt. Scott Podeyn took this photo at Incirlik, where he was a weapons flight chief and weapons expeditor supervisor. He was with the 48th Fighter Wing, deployed from RAF Lakenheath, UK.



A 2002 *USA Today* article mentioned that pilots routinely dodged Iraqi AAA, but F-16CJ pilot Sean "Stroker" Gustafson got "revenge," when he fired a HARM at an Iraqi weapons installation. Here's Gustafson with his crew chief, MSgt. Amanda Light, after he landed back at Incirlik following that mission. Years later, Light was again Gustafson's crew chief for his fini flight with the 93rd Fighter Squadron. Gustafson belongs to the Miami-Homestead Chapter, Fla.



Maj. Jeffrey Decker, logistics operations division chief, welcomes Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to Incirlik in June 2001. Alluding to intense Iraqi anti-aircraft fire during Northern Watch, *The New York Times* headlined this visit: "Rumsfeld Says Air Patrols Over Iraq Are in Ever Greater Peril." Decker is now logistics director for the KC-46 program at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and a member of the Gen. Russell E. Dougherty Chapter, Ky.



OPERATION DESERT FOX

Operation Desert Fox commenced Dec. 16, 1998, after Iraq refused to allow UN weapons inspections to continue. US and British forces launched cruise missiles and air strikes against Iraqi targets for four days.



I'll be home for Christmas Eve: Capt. Randy Kaufman reunites with his family on Dec. 24—to the delight of 10-month-old Jaimee and Sandy Kaufman (left). Aircraft commander for Slam-04, Kaufman had just come off a 24-hour flight to Ellsworth AFB, S.D., from the Middle East. Slam-04 had been part of an integrated strike package in Desert Fox and was the first B-1B crew to drop Mk 82 bombs in combat. They destroyed a Republican Guard barracks. Kaufman belongs to the Tokyo Chapter.

OPERATION ALLIED FORCE

Operation Allied Force, a 78-day NATO air operation over Serbia and Kosovo beginning in March 1999, was a response to genocide of ethnic Albanians in the Serbian province of Kosovo.

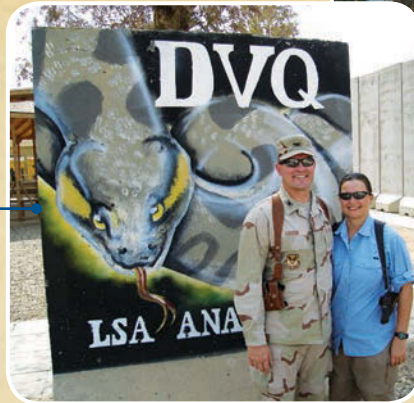
"Mayday, mayday, mayday, Vega 31," radioed F-117 pilot Lt. Col. Darrell Zelko before he bailed out. He'd been hit by Serbian air defenses, following his bomb run near Belgrade. From Tuzla, Bosnia, MH-53 pilot Capt. James Cardoso led a trio of search and rescue helicopters into Serbian airspace to rescue Zelko. Today, Cardoso is a member of the Waterman-Twining Chapter, Fla. He took this photo from a Pave Low flying over Albania during Allied Force.



President Clinton gets a briefing-on-the-go at Spangdahlem Air Base from Brig. Gen. Scott Van Cleef, commander of the 52nd Air Expeditionary Wing in 1999. Under the leadership of Van Cleef—today AFA's Chairman of the Board—the 52nd AEW included F-16s and A-10s from Spangdahlem's 52nd Fighter Wing, F-117s from Holloman, and Active Duty and ANG A-10s. "We didn't even call it a 'war' for quite some time," wrote Van Cleef in 2003. "Nevertheless, for those who flew in it, OAF was war."

OPERATION ALLIED FORCE (CONT.)

In spring 1999, the RQ-1 remotely piloted aircraft was in Bosnia for surveillance. Intel officer Maj. Mark Cooter, 11th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, stands in front of the operations cell and ground control station for the Predator in Tuzla. Cooter led the construction and initial standup of the site and was the squadron operations officer. Retired Col. Cooter is a member of the Wright Memorial Chapter, Ohio.



Flash forward to a wartime reunion—with pistols: On TDY from MacDill AFB, Fla., in 2008, Cooter, then CENTCOM's chief of ISR, caught up with his wife, Capt. Angelina Maguinness, a senior analyst, at Logistics Support Activity Anaconda, Balad, Iraq. Maguinness has deployed seven times in 12 years of marriage. This was the first time she crossed paths with her husband. Today, Lt. Col. Maguinness commands an intel analysis squadron. She belongs to the Wright Chapter.

Helmet bag in hand, Lee Alford (far right) poses with his four-ship mates at Aviano after an Allied Force mission. Alford was an F-16CJ flight commander at Spangdahlem from May 1998 to March 2001 and also flew Southern Watch missions in 2000. He is a member of the Tennessee Valley Chapter, Ala.



OPERATION NOBLE EAGLE

Operation Noble Eagle homeland defense began in the hours after terrorist attacks in the US on Sept. 11, 2001. Noble Eagle's combat air patrols over key US sites and important events continue today.



"I was on alert at the 144th Fighter Wing, Det. 1, March ARB [Calif.] the morning of 9/11," recalls Col. Amos Bagdasarian. After several hours in runway-alert and battle-stations status, he and a fellow F-16 pilot launched for the first West Coast combat air patrol over Los Angeles. They flew for some eight hours, refueled by a KC-10. In this photo at Fresno ANGB, Calif., Bagdasarian (left) checks preflight paperwork in 2003, before one of his last CAP missions. He went on to become wing commander, 129th Rescue Wing, and is a member of the Fresno Chapter.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Operation Enduring Freedom—Oct. 7, 2001, to Dec. 28, 2014—launched as a response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Coalition aircraft struck terrorist and Taliban targets in Afghanistan.



Reservist TSgt. Stephen Guinty changes a turbine engine on an A/M32 generator at Al Jaber in April 2002. Deployed with the 442nd Fighter Wing, Whiteman AFB, Mo., Guinty was en route to Afghanistan. Today an Air Reserve Technician and a Whiteman Chapter member, Guinty has deployed for Southern Watch, four times to Afghanistan, and just returned from Estonia for Exercise Atlantic Resolve.

Lt. Col. Kenneth Philippart test-fires an AK-47 donated to the Afghan National Army in September 2006. “We got to test-fire them to make sure they were operable before turning them over to the ANA,” explains Philippart, now retired and a member of the Tennessee Valley Chapter.



A1C Abraham Almonte takes a break at the Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyzstan, in August 2007. He was there as a crew chief, 376th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Manas operated as a key transportation hub for 10 coalition countries, from 2001 to 2014, and 5.3 million coalition personnel passed through it. SSgt. Almonte is the immediate past president of the Keystone Chapter, Kadena AB, Japan.

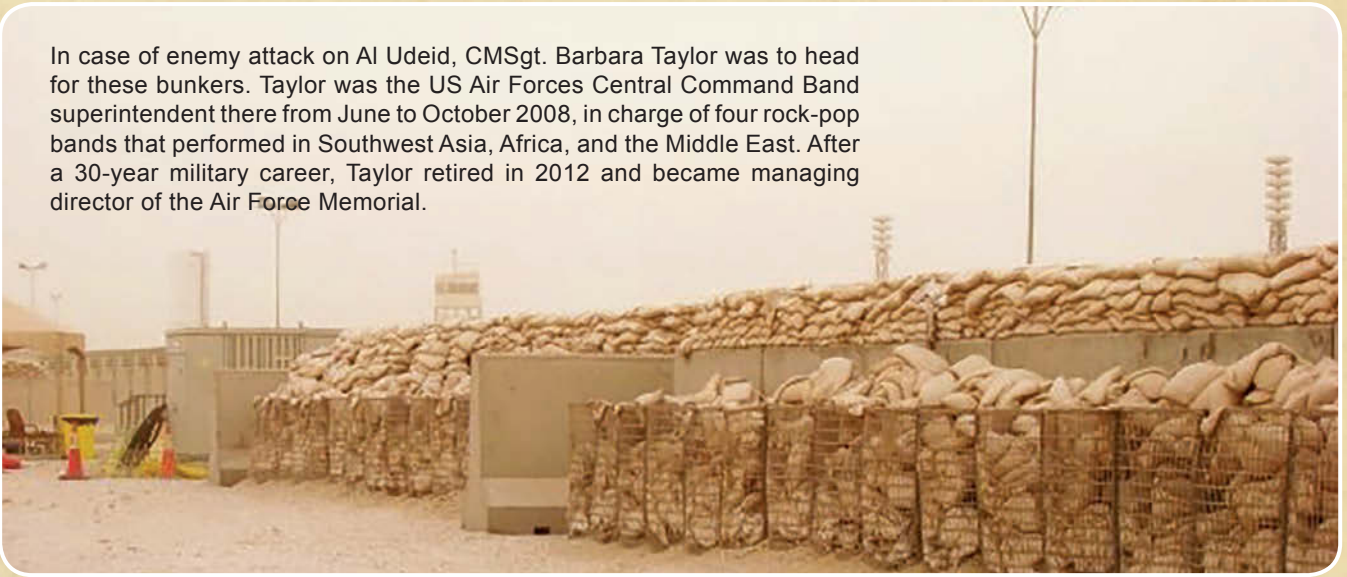
In 2011, RAF Group Capt. Colin Da’Silva commanded Camp Bastion, a British base in Helmand province. Upper right, he prepares to fire a light anti-tank weapon on the range—“very excited to get it right,” he comments. In a playful moment on Christmas, Da’Silva uses his hands for a landing pad, as a sergeant flies a Chinook model. Outside, dozens of real Chinooks lined the runway. Da’Silva is assistant air attaché, British Embassy, Washington, D.C., and a member of the Nation’s Capital Chapter.





During his assignment as the 1st Fighter Wing's top enlisted airman, CMSgt. Rodney McKinley also served from February to June 2003 as 379th Air Expeditionary Wing command chief. Here, he organizes a ceremony at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. McKinley became the 15th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force in 2006. He belongs to the Central Oklahoma (Gerrity) Chapter.

In case of enemy attack on Al Udeid, CMSgt. Barbara Taylor was to head for these bunkers. Taylor was the US Air Forces Central Command Band superintendent there from June to October 2008, in charge of four rock-pop bands that performed in Southwest Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. After a 30-year military career, Taylor retired in 2012 and became managing director of the Air Force Memorial.



It was 108 degrees in the shade. Sweat and hydraulic fluid dripped down the neck of Marine Corps Col. Frank Zaborowski as he waited for takeoff in this CH-53 at Camp Dwyer in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Zaborowski served as a logistics and engineering liaison for 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade from 2009 to 2010 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Today he is AFA's senior director of CyberPatriot operations.



"Unforgettable moment," writes SMSgt. Tammy Bean. This photo captured a Marine (right), who had traveled from down-range alone, being reunited with his military working dog at the Transit Center at Manas. Bean is today a Joint Staff executive assistant at the Pentagon. She served at Manas as an admin assistant with the 376th Expeditionary Mission Support Group from March to November 2012.

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

In March 2003, President Bush announced the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The US led a coalition to liberate the Iraqi people and disarm the forces of Saddam Hussein.



Maj. Dennis Davoren took this selfie in a U-2 spyplane, “somewhere above 70,000 feet.” A Dragon Lady pilot for nine years, he says he also flew “the very first U-2 sortie over Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom.” Today, he is a member of the Chicagoland-O’Hare Chapter, Ill.

At the Air Force Academy in September 2003, 10th Communications Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Kristen Dotterway photographed MSgt. Paul Lagatta (standing left) and SSgt. April Malloy (on the ground). They’re receiving self-aid buddy-care instruction during training. Dotterway pointed out that all troops—deploying or not—underwent basic first-aid and chemical warfare training. She belongs to the Joe Walker-Mon Valley Chapter, Pa.



Col. Scott Patton shot this from a Huey and calls it “Over Desert Crossroads.” At the US Embassy in Baghdad from June 2013 to the following June, Patton was a senior advisor at the Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq, working with senior Iraqi Ministry of Defense and National Security Agency leaders. He is a member of the Tennessee Valley Chapter.



“Battle Rattle,” TSgt. Tynisa Haskins labeled this photo, using slang to refer to her gear. Deployed in September 2007, Haskins was NCOIC, Legal Office, with a civil affairs brigade at Camp Slayer, Iraq. She says that next door to where she’s standing in the photo was Saddam’s Victory Over America complex. Today SMSgt. Haskins is president of the Thomas B. McGuire Jr. Chapter, N.J.



CMSgt. Joe Thornell (far right) and other senior NCO visitors study a sand table at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in November 2008. 586th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron airmen used this sand table, with its models of landmarks and threat areas, before embarking on convoys. Thornell was the 586th Air Expeditionary Group superintendent, based at Ali Al Salem AB, Kuwait. He belongs to the Dacotah Chapter, S.D.



MSgt. Donald Mascardo, surveys an airfield during an expansion project at Speicher Air Base in Tikrit, Iraq, in January 2008. Now retired, Mascardo lives in Stockton, Calif., and was with the 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron as an engineering superintendent.



Brig. Gen. Mark Barrett commanded 1st Fighter Wing, Langley AFB, Va., when the 40 F-22s of the 27th and 94th Fighter Squadron reached full operational capability in December 2007. This photo was taken in 2009, a year when the Raptors provided Noble Eagle coverage over Inauguration Day in the Nation's Capital, deployed as theater security packages in the Pacific, and headed for the first time to Southwest Asia for a multinational exercise. Retired Maj. Gen. Barrett is AFA's executive vice president.



As 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group commander in 2003, Col. Brent Klein (standing to the left of the wooden riser) conducts a regular morning meeting for hospital staff members at Tallil AB, Iraq. Klein is a member of the Carl Vinson Memorial Chapter, Ga.

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (CONT. NEXT PAGE)

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE

Operation Inherent Resolve military actions by US Central Command and partner nations are part of the strategy to degrade and defeat ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Targeted air strikes began in August 2014.

On his fourth overseas deployment, Columbia Palmetto Chapter President and C-130 pilot Lt. Col. Buck Shuler, shown here in July 2014, flew resupply missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman. His most memorable mission came in August 2014: Airdropping supplies to Kurds stranded on Mount Sinjar and surrounded by ISIS forces.



TSgt. Sharlene Shuler observes a practice mass-casualty event from a South Carolina ANG Black Hawk during Vigilant Guard 15. The three-state exercise in March 2015 practiced deploying force packages. Shuler is NCOIC, airfield management operations, 169th Operational Support Squadron, McEntire JNGB, S.C. The spouse of Lt. Col. Buck Shuler, she was the AFA 2012 South Carolina state member of the year.



In this April 2015 photo from Lt. Col. Sarah Williams, Capt. Matthew Schneider marshals a U-2 at a forward operating location. Today, the U-2 flies more than 16,000 hours a year. At Beale AFB, Calif., Williams is the 9th Maintenance Group deputy commander and president of the David J. Price/Beale Chapter. Schneider, 9th Maintenance Squadron's ops officer, belongs to the C. Farinha Gold Rush Chapter, Calif.



EXERCISE PITCH BLACK AND EXERCISE TRI-SLING

Exercise Pitch Black, organized by the Royal Australian Air Force, in summer 2014 involved air forces from France, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, the UAE, and the US. Exercise Tri-Sling followed afterward—three weeks of dissimilar air combat training with Australia and Singapore.



A1C Aaron Church, in civilian life an *Air Force Magazine* senior editor, marshals a D.C. ANG F-16 while deployed to RAAF Base Tindal in Australia's Outback in September 2014. The 113th Wing participated in both exercises on this deployment as part of a Pacific theater security package. SrA. Church belongs to the Northeast Iowa Chapter.

RESOLUTE SUPPORT

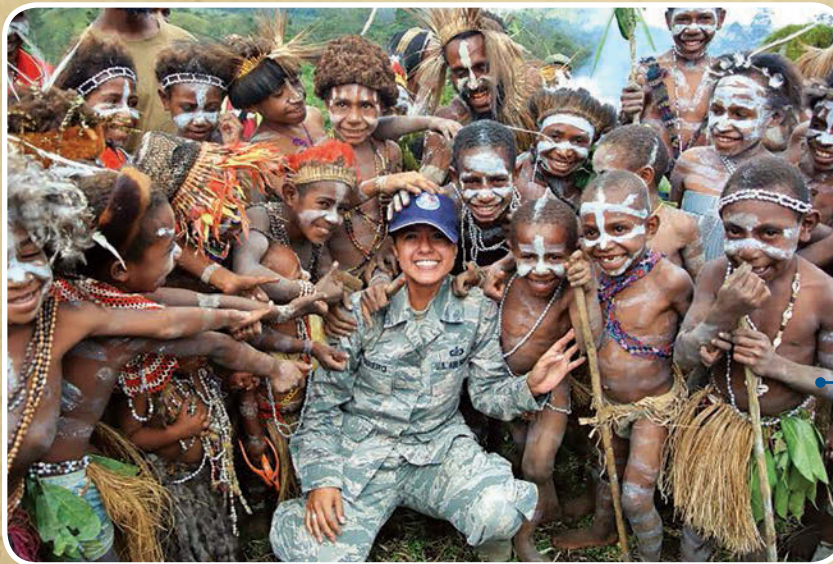
The Resolute Support train-assist-advise mission, led by NATO, immediately followed the December 2014 stand down of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.



On the drums, TSgt. Adam Green drives the rhythm for “Nighthawk,” eight US Air Force Band musicians who deployed from JB Bolling-Anacostia, D.C., in February 2015. Green volunteered for this gig, spending 100 days in Southwest Asia. Favorite moments: organizing an “Al Udeid Idol” singing contest and shooting a music video with only cell phones, a laptop, and a digital camera as recording equipment. Green belongs to the Steele Chapter.

OPERATION PACIFIC ANGEL

Operation Pacific Angel is a recurring humanitarian assistance program led by Pacific Air Forces and hosted by US Pacific Command. It has built partnerships with Pacific nations since 2007.



Toddlers in Goroka, Papua New Guinea, followed her around, writes Keystone Chapter’s SSgt. Veronica Guerrero of the 18th Contracting Squadron, Kadena Air Base. The girls in the town were “fascinated by the fact that I wasn’t married, that I didn’t have kids, and I had traveled the world.” Guerrero took this June 2015 photo during a thank-you celebration at a school she helped refurbish.

End Note

When AFA members and others contributed their photos for this pictorial, they sometimes disclosed the personal cost of two decades of deployments.

One airman wrote: “Many of the pictures I had not seen in a long time, and they brought up some serious memories of things I have not worked through.”

Another airman scrambled to get permission from others in the photo, thinking they might not want to be identified because they could deploy again.

After 25 years on nonstop operations, the vast majority of airmen now serving have never known a time when the Air Force was not at war. ✪