

## Swept Up ... and Up



Boeing's swept-wing B-47 Stratojet of the late 1940s and 1950s could be a sight to behold. Clockwise from top: a late model B-47 on a JATO—Jet-Assisted Takeoff—flight; an XB-47 on one of the first JATO tests; and Maj. James Gallagher, a SAC pilot, inspecting installation of JATO bottles. Early jet engines lacked adequate thrust at low speeds, so B-47s were augmented with the JATO system, which added thrust

for short-strip or heavy-load takeoffs. Some B-47s had 18 solid-fuel JATO rockets built into the fuselage sides, as seen in the Gallagher photo. Later models, like the one at top, used 33 external rocket units mounted on a collar strapped underneath the B-47. The JATO unit could be jettisoned. Such takeoffs were rare.