

The Air Force
Association,
incorporated
February 4,
1946, observes
its Golden
Anniversary.

Fifty



In the summer of 1945, Gen. of the Army H. H. "Hap" Arnold was already thinking about the three million Army Air Forces veterans who would be returning to civilian life when World War II was over. What Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, had in mind for departing veterans was an organization that would not only "keep the gang together" but also work effectively on behalf of airpower.

Arnold was the founding father of the new organization—which would be known as the Air Force Association—but the spiritual father was Billy Mitchell, who led the fight for an independent role for military aviation. In the 1920s, Arnold had put his own career on the line to back Mitchell,

who was court-martialed for his aggressive advocacy of airpower.

The key policy objective of the new Air Force Association would be the establishment of the Air Force as a separate military service. When that goal was realized in 1947, AFA's journal, *Air Force Magazine*, proclaimed it to be "The Day Billy Mitchell Dreamed Of."

An admirer aptly described Arnold as a "human bulldozer." The energy that he imparted to get AFA going was prodigious. In August 1945, Arnold asked Edward P. Curtis, an AAF veteran and an executive of the Eastman Kodak Co., to put the Association together. Curtis began with an organizational meeting in New York, N. Y., on October 12, 1945.

A consensus formed early that the Association's first president should be war hero James H. Doolittle (left).

Years of AFA



From the beginning, AFA took airpower to the public. The biggest attraction at the National Air Fair of 1949 in Chicago was the biggest aircraft in the world, the B-36.

The twelve men who attended are recognized today as the founders of AFA. [See box, opposite.] They agreed on the basic direction the Association would take and that application should be made to the Internal Revenue Service for nonprofit, tax-exempt status.

Later on, leaders would be elected, but an initial group of officers would be appointed to get things under way and build membership for the organization. A consensus developed early that war hero Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle, who had returned to civilian life as a vice president of Shell Oil, should be AFA's first president.

In January 1946, President Doolittle held a press conference to announce the establishment of AFA. He said that the organization would be based on a grass-roots structure, with local, state, and regional affiliates; that it would publish a national magazine; and that it would sponsor educational programs to keep its members and the public at large abreast of airpower developments.

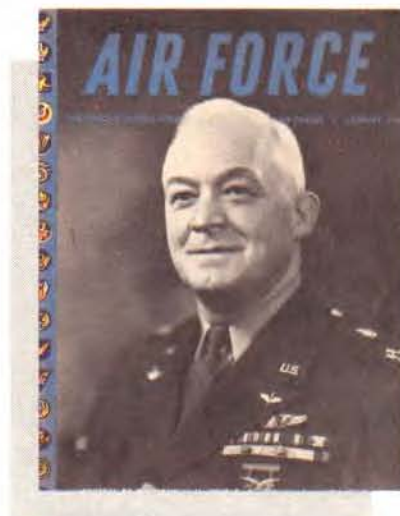
Message and Momentum

On February 4, 1946, the Air Force Association was incorporated in Washington, D. C. This is the date traditionally observed as AFA's birthday. The new organization had a message and momentum. What it did not have was money. In that first critical year, members dug deep into their pockets and donated more than \$50,000 in addition to their dues to keep AFA alive.

The new organization might be strapped for cash, but its performance was top of the line. When AFA leaders spoke, the *New York Times* and other news media regarded it as newsworthy. In August 1946, the Association organized a coast-to-coast radio broadcast, featuring (among many others) two Hollywood stars, James M. Stewart, who was an AFA vice president, and Ronald W. Reagan, an ex-Air Force captain and a charter member of AFA.

In July 1946, another element of the plan for AFA fell into place when *Air Force Magazine*, "The Official Service Journal of the US Army Air Forces," became "The Official Journal of the Air Force Association." This, too, bore the mark of Arnold. Early in his career, Arnold had been Chief of Information for the Air Service and editor of the monthly news-

The *Air Force Magazine* cover for January 1946 was a classic. It pictured "Hap" Arnold, wartime leader of the Army Air Forces and founding father of AFA.



Six of the officers of the newly formed Air Force Association met with President Harry S. Truman at the White House in early 1946. From left: AFA President Jimmy Doolittle, Executive Director Willis S. Fitch, National Director Forrest Vosler, President Truman, Third Vice President Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr., Second Vice President Meryll M. Frost, and National Director James M. Stewart.

letter that was the direct forerunner of *Air Force Magazine*. As commander of the AAF, he ordered "a first-class, slick-paper magazine—highly readable—the best of its kind—with worldwide circulation." In 1946, the magazine was "bequeathed to the Association by the AAF in a kind of war-surplus status," as one of the editors put it.

At AFA's first National Convention, held in Columbus, Ohio, in 1947, Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, Air Force Chief



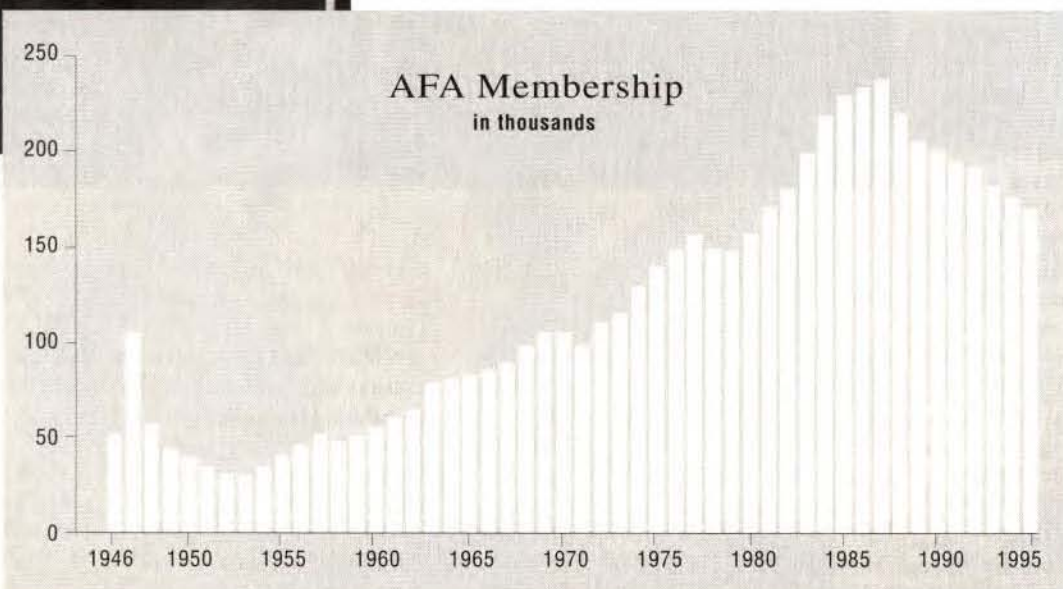
In Hollywood, AFA's observance of Air Force Day, August 1, 1946, was organized by former AAF Lt. Col. Jack L. Warner (second from left). A special coast-to-coast radio broadcast featured fighter ace Lt. Col. John C. Meyer, former AAF Capt. Ronald W. Reagan, and former AAF Col. Jimmy Stewart.



Julian B. Rosenthal, who wrote the original AFA Constitution and bylaws, lives in Durham, N. C., and continues to follow Association events with great interest.

The Twelve Founders

- John S. Allard, Bronxville, N. Y.
- Everett R. Cook, Memphis, Tenn.
- Edward P. Curtis, Rochester, N. Y.
- James H. Doolittle, Los Angeles, Calif.
- W. Deering Howe, New York, N. Y.
- Rufus Rand, Sarasota, Fla.
- Sol Rosenblatt, New York, N. Y.
- Julian B. Rosenthal, New York, N. Y.
- James M. Stewart, Beverly Hills, Calif.
- Lowell P. Weicker, New York, N. Y.
- Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney, New York, N. Y.
- John Hay Whitney, New York, N. Y.



Membership shot over 100,000 during AFA's second full year of existence, but that level proved unsustainable, and the Association did not reach it again until the 1960s. Strong growth in the 1970s and 1980s reflects the remarkable success of the Base Drive membership program. Totals dropped in the 1990s, along with the size of the Air Force.



When the Air Force gained independence from the Army in 1947, AFA paid fitting tribute to Billy Mitchell, who had led the fight for airpower after World War I and who was court-martialed for his aggressive advocacy of the cause.

of Staff, told the delegates that “public support is as essential to effective airpower as industries, airplanes, and airmen.”

Informing the public and generating public support was something that AFA did well. At Columbus, citizens stood four abreast for blocks, waiting to walk through a B-29. President Doolittle and other Association leaders drew large crowds and press attention wherever they went. A critical connection to the public, however, was the 152 local squadrons—as chapters were called in those days—operating in forty-five states by the end of AFA’s first year.

President Doolittle in his remarks at Columbus was especially proud of the small squadrons, singling out the Beckley, W. Va., group for doing “as much to bring the message of ‘airpower is peace power’ to their fellow citizens as any community in the country.”

September 18, 1947, was a great day for AFA as the US Air Force took its place as a separate military service. The battles, however, were far from over. Postwar demobilization continued to draw down the strength of the armed forces. “While recognizing that peacetime airpower is expensive, we know that wartime airpower is far more costly,” AFA warned in its first Statement of Policy. In 1948, the Association campaigned for a seventy-group Air Force, which had been called for by a special Presidential Commission.

In 1949, AFA was in the forefront of support for the B-36 bomber, which was under attack by advocates of carrier-based airpower. The unsuccessful attempt by naval enthusiasts to kill the B-36 became known as the “Revolt of the Admirals” and was detailed in a special fifteen-page report in the December 1949 issue of *Air Force Magazine*. The B-36 went

taking part were Jimmy Stewart, Bob Hope, Marlene Dietrich, Lena Horne, Clark Gable, Dinah Shore, Jack Dempsey, Jerry Colonna, Jane Froman, Carmen Miranda, Margaret O’Brien, Walter Pidgeon, Herb Shriner, Gypsy Rose Lee, Joe E. Brown, Jinx Falkenberg, and the Radio City Music Hall Rockettes. John Reed Kilpatrick, president of the Madison Square



on to operational service, and the admirals’ revolt founded.

Celebrity participation was a standard feature of early AFA events. The “Hollywood Connection” was never more in evidence than at “Operation Wing Ding” at Madison Square Garden in New York September 25, 1948. This four-and-one-half-hour program was produced by AFA as the highlight of its second National Convention. Among those

Garden Corp., called it “the greatest show ever put on in Madison Square Garden.”

Clearly, the young Air Force Association was fulfilling the three objectives that Doolittle laid out in his February 1946 press conference. The “grass roots,” represented by the local squadrons, were thriving impressively. AFA had a spectacular national publication in *Air Force Magazine*. And keeping its members and the pub-



Principal speaker at AFA's first convention in Columbus, Ohio, in 1947 was Gen. of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, then Army Chief of Staff. Here he is flanked by AFA's first president, Jimmy Doolittle (left) and Edward P. "Ted" Curtis, the man chosen by "Hap" Arnold to put AFA together.

AFA's first elected president was World War II fighter pilot Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr. He led the Association's fight to achieve financial stability in the early days.



"Keeping the Gang Together" was something the early AFA did well. Here, members check the message board at the 1947 Convention in Columbus. Sometimes, Orville would be notified to call Wilbur at the bicycle factory.



In October 1945, Gen. of the Army H. H. "Hap" Arnold congratulates Lt. Col. James H. Straubel after awarding him the Legion of Merit for his work as editor and publisher of *Air Force Magazine*, the official journal of AAF during World War II. Straubel separated in February 1946 as a colonel, was called to join the AFA staff in July 1947 as editor of the magazine, became executive director in September 1948, and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1980. In the foreword to *Crusade for Airpower*, Doolittle said that Straubel, "more than any other, deserves credit for the success of this Association."

Air Force Association National Presidents



James H. Doolittle
1946-47



Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr.
1947-48



C. R. Smith
1948-49



Robert S. Johnson
1949-51



Harold C. Stuart
1951-52



Arthur F. Kelly
1952-53



George C. Kenney
1953-54



John R. Alison
1954-55



Gill Robb Wilson
1955-56



John P. Henebery
1956-57



Peter J. Schenk
1957-59



Howard T. Markey
1959-60



Thos. F. Stack
1960-61



Joe Foss
1961-62



John B. Montgomery
1962-63



W. Randolph Lovelace II
1963-64



Jess Larson
1964-67



Robert W. Smart
1967-69



George D. Hardy
1969-71



Martin M. Ostrow
1971-73



Joe L. Shosid
1973-75



George M. Douglas
1975-77



Gerald V. Hasler
1977-79



Victor R. Kregel
1979-81



John G. Brosky
1981-82



David L. Blankenship
1982-84



Martin H. Harris
1984-86



Sam E. Keith, Jr.
1986-88



Jack C. Price
1988-90



O. R. Crawford
1990-92



James M. McCoy
1992-94



Gene Smith
1994-

Air Force Association Chairmen of the Board



Edward P. Curtis
1946-47



James H. Doolittle
1947-49



C. R. Smith
1949-50



Carl A. Spaatz
1950-51



Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr.
1951-52



Harold C. Stuart
1952-53



Arthur F. Kelly
1953-54



George C. Kenney
1954-55



John R. Alison
1955-56



Gill Robb Wilson
1956-57



John P. Henebry
1957-58



James M. Trail
1958-59



Julian B. Rosenthal
1959-60



Howard T. Markey
1960-61



Thos. F. Stack
1961-62



Joe Foss
1962-63



Jack B. Gross
1963-64



W. Randolph Lovelace II
1964-65



George D. Hardy
1966-67



Jess Larson
1967-71



George D. Hardy
1971-72



Joe L. Shosid
1972-73



Martin M. Ostrow
1973-75



Joe L. Shosid
1975-76



Gerald V. Hasler
1976-77



George M. Douglas
1977-79



Daniel F. Callahan
1979-81



Victor R. Kregel
1981-82



John G. Brosky
1982-84



David L. Blankenship
1984-85



Edward A. Stearn
1985-86



Martin H. Harris
1986-88



Sam E. Keith, Jr.
1988-90



Jack C. Price
1990-92



O. R. Crawford
1992-94



James M. McCoy
1994-

A highlight of AFA's 1957 National Convention in Washington, D. C., was this "anniversary portrait," featuring a group of men and women who represented a cross section of American history.

From left to right (bottom row):

Dr. Theodore von Kármán, famed aerospace scientist; MSgt. Horst Tittle, then USAF's oldest noncommissioned officer; Gen. Nathan F. Twining, then Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Brig. Gen. Frank P. Lahm, first American military pilot; Air Cadet Dennis LaFarlette, who received his pilot wings at the Convention from General Lahm; Mrs. Henry H. Arnold, widow of Gen. of the Army "Hap" Arnold; Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, first USAF Chief of Staff; Maj. Charles E. Yeager, first man to break the sound barrier.

Second row:

Brig. Gen. Erik Nelson, who led the first round-the-world flight in 1924; Col. James Jabara, first jet-to-jet ace; Gen. George C. Kenney, top World War II air commander in the Pacific; Jacqueline Cochran, world's greatest aviatrix; Gen. Thomas D. White, then USAF Chief of Staff; Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, top American ace of World War I; Cols. Oakley Kelly and John Macready, who made the first nonstop flight across the US in 1923.

Third row:

Col. Francis S. Gabreski, a leading World War II ace; Edna M. Adkins, longtime secretary to USAF Chiefs of Staff; Sen. Stuart Symington, the first Air Force Secretary; James H. Douglas, Jr., then Air Force Secretary; Maj. Gen. Claire Lee Chennault, World War II commander of the Flying Tigers; Maj. James G. Gallagher, who led the first nonstop round-the-world flight in 1949.

Top row:

Col. Paul W. Tibbets, pilot of the B-29 *Enola Gay*, which dropped the first atomic bomb; Col. Bernt Balchen, pioneer Arctic flyer; Lt. Gen. William H. Tunner, future commander, Military Air Transport Service; Brig. Gen. Thomas DeWitt Milling, one of the first military pilots; J. H. "Dutch" Kindelberger, noted aerospace industry executive; Gen. O. P. Weyland, top air commander in Korea; Roscoe Turner, famous racing pilot of the 1920s and 1930s.

lic informed on airpower was what the Association did best.

More Milestones

Sept. 15-16, 1947. First AFA National Convention, in Columbus, Ohio. Several thousand AAF veterans attend. The principal speaker, Gen. of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, says, "The creation of the United States Air Force as an independent entity recognizes the special capabilities of airpower."

Nov. 25, 1950. Arnold Air Society, an organization of Air Force ROTC cadets, affiliates with AFA.

Oct. 28, 1953. Air Reserve Association merges with AFA.

Feb. 3-4, 1956. Jet Age Conferences begin. AFA sponsors, in Washington, D. C., the first of four national Jet Age Conferences. (The final Jet Age Conference was in Las Vegas, Nev., in conjunction with the World Congress of Flight in 1959.)

April 1956. An *Air Force Magazine* special issue on Strategic Air Command draws the attention of Arthur Godfrey, who tells a prime-time audience on the CBS-TV network to "get a copy and read it from cover to cover." The magazine is not available on newsstands, but Godfrey (with AFA permission) tells





This shot of AFA leaders was taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors in the 1960s. Front row, left to right: Thomas G. Lanphier, Jr., Robert S. Johnson, George C. Kenney, and John R. Allison. Back row: James H. Doolittle, Carl A. Spaatz, C. R. Smith, Gill Robb Wilson, John P. Henebry, and Peter J. Schenk. All were former presidents of AFA except for Spaatz, who had been chairman of the board.

the TV audience that several hundred copies are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Requests pour in, first by the bag and then by the truckload. The Association eventually condenses the Strategic Air Command articles into a twenty-four page reprint and distributes 160,000 free copies.

May 1, 1956. The Air Force Association Foundation—later the Aerospace Education Foundation—formally established.

July 1956. AFA, for the first time, gets into the insurance business by announcing its Flight Pay Protection Plan.

Aug. 1–5, 1956. At its National Convention in New Orleans, AFA inaugurates the Outstanding Airmen of the Air Force program.

August 1957. The biggest issue of *Air Force Magazine* ever printed—458 pages. It includes a history of the Air Force, edited by the USAF Historical Division, commemorating the “Golden Anniversary” of the Air Force. (The anniversary dates from August 1, 1907, when the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps began.)

November 1958. “Space Digest” begins as a special section in *Air Force Magazine*. It becomes part of the magazine’s title—*Air Force Magazine and Space Digest*—in June 1959. It ends in January 1971.

Apr. 12–19, 1959. AFA’s World Congress of Flight in Las Vegas. First international air show in US history. Fifty-one foreign nations participate. NBC-TV telecast an hour-long special, and *Life Magazine* gave it five pages of coverage.



At the AFA Honor Squadron Dinner at the Air Force Academy in 1961 are (from left) AFA President Thos. F. Stack, USAF Chief of Staff Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, Cadet Lt. Col. George L. Butler, commander of the Honor Squadron, who went on to become the last commander in chief of Strategic Air Command, radio-TV’s Arthur Godfrey, and AFA’s first president, Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle.

May 1959. AFA sponsors its first Outstanding Squadron dinner at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. This would become an annual event and a highlight of the AFA calendar.

October 1960. AFA life insurance program begins.

Sept. 11, 1963. The AFA National Convention adopts a Statement of Policy opposing the proposed Test Ban Treaty. This infuriates Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara. Under political pressure, Secretary of the Air Force Eugene M. Zuckert cancels his attendance at an AFA reception at the Convention, but Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, Air Force Chief of Staff, attends and stands alone as the guest of honor, greeting 2,000 people in the reception line.

February 1964. AFA’s New York, N. Y., Iron Gate Chapter sponsors the first of its annual Air Force Salutes. This becomes an event of national stature, drawing participation

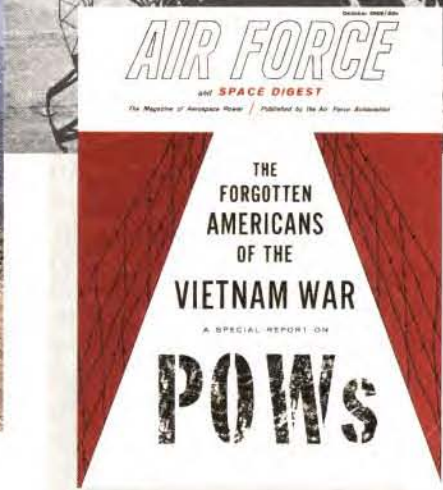
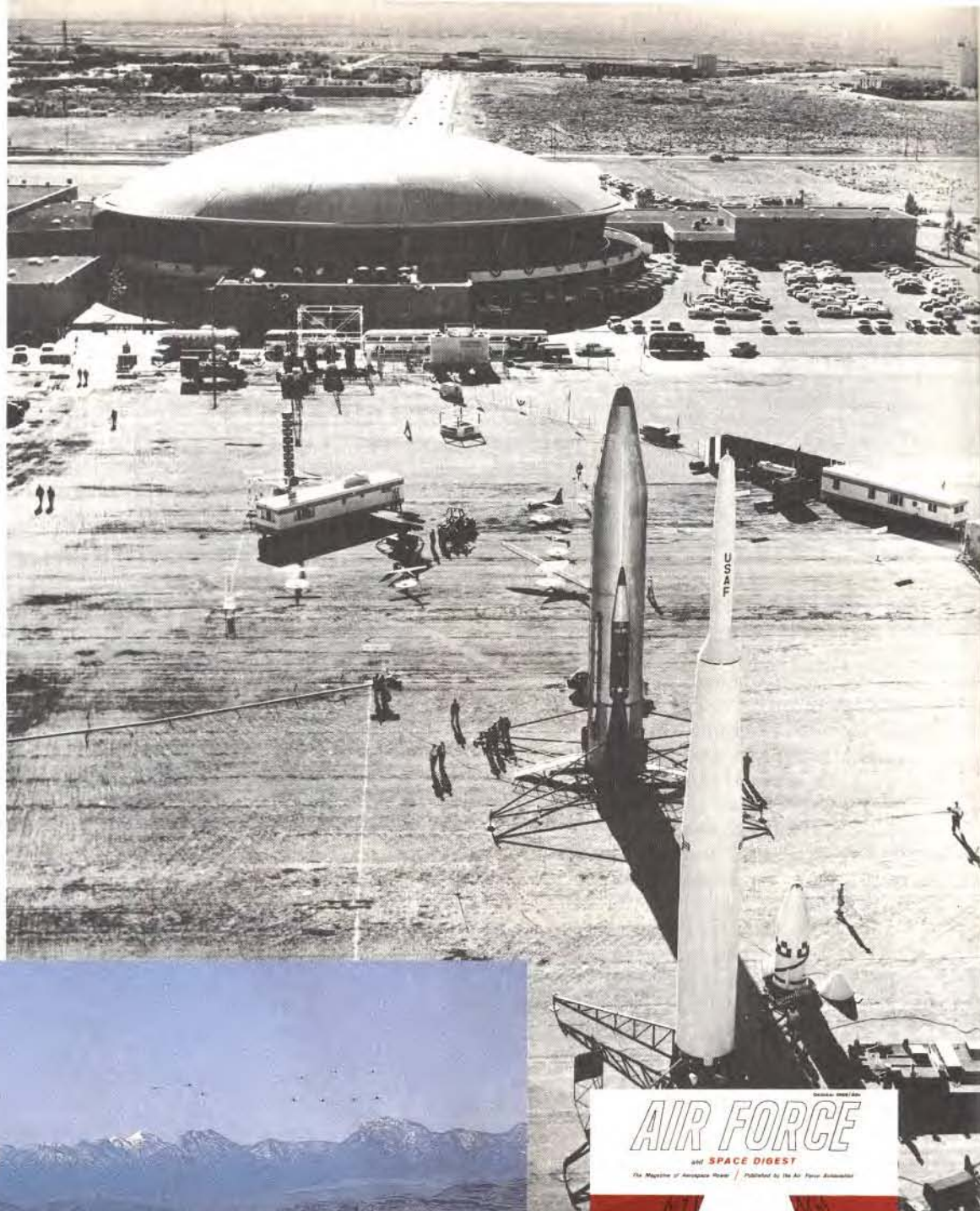
by Air Force leaders, members of Congress, and others, and raising large amounts of money for USAF-oriented charities.

March 1964. AFA’s Airmen’s Council asks USAF to appoint a “Sergeant Major of the Air Force” through whom “enlisted personnel can freely express their opinions and recommendations on matters ranging from mission effectiveness to personal problems.” The proposal is turned down, but the idea lives on until 1967, when the first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force is appointed.

September 1964. AFA changes the designations of its field units: “Wings” become “state organizations,” and “squadrons” become “chapters.”

Sept. 9–12, 1964. AFA introduces Aerospace Development Briefings and Displays at its National Convention. This program complemented the defense industry exhibits at the Convention and drew large crowds

AFA's World Congress of Flight, 1959, in Las Vegas, Nev., judged to be the "world's biggest air and space show," with fifty-one nations represented, was televised for an estimated forty million viewers. This auditorium housed symposiums, plus equipment displays by eighty-five companies.



AFA's "Gathering of Eagles" at Las Vegas in 1986 was a week of spectaculars, indoors and outdoors. Here, elements of the Confederate Air Force, configured as Japanese fighter-bombers, approach the field to begin the "Tora, Tora, Tora" re-creation of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

This *Air Force* Magazine cover story in October 1969 was picked up by *Reader's Digest* and built from there into a massive wave of national support for the prisoners of war and missing in action in Vietnam.

to learn about the latest in systems and technology.

March 17, 1967. The Aerospace Education Foundation undertakes "Project Utah" in cooperation with the US Office of Education. It demonstrates the feasibility of using Air Force technical training courses in the Utah public school system. This award-winning project, significant in its own right, was given major credit for later helping secure accreditation for the Community College of the Air Force.

Nov. 18–20, 1968. First National Laboratory for the Advancement of Education, cosponsored by the Aerospace Education Foundation and the US Office of Education. Some 1,600 educators attend. A second National Laboratory, held in 1970, draws more than 3,000 educators.

October 1969. *Air Force Magazine* cover story, "The Forgotten Americans of the Vietnam War," ignites national concern for the prisoners of war and the missing in action. It is reprinted in condensed form as the lead article in the November 1969 issue of *Reader's Digest*, is read in its entirety on the floor of Congress, and is inserted into the *Congressional Record* on six different occasions. This article stirs the conscience of the nation and rallies millions to the cause of the POWs and MIAs. *Air Force Magazine* publishes an MIA/POW Action Report from June 1970 until September 1974.

February 1971. In conjunction with the celebration of its twenty-fifth anniversary, AFA redesigns its traditional "wee wings" logotype. The revision proves unpopular, and the traditional design is readopted in 1973.

May 24, 1973. AFA National President is special guest at a White House ceremony in tribute to returning POWs.

Sept. 15–19, 1974. AFA establishes a new event, "Salute to Congress"—forerunner of the Congressional Breakfast program—as part of the National Convention.

February 1976. First issue of *Cross-feed*, an internal AFA publication aimed at field units, is published.

October 22–23, 1976. AFA holds its first national symposium in Los Angeles, Calif. The twentieth symposium in this series was held in Los Angeles in October 1995.

Aug. 4, 1984. After thirty-eight years in the District of Columbia,

In 1971, AFA streamlined its "wee wings" insignia (below). Members, however, did not like the new version (right), so the traditional design was restored two years later.



The *Enola Gay*, the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, was turned over to the Smithsonian Institution at the 1949 AFA National Convention in Chicago.

Shown here are Carl Mitman, representing the Smithsonian; Col. Paul Tibbets, who flew the aircraft on its historic mission and brought it to Chicago in 1949; *Enola Gay* bombardier Maj. Thomas Ferebee; and Maj. Gen. Emmett "Rosy" O'Donnell. In 1994, AFA exposed plans by the Smithsonian to display the *Enola Gay* as a prop in a political horror show. The ensuing outrage from the public and Congress led to a complete change in the exhibition.



AFA National Headquarters moves into the Association's own building in Arlington, Va.

November 1984. AFA Visa Card program begins.

January 17–18, 1985. AFA's first Tactical Air Warfare Symposium is held in Orlando, Fla.

April 27–May 1, 1986. AFA's "Gathering of Eagles" in Las Vegas draws veterans of three wars to a five-day program on the heritage and capabilities of airpower.

September 1988. "Lifeline in Danger," a comprehensive white paper on the defense industrial base, is produced by the Air Force Association and published by the Aerospace Education Foundation. A follow-up report, "Lifeline Adrift," is published in September 1991. These works are

regarded as classic studies of the industrial base problem and continue to be cited for years afterward.

January 1991. The Aerospace Education Foundation joins AFA chapters and *USA Today* newspaper in the "Visions of Exploration" program, which provides public school students with materials to develop their interests in issues of the twenty-first century.

September 1991. AFA amends Constitution to give active-duty mem-

bers full membership privileges, including the right to vote and hold elective office in the Association.

Jan. 30, 1992. AFA leads the way in establishing the Air Force Memorial Foundation to build a national monument in the Washington, D. C., area to the Air Force and airmen.

March 15, 1994. An AFA Special Report, "The Smithsonian and the *Enola Gay*," exposes plans by the National Air and Space Museum to display the B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima as a prop in a politically rigged exhibition lacking balance and historical context. Other groups, Congress, the news media, and the public pick up the issue and force the museum to change not only the plan for this program but also its approach to exhibition planning. ■

More Highlights From the First Fifty Years

Aviation pioneer Maj. Gen. Benjamin D. Foulois holds the audience at the 1960 AFA Convention spellbound with an impromptu speech on the need for US military preparedness.



Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey (second from right) listened attentively to an AFA Aerospace Development Briefing in 1966. Shown with him left to right (front row) are AFA President Jess Larson, FAA Administrator Gen. William F. McKee, USAF (Ret.), Secretary of the Air Force Harold Brown, USAF Chief of Staff Gen. John P. McConnell, and Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg. In the second row are NASA Deputy Administrator Dr. Robert C. Seamans and Executive Secretary of the National Aeronautics and Space Council Dr. Edward C. Welsh.

AFA National Conventions

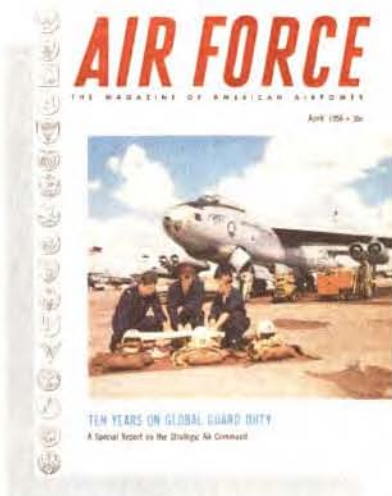
- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1947 | Columbus, Ohio |
| 1948 | New York City |
| 1949 | Chicago |
| 1950 | Boston |
| 1951 | Los Angeles |
| 1952 | Detroit |
| 1953 | Washington, D. C. |
| 1954 | Omaha, Neb. |
| 1955 | San Francisco |
| 1956 | New Orleans |
| 1957 | Washington, D. C. |
| 1958 | Dallas |
| 1959 | Miami Beach |
| 1960 | San Francisco |
| 1961 | Philadelphia |
| 1962 | Las Vegas |
| 1963 | Washington, D. C. |
| 1964 | Washington, D. C. |
| 1965 | No AFA National Convention (Fall meeting with Aerospace Development Briefings held in Washington, D. C.) |
| 1966 | Dallas |
| 1967 | San Francisco |
| 1968 | Atlanta |
| 1969 | Houston |
| 1970-95 | Washington, D. C. |



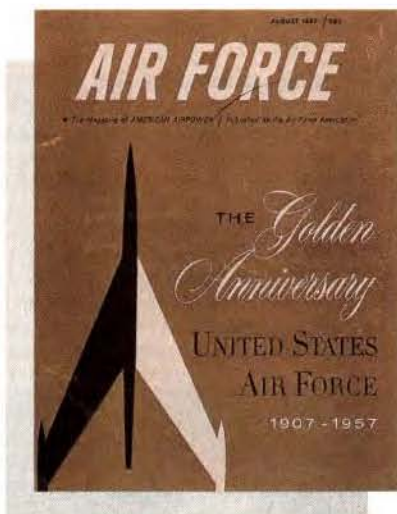
PROGRAM

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION
21st ANNIVERSARY
NATIONAL CONVENTION
AND AIR FORCE REUNION
March 14-17, 1967

SAN FRANCISCO
EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE CITY



Arthur Godfrey was impressed with the April 1956 issue of *Air Force Magazine*, which featured the Strategic Air Command. He told his network television audience about it, generating 160,000 requests for copies.



In August 1957, fifty years after the start of the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps, *Air Force* Magazine published its largest issue ever. Most of the 458 pages were a "Golden Anniversary" retrospective prepared by the USAF Historical Division and later published separately as a book by the Van Nostrand Co.

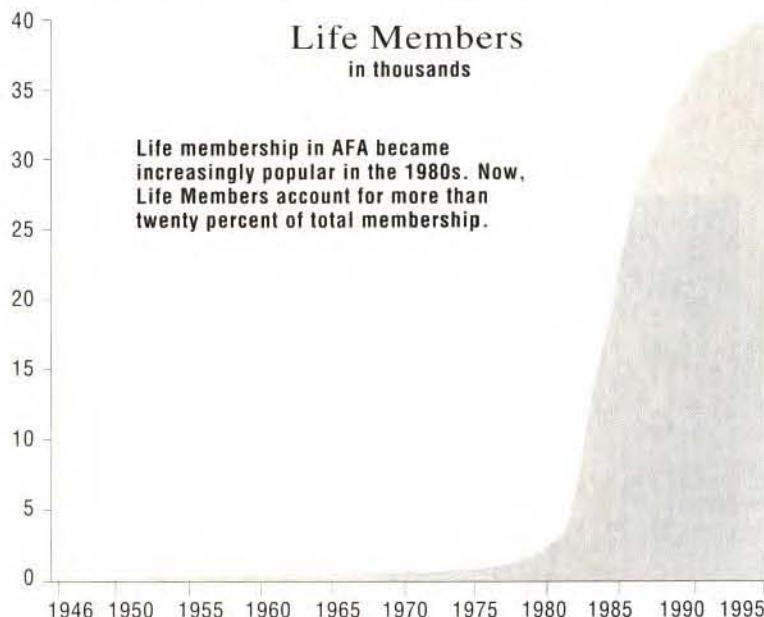


Gen. Carl A. Spaatz, wearing boots and tuxedo, didn't let a blizzard keep him from AFA's fifteenth-anniversary dinner in Washington, D. C., in 1961. (The photo made the national wires.)

Gold Life Member Card Recipients

Awarded to members whose AFA record, production, and accomplishment on a national level have been outstanding over a period of years.

Name	Year	Card No.
Gill Robb Wilson	1957	1
Jimmy Doolittle	1959	2
Arthur C. Storz, Sr.	1961	3
Julian B. Rosenthal	1962	4
Jack B. Gross	1964	5
George D. Hardy	1965	6
Jess Larson	1967	7
Robert W. Smart	1968	8
Martin M. Ostrow	1973	9
James H. Straubel	1980	10
Martin H. Harris	1988	11
Sam E. Keith, Jr.	1990	12
Edward A. Stearn	1992	13
Dorothy L. Flanagan	1994	14

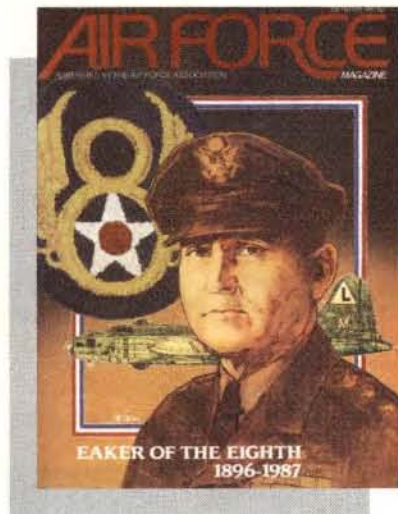


Speaker of the House Rep. Carl Albert (D-Okla.) signs up as a three-year member of AFA. Here, he tenders his check to AFA President Joe L. Shosid, left, at AFA's Salute to Congress in 1974.



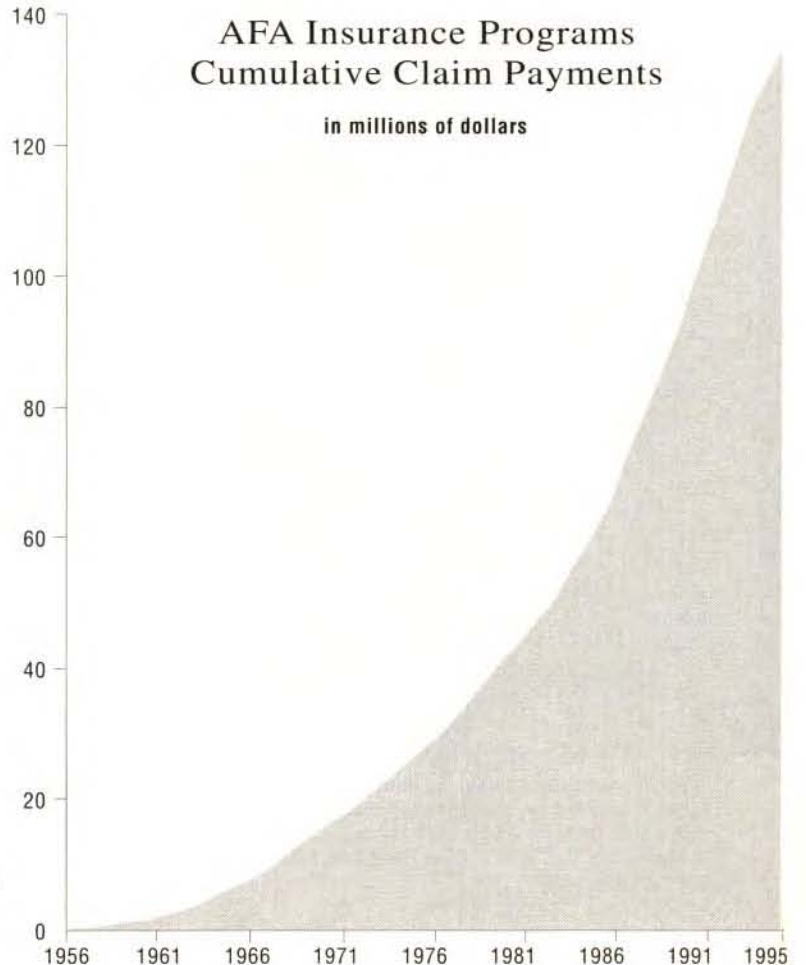
This 1984 publication honored the men who had served up to that time as Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force: (left to right) Paul W. Airey, Donald L. Harlow, Richard D. Kisling, Thomas N. Barnes, Robert D. Gaylor, James M. McCoy, Arthur L. Andrews, and Sam E. Parish. *The Chiefs* was produced by the *Air Force Magazine* staff, published by the Aerospace Education Foundation, and presented by the Enlisted Council of the Air Force Association.

At AFA's Silver Anniversary banquet in 1971, Sen. Howard W. Cannon (D-Nev., standing) chats with former AFA President C. R. Smith (left) and AFA Chairman of the Board Jess Larson.



The October 1987 cover marked the passing of the legendary Ira Eaker, who stood close to Mitchell, Arnold, and Doolittle in AFA's hall of heroes.

AFA insurance programs have grown steadily from modest beginnings in the 1950s. Through 1995, cumulative claim payments totaled \$133,476,130.



Some of USAF's Outstanding Airmen talk with Chief of Staff Gen. Thomas D. White at the AFA Convention in 1959. The Outstanding Airmen program had been started by AFA three years before. From left to right: SMSgt. James O. Simmons, Air Force Academy; MSgt. Perry Bishop, Air Research and Development Command; TSgt. Leonard T. Newton, Jr., Recruiting Service; General White; SMSgt. Anthony J. Baione, Headquarters Command; SMSgt. Robert T. Campbell, Jr., Continental Air Command; SMSgt. Dwight H. McCracken, Military Air Transport Service; and SMSgt. Clyde Ellison, Alaskan Air Command.



At Honors Night during AFA's 1962 National Convention, Bob Hope congratulates SMSgt. Arthur E. Cole of Headquarters Command—one of the Outstanding Airmen of the Year—and Mrs. Cole.

At the Wings Club in New York, N. Y., on August 1, 1947, AFA President Jimmy Doolittle is flanked by World War II bomber pilot James Stewart and Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg, who would later become the second Chief of Staff of the independent Air Force.



The monthly "Valor" page began running in *Air Force Magazine* in February 1983 and became an instant favorite with readers and members. In 1985, the Aerospace Education Foundation published this collection of "Valor" articles—most of them written by John L. Frisbee—and other accounts of heroism from past issues of the magazine.



Aerospace Education Foundation Presidents



John B. Montgomery
1963-64



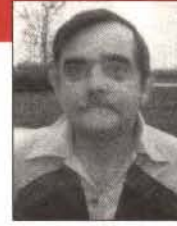
Dr. Lindley J. Stiles
1964-66



Dr. B. Frank Brown
1966-67



Dr. Leon M. Lessinger
1967-68



Dr. L. V. Rasmussen
1968-71



Dr. Leon M. Lessinger
1971-73



Dr. Wayne O. Reed
1973-74



Dr. William L. Ramsey
1975-81



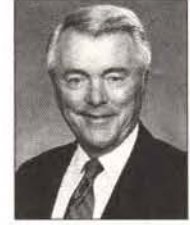
Dr. Don C. Garrison
1981-84



George D. Hardy
1984-86



Eleanor P. Wynne
1986-87



James M. Keck
1988-89



Gerald V. Hasler
1989-94



Thomas J. McKee
1994-

Aerospace Education Foundation Chairmen of the Board



Dr. W. Randolph Lovelace II
1963-64



Gen. Laurence S. Kuter, USAF (Ret.)
1964-66



Dr. Walter J. Hesse
1966-69



J. Gilbert Nettleton, Jr.
1969-73



George D. Hardy
1973-75



Sen. Barry M. Goldwater
1975-86



George D. Hardy
1986-89



James M. Keck
1989-94



Walter E. Scott
1994-

Here, from our July 1957 cover, are seventeen drawings by Milton Caniff, creator of "Terry and the Pirates" and "Steve Canyon," who based many of his characters on real people. From top, left to right: Poteet Canyon (based on Nancy O'Neal); Dude Hennick (Frank Higgs); Col. Flip Corkin (Philip Cochran); Lt. Upton Bucket (Bill Mauldin); Col. Vince Casey (C. D. Vincent); CAP Cadet Scooter McGruder (Margaret Kennefick); Allee McDean (Alice McDermott); Maj. Gen. Claire Chennault (himself); Steve Canyon ("a composite"); Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell (himself); Lt. Taftly Tucker (Bernice Taylor); Miss Lace (Dorothy Partington); Maj. Luke Adew (William Lookadoo); Col. Soup Davey (David F. McCallister); Lt. Peter Pipper "the Piper" (John F. Kennedy); Brig. Gen. P. G. "Shanty" Town (also C. D. Vincent); and Miss Mizzou (Marilyn Monroe).



National President Victor R. Kregel, right, presents the 1980 AFA Man of the Year award to David C. Noerr of San Bernardino, Calif. The next year, Dave Noerr joined the AFA staff where he was to serve many years as director of Volunteer and Regional Activities.



Tennessee Ernie Ford, a former B-29 bombardier, was active in AFA for many years. Here, he performs with the Air Force Band at the 1981 National Convention.

Twenty-One Names Not Chosen

In August 1945, Gen. of the Army H. H. "Hap" Arnold and the Army Air Forces asked Edward P. Curtis to take the lead in organizing "an AAF Veterans' Association." Along with the request came a study exploring the idea of such a group. That paper posed no less than twenty-one possible names, but the one eventually chosen—the Air Force Association—was not among the twenty-one suggested:

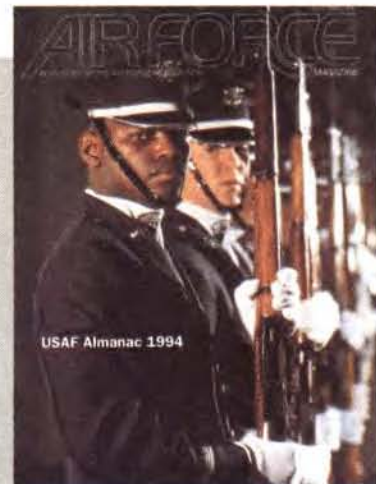
- Air Force Legion
- Air Force League
- Air Force Veterans Association
- Air Force Council
- Air Force Veterans Federation
- Air Force Veterans Alliance
- National Legion of Air Force Veterans
- National League of Air Force Veterans
- National Association of Air Force Veterans
- National Federation of Air Force Veterans
- National Fraternity of Air Force Veterans
- National Council of Air Force Veterans
- United League of Air Force Veterans
- United Federation of Air Force Veterans
- United Association of Air Force Veterans
- United Council of Air Force Veterans
- United Alliance of Air Force Veterans
- American Air Force Veterans
- American Veterans of the Air Force
- American Veterans of the Air Force
- Air Force Alumni Association

Curiously, Billy Mitchell had founded, in 1926, an earlier group known as the Air Force Association. It was headed by World War I ace Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker. That organization was unsuccessful, however, and did not last very long. It was not a direct ancestor of the present Air Force Association.

Profiles of AFA Membership

As of October 1995 (Total 170,000)

61%	One-year members	Of AFA's service members (who account for about twelve percent of the US Air Force total strength):
15%	Three-year members	
24%	Life Members	
		60% are officers
28%	Active-duty military	40% are enlisted
39%	Retired military	Of AFA's retired members:
16%	Former service	70% are retired officers
7%	Guard and Reserve	30% are retired enlisted
6%	Patron	
2%	Cadet	
2%	Spouse/widow(er)	



AFA's most famous product is the Air Force Almanac, published each year in May. It has become the standard look-it-up reference for everyone—including the US Air Force—for facts and figures about the Air Force.



The annual Air Force Almanac is popular all over. In 1991, it was translated into Japanese and published in this authorized edition by Koku-Fan. The cover illustration was the same as the one that appeared on the regular edition in May 1991.



Aerospace Education Foundation Scholarships

	Awarded to	Year begun	Number awarded to date
Von Kármán	Graduating AFROTC cadets for graduate study	Fall 1989	55
Angel Flight/Silver Wings	Angel Flight/Silver Wings members who are college juniors and seniors	January 1993	30
Eagle Grant	Selected graduates of the Community College of the Air Force	Fall 1991	1,300
Spouse	Spouses of USAF active-duty, Guard, and Reserve members for graduate or undergraduate study	July 1995	30



Delegates to the 1951 Convention gather for the Airpower Banquet at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles, Calif.

Locations of AFA National Headquarters



A thirty-eight-year-old dream was realized in 1984 with the opening of the Air Force Association Building in August and its formal dedication in September. AFA's first national president, Jimmy Doolittle, led the throng of Association leaders, members, and guests who came to the ceremony by bus from the National Convention hotel.

In Washington, D. C.

February 1946	1603 K Street, N. W.
Mid-1946	1616 K Street, N. W.
June 1949	901 16th Street, N. W.
November 1950	1424 K Street, N. W.
January 1954	701 17th Street, N. W.
April 1961	1901 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.
April 1964	1750 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W.

In Arlington, Va.

August 1984	1501 Lee Highway
-------------------	------------------

Coyne, James P. *Airpower in the Gulf.* Washington, D. C.: Aerospace Education Foundation, 1992.

Editors of Air Force Magazine. *Almanac of Airpower.* New York: Arco, 1989.

Editors of Air Force Magazine. *Space Weapons: A Handbook of Military Astronautics.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959.

Goldberg, Alfred, ed. *A History of the United States Air Force, 1907-57.* Princeton, N. J.: D. Van Nostrand, 1957.

Loosbrock, John F., and Richard M. Skinner, eds. *The Wild Blue: The Story of American Airpower, The Best from Air Force Magazine.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1961.

Schweibert, Ernest G., and the Editors of Air Force Magazine/Space Digest. *A History of the US Air Force Ballistic Missiles.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964-65.

Skinner, Richard M., and William Leavitt, eds. *Speaking of Space, The Best From Space Digest.* Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1962.

Straubel, James H. *Crusade for Airpower: The Story of the Air Force Association.* Washington, D. C.: Aerospace Education Foundation, 1982.

AFA Executive Directors



Willis S. Fitch
1946-47



James H. Straubel
1948-80



Russell E. Dougherty
1980-86



David L. Gray
1986-87



John O. Gray
1987-88



Charles L. Donnelly, Jr.
1988-89



John O. Gray
1989-90



Monroe W. Hatch, Jr.
1990-95



John A. Shaud
1995-



Newly elected Aerospace Education Foundation Chairman George D. Hardy presents an AFA mantel clock to the retiring Foundation Chairman Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) at a dinner at the National Air and Space Museum in December 1986.

Bob Stevens'

"There I Was..."

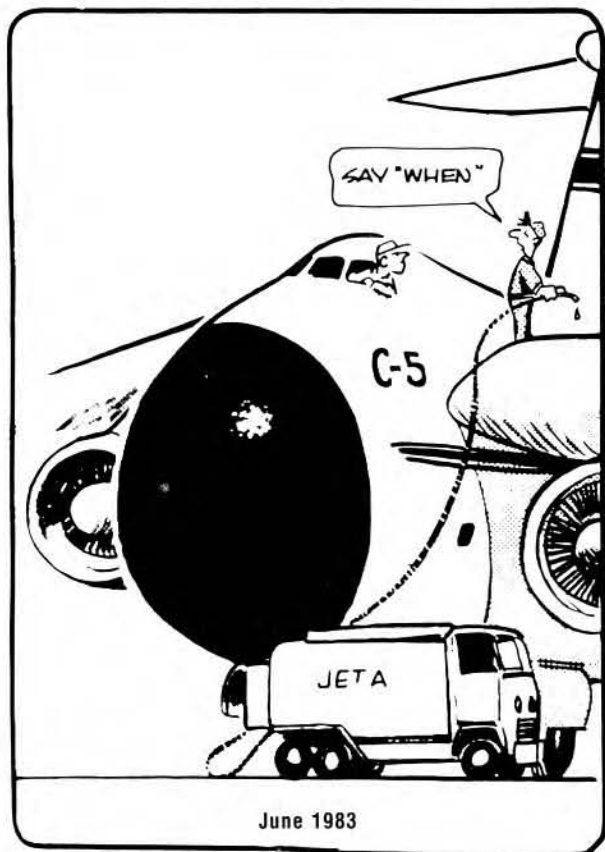
"There I Was" made its debut in the January 1964 issue and ran every month—360 issues—for the next thirty years. For most, but not all, of that run it appeared on the last page of the magazine. There were a total of 362 pages, because two episodes were doubles. The final installment was in the December 1993 issue.



May 1966



January 1964



June 1983



February 1976