



MILE HIGH VIEW

NEWSLETTER OF THE MILE HIGH WING,
COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE (CAF)

Keep 'Em Flying!

September 2005

The Mile High Wing's "Cream Puff"

By Col Stan Peterson

Adversity is something we all have to deal with on occasion, and the Mile High Wing and the CAF are no strangers to it. Although there are incredible challenges to keeping these old vintage aircraft flying, fortunately there are those that are not easily dissuaded by the inevitable setbacks.

To those who continue to forge ahead, the challenges are worth the effort to ensure that the price that was paid for our freedoms will never be forgotten.

Although the Mile High Wing had lost an aircraft through an unfortunate set of circumstances, they are fighting back to preserve the memory of those who gave so much for our freedom. They have brought back an aircraft that had been left to ruin and had not been cared for in over a year.

Even though the recovery process was costly, it continued even after the aircraft was declared officially airworthy, ensuring that the airplane is in perfect working order.

The aircraft is an AT-7 Navigator, Air Force serial number 42-56779R, built by Beechcraft Aircraft Corp. in 1942 and delivered to the USAAF on 3 May 1943. The aircraft has a wingspan of 47'8", is 34'3" long, and it has two Pratt and Whitney R985 engines of 450HP each and a top speed of 224 mph.

During WWII, these aircraft were used to train over 90% of the navigators. This particular plane was assigned as follows:

May 1943 San Marcos Field, TX
Dec 1945 4196th Base Unit, Victorville Field, CA
Jul 1948 4126th Base Unit, San Bernardino AFB, CA
Jul 1949 San Bernardino Air Depot, CA for storage
Jul 1949 Redesignated a T-7
Nov 1949 Pacific Overseas Airlines, Ontario, CA for overhaul



The Wing's C-45, aka "Cream Puff"

Nov 1949 2347th Air Force Reserve, Long Beach, CA
Aug 1950 452nd Bombardment Wing (light), Victorville, CA
Jan 1951 Beech Aircraft, Wichita, Kansas for remanufacture
Feb 1951 Dropped from USAF inventory

The aircraft was remanufactured and redesigned a C-45G, Air Force serial number 51-11455, and was delivered to the USAF on 28 April 1952.

After remanufacture, the aircraft was assigned as follows:

Apr 1952 3902nd Air Base Group (SAC), Offutt AFB, NE
Apr 1954 806th Air Base Group, (SAC), Lake Charles AFB, LA
Sep 1954 3520th Flying Training Wing (ATC), McConnell AFB, KS
Sep 1954 806th Air Base Group, (SAC), Lake Charles AFB, LA
Jun 1955 808th Air Base Group (SAC), Bergstrom AFB, TX
Jul 1955 806th Air Base Group (SAC), Lake Charles AFB, LA

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Calendar of Events

September 17, 2005 – No meeting.

October 15, 2005 – Wing meeting:
10:00 a.m., *Platte Valley Airport*.

Wing meetings are held on the 3rd
Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m.

Note: No September Meeting!

The September meeting will not be conducted because our Wing will have its PX at Front Range Airport on 9/17/05 for their first Classic Car and Airplane Show.

The October meeting will be moved to Platte Valley Airport for hanging out with the C-45 and attending the WWI Museum Day.

If you have any questions, call Paul LaPrad at 303-696-6988.

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- Sep 1955 825th Air Base Group (SAC), Little Rock AFB, AR
- Sep 1958 Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ for storage
- Mar 1959 Dropped from USAF inventory by authorized reclamation

Note: Aircraft history obtained from the USAF Historical Research Center, Maxwell AFB, AL.

Now, after a long list of private owners, the “Cream Puff” comes to the Mile High Wing of the CAF where she and her extensive military history will truly be appreciated and cared for. →



Mile High Wing, CAF

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