

937th SOONER NEWS

Volume II, Number 1

ASTRONAUT VISITS 937TH

Oklahoma Astronaut Thomas P. Stafford's landing at Tinker last UTA was almost as wet as his three splashdowns in the Pacific Ocean.

Air Force Col. Stafford was greeted by heavy fog and members of the 937th as the chief of the astronaut office of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration taxied onto the landing strip to begin an unofficial visit to Oklahoma City.

The visit was unofficial in that he didn't come visiting as an astronaut, but rather to see some friends.

Addressing members of the 937th, Stafford recalled his recent visit to Southeast Asia with Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

He said he was very impressed with the respect felt toward the United States in countries he visited on the tour.

The leaders of the nations visited, the astronaut said, respected President Nixon's attitudes toward U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia.

The Nixon Doctrine, as outlined by Stafford, stressed three points: the United States is a Pacific power, series of honored commitments by the United States in Asia will be kept, and the United States is not going to commit major forces to the continent as the nation has done in the past.

The Asian leaders also agreed, according to Stafford, that the worst thing the United States can do is to rapidly disengage from Vietnam.

Stafford said he fully

supported the President's Vietnamization process.

Turning to the future and the space program, the veteran of some 290 hours in space during three flights said the key to future flights in the space shuttle.

He said the shuttle will be something like a conventional airplane, in that it will be able to land on firm ground and eliminate the dramatic splashdowns familiar to television spectators of the space program.

One major aspect of the development of the space shuttle will be decrease in cost of production of space hardware needed to break away from the earth gravity.

The present booster costs \$1,000 per pound to produce, Stafford said.

The space shuttle can reduce the cost to \$50-80 per pound.

He noted that the cost per pound for the Saturn rocket does not run more than the cost of most commercial jet airliners.

But, he added, "you don't throw away the plane" following a flight from Los Angeles to New Rok.

The space shuttle, he noted, will partially eliminate the process of leaving hardware in space.

NASA, according to Stafford, is continuing to fund research on a nuclear rocket, completion of which he predicts for 1975-76.

He said before the nation can get to Mars, there are logical steps through which the program must develop. The first is development of the space shuttle, the second



Thomas P. Stafford

is the development of a nuclear-powered shuttle, and the third is the actual trip to another planet.

"We can do it (travel to other planets) right now, but we have other areas to develop first."

He feels Americans will be on Mars before the end of the century.

According to Stafford, the space program will pay for itself through advances it encourages on earth.

He noted the discovery of major oil deposits in Australia and more accurate forecasting of weather as two of the outgrowths on earth of space exploration.

Comparing the U. S. space program with that of the Russians, he firmly stated, "With respect to the manned program, they're not even in the ball park."

He said the Russian spacecraft is basically the same one they were using in 1961.

Concerning cuts in the space program budget, the command pilot of Apollo 10 said the funds are adequate for the next year.

But, he added, if the trend continues, "We may have a hard time developing the shuttle."

He described his role as chief of the astronaut office as responsible for selecting flight crews, monitoring training, and public relations.

The nearly bald Weatherford native jokingly said he took his new job "hoping that I didn't lose all my hair."

Stafford was invited to stop by the 937th unit during his visit in Oklahoma by Lt. Col. James L. Wade, commander of the 305th.

Stafford praised the efforts of the 305th in its airlift duties to Southeast Asia and other parts of the world.

The astronaut noted that extra emphasis will be put on the duties of squadrons such as the 305th as more land troops are pulled out of Vietnam.

Closing the commander's call was a presentation to the astronaut of a plaque making him an honorary member of the 305th.

NEXT UTA
11-12 APR.



Col. Stafford says hello to Lt. Col. Jim Wade of the 937th. Col. Wade was the one who invited Stafford to drop by the unit while he was at Tinker.

Even though the weather was not too friendly on the Saturday of the last UTA, Col. Thomas Stafford, astronaut from Weatherford, received a warm welcome from members of the 937th.

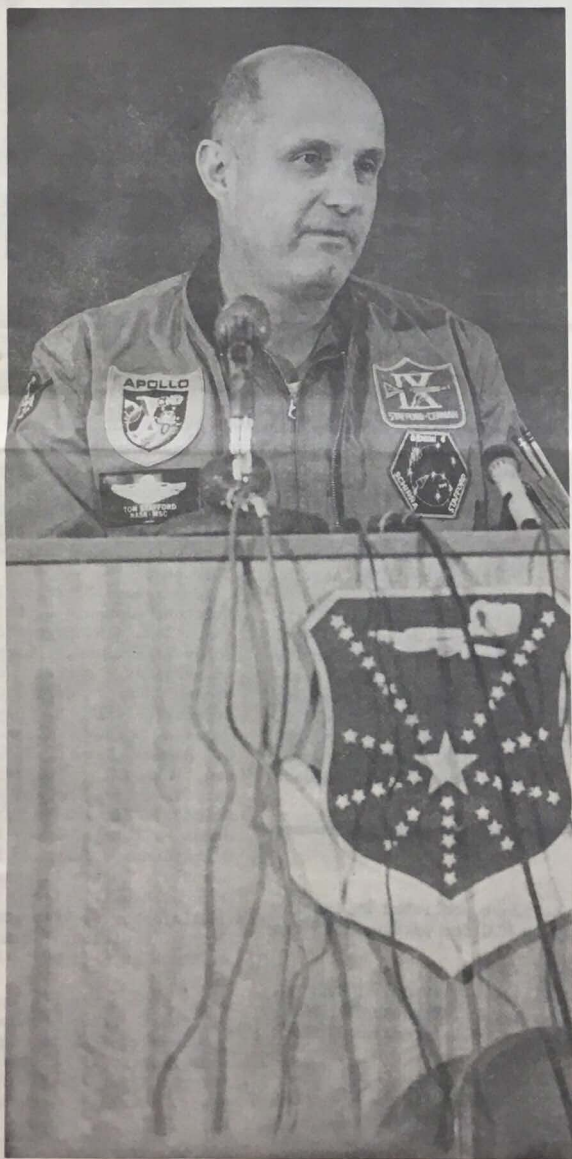
From the time his sleek two-seater NASA-owned jet touched down at Tinker until he left commander's call, he had the attention of the whole unit.

He was living proof of the pride in being a member of the aerospace team.

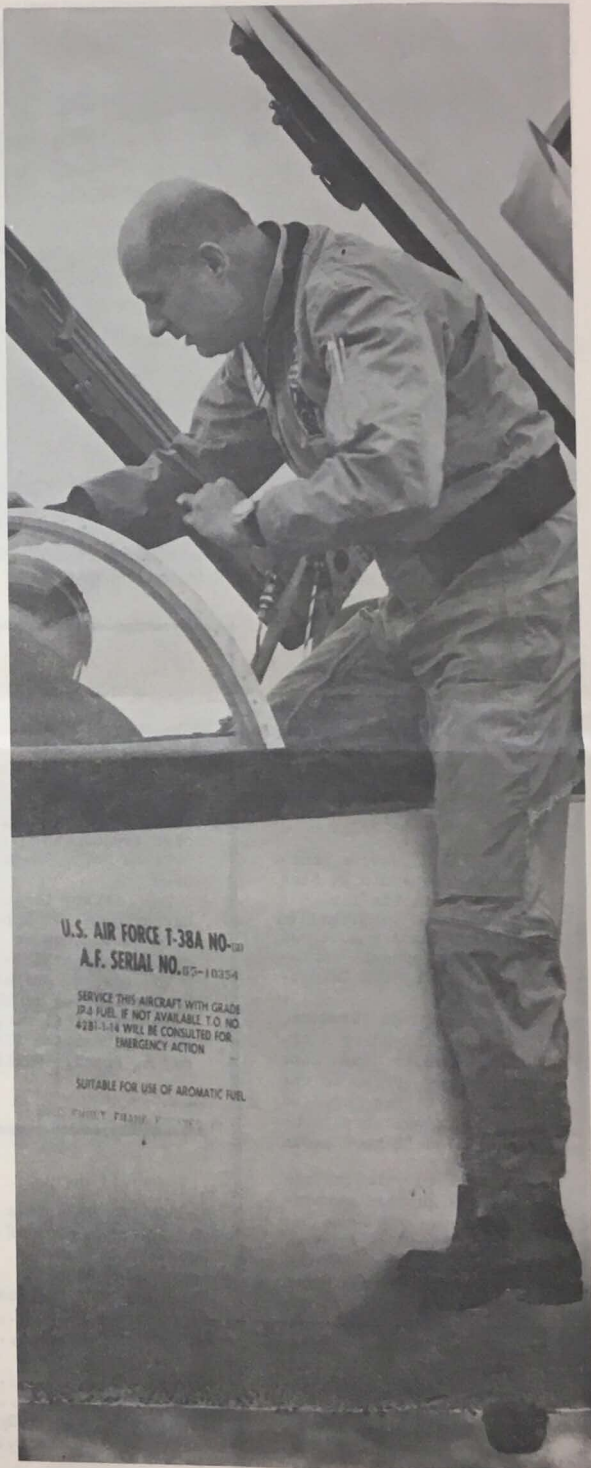


An informal welcome is given the astronaut by 937th officers. His visit to Oklahoma City and the unit had been labelled "unofficial."

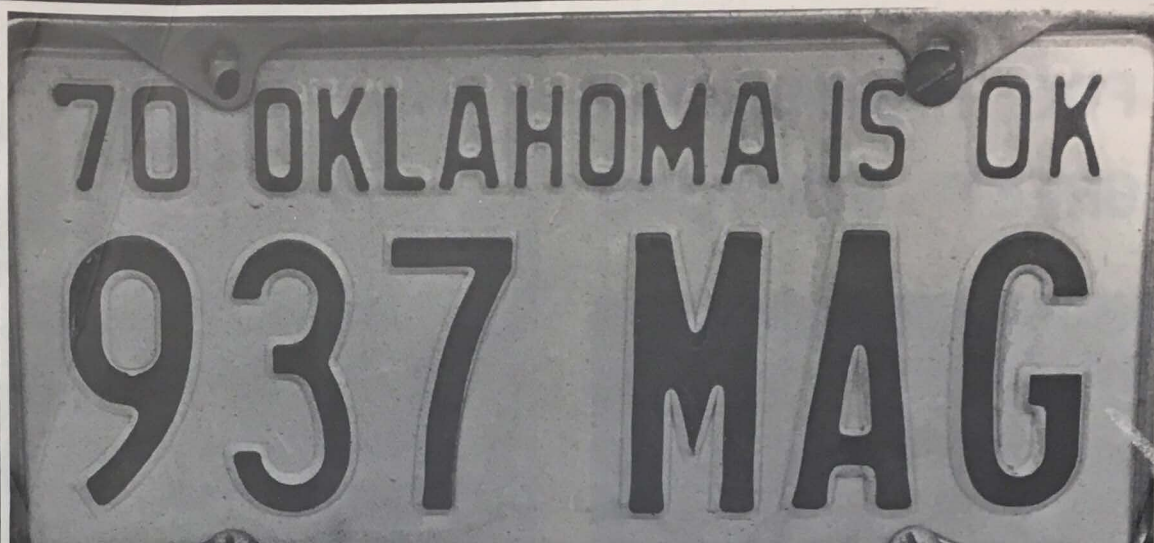
FOG, HANDSHAKES GREET STAFFORD



Astronaut Tom Stafford addresses the men of the 937th from a podium carrying the emblem of the Sooner Group.



Climbing from a NASA-owned plane he piloted to Tinker, Col. Stafford begins his Oklahoma City visit.



The 937th MAG is well displayed on the car tag of Capt. Harold E. Stewart.

937TH GOES EVERYWHERE WITH CAPTAIN

The 937th travels wherever Capt. Harold E. Stewart goes in his car.

The data information officer for the unit has "937 MAG" proudly emblazoned on his 1970 Oklahoma car tag.

According to Stewart, "It gives the 937th a little publicity and lets me show my pride in the 937th. It has aroused many questions from people who don't know about the 937th."

No one in Oklahoma can duplicate another personalized tag, he added.

"I got the idea from an article in 'Air Force Times' about a pilot who accidentally got his squadron's initials and numbers from his home state."

Stewart suggested that anyone else who might desire a tag to increase interest in the 937th might use 937 Spt, 937 Sup or USAFR.

There's a six letter maximum for the tags.

PROMOTIONS

The following 937th personnel have received promotions during the past few months:

To major: Chester E. Urey Jr.

To first lieutenant: Catherine A. Bishop.

To chief master sergeant: George Tiefel Jr.

To senior master sergeant: Charles T. Thomas.

To technical sergeant: Hugh C. Hamilton III, Leroy A. Freed, William C.

Henson, Larry L. Paltt, Albert L. Adams.

To staff sergeant: Richard P. Cochran, David R. Crawford, Kenneth M. Preston, David A. Austin, Michael M. Cobb, James D. Davis, Charles A. Dickson Jr., James D. Ecker, Robert J. Farrell, Shelby S. Foster, James M. Gleason, John H. Grassman, Marvin D. Hall, Donald G. Jones, John M. Myers, Ronald P. O'Brien, James J. O'Donnell III, Robert

A. Rose, Thomas M. Shipp, Robert A. Soper, Leslie Williams, Gerald D. Ratway, Robert C. Russell, Jerry L. Shuck, Stanley C. Tucker.

To sergeant: Stanley R. Britton, Johnnie L. Bufkin, Ronald W. Everaard, Bobby R. Hoffman, Larry E. Presley, Darrel G. Stonecipher, Carl O. Stramski, Bill R. Day, James W. Dorney, Michael G. Harmon, Gary D. Jackson, Larry R. Oliver, Gary C. Rhodes, Roland E. Schmidt, Richard D. Nix, James R. Powell, Benny E. Richardson, John E. Shankle, Rogers D. Arms, Gary J. Banks, Jeffrey H. McLain, Bobby J. Raincrow, Gary A. Robinson, Everett E. Shissler, John C. Smith.

To airman first class: William E. Brown, Thomas R. Cassady, James R. Lamens, Robert P. McIntire, Troy A. Tate, Travis D. Baker, Charles S. Ewing, Earl T. Jones, Leonard E. Maker, Michael A. Swick, Alan E. Edwards, Kenneth E. McBride, James R. Purdum, Esquelle L. Thomas, Wesley L. Wietelman.

The SOONER NEWS is a unit newsheet published by the Information Section of the 937th MAG for personnel of the Sooner Group.

Col. Cecil T. Jenkins.....Cmdr., 937th MAG
 Capt. Larry Bunch.....Personnel Officer
 1Lt Steve Hope.....Information Officer

Editor.....Ann Larry Snipes
 Photographers.....A1C Robert Taylor, A1C Bill Witt
 Illustrators.....Sgt Richard Thompson, Ann David Hale
 Editorial Assistant.....A1C Marvin Stepp

The SOONER NEWS is a quarterly publication and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the United States Air Force Reserves.

COLLEGE SECURITY IN SERGEANT'S HANDS

By A1C Marvin Stepp

"Young people now days do some things that really surprise me. But when I was a boy, I did some things that would probably shock them", stated TSgt Gene Thrusher, director of safety at Northeastern State College in Tahlequah.

These are surprising words coming from a man with 20 years of experience in the Oklahoma Highway Patrol. With closer observation, the above is not startling but indicative of the man's true character and capability for understanding.

In view of the recent disruptions at NSC, one would assume Thrusher would have changed his views drastically.

While trying to reason with the nearly 200 students apparently bent on

a "panty raid," Frusher lifted the safety-shield from his face and was hit in the mouth with a brick. He lost three teeth and required 30 stitches in his lip.

"When I got there, two of my officers were already down," stated Frusher at NSC's news conference.

Frusher remained on the scene for one and a half hours after being hit to keep his men from "wiping out" the close to 40 rock throwing young men.

"I think it's a damn shame that 5,000 students should be blamed for the actions of 40 students," stated Frusher the morning after.

Frusher and his men were expecting the riot but hoped to avert any

damage. A few students were allegedly passing out pamphlets inviting others to come to the "second annual Christmas riot."

"If he (Thrusher) had been here six months before this happened," according to Dr. Ivan Holmes, PR man for NSC, "he could have stopped it."

Frusher constantly cautioned his men against antagonizing the students or letting radicals catch them in an awkward position.

"Citations are dwindling," Frusher said in early December before the riot. "But although we want to give a student every break possible -- the benefit of the doubt, we do give citations and

make arrests," he said.

He stated that he and his men have to earn the respect of the students.

"I can't expect anyone to respect me just because of uniform," he said.

He stressed respect for others with his men.

"If we don't judge students because of their color or long hair, they won't judge us with terms like cop or fuzz," Frusher stated.

Along with the original 17 students arrested (one had charges dropped), four more students were charged after information from unnamed students was received.

Frusher is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the Civil Defense Training School at Alameda, Calif.



TSgt Gene Frusher sniffs some confiscated marijuana.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

We often desire to arouse the interest and initiative of others. To do the same thing in the same old way often becomes boring in every area of life.

Our age is characterized as an age of change. Our young people want to get away from the routine things of life even if it sometimes involves reacting to the past in styles and customs. On the other hand there are those who would like to visualize some fantastic dream of the future which may involve a trip to the moon.

Bob Hope was remarking about how times have changed: "Why once it took the wagon train six

months to cross the country," he said. "Now they send rockets millions of miles into space and back again in less time. But nobody's watching. They're all home watching 'Wagon Train' on TV."

A study of God can be a fascinating experience. Martin Luther said, "A mighty fortress is our God a bulwark never failing."

David, the great king of Israel, stated, "God is mighty and His mercies are new every day."

When we think about the Lord's interest in our individual lives, we have a new experience of confidence and courage each day.

Chaplain Edward Lane



Members of the Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron gather around to admire award.

AEROMED SQUADRON RECEIVES HONOR

The 73rd Aeromedical Evacuation Flight has been awarded a citation matched only by one other flight in the nation -- and the other one went to a regular Air Force unit.

The flight won the PRIDE achievement award from the Military Airlift Command. PRIDE stands for personal responsibility in daily effort.

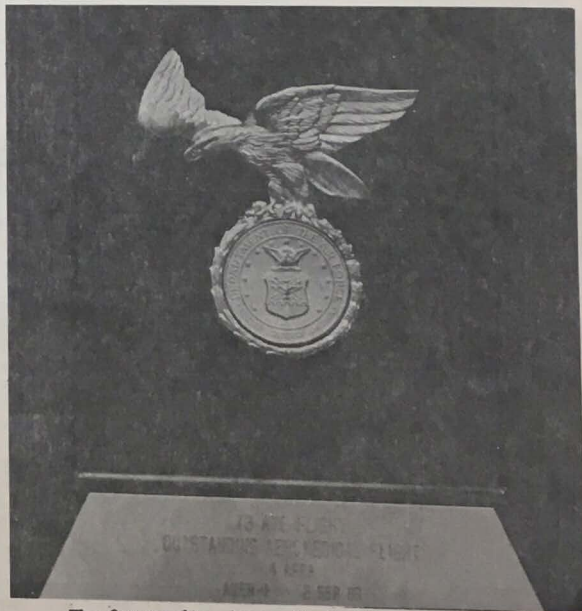
This award was given for achieving AMER-1 rating. Only a select four per cent in MAC are qualified to receive this highest possible rating.

The flight, under the command of Capt. Paul Nelson, became a squadron on March 1.

The 97 people in the squadron come to UTAs from Austin, Denver, Colorado Springs, Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

The squadron has 24 nurses, 40 medical technicians, and eight in administration.

The participate in 6-10 hours of class lecture each UTA and spend two weeks of active duty overseas. In addition to these duties, the members of the squadron must fly 2½ hours every 45 days.



The Outstanding Aeromedical Flight Award.