

From Operation BOLO to Baghdad

12 February 2019 BMC – AOC Luncheon

By Kent Namikas

On February 12, we had another successful luncheon at the Lackland Club. We had over 50 crows attend the gathering to include Sam Roberts the Western-Mountain Regional Director.

We had two great presentations for this luncheon. The first was on Operation Bolo by Col (ret) JB Stone. While on active duty, JB flew the F-102 and F-4. Then later in the Colorado Air National Guard he flew the F-100 and A-7. While in the guard he studied law and subsequently practiced law for 14 years before flying for Continental Airlines. He is currently retired. During his brief he explained how he was the wing tactics officer and worked closely with then Col Robin Olds to develop the plan to lure and trap North Vietnamese MiG-21s by mimicking F-105 bombing formations. They used F-105 call-signs, routes and flight profiles. It was successful in bringing out the MiGs. The first wave flew in three flights (Olds, Ford and Rambler). Col Olds led Olds flight, Col Chappie James led Ford flight and JB led Rambler. In the end, it was a highly successful operation that led to the highest number of downed enemy aircraft for one mission during the Vietnam War - 7 MiGs in just 15 minutes. After he spoke we watched a video that provided an excellent summary of the mission.



The second speaker was Col (ret) Dave "Tooms" Toomey. While in the Air Force he flew F-4G Wild weasels and F-117A Stealth fighters. He flew combat sorties in OPERATIONS DESERT STORM, SOUTHERN WATCH and IRAQI FREEDOM. He was the Commander of the 8th Fighter Squadron Black Sheep at Holloman AFB as well as the Air Force Information Operations Center at Lackland AFB. Currently Dave works for SRC Inc. For the brief, he spoke about his experience flying an F-117 during the initial strike of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. He explained how they were on standby to fly the mission and were expecting the first flights in a few days. But then he was called in and told that they were to strike a target in Baghdad that night. They were only told minimal information yet still had to plan and takeoff in just over 2 hours. Finally, they were given the target specifics and they departed under radio silence for the long flight into country. First, they met a KC-10 tanker and had to request the tanker push north into country to maintain their tight requirement of the time on target. Soon

after, they met up with EA-6Bs and F-16s that would provide support for the mission. They pressed inbound and struck their target just seconds before Tomahawk cruise missiles leveled surrounding targets. Dave returned to base without incident after participating in the opening round of the war.



It was great to learn more about our military history from a first person perspective. After the briefings, Chapter President John Langford presented each of the briefers with a copy of “AOC Legacy, The First 50 Years.”