

HIGH ALTITUDE RECONNAISSANCE DURING THE COLD WAR (218)

Wednesday, 1:00 – 2:30, (1 Classes, 2/25) in Room 19

Tuition \$17

Tom Barrett will give a presentation on **“High Altitude Reconnaissance During the Cold War.”** During three of the twenty-two years he served in the United States Air Force, he was a high-altitude reconnaissance pilot who participated in some of the USAF's most secretive photographic and nuclear sampling reconnaissance flights. Few aviation enthusiasts know about the aircraft he flew. Built in 1964 to replace U-2A and B models, this General Dynamics 122' wingspan RB-57F aircraft was designed to carry a pilot, systems operator and the world's largest camera. It was the size of a VW, weighed almost 6,000 pounds and could produce detailed photographs of objects fifty miles away while flying above 70,000 feet. Twenty-one of the aircraft were built by General Dynamics. To minimize public speculation and maintain secrecy, the aircraft were never painted black and were given the same designation as an existing aircraft the 65' wingspan

Martin B-57.

Especially interesting are the missions flown taking samples of nuclear detonation “mushroom clouds” throughout the world. Please note that at night “Tom may glow in the dark. “

Tom Barrett, USAF Retired, was the (Oshkosh WI) Experimental Aircraft Associations (EAA) museum / flight operations director from 1995 – 2000. His previous appointment was six years as Associate Professor and Director of the Business Management Program at Ripon College in Wisconsin. That academic career followed a nine-year contract position as Transportation Services Division Manager for SDI "Star Wars" research at Kwajalein Missile Range in the Marshall Islands.

During a twenty-two-year Air Force career, he logged over 10,000 flight hours including 541 combat missions over North and South Vietnam. His UC-123 aircraft encountered sixty-seven hits by ground fire including eighteen hits on the mission which earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross. Tom also served in several key USAF staff positions including Director of Cadet Wing Operations at the United States Air Force Academy. A graduate of the University of Nebraska with a degree in Geopolitics, Tom also holds a master's degree in public administration from Auburn University. He has published studies of third world economic development and authored “Wants-N-Tides,” a book of poetry reviewed by The Washington Post. One of his works has become a classical choral work performed in concert halls. [youtube.com/watch?v=Gjutt-c8efw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gjutt-c8efw)

Tom and his wife Lynn (glider pilot /sailor /former USAF RN) live in Ruskin, FL. They spend their summers in Ludington, MI. They are lifelong sailors and completed a five year five-thousand-mile voyage on their 35' sailboat 2003-2008. Now that “age has set upon them (87/79) they frequently travel in their RV most recently to Alaska and the Canadian Maritimes. Their son Ian is an Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University graduate and Delta Airlines Captain based in Minneapolis. Their daughter Jen is an archeologist living with her husband in Scotland.