

# Twenty Years With the Same Lady



by Lt Col Ted M. Watson • HQ ADCOM/DOCE



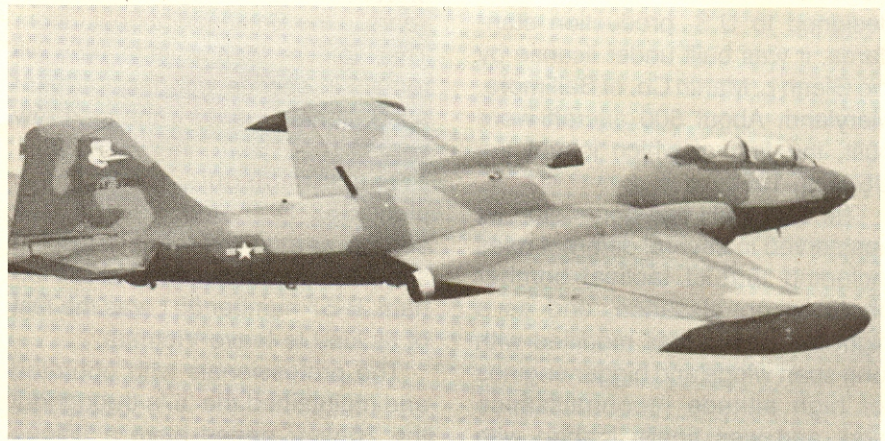
On 1 July 1978, the 190th Defense Systems Evaluation Group (DSEG), Kansas ANG, will convert to KC-135 tankers and, in so doing, will say farewell to ADCOM and to an old friend of 20 years — the B-57 Canberra. In April of 1958, the unit received two shiny, near new (almost) B-57s, tail numbers 53-3841 and 52-1509. Aircraft 841 has remained with the unit for the duration of the B-57 era. This aircraft is a dual-control version used for pilot transition and flight checks. For this reason, this aircraft was retained by the 190th throughout these years. 509 was returned to the unit as an ECM aircraft and was ferried to Burlington, Vermont, in April 1978. The last B-57 left the 190th on 18 April 1978, 20 years to the day since those first ones arrived.

The first model flown by the unit was the RB-57B, a tactical photo reconnaissance bird. Later, in August of 1958, they traded their "B" models for RB-57As. With the "A" model, the 190th continued their photo recon mission under the Tactical Air Command.

During the Vietnam Conflict, the 190th trained active duty USAF crew members for the RB-57 "Patty Lynn" program at Thon-Son-Nhut. In 1972, they acquired the latest version of the B-57 series, the B-57G. This aircraft was equipped with sophisticated detection equipment for use in night tactical bombardment, which became the 190th's new mission.

Again, the group changed mis-

sions and B-57 versions when they joined ADCOM in 1974 as part of the Command's "Friendly Enemy." Flying the EB-57B, an ECM equipped model, the 190th provided electronic jamming targets for NORAD/ADCOM exercises and evaluations. They quickly adapted to their new mission and became part of the ADCOM EB-57 "Road Show" providing ECM in Canada, Alaska, and all parts of the CONUS.



One of the first — and last. B-57C 53-3841 has flown 6,650 hours.





One of the original "Blackbirds" at Hutchinson, Kansas, the first home of the 190th DSEG. The unit moved to Forbes AFB at Topeka in 1967.

The B-57 was designed in the last stages of WW II by the British. Redesigned to U.S. production standards, it was built under license by the Glenn L. Martin Co. of Baltimore, Maryland. About 500 aircraft were built, the first of which joined the USAF in 1952.

The 500 MPH first-generation jet has served in several different roles including that of tactical bomber photo reconnaissance, and as a night intruder. It was modified with long span wings and bigger engines for high altitude reconnaissance work and was finally loaded with black boxes to become the electronic warfare EB-57.

Two of the 190th aircraft are designated to spend their retirement years in the Smithsonian Institution. That won't be for a while for they will remain in service with the Vermont Air National Guard for the next few years.

The Smithsonian-bound airplanes 52-1551 and 52-1499 saw service around the world including some 2200 hours of combat in Vietnam. B-57 number 551 was the last of its kind to leave Vietnam.

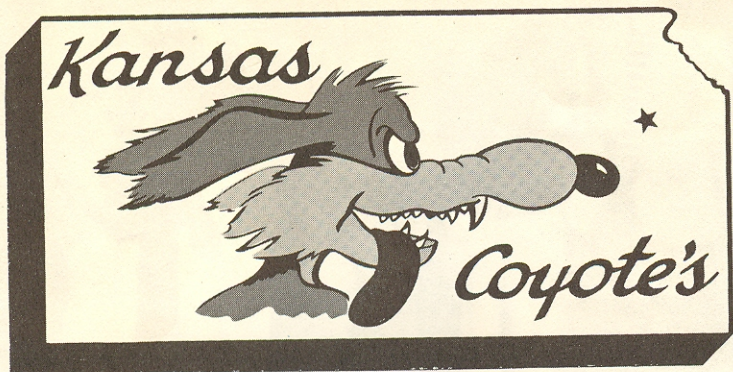
The professionals who operated and maintained the '57s throughout the 20-year period have a unique story. Sixteen of the unit's maintenance personnel have been with the

B-57 for the duration and 33 of the Guard crew members have flown only the B-57 during their military career. Indeed, 20 years with the same lady.

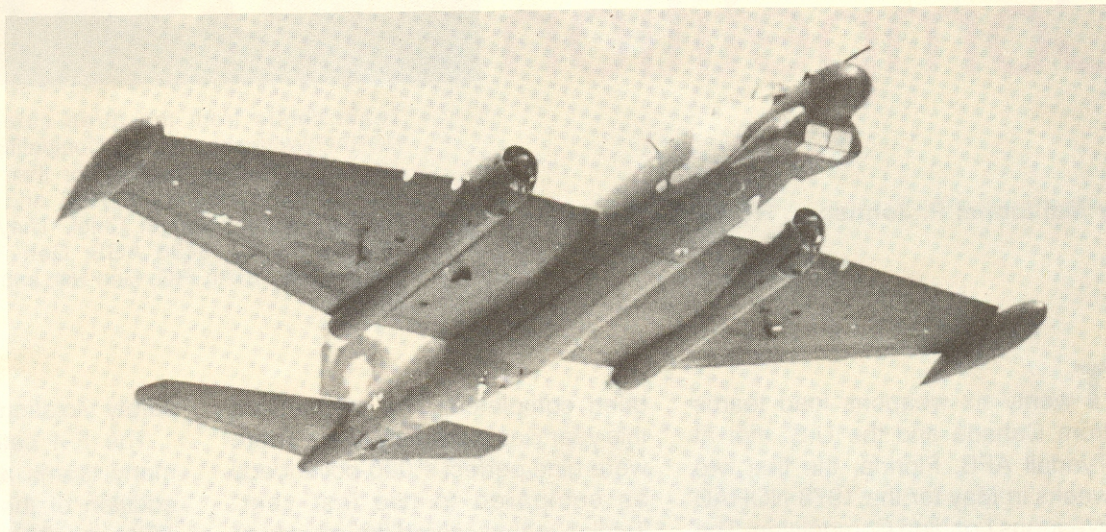
Among the original group were CMSgt Kenneth L. Horner, Chief of Quality Control, and Lt Col David Render, Director of Operations. CMSgt Horner came to the unit in 1946 on KANG order number one. Lt Col Render has logged 3,953 hours in the B-57.

ADCOM gives a huge "Thanks, guys" for a job well done! We know you will make great "gas passers" even if you're not flying "Cranberries." ★





The emblem of the 190th DSEG often found on bar mirrors around the country, deposited by visiting members of the Kansas ANG.



In 1972 came the B-57G with the bulbous nose, low light-level TV, and laser for night bombing.



The much traveled EB-57B 52-1551 destined for the Smithsonian. She has 6,882 hours in her book.