



Retired U-2 pilot Gary Hawes shows off his helmet and oxygen mask Wednesday at his St. George home. PHOTOS BY TREVOR CHRISTENSEN / THE SPECTRUM & DAILY NEWS

Flying high (really high)

Former U-2 pilots reflect on recon missions flown as far back as '70s

By Brian Passey
bpassey@thespectrum.com

There's a 17-year age gap between Gary Hawes and Glenn Whicker. Hawes grew up on an Idaho farm while Whicker was an "Air Force brat." Yet they both belong to an exclusive club.

They describe themselves as "brothers in altitude." The altitude they refer to is 70,000 feet, where they flew as pilots of the Lockheed U-2 "Dragon Lady."

"If you don't treat it right, it will fight back like a dragon," Whicker says of the plane's nickname. "If you treat it right, it's like dancing with a lady."

Hawes, 75, and Whicker, 58, piloted the reconnaissance aircraft in different eras. Hawes flew missions over Cuba and Southeast Asia from 1971-1976. Whicker flew missions over the Korean Peninsula and Eastern Europe from 1987 to 1991.

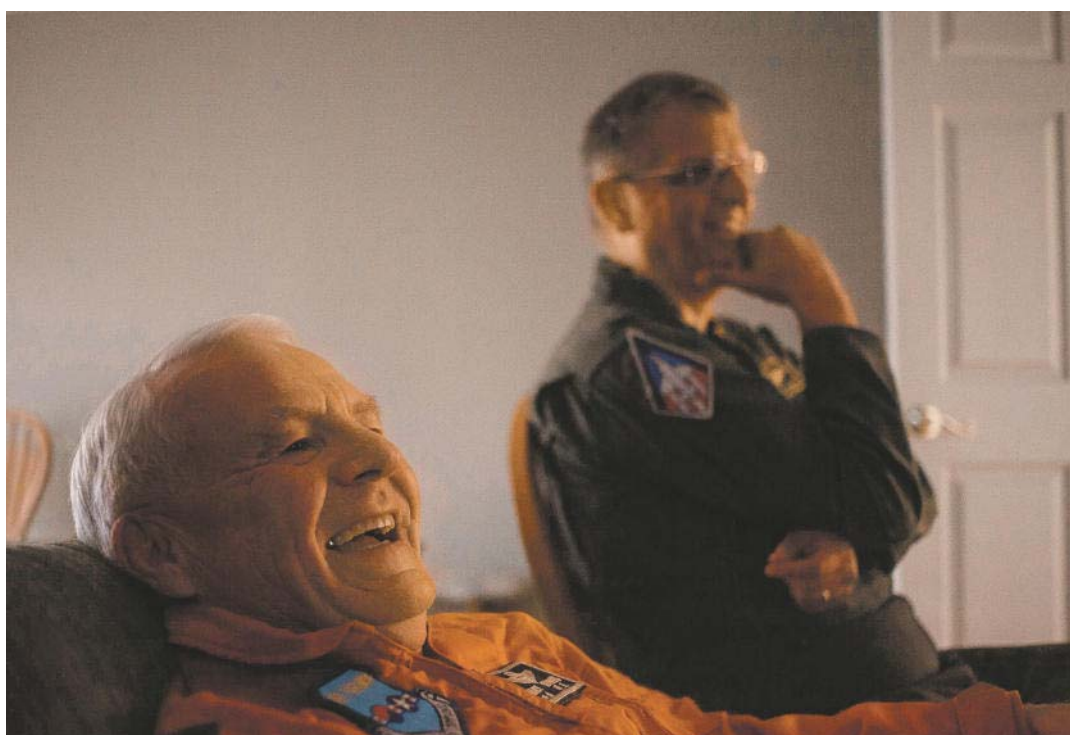
The U-2 is a reconnaissance aircraft that first flew in 1955, but it is still operated by the U.S. Air Force today. It's often called the "U-2 Spy Plane," but Whicker says that's not entirely accurate because spying is illegal. It's technically a reconnaissance plane.

That's why during his tenure as a U-2 pilot he didn't fly over enemy countries, just along the border. However, in 1960 a CIA-operated U-2 was shot down over the Soviet Union. The pilot, Gary Powers, ejected and was jailed as a spy for two years.

While satellites have taken on some of the tasks previously assigned to U-2 pilots like Whicker and Hawes, a need remains for the U-2's particular set of skills, which includes long, high-altitude flights.

Hawes also says it's important to have a human pilot up there to make decisions and react to changing situations. That's part of why the U-2 remains in service even as unmanned drone technology advances.

"Anywhere there's a hotspot in the world you're going to find a U-2 right there," Whicker



Retired U-2 pilots Gary Hawes and Glenn Whicker watch films recorded by Hawes while he was in the U.S. Air Force at his St. George home on Wednesday.

er says.

Taking off

Hawes and Whicker first met a few years ago in St. George when Whicker was pursuing a certification to become a private flight instructor. Hawes was the local flight instructor who certified him, and somewhere along the way they discovered they both knew what it was like flying above 50,000 feet.

"It's a pretty limited brotherhood," Hawes says.

When they meet at Hawes' St. George home to talk about their history, Hawes answers the door wearing the bright orange flight suit worn by U-2 pilots of his era. Whicker is dressed in the green flight suit of his era.

They begin with a video Hawes compiled from Super 8 films he made in the 1970s. It starts with footage from Thailand, where he was stationed for a time during the Vietnam War. The first scene shows pilots going through a cursory physical exam required before each flight.

"Anywhere there's a hotspot in the world you're going to find a U-2 right there."

GLENN WHICKER
Former U-2 pilot

Good health was required for the high altitude flights. Hawes says the high altitude was necessary in his day to keep the planes out of missile range.

"We could get up above 75,000 feet," he says.

Technological advances have now eliminated that high-altitude safety net. Just before the Gulf War, Whicker was flying near the Iraqi border when an Iraqi missile operator warned him over the radio to turn around or be fired upon.

Whicker, however, had orders to continue flying. He figured an incident like that would be what would eventually start the war.

"We thought one of us was going to be the sacrificial lamb but it never happened," he

says.

Because of the high-altitude flights, the pilots have to wear pressure suits — similar to those worn by astronauts — to protect them if cabin pressure is lost and to provide them with oxygen. Whicker once lost his engine while over the demilitarized zone between North Korea and South Korea, resulting in a loss of cabin pressure.

"The suit just blows up and you become like the Michelin Man," he says.

Whicker had to make an emergency landing along the coast of South Korea with his physical movement limited by the pressurized suit. Yet even under normal circumstances, the take-offs and landings are not simple when it comes to the U-2.

It's the only Air Force plane with a bicycle landing gear rather than tricycle-style. A third wheel at the back of the plane enables steering while taxiing.

However, the U-2's massive wings, which carry fuel and enable glider-like capabilities,

See FLYING, Page D2



Celece
Seegmiller
The Travel
Connection

Ten ways to stay safe while traveling

Summer vacation season is just around the corner and many of our customers are preparing for exciting river cruises, escorted tours and vacations around the world. I recently received some excellent safety guidelines from one of our travel partners at Europe Express. They polled their travel specialists and created a list of tips for staying safe while traveling abroad:

1. Don't look like a tourist. Many people have a perceived idea of what the quintessential American looks like: white sneakers, big camera or sweatshirts with university logos. Staying away from these stereotypes when dressing can help travelers avoid drawing attention to themselves. Also, be wary of public displays of wealth — leave flashy jewelry and unnecessary expensive gadgets at home.

2. Separate money sources. Don't leave all cash and credit/debit cards together as most do when they are at home. This is a safe guard against unfortunate events like theft — the phrase 'don't put all your eggs in one basket' is very true in this case.

3. Secure wallets and purses. Eliminate opportunities for theft. Make sure purses are closed and zippers are placed toward the front of the body. Never put wallets in back pockets or any other pocket that is easily reachable by others. Money belts are also an option, but what is most important is making money easily accessible to yourself but difficult for others to take without you noticing.

4. Make copies of your important documents. Scanning and printing copies of documents and keeping them in several locations is very simple, but can be crucial if they are lost or stolen.

5. Purchase travel insurance. There are many benefits to travel insurance, but one of the biggest is ensuring medical coverage while abroad. Hospital bills can add up quickly, so purchasing insurance is vital.

6. Don't leave your belongings unattended in public. This is true everywhere,

See TRAVEL, Page D2

TRAVEL TRIVIA

Test your travel knowledge with a weekly travel quiz from Gary Sorensen, regional manager for Morris Murdoch Travel.

1. The Chunnel is the train tunnel that connects which two countries?
 2. The formerly known city of Constantinople is now called?
 3. Manaus, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are cities in which country?
 4. Which Alaskan city was the gateway to the Klondike gold fields?
 5. Pearl Harbor is located on which Hawaiian island?
 6. In 79 A.D., Mount Vesuvius erupted burying which city in Italy?
 7. The most visited tourist site in Vermont is?
 8. The Mona Lisa finished in 1506 hangs in the Louvre Museum in which city?
- Answers are on D2

Happy 65th Anniversary
Wayne & Lucy Leavitt



Melvin Wayne Leavitt of Gunlock and Mary Lucy Wittwer of Santa Clara were married a long time ago on April 26, 1949 in Santa Clara. They are the parents of 3 children - Cindy, Carolyn, and Dennis, and were sealed as a family on June 15, 1966, in the St. George Temple. Wayne and Lucy's family, which includes 7 grand-children and 24 great-grand-children, want them to know how much we love them. A private celebration with their children was held in their honor earlier this week.



Eric and Lori Kurtz of West Richland, Washington are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter, Mercedes Marie Kurtz to Christopher Robert Anderson, son of David and Lynne Anderson of Mesquite, Nevada. The couple were married Saturday, April 26, 2014 in the Columbia River Temple in Richland, Washington. A reception was held that evening at the home of the bride's parents. An open house will be held Saturday, May 3 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Whipple Chapel, 121 Whipple Way, in Mesquite.



Rusty and Lundee Holmes of Enterprise, Utah are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter, Katelyn Holmes, to Chase Fred Meacham, son of Karl and Marcia Meacham of Delta, Utah. It will be in the Manti, Utah temple on Thursday, May 1, 2014.

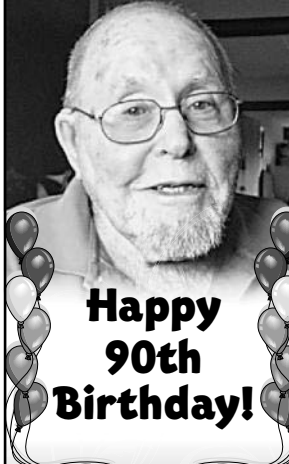
There will be a reception held in their honor that evening from 7:00 P.M. until 9:00 P.M. at the Enterprise Heritage Hall on 88 South Center Street, Enterprise, Utah.

An open house will be held the following evening, Friday, May 2, 2014 from 7:00 P.M. until 9:00 P.M. at the Delta Stake Center, 125 South White Sage Avenue, Delta, Utah.

The couple will make their home in Cedar City, Utah.

Happy 90th Birthday!

To McLean Simkins
born May 3rd, 1924
in
Cedar City, Utah



Happy 80th Birthday



Wes and Jane Hunt will be celebrating their double birthdays on May 5, 2014, at an open house from 4:30 to 7:30 at the home of Eidon Hunt (245 W. 300 S.) Enterprise, Utah.

Wes was born May 28, 1934 in Enterprise and Jane was born March 12, 1934 in Enterprise. They married November 15, 1952 in the St. George Temple. They have 5 children - La Neta, Jerald, Clairene, Eldon and Raquel. They are the proud grandparents of 24 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren.

They enjoy camping, gardening, and traveling to visit friends & family, and making homemade candy, which many of you are recipients of at Christmas time.

No gifts please.

TRAVEL TRIVIA ANSWERS

From Quiz on Page D1
Answers: 1. France and England under the English Channel. 2. Istanbul, Turkey. 3. Brazil. 4. Skagway. 5. Oahu. 6. Pompeii. 7. Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream Factory near Burlington. 8. Paris.

Travel

Continued from D1

Flying

Continued from D1

also require stability so temporary landing gear called "pogos" are inserted into sockets under each wing while the plane is on the ground. When it takes off, the pogos fall away.

Long flights

Once the plane is in the air, pilots can expect to fly for 10 to 12 hours. It's a solo flight so there's no one else to help them while on a mission. During Whicker's time, reconnaissance photographs were digital and transmitted either through satellites or ground receivers while still in flight. But in Hawes' day they still used "wet cameras" with film that had to be developed after landing.

While in flight, food is consumed in liquid form through a tube. They even have a way to heat it up, but the timing has to be just right or it could be bad news.

"If you leave it in for longer than two minutes, that tube explodes and you get it all over your faceplate," Whicker says. Of course, eating on long flights does have its disadvantages. What goes in, must come out.

"When we flew for 10 to 12 hours, they had to hook you up to a relief tube," Hawes says. However, this relief tube only worked for liquid waste and for men.

That is why there were no women U-2 pilots until the 1990s when a special diaper was developed.

Solid waste presents a different problem. That's part of why the pre-flight meal was important. Whicker describes it as a high-protein, low-residue diet.

"If you did ever have a problem with 'No. 2' you got your name on a plaque," Whicker says.

Part of why the flights take so long is because the U-2 is a sub-sonic aircraft, traveling only at seven miles per minute. When Hawes flew flights over Cuba, he would take off from Tucson and fly over Texas on his way to the Caribbean. He learned that even by air it takes a

long time to cross Texas.

Touching down

Landing is the most difficult part of flying a U-2. The bicycle landing gear and the rear wheel must touch down at the same time to avoid a bouncing motion called "pilot-induced oscillation" that can end in disaster.

After touching down, one of the wings may fall to the ground and skim along the runway. Titanium skids protect the wing if this happens. Hawes' video shows a crew member approaching the plane as it comes to a stop, jumping up to grab the wing that is still elevated and using his body weight to bring the opposite wing off the ground so another crew member can reinstall the pogo under the wing.

"We used to have contests to see who could taxi the longest before a wing drops to the ground," Whicker says.

Because U-2 flights are so complicated, training flights are practically nonexistent. Each flight is operational and authorized by the president of the United States.

The difficulty of the mission is why it's a voluntary, special-duty assignment. When Whicker applied for the program, he had three interview flights in a two-seater trainer. He had to show progression in landing with each flight.

However, when Hawes applied for the program, two-seater versions of the plane did not exist. That meant his first U-2 flight was solo. Another plane with a trainer flew alongside him to provide instructions.

Despite the difficulty, it's obvious that both pilots

enjoyed the adventure and the challenge.

"It's a great mission," Whicker says. "It's a challenging airplane to fly. I think it's the most difficult aircraft to fly in the Air Force."

After U-2

Both pilots still continue to fly as instructors for Above View FBO and this year Hawes is celebrating his 50th year of flying.

After the Air Force, Hawes worked as an airline pilot for SkyWest from 1990 to 2000. Now he flies a corporate jet for Nu Skin Enterprises a week or two each month.

The "frosting" of his flying career, however, came just after he retired from SkyWest as a company in Nepal leased a SkyWest plane for tourism flights. The company hired Hawes to fly the plane to Nepal, and when he arrived they informed him that he needed to stay and teach their pilots how to fly it.

"I spent six months flying tourists around Mt. Everest," Hawes says.

Whicker was in the Air Force for 25 years, finishing with a desk job as a colonel. Now he heads up the Air Force Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps at Dixie High School, which takes in students from throughout the metro area. It is now the largest JROTC program in the state.

After all these years, Whicker says some students ask him if he ever gets bored of flying.

"I never get tired of flying," he says. "It will always thrill me until the day I die."

Follow Brian Passey on Twitter and Instagram, @BrianPassey.

but especially when abroad in tourist areas. Keep belongings with you at all times; for example don't place phones and wallets on the table or hook purses on the back of chairs when dining, and never leave luggage outside hotel doors.

7. Avoid pulling money out in public. Take out wallets as infrequently as possible, and avoid showing large amounts of cash. This helps reduce the risk of being targeted for foul play. With this in mind, we would encourage keeping small amounts of currency for minor transactions, bartering and tipping.

8. Get familiar with the surroundings. A confident stride can make all the difference but not ending up in a bad part of town helps even more. To avoid this, study your map, talk to the front desk clerk or examine your guidebook before venturing out. If you find yourself in an area that is not familiar or you feel threatened, go into a hotel or restaurant.

9. Put away your belongings. Most hotels will be fine, but in those terrible incidences where you run across a dishonest person it is best to keep your belongings out of site. Leave them in your suitcase, put them in the hotel safe or, better yet, leave them at home if you can.

10. Double check. There are many distractions while traveling. We also tend to carry more stuff. Look around and double check that you have all your belongings before leaving anywhere.

While this was intended for international travel, I think it is a great reminder regardless of the destination. It is so easy to get caught up in the excitement of a new city or attraction and forget about some of the details. Common sense and safety preparation are two of the most important things to take with you.

Celece Seegmiller is the local owner of The Travel Connection located at 1386 E. 100 South in St. George. Email her at celece@stgeorgetravel.com.

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

					2	7		
	6		8	3	4			
9		6			7			
6	7	8	1	5	2	3		
	8			9		1		
		3	4	7		8		
5	1							

Answer to previous puzzle

7	4	3	1	6	9	2	5	8
1	5	9	2	4	8	7	3	6
2	6	8	3	5	7	4	1	9
9	3	7	8	1	5	6	4	2
6	8	1	7	2	4	3	9	5
4	2	5	9	3	6	1	8	7
3	7	2	5	8	1	9	6	4
8	1	4	6	9	2	5	7	3
5	9	6	4	7	3	8	2	1

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

4/27

WHAT Women WANT expo

May 16th 10am-8pm
May 17th 10am-6pm

At the Dixie Center



Sponsored by: SPECTRUM MEDIA A GANNETT COMPANY

Register at whatwomenwantexpo.com or call 435-674-6244

The Best Manufactured Homes Around!

We offer the best:

- Selection
- Financing
- Site Preparation
- Delivery Set Up
- Service After the Sale

Luxury Homes Toll Free: 866.896.8222
1238 S. 500 W. Richfield, UT
www.luxuryhomesrichfield.com

Don't purchase a hearing instrument until after you visit the Doctors at...

ADVANCED HEARING & BALANCE SPECIALISTS

- Highest Value with our Best Price Guarantee on all name-brand hearing instruments
- \$500 buy back on old instruments
- Balance and dizziness testing available
- Medical hearing exams performed by Doctors of Audiology
- Interest-Free financing available

(435) 319-4700

Coral Desert Health Center
1490 E. Foremaster #360
St. George, UT
10 Southern Utah and Nevada Locations



Dr. Devin Anderson, Au.D., FAAA
Dr. Nicole Choules, Au.D., FAAA
Jacob Burrows, Au.D. Intern
Kimball B. Forbes, MCD, FAAA
Dr. Lance F. Greer, Au.D., FAAA
Dr. Eric Maxwell, Au.D., FAAA
Dr. Natalie Johnson, Au.D., FAAA

HearingAidDoctor.com