

3/1964 FIRST FERRY FLIGHT

News Item, AIR FORCE TIMES MARCH, 25 1964. "Deployment flights to Europe are so routine; AF rarely announces most of them these days. But this one was a bit different".

That was one of several news items related to the first in-flight delivery of Grumman OV-1 Mohawks overseas. Similar news releases were in the Army Times, Army-Air Force Journal and Register, the Star's And Stripes, and several other national military related publications. All of this publicity was the result of the first flight delivery of OVA-I Mohawks to USURER in March 1964.

But, what is the real story behind the planning and testing which insured that such a flight would be successful?

In 1962, while assigned as an OV-1 Service Test Pilot to the Transportation Aviation Test And Support Activity (TATSA), (later to become an integral part of The Aviation Test Board,) Fort Rucker Alabama, I was tasked with evaluating the feasibility of flight delivering OV-1 A/C to overseas operational units.

An initial study indicated that with the necessary fuel, such a flight should be no more difficult or hazardous than flying an OV-1 across the United States except that the flight would be conducted over an extended expanse of open water.

A more detailed deployment study was conducted with the professional assistance of the airframe and power plant manufacturers. It was determined that in order to safely fly the overseas flights from CONUS through Newfoundland and the Azores to Germany, it would be necessary to replace the dual 150 gallon fuel tanks with 300 gallon tanks. The additional fuel would provide the necessary range to make long-range flights a safe reality.

To validate the theoretical studies, a TATSA OV-1A (59-2613) Mohawk was fitted with two (2) 300 Gal. Fuel tanks. A weight and balance test revealed that the takeoff weight with full fuel tanks (approx. 900 gal) would be in the 15,500 lb range, but well within design limits.

Flights were made with empty 300-gallon drop tanks, 150 gallons of fuel, then 300 gal drop tanks full and fuselage tank full. The results were as predicted. The flight handling characteristics were basically normal. In-fact it was determined that the large 300 gal./ tanks provided a C/L of about 20% which helped quite a bit in providing lift. However the takeoff distance was significantly extended with full fuel tanks.

As a result of the evaluation, I was charged with developing a detailed plan for flight deploying four (4) new production OV-B A/C to EUSAREUR before the end of 1962. Commencing with being given that task, I was reassigned back to the Mohawk Program Managers Office in He. AMC, Washington D.C.

I was now under the gun to make sure that not only was the plan sound but that when implemented in would be a success.

In an effort to ease the concerns of the AMC Commander, and senior staff that such a flight was not just another "Wrong Way Corrigan" stunt, I obtained a new production "long Wing" OV-1B with up rated engines. 300 Gal tanks were also installed. I then flew from Fort Belvoir Va. to Sioux Falls South Dakota with several fuel stops en-route. Fuel consumption and fuel flows were checked for accuracy. After coordination with the FAA I departed Sioux Falls with a direct flight plan to Davison AAF. Fort Belvoir Va., a distance of over 1500 miles. The flight was to be made using the manufacturers recommended climb/cruise chart. The initial climb was to fl130 then as fuel burned off, step climb to fl210. The FAA was most cooperative routing me around commercial traffic. The flight went off without a hitch. I arrived a Davison AAF six (6) hours later with over one (1) hours fuel remaining.

Based on this evaluation, I was given the go-ahead to prepare a plan for a flight deployment of four (4) OV-1B A/C to EUSAREUR in late October or early November 1962. A request for three (3) Mohawk pilots was sent to the 11th Air Assault Div. At Fort Benning. A decision had been made to have only one (1) pilot per A/C for several reasons. One (1) because to flight legs would be relatively short, a co-pilot would not be required, (2) in the unlikely event that it would be necessary for the crew to eject over the ocean, it would easier for air sea rescue to locate and rescue one rather than two crew members.

Arrangements were made with the Air Force Air Rescue Service to attend the AF Deep Survival School at Langley A.F Base. It was a very well taught and beneficial course.

All preparations were completed and we were ready to go, when the Cuban Missile Crisis developed. Everything came to a halt. The AF advised that they would be unable to provide Air Sea escort across the Atlantic as they might be chasing Russian A/C or surface ships. As a result, the OV-1 deployment was put on the back burner. The 11th Air Assault pilots were returned to their units. The year 1963 was taken up with other OV-1 programs such as the French and German Mohawk evaluations.

In the spring of 1964, after the international problems cooled off, the OV-1 deployment program was again activated. I was designated as the project officer and flight leader. The 11th Air Assault Div. Assigned three pilots, Capt.'s Nelson E. Williams, W.L McDermott, and Dr. Butler to the program. All highly qualified Mohawk pilots. In early March 1964 we assembled at the New Cumberland Army Depot, picked-up our new OV-1B SLAR equipped A/C with 300-gallon external tanks installed and flew to the Grumman Factory at Bethpage N.Y. The contractor wanted to give the A/C a little last minute Tender Loving Care (TLC) before we started the long over water flight. .

A decision was made NOT to depart from Bethpage for Newfoundland with full fuel loads. The reason being that the Bethpage airport is surrounded by private homes. Should an engine failure occur on takeoff; it would be necessary to drop both 300 gal. full fuel tanks. This could result in a major tragedy on the ground. Consequently it was decided to depart Bethpage light on fuel and fly to McGuire A.F. Base, (Fort Dix) New Jersey where there was a runway capable of handling C-5 type A/C.

We lifted off from McGuire at about 0900 on Tuesday the 3rd with a flight plan direct non-stop to Argentia Newfoundland with an estimated flight time of 5.15 hrs.

The flight was completely uneventful. It did serve as a shakedown and to give all of the pilots confidence that the trip was routine. We Arrived at Argentia to a snow covered runway and 30* temperature after a 4.9hr flight.. With a two-hour time difference between New Jersey and Newfoundland it was late afternoon when we touched down. The U.S Navy and Air Force personnel were very helpful in preparing the A/C for the next day's flight to Lajes A.F. Base Azores Islands. Prior to dinner, we spent several hours with the Air Rescue folks working out a plan for our flight and their escort duties the following day. The flight plan called for a direct departure east to "Ship-Delta" a navigation ship stationad half way between Newfoundland and the Azores. Then direct to Lajes .Our flight plan called for a climb to fl150 then ultimately climb to fl21 as fuel burned off. The Air sea rescue a/c, an old RC-54 with a 130kt air speed had a life boat strapped on it's belly and would attempt to maintain VFR under the low clouds. The reasoning was to try to visually locate a crewmember in the water should a rescue be necessary.

We departed at about 0900 into a 3000 ft overcast light snow and with tops estimated to be 10,000ft. (Don't tell me about Army regulations that says ferry flights must be conducted in VFR conditions only. Had we followed those procedures, we would still be there). We broke out on top at about fl130, clear blue sky and a nice strong tail wind. We spread out in a loose diamond formation, pushed on the autopilots, picked up Ship Delta Beacon and relaxed .We were also in positive radio contact with the Air Rescue A/C that was floundering around down near the surface ready to provide assistance, if required.. The flight was estimated for 6.5 hours.

It was not to long before the RC-54 Dumbo pilot called crying in his beer. He was trying to maintain VFR at 1500ft He was in moderate to heavy turbulence and light to moderate icing. He was having a real rough ride trying to provide the required cover. At the same time, we were basking in the spring sun up on top. Such is life.

We cleared over ship Delta a little ahead of schedule and homed in on Lajes. Our Air Sea rescue A/C left us and returned home to Argentia. Happy to be rid of his Army friends. A second Air Rescue A/c had departed Lajes, west bound for an intercept and to herd us back to Lajes.

We had a strong tail wind at fl210 and were ahead of flight plan. As we approached Lajes, approach control advised that the island was covered with a heavy rainstorm with ceilings at 500ft. Approach control spread us out and turned us over to GCA. The final approach was normal and we all landed safely in a torrential rain after a flight of only 5.8hrs..

After a good nights sleep, we filed a flight plan, direct Lisbon, direct Terrajon Air Base, Madrid Spain. Estimated flight time, 5hrs. The climb, cruise profiles were to be the same as previous legs. There was no reason to change a good thing.

Up until the time we arrived at Terrajon after a flight of only 4.3hrs , everything had gone smoothly at our arrival airports. But what a change we were to encounter upon landing at Terrajon. Unknown to us, this base was the home for a number of highly classified flight operations in the iron curtain region.

Because the personnel at the base were not familiar with the OV-1 Mohawk, they assumed that it had some role to play with their classified flights, particularly when they saw that large APS-94 radar antenna attached to the exterior of the fuselage. As we taxied off to active runway, several armed security personnel in jeep like armored vehicles met us. We were directed to a fenced-in secure area where armed guards were posted. I thought for a minute that we had landed at a SAC Base. After securing the A/C, we were taken to Base Operations for a briefing. Fortunately, the local Grumman Representative who was expecting us, smoothed the way and we were soon out of there and headed for dinner.

A good Spanish meal and lots of local wine helped us to celebrate our successful crossing of the Atlantic from New Jersey to Spain. In-fact, things were so pleasant, that the next morning, we had difficulty meeting our proposed 09:00 departure. However, all went well. It was necessary however to fly commercial airways through Spain, France and into Germany. Estimated flight time to Coleman Army Airfield, Sandhofen Germany was 4.8hrs. The flight actually only took 4.1hrs.

The only reroute problem encountered on the whole trip was self-induced by me. As we entered French airspace, it was necessary to change to a new sector radio frequency. Somehow I dialed in the wrong frequency, resulting in my inability to communicate with Air Traffic Control or the other A/C except on "DOG" channal. The problem corrected itself when we entered German airspace and I changed to a new frequency. I did it right that time. It must have been the Spanish wine that caused the problem.

Upon arrival at Sandhofen, Ltc Col Robert G. Shepard, Deputy Commander, U.S. Army Aviation Maintenance Center,(USAAMAC) and several USAREUR Aviation Section representatives met us on the flight line.. After all of the hand shaking and congratulations were passed around we were escorted to Flight Operations. There we were greeted by representatives of Army Times and the Oversea's Weekly. The USAREUR PIO office had cleared them. They both requested audio taped interviews.

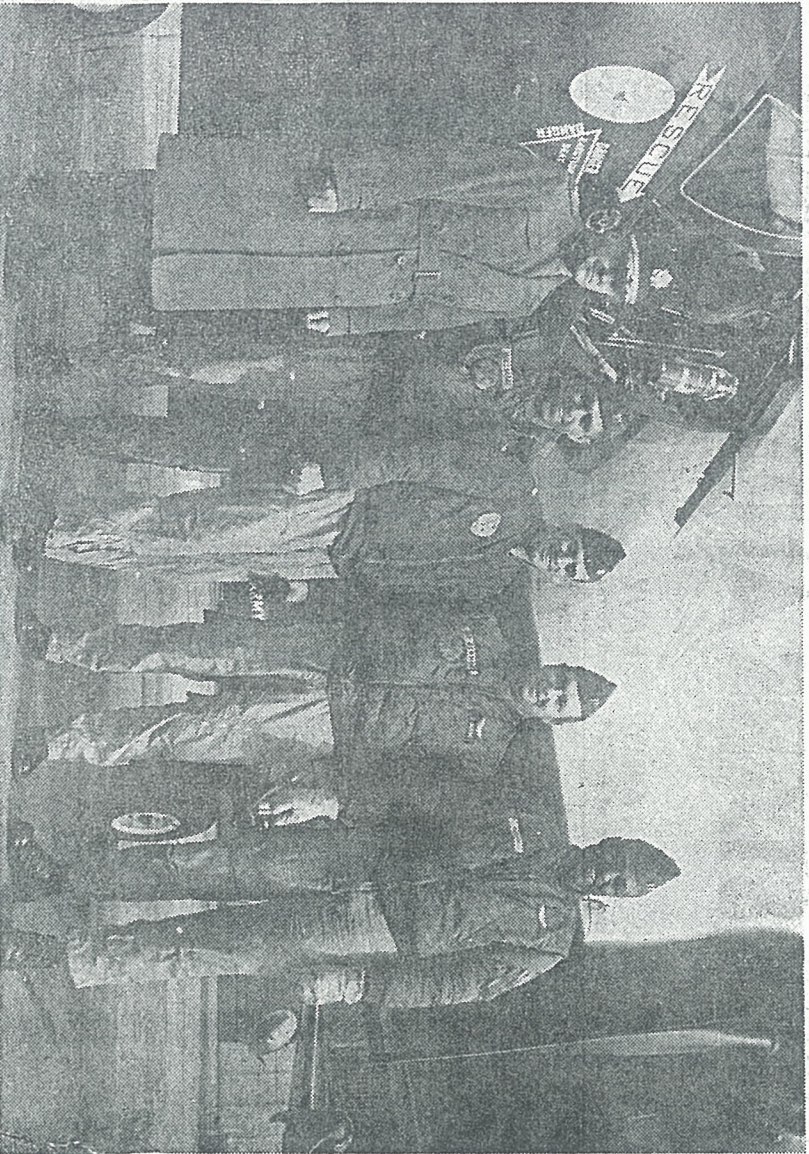
These interviews would be sent to the other military oriented news services. After completing the interviews, we were advised by a USAREUR representative that they had a surprise for us. It so happened that the USAREUR Annual AAAA Convention was being held that week in Garmish Germany, A U.S. Military recreation facility in the Southern Alps. and we were to be recognized guests to the Saturday night (tomorrow night) banquet. We were to be flown the next morning by helicopter from Heidelberg to Garmish and returned Sunday in order to catch a flight back to the states on Monday.

I requested the USAREUR representative to advise the Hq. AMC, Washington D.C. Staff Duty Officer of our safe arrival and for him to advise the Mohawk Program Manager. Knowing that it was nearly 23:00hrs Friday night in Washington, I assumed that the P.M. would be given my message Saturday morning.

Not so, he was called at home and not only advised of our safe arrival but of the USAREUR plans to recognize us at the AAAA banquet at Garmish the following evening. For reasons unknown to us even to this day, the stuff hit the fan. Through the USAREUR Staff Duty Officer we were directed not to attend the AAAA function ,and that there was to be no publicity of the mission (to late for that) and that we were to return to our home duty stations ASAP. We caught a commercial flight out of Frankfurt Monday morning and were at our duty stations the following day. Nothing was ever said to me by the PM about the Garmish incident or the fact that the Flight Delivery story was carried in just about every military oriented paper in circulation.

It is interesting that just a few months following this flight, the PM Office decided to initiate OV-1 flight deliveries to Vietnam. Captain William L. McDermott who had been on the flight to Germany, was designated as the Project Office and Flight Leader. Although the flight delivery of four (4) OV-1 Mohawks to Vietnam was a technical success, the diplomatic difficulties encountered in arranging enroute landing rights or over flights was so overwhelming and costly that it was accomplished only once.

CONCLUSION; The first flight overseas deliveries of OV-1 Mohawk's had been completed without a single mechanical or technical problem. It was therefore concluded that there was no technical reason why such future deliveries could not be conducted on a routine basis.



MOHAWK MISSION — Lt. Col. Robert G. Shepherd (left), deputy CO of Army Aviation Maintenance Center, Sandhofen, Germany, welcomes pilots who flew four OV1B Mohawk aircraft from

the United States. Standing before one of the planes are (from left) Capt. Nelson E. Williams, Maj. James R. Barkley, and Capt. W. L. McDermott and D. R. Butler. — Army Photo by Crossley

Four Mohawks Flown From U.S. to Europe

HEIDELBERG (Special) — Four U.S. Army OV1B Mohawk aircraft arrived in Germany on schedule after completing a deployment flight of over 4,000 miles from the United States, with fueling stops en route.

The twin-engine turboprop planes set down at the Army Airfield at nearby Sandhofen.

This marked the first flight delivery of Mohawk aircraft to Europe. All previous deliveries have been by surface means.

The four OV1Bs are part of US-AREUR's Mohawk allocation and will be assigned to units now stationed in Europe.

The Mohawk is the Army's standard surveillance aircraft assigned to division level and higher. It is capable of all-weather surveillance by visual, photographic, and electronic sensory devices.

The four aircraft deployed are equipped with Side-Looking Airborne Radar systems (SLAR) which were operational during the flight. Upon arrival in Europe, all systems were operational.

"It was a very successful trip," said Maj. James R. Barkley, Wilmington, Del., pilot in charge of the three-day flight from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J. "There were no difficulties. The mission can be considered routine."

The remaining three aircraft were piloted by Capt. Douthard R. Butler, Waxahatchie, Tex.; William L. McDermott, Utica, N.Y., and Nelson E. Williams, Wann, Okla.

Barkley is assigned to the Army Materiel Comd in Washington and all three captains are stationed at Ft. Benning, Ga.

Four Army flyers hop Atlantic in first air-ferry of Mohawks



Trans-Atlantic crossing by four OV-1Bs early this month marked first time that Grumman Mohawks had been air ferried to Europe. U.S. Army Major James R. Barkley, shown here during Plant 4 send-off with Grumman Vice President A. James Zusi, led the Army team comprised of Captain Duthard R. Butler (L), Captain Nelson E. Williams, and Captain William C. McDermott (R).

U.S. Army pilots flew four OV-1Bs past a major milestone in the Mohawk program this month when they delivered the observation/surveillance aircraft at Sandhofen, West Germany, following a 4000-mi. flight from McGuire AFB, N.J. The Grumman Mohawks arrived with all surveillance systems operational, ready for immediate deployment to U.S. Army units in Europe. It was the first time any of the aircraft had been flown across the Atlantic; all other Mohawk deliveries to Europe had been by ship.

Major James R. Barkley of Headquarters, Army Material Command, Washington, D. C., who led the first Mohawk ferry trip to Europe, said, "This was a very successful flight. There were no difficulties. The (trans-Atlantic) deployment mission can be completed routinely with more than adequate fuel reserves remaining."

Accompanying Major Barkley on the flight were Captain Duthard R. Butler, Captain William C. McDermott, and Captain Nelson E. Williams, who are attached to the new 11th Air Assault Division, Ft. Benning, Ga.

Following the acceptance of the four Mohawks at Bethpage, each plane was fitted out with two 300-gal. drop tanks for the 4000-mi. trip. Stopovers on the U.S.-Germany flight were made at Argentia Naval Base, Newfoundland; Lajes AFB, Azores Is.; and Terrajon AFB, Madrid, Spain.

The all-weather Mohawk carries out its surveillance mission by visual means, or by photographic or electronic sensory devices. Upon arrival at Sandhofen, SLAR photographic imagery was taken prior to landing to demonstrate that all systems were operational and ready for immediate use.

07 MARCH 1964

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● Mohawks Make First Flight to Europe

FOUR Mohawk planes, capable of surveillance and attack roles, have been flown from McGuire AFB, N.J., via the Azores to Sanhofen, Germany. The flight, led by Maj. James R. Barkley of Headquarters, Army Materiel Command, marks the first aerial delivery of Mohawk aircraft to Europe. All previous deliveries have been by ship.

While assigned to division level or higher the Mohawk has an 800 mile range or 400 mile radius of operation. For its more-than-4000-mile flight extra fuel tanks were added.

On arrival in Germany, Barkley said that the fuel supply for the two-day flight was more than adequate. He called the trip "very successful."

Possibly to lighten the load, each of the four aircraft had only the pilot aboard. Other pilots were Capt. Duthard R. Butler, Capt. William C. McDermott, and Capt. Nelson E. Williams, all of Fort Benning.

● Overseas Troop Strength to Stay Firm

"NO MAJOR changes" in the overseas deployment of Army units are planned in 1964, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations reports.

Lt. Gen. H. K. Johnson has told Army civilian aides at Fort McNair that it is necessary to keep forces overseas even though it is

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Air Force Times

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Up and Coming

Four Army Mohawks Fly Atlantic Instead of Making Trip by Ship

DEPLOYMENT FLIGHTS to Europe are so routine, AF rarely announces most of them these days. But, this one was a bit different. The 4000 mile hop from McGuire AFB, N.J. was made by four Grumman OV-1B Mohawks . . . Army types. Army Maj. James R. Barkley, pilot in charge of the flight said they had no difficulty, added that the trans-Atlantic deployment mission "can be completed routinely."

Previously the planes were all delivered to Europe by ship.

Army's standard surveillance aircraft, the Mohawk is equipped with side looking airborne radar (SLAR) used during the ocean crossing. It is capable of all-weather surveillance by visual, photographic or electronic sensors.

Capable of 325 mph top speeds, the Mohawk can slow to 76 mph for landing and put down with a landing run of less than 600 feet. Some versions, armed with underwing weapons are operating in Vietnam. A two-seater in the surveillance model, the OV-1 is also being studied as a possible cargo transport.

The four ships flown to Europe will join USAREUR units. They were delivered to Sandhoffen.

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The Mohawk, the Army's standard surveillance aircraft, assigned to division level and higher, is capable of all-weather surveillance by visual, photographic or electronic sensory devices.


The four aircraft deployed are equipped with side looking airborne radar systems (SLAR) which were operational during the flight.

PILOT IN CHARGE of the two day flight from McGuire AFB, N. J., was Maj James R. Barkley, Headquarters, Army Material Command, Washington, D. C.

The other three aircraft were piloted by Capt Duthard R. Butler, Capt William

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Springfield Man Leads Air Delivery

Army Maj. James R. Barkley of 6308 Abilene St., Springfield, was the pilot in charge of four Mohawk aircraft on delivery to U.S. forces in Germany recently.

The flight, from McGuire Air Force Base to Heidelberg, Germany, marked the first flown delivery of the new Army aircraft. Maj. Barkley flew one of the planes.

The Major is married and he and his wife, Margaret, have four children; James 15, Richard 14, Nancy 12, and Barbara Anne 5. Assigned to the Army Materiel Command in Washington Major Barkley has been working on the development of the Mohawk since its beginning in 1958.

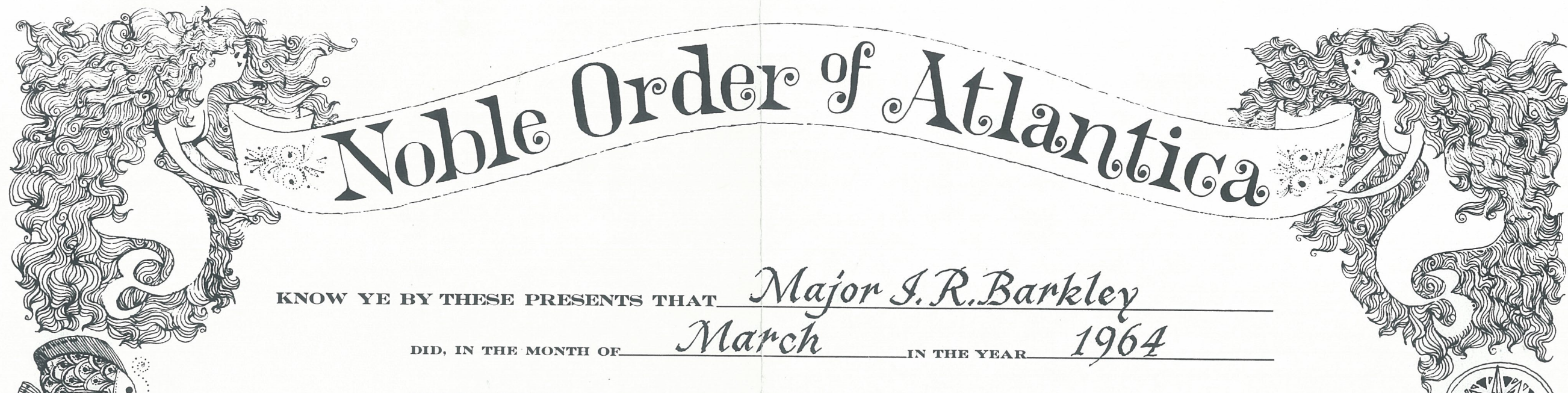
A senior aviator with 14 years of Army flying the Major was stationed at Fort Rucker, Ala., before coming to the Army Materiel Command. At Fort Rucker Major Barkley was with the Mohawk Test Board.

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SPRINGFIELD NORTHERN VA SUN

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KNOW YE BY THESE PRESENTS THAT Major J. R. Barkley
DID, IN THE MONTH OF March IN THE YEAR 1964

MAKE THE FIRST TRANSATLANTIC FLIGHT BY A GRUMMAN MOHAWK; AND BE IT KNOWN THAT,
HAVING BEEN FOUND WORTHY, IS HEREBY AND FOREVER A TRUE, EXALTED MEMBER OF THE

Noble Order of Atlantica

THEREFORE, GRANT HIM FULL HONOR AND RESPECT, WHEREVER THE WINGS OF
THE MOHAWK MAY CARRY HIM. THE GREAT SEAL IS HEREBY AFFIXED IN SALUTE.

Leroy R. Grumman

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