

# THE LIFE SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

**News for the men and women who served in the USAF or civilians who work in Government or industry in the Aircrew Life Support business.**

---

Reporters: Tommy Tompkins \* PO Box 372 \* Equality, IL 62934 \* Email: [tombob@shawneelink.com](mailto:tombob@shawneelink.com)  
Bob McElwain \* 17149 Forest Hills Drive \* Victorville, CA 92392 \* Email: [mcelwain@charter.net](mailto:mcelwain@charter.net)

**Visit our web site at:**

**<http://www.usafals.com>**

May 2002 Issue

---

I dedicate my input to this newsletter to a very interesting project being worked by Steve Norris. Steve has a big interest in Aircrew Helmets, not from the identification (not just a picture book) aspect but from the operational and configuration point of view. This is a big and in my opinion a worthwhile endeavor and Steve has asked for our help. We have the capability within our Life Support Forum to really help Steve make this an outstanding reference of what we have devoted our careers to! I have been corresponding with Steve trying to help and several others have also but Steve is asking for maximum participation from Life Supporters. Steve's e-mail is below. Let's help as we can!

Cheers,  
Tommy

\*\*\*\*\*

*I would like to ask for official sanction from your group. The letter below was*

*written in an attempt to get the Life Support Group interested in the project. Can you send this along to them with my e-mail address and phone number? If I am going to do this, I need max exposure. The current status of the book is about 100 pages ready of what will probably be 300 pages. If possible, I'd like to keep everyone up to date on the effort via the web pages and get some of these guys to proof the stuff I write. You know, sort of here's where I am, does any one know anything about this, that, the other thing.*

*Hi all.*

*My name is Steve Norris and I am ex-USAf enlisted (1973-77). As some of you may already know, I am writing a book on USAf flight helmets. I am interested in the development and operational aspects of USAf flight helmets in the Jet Age. Here's your chance to contribute to a book that deals with your USAf career. This is something that most of you have intimate knowledge of and I need your help.*

*What do I Need? For starters, you guys were there. You know what the evaluations were like. You know who complained about what. Why a particular change was made. You also probably have some of the*

**reports, photographs and technical manuals locked away in attics and garages. Well, here's your chance to dust them off and get them into print. Why else are you saving them? What Am I looking for? The list below isn't necessarily complete as you may have something that I missed.**

- 1. Photos both official and unofficial.**
- 2. Tech manuals, TOs, etc.**
- 3. Reports, meeting notes, anything that can help detail the development or operational usage.**
- 4. Your stories. Personal accounts are essential to the success of this book.**
- 5. Would you consent to be interviewed for the book? I need contacts that can help me understand what your field was like in the day-to-day operations etc.**
- 6. Copies of unit insignia, program patches, etc. Don't want the originals, just good quality copies that will display okay in print.**
- 7. IMPORTANT question of the day: What is the one thing I don't know about US flight helmets that I need to know to write this book?**
- 8. Contacts with others. Are you a member of SAFE? Do you know of a book or resource that is out there that I don't know about? Any clue is useful. Let me know where to look and I will.**

**What's in it for you?**

**1. Anything sent to me gets credit in the book.**

**2. I would love to name names and give credit where credit is due. I have documents establishing project managers and reports written by various individuals. I will be discrete though. If you don't want your name in print, no problem. THIS BOOK IS ABOUT FLIGHT HELMETS and I have no axe to grind with anyone.**

**3. I will return anything you want back. Have a photo and want it back, no problem. Same for documents etc. Again, everything used will be credited.**

**4. I will make copies of references materials and burn these to CD-ROM and these will be sent to Tommy to be part of the Life Support Technical library.**

**5. Eventually, I will send the research material I gather to the National Air and Space Museum for future historical study. Right now, NASM doesn't have very much information on USAF personal flight equipment. I will probably double their TO collection with what I already have.**

**I am not looking for hardware. As a collector, I have over 200 flight helmets and oxygen masks from literally around the world. I want to write this book.**

**Why I need to locate this stuff?**

**Simply stated: much of the ASD paper has simply disappeared. I can find no one at Brooks, DTIC or NTIS that can help me find what should be**

***a couple truckloads of documents. If you know where this info is, I'd love to know.***

***Interested? Please contact Steve Norris, my email is: [snorris129@aol.com](mailto:snorris129@aol.com). I can also be reached at 336-993-1064 or Cell 336-918-2007. Leave a message if I'm not in. I will get back to you. Thanks for any help you can muster.  
Steve Norris***