

UNOFFICIAL AIRCRAFT NAMES - II

by

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In response to Ralph Brown's article "Unofficial Aircraft Names" (page 84) a brief search of my current vocabulary brought forth these current examples of unofficial terminology. Several items are included that refer to components to show the ingenuity of the GI in trying to make sense out of the Philadelphia lawer language that still exists in the tech orders.

Being an old Fighter-Bomber man, I recall a nickname for the F-86 that was not too well accepted by the 86 jockeys in Korea. But around Fighter-Bomber outfits (who operated from the deck up to 3,000 feet) the F-86 was called "THE HIGH ALTITUDE FOXHOLE".

More common names for modern aircraft are the "HOG" for the F-84F, due to its resemblance to a razorback hog. Also flight line rumor has it that Republic was going to build it of concrete, but found this stuff was heavier. The F-86D has been dubbed the "DOG" not only for its phonetic pronunciation of the "D" suffix, but also it tends to be a "dog". The T-28, due to the strange engine sound derived from hooking four exhaust outlets on seven cylinders (or more commonly "jugs"), has collected the name "JOHN DEERE".

Going back a few years, we find names such as the "YELLOW PERIL" tied to the Navy M3N, "FLYING BARNDOR" for the B-15, and "MONSTER" for the C-46. The B-25 is still called "THE BUCKET OF BOLTS". Many aircraft have been dubbed "ACCIDENTS GOING SOMEPLACE TO HAPPEN", or "ACCIDENTS THAT HAVE ALREADY HAPPENED - WE JUST DON'T KNOW IT YET", but the tendency of the R-3350 to break rods gave the B-29 the not-too-affectionate nickname of the "FLYING FIREHAZARD".

Of course the R-3350 brings to mind the saying that Wright engines were built to power the airplane and lubricate the elevator hinges at the same time; and has anyone ever looked at the Pratt & Whitney Wasp Major (R-4360) without wanting to call it the "CORNCOB"? While on the subject of engines, the Allison J-35 was called the "ALLISON TIME BOMB" before it ever saw an F-89.

Speaking in more general terms, we find all aircraft called "BIRDS". The prop driven aircraft are called "RECIPS" and the Jets "BLOWTORCHES", although in the mid-west there is often a reference made to a "CORN DRIER". To complete the general types, the wonderful rotary wing aircraft are more often called "WHIRLYBIRDS" or "CHOPPERS", with the Piasecki collecting the name "KATYDID".

Getting on into components, it is probably best to list the names and their meanings than to go into lengthy explanations of each one: BARBER CHAIR - Central Fire Control Gunners Seat on B-29; BARBER POLE - Landing gear position indicator; BARN - Hangar; BATHTUB - Lower cowl section and ducting on B-29; BIRDCAGE - Accessory section area in jet airplane; BIRDDOG - Radio compass; BLUEBIRD - 100 pound practice bomb; BUG - An inherent design trouble; BURNER CAN - Combustion chamber on jet (often just CAN); CHRISTMAS TREE - Trouble Warning Lights on instrument panel (collectively); FAN - Propeller; GEORGE - Auto pilot; GREMLIN STOOL - Turn-

over superstructure on trainers; HORN - Radio; IDIOT SEAT - Co-pilot or instructors seat; MOUSE - Cone used to adjust tailpipe orifice area; PANIC BUTTON - Prop feathering button, Bailout warning, Seat ejection controls; PUTT-PUTT - Auxiliary power unit; RAG - Air to air gunnery tow target; SUCKER DOORS - Intake vacuum relief doors (F-84G).

This is not a complete list, of course. There are many other terms used and quite a number of them have passed thru the nickname stage and become accepted terms (such as ABORT and TOUCH AND GO). The aviation language is fast becoming a new tongue and quite often mystifying to the layman. A dictionary, such as the Editor has suggested, would be an enlightening and often amusing text. It would take the combined efforts of the members of the AAHS, but it could and should be done.

In addition to nicknames often amusing definitions or synonyms are applied to existing terms. Bomber pilots tend to call Fighter pilots "OVERAGE-IN-GRADE JUVENILE DELINQUENTS" and most fighter pilots admit it. The B-47, because of its Navigator-Bombardier-Radar Observer duties, has brought forth the "THREE HEADED MONSTER" title.

I can't close without relating some of the legends surrounding the biggest of the Big - the B-36. It's a well known fact that due to the nose high attitude take-off the pilot has to go on oxygen before the main gears leave the ground. Also the Air Force is considering giving all personnel in the forward compartment ten minutes more flying time than those in the rear. Operations officers say that they now change the term ETA (Estimated Time of Arrival) to EDA (Estimated DATE of Arrival)!

UNOFFICIAL AIRCRAFT NAMES - III

Contributed by Willis Nye

PEA SHOOTER - Boeing P-26 fighter.
 BUCK ROGERS JOB - Douglas A-26 when fitted with the 75mm cannon, central fire control, wing machine guns, and bombs.
 YIPPEE-38 - YP-38, Lockheed's second version of the P-38 fighter series.
 TIN GOOSE - Ford Trimotor.
 FORTY - Boeing Mailplane model 40-B.
 EAGLEBRICK - Alexander "Eaglerock" OX-5 bi-plane.
 DH - DeHavilland 4 biplane, civilian version.
 FLAMING COFFIN - De Havilland 4 World War I day bomber.
 T-M or TOMMY - Thomas-Morse S4B or S4C.
 CANUCK - Canadian built JN4.
 HISSO - Hispano-Suiza Model "A" or Model "E" engine.
 MIXMASTER - Douglas XB-42 pusher type bomber.

Reminder: Don't forget to pay your 1957 Dues! Payable as of February 1st, 1957.
 See page 132 for further details.