



BICENTENNIAL PARADE

Compiled by Gerald Markgraf



(Top) "Freedom's Way USA," a Gates-Learjet 36 (N200Y) commanded by Arnold Palmer, set a world class record by flying around the world in 57 hrs. 42 sec. on May 17-19, 1976. (Gates-Learjet)

(Middle) Delta has modified their famous "Widget" trademark with stars and stripes to commemorate the Bicentennial throughout the Delta fleet. (Delta)

(Right) "MS Liberty Bell" (136750), a C-1A "COD" attached to USS Independence (CV-62) at Naples, Italy. (Carlo Tripodi)



Commemoration of the United States' Bicentennial has taken many forms throughout 1976. One of the more visible and enthusiastic examples has been the appearance of numerous military, commercial, and private aircraft painted in markings appropriate to the patriotic spirit of 1776. The paint schemes are colorful, usually spectacular, and sometimes a bit garish, but all reflect an obvious pride for aircraft and country.

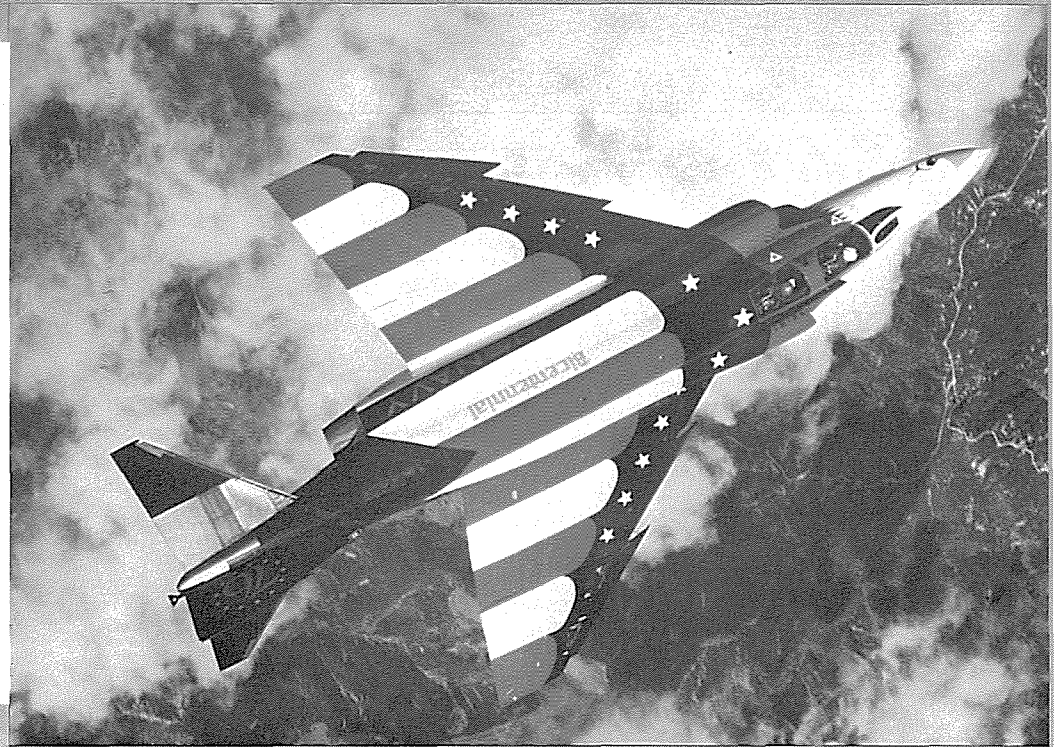
Aircraft in commemorative markings have been most prevalent in the military with the U.S. Navy holding a slight edge over the other services for colorful variations. Actually, nothing like these markings has been seen since the German flying circuses of WW I. Consequently, aviation buffs are scrambling to make a photographic record of this unique era as it is probable that most commemorative markings will be removed after 1976.

The photographs presented herewith are a representative selection collected by AAHS members. They can only be representative due to space requirements and because the abundance of aircraft so marked makes a complete photographic collection difficult to attain at this time. Certainly the subject is one that will generate interest for years to come.

Thanks to all the persons and organizations who contributed photos or helped to compile the photos presented in this feature. They are: The Aero-Union Corp., Dave Begy, Pete Bergagnini, Braniff International Airlines, Don Claflin, Delta Airlines, C.E. Galloway, R. Flinzner, Harry Gann, Gates-Learjet Corp., Ronald W. Harrison, Hawaii ANG, Major Marvin W. Heining, Frederick A. Johnson, R.E. Kling, Ruud Leeuw, T. Kudo, Roy Lock, Capt. Don Logan, G. Longo, McDonnell-Douglas Corp., Peter Mersky, Ronald D. Neal, Naoki Nishimura, Robert T. O'Dell, Gene Olson, William R. Peake, George E. Poling, Mick Roth, Horace W. Sagnor, L.B. Sides, Harry Sievers, R.B. Starinchak, Carlo Tripodi, Bruce Trombecky, Barrett Tillman, U.S. Navy, M. Wada, and T.R. Waddington.



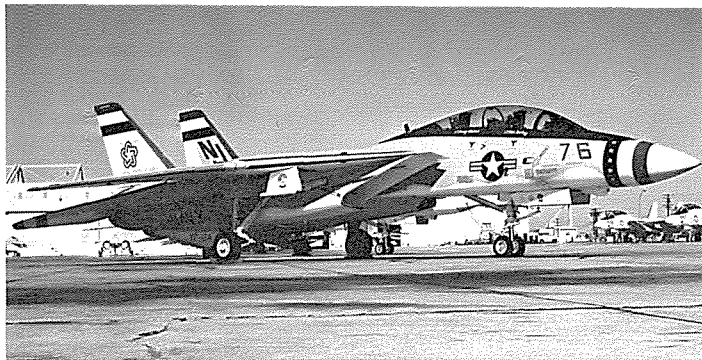
(Above) A McDonnell-Douglas TF-15 (71-0291) in Bicentennial markings closely resembling those of the "Thunderbirds." (McDonnell-Douglas)



(Right) VX-4's Bicentennial F-4J (153088) displays a spectacular red, white and blue scheme. Note the gold talons on the strut covers, the experimental leading edge slats, and an F-4B radome. (Harry Gann)

(Below) This B-25 with a unique stars and stripes scheme serves as the Hawaii ANG's "Gate Guard" at Hickham AFB. (Hawaii ANG)



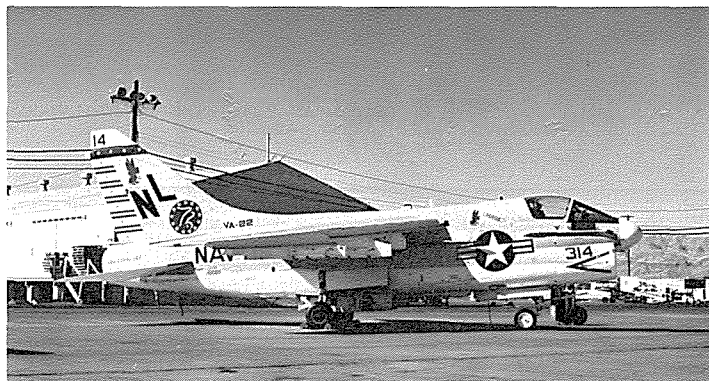
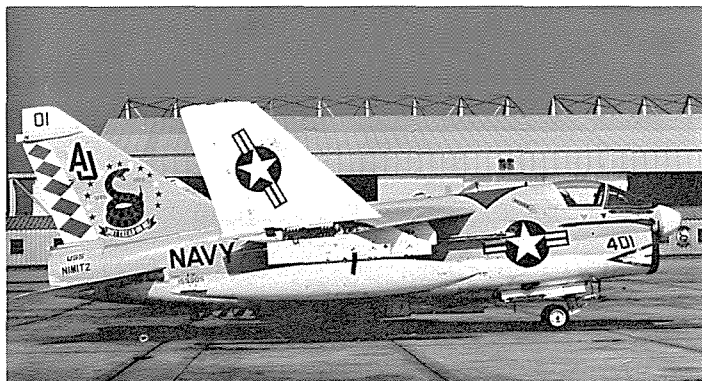


(Above) VF-124's Bicentennial F-14A (159616) has red, white and blue stripes accenting the nose, stabilizers, wing tips and wing leading edge. (G.R. Markgraf)



(Above) The venerable top hat of VF-14 is here changed to a style suitable for Uncle Sam and placed on a red, white and blue field. (R.B. Starinchak)

(Below) VA-86's standard rattlesnake motif is well suited to the "Don't Tread on Me" motto. Stars are alternately red, white and blue with a red "1776-1976." (R.E. Kling)



(Below) The "Fighting Redcocks" of VA-22 modified their standard markings with red, white and blue stars and stripes on the rudder and a "76" logo (156811). (Don Logan)

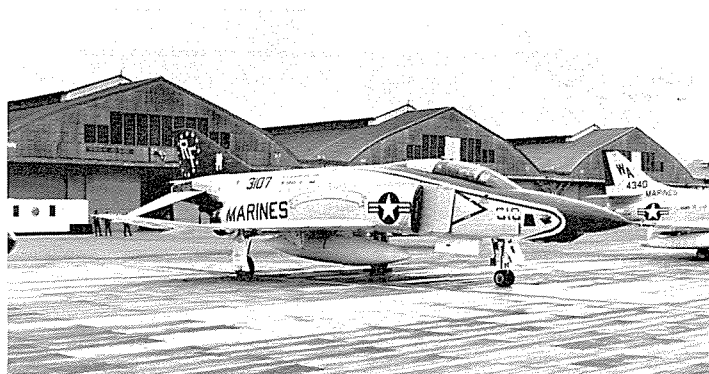
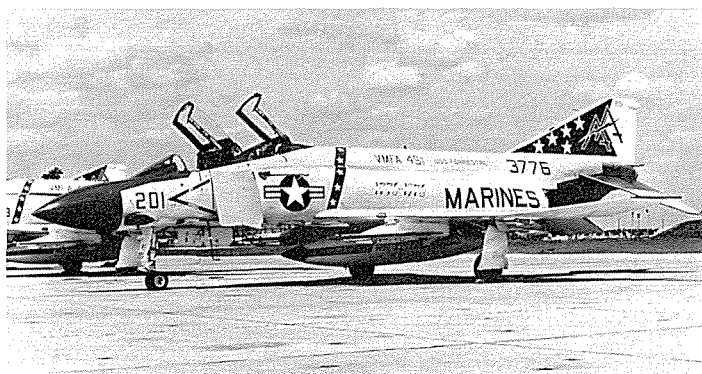


(Above) VF-301's "CAG" F-4B (152986) with a Bicentennial logo and "United States of America 1776-1976" in red, white and blue. (T.R. Waddington)

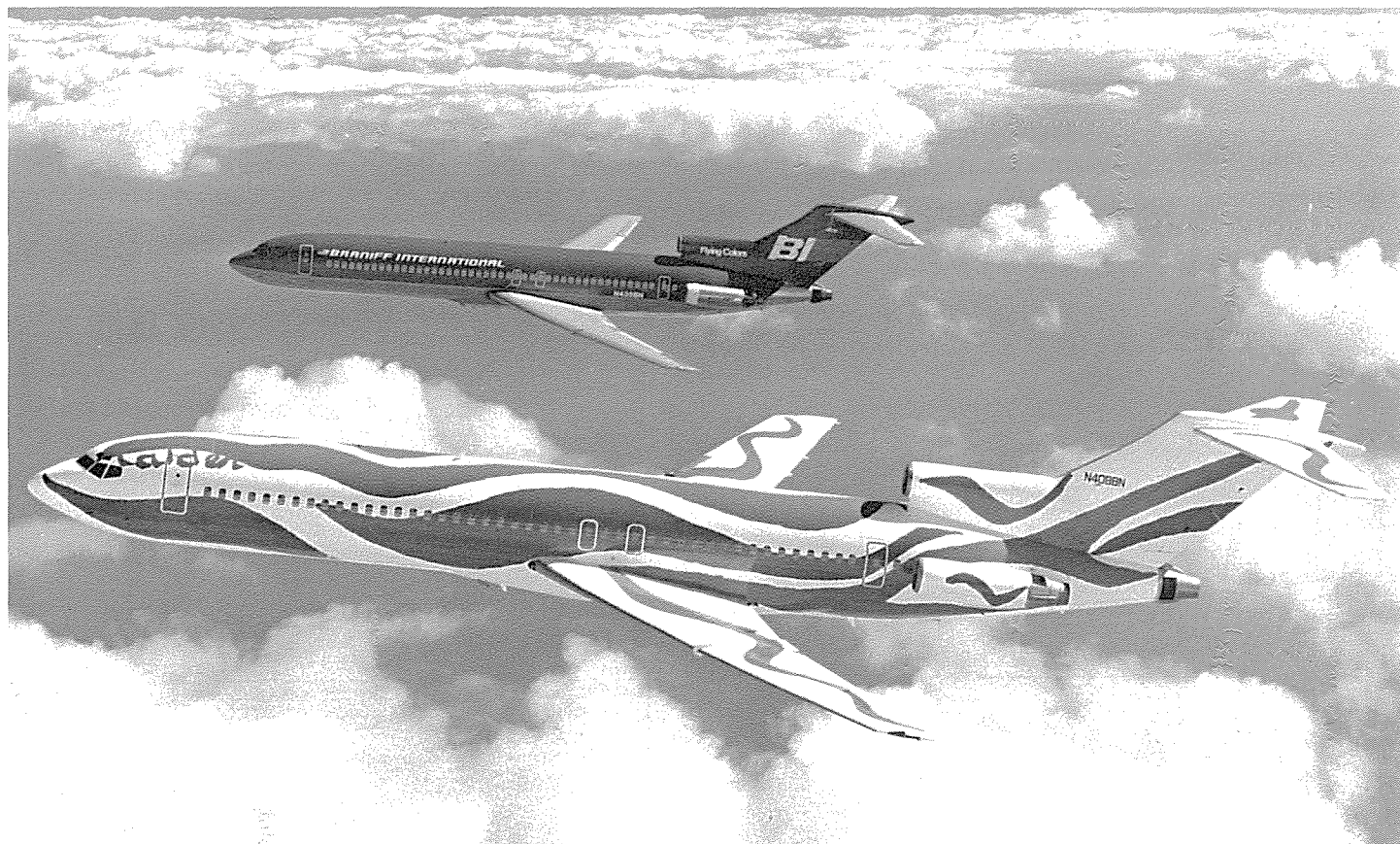


(Above) An RF-4B of VMFP-3 at El Toro MCAS. Markings are a dark blue tail and nose with red and white piping, a liberty bell in bronze, and "Spirit of America" in red, white and blue. A "76" nose number remained to be added, but 153098 crashed 3 days after the photo was taken. (G.R. Markgraf)

(Below) The "Warlords" of VMFA-451 operate F4Js with medium blue markings (including on radome) and white trim. Lettering is black except for the red, white and blue "1776-1976" (153776). (R.E. Kling)



(Below) A slightly modified version of VMFP-3's "Spirit of America" is shown here at MCAS Iwakuni (153107). (M. Wada)



(Above) One of the most ambitious Bicentennial projects involving an aircraft is Braniff's 727-200 "Flying Colors of the United States" featuring a design by Alexander Calder. (Braniff International)



(Above) ONA painted two DC-8-20s with designs suggested through an employee's contest. This DC-8 (N1976P) features a stars and bars design, and the other (N1776P) has a stars and stripes. (Harry Sievers)



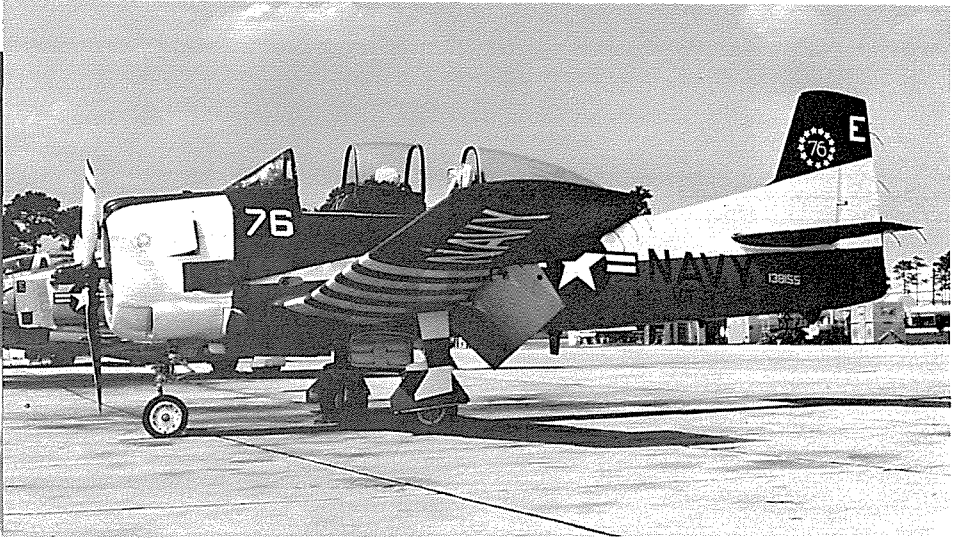
(Above) This beautiful C-54G Fire Bomber based at Redding, CA is the result of considerable effort and expense on the part of the Aero-Union Corp. of Chico, CA to commemorate the Bicentennial. The design is by Jack Young and Dale P. Newton. (G.R. Markgraf)

(Below) This Cassutt III, #76 (N18PM), owned by Paul Musso, was photographed at Burlington County Airpark, N.J. (Robert T. O'Dell)



(Below) VS-41 at NAS North Island flies this unique S-3A (160120) with an all white paint scheme accented by red, white and blue trim. Note the snake on the tail and the motto "Don't tread on me." (Roy Lock)





(Above) VT-2's Bicentennial T-28B (138155) has a red lower fuselage with red and white stripes banding the inboard wing panels. The upper fuselage and outboard wings are blue. (R.E. Kling)

(Left) The Naval reservists at Andrews AFB were among the first units to paint their aircraft in markings commemorating the Bicentennial. (R.E. Kling)

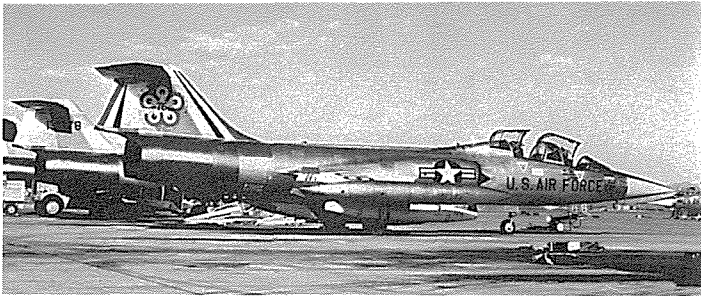


(Above) This AT-6 (N30JF) belongs to John Gerber and was photographed at Grant's Pass, OR. Note: snake painted above exhaust pipe. (Gene Olson)

(Below) "Spirit of '76," a LAMPS SH-2F (150175) of HSL-31, based at NAS North Island. (T.R. Waddington)

(Right) A VP-92 P-3A (150512) from NAS South Weymouth with an appropriate minuteman superimposed on a red, white and blue band is named "Spirit of Bunker Hill." (R.E. Kling)





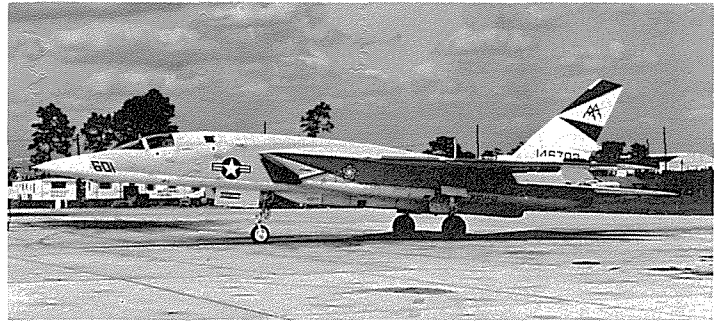
(Above) John D. Arce, crew chief of this TF-104G (13076), designed the markings as part of a Lockheed employee's Bicentennial program. The aircraft is based at Luke AFP. (Dave Begy)



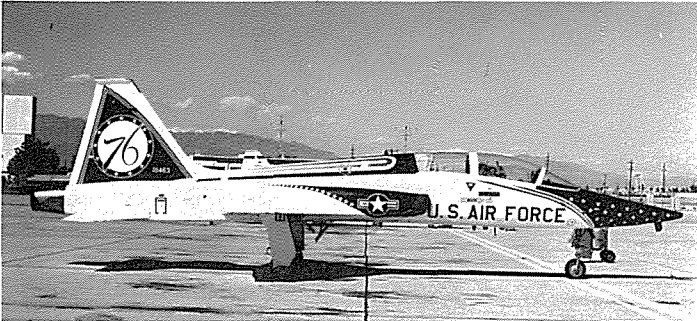
(Above) This beautiful F-106 (58-0760) of the Florida ANG is white with star-spangled blue nose and spine. The aft stabilizer is red. (L.B. Sides)



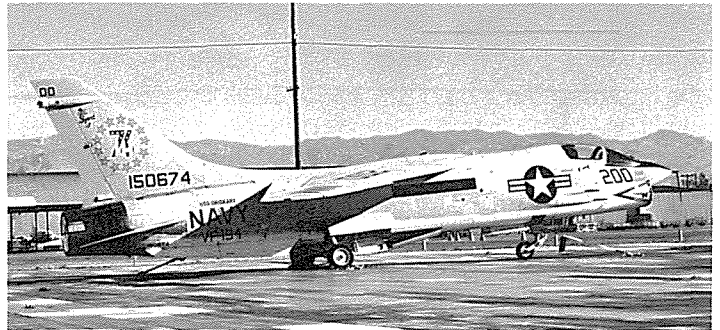
(Above) An RA5C (156632) of RVAH-6 displays squadron markings which include a red, white and blue pennant on the fin fairing. (R.E. Kling)



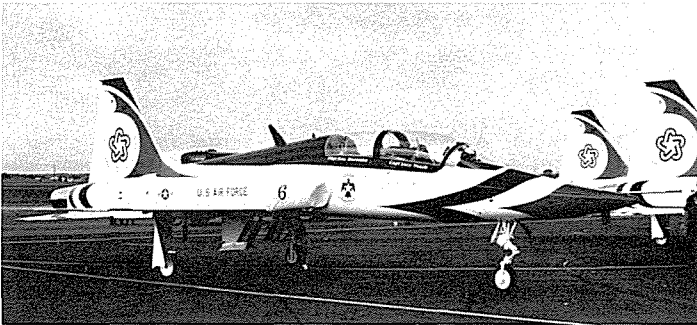
(Above) This early RA-5C (146702) of RVAH-12 has red, white and blue tail markings and a Bicentennial logo near the intake. (R.E. Kling)



(Above) The red, white and blue markings on this T38A are a pleasant exception to the usual plain markings of training command T38s. (Mick Roth)



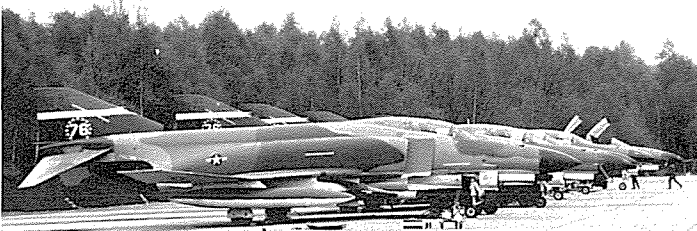
(Above) Retired at Davis-Monthan AFB after the last cruise for USS Oriskany and the U.S. Navy's F-8s, this F-8J "CAG" of VR-194 displays a red, white and blue "76" surrounded by gold stars. (Dave Begy)



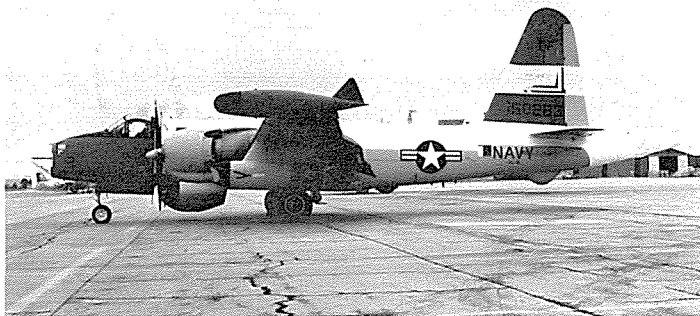
(Above) The USAF's Thunderbirds have modified their standard markings by including a Bicentennial logo on the tail. (G. Longo)



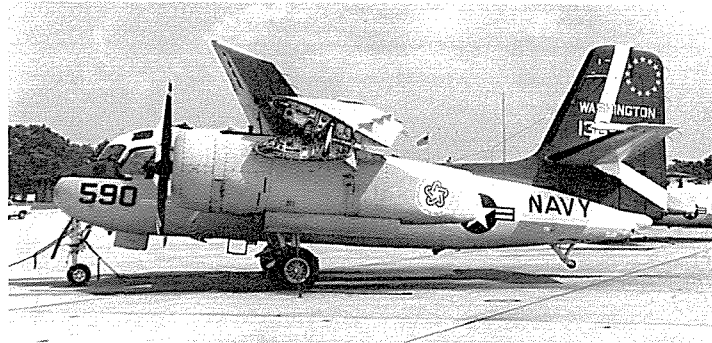
(Above) VA-204's A4s feature a discreet red, white and blue "76" and stars. (L.B. Sides)



(Left) These F-4Es of USAFE's 36TFW have the entire fin and rudder in red, white and blue. The "BT" code from Bitburg AB is just above the serial number. (Ruud Leeuw)

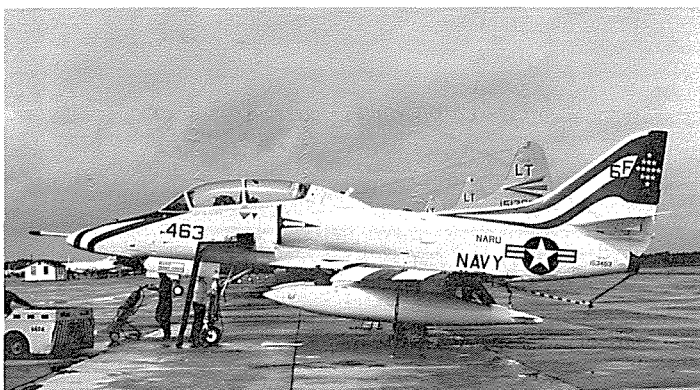


(Above) VC-8's stylized eagle is modified in red, white and blue with the dates "1776-1976" on the tail of their NP-2H (150283). (R.E. Kling)

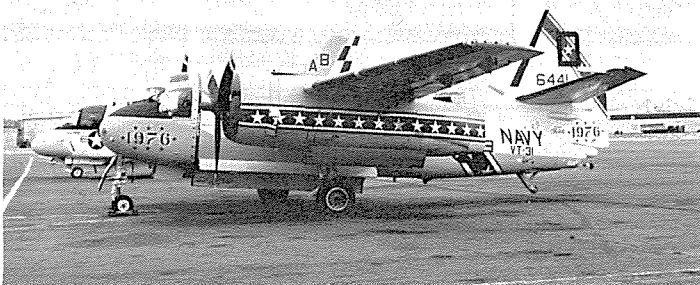
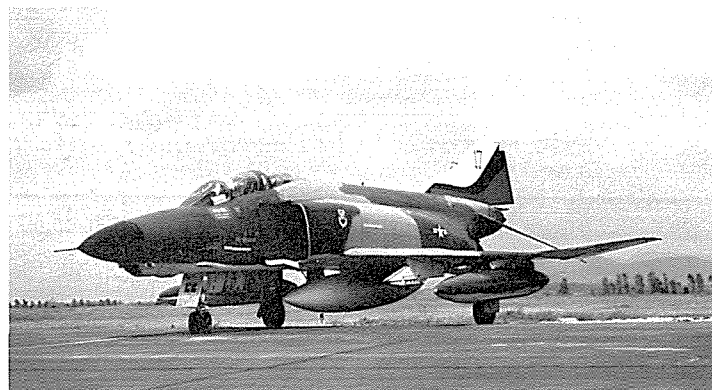


(Above) A US-2B from the Washington NAF at Andrews AFB is shown here in red, white and blue tail markings and Bicentennial logo. (Ronald W. Harrison)

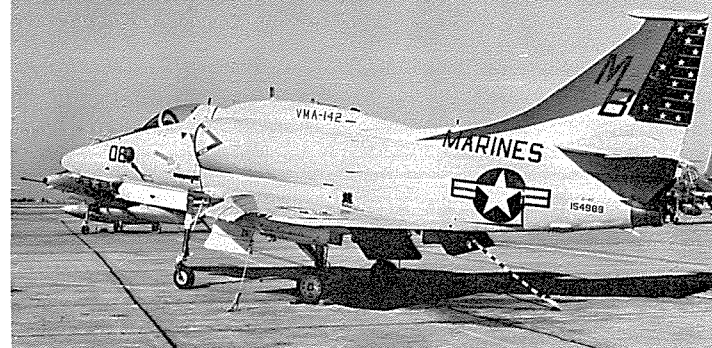
(Below) A TA-4J (153463) of the NARU Jacksonville has red, white and blue stripes decorating the nose and outboard wings, red and white stylized stripes on the fin, and a blue field with white stars for the rudder. (R.E. Kling)



(Below) This red, white and blue marked RF-4C of the 17 TRS is based at Zweibrucken, Germany. (R. Flinzner)



(Above) The commemorative trim on this VT-31 US-2B consists of broad blue bands, white stars and thin red stripes on either side. (Bruce Trombecky)



(Above) This "Super" A-4F was recently retired from one of the last U.S. Navy carrier-based A-4 squadrons and now wears the red, white and blue markings of VMA-142. (L.B. Sides)

(Below) One of the more striking Bicentennial schemes was designed for this TA-4J (158130) of VT-7 operating out of NAS Meridian, Miss. Markings are red, white and blue. (U.S. Navy)



(Below) VF-151 modified their standard markings by substituting red, white and blue for yellow and black. In addition, stars were added and "USS Midway" and "201" are in red, white, and blue. (T. Kudo)

