



# THE A.F.I.T. MAN

Before he went in quest of a college degree, Capt. Martin J. Barnard (being greeted by his wife Pat) was one of a quartet of Air Force pilots making the first non-stop Tokyo to Honolulu jet flight, setting the record in 1957.

brighter careers in a better air force  
await officers at o.u. who have become  
full-time students and part-time pilots

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'60journ



In this classroom, Capt. Al Turner is just another student attempting to master the science of digital computers. He received his bachelor's degree from Howard Payne College, Brownwood, Texas, and will complete graduate work in mathematics in time for the June commencement.



When the Air Force moves the family of A.F.I.T. liaison officer Maj. William Adden, it has quite a sizable job on its hands. Adden is shown here with his wife, Pearl, and his four daughters, Marcia Elaine, 14 (at left); Amy Leigh, 11 months; Terry Lynn, 10, Danna Jean, 16.

A LARGE, floppy brown briefcase is becoming the mark of a rather unusual student here at the University of Oklahoma. The briefcase is United States Air Force issue, used by all pilots and navigators. But now the briefcase is filled with textbooks, not flight plans, and the fellow who carries it is just another Sooner student as well as being a career officer in the Air Force. He receives no special notice in classes. He doesn't wear his uniform which may display World War II and Korean War decorations. He is a part of a program known as the Air Force Institute of Technology.

There are 101 Air Force men enrolled this semester, giving O.U. one of the largest A.F.I.T. programs in any university. The local branch is the Civilian Institutions Program, one of three divisions of A.F.I.T., operating on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This program utilizes the services of civilian universities, industries, hospitals and the schools of other branches of the government to train personnel in a wide variety of fields, including management, social sciences, engineering, physical sciences, medicine, and languages.

One of the more interesting aspects of A.F.I.T. is that the large majority of men who come to O.U. as full-time students still retain their ratings as flying officers. And they must fulfill a required amount of flying time (eight hours each month) to keep this status.

As Col. Ralph L. Stephenson, '41bus, commander of the A.F.R.O.T.C. unit, points out, "That eight hours is a lot longer than it seems. A man doesn't go up to Tinker and get it done with one day's flying . . . especially if he is flying a jet. You take a jet up and fly to Albuquerque, refuel and come back, and you still have hours left. If a jet pilot flew his eight hours all at once he could go to the North Pole."

The jet jockeys fly T-33s out of Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City. Their eight hours must include a specified amount of night and instrument flying. An average flight could be a one-day "out and back," or the flyer may take a weekend "round robin" to several Air Force bases across the country, before returning to Tinker. All flying is done individually, since formation flying takes more time and planning and the flight leader is re-

sponsible for planes other than his own.

The transport pilot may get in his flying time with duty hops between Tulsa and Oklahoma City, or other short flights. As one man who flies a C-47 observed, "You can't go as far in a gooney bird as you can in a jet."

The students in the A.F.I.T. program are the cream of the crop, having survived an intensive selection process. The officer who applies can expect a fairly long wait, while his application is sent to the Pentagon and from there undergoes academic screening at A.F.I.T. headquarters, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. The men selected are those who the Air Force feels can better themselves and their service with a college degree and the education that goes with it. All of the applicants for the program must have at least 30 college hours to their credit, but actually need considerably more if they are to complete their degrees in the required two years.

Maj. William Adden, for instance, began his college education some 10 years ago while he was stationed at Sherman, Texas. By attending Austin College he collected

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69 credit hours, all of them counting toward his degree. And he earned every hour the hard way, serving as a full-time flight instructor and going to school five nights a week and on Saturday.

With the limited amount of time in which to complete degrees, the hour load for the A.F.I.T. men is far from light. Major Adden is studying business management, majoring in management and minor-ing in economics. He is enrolled in 18 hours this semester—the history of business management, production planning and control, time and motion study, cost account-ing, economic history of the United States, and special problems in transportation.

His study is planned to prepare him for an Air Force job in production and pro-curement following graduation. This job, generally, will deal with problems in the production and procurement of weapons and weapons systems that have to do with the actual factory production, purchasing and supervision of contracts.

**A**S LIAISON officer for the A.F.I.T. group here, Major Adden must keep up with what goes on within the University and handle any problems that may arise. He and Colonel Stephenson work together on some matters from time to time, but both officers emphasize that R.O.T.C. and A.F.I.T. have no actual relationship, other than being two programs which have brought Air Force personnel to Norman, and which bring them together once a month for the comradeship of a joint lunch-eon in the Union.

"The men in A.F.I.T. are completely on their own," Major Adden says. "They have no military duty except going to school, and, if they are rated, in completing their flying requirements. They need no close supervision because if they fail it's no-body's fault but their own and their careers may consequently suffer."

Grades show that the men are better-than-average students. The undergraduate grade average for last semester was slightly above a B. There are students in almost every field, with a majority in engineering. The diversification runs from work for a B.A. to a Ph.D. in mathematics.

For most of the men in the program, a good grade in a course is really not hard to come by, mainly because they find it easy to study and concentrate. One officer, Lt. Robert W. Conors, was a college student in California before getting his commission

through the aviation cadet program. "I haven't run into any real trouble here . . . mainly because I have found that I put much more time into studying than I did when attending the University of California and Fresno State," he explains. "You tend to settle down and really hit it, because this is what you are here for, and nothing else."

**C**ONORS is in aeronautical engineering. His courses are oriented along a "re-search and development administrator" line. After graduation his job will probably consist of checking on private research projects, protecting Air Force interests and investments.

At 30, Conors is one of the younger officers here at O.U. now, and like most students he has praise for some aspects of the University and criticism for others.

"I think the engineering school here is a good one. Unlike some people, I don't feel that the engineers are getting too rigid an education. Of course they recently re-organized their curriculum, but I think it is a sound program for turning out a good technically trained engineer. . . . The thing that I have enjoyed most about being able to come back to school is the football games. I am a great fan of the game and have really enjoyed being able to see college football again . . . but I think it is wrong that this team doesn't really represent the school, it represents the entire state.

Some of the officers find that living in a civilian community again is a little hard to get used to. For the past five years Capt. William Doty and his family had lived on a military base in Topeka, Kansas, where he flew a tanker for S.A.C. Doty has been in the Air Force for 14 years. He began his education while stationed in Bermuda, tak-ing courses through a branch of American International College, Springfield, Massa-chusetts.

Doty, also in the business field, will take a staff personnel position after graduation. He feels that his education at O.U. is mak-ing him a better all-around officer, "the management and organization courses are going to make me a more efficient officer for my job, and some of the associated courses are broadening my ability."

The phrase "officers of the A.F.I.T." is out-of-date at the University this semester since for the first time an enlisted man has been added to the group. A staff sergeant from a base in California is working

toward an O.U. degree which will lead to a commission. The object of this new phase of A.F.I.T. is to increase the number of educated career men in the service. The Air Force feels that the added incentive of a col-lege degree and commission should en-courage an increasing number of top en-listed men to re-enlist.

The men at O.U. have a wide variety of backgrounds. The quiet guy sitting on the back row of the math class may have piloted a Sabre jet in Korea. Another may have been a ground officer who has never even flown a plane. They come fresh from as-signments with groups with initials for names, such as S.A.C., S.A.G.E., and T.A.C.

There are graduates of Annapolis and West Point. There are men who have re-cently received Air Force commendation medals. A recent A.F.I.T. graduate was a former member of the Air Force's crack precision aerobatic team, the Thunder-birds. There are men at O.U. like Maj. Martin Barnard, who was one of the four men who flew the first jet flight non-stop from Tokyo to Honolulu.

After receiving their degrees, these men will go to jobs as diverse as their past re-cords. Two officers who will graduate in June of this year, Capt. John D. Colbrunn and Capt. John H. Saxon, Jr., will go to the Air Force Academy as instructors. Other men will be assigned to such highly im-portant branches of the Air Force as the bal-listics missile division of air research de-velopment.

**W**HETHER the men go following grad-uation from O.U., they will have one common bond—the source of their educa-tion. One of those officers looks at his educa-tion as a chance to do some fresh thinking. "After being in the service for some 16 years," he says, "I found myself going down a rather one-track line of thought. Coming back for education can provide you with some fresh ideas and a new slant on things."

Another man best sums up the entire A.F.I.T. program when he points out that "the modern Air Force is now in the most rapid transition in its history. It is really getting technical now, and if you are not technically trained in the coming years, you are going to be left standing on the corner. The Air Force wants its career officers to be educated men . . . and no matter what their fields may be, it is becoming more essential that they have college degrees."