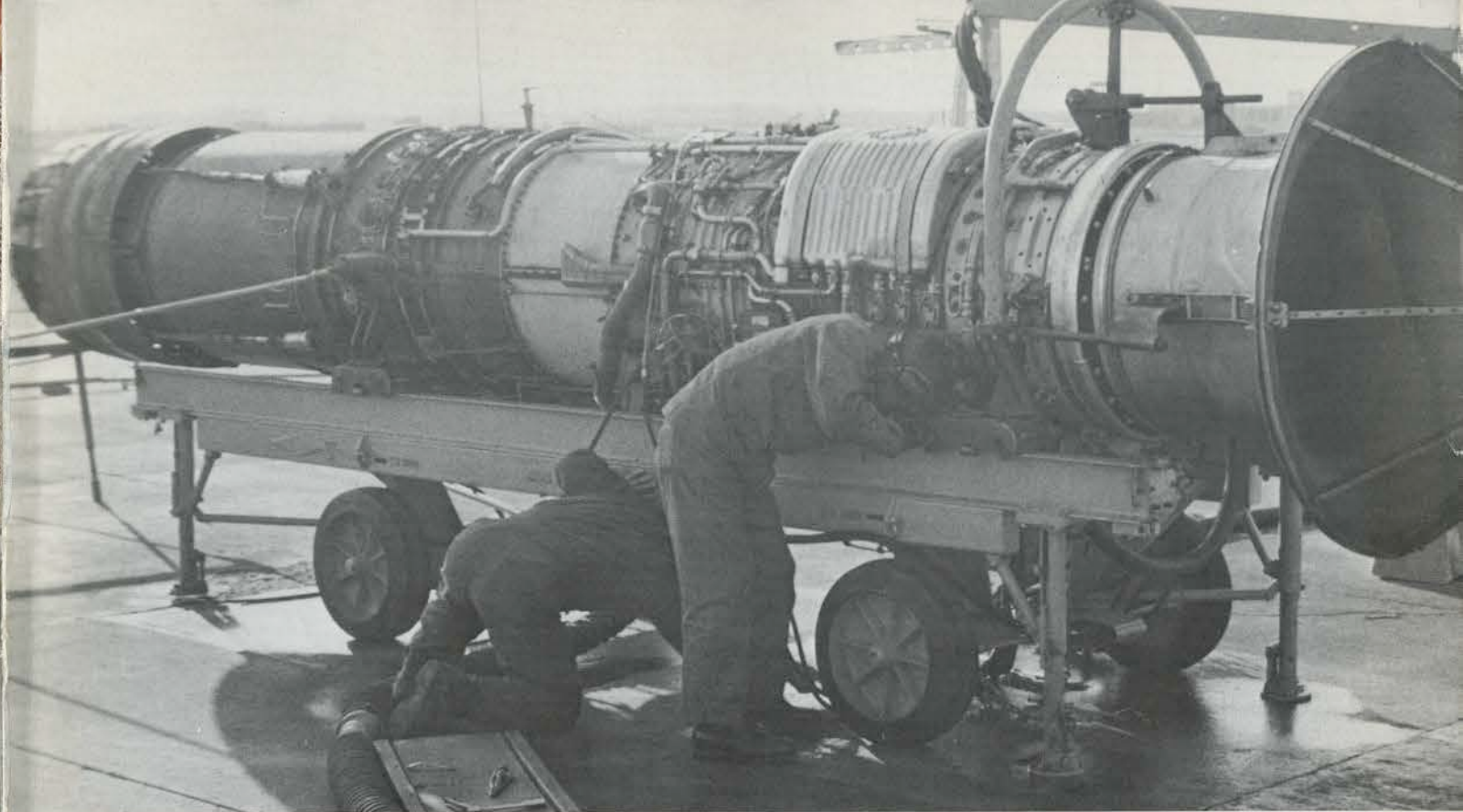
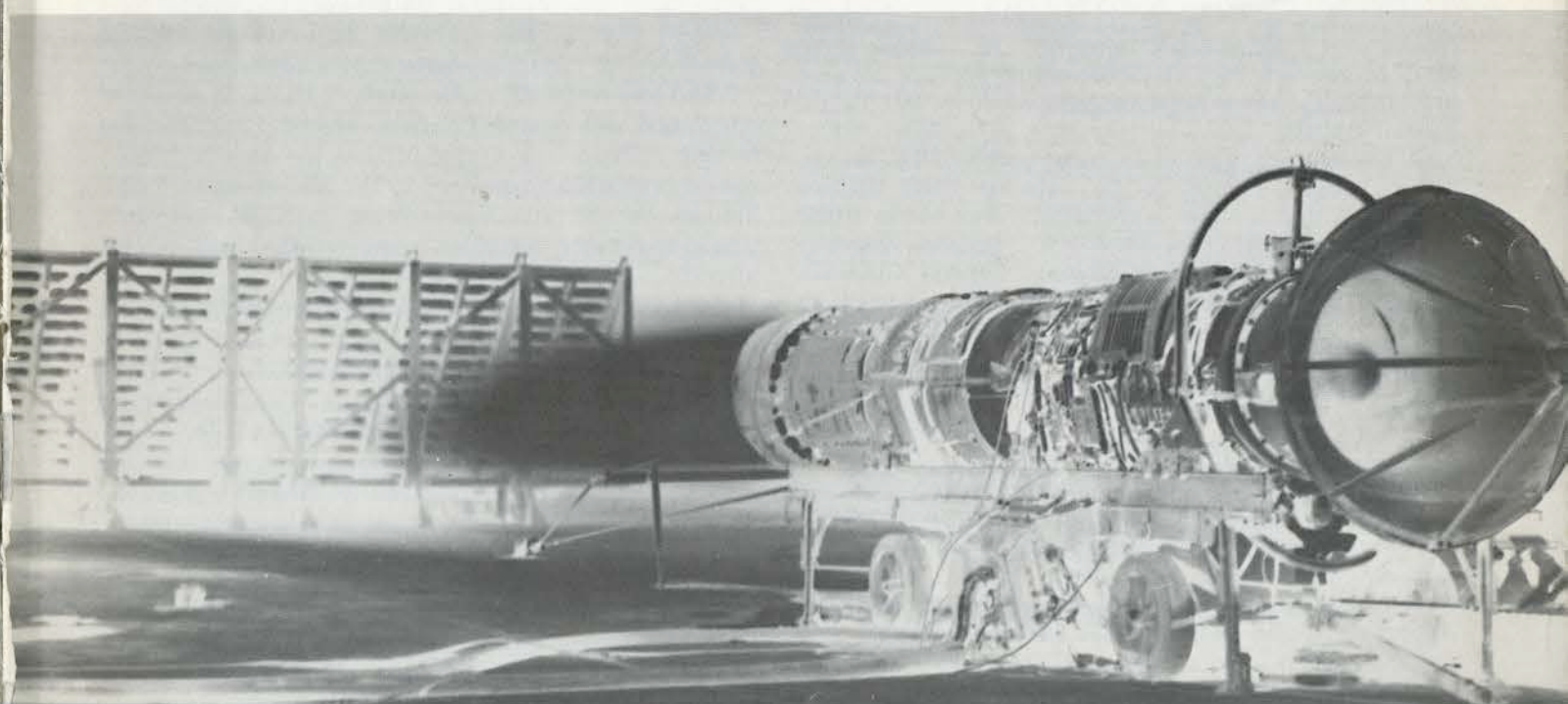




Torii Teller

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MCAS Iwakuni, Japan



Tiger by the tail... Page 13

"Discover flying" with Iwakuni Flying Club

The wild blue yonder over MCAS Iwakuni beckons more than just military pilots and an occasional sea gull.

Servicemen, their families and American civilians working here, as members of the Iwakuni Flying Club, daily live up to the club's motto "Discover Flying."

The Headquarters Marine Corps-approved, Secretary of the Navy-sanctioned organization is dedicated to obtaining licenses for its 60 members.

Two 1969 model Cessna 150s are maintained under lease from a civilian concern.

Lt(jg). Dick Wales, NASU weapons officer and president of the club, says, "We are definitely expanding. Each month, an average of five new members join. We are currently trying to get a three-year, no-interest loan from the Marine Corps to purchase the two planes we have, and a Cessna 172 four seater"

The would-be flyers meet the first Monday of each month, in the rear of Building 201. They also maintain an office with volunteers in the MCAS Operations Building.

The club has \$15 per month dues, of which \$10 is guaranteed flight time (one hour) Aircraft rental fees, including fuel and maintenance, are \$10 per hour. FAA regulations require 40 hours of flight time before a flight



Lt(jg) Wales holds a pre-flight inspection on one of the Club's Cessna 150s as he prepares for a flight.

Story by Sgt. Gary Salter
Photos by Sgt. John Ames



Planning the route is part of the routine club members face before each flight.

inspection may be administered for a private pilot's rating.

The club does not offer a ground school, but does sponsor one held in MCAS Headquarters, Building 360.

Membership in the club includes eight commercial ratings, 12 private, and the remainder students. Of these, four are instructors for the students studying for a private rating.

At present, the written test must be taken at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo with a flight inspection at Atsugi. A tour is made by flight inspectors from the regional FAA office in Hawaii every three months, and plans are being made to have Iwakuni put on that circuit.

A medical examination is required, and the certificate, often called an "up chit," serves as a student's license. The MCAS Medical Department performs the exam.

A major benefit of obtaining a license at Iwakuni is sight-seeing. Under the Status of Forces Agreement between the U. S. and Japan, landing and parking fees are free at private fields.

Another benefit for anyone planning a career in commercial flying after separation from active duty is the low expense. Under the G. I. Bill, pilots must have a private rating before obtaining assistance for commercial ratings. Then, the individual is required to pay approximately 10 per cent of the costs for higher ratings.

Snarling dogs guard the past

Story by: Sgt. Denny Moats

Snarling stone dogs still protect the interior grounds, the torii and trees are still there, but that's about all that remains of a place which was once a focal point of daily life for young Japanese Navy pilots.

Located only about 50 feet behind the present MCAS Headquarters building and across the JMSDF Air Unit Headquarters parking lot stands the Iwakuni Kokutai Jinja. Or what's left of it.

A place of worship

What is today only a skeletal reminder of its past glory was once a place of worship for the Japanese Navy in February 1943, when it was originally constructed. The structure was dedicated in that month and a plaque, known as the Goshitai, was brought from Ise City and placed within the shrine. It was supposed to represent the mother goddess of Japan and the ancestress of the Imperial Family

Regular stop for cadets

Small groups of aviation cadets would file off the parade field each morning to make their individual ceremonial bows before their shrine. This shrine was also a regular stop for cadets going or coming from liberty as it was located near the main gate which used to be at the end of the street where the Station Hospital is today

Beyond the torii marking the entrance was a small basin carved from rock for cleansing of hands and



With the shrine now gone and the dogs guarding only a small plot of weeds and stone, the Iwakuni Kokutai Jinja will never again look as it did when this photo was taken years ago.

mouths before prayer. A small stone marker indicated directions to various locations throughout Japan and the rest of the Pacific. Here worshippers could bow and face in the direction of a friend or relative living or fighting elsewhere to offer prayers for that person.

Shrine degenerates

With the acquisition of the air station by first one and then another

Allied force after the war the shrine degenerated. The Goshitai was removed, the carp in the ponds were taken out, and statues were taken from their perch on the shrine's stone pedestals.

Today only the snarling dogs remain of this spot which was once a very significant part of each Japanese Naval aviation cadet's daily routine.

... Steel Monsters are their business



It starts as a high pitched whine, then quickly develops into an earth-shattering, tooth-rattling roar. The metallic monster sits on its platform straining at it's mooring, ready to let loose all of the screaming fury it possesses.

Men scurry around beneath and on top of the howling monster a J-79 General Electric jet engine undergoing tests which are the final step in a three day process. Each J-79 engine (used to power the F-4 Phantom) goes through these tests every 30 weeks or 270 hours of engine time.

The process starts at the squadron flightline when the engine is pulled from its aircraft and sent to a power plant shop.

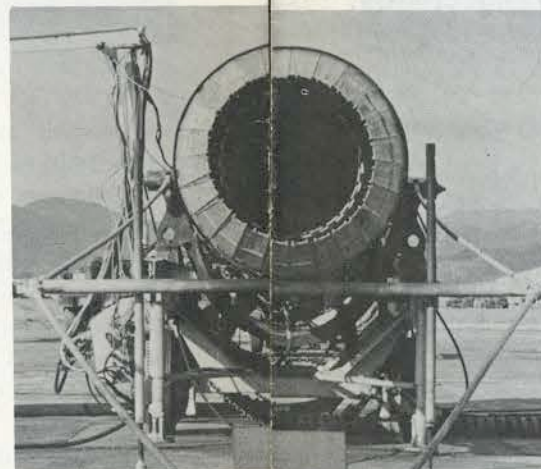
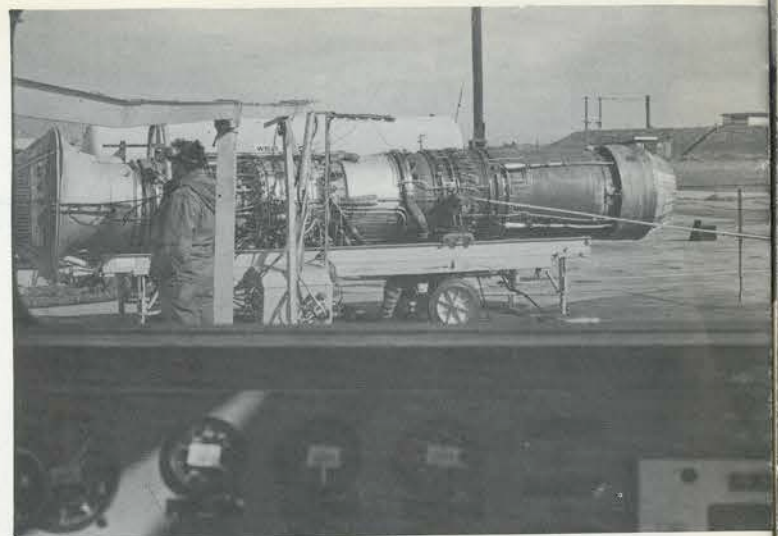
One such shop is H&MS-15 Power Plants. Here the J-79 is assigned to a crew of mechanics which begins at the front of the engine the turbine and goes over it with a fine tooth comb.

Each member of the crew is a trained mechanic, a special breed man of who talks the jargon of a hot-rod racer but performs his work like a skilled surgeon. Crews are assigned special sections of the engine that they are supposed to check. The turbine case is checked for FOD (Foreign Object Damage) that may have been caused by debris on the runway or flightline. Turbine blades are checked for cracks and warps and any other signs of wear. All through the maintenance check of the engine, its progress is charted and double checked to make sure nothing is missed.

After the J-79 leaves the H&MS-15 shop, it is transported to the opposite side of the air field to the test cell. Here the 1,500 pound bulk of stovepipe is transformed into a fire-breathing, screaming metal monster.

At the test cell, mechanics and technicians connect it to a control cab with cables. The control cab is where the functions of the engine are monitored and the J-79 is run from idle to full military power. It is here that the J-79 can be transformed from a high powered aircraft engine into, as one test cell crewman put it, "the world's largest fragmentation grenade" in a matter of seconds.

While there is less than 1 percent chance of an accident



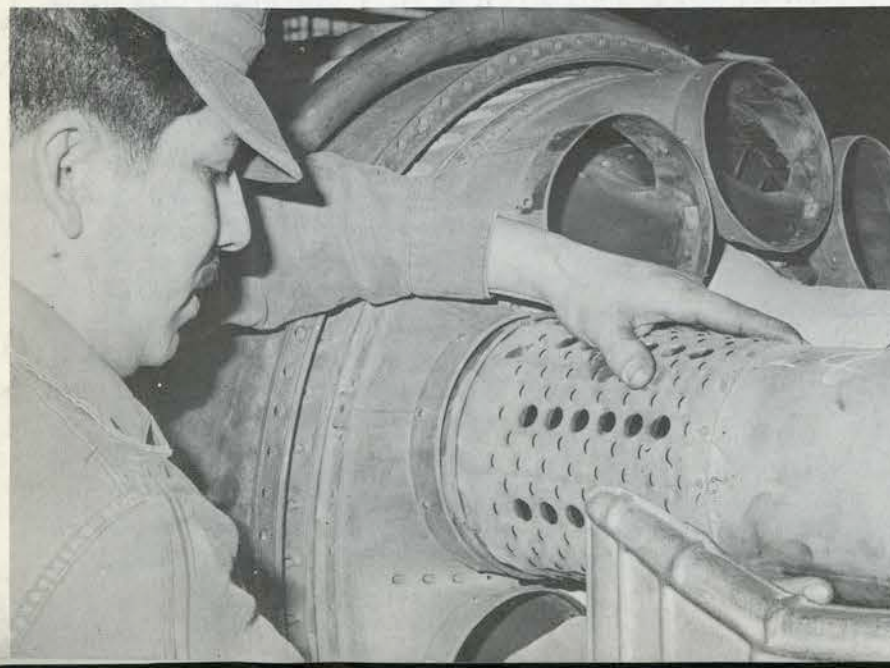
while testing these engines, there is an extremely thin line between safety and disaster.

"If one of these engines blows," says a test cell crew member, "we have about a one second warning before it happens."

The front of the J-79 is screened off before the engine is cranked up. The intake can suck a man into the engine from thirty feet. The engine is tied down to a single restraining point to keep it from moving as it is put through its rigorous paces.

Once the engine is securely tied to the ground, it is started. When the engine roars to life, the functions are checked on monitoring instruments while it's idling. Adjustments are made in the flow of fuel and oil to the engine if needed. The next move is to step up the power in phases.

The engine is timed. How long from idle to full power? How long from idle to afterburner? All these questions must be right before the engines are returned to their squadrons. The tests take approximately two hours and in that time the J-79 consumes 1,000 gallons of fuel.



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