

Videmus Omnia



55th STRAT RECON WING ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2001

COME TO MELBOURNE, FLORIDA'S SPACECOAST, FOR THE 55TH SRW ASSOCIATION REUNION

**IT'S TIME TO
REUNE ONCE AGAIN!
MELBOURNE BEACH,
FL, 17-20 MAY, 2001**

The Fifty-Fifth SRW Association will hold its 21st reunion from 17 to 20 May 2001 at the **Holiday Inn Beach Resort Melbourne-Oceanfront** located in Melbourne Beach, FL. Just 15 minutes from the Melbourne International Airport, and one hour, ten minutes from the Orlando International Airport, the hotel provides the perfect location for sun, sand, and the relaxed atmosphere to renew old friendships and make new ones. Airport shuttle service to the Melbourne Airport is available for all arriving/departing flights. There is **none** to/from Orlando.

Note: Renting a car for the drive to and from Orlando and Melbourne may be less expensive than the air hop between airports. Check it out.

Holiday Inn room reservations: (\$79.00 per night, plus tax, single or double occupancy) should be made **through** Holiday Inn reservations at 1-800-465-4329; or **directly** to the Melbourne-Oceanfront at 1-321-777-4100; fax: 1-321-773-6123. **You will need a credit card to hold your reservations. Be sure to mention the 55SRW reunion to obtain the special room rate.** Additionally, a limited number of oceanfront rooms are available for \$99.00 per night, plus tax, and suites are available for \$159.00 per night, plus tax. The hotel has a web site, if you would like to obtain more

information--www.holiday-inn.com/mlb-oceanfront.

Reunion registration forms (the last two pages in this newsletter) and payments should be sent in by the May 1st to provide event head counts for the planning committee.

See the reunion registration form for information on how you can eliminate the room tax through early registration and by payment through the Association, and to compete for a free room drawing.

Make your air travel arrangements through your favorite travel agency, or with an airline, or on the Internet. If not already done, do it soon!

For **RV'ers** there is a **FAMCAMP** at Patrick AFB. Phone: 1-321-494-4787. It is about five miles or so from the

Holiday Inn. There is RV parking across from the hotel at **no cost** to guests. Parking only, **no** hookups.

Reunion cochairmen, John Caban and Barney Clary, have done a superb job of putting together a well balanced agenda of activities and free time for what is expected to be yet another memorable gathering of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** troops, family and friends.

The reunion planners have striven to provide a variety of events for the reunion attendees; some of them are duplicated to allow maximum flexibility. Some attendees may not choose to do any of the activities outside the hotel. This is **not** a problem—pick and choose as you desire. **The primary goal is for us to get together and have fun.**

Wednesday, May 16th

Those 55thers arriving Wednesday, May 16, will be able to **register for the reunion** until 8:00 p.m. and enjoy gathering **in the hospitality suite**. The hospitality suite is the penthouse, a large two story room with a glass wall facing the ocean, which will be available to us 24 hours a day throughout the reunion. Check-in and greet others. *(There will be a meeting of the Board of Directors at a time to be specified by them.)*

Reunion registration will be in the hospitality suite each day. Hours may vary, but generally, there will be

someone there to help you. Feel free to volunteer for bartending and/or registration help. You may find **John Caban** and/or **Marsha Griffin** tickling the ivories from time to time, so we can indulge in some nostalgic and, perhaps bawdy, sing-alongs. Be prepared to sing the 55th anthem found elsewhere in this newsletter. For those of us who can no longer memorize (or even remember) stuff, bring it with you.

Thursday, May 17th

Shopping, Factory Outlet Mall in Vero Beach (Morning 'til ?) You can take a one-hour bus ride to the largest outlet mall on the Space Coast. Seventy-five stores are sure to please even the most discriminating shopper. *(This option is also offered for Friday morning so you have a choice on when to melt your plastic.)*

Kennedy Space Center Tour (Morning), a bus jaunt to Kennedy Space Center to experience NASA's past, present, and future. See the Space Shuttle launch pad, the enormous Launch Vehicle Assembly Building. Learn about the international space station, and much more. The start time is 9:30 a.m. and will last approximately three hours.

Your special VIP tour will avoid waiting in the normal lines at this popular tourist attraction. The \$40 cost of the tour includes the Visitors' Center, the museum/gift shop, and an IMAX theater. Just like Disneyland! *(This tour option is*

also offered for Friday morning.)

There will be ample free time until the **evening Casino Cruise**. Miss the gambling from the last reunion? Then we have the entertainment you'll like. Cruise on the largest gambling ship we know about. Five decks of gaming tables will give you ample opportunity to play. A finger food buffet is available at **no charge**. Gambling instruction is available on board the ship.

While the emphasis on the ship is gambling, there is also a small lounge with entertainment and outside seating on the afterdeck. Best of all—there is **no charge for the cruise itself**; but, beware—those machines suck the money out of your wallets. Buses will leave the hotel at 5:50 p.m. The ship sails at 7:00 p.m. and returns to the dock at midnight. Participants can expect to return to the hotel about 1:00 a.m.

Friday, May 18th

The obligatory **Golf Tournament** for you duffers, hackers, and Tiger-wannabes will take up the morning. Swing away with your reunion friends at Patrick AFB. Shotgun start; cost of \$30 includes carts, green fees, and prizes. Organized by **Jim Owen**.

Shopping, Factory Outlet Mall in Vero Beach (Morning 'til?) See the details on Thursday's schedule. This gives you another option on tailoring your plans.

Kennedy Space Center Tour (Morning) Ditto the previous paragraph.

Sunset Dinner Cruise. This is limited to the first 75 folks who sign up. You will cruise the Indian River and enjoy the sunset with your friends and the pleasure of relaxed dining. One meal selection for all. Sailing time is 6:30 p.m., returning at 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 19th

There will be an **RC-135 aircraft tour** (providing the 55th Wing's operational commitments allow availability) at Patrick AFB early this morning. You will see what technology the current crewdogs have to play with these days.

Back at the hotel, **Robb Hoover** will orchestrate a **Reconnaissance Seminar** from 9:00-11:00a.m. on the following topics: The November 1970 Pechora Sea incident with **Jimmy Jones** and crew, the last time there was MIG gunfire near a 55th aircraft; Air Force Technical Applications Center at Patrick and the recon community relationship; and a current operations briefing from a 55th Wing representative.

The 55th **SRWA Business Meeting** for the membership and guests will be held **immediately after** the seminar (approx. 11:15 a.m.) The purpose is to review, update and conduct the necessary affairs of the Association; hold the election of the Board of Directors; and to

talk about future reunion sites/dates, etc.

To consider: do we want to have a reunion between this one and Dayton in September 2003? If so, when, where, and who will be in charge? Think about it.

The newly elected Board usually meets immediately after the business meeting to elect officers from its ranks.

All this stuff is free, gang! Free is good.

After that, you will be on your own for lunch and free time for the hospitality suite or whatever, until the gala **Saturday Evening Banquet.** The banquet will be held at the hotel. **Dress for dinner will be coat and tie for the male members.** (*Please wear pants, as well.*) Meal choices and a place to indicate special meal needs can be found on the registration form.

The invited guest speaker is **LtGen (Ret) Phil Ford.** The general is a long time friend of the Fightin' Fifty-Fifth, having served the first of his five tours at Offutt as an RC-135 driver for the 55SRW. After his last tour there, he retired from the Air Force as the Vice CinC of US STRATCOM. Sunday, the 20th will be the last hurrah to say farewell to comrades and friends for a safe return home, and to resolve to attend the **next** reunion. (*This article was done by committee with Barney Clary in the lead.*)

* * * * *

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings one and all.

We got through the holidays again and here we are in 2001. I hope the blessings of good health and happiness are with you all. Just can't believe year 2K has passed and that we finally have a new president.

I'm sure, that in my earlier years, if I had known I would live this long, I would have taken better care of myself.

During the period since my last letter, the Association Board and the Omaha Caucus have been busy. The Caucus met 22 September, a week prior to meeting with **BGen Greg Power**, the 55th Wing Commander, over dinner.

The meeting with the BGen Power over dinner was again very warm and the conversation candid. BGen Power stated that he valued and appreciated the relationship with the Association/Omaha Caucus and wants to continue with the periodic evenings together.

The Caucus met again on 8 December and discussions included our participation in the 55th Hall of Fame selection process, update on the status of the 55th SRW Association Award of Excellence, and the progress of the *We See All* sequel.

The Hall of Fame selection committee met and **Col Bill Riggs** was selected (*details in a separate article*).

The **55th SRW Association** award trophy is in the completion stages and our Selection Committee, headed by **Mike Cook**, will review qualification folders and will notify us of its findings soon. The award will be presented at the Birthday Ball. Concerning the *We See All* sequel, Robb Hoover has put out another plea for stories and photo's in a separate article. **We need your photos and stories.**

The Board approved the donation of \$1000 to the 55th Birthday Ball to offset the costs of the Ball. This year's Ball will be held at Harvey's Hotel in Council Bluffs, IA on the 24th of February, the anniversary of the activation of the **55th Recon Group** in Strategic Air Command.

This year's theme is "Silent Partners", and a number of the organizations and corporations will be heralded at the Ball. Additionally, two new members will be inducted into the Hall of Fame, and we will be presenting the Association Award of Excellence (we will present it again at the reunion). Should be a great time and I encourage your attendance.

Barney Clary and John Caban have organized a terrific party for us at the May reunion in Melbourne. Be there!

Anyone interested in serving on the Board of

Directors, please notify **Past President Sam Pizzo**, whom I've asked to chair the nominating committee.

The long overdue RB-47 painting the Association purchased from **Bruce Bailey** has arrived back from being loaned to the AF Museum for copying, and is at the SAC Museum. A dedication and unveiling ceremony is currently being worked, but no date has been set, as yet

Looking forward to seeing you all in Florida.

Videmus Omnia, Bill.

* * * * *

WE SEE ALL...THE SEQUEL

Status Report

BGen Greg Power, was presented a copy of **Bruce Bailey's 'We See All'** by the 55th SRW Association shortly after his assumption of command of the Wing last year. He was so impressed by the book, that he asked us if it would be possible to publish a sequel which updated the original effort by recounting the RC-135 era. He pledged the support of the 55th Historian's office in researching and publishing such an account.

Several meetings have been held at the 55th Historian's office with **TSgt Rob Michel, TSgt Tracy Reed**, Bill Ernst, Craig Kibbe, Max Moore and Robb Hoover.

A significant number of pictures from the RC-135 era, to include Eielson/Shemya operations, Kadena, Mildenhall, Hellinikon etc., have been scanned by the History office into a master archive.

Some of the most significant finds were the original scrapbooks of the 82nd SRS, courtesy of **Jock McLeaish**, from the 1967-76 era; and the treasure trove of recently declassified unit histories, which were obtained by **Roger Bishop** through the Air Force Historical Research Agency over the past six years.

We need more stories and pictures, about both on and off duty, before we embark on the editing stage this summer.

Bring your favorites to the Melbourne reunion. This is your big chance to submit your input from the RC-135 era. Copies of the *Crew Dog Gazette* are especially sought after. Original prints are preferred, which can then be scanned by the History office and **returned to you**. Call Robb Hoover (402) 292-6616, or e-mail **RobbHoover@aol.com** with any questions or input.

By Robb Hoover

* * * * *

NOMINATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There will be an election of the Board of Directors at the reunion membership meeting. Their term will extend to the next reunion.

Members currently serving as the elected Directors are: **Bill Ernst (Pres), Robb Hoover (VicePres), Errol Hoberman (Trea), Ben White (Sectry), Don Griffin, Sam Pizzo, Sparky Adams, Max Moore, Jim Maloney, Charlie Waters and Craig Kibbe. Col Scott Merrow and MSgt Steve Haggett** are the active duty members of the Board.

Bylaw 3.1.1 of the Association states: *“There shall be no less than seven or more than eleven Elected Directors. Additionally, the serving 55th Wing Commander may nominate two volunteer active duty persons from the Wing to serve on the Board.”* The latter two must be approved by the serving Board.

Anyone desiring to serve on, or nominate someone for, the Board of Directors should let one of the current Board members know, who can relay to Sam Pizzo, and the names can be added to the slate.

At the general membership business meeting, nominations may be made from the floor, as well.

Bylaw 3.1.2, as amended in March 2000, allows any Board member elected four times to be exempt from election and be granted “permanent” status (and not count toward the limit of eleven), unless they decline that status, or choose to stand for election. A permanent Board member cannot serve as president. Those who have been

elected four times are: Adams, Hoover, Hoberman, Moore, Pizzo, Waters and White.

A slate of nominees, and who has chosen permanent status, will be announced at the membership meeting.



ASSOCIATION LOGO POLO SHIRTS

Charlie Waters is working on getting a batch of polo shirts with the dual-shield pin logo of the Association on them. The logo will be on the left breast, no pocket, white with blue or red trim, similar to those sold at past reunions until the supply ran out. Cost should run about \$25 each.

He would like to know how much interest there is for the sale of these so he can determine how many and of what sizes to order.

If you are interested in getting this type of shirt, to determine a body count **ONLY**, let him know number and sizes of shirts desired.

You can e-mail him at CEWpap@home.com, or drop a short note to:

151 Calhoun Dr. #507
Destin, FL 32541-1562

DO NOT SEND MONEY.



We are born naked, wet and hungry. Then things get worse.



DO YOU JUST BELONG?

(Reprinted from the DFC Society newsletter, but it can apply to any organization. Ed.)

Are you a member, the kind who would be missed? Or are you just a member, content your name is on the list?

Do you attend our reunions and mingle with the flock, or do you meet in private to criticize and knock?

Do you work on our committees to see there is no trick, or leave the work for just a few and complain about the clique?

So come to the reunions and help with hand and heart. Don't just be a member, but take an active part.

Think this over members, you know what's right and wrong. Are you an active member, or do you just belong?



Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.

A fine is a tax for doing wrong.
A tax is a fine for doing well.



TREASURER'S REPORT

The Association, as of 31 December 2000, had cash assets of \$14,364, of which \$5,577 is invested in a CD.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of 31 December 2000, the Association had 1015 members in good standing, 146 of which are widows exempt from paying dues. This is an increase of 10 members since 31 December 1999. At the end of 2000, there were 200 members who did **not** renew.

If your dues have expired, \$10.00 is due. \$25 will update your membership for three years.

To anyone whose dues expired earlier than 1 January 2001 and fails to renew this year, this will be the last newsletter you will receive. The four-digit year your dues expire(d) can be found in the upper right hand corner of the mailing label for this newsletter.

Please remit dues to **55SRW Association** and mail them in the enclosed, pre-addressed envelope to **Errol Hoberman at your earliest convenience.**

New members receive the Association's dual-shield lapel pin. Members desiring replacement or additional pins can get them from Errol for \$5.00 prepaid.

An updated Association roster will be published some time after the May reunion. So, this is a good time to use the envelope to give Errol **any pertinent data changes, i.e.: address, zip or phone area codes/number, spouse, et al.**



55th WING BIRTHDAY BALL

The **55th Wing** will hold its 23rd annual Birthday Ball on February 24, at Harvey's Hotel in Council Bluffs, IA. The gala celebrates the 60th anniversary of the activation of the **55th Pursuit Group** at Hamilton Field, CA, in January 1941. The date of this Ball also coincides with the designation of the **55th Reconnaissance Group** under SAC at MacDill Field, FL, in 1947. The current wing traces its heritage to both these historic events.

The primary theme of this year's Ball is "Silent Partners", and will focus on honoring those maintainers and acquisition units and organizations that have aided and supported the Wing so diligently over the past decades and enabled it to accomplish its varied and critical missions. Recognition will be made to the Boeing and Raytheon corporations, the Big Safari program, AFMC Det 2 at Greenville, TX, the Air Force Association, and the Offutt Advisory Council.

BGen Power will address the Ball and preside for the presentations. Additionally, two former members of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** will be inducted into the **55th Wing's** Hall of Fame; the **55th SRW Association** will award its first annual trophy to an outstanding

person, crew or unit of the Wing; and the Heartland of America Band will perform.

Co-chairmen of the Ball Planning Committee are **Maj Donald Curran** and **Capt Mark Stratton** of the **45th Reconnaissance Squadron**. The committee consists of volunteers from many **55th Wing** and base units. Bill Ernst and Max Moore, Association president and Board member, respectively, are on the committee as special advisors. Among the Ball attendees will be active duty personnel, retirees and civilian community leaders. Historically, about 80 Association members attend.

For those who receive invitations, **please RSVP whatever your intentions.** If you do **not** want to be invited in the future, indicate as such on your response and your name will be removed from the list.

The Association provides the **55th Wing** Protocol Office with our membership roster to be used for mailing invitations. That roster does not contain rank nor marital status. So please do not vent your displeasure on that office regarding how the invitation was addressed. Protocol personnel do not have the resources to research that information. *(The last two paragraphs are a recording.)*

By Max Moore



55th WING HALL of FAME

By now most of the Association's members know that the 55th Wing has an established Hall of Fame consisting of former 55thers who have distinguished themselves in significant ways.

The Hall of Fame process is an evolving one that actually had its beginning in 1998 with a "heritage project" initiated by **Col Bob Atkins**, the 55th Support Group Commander at that time. The concept was to select a number of "heroes" from the Wing's storied past to be honored in a lithograph and accompanying book, and to be presented at the Birthday Ball in January 1999.

A panel headed by the then-Wing Vice Commander, **Col Greg Smith**, began an arduous selection process over a several month period in 1998. Association Board members **Bill Ernst**, **Robb Hoover**, **LtCol Bo Marlin** and **TSgt Craig Kibbe** were among the members of that committee.

There were an established, definitive criteria, and a conscientious effort to choose a solid cross-section of the Wing's heritage.

The daunting challenge of reviewing many worthy nominees culminated in the naming of 19 "heroes" who **represented** the long history of, varied missions of, and the thousands of outstanding people who have served in the 55th

over the decades, from WWII, through the Cold War era, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and into the 1990's.

Many of those are well known to 55th alumni---**Reg Urschler**, **Harry Tull**, **Bruce Olmstead** and **John McKone**, **Burt Barrett**, "Iron Mike" **Rafferty**, **George Miller**, **Larry Mitchell**, et al.

Two more inductees, LtGens **Tom Keck** and **Phil Ford**, were chosen by **BGen Ron Sams**, the 55th Wing Commander, and presented at the Ball in January 2000. There was no formal selection method.

This year, BGen Power decided to define the criteria for nominees, named a selection panel, and add two more inductees.

The selection guiding principles stated: "Nominees could be civilian or military of any rank. The nominee(s) must have had a direct impact on the 55th Wing mission and/or (Offutt) community. Nominees can be historical figures who impacted the development of the 55th Wing (including all previous 55th organizations—the 55th Pursuit Group, 55th Fighter Group or the 55th Strategic Recon Wing.)

While personal achievement is important, the nominee will stand as a role model, therefore, primary consideration will be given to the nominee's leadership, vision and impact on the Wing." Association President Ernst was

named to the four-member panel.

Colonel **Bill Riggs**, who served longer than any 55th wing commander before or since (1966-70), during the Wing's move from Forbes to Offutt, and oversaw the transition from RB-47s to RC-135s, was nominated for induction by **Max Moore** on behalf of the Association.

Col Riggs was chosen for the Hall of Fame and will be inducted at the 24 February 2001 Birthday Ball. His widow, **Alice**, will be unable to attend due to recent hip surgery, but one of their daughters should be there to accept the honor.

The second inductee will be **Mr. (retired CMSgt) Jerald Kozlek**, who was nominated by **LtCol Kermit Neal**, commander of the 95RS at RAF Mildenhall, UK. **Mr. Kozlek** is being recognized for his significant support and contributions as a civilian service (GS) employee at RAF Mildenhall, NSA Souda Bay, Crete, and Riyadh, Saudia Arabia, during the Gulf War. He also has been named for several civilian supervisor, management, and performance awards.

The reason for this review article, and there is one, is that since its inception, the 55th Wing Hall of Fame has generated much discussion, sometimes passionate debate, and some would say, controversy, among Association members as to how our

organization should respond and participate in the future of the Hall of Fame process.

Some see the system as flawed; too limited in recognizing heroes, legends, and/or significant contributors, and does not warrant the Association's involvement.

Others take the position that, although the process is less than perfect so far, **if** the Association does **not** include itself in the program, we become part of the problem and not part of the solution.

At this point, the Association leadership has elected to continue to take part in the project, to suggest improvements in the selection criteria, and to participate in the nomination and selection process.

The intent here is to provide background for possible discussion on this subject at the Association membership meeting at the May reunion.

By Moore/Ernst

* * * * *

**YOUR 55TH ASSN
WEB SITE
www.55srwa.org**

You are urged to check out the site. **Webmeister Don Griffin** and his creative sidekick, **Dave Johnson**, have put together a virtual cyber-work of art. Everything you want to know about the Association is there: constitution, bylaws, officers and bios; membership form,

library, picture gallery, and e-mail address listing, bulletin board and links to many other sites of interest.

* * * * *

ASSOCIATION BUSINESS & MEMBERSHIP SOURCES

Business/Policy/Reunion Suggestions:

President Bill Ernst
410 Greenbriar Court
Bellevue, NE 68005
e-mail: BillErnst@aol.com

Association/Wing History:

Vice President Robb Hoover
13412 Tregaron Circle
Bellevue, NE 68123
e-mail:

RobbHoover@aol.com

Membership Dues/Changes of Address:

Treasurer Errol Hoberman
6441 Avenida De Galvez
Navarre, FL 32566
e-mail:
RavenOne@ispchannel.com

Newsletter Articles/Letters:

Secretary Ben White
330 W. Brambleton Ave
Apt 1614
Norfolk, VA 23510
e-mail: **yet TBD**

Associate Newsletter Editor:

Max Moore
201 Basswood Court
Bellevue, NE 68005-2001
e-mail:
MaxMoore55@aol.com

Association Web Page Comments/Ideas

Don Griffin
8683 Rawhide Lane, #11
Wilton, CA 95693
e-mail: dgrif@ns.net

TAPS – News of Association members and associates taking the “Big PCS” should be sent to **both** Bill Ernst and Ben White (*please note above that all Ben White’s address info has changed*).

Please include next of kin and an address to which the Association condolence card may be sent; date of demise, and any other pertinent information, if known. The news in **TAPS** is limited by what information is given.

T A P S



Dan Emrich, died October 27, 2000. Former RB-47 pilot/staff member at Forbes AFB, KS. Wife: **Barbara**. Alpine, CA.

Lillian Hagie, wife of **Doug**, long time RB-47 pilot in all three squadrons at Forbes and commander of 343rdSRS. She died October 15, 2000. San Antonio, TX

Earl L. Flora, died November 10, 2000. KC-97 navigator at Forbes; EC-135 nav at Offutt. Held staff

positions in 55th at Offutt. Wife: **Flossie**. Bellevue, NE.

Lewis A. Foreman, died October 29, 2000. Wife: **Mary**. Sumter, SC.

Dorothy Fullner, died December 2000. Wife of **Ray**. Riverside, CA

Ray F. Needham, died October 28, 2000. RB-47 pilot at Forbes. Fort Worth, TX.

Sally Reid, died December 25, 2000. Widow of **Al**, RB-47 pilot. Topeka, KS.

Elinor L. Schussler, died January 15, 2000. Widow of **Mickey**. Pensacola, FL.

Charleyne Tull, wife of **Harry**, long time EWO at Forbes and Offutt. She died November 5, 2000. Bellevue, NE

Sambi Wilder, died December 2000. Wife of **Thomas**. Louvale, GA



THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY

There is such an organization as the DFC Society. It was formed about six years ago, founded by **Alexander D. Ciurczak** of Capistrano Beach, CA.

There are minions of 55thers who have earned the DFC over the decades, so if anyone is interested in joining the Society, here is info to contact: write the DFC Society at 6920 Miramar Rd, Suite 207D, San Diego, CA 92121-2642. Phone: (858) 693-1950;

fax: (858) 693-1882; or e-mail: dfcsociety.com. The web site is: www.dfcsociety.org



55th ANTHEM
The Fightin' Fifty-Fifth, We
See All
*(Sung to the tune of "Hey,
Look Us Over!")*

**Hey! Look us over,
The 55th is here.
We're a bunch of rovers,
Traveled far and near.
We get together
Almost every year.
If ever a Wing in SAC
there was,
The 55th's the best
because:**

**We've looked you over,
From way up in the sky.
We've flown to places
Faint hearts wouldn't try.
Oh, the 55th's the first
to fight,
We're always number
one,**

**So look out world, here we
come!**

*(Editor's note: **Joe Gyulavics** with **John and Reese Drost**, put this ditty together on a paper napkin over lunch at the Seattle reunion in 1992. Hey! At least it is theme song. If someone thinks they can compose a better one, do it!)*



DEFINITION

Shin: A body part useful for finding furniture in the dark.



LOOKING AHEAD TO DAYTON 2003

The Association's Board of Directors has resolved to hold a reunion in Dayton, OH, the Thursday to Saturday **after** Labor Day 2003. This reunion is intended to coincide with the opening/dedication of the Cold War Annex to the Air Force Museum near Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.

Association members will be urged to make it official at the reunion meeting in Melbourne, FL.

The "queen", or centerpiece, of the exhibit is to be an RB-47H, tail number 4299, which flew operational strategic reconnaissance missions for the 55th SRW at Forbes AFB, KS, in the 1960s. Restoration of the ol' bird is progressing well.

John ('Jack', 'Ernie') Kovacs remains our man in place, and he has been formulating and coordinating reunion plans. He is recovering from heart-bypass surgery, but he continues to keep the Board updated on the status of the restoration process. And he is in frequent contact with **MGen (Ret) Charles Metcalf**, Air Force Museum Director.

MGen Metcalf reported in December that the groundbreaking for the annex is slated on or about 1 March of this year, and that "we hope to have beneficial occupancy by late spring 2003....the best laid plans."

The Museum may “co-sponsor” the reunion, which could grow to include other reconnaissance units, such as C-130, U-2 and SR-71 veterans.

More on this at the Melbourne reunion membership meeting and in future newsletters. (Basic article reprinted from Sept 2000 *Videmus Omnia*, with some updating. Max.)

* * * * *

The only cure for insomnia is to get more sleep

* * * * *

LETTERS AND STUFF

In a response to a dues reminder, **Bill Henderson** averred: Thanks, Errol. Check will be in the mail tomorrow. If felling well upon rising, will opt for the three year deal. If not feeling too well, will send monies for one year. If you do **not** hear from me, put me in the **TAPS** section of the next newsletter. Thanks, Bill H.

(Am pleased to report that Bill remitted his dues for three years in mid-January, presumably on a ‘feel-good’ day, thus avoiding a posting in TAPS. Max.)

* * * * *

(Have you ever wondered, and of course you have, why some names are highlighted and others not? Well, it is a well-accepted tenet of journalism that ‘names are news’. So, in this publication, as

a general rule, the first time a name is mentioned, it will be in **bold face type**. After that, it will be in the usual style. Of course, there are exceptions. Max)

* * * * *

Hi Max,

Thanks for the great work you did on the Bill Riggs nomination for the Hall of Fame. I am sure that most of the members of the **55th SRW Assn** have no idea of the time and effort the Board members put in just to keep things going. I salute all of you "Omaha guys" for your hard work.

I was glad to hear that one of Bill's family will be there at the Ball. I have houseguests arriving that weekend and I won't be able to attend. I hope **Tony** will make it, or **George Miller**.

(My) last visit with Bill was at the Seattle reunion. He was a great commander to work with; helped me along and made it possible to take over the job after Tony.

My best to everyone there and maybe I can make it next time. I hope everyone has a ball at the Ball!

Cheers, Bud

Via e-mail from **Marvin “Bud” Morss**, former **55thSRW** commander.

* * * * *

Max: I congratulate you for the persistence and drive that has made the very deserving honor to come about for Bill Riggs. Just got my invitation for the 55th's Birthday Ball. As of now, I plan to

attend. Hope to see you at the affair. Tony. (This is a composite of two e-mails from **Anthony Martinez**, former **55th SRW** commander.)

* * * * *

Anyone interested in a possible reunion of the USAF Pilot training Class 55-B are asked to contact **Dick Nemeth** at 3527 Goodview Ct., Fairfax, VA 22031, (703) 280-5075, or e-mail: d.hnemeth@att.net; or **Dale Peckman**, 1970 Thomas Dr., McKeesport, PA 15131, (412) 751-7102, e-mail: pherkybird@aol.com. (From an e-mail by Charlie Waters.)

* * * * *

Actual Lines from OERs

Has a full six-pack, but lacks the plastic thingy to hold them together.

Started out with nothing and still has most of it.

Bright as Alaska in December.

Has a photographic memory, but the lens cap is on.

Wheel is turning, but the hamster is dead.

Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train is not coming down the tracks.

Hard to believe he beat out 1,000,000 other sperm.

* * * * *

55TH SRWA REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
17-20 May 2001

MAIL EARLY—EARLY REGISTRATIONS received by APRIL 15th (TAX DAY) will be entered in a drawing for a free room for all four days!!

Also, under Florida law, as a tax exempt organization, you can legally avoid the 10% room tax if you pay for your room through the **55th SRWA**. If you pre-register with us by April 15th and include your total room payment (see below), we will pay for your room and you will save \$31.60 on the standard room for a four-day stay. 10% on other types of rooms.

For those who choose this payment method, your credit card will then not be used.

REMEMBER, SEND IN THIS FORM BY APRIL 15 TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE FREE ROOM DRAWING AND TO SAVE THE ROOM TAX

NAME(s): _____

GUEST(s): _____

(Include "callsign / nickname" for nametags)

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: () _____ E-MAIL: _____

() **REGISTRATION:** (Includes Hospitality Room) **(All attendees must pay this.)**
Total number attending: _____ X \$15.00 = \$ _____

ACTIVITIES OPTIONS (All costs are per person)

() ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TOURING AN RC-135 (if available) YES/NO

() PATRICK AFB GOLF TOURNAMENT
Total number playing golf: _____ X \$30.00 = \$ _____
(Cost **includes** carts, green fees and prizes)
Can you help transport golfers to the course at Patrick? YES/NO

() SHOPPING, FACTORY OUTLET MALL—VERO BEACH
() Thursday AM () Number attending
() Friday AM () Number attending
Total going shopping: _____ X \$ 15.00 = \$ _____

(Continued on next page)

() KENNEDY SPACE CENTER TOUR

() Thursday AM () Number attending

() Friday AM () Number attending

Total attending tour: _____ X \$ 40.00 = \$ _____

(Price **includes** Visitors Center, museum/gift shop and IMAX theater)

() CASINO CRUISE FROM PORT CANAVERAL (Thursday Evening)

Total attending cruise: _____ **No charge**--Just bring money!

() INDIAN RIVER DINNER CRUISE (Friday Evening) **Limit: first 75 sign ups.**

Total attending cruise: _____ X \$ 40.00 = \$ ****SOLD OUT (March 2)**

() DINNER BANQUET (Saturday Evening)

Please list your dinner choice(s): # _____ \$ _____ X _____ = _____

_____ \$ _____ X _____ = _____

(Prices include 18% gratuity. Dinner wine **not** included.)

#1 Chicken Apple Almond \$21.00 #3 Roast Prime Rib \$25.00

#2 Filet Mignon \$28.00 #4 Encrusted Mahi Mahi \$21.00

Special Food Needs (Please Specify) _____

Number of nights at Holiday Inn _____ X Room Price = _____

(Standard room \$79, oceanfront \$99, suite \$159)

GRAND TOTAL (of all events and hotel): _____

WILL YOU HAVE A VEHICLE AVAILABLE AT THE REUNION ? YES/NO

Make checks payable to BARNEY CLARY

Send completed form and payment to: Barney Clary
(Please us the enclosed preaddressed envelope) 1371 Sanibel Lane
Merritt Island, FL 32952

PLEASE HAVE THE FORM AND CHECK IN THE MAIL BY MAY 1st

We suggest you make a copy of this form as a reminder of the events you paid for!