

# Videmus Omnia 55th STRAT RECON WING ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2006

# REUNION OMAHA/OFFUTT-"RETURN TO RECCA" 20-24 SEPTEMBER 2006



The 25<sup>th</sup> (Silver) Reunion of the 55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association will return to the current home turf of the *Fightin'* Fifty-Fifth for the first time in ten years, and it will mark an opportunity to reengage former members, friends and associates of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW with this generation of warriors presently serving our nation in the War on Terror. You do not want to miss this one.

This issue of the  $\overline{VO}$  contains the planned schedule of events for the reunion and a

registration form. You will note that there is a \$20 incentive to register early. Plus, if you register by 1 August you will be in a pool for a drawing to win one free night's stay in the hotel.

# Cut-off date for reunion registration is 21 August 2006. Send it in now!!!!

Headquarters will be the Downtown/Old Market Embassy Suites at 10<sup>th</sup> and Howard Streets in Omaha, NE. Easily accessible from I-80 and from Epply Airport, it is located just across the street from the bustling and eclectic Old Market area of downtown Omaha, noted for its diversity in fine restaurants and myriad specialty shops.

To book your suite, the number for central reservations is 1-800-EMBASSY (362-2779). To call the hotel directly, phone: 402-346-9000. Refer to the ID name: **55thSRW Association if you call in**. Or, you can go online and check out the hotel at www.embassysuitesomaha.com. If you **register on line**, the ID block code is loaded as **RWA** since SRW was already allocated.

The IDs are needed to get the **special reunion** rate of \$119 for single and \$124 for double occupancy (plus taxes and fees, 16.46%). The rate is good for three days either side of the 20-24 September 2006 reunion dates. The cut-off date for hotel registration to receive the reunion rate is also 21 August.

The rate includes for Embassy guests, a madeto-order hot breakfast, an evening manager-hosted cocktail reception, complimentary newspaper, and free parking **every day**; plus courtesy (free) shuttle transportation to/from the airport.

# Schedule of Events

Registration will begin Wednesday, 20 September. There will be generous hours for the hospitality suite every day for local area members as well as those from out of town. The obligatory golf outing is slated for Thursday morning. Tours are offered as are alternative activities for the ladies. Ample free time is allocated to commiserate with long time friends and comrades, and to enjoy the sights and attractions that Omaha has to offer. (See attached schedule.)

For those reunionites who live in the Omaha/Offutt area, you are advised to visit the hotel during the reunion registration hours to get the reception package (**not later than** 1300 Friday, 22 Sept), and hit the hospitality suite anytime for camaraderie and fellowship.

The grand banquet will be on **Friday** (coat and Association tie for the gents).

Saturday will be devoted to the **membership** meeting in the morning, and the afternoon will be at Offutt for briefings, tours and other activities. (*This* is the recommended day to wear the Association polo shirts and caps to show the logo).

The evening festivities will be an informal BBQ with live entertainment on the base. This will be the

best time to meet and interact with the active duty troops of the current *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*.

If you have **not** been back to Offutt in recent years, you will see lots of physical changes around the ol' flying patch. New construction is evident all around the base, including extensive runway repairs and upgrade, which began in mid-May. The Wing's aircraft, crews and maintenance are operating from Lincoln, NE, Airport during the project which will last into November. This involves about 12% of wing personnel in place or commuting.

Finalize your plans now to "Return to Recca" at Omaha/Offutt this September and get the registration form in soonest!!

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# PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Greetings from the Heartland.

The hot and windy has finally arrived to the Midwest and is here to stay for a while. However, as the weather patterns have changed over the years, September should not be so warm. Average temperatures range from 70F to 80F daily, with cooler evenings, a marked decrease from the July and August hot and humid. It was very pleasant last September during the third week of the month. Should be pleasant for the gathering this year.

The schedule of events and registration information are included herein. <u>SIGN UP</u> <u>EARLY</u>. There is an early registration cost advantage and there will be a drawing for three free hotel nights for the early birds.

As you can see in this grand newsletter, the Association has been busy here at Offutt. Numerous events have offered the perfect forum for the direct involvement of the Association in 55<sup>th</sup> Wing activities. There are on-going opportunities where we are involved. We are currently helping on an Offutt monument feasibility study and together with the Wing, helping the 55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Association with a monument dedication at Wormingford, England, to honor those lost in World War II operating from RAF Wormingford.

More info to follow as these projects develop or are completed.

Our involvement is a direct result of the outstanding regard for the Association from **BGen Jonathan George**. He actively seeks our input and advice in those matters where our experience as an Association and historical perspective can add to the equation. We are grateful for the opportunities and look forward to many more challenges.

General George has overcome some higher headquarters scheduling conflicts and will be able to participate in the reunion. This will be your opportunity to say "hello to the Wing Commander", to see some of the troops of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing, and to get an update on the current missions and activities of the Wing to understand the why behind the statement that "The sun never sets on the Fightin' Fifty-Fifth".

So...come on out to the reunion in September to meet with old friends, tell some tall tales, and to thank the men and women of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* who are in the front lines fighting the War on Terror.

See y'all in September

Videmus Omnia, Jim

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# ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This will be done at the membership meeting at the reunion. For your review following is the bylaw governing same.

#### By Law 3: Directors

- 3.1 Membership: The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Board of Elected and Permanent Directors (Directors).
- 3.1.1 Elected Directors: 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 two 55th nominees, when approved by the serving Board of Directors, will serve with all the rights, responsibilities and privileges of the Elected Directors. Their terms of office will coincide with the serving Elected Directors and may continue as long as they remain assigned to the 55th Wing, unless replaced by a Board approved nominee(s) of the serving 55th Wing Commander.

- 3.1.2 **Permanent Directors**: Directors who have served **four or more elected terms** will be automatically granted "Permanent" status unless they request otherwise. When confirmed in permanent status by the President, these Directors will be exempt from elections and will **not** count against the elected number restriction. With the exception of not being eligible for President, Permanent Directors will have all rights, responsibilities and privileges of Elected Directors.
- 3.2 Election of Directors shall be held at Membership meetings conducted during the Association reunions
- 3.3 The term of each Elected Director shall extend until the next reunion Membership meeting.

(Note: Once the Board is elected, the Board members meet, then nominate and elect the officers.)

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# THE ASSOCIATION GETS MAXIMUM EXPOSURE

From the time BGen Jonathan George assumed command of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing in October 2005, he has been exposed to the Association's visibility and dedicated support to the Wing.

He was (and still is) so impressed with what the Association represents that he extended an offer to Pres Thomas, the **unique**, and first time ever, opportunity to give a presentation to the Wing's senior staff at the weekly standup meeting in the Operation Support Sqd's conference room (no, it hasn't been held in the command post for some time, and the group doesn't stand up).

On 13 March 2006 before a packed room of about 70 officers and NCOs, Thomas, Secretary **Max Moore** and Historian **Robb Hoover** did a three-man tag-team briefing hitting the highlights of the Association's purposes and support to the Wing.

After an introduction by 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Vice Commander **Col Curtiss Petrek**, Thomas led off with a preamble of basically what, why and who the Association is. He emphasized that no other unit in the Air Force has such a large, active and viable "alumni fraternity" that continues to grow, contribute and serve.

#### The Briefing

Moore then detailed accomplishments, projects and activities in which Association members play important roles and/or participate: the annual Wing Birthday Ball; the Hall of Fame; the Award for Excellence: the establishment of the 55SRW Cold

War Memorial; and the procurement and construction of a flag/flag pole for the Offutt AFB historic military cemetery.

Hoover picked up the narration by discussing how the Association spearheads recognition of the noted figures and events in the history of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*; Association reunions; "*Tales of the 55*<sup>th</sup>"; and the many ways our organization contributes to historical support of the Wing with research, oral interviews, videos, publishing books and articles.

Closing remarks were made by Thomas who wound up the meeting by presenting a \$1000 check to Col Petrek and **Major** (**LtCol-sel**) **Mike Kosco**, chairman of the 2006 Birthday Ball committee. The annual donation from the Association helps defray the costs so junior enlisted personnel can attend the Wing's largest social event.



L to R: Petrek, Kosco, Thomas

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# ASSOCIATION BUSINESS & MEMBERSHIP SOURCES DIRECTORY

**Business/Policy/Reunion Suggestions:** 

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E-mail: JThomas927@aol.com

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# **Association Web Page Comments/Ideas:**

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Wilton, CA 95693

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Jim Maloney

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Papillion, NE 68046-5619

E-mail: jim@maloney.com

#### Other Members of the Board of Directors:

Vice President Ricky McMahon

Permanent Members: Sam Pizzo, Sparky Adams, Charlie Waters, Bill Ernst, (Hoover, Maloney). Elected Members: Joe Gyulavics, Fox Censullo, George Ross, LtCol Kevin Todd, Michael Cook, Dennis Haun, (Thomas, Hoberman, Moore, Griffin). Active Duty Members: Colonel Don Kelly and LtCol Ken Bauer.

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# TREASURER'S REPORT

\$ \$ \$ \$

The Association, as of 1 May 2006, had a checking account balance \$4,109.74. Another \$7,471.04 is in a saving account, and \$10,090 is held in a CD. **The Association remains solvent.** 

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# **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Also on 1 May 2006, the Association had **1,104** members in good standing, of which 158 are widows, plus 34 associated members. This is a net **increase** of **59** members since 13 February 2005.

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The effort by Membership Chairman Hoberman to recoup those whose memberships lapsed from 1994-2004 began with a 'we want you back' letter

that went in the snail mail to 263 former members the latter part of January.

Of those who responded, 74 returned to the fold. A remarkable number. Most had just let it slip by and/or needed the reminder. As expected, there were several 'return to sender' comebacks due to moves or the passing of former members.

The Association can once again claim members in all **50 states**, plus Guam, Puerto Rico and APOs in Europe.

The number of **active duty members** continues to rise as interest has picked up due to the Association's exposure in the Offutt area, the solid support of the Wing senior staff, and as current members continue to recruit.

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2006 on <u>your address label</u> means that your dues expire at the <u>end of this year</u>, and you are still a Regular Member (RM) in good standing. Any other year indicates when your dues will expire, or have already expired.

Dues come due each January, so if you haven't already done so, reup <u>now</u>.

If your dues expired 2005, \$20.00 is due to include 2006. One year's dues is \$10; \$25 will update your membership for three years beyond what now shows as an expiration year.

NOW is the time to renew.

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Please remit dues to 55SRW Association and mail to Errol Hoberman as soon as practical. For those who receive this newsletter via regular post, an Association-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

New members receive the Association's dualshield lapel pin and the 55<sup>th</sup>SRW Cold War Memorial coin when they join.

Members desiring replacement or additional pins can get them from Errol for \$5.00 prepaid (if you want more than one pin, the cost is just \$3.00 for each additional pin if mailed at the same time; i.e. one pin, \$5, two pins, \$8, three pins \$11, etc.).

Jim Thomas and Max Moore have pins and coins, as well, so members in the Omaha area can get the pins from them for \$3.00 without the postage. Extra coins are \$5.00 each.

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Over the years, it has not been an unusual for members to include modest amounts of money over and above that required for dues to add to the treasury, and every dollar is much appreciated.

Others may wish to contribute to the Association with an outright donation, or by an endowment or bequest. Something to consider.

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If you don't receive e-mails from the Association, it likely is because your e-address is not listed or outdated. To get on the *members only* e-mail roster, or correct/update any changes in recent months, send your current e-mail address to Errol Hoberman at SAC-EWO@mchsi.com.

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# MEMORIAL BRICKS CAN STILL BE ORDERED

Dear Fellow Members,

A final reminder: There may still some 55th veterans out there who haven't gotten the word about the 55<sup>th</sup> Cold War Memorial that was completed in the National Museum of the US Air Force Museum Memorial Gardens, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, and dedicated in September 2003. This project is a magnificent tribute to the Cold Warriors of the 55th SRW and is centered on a paver brick patio.

Over 600 of the bricks were engraved-to-order for the purchasers. If you haven't bought a brick, or know of an individual who has not bought a brick and wants one, **the time is now** to purchase one or more. It will be necessary for us to have 15 or more orders for the contractor to engrave the additional personalized bricks on-site.

The cost is \$65 for each brick, and the engraving is **limited** to three lines, 13 characters per line including spaces, dashes and slashes (**No periods, commas, colons or semicolons or quotation marks**). Example is as follows:

LTC JOE DOKES = 13 Characters RC-135 AC/IP = 12 Characters 38TH/343RD SRS = 14 Characters, but ok

If you want to upgrade your membership with a brick buy, send us \$100 and you will pay for a brick and three years' membership extension. Add \$65 for any additional bricks.

As I have said before, **now** is the time to get a brick for your grandchildren and great grandchildren to reflect upon in the years to come.

Make your checks to **55SRW Association**, tell us exactly how you want your brick(s) to read, and mail to Bill Ernst, 410 Greenbriar Court, Bellevue, NE, 68005.

No more orders for bricks will be taken after the reunion in September 2006.

See you in Omaha! VO, Bill

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# THE 55<sup>TH</sup> WING HALL OF FAME

**Colonel Merlin F. (Steve) Stevens**, USAF-Retired, is the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Hall of Fame inductee for 2006. He served with distinction in four separate tours with the 55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing at Offutt AFB, NE, during a span of over17 years.

He was inducted into the Hall during a ceremony at 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Headquarters at 1500 on 31 March in the company of family, friends, wing staff and other well wishers.



BGen George, 55th Wing/CC does the honors

In March 1967 as a member of the 343<sup>rd</sup> SRS, Steve was in the first cadre of pilots to qualify in the 55<sup>th</sup>'s newly acquired RC-135C aircraft. He early on demonstrated his leadership and aviation skills as an aircrew commander.

Following assignments to Eielson AFB, AK, and Clark AFB, P.I., he returned to the **55**<sup>th</sup> **SRW** in July 1972 with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Command and

Control Squadron as an instructor/evaluator pilot in the EC-135C flying the Strategic Air Command's Airborne Command Post.

In April 1974 Colonel Stevens was **specifically** selected to be the chief of the command crew flying 'Casey 01' for Commanders in Chief of Strategic Air Command, Generals John Meyer and Russell Dougherty at Offutt.

Colonel Stevens' third tour with the 55<sup>th</sup> began in December 1975 as operations officer of the 2ACCS. He then commanded the squadron from June 1977 to June 1978.

His following assignment was to the Pentagon, Joint Staff, Worldwide Military Command and Control Systems, working the E-4A/B Program (the mission of which was now part of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW). During this period, he was promoted to colonel two years below-the-zone.

After attending the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, DC, and another assignment at the Pentagon, Colonel Stevens was once again reassigned to the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW in July 1981 in his most important capacities. He served as the Deputy Commander for Operations, Vice Wing Commander, and was the Commander the Wing from November 1982 through October 1984. He retired in April 1986 culminating an outstanding 30-year career serving his country.

Of very special note is that the inspired leadership, dedication to duty and exemplary professionalism demonstrated throughout his career, presented Colonel Stevens as a superb role model and mentor to numerous officers and NCOs who served with and under him. His personal example motivated many of them to follow his footsteps, several of whom remained with, or later returned to, the Wing to become another generation of leaders in the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*. That is Colonel Stevens' most positive and lasting legacy.

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# TALES OF THE 55<sup>TH</sup>

Coordinator and emcee Jim Thomas took the reins from event originator Robb Hoover for the seventh edition of the "Tales of the 55<sup>th</sup>" on Friday afternoon, 31 March in the ballroom of the Patriot Club (also know as THE Club; formerly known as

the Offutt Club; formerly known as the Offutt Officers Open Mess, aka: OOOM or O-Club).

The occasion has become the traditional kick-off of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Birthday Ball weekend.



Pres Thomas acknowledges Hoover's contributions

Attired in a set of flyers' pinks and greens with leather jacket, Jim welcomed the largest crowd ever, a standing room only group of over 300, the majority of whom were active duty crewdogs.



After his opening remarks, he introduced Hoover to relate the tale of the 55<sup>th</sup> ceremonial bell. Robb then rang the bell to open the festivities. **Harry Tull** took his turn at it, and then BGen Jonathan George, 55<sup>th</sup> Wing commander made it official. The general followed with comments of his own regarding the significance of the "Tales" and traditions established by the forebears of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*.

He then instituted a new tradition with a war cry, as Colonel Petrek, the wing vice commander, called out to the assemblage: "The Fightin' Fifty-Fifth!!", to which the crowd responded: "Leads the fight!!!". This was repeated several times during the evening. BGen George credited Command Chief MSgt Bob Muthard with the idea of the chant.

### The Speakers

The agenda of speakers ranged from WWII to today's war fighters. **MGen (Ret) Ed Giller** led off recounting his time with the 55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group in the UK, and how the 55th was the **first** Allied aerial unit **over Berlin** during the war. The bombers had received a recall due to weather, but the fighters did not get the message and pressed on.

**Pappy Cole** told of his duty in the early years of the Cold War recon business with descriptions of deployments in RB-29s and RB-50s. **Capt Clay Small**, an EC-130 (*Compass Call*) pilot of the 55<sup>th</sup> Electronic Combat Group from Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, related how his unit of electronic jammers supported the efforts of air and ground missions during Iraqi Freedom in more recent months.



**Capt Brandon Pollock**, an aircraft commander in the 45<sup>th</sup> Recon Sqd, gave an account of how the OC-135 (*Open Skies*) crews provided damage assessment and other support in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

The event ended with BGen George, the speakers, and the assemblage toasting the 55th troops currently deployed around the world who continue to bolster the motto, dating from the 1950s, that "The sun never sets on the 55<sup>th</sup>".



BGen George, Giller, Cole, Pollock, (not pictured: Small) Toasting: "Videmus Omnia!"

This year's event was again tri-sponsored by the **55**<sup>th</sup> **SRW Association**; the Strategic Roost, Association of Old Crows; and the local Curtis E. LeMay Chapter, Order of Daedalions.

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# 55<sup>TH</sup> WING BIRTHDAY BALL 2006

The 28<sup>th</sup> Birthday Ball was held on Saturday, 1 April, 2006, at the Qwest Center Omaha and another grand event it was. Attendance was over 700 for the gala, including over 100 Association members and guests, both retirees and active duty. Wing Commander BGen George hosted the Ball.

The planning committee was ably headed by Major (LtCol-sel) Kosco and **Maj Brien Baude**, both of the 1ACCS. Moore and Ernst represent the Association on the committee.

The Association was well represented at the Ball by the usual local suspects, led by President Thomas and his wife **Sharon**, Secretary Moore and **Carol**, Historian Hoover and **Shirley**, Board members Bill Ernst and **Linda**, Michael Cook and **Tina**, Jim Maloney and **Peg**, Col Don and **Melinda** Kelly; LtCol Kevin and **Janice** Todd.

The local contingent included: BGen and Kelly George; Col and Joyce Petrek; Dick and Lorraine Purdum; Dick and Jane Scott; Tom and Francine Garrity; Bob Krist, Brain Worth, Jeff and

Debbie Polles; Dave and Irene Wolfe; Charlie and Dannie Daubs; John and Toni Johnson; Gene and Linda Shaw; Reggie Stewart and 'Bert'.

Also: Kurt and Jamie Kramer; Mike and Mary Scacca; LtCol Wes and Anna Thibodeaux; Dave and Colleen Burroughs, John and Ruth Tresmer; Pete Glenboski; Ham and Pat Kennedy; LtCol Barry Beard; LtCol Randy and Lisa Vogel; Dorene Sherman; Ronnie Mitchell; Roland and Kathy Saenz (who bring their grandchildren); Col Dennis and Claudia Wier; Richard and India Casey; CMSgt Robert Muthard; Col Gary and Mrs. Elliott; Col Don and Kara Gleason; LtCol Stephen Graf and Kelly Nelson.

Among those who ventured in from other parts were: Vice Pres McMahon and Cary; Greg Smith; Bob and Carole Barsaloux; Al and Sandy Feldkamp; Jim and Marion Taylor; Pete and Treva Potter; Jim Riley; Roger and Ann Bishop; Paul and Susan Yeoman; Mace MacElhaney; LtCol Tim Spaeth; Roger and Gena Craig; Bucky Shiers; John Trumble and two of his grown children.

Four former wing commanders attended: MGen (Ret) and Mrs Michael Kudlacz; BGen (Ret) Larry Mitchell and Susan; Col (Ret) Steve Stevens and Suzanne; and Col (Ret) Dan Peterson and Katie.

Hall of Famers who returned were: LtGen (Ret) **John Sams**; Ed and **Millie** Giller, Mitchell, Tull, Pappy Cole and **Anka**; **Loose Lane** and **Cindy**; and **Hank Dubuy** and **Sandra**.



The theme for the event was "The Fightin' Fifty-Fifth Leads the Fight". The guest speaker was LtGen (USAF-Ret) Thomas G. McInerney, former USAF Ass't Vice Chief of Staff, and currently a military analyst for Fox TV News.

The event's program included the announcement of the 2005 55<sup>th</sup> SRW Assn Award

for Excellence winner (see following article), and the presentation of the newest member into the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Hall of Fame, Col (Ret) Steve Stevens.



Déjà vu all over again with BGen George and Stevens

BGen George, Ed Giller (as the senior member in attendance) and Airmen Basic **John Huck** (the newest member of the Wing) did the honors of cutting the birthday cake using the ceremonial saber donated by the Association in 2001.



Documented evidence of Ed Giller's cake cutting expertise dating to the 55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group in 1943.

The **Noteables** big band group of the ACC Heartland of America Band, resplendent in their WWII replica uniforms, provided the dance music to wind up the festivities.

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# THE 55<sup>TH</sup> SRW ASSOCIATION AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The 55<sup>th</sup> SRW Association Annual Award for Excellence is presented to that individual, crew, group, or organization that best exemplifies the basic tenants of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW Association.

The 2005 recipient of the Award is **MSgt Norman de la Vega**, a member of the 55<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Sqd, and the Elite Guard.

Pres Thomas made the announcement at the Ball, stating that the MSgt emerged as the "most exceptional performer" among a group of nineteen superior nominees from the Wing, and citing the accomplishments leading to his selection.

MSgt de la Vega was selected as Air Combat Command's 2005 Outstanding Security Forces Support Staff NCO, and was rewarded for his leadership with a promotion through the Stripes for Exceptional Performers Program (STEP).

He was consistently recognized by his supervisors and commanders for his over and above professionalism during deployments to Afghanistan and in his assigned duties at Offutt.



Association Vice President McMahon, the inaugural recipient of the Award, made the plaque presentation to MSgt de la Vega.

Past award recipients are McMahon, 338<sup>th</sup> Combat Training Squadron commander, for 2000; and **MSgt Steven** and **MSgt Lisa Haggett**, 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Command Section, 2001; **LtCol Kurt Kramer**, 38<sup>th</sup> RS commander, 2002, and **LtCol** 

**Glen Gulleckson**, 343<sup>rd</sup> RS commander, 2003; **TSgt Terry Hunt**, Medical Support Group, 2004.

The permanent trophy resides in the lobby of the **Gen Russell Dougherty** Conference Center at Offutt. Many significant events are held there each year, including the annual ACC Commanders and Chiefs Conferences, so it is in a high visibility area.

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# HOOVER AUDITORIUM DEDICATED

The Air Force Officers Training School (OTS) at Maxwell AFB, AL, dedicated an auditorium in its headquarters building in honor of LtCol (Ret) **Robb** L. **Hoover**, an aviation cadet graduate, Class 63-09, and veteran Cold Warrior, on 17 May 2006.

The ceremony was before a packed auditorium including 250 OTS cadets, **BGen Ronnie Hawkins**, Commander, Air Force Officer Accession and Training Schools, and **Col David Gerber**, Commander, OTS.



Robb's career included serving in the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW as an electronic warfare officer in RB-47s and RC-135s in which he flew numerous operational strategic reconnaissance missions against hostile communist nations worldwide. His career also had several positions in SAC's intelligence arena.

The foyer outside Hoover Auditorium will have a Cold War motif (a work in progress), and plaques are posted honoring four other Cold War veterans who also just happened to have served in the Fightin' Fifty-Fifth: LtGen (Ret) C. Norman

Wood, the first OTS graduate (1960) to attain the rank of general officer; BGen (Ret) Regis Urschler, aviation cadet (1955); BGen (Ret) Larry Mitchell, graduate of the last class of OCS (1963); and LtCol (Ret) Harry Tull, aviation cadet (1944-45) and a Tuskegee airman.

The idea for this project was generated by two former 55<sup>th</sup>'ers (and current Association members) who are OTC squadron commanders, LtCol Mark Morris, (son of Mike Morris, another 55<sup>th</sup> old crow) and LtCol Bruce Danskine, who sought to recognize superior leadership examples of former graduates from OTS, OCS and aviation cadets.



L to R: Danskine, Wood, Hoover, Tull, Mitchell, Morris.

**Capt Dale Kolomaznik** was the lead project officer whose planning and execution of the dedication event schedule was outstanding.

Many family and friends attended the three days of activities associated with the dedication which included a formal dining out, an informal BBQ, and the graduation parade for the Basic Officer Training and Commission Officer Training classes.

They were: Shirley Hoover, daughter Lisa Lambert and granddaughter Amelia; brother, Dr. Ken and Sandy Hoover; Jim and Judy Strickland; Bill Ernst; Max Moore; Errol Hoberman and Susan Curran; Ken and Myrtle Stoop; John Trumble; Susan Mitchell; Gary Percival; Hank and Sandra Dubuy; Ray, 'Sam' and Mitchell Kinkaid; Mike and Muriel Morris and Bob and Marty Kenderdine, Mark Morris' parents and in-laws and his wife, Nancy.

Active duty Association members assigned to Maxwell schools who were encountered were Col Steve Visco, LtCol Will Hampton (a former member of the Board of Directors) and **Major Jennie Hampton**; and **LtCol Jeff** and **Major Trish Seinwill**, all of whom are headed onward and upward in the best tradition of outstanding 55<sup>th</sup> alumni. (*Hoo-rah!!!*)

An RC-135W and crew from the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing at Offutt flew in for a static display, and a flyover of the graduation parade and commissioning ceremony **precisely** as the hats went in the air! (*Good nav.*)

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TAPS



**Ann Carretto**, 83, 26 February 2006; Abilene, TX. Wife of **Frank**, former 55<sup>th</sup> navigator. A native of New Jersey, Ann was a career Air Force nurse from 1952-1974, and retired as a lt. colonel.

William D. Kyle, 88, 6 February 2006; Ogden, UT. Born in Butte, MT, Colonel Kyle was a 1943 graduate of the US Military Academy at West Point, NY. He served as a B-24 pilot with the Mighty 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force in the UK toward the end of WWII; and in B-29s at Okinawa during the Korean War. He was commander of the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW at Forbes AFB, KS, 1960-61, during which time his stellar and dignified leadership was evident in the aftermath when the Soviets shot down an unarmed RB-47 over the Barents Sea in July 1960.



Annie Elizabeth Hathaway Minor, 22 March 2006; Augusta, GA. Widow of Marion E. Minor.

Eddie "Mitch" Phillips, 51, 26 February 2006; in Las Vegas although he resided in Mary Ester, FL. Mitch was a native of Lawton, OK, and served in the US Marine Corps before earning a commission in the Air Force. He was an RC-135 EWO in the 55<sup>th</sup> at Offutt from 1982-88. He subsequently worked as a civilian for the Air Force as Deputy Chief of Advanced Programs.

**James E. Stitt**, 84, 23 April 2006; Kokomo, IN. Jim was an EWO on RB-50s, and later in RB-47s at Forbes AFB, KS. He retired in 1963.

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**TAPS** notification of Association members, spouses, friends and associates taking the Big PCS should be sent to Jim Thomas and Max Moore (see DIRECTORY, page 4 for contact info).

Please include next of kin and an address and to whom the Association condolence card may be sent; date of demise, age, crew or duty position; bases and approximate years with 55<sup>th</sup>; and any other pertinent information.

The news in TAPS is <u>limited</u> by how much and how accurate the given information.

\* \* \* \* \*

# **LETTERS AND STUFF**



To the men and Women of the 55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association:

Our family thanks you for reaching out to us at this time of great sadness.

How Lloyd loved his 55<sup>th</sup> SRW !!!!!

We appreciate your comforting expression of sympathy.

With sincere gratitude,

*Sylvia and the entire Navarro family*, Universal City, TX (*From an e-mail*, 25 *January* 2006.)

\* \* \* \* \*

Membership Chairman Hoberman:

Please update your files with my status and new mailing address.

Commanding the **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** was the absolute best job in my career. I want to continue my association with this tremendous group of warriors!!

*MGen Craig Koziol*, Commander, Air Intelligence Agency, Lackland AFB, TX.

(From a note February 2006)

\* \* \* \* \*

My name is *John M. McGee*.

I was with the 55<sup>th</sup> from June 1954 to September 1957, first with the A&E squadron as a K-system mechanic, and later with the HQ squadron in maintenance control under Major **Bubert**.

After leaving the AF, I went on to college and graduated as a chemical engineer. I spent most of my career with NASA at three different locations.

I saw at least one person I knew at the September 2003 reunion, **Robert H. Goss**. I think he was originally from Vermont.

By the way, the last flightline job I had at Forbes was a compass swinger. I saw an RB47H in the Pima boneyard in 1989. I climbed on top and opened the transit hatch and saw my initials that I scratched on the underside of the hatch when I last swung that airplane. The old Navy buddy with me couldn't believe it!

I have many fond memories of my time with SAC. It gave me a great start in life. 23 Feb 2006

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Max and Errol:

I just pulled up the February newsletter and read it cover to cover. The article on the naming of the hall for Robb Hoover, and the one on BGen George saving the U-2 were great.

As I look back over the years, I think how lucky I have been to know such a GREAT bunch of guys as those in the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW.

I'm trying to get all my administrative work done, as well other chores, prior to going back in the hospital for my second knee replacement. The first one turned out wonderfully. If the second one goes as well, I may be able to leap over tall buildings.

Best Wishes and *Videmus Omnia*, *Walter Savage*, Green Mountain, NC. (*From an e-mail*, 7 March 2006)

(Yo, Walter, my man! Don't get carried away, or...... you just might be. Max)

\* \* \* \* \*

Hi Errol:

A quick note to say I just prefer to receive the hard copy of the newsletter. I love reading it over and over.

Thanks, *Pat Phillips*, Sacramento, CA. (*From an e-mail, 16 March 2006*)

\* \* \* \* \* \*

Max:

I want to compliment you on the 55<sup>th</sup> Strat Recon Wing Association newsletter. It is a most professional job and enjoyable to read.

Bill Manire, Papillion, NE

(A former 55<sup>th</sup> SRW/CC. From an e-mail, 16 March 2006)

\* \* \* \* \*

(Always nice to get warm fuzzies from the folks "out there". Makes the effort worthwhile. Max)

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear Mr. Moore:

I was curious enough one day and decided to look up my grandfather's name on the Internet. He passed away a long time before I was born; in fact it was when my father was just about five years old. I knew he died in a plane crash but that was all.

I found a message on the Internet (from the 55<sup>th</sup> SRWA web site) about names that were being added on a monument, and I just wanted to thank (your Association).

**TSgt Hervey Hebert** was my grandfather and it is good to know that he is being remembered. So, I thank you very much!

Bethany Rutherford (formerly 'Hebert')

(From an e-mail, 8 April 2006)

Note: Ms Rutherford refers to action taken by the Association's Cold War Monument committee, which added to the memorial's Honor Roll, the names of six enlisted crewmembers, TDY from the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW, who perished with Rivet Amber, RC-135E over the Bearing Sea on 5 June 1969.

\* \* \* \* \*

Max,

I'm very familiar with your association and its fine reputation. A friend of mine, **Bill Simon** of State College, PA, is a member. Bill and I were colleagues in AFROTC at Penn State decades ago.

I ran into Bill, and through him, got to meet a number of **55th** people, at the SAC reunion in Pooler, GA, a few years ago (*May 2002*).

Also, last year I had occasion to admire the outstanding **55th SRW** monument at the National Museum of the US Air Force.

Dodds Monuments of Xenia, OH, the same firm that produced (*the 55<sup>th</sup> Cold War*) monument, will be doing the SAC Memorial as well.

When I was consulting with the people at Dodds in the spring of 2005, they made a point of saying how much they appreciated working with the 55 SRWA. They expressed their confidence that the 55th would support the SAC Memorial Project.

Thanks again for the contact info. I plan to be at the SAC reunion in Tucson in May with plenty of materials and info about the SAC Memorial.

Ron Resh, Project Coordinator, Silver Spring, MD. (From an e-mail 6 March 2006)

\* \* \* \* \* \*

## SAC MEMORIAL PROJECT



Design depiction by Dodds Monuments of Xenia, OH

The SAC Memorial project is a grass roots effort by SAC veterans and SAC component organizations to erect a monument at the National Museum of the US Air Force Memorial Gardens near Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.

Initial planning and design of the ten feet tall, six feet wide monument, are completed. The fund raising stage is ongoing and the target is \$25,000. The aim is for construction to be finished in time for official dedication sometime in 2007 or 2008.

55<sup>th</sup>SRW Association members who wish to contribute to the fund drive should make checks

payable to "*Dodds Monuments – SAC Memorial Project*", and mail to "SAC Memorial Project", c/o Ron Resh, Coordinator, 10825 Bucknell Dr, Silver Spring, MD, 20902-4325.

For more direct information, you can e-mail Ron at: rreshlegis@aol.com

\* \* \* \* \*

Editor's plea: If any members wish to contribute letters, stories, photos and articles, please send them to me. If events occur in your area that you think would be of interest to the general readership, mail or e-mail the pertinent details, and include the names of those Association members who attend. Names are news. The only way to broaden our coverage is to get input from 'out there'.

Thanks, and Videmus Omnia, Max

(Contributions may be edited for content, readability, and spacing.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## **E – NEWSLETTER**

Association members in good standing who so desire can receive the newsletter via electronic transmission. To get on the members only e-mail roster, send current e-mail address to SAC-EWO@mchsi.com. Or go to: www.55srwa.org for full instructions on how to read and/or download the e-newsletter. There is an archive of many past issues there, as well.

\* \* \* \* \*

# ASSOCIATION POLO SHIRTS/CAPS

You will no doubt want to acquire a shirt and/or cap in time for the big reunion in Omaha to wear at the membership meeting and Offutt Day. They will be available at the reunion, but buy now and avoid the rush. No waiting.

The May shirt inventory by sizes: small - 2; medium - 6; large - 8; XL - 7; XXL - 3. If those go, we can always order more of any size as needed, including XXXL. A new order will likely be placed before the reunion. Cost is \$25 per shirt.

The dual shield logo is on the left front, white with red collar and sleeve trim, navy blue front placket, no pocket. They are 100% combed cotton. The quality is such that there is little to no fading or shrinkage.



There are 12 **golf/ballcaps** on hand. They are royal blue with the dual shield logo on the front, and an adjustable back strap. **They go for \$7 each.** 

The items can be viewed in color on the Association web site at **www.55srwa.org**, and click on the *Clothing Sales* link.

Anyone desiring to purchase either or both can send an e-mail to: MaxMoore55@aol.com; phone: (402) 291-8272; or write to: 201 Basswood Court, Bellevue, NE, 68005-2001

There are charges for priority postage to be added to the individual item costs: \$5 for a shirt only; \$7 for two shirts; \$6 if both a shirt and cap are ordered; \$3 for a cap only.

Checks for the full amount of your order should be made to the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW Association, or to Max Moore. Either way, the bucks end up in the Association treasury.

One more way to identify with your Association and "show the logo" at appropriate functions, on the golf course, wherever.

**Great gifts!** They are unisex, so get one for your spouse, significant other, or other family members. The dog, even.



## THE ASSOCIATION TIE

The 'regimental' tie is a distinguished blue and red striped design with the Association's dual shield logo prominently displayed in the tie's center. A fine gold line defines every fourth blue/red stripe.

It can also be seen in color on the web site.



The price is \$20 each which includes postage.

Order now! This item is a <u>must have</u> for the Omaha reunion banquet, and other appropriate events. Don't be the last on your block to own one.

To acquire the tie, contact Jim Thomas at JThomas927@aol.com, or write him at 4418 Anchor Mill, Bellevue, NE 68005-1168. Make checks payable to the 55SRW Association.



# SPARKLY 55<sup>TH</sup> PINS



(Shown as near actual size)

As a direct result of newsletter notices, the above pins have sold at a steady pace to **55SRWA** members all over the country. They are quite in evidence at recent Association reunions, and on ladies of the **55**<sup>th</sup> Wing at social occasions at and around Offutt.

You will want to acquire one for that special lady in your life to wear at the reunion in Omaha, and other any appropriate occasions.

The Association does **not** sell these pins and receives **no** money. But, as a service for those who wish to possess same: **Erwin's Jewelers, Frank Kumor,** proprietor, in Olde Town Bellevue, offers

them and you can purchase directly from the store.

Send requests to 223 W. Mission Ave, Bellevue, NE; or call: (402) 291-2454, or fax to (402) 293-5873 to order the pins. Costs are \$9 for the pin and \$3 for shipping.

\* \* \* \* \*

# YOUR 55<sup>TH</sup> SRW ASSN WEB SITE

# www.55srwa.org

The Association web site is an integral and vital part of the Association's line of communications and information. You are urged to check it out periodically to see updated information.

Everything you want to know about the Association is there: **constitution, bylaws**; officers and bios; membership form, library, picture gallery, a new bulletin board, and links to other associated and interesting sites.

Timely info and updates on the next reunion, other events and important bulletins on any projects in progress are posted. Also, there is email traffic on subjects of interest to members.

Webmeister Don Griffin and his creative cybercohort, **Dave Johnson**, maintain and regularly update the site so as not to let it get stale.

They are always looking for new and fresh ideas. Inputs from members are encouraged and welcome. Send them pictures, war stories, anything you want to share with the Association.

\* \* \* \* \*

# **REUNIONS**

# B-47 STRATOJET ASSOCIATION 21-23 SEPTEMBER 2006 Wichita, KS

For more detailed information, please contact the association website at B-47.com, or President **Don Cassiday**, 1-630-859l-1922, or e-mail colcass@sbcglobal.net. (Yep. Same as ours.)

\* \* \* \* \*

# 343<sup>rd</sup> SRS REUNION REPORT

The 343rd SRS (circa 1950s and 1960s) held a reunion in Wichita, KS on May 10-12 at the Four Points Sheraton.

There were a total of 39 former members in attendance. They were: Bruce and Fay Bailey, Mike and Pat Baker, Bill and Marilyn Bateman, Lee and Mary Brown, Mike Chaput, Bob and Elaine Coleman, Paul and Joe Dolby, John and Jean Duncan, Paul and Jane Fortin, Charles and Darleen Harens and Donald Jean.

Also: Jim Kitchens and Joyce Howard, Lester and Alice Kowalski, Don Malunat, Jack and Sharon McLaughlin, Bill and Kathy Millen, Richard and Irene Nikolai, Eliot Potter, James Riley, James Rodecap, Louis G Smith, Stanley Stark, James Taylor, Leland and Peggy York.

One popular event was a trip to the Prairie Rose Chuckwagon dinner on the 11th. A buffet diner was held at the hotel on Friday night. A meeting was held after the banquet to determine the location of the next reunion in fall of 2007. Possible locations suggested were Dayton OH, Lincoln NE, and Branson, MO, or to combine with the next 55th reunion (*Spring 2008, site TBD*).

Contributed by Paul Dolby, Reunion Coordinator.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SAC REUNION RECAP

The reunion in Tucson was held 24-27 May. Headquarters was the Doubletree Hotel at Reid Park. For the reunion 237 registered and 223 were at Saturday's banquet.

Major results from the general meeting: A consensus was to re-establish a SAC association. I will be coordinating and will be the focal point of the project. I have a list of personnel who have volunteered to assist in this endeavor. I am in the process of working with other SAC organizations in acquiring membership listings to update our master list. There is a list of people who asked about the reunion but could not attend. They specifically asked to be kept on future mailings concerning reunions.

Also discussed, the next reunion will be held in Dayton, OH, in conjunction with the installation and dedication of the SAC Memorial at the National Air Force Museum during Memorial Day weekend in May 2008.

It was recommended monies left over from this reunion be used for the 2008 SAC reunion.

Edited from a report by *Toby Romero*, Reunion Coordinator, Tucson, AZ.

\* \* \* \* \*

### OFFICIAL RECORDS INFO

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <a href="http://vetrecs.archives.gov/">http://vetrecs.archives.gov/</a> This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his/her DD-214 for employment purposes.

NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may use a new online military personnel records system to request documents.

Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site.

Since the requester will be asked to supply all information essential to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized.

The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records center's processing time.

Please pass this information on to former military personnel and their dependents. <a href="http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.ht">http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.ht</a> ml

\* \* \* \* \*

# YOU MIGHT BE/HAVE BEEN A CREW CHIEF IF.....

You've ever said, "Oh yes sir, it's supposed to look like that."

You ever sucked LOX to cure a hangover.

You know what JP4/JP5 fuel taste like.

You ever used a piece of safety wire as a toothpick.

You've used soot from an engine tailpipe to blacken your boots.

You believe the aircraft has a soul.

You talk to the aircraft.

You have ever wished the pilot would just say, "Great aircraft!"

Have been told to "go get us some prop wash, a yard of flight line or the keys to the jet." You've jumped into an intake to get out of the rain. You have done a preflight in really bad weather only to learn the flight was canceled hours ago.

You can sleep anywhere, anytime. But as soon as the engines shut down you are wide awake.

You've used wheel chocks or a tow bar for a pillow.

You have stood on chocks to keep your feet dry. You have ever started a jet inside the hanger!

You have wiped off leaks right before a crew show. All you care about is the flying schedule and your

days off.
You have had to defuel your plane an hour after

fueling it.

You refer to ANY machine as "she."

You've ever worked weekend duty on a plane that wasn't flying on Monday.

Your toolbox at home has wheels and foam cutouts just like those at work, and some tools in your toolbox at home are etched.

You think anyone who isn't a Crew Chief is a wimp.



#### **FYI**

No Offutt air show/open house was planned for 2006. However, there will be one at the Lincoln, NE, Airport, which just happens to be the same weekend as our reunion. They had to schedule when they could get the headliner. It is run by the 190<sup>th</sup> ARWing, Nebr ANG. 55<sup>th</sup> involvement is minimal.

So for those who want to stay over and trek to Lincoln to see the Blue Angels, the Warbirds (including Reg Urschler in his P-51), and the usual array of static displays, can plan on heading there on Sunday, 24 September.

\* \* \* \* \*

### WHO SHOT WHAT?

Picture credits to: Embassy Suites for the hotel shots (*Dave Johnson added the aircraft*); Birthday Ball committee for the Ball logo/coin; the Wing Historian for the Giller cake cutting; Hoover for Kyle; Pizzo for the tie; **Beth Kelley**, the sparkly pin; Moore for all others (the Ball check presentation, Hall of Fame, 'Tales', and Award for Excellence presentation).

# 55<sup>TH</sup> SRW REUNION SCHEDULE SEPTEMBER 20-24, 2006

#### WEDNESDAY – SEPT 20

1200-1800 REUNION REGISTRATION

1400-2200 HOSPITALITY ROOM OPEN:

1800- 1930 Board of Directors Meeting (Council Bluffs Room A)

DINNER ON THE TOWN

#### THURSDAY – SEPT 21

0600-0930 BREAKFAST - Hotel ATRIUM. Hotel guests FREE.

0700-GOLF OUTING DEPARTS, TEE TIME 0800 QUARRY OAKS

**RETURN TO EMBASSY APPROX: 1500** 

0900-2300 HOSPITALITY ROOM OPEN

0930 -1230 TOUR A TO LAURITZEN BOTANICAL GARDENS

1000-1800 REUNION REGISTRATION

1800 - RECEPTION IN HOSPITALITY SUITE - (Heavy hors de vors)

DINNER ON THE TOWN

#### FRIDAY – SEPT 22

0600-0930- BREAKFAST- Hotel ATRIUM. Hotel guests FREE.

0800 - TOUR B DEPART FOR LINCOLN RC- 135 STATIC DISPLAY

AND STRATEGIC AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

0900 - TOUR C to BOYS TOWN/VILLAGE POINTE SHOPPING CENTER

1000-1400 (FINAL CUT OFF) REUNION REGISTRATION

1000-1900 HOSPITALITY ROOM OPEN

1900-2100 GRAND BANQUET (Coat and Association tie) - BALLROOM

2100-2300 HOSPITALITY ROOM OPEN

#### SATURDAY – SEPT 23

0700-1030- BREAKFAST- Hotel ATRIUM. Hotel guests FREE.

#### 0900 -1000 ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP MEETING - BALLROOM

Business review, Election of Board of Directors, Selection of next reunion site/date.

1000 - 55<sup>th</sup> WING UNIT MISSION BRIEFING, Col Don Kelly, Deputy Ops Group Commander *Elected Board of Directors will meet immediately after membership meeting.* 

(Recommend wear of Association polo shirt/cap for the day and to BBQ)

LUNCH ON THE TOWN

1200 -1800 HOSPITALITY ROOM OPEN

1230 - DEPART FOR OFFUTT DAY TOUR D

1630 (APPROX) RETURN TO EMBASSY SUITES

1800 - DEPART FOR OFFUTT CASUAL BBO WITH 55<sup>th</sup> WING TROOPS

2100-2130 RETURN TO EMBASSY SUITES

2100-2400 HOSPITALITY ROOM OPEN

#### SUNDAY – SEPT 24

0700-1030 BREAKFAST - Hotel ATRIUM. Hotel guests FREE GOODBYES and CHECK OUT - DEPART THE FIX (*OR NOT*)

\* \* \* \* \*

## **OMAHA REUNION TOUR OPTIONS & Other Activities**

### Thursday, 21 September

**TOUR A- Lauritzen Botanical Gardens. 0930** departure on "Ollie the Trolley" to Omaha's beautiful gardens with over 2,000 plants, an herb garden, an arboretum and bird sanctuary, Festival Garden, Arrival Garden, Song of the Lark Meadow and a walled Victorian Garden. Take a walking tour or ride the shuttle. Browse the gift shop or have a bite in the café. Depart back to the hotel on "Ollie the Trolley" to arrive about 1230 for lunch in the Olde Market.

# Friday, 22 September

# **TOUR B - 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Ops Lincoln and Strategic Air & Space Museum.**

Depart **0800** via bus to 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Operations at Lincoln Airport. See airplane static display and windshield tour of operations at Lincoln during runway closure at Offutt. There will be a stop at the Strategic Air and Space Museum. The former-SAC museum near Ashland features over thirty famous SAC airplanes and missiles; 300,000 sq ft filled with military aviation history. View the restoration area and see the completed displays to include: a B-36, U-2, B-47, B-58, and other SAC aircraft, including the little "Goblin". Shop the gift shop or nosh at the Plane Food snack bar. Return to hotel late afternoon in time to spruce up for banquet.

# **TOUR C - Father Flanagan's Boys Town and Village Pointe Shopping Center.**

**0900** Depart for legendary Boys Town, a special part of Omaha's history. After a welcome by the Administrator, you will visit Father Flanagan's home, the Hall of History, Garden of the Bible, see the Dowd and Chambers Chapel; learn the real "He ain't heavy, Father, he's my brother" story. Stop off at the Village Pointe Shopping Center for lunch and shopping. Village Pointe is Nebraska's largest lifestyle shopping center with numerous retail, dining, and entertainment options. The open-air design of the center replicates a nostalgic Main Street shopping district. Check it out at <a href="https://www.villagepointeshopping.com">www.villagepointeshopping.com</a>. Shop and lunch on your own. Mid-afternoon return to the hotel.

# Saturday, 23 September

**TOUR D - To Offutt AFB. 1230** Departure for bus-windshield tour of Offutt AFB. There have been many changes to the base in the last ten years. See the oldest operational jail in the country; the new, huge fire station; new construction on BX strip mall, etc. See and walk through the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Hall of Fame at Wing Headquarters; see the two, new, full motion/vision RC-135 flight simulators in operation, and lots more. Return to hotel about 1630 in time for a little hospitality and time to get ready for the informal barbeque outing back at the base.

# **SELF DIRECTED ACTIVITY. Any day.**

Embassy Suites maintains four vans that will deliver and pickup within a three mile radius. Opportunities here are the world class Henry Doorly Zoo w/ IMAX Theater (the world's largest indoor jungle; Desert Dome; Gorilla Valley where the people are inside; white tigers in the Cat House; and more); Durham Western Heritage Museum; Heartland of America Park; Rick's Boatyard at the Riverfront...and for those who want to, go across the river to any of the three grand casinos. Embassy Suites has literature and info on these and other Omaha area attractions.



#### 55 SRWA REUNION OMAHA/OFFUTT SEPTEMBER 20-24, 2006

#### **REGISTRATION FORM**

# **PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION**

Money will be refunded for any tour/event for which you prepay that cannot accommodate you or is cancelled.

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