

# Videmus Omnia

## 55<sup>th</sup> WING ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2016

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from the Heartland.

Looks like we have a heat wave settling into the Heartland. It is 1800 hrs now and the temp is 99, and this week is not the end of it. More good old Nebraska weather.



We just finished our busiest season of the year. Another successful Birthday Ball, a very successful year for the 2016 Hall of Fame, and a big crowd of attendees at the *Tales of the 55<sup>th</sup>*.

It doesn't get any better for the **Association** than this. Maximum exposure to the rank and file of the active duty **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** commander **Col Reynolds** and the senior staff went back to the origins of the **55<sup>th</sup>** with the theme for the Birthday Ball. This theme was the catalyst for other heritage events within the operational squadrons and the Maintenance Group in the months/weeks leading up to the Ball, and during Heritage Week; plus the presentation of the Palm Memorial Trophy to the Best Reconnaissance Crew of the Year Award.

Your **Association** was very involved with the **Wing** in all those events. Col Reynolds most appropriately recognized the **Association** for its close partnership with the **Wing** at the Birthday Ball.

Included in this mailing is your copy of a history and heritage document given to all who were present at the Ball. The **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** Public Affairs were kind enough to give us these copies to mail out. We are doing that until they run out. The story of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* is well told in this document.

For those who have not discovered the **Association** web site yet, it is [www.55wa.org](http://www.55wa.org).

Expertly maintained and kept up to date by **Jim Maloney**. Check out the NOTAMS page now and get a taste of the information that covers the page: latest occurrences, items of info/interests, and short stories from **55<sup>th</sup>** veterans. You will like what you see. Guaranteeeeeeed!

The call out for inputs to the 2017 Hall of Fame will be put on our web site NLT 31 July. You can guess ahead using past history. Due in NLT 1 December 2016. Birthday Ball next year is 1 April.

All members are reminded that nominations originate from the field: active duty, veterans of the **55<sup>th</sup>** and **Association** members. That is the population that would know of the service of those deserving. Without inputs, you know the results: 0 inductees. We must accept that the nomination task is not an easy one: gathering data, documents, witnesses from days gone by, but a necessary one.

I know you will enjoy another blockbuster from Max coming up. Enjoy the summer; and...you be careful out there, now.

*Videmus Omnia, Jim*



### **PRO-NUN-SEE-A-SHUN**

During a social encounter a few years ago, a young second lieutenant (*are there any other kind?*), who professed to have survived four years as a student of *Latin*, informed this editor that the correct pronunciation of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* motto is thus: **Wi - dAy - moose Omnia**

He insisted the 'v' be pronounced as a 'w', and a soft 'i', with emphasis on the mid-syllable and a hard 'A'. Thus, for your edification, or whatever.

However, common usage and personal preference will likely prevail in the use of 'v', as in vigilant, valiant, victorious.

*(Yes, this is a repeat item for those who have not read it before, and/ or any new members. Max)*

\* \* \* \* \*

## DIRECTORS DIRECTORY

### Association Business/Policy/Issues:

#### President Jim Thomas

4418 Anchor Mill  
Bellevue, NE 68123-1168  
E-mail: [JThomas927@cox.net](mailto:JThomas927@cox.net)

#### Vice President Ricky McMahon

14325 Orlando Road  
Nokesville, VA 20181  
E-mail: [potomacpistol@gmail.com](mailto:potomacpistol@gmail.com)

### Membership/Dues/Changes of Address:

#### Treasurer Michael Cook

3204 Rahn Blvd  
Bellevue, NE 68123  
E-mail: [Michael.Cook@cox.net](mailto:Michael.Cook@cox.net)

#### Secretary Trish Seinwill

9335 Branchside Lane  
Fairfax, VA, 22031  
E-mail: [pseinwill@yahoo.com](mailto:pseinwill@yahoo.com)

#### Newsletter Editor Max Moore

201 Basswood Court  
Bellevue, NE 68005-2001  
E-mail: [MaxMoore55@aol.com](mailto:MaxMoore55@aol.com)

#### Webmaster Jim Maloney

7908 Kona Circle  
Papillion, NE 68046-5619  
E-mail: [jim@maloney.com](mailto:jim@maloney.com)

### Other Members of the Board of Directors:

**Bill Ernst, Errol Hoberman, Don Griffin, Fox Censullo, George Ross, Pete Glenboski, Kevin Todd, Don Kelly, Paul Jeanes, Val Dugie, Jeff Herd, Colonel Mohan Krishna. Active Duty: Vacant.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**Notes: SMSgt Vanessa Johnston**, 97thIS, went PCS on 27 May 2016 to Air Combat Command at Langley AFB, VA. She served from October 2014 and was a dynamic contributor to the **Association**.

**MSgt Rich M. Brown**, retired in March 2016 from the 55<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Group where he was a superintendent on the flightline. He was appointed to the Board in September 2014.

Both served the **Association** well and we wish them success in their future endeavors.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Appointed Awards Chairman

**Hamilton Kennedy**  
13701 S. 129<sup>th</sup> St  
Springfield, NE 68059  
[HHAAMMKK@aol.com](mailto:HHAAMMKK@aol.com)

### Appointed Historian:

**William (Bill) Sargent**  
2711 Northwood Circle  
Papillion, NE, 68133  
[William488@cox.net](mailto:William488@cox.net)

### Appointed Enlisted Affairs Liaison:

**Elvio Palmieri**  
1010 SW 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Pampano Beach, FL  
[EllvioPalmeri@yahoo.com](mailto:EllvioPalmeri@yahoo.com)

\* \* \* \* \*

## TREASURER'S REPORT

As of 20 June 2016, the treasury had an account balance (rounded) of \$50,000.

A significant portion of the money in the account comes from dues paid in advance. Therefore, we must keep money in reserve for each year to which the dues apply. In other words, dues for 2020 must not be spent until that calendar year.



Some members have paid as far ahead as 2024, 2025, 2027 (*just showing off!*), and 2028 (*and he is over 90 years old!!*). Now that is loyalty and optimism, folks.

Although the **Association** is solvent, we have expenses, obligations, and bills to pay, such as this newsletter and its postage.

**It is never too soon to renew your membership. So, please pay your dues promptly, or early and often.** Thank you very much.

\* \* \* \* \*

Remember that the **Association** is a **non-profit IRS 501(C) 19 veterans, federal tax exempt organization**. (*See the Association web site: [http://www.55wa.org/CORP\\_HQ/TaxExemptStatus.html](http://www.55wa.org/CORP_HQ/TaxExemptStatus.html)*). As such, you may **donate** additional funds to the treasury, or in the memory of a

comrade taking that final flight. Those **donations (NOT DUES)** are tax deductible under an IRS ruling for the organization. Every amount, large or small, is very much appreciated. It happens.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

There were **493 members in good standing as of 15 June 2016, compared with 542 on 31 December 2015.** Unfortunately, dues and members do expire. (See TAPS.)

Members whose dues expired on 31 December 2015 who did not renew by 1 April 2016, regrettably, were **deleted** from the membership data base. However, a friendly reminder was e-mailed to 185 of them and 134 renewed. *Hoo-Rah!!*

Remaining undaunted, friendly reminder 2.0 went out again to seek bringing those hold-outs back in to the fold.

**Retaining members, and recruiting new ones, is a recurring and never ending priority. There is an urgent need to reverse the loss of members.**

About 160 widows receive the newsletter gratis. As always, they are welcome to any and all **Association** functions.

Fifty-one **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** units and offices are sent the newsletter for PR purposes, and to keep them connected with the **Association**.

Occasionally, this effort has a payoff of exposure for the **Association** and new active duty members, now at about 20.

The top three states where members reside are: Nebraska (*surprise!*), 114; Texas, 67; Virginia, 40.

\* \* \* \* \*

### WHEN DO MY DUES EXPIRE?

That is the most asked question of the membership chairman. That date is on the address label to the RIGHT of your name in bold print: 20XX. Please make a note to keep up with your dues.

Life Members (LM) and widows are dues exempt.

See the note about **Members Only** section of the **Association** web site in the following item.

*You must be a dues paid, member-in-good-standing to gain the password and access.*

If you still are not sure of your dues expiration date, to inquire on same, please e-mail **Michael.Cook@cox.net**; or drop him a note at the following address to get an update on your membership status. **When in doubt, send money.**

**Please pay your dues prior to 31 December of your expiration year; but no later than 31 March to remain in good standing.**

**Mail to: 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association**

ATTN: Michael J. Cook

PO Box 13165

Offutt AFB, NE 68113

\* \* \* \* \*

**There is a membership/information update form at page 23 of this newsletter, as well as on the Association web site.**

**Please use that form any time you pay dues, and/or to report any address or other changes in your contact information. That is the best way to ensure we have your latest information on file.**

It is **imperative** to update your latest contact information, **especially** if you have relocated, changed your e-address, etc., within the past six months.

If you own more than one home, please give us **the** address you want any **Association** correspondence mailed to, and go into our data base.

**ALL CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE SENT TO YOUR HOME OF RECORD. Please keep us informed of any changes in your address or other contact information.** Invariably we get returned mail because of outdated addresses. Third class mail is **not** forwarded. **Please help us stay current.**

\* \* \* \* \*

*If you don't have a sense of humor,  
you likely have no sense at all.*

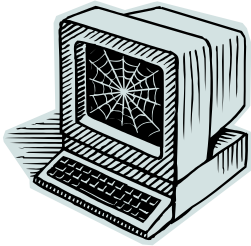
\* \* \* \* \*

*No one ever says 'It is only a game'  
when they are winning.*

\* \* \* \* \*

# YOUR 55<sup>TH</sup> WING ASSOCIATION WEB SITE [www.55wa.org](http://www.55wa.org)

The **Association** web site continues to be an integral and important part of the **Association's** communications. It is where one can keep informed between newsletters, and where news is reported and updated in a timely manner.



The **BX** section is where to find how to purchase **Association** items. Articles are added to the **Memory Lane** section as they are submitted. Please contribute **your own** to share with others.

Also, be sure to check out, contribute, and indicate you "Like" the *Facebook* page at <http://www.facebook.com/55thAssociation>.

There is a **55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association** channel on *You Tube*, as well.

In the first five months of 2016, there have been 4810 sessions of which 1424 were new visitors.

**Check the web site regularly for the latest information on the next reunion, Birthday Ball, and other significant events.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**An added link is in the Members Only page, where any member can check on his/her DUES EXPIRATION DATE. This area is updated periodically and may not reflect recent renewals.**

**Also on the front page is an area for members to enter their email address, and then they will be notified when there's been a change or update to the web site.**

\* \* \* \* \*

Any member who wishes to read and/or download **Association** newsletters from the web site can do so. That allows members to read the latest issue as soon as it is published, as well as read it wherever in the world one might be at anytime.

Question arises: "How will I know when a new issue is published?" Historically, about six months from the last one.

Newsletters are usually published about four months **before** a reunion, a couple of months **after** a reunion, and about six months from that one.

Based on that 'schedule', you just have to make periodic look-ins at the web site to find out.

In order to do so, you will need to visit the **Members Only** page on the web site, and read the newsletter, or download it from there. **Simply request the username and password from the web-guy and you're all set.**

*You must be a dues paid, member-in-good-standing to gain the password and access. (Is there an echo in here?)*

\* \* \* \* \*

On home page the NOTAMS list includes many recent and interesting postings, such as: articles from the Omaha World-Herald on the **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** on how its missions differ from the Cold War to the present; and how some remain the same with recent Russian and Chinese aggressiveness with intercepts of RC missions.

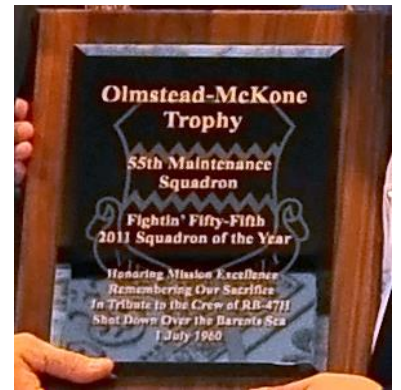
Plus: informative histories by **Jack Kovacs** on the history of the COLD WAR Memorial, and the restoration of RB-47H, 4299.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 55<sup>th</sup> WING OLMSTEAD-MCKONE TROPHY

The **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** established a 'squadron of the year' award in 2011. It was named the **Olmstead-McKone Trophy** after two historic figures from the **55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing** Cold War days.

Copilot **Bruce Olmstead** and Navigator **John McKone** were



survivors of an RB-47H shoot down by a Soviet MiG on 1 July 1960 in an unprovoked attack over international waters of the Barents Sea.

*(Four other members of that crew perished: Aircraft Commander **Willard Palm** and the raven team of **Oscar Goforth, Dean Phillips and Eugene***



*Posa.* All six are members of the Wing's Hall of Fame.)

Olmstead and McKone were subsequently picked up at sea and spent the next seven months in the notorious Lubyanka prison in Moscow. They were released in January 1961 as a gesture to new **President John F. Kennedy**. They were also featured on the cover of TIME magazine.



The presentation is made at the **Wing's** annual awards banquet in February.

Past winners are listed:

- 2011 – **55<sup>th</sup>** Maintenance Sqd, Offutt AFB, NE
- 2012 – **45<sup>th</sup>** Reconnaissance Sqd, Offutt
- 2013 – **55<sup>th</sup>** Comptroller Sqd, Offutt
- 2014 – **55<sup>th</sup>** Security Forces Sqd, Offutt
- 2015 – **755<sup>th</sup>** Operations Support Sqd, **55<sup>th</sup>** Electronic Combat Group, Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ.

\* \* \* \* \*

## WING'S HERITAGE TAKES CENTER STAGE

By **Ryan Hansen**, **55th Wing** Public Affairs  
(Minor editing by Max. Photos by **Chandra** of Wing PA)

In an effort to educate current **55th Wing** members about the Wing's illustrious history, the first in a series of heritage events took place at the 97th Intelligence Squadron on 5 February.

More than 50 active duty Airmen joined four members of the **55th Wing Association**, the Wing's 'alumni group', to share a few stories from their time with the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**.

"We have such a tremendous history and I don't know if any other wing in the Air Force that celebrates theirs as much as we do," said **Colonel Marty Reynolds**, **55th Wing** Commander, who attended

This year is special for the **55th**, as the **Wing** marks 25 years deployed, 50 years at Offutt and 75 years as a wing.

"It is unique to hit these milestones at the same time, so we think it's a great opportunity to take time to reflect on some of our **Wing's**

accomplishments throughout history through these heritage events," Reynolds said.



*"There was I....."*  
*Ernst regales the troops.*

Retired colonels **Jim Thomas** and **Bill Ernst**, retired lieutenant colonel **Max Moore**, and retired major **Bill Sargent**, who have more than 70 years combined experience with the **Wing**, all shared stories from their careers.

"Seeing those younger professionals renews my faith that the Air Force is in good hands and minds," Moore said. "Their respect and rapt attention was gratifying to us senior veterans. I really enjoyed the experience and it exceeded my pre-notion of what it would be."

Hearing the **55th Wing** veterans' stories was also a welcome experience for the active duty members.

"Understanding how it all started and where we come from provides a sense of identity and community," said **SMSgt Vanessa Johnston** (who organized the event), of the 97th IS's mission management flight. "I hope that by exposing airmen to stories from our past, they become inspired and can see that we would not be where we are today without the people who came before us."

Besides sharing stories from their time with the **Wing**, the **Association** wanted to let the active duty members know they are firmly behind them as they support multiple missions around the world.

"This was a great opportunity for us to come back and let the younger troops know we know what they're going through," Thomas said. "There are a lot of us veteran **Fifty-Fifth'ers** who pay attention to what they're doing, and we want them to know that we care about them, and are thankful for the support they are providing our country."



*Sergeant and Thomas  
We be seasoned crewdogs.*

The **Wing** is grateful to the **Association** for its support, said Johnston (*an active duty Director on the Association's Board*). "I cannot thank the members of the **55th Wing Association** who shared their stories with us enough," Johnston said. "I have a deep respect for them all, and am very grateful to work with them. They care deeply about the **55th Wing** and its members, and that is shown through their constant support to the wing."

*(This was the first of an intended series of similar events leading up to Heritage Week before the Tales and Ball.)*



*Colonel Reynolds, 55th Wing commander, witnesses as Birthday Ball Committee president, 1Lt Kusel, OIC, MXO, accepts a \$1000 donation check from 55th Wing Association president, Col (Ret) Jim Thomas at the wing staff meeting, 2 May 2016.*

This is the eighteenth year the **Association** has donated \$1000 to help defray the tickets costs for younger airmen.



## 338<sup>th</sup> CTS HERITAGE EVENT

In what has become an annual tradition, **Association VP Ricky McMahon**, (*in absentia this year*) provided pizza for the crewdogs in a May Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> squadron 'mayor's call' in the 338<sup>th</sup>'s heritage lounge, named for the squadron's founder and first commander, one Ricky Mac. (*Dedicated 27 March 2009.*)

**Association** president Jim Thomas was on hand to tell the troops what the organization is, who and what we are. They were so impressed, he was nearly trampled because he was between them and the pizza and brewskis. Hoo-Rah!!!

Such is how Heritage Week began this year.



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

On Friday, 20 May 2016, in Dock 1, of the **55<sup>th</sup>** maintenance facility, a large audience of active duty personnel, veteran **55<sup>th</sup>**ers, and guests, witnessed another program to include three Tale talkers.



*Emcee Thomas witnesses the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Hall of Fame Ceremonial Ball rings to open the Tales event. Pictured L-R: Cook, Mitchell, Taylor, Ernst. Not in the frame: Dubuy, Moore, Needham.*





**Hank Dubuy** recounted his experience as co-pilot on **Hobart Mattison's** crew in April 1965. Their RB-47 aircraft was on a routine reconnaissance mission out of Yokota AB, Japan, when North Korean fighters made an unprovoked attack on the aircraft in international airspace over the Sea of Japan, east of the Korean peninsula.

Dubuy reported returning fire from the RB's tail guns and the probable hit on one bogey.

Although severely damaged from the MiG cannon fire, the RB-47 was safely recovered to Yokota due to the skill of LtCol Mattison, and superior professional crew coordination.

\* \* \* \* \*

A terrorist incident in Athens, Greece, in August 1987 was the premise of **Jeff Needham's** tale. As an RC-135 crew was enroute to their hotel quarters after completing an operational mission, their unmarked bus was targeted by a terrorist motorcyclist's bomb.

The detonation injured 10 people on the bus, including the Greek driver, and some bystanders. The bus was badly damaged, so once the crew gathered themselves, they made the rest of the trip to the hotel on foot. Those airmen who were injured each were awarded a Purple Heart Medal.

\* \* \* \* \*

The third speaker was **MSgt Michael Johnson**, **55<sup>th</sup> Ops Group**, Weapons and Tactics, who was the Airborne Mission Supervisor (AMS) on an RC-mission flown on 12 November 2015 to provide intelligence support to US and coalition forces involved in Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, combat operations against ISIS forces in Iraq. MSgt Johnson was the key position coordinating all the mission efforts.

The crew of the PYTHON 71, was comprised of crewmembers from five tactical squadrons and the

**55<sup>th</sup> Ops Group**, and three from the Royal Air Forces 51 Squadron.

As AMS on the mission, MSgt Johnson held the audience's rapt attention explaining how the crew of PYTHON 71 ensured dedicated intelligence support to three distinct ground force operations: totaling over 7,500 troops, seven manned aircraft, and multiple remote piloted aircraft.

He related how the crew's accomplishments that date were awarded the Air Force Association's **General Jerome F. O'Malley Award**, "Best Reconnaissance Crew in the Air Force".

\* \* \* \* \*

In another heritage occasion, the crew of PYTHON 71 was also recognized by the **55<sup>th</sup> Ops Group** as the "Best Reconnaissance Crew of the Wing" with presentation of the **Palm Memorial Trophy** in a ceremony led by Ops Group commander, **Colonel Mo Krishna**, on 20 May 2016 in the 38<sup>th</sup> Recon Squadron's jam packed Raiders Lounge including several **Association** members.

*(This was the initial award of the replicated trophy since it was **returned** to the **Wing** after herculean efforts of Jim Thomas and the **Association** at the Tales event in May 2015. Related articles were in the July 2015 and January 2016 issues of **Videmus Omnia**.)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Another feature of the Tales is the 'redistribution of **Association** property', such as lithographs, memorabilia.



*Giving the traditional toast to the deployed **55<sup>th</sup>** troops: L-R: Dubuy, MSgt Johnson, Needham, Col Reynolds, Thomas.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*It is hard to make a comeback if you haven't been anywhere.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## 2016 HALL OF FAME

The two inductees for 2016 are senior NCOs with superior careers who were, and continue to be, outstanding role models and mentors.

The following narratives merely scratch the surface of their numerous significant accomplishments.

\* \* \* \* \*

**ChiefMSgt Dennis Haun** (USAF Retired) was assigned to the **55<sup>th</sup>** in 1992 where he became the first Maintenance Superintendent of the then 24<sup>th</sup> RS.



*Col Reynolds presenting Haun at the Ball.*

He was tasked to establish Air Combat Command's (ACC) first-ever Quality Assurance (QA) program. Blending the former SAC QA into the new ACC QA was a major challenge due to the differing cultures.

This had to be accomplished at Offutt, and all forward groups and squadrons assigned to the **55<sup>th</sup>**. The Chief expertly employed and maintained the QA program's rigorous nature of the inspection system previously established by SAC. The Chief got it done in a well coordinated effort.

Along with the changeover of the 24<sup>th</sup> RS to the 45<sup>th</sup> RS, there was a mixing of diverse missions; including the movement of the CB- and TC-135 trainer/logistical support missions from Eielson AFB, AK, to Offutt, integrating the WC-135 operations, and WC-135 OPEN

SKIES missions from McClellan AFB, CA. The challenges were daunting.

Chief Haun made significant and lasting contributions during his tenure. His impact continued well beyond his days in the squadron as many of the men and women he mentored are senior leaders in the **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** Maintenance Group today.

Since 2012, Chief Haun has maintained his support to the **Wing** as the **55<sup>th</sup>** Operations Group (OG) Facilities Manager. He provides real property management for Ops Group squadrons.

Among the activities he is involved in today are the plans for the next runway closure, and the eventual move of the Wing into Bldg 500.

The 45<sup>th</sup> designated its briefing room in Chief Haun's honor in 2006, an enduring legacy pre-validating his selection as a member of the **Wing's** Hall of Fame.

\* \* \* \* \*

**MSgt John H. "Bubba" Armintrout**, (USAF Retired) tenure encompassed 15 years in units at Offutt, AFB, NE: 6949th Electronic Security Squadron, and the 97th Intelligence Squadron (IS), **55<sup>th</sup>** Wing, 1982-1990, 1996-2003.

Originally a Spanish linguist, "Bubba" attained legendary status in his career field. MSgt Armintrout spent over 2000 days deployed in support of US Central Command operations serving in war on terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan.



*Armintrout accepting his plaque at the Ball.*

In addition to his primary job as a linguist, MSgt Armintrout mastered all enlisted RC-135 operational positions to include Flight Chief,



Operations Analysis, Mission Management, Stan/Eval and Operations Training.

He was one of the first Data Link Operators helping to define the procedures that brought the RC-135 into a new era of intelligence collection, to rapid dissemination of a useable product for warfighters, procedures that remain relevant today.

Additionally, he mastered the Airborne Mission Supervisor crew position on all collection variants of the RC-135.

“Bubba” made an impact in the motivating and training of generations of airman to getting the mission done. MSgt Amintrout’s talents and desires were to get the troops fully trained and equipped for their mission roles.

He never stopped taking care of his personnel, and he was especially adept at instilling that ethic among the troops.

MSgt Amintrout’s dedicated professionalism, versatility, and his devotion to duty and to his fellow service members earned MSgt Armintrout his place in the **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** Hall of Fame.

\* \* \* \* \*



*Hall of Fame group, L-R, Front: Dubuy, Haun, Taylor, Urschler, Mitchell, Moore. In back: Armintrout and Needham. Cook and Ernst went MIA.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## 55<sup>th</sup> WING 2016 BIRTHDAY BALL

The **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** held its **38<sup>th</sup>** annual Birthday Ball, **Saturday, 21 May 2016** at the Embassy Suites Convention Center in LaVista, NE, to emphasize that 2016 is a year of anniversaries for the **Wing**: 75 years



since its founding, 50 years at Offutt, 25 years deploying to SE Asia.

Appropriately, the theme was “**History-Heritage-Honor**”.

The gala was hosted by **55<sup>th</sup> Wing Commander, Colonel Marty Reynolds** and his wife, **Deanna**.

The featured speaker was **Admiral Cecil Haney**, Commander, US Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, NE.



Appropriately, his comments centered on the **Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth’s** storied history.

**Dave Webber**, local TV personality did his usual masterful job as master of ceremonies as he has done the past several years.

Other features included the announcement of the 2015 **55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association** Award for Excellence winner, the presentation of the Hall of Fame inductees, and dancing to the Heartland of America Band.

The 750 attendees included about 100 **Association** members and guests. Although there were a number of the usual suspects, not as many out of towners this year due to date conflicts.

Former wing commanders there were **Regis Urschler, Larry Mitchell, Don Bacon, BGen John Rauch**, and **Steve Stevens**.

The sixth ChiefMSgt of the Air Force (Ret) **James McCoy** attended, as well as former **55<sup>th</sup> Wing** Command Chiefs **Michael Parente, Vicki Swingle** and **Rich Casey** attended.

The governor of Nebraska, **Pete Ricketts** and his wife attended for the third year in a row. He is the only **sitting** governor who has ever been to the Ball.

Among numerous other dignitaries were: Congressman **Jeff Fortenberry** (R-NE), Congressman **Brad Ashford** (D-NE), several state senators (including **55<sup>th</sup> alum Bob Krist** and his wife, **Peg**) and Bellevue Mayor **Rita Sanders**.

The committee was headed by **1Lt Meagan Kusel** and **MSgt Timothy Coenen** of the **55<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Squadron**. Volunteer members of the committee come from several units in the **Wing**.

Max Moore represents the **Association** as an advisor to that committee.



*Traditional cake cutting: L to R: Amn2 Heaven Hudson, 55<sup>th</sup> Force Support Sqd, Colonel Reynolds, BGen (Ret) Regis Urschler, founder of the Ball.*

\* \* \* \* \*

In today's climate of funding crunches, the world needs to know the following fact (*it isn't new info, and has always been so*): **The 55th Wing Birthday Ball pays for itself. NO taxpayer dollars finance the event. It is paid for with 'ticket' sales, fundraising, sponsors, and donors.**

\* \* \* \* \*

## 55<sup>TH</sup> WING ASSOCIATION AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The 2015 winner, **SrAmn Brandon D. Buford** of the 41st, 55<sup>th</sup> Electronic Combat Group at Davis-Monthan, AFB, AZ, was announced at the annual Birthday Ball.

SrAmn Buford previously was named Airman of the Month, Airman of the Quarter, and Senior Airman of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing, recognized for his consistently superior performance.

His expertise in managing stan/eval programs, evaluations, training, and crew publications, was outstanding. He flew 39 missions in EC-130 COMPASS CALL missions in which ISIS targets were destroyed, and enemy personnel were captured or killed as a result of those interdictions.



*L to R: LtCol Melanie Olson, commander, 41<sup>st</sup> ECS, accepting on behalf of SrAmn Buford who was deployed; Association Board member SMSgt Johnston, and Association Awards Chairman Hamilton Kennedy.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The original trophy was commissioned in 2000, is now retired and is on permanent display in the **General Russell Daugherty** Conference Center at Offutt, as a newer high tech version has been completed.

The original is shown in a heritage display case with the **Wing Ceremonial Bell**.

**Association Historian Bill Sargent** worked

that updated project with Ham Kennedy, the **Association Awards Chairman**.

The new version (*with Sargent at right*) has a viewing screen capable of displaying a looped video of past winners and aircraft, for example.

The new one will be retained by the **Association** and stored in a custom-built carrying case until needed for appropriate occasions.





\* \* \* \* \*

## 2017 BIRTHDAY BALL

*The Wing has regained control of the schedule and next year's event will be on Saturday, 1 April.*

*Please note that Wing Protocol periodically reviews and culls its DV invitation list to reduce mailing costs, and to delete repeat offenders who do not RVSP, even with regrets, and there are many.*

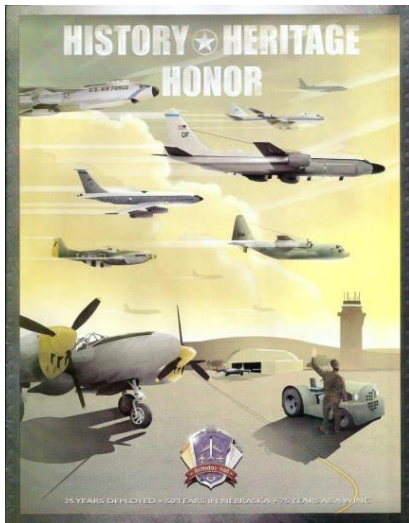
*Thus, if you have received invitations to the Ball and other events in the past, it may not occur in the future. Never fear, there will be ways to know of, and to attend, functions as information will be made available thru e-mails, the Association web site, networking, etc.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## HISTORIC ANNIVERSARIES BOOKLET

Under the good offices of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Public Affairs and local area Suburban Newspapers, Inc, (and their generous advertisers), a 32 page slick booklet was published and titled to commemorate the anniversaries of the 55<sup>th</sup>'s history as noted in the Ball theme.

The publication was a memento to every guest at the Birthday Ball; presented at the Offutt Advisory Committee meeting in early May; and was included for subscribers to the various local area weekly newspapers. It was and is widely distributed.



The **Association** was allotted 600-plus copies to be included in the mailing with this newsletter to dues paying members in good standing and widows.

You will note it is professionally, very well done, covering events during three specific eras of the **Wing's** history, including WWII exploits, Cold War incidents, and the more recent missions. It is a good read and has exceptional graphics and pictures (to entertain pilots).

(Attribution for contributing to the effort is given on page 5 of the booklet to President Jim Thomas and this editor, among others.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## MAIL 'N STUFF



\* \* \* \* \*

Hi Max:

Just received another issue of your excellent **55th Wing Association** newsletter.

We love hearing and seeing pictures of friends at the reunion and would like to try to make the next one.

This issue's TAPS item had far too many names of old friends, including **John Irwin**, of course. I did get a chance to talk with **Ruth** several days after my last note to you.

Tiny item, in the "Bit of **55th** History" (ARS) article, a flight crew was defined as "an aircraft commander, co-pilot, navigator and boom operator." I flew as co-pilot on KC-97's from 1960 to 1964 out of Dow AFB, Bangor, ME (refueled several RB-47's over northeastern Canada), and cannot imagine that airplane going anywhere without the flight engineer. He was at least as essential as any of the rest of us.

That was my first assignment out of pilot training, having specified "Southwest US" on my assignment preference sheet. Clearly the Air Force



had a better idea of what would be good for me since that is where **Bev** and I met **55** years ago today.

**Wayne Dauber**, Encondido, CA.

*(From an e-mail 25 January 2016.)*

*(Ed. Note: as attributed, the ARS article source was an item in the Forbes base newspaper of the time. No mention of an engineer. Bad on them.)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Max:

You all do a wonderful job putting the newsletter together. I commend your dedication.

However, most of the people mentioned in the newsletter are people I do not know, and I never come to any events in Omaha or elsewhere.

The bottom line is: you can remove my name from the mailing list and save a small amount of postage.

Thank you for sending it faithfully all these years.

Sincerely,

**Carol Maxon** (widow of **Gary Maxon**),  
Pittsburg, MO.

*(From an e-mail 25 January 2016)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Max:

I say again, the **Videmus Omnia** is the only publication that I read immediately upon receipt AND cover to cover!

Please do keep up your excellent work!

**Ron Strong**, Bellevue, NE.

*(From an e-mail 1 Feb 2016)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Max:

Just finished reading the **55th** newsletter and wanted to pass along my compliments.

As usual, it was so well done.

**Betty McCall**, (wife of **Bob/Cash**), Canby, OR.

*(From an email 6 February, 2016)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Max:

I enjoyed reading the recent issue of **Videmus Omnia**. Thank you.

**Dora Morris**, (widow of **Ray**), Wamego, KS.

*(From an e-mail 5 February 2016)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Max:

Just finished reading the January 2016 **Videmus Omnia** (and the) Membership Meeting Minutes. There was a question about a crack in the Cold War Memorial, and it was stated that repairs were being considered at a cost of \$400.

**Not so:** the crack appeared in 2008, and Dodds Monuments' guarantee covered it. They **replaced the entire base at no cost** to the **Association**. It was done in the spring of 2009.

**Jack Kovacs**, Fairborn, OH.

*(E-mail 7 February 2016)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Thanks for the "Heads-Up", Max. *(Regarding the Birthday Ball).*

Regrets. **Carole** and I are well, but not up to driving to Omaha again. AND, I'll never buy another airline ticket!!!

Give my best regards to all who attend, and you may tell them why Carole and I are not there to share all the good times.

I am impressed with today's **Wing** accomplishments, its challenges, and its heritage.

You'll never know how many times I've told local neighbors the "**Golda Eldridge**" story. Imagine this: Three generations of an Air Force family having the opportunity to fly COMBAT SENT sorties in the same RC-135 tail-number that "my dad / my grandad flew years ago".

My counterparts here find it difficult to believe those same aircraft are still out there, flying the same hazardous missions they flew in the late 1960s, the 1970s, and 1980s; as are the KC-135 tankers.

I flew tankers before going to Vietnam, and before *(coming to the)* **55th SRW**. I had the privilege of picking up and delivering the last KC-135 out of Boeing's Seattle plant; in 1964.

I was the crew co-pilot. We went to 8<sup>TH</sup> AF?HQ at Westover AFB, MA, where we picked up the commanding officer, **General Horace Wade**, who wanted to deliver the plane to his latest KC-135 squadron in Plattsburg AFB, NY.

We made all that happen, and the "City of Plattsburg" flew many air refueling missions, world-wide, after that! My latest info is that she's still in service out there.

Your strong support since we first met, studying the wing mission to brief the CC (1970), has always inspired me to "do more, and do better".

Thanks for all you do.

**Jim "Jet" Morrow**, The Orchards of Brannon Oak Farms, GA.

*(Jim is a former vice commander of the 55<sup>th</sup>)  
(From an e-mail 11 April, 2016.)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Hi, Max:

My thanks for all the newsletters, but my father **LtCol Wm. S. Boughton**, and mother **Shirley**, as well as my husband **Wendell Graves**, are all gone for many years.

When I saw that **Sam Pizzo** had passed, I pretty much said it is time to stop the **55th** info as I know no one in the **Association** now.

Thanks so very much, and the best to all members of the great **55th SRW**.

I have many wonderful memories of my father's years in the Air Force and I actually miss it all.

Bless you all,

**Sherry (Boughton) Graves**, Tucson, AZ.

*(From and e-mail 4 May 2016)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Max:

Yet another excellent newsletter (*January 2016*). Thank you.

I noted with interest the "*Bit of 55<sup>th</sup> History*" article about the **55<sup>th</sup> ARS** and thought I'd pass along a tidbit about its first commander, **LtCol William R. Lawley, Jr.**

He was the recipient of the Medal of Honor. I don't recall the citation but would assume it would be available "somewhere" on the internet.

Again, thanks for keeping all informed.

VO, **Reg Urschler**, Bellevue, NE.

*(From an e-mail, 6 May 2016)*

*(Ed. Note: Of course Herr General is correct. A condensed account of Lawley's courageous actions follows. He is honored with a brick in the Cold War Memorial patio at the center front of the monument. It is the only brick with gold lettering.)*

\* \* \* \* \*

Lawley joined the Army Air Forces from Birmingham, AL, in April 1942, and by 20 February 1944 was a 1Lt serving as a B-17 pilot in the 364th Bomb Sqd, **305th Bomb Group**. On that

day, during a bombing mission over Nazi-controlled Europe, his B-17 came under attack by numerous enemy fighter aircraft.

Eight crewmen were wounded and the copilot killed. With his plane severely damaged and on fire, he ordered his crew to parachute to safety.

Finding two crewmen who were too badly injured to bail out, Lawley, despite his own serious wounds, decided to stay with the plane.

1Lt Lawley, painfully wounded about the face, forced the copilot's body off the controls, brought the plane out of a steep dive, flying with his left hand only. Blood covered the instruments and windshield and visibility was a challenge.

With a full bomb load the plane was difficult to maneuver and bombs could not be released because the racks were frozen. Although weakened from loss of blood and shock, Lawley was able to make a successful crash landing in England.

Lawley recovered from his wounds and, on August 8, 1944, was awarded the **Medal of Honor**.

He reached the rank of colonel before leaving the Air Force in 1972. He died 30 May 1999 at age 78 and is buried in Birmingham, AL.

\* \* \* \* \*



Hi Max:

I have to give you a lot of credit for what you have been doing in publishing the newsletter all these years.

It's been a long time since I left Forbes, but I can still remember arriving there on the morning of 3 June 1954. (Wow, 62 years ago!) I was the first one of our group to arrive there.

After lunch I took a walk to look at the B-29's from the outside the fence, when all of the sudden, I heard someone calling my name. Needless to say, I was shocked as no one there could know me.

It was a friend of mine from back home. He was a mechanic on the B-29's and he told me that he was getting out of the Air Force as soon as the B-29's were gone.

So, I had to close down the Bomb/Nav shop in the UK, before returning home to Forbes. I didn't

know the **Wing** had moved to Offutt AFB. What a shock that was!

That was the second time that I was surprised to see all the bombers and tankers gone from Forbes. The first time was when I was in England and I was told to pack my bags and clear the base in one hour as I was flying home. I asked why, all they would say is, I would find out. That was October 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Thirteen years after my first day at Forbes, on 15 June 1967, I was the last **55<sup>th</sup>**er to leave Forbes after arriving home from England.

Well, Max, now that you woke up a ‘dead man’, it’s time for me to quit. LOL!

Good luck.

**Elvio Palmeri**, Pampano Beach, FL.

(From an e-mail 2 June 2016)

\* \* \* \* \*

## NEWSLETTER INPUTS WELCOME

*Yes, we are aware that these newsletters tend to be Offutt-centric. Hello! It is where stuff happens.*

*Here is how members can help diversify the coverage in Videmus Omnia:*

*Editor’s usual plea: If anyone wishes to contribute letters, true (humorous or otherwise) stories, photos and articles, please do so.*

*Send them to MaxMoore55@aol.com, preferably; or mail to the address in the Director’s Directory, pg 2. We encourage and welcome the input.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*When 55th events occur in your area (Florida, Texas, MD/VA/DC metroplexes, Denver/CSprings, California, wherever), gatherings great or small, that you think would be of interest to the general readership, mail or e-mail the pertinent details, and include the names of those who arrange and attend.*

*Names are news. Use ‘em. Pictures are good. Send ‘em.*

*The only way to broaden our coverage is to get input from the near and far reaches of Fifty-Fifth-land.*

*Please see following items as examples.*

*(Contributions may be,..... well, of course they will be, edited for content, readability, and spacing. It’s what I do.)*

*Thanks, and Videmus Omnia, Max.*



\* \* \* \* \*

## EAST COAST “CHAPTER”

East coast area alumni, including active duty, retirees and ‘beltway bandits’, have occasional social gatherings. Events are organized periodically for reconnecting, exchanging information, and camaraderie in the 55<sup>th</sup> spirit.

There are tentative plans for the group to attend a Potomac Nationals minor league baseball game in July or August.

**For information on future 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association East events, or to get on the e-mail listing, drop Ricky McMahon an e-mail at potomacpistol@gmail.com, or Ricky.McMahon@L-3Com.com, then pass him your contact information.**

*The more the merrier (obligatory cliché).*

\* \* \* \* \*

## SAN ANTONIO LUNCH BUNCH

This alumni ‘chapter’ is growing and flourishing. As **Dave Frutchey** and **Charlie McBride** have reported, they gather the **second** Thursday of the month, 1200 hours, at the *Lion and Rose Pub*, Blanco and Loop 410.

Initially, five veteran crewdogs began the group a couple of years ago. That has now grown to about 20 ‘members’. About 12-15 typically attend each monthly gathering. It is a time of reliving the past and just enjoying one another’s company.

*Others who occasionally attend are Bruce Barker, Andy Borden, Jim Hilliard, Ken Bryars, Hiram Goya, Ralph Cofield, Mike Morris, Bill*



*White, Ron Nickerson, Bill O'Hara, Chuck Younkin, Jeff Herd, Hank Dubuy, Howard Ham, Clay Harvey, Frank McMillan, and Gil Dewind.*



*L-R: Morris, Bryars, Nickerson, Frutchey, McBride, Frank McMillan, White, Younkin, Goya, Harvey, Gates, and Barker.  
(Photo from Nickerson)*

*Anyone wishing to join this genial group can contact Dave at [dfrutchey@att.net](mailto:dfrutchey@att.net), ph: 210-355-0040; or Charlie at [cmcbride40@yahoo.com](mailto:cmcbride40@yahoo.com), ph: 830-438-3349. Better yet, just show up.*

*The more the merrier (obligatory cliché).  
(This is a recording.)*

\* \* \* \* \*



*This convivial group manages to meet at least once a year to bring sunshine into the lives of the diners and staff of a brewpub near Castle Rock, CO.*

*Clockwise, L-R: Rick "Slim" Smith, Marilyn Brookie, Joy Smith, Carol Moore, Celia Reed, Jim Brookie, Tom Reed, Max "Not Slim" Moore.*

*(Photo from Moore)*

*They are from Monument (Smiths), Sedalia (Reeds) and Highlands Ranch (Bookies), CO. Moores from Bellevue, NE, in the area to visit family and friends.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*If there are any new 55th 'chapters' (big, small, in-between) forming out there, please let it be known so the word can spread. California, Florida, Colorado, and other parts of Texas (to list just a few) all have pockets of alums where such activity may occur.*

\* \* \* \* \*

## SAC HALL OF FAME FIRST CLASS INDUCTED

The gala function was held on Thursday 7 April 2016, at The **Strategic Air Command** and Aerospace Museum in Ashland, NE. The event was held to raise money and awareness for its mission.



The theme was *Wings of Freedom* and included recognizing and honoring former Strategic Air

Command (SAC) heroes, and commemorating past contributors.

The cocktail reception began at 1730, with the sit-down dinner at 1800.

The SAC Hall of Fame inducted its first members at the event. They included: **General Curtis LeMay**, who led SAC for nearly 10 years, and established its headquarters at Offutt AFB, NE; **General Thomas Power**, who succeeded LeMay in 1957 and led the command for seven years; **General Richard Ellis**, who was the command's ninth leader from 1977-1981; **General Bernard Schriever**, widely regarded as the father of the Air Force's ballistic missile and military space programs; and retired **CMSAF James McCoy**, who at 85 is the only living member to be inducted. The Chief established the command's noncommissioned officer academy and its NCO leadership programs, and later served as SAC's senior enlisted adviser. McCoy was the sixth the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, 1979-1981. (*Chief McCoy is a member of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association*)

Other posthumous inductees include **J. Robert Beyster**, who founded the Science Applications International Corp in 1969; and **Arthur C. Storz, Sr.**, who played a key role in promoting Offutt as the location for SAC headquarters.

“Funds raised from the gala will be used to support operations, preserve artifacts and exhibits of SAC history, and help the museum make needed improvements in its 18-year-old facility,” said **Museum Director Michael McGinnis**.

Among the many dignitaries attending, President Jim Thomas showed the **Association** logo at the event.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MUSEUM NAME CHANGE AND DEDICATION

A press release dated **25 June 2015**, announced that the Strategic Air and Space Museum Board of Directors approved the Museum staff’s recommendation to rename the museum the “**Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum**”.

**The change became official immediately, but the name dedication and unveiling of the logo occurred 21 May 2016. (See following article.)**

*(Also FYI: The original museum in 1959 was the Strategic Air Command Museum until 1966 (when it was at the north end of Offutt AFB), and again from 1991-2001. The name was the Strategic Aerospace Museum from 1966-1991.*

The newer building near Ashland, NE, opened in 1998 as the **Strategic Air Command** Museum. The name was officially changed to Strategic Air and Space Museum in 2001. That was done without any public input from museum members, or SAC veterans, or the public, and without public advance notice.

Of course there was controversy and an unfavorable backlash at that time.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SAC MUSEUM RE-DEDICATION

The ceremony at the Museum on Saturday, 21 May 2016, celebrated the name change and a re-dedication of its mission, and noted 70 years of Strategic Air Command history.

Over 200 SAC veterans and guests, including several **Association** members, attended and enjoyed a continental breakfast and social time before the formal program.

A ceremonial ribbon cutting led by Museum Director McGinnis and Chief McCoy included the featured guest speakers: **MGen (Ret) Bill Doyle, BG (Ret) George Cole; CMSgt (Ret), SES (Ret) Al Buckles.**

**Bryan York**, the Museum Curator, gave a slide presentation on the history of SAC, prior to the speakers recounting their experiences in SAC’s glory days.

Guided tours of the Museum and specific aircraft, and other activities for visitors and families completed the full day’s agenda.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY IN THE UK

In what is now an established annual rite, the **Association** and the 95<sup>th</sup> IS at RAF Mildenhall, UK, participate in the laying of wreaths at Madingley, UK, to honor the 55<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group members who died in WWII. The 55<sup>th</sup> WA provides the wreath and the 95th does the ceremony.



**Capt Scott Grams** of the 95<sup>th</sup> IS placed the wreath at the ceremony. He provided the photo.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The smallest good deed is better than  
the grandest of intentions.*

\* \* \* \* \*



## BO MARLIN HONORED

**Robert (Bo) Marlin**, a former 45<sup>th</sup> RS commander, and a long time **Association** member, was recently selected as a Defense Intelligence Meritorious Senior Level Professional Presidential Rank Award winner for 2014, the second-highest annual award given to selected career Senior Executive Service (SES) members and limited to no more than 5% of the SES members in any year.

He was recognized for "sustained superior accomplishment in the administration of programs of the US Government, and for noteworthy achievement of quality and efficiency in the public service."

The presentation was made in a ceremony for the 2014 Defense Intelligence Presidential Rank Award Winners by the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence on 27 April, 2016.



*L-R: The Honorable **Marcel Lettre**, Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, **Marlin**, **Michael L. Rhodes**, Director of Administration in the Office of the Deputy Chief for Management.*



## EC-135 RESTORATION UPDATES

The SAC Museum restoration crew continues to assess the condition of the airframe. Volunteers are sanding the entire exterior of the aircraft. Although the exterior will not be painted until late in restoration, sanding the exterior now exposes areas that need corrosion treatment or sheet metal replacement.

Within the aircraft, the heating/cooling duct, which runs the entire length of the aircraft above the center aisle, is severely corroded. Restoration

manager **Mark Hamilton** and volunteer **Doug Spurlock** have done a lot of sheet metal repair on the duct.

Volunteer **Steve Stevens** sands the left wing leading edge (*pictured at right*).



Meanwhile, volunteers, including **Dick Doolittle**, have almost finished sanding the entire cockpit area in preparation for priming and painting. Other volunteers are removing wires, removing wood flooring to assess the airframe under the floor, and removing more of the heating/cooling duct.

All areas of the aircraft show the effect of storing the aircraft outside for many years while awaiting restoration. Volunteer **Hank Carriger** recently removed two large garbage bags of birds' nests and other debris from the non-pressurized tail compartment. Dirt on the bottom of that area was over an inch thick.

This is a long and arduous project requiring dedication and a lot of elbow grease.

*(Report by Hank Carriger, Bellevue, NE, 10 June 2016)*



## TAPS



**BAUMAN, Thomas A.**, 82, 24 August 2015, Pacific, MO; survived by wife **Beth**. Tom was an Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO) in RB-47s in the **55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing** at Forbes AFB, KS, circa 1960s.

**BROWN, Robert L.**, 78, 19 April 2016, Sumter, SC; wife of 55 years, **Catherine Mary**. An RC-135 EWO, Bob was on Rivet Ball at Eielson AFB, AK, 1967-69. After serving as an



assistant professor of English at the USAF Academy, 1973-77, he was the EWO 'ops officer' in the 343<sup>rd</sup> at Offutt. He originated the *Crewdog Gazette*, a satire of crewmember life in the 55<sup>th</sup>.

**DONOVAN, Caroline**, 73, 6 June 2016, Omaha, NE; former wife of **Dan**, who was the vice commander of the 3902nd ABW at Offutt in the mid-1980s. Caroline was a former school teacher and had an avid interest in antiques.

**GILGUT, Dorothy (Dody)**, 78, 7 May 2013, Ocean Park, ME. She was the widow of **Richard (Dick)**, who was an RC-135 EWO at Kadena AB, Okinawa, and on COMBAT SENT aircraft at Offutt in the late 1960s and into the 1970s.

**GUSTAFSON, Carl (Gus)**, 85, 26 September 2015, Wheaton, IL. Retiring as a SMSgt after 28 years in the AF, Gus was a career maintainer who served in the 55<sup>th</sup> at Offutt circa 1970s.

**HURD, Peter M.**, 79, 16 December 2015, Houlton, ME; wife, **Alma Jean**. An EWO, Pete served in RC-135s at Eielson and the 55<sup>th</sup> at Offutt, in the mid-1960s. He had a Vietnam tour, 1968-69, and later retired in 1978 from duty in the Office of Undersecretary for Defense, Pentagon, DC. Pete then worked for Det 2, Big Safari, in Houlton.

**MATTISON, Enid**, 93, 22 February 2016, Fair Oaks, CA. She was the widow of **Mahlon**, an EWO in RBs in the 343<sup>rd</sup> SRS at Forbes, late 1950s to 1962, when he was transferred to the 4157<sup>th</sup> SW at Eielson in the original *Office Boy* RC-135D program.

**OSBORN, Phillip W.**, 77, 12 February 2016, Yreka, CA; wife of 53 years, **Janice**. Phil was in the 55<sup>th</sup> as an RB-47 navigator at Forbes, then in RCs at Offutt in the 1960s. He was assigned to the 6SW at Eielson in 1970, then to the 307<sup>th</sup> ARGroup at Travis AFB, CA, where he retired in 1978. During his retirement years, he became an avid gold miner, among other pursuits.

**PAUL, Joyce**, 12 February 2016, Silver Springs, MD; wife of **Norman**, a long time navigator in the 343<sup>rd</sup> at Forbes and Offutt, circa 1960s and 1970s.

**PIXLEY, John J.**, 80, 3 March 2016, Omaha, (formerly of La Vista, NE); survived by **Sandra**, they were married 61 years. John was an RC EWO and staff officer in the 55<sup>th</sup> at Offutt during the 1970s and early 1980s. His second career was as

Director of Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs at Iowa Western CC in Council Bluffs, IA.

**RAFFERTY, Betty**, 92, 15 September 2015, Tucson, AZ; widow of **Charles M. (Iron Mike)**. A legendary SAC B/RB-47 pilot at Forbes in the 1960s, he served in the 55<sup>th</sup> as 343<sup>rd</sup> SRS CC, Deputy CC for Ops, and Deputy CC for Maintenance. He was a charter member of the **Wing Hall of Fame** in 1999. Rafferty passed in November 1967 while on active duty.

**RUPP, Edward**, 68, 31 May 2016, Rosa Beach, FL; wife **Donna**. Ed served in the 55<sup>th</sup> at Offutt as an RC-135 pilot and staff officer in the 1970s. After retiring in 1992, he founded a real estate agency.

**SMITH, Rafael (Ray) W.**, 82, 20 January 2016, Dallas, TX. A pioneer EWO in RB47s at Forbes in 1955, he left the AF in 1958 to pursue a degree in philosophy at Penn State. He later moved to Dallas and started a machine tool company.

**SUL, Aristo**, 80, 14 February 2015, San Antonio, TX; wife, **Virginia**. A retired MSgt, Aristo worked in aircraft maintenance in the 55<sup>th</sup> at Offutt circa 1970s. He and Virginia were regular reunion attendees.

**TENNANT, Thomas H.**, 85, 5 March 2016, Bellevue, NE; wife **Margaret**. Chief Tom had near legendary status in the US Electronic Security Service for about 30 years at Yokota AB, Japan, Kadena AB, Okinawa, and at Offutt, among many assignments. He mentored, and was an outstanding role model, for a generation of linguists and other airmen.

**TESI, Guido**, 91, 22 October 2015, Topeka, KS, married to **Margaret** for 67 years. An Army Air Corps pilot from 1943, he flew B-17s and B-50s before coming to the 55<sup>th</sup> at Forbes in RB-47s in the late 1950s. Retiring from the AF in 1963, he served another 24 years in government intelligence.

\* \* \* \* \*

**TAPS** notification of **Association** members, spouses, friends and associates should be sent to Editor Max Moore, 201 Basswood Court, Bellevue NE, 68005; or e-mail MaxMoore55@aol.com



**Please include next of kin and an address to whom an Association condolence card may be sent by the President.**

The date of demise, age, location; and if known, connection to the 55<sup>th</sup> - base, time frame and Air Force specialty will be helpful.

Please note that the news in TAPS is determined and limited by how much and how accurate the given source information.

Otherwise, I just have to make up stuff. (Insert smiley face.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## TAPS ON THE ASSN WEB SITE

The TAPS section has an alphabetical, as well as chronological, listing for easier access to the names and dates of those in the 55<sup>th</sup> family who have passed.

Anyone who wishes to have the name of a family member, friend, or comrade who was a former member of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* added to the listing can request the web-guy to do so.

Please have the date of demise (*at least the year*) for placement.

\* \* \* \* \*

## MEMORIAL BRICK ORDERS

There may be some 55<sup>th</sup> veterans and/or family members, friends, associates, who want to order bricks for the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW Cold War Memorial patio in the National Museum of the USAF Memorial Gardens.

Orders have slowed considerably, but anyone interested in doing so should contact Bill Ernst for details: BillErnst1@cox.net, or phone 402-292-1205.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Follow up on a report in the January 2016 issue of VO, pg 14 on faded bricks.)

Jim (Thomas) and Bill (Ernst):

I ordered the 26 "re-make" bricks for the Memorial patio.

Larry Morrison at Dodds Monuments, says he will sell them to us at \$25 per brick. To save us labor costs, he will install them himself. He has done this for us in the past as he stops at the Memorial after work, and installed bricks.

So this year we are only paying for the bricks, and **no labor** or installation costs for a total of \$650

(I suggest any leftover budgeted funds can be carried over for next year).

Jack Kovacs, Fairborn, OH, 10 May 2016

\* \* \* \* \*

As yet another example of diligent caretaking, here is Jack's 11 year old grandson, *Patrick Morrow*, using a leaf blower to police up the patio. June 2016. Photo by Jack.



\* \* \* \* \*

## ANOTHER TALE OF THE BELL

In mid-March, the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Ceremonial Bell traveled on a spirit mission from its adopted home at Offutt AFB back to the United Kingdom in an effort to revisit and rekindle its roots.

While there, the Bell visited the very spot of its origin at the Officer's Club at what was then RAF Upper Heyford.

Interestingly, the former bar is now a school. But the Bell caretakers were given access by the hospitable and eager assistant principle, and it was placed upon the very marble mantle on which it originally was hung in 1965 by a deployed RB-47 crew from the 55<sup>th</sup> SRW at Forbes AFB, KS.

That is documented in the photo provided by a not to be named individual.

Following its brief visit to the UK, the Bell made a stop at Souda Bay, Crete, to inspect operations there before returning via an operational RC-135 mission to Offutt.



The Bell was well cared for and with respect during its sojourn to lock one more tale into its heritage with the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*.

(This item was contributed by **Colonel Mohan Krishna**, 55<sup>th</sup> Ops Group Commander, and an elected member of the **Association** Board. His source is person, or persons, currently under deep cover. 20 June 2016.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## FLAGS FLOWN OVER THE AIR FORCE MEMORIAL ARE AVAILABLE

The Air Force Memorial staff has available for purchase, **US flags** flown over the memorial. These are great gifts for retirement, birthdays, Christmas, etc. All flags purchased through the Air Force Memorial are **made in the USA** and include a certificate of authenticity.

Pricing: 3 x 5 - \$24 Nylon, \$34 Cotton; 5 x 8 - \$42 Nylon, \$59 Cotton (plus \$6 shipping). Nylon is recommended if the flag will be flown outside.

You may choose a **specific significant date** on which you would like the flag flown over the Memorial.



You can also request that a flag you already own to be flown for free.

For specific and updated information, contact the Air Force Memorial staff at Ph: 703-979-0674, or go to [afmf@airforcememorial.org](mailto:afmf@airforcememorial.org) home page, click on the EVENTS block, then the 'Flag Flying Request' link (*left side*) to download the order form

\* \* \* \* \*

## ASSOCIATION BX

\* \* \* \* \*

### ASSOCIATION POLO SHIRTS/CAPS

These are 'must have' items for reunion events; plus, they look good on the golf course, for casual Fridays at the office, and any leisure activity.

All the items can be viewed in color on the **Association** web site at [www.55wa.org](http://www.55wa.org), and click on the BX, Clothing Sales links.



Give a big hint to the family, and mayhap some generous loved one will give you a gift for whatever you have going: Father's Day, birthday, anniversary, Christmas, Hanukkah, Ramadan, Kwanzaa, Chinese New Year, whatever.

**Great gifts!** The shirts and caps are **unisex**, so get one for your spouse, significant other, or other family members, the family pet even.

The all white design is 100% polyester micro-pique, moisture-wicking and anti-microbial control; available in sizes medium, large, XL, and XXL. Size 3XL can be ordered if requested, Big Guy.

**The cost is \$35 each.**

**Be sure to state which size you want in your order.**

\* \* \* \* \*

The golf/baseball caps are royal blue with the dual shield logo on the front, and an adjustable back strap. **They go for \$12 each.**

**There are charges for priority postage to be added to the individual item cost: \$5.45 for one cap; \$10.45 for one shirt; \$11.35 for both a shirt and cap order; \$11.35 for two shirts.**

More ways to identify with your **Association** and "show the logo" as appropriate for reunions, official, social and casual functions.

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE ASSOCIATION TIE

The **Association's** '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.

The price is \$25 per tie, including shipping and postage. Order now!

This item is another great gift item, and a 'must have' for Association reunion banquets and other appropriate events.

\* \* \* \* \*

Anyone desiring to purchase any of the advertised items should contact the haberdasher, William (Bill) Sargent at 2711 Northwood Circle, Papillion, NE, 68133 or William488@cox.net

Checks for the full amount of your order should be made to the 55th Wing Association, and Bill will be promptly on your order.

\* \* \* \* \*

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



(Shown actual size)

The pins continue to be sold to Association members all over the country. They are particularly evident at official and social functions at Offutt, and at 55<sup>th</sup> reunions.

You will want to acquire one for that special lady in your life to wear on any occasion. Gents, it makes a great birthday or anniversary accessory gift, or holiday stocking stuffer.

Classy, but inexpensive.

The Association does not sell these pins and receives no money from the sales. But, as a service for those who wish to possess same: Erwin's Jewelers, Frank Kumor, proprietor, offers them and you can purchase directly from the store.

Send order 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 \$4 for shipping.

Frank is an Association member and ardent supporter. He is also one of the 55<sup>th</sup> Commander's Wingmen, allowed to wear the coveted leather flight jacket.

\* \* \* \* \*

## REUNIONS

\* \* \* \* \*

**B-66 ASSOCIATION**  
**28 AUGUST-1 SEPTEMBER 2016**  
**CHARLESTON & SHAW**  
**AFB/SUMTER, SC**

Cut off for registration is NLT 1 August, so do not hesitate if you plan to attend.

They have planned a full agenda in a picturesque and historic part of the country.

Complete details can be obtained in the form of the organization's summer newsletter and the registration form by contacting Jim Milam at JIMMILAM@aol.com.



Organizers relate that this may be their final reunion due advanced aging of members and declining attendance. So try not to miss this one.

\* \* \* \* \*

**DFC SOCIETY NATIONAL CONVENTION**  
**25-29 SEPTEMBER 2016**  
**\*CANCELED\***

Due to the very unfortunate circumstance that an officer and director of the Society in an absolute breach of trust and honor, cleaned out every Society account, the organization is forced to cancel this and other activities for the foreseeable future.



In an early May letter from President Chuck Sweeney to DFCS members, he states, "While

we make no definitive accusations at this time, the Board of Directors has seen fit to remove **Anthony Ventura** as out treasurer.”

Of course the appropriate authorities were notified and are investigating.

UPDATE: Society President Sweeney in a 13 June report relates that Society members have responded with over \$75,000 in donations to help the organization reestablish some financial stability. Among other things, the Society has been able to restart the Scholarship Fund.

“While in the process of raising funds to recapitalize, we have established some very tight financial operating controls that include a special Audit and Finance Committee, independent of the treasurer, and a Bookkeeper and CPA for financial oversight and legal filings, three party approval of all checks written or money movement”, wrote Sweeney.

\* \* \* \* \*

**B-47 STRATOJET  
ASSOCIATION  
28 SEP-2 OCT 2016  
WASHINGTON, DC**



A well planned agenda in the nation’s capital.

Full details on the hotel, costs, agenda, registration, et al, can be obtained at this link: <http://b-47.com>

\* \* \* \* \*

**55<sup>th</sup> WING ASSOCIATION  
TAMPA, FL  
19-22 APRIL 2017**

**Richard Ray** is the reunion chairman and he has signed the contract with the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore Hotel.



For reunion reservations, call the hotel directly at 1-813-877-6688, or Hilton reservations at 1-800-445-8687; and

identify as the **55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association Reunion**. **Cut-off date for the reunion rates are 20 March 2017.**

**Rates: Single, \$139; Double, \$149; Triple, \$159; Quad, \$169. Includes buffet breakfast: Transportation to and from Tampa International Airport and local transportation; complimentary parking; complimentary internet access in rooms.**

Tentative events are a Thursday evening reception; Friday tour of SOCCOM at MacDill AFB; Board meeting (likely late Wednesday afternoon; golf outing; membership meeting; shopping and lunch at the International Mall; gala Saturday evening banquet; and of course, generous hospitality suite hours.

As details become available, they will be posted on the **Association** web site, and the **next newsletter, planned for January 2017, will have complete details, agenda, registration costs, etc.**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW AND MAKE PLANS TO BE THERE.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**WHO SHOT WHAT**

Graphics from various sources, Clip art, and web sites. Pictures not previously attributed: Tales, Hall of Fame group and Award for Excellence trophies by Moore.

The Ball Hall of Fame presentations, cake cutting, and the Award for Excellence presentation by **Josh Plueger, 55<sup>th</sup> Wing** Public Affairs.

Adm Haney, official photo; Marlin provided by Bo. AF Memorial from the AFA web site.

**Association** shirt/cap by **Larry Utley**; tie by **Sam Pizzo**; **55<sup>th</sup>** pin by Moore; ‘Mad Max’ graphic by **Patricia Gros**, friend of the **Association**.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Included in this newsletter is a REUNION SURVEY (page 24). It is self-explanatory with the expressed purpose of telling the corporate ‘us’ how ‘we’ can improve, update, etc., to make the reunions more attendee friendly.*

*You are urged to please take the time to complete the form and return mail to the Association as soon as practical. Your input can make a difference.*



# Videmus Omnia



## 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association, Inc.

(Formerly – 55<sup>th</sup> Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association)

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(Address Update)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Veteran? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No    Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_  
(Dates of Service)

Are you a former member of the 55th Strat Recon Wing? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you a member of the 55<sup>th</sup> Strat Recon Wing? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Dates of Service)



Are you a current or former member of the 55th Wing? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you a member of the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Dates of Service)



Which 55th Unit(s) were you a member? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you on active duty? \_\_\_\_ If so, with what unit? \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

What is your present occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form with dues, if applicable  
**(\$20 per year or \$55 for 3 years)\***

to:

**55<sup>TH</sup> WING ASSOCIATION, INC.  
P.O. BOX 13165  
OFFUTT AFB, NE 68113**

\* Note – Expiration date of **NEW MEMBERS** only joining after 1 Oct extended to 31 Dec of following year  
\*\* Note – Dues expiration date – 31 December  
\*\*\*Note - Questions? **Contact Michael J. Cook, Membership Chairman, at [Michael.Cook@cox.net](mailto:Michael.Cook@cox.net), or at the above mailing address, or call (402) 578-5848.**



## REUNION SURVEY

The recent history of **55<sup>th</sup> Wing Association** reunions has shown a downward trend in attendance. In an effort to find how the corporate 'we' can turn that around, the Board of Directors decided to survey the membership to see if what specific factors effect members' decisions to attend (or not) reunions.

Likely there is no single reason or pattern, but it is worth the effort to get input from our membership to see how reunions can be made more appealing.

**We have been doing the same format for years. Please give us your ideas on what we can do better, differently, or add new events, and why you think it would appeal to the members.**

Please answer or rate the following categories to the best of your opinions.

**WHAT INFLUENCES YOU MOST ABOUT ATTENDING?**

**Rate 1 to 10, 10 being the most important.**

LOCATION

COSTS (Hotel, Registration)

REUNION AGENDA (Events, tours)

TIME OF YEAR PREFERED

FAMILY or HEALTH SITUATIONS

QUESTIONS:

Is the 18 month schedule okay? Should we go every two years? Every three?

Should reunions be held in Omaha area periodically? Yes No

If so, how often? Every other? Every five years? Ten? Other?

Is planning a cruise reunion a good option? Yes No

Tours – should there be more or fewer?

What are your thoughts on contracting with an organization like BRATS who professionally plan, organize, and contracting for reunions. The B-47 and BIG SAFARI Associations have used them for reunions. BRATS have bargaining power that we do not, and could bring new ideas and approaches to us. They will do what our coordinators want, but there is a fee, of course.

Your thoughts or experiences from other organizations' reunions you have attended that used BRAC.

**Please use additional paper, if needed, to elaborate with any comments, suggestions or observations regarding future reunions. What would you like to see improved/added?**

**Be candid. Any and all information will be helpful to evaluating decisions in future planning.**

**We ask that you complete the survey by 30 July 2016 and mail to:**

**55<sup>th</sup> WING ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 13165  
OFFUTT AF, NE 68113 ATTN: SURVEY**

**Thank you for your attention, time, cooperation, and participation.**



