

Videmus Omnia

55th WING ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2018

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



It seems, finally, springtime returns to the Nebraska prairie. With this awakening of new life, we are seeing a parallel rise in *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* activities. History matters—the *raison d'être* for our **Association's** existence! 2018 is a hallmark year for many events entwined with our heritage.

On 7 April, several **Association** members joined local United Kingdom (UK) brethren attached to the **55th Wing** and USSTRATCOM to celebrate the Royal Air Force's (RAF) Centenary (1918-2018). **Squadron Leader (04) Adrian (Ade) Pickup** was the RAF project officer for the ceremony.

At 1000L, a *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* RIVET JOINT RC-135 made an overfly of the Strategic Air Command and Space Museum at Ashland, NE.

After comments by military and political dignitaries, a birthday wreath honoring the unique USAF/RAF bond was presented by **55th Wing Association** to Air **Commodore James Linter**, the UK Air Attaché, who flew in from Washington, DC. The RAF contingent then invited all attendees to move to the Museum's downstairs to view several display tables—including one reserved for the **Association**.

On the **Association** table, our "ceremonial bell" and **Association** flag were prominently displayed



with USAF/RAF artifacts members contributed to the **Association's** table. Of course, we tried to snag a few new members with newsletters and membership forms displayed as we "manned" our post from 1000-1400L. (*And we did snag a few.*)

(*More coverage on this event on pages 7 & 8*)

In addition to the RAF Centenary, 2018 is also the 100th anniversary of **Lt Jarvis Offutt's** death (13 August 1918) in Valheureux, France. One timely irony of Offutt's demise was the fact that he was ferrying aircraft for the RAF's 56 Squadron. Thirty years later, in 1948 (70 years ago!), Offutt Field at Ft. Crook, NE, was renamed Offutt Air Force Base when the USAF became a separate service.



The **55th WG/RAF** connection continued for decades to the present; becoming even more intertwined during WWII, Cold War, and Middle East operations. The *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth's* direct relationship with the RAF is truly legendary and mutually successful.

Many **Association** members for many years have sortied from the UK to destinations far and wide. Several *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* alums even found the "love of their life" in RAF environs.

Today, the **55th Wing** is esteemed for its UK RJ *Airseeker* bed-down, and co-manning relationship with the RAF. So, let's all raise a pint to our "friends across the pond", remembering fond memories and recognizing what **Sir Winston Churchill** said was a truly "special relationship" (*and ".....two nations separated by a common language."*).

So, what's next? Memorial Day ceremonies at the Omaha National Cemetery and at RAF Madingley, of course! A decision on timing and planning for the **Association's** next Reunion/Birthday Ball, to be sure!

Re-establishing better periodicity with Board of Directors meetings, a must! Plus, identifying potential **Association** efficiencies, increasing membership rolls, maximizing members' benefits, and forging a strategic way-ahead worthy of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth's* heritage, present and future.

VIDEMUS OMNIA, Spy V

* * * * *

BOARD OF DIRECTORS DIRECTORY

Association Business/Policy/Issues:

President Joe Spivey

25014 Farnam Circle
Waterloo, NE, 68069
E-mail: jespivey@thecseteam.com

Vice President Ricky McMahon

14325 Orlando Road
Nokesville, VA 20181
E-mail: potomacpistol@gmail.com

Membership/Dues/Changes of Address:

Treasurer Michael Cook

3204 Rahn Blvd
Bellevue, NE 68123
E-mail: Michael.Cook@cox.net

Secretary Trish Seinwill

9335 Branchside Lane
Fairfax, VA, 22031
E-mail: pseinwill@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor Max Moore

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

Webmaster Jim Maloney

7908 Kona Circle
Papillion, NE 68046-5619
E-mail: jim@maloney.com

Awards Chairman

Hamilton Kennedy

13701 S. 129th St
Springfield, NE 68059
hamiltonwilsonkennedy@gmail.com

Other Members of the Board of Directors:

Bill Ernst, Jim Thomas, Errol Hoberman, Fox Censullo, George Ross, Don Kelly, Paul Jeanes, Val Dugie, Colonel Mohan Krishna. Active Duty: Colonel David Preisman.

Appointed Historian:

William (Bill) Sargent

2711 Northwood Circle
Papillion, NE, 68133
William488@cox.net

Appointed Enlisted Affairs Liaison:

Elvio Palmieri

4020 W. Palm Aire Drive, Apt. 409
Pompano Beach, FL. 33069
ElvioPalmeri@yahoo.com

* * * * *

TREASURER'S REPORT

Please 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). 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, and thank you very much.

Most recently, Calvert Systems donated \$5000 for upkeep of the **55th SRW Cold War Monument** at the Memorial Gardens of the National USAF Museum, near Dayton, OH. Hoo-rah!!

* * * * *

As of 31 March 2018, 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. For example, dues paid for years thru 2020 **cannot** be spent and are prorated through the ensuing calendar years.

Some members have paid for several years in advance. One gent is covered through **2034**. 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 the postage. We do have a budget.

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

* * * * *

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

There were 432 members in good standing as of 16 April 2018, compared with 486 on 31 October 2017.

The downturn is the result of members whose dues expired on 31 December 2017 and who did not renew by the end of the grace period. They were removed from the active member rolls on 1 April.

This newsletter is being sent to the lapsed members as a good faith gesture to encourage them to return to the fold. Their address labels will indicate **EXPIRED**. (*Dues, not literally.*)

Otherwise, regrettably, this is the last correspondence the Association will attempt with those troops.

* * * * *

About 145 widows receive the newsletter gratis. As always, they are welcome to any and all **Association** functions.

Fifty **55th Wing**, and associated, units and offices are sent the newsletter for PR purposes, and to keep them connected with the **Association**, and vice versa.

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

* * * * *

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 of this year-date to keep up with your dues.**

Life Members (LM) and widows are dues exempt.

If you are not sure of, or have a question about, your dues expiration date for whatever reason, 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 of the following year to remain in good standing.

* * * * *

PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY ASSOCIATION CORRESPONDENCE TO MICHAEL'S HOME ADDRESS.

PLEASE USE THE ADDRESS ON THE MEMBERSHIP FORM.

THANK YOU.

* * * * *

Please help us stay current.

There is a membership/information update form at page 27 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 to go into our data base.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE WILL BE SENT TO YOUR HOME OF RECORD.

Invariably we get returned mail because of outdated addresses. Third class mail is **not** forwarded, nor returned to us.

* * * * *

RECRUITING MEMBERS TO THE ASSOCIATION

Retaining members, and recruiting new ones, is a recurring and never ending priority. It is the life blood of any organization.

There was a noticeable increase in the membership, due to diligent efforts of some current members, lapsed members returning, new sign ups of troops who have not belonged in the past, etc., **until the end of the grace period hit.**

When anyone recruits new members, those potentials may ask questions or have concerns. Here are some tips to point out to those who are apprehensive about joining:

1) **No meetings** except at reunions. Alleviates concerns of time and commitments.

2) The **Association** has **no HHQ to answer to**: no quotas, no required reports up channel, etc.

3) We have **no problem filling** officer slots, Board, or committees. Usually new members think they may be tapped for those sorts of things as happens in other organizations.

4) Belonging is a major way to **stay connected** with former and current **Wing** members; know about events the **Association** is doing; and news of the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* and Offutt. (Newsletter, web site, et al.)

Feel free to retain this for future reference, as needed. Add your own tips, as well.

* * * * *

The **Association** welcomes not only *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth* 'alumni', but associates, supporters and friends thereof. There are many members who did not serve in the 55th, but were connected to the unit and/or its history in some way.

Recently, an RAF officer attached to the **Wing** joined the **Association**, an historic first!

* * * * *

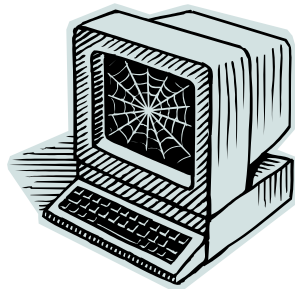
YOUR 55TH WING ASSOCIATION WEB SITE www.55wa.org

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

The home page NOTAMS list includes many recent and interesting postings.

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.



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

Check the web site regularly for the latest information on the next reunion, Heritage Week activities, and other significant events.

As of 01 January 2017 there were over 30,220 visitors to the site.

* * * * *

A 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.

This page also contains a "Lost and Found" section where members can search for information about how to contact friends and former crewmates.

* * * * *

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.

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 need to visit the **Members Only** page on the web site, and read, or download the newsletter 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

Past newsletters dating to February 1998 are archived, as well, and can be accessed on the home page. It is interesting to see how it has evolved over time.

* * * * *

HISTORY OF 10,000 DAYS IN THE DESERT

AL UDEID AIRBASE, Qatar: On 2 August 1990, Saddam Hussein of Iraq attacked Kuwait with a series of bombings in the country's capital,

Kuwait City. Four days later, Operation Desert Shield kicked off, the first RC-135 Rivet Joint mission of the **55th Wing** flew to the US Central Command area of responsibility (AOR). This mission officially established the 763rd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (ERS), which was known as the 4077th Reconnaissance Squadron until 1998.

After Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the unit continued to support theater and national-level consumers with real-time, on-scene intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination capabilities to US and coalition forces.

The unit stayed in the Middle East and supported Operation Southern Watch from August 1992 to March 2003, and both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom for the majority of the 2000s.

In August 2003, the aircraft and personnel transitioned from Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia, to Al Udeid. It was then that the 763rd ERS was activated into the squadron it is today.

“The reason the 763rd has been in CENTCOM for so long is because of the unparalleled capabilities our aircraft and personnel bring in helping fight and win our nation's wars,” said **Lt Colonel Aaron Gray**, 763rd ERS commander.

Christmas Eve 2017 was the 10,000 day of being in the area of responsibility (AOR). **Colonel Michael Manion**, **55th Wing** commander, flew in from Offutt to visit the deployed unit at AUAB.

Currently, the 763rd ERS consists entirely of personnel, equipment, and aircraft from the **55th Wing** from Offutt AFB, NE.



“It is an absolute honor to serve as commander of the **Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth** and to be here with our deployed warriors for this historic occasion,” Manion said. “This milestone not only shows the Warhawks’ dedication to the mission, but also proves we have the resolve to stay until the job is done.”

Twenty-seven years have passed since the 763rd began, and the unit continues to support operations in the area, standing ready for any future contingencies that may come to the theater.

“It is exciting to know that we are part of a long lineage of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance airmen who have contributed to

operations in this AOR over the past 10,000 days,” Gray said. “We are driven every day knowing that we have the high standard of so many who came before to live up to.”

(Photo and article courtesy of 55th Wing Public Affairs, December 2017 with minor edits by Moore. Four more months, and counting, can be added to that time line, with no end in sight.)

* * * * *

*Airspeed is life. Altitude is life insurance.
No one has ever collided with the sky.*

* * * * *



Logo by Josh Plueger, 55th Wing Public Affairs

OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, NE – The Warhawks logo was officially unveiled by the 55th Wing commander during a staff meeting on January 25. The name was chosen by Colonel Michael Manion, 55th Wing commander, in the months following his assumption of command on 8 June 2017.

“When I was growing up and playing competitive team sports, I always enjoyed the camaraderie in being a part of a winning team,” he said. “So when I arrived here, I wanted to know what our wing’s nickname was, and as it turned out, we didn’t have one.”

So, he challenged his staff to look at the wing’s history, along with its current mission set, and come up with some ideas.

After hearing about how an adversary described the 55th Wing’s RC-135S Cobra Ball mission in the Pacific as, “imperialist warhawks running amuck”.

“When I heard they referred to us as warhawks, that just stuck,” he said. “Our wing has been continuously deployed for more than 27 years, and often times we’re supporting four or five combatant commands around the world at the same time. We are without a doubt, Warhawks.”

From that point on the name Warhawks became part of the wing’s lexicon.

However, there was no logo to match it.

When Colonel Manion unveiled the Warhawks logo to the wing’s leadership team, there was resounding applause.

“I think it’s outstanding,” he said.



“Now, when our team hears the name Warhawks, there is a visual to go with it.”

The Warhawks logo will be used in a variety of ways, throughout the wing and for future events. **The preferred use is as one word.**

(Article and photo by 55th Wing Public Affairs. Minor edits by Moore. 31 January 2018.)

(A version of this article was published in the Bellevue Leader and Omaha World-Herald the first week in February under the byline of Eugene Curtin, senior staff reporter with Suburban Newspapers.)

* * * * *

(Editor Observation: Terms associated with the Wing are history based, are varied and several. They include “The Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth” dating to the 55th Fighter Group of WWII; “The Sun Never Sets on the 55th”, coined in the mid-1950s to reflect the unit’s global operating locations; Videmus Omnia (We See All), the Wing shield motto; Team Offutt, sometime after the Wing became host unit in 1986; “The 55th Leads the Fight”, about 2000.

This from the archives and memory of one who has been assigned to and/or associated with the 55th since June of 1960. May have missed some.)

* * * * *

MORE 55TH HISTORY

According to **unclassified** information in the classified appendix of the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing history for April-June 1967, the first **operational** mission by an RC-135C model was a *Burning Eye* mission flown on 5 April 1967.

The first operational **global** mission was a *Burning Skies* mission flown on 3 May 1967. In both cases, the aircraft tail numbers were **not** identified.

The histories list four RC-135Cs assigned to the 343rd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron by 1 April 1967 (with dates of delivery): tail numbers 63-9792 (27 Jan 67), 64-14843 (25 Feb 67), 64-14841 (22 Mar 67) and 64-14872 (31 Mar 67.)

The entry for the first *Burning Sky* mission states that **Major Don Griffin** was the command pilot with a total mission time of 22:15 hours.

No such information was included with the entry for the 5 April 1967 mission.



According to the histories, the reference used for this mission information was a personal interview with **LtCol Forrest Zeno, 55DCOO** (Recon Ops directorate), which was not included in the report.

Archangelo ‘Archie’ DiFante

Air Force Historical Research Agency
Maxwell AFB, AL

(Editor Note: There is a dichotomy in that the 55th Wing Historian and a Wing history booklet both indicate the first operational sortie was flown on 1 April 1967. This information was imparted in a series of e-mails in April 2017 as a result of an inquiry on the subject.)

* * * * *

ANOTHER FORMER WING KING PROMOTED

Colonel George M. “Moose” Reynolds, a former **55th Wing** commander (June 2015-June 2017), promotion to brigadier general was announced on 16 November 2017.



His current position is Military Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, Air Force Research Institute, Air Education and Training Command, NY, NY.

Pin-on date and his next assignment are TBA.

President Spivey sent him a congratulatory e-mail on behalf of the **Association**, and received this response:

From: Reynolds, George M., Col USAF
Sent: Tuesday, 21 November 2017

Joe,

Really appreciate the note and well wishes. The **Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth** is in our DNA, so it is great to get a note from the **Association** President!!

Please pass along our thoughts to all the members!

Marty “Moose” Reynolds

Colonel, U.S. Air Force, Military Fellow

* * * * *

RAF/55TH EVENT AT THE SAC MUSEUM 7 APRIL

The national anthems of the USA and UK were sung by **MSgt Rebecca Packard** of the USAF Heartland Band, just before the RC-135 flyover in a perfectly blue (and frigid) sky. *(Spring time in Nebraska, 25 degrees, plus wind chill.)*

The speakers at the event were **55th Wing Commander, Colonel Michael Manion, United Kingdom Air Attaché Air Commodore (07) James Linter**, and **Congressman (BGen-USAF Ret) Don Bacon**, (a former **55th Wing** commander, March 2011-June 2012).



Both Colonel Manion and General Bacon specifically expressed their appreciation for the **55th Wing Association’s** participation in, and support of the event. The RAF project officer also extended his ‘thank you’ to the **Association** for its support.

Accompanying Colonel Manion were **55th Wing Command Chief MSgt Brian Kruzelnick** and **MSgt Scott Hughes, 55th Wing Protocol Superintendent**. Additionally, there were numerous **Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth** active duty troops and a contingent of the RAF personnel attached to the Wing, as well.

AirCmdr Linter remained at the Museum most of the day enjoying the many aircraft and other displays, and mingling with personnel from both services.



President Spivey and Congressman Bacon made the birthday wreath presentation to Air Commodore Linter, as Colonel Manion looks on at rear, left.

Joe's trusty 'aide', **Ken Bauer**, was instrumental in securing the wreath and a ton of refreshments in the volunteer room.

Inside the Museum there were myriad activities for families, and history displays about the RAF, USAF, **55th**, and Offutt. There was a good crowd of Museum visitors to witness the ceremonies.

The **Association** table was situated between the **55th Wing** Historian's display manned by **John McQueney**, and the **55th Wing** display. Our table displayed the ceremonial bell, the **Association** flag, some memorabilia, copies of the November issue of the *Videmus Omnia* and membership forms.

Assisting Spivey at the display table were **Chris Regan**, Max Moore, Jim Maloney

Among the **Association** members who dropped by were **Brian Tingstad**, **Brian Humphrey**, **Lew Adams** and his daughter, **Roland** and **Kathy Saenz**.

A presentation by Squadron Leader Adrian, an RAF exchange officer attached, and **Major Noah Lazenby** on the shared history of the RAF and USAF was given at 1100 and 1400. Both officers are Assistant Directors of Operations (ADO) for the 338th Crew Training Sqd. (CTS) of the **55th Wing**.

POSTSCRIPT

President Spivey reported that the wreath which was presented on the **Association's** behalf at the RAF 100th Anniversary ceremony, Ken Bauer, Sqd Ldr Adrian, and **Mike Hoskins** (L-R in the photo) took it from the SAC Museum



following the afternoon festivities and placed it at the Omaha gravesite of **Lt Jarvis Offutt**. Very appropriate — and nice touch. Thanks to them for doing so. (Photo provided by Bauer)

* * * * *

GARY SINISE'S LT DAN BAND PERFORMS AT OFFUTT

A great, sincere, and visible supporter of the military, veterans and their families, actor/musician **Gary Sinise** (of *Forest Gump* fame) brought his ensemble to Offutt on 7 April.

When Col Manion was asked, "How did you get this gig from a famous group?" He answered, "He e-mailed me! And asked if he could bring his band to Offutt". That was in mid-March.

Before the concert, Colonel Manion met Sinise at the airport, and then gave him a wide-ranging tour of Offutt. Sinise also met with a group of Wounded Warriors and the organization's supporters.

An estimated crowd of about two thousand active duty, families, guests, and retirees (including several **Association** members), representing all age groups, were treated to two hours of spectacular sound and lights entertainment in the Bennie Davis Maintenance Facility, Dock 1. Admission was free and open to the Offutt community.

The fifteen or so very talented musicians and vocalists played a wide variety of popular and familiar music (no real hard rock), and every member was featured in solo at least once.



Sinise, who plays a long-necked bass guitar, was rarely in front as he allowed the group to be the main attraction. He did make a few statements about why he formed the band and does tours to

support the military and first responders all around the country with the help of his foundation.

The session ended with a stirring rendition of "God Bless the USA" to a standing, very appreciative, sing-a-long audience.



Gary Sinise at center

(Editor Note and opinion: If you ever get a chance to see this group at a military base near where you reside, I recommend you do so. Even us ol' folks loved the show and atmosphere.)

* * * * *

55th WING HALL OF FAME

*(Editor Note: Although the history of the Hall of Fame has been published in recent years, this is the first time since September 2007 that the entire process and criteria has been included in an issue of **Videmus Omnia**. This information is available on the **Association** web site every year and all year. Retain if/as you see fit.)*

* * * * *

2018 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS PROCESS DEFINED

Below are the specifics of the criteria and submission requirements. After reading them, if you want to take on the challenge of making a submission, contact **Hamilton Kennedy**, our Awards Chairman at HamiltonWilsonKennedy@gmail.com. This is not meant to be a pre-screening of a candidate. He will insure with you only that you fully understand the process instructions and requirements. This is to help insure a level playing field.

Nominations (submit just one original copy plus documentation) are due **NLT 15 JULY 2018**. "Just the facts." Contributions to the missions of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** are the only currency of the Hall of Fame (HoF). Who can submit someone for consideration to be inducted into the Hall of Fame? Anyone who has knowledge of outstanding service to

the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** as described defined below and who complies with the requirements of submission. The Hall of Fame criteria and format specifics are highlighted below. Follow it. Any questions, please ask. Contact: HamiltonWilsonKennedy@gmail.com

* * * * *

55 WING HALL OF FAME Process is administered by the **55th Wing Association**.

Each year the timelines have to be modified to coincide with the date of the **55th Wing Birthday Ball**.

The **55th Wing Birthday Ball** will be on 22 September 2018.

Objective: To recognize those former members of **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth** whose mission accomplishments, contributions, and/or sacrifices stand out while performing, and providing direct support to the missions of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**.

General: A maximum of two (target) awards (a crew will be considered as one award) may be given in one year. Consideration of nominees does **not** mandate selection to the HoF. Formal induction ceremonies for the HoF will be conducted during Heritage Week and final presentation at the **55 Wing Birthday Ball**.

Nominees for the HoF recognition will be former military members who have served as members of any of the following units: **55th Pursuit Group**, **55th Fighter Group**, **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing** and/or the **55th Wing**. These units are herein referred to collectively as the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**. The selection process consists of actions by both a Screening Committee and a final Selection Committee. These committees are made up of both retired and active duty members of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Must have been assigned to the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**.
2. Mission accomplishments, contributions, and/or sacrifices must have been accomplished while assigned to and performing the missions of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**; or having been assigned to the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**, the mission accomplishments, contributions, and/or sacrifices must have had a direct, significant and sustained impact on the accomplishment of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth's** mission(s).
3. **Nominee cannot be on active duty.**

NOMINATION PROCEDURES:

Nomination packages will be comprised of the following items:

1. Nominator: (One nominator only) (see para 6)

Name

Address

Phone number/e mail

Consolidated letter of justification for favorable consideration of the nominee signed by the nominator.

2. Nominee(s):

Name

Address

Phone/ e mail

If nominee(s) is/are deceased, please provide name, address and phone number of an appropriate family member who can represent the individual (if possible) at the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

3. Photo of nominee (color preferred) (for publication)

4. Assignment Dates – Provide assignment history to the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth* and/or assignment history and nature of operational relationship in direct support to the mission of the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*. (support provided, impact on mission)

5. Narrative – Detail specific mission accomplishments, contributions, and/or sacrifices to the missions of the *Fightin’ Fifty-Fifth*. Detail the impacts on mission success, i.e. how did, what was done, cause mission success. The nominator must provide best available supporting documentation wherever possible to ensure the HoF committees can be convinced of the authenticity of the information forwarded in the nomination.

**Justification and documentation required almost demands that the individual know of the effort to nominate him or her.

6. Nominations must be signed by nominator (letter of justification) and no more than one/two additional individual(s) who was/were either witness to the acts, unyielding service, etc., or someone who can attest to the validity of the nomination. A signed letter of justification/statement of observation from the additional individual(s) will do.

7. Submit nominations to the Awards Chairman, Hamilton Kennedy. Nominations packages with supporting documentation should be sent to him at 13701 S 129 St, Springfield, NE 68059. Just one original package must be submitted. The Awards Chairman will be responsible for providing best copies of all documents to all committee members.

8. Nominations may also be submitted electronically but, only after pre-coordination with the Awards Chairman, HamiltonWilsonKennedy@gmail.com.

9. Nomination schedule: **15 July 2018** - All nomination packages are due unless alternative timelines are agreed to.

10. Presentations will be made by the **55th Wing** Commander at an Induction Ceremony during Heritage Week and the annual **55th Wing** Birthday Ball, or other event or venue as coordinated between the **55th Wing** and the **55thWA**.

Joe Spivey

President, **55th Wing Association**

* * * * *

HALL OF FAME CEREMONY AND TALES OF THE 55TH (19th EDITION)

As has become tradition over the years, both events will be held on **Friday, 21 September 2018**, the day before the annual **55th Wing/AF** Birthday Ball as part of **55th Heritage Week**.

President Joe Spivey (Hall) and **Jim Thomas** (Tales) will emcee and orchestrate the proceedings. Both programs are in the very early planning stages, but will be fleshed out in the coming months.

The two events are ‘must do’ for out of towners in for the Ball.

The venue will be Dock 1 of the Bennie Davis Maintenance facility, an informal setting, but accommodates the large crowd of active duty troops, retirees, family, guests and friends.

* * * * *

55TH WING/AIR FORCE BALL 22 SEPTEMBER 2018

The **40th 55th Wing** Birthday Ball is scheduled for **Saturday, 22 September at the Century Link Center in Omaha**, to be hosted by Colonel Michael Manion, **55th Wing** Commander, and his wife, **Shannon**.

The Offutt Top Three Association (Senior NCOs) will again have the responsibility for planning the event ‘going forward’, under the lineage direction of the **55th Wing** Command Chief and **55th Wing** Commander.

Although the main references are to the Air Force Ball, this arrangement does insure a major **55th** presence. Plus, the Hall of Fame inductees and the **55th Wing Association** Award for Excellence presentations will be on the program.

Captain Keith Saylor, USSTRATCOM, **55th** Security Forces Sqd, and **MSgt Paul Erickson**, **55th** Contracting Sqd, are co-chairs for Offutt’s largest formal social function of the year.

Stay tuned, boys and girls, and check the **Association** web site for updates of more details on all these events.

* * * * *

Please note that 55th Wing Protocol office personnel 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/or other Wing events in the past, it may not have occurred in the recent months/years, nor in the future.

*But, not to worry. The word will always be spread by networking, and anyone can sign up to go to the Ball, or other events, via ‘executive action’ as has been done in recent years **whether you get a formal invitation or not.***

* * * * *

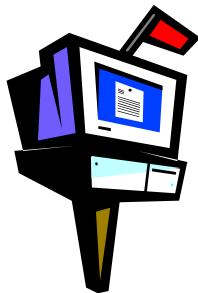
In today's climate of funding crunches, the world needs to know the following fact (*it isn't new info, and has always been so*): **The 55th Wing Birthday Balls past, and this year's gala, pay for themselves.**

NO taxpayer dollars finance these events. They are paid for with 'ticket' sales, fundraising, sponsors, and donors.

The Association donates \$1000 annually.

* * * * *

MAIL 'N STUFF



* * * * *

Max,

The **55th Wing Association** has been carrying my mom, **Joanna Davis** on its rolls. She died some time ago. My dad, **Esley "Ray" Davis**, who passed in August 2004, was a WWII pilot who stayed in the Air Force Reserves after the WWII and was recalled for Korea.

He had been working for the Army map service, and then he was assigned to the **55th SRW** and sent to Ramey AFB. PR, as a cartographic officer and pilot. He flew the RB-29 for the **55th**.

Our family moved with the **55th** to Forbes AFB, KS, in 1952. Subsequent assignments were to the Air Photographic and Charting Service where Dad served as a RB-50 command pilot, then to HQ APCS, ACIC, and finally DIA, as the mapping mission moved to satellites.

After retiring from the Air Force, he went to NOAA (near Denver) where he was responsible for development and production of aeronautical charts and the development and implementation of aeronautical aids.

Larry Davis, Boulder, CO

(*From an e-mail, 27 November 2017*)

* * * * *

Dear Bill (*Ernst*):

Enclosed is a check to be used to replace the original (*memorial patio*) bricks for **Richard Campbell, Paul Caselton** (Nav) and **Joe Gyulavics** (CP), when necessary.

They were Dick's original RB-47 crew. When Joe got his own crew, **Bill Klausner** replaced him. If Bill does not have a brick, please order one for him.

Thank you for your help.

Eva Campbell, Ft. Worth, TX

(*From a letter, early February 2018.*)

* * * * *

Max, thanks for the 'friendly reminder' note.

I had put the (*membership*) update/payment in my 'do it later' file. (*Renewal check was enclosed.*)

Things are getting better now that the warming is in sight.

In January we had about half-foot of snow. Interesting impact: The airbase here has an airlift unit (C-17s) and was shut down for several days. No snow plows or other equipment to deal with the situation.

I suspect the Joint Base Charleston commander was busy filling out resumes as a result.

In my over-55 community of about 300 residents, just one home owner had a snow shovel. I did my two-car driveway with a small garden shovel.

Snow is another four letter word we do not use in polite company here.

That's the latest from the edge of America.

My best to the **55th** and all present, past and future members.

Cheers, **Rudy Smart**, North Charleston, SC.

(*From a note, 15 March 2017.*)

* * * * *

RECOLLECTIONS OF COLONEL (RET) JOHN DROST

My name is **Gary Drost**. I'm a retired Air Force officer and pilot, and the son of **Colonel (Ret) John E. Drost**, who flew EB-47s, RB-47s and ERB-47s in the **55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing** from 1954-1968 at Forbes and Offutt.

I'm writing to recount a bit of lore most likely not known by any surviving old-timers of the **55th**, much less any of the current crewmembers or staff.

Dad will be 97 on May 31st, and this is a story of one memorable deployment in the spring of 1965.



First, a bit of history to set the stage. Like tens of thousands of young men in 1941, Dad answered the call to arms when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. He wanted to be a fighter pilot, so he joined the Army Air

Corps. He was an instinctive pilot and did well in pilot training. So well that he was assigned as a test pilot at Alamogordo AAF in New Mexico. His job was to test fly every aircraft that came into the maintenance and repair depot before and after it was repaired.

Since the Army couldn't spare instructors to teach him how to fly every aircraft in the Air Corps, Navy and Marines, they selected a pilot who had the instincts and skill to fly anything with engines and wings. That pilot was my father.

He was disappointed that they didn't give him a fighter, but he found that the "seat of the pants" flying he experienced as a test pilot would prove to be very valuable throughout his career. He checked out in 34 aircraft, most of them he did himself with the flight manual in one hand and the stick or yoke in the other.

One flight at Alamogordo proved a real challenge, as it was in a B-24 "Widow Maker", a name it was given by flight crews for good reason.



It was a post-repair flight, and he was configuring the aircraft for landing.

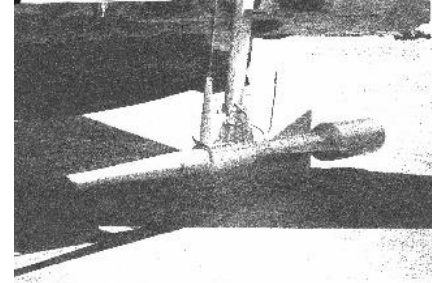
When he lowered the flaps, the plane did an **un-commanded barrel roll to inverted flight on final at low altitude**. He was able to recover to level flight by returning the flaps to zero, as he was taught in flight school. After figuring out that he couldn't use any flaps at all, he safely landed at a much higher speed.

The barrel roll was caused by a wrench a mechanic had left in the wing that pulled on the aileron cable when the flaps were lowered. Seat of

the pants saved him, the crew and the plane, and would again many times in years to come.

Fast forward to 1963 and Forbes AFB. Dad had always had superior results on his operational missions and it didn't go unnoticed in Washington.

The CIA was aware of his success rate and sent two agents to Forbes to interview him and with a proposal. They wanted him to test a new device that was being developed for the CIA to see if it was feasible. It consisted of a towed sensor that looked like a missile.



The theory was the farther the sensor was from all the equipment in the aircraft, the better results it would generate. Dad agreed to their proposal, and he and his crew deployed to Ontario, CA, to work with Lockheed and ITT engineers to modify tail number 34291 and do the test flights in the Edwards Range. I believe the project code name was IRON LUNG.

The crew for the flight tests consisted of: Pictured right to left: A/C: **Major John E. Drost,**

CP:

Capt.

James A.

"Jimmy"

Reinhardt,

Nav:

Capt.

Clyde E.

Duncan,

R1:

Capt.

William

F. Henderson, R2: 1Lt Russell L. Lewis, R3:

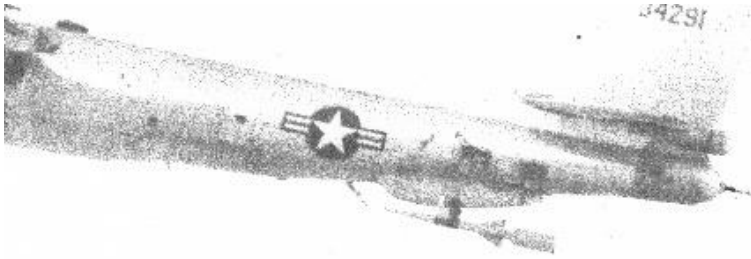
Capt. Stanley D. Rock



The tests were fraught with problems, as the sensor's cable often snapped due to the wake turbulence as it was being reeled out. After many failed attempts, the CIA was ready to cancel the program, when Dad came up with an idea.

He proposed using a prism he found in a Navy surplus store, making it into a small periscope, and fitting it through the fuselage at the R1 position. The periscope allowed the R1 **Bill Henderson** to see the sensor as it was reeled out, as it was not

visible to the pilots. He could then help the pilots maneuver the aircraft to keep the sensor out of the aircraft's wake. It worked, and the CIA funded the program for another two years, with Dad's crew as the primary operators.



In April of 1965, Dad's crew deployed to Yokota AB, Japan, and flew missions for SAC, but with some special instructions from the CIA. The SAC commanders cautioned him about doing the things the CIA wanted, but Dad was sure he could please both "bosses" and get the intel they each needed.

On one mission, the CIA told him that they needed more and better information from some specific sites in North Korea and asked if there was something he could do to stir them into activity, which the Koreans hadn't responded to in the past.

Dad said he was sure he could do something to get them to respond. Without telling his crew, most likely because they would have tried to talk him out of it, he turned directly toward the site and suddenly went into a dive simulating a bombing run.

HERE COME THE MiGs!!

That shook up the North Koreans and they responded by launching MiG-17s to intercept the airplane. Dad told the crew to buckle up and to be ready for some violent maneuvers, and that they could expect to be attacked. He took up a heading for international waters and pushed the Stratojet to its limits as the MiGs gave chase.

The surprise maneuver produced some great intel, but got the ire of the Detachment Commander at Yokota, as a listening post on Hokkaido gave the staff a running account of what the Soviet communications were saying about the encounter.

Dad got his butt chewed out, but the CIA agents said the results were successful and thanked him for sticking his neck out. He told them the colonel wasn't through with him, though. The agents said they would "make a call", and Dad never had any more problems with the colonel after that.

On a later mission during that tour, his crew was once again being chased by the North Koreans. As they exited the sensitive area, and unknown to Dad and crew, **LtCol Hobart Mattison's** RB-47H was entering the same area on an unrelated SAC recon mission.

The MiGs broke off their chase of Dad's airplane, as it was heading out to sea faster than the MiGs could pursue. Unfortunately for Mattison, the MiGs were in perfect position to engage his airplane as they entered the operating area. Mattison's plane was shot up badly, but due to his superior airmanship and a lot of guts, they recovered safely at Yokota. (*That RB (tail #3290) never flew again.*)

MISSION 'CRTIQUES'

When he returned to Forbes, Dad was called in by the **Wing** Commander and cautioned that, "These guys won't be able to protect you." He was also lectured by his squadron commander about SAC rules and the consequences of going outside them for the CIA.

Dad told the commander that he would be very careful, and that, "The CIA has spent a great deal of time and money on this special operation and they expect results. I intend to do whatever it takes to obtain those objectives and bring my crew back safely".

He had to walk a thin line, as he had two sets of bosses, and each one had different, and sometimes conflicting, expectations.

This was testament to his dedication to finding a way to accomplish those critical Cold War missions.

As an aside, after two years of petitioning the Air Corps, in 1945 Dad finally got "his" P-51D, and was assigned to the **55th** Fighter Squadron, **20th** Fighter Group at RAF Kings Cliffe, UK, for the remainder of WWII.

His "seat of the pants" experience as a young pilot served him well.

As a young boy hearing his experiences, fueled my desire to be an Air Force pilot, so I followed in his footsteps some years later. I'm proud to say that my son, **Lt Col (Ret) Michael John Drost**, who flew F-16s, did the same.



Thanks, Dad, for being a great father and setting such a great example for us to follow.

Videmus Omnia.

(Article and photos submitted by Gary Drost, College Station, TX, March 2018.)

* * * * *

(Editor Note: John Drost was inducted into the 55th Wing Hall of Fame in 2007 for the exploits defined in this article. Hobart Mattison was inducted in 2003 for his airmanship in saving the aircraft and crew.)

* * * * *

NEWSLETTER INPUTS WELCOME

Yes, we are aware that these newsletters tend to be Offutt-centric. 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 Directory on page 2. We encourage and welcome any 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 in. (See Gallery pages 24-26)

The only way to broaden our coverage is to get input from throughout Fifty-Fifth-land.

Letters, articles, photos, and other items in this issue are examples.

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

Thanks, and Videmus Omnia, Max.

* * * * *

EAST COAST "CHAPTER"

East coast area alumni, including active duty, retirees, Pentagon habituates, and 'beltway bandits', have occasional social gatherings. Events are organized periodically for reconnecting, exchanging information, and camaraderie in the 55th spirit.

For information on 55th Wing Association East events, or to get on the e-mail listing, phone Ricky McMahon's cell: 571-643-2602, or e-mail at potomacpistol@gmail.com, or Ricky.McMahon@L3T.com. His cohort is Trish Seinwill, pseinwill@yahoo.com. Pass your contact information to either of them.

In addition, if you know of any former *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth'er* in the National Capitol Region who is **not currently** receiving 55th Wing Association information, let Ricky or Trish know, or provide contact information for that individual and one of them will make sure they get an **Association** membership form and the information they need to become connected.

* * * * *

SAN ANTONIO LUNCH BUNCH

This alumni 'chapter' is still active. As **Charlie McBride** and **Dave Frutchey** report, they gather the **second** Thursday each month, 1200 hours, and have **relocated** to **TGI Fridays**, McCullough and Loop 410.



This seasoned group was at the March gathering. Back: L-R: Todd Daniel, Frutchey, Bill O'Hara. Front L-R: Ray Uribe, Andy Borden, McBride, Mike Morris, Ron Nickerson.

(Photo provided by McBride)



Initially, five veteran **55th** crewdogs began the group a few years ago. Typically, 9-12 attend each monthly gathering. It is a time of reliving the past and just enjoying one another's company.

To join this convivial group, contact McBride at cmcbride40@yahoo.com, or Frutchey at dfrutchey@att.net. Better yet, just show up.

* * * * *

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.

* * * * *

ORDER OF DAEDALIANS

This historic organization has recently opened its membership to **any and all rated military officers, active duty and retired.**

Its origin dates to 1932, but its first formal institution was on 26 March 1934, at Maxwell Field, AL, and consisted of WWI veteran pilots.

The membership was limited (*until now*) to military commissioned aviators (pilots) with the stated purpose "to perpetuate the spirit of patriotism and love of country...and the high ideals of self-sacrifice which placed service to the nation above personal safety and position, and to further cement the ties of comradeship which bound us together at that critical hour of our nation's need..."
Motto: "*We flew. We fly.*"



Those interested in joining can access the web site at www.daedalians.org for complete information on the organization, where local flights (chapters) are located, and much more history.

Several **55th Wing Association** members are active in the **General Curtis E. LeMay** Flight at Offutt, and in other flights across the nation.

* * * * *

One who lacks courage to start is already finished.

EC-135 RESTORATION UPDATE

This **Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum** is three years into what is now a five year, \$200,000 project, on EC-135C Aircraft 38049. Fund raising has stalled at about \$90,000. There has been **little to no** help from Boeing, which built the aircraft, or other corporations.

You can send a donation to: SAC AEROSPACE MUSEUM, Attn: Development, c/o EC-135, 2821 West Park Hwy, Ashland, NE, 68003; or on line at: SACMuseum.org/donate, and **state it is for the EC restoration.** They need all the assistance they can get.

The ultimate goal is to restore the plane internally to the way it was when the last *Looking Glass* mission was flown in 1990. The bird was **the** high time EC with 29,151.2 airborne hours.

The aircraft did pull ground alert for another couple of years before actual retirement. Then it set outside the Museum for over 20 years.

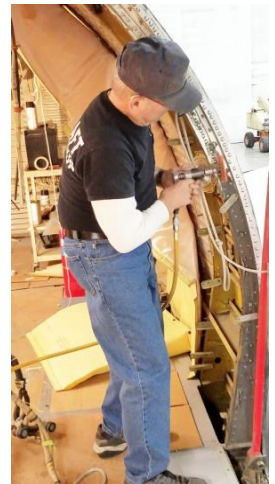
The aircraft will eventually be displayed (*without wings and engines*) in the main museum viewing area.

This is a long and arduous project requiring dedication, and a lot of time and elbow grease. A cadre of many volunteers has put in over 16,000 hours of work through March.

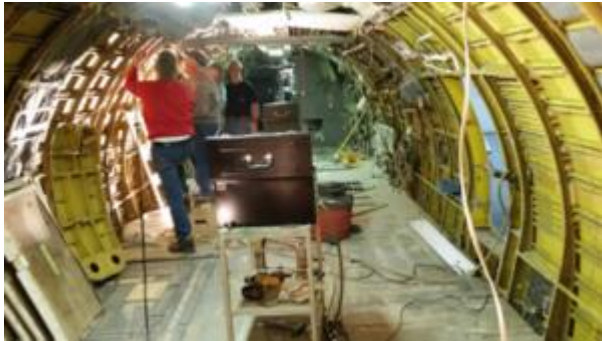
At right, **Steve Stevens** toils diligently. He, **Dick Doolittle**, and other volunteers, devote most every Wednesday to the project.

All of the insulation and interior lighting has been installed. Another big addition was the donation by Douglas Interior Products of Bellevue, NE, of 80' by 12' carpeting that matches the original.

If you flew or maintained the EC-135s, or significantly contributed to the *Looking Glass* missions, or just curious, and visit the SAC Museum, ask a restoration volunteer to escort you into the Restoration Hanger for a closer look. Safety is always paramount and all visitors will be escorted. But, the volunteers welcome the chance to show anyone how they are restoring the aircraft.



Progress on the restoration can be monitored in pictures posted to the following *Facebook* sites: SAC ACC (Strategic Air Command – Airborne Command and Control), 4th ACCS PACCS, LOOKING GLASS (SAC ABNCP) AND PACCS, FANS OF STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND, and SAC VETERANS.



(Updated material and photos provided by **Hank Carriger**, Bellevue, NE, Volunteer Coordinator, from a series of e-mails February/March 2018.)



ORI EXPLAINED?



Cartoon courtesy of **Jerry Thompson**, a former bomber pilot and famed SAC cartoonist.



TAPS



AUSTIN, Harold (Hal), 94, 22 February 2018, Riverside, CA. Hal was an AC in RB-47Es in the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW) at Lockbourne AFB, OH. His crew flew out of the UK on one of a series of highly classified photo recon missions overflying Soviet territory on 8 May 1954. They were intercepted by numerous fighter aircraft, one of which inflicted cannon fire damage. But Hal was able to safely recover the plane and crew.

This event is recorded in several books and articles about the Cold War.

ENNEY, James C., 87, 27 January 2018, Orange Park, FL; wife of 52 years, **Margaret**. Jim was a career intelligence officer who began his Air Force life as an enlisted troop and retired a major general. He had tours in Vietnam, Germany, and Washington, DC. Jim was at Offutt twice in the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff. He retired in November 1982 after serving as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence at SAC HQ.

GOEDEN, Ervin "Sam" H., 93, 5 January 2018, Omaha, NE; wife of 42 years, **Patricia**. A WWII veteran navigator who flew combat missions from England in B-17s, Sam came to the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW) at Forbes AFB, KS, in 1954. He subsequently spent 17 consecutive years in the unit. (See article following)

HENSLEY, Dale L., 80, 28 November 2017, Clovis, NM; survived by wife, **Patricia**. An Oklahoma native, Dale was an RB-47 EWO in the 55th at Forbes in the 1960s. He also attended the German Staff College in Hamburg. After retiring, he was an avid outdoorsman.

MOORE, Morgan C., 83, 7 April 2017, Boise, ID, (where he was born and raised); married to **JoAnn**. Also an RB-47 EWO at Forbes in the 1960s. Morgan had subsequent tours as a KC-135 navigator, and then as a defensive systems officer in B-52s and B-58s. Retiring after 20 years, he

returned to Boise and ran a successful photography studio and a limousine service.

PANZICA, Richard V., 75, 4 January 2018, Grass Valley, CA; married 52 years to **Susan**. Dick entered the Air Force in 1966 and was a 2ACCS navigator in EC-135s at Offutt before a tour in RCs at Kadena AB, Okinawa, 1970-74. He then was in U-2s at Beale AFB, CA. After retirement he spent several years as a civil service instructor for U-2 crewmembers.

SCOTT, Mary Jane, 81, 17 March 2018, Plattsmouth, NE; wife of **Richard (Scotty)**. Scotty was an EWO in RC-135s at Kadena and Offutt. Janey, the daughter of an Army general, was a seasoned military wife and devoted mother and grandmother. They were married 58 years.

SHIERS, Clifford "Bucky", 82, 19 January 2018, Gibbon, NE, (where he was born). He went to aviation cadets in 1958 and earned his navigator wings. First assigned to KC-97s, later in KC-135s, Bucky had a combat tour in Vietnam in AC-130 gunships, then came to the 2ACCS at Offutt in 1973. He moved to the RCs with the 38th and 343rd squadrons, and served in stand/eval. He retired in 1980 after 22 years service, then worked at E-Systems in Greenville, TX, for another 18 years

SIMON, William III, 80, 11 February 2018, State College, PA. A Pennsylvania native and graduate of Penn State, Bill began his career as a tanker navigator, and then was in RCs at Kadena and with the 55th at Offutt. He later was assigned to C-130s at Clark AFB, PI. His last assignment was Director of Operations at USAFE HQ in West Berlin. Retiring there in 1984 after 25 years service, he taught computer science and math at a college extension, before returning in 1992 to do the same at Penn State.

(Editor Note: Bill was a member of Jimmy Jones's crew (as was this editor) on 17 November 1970 when their RC was intercepted by two MiG-17s in international airspace over the Barents Sea. He was looking out the AC's window and witnessed the lead MiG firing warning shots parallel to the aircraft. This was the last known incident of hostile fire near a 55th aircraft.)

* * * * *

Ervin H. "Sam" Goeden, LtCol USAF Retired, was a lean, healthy 93 year old who reportedly took no medications, yet he met a tragic end in an automobile accident. His wife, Pat, was critically injured and has had a long recovery period.

They were being driven by Pat's son to their winter home in Florida when east of St Louis in Illinois, a speeding SUV sideswiped (hit and run) their car, off the road, into a tree. Authorities were not able to track down the offender.

Sam was a native of Wisconsin, born in 1924. He joined the Army Air Corps out of high school in 1942. Graduating from aviation cadets as a navigator, he was assigned to B-17s and sent to England. From there he flew numerous WWII combat sorties over Europe.

After the war he trained into B-29s with assignments in the CONUS. After more training in bomb/nav systems in Houston, TX, and Sacramento, CA, he went to the 55th SRW at Forbes AFB, KS, in the first cadre of crewmen in the brand new jet RB-47H models. **Don Mather**, a pilot and AC, and Sam were crewed together 'forever'. They were a select crew in stand/eval for much of their 12 years at Forbes.

(L to R: Mather, McCain, Goeden.)

An unassuming fellow, Sam did not draw attention to himself, but every navigator (and others) in the **Wing** knew his reputation as an expert professional, an experienced WWII veteran, and he had the respect of anyone who knew him. If a navigator got a 'blessing' from Sam during an 'over the shoulder', or after a check ride, it was a recognized badge of validation.

Bill Lewis (*The Elder*), a contemporary navigator and friend of Sam's at Forbes said of him, "He had the most integrity of anyone I ever knew."



Sam then moved with the 55th to Offutt AFB, NE, in 1966, after attending -135 training at Castle AFB, CA, where it was reported that he quietly critiqued (from the back row) the navigator instructors if their course lectures or materials were not exactly accurate.

With the **Wing** at Offutt he continued his low key professionalism as the senior navigator instructor, and became the **Wing's** chief staff navigator (DOTN), overseeing the training and assignments of the navigator corps.

His reputation as the consummate professional, and role model to a generation of navigators, remained until his retirement in 1971.

That culminated 29 years of honorable active service, and **17 consecutive years** in the *Fightin' Fifty-Fifth*. Sam was a 55th institution.

In retirement he and Pat continued to reside in Omaha while wintering in Florida.

Sam Goeden's legacy will be remembered by an untold number of family, friends, and fellow **55th'ers** as an unpretentious and truly gentle man.

(Crew photo from "We See All", and Sam's official AF picture from his published obituary.)

* * * * *

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.

The information is relayed to the **Association** president and the web master.

*It is **not an imperative** that the departed be a member of the Association. If one has any relevant connection to our history, they will be remembered.*

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

The date of demise, age, location; and if known, connection to the 55th - base, time frame and Air Force specialty (crewmember, maintenance, communications, etc.) 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.

* * * * *

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 55th 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 webmaster to do so.

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

* * * * *

MEMORIAL BRICK ORDERS STILL CAN DO

There still may be some **55th** veterans and/or family members, friends, associates, who want to order bricks for the **55th 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: Billhernst@gmail.com (**new**), or phone 402-292-1205.

There are currently 602 dedicated bricks in the patio with about 100 available for new orders. Since 2003 about 50 new bricks have been added. Some years a few new bricks are added, some years, none.

Any new brick orders can still be sent to Ernst anytime, but no later than **30 June 2018**, to allow time for processing, engraving, and installing by the end of summer 2018.

Interestingly, the Museum **no longer allows** bricks as part of memorials currently being installed in the Memorial Gardens, upkeep and maintenance being the problem.

Other monument patios do not have diligent on-site caretakers such as Kovacs and **Larry LaFlair**, and several of them are in varying degrees of disrepair.

* * * * *

Anyone in the Dayton area who would like to volunteer to help Jack and Larry with this detail should contact Jack at j1a2c3k@aol.com to coordinate and learn what work it entails. They

are advancing in senior status and can use the assistance. Hey, it gets one outdoors for a time.

After a spring cleanup, time required is usually about 1/2 hour every two weeks or so. No real heavy lifting. Mainly: stooping, bending, elbow grease.

* * * * *

COLD WAR MEMORIAL MEMORY BOOK

Memo from Jack Kovacs, 28 March 2018:

Joe:

Enclosed please find a 23 page book I created which tells the story of the creation of the **55th WA** Cold War Memorial. It shows the steps taken in the design, creation, building and installing of the Memorial.

It also shows some of the events which happened after the dedication in September 2003, such as: the movement and cracking of the base; different faults which resulted in the partial dismantling of the monument to correct the problem, and total dismantling for the replacement of the large piece of the base.

This story is not document anywhere else in hard copy.

I would like to have this book presented to the **55th Wing** Historian for preservation.

Feel free to review it before presenting it.

Copies of the book are available at jacksstories.shutterstock.com for \$30-\$60 depending n whether a sale is going on. There is no benefit to me, no money.

Sincerely, *Videmus Omnia, Jack*

* * * * *



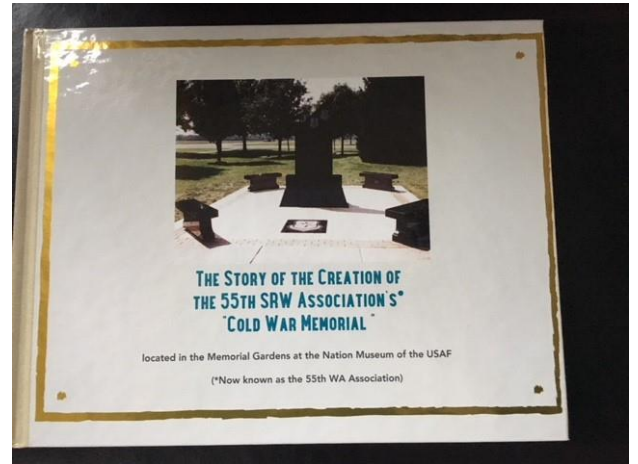
(Editor Note and Opinion: This is just one more example of Jack's never ending diligence and

*dedication to keeping the Cold War Memorial in the fore of the heritage of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth.***

For over twenty years he has devoted untold hours and days as the man on-site monitoring the restoration of RB-47H, #299; and the coming to fruition of the Memorial, plus the continued upkeep of the surroundings.

Jack's contributions cannot be overstated. They are unmatched.)

* * * * *



This book details the history of the Cold War Memorial in the Memorial Gardens of the National Air USAF Museum near Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Compiled by Jack Kovacs who was our man on-site for the entire process. It is a hard copy of the slide show on the **Association** web site documenting the history from inception until dedication in September 2003.

It is very detailed with graphics and pictures.

The book was on display at the event at the SAC Museum on 7 April. President Spivey then presented it to Colonel Manion, **55th Wing** Commander, and Vice Commander **Colonel David Berg** on 11 April.

Wing Historian John McQueney, witnessed the handover, and later responded that the document is safely stored in his office for archiving to be preserved for posterity.

It was accompanied with a cover letter from President Spivey expressing the importance of the Memorial's purpose of honoring the Cold War veterans of the **Fightin' Fifty-Fifth**, and the book's origin.

* * * * *

STORY OF A TRUE WWII 55TH FIGHTER GROUP HERO

Already out, the June 2018 issue of the *Flight Journal* has on the cover a photo of two P-51 aircraft in the livery and markings of the 55th Fighter Group.



The inside cover story is about **Lt Colonel Elwyn G. Righetti**, whom the article dubs *‘The Strafing King’*.

He commanded the 55th Fighter Group from 22 February to 17 April 1945. On the latter date his P-51, named *‘Katy Did’*, was hit by flak near Dresden, Germany, and he had to crash land. It was his 30th birthday.

Righetti was then listed as Missing in Action, but subsequent investigation indicated he was probably captured and killed by German civilians.

A native of San Luis Obispo, CA, his nick name was *‘Easy El.’* He was posthumously promoted to colonel on 12 May 1945 and is remembered on

Tablets of the Missing at the American War Cemetery Henri-Chapelle in France. His widow was **Cathryn**.

* * * * *

*One problem with common sense is,
it is not common enough.*

FLAGS FLOWN OVER THE AIR FORCE MEMORIAL PROCEDURES UPDATED

As of 1 April 2017, the responsibility for daily operations of the Air Force Memorial transitioned from the Air Force Association to the United States Air Force.

In an e-mail of 17 January 2018, this instruction was provided: Use this link for information and a request form:

www.afdw.af.mil/Air-Force-Memorial/Flag-Flying-Program/

The snail mail address is 1 Air Force Memorial Dr, Arlington, VA, 22204; ATTN: Outreach Coordinator.

“Please feel free to put **afmemorial@mail.mil** as the point of contact (POC) for any inquiries.”

Zachary H. Steele, GS-12, DAF

Events & Outreach Coordinator/Air Force Memorial

* * * * *

REUNIONS

* * * * *

OMAHA/OFFUTT AREA POPULAR FOR REUNIONS IN SEPTEMBER 2018

* * * * *

It is noteworthy that the chairmen of all three area reunions are members of the 55th Wing Association.

* * * * *

Anyone planning to attend any or all three might just as well roll in after Labor Day and stay the entire month. Usually great weather then, and there are lots of things to do and see, and friends to visit in the Omaha area.

* * * * *



BIG SAFARI ASSOCIATION

This one is planned for 5-9 September 2018

Reunion chair **Bill Ernst**, has Embassy Suites in downtown Omaha near the Old Market as HQ. **Cutoff date for special rate is 6 August.**

Bill's new e-address is **billhernst@gmail.com.**

Details and updated info is on the organization's web site, Bigsafariassociation.org, but, you must be a member to access it.

A full registration package was to be mailed by 15 April.

* * * * *



SAC ACCA REUNION

Scheduled for 12 though 16 September 2018.

Reunion headquarters will be Courtyard Marriott/Beardmore Convention Center in Bellevue, NE. Reservations can be made by calling 888-236-2427 and asking for the **Airborne Command and Control Association** blocked rooms. **Cut off for special rate is 15 August.**

Dick Doolittle is the reunion chairman. He reports well over 100 potential attendees already. His e-address is **rnd31@cox.net.**

One can contact him for registration info and form, agenda, et al. More details

can be found on the ACCA web site, www.sac-acca.org. **Register NLT 10 August.**

Highlights will be a trip to the SAC Museum to see the restoration project on the EC-135 aircraft, and a buffet dinner there with **General John E. Hyten**, USSTRATCOM Commander, as speaker.

* * * * *



B-47 STRATOJET ASSOCIATION

Slated from 18 to 21 September 2018,

reunion headquarters will be at the Magnolia Hotel, 615 Howard Street in downtown Omaha, just around the corner from the Orpheum Theater.

Dick Purdum leads this gathering. For more information, contact him at **dickpurdum@cox.net.**

Details are on the organization's web site, www.B-47.com.

* * * * *

91st STRATEGIC RECONNAISSANCE WING ASSOCIATION

Although this brother unit deactivated many years ago, the troops still gather from time to time.

This next reunion will be in Branson, MO, from 19-26 August at the Grand Plaza Hotel. Reservations are to be made through the Branson Tourism Center.

Everyone is welcome to this gathering whether or not a member of the 91st Association.

Jim Bard, secretary, is the contact for detailed information at **jimbardjr@comcast.net**, or call 410-549-1094. The web site is www.91stSRWA.com.

* * * * *

Light travels faster than sound. That is why some people appear bright until they speak.



COMING ATTRACTIONS
55TH WING ASSOCIATION
SPRING 2019
OMAHA/OFFUTT



**STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS AND
 UPDATES AS THEY DEVELOP ON THE
 ASSOCIATION WEB SITE.
 PROJECTED NEXT ISSUE OF VO -
 SEPTEMBER 2018**

* * * * *

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.



Shirt and cap photos by Sargent.

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

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

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, or just because you are you.

Now available in a variety of colors, the 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 and color you want in your order.

* * * * *

The golf/baseball caps are royal blue or tan 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.

Supply is low and when they are gone, they are gone.

* * * * *

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 promptly respond to your order.

* * * * *

CHANGES COMING

There are future plans to have a web site set-up that will allow members to order different colored polo shirts, caps, and other items with the Association logo. For those who don't have a computer available, you will still be able to order via the US Postal Service (through me).

More to followstay tuned. *Bill Sargent*

* * * * *

55TH FASHION PINS

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

You will want to acquire one for that special person in your life to wear on any occasion.

Gents and ladies, it makes a great birthday or anniversary accessory gift, or holiday stocking stuffer. (Shown actual size)



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 55th Commander's Wingmen, allowed to wear the coveted leather flight jacket awarded for superior and continued community support to the 55th Wing.

* * * * *

WHO SHOT WHAT

Graphics from various sources, Clip Art, and organization web sites. Air Force Memorial from the US Air Force web site. Reynolds official AF photo; RAF event and Lt Dan Band pix by Moore.

Photos of Offutt and Righetti from internet searches. Kovacs, 55th tie and pin by Moore; 'Mad Max' graphic by Patricia Gros, friend of the Association.

* * * * *



GALLERY OF GATHERINGS



This lot is pictured in the conference room of President Spivey's office in Bellevue, 4 December 2017 at precisely 1649 CST. (For pilots: The little hand is on the five and the big hand near the ten.)

*In front L to R: Max Moore, **Brian Humphrey**, John Cooper.*

*Standing, L to R: Bill Sargent, Bill Ernst, **David Davies**, Dutch Van Denburg, Jeff Johnson, Mike Scacca, Scotty Dowell, Kurt Kramer, Mark Schenck, Ham Kennedy, Spy V, Jim Thomas, Jim Maloney, Don Kelly, shy-one **Marti Marmor**. (Photo provided by Moore.)*



This convivial group met for dinner at Garcinio's in Old Town, Alexandria, VA, on 17 January 2018.

Pictured L to R: Rick Osmun, Greg Johnson, David Heininger (reportedly on the cell phone to his bookie, or maybe stock broker), Steve Visco, Mary Erteschik (who stopped by to say 'hello' and add a touch of class to the event), Jon Wilson, Dave Erteschik, Tom Anderson and Bill McKechnie.

(Photo provided by Erteschik.)



*This is **not** DaVinci's "Last Supper", but close enough.*

*L-R seated: **Jim Maloney, Fox Censullo, Cliff Lambert, Invisible Person, Kay Lambert, Peg Maloney, Shirley Sievers, Chris Olivo.***

*Standing L-R: **Howard Ham, Mike McFarland, Charles Lochlin, Stan Sievers, John Olivo, Theresa Censullo, Pearl McFarland, Diane Lochlin, Margaret Ham.***

*The occasion was to celebrate the life of the Olivos' son, **Jose**, at the Grill in Leon Springs, San Antonio, TX, 20 January 2018.*

(Provided by Maloney. Quality caveat – Copy of a copy of a copy.)



*L-R: **Michael Cook, Bill Sargent, Ray Scott, Jim Thomas, "Spanky" McFarland, Rich Holsinger, and Paul Finnegan.** The occasion was visitation for "Bucky" Shiers in Kearney, NE, 24 January 2018. (See TAPS) Floral arrangement from the **55th Wing Association.***

(Picture provided by Cook.)

**I AM A UNITED STATES
MILITARY VETERAN**



**BE
ADVISED**

**I once took a
SOLEMN OATH to defend
the CONSTITUTION
against ALL enemies,
foreign and DOMESTIC.
No one has ever relieved
me of my duties under this
Oath!**



Videmus Omnia



55th Wing Association, Inc.
(Formerly – 55th 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 55th Strat Recon Wing? _____
(Dates of Service)



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

When were you a member of the 55th 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: **55TH 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 December of following year
- ** Note – Dues expiration date – 31 December
- ***Note - Questions? **Contact Michael J. Cook, Membership Chairman, at Michael.Cook@cox.net, or at the above mailing address, or call (402) 578-5848.**

