PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Hello Everyone,

The reunion committee has met and preparations are underway. Before we know it we’ll be sitting around the hospitality room at the Hope Hotel telling jokes, swapin’ lies and drinking Beer (or other stuff). The next Newsletter will include the reunion registration form that will need to be completed and mailed to the P O Box and you will receive that in the spring of next year. Reunion dates are June 6 thru June 9, 2013. Thursday thru Sunday with dinner on Saturday evening.

James A. and Candace Hampton made a donation of 25 Portfolios embossed with the Association Logo. Our thanks go to Jim and Candace for their kindness and donation. The Portfolios will be available for purchase on our web site very soon.

We have had six Association breakfasts this year and the attendance has been very good. Everyone that attended had a good time and it is always nice to see our friends. Because the reunion is in June next year we will not have any breakfasts scheduled for 2013.

Thanks to Tom McVey for the idea and to Barry Hampton, Keith Cline and Steve Knorr for sponsoring the breakfasts in their areas.

Our membership total is as follows; 136 members, 28 have not renewed their dues, for a total of 108 paid members. Bob Cepluch has mailed membership renewal post cards to all past due members and hopefully they will renew soon.

Please visit our new website that Tom McVey has set up. The new web pages are interactive so visit the site set up an account and leave a message. Let us know what you think. www.87apsa.com. Also remember to shop the APSA store on the web site.

There are two good Newsletter articles this month submitted by Glen Ruswinkle and James G. Hampton. We would like everyone to submit an article about their Military careers. We all served the 87th APS but we took different paths to get there. We would like to hear your story.

Your Association Officers and Trustees would like to wish all of our members a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May God continue to Bless the United States of America.

Until Next Time.
Charlie

Charlie’s Recommended Read

“Air Force Spoken Here” General Ira Eaker & the Command of the Air Author - James Parton

A biography of a pioneer in military aviation. Eaker is most famous for building the American Eighth Air Force in WW II’s early days and for insisting on bombing Germany in daylight, a decision of considerable importance. After he retired as a three-star general, Eaker wrote a syndicated newspaper column and worked for Howard Hughes
87th Christmas Party  Please call Tom McVey, Bob Cepluch or Charlie Hampton to make your reservation. We will give the list of names to Sean Storms on Dec 10th.

Tom  513-377-0472
Bob  513-607-1207
Charlie  859-468-8873

Note from the 87th Squadron
We are having the Christmas party on the 15th of December. 1700 thru 1930 will be the dinner we are including families this year, there will be an after party immediately following, from 8 to 11. There will be raffles. The Children’s Hospital visit will be happening on the 7th of December. If anyone that would like to attend please let me know. Please bring an unwrapped new toy.

Chief Sean Storms   937-257-4566

Retirements
Pete Ellars
Tom Kanoza
Evelyn Petrosky
Helen Redwine-Smith
Brent Snelling
Barry Storer
Clark Wierda

Suggestions
Please let us know if you have any ideas on how to improve the Association or of any events you think the 87th APSA should consider doing.

New Email Address
Here is our new email address
87apsa@gmail.com

Upcoming UTA’s
Dec 15-16
Jan  5-6
Feb  9-10

Squadron News

8/9/2012- Senior Airman Jerel Wright, 87th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation apprentice, is the 445th's Airman of the Quarter, third quarter.

Congratulations Jerel.

Senior Airman Garrick Payne, 87th Aerial Port Squadron air transportation craftsman, is greeted by friends and co-workers at the Dayton International Airport Oct 25th.

87th APS part of NASA shuttle trainer move

–Twelve Airmen from the 87th Aerial Port Squadron with the help of NASA loadmasters unload the first Shuttle Crew Compartment Trainer from NASA’s Super Guppy aircraft Aug. 23. With the help of the National Museum of the United States Air Force restoration specialists, the CCT-1 was moved from the Super Guppy to the museum’s Cold War Gallery where its interior will be reassembled then put on display for the general public when it is moved to a new Space Gallery in the museum’s planned fourth building. (U.S. Air Force photo/Lt. Col. Cynthia Harris)
Vietnam 2012 – A Beautiful Country

My wife, Lyn, daughter, Denise, and I visited Vietnam this summer (July, 2012) while my son, Brian, was living in Hanoi for six weeks. We flew round trip from Atlanta, GA to Saigon with a connecting flight in Seoul, South Korea on Korean Airlines. We left Atlanta July 19th and returned July 30th; we visited Saigon, the Mekong Delta, Iron Triangle (Cu Chi Tunnels), DaNang, Hue, Khe Sanh/DMZ, Hanoi, and Ha Long Bay/Tonkin Gulf.

Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, has not changed much; however, there are new high-rise buildings being constructed. A subway system will be built soon, according to a newspaper article. We stayed in The Rex Hotel, which is now a five-star hotel, ate dinner on the roof-level restaurant, and watched traffic below. The C-130B hanger is being used by Vietnam Airlines, but looks the same.

Da Nang Air Base has not changed since the U.S. left the country. However, the base is contaminated with Agent Orange and our government has agreed to clean it.

A C-130A, some army equipment, and rebuilt bunkers are on display beside a small museum at Khe Sanh. The runway, taxiway and buildings at Khe Sanh are gone. Coffee is now grown on the grounds. We walked across the DMZ or Freedom Bridge, and visited another small museum in old North Vietnam. Hanoi is a very neat, clean, well-maintained city. Our guide found the downed B-52 bomber still in Hun Tiep Lake in Hanoi.

We had strange feelings walking through the Hanoi Hilton prison and viewing “Uncle Ho” lying in the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum. We ended our visit by enjoying a relaxing boat cruise among the limestone islands and rocky outcrops in Ha Long Bay and walked through two caves.
Some general observations:
- The water is still not pure; consequently, hotels provide bottled water.
- Vietnamese beer is really good now. Very few places sell San Miguel Beer.
- The police-force is unarmed and friendly.
- We never saw nor heard sirens or emergency vehicles, which is interesting since a local described traffic as “organized chaos”.
- The people are very friendly and asked why more Americans are not visiting Vietnam.
- The food is great and reasonably priced.
- There are more motorbikes than autos. Cars are very expensive to buy and maintain. It is fun to watch a family of four or five on one motorbike, or “Honda”, navigate the congested traffic.
- Five-star hotels cost approximately $120/night and are very good.

Traffic in Ho Chi Minh City  The Rex Hotel  Rooftop Garden Bar & Restaurant at Rex Hotel

I would recommend our tour company, Indochina Pioneer, if you decide to visit (www.indochinapioneer.com). Mr. Lam Duong is the Sales Manager and a founding partner of the company. He designed our tour to our specifications and completed all arrangements. We had the pleasure to enjoy dinner with Lam and his wife, Loan, while in Hanoi.

Please contact me for more information if you are interested in visiting Vietnam.

Vietnam is a very beautiful, scenic country!

Col.(Ret.) Glen G. Ruswinkle

glengruswinkle@comcast.net

Glen,
It is nice to hear about your family vacation to Vietnam. The last time I had a San Miguel Beer was during an annual tour. I didn’t make it to Vietnam, but many of the 87th members with prior service did get to go there with all expenses paid by Uncle Sam. Tom
My Service in the USAF -1955-1959      Jim Hampton

I arrived at TRAVIS AFB California two days before Christmas in 1955. I was fresh out of basic training at Sampson AFB Geneva, NY and used a few days leave and THEN rode the train from Cincinnati to Fairfield/Suisun near Travis. I recall it was pouring down rain. I had been assigned to the 1501st Air Terminal Squadron. The forerunner of the Aerial Port Squadron.

Sometime between Christmas and New Years all of us newly arrived airmen reported to the squadron training room on the 2nd floor of the cargo building. I was very lucky as I was the only person assigned to the "TRAFFIC CONTROL" section which today is known as ATOC. Here I was to spend the next 20 months. As I walked down the flight line for the first time I was in awe of all the BIG transport planes. Man, I thought it can’t get any better than this.

I reported in to the OIC and then the NCOIC of the department. I was assigned a shift and met my trainer, SSgt George K. Kobayashi. We worked well together and he taught me the "TRAFFIC" business. Weight and balance and dispatching, load messages, coordinating with base ops and keeping the duty officer/ramp person updated. A very busy position and I loved it. I was performing weight & balance on 6 different aircraft. The C-47, C-54, C-97, C-118, C-121(NAVY R7-V) and the C-131 flown by the medical squadron. The loadmaster worked up the weight and balance on the C-124 which was the Globemaster II.
Looking back I recall the first time I saw a form DD365F (weight & balance). There was a different slide ruler for EACH aircraft. I had a limited education and man I thought what am I doing here. But, it all fell in to place for me. Soon I had the reputation as one of the most knowledgeable persons in the department. On 30 March 1956 after only 3 months on the job I was nominated as squadron airman of the month. I was selected and "Won" a check for $10. I had been in the AF for six months. I thought I was flying high.

About this time I went to base ops and talked to the aircraft commander of a local flight to see if I could "go up" with them. It was a C-124 Globemaster. I for the first time flew on an AF plane. We flew in the area and around the Bay Area for several hours. I got sicker than a dog but continued to go on local flights the whole time I was stationed at Travis. I made lots of friends with whom I still keep in touch with today after more than 55 years. At Travis I got my GED in March of 1956. In December 1956, I took my 3 level test and I got a perfect score of 200. Then, in March of 1957 I got my second stripe (Airman 2nd Class).

In July of 1957, I received PCS orders to go to Hickam AFB Hawaii. I have so many great memories of Travis. Even today every couple of years I go out to the area as my best man lives there and we always spend one day at Travis. The PAX terminal is the SAME one I worked in. The PAX counter is in the same spot. Traffic was behind passenger service. Oh, if I could only go back for a little while.

At the time I joined the Air Force in 1955, it had only been a separate branch since September of 1947. There was a lot of trial and error and OJT. In the time that I served on active duty, 55-59, the Air Force was nearly a million strong. Today that figure is down about 700,000. I served in both the 1501st and 1502nd Air Transportation Wings in MATS, Pacific Division at both Travis and Hickam AFB Hawaii. Travis at the time was a SAC base with massive 10 engine B-36 bombers. I was going to make the Air Force my career but a young lady came along and changed everything. That’s a story for another day. Thanks for the chance to share this story. I have a thousand more.

Jim
87th APSA Members Serving During the Cuban Missile Crisis

Please take a few moments to read about the guys who were serving back during the Cuban Missile Crisis. These guys helped the nation during this critical time. Having a large military that was ready to go to war made Russia back down and take their missiles home. I don’t think I have the full list of who served at that time. As I hear of others that have served, then I will include them in the next newsletter.

In October, 1962, I was stationed at Ramey Air force Base in Puerto Rico. I was a cook and enjoyed my tour in Puerto Rico. The base was very busy during the crisis. I enjoyed every minute at Ramey.

Don Newbauer

I had just gotten out of boot camp at Great Lakes at that time as I was in the Navy. I was then sent to California, to Moffett Naval Air Station for temporary duty and then onto my final duty station the USS Oriskany.

Jim Post

In October 1962, I was on active duty stationed at Bitburg Air Base in Bitburg, Germany. I had just come out of the Base Theater with my fiancé Juanalda when the alert sirens sounded. It was 2230 hours and we thought that this was BAD since we never practiced for any events at this time of night. I sent my future wife on home and reported to the A&E shop on the flight line. That's when we found out what was really going down. USAFE headquarters at Ramstein had alerted the 36th TFW to scramble all three squadrons and be ready to launch at dawn to patrol the East German border in case the Commies were launching an offensive.

It was an awesomely beautiful sight to see 50+ F-105's lined up for a mile down the taxi way getting ready for takeoff against the sunrise. They all got off AOK and then we actually found out that we were finally standing up to the missile threat in Cuba. My opinion --- I know that there were more planes in the air than just ours and that show of strength around the world backed the Commies down that time.

It was tense for about 8 hours and then it was over. For a 21 year old spoiling for a fight it was a great moment but for an older and (I hope) wiser 70 year old, another confrontation is not as exciting and it's really more discouraging since world nations don't have the respect for us as the free world leader as they had then.

Mike Nakoff
In October 1962 I was on active duty and assigned to HQ Air Rescue Service at Orlando AFB, Fl. I happened to be the ARS HQ Top Secret Control Officer and was responsible for keeping all classified documents current and available to the Operations Section that was planning the invasion of Cuba. We were located in Orlando just north of McCoy AFB which was a major SAC Base at the time. In a matter of hours McCoy became super fortified and swelled to four times its normal size. Air Rescue’s mission was to provide rescue services to the combat squadrons that were doing reconnaissance and planning to support for the invasion of Cuba. It was an interesting and scary time.

I can’t believe it’s been fifty years. I was stationed at Forbes Air Force base in Topeka Kansas. Two units operated out of Forbes AFB, a B-47 Bomber Wing and the RB-47 OMS. I was an airplane general mechanic for the 55th OMS. I don’t remember how many days we were there, but our aircraft mission was to take photos of Cuba and the Russian ships during that time we never left the aircraft. They were turning them around so quickly, we slept when we could. Inflight meals brought our meals out to the aircraft. We lost one of our planes on takeoff all were killed. The elevators would not provide enough lift and the plane crashed right after liftoff. We all had to take a lie detector test to see if anyone was not telling the truth. I was scared to death that maybe I had caused the aircraft to crash. Someone left a rag on the control cable that we use to find snags in the cable. Whoever checked the cable left the rag on the cable and it got caught in the elevator quadrant preventing the lift needed for takeoff. As far as I know noone got into trouble for this. I think it was because of the hours we were working which I think was dangerous, they decided to not proceed with the investigation. This happened at MacDill AFB Florida around October. 1962.

In October, 1962, the 4043rd strategic WG, SAC was fully manned and operational here at WPAFB. I was one of the 15 K-9 handlers in support of the mission security team. At this time, our Wing was also flying "Chrome Dome" missions and the rumbling of a couple of B-52s and KC’s was no big thing. But when the claxon horn went off and all the alert crews came running out of their underground bunkers like ants, then we felt like we were going to earn our pay for the next few days. Indeed we did and also for the remaining thirty seven days. The first three days we worked twelve hour shifts, then eight- hour shifts for the remaining 34 days.

My first assignment from boot camp was the 1611th Air Terminal Squadron at McGuire AFB in New Jersey. I received orders in early 1962 for assignment to the 1503rd at Tachikawa Air Base in Japan. If memory serves I arrived in Japan in early August of 62 and there was a buildup of troops and things were beginning to escalate in Vietnam so I’m not sure how much the Cuban Missile Crisis affected the staging at Tachikawa. I do remember there was a lot of traffic coming through the base and we were busy all the time.