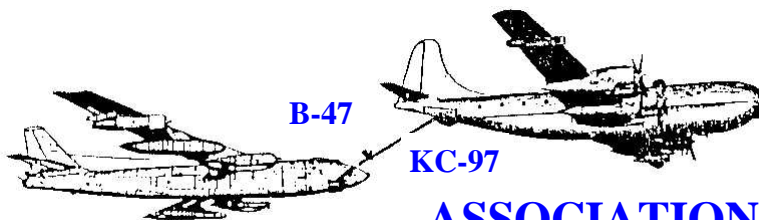




## 307TH BOMB WING



## ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 37

For all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing at Lincoln AFB, Nebraska

JULY 2002

### Passing The Torch The Chairman's Column

More than forty years ago at Lincoln Airplane Patch, I learned that Tony Minnick was a leader to be admired and followed. His ten years-plus as Chairman of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing Association have further borne out that judgment with glittering clarity. He has kept the Association active, solvent, well organized and turning out an impressive string of reunions, each one seemingly better than the one before.

Tony would be the first to point out that he has had lots of help, starting with his charming roommate, Bev, and extending through the Chairman's Committee, the reunion organizers and countless others. Nonetheless, it is Tony's vision and guidance that have kept this organization's wings level through some very turbulent times and all of us owe him a debt of gratitude for his leadership.

Last May, as I was recovering from the slam dunk at the business meeting and marveling at the speed, stealth and precision of the ambush that had suddenly propelled me into the chairmanship, I began to realize what a privilege it was to follow such a leader. I thank the members for their confidence and support and look forward to building on the solid foundation that Tony and his advisors have built.

I haven't had time to develop a full-

fledged "Grand Vision" for the next few years (beyond ensuring that we have a "Grand Reunion" in Las Vegas in 2004!), but have thought through how I'd like to carry out my duties during my tenure. Tony set the example for how to run an association like ours by free and open discussion and democratic process. I intend to follow his lead. Throughout my Air Force and business careers, I've tried to operate on this premise: ALL of us are smarter than ANY of us. I want to move the association forward with the times, but will seek the counsel of the Chairman's Committee and the members on the direction we should take.

For your part, I ask that you be "good citizens" of the association. Be active and vocal when your opinions are sought. Make sure your point of view is heard and understood. After free and open discussion of alternatives and a vote on a course of action, I ask you to support the decision of the majority with grace and good will.

I have made some preliminary judgments on where our priorities should lie in the immediate future and I ask for your thoughts, ideas, and alternatives:

- The first order of business is to analyze the pros and cons of hiring a commercial reunion coordinator vs. the "slave labor" approach

we've followed heretofore. I will be working with the Chairman's Committee in the weeks ahead and hope to have a specific proposal for your consideration in the next Newsletter. I would welcome your thoughts on the subject NOW, while ideas are beginning to take shape. My e-mail, postal address and phone number are on page 2. So are those of the rest of the Chairman's Committee. Please take part in the process.

- Over the slightly longer term, I believe the Association ought to have a first-class, professionally developed and maintained website on the Internet. We should all be grateful to the members who have tried to piggyback an Association website onto their own, but it simply hasn't worked. This isn't a "prestige" thing, but recognition that the Internet has become an indispensable tool for information and communication. The majority of you have access to the Internet; imagine the savings in printing and postage costs by posting the Newsletter (and other, even more time-sensitive information) on the website. The savings alone would cover the modest cost for this service. Such a site could be a bulletin board, a forum, an archive, whatever we wanted it to be. If the members support this direction, I'd like to have a prototype up and on the web before the end of the year.

(Continued on page 2)

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Most people approach organizational bylaws with an interest level somewhere between a haircut and a root canal. I invite you to read the bylaws of our association posted on this page. They have served us well for over ten years and the guiding principles are as valid today as when the founders drafted them. However, some of the administrative and organizational tenets

### **307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association**

**Chairman:** Pete Todd, 1250 Big Valley Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80919-1015. Phone 719-531-5874. Email: petetodd@aol.com.

#### **Chairman's Committee**

**Secretary:** Larry Boggess, 4304 Ridgecrest Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Phone 719-548-8024. Email: larryjan@worldnet.att.net

**Membership:** Jan Boggess, 4304 Ridgecrest Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Phone 719-548-8024. Email: larryjan@worldnet.att.net

**Treasurer:** Tony Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

**Newsletter:** Mike Gingrich, 1525 Edenwood Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45434. Phone 937-426-5675. Email: mikegingri@cs.com

**Co-Historian:** Robert Loffredo, 6004 SW 2nd St, Des Moines, IA 50315. Phone 515-285-3445. Email: mustang51c@mchsi.com

**Co-Historian:** Ernie Pence, 2001 A St, Schuyler, NE 68661. Phone 402-352-3311. Email: Ernie\_Pence@cargill.com

**Co-Founder:** Billy Williams, PO Box 29223, 5141 N 72nd St, Lincoln, NE 68529-0223. Phone 402-466-9301. Email: wjwbdw@juno.com

**Co-Founder:** Betty Pelletier, 205 W Palma Drive, Green Valley, AZ 85614. Phone 520-625-2936.

**Las Vegas 2002 Reunion Chairman:** Vern Biaett, 10201 B West Coggins Dr, Sun City, AZ 85351. Phone 623-972-7328. Email: vbiaett@azwest.net

The Association is a non-profit Veterans Organization. All contributions to the organization are gratefully received, but are not deductible under IRS Code. The Chairman is elected by majority vote of all members at each business meeting. The Chairman's Committee serves at the pleasure of the Chairman.

have become outdated or overtaken by events. Between now and our next reunion, I would like to promote a serious discussion toward modernizing our governing document and vote on appropriate revisions at the business meeting.

All of you have a life outside the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing Association. Enjoy that life, keep healthy and come together with comrades in Las Vegas in 2004. Meanwhile, please bring the Association into your "crosscheck." I solicit your assistance and participation in keeping alive the spirit and friendships that bind our group together.

Pete Todd

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### **Bylaws Of The 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association**

**PURPOSE:** The 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B47/KC97 Association, hereinafter referred to as the "Association" is a worldwide association of current and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces assigned to the 307<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing (M), SAC, at Lincoln AFB Nebraska. The purpose is camaraderie of its members and support of the U.S. Air Force.

**MEMBERSHIPS:** The Association shall accept membership from those who qualify by definition and widows/widowers of those who qualify without regard to grade or rank. Ethnic background, race, national origin or religious belief shall never be a condition for membership.

**OPERATIONS:** The Association shall operate as a non-profit veterans organization. It may or may not be endorsed by the U.S. Air Force. The Association shall be apolitical and support no candidate or party for election to public office. No member shall receive compensation except for reimbursement of expenses in behalf of the Association.

**MEETINGS:** From time to time the Association may conduct reunions for the enjoyment of its members and their guests. Such gatherings shall not ex-

clude any category of members. As an all ranks and grade veterans organization, no reunion, convention or conference shall be conducted solely for a restrictive class of the membership. Nor shall any group of its veterans use the name "307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B47/KC97 Association" to advertise a gathering that excludes any person eligible for membership.

**GOVERNING:** The Association shall have no officers. The Association will be governed by the Committee Chairperson chosen by affirmation at the Reunion Business Meeting to serve through the next reunion. The Committee Chairperson shall function as the Executive Officer of the Association and shall be responsible to the membership for the conduct of the Association. The Committee Chairperson shall appoint appropriate committees to serve as Trust Fund trustees, to make arrangements for the next reunion and to publish a periodic newsletter.

**DUES, DONATIONS, FEES:** The Association shall not levy annual or periodic dues upon the membership. Donations to the Association and reunion registration fees shall be used only to maintain a central locator, to publish and distribute correspondence and newsletters and to plan and activate the program for future reunions.

**AMENDMENT & PERPETUITY:** These Bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of 51% of the membership present at a Reunion Business Meeting, provided that the purpose of the Association and its class of membership shall be inviolate. The Association shall continue in perpetuity until dissolved by a majority vote of the membership.

BYLAWS COMMITTEE APROVED:  
5 MAY 1988

## **Factoid**

The aging process could be slowed down if it had to work its way through Congress.

## 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association

### Fort Worth, Texas Business Meeting

10:00 AM CDT, MAY 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002

#### Minutes

The meeting was opened by Chairman Tony Minnick. R.T. Boykin, Chairman of the Fort Worth Reunion had requested to speak first. He thanked those present for attending the reunion and all the members of his committee for their work in arranging the many events scheduled during this reunion.

After the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance, The Chairman asked for additions, corrections or changes to the minutes of the last meeting in Lincoln, NE in 2000. The minutes had been previously published in the newsletter. There being no changes, the minutes were approved by voice vote.

The Chairman read the Association's Financial Report. There being no comments the Report was approved by voice vote. The Chairman stated the organization operates only on donations, and gave a status report on donations received since the last business meeting.

There being no other old business presented, the meeting was opened for new business.

Tony Minnick presented the results of his contact by the Armed Forces Reunion, Inc. Organization. They have assisted and coordinated reunions for several military units throughout the United States. For reunions that reserve 100 or more hotel rooms they charge \$5 per person. (\$10 per person for less rooms). Bob King made a motion that we investigate using this organization. The motion was seconded and passed. Tony Minnick accepted the duty for this investigation.

Locations suggested for our Year 2004 Reunion were Fayetteville North Carolina, Hale Koa Hawaii, San Francisco

#### Newsletter Schedule

The 307th Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association Newsletter is published for the benefit of all former members of the 307th Bomb Wing of Lincoln AFB, Nebraska. It is expected to be published three times a year in March, July, and November.

Contributions for publication in the newsletter are encouraged, and are essential for the success of this newsletter.

California, Sacramento California, Las Vegas Nevada, Wichita Kansas and an Ocean Cruise. Motions were made and seconded for the Ocean Cruise, Wichita, and Las Vegas. A standup vote for each was taken. There being a virtual tie between the Cruise and Las Vegas, a run off between the two resulted in Las Vegas winning 51 to 47 votes. The committee formed for Las Vegas is currently Vern Biaett, Betty Pelletier and Bill Courier.

The meeting was opened for nominations for the next Chairman of the Association. Mike Gingrich and Gene Aenchbacher were nominated. Each declined to accept. Harold (Pete) Todd was nominated and seconded. There being no further nominations, Pete Todd was elected by unanimous vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.

VERNON L. BIAETT  
SECRETARY

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#### Back In Touch

307<sup>th</sup> members for whom we have obtained addresses since our last newsletter.

**Roger S Matich**, 29948 John Hank St, Garden City MI 48135-2314.

**James T Odom**, 19501 N Drew, Centralia, MO 65240.

**Edward Venable Jr**, 7749 SE Fork River Dr, Stuart FL 34997.

**Allen H Goldblatt**, 433 N 16<sup>th</sup> St, Kansas City, KS 66102-4301.

**Rubin H Miller**, 2407 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Court, Greeley, CO 80631.

**John Reppond**, 141 Deer Run Dr, Pleasonton, TX 78064-1509.

**Richard L Roach**, Rt 1 Box 141B, Warsaw, MO 65355.

**Paul M Cavanaugh**, 135 W Manlius St, East Syracuse, NY 13057-2572.

**Tim Serra**, 8423 Opal St NW, Massillon, OH 44646-1747.

**Russell Dean Radden**, 11250 East Hwy 69 #106, Dewey, AZ 86327.

**James Villa**, PO Box 007, Bellville, TX 77418.

We're happy to have finally found you!

#### Treasurer's Report

##### 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing B-47/KC-97 Association

Ending Balance from last report February 1, 2002: \$2,708.45

	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Deposits</u>	
<b><u>General Fund Balance</u></b>			<b>\$2,708.45</b>
Expenses:			
Postage	214.07		
Supplies	86.82		
Admin Expense	89.48		
Printing	684.42		
	<b>1074.79</b>		<b>-1074.79</b>
			<b>1633.66</b>
Income:			
Donations		840.00	
Interest on account		6.13	
		<b>846.13</b>	<b>+ 846.13</b>
<b>Ending Balance May 16, 2002</b>			<b>2,479.79</b>

**Sue Jacob, Treasurer**

## Long Vanished, But Not Forgotten...Daughters Seek Memories of Their Fathers

On October 10<sup>th</sup> 1956, a Navy MATS C-118 departed from Lakenheath RAFB in the UK, enroute to Lajes in the Azores, with an ultimate destination of Lincoln AFB. On board were fifty men of the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing, and nine other military personnel, including the aircrew. The 307<sup>th</sup> men were returning to Lincoln at the conclusion of a three-month TDY at Lakenheath.

The C-118 never arrived at Lajes. It had been lost at sea, and no confirmed trace of the aircraft was ever found, despite the most intense search and rescue effort ever mounted. Shortly thereafter, a Memorial Service was held, attended by the stunned men and women of LAFB. It was, at that time, the most disastrous single event in the history of the Air Force.

The dedication of our Wing History, published in 2000, is directed at these men and other 307<sup>th</sup> men lost in aeronautical related endeavors throughout the years. We can do no less than honor them. We are mindful that these fifty men left behind wives, children, sweethearts, parents, and friends, who to this day, still grieve for them. Lest we forget, their names are listed below.

Recently, the daughters of A2C Cloyse Hepler, and Captain Kenneth Goodroe, contacted the newsletter for assistance in finding 307<sup>th</sup> personnel who may have known their fathers, or others in the ill-fated flight. They are in contact with several other offspring of the missing men. It was thought that Morgen Goodroe and her mother June would attend our recent reunion in Fort Worth in order to talk with the attendees, but their presence was precluded by a medical emergency. The personal stories of their quest written especially for the newsletter by Morgen Goodroe and Katherine Hepler Ward, appear below.

It is within our power as a group and as individuals to help in their quest. Please do.

Captain Kenneth E Goodroe	A1C Robert C Urban	A2C Henry J Schuver
Captain Robert W Ryan	A1C Earl F Vasey	A2C Robert D Spurling
MSgt William A Caisse	A1C Herbert A Banks	A2C James B Whitlock
SSgt Thomas I DeCota	A2C Albert L Beard	A2C Frank C Williamson
A1C Alton J Gaines	A2C Dale R Brockman	A3C Roscoe F Deel
A1C Orest D Giancola	A2C Conrad J Buehler Jr	A3C Willie B Ferguson
A1C Billy B Grogan	A2C Edmond R DeWolf	A3C Ronald L Gardner
A1C Eugene D Gruenberg	A2C John F Disanto	A3C Charles W Hannah
A1C Richard K Hunter	A2C Raymond E Drake	A3C Lloyd D Harding
A1C Ronald L King	A2C Lyle C Giberson	A3C Lee R Kane
A1C Robert Lada	A2C Gene O Godfrey	A3C Sherman W Lock
A1C Joseph D Loontjens	A2C Cloyse A Hepler	A3C Ralph M Pacelli
A1C Michael C Macedonia	A2C Gerard A Hummel	A3C Donald L Reynolds
A1C Ronald F Mountain	A2C Robert H Lipina	A3C Abelardo Siller Jr
A1C Stanley L Osgar	A2C George F Luce	A3C Bruce B Stewart
A1C Keith A Peterson	A2C William R Ray	A3C Earl E Tanner
A1C James L Schorr	A2C Leonard J Roman	

### From Katherine Hepler Ward

In October of 1956 I was nineteen months old. I spent my days wearing my daddy's shoes and carrying his picture around our small apartment in Lincoln, NE. My dad had been gone for three months TDY to Lakenheath, England. Three months, to a 19-month-old, is a lifetime.

My dad, A2C Cloyse "Hep" Hepler, grew up dreaming of becoming a pilot. He attended Oklahoma Military Academy. At 17 he got married and joined the Air Force. He went to basic training at Sampson AFB (March 1954), and tech school at Lowery AFB (June 1954). His AFSC was 3213OE. He was stationed at Lincoln AFB (Dec 1954) where he was a K series system Mechanic 307<sup>th</sup> A&E (3215 OC).

In July 1956 my dad was given orders to Lakenheath for a 90 day TDY. On Oct 11, 1956 he and 58 other men were coming home to Lincoln AFB. The C-118 they were in left Lakenheath with a stop at Lajes, Azores. The plane never arrived

*(Continued on page 5)*

### From Morgen Goodroe

To the members of the 307th...

One clear memory of the time right after my dad's death was of a bowl of fruit sitting on the table in front of the big picture window in our house in Lincoln, NE. It was huge and unexpected and would have normally been a wonderful treat. It was there every day for a long time but no one felt like eating anything and then one day it was just gone. Even though I was only three months past my 6th birthday, I remember thinking how fast things we take for granted in our lives, no matter how wonderful, can disappear.

Dad was among the fifty men from the 307th on the plane that went down close to the Azores while returning to Lincoln AFB from Lakenheath, England in October 1956. They had all been in Lakenheath on TDY.

Dad earlier came home in the middle of his time there for a

*(Continued on page 5)*



(Continued from page 4) Ward  
at the Azores.

The most extensive search in Air Force history, up to that time, was conducted. Nothing conclusive was found. Possible SOS's were reported and a life raft and tire found. None of this was positively identified as coming from the downed flight.

After my dad's death, my mom and I stayed briefly in Lincoln.



Cloyse Hepler

We had lived off base in Havelock. We then moved to Chicago to be near my dad's family. Finally, when I was two, my mom and I moved to San Francisco. I think it was the farthest place she could go to get away from the memories and the pain. When I was three and a half she remarried. They had two children.

In May 2000 my younger brother died. My step dad and sister went to

California to deal with his estate. While in California they were attacked by a transient. My sister recovered quickly from her injuries. My step dad's spinal cord was partially severed in his neck. He is now a quadriplegic under constant medical care.

During this crisis I thought of how fleeting life is. I decided it was time to fill the hole in my heart. I believed someone out there knew my dad and had info about him, who he was, what he was like. I wanted to know about my dad. My mother did not discuss him or the plane crash. It was very hard on me growing up with no memories to cherish.



Katherine Hepler Ward

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 4) Goodroe

bomber competition in Columbus, Ohio. We all drove with him to Columbus and we laughed a lot and sang songs in the car. I am very thankful for that trip, as it was the last time we all were together. After the competition he returned to Lakenheath to finish his TDY. He was a bomber pilot and flight instructor.

When it happened Mom (June Goodroe) alternated between fury, numbness and despair. She was ferocious about the newspaper reporters who clamored, some even banging on

our side yard windows for an interview; but she could barely speak most of the time. Dad's best friend, Major Bill Howard, kept things going at the house and ran interference with the press and phone calls.

I remember the memorial service just as it's shown in the picture in the paper; a cavernous room filled with people in black, everyone quiet and sad.

In the next year and a half we moved to Texarkana, TX to live near Dad's family, back to Lincoln and then to Dallas where Mom's family lived. I think Mom was looking for a place that felt like home but she had lived in quarters for 15 years and it took many years before she would settle into civilian life. For a



Captain Ken Goodroe

time friends from the Air Force would visit and Maj. Howard helped Mom for a while; but when she remarried eight years later and we relocated to Miami, there wasn't anyone to ask about him anymore.

All through grade and middle school I would fantasize about the school principal calling my name over the intercom to come to the office, there would be my dad, he would have been rescued

(Continued on page 6)



Morgen Goodroe

*(Continued from page 5) Ward*

Barb, a dear friend of mine, said I should try the internet. We found some vet site. I posted my quest for info on my dad and the plane crash. Not one response!

In the mean time I pulled out some old newspaper clippings about Oct 11, 1956. One article listed 11 men who had lost their lives on the flight and lived in Lincoln. Included were the names of their wives, children and ages, along with their hometown.

Together Barb and I tried to find phone numbers, addresses, anything to find the kids. We had no luck. With still no responses from the posting on the vet boards I asked Barb to keep looking and posting on US vet sites. I thought I would try British Vet sites. I posted on a RAF site. Immediately I got a response. A retired RAF pilot emailed. His plane was one of the first sent out on the search and rescue for the downed plane. He has sent numerous detailed emails since about the search and what took place on that side of the Atlantic.

Barb then came up with the idea to go on Classmates.com. Having the names and ages of the children we could locate them by graduation year.

We found Morgen Goodroe. Her father, Capt Kenneth Goodroe, was one of the two officers on the plane. Next, we found Jake Caisse. His father was Msgt William Caisse, also on the plane.

I was so excited I wrote them immediately. Their responses blew me away. I was not alone! All my life I felt like such an outsider, even in my own family. Here I was reading two emails from people who mirrored my exact feelings. It was incredible. Kindred spirits.

Checking further into Classmates.Com I found I could pull up Lincoln AFB. I pulled up 1953-1957. Barb and I split the list in half.

The first person I heard from was from a different squadron and did not know my dad. He did however share the most entertaining and colorful stories about Lincoln, the base and the times. I still look forward to getting his emails. I then heard from another, also from a different squadron and did not know my dad. I was able to connect those two together. They were from the same squadron so that was fun.

I heard from at least 30 men, none who knew my dad. All were wonderfully helpful. They told some of the greatest stories of their times at LAFB. It made me proud to be born at LAFB.

One of my treasures sent to me was a B/W picture taken at Lakenheath of a plane similar to the one my dad was on.

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Continued from page 5) Goodroe*

from an island and returned to us. My only prayer for many, many years was that my dad would somehow be alive and come home.

Because we moved so often, and grew apart from his family in the process, I didn't know anyone who knew my dad except my mom. She would share stories about him and tell us how much he loved us but as I got older I wanted more. Who was he to the men he worked with and his adult friends? They would have memories of him outside family life. I wanted to get a clearer picture of him as a whole person so that I could know who he was.

In my thirties I tried contacting his brother but we never made the connection. Maybe it was too hard for him to talk about Dad. My sister and I have shared all the little bits of memories we each have but neither of us have a lot of memories.

It has been very hard and still is; I can write or read about the accident okay but if I try to read it out loud or talk about it with someone, I sometimes start crying. I have a few good memories of my dad and I miss him and his presence in my life everyday. I often wonder how different my life would be if he had lived. Sometimes I'm mad that he would have such a dangerous job when he had a wife and four children to live for. Most times I just miss him.

In the past couple of decades I have often wished I could find some of the people who knew my dad but had no idea where to start my search. When I found the Internet I registered with vetfriends.com but didn't have any luck finding anyone. Then one day I got an email from the daughter of one of the men who were with Dad on the plane that day. Katherine was a person who had really put her questions to work and her friends had been helping her conduct a search. When they matched my name from the survivors list to my name at Classmates.com I got a letter. In that moment I was not alone anymore. Since then, with Kat's help, I've heard from other children of men who were lost that day and now have names and phone numbers of men who actually knew my dad.

Some names of men who worked with Dad that I remember (and from my mom) are Master Sgt. Walter Lusk, Walt Hammer and Rudy Webb (don't know their rank) and Major William (Bill) Howard.

If anyone who knew my dad would like to contact me I can be reached by snail mail at:  
2057 Centerville Road, Dallas, TX 75228. Phone 972-840-7044 at work, or 314-320-2563 at home. My email address is mgoodroe@earthlink.net

Thank you all for keeping the memories for us.

Morgen Goodroe,  
Daughter of Captain Kenneth E. Goodroe

*(Continued from page 6) Ward*

The stories and their generosity in sharing their memories are quite rewarding but the bottom line is I still had not found anyone who knew my dad. I was discouraged.

In March 2001, someone sent me a copy of a 307th newsletter. It had a list of email addresses. I did not email anyone. I just couldn't face getting my hopes dashed any more. I put the newsletter in a drawer.

I did write the Dept of the Navy for a copy of the official records of the plane crash. Also I requested from the AF archive records a copy of my dad's military records. It took months but they finally arrived.

A year later, this past March, I decided enough is enough! Somebody, somewhere had to know my dad. I pulled out the newsletter and started sending out emails one address at a time. I think I sent a zillion ;-)

Just as I expected, one email after another came back saying they did not know my dad. I was more than disappointed this time. Did my dad even exist???

Many of the responses contained information on the upcoming 307<sup>th</sup> reunion in May in Fort Worth. I also learned Mike Gingrich was editor of the newsletter and the names of the two historians. I truly wanted to go to the reunion but had other commitments. I asked Morgen Goodroe if she could attend. Morgen lives close to the reunion site. I took photos, newspaper clippings and parts of my dad's military records and copied them. Then I put all the information in a binder for her to take to the reunion to maybe spark a memory or two in someone.

Sadly, Morgen, at the last moment was unable to attend. I know how much she wanted to attend the reunion. She was going to bring her mother. I hoped it would be a healing time for them both. I pretty much gave up on the whole idea about finding anything out about my dad after the reunion. It just wasn't worth the heartbreak any more. The constant disappointments were taking their toll.

Then out of the blue I received an email on the 17th of May from someone in the 307th. He thought he might know someone who might have known my dad. He sent his address that of course I immediately shot off an email to him about my quest to find info on my dad. As soon as I wrote I received a message that the address was not a working address. I wanted to cry. I figured I'd just forget it. That lasted about 3 seconds and I wrote Mike Gingrich, editor of the 307<sup>th</sup> newsletter, asking for a newer address for the person. I didn't hear back and I didn't hear back. Patience was not my strong point by then.

A message from Mike came back a few days later letting me know his computer had crashed. He could not retrieve the info I had requested. He said he would write when he fixed the problem. A week maybe a week and a half later I re-

ceived an email from Mike with not only a new address for Charlie but he had found someone at the reunion who knew Morgen's dad. Mike also included the addresses of two men who may have known my dad.

Seriously, I didn't know what to do. Do I write and risk another disappointment or do I just walk away.

Am I crazy!!!! Of course I am going to write. I am not going to have been on this roller coaster ride for almost two years and not see it all the way through. I got on my keyboard and started writing my little heart out.

Charlie wrote back saying he did not know my dad but did I have more info on his job. I tore through the military records and BINGO his job was listed as (3215OC) K series system mechanic 307th A&E 307th BOMWG. I emailed the info on to Mike, Charlie and the other two men.

Sunday, June 2nd I woke up early and decided to read my email. Lo and behold I heard from one of the men from Mike's list and he knew my dad. I sat there reading his brief email and cried. All this time and I finally got a positive response. What next??? I didn't know what to do, what to say.

First thing I did was print up his email and wake my husband. I tried to tell him the good news but I was crying so hard I couldn't speak. I felt as if 45 years of looking had come to an end and a beginning. I agonized all day over what to write back. I didn't want to bombard him with too many questions. I had 45 years of questions, which ones do I ask??? I said a little prayer and wrote back the next day. I was so afraid maybe he had forgotten things and wouldn't remember details I wanted so much to hear about.

Much to my surprise he not only answered right away but he answered each question. I stared blankly at the screen. As he described my dad it was as if he was describing me. Funny, I am my father's daughter.

The whole journey has been a rewarding experience. I want to thank everyone for all their help, emails, stories and jokes. Even if I would have not found out any information about my dad, the friendships I have found with all of you, I will always treasure. You are an incredible group of men and we are lucky to have men like you who served your country and were stationed at Lincoln AFB.

It is an honor and pleasure to know you. I look forward to hearing from anyone who might have information on my father Cloyse Hepler, Capt Kenneth Goodore or Msgr Armond Caisse.

Thank you and God Bless each one of you.

Kat

Katherine Ward, 6941 Sylvan Glen Way, Citrus Heights, Ca 95610. Phone 916-726-9281. katherine@webtv.net

## Fort Worth 2002

### A TEXAS SIZE "THANKS" TO:

Bob & Bette Ace; Gene & Betty Aenchbacher; Sandor & Nancy Babos; Roger & Dottie Beamer; Margot Berkovitz; Vern Baiett; Larry & Jan Boggess; Gordy & Helen Brekken; Laurie & Donna Bunten; Earl & Ida Buys; Bob & Pat Byrom; Jim & Carolyn Carlton; Bill & Grace Carrier; Johnny & Joan Clark; Jim & Barbara Cone; Dallas & Julie Crosby; CDR & Mrs David Crosby; CDR & Mrs David Crosby; Virgil L. Domino; Earl & Dorothy Eastabrooks; Barbara Moore Ekstrum; Rosella Vining; James Evans; Woodrow Fail; Norm French; Darrell & Lois Gallenberger; Jim & Judy Gardner; Donald D. & Joan Morris Gillette; Mike & Jan Gingrich; Merle Hahn; Bob & Gwen Hansen; Skip & Betty Jean Heller; Brent & Anne Horn; Bob & Peg Jorgensen; Jim & Jean Kent; Bob & Shirley King; Pete & Dody Kraska.

Allan F. Kulikowski; Jim & Darleen Lancaster; Jerry & Penny Lanning; Robert & Betty Lofredo; Marvin R. Lungren; Billy & LaRee Lyons; Janie Marvel; Stephen & Dottie Mattick; Carol B. & Stephen R. Mattick, III; Pete & Pat McKay; LeRoy & Lynda McMath; KeShawn Porter; Norman T. Menke; Roy & Cathy Miller; Rubin & Ruth Ann Miller; William E. Miller; Tom & Andie Mills; Tony & Bev Minnick; Michael Myatt; Peter Myatt; Steven Myatt; Jim & Dottie Myers; Don & Angie Nigro; Butch & Dianne Nollenberg; Jerry & Helen Otten; Pat & Norma Patterson; Art & Ruth Pearson; Betty C. Pelletier; John & Loretta Reppond; Bill & Mary Rogers; Gerry Rotter; Bill & Jeanette Schwob; Les Schobe; Lynette Honsey; O. E. Short; Alan Simpkins.

Clarence & Charlotte Southerland; Jerry & Joan Sparks; Harold & Dee Strumpler; J. B. & Marty Taylor; T. R. & Eunice Taylor; Noble "Tim" & Gladys Timmons; Pete & Wendy Todd; Paul R. & Lorraine Trudeau; Rick & Pattie Waters; Dorothy Veiluva; Bob & Liz Walker; Les Walrath; Rudy & Katy Webb; Anne Webb; Wally & Peggy Whitehurst; Ken Wikle; Bill & Jean Williams; and Robert J. "Willie" Williams.

**For attending The 307<sup>th</sup> Reunion in Fort Worth and making it a success! The many verbal, snail mail, and email accolades that y'all laid on us are deeply appreciated.**

**Dru & R. T. Boykin, Jr.**

### WE CONGREGATED IN COWTOWN AND HAD A GREAT REUNION

May 1<sup>st</sup> arrived and we gathered in the Presidential Suite at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in down town Fort Worth. Yes, the Presidential Suite was our Hospitality Room, a complete apartment with two full baths, complete kitchen, dining room, bedroom, den, bar, and a combination living and conference

room.



The Radisson Plaza Hotel, formerly the Texas Hotel, was the hotel in which Jackie and JFK stayed the night before that dark day in Dallas. The speculation that our hospitality suite was the actual suite in which they resided made for interesting conversation. Actually, no one knows exactly in which room/suite they actually stayed, all that is known for certain is they stayed in the hotel. The 307<sup>th</sup> opinion poll favored our hospitality suite.

The refrigerator was stocked with imported English beer, donated by **Scottish & Newcastle Importers Co. of San Rafael CA.** Enjoying this wonderful beer stirred up conversation about our Reflex Days. Our reunion committee kept the bar, kitchen, and refrigerator supplied with other popular snacks and refreshments, which was supported by our kitty donations.

Wednesday night we walked four blocks to City Streets for our "group get togethers" and enjoyed a wonderful all you could eat Italian buffet, pasta, meat balls, pizza, salad, fruit, desert, etc., etc., etc. Happy hour drink prices prevailed through out the evening and we had great time busting our diets, discussing old times, and encouraging our members to participate in karaoke. After the buffet some of our 307<sup>th</sup> members stayed and enjoyed the floorshow. Zany dueling keyboard comedians had us participating in boisterous Marti-Gras-Style sing-a-longs.

Thursday, while the golfers played "19" holes at The Squaw Valley Lockheed Golf Course, others bused to the Historic Fort Worth Stockyards. Upon arriving at The Stockyards, an all you could eat Mexican buffet was enjoyed. Some of us complimented the excellent food with Margaritas and/or imported Mexican beer. While having lunch we observed a cattle drive of Longhorns in route from the Stockyards to the banks of the Trinity River. Next we boarded the 19<sup>th</sup> Century steam powered Tarantula Train which took us on a round trip on the old Chisholm Trail. Upon arriving back at the Stockyards we detrained and were met by tour guides who took us on a walking tour. Our venture ended with observing the Longhorns as they were driven from the Trinity River back to the Stockyards.

Friday, some of us bused to the American Airlines C. R. Smith Museum while another group bused to Lockheed. Some of us hung around the hospitality suite and reminisced. Others roamed around Sundance Square, visited one or more of the museums, dropped by the Mayfest in Trinity Park, shopped, or just plain rested up for the big evening at Billy Bob's Texas.

Billy Bob's Texas (BBT), The World's Largest Honky Tonk, was a lot of fun. We bused to BBT and enjoyed a "Texas Bar-B-Que" dinner. Many of us complimented our meal with Texas Lone Star Long Neck Beer(s). Afterwards we wandered around BBT and many of us attended a true to life real live bull riding performance. The clowns were enjoyable as well as courageous. Not a single rider stayed on those wild bulls for the

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required 8 seconds. Some of us, after a few more of those Lone Star Long Necks got brave and rode the Photobull. There were games, pool tables, music for boot scooting, plus a concert. The concert was a little loud, but everyone agreed that BBT was a lot of fun.

Saturday, we had our biannual business meeting, a spirited gathering, and to his complete surprise, elected Pete Todd our new Chairman. We also, by the barest of margins, selected Las Vegas for our next reunion in 2004. A highlight of the business meeting was when Reunion Chairman R T Boykin presented Association Chairman Tony Minnick with a plaque in recognition of Tony's twelve years of devoted service to our association. That evening, after photos and cocktails, we convened in The Famous Crystal Ball Room for our banquet.

Our own Reverend LeRoy McMath gave the invocation, we Pledged Allegiance To Our Flag which was immediately followed by The Texas Boys Choir singing our National Anthem. For the next 35 minutes the captivating performance of The Texas Boys Choir held us in awe.

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After The Texas Boys Choir we enjoyed our dinner and the tunes of The Glen Dorsey 5 Piece Band.



### Fort Worth 2002

The Stock Yard cowboys stood by to lasso our people to get them back on the bus



## Harry T. Swim's Promotion By Ernie Pence

**Y**ou would be well advised not to believe all the skullduggery took place on the flight line in the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing. I know as a rule we don't use names in this area of the newsletter, but I am quite sure if Harry T. is still around, he is still proud of this bit of military side step.

Harry T. Swim was at one time one of our Squadron orderly room clerks. Harry T. knew where all of the bones were buried. He knew all of the people that could be "reached" in Headquarters, Supply or anywhere else a surreptitious deal were to be made.

Once, a one star confronted Harry T.. As happenstance would have it, there was absolutely no one of authority in the 370<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron building that day. The General asked where the Squadron Commander was - Not available!, the Adjutant - Not available!, the First Sergeant - also not available!. The General growled, "Just who the hell is running this place?" A/2C Harry T. Swim with a disarming smile stood tall and replied, "I am sir." The General snorted and left. Harry T. never let anyone important, or not, put him off his feed.

Harry T. was not without his faults. He was known to pull a cork too often. He was known to be late for work too often. In England he once bought a rabbit at the market, sans doute hide and entrails intact, placed it in his room,

locked the door, and went to town to obtain a cook or a drink, no one is quite sure which. Harry T. was gone three full days; his barracks mates were by now looking for blood when he returned.

Harry T. was long in tooth and seemed to be at odds with Lt. Colonel Smith about what Harry considered his long overdue promotion to A/1C. The Colonel informed Harry T. in no uncertain terms that his attitude, deportment, and attention to starting times had a great deal to do with his long tenure as an A/2C. Harry T., never one to be put off by what he considered petty details, hung in like a bulldog. The Colonel was not moved and said the list would go in as is, forth with.

Harry T. to say the least was a determined A/2C. Prior to sending the promotion list to Headquarters, he red lined the last man on the A/1C list and typed his name in below it. On time for a change, Harry T. is at his desk the next morning sporting a brand new set of A/1C stripes on his sleeves. Bear in mind the orders have not yet been cut. But then again Harry had information no one else had, not even Lt Col. Raleigh D. Smith.

Col. Smith had a good eye, upon walking into his office; in passing he said to Harry T. "You're out of uniform Harry." Harry T. non-pulsed replies, "No sir, the orders are on the way from Headquarters, and I am on the list." All progress toward his office was halted by Raleigh D. The fight was on, and Harry refused to back down. Now we know it would be embarrassing to rescind an order of that magnitude without an appropriate letter of explanation, as it would also be somewhat embarrassing to court martial a just promoted A/1C.

I don't think Harry T. lasted too long after that, but he arrived at his next station as an A/1C, and who knows if a letter followed in his wake. Harry T, a different, adaptable and somewhat cunning sort. You may not have agreed with his style, but he got an A for brass!



Tony's Award - Minnick & Boykin



Boykin, Walrath, Fail watch B-47 Last Flight video



Gene Aenchbacher ate one of each!



"Surprise Wendy, I'm Chairman" - Pete Todd



The Texas Boy's Choir

## Fort Worth Reunion 2002



The Saturday Lunch Bunch



Bar-B-Q at Billy Bob's



Walrath & Shobe arrive at Billy Bob's



Breakfast at the Radisson





Boykin, Struempfer, & Lundgren hit the coffee



Waiting for the Tarantula Train



Tall stories-Fail, Nolenburg, Minnick, Pelletier, Crosby, Horn



Bus ride to the Stockyards



Chairman Tony & Bev tame the Beast



They finally caught them! Taylor, Gingrich, Nigro



On the Tarantula Train



Stockyards Cattle Drive

## Around the Wing

No one has ever explained why the SAC Quarter was four months long, thus making a year out of only three quarters. What happened to the fourth quarter? Was it held in reserve at SAC HQ? Or, was this the first instance of New Math? Anyway, using SAC standards, this newsletter is a quarterly publication, which serves only to introduce our photo of the "quarter", shown nearby. This photo, courtesy of Gene Aenchbacher, is of the famous and entertaining "307<sup>th</sup> Dancing Tummies", circa April 1958. A prize, of undetermined substance will go to the first person that identifies whose bodies belong to the tummies. TIP: we have no idea, so any guess is arguably correct.

Our reunion in Fort Worth was successful by all standard accounts, but was not without tragedy. Early on Friday morning, **Angie and Tom Mills** received word that Angie's son had just been killed in a traffic accident while driving to work in Houston. The 307<sup>th</sup> maintenance troops, Billy Williams, et al, rallied in aid, got the Mills packed and on an airplane to Houston. A somber mood prevailed as all reunion attendees signed a card expressing our sympathy for Angie and Tom. Again, we send our condolences to Tom and Angie, who over the years have been loyal and steadfast friends to us all.

A fact little known to most of us emerged recently, when it was pointed out that **Steve Mattick** is the only person to have served with the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group/Wing during World War II, Korea, and the B-47 Cold War era. That is certainly worth a place in the 307<sup>th</sup> Roll of Records, and we thank Steve for his devoted service to our country and unit.

All of those who attended the 307<sup>th</sup> reunion festivities at Billy Bob's now know why California has an electricity shortage... all the electrons were diverted to the audio amplifiers during the Cory Morrow concert at Billy Bob's. Jet engine noise was pale by comparison. However, the excitement of watching the bull riding and having our photos taken on the "bull" more than made up for the injuries to our eardrums.

It's a small world department: During the dance band phase of the Reunion Banquet, several young couples from the high school prom in the adjoining ballroom wandered into our ballroom to see what the old fogies were up to. **Bob Byrom**, a former B-58 pilot, and **Pete McKay** engaged them in conversation and explained that it was a reunion of former Air Force SAC troops. One of the young men responded that his uncle had flown B-58s in the Air Force, and when his name was mentioned, Bob remembered him as a well-known former compatriot. You get to meet interesting people wherever you go! When last heard from, Byrom was planning to fly his Cessna north along the Alcan Highway to Anchorage this July. After the conclusion of this mission we are fully expectant of an after-action report from Bob!

307<sup>th</sup> reunions of late have seemed to become true family

events, as the sons of **Steve Mattick**, **Pete Myatt**, and **Dallas Crosby**, all attended Fort Worth with their dads. If you want to know anything about the game of rugby, just talk to Steve's son, Steve Junior. Michael Myatt retired from the USAF several years ago and is now enjoying a second career in the Las Vegas area. Dallas' son, Commander Davis "Bing" Crosby, USN, a veteran of the Gulf War, continues the aeronautical tradition, currently piloting USN T-39s out of Pensacola.

The perfect attendance list for our eight reunions is now down to nine people/couples. Vern Biaett, Jim Carlton, Bill Carrier, Mike Gingrich, Merle Hahn, Tony Minnick, Don Nigro, Betty Pelletier & Billy Williams have attended every 307<sup>th</sup> reunion to date.

**Les Walrath** seems to have a hard time staying home...he's now off to spend the summer in Alaska.



Seen in TROA magazine was the death notice of Lt Col **Barnett (Skip) B Young** in March 2002. Skip was a early B-47 pilot in another wing, and was deeply involved in the tests of the ability of the B-47 to perform loops, rolls, and Immelmans in association with the development of LABS delivery tactics. About ten years ago this newsletter had the pleasure of printing an article by Barnett in which he described the flight tests.

**Bob King** writes that if anyone sees an RV tooling down the road with a Saturn station wagon in tow look closely at the Washington license plate. It might read "B47NAVB". That will be the Kings on the road again.

An interesting LAFB related web site can be found at [www.geocities.com/bigrob685](http://www.geocities.com/bigrob685). This web site has been put together by a high school lad from Lincoln, and is remarkable in its scope and depth. It appears to be a true labor of love. He is looking for help with correction of factual mistakes, and locating additional material. So, give it a look, and help out this enterprising young fella with our heritage.

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From Glendale Arizona, frequent correspondent **"Jimbo" Shumake Jr.**, emailed regarding the passing of **Bill Holden**. ...He was a regular Air Force Captain, at Kadena AFB, Okinawa, was a skilled pilot and a very likeable crew commander. He molded some young airmen, myself included, on a third B-29 overseas assignment, into the top 307th Bomb Wing Lead Crew. We had fun and yet very serious in checking out the other crews. We parted in late October 1954. I regret not writing or visiting him at Lincoln while I was at Altus AFB, Oklahoma, with the 96th ARS, in the KC-97 tankers. I need to tell everyone, especially his family, that he was one of the top 5 pilots, both in B-17's and three different B-29 squadrons that gave me security and encouragement. I wish his wife were still here. I met that fine lady while stationed at Okinawa.

A former FMS Instrument "Shopper" from 1956 to 1959, **Jim Sims** wrote from Etowah NC - ...enjoy the newsletter very much. Brings back some wonderful memories and puts me in touch with some friends...

A lament comes from former crew chief **Mike Fox** of Amarillo, Texas: I was appalled at the article in the November 2001 newsletter regarding the fate of 53-6244. I can't believe that the powers that be could have let the last B-47 made slip through their hands and end up as a piece of fire-fighting practice equipment. I always thought that when this beautiful bird left Lincoln that it would end up as a treasure at the Air Force Museum. When my best friend and I visited the museum, I had bragged to him that he would see this aircraft. We were both shocked not to see it. I not only had the pleasure to preflight and launch this aircraft, but I was also afforded the opportunity to spend time on alert with it and to fly as the fourth man. It was a sad day when I read the article, but it is a downright shame that this piece of history was desecrated in this manner. I salute this lady and say goodbye.

Another new member of our association is **James Villa** of Belleville, Texas, a former OMSer. Jim writes that he is thrilled to find the association and run into familiar names such as Billy Williams, Ernie Pence, Don Johnson, Joe Fuqua, Jim Sine and John Mattioli. Jim alerted us that a friend is putting together a B-47 website (watch this space), and that his disgust with what happened to B-47 53-6244 at the Air Force Museum led him to recently send them a letter of protest. It's fair to say that many folks, in our association and elsewhere, share his feelings about 6244. Sorry we missed you in Ft Worth Jim, but hope to see you in Lost Wages.

Every once in a while we hear from someone on our address rolls who was never assigned to Lincoln AFB. Such is the case for **Andrew J Vangalis** of Las Cruces, NM. It turns out Andy was with the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS long before Lincoln, and has some interesting historical notes to offer. According to Andy, the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS was activated about June 1951 at Walker AFB, Roswell, NM and was outfitted with Boeing boom type KB-29P aircraft. They then took part in the Fox Peter I project –

the first flight of jet fighters to the Pacific area. They stationed out of Hickam AFB and were credited with eight saves of F-84s that had fuel problems. In 1952 they participated in Project Ivy nuclear tests out of Kwajalein island during which the first US H-bomb was tested. In 1955 or 56 the squadron was attached to the 20<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing and was redesignated as the 20<sup>th</sup> ARS. Shortly thereafter, the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS designation was reactivated at Lincoln. Andy notes having known **Glen "Red" Lally**, and wife Dottie, through his WWII service with the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, and subsequent reunions. He also notes his commander in B-29s at Kirtland AFB in 1946 was **Perry Hoisington**.

Back in the brown shoe days, enlistees entered the happy world of the USAF either through Lackland or **Sampson AFB** for their basic training. Sampson, located near Geneva, NY, was activated by the AF in 1950 to handle the training surge associated with the Korean War, and was closed down in 1957. In a recently received fact sheet we learned that the Samson AFB Veterans Association was formed in 1954, and that annual reunions are held in the northeast. Their next reunion will be held at Samson State Park, Romulus NY, from September 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Contact Chip Phillips, Executive Secretary, SAFB Veterans Association, Inc, phone 716-633-1119, Fax 716-633-9188 or email chip34@aol.com for information. Chip's mailing address is PO Box 331, Williamsville, NY 14231.

**Margaret Akins** wrote to **Richard Amenell** regarding the passing of her husband **Charlie Akins** in February 2002. ...Hi. Thank you for writing. Charlie went into the Air Force in July 1952. He was stationed in Calif., Wichita Falls, TX, and then went to Topeka Ks. He was in an explosion on base, while in Topeka and was hospitalized for some time. In July 1954 he was sent to Lincoln, Nebr. where the sunflowers were growing tall. I wish I could remember all of his "stories", he was a great storyteller, but do know that it was some time before the airplanes came in. He was a mechanic, in air craft and engine-(A & E), was in the Air Refueling Squadron and 307th Bomb Wing. He was TDY in England, and Greenland, before we were married in Oct 1957. Our first daughter was born at Lincoln in Dec. 1958. He was sent later on in 1959 to the Azores, TDY. In Dec. 1959, he was offered a transfer to Wright Patterson AFB on KC 135's, that he gladly took. He was so excited to be going with that aircraft. Our son, Randall was born on base in Feb. 1960. He was the first SAC baby born on that base, received my picture taken with him in the local paper! In January 1961, Charlie developed medical problems which acquired him a disability retirement. Much to his dismay, as he lived and breathed AF. He came out S/Sgt E-5. Some names he served with - Capt James Harvey, C. B. Story, I don't remember rank, but Rothenbach is another one. There are many other names, but I just can't remember right now. When I get out some of the info he has collected, I will be clearer on all of it.

We moved back to home: Missouri and stayed until 1980 when we moved to Texas. Charlie was a life member of the Air Force Association; Disabled American Veterans, Veteran of Foreign Wars and American Legion. He was an avid collector of Air Force memorabilia and read much of the time about the Air

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Force, past and present. In May of 2001, Charlie was diagnosed with lung cancer. He passed away on Feb. 21, 2002. His burial was in Clinton, Mo. A nice little cemetery where a section is set-aside for veterans and families. They have flags flying and a memorial plaque on a stone to honor veterans at the front of the set aside plots.

Again, I thank you for writing. I have received cards from many other Air Force friends.

A historical query from **Gary McGill**: just read an article in the "Aviation History" magazine which described Charles Lindbergh's first airplane flight which took place in 1922 in Lincoln, Nebraska. He was enrolled in flight school with "Nebraska Aircraft Company" and flew with his instructor in a "Lincoln Flyer". After eight hours, he was scheduled to solo but didn't have the money to pay the insurance premium for a solo flight so he went on and became a wing walker with his instructor pilot. When he actually soloed was not mentioned in the article. I was wondering if the airfield used by Nebraska Aircraft Company eventually became Lincoln AFB. Maybe you have some information on that or someone in the 307th who lives around Lincoln would know about that early history.

The current address roster, a deceased list and the E-Mail list from the 2002 reunion are available by request for a \$3.00 donation to the Association to cover mailing cost. Send your request to Tony Minnick at 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516-2364. Please continue to send all address changes, zip codes and telephone changes to this address also.

We've heard briefly from a bunch of people in the past several months: they include Don Ivie, Jim Kingsley, Ann King, Jim Chittenden, Fred Bennett, Dudley Bailey, Wally Mitchell, Pete Martino, Bob Mulleins, Jim Yandle, and Joann Tuin.



## The Last Flight

The verse on the SAC Chapel Memorial Window says it best...

**Charles J Akins**, ARS, FMS, Henderson TX, 21 February 2002.

**Dora "Tommy" Buchanan**, Rockville MD, 31 December 2001.

**Richard D Coon**, 370<sup>th</sup> BS, Richmond VA, 13 January 2002.

**Leon David Gordon**, ARS, Tampa FL, 3 February 1998.

**Mozelle Hart**, Edmonds WA, 1999.

**Harold W Herdt**, Riverside CA, 2 June 2001.

**Willis E House**, AEMS, Lincoln NE, 2 September 1998.

**Herbert Kennedy**, 372<sup>nd</sup> BS, Leonardtown MD, 11 November 1994.

**Elmer Sensenig**, 370<sup>th</sup> BS, Amboy IL, 27 July 2001.

**Clayton L Southern**, 818<sup>th</sup>, Monroe MI, June 2001.

**Clyde E Taylor**, ARS, Garland TX, date unknown.

**Marvin F Tyrell**, OMS, HQS, date unknown.

**Steve Vensky**, Montgomery AL, 24 June 2002.

**Kenneth J Welnetz**, ARS, Laporte IN, 30 March 2002.

**Melvin Wynia**, Sacramento CA, 1985.

*And God said who shall we send. I answered I am here, send me." Isaiah 6:8*

## Donations

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of those who have recently made donations to the Association's General Fund.

Bob Ace  
Gene Aenchbacher  
John Allison  
Joe Anthony  
Joe Biggs  
Gordon Brekken  
Laurie Bunten  
Jim Carlton  
George Davis  
Barbara Ekstrom  
Jim Evans  
Harold Friedman  
Donna Gerstenschlager  
Roger Grommesch  
Merle Hahn  
Brent Horn  
Samuel Kent  
Allan Kulikowski  
Howard Johns  
Mary Judds  
Janie Marvel  
Norm Menke  
Rubin Miller  
Tom Mills  
James T. Odom  
Robert Patterson  
Clark W Peterson  
John Reppond  
Bill Rogers  
Gerry Rotter  
Wm. Schwob  
Wm. Sims  
Pete Todd  
Paul Trudeau  
Edward Venable Jr

## Email Changes

The following changes to the email list have occurred since the last issue of the newsletter. We now number over 280!

### Additions

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### Changes/Corrections:

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 Johnny Clark: meptck@cox.net  
 Bill Bathurst: wdbath@adelphia.net  
 Vern Biaett: vbiaett@azwest.net

Send your email address in and if you would like to have a current list of 307<sup>th</sup> Email addresses emailed to you, drop a note to "mikegingri@cs.com".

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## The Gentle Warrior by Ernie Pence

Some of you may know this man's service record, others may not. If not, it is high time you knew more about the service this airman rendered to his country. We all knew Glen Hesler as "Pappy Hesler" or as he was sometimes called by the enlisted, "Tiger Hesler."

Pappy joined General Chennault's proud and brave flyers after the United States entered the war. These brave few fought with next to nothing for reserves or logistical support. Always outnumbered and lacking in everything but the will to go up again. When things were at their worst for a Chinese group about to be annihilated by a superior Japanese force, it was Pappy and a few of his Chinese wingmen that came to the rescue.

The Nipponese gathered a large force and were going to attack the next morning. Pappy and his Chinese pilots were to make what may have been the first low-level night attack in that theater. Night navigation without any beacons or nav aids had to be hairy. His little band flew to a set of coordinates and when the ill fated Chinese troops below heard them they lit fuel oil soaked ground shaped like an arrow pointing at the enemy. Pappy went in hot and low on the first pass with napalm. That lit the way for his following airmen. After the napalm was expended they strafed until their guns were empty. They annihilated the entire enemy force and saved their friends on the ground.

Pappy and his fellow airmen heavily

patrolled the rivers for enemy supply barges and bridges under construction. Once, while coming in at 10 feet for a strafing run, his airplane hit something and lurched. Pappy brought her up to altitude and felt the rudder grind. He took her home and upon landing the ground crew wound up 2,000 feet of small cable that had been trailing the aircraft. The Japs had laid a trap by stringing cable across the river.

Pappy was shot down on one of these river raids and bailed out at 400 feet. He injured his back upon landing, got up and beat feet to avoid the pursuing enemy. His two wingmen held them at bay until they were low on fuel and had to return to base. Pappy ran for eight solid hours that day! His thirty three-day escape and evasion led by Chinese irregulars through the rugged countryside with nothing to eat is an epic story unto itself. This event alone speaks volumes about the self-determination and discipline of the man.

Pappy was called back for the Korean War and started out flying the B-25. His mission was to fly young navigator trainees. He latter transitioned into the T-29, which we saw arriving a few times at Lincoln with it's multiple bubbles on top of the fuselage for the want-to-be-Navs. After spending some time in the T-29, Pappy must have wanted to fly something a little hotter, so he asked for and received a transfer to B-47's. This is where I first met Pappy. I was about 18 years old and wet behind the ears.

Pappy walked up to my bird the first time I met him, and my thought was... what's this "Old Dude" doing trying to fly jet bombers? What a laugh!... I failed to take notice of the keen eye and competitive spirit that was beneath the exterior of this phenomenal man. He had those little steel rim glasses on and I did not take the time to look into the interior of the man. I soon learned what competitive and professional was from him.

I was on alert with him in the old south alert area one sunshiny day in 1958, the bird was 3210. The klaxon went off

and the crew was right on my butt. That man could start engines. I ran over to the edge of the grass and gave Pappy the go ahead, he rolled about 3 feet, tested the steering and had none. He flashed the landing lights at me and signaled with his hands he had no steering. I hit the forward wheel well at a dead run.

A quick check told the story, the steering disconnect valve was stuck. I gave it a good whack while pulling on the plunger with the other hand. When it moved, I hit the steering link to make sure it was engaged. Pappy felt the forward main turn and fire walled the throttles. That big mama lurched forward and away we went. I tell you folks; at that moment you could not have driven a darnin' needle up my behind with a sledgehammer! Lots of things run through your mind at a time like that. Is he going to stop, if not, can I fit in here with the gear up, can I get out of here with the gear up? We made a hard left turn and Pappy hit the brakes, I was out of there like a shot. It didn't dawn on me till later that Pappy didn't want anybody down the line to get in front of him. There's that competitive spirit.

I was to fly a number of times later with this fine pilot. We all know how tough it was sometimes to get the hookup at night with bad weather and a time crunch. The man never ceased to amaze me; he was just so darn smooth. Slip in, hook up, transfer and depart. It was a thing of beauty.

Vietnam came along and this "Gentle Warrior" went off again to serve his country in the Pacific. He flew Buffs over there and the Herky Bird. It never ceases to amaze me the exposure to fire this man has had in his career, not to mention those hairy low-level missions you were all exposed to in night training ops. All who serve in combat are special people to all of us, I single this man out, because of my personal involvement with a man that made such a lasting impression on a young airmen, thank you "Pappy."

The one thing that has bothered me in

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later years was when I met Pappy at the Florida reunion. Here came this fine gentlemen and his lovely wife, Pappy not looking one damn bit different then he did the first day he walked up to me and 3210 back in 1958. I'm now fat, getting bald, and Pappy stills looks the same to me as he did in '58. T'aint fair Pappy.

E.V. Pence

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### Another Aggie Joke!

Aggie jokes have been around virtually as long as Aggies. Here's another one.

An Aggie returns to his room and finds his roommate with bandages on both ears.

"What happened?" he asks.

"I was ironing my shirt," the roommate says.

"And when the phone rang, I picked up the hot iron instead of the receiver."

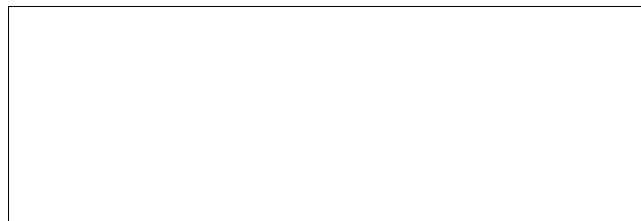
"So what happened to the other ear?"

"Well, I had to call the doctor."



Sheriff Corbin toasts the dancing girls at the Wild West Party of 1958. Who are these beauties?

Photo by Gene Aenchbacher



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