

## ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 56

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

NOVEMBER 2008

### President's Column

#### Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?

Well, no, it's probably not going to be like the 1930s, with the bread lines, Dust Bowl, high unemployment and massive migration of population, but all of us are rightly concerned about the current economic turmoil and uncertainty. Most of us have seen a substantial slice of our hard-earned "nest egg" disappear and wonder when the economy will heal. I don't pretend to have any glittering insights on that subject, but I'm hoping that we'll **all** have the physical and financial wherewithal to get to Dayton by June of 2010!

Mike Gingrich and Bud Flanik have already laid the groundwork for another outstanding reunion. For an overview, you can check out the Association home page (<http://www.307bwassoc.org>). To take a hand in shaping the reunion activities, please check out (and **fill** out) the Reunion Survey Form in this newsletter. Your input will not only help Bud & Mike plan the schedule, but it will also give us a ballpark estimate of how many people plan to attend. 2010 might seem like a long way off, but I can't overemphasize how important it is to have an *early* order-of-magnitude estimate of the number of attendees. So please give us your non-binding intentions (one way or the other) and let us know if your plans change.

Normally, I try to stick strictly to Association business in this column, but so many of you have been so solicitous of Wendy's condition that I thought I would use this channel to update everyone. As most of you know, my wife has survived several bouts of cancer, but she was "visited" once again last year. This time, the breast cancer was declared inoperable and incurable, but it is treatable. This essentially means that she'll be on chemotherapy for the rest of her life.

Fortunately, she's able to take an oral agent whose side effects are somewhat less devastating than those from the clinically-controlled poisonings that she had to undergo in the past. So far, after about a year of this therapy, the cancer seems to have been contained (no detectable spread or growth), but the side effects have been challenging. Those of you who attended the Branson reunion might not even have noticed how tired she was. (She's a Brit, so the "stiff upper lip" comes naturally to her and she's great at putting on a brave face.) But her fatigue was so severe and pervasive that we decided to cancel our usual summer trip to visit family and friends in England.

I'm happy to report that she has continued to improve throughout the summer and fall and is tolerating

travel much better. Her energy level is still low and she continues to be afflicted by various other uncomfortable side-effects, but she's able to drive, travel, socialize and lead a reasonably normal life. She wants me to thank everyone for their encouragement, prayers and positive energy. Both of us appreciate more than we can say your outpouring of love and support. She and I are optimistic about the future and look forward to seeing everyone in Dayton in June of 2010.

Meanwhile, we have much to be thankful for. We wish you and yours a Happy Thanksgiving, a very Merry Christmas and a full twelve months of health and happiness in the New Year.

Pete Todd

#### Chuckles

A thief broke into the local police station and stole all the lavatory equipment. A spokesman said "we have nothing to go on!"

There were three Indian squaws. One slept on a deer hide, the second on an elk hide, and the third on a hippopotamus hide. The first two had baby boys and the third had twin boys. This proves that the squaw of the hippopotamus is equal to the sons of the squaws of the other two hides.

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

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

### Officers of the Association:

**President:** Pete Todd, 1250 Big Valley Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80919-1015. Phone 719-531-5874.  
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**Vice President/Newsletter:** Mike Gingrich, 2527 Greenlefe Drive, Beavercreek, OH 45431. Phone 937-426-5675.  
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**Treasurer:** Tony Minnick, 5920 Robin Court, Lincoln, NE 68516. Phone 402-423-6848. Email: tonym@inetnebr.com

### Association Founders:

Billy Williams, 5546 Enterprise Drive, Lincoln, NE 68521. Phone 402-438-6061.  
Email: jeannbill@windstream.net

Betty C Pelletier, deceased 29 November 2004.

**The Association is strongly reliant upon key members who have volunteered their time and effort to keep the wheels running smoothly. They are:**

**Membership:** Jan Boggess, 4304 Ridgcrest Dr, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Phone 719-548-8024.  
Email: LarryJanB@gmail.com.

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

**Co-Historian:** Mike Hill, 1405 8th St SW, Minot, ND 58701. Phone 701-838-9288.  
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**Co-Historian:** Robert Loffredo, 6004 SW 2nd St, Des Moines, IA 50315. Phone 515-285-3445. Email: implanenuts@mchsi.com

### Dayton 2010 Reunion Co-Chairmen:

Roger "Bud" Flanik, 3207 Zephyr Dr, Dayton OH 45414. Phone 937-277-8285. Email: airbud@aol.com.  
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The Association is a non-profit Veterans Organization. All contributions to the organization are gratefully received, but presently are not deductible under IRS Code. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are elected by majority vote of all members at each business meeting.

## Around the Wing

**F**orgotten in the crunch to get out the previous newsletter was our usual report on folks who have made a perfect attendance record at 307<sup>th</sup> Reunions. We kind of broke the string at Branson, losing four couples from the honored list, thus slipping from 9 to five perfectly attending couples. The Fabulous Five with perfect attendance are Jim & Carolyn Carlton, Bill & Grace Carrier, Tony & Bev Minnick, Don & Angie Nigro, and our association co-founders, Billie & Jean Williams. *We very much regret to tell you that Bill Carrier lost his life in a tragic automobile accident on 17 September 2008.*

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**Are there recent changes to the Flag Code?** Bert Vorchheimer has advised us of the following:

*Section 594 of H.R. 4986: National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 - passed into law and signed by President Bush January 28, 2008*

*\* Public Law No: 110-181 (Sec. 594) "Allows members and veterans who are present but not in uniform during the hoisting, lowering, or passing of the flag to render the military salute."*

Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present and not in uniform may render the military salute. The wording of what is now Public Law No: 110-181 implies we have an option when it comes to saluting. Since non-military civilians don't have that option, a military salute would distinguish veterans from the rest of the crowd.

Source: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h110-4986>

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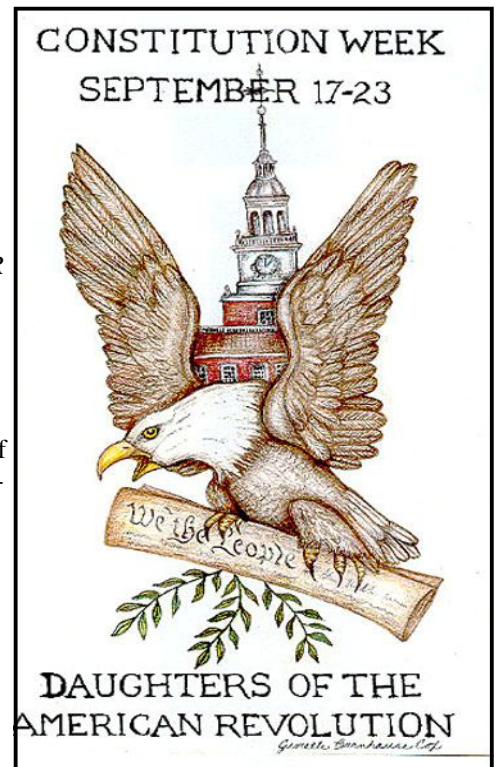
**Genelle Cox** writes...

Some good news: As a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, I drew a poster and entered it in the National Constitution Week Poster Contest. I won First Place in California and First Place National! I was so thrilled and honored. I was invited back to Washington D.C. to receive my honor at the National convention in July. I just couldn't make it, so a friend of mine went in my place. The DAR is going to publish my poster and put it up for sale in their gift shop at National Headquarter in D.C. and for sale on the DAR web site. Genelle and Bob. *Genelle's poster is shown nearby and you can see it in its full glory on the DAR website. Isn't it great to have such a talented person in our throng?*

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### Military Offspring

In the last issue we asked you to tell us of sons and daughters who are or were serving our nation in the military. Since then, we've become aware of grandchildren also serving so they will also be included in our recognition. What we know thus far appears below. Some of this comes from deep within our memories and some information is recent in origin. Eventually, we would like to be



(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

able to provide more info about these individuals to whom the torch has been passed.

Neal Amtmann

Lt Col Wendy Wasik, USAF - pilot

Russell & Mary Bowling

Rebecca Bowling, Lt Col USAFR Ret  
grandson-USA, name unknown

Dallas & Julie Crosby

Bing Crosby, Lt Cmdr USN – pilot

Donal Finn

Christopher E Rainey, USAF, grandson

Roger & Jan Flanik

Barry Flanik, USNR Ret

Dick & Barbara Goodson

Bobby Goodson, USAF

Wife, USAF

Grandson, USAF

Jack & Toni Hager

Son and daughter both National Guard careerists

Frank & Dee Kisner

MGen Frank Kisner, USAF -pilot

Col Janet Augustine, USAF

Vince & Harriet Kovacich

Captain Kevin J Kovacich, USN - pilot

Commander Deborah Kovacich, USNR Ret - nav

Glenn & Dottie Lally

Capt Patrick Lally. USAFR Ret - pilot

Jake & Billie Mealka

Maj Janet Mealka, USAF

Peter Myatt

Major Michael Myatt, USAF Ret

Robert Keith & Rose Nystrom

Lt Col Nystrom, USAF. First name unknown.

Paul & Shirley Pudwill

Dominic Gorie, Commander USN - pilot, astronaut

Harold E & Juanita Pennington

SMsgt Sharon K Worley, USAF Ret

Chester & Hazel Shaver

David Shaver, USAF

Dick & Mary Storr

Richard Dale Storr, Lt Col USAF-pilot-Desert Storm POW

David Storr, USMC

Douglas Storr, USAF

Pete Todd

MSgt Joseph M Todd, USAF

PFC Kelsey White, USMC (granddaughter)

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### Shanksville Iron & Steel

By now, there is not a person among us who does not know the story of Flight 93 and its terrible end as it crashed into the ground at Shanksville, Pennsylvania on 9/11/2001, and the heroism of its captive passengers.

An informal memorial has been created at Shanksville by the citizenry, and funds are being collected for a formal memorial.

The FDNY, the first responders at the World Trade Center, have bound their allegiance to their brothers at the Shanksville Volunteer Fire Department, the first responders to the crash site, by fashioning a piece of structural steel from the Towers into a fitting memorial, a Cross.

What follows here comes from **Ken Fisher**, our LAFB compatriot, founder of the 551<sup>st</sup> Strategic Missile Squadron Association, and retired director of communications for the FDNY. He tells how they recently took the Cross 300 miles to Shanksville in a motor caravan with his communications vehicle in the lead.

“You might have heard about it on radio or watched part of it on the TV news.

Every overpass in NJ had 3 to 5 fire trucks assigned. It was a sight to see. What got us was the old timers, the WWII vet standing along the roadway, hat off, hand over his heart, waving Old Glory with his other hand.

We had over 500 bikes, two large trucks, several SUV's, a full size over the road bus, and several fire department support vehicles. Me, I was in most cases the lead vehicle. What a weekend!

We delivered a 14 foot cross that was made out of steel from the North Tower of Ground Zero to the fire department that was first due at the Flight 93 crash site on 9-11. It is a shame that the cross cannot be placed at the crash site, because it is a religious symbol.

We started off some 500 bikes strong from a former military base in Brooklyn, NY and after a few stops that number increased. We had with us a bus load of NYC firefighters, several vans, Engine 343 (a 1951 pumper) that was flatbedded to Summerset, Pa. where we spent Saturday night. The organization that I work for provided three communication vehicles for the trip. We even used the Iron Shields Motorcycle Club command vehicle for the trip.

Today, three weeks later, I look at these bikers with a different view. They are yesterday's cowboys, riding sometimes between our modern highrise buildings instead of trees and mountains. They take to our nation's highway, always looking for 'Route 66' but settling for US 30 when nearby, bypassing our modern interstates when possible.

It was a gathering of eagles that became a real Rolling Thunder, especially as you rode through the tunnels of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. You might find this shocking but most of these bike riders are first responders! Yes, firefighters, cops, former military, and EMS personnel, both males and females. Now after looking at the below link (showing some of the TV coverage) maybe you might look at bikers a different way! I know that I do.”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydCk1vRUf88&feature=related>

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(Continued from page 3)

## History Book Progress

Author Mike Hill has completed the first draft of the book and both Pete and Mike G are currently assisting with the editing. Much work still lies ahead: selection of photos and illustrations, working of format issues with the publisher, preparation and review of the galley proofs, etc. All told, it is still well over a year before it will roll off the presses.

BUT, what a piece of work it is! The research and interviews Mike Hill has accomplished are absolutely remarkable. Research and verification continue as we edit our way thru it. The content of the years 1954 to 1957 is extensive as is that of the 307<sup>th</sup> ARS. I, Mike G, point this out because I did not arrive on the scene until well into 1958. I picked up fragments of things that happened before my time, but not much; I also knew very little about the ARS. But, I gotta tell ya, Mike Hill's book filled it all in for me, and I no longer feel like such a dumb kid! Seriously, you are going to like it when you get it. Very few of us were with the 307<sup>th</sup> for the entire 12 years and we all have voids in our knowledge of what happened with the wing. This book ably fills in those voids.

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A framed copy of John Young's print, Cold War Warriors, with engraved commemorations of Lincoln Air Force Base's 98<sup>th</sup> and 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wings was recently placed in the commercial air terminal at Lincoln airport. This was brought about through the efforts of the B-47 Stratojet Association, its president, Col (Ret) Sigmund Alexander, Tony Minnick and other vets of the 307<sup>th</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup> BW. The print is displayed on the wall beyond the up escalator.

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We recently received an email from Mr Raymond Mazzola who is the nephew of Lt Anthony Marcanti. On April 6<sup>th</sup> 1956, Tony Marcanti-Nav, Capt James Sullivan – AC, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Lawrence Schmidt-CP, and A1C James Berry- Crew Chief, perished when their B-47 #53-4209 went down near Ceresco shortly after takeoff. Mr Mazzola intends to emplace a memorial to the fallen crew at the crash site in late October or early November and has tried to find family members of the other deceased to no avail. We have not been able to help him, because other than the historical crash report we have no records of the crew. In fact, we have been unable to determine their squadron. If any of you know anything, please clue us in and we'll get the info to Mr Mazzola.

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Before we wrap things up on this issue, some thanks and kudos are in order. Woody Fail, way down Texas way has volunteered to help out with reunion admin work by doing some computer record keeping of registrants and funds...even though he will be unable himself to attend due to a seasonal conflict with his duties as an official at golf tournaments. Woody's support in this area will make the job much easier for Bud & Mike. We wonder tho'...does Woody wear a striped shirt and blow a whistle?

Then to John Koupsi, Bill Bathurst, Dale Christians, Tony Minnick, and countless others we have had to consult to clarify issues resulting from the drafting of the wing history. Without your corporate memory, we'd be lost!

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Some other troops we've heard from recently are Ken Tarwater, Dick Goodson, David (son of Chester) Shaver, Fritz Ahola, and Bill Johnson.



**Cold War Warriors by John Young, now hanging in Lincoln Air Terminal**

### Airman's Prayer Author Unknown

Here in the Nebraska Flatlands  
Lincoln is the spot  
Fighting a tropical heat wave  
In the land that God forgot.

Leaving at home our memories  
And longing to see our gals  
Hoping that when we return  
They haven't married our pals.

Here with the snakes and lizards  
Here where a man gets blue

Here in the middle of nowhere  
A thousand miles from you.

No one knows we are living  
No one knows who I am  
Back home we are forgotten  
For we belong to "Uncle Sam".

How can we keep on living  
It's more than I can understand  
No we are not convicts  
But defenders of our land.

Four years. How can I stand it!  
Four years of a life we will miss.  
Don't let the Draft Board get you  
But for God's sake don't enlist.

We are Airmen of the Air Force  
We work for our hard earned pay  
We protect the men with millions  
For two and a half a day.

Someday when this war is over  
We will hear Saint Peter yell,  
Oh, enter ye men of Lincoln  
For you've served your time in Hell!

From Ed Seagraves

*Dayton 2010*



Well, it's about time to tell you a little bit about what might happen or what we hope might happen at a 307<sup>th</sup> reunion in Dayton in 2010. But first, a brief message from Bud & Mike, your organizers...

After the Dayton Reunion in 1996, Mike Gingrich

and Bud Flanik swore an oath that they would never **never** ever get involved with planning or administering another reunion...too much work...too many worries...not enough Maalox ...As we know all too well, politicians change their minds ...and so did we. We recognized in subsequent years that the events at the Air Force Museum and the Riverboat dinner cruise on the Ohio River at Cincinnati were two of the most popular reunion events ever, and are talked about whenever we get together. Additionally, folks who are new to our group since 1996 have expressed a desire to "do the museum", as have folks who were here the first time around. The museum itself is much larger and quite different than it was in 1996, and by 2010 is expected to be twice as large as it was in '96. Also, institutional support for military reunions such as ours from the museum, the hotel, and the convention bureau is much stronger and much more helpful than it was before...they actually will do a lot of the work we had to do ourselves in earlier years.

...So, we decided, "what the heck, let's give it another go, our members deserve it!", and thusly Bud stood up at Branson to say "come back to Dayton in 2010".

Our criteria this time around are to offer fundamentally the same "events" you enjoyed so much in 1996; to avoid overscheduling you and give you plenty of time to socialize (i.e. tell war stories) and to browse the Air Force Museum, and aviation's historical origins, and to provide a fun experience while keeping things simple and keeping costs down.

You can do your part and help us out immensely by filling out and mailing the survey form found in the back of this newsletter to let us know your interests and to help us size things.

So, what follows here is how things rack and stack together in the planning process thus far.

First off, the reunion is set to begin on Monday June 14<sup>th</sup> and terminate with departures on Saturday June 19<sup>th</sup>. Mid-June is one of the two periods each year most likely to have fine weather, the other period being in mid-September. (We Buckeyes try to ignore the weather the other 10 months of the year). We settled on June because of booking availabilities at the National Museum of the United States Air Force (NMUSAF), and the fact that things in mid-September are very booked up because of the annual Air Force Marathon. In

case you're wondering, NMUSAF is just a longer label for what we used to call the Air Force Museum, but they tell us that being a National Museum gives the institution a little more political protection than it had previously.

Our reunion hotel will be the Holiday Inn in Fairborn, which you old-timers might remember is the same hotel that headquartered us at our reunion in 1996. We'll have more to say about the hotel later.

Things will start off on Monday, the 14<sup>th</sup>, with arrivals and registration in our hospitality room. The hotel is preparing a complimentary welcome reception, consisting of cheese & fruits, veggies, dip, coffee and punch. To promote camaraderie and conviviality, we also plan to have a selection of sub sandwiches and a cash bar with prices rivaling those accorded us in Branson. We also hope to provide a sing-along pianist for those of you who have the mad craving to recapture "those good old days" with the rest of us.

Should you desire heartier food fare, there is a McKenna's Grill in the hotel and five more restaurants within a four-minute walk, as well as numerous fine restaurants within a five-minute drive.

Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> is free time during the day, giving you time to comingle in the hospitality room, visit the NMUSAF, or other aviation-oriented sites nearby. Our first official activity kicks off late Tuesday afternoon as we depart for the NMUSAF for a cocktail party, "Dinner Under the Wings", and a concert by the Air Force Band of Flight. For those who have not experienced this before, our dinner and concert venue is set up smack dab in the middle of the museum's Modern Flight Gallery right next to the B-52, the F-22, the Predator, and other warbirds. The museum plans to have the gift shop and bookstore open for your browsing during the cocktail hour, and museum volunteers will open up the KC-97 and other aircraft so you can climb inside and reminisce.



**Dinner Under the Wings**

Wednesday morning, the 16<sup>th</sup> is open for you to pursue your interests, but in mid-afternoon we'll congregate to be bused to Cincinnati for a two and a half hour evening dinner cruise on

*(Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

the majestic and placid Ohio River aboard the stern wheeler "River Queen". To help capture the mood of the Riverboat Era when women were Belles and every man was a gambler, we'll have a trio playing Southland Dixieland steamboatin' melodies.



**River Cruzin' with Dixieland**

Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup>, we'll spend part of the morning and part of the afternoon closer to home at Carillon Park, a local historical center that showcases the Wright Brothers, and technical innovations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While there we'll be served a cookout picnic lunch by Culps Café and we will be given the option of a short one-hour side excursion to Hawthorn Hill,



the Wright Brothers Mansion. The mansion, planned by both brothers, was not completed until after Wilbur's death and became the home for Orville, his sister and their father until their respective deaths. The NCR Corporation has meticulously maintained the premises and used it as their corporate guest house until 2006. It is truly a grand old estate.

For those who want to stay close in the evening, the hospitality room will be open with conviviality, music, and a cash bar.

Friday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, will follow our usual reunion last day routine, with the morning business meeting, and evening cocktail reception and banquet. Additional adornments include the open hospitality room, the taking of unit and couples photos for our traditional memory book, a renowned guitarist for our reception and dining, and our traditional ceremonies and speaker, and perhaps some short entertainment. Depending on your desires we may also arrange for a small combo to provide music for after dinner dancing.

More information and detail regarding the above is offered as follows.



**The Holiday Inn Fairborn I-675**, 2800 Presidential Dr, Fairborn, Ohio 45324, phone 937-426-7800, will be our reunion headquarters. We are being offered a daily rate of \$104 which includes the deluxe breakfast buffet with made to order eggs, omelets & waffles. A local tax rate of 12.5% is in addition. This rate, discounted from the usual seasonal rate of \$133 is available to our members for 3 days before and after our reunion. The hotel offers high speed wireless internet access, an indoor pool, and a fitness center. Rooms all have coffeemakers, hairdryers, irons and ironing boards, voice mail and data ports, and other standard amenities. Check it out on the web at <http://www.whihotels.com/ebrochures/hifairborn/index.shtml>.

**National Museum of the United States Air Force.** There is much more to be said about the museum than we can include here, so please go to both web sites at <http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/>, and <http://afmuseum.com/>. The museum hopes to house a Space Shuttle by the time of our reunion, but one might surmise whether that is realized by 2010 depends on many factors out of the control of the museum. Note that there are IMAX showings on the hour throughout the day and into the early evening; check the website to see what's playing, when. Something that can easily escape your attention is the Presidential and Research Aircraft Gallery. This is located within the base secured area (Area B) in a hangar along the old Wright Field flight line. You can drive onto the base and to the hangar if you have a military retired ID card. For those

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

without a vehicle or military ID, you can sign up for a daily escorted tour at the museum's visitor's desk. You must have a photo ID to do so. Every Friday afternoon a tour of the Restoration Hangar is conducted whereby ongoing restoration work can be seen close up as it is happening and being accomplished by the volunteer staff. Two of the big restorations are the Memphis Belle B-17 and the XC-99 cargo aircraft. The shop is also located in the Area B restricted area and the tours usually have a long lead time for sign up. There is a possibility, if enough of us are interested, that the museum might put on a special tour group for us. If you would be interested in this, please indicate so on the survey form in this issue.

**Riverboat Dinner Cruise.** We will be guests of B&B Riverboats on board their River Queen, where we will have the entire vessel for our exclusive use for the two and a half hour duration of the evening cruise. You can visit the B&B website at <http://bbriverboats.com/> to see the River Queen and its deck plan.

**Carillon Park,** located on the south side of Dayton, has become a popular tour stop for military reunion groups for the past ten years or so. It houses Wright Brothers Aviation Center with the original 1905 Wright Flyer, the Wright Cycle Shop, a museum, and in addition to an audio tour, features showings of a historical film of how it all came about. If you like old cars, old trains, and old inventions, this is the place for you, and there's plenty more to see here as well in a beautiful well kept setting. Find out more at the web site: <http://www.daytonhistory.org/destinations/carillon-park.htm>.

**Hawthorn Hill,** the Wright Manse, is but a short distance from Carillon Park, and is offered as a side excursion from Carillon, taking about one hour including the transportation. Tours of the mansion have only recently been allowed and normally are very restricted in number. We are fortunate to have been offered special accommodations and a special price for the combined Carillon/ Hawthorn Hill package. Find

out more on the web at: <http://www.daytonhistory.org/destinations/hawthorn-hill.htm>.

**Other areas of Aviation Interest.** Dayton has more aviation historical related sites scattered about than you can shake a stick at, and a few years back they were unified under the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, and the Aviation Trail. The web sites below give a complete layout of all the venues and sites. Worth noting is that two of the sights are located at WPAFB but are public access – the Huffman Prairie flying field, and the Wright Brothers Memorial and Interpretive Center. Huffman Prairie is the cow pasture, now adjacent to the WPAFB main runway, where the Wright Bros set up their flying field upon their return from Kitty Hawk. It features their hangar (shed?), and the catapult tower which helped them accelerate to takeoff speed. In summertime a replica of their airplane is kept on site. The Wright Memorial is situated atop the hill south of the runway, where every December 17<sup>th</sup> is held a ceremony and flyover commemorating their first powered flight. Just a few steps away is the National Park Service Interpretive Center with some very interesting interactive technical exhibits, a Wright Flyer simulator you can try (crash) your hand at, and a well stocked gift shop. It's worth a stop. Also in Dayton, an unusual attraction is the parachute museum.

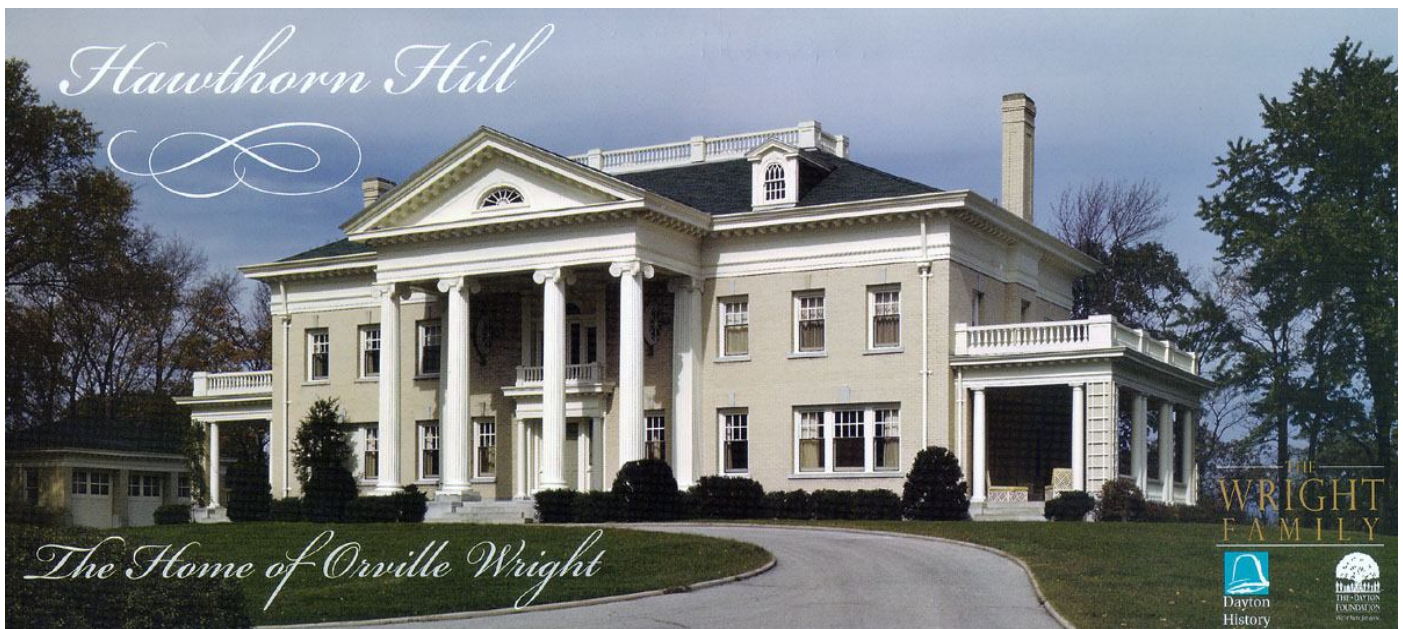
<http://www.aviationtrailinc.org/>

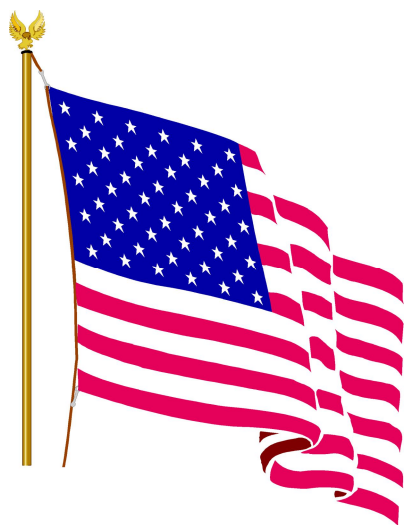
<http://www.aviationheritagearea.org/aviationTrail.htm>

<http://www.nps.gov/daav/>

**Jim McCutcheon, Guitarist.** We are fortunate in Dayton to claim one of the foremost classical guitarists in the country in Jim McCutcheon. He was highly acclaimed by our members when he played for our banquet dinner hour in 1996. So, we have invited him back! He is also a composer and teacher, and his website at <http://jim.mccutcheon.biz/> can give you an idea of this man's breadth and talent.

Till next time, the Dayton Guys, Bud & Mike





## The Last Flight

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

**William "Bill" Carrier**, 370<sup>th</sup> & 424<sup>th</sup> BS. Phoenix AZ, 17 September 2008.

**Frank Fish, Sr**, FMS, Kamiah ID, 9 August 2008.

**Lewis E Lyle**, Commander 818<sup>th</sup> Air Division, Hot Springs AR, 6 April 2008.

**Kathryn Mitchell**, Dubuque IA, July 2008.

**Duane Mousty**, ARS, McComb IL, July 2008.

**James A Powell Sr**, ARS, Vine Grove KY, 22 February 2008.

**Arlene Sears**, Corbin KY, 16 August 2008.

**Chester D Shaver**, 370 & 372BS, Valparaiso FL, 8 August 2008.

**Donald E Stallard**, 424<sup>th</sup> BS, Hampton Falls NH, date unknown 2008

*I heard the voice of the Lord, saying,  
Whom shall I send, and who will go  
for us? Then said I, Here I am; send  
me. Isaiah6:8*

## Back in Touch

Frederick "Fritz" W Ahola, PO Box 557, 23451 Woodside Lane, Dollar Bay MI 49922-0557.

Archie Christie, 121 W 48<sup>th</sup> St #506, Kansas City MO 64112-3821.

Richard D Goodson, 554 Shades Bridge Rd, Greenfield TN 38230.

David J Mercer, 8408 S Tularosa Ct, Lincoln NE 68516-7722.

James K Ringer, 1209 Capri Terrace, McHenry IL 60050-8370.

## Donations

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

Gertrude C Barth  
Archie S Christie  
James E Cone  
Dallas L Crosby  
Roland L England  
D E "Sarge" Finn  
Larry F Garrett  
Toni L Hager  
Merle Hahn  
Glen & Lucy Hesler  
Robert E Jones  
Robert S Patterson  
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## Tales of Alert By Dave Bowersock

From the mid 1950's through the '60's the "Cold War" was hot. Cold War was a term to describe the hostile relations that existed between the Communist block of nations and the free world countries. More specifically the term defined the tension, mistrust and nuclear weapons proliferation between Russia and the U.S. Both sides had intercontinental weapons on quick reaction alert status at all times. It was an environment where even the perception of an enemy attack could lead to disastrous nuclear destruction. Many scary incidents took place during these years, most of which the world's general population knew nothing about.

From early 1960 through 1963, I was a B-47 pilot in the Strategic Air Command (SAC). At that time, the B-47 and B-52 were our front line bombers. In this year, 2003, the B-52 is still one of our main fine bombers. The B-47 was a six engine, swept wing, tandem cockpit, 400 mph class bomber with a crew of three. Although faster and easier to fly at low level than the 52, the B-47 was retired because it was very tight and so compact that it could not be adapted to new technology and additional "black boxes".

*(Continued on page 9)*

### Treasurer's Report

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

Ending Balance from last report July 8, 2008: \$8,760.17

	Expenses	Deposits	
<b>General Fund Balance</b>			<b>\$8760.17</b>
Expenses:			
Postal	236.38		
Printing	622.08		
Admin/Equip/Supplies	47.24		
Internet	53.70		
Memory book production	326.17		
	- 1285.57		<b>-1285.57</b>
			<b>7474.60</b>
Income:			
Donations	541.00		
Interest on account	5.25		
Memory books	378.00		
	924.25		<b>+ 924.25</b>
<b>Ending Balance October 20, 2008</b>			<b>8398.85</b>

Tony Minnick, Treasurer



(Continued from page 8)

I believe that our three man crew was as good as or better than any other crew I ever knew of. The co-pilot was Gene Van Meter from Ohio and our navigator/bombardier was Neal Amtmann who grew up in New Jersey. We liked each other and got along exceptionally well, which was good because for nearly three years we spent more time together than we spent with our families (girl friends in Neal's case as he was a bachelor at the time). While on alert or reflex we were together every hour of the day and night. We all three enjoyed many of the same things and we spent a good bit of time together exercising at the gym. It may be difficult to understand but these three years were both the most enjoyable and, due to the world situation and the pressures of flying in the Strategic Air Command, the worst days of my Air Force career.

We were all young lieutenants with three years or less flying experience, in charge of a 190,000 pound 400 mph airplane with unlimited range using midair refueling, and often carrying nuclear bombs. We were well trained and quite professional but it's difficult not to wonder how the world made it through all those very tense years without someone or something on either side starting a tragic war.

"Alert Force" was the term used to define all of the missiles, aircraft, crews and weapons that were in position, ready and capable of being airborne within minutes of receiving a "Go Code" from the President via SAC HDQTRS Command Post, Offutt AFB, Nebraska. Combat trained and tested air crews were rotated on and off Alert Duty. One week on then two or three weeks off. Four or five times a year we flew to an overseas base and sat alert for two weeks, then one week of R & R, one more week on alert, then we flew back home. This routine was called "Reflex". It was hard on family life.

While on alert, air and maintenance crews were sequestered to the base where they ate and slept. Crews inspected their aircraft and bombs daily, attended training classes, studied assigned targets and responded to alert exercises.

**Alert Exercises:** During alert duty, crews were required to remain together at all times. Each crew had a vehicle and they were free to go places on base when not assigned training or other duties. An exercise could be called by SAC Command Post at any time, day or night. Klaxons (loud, deep throated sirens), positioned all over the base, gave the signal for an exercise. They would also signal a launch if we went to war. The entire base gave the right of way to crews rushing to their planes.

There were several types of alert exercises, from just a radio call-in from the cockpit, to starting engines then reporting your aircrafts readiness status, to going through the full launch procedure down *the* runway up to, but not

including takeoff. All of this was to continually check the readiness and response time of the alert forces.

The following are my recollections of some of the more unusual events that my crew experienced during three years of alert duty. Most are a bit funny now, they weren't then.

### Alert Stories

**A FAMILY VISITATION:** Family visiting hours were scheduled several times during the alert week. There were several places on base where families could get together, providing the crew remained together.

One Sunday afternoon at Lincoln AFB, NB, my family, Gene's family, Neal and his girl friend were together at the base swimming pool. In response to someone's question about an exercise, Gene said that we had never had exercises on Sunday and that if the klaxons blew it would probably be for the real thing. I think that it was within the hour that the klaxons sounded. There were other crews there and we all instinctively grabbed up our flight suits, yelled goodbye and ran for our trucks while the wives and girl friends sat stunned and a little frightened. Just before reaching the truck, I looked back and there was my wild eyed, six year old daughter Terri, running right along with us. I scooped her up, ran back to where Loretta was standing and practically tossed Terri to her. Of course it was just an exercise and, of course, it spoiled the whole afternoon, not to mention scaring the daylight out of our families.

Loretta didn't come out to visit very often. She said it felt like visiting a prison. I sometimes suspected that her attitude toward visitations began that Sunday afternoon.

**THE CUBAN CRISIS:** The period from Oct. 18 to Oct.29, 1962, was known to the whole world as the "Cuban Missile Crisis". The United States had discovered camouflaged Soviet missile launchers in Cuba. President John Kennedy resisted the urge to invade Cuba or obliterate the missile sites with air strikes. He chose diplomacy as his first response. In turn Russia's Premier Khrushchev gave standing permission to launch the missiles at the first sign of an invasion. We were in a stand-off with the real possibility of starting a nuclear shoot out.

To up the ante, Russia announced that it had two ships with additional missiles and equipment enroute to Cuba. The US countered by blockading the island with a naval task force. The world stood by with great anxiety as these two forces sailed toward each other.

At Lincoln AFB, all crews that were not on alert status were called to the base. We were advised of the situation, told we were going to deploy (destination unknown) and that we had one hour to pack a bag and return to the base. (Gene had a feeling and he had come with a bag already packed.) I called

(Continued on page 10)

*(Continued from page 9)*

Loretta, asked her to pack my bag, and made a fast trip in to get it. Later, when I opened it, I had both Bermuda shorts and long underwear. Good thinking!

We were in a group of six aircraft, with nuclear bomb loads, that deployed to Billy Mitchell Field in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The US was dispersing our forces for maximum survivability in the event of a sudden missile attack. Cots were set up in the National Guard Armory to accommodate the crew members. Our time was spent on flight planning, target study, preflighting the aircraft and updated briefings of the situation.

The US and Russia continued to make threats and counter threats, like four year olds in a sand box. A command post was set up in the armory with about five phones including the RED one, which was a direct line to the SAC Command Post, Offutt AFB, Nebraska. The aircraft commanders rotated the CP duty and manning the phones around the clock. The meeting of the Soviet ships and our task force was estimated at shortly after midnight on the 29th. That afternoon we had the "Official" briefing from SAC. The briefing officer impressed on us that this was not an exercise and that if the Red phone rang, the duty officer should immediately turn on the lights and get the crews up even before answering it. We would be at war.

I had the duty starting at midnight and there was just enough traffic on the phones to keep me busy and my mind off of what might be happening. Around 0200 hours a phone rang and I picked up the one I thought it was. With the phone in my hand I heard the ring again and I realized it was the RED phone. There is no way I can make you, the reader, fully aware of the feeling of my adrenaline rush - we were going to nuclear war.

I flicked on the light switch, yelled at the crews then answered the phone. From, the background noise it sounded like "Looking Glass", the airborne command post. A voice came on and we went thru the code authenticating procedure (to insure we were both who we said we were). By this time the crews were gathering around me.

The telephone voice asked the operators name (meaning me). I said Bowersock, and at his request repeated it twice (it was a noisy connection). He asked me to spell it phonetically. I began, Baker, Oboe, - ah, I mean Bravo, Oscar (a few of the letters had recently been changed). I can normally do this in about five seconds but my moment in the spotlight was making me sound like an idiot. The crew members, realizing what I was doing began "Helping", which resulted in a noise much like a stirred up hen house. When I finally got it out the voice on the line was laughing and replied, "Roger, I copied Bowersock. This is Looking Glass with a communications check, thank you,- out." There were only a few that got back to sleep that night.

It turned out that Khrushchev caved in at the last minute and turned his ships around. He had misjudged the character of John Kennedy and the confidence of the US military. The world breathed a collective sigh of relief and we returned to Lincoln AFB much more serious about the role we played in the current world environment.

**THE DISASTROUS DELTA EXERCISE:** Before being assigned to Lincoln AFB, we were stationed at McCoy AFB in Florida. We were lounging around the pool with most of the other crews on alert at Sidi Slimane, Morocco. It was our crew's first alert on a reflex tour of duty. The Klaxon sounded, sending us scrambling to our planes while putting flight suits on over wet bathing trunks. The cockpits, were of course, hot and uncomfortable.

We started engines, checked in and learned that it was a Delta exercise. We would start engines, taxi to a spot on the ramp near the end of the runways, shut down all engines, except #4 and monitor the radio for instructions to continue.

Number 4 engine was left running to provide power to restart the other five engines, operate the radios, and supply power to several other electrical and hydraulic systems.

Now, back to the time when all crews were arriving at their aircraft. A series of events quickly occurred that gave this exercise its infamous name. First the wind had earlier increased in velocity and changed direction (now coming from behind the line of B-47s). For some reason the base commander decided not to reposition the aircraft to face into the wind, which meant the power carts would have to generate additional RPM's to get a positive air flow thru the engines to start. Thus, during the start-up, one aircraft suffered a fire in the engine and another could not get all of his engines started. Scratch two for the exercise.

Our maintenance crew chief signaled us out of the parking slot then realized, as we were half way out, that our wing tip might hit the power cart. He gave me an emergency stop signal. Down in the navigator's compartment, Neal felt the sudden jolt and got out of his seat to look out his small window to see what was going on. What he saw was a B-47 bearing down on our exposed position on the ramp. Gene and I were watching the chief on the left side while the taxiing aircraft was coming from the right. Neal yelled just in time for Gene and me both to call out over the radio to warn the plane to stop. That crew had their heads in the cockpit, going thru the check list and didn't see us until we called. Neal's action probably saved one big fire ball.

We moved out with the other 47's to the prescribed parking spots near the end of the runways. Neither Gene nor I can remember why, but we had a minor malfunction which caused us to keep #3 engine running instead of #4. Three performed the same functions as four except that it was necessary to recycle a switch to maintain hydraulic pressure to the control surfaces. Since this was a non standard procedure, the check list

*(Continued on page 11)*

(Continued from page 10)

did not instruct the crew to recycle that switch, and as you may have guessed, we forgot it.

At a signal from the command post, all B-47's were to restart engines, proceed rapidly, in line, to roll onto the runways, advance power and proceed as in a normal take-off to, (a speed I don't remember now), pull the power back to idle then taxi back to our parking space on the ramp.

That was the plan- here's what happened. The first plane out went down the runway in normal fashion. The second plane turned too fast and sharply onto the runway and damaged either the main gear or the outrigger, whichever, he was stuck. (Scratch three). That left us to move to the left runway. As I turned onto the runway I pushed the throttle forward and our speed increased rapidly. It was then I realized that we had no hydraulic boost and because of the strong crosswind the vertical stabilizer was forcing us off the runway to the left. I yelled for Gene to help with the brakes and we stopped the beast with the front wheels about two feet from going into the Moroccan sand. Now both runways were blocked, (scratch the whole force less the one that made it down the runway).

Even that first crew didn't get away clean. As they turned off of the runway they were looking back to see the pile up and they hit a power cart and tore up their left aileron.

When the IG investigation was finished, several officers and airmen received official reprimands, and a few were transferred out of their jobs, including the detachment commander. I'm not sure why, perhaps the inquisition just ran out of steam, maybe it was because all three of us were lieutenants, or maybe it's because we pointed out a glitch in the check list concerning shutting down engine #3 vs #4, but all **we** received was a good ass chewing with no official reprimand on our records.

**A GHOST STORY:** We were on alert at Lincoln AFB. One night Gene and Neal wanted to see a movie but I was taking college classes and needed to study. The crew in the room next to ours said they would be in all night and I could ride in their truck if we had an exercise. (Well, of course we had an exercise or I wouldn't be telling this story).

About the only time we didn't wear our flight suits and boots when on alert was when we were in bed, at the pool or working out in the gym. Even then, everything was within reach at all times. That night I was wearing my flight suit but it was cool in the room so I had my white terry cloth bathrobe over it. My boots were off and sitting by the doorway.

When the klaxon sounded, I grabbed my jacket and, for some stupid reason, I sat down and put my boots on. When I got

(Continued on page 12)

## Dayton Reunion Interest Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Are you interested in attending the Dayton reunion? (X Mark your response) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Number in your party \_\_\_\_\_

What would be your mode of travel? Air \_\_\_\_\_ Car \_\_\_\_\_ Dogsled \_\_\_\_\_

Any special or dietary needs? Please explain \_\_\_\_\_

(For the following, place an X if you are interested:

Optional side trip to Hawthorn Hill Wright Family Mansion \_\_\_\_\_

IMAX theater at AF Museum \_\_\_\_\_

Presidential/Research Aircraft Gallery at AF Museum \_\_\_\_\_

Museum Restoration Hangar/Shop tour if it can be arranged \_\_\_\_\_

Live combo for dancing after reunion banquet \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate your preferred beverages? Soft drink \_\_\_\_\_, wine \_\_\_\_\_, beer \_\_\_\_\_, bourbon \_\_\_\_\_, scotch \_\_\_\_\_, vodka \_\_\_\_\_, rum \_\_\_\_\_, gin \_\_\_\_\_, other \_\_\_\_\_.

Comments or Suggestions?: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and mail to Mike Gingrich, 2527 Greenlefe Dr, Beavercreek, Ohio 45431,  
Or email your response to Mike at [mikegingri@cs.com](mailto:mikegingri@cs.com)

(Continued from page 11)

outside, the last two trucks were just pulling away. The one I was supposed to ride with was already gone so I jumped into the truck bed of the nearest one to me. While we were on the way I took off my white robe, put on my flight jacket and then tied the arms of the bathrobe around my neck. I soon discovered that their airplane was in the first row whereas ours was next to last.

When the truck stopped I jumped out and started running between the planes. I had perhaps 70 or 80 yards to go. We had a good moon that night so the tail numbers were easy to read. Gene and Neal were there ahead of me and the power cart was already going. I scrambled up the ladder, threw my bathrobe in the crawl way and climbed up into the front cockpit. When I got my helmet on I expected some smart ass remark from Gene about me being late but there was a lot of chatter going on between the aircraft and questions coming from the Command Post. Gene explained that several pilots had seen a white something or someone going between and even under the wings of some of the planes. The security force was sweeping the area.

As Gene and I started the check list, something in the bright moon light caught my eye. It was my white terry cloth bathrobe lying in the crawl way. I was the intruder, the ghost in the night. I think I told Gene and Neal but I'm sure I didn't tell anyone else.

**MIXED SIGNAL:** All B-47's loaded with nuclear weapons were guarded at all times. When we were on alert at Sidi Slimane Air Base, in Morocco, access to the parking ramp area was by a "number of the day". The procedure was that anyone who needed access to the airplanes was given a number by one of the guards at the gate and the person then replied with the appropriate number to equal the code required. That may sound simplistic but it was actually very serious business.

On an alert exercise the navigator was generally the last to go up the ladder into the B-47 so most crews had the nav drive the truck. Neal was driving during one exercise and, of course, we were moving at a very fast speed. As we passed thru the gate one of the guards stuck up some fingers and Neal replied with a set of fingers out of the truck window. Gene and I immediately saw that he had given the wrong number. By now the truck was about thirty yards past the gate and we both stuck our heads out the windows and began yelling the correct number. The guard appeared to be surprised and confused. But then he made his decision (the correct one actually) and raised his weapon aiming it at us. Gene and I yelled one more time then we both dove for the floor of the truck. I looked up and saw Neal, hunched over the steering wheel, with a determined look on his face. As we arrived at our aircraft, an Air Police vehicle, lights flashing, pulled in behind us. It didn't take long to convince them we were a legitimate crew.

We never asked why that guard didn't shoot. I think we assumed that he heard one of us yelling the correct number. Whew!



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