



# 579<sup>th</sup> SMS NEWSLETTER

## Volume II

Created by Fred Mortimer – Reunion Chairman

I have finally found some time to create the long awaited second edition of the newsletter. We have been running non-stop since the trip to Tennessee. Welcome to all of the newly listed members and Hi, again, to the rest of you all.

### **A brief word about membership;**

With the help of Allen Mauldin we have increased the membership list from 130 last year to over 220 as of this week. Allen has utilized his considerable skills as an investigator to locate many, many individuals who had not heard about the reunions or that there was any formal 579<sup>th</sup> Reunion organization. Obviously, we wouldn't have been able to do any of this, without the initial efforts of Gene Lamb who was the original leader for the earlier reunions. Thanks to both of you! Also, if anyone has been in contact with other members of the 579<sup>th</sup> SMS that may not have heard about the organization or the reunions, PLEASE contact me!!

### **NASHVILLE**

Well the Nashville Bash is history!! Aside from the 'occasional' rain storm (daily), some minor problems with the elevators and minor billing problems, it was a **great time** for everyone. We showed up on Wednesday afternoon to get familiar with the place, figuring we would be the first on site. Wrong!! John Green and his lovely wife, Terri were there to greet us when we checked in. Our lovely and talented representative from 'The Reunion BRAT', Jeri Glass was on hand to handle all of our arrangements. Our thanks again to Jeri and to Linda Irvine's capable staff for all of the 'prep' work.

**Thursday** evening started with the Welcoming buffet where everyone got to mix it up a little and renew old friendships and hopefully make some new ones. We discussed the plans for the weekend and just about everyone adjourned to the hospitality suite for more reminiscing. Several people had brought some memorabilia and Judy and I had assembled several boards with photos, etc. plus handouts for everyone.

**Friday** morning we had an early start with a bus tour of the city. We toured past many of the historic buildings downtown and the various areas of Nashville that were (and are) a key part of the music industry. We had a brief visit to the Parthenon Building (below) that is a replica of the Greek structure of the same name.



After our city tour, we traveled to Fort Campbell, home of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. We enjoyed a great lunch at the Golf Course/Country Club and then toured the museum. Sgt. Campbell (above, with Les Hayles) was an excellent guide during our stay on base. The museum contains over 100 years of Ranger history of the Rangers and will be worth revisiting, especially after they complete the newer, larger building. There is just so much history crammed in a very small building.

Friday evening we headed out to the Grand Ole Opry to see the two-hour radio show. We saw several entertainers that I remember listening to when I was a kid. Porter Wagoner, Jimmy Dickens & Roy Clark were on hand and we had great seats in the front rows of the balcony. After the show (and a long day) we headed back to the Sheraton. Again, many of us reconvened to the hospitality suite for a nightcap.

**Saturday morning**, we held an informal business meeting to discuss any issues with the Reunion and to decide the location of the next (2008) get-together. The following things were covered:

Choice of location: Roswell, NM (unanimous)

Date: some time in May (to be determined)

Discussion: Plaque design for site #4 (F. Mortimer)

Plaque design for Air Terminal at Walker (F. Mortimer)

Cost of creating plaque (F. Mortimer)

Volunteers for searching for more members (Allen Mauldin)

I will try to post the design and information on the plaques as soon as I hear from the Mayor of Roswell.

Oh Yeah, I almost forgot, I have been put in charge of the Roswell Reunion !!

Saturday afternoon was open for everyone to do their own thing. Some people enjoyed a riverboat cruise, some went exploring around town, Judy and I joined Claude & Hallie Kitchens on a tour of a local plantation.

Saturday evening was the Reunion Banquet. A great meal was prepared by the Sheraton, and after dinner yours truly made some opening comments and presented our speaker for the evening, David Johnson. David owns an Atlas-F silo in Hobart, OK and is also in the computer business. (David also designed our website 'www.579SMS.com'.) His slide presentation covered the history behind him owning the site and also his business plans. David and Gary Baker (owner of Roswell site #4) have formed an alliance that will provide 'hard-site' computer back-up facilities for any business requiring secure on-line data storage. The missile sites will be linked with their clients via satellite communications, hi-speed data-links, etc. Gary and David will also provide redundancy by having duplicate sets of computer systems and client data files at both locations. Gary Baker had planned to make a joint presentation, but couldn't travel from Roswell due to an emergency. Our thanks to David for preparing such an excellent presentation. David also spent many hours over the weekend scanning the many documents that were supplied by the attendees. Many of the documents will be displayed on our website.



We had a special mystery visitor during the festivities: this was truly a 'Blast From the Past'.

Any guesses on who it is behind the Foster Grants?

Oh Yeah... Someone found out that Terry Doyle lived in the Nashville area and convinced him to come to dinner with his lovely wife, Sandra. We hope Terry & Sandra will be joining us at future reunions.

Sunday morning found us all together for the Farewell Breakfast. Most everyone had travel plans for the day. Some of us stayed on another day and left on Monday. Everyone seemed to have a really good time and are looking forward to **Roswell in 2008**.

I will be working with David Johnson to get many of the Reunion pictures put on the web-site. So for the sake of ink and paper and postage, I have not put a lot of photos in this newsletter.

If anyone has any memorabilia, documents, pictures that they would like to share, PLEASE dig the stuff out and let me know what it is. We can scan it, photo copy it, etc., and either put it on the website or bring it to Roswell.

**Again, if you have any contact with anyone from the squadron, even if it is an old address, PLEASE forward it to me so we can research their current location and to let them know of the next reunion.**

The fact that we are well over 200 strong at last count, we will probably have to get our reservations in a little earlier for Roswell. Even if only 1/3 of the list attends, we will have to have a minimum of 70 rooms !!! So I'm sure we will need to book early. I should have the dates firmed up in the next month or two and then we will start working on accommodations, transportation, etc. One of the things I need to determine is when the New Mexico Military Institute's graduation is. I'm sure they will have a large contingent of relatives showing up in Roswell for that ceremony...

A big thanks to everyone who brought items to the reunion, they were enjoyed by everyone!

A special thanks to **Les Hayles** for his pictures, **Allen Mauldin** for his research to locate former squadron members, **Claude Kitchens** for his expertise and valuable input, and especially to **Judy**, my bride of 39 years, whose great patience and organizational skills keep me on-track.



Crew 48 (Kitchens, Williamson, Mortimer)



Farewell Breakfast