



579th SMS NEWSLETTER

Volume VII

Created by Fred Mortimer – Reunion Committee Board Chairman
June 4, 2014



Well, the 2014 Reunion of the 579th Strategic Missile Squadron is in the history books. By all accounts, the reunion was an outstanding success. For those of you who could not attend, the Huntsville get together was one of our best venues. The hotel, Four Points Sheraton at Huntsville Airport was a pleasant surprise. The room accommodations were great; the complimentary breakfast was made-to-order and plentiful. We were provided with a complimentary hospitality suite with enough seating!! The banquet hall was well laid out and we were able to use it for the welcoming buffet and our business meeting. A round of golf was provided for guests on Saturday.

I need to start this newsletter by thanking Les & Dianna Hayles for their scouting trip to Huntsville that **saved us a lot of grief and money**. I also want to thank them for handling the camera chores again. Great Job!!

A special guest joined our reunion, the original leader of the pack, Mr. Gene Lamb !! It was great to see Gene again and a great treat for all of us who have attended most of the early reunions. Gene's input has always been valued and is so welcome. Also, I would like to thank Gene's friend Ms. Janice Trygstad for attending this reunion and I hope we have the honor of her presence in the future. It was so nice to meet you Janice.

Thursday

We set up registration in the hospitality suite so everyone had a place to meet after they checked in. The hotel had prepared a 'goody' bag of brochures, maps, etc. and Judy (my bride) had our hand outs prepared with the nametags, pens, pads, can cozies, etc. for handing out to the attendees. A booze run was made to stock the bar and the festivities were ready to go. The welcoming buffet was well prepared - Alabama Barbeque, pork, chicken, etc. with several deserts. After the buffet, many people returned to the hospitality room for more refreshments.

Friday

Everyone met in the lobby to drive to the *U.S. Space & Rocket Center*. We were met by an outstanding group of guides and aides that processed us through the admissions and saw to it that we had wheel-chairs for anyone that needed them. We immediately began our tour on the inside of the center where we walked among the many displays including the full-sized Saturn-5 display overhead (horizontally). The Saturn is over 300 feet in length (think of a football field). After our inside tour, we moved outside to the static displays of both Army missile equipment and an Atlas on a trailer. Several older rockets were on display as well. We broke for lunch and reassembled at 1:00 PM for our bus ride to Redstone Arsenal.

Redstone Arsenal/Marshall Space Flight Center. We were escorted into the observation room of the actual Space Flight Center where we had a view of the live monitors of the International Space Station and several astronauts. The astronauts were just preparing for their evening shutdown, so we couldn't see a lot of activity but we were given an excellent description of what was on the monitors and what the individuals in the Flight Center do to support the crew. The young lady giving the talk was a payload specialist and then we were treated to a brief discussion by Col. T.J. Creamer, former member of the Space Station Crew as the Flight Engineer and NASA Science Officer (Expedition 22/23 – 2009/2010). We then toured some of the original engine test stands on Redstone Arsenal. We returned to the U.S. Space & Rocket Center to view the IMAX film on the Hubble Telescope. Needless to say, this was a busy day and I think most everyone was ready for the hospitality suite (again).

Saturday

All attendees met in the banquet hall at 9:00 AM for the 'dreaded' Business Meeting. Yours truly, along with my trusty side-kick (Judy), presented the state of the reunion finances, balance from 2012, income from the reunion registration, expenses for 'goody bags', expected charges for buffet, banquet, supplies, etc. And yes there is a balance left after everything was paid. (That is, thanks to Judy's bookkeeping!!!). We discussed any current issues or problems at the reunion itself. The only issue that anyone had, us included, was the parking issue for guests. The hotel was very aware of the hassle and did whatever they could to resolve it as it was brought to their attention. The final discussion was to determine if there would be another reunion and where it should be. I will cover more on this at the end of the newsletter.

After the Business Meeting everyone had most of the day to explore, play golf, shop, etc. Judy and I went to the Veterans Memorial Museum. We met up with Les and Dianna Hayles, Alex Ivey, Marie Talnack and Bob Moffit. This was an excellent museum with items from WWI, WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, and the Gulf Wars, etc. We probably spent 2-3 hours wandering the many displays and talking with the museum's staff. We thoroughly enjoyed the time and learned a lot. I think everyone else felt the same. After our excursion, we returned to the hotel to prepare for the banquet. No banquet should start without some serious lubrication, so we restocked the hospitality suite (again), to be ready for the post-banquet 'discussions'.

The Banquet meal was excellent, period. The beef was well prepared, the stuffed chicken was excellent. The dessert was out of this world, I gained a half-pound on that alone!! Our compliments were sent to the chef and staff.

Our speaker for the evening was Mr. Joe Fitzgerald, Vice Chairman of the Alabama Space Science Commission. Mr. Fitzgerald is also the CEO of Decision Sciences Company, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Founder of the Honor Flight Tennessee Valley and participant in the Honor Flag Program. Mr. Fitzgerald was responsible for the transportation of over 1300 World War II Veterans to the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. and the flight of over 300 burial flags to/from the WWII Memorial in D.C. Mr. Fitzgerald biography is longer than this newsletter and in addition to his other accomplishments, he was directly responsible for our VIP treatment at the Space and Rocket Center and at the Marshall Space Flight Center. Our appreciation to Mr. Fitzgerald has been expressed verbally and in writing. Again, our thanks to Joe for his coordination of our visit and spending Saturday evening with us.

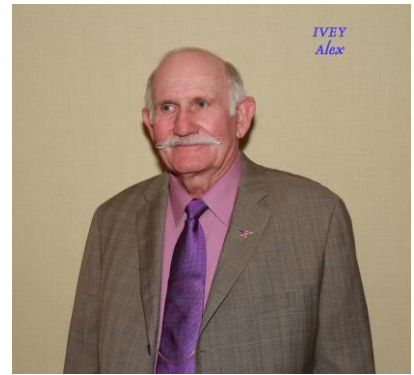




ENGSTROM
Richard & Carol



HAYLES
Dianna & Les



IVEY
Alex



KITCHENS
Hallie & Claude



TRYGSTAD
Janice

LAMB
Gene



LEONARD
Hal & Marilyn



LLOYD
Robert & Carolyn



LUNDGARD
Jack & Gwen



MORTIMER
Judy & Fred



NEUBAUER
Ken & Sherry



OLMSTEAD
Daisy Rob Bob Gayle



TALNACK
Dr Marie

MOFFET
Bob

After our banquet, most of the remaining group adjourned to the hospitality room for more refreshments, although there was a fair amount left on the bar the next morning. Most everyone was leaving on Sunday, some actually left really early. Judy and I went down for breakfast at 7:30 AM so we got to see the majority of the folks before they departed. Everyone expressed their thanks for a GREAT reunion. Our thanks again to Les and Dianna for ALL of their help, they made our job so much easier.

Judy and I left Huntsville around 7:30 AM on Monday to drive to Dunedin, FL (near Clearwater). We made it home in about 10 hours, thanks to Bob Lloyd and his excellent directions.

THE LAST HURRAH.

As part of the business meeting, I brought up the discussion on another reunion and where it should be. Everyone had ideas ranging to just ending it in Huntsville to holding a final reunion in Roswell. Our attendance has been falling off over the years, people are not getting any younger, or any healthier. Travel is becoming more expensive and Roswell is not exactly on the beaten path. I for one am not sure how much longer I want to keep doing this either. Judy and I have been actively working every reunion since Pismo Beach/Vandenberg AFB in 2004. While we had help with The Reunion Brat for a couple of reunions, that became more expensive and service was lacking.

Terry Doyle stepped in to do a lot of the day-to-day setup for several more reunions, Terry's health is not good at this point and I can't keep asking him to step up (he made 3 scouting trips to Roswell for one of the reunions). Get well, buddy and **Thank You** for your help.

The tentative date is Thursday, April 28, 2016 in Roswell. We will continue to investigate venues in Roswell, but I will need some commitment from everyone planning to attend so we have an approximation of the headcount. This may be the last time your kids or grand-kids (or great-grand-kids) will have to see what we are all about. I have discussed this with Dr. Marie Talnack at the Walker Aviation Museum, to ensure that we are given the attention and treatment we deserve. If necessary, I will volunteer to visit Roswell next year to cement the specifics with the Museum, City of Roswell, and hotel(s). I know this is a little early for planning a trip to your 'most' favorite place in your history, but **I'm not going to run another one after 2016 !** So we have this opportunity to hold our 10th Reunion in the place where it all started. I need to hear from you ALL. PLEASE consider this is possibly the last time we can all get together in one place as the 579th Strategic Missile Squadron. If any of you know of anyone from the squadron who has dropped off the grid for whatever reason, send me their mailing address, email, phone number, etc. I will make contact and see what we can do to help them make it to Roswell. The choice is yours!

Best Regards as always,

Fred Mortimer, 579th SMS Reunion Committee Chmn.

p.s.: We have some leftover items from the reunions that may be of interest to all of you. I will make these available at **cost + shipping** to anyone that may like to have a memento from our reunions. These items were paid for during each reunion and the proceeds will go into the account for our next (last) reunion.

50th anniversary pins (from the 2012 reunion) \$4.00



Engraved pens with 579th Strategic Missile Squadron \$4.00



Can covers (cozies) with the squadron logo. \$3.00



Squadron patches (exact duplicate from the original) very limited qty \$5.00



**Look what we found in Huntsville !!
and YES it is an Atlas-F !!**