

## AAFM Growth Continues !

I continue to receive two to five new memberships per day in the mail, and missileers who have just read their copy of the Afterburner are still calling. We are over 500 in strength now - but there are a lot more missileers out there who either don't know about us or haven't decided to join yet. Many of you continue to provide addresses of friends - keep it up so we can get the word out on **AAFM**.

I also get several letters a month from members with ideas or information for articles for the newsletter - you will see some of these in coming issues. I have gotten several items on Mace and Matador in Germany - just the kind of historical information that makes a good newsletter issue. Rodger will be glad to take your inputs - old articles about life in the missile force, historical articles and information about early units are all interesting reading for our members.

Finally, as we work on the details of our first general meeting, scheduled for next May, I can use your ideas. Let me know what kind of briefings, meetings and social events you would like. We have had several recommendations on items for sale - caps, pins, etc. Your input will make the first meeting a worthwhile and exciting event.

*Charles G. Simpson, Colonel, USAF (Retired)  
Executive Director*

## Members of Our Board

**AAFM** has a full board of directors - we gladly added two retired Chiefs to our list in the last few weeks. Your board now consists of twelve voting members. Keep in mind that we will elect new board members in March 1994 - if you would like to nominate someone - or volunteer to be involved, let us know.

*MGen (Ret) Ralph Spraker, President  
Col (Ret) Dick Schoonmaker, Vice President  
Col (Ret) Pat Henry, Secretary/Treasurer*

<i>LiGen Dirk Jameson</i>	<i>BGen Lance Lord</i>
<i>LiGen Jay Kelley</i>	<i>Col (Ret) Jack Lander</i>
<i>MGen (Ret) Barry Horton</i>	<i>Col (Ret) Charles G. Simpson*</i>
<i>BGen Seb Coglitore</i>	<i>CMSgt (Ret) Conrad A. Paquette</i>
	<i>CMSgt (Ret) Robert Kelchner</i>

*\*The Executive Director is a non-voting member of the board.*

## From The President

We are finalizing plans now for the first general meeting of the **Association of Air Force Missileers**. We will meet next May in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Specifics on the hotel, rates, activities and other facts will be provided to you no later than the next newsletter. I can tell you our basic plans - arrival is planned for Monday, 23 May, and departure scheduled for Thursday, 26 May. During the time you are in the Springs, we are planning the following activities:

- An arrival reception/cocktail party
- A banquet
- Tours of Cheyenne Mountain, Falcon Air Force Station and a Minuteman site near Warren AFB
- A golf tournament
- Briefings by Air Force Space Command on the current and future of ICBMs

Mark your calendar now and watch for the detailed announcement in the next few weeks.

*Ralph E. Spraker, MGen USAF (Retired)  
President*

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## Editor's Desk

Hello everybody out there! How the time does fly. I hope you all will take note of the continuing membership growth numbers on the newsletter mast head - **509 and growing!** Now it is a real coincidence that I used to be a member of the 509th at Whiteman AFB, MO. So that number brings back many memories. Keep those comments and suggestions coming for the best newsletter possible. As always, comments can be forwarded directly to the Breckenridge, Co. AAFM address, or to: *AAFM Editor, Rodger Phillips, 385 Meadowbrook Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93455.* Remember when I said "a new modem phone number will be identified in the next newsletter, but for now the following number will get through (805) 937-3847." What I should have said was: "Keep using the (805) 937-3847 number until further notice." I have received letters and phone calls from a number of old friends and appreciated the several new contacts as well. It's a real pleasure to meet new members and to receive your ideas. Many of your inputs will be implemented as we press on. I have been including current event type articles from the Vandenberg Space and Missile Times, as appropriate. Many of you may also have similar articles from your home bases which would be of note to our members. *Please do send those along for possible inclusion in the next newsletter.* You can send them direct to me for a quick turnaround. Make sure you check with the publisher/author of each article to receive his/her permission to reprint the article. I always try to print the author's name and the name of the source publication in our newsletter.

*Rodger S. Phillips, Major, USAF (Retired)  
Newsletter Editor*

The AAFM Newsletter is published quarterly by the Association of Air Force Missilers. P.O. Box 5693, Breckenridge, CO 80424.

Membership:                   \$20/yr. \$50/3yrs, \$250/Lifetime

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## Many Ways To Help

The word is getting out and we are beginning to receive some very good articles for the newsletter. Several of the recent submittals are included in this issue. We could still use your help in the following areas:

### **351st SMW Patch**

An early article told of the attempt by Greg Ogletree to publish a "pictorial legacy of the embroidered insignias worn by missilers over the years - - ." This work would include not only official unit emblems, but also unofficial unit morale patches too. Greg is still in need of one of the original 351st Wing patches. If you come up with one, please shoot it on to Greg at: 3419 Comstock Avenue, Omaha, NE 68123-1394, (402) 291-1207.

### **Spring AAFM Meeting**

Take a good look at the planned events presented by our AAFM President, Ralph Spraker. Sure looks good to me. How about you? Can you think of anything we might be missing? How about something for the wives? Send your comments and suggestions on to Ralph or Charlie so they can receive consideration for their schedule of events.

### **Veterans of Underage Military Service**

We recently received a letter from Billy Boyd, Jr., requesting AAFM to run the following note regarding those who served our country at an earlier age than most: "*Attention all missilers: If you served in any branch of the military for any period of time under the age of 17, please contact the Veterans of Underage Military Service, 3444 Walker Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21042. Strict confidentiality will be honored, if requested.*" As a further note of interest, Billie served in WWII, at the tender age of 16, flew 50 combat missions out of England and came back home in time to celebrate his 19th birthday! Billie was a member of the 386th Bomb Group and he "keeps right on ticking." *Our hats are off to you, Billie!*

### **Bitburg Monument Follow-up**

Many thanks also to Irving B. Schoenberg for your letter providing interesting additional facts regarding the Bitburg Monument. Colonel Schoenberg served as Commander, "B" Flight, 71st Tactical Missile Sqdn. and Executive Officer, 585th Tactical Missile Gp, Bitburg AB, Germany. Your data appears later in this edition.

## California AFA 1993 USAF Man of The Year

*The California Air Force Association (CAFA) recently selected Lt. Gen. Dirk Jameson as their 1993 "USAF Man of the Year."*

"This is our number one military award of the year," said Bill Christensen, a member of the selection committee. "We look at the commanders of all the major Air Force units in California. He was selected for his outstanding and farsighted leadership of Twentieth Air Force, and is responsible for the safe operations and maintenance of the nation's intercontinental ballistic missile force. In a letter announcing his award, Cheryl Waller, CAFA president, wrote, "This is a fine tribute to your dedication and your outstanding efforts in behalf of the United States Air Force and Air Combat Command." During the selection committee's meetings, the leadership role Jameson played in the smooth transition of missiles from Strategic Air Command and then to Air Force Space Command was a major factor for his selection. In addition to the task of reorganizing, he oversees the safe deactivation and elimination of 450 Minuteman II missiles spread throughout three western states. "This is a great honor," Jameson said. "I have strong feelings for AFA and what they do for the Air Force." "It was with great pride that we were represented by Lt. General Jameson," said Paul Maye, president of the Vandenberg AFA chapter. "He has been a tremendous help to the chapter at Vandenberg. He really helped bring it back and make it one of our strongest chapters," said Christensen. The award was presented in Sacramento during the CAFA 1993 State Convention. Jameson was the convention keynote speaker, discussing the Air Force in a changing world and strategic weapons after the Cold War. "As the Air Force evolves to meet challenges of the new world order, we need support from the community," said Jameson. "The AFA does a lot for the Air Force and its members. It's exciting to be seen as part of the team."

*By Capt Lee-Volker Cox  
Vandenberg AFB Space & Missile Times, 3 September 1993*

*It's a real pleasure to reprint this article from Space and Missile Times. General Jameson has been very supportive of the AAFM Editor during the development of this newsletter. Many thanks!*

### **AAF** Forum Set For Great Falls

Our AAFM Executive Director, Charlie Simpson, has scheduled an informal "get together" at the Malmstrom AFB Officers' Club on Monday evening, 25 October, at 1800 hrs. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss our AAFM Association, our goals for the future, and to say hello to both current members and welcome potential new members. This is a great opportunity to get your ideas for AAFM directly to one of our key board members. We also want to give the wives and our many single female members a chance to voice their opinions about our association. Those of you who may not have had the pleasure of meeting Charlie before will have a chance to meet a great guy and hopefully also meet his wife, Carol. *Carol, you are going to be there, right? A great couple!* This promises to be an interesting evening for learning about the future of AAFM as well as a fun time. *See you there!*

### **Items of Note:**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our two new members of the AAFM Board of Directors, CMSgt (Ret) Conrad A. Paquette and CMSgt (Ret) Robert Kelchner. Thank you both for volunteering to serve on our Board. Your experience and assistance will be invaluable.

The new AAFM Membership Directories were recently mailed out to all and we have had some feedback regarding the document format. This first release was a tough cookie to complete. There was so much data to be presented! Rest assured that the format will continue to be refined. This is a learning situation for all of us on the publication end of things and we want to be remembered as being "quick studies" when it comes to having things fixed for the next time around. *Your suggestions are in work!*

## More On The Bitburg Monument

*The following information was received from Colonel (Ret) Irving B. Schoenberg who served as Commander, "B" Flight, 71st Tactical Missile Squadron (Nov 59 - Jul 61), and Executive Officer, 585th Tactical Missile Group (Jul 61 - Jul 62), Bitburg AB, Germany.*

During this period of service, "Colonel Fred W. Vetter served as Group Commander and was most involved and responsible for conceiving and erecting the Monument." "If my memory serves me correctly, the monument was constructed of marble obtained from Italy. There was an impressive dedication ceremony involving officials of the 36th Tactical Wing (stationed at Bitburg) and the 38th Tactical Missile Wing, our parent wing, headquartered at Sembach, AB, Germany."

"It may be of interest to missileers to know that Colonel Vetter presented to certain members of the Group, at the time of their reassignment from the Group, a 4 1/2 inch high replica of the monument in black marble. On the face of replica was attached the official Missileman's Badge. It is an impressive memento of an interesting period of USAF missile history."

*Many thanks Col Schoenberg, for your letter sharing your service at Bitburg. (Col Vetter retired as a Brigadier General)*

Bitburg Picture

## REUNIONS

### 69th TMS, 586th TMG, 801st TMW, Hahn AB, Germany

*Seeking all former members, all ranks for a reunion in San Antonio, TX in October 1993. Please contact: B. Friedmann, 19189 Waterbury Court, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.*

### 551st SMS

*The 551st SMS is seeking all former unit members for a reunion (still in the planning stage). More information will be provided as the event firms up. All interested please contact R.L. Haun, 7709 99th Avenue SW., Tacoma, WA 98498. Telephone: (206) 584-3938.*

May 94 - A Special Reservation

## AAFM Colorado Spring

Watch For Details

### 556th SMS Association - Atlas F

*Former members of the 556th SMS. The Association of the 556th SMS is planning a reunion for 1994 from 25 August thru 27 August 1994, in San Antonio, TX.. All interested, please contact John Bilotta, 7903 Remuda Drive, San Antonio, TX 78227.*

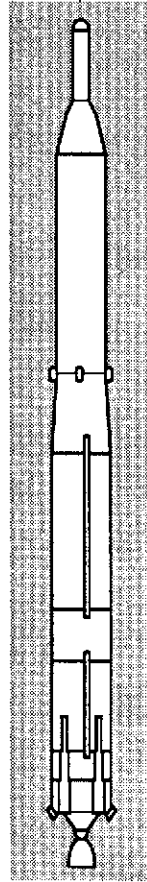
*All agencies/persons requesting reunion announcements: Please make sure you provide complete data regarding personnel contacts, phone numbers and area codes, to the AAFM Executive Director or AAFM Editor. We want to ensure that you have the best opportunity possible to reach distant friends.*

## The Titan I - Part 2

Titan I manning went through several changes over the short life of the system, but the changes were more in the way of minor details or titles than in significant content. Basically, it took a lot of people to operate and maintain a very complex weapon system. The four separate operating squadrons at Beale, Larson, Mountain Home and Ellsworth, each had a colonel commander, and lieutenant colonel deputy commander and deputies for operations and maintenance. They were basically small "wings" in setup - they just lacked the support activities normally found in a full wing. Of course, Lowry was a full wing.

Operations consisted of around fifteen combat crews per squadron, including line, instructor and standardization crews. The crews were made up of four (and sometimes more) crewmembers. The four were the Launch Control Officer, the Guidance Control Officer, the Missile Maintenance Technician and the Ballistic Missile Analyst (or was it Analysis?) Technician. Some of the titles changed (missile launch officer, missile guidance officer, etc.) and the crew commander, while normally the LCO, was sometimes the guidance officer. The "sometimes more" crewmembers included the power production technicians - the two on 24 hour duty were sometimes considered part of the crew and sometimes considered to be maintainers.

Combat crews normally performed 24 hour alert tours - and, at least at Mountain Home, they seldom drove to and from the complexes. Big diesel busses and H-19 helicopters were primary methods of transport - the "planners" at SAC determined that driving all the way to the complex was too tiring for crewmembers, so they were riders. During a normal tour, the total population at the complex varied from the four/six crewmembers, cook and two security policemen (weren't they still called "Air Police" then?) to a crowd of up to eighty people.



The "crowd" included a lot of maintenance people. The Site Commander, a lieutenant colonel or major, was on site during normal duty hours - which often meant several days straight if something major was going on. His staff included a Site Maintenance Officer (Captain or Lieutenant), Site Chief (a Chief, Senior or Master), a job controller/expediter, a tool crib operator, a power house chief, three pad chiefs, three assistant pad chiefs, several missile facilities technicians, a number of plumbers, electricians, air conditioning technicians and power production technicians. There were also more security police, an additional cook and assorted specialists, depending on the type of maintenance in progress - and there was always maintenance in progress.

You probably have figured out that Titan I was people-intensive. It was obvious from the start that it would take a lot more effort to maintain and operate nine Titan I missiles (or a like number of Atlas missiles) than it would to operate Minuteman or Titan II. The massive amount of labor required, combined with the complexity of a low-reliability system ensured a short life for one of our first ICBM systems.

*Coming next - some stories about life in Titan I, the Cuban Crisis, LOX loadings, "Popsicles," and more.  
By Charles G. Simpson*

*All you Titan I guys, there must be a lot of first hand stories that Charlie's Titan Series brings to mind. The Cuban Missile Crisis added some pressure to crew members who were both new to crew duty as well as new to the complex systems that first came on-line. Think about it, and then put your stories down on paper through an informal letter to AAFM. Give us an up close look at the times. These were obviously some serious times but having said that, I can think of some pretty funny things that happed along the way. The Editor.*

## **First USAF Missile Wing Activated**

The first guided missile wing in the United States Air Force is going to be activated at Hahn Air Base, sometime in September. The unit designation is to be the 701st Tactical Missile Wing, commanded by Lt Col Robert F. Zachmann, the present commander of the 7382nd Guided Missile Group, here at Hahn.

The activation of the wing, from the 7382nd resources, will also bring about the re-organization of the 69th Tactical Missile Squadron so that it will become a group, the 586th Tactical Missile Group, commanded by Lt Col Eugene Mulling Jr. The three squadrons which are to be activated here at Hahn, and their commanders, are as follows: Major Joseph G. Calder, Commander, 586th Communications and Guidance Squadron; Major Albert S. Bowen Jr., Commander, 69th Tactical Missile Squadron; Major Max A. VanAusdal, Commander, 586th Support Squadron.

*Reprinted from the "Hahn Hawk," 25 August 1956. Story submitted by CMS Jerry D. Siders, Copperas Cove, TX. Thanks for the story (ies), Jerry!*

## **Missile Monument A "Must"**

One of the landmarks that should be visited during a tour of Bitburg AB is the missile monument in the Missile Support Area. Located just off the Oberweis highway past the Auto Hobby Shop, this monument commemorates the first operational tactical missile squadron overseas.

Aptly named the 1st Tactical Missile Squadron, this Bitburg squadron was armed with TM-61C "Matador" surface-to-surface missiles. Limited to a 600 mile range, these radar-guided missiles were part of USAFE's first line of defense until replaced by the longer range "Mace" missiles.

The monument consists of a "Matador" missile mounted on a concrete pedestal. For those who desire a glimpse into military history or just a day's outing, the monument should be a "must" stop.

*From the Bitburg AB paper, circa 1966, also submitted by J.D. Siders.*

## **Lessons From The Past -**

### ***Learned The Hard Way***

"Some" years ago, I was the Maintenance Squadron Commander in a Minuteman Wing. I arrived at the unit early one morning to check the status of missile loading at one of our sites, and was met by the maintenance supervisor who informed me, "Well, they've done it, they lowered the missile on the silo door!"

Quite appropriately, the Wing Commander told me I was the "On Site Commander," and that I was to "stabilize" the situation until SAC and Ogden provided recovery procedures. It took over an hour to gain site access due to some dispatch data confusion, but as far as I could determine, the situation was "stabilized."

The site configuration was as follows: the silo door was about 2/3rds open, the missile was resting on the door, on one first stage nozzle (crushed), there were many feet of slack in the transport erector (TE) cables, and the missile was positioned such that its weight was pushing the TE down. There were about 60 people on site, plus a PT van, 3 five-ton vans, and numerous pickup trucks.

At about 2 pm, the TE tractor was low on fuel, so I requested a gas truck and asked the folks on the MPH if it would be OK to turn off the TE tractor engine during refueling. After some delay, I was told that the TE check valves would preclude loss of hydraulic pressure and that the TE would remain erect. *No problem!*

Ten minutes into the refueling operation, the TE started making some rather strange (and loud) creaking noises. A young maintenance officer ran up to me and said, "Come look at this!" He took me to a point on site where we could line up a power pole and the TE and it was immediately obvious the TE was coming down (keep in mind the site configuration - noted earlier).

The MMT and MHT team chiefs (who were a lot calmer than I, at this point) and I decided rather quickly to do the following: (1) Evacuate the site of all vehicles and non-essential personnel. (2) Start closing the silo door, (3) Start the TE tractor and hit the TE erect button, (4) Get all the slack out of the TE cables. All this was done in about ten minutes, during which, I directed perhaps the fastest missile site evacuation in SAC history.

*Continued on Page 7*

## **Lessons From The Past - *From Page 6* Learned The Hard Way**

During this period, the young maintenance officer, before departing the site, picked up the SIN phone, told the Wing Commander, "The TE's coming down," and hung up. I'm told the Wing King went completely pale and was speechless for some time. In any case, we did what we thought was right, as quickly as possible.

There were two separate investigations conducted. The first, the missile accident, resulted in many personnel and procedural changes, plus a much heightened sense of concern and awareness in the unit. The second involved the transport erector problem and the actions taken because of it. The results were inconclusive. The "experts" never believed the TE could start down under the existing conditions. There was certainly no doubt in my mind in which direction it was going, or that we were looking a real problem in the face. There was no "official" blame assessed, but since the Wing Commander hardly ever spoke to me again until he retired, there was little doubt in my mind who he thought the culprit was.

In retrospect, some unusual and funny things happened during this event. However, I would be the first person to urge the active duty folks to avoid any involvement in accidents/incidents. They are not fun nor funny, and can be hazardous to one's physical and career health. In fact, without exception, accidents don't happen if unit officers and NCO's are alert, caring, and involved.

*The point worth remembering is - just about the time you think things are really going well, that no problems exist and complacency has set in, stand by for a rude wake-up call!*

*Story submitted by one of our AAFM members. Name withheld by request. As you can see from the story, our work was exciting, hazardous, and the decisions to be made were tough indeed. We didn't always get the results expected and the cost could be pretty high in a lot of different ways. Thanks for your story. The Editor.*

## **Titan II Set To Launch Landsat-6**

A Titan II rocket carrying a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite, Landsat-6, lifted off from SLC-4 West, Vandenberg AFB, at approximately 10:56 hrs on Tuesday, 5 October. The launch appeared to be right on time and rapidly disappeared into a low cloud bank. Initial telemetry data indicated a successful performance by the launch vehicle.

The Landsat-6 will provide coverage of Earth every 16 days, transmitting data to ground stations around the world. Data will be used in studying the global environment and have wide-ranging applications in forestry, agriculture, geology, urban planning and coastal zone management.

The launch vehicle was a refurbished Titan II intercontinental ballistic missile, capable of placing 4,800 lbs of payload into polar orbit. Earth Observation Satellite (EOS) Company will commercially operate the satellite. The Titan II was launched by a Martin Marietta Astronautics Group (MMAG) launch team and marks the third successful flight for a Titan II Space Launch Vehicle (SLV).

## **Lt. Gen Jameson Departs VAFB**

Lt. General Dirk Jameson, 20th Air Force Commander, left Vandenberg AFB, the week of 3 October, enroute to his new location at Francis E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. F. E. Warren AFB will be the new Headquarters location for 20th Air Force. As 20th AF Commander, General Jameson is responsible for the nation's ICBM force, including six missile wings with more than 12,000 active duty members.

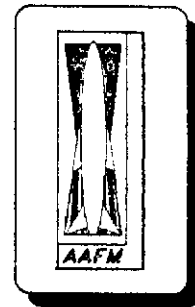
## **Positions Pending**

Space Dividends of Colorado Springs, CO., is looking for several recently retired USAF personnel with junior/senior level missile/space experience.

Positions available include missile operations, maintenance and logistics, satellite operations, space launch operations, and earth station experience. Please send resumes to Space Dividends, 5035 North Academy Blvd, Colorado, Springs, Colorado 80918.

# ***Association of Air Force Missileers***

Post Office Box 5693 Breckenridge, CO 80424  
303-453-0500



*"Victors in the Cold War"*

## **LATE NEWS AND COMMENTS -**

Our membership has now passed 535 - and our five hundredth member was Tom Sloat, who lives in Alaska. I was finally able to get the 1991 3901SMES Reunion mailing list - with more than 400 names on it. The generals and colonels struck out, but a former 3901 secretary and **AAF** member, Alice Maxon, was able to come up with the list. Information has gone out to all of those who were listed.

The Commander of Air University, Lieutenant General Jay Kelley (**AAF** board member) has agreed to let us sponsor awards for papers on missile topics. Each of the major functional areas at AU is working with me to develop criteria and guidelines for the awards.

One of our major objectives is to preserve the history of the missile force - and our budget includes an amount each year that will be awarded to deserving museums who undertake missile related displays. Guidelines for requesting grants will be sent to museums soon, and a special committee will evaluate the applications and select projects that we will fund. We have budgeted a total of \$2,000 for awards and museum support for 1993. If you know of a museum that helps achieve our goals, let me know how to contact them. The museums currently on our list of potential grantees include the SAC Museum in Omaha, the Ellsworth Museum, the Titan Museum in Arizona and the Vandenberg project.

I have just learned of another new organization which may interest some of our members - the Air Force Space Operations Association, 6515 Little Falls Dr, San Jose, CA 95120. If you are interested, contact Keith Smith at AFSSOA.

Our first 500 Member Directories went out this summer - some of you had difficulty figuring out the format - I tried to include as much data as possible on each member. For some, it was too much, and for others, not enough data. We will work to improve the format and content so that the 1994 issue will be easier to read (old eyes??) and easier to understand.

**REMEMBER - I CAN PROVIDE LISTS OF MEMBERS IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE FROM AN OLD UNIT OR SYSTEM - JUST LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU WANT AND IT WILL BE PROVIDED.**