

AAFM Newsletter

AAFM - Ten Years Old



The Payne Award



*Jerry Strong and
Enlisted Award
Winners, 2001*

AAFM - Beginning our Second Decade - by Col (Ret) Charlie Simpson, Executive Director

It is hard to believe that your organization, the *Association of Air Force Missileers*, just had it's tenth birthday. Our official founding date is 1 January 1993, when we became a Colorado nonprofit corporation. Some of you know the genesis of AAFM - but many don't. Our organization grew out of some discussions several of us had in 1991 at the 30th Anniversary Reunion of the 3901st Strategic Missile Evaluation Squadron, which was held in Las Vegas. During that reunion, we talked about the fact that, unlike other professions, we didn't have an organization for missileers. There had been a number of attempts at forming associations over the years, but usually, these efforts faded as soon as the "founders", normally active duty officers or sergeants, moved to a new base. There were several attempts at SAC Headquarters to start a missileers organization, but none of the attempts ever blossomed.

During 1992, I talked to a number of missileer friends about the idea, and we formed an initial board consisting of MGen (Ret) Ralph Spraker, President, Col (Ret) Dick Schoonmaker, Vice President, Col (Ret) Pat Henry, Treasurer, and LtGen Dirk Jameson, BGen Seb Coglitore and Col (Ret) Jack Lander as board members. I volunteered to be the executive director "for a while." We developed our goals - the same ones listed on page one of each newsletter, and we began the process to become a tax-exempt nonprofit organization through the Internal Revenue Service. We also began spreading the word to attract members. We started with our Christmas Card lists and we put notices in Air Force Times, Air Force Magazine, the AFSA and NCOA publications and in base newspapers every place we could. I traveled to Vandenberg for the competition and to many of the missile wings, and within three months we had over 160 members.

Our first newsletter was printed and mailed to over 1,000 missileers. The four page issue featured two articles about AAFM and a short summary of Greg Ogletree's "History of the Missile Badge." We listed one reunion and two attempts to contact members of specific units. And nobody even noticed that the title page said "Associaion of Air Force Missileers" - only one extra "e".

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The Mission of the Association of Air Force Missileers -

- Preserving the Heritage of Air Force Missiles and the people involved with them
- Recognizing Outstanding Missileers
- Encouraging Meetings and Reunions
- Keeping Missileers Informed
- Providing a Central Point of Contact for Missileers

AAFM Newsletter ²

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A Word from the Association

Omaha, 2004 - We announced in December that the next National Meeting will be 19-23 May 2004 at the Marriott Hotel in Omaha. A registration form will be in the June AAFM Newsletter. Events will include a Wednesday evening welcome party, a tour of Offutt and StratCom facilities on Thursday, a dinner and tour at the Strategic Air and Space Museum Thursday evening, golf or local area tours on Friday, a dinner Friday night, a general and board meeting Saturday morning and our banquet Saturday night, featuring Admiral Richard Ellis, Commander of USStratCom as speaker. We have arranged a rate of \$85 per night at the hotel, which includes a full breakfast for two each morning. Plan on joining us in Omaha.

AAFM Finances - We ended 2002 in good financial condition.. Income included Dues (\$29,780.77), Donations (\$6,430.19) and Investment Income (\$1,082.05) for a Total of \$37,293.01. Expenses included Missile Heritage Grants (\$7,670), Awards (\$4,623), Printing (\$8,639.86), Postage (\$4,488.77), Meetings (\$120.70) and Administration (office/computer supplies and equipment, publicity, publications, telephone and other operating expenses (\$6,012.69) for a total of \$31,555.02, which means we carried over to 2003 \$5,737.99. Assets included Checking (\$6,499.50), Savings (\$8,993.82), Paypal Account (\$507.73 and value of investments (\$33,671.69) for a total of \$49,672.74. Liabilities were prepaid dues of \$42,970.12.

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Association of Air Force Missileers

PO Box 5693, Breckenridge, CO 80424

aafm@afmissileers.org www.afmissileers.org 970-453-0500

Your AAFM Newsletter depends on you - send in your articles and stories now - share your missile experience with your fellow missileers and do your part to preserve our history

Letters to the Association

Address your letters to AAFM, Box 5693, Breckenridge, CO 80424, or send by e-mail to aafm@afmissileers.org. Letters may be edited to fit - content/meaning will not be changed.

December Issue - I always enjoy and appreciate the AAFM newsletter. In this regard, I wanted to let you know that the December 2002 edition knocked the breath out of me, it is so good. I think it is wonderful that General Lance Lord contributed such an enlightening and valuable piece on the Air Force Space Command and the future of the ICBM force. Kudos to General Lord. The article by Col. Nicolaus Gaynos, USAF (Ret.), on the genesis of the missile program educated me greatly and held me spellbound with fascinating insights. It also brought some nice smiles to my face. That is a "saver" for me. Jay Kelley's "President's Corner" and your run-down on the fifth national meeting were great. And the other items were top-notch too. Bob Kelchner's printing provides an extraordinarily appealing product. We are fortunate that Bob provides this genuinely outstanding service. *Richard Boverie MGen (Ret), mbrno L0070, West Palm Beach, FL*

December Again - Enjoyed both Lance Lord's and Nick Gaynos' articles. Nick and I were very good friends but I lost track of him. Incidentally, after 18 months of no golf, I won the Vandenberg-Santa Maria Home and Home Golf Tournament today. *Joe Sesto, Honorary AAFM Member 11, Santa Maria, CA.*

These were two of several letters about the last newsletter - Honorary Member Joe Sesto, a longtime Vandenberg supporter, celebrated his 90th a couple of years ago - and is a good friend of both Gen Lord and Col Gaynos.

Early Missileers - I was wondering if you could run a sort to print out all of the "Early Missileers" and their names and address. A small group of us met a few years ago in Riverside, CA, but nothing further came out of it other than some of them have passed away. With them went stories of early research and development, successes

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Letters (Cont) - and failures, the history of the early resistance to missile development which, as "Germany found out, was militarily ineffective." A capsule narrative told of a project officer who took two B-17s to England during WWII that were equipped to launch glide bombs with post-release guidance with the aid of a television camera in the bomb's nose and remote controls in the B-17. The two aircraft were being confiscated by the 8th USAAF to be converted to conventional bombers! *Phil Mack, mbrno A0721, Renton WA*

Phil, along with members Ralph Angel, John DeMatteis and Elmer Peterson were all involved in early testing of glide bombs, V-1s, GAPS and other early systems. We probably have some others - but I don't track dates in the member database.

Space Lift - I recently bought a copy of: "To Reach the High Frontier - A History of U.S. Launch Vehicles" (edited by Roger Launius and Dennis Jenkins), (The University Press of Kentucky, 2002). 519 pages, 5 x 9. \$49.95 (Available from Amazon.com for \$34.97) The dust jacket notes that the text "details the histories of the various launch vehicles developed in the United States since.....1957", and "Each (case) study has been written by a specialist knowledgeable about the vehicle described and places each system in the larger context of the history of space flight." Each Chapter is a brief (30+ page) review of each missile system used as a Launch Vehicle. If you are trying to figure out the family tree of the ATLAS, THOR, Titan, Minuteman, Saturn V, Centaur, DELTA, SRB, SCOUT, or many of the more obscure missiles or variants this text is a gold mine of information. For example - I never knew of a program to develop a recoverable Atlas booster, nor was able to trace the development relationship of the Atlas D/E/F to the Atlas G, H, I, II or III. I never heard of an Atlas IIIA, or had much info on Atlas IIAS, or Atlas V configurations, or knew the difference between an SLV-3A or SLV-3C. and that's just one chapter..... Anyway - Highly recommended. *Carl Stidsen, mbrno A0347, Toland, CT*

SIOP - BGen Joel McKean, in the Dec 02 issue of AAFM Newsletter, refers to "the SIOP (Single Integrated Operation Plan)." When I look at my glossary in -13 (Ellsworth) and -14 (Minot) weapon system TOs, SIOP is defined as "Single Integrated Operations Plan." A Colonel Gosling (first name long forgotten), one of the DOs who served 91SMW while I was there, used to fail crewmembers on their EWO cert briefs if they did not define SIOP cor-

rectly. In his lexicon, SIOP stood for Single Integrated Operational Plan. *Bill Sims, mbrno A0242, San Antonio, TX*

The official SAC History, "The Development of Strategic Air Command" states on page 88, "...a Single Integrated Operational Plan..."

Peterson Museum - On behalf of all the members of the Peterson Air and Space Museum Foundation, I wish to thank AAFM for its grant of \$2,000. We will use the grant to develop a display of missile artifacts, photographs, models and memorabilia to support our common goal of preserving the heritage of the USAF ICBM force and the great people who served and are serving at all our ICBM locations. Construction of the exhibit will start early in 2003. I would also like to thank you for the earlier grant to restore and emplace the Bomarc missile. *BGen Mike Drennan, Foundation President and mbrno L269, Colorado Springs, CO*

Titan Museum - We received your generous gift of \$1,000 to assist in the restoration of the historic fleet of vehicles at the Titan Missile Museum. We thank you for your investment in this project and a special thanks for your ongoing partnership. *Becky Roberts, Director, Titan Missile Museum, Green Valley, AZ*

Patrick Museum - I was very disappointed to see the AF Space & Missile Museum Foundation omitted from the list of 2002 grant recipients in your latest e-mail newsletter. The Foundation was thrilled to receive the money and has great plans to fabricate storyboards for an interpretive kiosk at Cape Canaveral AFS Launch Complex 14, site of many early Atlas ICBM launches. Would it be possible to add a "correction" in your next issue? Thank you for your consideration. *Emily A. Perry, Director AF Space & Missile Museum, Patrick AFB, FL*

We also received thanks from the Clinton County Historical Association and the Whiteman Museum for our grants for 2002. I goofed both in the e-mail update and the December Newsletter - we were glad to provide \$1,000 to the Patrick museum.

Final Launches - As you are aware from your conversations with Capt Kowalski, we do have two significant emotional events expected to occur here at Vandenberg this summer, the last Atlas II launch from Vandenberg (an Atlas IIAS) and the last Titan II launch from Vandenberg.

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Two Warren Chefs at Guardian Challenge 2001

In Titan I we had it good - a real chow hall on the site, with a staff or tech sergeant cook and a young airman assistant on duty to fix our meals. A Titan I site was a busy place - up to 100 folks there during "normal" duty hours - so the two cooks had a big job preparing full meals for the mob at lunch, and other times during heavy maintenance. Breakfast, dinner and midnight chow were less busy - usually only the combat crew, powerhouse folks, security troops and cooks. The food was always good and there was lots of it.

We started Minuteman the same way - each site in the early and mid-1960s had two cooks on site and the same home cooked meals. We had a real kitchen (small but effective) and a dining room. The cooks delivered the meals to the duty crew below ground, but the cops, maintenance folks, Facility Manager, cooks and any other folks on site got to sit down in the dining room. On holidays, families were invited to the sites, as they had been in Titan I. But in the late 1960s, things changed. All the experienced food service folks were needed in Viet Nam - so we ended up with really junior cooks at the missile sites. Someone at the headquarters came up with a new foil pack - a little different than the combined, TV dinner style described by Jack Roberts from the Atlas days - to make it easier for the inexperienced cooks. Foil packs were individual servings - select your meat dish and the vegetables to accompany it (and memorize the good ones and the bad ones, by number) and desserts. A salad was usually available (even a brand new cook could handle that) and for breakfast, you could also opt for real eggs, bacon and

Missileers and Food - by Col (Ret) Charlie Simpson, AAFM

Executive Director

During the past ten years, we have had articles about the history of every missile system, Cuba, the missile competition, uniforms, transportation and lots of other topics. But except for one story a few months ago about a Christmas dinner at a Titan I site, we haven't featured the topic of the food that missileers eat.

The fact that missileers will eat almost anything isn't important to the story - you will see that, based on the tales in this collection, we just prove they will. Most of us agree that the food provided to missile crews, maintainers, security forces, civil engineers, comm folks and everybody else who visited or "lived" on a missile site has run the gamut, from real gourmet meals to stuff we weren't too sure of. Some folks had it really good - there was a site cook or two, a dining room and real, home cooked food. Others had to stop by and pick up the "rations" on the way to the site and prepare it themselves. Still others brownbagged - and most of us knew all the good local cafes and burger places in the boonies, like the Cove Cafe in Newell or the great cinnamon rolls in Michigan. You all had your favorites.

toast instead of some of the packaged choices.

Today in Minuteman, we have "Chefs" at each site, and they take pride in their work. They even compete in the annual Space and Missile Competition at Vandenberg. It is similar to the later days of the "new" foil pack - with choices for each meal - but a little more personal than it was in the early foil years.

Those of you who served in Atlas and Titan II had a different problem- there was only you, the crew on site - maintenance folks, like Jack Roberts, brought their own food. None of the Titan II vets submitted tales for this issue - maybe we will see some in the future. I also suspect that the Matador, Mace, BOMARC, Thor, Jupiter and airlaunched folks have some good stories, too - I am sure that not all meals were like Bob Bolton describes in his "Pizza" article.

Then there was GLCM - the members of a Ground Launched Cruise Missile flight really roughed it when they deployed to the "field." They had a device to "cook" the MREs - or at least increase the temperature a little before ripping open the olive drab plastic packs of food. Some folks really like "Meal, Ready to Eat", but others (including the author) never found them to be real favorites. I had my share during exercises at Comiso - but as the base commander, I kept encouraging the folks to take advantage of the dining hall as long as it was still operating. My wing commander at the time thought it was much more sporting to "destroy" the mess hall and have us all live on MREs for the three or four days of the exercises.

MREs are still around - they have improved, I

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Missile Food (*cont*) - am told. But I still remember being told by the base bioenvironmental folks at Incirlik that the million or so meals we had stored in the steel sheds had all gone bad because of the heat - it was easy to tell the bad ones - those olive green packages looked like green balloons.

We do know that no missileer ever starved - although some, like Dick Mellor, may have been a little hungry for a while. During my days at Grand Forks, we had similar blizzard - one maintenance team spent seven days trapped at a launch facility with only a couple of candy bars and some cigarettes. That storm was so bad that even the helicopters couldn't fly. But the combat crews, the cops and the FMs had those two good cooks on site and lots of food for their seven day stay.

I suspect this article is only part one - you all have good stories - some even true - about what you ate and what you avoided - enjoy the stories here - and send yours in for future issues.

Atlas and Foil Packs! - by Jack Roberts,

PhD, mbrno A0513, Campbell, TX

At the 548SMS at Forbes AFB, Kansas in the early 60s, foil packs were the very latest thing in missileer cuisine. The foil pack was the Air Force answer to the TV dinner. And, as I recall, they were surprisingly good! (Or, were we just a bunch of hungry GIs who would eat anything?)

The foil pack consisted of an entree, bread, one or two veggies (can't recall exactly), and a dessert. Each item was packed into its own individual aluminum foil container with a lid crimped on. The entree was usually something like smothered steak, meat loaf, or roast beef with gravy. Anything that would lend itself to being cooled in a walk-in cooler overnight or since the very early morning, then reheated at the site during the day. The same for the veggies. Green beans, corn, succotash, peas, etc. The desserts were usually a helping of pie. Cherry and apple seem to have been the favorites. The bread was similar to toady's brown and serve rolls, with two rolls in the container.

One complete foil pack meal was packaged in a lightweight cardboard box, usually along with half-pints of milk, seasonal fruit, condiments, and plastic eating utensils. Once we each got two cigarettes in a little cardboard container about the size of a package of gum. I think they were a promotional gimmick from some tobacco company.

The procedure for obtaining these rations varied depending on the job to be done on the sites, the squadron

section involved, etc. Those of us on the Mobile Checkout and Maintenance (MOCAM) crews (at least, Sgt. Hall's crew) would order our foil packs as soon as we arrived at the Missile Assembly Building (MAB). Sometimes we ordered individually, at other times one crewmember would order for the whole crew. Someone would call the foil pack kitchen and find out if choices of entree or dessert were available. An order was compiled, the kitchen notified, and we were ready to go. All this was happening while we were getting our tools, parts, work orders, security codes, vehicles, etc. ready.

The foil pack kitchen was the last stop on the way out of town. Our order was nearly always ready for us. Usually, the order for the whole crew was packed into a large blue cooler with some chunks of dry ice thrown in. We always carefully maintained and returned the empty cooler we had used the day before. Those of us on separate rations paid cash, the others used their chow hall cards.

Once on the site, someone was detailed to put the foil packs in the refrigerator and put on the coffee pot. The rest of us would unload tool boxes, parts, etc. and park the vehicle(s) out of the way. Our NCOIC would check in with the MCCC and after the safety briefing, we went to work.

At a convenient time about thirty minutes before meal time, Sgt. Hall would detail one of us who was not too busy to go to the kitchen and put the foil packs in the oven. They took about twenty minutes to heat up. Then we all sat down together and had a hot meal. Occasionally, someone had to be left on tank watch or some such other duty. We always took their meal to them or relieved them as soon as possible so they could eat.

In every group, there is usually a prankster. However, I only recall one prank involving the foil packs. Every site had mice. Someone found a dead mouse, sneaked into the kitchen, dumped out someone's veggies, and put the mouse in the container, carefully re-crimping the edges to hide the deed. You can imagine what happened when the crew member opened what he thought was his veggies and instead found a mouse cooked to a turn! I think I know who did it and I swear it wasn't me!

We didn't always have an oven in which to heat up our foil-packs. One time our old crew bus started giving us trouble on the way to a site. We just managed to limp into a roadside park as it quit completely. No radios or cell phones in those days, but we finally flagged down a launch crew going back to base. They promised to send help, but we knew it would be at least a couple of hours, maybe longer. So we gathered up some wood, started a fire in one

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Missile Food (*cont*) -of the park picnic fireplaces, heated up our foil packs, and had lunch while waiting.

Occasionally, some of the married guys brought their lunch from home. I carried my lunch a few times, but the foil packs were reasonable and good, so why bother? The only time I carried my lunch consistently was when I knew I was going to be on base for the day (or night).

No review of Air Force food would be complete without the mention of the “midnight chow hall.” On a base as large as Forbes, there were several chow halls, but only one that stayed open 24/7. This chow hall was the nearest one to the flight line alert facility, so the bomber alert crews ate there both day and night. Besides the alert crews, air police, air traffic control people, and all others on night duty ate there. I guess that because of the alert crews demanding the best, the midnight chow hall was far superior to others on the base. A midnight chow hall pass was like gold! All the missileers had one because we worked such weird hours. We were not supposed to use it except at night, but.....

Some say that GIs are supposed to gripe about the chow, but honestly, it was pretty good at Forbes. Hats off and thanks to those who prepared it!

Minot Burger - by Bill Sims, mbrno A0242, San Antonio, TX

Like most people who spent time below the prairies in our various missile-bestowed states, I did my share of eating in the capsule. I don't remember much about the different meals available as foil pack menu items, but it seemed the “barbeque beef tips” foil pack was pretty good. I also remember a tasty dessert item that was an apple crunch sort of confection. I recall peeling the crinkled foil seal back from the often-charred, flat white cardboard lid of the foil pack, to reveal the wondrous contents within. These cardboard lids bore an ink stamp revealing the name of the delicacy inside. Foil packs were cheap, running anywhere from about a quarter, up to around a dollar for the fancier entrees (like the beef tips).

My fondest memories are of a sandwich I was introduced to by my first crew partner and commander, 1Lt Mark Voorheis. Mark and I were joined at the hip from early 1985 for several months to follow, home-based at November LCC, within rock-throwing distance of Mohall, North Dakota (population: several dozen; sole traffic direction device—one stop sign). Mark was generous enough to share with me the secret delicacy perhaps only available at launch control facilities, prepared by the military-trained killers and master chefs on-site: the Cheesy



LCF Cook Airman Woodruff, Bill Sim's DMCCC and the FM Bacon and Egg Burger. This wondrous burger had a standard chow hall beef patty, bun and slice of American cheese. But what set it apart was a fried egg laid on top, with a couple-three slices of bacon applied to perfect this delicious, cholesterol-laden gut bomb. Add your condiment of choice (ketchup is always good; thousand island dressing provides some true character), and you had a cheeseburger of incomparable delight, capable of filling you up the way no Chinese buffet could ever do, and making you sleepy enough within a half hour or 45 minutes of consumption to fall asleep among the many buzzers and bells of the typical LCC.

Commercials used to say “it takes two hands to handle a Whopper.” Well, it took two hands to handle the Cheesy Bacon and Egg Burger, too. This thick, oil-slicked conglomeration of starches, fats, and proteins was often as hard to grip and keep in one monolithic clump as a Pam-coated water balloon. Yessirree, that Cheesy Bacon and Egg Burger was truly a gift from God (somewhere between Rebecca Romijn-Stamos and a 1965 GTO).

Sometime in the next few years, when I'm having my first heart attack from too many chunks of bacon and fried egg and cheese and beef patty clogging up my vital blood passages, I'll think back with intense fondness on how I got to where I am, courtesy of outstanding on-site LCF chefs and the miracle food product known as the Cheesy Bacon and Egg Burger.

Whiteman Thanksgiving - by Col (Ret) Tony Peguese, mbrno A1070, Naples, FL

I was an instructor missile combat crew commander assigned to the 351st SMW at Whiteman AFB, MO. The scheduler had a rule that you had to be on alert for one of the holidays, Thanksgiving, Christmas or the New Year celebration. I always volunteered for Thanksgiving.

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Missile Food (cont) - On Thanksgiving we were saved from the foil pack meals which as everyone knows was the normal fare. It was turkey day. Of course, the site cook had to prepare the feast. My deputy and I spent the day listening to the deedle, deedle and doing crew things. By late afternoon, I called topside to check on the status of the turkey. Everything was okay, I was told. At about 1630, the dep and I began to wonder when dinner was going to be served. This is what followed.

The cook was brand new. He had not as yet attended his tech school. He had taken a frozen turkey, read the directions, and put it in the oven for six hours based on its weight. Six hours later we had what could only be described a disgusting mess. He had placed the turkey in the oven still frozen, plastic wrap and all. We had some pretty upset troops on the site that day.

I called the Wing Command Post and related our plight. I think the controller fell out of his seat, he laughed so hard. He instructed me to stand by. When he called us back, he told me that he had arranged for one of the helicopters to fly our Thanksgiving feast to the LCF. Later that day, everyone feasted on turkey with all the trimmings thanks to Chow Hall Mess Sergeant and our Helo pals. It is a story locked in my memory and recalled each Thanksgiving day.

Tactical Pizza - by Bob Bolton, Editor of the *Tac Missileer News*, mbrno A1199, Lawrenceville, GA

This Blockhouse pizza was popular at the 887TMS, Grünstadt, Germany. Best time to make it was any time on alert duty but, preferably nights around 0200 to 0400 when the hungriness would really hit.

Instructions: Lay toaster on side. (See toaster in photo) Smear two slices of depot bread with catsup. Sprinkle the slices with any leftover scraps of dining hall cheese you might be lucky enough to find in the block house frig. If no cheese, just continue on, adding a dash of hot sauce and some salt and pepper to taste. Carefully insert the prepared slices into the now horizontal toaster. Activate toasting process. Stand by to catch the hot slices when they eject. Careful or you'll burn your fingers and it makes a mess if you drop a slice. Eat, enjoy, make some more. I was lucky in that I had a launch office who occasionally brought in tinned, smoked oysters to snack on during those long night shifts, he would sometimes give me a few of those oily, preserved oysters to top off my block house pizza, BAM!!!!...that really kicked it up a notch. Pizza best served with a fine, over brewed, well aged, pungent cup of GI issue coffee.

Really Scrambled Eggs - by Richard Mellor
mbrno A1651, Spokane, WA

Food, or rather the lack of it, was a serious concern with our crew at the missile site in the 567SMS at Fairchild, one of the Atlas E squadrons. We went on alert the last day of December 1964 for a 24 hour tour. We only carried enough food for the tour. At that time, there were no rations on the sites and no way for replenishment. During the day, a blizzard blew into the Spokane area, shutting down all of the roads, continuing for 24 hours.

We could not be relieved by the next crew because all roads were closed and the plows could not open them. During the next 24 hours, we had no food. It was getting serious. Our crew commander's wife organized a relief mission to get us something to eat. When the third day dawned clear and sunny, the roads were still closed, so due to her efforts an airplane was dispatched with a box of food. We only had a fixed wing U-6 available for squadron use, and it couldn't hover. The pilot came across the site at a very low altitude, and the loadmaster kicked a box out the door - no parachute. It bounced three times and came to rest against the perimeter fence. Inside the box were bacon, eggs and butter. Needless to say, the eggs, raw, made a mess of everything. We salvaged some of the food, but not very much.

The morning of the fourth day, our relief crew showed up on a snow cat, borrowed from the forest service, to take over the site. They sure were a welcome sight - they even brought us something to eat.

After that, they started placing emergency rations on the sites, but remember we were the pioneers of the space program, and had a lot to learn. When I read about the crews having enough food and water, and even chefs, to survive to weeks, I realize things have really changed. We were never prepared like that - but I am still glad I served as one of the pioneers.



887SMS Pizza Kitchen, toaster vertical



AAFM Display with Kelley and Simpson, GC2002

AAFM's Tenth (cont) - By July, we had 405 members, a great response to a notice in the "Afterburner", the newsletter for AF Retirees, and Roger Phillips became the newsletter editor. The July issue had eight pages, articles about Titan I, Bomarc, the new Space Command and 30SW missions, a story about the first female missile squadron commander and several notices. Our board now included LtGen Jay Kelley, MGen (Ret) Barry Horton, BGen Lance Lord and BGen Ron Gray (Ron's name didn't make the newsletter) and we added two Chiefs, Conrad Paquette and Bob Kelchner, shortly after the second issue. We began planning our first National Meeting, which was held 23-26 May 1994 in Colorado Springs.

In October 1994, Bob Kelchner began printing our newsletters - we went from "copies" to a professional publication with great photos, a blue header page and twelve pages for each issue. In October 1996, we had our second National Meeting, this time in Santa Maria. Roger Phillips had a new job and was having difficulty finding time to put our newsletter together, so I became the editor again for the March 1997 and later issues.

Throughout the life of AAFM, we have continued to grow - not rapidly, and we aren't gigantic, but over 2,500 missileers, people interested in missiles and those involved other ways, have become members, and we add more every month. We have almost 1,800 currently active members (that means you have paid your dues). The others come and go as we remind them that we need their donations for dues. We have continued to be an organization that is about 70/30 in almost every statistical factor - that goes for retirees/active duty, officer/enlisted and operations versus other specialities.

We got into the electronic age early - e-mail and a web page have been part of AAFM for a long time. Our web page has attracted a large share of our new members - if you search Google for "missileer" it will lead you there.

We update the page monthly, thanks to member Bob Notman, who developed the current format, and we send over 1300 members e-mail updates monthly.

Our programs have done well because you, the members, have provided strong support both through your donations and your hard work. We have provided over \$86,000 to seventeen museums for forty four projects, and honored sixty six members who passed away during that time. We sponsor the Phillips and Payne awards for AF Space Command, honoring the best missile operations squadron and the missile maintenance squadron that does the most for its people each year. Thanks to an initiative by member Jerry Strong, we participate in the annual AFSPC Enlisted Recognition Program. We provide trophies to 20AF for the winning missile teams at each year's competition and give each participant a commemorative coin. We take part in the Guardian Challenge Expo each year, with the AAFM display always in the center of the display area. We have provided awards and recognition for several AFROTC graduates and other special occasions.

More and more units are having reunions - we have assisted many of them by providing lists of unit members and helping spread the work. We have encouraged them to combine their meetings with ours, which worked well for the 485TMW in 2000 and the 556SMS in 2002. Our next national meeting, 19-23 May 2004 in Omaha, will be our sixth. We visit bases and other locations around the country for local area meetings, offering members an opportunity to gather and talk about the missile business. We have met at Minot, Warren, Malmstrom, Whiteman, Ellsworth, Offutt, Vandenberg, Peterson, Patrick, Kirtland, Randolph and the Pentagon in recent years. We have built a database of over 5,000 missileers and have often helped folks find a lost friend.

Your newsletter has documented the history of every missile system and many aspects of missile operations, maintenance, support, research, testing and deployment. Members have provided superb personal stories, some serious and some that are hilarious, about all aspects of life as a missileer. We have developed a large library of books, articles, CD-ROMs and photos, and are often asked for assistance by television documentary producers, authors, researchers and people working to develop museums and memorials. We were part of three significant ceremonies, the closing of the 44th, 351st and 321st Missile Wings. We worked closely with the National Park Service in their successful efforts to turn a South Dakota missile launch facility and launch control

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AAFM Board Members in Colorado Springs in 2002

AAFM's Tenth (cont) - facility into national historic sites. We are working now with the Woodrow Wilson Foundation in a program to document and display the history of the Cold War.

While many think of us as an ICBM organization, we are, in fact, an association made up of people with experience in every ground and air-launched missile system. True, the majority of our members served in Minuteman, Peacekeeper, Atlas or Titan - but we have many who were in Mace, Matador, Thor, Jupiter, Snark, Bomarc, GLCM, strategic and tactical air-launched systems and a rapidly growing number of spacelift, satellite and space operations. Those of you who think the newsletter has too much ICBM need to send in your stories in other areas.

Today, several folks make things happen in AAFM. Kevin Mortensen, an active duty captain who is in the Pentagon, takes care of all our monthly dues notices - a pretty big job. Bob Kelchner reviews the newsletter draft, prints and mails over 2200 copies every quarter. Bob Notman improved our web page and keeps it

current. Steve Castro found us an on-line backup system for our financial and member records. Several of you volunteer to take charge of local and national meetings. Our budget is less than \$40,000 per year, but we turn out work like an organization with a budget ten times that.

Where does the future take us? Your president and board are working now on new projects, including a missileer memorial, a Minuteman for AF Space Command and some missile artwork. They are always looking for more ways to recognize the young men and women who currently serve in the missile and space fields. We need to continue to push our friends to join - there are a lot of missileers out there who aren't members of AAFM.

We need to encourage more members to attend our National Meetings - President Jay Kelley's "One Plus One" initiative addresses both of those issues.

In the long term, we need to find more ways to grow and change with the Air Force. If we concentrate on the past, we will slowly dwindle away. Preserving our heritage is very important, but so is keeping the young airmen and officers involved so AAFM will be around for a long time. On a personal note, we need to start grooming a new executive director - at some point somebody has to take my place. A lot of you like to stay involved with today's Air Force, even though your tour of duty ended some time ago. One of you out there would be an excellent "second" executive director for AAFM - let us know if you are the one.

Our first ten years have been a lot more successful than most of us dreamed that they would be - and we are just getting started. Do your part to help us continue to grow - and keep those superb articles, stories and letters coming to us. AAFM will be around for a long time.

One Plus One.....How Are You Doing ?

Every week I run into an old missileer, and sometimes a young one, who is not a member of our distinguished organization. And not surprisingly, they then tell me about someone they know that isn't a member either. I have run out of applications to hand out. Charlie !! Send me some !! And I'll bet each of you have similar experiences. We just need to do something about it. So lean into "One Plus One" with me. Together, we can grow this great outfit into the larger organization it should really be, and consisting of members who care. And remember, we have the perfect opportunity to not only reach out but to bring 'em in, with the next National meeting coming up at Omaha, in 2004 !

**Jay W. Kelley, Lieutenant General, U. S Air Force (Retired)
President, Association of Air Force Missileers**

Contact AAFM if you need brochures - or download an application at www.afmissileers.org



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Newsletter Copies

Copies of all of our newsletters are available to anyone several ways. We have printed copies in three volumes - 1993-1994, 1995-1997, 1998-2002. A complete collection is also available on CD-ROM, with each newsletter in Adobe PDF format. We are in the process of putting all issues on our web page at www.afmissileers.org, also in Adobe PDF format. Some issues are available now in the Museum section of the web page. We also have individual copies of most back issues, so if you are looking for a specific one, let us know. Individual copies are available to the requestor for only the cost of shipping.

We often provide specific issues or articles to researchers and authors, and are occasionally asked for permission to reprint articles in other publications. We almost always give permission, but since some of our articles have themselves come from another source, you may have to go to the original publisher for reprint permission.

Any time you want to use articles or information from the AAFM Newsletter, contact us and tell us what you would like to use - normally it isn't a problem.

Taps for Missileers

Col (R) Joe Church, who commanded the 321SMW, passed away in May - he lived in Florida

Jemima Brennan, the 341SMW wing commander's secretary for many years, was known by a lot of you. She lived in Great Falls.

MSgt (R) Robert M. Cox, an AAFM member, served in Titan II in the 308SMW and lived in Homer City, PA.

551SMS - Lincoln Atlas F Unit

The first reunion for the 551SMS, the Atlas F unit at Lincoln AFB, NE in the early 1960s, is in Lincoln 23-26 April. Thanks to the efforts of Ken Fisher, Ron Resh and several other squadron members, more than 500 squadron members have been located. AAFM member BGen Roger Burg will address the attendees at the Friday night Banquet. Ken provided the information below about the 551SMS.

- Squadron resurrected on 24 Oct 60, activated on 1 April 61 and reported to the 818th Air Division.
- Sites turned over to AF in Oct 62.
- 1st Modifications announced - 28 June 63
- On 1 Jan 64 551SMS came under the 98th Bomb Wing, which became the 98th Strategic Aerospace Wing.
- 1964, squadron received first of three T-601 trainers.
- In August 64, crews test new blue missile uniforms.
- 11 Sep 64, AF announces closing of Titan 1, Atlas D and E Squadrons.
- 19 Nov 64, AF announces closing of Atlas F Squadrons.
- 14 March 64, Site 8 taken off of alert.. Two more missiles removed. (Sites 2 and 12) by 22 Mar 64.
- 12 April 64, missile pulled from last Atlas F site on alert (site 10)
- 18 June 65, Lincoln AFB opens "Missile Mart" as equipment is pulled from the sites for government agencies reuse. Equipment on display in ANG hanger.
- 26 June 65, squadron is inactivated.
- 23 Dec. 65, 2AF announces the AF Outstanding Unit Award. for 551SMS for period from 1 July 1964 to 1 June 1965

Map used as a presentation to squadron members in 1965.



Letters (Cont) -Because the launch dates have been in flux, and because their processing schedules overlap and coincide with Guardian Challenge, we have not planned or scheduled any "celebratory" events with those launches as of yet. We have folks from agencies on-base who are just forming to look at some possibilities. At the present time, we can't say what these events might look like, or just how broad an audience they would reach. *LtCol David D. Thompson, Ops Officer, 2SLS, Vandenberg AFB, CA*
Several members are involved with these launches, which aren't firm yet - we will keep you advised

Arkansas Titan II Museum - A 308SMW Titan 11 Museum is being activated in Jacksonville, AR the home of Little Rock AFB. A facility and funding is available and a curator will soon be hired. The organizers are actively seeking items for the facility. If you would like to donate same please notify Ron Bishop at RBJR57@earthlink.net or call 623-214-8640.

321st Gripe Books - I served up in the 321 SMW, 447th SMS from 1989 - 1993. I was wondering if anyone kept the "Gripe books" from the LCCs after deactivation. They were very special to the crews, and I'd love to see and get a copy of them again. *Maj Ron Hirtle, mbrno L153. Rochester, NH*

Reunions

551SMS, Lincoln, Nebraska, 24-27 April, 2003, contact, Ken Fisher, sms551@aol.com, 2890 Lafayette Ave, Bronx, NY 10465-2231, phone 718-792-2360

548SMS, Topeka, KS, 27-31 August 2003. Contact Don Peoples, 55 Bucknell Ave, Hamilton, NJ 08619-2059 Phone 609-587-6487, email njpeeps@att.net.

TAC Missileers, 19-21 June 2003, Denver Tech Center Embassy Suites, 800-654-4810 for reservations, email perkster@fcol.com

Peacekeeper First Flight 20-year Reunion, Santa Maria, CA, 18-20 June 2003. Contact Charlie Radaz, 579 St. Andrews Way, Lompoc, CA 93436, (805) 733-2051, fcmjradaz@aol.com

341st Maintenance Quality Control (1962-75), Great Falls, MT, 15-16 August 2003, contact John Spencer, Phone 406-761-5721, e-mail jspensir@att.net.

390SMW (Titan II), Tucson, AZ, 29 Sept-3 Oct 2004, Tucson.