

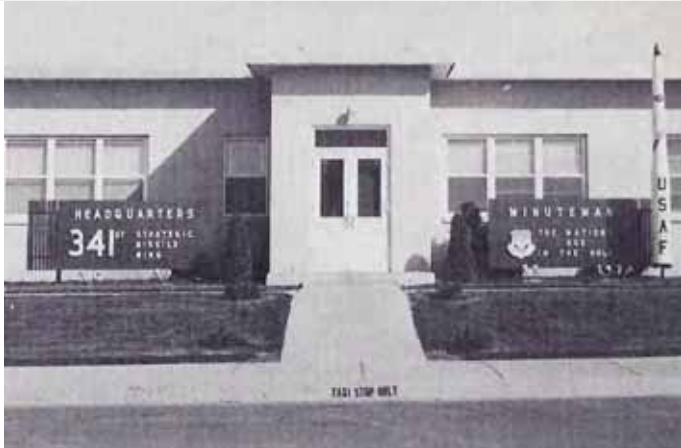
Association of Air Force Missileers AAFM Newsletter

"Victors in the Cold War"

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Malmstrom Maintenance - the Early Days



341SMW Headquarters - 1962



The author at work

You have read about life as an operator in the last two parts of "Memorable Alerts and Dispatches."
Now a little bit about life as a maintainer - the folks who keep those missiles on alert

A Maintainer in the First Minuteman Wing - by former Airman Dwight "Skip" Spencer, MbrNo A2138, Albuquerque, NM

The history and heritage of the early 341st Strategic Missile Wing (341SMW) is unique and little known except those who served with the unit at its inception. The wing came about as a missile wing because of the arrival of the Minuteman missile, which replaced the early liquid fueled systems. Minuteman utilized solid propellant rocket boosters permitting long term placement in silos without constant maintenance, or refueling in preparation for launch. The cost to operate and maintain Minuteman was relatively low, meaning many more missiles could be deployed with fewer personnel: It could launch almost instantaneously, and be adapted to changing requirements and new configurations. Some interesting stories come from the problems this new concept presented to the Air Force. You'll get a flavor of this as you read these reminiscences. I originally prepared this article for a reunion of fellow maintainers who served in the early days of the wing, to provide a snapshot on the history and heritage of the wing and the 341st Missile Maintenance Squadron (341MIMS). The recollections, reminiscences, anecdotes and thoughts are mine as I lived my 341st experience from June 1962 through August 1964.

It is my hope that all members of the 341SMW, past or present, military or civilian, officer or enlisted or anyone with an interest and curiosity in the Minuteman history and heritage find these pages informative, interesting and even humorous. Keep in mind that I was a Nuclear Weapons Arming and Fusing Specialist. As such, the vast majority of my activity was constrained to the Reentry Vehicle (RV) Assembly Building and weapons storage area. Though we were a very small unit within the 341MIMS, we worked closely with the crews who picked up the assembled RVs, transported them to the launch sites and installed them on the missiles. A more complete view of the life and times can certainly be had by talking with the men who served in other capacities such as targeting, missile installation, site maintenance, communications, security and so on.

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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

Malmstrom Maintenance *(Continued from Page 1)*

Certificate presented to wing members involved with bring the first Minuteman missiles on alert

Life in the Squadron

As was always the case in SAC, training was the backbone of operational readiness. Prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis we trained, then trained some more, after that, we trained until we could perform our duties in our sleep. In the late summer of 1962 we began shipping out a number of our trained and proficient personnel to Ellsworth AFB and Minot AFB to form cadres of experienced Minuteman specialists to prepare those respective Wings for installation and operational readiness.

In general, we tried to stick to an eight hour work day, but it was almost impossible to do. There was simply too much work to be done. We were a 24/7 operation and we all thanked God for midnight chow at the Chuck Wagon (the base chow hall). Our COs (commanding officers) were sensitive to the demands placed on the personnel in bringing this new Minuteman concept to life. With 150 sites strung out over hundreds of miles (the 564SMS would not come along until 1966), travel was constant, long, slow and boring. In too many cases an installation or targeting crew would get back to base after several days on the road, only to turn around and be out again the next day. Indeed, it created some serious problems vis-à-vis divorce rate and low morale that had probably not been calculated into the anticipated problems of activating a Minuteman wing.

Worthy of note was the fact that we used a rudimentary method of timekeeping on computer. Each day we filled out a punch card that recorded the amount of time (using codes) spent in duties related to our primary AFSC, another in performing ancillary duties and so on. Anything beyond eight hours was banked as "Comp Time Available," not that we'd ever be able to use it. The use of "Comp Time Off" had to be approved by our immedi-

ate supervisor or CO. In most cases the time off was approved if the workload and schedules permitted. Sure helped saved a little bit of our annual leave.

Chow - or what Civilians call Food

We single enlisted troops had the high privilege of eating at the base chow hall, otherwise known as the "Chuck Wagon". Along with the standard breakfast, lunch and dinner hours, it was open every night for "midnight" chow. We were pretty healthy eaters. My two "roomies" and I would get up without fail for midnight chow if we weren't in town doing what young, single GIs do. We ate the same thing at midnight chow that we usually had for breakfast the next morning. It was pretty typical SAC: clean, good food, and all you could eat. It was staffed by our own SAC cooks who probably got more respect than the Pentagon itself.

The cooks prepared our omelettes with as many eggs as we desired and whatever ingredients we chose. My favorite was always a plate of SOS, with three slabs of toast topped with a huge ladle of creamed hamburger, beef, sausage, or whatever else the cooks had swept up off the floor from the last meal, topped with four to six eggs over easy. Add to that a bowl of fruit, a quick jaunt to the "cow" for two glasses of fresh, ice cold white milk and two glasses of chocolate milk. We always seemed to go back for two more glasses of chocolate milk. Chase it all down with a couple cups of hot coffee and we were "off to the races". After learning how to drink that miserable poison called chicory coffee when I was stationed at Columbus AFB, Mississippi, I could drink anything. But after drinking the chow hall coffee, I know they didn't buy it from Juan Valdez.

With the missile sites being strung out near and far and all the travel required by the maintenance crews, food provisions were a challenge. The in-flight kitchen provided pretty nice boxed in-flight lunches for the crews and we actually carried old C-rations of WWII vintage. I remember some were dated as far back as 1945. On a couple occasions I made it out to a site, I discovered I preferred the canned ham and eggs. This is also how I learned that salt is nature's perfect food. If it can mask the taste of C-rations, it can work on anything.

Barracks Life

The barracks (they weren't called dormitories then) in which we lived was our refuge. My room was on the second floor. Each room accommodated three men, with one single bed and a double bunk. Each set of two rooms shared a common lavatory that had a commode,

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Malmstrom Maintenance (Continued from Page 2)*341MIMS Open House*

sink and shower. We did not have TV in our rooms but had a small TV room and large game room on each floor. We were allowed to paint our rooms any color we desired as long as it was tasteful and conservative. Our lockers could be organized in whatever manner we desired as a rule, as long as they were neat and clean. Once a week, we'd get together and do a spit shine on the barracks. The crowning touch was always the fresh coat of Simonize paste wax applied by hand then buffed with a commercial brush buffing wheel. Finally, we'd fold a GI issue wool blanket, set the buffer on it and do the final buffing. The floors always sparkled like glass. But that was an old trick every GI knew.

One of the more popular activities in the barracks game room was playing military double deck pinochle. We usually played it just for score but occasionally we'd play for a penny a point, quarter a set and fifty cents for game. We'd play pinochle for hours on end. When we needed a break, we'd haul into town and grab a couple brews.

Our training and team concepts as practiced in SAC ensured that we got to know each other intimately as working team members. We learned each other strengths, weaknesses and nuances. We knew we could depend on each other regardless the circumstances. Our trust in each other became unquestioned.

Living together in the barracks, playing together, eating together, socializing together, permitted us to get to know each other on the personal level. We learned to respect each other and appreciate our differences, whatever they might have been. The differences became a matter of no consequence. We were buddies, brothers and team members. I guess there was something to be said for being SACumcized. Now, after many years and in retrospect, I am convinced General LeMay had it right.

Early in 1964 many of us in the barracks were being offered separate quarters and separate rations. This was due to the fact that many of the NCOs were getting

divorced because of all the time spent away from family. This was one of the major unforeseen problems the Air Force had to wrestle with in the Minuteman program. As the NCOs moved into the barracks, many of us thought we had died and gone to heaven. My two roomies and I chose separate rats and rented a small apartment in Great Falls. I've got to admit, it was pretty neat but I sure did miss my pinochle games and that great SOS at the Chuck Wagon.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

22 October 1962 - after eating chow, several of us went to the TV room in the barracks to see President Kennedy make an important announcement regarding the Cuba situation that had been brewing. It was late in the afternoon as I recall. After the speech, we sat silent for a moment almost dumbfounded because I think we all sensed what was coming. Within minutes we were ordered to report to our duty stations where we learned the entire armed forces were placed in DEFCON 2. One of the guys asked a senior NCO what that meant. The reply: "We're one step away from pulling the trigger, this is the real thing."

With a thorough briefing, we began preparing to assemble RVs and warheads for transport to the field. We already had a couple that were ready to go in storage. All the training and expertise paid off that night. Around 8 to 10 hours after reporting for duty, the first Mk 5 RV had been installed, the targeting crew did their job and the first Minuteman was placed in what we then called "Emergency Combat Capability" with the 10th Strategic Missile Squadron (10SMS). To the best of my recollection, the site was either A-07 or A-09. This is why Kennedy called us "The Nation's Ace in the Hole". We were the first. Without a doubt, the Russians knew all this and without a doubt, it helped get their attention.

We continued at a frenetic pace for the next 30 days. Typically, 16 hour days were normal, weekends included. The payoff was the missile squadrons and wing reaching operational readiness well ahead of schedule. Finally, we were able to begin returning to a more normal life, enjoying our hobbies, the many activities Montana had to offer, the weekend trips to Canada and the abundant activities in the city of Great Falls, as well as on base.

Cops and Robbers and Other Things

The winter of late 1963 and early 1964 were particularly severe. Thank God for our parkas, leggings and bunny boots! As luck would have it, the 6 volt batteries

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Malmstrom Maintenance (Continued from Page 3)

used at the LCFs and missile sites were found to be unsatisfactory and therefore condemned. As the new replacements were installed, the old ones were stacked in the middle of the MIMS hangar. We ended up with a huge mountain of well charged, military spec 6 volt batteries. Remember, we had to use either dip stick heaters, head bolt heaters or an incandescent light to keep our car engines warm enough to crank the next day. Our DCM, magnanimous fellow that he was, told us we could each take some of the reject batteries to wire into our cars for extra cranking power for the cold temperatures. So we did. We figured if we could make a B-52 fly with bailing wire we could make our cars run with bubble gum. Were we good, or what?

Shortly after placing four of the batteries in my trunk and wiring them, I was stopped at the main gate and the guard inspected my vehicle. Of course, he noticed these were military issue batteries and Clancy was about to lower the boom. Before I knew it I had a date with the OSI. They placed me in a room with a small table, a chair, a pad of paper, a pen, and of course, the room had a one way mirror which I guess I wasn't supposed to notice. They interrogated me and I told them the truth. Then they told me they would leave while I wrote a confession. They left, I doodled on the paper, they were not happy campers. They dismissed me.

After they investigated more thoroughly, they discovered they would have to court-martial the whole wing. Everyone from the janitor to the DCM. We all had batteries. Unlike us, I just don't think the OSI had enough productive work to do. Maybe they should have concentrated more on chasing spies around the badlands of eastern Montana.

Activities on Base

As the base and wing grew, so did the available activities. The auto shop was ever popular but the bays had to be reserved to work on your car. The gym was another popular place. A number of us worked out on a regular basis, especially with weights. At the time, the Air Force was big on what was called the 5BX Program which was an adaptation of what was used in the Royal Canadian Air Force. 5BX stood for 5 Basic Exercises. Bottom line was - no fatties allowed. Skiing through the Ski Club afforded trips to places like King's Mountain.

We had a Civil Air Patrol squadron on base. I became an advisor to the CAP since I had been a CAP Cadet in my high school years in Colorado. The kids who were members of the squadron were children of military personnel serving at Malmstrom as well as chil-



C-133 used to transport missiles

dren from town who otherwise had no affiliation with the military. During the summer of 1964 we flew our Montana CAP squadron to Lowry AFB on a C-119 Flying Boxcar for a two week summer encampment. The kids were phenomenal. They even got rides in a T-33 jet trainer. I wonder to this day if any of them became pilots. By the way, about 25% of the squadron were girls.

In an attempt to include the families in on the activities and mission of the 341MIMS, the CO held a couple of open houses in the squadron maintenance hangar. It was perfect for "show and tell". We'd usually have them in the afternoon complete with finger food, snacks, soft drinks, and - "The Devil Made Us Do It" - a couple of kegs of cold beer. I understand the times are a bit different now. A good time was always had by all and gave us all a chance to socialize and unwind a bit.

Transporting Missiles and Explosives

The methods of getting the missiles to the base were by rail or aircraft. Warheads were usually flown in by a military contractor known as Logair. The backbone of the Logair fleet at the time was the C-46, the Curtiss Commando of WWII fame. It had a cigar shaped fuselage, twin engines and size similar to the Douglas C-47 Sky Train which was widely used after the war as the DC-3. Our missiles were often flown in on the C-133 Cargomaster. She was capable of hauling heavy loads for long distances. To say she was a beautiful aircraft is an understatement.

Winter 1963/64 and the Flood of 1964

Bitter cold and profuse amounts of snow were the hallmarks of the winter of 1963/64. For a one month stretch the temperature fluctuated between zero and minus 35 degrees. In all honesty, the cold, snow, whiteouts, and all the features associated with bitter winter weather seemed to have little or no effect on our operations at the

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Malmstrom Maintenance (Continued from Page 4)*Flooded Great Falls*

base. If anything, the nighttime scrambles of the F-101 Voo-Doo's of the 29th Fighter Interceptor Squadron were most impressive. I can still hear the sharp crackling of their lit afterburners as they would climb vertically into the clear, black Montana sky.

With the winter thaw came the great flood of 1964. As I recall, it was early in June and the Sun river overflowed its banks in a major way. One of the hardest hit areas was Great Falls and the areas of the rivers that fed the Missouri. About 35 people died as a result of the flood. Many of us on base contributed our time and help when not on duty to help sandbag, move people and just help where help was needed.

Life in Great Falls and Montana

Money, Money, Money - When I arrived in Great Falls, I discovered silver dollars were a primary form of currency in use in the area. It's not that I was unfamiliar with them, being a Colorado boy, but in Montana they were a common form of exchange and were everywhere. I made a habit of collecting them since numismatics had been a favorite hobby since childhood. I managed to collect virtually every silver dollar for every year from 1880 through 1904 from every mint which included Denver, New Orleans, San Francisco, Philadelphia and Carson City.

Drink and Dance - While the squadron dominated our lives and activities, the Great Falls and Montana provided welcome relief and an opportunity to throw on the "civvies" and do whatever it was that GI's do. Imagine that!!

The city had a good number of dance halls and pubs. A couple of our favorites were the J bar T and the Rangers Club in Black Eagle. The J Bar always had great live music and one of the more popular requests was "Wipe Out" so we could get in to the drumming as we danced. The twist, mashed potatoes, limbo, western swing, two step, and of course, just plain old, feel good,

belly rubbin' were the more popular dances of the period. Tomato beer was one of the more popular drinks. We'd order them by the pitcher. Other favorites were scotch and soda (owing to the famous song by the Kingston Trio from the 50's), bourbon and Coke, Cuba Libres (rum and Coke with a twist of lime), and the ever popular Moscow Mule, a copper mug about 1/2 to 3/4 full of ice, a shot of vodka, topped it off with ginger beer or ginger ale and a twist of lime. Other pubs we enjoyed were the small jazz clubs. There were a few on Central Avenue that had wonderful jazz trios and quartets. We could sit for hours just listening to great live jazz and really relax. One place I remember in particular had a circular firepit we could sit around and warm up on those cold winter nights. After the pubs closed we'd converge on Tracy's Restaurant on Central Ave. or Scheffi's Pancake House on 10th Ave. South.

Montana had everything a man could ask for, even - how do I put this - bordello's? Call them what you will, they were ubiquitous. Though prostitution was not legal, it wasn't illegal either. Montana was still living it's old west and mining heritage. By and large, it was a situation of live and let live. Law enforcement didn't bother them and they didn't bother the communities.

Fishing and Hunting - Along with all the summer and winter outdoor sports, fishing and hunting were probably considered the premier activities, especially for a Rocky Mountain boy like myself. Weekend jaunts to places like the Bob Marshall wilderness in search of Dolly Varden trout not only gave a lot of enjoyment but an opportunity to discover the beautiful and rugged state of Montana. One of the NCOs in the RV shop built a smoker in his backyard out of an old kitchen range for smoking fish. He would bring fresh smoked trout into the shop for us to snack on. The smoked fish was "to die for". I'd wager nothing has changed over the many years since..

I was fortunate when it came to hunting. The weapons and RV assembly teams (we had three) consisted of two senior airmen and a senior NCO. My lead NCO was a grizzled, WWII Master Sergeant. He was also a native Montanan who knew his hunting. During hunting season of 1963, the three of us not only filled our deer tags but filled the tags of a number of others who had given us their tags to use. We ended up getting 27 deer that season. All that venison fed the Sarge's family of six children and wife who was debilitated with MS.

We made about 300 pounds of venison sausage and got plenty of roasts and steaks with all that meat. We

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Malmstrom Maintenance (Continued from Page 5)

The Black Hawk Smoke Stack at the Smelter

The "second tallest stack in the world" is gone now almost went broke buying all the pig casings, spices and suet to make that much sausage. You haven't lived until you have spent a couple of days making 300 pounds of sausage from scratch. Once the casings were filled, we had to tie each link off, package them and freeze them. As an aside, the ranchers loved our flight parkas. As a matter of fact, in exchange for a parka, some of the ranchers would go out and kill an elk, dress it and quarter it. All we had to do was pick it up. The cost of a hunting license back then was \$6 which included two deer tags, one elk, and as I recall, one bear. The license also made you eligible for an extra deer and elk.

A Note in Closing

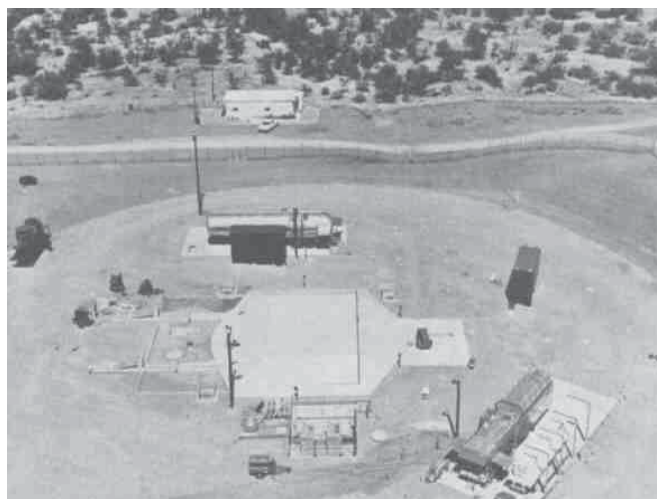
For those interested in the history of the 341SW, the Minuteman, nuclear weapons, or the military in general, many sources are available, including the Malmstrom AFB Museum, the National Atomic Museum in Albuquerque, the book "US Nuclear Weapons, The Secret History" by Chuck Hansen, and a lot of web sources.

The recollections I have presented here are my experiences. The times were not always pleasant. Far from it. But I maintained a good sense of humor and being young, I always looked forward to tomorrow. I was never disappointed. My Minuteman and SAC experience turned me into a man. Never again could I be the young, naive 17 year old that I was when I enlisted.

Now, the 341SW is one of the oldest combat wings in the Air Force. Its history and heritage is colorful and its citations many. The wing, the maintenance squadrons and the four missile squadrons continue to quietly perform their duties, professionally and usually unnoticed. The men and women of today's 341SW continue to build on a tradition and heritage that was started many years ago. I have no doubt that the old SAC ethics

and humor still exist. To each of you, past, present, and those yet to come, I salute you. I hope you find as much pride, in the future, as I still do, because of my association with such an exemplary unit.

The author, Dwight "Skip" Spencer served in the USAF from August 1960 to August 1964 as a Nuclear Weapons Arming & Fusing Systems Specialist (AFSC 331X0 A&B). His first assignment was with the 4228th Strategic Wing, Columbus AFB, MS, a B-52F wing with Hound Dog missiles. After going back to tech school for training in the Mk 5/W-59 configuration for the new Minuteman missile system, he arrived at Malmstrom AFB in June 1962 and embarked, in his words, "on 26 of the best months of my life." He lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico

**Locked Out - from the Inside** - by Jim

Reynolds, MbrNo L166, Tucson, AZ

On 22 November 1977 at Davis-Monthan's Titan II site 571-9, blast door 9 could not be opened by the two crewmembers for the "Quick Changeover Check beyond Door 9." This check was usually done with one oncoming and one off-going crewmember while the officers do whatever they had to do – or this was done by two oncoming crewmembers after the off-going crew had departed the complex. This involved the following major items: Checking the "Vapor Detector Panel" between doors 8 and 9, turning on the launch duct lights in the long cableway, checking the seal on the electrical junction box on level 2, checking the seal on the electrical junction box and the diesel on level 3, a quick check of HS-2 System on level 6, checking the seal on the electrical junction box and switching over the air compressor on level 7, opening the access door on level 8 and looking in to make sure no one had taken the missile during the off-going crew's shift – this is why the launch duct lights were turned on earlier and to hear the klaxon and VSS test on the other side of blast door 9.

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Titan Door *(Continued from Page 6)*

The crew contacted the 390SMW Command Post, who set up a conference call with Job Control, Quality Control, the MIMS hydraulic shop and anyone else that they thought should be involved. It was determined, with SAC's unhappy blessing, that two individuals should be lowered down, one at a time, by a crane through the topside silo door, make entry at level 1, and open blast door 9 from the silo side.

A five man maintenance team was quickly rounded up and on their way. Upon arrival at the complex, the team received one of the most extensive briefings that they had ever had! Command Post, Job Control, and just about everyone else, including SAC, were on a conference call. The telephone receiver was on top on the tech order cabinet so everything was heard and verified. The maintenance team went back up topside to get things ready. First, the crew to partially opened the silo door, using the "Emergency Silo Closure Door Opening Procedure," which up until this time had only used in the trainer, never in the real world! With this done, there was a quick positioning of the A-16 crane, and a quick and safe lowering of the first individual into the launch duct. Since the silo door was not completely in the open configuration, I can't remember if we installed safety poles and chains or not. SSgt James "JJ" Jensen was the first to be lowered down to the level 1 access door diving platform. It's a very good thing that the level 1 padlocks had been permanently removed from the equipment side of the launch duct or JJ would have had to go in on level 2, or lower, and wait for SSgt Randy Hakman who was the next individual to be lowered down by crane. During the time that JJ was on the diving board, he had to continually make eye contact with an individual topside so that the "Two Man" and "No Lone Zone" policies were not violated, and keep in continuous voice contact.

As soon as both had exited the launch duct, their presence was verified in the silo equipment area and that the silo access door open light was out, the topside team started to get the A-16 out of the way, so that the silo door could be shut, and the temperature could get back to normal in the launch duct. Meanwhile at blast door 9, JJ and Randy found that the problem was a broken I-bolt in the pin box on the silo side of Door 9. We know what the result of this was! Every blast door I-bolt had to be inspected, and replaced if it looked bad. This was the first time in the history of the Titan II (and ICBM weapons systems) that a lone individual had permission, if unable to comply fully, to knowingly violate the No Lone Zone

and Two Man policies

The maintenance personnel were: Team Chief SSgt James Jensen and SSgt Randal Hakman of the hydraulic shop, and SSgt Michael Hallczuk Jr., SSgt James Reynolds and Sgt Earl Jarrett, missile maintenance technicians. The combat crew on duty, crew S-101, was Capt Larry Tice, commander, 1Lt Clarence Williams Jr., deputy, SSgt Daniel Kitchens, ballistic missile analyst technician and AIC Lawrence Nidetz, missile facilities technician. Everyone involved received a "Letter of Recognition of Personnel" from the wing commander, Col C. H. Greenly, and those of us in the MIMS received one from the Wing DCM Col Thomas Wright, with an endorsement from the MIMS commander, LtCol Joseph Friedman. This was an prime example of a problem identified by a combat crew, even though it was a standboard crew pulling a regular alert, and maintenance personnel working together to insure that this weapons system never had to be used during its lifetime, 1962 to 1988.).

Another South Dakota Blizzard -

by Bill West, MbrNo A1361, Tempe, AZ

As part of the 44th Missile Security Squadron at Ellsworth in the 70s, we missile cops worked a variety of rotating shifts in the field. Most of the time it was two days on, four days off and 12 hours on duty at the LCF. We also worked other variations of shifts.

I recall it was New Year's Eve, 1975. I was a Flight Security Controller (FSC). At that time we were rotating three days on and six days. Of course, those six days off more times than not usually included some kind of training on base or other commitment. Our security crew was just about to wrap up our there days at C-01 LCF near Phillip, SD. All of us were looking forward to getting relief, get back to base and get ready to celebrate New Year's Eve. Wrong! Mother nature shut down everything with a good old fashioned famous northern plains blizzard. Whiteout conditions prevailed. It snowed sideways! No relief crews could make it out to anybody including the capsule officers. The interstate was closed, the two lane state highways were blocked. It was ugly.

We cancelled plans with wives and girlfriends back at base or Rapid City and reluctantly gave in to our fate. New Year's day came and went. Then another day. We were all getting antsy. Our clothes and fatigues were getting a bit gamey. The cook started to run out of those famous "foil packs" of food. In the Charlie day room we did have a color tv. If we were lucky, we could pick up one channel, a snowy KOTA-TV from Rapid. This, of

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Blizzard (Continued from Page 7)

course in the days before widespread cable tv or satellite. The radio station reception was even worse that far out in the field.

We continued on with our extended alert tour. Finally on the sixth day the weather broke and roads were clear enough to finally get relief crews out to the LCF. Looking back on the memory of this event, no one froze to death or suffered frostbite. Everyone was safe and realized that blizzards “come with the territory” of pulling alerts at the far-flung LCF’s of the now deactivated Minuteman IIs of the 44th Missile Wing at Ellsworth. We were so glad to be going back to base that I don’t believe we even stopped at Wall Drug for coffee on the way home...!



The Incredible Defense Support Program Satellite

- by LtCol AB Barredo, MbrNo A2216, Broomfield, CO

Have you ever wondered sitting in that 60-foot deep, egg-shaped cocoon what kicks off the chain of events that makes all your training pay off to put “Hands on Keys?” Well for the past 30-plus years, perched in its 22,000 mile nesting orbit, the Defense Support Program (DSP) satellite has reliably and steadily reported missiles launched from anywhere in the world, kicking off the first link in missile warning for America.

By all first impressions it looks like a large coffee can with four paddles and an inverted nose cone, as if someone accidentally put it on backwards. Not elegant, not alien-like, not futuristic and something a child may have even conceived with crayons and some scratch paper. But this unassuming piece of space hardware has all the sophistication needed to conduct a critical wartime space surveillance and tracking mission. In fact over the years, it has surprised its makers and users with the level of detection it has provided from the original

design to see large ICBMs, to the detection of current emerging threats of third world nations and their dimmer, smaller, yet threatening capabilities.

The 32-foot long spacecraft is approximately the size of a yellow school bus. It has several major systems to make it invaluable while in its parking spot eyeballing earth; the encrypted communication system to talk to us, thermal system to keep the components functioning in the deathly cold of space, propulsion system to take evasive and defensive maneuvers, and of course the sensor with its cell array to sense infrared signatures left by launching missiles. Redundancies are built in for critical components to provide backup capability in the event something happens to a primary system. The spacecraft and its brethren have pleasantly performed beyond its original design life to keep watch over our nation. So if you are ever wondering what can cause that “deedle, deedle” tone, know the remarkable DSP satellite is alert and performing. Many missileers have had the pleasure to work with this satellite by proceeding from “shooter” to “sensor” roles experiencing the end-to-end process in the warning chain. From the Cold War, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom and now with Operation Iraqi Freedom, our nation will continue to rely on our old trustworthy friend, standing watch from the high ground and ensuring “They shall not pass!”

For more information, see http://www.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet_print.asp?fsID=96&page=1

Looking Glass Celebrates 45th Anniversary

- By Maj Richard Hughes, US Strategic Command Airborne Command Post, MbrNo A1685, Bellevue, NE

The date 3 February was a special day for the men and women who fly, maintain and control the US Strategic Command’s Airborne Command Post, also known as Looking Glass. The date marked the 45th anniversary of the Looking Glass mission, which began on 3 February 1961.

The world has changed greatly since that first operational sortie, however some things have remained constant, such as the ability of Looking Glass to command, control and communicate with American strategic forces and the steadfast professionalism of those involved in this crucial mission.

In the early 1960s, the Strategic Air Command wanted a survivable means to control the nation’s bomber, tanker, reconnaissance and intercontinental ballistic missile forces. A mobile platform was needed to replace the

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Looking Glass (Continued from Page 8)

underground command center if it was destroyed by enemy attack or otherwise incapacitated. Until the early 1960s, the only threat posed to SAC was that of the small Soviet bomber force. However, the advent of ICBMs, with their rapid flight time and destructive power, forced the SAC leadership to adapt to the new threat.

The Air Force selected highly specialized EC-135s aircraft to fulfill the new mission. These aircraft had an extensive array of then state-of-the-art communications and monitoring equipment, and room for a large battlestaff headed up by a general officer who served as the Airborne Emergency Action Officer, or AEAO. The aircraft was given the name Looking Glass because it mirrored the ability of the SAC underground command center to control the nation's nuclear forces. Additionally, Looking Glass EC-135s could transfer fuel to other aircraft via a KC-135 style boom.

On that cold February day in 1961, SAC officials directed Looking Glass to perform continuous airborne alert. From 1961 on there was an EC-135 ABNCP airborne around-the-clock, every day of the year, until 24 July 1990, a period of 29 years, five months and 21 days. Over 280,000 flight hours had been flown without accident, a feat directly attributed to the spectacular accomplishments of the EC-135 maintenance crews. The supporting security forces, operational support troops and staff were all key factors in 29 successful years of airborne alert.

However, the end of the Cold War did not mean the end of the Looking Glass mission, and aircraft and crews occasions. Time and time again, ABNCP has proven its constant ability to provide survivable, enduring and reliable communications for the nation's military and civilian leadership.

Much has changed since first Looking Glass took flight. What hasn't changed is the ability of the ABNCP and the people who fly, maintain and support it to adapt to the new challenges faced by our nation. As they have for 45 years, the Looking Glass continues its constant vigil and it continues to shine.

Tac Missileers Reunion - "The Joe Perkins Group from Florida" - by

Bob Bolton, MbrNo A1199, Lawrenceville, GA

"Hmmm!! Was that a tour group of some TAC Missile Boys?" We occupied 143 suites with 304 members and wives at our Nashville get-together. A very good showing! A handful of the attendees made it a fully



week in Nashville, most were there for the 1-3 June official days, and several came for only one day. No matter the time spent, all seemed to enjoy our happening. A big thumbs-up to everyone who made the effort to join us. We had representatives from every region of the country and one devoted missileer came all the way from the Philippines. At registration each member was presented with a welcoming packet containing among other items an elegant personalized name tag, commemorative digital clock and a replica of our Tac Missileers badge with blinking red LED nose cone. We saw them blinking all over Nashville.

As always I hung out with the usual suspects from Grünstadt but took the time to chat with other folks at the odd moment here and there. The mood was much less frenetic than we had experienced at earlier reunions. More like a family reunion this time. A lot of the members did their own interesting things beyond the reunion venue. Golf, antique hunting and exploring Nashville and local area highlights on their own or on the old standby, Gray Line Tours, were popular. Many visited the Frist Center Of The Visual Arts in the beautifully restored historic post office, the Ryman Auditorium, location of the original Grand Ole Opry radio show, also known as the Mother Church of Country Music, the Country Music Hall Of Fame, an audiovisual rush of the pure glitz that is country music, and many missileers did the "Honky Tonkin" thing at the Wild Horse Saloon, Tootsies Orchid Lounge, Woody's, The Stage and Rippy's, all located downtown on Broadway Street.

During Thursday's business meeting the board of directors were reelected by unanimous approval. Board members are Joe Perkins, Executive Director, Julian Espozeto, President, Max Butler, Membership Director/Treasurer, Larry Emerson, Secretary, Bob Bolton, Newsletter Editor, Curtis McKee, Publisher and Art Gust, Historian. The membership present also voted to hold our next reunion in Tucson, AZ. Members Baldner

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Tac Missileers (Continued from Page 9)

and DeVoy will do the initial reconnaissance in Tucson for our 2007 meeting.

The river dinner cruise on the General Jackson was well worth the trip alone, not only did we enjoy a great meal with first-rate service, we were also entertained by the outstanding Peking Acrobats. Our "formal" evening on Friday was first-rate and all enjoyed the banquet, companionship, formal moments, presentations and door prize drawings.

Those staying the bonus day found Saturday's planned activity a big hit, more than one hundred attended the early evening Grand Ole Opry show. The warm-up performer, a Minnie Pearl impressionist, pointed out several of the larger groups in the audience. One group she announced was the "Joe Perkins group from Florida". That must have been us because we all applauded and cheered when she acknowledged our presence with that slightly misleading moniker. Each morning we assembled in the hotel's dining area and atrium to enjoy a most excellent, complimentary, cooked to order breakfast. Many lingered at their tables and chatted well into the mid-morning hours before setting off on individual or group sight-seeing missions. Late afternoons found the us gathering again to enjoy the complementary happy two hours after the day's outing. Sunday, after breakfast, most of the members headed out to their homes. Parting hugs and handshakes were breaking out spontaneously all around the hotel as each person or couple departed. Most everyone was already thinking about the next reunion in Tucson, 2007. Nashville 2005 was a most outstanding experience.

45th Anniversary Reunion for 1st Minuteman Launch

- 45SW Press Release

The 45th anniversary of the first launch of an Air Force Minuteman missile, 1 February 2006, marked the return of the "missileers" to Cape Canaveral AFS.

About 100 mostly-retired Air Force members and government contractors who worked on various ICBM programs here during the 1950s, 60s and 70s gathered for a reunion in the city of Cape Canaveral. As part of the reunion, roughly 35 of them toured Cape Canaveral AFS with their family members. One of the tour stops was Complex 31, site of the first Minuteman launch on 1 February 1961.

LtCol (Ret) P.J. Wilson and his wife Roma, of Potomac Falls, VA were among the attendees. As a first lieutenant assigned to the 6555th Test Wing here in 1961,



his job was to make sure the launch pad was ready to support that first launch. He also analyzed telemetry data from the reentry vehicle. "There was absolute elation with the successful first launch," said LtCol Wilson. "The Cold War was on. The pressure was really great to meet the date."

Since the program was classified, LtCol Wilson couldn't tell his wife Roma what he was working on at the Cape. "That's the way things were and I didn't ask any questions," she said. "But I knew he was working on something supersecret for the nation."

Although he served at several bases during his Air Force career, LtCol Wilson spent 17 years working on the Minuteman program, culminating with a stint at the Pentagon as the Minuteman Element Program Monitor in 1972. "We kept improving it to the point where the Russians couldn't keep up with defending it."

Paul Waite, of Viera, FL, organized the reunion and was also part of the launch team for the first Minuteman mission. Now retired, he worked as a civilian contractor for North American Aviation as the supervisor of ground equipment.

"I was asked to stand on the roof of hangar 1 and watch the launch by the group leader I worked for. He wanted me to witness the staging events," Mr. Waite said. "I was so nervous. My hands and the binoculars shook so badly it was hard for me to tell when it staged."

Fortunately, the missile performed flawlessly and after a flight of 4,600 miles its reentry vehicle landed within the designated impact zone. Over the years, three versions of Minuteman missiles were successfully tested from here. Ultimately, the system went into operational status and became a mainstay of America's nuclear deterrent forces.

Gordon Dittmore, Redlands, CA, worked for TRW and served as the project engineer for the 1,000 Minuteman silos built at various bases, including two here. He said, "The reunion reminded me of all the great

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1st Minuteman *(Continued from Page 10)*

people and work that made the Minuteman program successful. This weapon system destabilized and bankrupted the Russians because they couldn't counter it, so they finally gave up."

Complexes 31 and 32 were built here between July 1959 and July 1960 to support the Minuteman program. Each complex had one blockhouse and two launch pads. The two "A" pads were constructed as conventional flat pads, and the two "B" pads were built as ballistic missile silos. The sites were modified subsequently to support later versions of the Minuteman. Pad 31A supported the first Minuteman I launch. Pad 32B supported the first Minuteman II and III launches on 24 September 1964 and 16 August 1968 respectively. In all, 92 Minuteman I, II and III missiles were launched from here between 1 February 1961 and 15 December 1970. The silo at Complex 31 now serves as the burial vault for the Space Shuttle Challenger.

Next Generation Cruise Missile

by SSgt. Ryan Hansen, Air Armament Center Public Affairs

Since the late 1970s the Department of Defense has tried and failed numerous times to give the warfighter an affordable standoff cruise missile capable of taking out the enemy's air defenses early on in a conflict. That need has finally been met by the Air Force's next generation cruise missile - the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile, or JASSM. JASSM is 14 feet long and 2,250 pounds, and is an autonomous, conventional munition with a standoff range of more than 200 nautical miles. It is designed to defeat heavily defended, high-priority enemy targets deep behind enemy lines. JASSM can be released in virtually any type of weather and uses its inertial navigation and Global Positioning Systems to find its intended target and then its infrared seeker for pinpoint accuracy just before impact. Once in the air, the stealthy cruise missile can reach high subsonic speeds at .85 mach. It is also equipped with an anti-jammer that keeps the enemy in its crosshairs regardless of their technology or capabilities. This weapon would give both fighter and bomber aircraft the ability to strike heavily defended and high-value targets in any weather and keep them out of harms way. The last attempt to try and provide this capability was the Tri-Service Standoff Attack Missile in 1986. But after eight years of development, the program was terminated because of problems with the weapon and escalating costs. The need still remained, so DOD went back to the drawing board. "The US desperately needed a first-day-of-the-war stealthy cruise

missile that could go in and take out those threats that put our manned platforms at risk," said Gerry Freisthler, director of the Air Armament Center's engineering and acquisition excellence directorate. "We needed something to go in and take on those double digit (Surface-to-Air Missiles) that may be able to put our aircraft and aircrews at risk, and that's how JASSM came about."

JASSM engineering and manufacturing development began in 1997 and entered low rate initial production in 2001 and reached full rate production in 2004. However, even as JASSM continued to hit milestones some challenges remained. "Achieving demonstrated in-flight reliability turned out to be our biggest challenge in the transition from development to full rate production," said Col Jim Geurts, who manages the program as the Long Range Missile Systems Group commander. "To address these challenges, we pulled together the experts from across industry and the DOD to review our plans and give us feedback to ensure we could achieve the type of reliability growth needed as we began fielding large numbers of assets in the field," Col Geurts said. Their hard work paid off and the JASSM team went back to prove the weapon could deliver on its promise. During flight tests in 2005 the weapon scored nine successes in 11 tests, followed by two more successful flights in 2006.

The weapon finished the year strong reaching initial operational capability on the B-52 Stratofortress and B-1B Lancer. More than 350 JASSMs have been delivered. "The JASSM weapon system continues to demonstrate high reliability in flight and ground testing," said MGen. Jack J. Catton Jr., director of requirements for Air Combat Command. "More and more units are gaining the capability to effectively employ the weapon system."

The second phase of the program is an extended range version, JASSM-ER, with a standoff capability to more than 500 nautical miles. This version has a new engine and can carry more fuel. It will first be integrated on the B-1B and will be ready for flight testing later this spring. "A JASSM-ER will have the same lethality and stealth as a JASSM, but it will deliver that knockout punch from more than twice as far away," said LtCol. Stephen Davis, JASSM Block 2 Squadron commander. "In the simplest terms, this means some child's mom or dad won't have to fly their B-1 through enemy threats to strike many deeply placed targets." LRMSG is also adding a weapons data link that will enable key command and control elements to communicate with the weapon after it's already in flight. "The data link will plug the weapon right

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JASSM (Continued from Page 11)*JASSM and F-16 - Lockheed Martin Photos*

into the warfighting network,” said Michele Brazel, LRMSG deputy director. “They’ll be able to track what each missile is doing in flight, retarget it in flight if need be, and then get a good indication of whether or not it destroyed its target.”

JASSM is scheduled to be one of the first weapons to be Universal Armament Interface compliant. UAI is a joint initiative that will allow the Air Force to incorporate new precision-guided munitions onto its aircraft without requiring major changes to each aircraft’s software. New development activity is also planned to enable JASSM to enhance its maritime engagement capability and become the air launched weapon of choice not only for highly defended fixed and relocatable land targets, but moving maritime targets as well. The Australian Defense Force selected JASSM for their F/A-18 Hornet fleet. The Air Force plans to buy 2,400 JASSMs and 2,500 JASSM-ERs with production through 2018

SWC becomes SIDC - by SSgt Don Branum, 50SW Public Affairs

The Space Warfare Center became the Space Innovation and Development Center in a formal ceremony in March. The name has changed, but the organization’s mission remains the same, said Col Larry Chodzko, SIDC commander. “One of the things I want people to understand is that there’s no change in our mission,” he said. “What’s changed is the new focus Gen Lord and now LtGen Klotz have given us to concentrate on.”

“This is more than a simple name change,” said LtGen Klotz to a gathering of about 100 SIDC members during the renaming ceremony. “It is a symbol of our renewed focus. This change further helps the integration of the Air and Space Warfare Centers. The changes we have made - and will make in the future - better enable this center to test, develop, evaluate and rapidly respond to emerging requirements. Just like in the television com-

mercial, you don’t make the airplanes, or missiles, or satellites - you make the airplanes, missiles, and satellites better. More importantly, you do things at a pace unmatched anywhere in the Department of Defense. You set the standard for innovation.”

In one of the more significant changes for the newly renamed SIDC, the 3rd Space Experimentation Squadron was activated. The 3SES is the only Air Force organization with a mission to develop operational concepts for space systems, said BGen Robert Worley, AFSPC Director of Strategic Plans, Programs, Analysis, Assessment, and Lessons Learned. In addition, the SIDC’s 26th and 527th Space Aggressor Squadrons will realign under Air Combat Command but will still be physically located at Schriever. The date of that realignment has not yet been announced. “We’ll still look out for them,” Colonel Chodzko said. “We have to maintain our close relationship. But overall, the organization and the command will be richer. The aggressor squadrons will bring in information from the operational side of the house, and then take things (from the SIDC) to information warriors.” The SIDC’s focus will expand as well, allowing and even requiring the organization to think creatively, said Colonel Chodzko. However, support and capability for the warfighter will remain the primary focus. The desired result of the SIDC’s process is new tactics, techniques and procedures that will benefit warfighters. “If all we accomplish is to bring back just one extra Soldier or Airman, it will be worth it,” Colonel Chodzko said. “That’s why, to me, this is inspirational—because the things we work on here have the chance to do that.”

AFSPC Leader Retires - by Capt Karim

Ratey, AFSPC Public Affairs

Air Force Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley presided over the retirement ceremony for General Lance W. Lord, Commander of Air Force Space Command, on 3 March. More than 700 current and former national defense leaders, active and retired senior officers, civic leaders and active-duty members witnessed the celebration of the general’s 37-year distinguished career of service to the US Air Force and the country. General Lord led the command and its approximately 40,000 space and missile professionals from 19 April 2002 to 31 March 2006.

During the ceremony, Gen Moseley presented Gen Lord with the Distinguished Service Medal, first oak leaf cluster, for his service as Commander of AFSPC.

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Lord Retires (Continued from Page 12)

Some of his accomplishments highlighted include: enabling the command to provide combat forces and capabilities to NORAD and US Strategic Command; supporting combat operations around the world to include Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom; establishment of the National Security Space Institute; the last Titan IV launch; and the Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile weapon system deactivation. General Moseley expanded on Gen Lord's leadership. "Lance, this current generation of space leaders and leaders across our entire Air Force looked to Gen Bernard Schriever as the pioneer and father of space and missiles," said Gen Moseley. "However, I think there's another leader among us that - future leaders will look up to. The lieutenants and captains today, and the Airmen and cadets of today will grow up looking at you. They'll look at Lance Lord as that next generation of space leader because of what you've done."

Gen Lord spoke about two highlights he was most proud of as AFSPC commander. First, he thanked the enlisted professionals who bestowed him with their highest honor of the Order of the Sword. Second, he described the High Frontier Adventures program. "Most recently, I had a chance to teach a math and science class with 27 young 6th graders at the Discovery Canyon Campus in Colorado Springs," said Gen Lord. "Our whole idea was to get the word out from us to participate with young people to help drive their interest in science and mathematics." Colorado Governor Bill Owen declared 3 March 2006, Gen Lance Lord Day in the state of Colorado. Gen Lord leaves behind a lasting legacy in AFSPC. As the general was fond of saying, "If you're not in space, you're not in the race."

Questions for AAFM

We get questions from members and others, ranging from simple requests for information to detailed questions about the history, operation or units and locations.

For those looking for details about a specific system or unit, we provide member contacts who can give good answers. That is why some of you gotten calls from TV and film producers and authors doing research on one of our missile systems. Here are a answers to questions members asked about specific issues.

Titan II Dash One - we told you that missing pages would be provided when available (they aren't yet) and the TCCPS/PARPS manuals would follow (we lost our source for these books so are looking for another.)

44MW Book or Coins - The Ellsworth museum is scanning the history book onto CD, as we are - one of many pubs in the queue to scan. We aren't aware of any 44MW coins - they did have launch key pins at the closing.

Minuteman Flags - Two sources, the Missile Maintenance Association - contact Bryan Clarkson, 91 MXG/RA. 300 Minuteman Drive. Minot AFB, ND 58705, 701-723-6207 or GOMPFS Displays, Inc. Box 1983, 110 University Dr., Fargo ND 58107 701-293-1900, gompfsdisplays.com

Patches - every patch we have is listed on our "Donations and Store" web page and the back cover of each newsletter - if you are looking for a specific patch we can put an note in our e-mail updates and newsletter, and there are several sources on the web.

Locator - if you are trying to find a missileer that isn't in our database, we can ask in our updates or newsletter.

Lapel Pins - we now have all six varieties of the missile badge and are adding the new space badge soon. Look on the back cover or the web page to order

AAFM Board Elections

Every two years, we elect four board members to six year terms. At the conclusion of each board election, the twelve board members elect the AAFM officers for two year terms. Over a thousand of you have already voted by e-mail, and ballots are in the mail for those who don't have e-mail.

You are asked to vote for the four candidates that the Nominating Committee selected, or any of the four plus write-in candidates to total four. The committee nominated Jay Kelley, Bob Kelchner and John Howe for reelection and nominated founding board member Lance Lord to replace Jim Burba, who has served since we started. If you haven't voted yet, get your ballot in by e-mail, using the card provided by mail or by sending a note to AAFM voting for the four nominees or any of the four with write-in names to total four candidates. If you are interested in serving on the board, send a resume to us well before the 2008 elections.

A Word from the Association

Cheyenne - We are less than six months from our next National Meeting - have had lots of calls and e-mails about the upcoming event - make sure you are there with us.

Elections - many of you have already voted, and post card ballots have been mailed for those who didn't have an e-mail address on file or the address was invalid. If I didn't get an error message (bad address), you will not be mailed a post card, because we assume you got the e-mail ballot. A reminder - we elect four board members every two years. The nominating committee looks at all those who volunteer or have been suggested, so we are always looking for members who want to serve. Keep in mind that the committee looks at members who continue to contribute to AAFM's success, so for those who question why we keep some board members in office for a long time, it is because of what they have done to advance AAFM programs, keep us in touch with the active force or been very active in other areas. If you are interesting in serving a six year term as a board member, get us a resume before the next elections in 2008.

AAFM Mosaic Prints - We signed and numbered prints of Darrell Anderson's dichroic glass mosaic, "Countdown, 5-4-3-2-1" available. You can order your copy either by using the form on the inside back cover or on our web page - all it takes is a donation of \$30 or more to one of our AAFM programs. You can request a specific number and it will be provided if not already picked by someone.

Member Dues - We mail out reminders a few months before your expiration date. Maj Kevin Mortensen, who works in AFSPC headquarters, takes care of these mailing for us. You can renew by check or on our web page. We also mail notices occasionally well after expiration, as well as sending a list by e-mail - keep your dues current and support AAFM programs.

Missile Patches - We are in the early stages of building a missile patch gallery on our web page. Greg Ogletree is providing scans of his entire collection of official and unofficial patches - take a look at the new gallery.

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.

Malmstrom Crews - I recognize the crew member walking through the tunnel to the blast door in the September issue. He is then Capt Junius Kershaw of the 12SMS at Malmstrom. That picture appears in LtCol Clifford Goodie's book, "Strategic Air command: A Portrait" that was published in 1965, so I would guess it was taken in about 1963 or 1964. The predeparture briefing picture was taken at the same time and features LtCol Rudig and the crews of the 10SMS, 12SMS and 490SMS, left, center and right. That looks like Steve Ellis sitting up front, flipping slides, and he also appears in the photo with the 12MS reunion article. Capt Kershaw was my crew commander for a while. He had been a B-52 pilot and was not too happy about being assigned to sitting in a hole in the ground in Montana. He missed the flying and was relegated to flying a C-47 to collect his fight pay. Wonder what happened to him? *Jim Tegar, MbrNo A1897, Littleton, CO*

First Alert - The USAFE historian's reply to MGen Boverie, on page 3 of the December 2005 AAFM Newsletter sent me to a footlocker full of odds and ends accumulated. I found 13 Sep 1955 orders sending me from the 36TFG Combat Ops, Bitburg, Germany, to Cazaux, France, where on 14 Sept I set up a mobile MARS rig in the field under the call AJ3AI/1, to support communications with Bitburg via a Paris based net controller. At that time, European landlines were undependable, microwave was in its infancy and tactical radio could not achieve the reach, hence use of the MARS mobile rig to support fighters transiting the North Atlantic, should President Eisenhower decide in favor of a French-United Kingdom request to help counter nationalization of the Suez by President Gamal Nasser. 12AF traffic indicated USAFE readiness generation, as a microcosm of EUCEM, was not significant, perhaps in expectation the

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Association of Air Force Missileers, PO Box 5693, Breckenridge, CO 80424

aafm@afmissileers.org

www.afmissileers.org

970-453-0500

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US would demur. The Washington decision was not slow in coming; there would be no wave of fighters, but not because of a Soviet threat of missiles. Rather, because the US had concluded, however painful to allies, the inevitable time for Suez transfer had arrived. By the end of 1956 the US had not only made clear the principal of self-determination in favor of Egypt, Congress appropriated \$200 million to support Middle Eastern countries and authorized military force if requested. While one could read this as increasing the potential for hostilities, the reverse was true - it had a quieting effect. For Israel, Russia, England, France and Egypt, their positions were largely postured national interests and projected conviction, albeit shallow; advocacy in favor of direct military action did flare from time-to-time from different corners but wasn't sustained. The Eisenhower Doctrine promulgated in January 1957, in effect, closed the door on military action. Tying missile alert to this "crisis" is a stretch. The Hungarian uprising was quite different, not the least of which was proximity to US assets; the 36th Tactical Fighter Wing, though in the Eiffel Mountains was minutes away from Hungary by fighter. When a Budapest radio station was seized and repeatedly transmitted heart wrenching calls to free nations for help Russia took immediate action to quell the insurrection and more importantly ensure there would be no time for outside involvement. We were not still, preparations were made for evacuating dependents to France and port cities; this was not done in response to the Suez flare. Travel kits were prepared, vehicles fuelled, important documents consolidated, dispersal routes identified, port city consolidation points selected, and nonessential personnel identified for evacuation. Intelligence indicated tanks were moving from then East Germany toward Budapest largely on a single artery. The intelligence was suspect because it was so detailed, including numbers of tank breakdowns by town. What none of us knew was the unknown high flyer occasionally detected on radar was the compartmented U-2, the most likely source of pristine data. 12AF tasked the 36TFW to make a night reconnaissance; a 52TFS pilot was briefed to fly a diversionary route to a point at which he was to enter Warsaw Pact air space, climb over Budapest sufficient to assess activity, then fly the route believed in use to move tanks for a quick assessment then RTB. On debrief, he noted no hostile fire, but he saw an extraordinary numbers of tanks on the move. The number that stayed with me was his estimate of 500 tanks headed toward Budapest. While the historian refers to the tanks

as Warsaw Pact, the evidence we had was they were Russian tanks manned by Russians operating as though a General Zukov knockoff was in the lead using the Heinz Guderian model - in spades. Russia resolved its house-keeping issue through force quickly and decisively and thereby present the world with a fait accompli and limiting US response to rhetoric. Placing missiles on alert in the absence of evacuation focused US interest upon retention of the status quo. It is important to recall Russia was at the height of her self-confidence, six years earlier she proved herself a nuclear power, and her large standing army could field massive numbers on the border almost over night. We had settled into the remnants of occupation - a measured complacency, EUCOM was heavily populated with dependents, civil servants and civilian contractor personnel; our logistics capability was a shadow of what it had been, e.g., C-119 aircraft were still in use. While the free world had no stomach to take on the Russians, placing missiles on alert sent a sign, however muted, "Let's not enlarge this." As an aside, twenty-five years later I found myself working for MGen Boverie in the Pentagon as member of the NATO AWACS Task Force. I have yet to meet a finer officer or gentleman. *Joe Conrad, MbrNo A1834, Mount Vernon, NH*

Snark Color - I am a retired AF officer and volunteer in the Restoration Division of the museum here at Wright-Pat. The museum is currently restoring their Snark missile for display in the Cold War Gallery, and a question has come up concerning the color of the launcher. The color yellow is the leading candidate at this time, since the museum has one color photo that appears to show a launcher painted thus. In addition, we have noted that BOMARC missiles from the same era also used a yellow-painted launcher arm. However, it might be best to hear what a "hands on" kind of expert would have to say about this subject. Are there any Snark personnel in your organization that you might know? A little "missileer help" will go a long ways towards ensuring the launcher is painted correctly on the first try. *Col (Ret) Ron Thurlow, Beavercreek, OH, tlow52@earthlink.net*

You can e-mail Ron or contact AAFM and we will pass the right color along to him.

Dow BOMARC - I am looking for information about the BOMARC missile facility that was part of Dow AFB. In 1964 when the Dow site was shut down the Air Force gave the City of Bangor one BOMARC missile to put on display. The missile was on display until 1970 when our

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city manager wanted it removed. Since then I have not been able to locate it. The city officials don't know where it is but would like me to let them know where it is if I find it. I will keep you informed of how I am doing.
Wally Winchell, PO Box 1128, Bangor, ME 04402-1128, wei131@msn.com

AAFM National Meeting

We are only a few weeks away from our next national gathering. If you haven't made your hotel reservations or mailed in your registration yet, go to the back cover for details on our Cheyenne meeting. We already have a significant number of registrations, and your executive director will be in Cheyenne in the next few days to finalize more of the tour details. The folks at 20AF and the 90SW are looking forward to our visit, as are the people from the local area.

You will have the opportunity to see today's missileers at work, in operations, maintenance and support, as well as learn about the history of Cheyenne and Wyoming. And for those who want to return to the past, we will have tour of an Atlas E site near Greeley.

We have added some interesting presentations for our general membership meeting, including one about the earliest testing of glide bombs and guided missiles, including test of captured German V-1s. As we did in Omaha, we will have some other good presentations during the meeting.

If you are one of the many who have said, "the check is in the mail," it's time. Get your Little America reservations made and your registration form in the mail so you can take part in our best National Meeting yet.

Taps for Missileers

Col (Ret) Walter Davison, served in Titan II in the 390SMW.

Col (Ret) Edward N. Hall, USAF's foremost rocket expert and widely considered the father of the Minuteman ICBM, and was involved in the early phases of a number of other missile programs, lived in Torrance, CA

LtCol (Ret) Eugene W. Ingold, of Great Falls MT.

Col (Ret) William A. Knapp, an AAFM member, served in Minuteman in the 44SMW and 91SMW and lived in Centennial, CO

MGen (Ret) Jimmey Morrell served in the 44SMW, as commander of the 2SW, 9SD and 45SW, at Hq SAC, Hq AFSPC, the Pentagon and White House

LtCol (Ret) Edward Reinhard, an AAFM member, served in Matador in the 585TMG and 1TMS, and lived in Billings, MT.

SAC Memorial

The Strategic Air Command memorial at the National Museum of the Air Force is progressing well - a number of organizations have joined AAFM member Ron Resh's project. You can donate to the project with a check to AAFM, or use our web page and a credit card. We will provide a single check to the project.

Reunions

Association of Air Force Missileers - 27 Sept - 1 Oct 2006 - plan now to attend our seventh National Meeting at the Little America Hotel in Cheyenne, with great tours at Warren AFB. Registration form is part of the September 2005 newsletter and later and on our web page.

556SMS (Plattsburgh Atlas) will be there, contact Mel Driskill at e-mail dgser@earthlink.net or Bruce Raleigh at braleigh@wideopenwest.com

548SMS (Forbes Atlas) will also join us, contact Don Peoples at njpeeps@att.net.

485TMW (GLCM-Florennes), 1-5 June 2006, Doubletree Hotel, Washington, DC, contact LtCol Chris (Bubba) Ayres, phone 703-693-7854 (work) or 540-288-1835 (home), e-mail christopher.ayres@js.pentagon.mil
Airborne Missile Maintenance Squadron Alumni Reunion, 24-28 April 2006, Boomtown Casino Hotel, Bossier City, LA, contact Ronald Sortor, 3980 Curtisville Road, South Branch, Michigan 48761, Phone 989-735-4050, www.ammsalumni.org, E-Mail email@ammsalumni.org

Gemini Space Program Reunion, 21-23 April 2006, at Titusville, FL AF veterans of the 6555th ATW will get together along with persons of other organizations and agencies. A cruise is planned to leave the 24th, contact Dick Gentile at 321-242-2561 or ggemini@earthlink.net.

Strategic Air Command Reunion - 24-27 May 2006, Tucson, AZ, contact Toby Romero, 4918 E Cooper St, Tucson, AZ 85711-3620, 520-327-2224, e-mail jtrome-25@excite.com

390SMW - Williamsburg, VA, 4-8 October 2006, contact John Lasher at elainelasher@aol.com

579SMS (Walker AFB Atlas), 20-23 April, 2006 Nashville, TN, contact Fred Mortimer at fmortimer@tampabay.rr.com or 727-734-3487

1, 11 and 69PBS/TMS, Matador (1953-1958), 5-9 October 2006, Albuquerque, NM, contact Joe Traina at RMTJVT@comcast.net for details.

Reunion Notices should be to AAFM as early as possible for the newsletter, web page and e-mail updates.