



NEWSLETTER



General

By Gene Walker



This is the first issue of "The 707th Radron Newsletter". In the beginning I will publish each issue as I receive enough input to warrant it. Hopefully, I will be inundated with input and will have to start scheduling future publications. Most likely, permanent headings will be established as I get a feel for the type input being received and from whom it is received. Let me know what your thoughts are. Please keep in mind that some cost will be incurred for printing and mailing the newsletter. If anyone wishes to donate to the cause, please feel free to send contributions to Barney. There is absolutely no obligation to do so. Contact information appears at the end of the newsletter. I welcome all critiques, good or bad. So, with all that said, "Let's get on with the show".

Bulletin Board

What does **Excubitores** mean? Thanks to Tim Skeen for the following:

Excubitores, which properly means watchman or sentinels of any kind, was the name given to the soldiers of the cohort, who guarded the Palace of the Roman Emperor. The commanding officer was Tribunus Excubitor. When the Emperor went for entertainment at the house of another person, the Excubitores appear to have accompanied him and to have kept guard as in his own Palace. Now you know the rest of the story.

Chat

We have an inter-net chat session each Wednesday at 2000 EST. If another day or time would be more suitable let Barney know. The Chat room is open for your use 24/7 so enjoy using it, get a group together and shoot the breeze or what ever.

Inform and be informed

The master roster is only as good as the information we

receive. If you know of any changes or if your address, phone, or email changes let us know.

Next Reunion

Yes Virginia! There is talk about having another reunion and we're willing to get involved but need your help.

Where would you like to have it? What type of extras would you like, tours-shows-whatever? How long should it be, 1-2-3-4 days? What type of meal, buffet-sit down? We've had the following suggestions and are in the process of checking them out:

Grand Rapids, Savannah, Orlando, Branson, Nashville, Washington DC, Louisville, St. Louis, and a Cruise. So let us know what you think and the area that gets the most response is the one we will pursue. Send your recommendations and preferences to:

Floyd Fisher

513-574-7431

5791 Valley Vista Way, Cincinnati, Ohio 45247

ffisher@cinci.rr.com

707th SHIRTS

For those that didn't get to order shirts Dan Capece has agreed to place quarterly orders if he receives enough requests. I think he needs 10 or 12 orders before he can place an order with the supplier. You can contact Dan at the following:

Dan Capece

561-738-7839

2906 Black Oak Ct. Boynton Beach, FL 33436

sgtdan1013@aol.com

Reunion Handout's

We have a limited number of Reunion Programs with names and location of all members found and copies of the 1956 Welcome to the 707th/Grand Rapids, Mn. Booklet, 30 pages of memories that can't be replaced. If interested contact Floyd Fisher at the #'s listed above under Next Reunion.

CD's

There are 2 CD's available from the reunion, Gus Campana's enjoyable and some what moving slide presentation and Pete Session's composite of pictures from the web site and pictures of the reunion itself. If interested you may contact them for details.

Gus at: gusbell@aol.com

407-352-3687

8031 Old Town Dr. Orlando, Fl. 32819

Pete at: wwpete@bellsouth.net

772-569-2992

6486 48th Ave. Vero Beach, Fl. 32967

A Token of our appreciation

The following widows received spent cartridges from the gun salute, at the memorial service, as a show of our appreciation for the deceased members' service to our country.

Jeree Ingle, wife of Howard Ingle; Annalee Johnson, wife of Russell Johnson; Dee Proctor, wife of Joseph Proctor, Nancy Secrist, wife of Harry Secrist; Darlene Soli, wife of Randall Soli; Margaret Thomas, wife of Normam Thomas.

From Headquarters



Permanent Memorial

At the reunion it was generally agreed, if we had leftover funds, we should donate it to a charitable organization in GPZ. The GPZ connection hereafter referred to as "HQ", have voted to give the \$500.00 donation to the Itasca County Historical Society. In return the Society is going to erect a permanent display outside the Historical Society Building honoring the Grand Rapids Air Force Station and the 707th. This was a very gracious offer, resulting in a lasting memorial to the Air Force, the Base and to those that served there.

HQ also cast their votes for a reunion to be held in GPZ in the year 2008. They felt this would give more significance to the reunion, as it will be 45 years since the closing of the base. Please send your comments in an email, U.S mail or posted on the website Bulletin Board. I'll compile all the replies and submit the results for everyone's perusal.

Sound Off What a Reunion!!! By Floyd Fisher



Thanks to all that helped put on such a memorable event and to all those that attended. To those that weren't able to make it, I'm so sorry that you missed out. I'll try and just touch on the happenings and give you a little background.

On Wednesday we had registration and the Hospitality Suite was open for all those that wished to partake.

On Thursday registration and the Hospitality Suite were open and in the early afternoon we had the Welcoming Reception. The crowd had started to grow by now and we had a very good gathering. The food was good, and the drinks plentiful. Drawing of door prizes and getting acquainted help fill the time. The rest of the day was devoted to visiting with old friends at the Hospitality Suite. Others went to check out the old haunts of Rapids. Many people went to see family and friends in the area.

On Friday the registration desk and Hospitality Suite were open and then in the afternoon we all went to the Base for the Memorial Service. This was without doubt, the high light of the entire reunion. The Service had all the aspects of a memorable occasion; The Colors were posted by the VFW color guard. There was an opening prayer by the Reverend Bill Allison and some welcoming remarks by 3 local political figures. Then there was a reading of the deceased names by Mr. Mike McKeever, which was interrupted by a fly over by the Air Guard unit out of Duluth. The rest of the names were read and then a Gun Salute was fired followed by fading Taps. Needless to say there weren't too many dry eyes during or after this event. Everyone stuck around after the ceremony looking at the old base, or what was left of it.

From the Memorial Service we went to Veterans Park for a catered picnic. Everyone was treated to some really good food and we had some door prize drawings. A few games were attempted but most just sat and talked and renewed old friendships and made new. That evening was spent around the Hospitality Suite or visiting in the local area.

On Saturday the golf outing was attempted by those so inclined, while the others either took tours or slept in. The Hospitality Suite was open and many took part of the Continental Breakfast, which was served each day. When the afternoon came many of the golfers joined the others for the afternoon tours or just relaxed around the pool, and Hospitality Suite.

Saturday evening was another high light, the evening was full of surprises and enjoyed by all. The meal was enjoyed by everyone and between the MC's, door prize drawings and presentations the DJ didn't get to play until later in the evening. A slide presentation by Gus Campana really was impressive and very well done. Many, Many war stories were told that night and the sound of laughter was everywhere. Without a doubt it was well received by everyone.

On Sunday we had a Farewell Gathering with a formal Continental Breakfast and Gus was good enough to give

his slide presentation from the night before. All shared farewells and some tears, and by noon the 707th had faded once again.

In closing I'd like to say that Grand Rapids made us feel very welcome and went out of their way to accommodate us. The CVB, press, businesses and individuals treated us with respect and kindness. I hope that we in turn left them with a renewed respect for the 707th.



Lasting Tribute By Floyd Fisher

After the reunion dust had settled, Jim and Colleen Nardone started thinking about how soon all physical presence of the base will be gone and how sad that is. They got in contact with the local historical society about a permanent display on the 707th place in Grand Rapids history. The Itasca county Historical Society thinks this is a great idea, and would like to come up with a "Traveling Exhibit" which means it could be on boards and could be displayed at certain times during the year. Also this same exhibit could be taken to schools and other places she gives presentations on specific events in local history. What they need is stories, articles, artifacts, pictures etc. to be included in the exhibit as well as information for the research center the society maintains. Any pictures submitted will be copied and originals returned. So if you're interested in lending a hand please contact Jim and Colleen at any of the following:

nardone@uslink.net

or

218-326-4908

or

2606 Audrey Lane, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.

Just think about this – in the future say 20 years, when most of us are gone, for someone to find information on a grandfather or even a great-grandfather, because he was stationed at GPZ. The curator would like to have names and any specific information we can recall. How about the centennial celebration in nineteen fifty eight? Perhaps you could information about fighting forest fires, search and rescue missions, sports activities, and the auto racetrack. There has got to be many ways we can help out so get in touch with the Nardones.

OUR SINCERE SYMPATHY to the FAMILY of:

Bette Mila passed (31 Jul 03).

Those of you that attended the reunion will recall meeting Jose Mila's lovely family. In spite of Bette's illness, she wanted them to attend the reunion and she loved every minute of it. It was a memorable time for Jose, his family

and Bette. We were please that Bette was able to spend time with us, but more so, that we had the pleasure of spending time with her.

George Trembly passed (30 Oct 02). When I contacted George about the reunion he was very interested. At that time he filled me in on his medical condition and pending surgery. He requested that I take him off the mailing list, stating that he would let me know when he was ready to resume correspondence. I'm so sorry I hadn't kept in touch as I could have added his name in the Memorial Service.

I would like to make this a regular section of the newsletter but it will take everyone's input, to keep this and the website up to date. Please if you know of someone that is deceased, and we don't have him or her listed, let us know.

Comment Form

Newsletter

Did You enjoy this newsletter

Yes I want to subscribe No thanks.

I would like to submit articles to the newsletter

From Time to Time Regularly

The format of the newsletter is:

Just fine Needs some changes Terrible

I would like to see these subjects in future newsletters:

Reunion

Did you enjoy the last reunion?

Yes Somewhat No Did not attend

Would you attend another reunion?

Absolutely Health Permitting Nope

Where would you prefer the next reunion be held?

Grand Rapids Northeast Southeast

North-Central South-Central Northwest

Southwest Biloxi Branson Wash. DC

Other:

When would you prefer to have the next reunion?

2005 2006 2007 2008

Would you help with the planning and organizing?

Yes No

Dismissed

By Gene Walker



Well, that was the very first 707th Newsletter. We will be coming up with some permanent paragraph headings for future publications. In the mean time it would be great if we could get some input from the troops. The newsletter will only be as good as the content and that must come from throughout the rank and file. So, please let us hear from you. Make your voice heard LOUD AND CLEAR.

Anyone who wishes to have one of our email addresses should get in touch with me. I will set it up for you. Your new email would be yourname@af-acw.com

Be looking for the new and updated website. Work is in progress and will be opening soon. With the new site you will able to submit your input directly to the site. Neat.

Contact Information.

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