



ECHOES

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August 2000

2001 REUNION IS ON!

More info in this newsletter

AFTAC Colorado Alumni Picnic 2000



Dick Platt demonstrates his horseshoe technique.

The eighth annual AFTAC Colorado Alumni picnic was held **June 10** at Lake Williams at Buckley ANG Base. Lonnie Gibbons organized the first horseshoe invitational. About 50 Alumni, family and friends showed up for the traditional burger/brat meal, horseshoes, fishing, and of course, AFTAC Stories. As promised, Buckley has rejuvenated the lake and we witnessed some locals pulling out 20 inch catfish. Two members of Det 45, Captain Jarko (see photo) and Tsgt Tony Ferrise were warmly welcomed. Ben Vlassick and Lonnie Gibbons had a good time along with everyone else.



It was great to see Ernie Long, who was released from the hospital in May.

Captain Jarko - Det 45 Commander



Just Fishin'



Summer of 2001 will be the AFTAC reunion at the Doubletree Inn (formerly the Red Lion Inn).

(photos by Bill Harris)

The Colorado AFTAC Alumni Winter Evening will be held at the CAMANA club at Buckley ANGB on November 11th. We will start with cocktails at 6 PM and dinner at 7 PM. Mark your calendars!

MAIL

Hi Ben,

Sure glad you hi-lighted the due date. It got my attention so here is a check for another 2 yrs of dues.

Sure do miss seeing the ol Colorado bunch since moving to Texas.

Willie
(William Osteen)

Memorandum for AFTAC Alumni Association of Colorado

From: Det 45/CC

Subject: Appreciation, AFTAC Alumni Association

1. Please accept my thanks for the invitation to your general membership meeting on 18 March. I enjoyed meeting your members and hearing tales of the AFTAC of the past. Today's AFTAC is a much smaller organization, but it is no less vital to the nation's interests. It makes me proud to be a part of the AFTAC family and to share in continuing the proud tradition begun by many of your members.

2. With today's changing roles and missions, it is important for our new AFTAC members to understand their heritage. Accordingly, I would like to offer Detachment 45's support as well as my own for your organization. Specifically, we would be proud to help with the AFTAC reunion in 2001. We will be happy to set up an open house at the Det; please let me know what else we can do.

3. Again, thanks for letting me be a part of your organization. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to call me.

Very Respectfully,

CHRISTOPHER S. JARKO, Capt, USAF
Commander

(Thanks very much Captain, we appreciate your support)

Ben and Bill,

Hi from North Texas. Just received my March copy of the Colorado Echoes newsletter and saw that it's time to renew my dues. I will be sending a check in

tomorrow's mail for \$10. Please extend my subscription for another 2 years.

Am still here in the Wichita Falls, TX area and still working in training at Sheppard AFB as a Civil Service person. Am still very busy, but am beginning to get those "retirement twinges". I'm beginning to feel like it's about time to start thinking about hanging it up. Oh well, for now, I'll keep plugging away. Take care and thanks for the good job you guys do for the chapter.

Paul Chesnut
pchesnut@swbell.net

Date: Thu, 23 Mar 2000
In Memory of Paul Dickinson

Paul was in the 1009th SWS from 1951 thru 1954.
Forwarded from Kevin Dickinson

Hi,

I'm Paul's eldest son. Saturday night he suffered a stroke caused by an aneurysm, which essentially caused a blood vessel in his brain to explode, this triggered a heart attack. Because the aneurysm caused brain damage, and the heart attack deprived his brain of blood and oxygen, he suffered irreparable injury - if he underwent numerous surgeries, they could at best restore his physical and cognitive functions. Based on his stated wishes, we allowed nature to run its course, and he passed away last night.

There will be a life-celebration this Saturday. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Kevin Dickinson
kevin@vlan.net
505.892.6282

(our condolences, Kevin)

To: "Bryce Dunn" <bdunn@qadas.com>
From: "AFTAC Alumni" <alumni@csihq.com>
Subject: [AFTAC Alumni] Mar 2000 Post Monitor
The March 2000 Post Monitor is in the snail-mail and should be at your door shortly (if you're a member). We've got an abridged version on-line at <http://www.csihq.com/aftac/newsletter/newsletter200003/> And, as is our policy, the Mar 1999 Version is now completely available on-line at <http://www.csihq.com/aftac/newsletter/newsletter199903/>

If you don't want to wait a year to see the whole newsletter then you'll have to join up! The membership form can be printed from our web site. Just "search" for yourself at

<http://www.csihq.com/aftac/membersearch.html> and click on the "Join the Association" link at the bottom of your data.

Frank Goodreau (CA) forwards this Obituary, thru Jim Payne, to the Alumni Association. Jim Payne remembers Merrill Seaman as the school house Principal replacement for Loyd Sittler when he was there in early 60's.

QUOTE

Obituary, Lt. Col.(Ret) Merrill Hicks Seaman
as published in THE UNION, Grass Valley-Nevada, CA -
00.4.27 edition

Private graveside services for Lt. Col.(Ret) Merrill Hicks Seaman were conducted today at Penn Valley Cemetery. Lt. Col. Seaman died Monday, April 24, after a lengthy illness. He was 81. He was born July 3, 1918, in Superior, Wis. He served for 30 years in the U.S. Army Air Corps and U.S. Air Force in World War II and the Korean War. He retired with honors in 1971. He had lived in Lake Wildwood for 22 years. Lt. Col. Seaman is survived by his wife of 55 years, Betty; sons Col (Ret) John Seaman of Gig Harbor, WA., Capt. (Ret) Edward Seaman of Panama City, FL., Col (Ret) Frank Seaman of Colorado Springs, CO., and Robert Seaman of Silverthorne, CO., daughter Marilyn Seaman of Auburn; 13 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his sister, Kay Noonan; and brother, Bentley Seaman. Memorial contributions may be made to the charity of one's choice.

Editor's note: I am reminded of the words of the officers at the RSL club at Alice every evening - as we gazed out the glass to the lighted memorial on ANZAC Hill - Ladies and Gentlemen, it is 7 O'Clock. They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old, age shall not weary them, nor the the years condemn. With the going down of the sun and in the morning, we shall remember them. Least we forget.

SEO REUNION

After hearing a couple of rumors of a desired reunion of Special Equipment Operators, a question was sent to the AFTAC Alumni web site and a positive response was received. Since there is not enough time to organize a formal reunion for the desired date, we have put an impromptu reunion together and hope as many as possible can attend.

"200th day (18 July, Tuesday), year 2000, main lobby of the El Dorado Hotel, Reno, NV., high noon. Wear your wings, name badge and bring your war stories. Be there or be square."

Reno was chosen because it is centrally located as is the El Dorado Hotel. It is co-joined with Circus Circus and the Silver Legacy with enclosed walkways. Phone numbers are: El Dorado, 1-800-648-5966, Circus Circus, 1-800-648-5010, Silver

Legacy, 1-800-687-7733, for reservations. Ask for discounts and room and show packages, if interested. For other accomodations in the area call: Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority at 1-800-FOR-RENO.

We have also been requested to invite all "F Troopers" to join us. Would love to have them. Since we are not sure of who all you SEO's and F Troops are, we would like you to get the word out to those you know. Any questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,
Carol & Orv Pritchard,
("Pritch", SEOXXVI, '56 - '70)
caporv@aol.com
George Thompson, (SEOXVII, '56 - '68)
(707) 994-4143

Ed: Received this via email. Even though it has passed, thought it was worth sharing.

Borrowed from the Florida Chapter's "Commander's Call", a synopsis of Lt General Clapper's time with AFTAC. The Florida "Post Monitor" will have articles from other previous commanders featured in their publication. (Hope they don't mind - its a great article)

James R. Clapper, Jr.
L/Gen, USAF, Ret.
Commander, June'84-May'85

submitted 99/2127,
reviewed 00/1

It seems now that an awful lot went on during my all-too-short tenure as Commander. I was tremendously impressed with the Command and its people. My time was probably a turning point, since I represented the first non-scientific career officer to be commander, a trend that has continued since. A tradition of sorts was started, where colonels went to AFTAC, and were promoted to brigadier general while there. That wa obviously a good thing for them as individuals, and for the stature of the command as well.

For me, I saw a lot of similarities between AFTAC, and where I had grown up, USAFSS. The basic missions in both commands was performed by the premier enlisted people in the Air Force. Both were self-contained, somewhat cloistered activities, spread all over the earth. And, there was a tremendous dedication to the mission, even if the many exploits performed in pursuit of it were often necessarily unsung. I guess some Of my most vivid memories were during my overseas trips to visit the units. Some marvelous people doing great things, in some pretty tough environments. (as Gen Clapper went on he chose to use the questionnaire format, a format he himself devised)

1. *How would I characterize AFTAC as an institutions Its people? Its contribution?*

-AFTAC represents a unique NATIONAL asset; it performs critical missions for the nation that transcend its size and budget. It has been composed of a relatively small group of people—officer, enlisted, and civilian—who have contributed in a manner far disproportionate to their numbers. It is truly remarkable that it has carried out such complex, sensitive missions, on a world-wide basis, and done so with great distinction. Its people are magnificent. AFTAC seemed to attract and keep a higher percentage of high caliber people than just about any other military organization with whom I was associated.

2. *How did I feel about the job when I assumed command?*

-A combination of tremendous pride, exhilaration, and expectation. For whatever reason, I felt a special desire to do well, since I was the first non-scientific career officer to be assigned as commander. I was honored and humbled, but really didn't appreciate what a great job it was until I got into it.

3. *How did I feel about the job when I passed the flag to my successor?*

-I had mixed emotions; I was the commander not quite a year, so I felt as though I had so many more things I wanted to try to accomplish—but, at the same time, the reason I had been re-assigned was selection for promotion; even so, I wasn't too wild about going to Korea and "joining the Army" for two years (even though, that, too turned out to be an extremely rewarding assignment). On the other hand, I felt extremely good about passing the flag to Rich O'Lear, my closest friend, whom I had great faith would make AFTAC even better.

So, a mix of feelings.

4. *What were the greatest sources of satisfaction to me as Command. Your greatest frustrations?*

-We made a lot of changes—organizational, procedural, philosophical—during my time, and seeing the reaction of people in the command to these changes was very satisfying. I always got a tremendous sense of pride when I would visit field units, and see, time after time, the great job that our small bands of folks were doing in some pretty God-forsaken places—and in a completely positive, cheerful, can-do fashion. I suppose my greatest frustrations were (1) running out of time, and (2) the Command not getting the recognition it deserved from the Base. (These are apart, of course, from the standard complaints of not enough funding, not enough people to take on other projects.)

5. *Do I recall any vignettes that occurred during my tenure as commander that particularly stand out in my mind now—good or bad?*

-I remember visiting the Det at Sonseca, and then trying to set up a "school house" after I got back from the trip—scrounging up school supplies for our children there who were home taught.

-I remember a trip Frank Hall and I took to the Far East, and our belated realization that we were flying over Vietnam on the leg from Bangkok to Manila (not sure why that stands out, but it does; maybe it was just that traveling anywhere with Frank Hall was a memorable experience).

-I remember Tom Ciambone cost me a small fortune when he got my son Andy into model trains. I remember the struggle to get the flag pole installed in front of the headquarters building. I really don't recall any "bad" vignettes—at least none that I'd feel comfortable including here!

AFTAC ALUMNI 2001 REUNION DENVER COLORADO

The Colorado Chapter of the AFTAC Alumni Association has decided to host the 2001 reunion at the Doubletree Hotel (formerly the Red Lion Inn) at the old Stapleton Airport. This is the same facility where we hosted the 1996 reunion. The dates are 14 through 17, June, 2001. The reunion reservation form is attached to this newsletter. If you plan on attending please get it in as soon as possible for a head count. During the 1996 reunion we had to cancel the golf tournament due to only 7 interested parties. Copies of the form should also be available in the Florida chapter Post Monitor and the AFTAC home page. You can also call Ben Vlassick at 303-690-1239 or email at "aftacco@aol.com". Hope to see you there.