

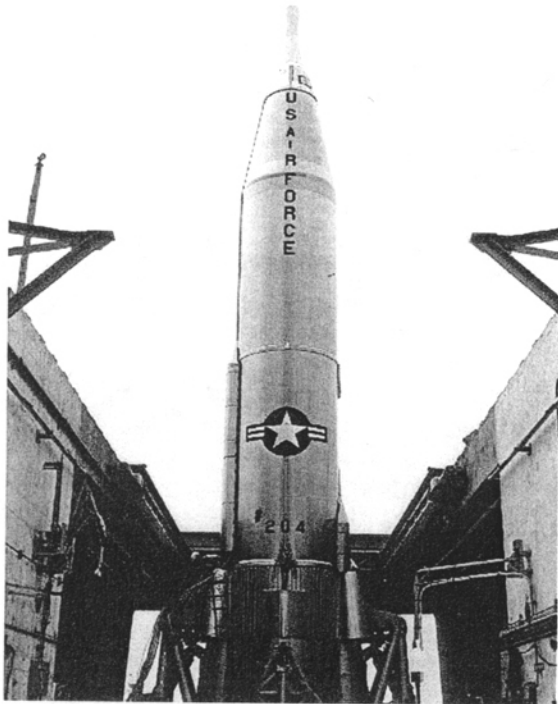
# 548<sup>th</sup> SMS

MISSILE

TIMES

Volume 4, Issue 2

December 2006



## COMMANDER'S BRIEFING

The second reunion of the 548<sup>th</sup> SMS is now history! Although it was a small group, I believe those that attended Our Reunion/AAFAM meeting had a great time, (See related article). We have already started thinking about the next reunion in two years. We decided that the next reunion will not be held in conjunction with the Missileers, we will do it on our own if there is enough interest. We are looking at the possibility of having our next gathering on a cruise ship. The fee for a reunion on a five to seven day cruise would be all inclusive except for your own transportation to the port of departure. The cost should be comparable to a hotel with meals. Planning for this event needs to be put into motion soon, so that we can be sure to get the cruise at the most appropriate time for us. **Now!** *The first stage of the planning is up to you, The Members!* We need your feed back to know whether to proceed with this

endeavor or to proceed with plans for a reunion at a land based location to be determined.

Let us hear you thoughts: Call Don, send an Email or snail mail to:

Don Peoples  
411 N 6<sup>th</sup> St # 1115  
Emery, SD 57332-2124  
609-462-5644  
[njpeeps@att.net](mailto:njpeeps@att.net)

## Missileer's Memories

*In the past we have requested that members submit a memorable recollection of an experience that they remember from their duty in the 548<sup>th</sup>. The following is the first in a series. Feel free to submit yours to be published at a later date.*

I was in the 548<sup>th</sup> for almost 3 years as an EPPT assigned to crew R-02. The crew members L-R were, MMT Garrett Grim, Me, MCCC Maj. Alan Linville, DMCCC Lt. George Whittington and BMAT Ssgt. Louie Johnson.



We normally pulled "Alert" at Site # 3 in Waverly, KS south of Lyndon.

On one particular day the Civil Engineers came onto the site to inspect the Emergency escape system that was located in the ceiling of the enlisted sleeping quarters. (If you remember; the escape system consisted of a steel door "Topside" and another overhead in the ceiling and a 16 cubic foot cavity in between, filled with about 1 ton of sand, a ladder was built into the wall that allowed egress). For this test, an engineer placed a large pan on the floor to catch the

sand that would be released. The engineer advised us on lookers to stand back, the hatch release system was activated, the door flung open but nothing else happened. The sand was solid, frozen in place by the freezing outside temperature. This should not be a surprise! The sand was put in place on a hot humid day. The engineers shouted, "Stand back, if this sand falls, it could kill someone"! We all scattered out and away. I don't know what the outcome was, I guess it was time for a crew change or it was time for me to take engine readings. I don't think that their pan would have caught all of the sand anyway. If it was dry and dusty sand it may have caused a lot of other problems. This was just another day of duty at Site 3.

By Lester Elyea

## FROM ACCOUNTING

Following is the Treasurer's Report from June 29, 2006 thru Dec. 10, 2006.

Beginning Balance June 29, 2006 3293.46

### Income:

Sale of Merchandise	59.00
Membership Dues	<u>195.00</u>
Total Income:	254.00

### Expenses:

Domain Fee	75.00
Postage	137.22
Printing	86.13
Miscellaneous	<u>16.11</u>
Total Expenses:	314.46

Ending Balance Dec. 10, 2006 3233.00  
Warren Shane 548<sup>th</sup> SMS Association Treasurer

## FROM SUPPLY

### 548<sup>th</sup> SMS Association Items for sale:

Patches -----	\$ 4.00 ea.
Pins-----	\$ 4.00 ea.
White Visor with a pin attached-----	\$10.00 ea.
CD # 1 **-----	\$7.00 ea.
CD # 2 ***-----	\$7.00 ea.
Bio Booklet -----	\$ 7.00 ea.
T Shirt ...only 5 left, 1 S, 3 Med, 1 XXXL-----	12.00ea.

**All prices include shipping. All receipts from sales go to the association treasury.**

\*\* CD # 1 = Approx. 140 photos of site construction through de-activation, including base and squadron member pictures.

\*\*\*CD # 2 = This CD is comprised of all the photos taken during the 2003 reunion activities. Those folks that couldn't make it to the reunion may want to purchase this CD to get filled in on what we did and who was there.

The pin is a miniature 548<sup>th</sup> patch about 1" Diameter. If you would like to purchase a hat for \$10.00, (white hat with a 548<sup>th</sup> patch on the front) I

will have more hats made if there is enough interest, let me know if you would like to order one.

Make your checks to: 548<sup>th</sup> SMS Association

Send your orders for these items to:

Stan Bieleski, Jr.

104 Teakwood Ct.

Clinton, TN 37716

## ROLL CALL

Do you have any copies of your old orders? These documents or other 548<sup>th</sup> memorabilia you may have saved could aid us in identifying and locating former 548<sup>th</sup> members. If you can share copies of these documents, please send them to Warren Shane at the above address.

**Membership dues:** During the organizational meeting at which the 548<sup>th</sup> Strategic Missile Squadron Association was formed, a decision was made to set the dues structure at \$10.00 per member per year. These funds will go for the usual things such as postage, web site maintenance, etc. Some funds will be kept in reserve for assistance in organizing the next reunion.

The membership year runs from January 1 thru December 31. This year, dues paid will be good thru December 31, 2007.

As of the date of this newsletter, we have 12 paid-up members. A list of members should be available soon on the web site. [www.548sms.com](http://www.548sms.com) Make your checks payable to: 548<sup>th</sup> SMS Association Send checks to: Warren L. Shane, 1809 Clarks Creek Rd, Junction City, Kansas 66441

## New Member Password for 2007

Those that have already paid their dues for 2007, will see the 7 character password on your address label. You will need this password to access the members only section of the 548<sup>th</sup> SMS web site in the 2007. Sign in is:

USER ID= 548SMS  
PASSWORD= #####  
Domain Leave Blank

## 548<sup>th</sup> Legacy:

While visiting the Jackson Heights High School (our Site #9 north of Holton), at our first reunion in 2003, several people made a suggestion that the association make some presentation to the school in the name of the members of the 548<sup>th</sup> SMS. At our 2006 reunion it was decided that we will make a monetary donation for a scholarship to a deserving student.

## Mini Reunion in Topeka

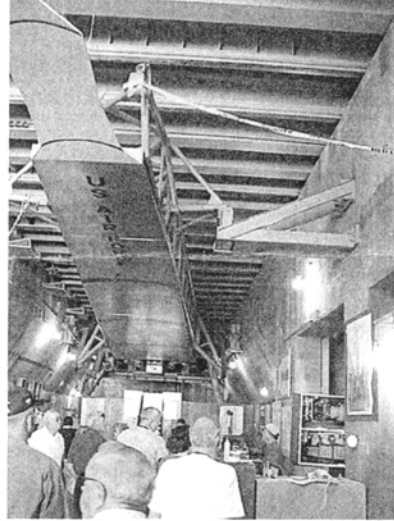
Mary and I were in Topeka during the first part of September visiting family. While there, I got to thinking about our members who lived in the Topeka area and if they might like to get together some day for lunch. I did make contact with several of our Kansas people, as it turned out we had seven members attend our mini reunion at Coyote Canyon for a buffet lunch. Harvey Chebo, Don Lawson, Jim Wetherington, Don Peoples, Bob Hood, Warren and Jeanne Shane. We had a good lunch and a few hours to hash over old times in the 548<sup>th</sup>.



## 2006 Reunion is now History

The second 548<sup>th</sup> SMS reunion was held at the Little America Hotel in Cheyenne, WY. We arrived in Cheyenne on Monday and met John & Maggie H at our campground, (there were other people that attended the AAFM meeting who were staying at the same place). The turnout for the reunion was lighter than expected but a good time was had by all that attended. The AAFM did all the planning for the weekend and their effort resulted in a great time. The weekend started with registration in the hospitality suite early Wednesday afternoon. A get acquainted reception was held Wednesday evening where we had the opportunity to meet old friends and to make new friends. Talk about a small world! One couple that we happened to be sitting with at the reception, Mary saw the weekend before at Royal Gorge in Colorado. Thursday started off by boarding busses at the hotel for a trip to Francis E Warren for a briefing by the wing commander in the base theatre. Following that we boarded the busses again for a tour of Historic F.E. Warren AFB. This tour included most of the bases historic homes, the missile museum, and the Minuteman Maintenance facility. We were also given an in depth tour of the Launch control training facilities and the Minuteman & Peacekeeper launch facilities. Dinner and entertainment that night was at the Old West Museum in Cheyenne. Friday was golf day and a tour of Cheyenne for those interested. Saturday started

with another briefing, then a bus trip to Greeley, CO where we had an opportunity to tour a well preserved Atlas "E" site. The county uses the site for records storage and have built a park around and just off of the topside area. The missile bay almost looked like an Atlas had just been taken out of it. The complete missile erector was still in place although the nose clamp was removed and hanging on the wall.



The launch control room was just as left after removing all of the equipment, the standard green paint still prevailed. One of the guides opened the double doors (where the briefings took place), that opened into the kitchen area, Topside looked just like it would have in the early 1960's. When everyone had enough of the site we headed for the busses. After about an hour bus ride we were back at the hotel in time for a short rest period before the banquet. All the people that had worked on the Atlas (Atlas E got first priority) were given a "T" shirt, compliments of the folks at the Greeley "E" site. Our banquet was held Saturday evening. The guest speaker that evening was Gen. Kevin Chilton, commander of Air Force Space Command and former astronaut. General Chilton is the first astronaut to earn a fourth star. He pinned on the rank of general in a promotion ceremony the morning of his assumption of command June 26, 2006. General Chilton joined the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1987. At NASA he flew three space shuttle missions on Space Shuttles Atlantis and Endeavor and served as the deputy program manager for operations for the International Space Station program.

## Newsletter editor needed

Would anyone like to volunteer to take on the duties of our newsletter editor? A new editor would more than likely have new ideas to bring to the table. If you would like to help out, with assistance from me and others, contact me at [njpeeps@att.net](mailto:njpeeps@att.net) or 609-462-5644  
Thanks, Don



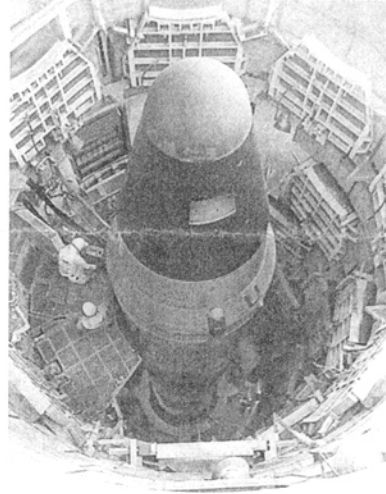
The 548<sup>th</sup> reunion attendees pictured above are front L-R are John Embich, John Hoinski, Bill Fein, Gus Dove back L-R Warren Shane, Don Peoples, Sam McGowan, Frank Shepherd and Darrell Vaughn. Not pictured are Lester Elyea and Jim Wetherington and David Johnson.

## Titan Missile Museum

A Must-See Arizona Exhibit

I would think the following would be of special interest to those that went from Atlas to Titan II. A remarkable museum 15 miles south of Tucson, Arizona, is one of only two Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) silo complexes in the world that is open to the public. (The other is a Minuteman in South Dakota see: [www.nps.gov/mimi](http://www.nps.gov/mimi)). Most of the hardware is still in place, including the 110 foot tall Titan II rocket. The facility consists of three underground structures, connected by tunnels: the control center; the silo; and, in between them, the blast lock structure, which contains the access portal and the stairwell that brings you 35 feet underground and through the blast door in to the facility. Mary and I have been in Arizona for the last 2 months, while here we have done a lot of sight seeing. For years I have seen information about the Titan Missile Museum located in Tucson, AZ. With that in mind, I had decided that sometime when I get to Arizona, that the Titan museum will be a high priority on my list of places to visit. We first went to the museum building that houses a very informative, pictorially displayed, history of the Titan. Included in the poster display are all the successes and even failures in the Titan system from concept to the very last Titan II launch. Our guided tour started with a video that was followed by a briefing before we walked out to the elevator to the silo. I was never on a Titan site but it appeared to me that the whole complex was well preserved. Topside was very complete with the security system and even vehicles that may have been seen topside during maintenance operations or propellant downloading while the complex was in an operational configuration. As we walked through the tunnel, the advancements in site hardening (over our Atlas semi hard sites), was very apparent. Walking into the control room was like stepping back to the late 60's although some more modern electronics

chassis had been added to the electronics racks. While in the control room our guide started a simulated countdown. The launch control console was configured to simulate an actual launch through missile away. The tour concluded once we arrived topside. If you are ever in the Tucson area I would highly recommend that stop at this Historical 571<sup>st</sup> SMS silo. Two other points of interest nearby are the Pima Air & Space Museum of which the Titan site is part. A bus tour of the AMARC facility at Davis Monthan AFB should not be missed.



## TAPS FOR 548<sup>TH</sup> MISSILEERS

We need your help in remembering these men. You can help by notifying one of the 548<sup>th</sup> SMS Association officers if you learn of the passing of one of our members so that their names can be posted here. Please try to provide us with as much information as possible in each case. Unfortunately, since our last newsletter, I have been notified that we have lost four more members that I am aware of; Wilfred Seeto, Gary Lubbe, Neil LeSuer and Ken Petry. Ken passed away on December 7, 2006 in Tucson, AZ after a bout with cancer.

## Space and Missile Hall Of Fame

August 29, 2006 Peterson AFB, CO.

Six trailblazers were inducted here Aug. 24 into the Air Force Space and Missile Pioneers Hall of Fame for their significant accomplishments in the advancement of space and missile programs in the Air Force. The 2006 Space and Missile Pioneer inductees, all retired, are:

Maj. Gen. Ben Funk,

Brig.Gen. Maurice Cristadoro Jr.,

Col. Wilbert Craig III,

Col. Francis Hale,

Reserve Col. Richard Leghorn



Lt. Col. Albert Johnson.

Among the distinguished guests were Colorado Senator Ron May and Colorado Springs Mayor Lionel Rivera. Lt. Gen. Frank Klotz, AFSPC vice commander, presided over the ceremony.

*Colonel Craig* played a significant role in the Air Force's early space surveillance programs. He helped organize the "Moonwatch" Project to create one of the first Air Force satellite tracking sites. Colonel Craig was selected for the original Spacetrack Space Surveillance team; was chief analyst for Program 437, the nation's only deployed anti-satellite system; and led the project to put space surveillance into initial Cheyenne Mountain operation in 1965 and 1966. Colonel Craig was the Air Force secretary's representative for preparing the Department of Defense for shuttle operations. He evaluated potential shuttle applications and created the proposed 12-year launch schedule.

*General Cristadoro* helped develop the Air Force's intercontinental ballistic missile programs. In 1956, he joined Western Development Division, where in March 1958, he became director of the Atlas ICBM program. He was responsible for all aspects of Atlas acquisition, which had the highest national priority at that time. He was among a very small group of individuals intimately involved with the highly secretive preparations for using an Atlas booster to launch SCORE (Signal Communications by Orbiting Relay Equipment), the world's first communications satellite. General Cristadoro later oversaw all matters associated with Air Force Systems Command's role in ballistic-missile acquisition. He shouldered responsibility for shifting resources from Atlas to the Titan and Minuteman ICBM programs.

*General Funk* In the mid-1950s, was assigned by the Air Materiel Command to direct the procurement and production activities supporting Gen. Bernard Schriever's high-priority ballistic missile

development program at Western Development Division in Los Angeles. General Funk dedicated himself to supporting General Schriever's efforts to develop, test, produce and deploy the first generation of ballistic missiles.

*Colonel Hale* served as the deputy director of the Thor missile program beginning in January 1956. He became the first plans and programs officer, then deputy director, of the Minuteman ICBM program. He was a professor and head of the astronautics department at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and, before retiring from active duty in 1965, he worked in the Pentagon on various advanced aerospace projects.

*Colonel Johnson's* contributions centered on development of military reconnaissance satellites. In August 1958, he became the project officer for the recovery vehicle being developed by General Electric to return data from earth-orbiting satellites. When the Discoverer/Corona project was formed later that same year, he became one of the original team members. As chief of the payloads division for Discoverer/Corona, Colonel Johnson's primary responsibility was working with the Central Intelligence Agency and its contractor, ITEK Corp., to integrate the Corona camera with the Discoverer Satellite Vehicle. He also served as the first project officer on design of components and subsystems to detect and counter possible enemy interference with Air Force satellite operations.

"We never expected (recognition) 50 years ago," said Colonel Johnson. "We thought what we were doing would be buried forever. But I had nothing but fun working with that team. They were unconventional, every one of them."

*Colonel Leghorn* led development of early Cold War airborne and space-based photographic reconnaissance systems. In the 1950s, he headed the Reconnaissance Systems Branch at Wright Air Development Center, Ohio, before being assigned to the development-planning staff of then-Colonel

Bernard Schriever at the Pentagon. In the latter position, Colonel Leghorn contributed extensively to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Air Force-funded Project Lincoln, which issued the June 1952 Beacon Hill Report that identified extremely high-altitude vehicles -- balloons, sounding rockets, air-breathing missiles and aircraft -- that could carry improved sensors near or over Soviet territory. This laid the groundwork for the U-2 aircraft. General Klotz said later, at a luncheon held in the inductees' honor, that the Air Force

Space and Missile Pioneers Hall of Fame is unique from other halls of fame in that inductees are not typically well known to the world, due to the necessary secrecy surrounding the body of their work. "It is fitting that we can finally give them the recognition they so richly deserve," General Klotz said.

**Here are a few interesting web sites to visit.**

AAFAM web site [www.afmissileers.org](http://www.afmissileers.org)  
[www.stlucas.com/jslstuff/atlas2.txt](http://www.stlucas.com/jslstuff/atlas2.txt) This is a list of  
 that gives an Atlas launch history.  
 The Titan missile museum  
<http://www2.nuclearwinter.com:8080/titan/>

548<sup>th</sup> SMS  
 c/o Jack Roberts  
 2175 CR4312  
 Campbell, TX 75422



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