



## COMMANDER'S BRIEFING

548<sup>th</sup> Association members! It's time to seriously start planning the second 548<sup>th</sup> SMS reunion. Although we have been doing some investigating of host cities in which to hold a reunion (we have those listed below), we are counting on your input to help us move forward. Where would you like to attend a reunion? We would like to schedule the reunion in a location in which the most members would be interested in attending.

Mary and I have had the opportunity to visit 2 cities that are very interested in hosting military reunions. We attended a reunion planner's conference (ConFam) in Corning, NY last August. The meeting

was organized by "TRN", a military reunion planners group that was hosted by the Steuben County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The goal of the CVB is to entice military reunion planners to bring their reunion to the host facilities. The ConFam's are designed to give the attendee's the opportunity to visit several hotels and area attractions that may be of interest to reunion attendees in those host cities. While at the conference we also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from other cities and hotels from those locals. With the knowledge gained the planners can offer their reunion attendees an exciting event at reasonable cost in an interesting location.

Over the 3 day period in NY we were introduced to the city of Corning in the beautiful Finger Lakes region of New York State, this is a beautiful area of N.Y. that is noted for its wine production and the Corning Glass works. In Corning we visited with 3 hotels and toured each of the hotels facilities. We also visited several museums over the 3 day period, those visited were Corning Glass, the Glen Curtis museum, the Sailplane museum and the Wings of Eagles "War Bird" museum. We were also treated to a premier showing of the documentary film titled, "In The Shadow of The Blade", which is scheduled to be televised on the Discovery Channel on Veterans day Nov 11, 04.

In October Mary and I were joined by Dick (548<sup>th</sup> Op's training) and Betty Davis at a 3 day ConFam in Eugene, Oregon. We were again introduced to a wonderful area for a reunion. Eugene is a very neat city with very friendly residents that would love to have us visit their city. The Lane county CVB kept us busy for 3 days showing us several area attractions that could be of interest to our group.

Now as for our reunion! Our first point of concern is; in what time frame do we want to hold the next reunion? Would late 2005 or sometime in 2006 be the best for those wanting to attend?

Secondly, we need to establish where to hold our reunion. Please send in your suggestions or comments about what we have already come up with. Would you be interested in traveling to any of the sites that we have visited or received additional information.

Other possibilities for a reunion location may be to combine our reunion with another Atlas Squadron reunion at some future date or to join the Association

of Air Force Missileers (AAFMM) at their reunion in Cheyenne, WY in Sept 2006.

E-mail your thoughts to Don at [njpeeps@att.net](mailto:njpeeps@att.net) or Jack Roberts at [Jack\\_Roberts\\_CR4312@Yahoo.com](mailto:Jack_Roberts_CR4312@Yahoo.com) (note that there are underscores in Jack's address, one between the k and R and another between the s and C).

**Membership dues:** Please pay the \$10.00 dues at your earliest convenience. Send them to Warren Shane, the 548<sup>th</sup> treasurer, at 1809 Clarks Creek Rd., Junction City, Kansas 66441.

They are due by the end of December. It is these dues and a lot of work by a few members that bring these newsletters to you. Any monies left after the annual printing and mailing costs will be used as a cushion for the next reunion startup funds.

**548<sup>th</sup> Legacy:** At the last reunion in 2003, while visiting the Jackson Heights High School (our Site #9 north of Holton), 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. This could be in the form of an annual or biennial donation to purchase an item that the school would put to use. (We did see that their gym displays a number of pennants donated by different groups). Another possibility would be to establish some type of small recurring scholarship for a high school student. The criteria could be developed at a later date if such an endeavor should be voted in.

## FROM ACCOUNTING

Financial Statement November 9, 2003 thru Nov 9, 2004

<u>INCOME</u>	
Sales	195.00
Interest	10.01
Association Dues	220.00
Reimburse from 2003 Reunion	53.46
Total income	\$478.46
<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Printing Nov 2003 News letter	\$147.76
Postage	152.86
Checks	10.23
Administration Expenses	39.51
Total Expenses	\$ 350.36

Balance on hand 11-09-2004 \$ 2098.48

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 = Coming soon! This CD will be pictures taken during the 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

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, 2005.

As of the date of this newsletter, we have 66 paid-up members. A list of members should be available soon on the web site. [www.548sms.com](http://www.548sms.com)

**Remember, to receive future issues of this newsletter, you will need to be a paid-up member.**

Make your checks to: 548<sup>th</sup> SMS Association  
Send checks to:  
Warren L. Shane, 1809 Clarks Creek Rd, Junction City, Kansas 66441

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.

## THE EDITOR'S BRIEFING

I have received copies of articles from Don and others that are of interest to missileers. Some of these articles are from The New York Times, others are from other un-named sources. I will reproduce them here (with some editing) for your interest.

Adapted from a New York Times article by Corey Kilgannon

*During a recent visit to Queens, New York, Walter Cronkite reminisced about the early days of space exploration. He was looking at an Atlas on display at the New York Hall of Science Rocket Park. Cronkite stated "There was nothing like the day we first landed on the moon. It was the culmination of all we had been working on."*

*The new display contains many artifacts and missiles collected from NASA and other sources. It is a part of a \$68 million expansion of the hall's expansion program.*

Editor's comment: I have been to the missile displays at the cape. Among other missiles, there is an Atlas standing tall. If you recall, the Atlas had no internal frame. It was just a pressurized stainless balloon. How do they get the bird to stand there with no apparent support? I have heard that they fill the tank sections with expanding foam. Any other answers from members?

Adapted from a New York Times and Associated Press article

*46 years ago, a nuclear bomb weighing 7,600 pounds was lost off the coast of Georgia. A crippled B-47 dumped the bomb near Little Tybee Island.*

*Recently, elevated levels of radiation have been detected in the area. Derek Duke, a retired Air Force pilot had led the efforts to find the missing bomb. Though the bomb is not capable of producing a nuclear explosion, it may still contain over 400 pounds of conventional explosive*

Editor's comment: We had a few mishaps at the 548<sup>th</sup>, but thank goodness we never lost a warhead!

A genuine 548<sup>th</sup> story from Bruce Casper

Bruce Casper reports that he and Sgt Byrne were setting up some survey equipment near Colonel Clugston's office one evening when the Colonel came out of his office on his way home.

The colonel got interested in what was going on and did not leave until 2330 hours.

Editor's comment: This is not the first story I have heard of how Colonel Clugston was a "hands on" commander. Let me add one of my own.

I had tank watch duty one Christmas eve at the MAB. As I was going off duty about 7:00 Christmas morning, I observed Colonel Clugston's staff car backed up to the door just outside the transportation office. He was busily unloading small gifts and refreshments for the launch crews who were coming in and going out

We have been contacted by Joy Ovington, the daughter of Major Richard (Dick) J. Ovington (deceased). She is requesting that anyone with information about her father contact her at [joyovington@yahoo.com](mailto:joyovington@yahoo.com) or 7053 Horner Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63117.

Major Ovington may have been in California in the 50s and the 60s, but was married in Topeka in 1965. It is thought that he was involved with the Atlas E project in some capacity, possibly as an MCCC or deputy. He retired in 1966 and passed away in 1979.

David Johnson, our Historian/Webmaster, has our new web site up and running. Check it out at [www.548sms.com](http://www.548sms.com)

Also, try this site:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/missile\\_talk](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/missile_talk)

You can join this group at no cost and and participate in the discussions.

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

Since the first list of former 548<sup>th</sup> SMS members was compiled, some have passed on. Of course, others will follow. This space will be dedicated to listing those who have become deceased since the last communication.

*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.*

Combs, Thomas D., LTC., 25 June 1920 - Aug. 3, 2004. Lt. Col. Combs served in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. In addition to his service with the 548<sup>th</sup> SMS, he served with the 56<sup>th</sup> Weather Recon. Sq. in Japan, was a B-47 instructor, and served as an FAC in Thailand. His wife of 57years, Marcielle, preceded him in death in February, 2000. His survivors include a son, two daughters, eight grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. Interment is in the Camp Nelson National Cemetery.