

US RADAR SITES of ICELAND NEWSLETTER

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NEWSLETTER #25. EDITOR: JERRY TONNELL, H-2, 1959.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN. William Chick, H-2, 1959-60. From all the feedback I have received, our reunion was outstanding. Comments about the tours, the food, and hotel hospitality were great. The breakfasts and meeting area provided by our host hotel - Wyndham Garden Inn - was more than adequate. Thanks goes out to our main workers, Jerry May, Pappy Papworth, and Peter Holland. I heard several comments saying "let's



Bricktown River Walk Boat Tour sight -- featuring hand molded metal replicas of the wild west.

have another reunion" – so, now we will start planning for our next one. I have received suggestions of reunion sites east of the Mississippi river. Namely: New Orleans, Memphis, St Louis, Dayton, and Lexington, Ky. All are centrally located and have things to offer in the way of tours. Our hospitality room has become our favorite event – it seems we have become family. **WC Chilton, H-1, 1961-62,** will have a new scrapbook ready for our next

reunion; those with OK City photos please mail your 4X6" prints to WC Chilton at: 210 Parish Lane, McMinnville, TN 37110. Thanks again for showing confidence in me as your chairman. Until we meet again, stay safe and keep enjoying life.

What Happened In Oklahoma City?

Monday afternoon: Upon arrival and check-in, we hurried to the Hospitality Room where we were met by **Jerry May** who was manning the registration desk where we got our nametags and had an opportunity to purchase or pick up a Reunion Hat or Shirt, or



purchase a Radar History Book or Coin. Some of the early arrivals included Ed Morris, Pappy Papworth, Jerry May, John Tianen, David Gillespie, Larry Robin, William Chick, Doug Harper, and David Hawk, all of whom engaged in swapping Iceland war stories. The Hospitality Room Chairman was **Peter Holland**, H-3, 1966-67. He was ably assisted by his wife, **Iona**. Together, they provided an outstanding assortment of drinks and snacks and kept the coffers full so that we never ran out. In fact, they came in under budget.

One of the attendees was a WW II Iceland vet by the name of **Robert (Bob) Moore**.

Bob, who hails from Clarksville, TX, served during WWII in 1944-1945 at a radar site named **Vail**. It was perched on top of an 800' mountain. The site location allowed low flying aircraft to fly under their antiquated radar coverage – but only if the plane maneuvered very carefully. Bob is a spry 92 years old and still going strong.



David Hawk brought a specially struck coin of historical value in that it was actually made from the remnants of the very first E3A AWACS which was initially named the TS-3. The aircraft was scrapped in 2012, and only 300 of the coins were struck. David

served on that particular aircraft during the 1970s.

Tuesday: Most everyone slept well, although, some were awakened by sounds that were reminiscent of a tornado warning -- only to later realize that it was probably a plumbing sound. But, when in Oklahoma, one never knows. After breakfast, we boarded two



buses and proceeded southwest for the 90 mile trip to Ft Sill, OK where we visited one of the US Army's major military museums. We presented a copy of our Iceland Radar History Book to **Dr Scott Neel**, Museum Curator. The Army now has access to the history and work of those of us who served in Iceland. After lunch at the Post Exchange Food Court, we traveled to Lawton, OK and the Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center where we were greeted and briefed by

their curator, **Phyllis Wahahrockah-Tasi**. She also received one of our Radar Books.

As we left for home, a C-130 just happened to fly directly over our buses and it "appeared" to be escorting us back to OK City – with a sly smile, Chick quickly took credit

for arranging the unofficial "Flyover." Once back in OK City, **Duane Tron**, H-2, 1963-64, a US Navy sonarman, shared dozens of striking photos he had taken at Langanes Peninsula during his tour. He graciously gave many of them to fellow attendees. That night, the hotel had arranged a special Manager's Special food treat which very nicely took the place of trying to find a restaurant for our supper.

Wednesday: We assembled in the Birch Room for our official breakfast meeting. **Larry**



Robin, our Deputy Chairman, opened the meeting and led us in the blessing. We then joined in and sang along to a recording of the *National Anthem* made by the Harmony Express Quartet. This was followed by a presentation of both a framed map of Iceland and a copy of our History Book to **Bandi Bishop**, the superb manager of our host hotel. Next, Jerry Tonnell

introduced our guest speaker, **Col Doug Harper**, who provided an interesting speech as he narrated slides he had taken during his year in Iceland as Commander of H-3, 1972-73. Later that morning we again boarded our buses and went to the famous Cattlemen's



Restaurant for steak and chicken – while there, we were entertained by two young singers who sang well but overpowered our ears with their amplifiers. We presented a Radar History book to Charlie Alvarado, general manager of Cattlemen's. From there, we went into the heart of OK City for a river cruise through the city's famous Bricktown River Walk area. After our return, the hotel came through again and served a large platter of sandwiches for our supper -- most took advantage of this and "ate in."

Thursday: We bused to the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum and presented a Radar History Book to Dominique Mitchell a senior representative of their Curator. After touring this amazing place, we ate lunch at the museum and then headed for the Alfred Murrah Building Memorial & Museum. While there, we presented a book to



Julie Likes, staff administrator to Kari Watkins, the museum's Executive Director. The museum was a sober reminder to us as to the effects of domestic terrorism. Later, Chick called an Executive Committee meeting & related that the cost of reunion was less than what was collected – which allowed us to give a partial rebate to those vets who had paid in advance, but had to cancel out at the last minute. Jerry May announced that he is stepping down as our Website photo chairman. As promised, our next reunion will be in two years somewhere

east of the Mississippi. Meanwhile, at the hotel, **Forrest "Butch" Freeman**, former commander of H-1, 1982-83, dropped in to spend some time reminiscing with some of his troops including his former superintendent of maintenance, Paul Goldschmidt. Next, **Jessica Harvey**, a young scholar from the Chicago area doing research about the military role in Iceland, came down & paid us a visit & received one of our Iceland Radar History books -- and was further tutored on our website by Reed Thomas. That evening, we partook of a shot from a giant bottle of Jack Daniel's Black Label donated by **Fred Schulte** and toasted him in group formation as **Ed Morris** took our photo. This was the only reunion Fred has ever missed – unfortunately, his chemo treatment got in the way.

Friday: Once again, we ate one of the scrumptious breakfasts provided by the hotel and then bid fond farewell to our comrades in arms. Special thanks go to **William Chick**, our Chairman, and his wife **Connie**, for the flawless handling of all the details and events that such a reunion incurs.