

ICELAND RADAR SITES NEWSLETTER, June 2005

FROM THE CHAIRMAN: William Chick, H-2, 1959-60. littlechick@msn.com

Our 2nd reunion is history with 180 people in attendance. The Colorado Spring area was a great setting. We all owe a big vote of thanks to the staff of the Peterson AFB Museum; they set up and oversaw our banquet. Our mural and pavers are a great addition to the Air Defense Command portion of the Peterson air and Space Museum.

Now the focus is on our next reunion -- tentatively scheduled to be held in 2007. Several places were suggested for a possible site -- Keesler AFB at Biloxi, MS, where many received their initial radar training, Lackland AFB at San Antonio, TX, where most of us entered the USAF, and Branson, MO, a popular entertainment resort.

We need for you to vote as to your choice for the next gathering. If none of the above is suitable for you, please vote for another place of interest. Deadline for voting will be by August 1, 2005. Please send your vote or suggestion to our Scrape Book Chairman
WC Chilton, 210 Parish Lane, McMinnville, TN 37110-5336,
wcandnelma@blomand.net

FROM THE TREASURER: David Hawk, H-1, 1985-86. Thanks again for considering paying a volunteer dues of **\$15** -- due in June of each year. Many of you have been supportive of the efforts to keep the Iceland Reunion alive. Again, our monies go to pay for the twice a year newsletter, site selection expenses, and other mail and phone expenses. Please make your check out to Iceland Reunion 2007 and mail it to:

David Hawk, Rt 1, Box 233, Elmore City, OK 73433.

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR. Reed Thomas, H-4, 1958-59. Reed01@optonline.net
US Radar Sites Iceland Coins are available for purchase. They are the same as those provided for the Colorado Springs reunion. If you would like to buy one, they cost \$10. Make your check payable to "Iceland Reunion" and mail it to the following address:

Reed Thomas 69 Koehl St. Massapequa Park NY 11762.

FROM THE HISTORIAN. Jerry Tonnell, H-2, 1959. jtonnell@mindspring.com

Since the last newsletter, copies of the *Radar Sites of Iceland History* book have been delivered to the Air Force Historical Research Agency and the Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, of the Library of Congress. The story of your experiences and accomplishments is now available to many more readers.



Book Orders. A limited number of the books are still available for sale (nearly 400 books have already been distributed.) They can be purchased for **\$10** (our cost), including postage. Place an order by writing a check payable to "Iceland Reunion" and mail to:

William Chick
104 Summit Point Court
Chapin, SC 29036

GROUP PHOTO. To purchase the group photo taken at the museum, contact: Cara Newman. P.O. Box 635, Colorado Springs, CO 80901. \$20 for an 8"x10"

WILLIAM A. CHICK
Iceland Reunion Chairman
104 Summit Pt Ct
Chapin, SC 29036

ICELAND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Richard Banta H-3 - IN
Jerry Blackwell H-2 - MO
Paul Blais H-3 - AL
Alan Boyle H-3 - CO
William Chick H-2 - SC
William Chilton H-1 - TN
Thomas Evans H-3 - MS
David Gillespie H-4 - MD
Robert Haines H-4 - KS
Jack Hamilton H-1 - ME
David Hawk H-1 - OK
Douglas Harper H-3 - MS
Andy Holzinger H-1 - OH
Jerry May H-1 - AR
Joseph Pyrdek H-3 - PA
Larry Robin H-1 - LA
Fred Schulte H-1 - LA
Reed Thomas H-4 - NY
Jerry Tonnell H-2 - AL

WHAT HAPPENED AT COLORADO SPRINGS?

53RD ANNIVERSARY REUNION OF THE RADAR SITES OF ICELAND

12 -15 MAY 2005, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

BY JERRY TONNELL, H-2, 1959, HISTORIAN, RADAR SITES OF ICELAND

Thursday, 12 May 2005. By Thursday afternoon, nearly 50% of the veterans and their guests had arrived and begun socializing in the Hospitality Room at the Academy Hotel. Room T-3 soon became a number to commit to memory because it was there that we renewed old friendships and made new acquaintances. Under the leadership of Alan Boyle, H-3, 1975, Hospitality Chairman, the room was well stocked with the following: soda, beer, spirits, ice, munchies, and plenty of tall tales. As members opened their registration package, they found inside a copy of the dedication program plus 8"x11" color copies of both the Mural Display and the Citation scheduled to be presented to the Peterson Air and Space Museum on Saturday. They were also given a Reunion Wine Glass. Later, at 6 PM, a sizeable number of folks gathered in the lobby around the registration table as a representative of Colorado Springs welcomed us to the city. He was officially presented one of our Radar Coins (the coin was the result of the efforts of Reed Thomas), a copy of our Iceland Radar History Book, and one of our engraved wine glasses which he accepted on behalf of the city.

Friday, 13 May 2005. On Friday morning, many of the attendees visited various places around the area including the Air Force Academy, Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods, and Focus On the Family HQ. By late afternoon, 90% of the 186 scheduled to arrive had reported in (*in a final count, slightly under 100 vets & some 80+ guests took part in the reunion.*) At 6 PM, the first of two banquets was scheduled. It was held at the hotel where a first class meal was prepared for a very reasonable price. After a prayer by Jerry Tonnell and the Pledge of Allegiance by Ross Cummings, MC Reed Thomas introduced Lt Col Brian T. Vaughn, current CO of the 932nd. He gave a PowerPoint presentation which showed the current role of the radar sites in Iceland. He thanked all past radar vets for the legacy they left for those presently serving in Iceland. In the assembly were two of our former commanders – Arthur Mussman, H-3 1969-70, and Doug Harper, H-3, 1972-73. In addition, one person represented the US forces who served in Iceland during WW II – Jane Boot, 1943, of the Iceland Base Command. William Chick closed the evening by awarding plaques to those who had ably served our association and/or helped put this reunion together.

Saturday, 14 May 2005. Saturday was packed with activities. At 10 AM, we gathered in the Academy Room for a presentation on Cheyenne Mountain by Jack McKinney. Some technical difficulties delayed the show, but, as a replacement, we saw a video of Iceland produced by the 932nd ACS for their 50th reunion in 2002. It included a recap of the history of radar in Iceland from 1941-2002. During this session, a vote was taken to allow the current Executive Committee to remain in their present posts.

Then, at 11 AM, each of the four sites -- H-1, H-2, H-3, and H-4 -- held their own gathering where members showed slides, exchanged pictures, shared stories and experiences, and renewed friendships made many years ago. After lunch, all prepared for the 15-mile trip from the hotel to the Peterson Air and Space Museum located on Peterson AFB. Upon arrival at the museum, we were able to view the documentary on Cheyenne Mountain in the museum theater. Ed Weaver, ex-AFI vet and member of

the museum staff, lead a tour of the facilities. One highlight of the tour was a restored EC-121T, Super Constellation -- it was available for boarding and inspection.

Finally, it was time for the banquet festivities. But as luck would have it, rain began to fall -- it was a light, but steady rain, much like the weather we experienced so often during our days on the "Rock." This put a damper on the outdoor group picture that was scheduled for 5 PM. So instead, all the vets assembled inside the Old City Hanger where the banquet was scheduled to be held. Standing in front of a restored P-47 Thunderbolt, the vets did their best to stand still and smile long enough for the reunion photo. Shortly thereafter the program began. After a call to order by MC Reed Thomas, the Peterson Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol posted the colors. Jerry Tonnell then led us in the invocation followed by Jerry Blackwell's reading of the Citation to accompany the Iceland Mural Display. Col Doug Harper was scheduled to present both the Mural and a copy of the Radar History to the Museum Director, Gail Whalen, and to Brig Gen Ronald Gray of the Museum Foundation. Radar vets Herbert Anderson and Howard Blackwelder were posted on either side of the Mural, (so ably designed by Joe Prydek.) Also presented was one of our Radar Coins. Gen Gray spoke and highlighted the importance of the radar vets' contribution to the Cold War effort. This was followed by Lt Col Brian Vaughn who delivered some concluding remarks. After a few short comments by Chairman William Chick, a most excellent dinner was served. The Mac McNulty Band entertained the crowd with their Big Band sound and a good time was had by all. During the banquet, an announcement was made that two of the radar vets were to be married during the last day of the reunion -- Lt William Gallian and Lt Katherine Peake, both formerly of the 932nd ACS (2001-03.)

A significant donation to the Museum was made by David Alcorn, H-3, 1962-63. He had built hand-made wooden models of H-3 and a Russian Spy Trawler. Both models will be on display along with the Mural we presented as part of the program. This will help insure that the accomplishments of the radar vets of Iceland will not be forgotten.

Sunday, 15 May 2005. As in the previous mornings, we assembled in the hotel dining room to enjoy, once again, a most excellent complimentary breakfast. Many lingered at their tables and chatted with other radar vets which added to the overall experience of a most rewarding reunion. The Academy Hotel staff went out of their way to treat us right and provide good service and facilities for a very reasonable fee. William Chick and Reed Thomas did an outstanding job finding this facility for our reunion.

Sunday was also a day to give thanks for the weekend's events and bid farewell to the old friendships that were renewed and new ones that were made over the past three days. Promises were made to keep in touch and exchange photographs. We began our return to the far corners of the USA, with a few flying back to Iceland and Germany. All departed on a positive note. In all, about half of the Colorado Springs attendees also were in Dayton in 2003 -- for the rest, it was their first trip to one of our Iceland radar reunions. Plans are in the making to hold another one in 2007.

From The Scrapbook Chairman. W.C. Chilton, H-1, 1961- 62.

Did you enjoy looking through the radar site scrapbooks at the registration table at Colorado Springs? As you uncover new photos, orders, or memorabilia, send them to Reed Thomas so that he can post them on our Website: 69 Koehl St., Massapequa, NY, 11762. Reed will then pass them on to me for inclusion in the scrapbooks.

ICELAND RADAR SITES NEWSLETTER, Dec 2005

FROM THE CHAIRMAN: William Chick, H-2, 1959-60. littlechick@msn.com

Our focus is on the 2007 reunion and news from the Biloxi area is not good. I have been in contact with Keesler AFB, real-estate brokers, and a couple folks who live there and the story is it will take longer than 2 years for the area to recover – including the governmental regulations required to move the casinos to new zoning locations. Our second choice in the voting was Branson, MO. A survey of the executive committee, plus some other inputs, recommended we take a good look at Branson. We will do that in the coming months. We estimate that somewhere around the 3rd week of May 2007 for the next reunion -- comments are welcome. A final notice will be in the June 2006 newsletter. Thanks goes to our membership chairman, Jerry Blackwell, H-2, 1960-61, who has found over 100 new members since the last reunion. Please look around and find any old orders and photos and mail them to us. Here's wishing you all a super holiday.



includes 110 pictures as well as quotations from some 75 radar vets. It explains what we did & how we did it. They can be purchased for **\$10** (our cost), including postage. (We also have reunion coins for \$10.) Place an order by writing a check payable to "Iceland Reunion" & mail to: William Chick, 104 Summit Point Court, Chapin, SC 29036

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR. Reed Thomas, H-4, 1958-59. Reed01@optonline.net

Thank you to all who contributed to our Katrina Relief Fund for airmen assigned to Kessler AFB Biloxi, MS. We collected and distributed, thru the AF Aid Society and Family Support, a total of \$2506.00. USAF officials acknowledged our contributions and they were greatly appreciated. Thank you for your support.



MEMORABILIA IDEAS: Joe Pyrdek, H-3, 67-68. pyrdek@alltel.net

If there is a desire for shirts, hats, etc. Let me know and I will start working on this.

FROM the WEBSITE PHOTO CHAIRMAN. Bob Haines, H-4, 1957-58. I am working on a "Then and Now Photo" section on the website for each squadron. We need photos taken while members were stationed in Iceland. We need "Now" photos taken



at least within the last couple of years. Photos may be sent by e-mail (Please do not reduce resolution, send full size.) Or send copies (copies only, NO original photos please) of photos by regular mail to Bob Haines

or Jerry May. Photos on CD will work too. Photos for H-1 and H-3 should be sent to: Jerry May, P.O. 1481, Jonesboro, AR 72403 jwmay@bscn.com. Photos for H-2 and H-4 should be sent to Bob Haines, 12911 Barkley St. Apt. 108, Overland Park, and KS 66209 ROWBOSF@everestic.net.

FROM THE TREASURER: David Hawk, H-1, 1985-86. Thanks again for considering paying a volunteer dues of **\$15** -- due in June of each year. Many of you have been supportive of the efforts to keep the Iceland Radar Reunion alive. Again, our dues go to pay for the twice-a-year newsletter, site selection and Website costs, and other mail and phone search expenses.



As many of you know, our association donated money to the victims of Hurricane Katrina and to at least one radar vet who very nearly lost everything. It is likely that another disaster will come along in the not too distant future where

thousands become homeless. To meet this need, we have decided to earmark some of our association's funds for that purpose -- however, we want to keep that money separate from our dues collection whose sole purpose is to fund the association itself. Therefore, we welcome additional donations to our "Disaster Relief Fund." You can donate in two ways:

- 1) If you write a check for dues that is more than \$15, indicate that the overage is for disaster relief, or
- 2) If you write a second check -- other than for dues -- ask for it to be earmarked for disaster relief.

FROM the SCRAPBOOK CHAIRMAN: W.C. Chilton, H-1, 1961- 62. I still will take pictures from any one of the sites in Iceland. Please label them and send them printed or a CD and I will put them in our scrapbooks. wcandnelma@blomand.net

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

I have always been curious about the genesis of nations, wars, sports, and associations. Therefore, I thought it might be of interest to report on just how the US Radar Sites of Iceland veteran's organization got its start.

It all began in 2000 when a radar vet by the name of Lowell (Woody) Woodworth (H-1, 1959-60) took it upon himself to develop a Yahoo sponsored website for the radar sites of Iceland. Based on old military orders, he was able to assemble and contact about 200 people. Early in this process, he made a call to a certain William Chick (H-2, 1959-60.) Chick was very excited about the prospect of helping to gather names and dove headlong into the task. About the same time Reed Thomas (H-4, 1958-59), found Lowell's website on the Internet and called him. Reed then began an intensive search of both folks from H-4 and those from other sites. While all this was going on, they learned that Joe Pyrdek (H-3-1967-68) already had a website which focused exclusively on H-3.

Matters progressed quickly and the data base expanded to several hundred. In the fall of 2001, Lowell suggested that they plan for a 50th anniversary reunion for the spring of 2003 in Dayton, OH. In the meantime, Lowell was tied down with other tasks and was working on another military reunion and asked that Chick take over as chairman of the event. Chick had the time, energy, and dedication to lead the program to what it is today. Chick and Reed replaced Lowell's website with a privately funded site that would not attract the unwanted advertisements and e-mails of the Yahoo site which had resulted in the loss of many members. Reed took on the task of being the new website administrator and got Joe Pyrdek to design the logo. David Hawk (H-1, 1985-86) and Carl Wenberg (H-2, 1958-59) were also part of the initial cadre that helped kick-start the organization. Reed called me and asked if I would volunteer to be the Historian. Chick and Reed then built a well balanced executive committee that would both plan and administer the forthcoming reunion. The committee made a decision early on that both the association and any reunions have at least one altruistic purpose—to honor the memory of the men and women who so faithfully served on the far reaches of America's defensive front.



The rest is history. Two highly successful reunions have been held -- one at Dayton, OH in 2003 and the other in Colorado Springs, CO in 2005. In both cases, Iceland Radar Site memorials have been donated to two different military museums and the Radar Sites of Iceland History book has been

sent to several libraries and the offices of the major air command historical offices of each of the MAJCOMs that oversaw our radar sites through the years. The location of the 2007 reunion will be announced in the near future. There are now nearly 1,300 radar vets in the data base.

WILLIAM A. CHICK
Iceland Reunion Chairman
104 Summit Pt Ct
Chapin, SC 29036

Planning Meeting. Our membership has grown to 1,300 which necessitates that we schedule a planning meeting for our Association. We will hold a planning meeting May 18-21, 2006 in Nashville, TN. All members are welcomed. The exact details of where and when are still being worked out and more info will follow for those who plan to attend. Contact William A. Chick if interested. There will be plenty of time for some sightseeing – Nashville is a target rich environment in the entertainment category. Our regular reunion will be in 2007 as planned.