

US RADAR SITES of ICELAND

NEWSLETTER,

November 2022


Newsletter #40. Editor: Jerry Tonnell, H-2, 1959.

From the Chair, Ruthann Couch, H-1, 1975-76. Hello everyone, it is an honor to serve as the Chair but Chick is a hard act to follow. Chick and Larry Robin were instrumental in starting our organization and in keeping it going for more than 20 years. They organized all the reunions in the past and did a fantastic job. Chick and Larry will continue to provide help as I organize the next reunion. I am looking at Montgomery, AL for the 2023 reunion and it looks like it will be in the September/October timeframe so that we have time to get the word out and get it organized. Nothing is in concrete yet but there is plenty to see and do in Montgomery including Maxwell-Gunter AFB. There is also a lot of history to explore. Look for more details in early 2023. And thanks again for your trust and support. For questions, contact me at:

3250 Whitbeck Blvd, Eugene, OR 97405, (541)-953-0683

couchruthann@centurylink.net

We Need Your EMAIL. So we can send Newsletters to you by email, please send your latest email to Joe Pyrdek at: us.radarsites.iceland@gmail.com

WEBSITE CHAIRMAN. Joe Pyrdek, H-3, 1967-68. Joe has worked tirelessly & constructed an entirely new Iceland Radar Website. Find it at: www.usrsi.org – it will show with this icon on a smart phone as— 

HISTORY BOOKS AND COINS. We have a handful of books and coins left. The price of each item is \$10. Make your check out to Iceland Radar Sites Reunion and mail to William Chick at 3021 Frost Meadow Way, Indian Land, SC 29707

TREASURER. Our newly-elected Treasurer is Paul Goldschmidt, H-1, '78-79. 8610 County Rd. 15 W, Minot, ND 58703 oldgold@srt.com

What Happened at the Indianapolis Reunion?

1st Account:

Chairman William Chick's FINAL Report on the Reunion

We left home in South Carolina about 7:30 am on Labor Day and got there in the P.M. Lots of traffic and rain but glad we did. The hotel had our reservation a little messed up but once everything calmed down, we got it settled and were told there was a brunch for us the next day at 10 am.

Sept 6th

At 1030 on the 6th the room was not set up or sign out in the area as we had asked for. After asking quite a few hotel folks we finally got the hospitality room. They put us up on the electronic sign. We set up a table and all turned out ok. We started giving out badges and some instruction on a later-to-be-held raffle. Ruthann Couch (Co-Chair), Don Burner (Admin.), and Peter Holland (Hospitality) got everything set up and we started registration, handing out badges and gifts.

The hotel did not really greet us and did not offer us a lot of help. We did not meet the quota for number of nights reserved. The hotel had a huge penalty fee, but the hotel rep Courtney Hernandez did find us some savings. We thanked her for that - it really helped. We had box dinners for the evening and everyone enjoyed chatting in the hospitality room.

Sept. 7th

Tours started at AM. Up first was the Indiana War Memorial. Then we had lunch at the Columbia Club, an old club right on Monument Circle. We all had a fun time. We ended the day with a pizza party and a review of our old reunions narrated by Larry Robin (Co-Chair).

Sept 8th

Tours started in the AM. First up was the Indianapolis Speedway Museum and ended with at the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art. At 4 PM we started to get ready for our banquet. The meeting started at 5:30 PM. Advancing the colors was done by Mississippi State Governor guard, First lieutenant Jason Chick. The prayer was given by Lt/Col (Ret) Jerry Tonnell. SMSgt (Ret) Larry Robin led us in song all singing GOD BLESS AMERICA. Chairman William Chick and Treasure/Co-Chairperson Ruthann Couch led meeting with multiple reports including a website review by Joe Pyrdek. Special guest speaker was BGen Stewart Goodwin. This summary of events was brief as others have put together detailed reviews with pictures. It was a wonderful time. I have resigned after being chairperson over 20 years. Thank you all for everything over the years!!

William Chick, Chairman Emeritus

2nd Account:

Written and Assembled By Joe Pyrdek

DAY 1. Tuesday, September 6th was the first day with people arriving from morning till night. When we arrived we were greeted with many, many police cars parked around our motel. No, it was not a crime scene! The Indiana police departments were holding their annual meeting and conference at the Marriott while we were there. The facility was more than large enough to handle both groups at the same time.

After checking in and putting our things into our rooms, it was time to go to the Hospitality Suite and register for the Reunion. This was the "HQ" for our entire reunion. It not only provided a chance to get a boxed lunch, sweet treats and refreshments but also the chance to view all the memorabilia collected from all the sites over the many years. Many conversations started at this table with members remembering and telling of their years in Iceland but also learning of what the following years brought them both in military and civilian life.

It also provided a chance to view some of the various *Quilts of Valor* which were awarded to various members in the past years and items in the Silent Auction raffle fundraiser.

Tuesday evening Ruthann Couch led a session where we learned of the plans for the next few days but also had a chance to review the activities of the group following our last, pre-COVID-19, reunion in 2019 and matters to be brought up at the formal business meeting scheduled for Thursday after the Banquet. This allowed the members to be better prepared to answer the questions about the future of our group, the need for people to fill the various jobs needed to have an effective group and the status of our finances.

Joe Pyrdek provided background information about the problems which resulted in the old website being abandoned and a new website created. He also pointed out that over the years we have lost contact with many of our members and the need to organize a plan to update our membership files (both Annual and Life and unpaid members). He presented a plan to transfer ownership of our website from his personal account to our group.

On a little sadder note, we also recognized the deaths of some of our members discovered over the past few months.

Yes it was a busy, busy first day!

DAY 1 PHOTOS





Indianapolis City Center



Indianapolis Skyline



Paul and Bonnie Goluschmidt enjoying the hospitality room



Ruthann Couch explaining the silent auction bidding

DAY 2. WEDNESDAY, Sept 7, 2022

Wednesday started early with breakfast in the Hospitality Room and then boarding the bus for a short ride to Indiana War Memorial. This classical Greek style architecture features three floors of memorials and artifacts from all the wars where Indiana soldiers and sailors lost their lives. Their names are shown on Memorial Plaques for WW I, WW II, Korea and Vietnam and other conflicts to honor those who made the Supreme Sacrifice.

Our tour started with a short video presentation in the six-hundred seat Pershing auditorium showing the construction of this magnificent memorial. Then we went up to see the breath-taking Shrine Room. Here is the Altar of Consecration and the Star of Destiny, surrounded by 24 pillars of Blood Red Indiana Marble. All of us were deeply moved by the striking beauty and solemn nature of this room built using materials from all over the world to symbolize the world-wide nature of the First World War. You could not help but realize the many sacrifices made by the men and women honored in this shrine.

The two lower floors had exhibits from all the conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and later conflicts. There was a special exhibit honoring those who lost their lives when the USS Indianapolis was sunk by a Japanese submarine shortly after delivering the Atomic Bomb dropped on Hiroshima to Tinian Island. The story of the loss of all but 317 lives of the 1196 aboard was a series of miscommunications where the Navy did not even realize that the Indianapolis was sunk until several days had passed. There are far too many exhibits to list them all so here is a link to the Indiana War Museum, where you can find much more information.

<https://www.in.gov/iwm/>

After the Indiana War Museum, it was time to get on the bus for a short ride to where we were having our three-years-delayed lunch at the Columbia Club. Our visit to this club, which was a five Star hotel with elaborate stained glass windows and sparkling chandeliers, was originally set up for the 2020 and subsequent 2021 reunions, both of which were blocked by the COVID pandemic. After our lunch in the elegant ballroom, we had a chance to visit the Soldiers and Sailors Monument across the street in Monument Circle.

The Soldiers and Sailors Monument is a 284' 6" neoclassical dedicated 120 years ago in 1902. Construction of the monument started in 1888 and was completed in 1901. The monument is the first monument constructed in the United States that was dedicated to the common soldiers who served in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812. The Mexican-American War and the Spanish American War. It is an obelisk made of Indiana quarried limestone on a raised foundation and surrounded by pools and fountains and topped by a 30 foot tall bronze sculpture of "Victory". We even had the excitement of a number of fire trucks and emergency vehicles with sirens screaming, but they left shortly after without any further activity being seen.

After our tour of the monument and surrounding area, we gathered back at the Columbia Club for the ride back to "HQ" for a pizza party and a video presentation by Larry Robin of our past reunions which started in 2003.

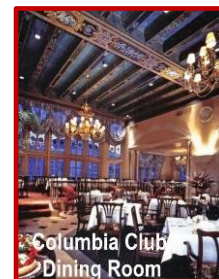
DAY 2 PHOTOS



Indiana War Museum



Indiana War Museum entryway ceiling



Columbia Club Dining Room



Monument inside the Indiana War Museum



Howard Wilson scanning the Indiana War Veterans



Indiana War Museum visit. L-R: BGen Goodwin, Ruthann & Gene Couch, Richard & Bonny LeDoux



USS Indianapolis Memorial Monument



Ruthann Couch expertly supervising the bus tours



Howard and Marty Benham riding the "shotgun" seat on the bus



Esther and Gil Gilbertson looking forward to the War Museum visit



Marty Benham at the Indianapolis town center, at the city's War Memorial section



Entrance to the famous Columbia Club restaurant where we dined



Enjoying lunch at the famous Columbia Club Hotel in downtown Indianapolis



Lunch at the famous Columbia Club Hotel



Larry Robin narrating his Iceland Reunion slide show

DAY 3. Thursday, Sept 8 started off with a quick coffee & rolls breakfast in our Hospitality Room HQ before boarding a bus to visit the world famous Indianapolis Motor Speedway. A short time and a few miles away we came to that famous oval cornered rectangle. Seeing the tunnel which runs under the grandstand and racetrack to allow entry to the inner area caused a few of us to wonder if that big bus we were on would fit through the tunnel. Yes, it did with room to spare AND WE WERE at "THE BRICKYARD!"

The Speedway is NOT actually in Indianapolis. It has its own town called Speedway, Indiana. The Speedway is located about 6 miles from downtown Indianapolis.

While we were unloading, we were treated to a number of Chevy Corvette owners racing their vehicles around the track. Then we entered the Museum and Visitor's Center. Ruthann met with the Speedway's tour people and we got into the three busses needed to drive our group to the various areas of the Speedway. In the Tower we saw where the reporters set up to cover the race, the viewing areas which gave a spectacular view of the entire race track facility including the 257,325 seating of the Grandstand, the "Gasoline Alley" pit Area, and the medical facility and the golf course. Yes, I did say Golf Course. There are four holes of this eighteen-hole golf course. They are located inside the Speedway's infield while the remaining 14 holes border the back stretch of the track.

You had a bird's eye view of the Finish Line and the 3 foot strip of the original bricks laid down in 1909 when the track was first built. In a little known fact, the very first race held at the track took place before the track was even completed and it did not have a single car in the race. It was instead a helium filled balloon race which drew 40,000 spectators. The winner was aloft for more than 24 hours and landed 362 miles away!

We were also treated to see the Winners Circle. This is a unique area where the winning race car is lifted from the track level to a second floor presentation area by a specially installed elevator.

After the tour of the track, we spent several hours in the museum looking at a number of different race cars from the early 1900's on. The variety of differently styled race cars was truly amazing. You could even drive a three lap practice on the track. Of course, you could only use the simulators available for your "race" but the experience was exciting.

After the museum, we were treated to a Bus Lunch. No that is not a typo error. We had Subway box lunches while on the bus before we started our journey to our next event of the reunion. We toured downtown Indianapolis and saw many of the sights while our driver negotiated the many roads and turns we took.

After our "Bus Lunch" we were off for a driving tour of Indianapolis. A big attraction was circling the Lucas Oil Stadium, home of the Indianapolis Colts NFL team. Soon we arrived at the Eiteljorg Museum. It was founded by Harrison Eiteljorg, an Indianapolis businessman who loved the art of both the Western U.S. and the many native tribes across the North American continent and he wished to preserve and promote the many different forms of art and history that the museum now contains. The Eiteljorg's collection has been ranked among the best in the world. Our tour guide was very knowledgeable about the different pictures on display and the various materials used by the native tribes in the creation of their arts and things used in daily living.

Then it was back to our hotel to get ready for the Reunion Banquet.

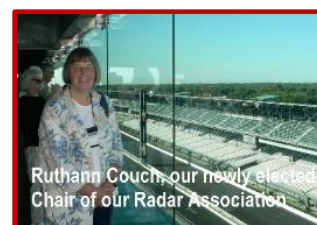
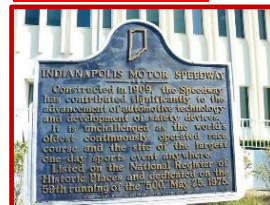
The Banquet opened with the Presentation of the Colors by 1st Lt Jason Chick. He is our Chairman's grandson who is a 1st Lt in the Mississippi National Guard. Following the delicious dinner, retired Brigadier General J. Stewart Goodwin, serving as Executive Director, Indiana War Memorials Commission, gave us a report on Indianapolis's outstanding recognition of the very high dedication the city and state has to recognize the efforts and dedication of the many Hoosiers who served our country in the many conflicts from the War of Independence to the current conflicts now taking place. Such efforts include not only the many outstanding monuments but

also the various services available to the veterans of Indiana. General Goodwin described the efforts to consolidate Veterans Services in a central location so all veterans can have easy access to the services they need. Following General Goodwin's presentation Plaques of Appreciation were presented to Chairman Chick, Vice-Chair Larry Robin, Historian Jerry Tonnell, Webmaster Joe Pyrdek, Asst. Webmaster Geoff Legg, Hospitality chair Peter Holland, and Registration Chair Donald Brunner. Chairman Chick presented Secretary/Treasurer Ruthann Couch with a Staples gift card.

Next was the presentation by Joe Pyrdek of a U.S. Flag which had flown above the U.S. Capitol Building and a certificate from U.S. Senator Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania recognizing Chick's more than 20 years of service in the formation and leadership of the Iceland Radar Sites Reunion Group. Chairman Chick's grandson Jason then presented Chick with a specially crafted "challenge coin" set of four coins in recognition of Chick's service to the country and his dedication and valiant efforts in the reunion Group's many gatherings and projects.

An Appreciation Award was presented to the Hotel Manager in appreciation of the hotel's assistance in holding our reunion. Following the Banquet, we retired back to our Hospitality Suite HQ to conduct the Business Meeting of our group.

DAY 3 PHOTOS



THE BANQUET





Our guest speaker, BGen (Ret) Goodwin



The Banquet Head Table. L-R: Jerry Tonnell, Brig Gen Goodwin, and Chairman Chick.

DAY 4, FRIDAY, Sep 9

We all packed up and departed for home carrying with us many pleasant memories of our days in Iceland and the friendships made while there and when attending our reunions.



Keep watching our Iceland Radar website for updates and for any news of a reunion in 2023.



Chairman Chick presents Brig Gen Goodwin the guest speakers award as in-coming chairperson, Ruthann Couch looks on.



Donald Brunner, our registration 'guru' receiving award from Chick and Ruthann

Report of the Business Meeting and Election of officers Meeting held at the Marriott Hotel in Indianapolis, IN on September 8, 2022

Here is the slate of officers that were nominated by the Nominating Committee (Joe Pyrdek and Howard Benham) and voted on (elected) at the September 8, 2022 Business Meeting. Howard Benham moved to accept the slate of officers and Donald Brunner seconded the motion. The attendees voted to elect the nominees.



Geoff Legg, Asst Webmaster, receiving an award from Chairman, Chick



Pete Holland, our Hospitality Chairman, receiving an award from Chick and Ruthann

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Chair | Ruthann Couch |
| Vice Chair | <u>Vacant</u> (but I will be looking for someone to fill the position) |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Paul Goldschmidt |
| Membership Chair | <u>Vacant</u> (but I will be looking for someone to fill the position) |
| Historian/Newsletter Editor | Jerry Tonnell |
| Webmaster | Joe Pyrdek |
| Assistant Webmaster | Geoff Legg |
| Memorabilia Chair | Peter Holland |
| Chair Emeritus | William Chick |
| Vice Chair Emeritus | Larry Robin |

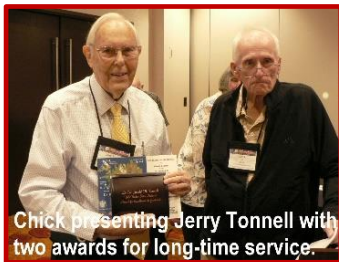


Joe Pyrdek, our Website Manager, receiving an award from Chick and Ruthann



Our Vice Chairman, Larry Robin, and wife, Marguerite, receiving an award from Chick and Ruthann

A motion was made by Joe Pyrdek and seconded by Howard Benham to have the Executive Board take ownership of the USRSI.org website. The motion was approved.



Chick presenting Jerry Tonnell with two awards for long-time service.

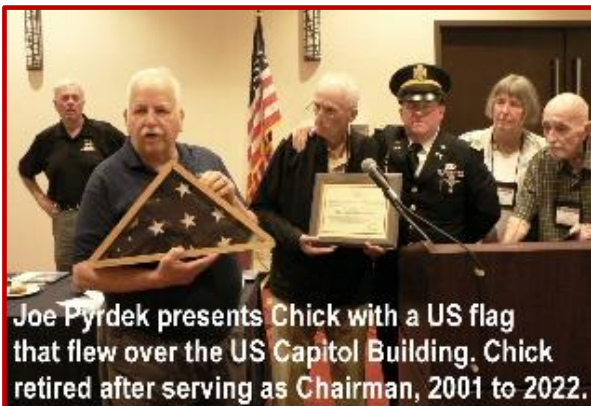


Our Chairman, William Chick, and his wife, Connie, receiving an award from Ruthann and Larry

A motion was made by Joe Pyrdek and seconded by Howard Benham to renew the domain name and the website registration. The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Joe Pyrdek and seconded by Howard Benham to make it known to the membership that members can make tax deductible Qualified Charitable Distributions from their IRA's to the Iceland Radar Sites Reunion. The motion was approved.

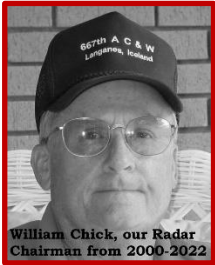
The group discussed the desire to have future reunions and there was a lot of enthusiasm to have a reunion in the next 12 to 18 months. The month of a reunion was a concern because May and June is busy with graduations and weddings and some members will not be able to attend a reunion. September was the month that most members thought was best because it was after summer and children are back in school and the weather is still mild for traveling. Several possible locations included Rapid City, SD, Montgomery, AL and Kansas City, MO. Ruthann Couch suggested Montgomery, AL because it is approximately half way between William Chick and Larry Robin and would probably allow them to attend the next reunion.



Joe Pyrdek presents Chick with a US flag that flew over the US Capitol Building. Chick retired after serving as Chairman, 2001 to 2022.

Webmaster Joe Pyrdek discussed the website and the need to improve communication to the members. He also talked about the search feature and fulfilling member requests to find other Iceland Radar Site veterans. The discussion was whether or not we should limit the number of requests per member. The decision was made to not change current procedures and revisit the issue if the number of requests become unmanageable.

Tribute to our Chairman, Emeritus, WILLIAM CHICK and His Wife, CONNIE.



William Chick, our Radar Chairman from 2000-2022

These two precious folks have been in the front line leading this organization since its inception around 2000. Chick has been a driving force to keep us going year after year when many felt that it would only last one, or at most, two reunions.



William and Connie Chick - an unbeatable leadership team

They spent countless hours and their own financial resources keeping us together. During our many reunions, fast friends were made. At each reunion stop, Iceland Radar History books were presented to city officials and plaques were donated to our host hotels. In addition, copies of our History book are in the offices of the Command Librarians of each of the Major Commands that oversaw our radar sites – MATS, AMC, ADC, TAC, ACC, and USAFE.

The story of the Radar Sites of Iceland will be remembered!

Here is a list of the 53 reunion attendees:

| | |
|---|---|
| <u>Robert Andrews</u> and Julie Fleury | H-3 '65-'66 |
| <u>Anthony</u> and Linda <u>Arnold</u> | H-3 '82-'83 |
| <u>Rich Banta</u> | H-3 '84 |
| <u>Howard</u> and Marty <u>Benham</u> | 932nd and HQ AFI '72-'75, '79-'82 and '86-'88 |
| <u>Randall Bills</u> | H-1 '76-'77 |
| <u>Donald</u> and Diana <u>Brunner</u> | H-3 '72 |
| <u>William</u> and Connie <u>Chick</u> | H-2 '59-'60 |
| Jason Chick, grandson | |
| Sharon Chick, daughter | |
| <u>Ruthann</u> and Gene <u>Couch</u> | H-1 |
| <u>James Getz</u> | H-1 '63 |
| <u>Byron</u> "Gil" and Esther <u>Gilbertson</u> | H-1 '69 and H-3 '78-'79 |
| <u>Robert Haines</u> | H-4 '57-'58 |
| Robert Haines, son | |
| Ken Wasmer, step-son | |
| <u>Paul</u> and Bonnie <u>Goldschmidt</u> | H-1 '78-'79 and '82-'85 |
| <u>Brad Hinton</u> | H-3 '85-'86 |
| <u>Peter</u> and Marie <u>Holland</u> | H-3 '66-'67 |
| <u>Billy Hurst</u> and Margaret Robertson | H-1 '65 |
| <u>Richard</u> and Bunny <u>LeDoux</u> | H-1 '68-'69 |
| <u>Geoff</u> and Janet <u>Legg</u> | H-1 |
| <u>Richard</u> and Sue <u>Mulz</u> | H-3 '84-'85 |
| <u>Joseph</u> and Rita <u>Pyrdek</u> | H-3 '67-'68 |
| <u>Larry</u> and Marguerite <u>Robin</u> | H-1 '64-'65 |
| Cindy Campbell, daughter | |
| Mark Robin, son | |
| <u>Frank</u> and Donna <u>Rollins</u> | H-1 '76-'77 |
| <u>Clarence</u> Dean <u>Stoltz</u> | H-1 & H-3 '55-'56 |
| Margaret Green, daughter | |
| <u>Gerald</u> and Norma <u>Tonnell</u> | H-2 '59 |
| <u>Roger</u> and Kathleen <u>Wertanen</u> | H-1 '58-'59 |
| <u>Harry</u> and Melissa <u>Wilson</u> | H-4 '57 and H-1 '61 |
| <u>David</u> Wingrove | H-1 '63-'64 |