

US RADAR SITES of ICELAND

NEWSLETTER, June 2017

Newsletter #32. Editor: Jerry Tonnell, H-2, 1959.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN. **William Chick, H-2, 1959-60.** I enjoyed our reunion and seeing many friends and welcoming about 15 new folks. We thanked the Hilton Hotel and the Radisson Hotel for their great service and hospitality. From the feedback I have gotten so far, looks like all had a good time. Thanks to **John Tienen, H-1, 1962-63,** and **Gary Carter, H-1, 1957-58,** for taking care of us – thank you so very much. We also thank American Legion Post 132 for posting the colors. Thanks to **Ruthann Couch** who served as this reunion's historian. I called for an election and got no reply -- so I will be your chairman one more time. I am looking for photos you took while there, so send them to me by email or prints. William Chick, email: littlechick@msn.com

We voted to have a reunion next year in Memphis. The site will be at two side-by-side motels:

1.) Hampton Inn - Southaven, 390 Goodman Dr W, Southaven, MS. 38671. 1 (662) 349-8855

2.) Fairfield Inn & Suites. 7149 Sleepy Hollow Dr., Southaven, MS. 38671. 1 (662) 349-6640

Room Cost: About \$122 per night for two with breakfast for two. You can start calling about reservations as early as July 1, 2017. **Tentative Schedule** of events. **30 May, Wed.** Arrive and register, hospitality room. **May 31, Thurs.** To Clarksdale, MS to Ground Zero, lunch and live Mississippi Delta Blues music. From there we will stop by Tunica River Casino Boats for about 3 hours. Working on a tour of FedEx center. **Jun 1, Fri.** Bus tour of Memphis, then lunch at BB King's restaurant in down-town Memphis. Time to visit Beale Street and maybe a trip to Elvis Presley Museum, or even the Sun Records Studio that spawned Elvis, Johnny Cash, and Jerry Lee Lewis, etc. That night we will have our banquet at the local VFW Post. All details are not yet worked out. **Jun 2, Sat.** Hospitality & Depart. **Reunion Cost: \$170 per person**, includes hospitality room, buses, all tours, lunch each tour day, & the banquet. For questions, call William Chick, 803 422 9486.



Memphis, TN – site of our 2018 Reunion – 30 May to 2 June. Complete details in our Dec Newsletter.

SCRAPBOOK CHAIRMAN, WC Chilton, H-1, 1961-62. In preparation for our 2018 reunion, I will be putting together a scrapbook of our 2017 reunion. Folks with 2017 Tucson photos please snail-mail your 4X6" prints to me at: WC Chilton, 210 Parish Lane, McMinnville, TN 37110.

WEBSITE DIRECTOR. **Reed Thomas, H-4, 1958-59.** We have added over 160 new names to our data bank since our last newsletter mostly coming from research of past *White Falcon* newspapers. Check out our Radar Website for updates: <http://usradarsitesiceland.com/> Reed's email is: reedt934@gmail.com

TREASURER. **William Chick, H-2, 1959-60.** Our annual voluntary membership dues run \$15 per year. Make checks payable to "Iceland Radar Sites Reunion" and mail it to William Chick, 3021 Frost Meadow Way, Fort Mill, SC 29707. His email is: littlechick@msn.com

FROM THE HISTORIAN. **Jerry Tonnell, H-2, 1959.** If you would like to order a copy of our *History of the Radar Sites of Iceland* book, please do so as we have only 7 remaining in stock of our 13th printing of the book. The price is \$10 including postage. To order mail a check payable to "Iceland Radar Sites Reunion" to: William Chick, 3021 Frost Meadow Way, Fort Mill, SC 29707.

WEBSITE PHOTO CHAIRMAN. **Joe Pyrdek, H-3, 1967-68.** If you have any pictures you would like to provide to the gallery, including ones from the Tucson Reunion, please send them on to me, Joe Pyrdek, either by e-

mail attachments to jpyrdek@zoominternet.net for electronic images. Or you can mail them via USPS as listed below. All picture formats (.jpg, .tiff, .png, etc.) can be accommodated. Please provide the original full size image and not a compressed or resized smaller image. If you scan them for sending them to me, please use a minimum of 300 DPI resolution to obtain the higher quality.

You can also send, preferably a copy and not the original, pictures to me at 13654 Foust Road, Conneaut Lake, PA 16316. A copy is preferred to prevent the original from being damaged or destroyed in the mail. All pictures received will be returned to you after they have been processed for use in the photo gallery. I am especially in need of some photos from the Oklahoma City 2013 Reunion & the 2017 Tucson Reunion. Please include information about where and when the picture was taken, along with a brief description so that info can be used as a caption for the image.



SAD News. We recently learned that one of the founding members of our association has passed on. **Jerry Blackwell, H-2, 1960–61, and H-3, 1961,** died in a hospital in Las Vegas on the 27th of April 2017. Plagued with ill health for the past few years, he was unable to attend the last four reunions. Jerry served as chairman of our search committee for 6 years. He personally found over 600 Iceland radar vet by doggedly researching old orders & interviewing other vets. Without him our organization would never have been able to reach out to a large number of the radar vets of Iceland.

What Happened in Tucson?

As your editor, I was unable to attend the Tucson Reunion, however, Ruthann (Connell) Couch, H-1, 1975-76, graciously volunteered to make a running account of events at the reunion. Below is her excellent report on the happenings in Tucson.

Tuesday, April 11. **Jerry May, H-1, 1962-63,** and **Pappy Papworth, H-1, 1962-63,** worked the Registration Table with help from **John Tienen, Gary Carter,** and his wife did a fantastic job with the Hospitality Room where there was plenty of water, soda, beer, wine and liquor. There were also plenty of cookies, chips, nuts, pretzels, apple, grapes and trail mix. We had a wonderful Subway sandwich dinner. We honored **Terisa Felix-Provencio** from the Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort for her help with the Reunion and the move to the Radisson. She was given a plaque by **William Chick, H-2, 1959-60,** that thanked her for her help. **Col Doug Harper, H-3, 1972-73,**



presented our chairman, William Chick, with a mouse pad that had an Icelandic Chick on it. He also included a plate explaining the gift and a stand. Col Harper went on to pass out needle point book marks with IRSR 2003 (*Icelandic Radar Sites Reunion with 2003 being the year that the reunions started*).

WW II Iceland vet, Jane Boote, attended the reunion. She is 97 years old...She was a US Army Nurse serving at Walter Reed Hospital in 1943, where she took care of some of the Doolittle's Raiders. She volunteered to serve overseas and in 1944 was sent to Iceland for a year, where she took care of American soldiers that were massing/preparing for D-Day. When she returned to the US from Iceland she went to Fitzsimons Army Hospital in Colorado. In 1946, Jane was sent to France as part of an evacuation unit (MASH unit) to handle the casualties from the Battle of the Bulge. She attended the final Doolittle's Raiders Reunion in Florida -- only 3 of the Raiders remain.

Below are a few anecdotal comments overheard at the reunion about Iceland service:

- When H-2 blew down in January 1961, the troops & their updated radar equipment were moved to H-3. The skeleton crew at H-3, which had been left behind when H-3 closed in 1960, increased 10 fold. This changed the complexion of H-3, which transitioned from very casual to a more military atmosphere.

- In 1965-1966, Icelandic bands played every Friday and Saturday in the club at Rockville. There were always plenty of Icelandic girls there but they drank a lot and frequently passed out. The night Club Manager drove them back to town. One time, he headed out the gate with a bus load and an Icelander driving a Mercedes taxi

drove up and realized that his fare was on the bus. He followed the bus and when the bus got to Keflavik, an Icelandic policeman pulled him over thinking that he was intoxicated. He had to blow into a balloon and it did not show that he had been drinking. So he had to blow into another balloon but again it was negative for alcohol and they had to let him go.

- An officer and his wife from Keflavik NAS came out to Rockville to the club and got drunk. They asked the night Club Manager to drive them home in their 1958 Thunderbird and then bring the car back the next day. The Thunderbird had large plastic tubes that were part of the air conditioning system, which were a great way to transport liquor off the military bases.

Wednesday, April 12. The group went to the Tucson Presidio which was the first fort in Tucson. There were demonstrations of the weaving and spinning of wool and cotton, the living quarters for families and troops, the soldiers and the weapons that they used, the blacksmith area, the foods that folks at the Presidio ate, and the way that clothing got its color. There was a musket firing demonstration and a cannon firing demonstration. We learned about scurvy and why the British were called "limeys." We also learned about the origin of going off halfcocked; a flash in the pan; lock, stock and barrel; and skin flint. Then we toured the Pima Air & Space Museum. We returned to the buses and had a boxed lunch supplied by the Hilton. We took a bus tour of the "bone yard" and saw a variety of aircraft. The bone yard has just under 4000 aircraft on 2600 acres (4 square miles). We found out that there are no C-141's left in the world. We had a pizza party at the hotel.



Below are a couple more anecdotal comments overheard at the reunion about Iceland service:

- Folks talked about the smell from the fish plant in Sandgerði, located just about 2 miles from H-1.

- There were bands at the Rockville Club every Friday and Saturday evening. Howard Benham, H-1, 1972-75, drove the drunks from Keflavik back to Kef after the Friday and Saturday evenings. The Icelandic gate guards always tried to find out if Howard had been drinking.



Thursday, April 13. The group boarded the buses to the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum that provided up close viewing of wildlife and plants that are native to Arizona. It was hot and required walking the looped trails to see the flora and fauna. Then we headed to Old Tucson, where movies and TV westerns have been filmed since 1939. Many enjoyed the "Hanged Man" reenactment, the Grand Palace Musical Revue, the Old Tucson Historic Tour, the stage coach ride, and the C.P. Huntington train ride. That evening, the banquet was a great closing for a wonderful reunion. Larry Robin, H-1, 1964-65, opened with a few remarks then Reverend Chip

Norton gave a blessing. American Legion Post 132 presented the colors and Larry Robin led the group in singing God Bless America. Jim Turner, a local Historian, shared information about Tucson that was very

interesting. There have been people in Tucson since 2000 BC and the Europeans arrived in 1691 where they found 800 Pima Indians. Over 9,000 prospectors came through Arizona on their way to the California gold fields. During the Civil War, Arizona was part of the Confederacy and on April 15, 1862, there was a battle between 12 Union and 12 Confederate soldiers that was the most westerly battle of the Civil War. Larry Robin provided a rundown of all the past US Radar Sites of Iceland Reunions, with the first one being in 2003 in Dayton, OH. Larry presented to Chick a sheep-skin rug signed by everyone at the reunion and some Icelandic souvenirs that members donated for Chick. Col Doug Harper presented Chick with a framed map of Iceland so Chick will always know where he served. Col Harper also gave Chick a Kentucky Colonel Plaque from the state of Kentucky. We took pictures of everyone at the banquet grouping them by table. It was a great reunion!



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NEWSLETTER, November 2017

NEWSLETTER #33. EDITOR: JERRY TONNELL, H-2, 1959.

--The Next Iceland Radar Reunion--

Memphis, TN, May 30- June 2, 2018

FROM THE CHAIRMAN. William Chick, H-2, 1959-60. We are in the final countdown for the Memphis Reunion scheduled for this coming 30 May to 2 June, 2018. We visited the Memphis area and have arranged for an interesting and fun-packed reunion experience. There was so much to choose from that we could only cram in a few events for our reunion schedule. However, in this Newsletter, we will publicize not only what is on the reunion agenda, but also three other appealing places that you could take in if you arrive before or stay after the reunion dates.

Below are the two side-by-side hotels for the Iceland Radar Site's Memphis Reunion.



1. Fairfield Inn & Suites Hotel

7149 Sleepy Hollow Dr, Southaven, MS 38641.

For reservations call 1 (662) 349-6640

& ask for "Iceland Radar Sites Reunion" rate.

2. Hampton Inn, Southaven

390 Goodman Rd, Southaven, MS 38641

For reservations call 1-(844) 641-1114

& ask for "Iceland Radar Sites Reunion" rate. Our Group Code for the Hampton is "IRS."

You may begin calling for reservations from this point on.

NOTE: The hotels are located side-by-side.

HOTEL COSTS: The per night room rate for two includes daily breakfast for two. **\$127.00** at the Fairfield. **\$125.40** at the Hampton. The hotels are only 40 yards apart. Each one will have a Hospitality Room -- and the guest room quality is about the same from hotel to hotel.

***** PLEASE MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE *****

-- only 17 have done so as of October. You can register now and cancel later if you have a schedule conflict.

"ALL EVENTS" COSTS: \$170 per person.

The All Events cost includes: hospitality room, buses, all tours, lunch on both bus tour days, and the banquet.

When you pay the total \$170 fee per person in advance, it will help with planning -- make checks payable to:

"Iceland Reunion" and mail to:

William Chick, 3021 Frost Meadow Way, Fort Mill, SC 29707

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

At the Memphis Reunion, we will be staying at 2 hotels -- the Fairfield Inn and the Hampton Inn. We will have a hospitality room in each hotel and they will be stocked with soda, water, chips, nuts and other snacks. All our numerous radar site photo books will be on display.

Wednesday, May 30, 2018. Register -- the Hospitality Rooms open at noon.

Thursday, May 31. At 9:30 am we will board the buses for Clarksdale, Mississippi and travel to



the Café Ground Zero, the Blues capital of the world. There we will have lunch and listen to live music straight out of the Mississippi delta. Afterwards, we will board the buses to Tunica, MS and the Gold Strike Casino for a couple hours (*there is also a small riverboat available.*) While there we will have dinner (Dutch Treat.) **NOTE:** we can each get a \$10 dinner coupon providing you eat dinner at the Gold Strike's large Pickle and Jam Eatery. We plan to be back to our hotels by about 7 pm.

Friday, June 1. We will board buses at 9:00 am & travel to Beale Street in Memphis. There are many sites to see there. About 11:30 am, we will go to the BB King Café for lunch and live music.



About 2:00 pm we return to the hotels and at 4:30 pm we will bus- up, go to the Rock and Soul Museum to tour, and have our Banquet. In the museum are the songs and history of southern soul. We will each get a headset -- and by punching in the numbers, you can listen to exactly what songs you love to hear. The museum will close to give us privacy for our banquet. Tables will be set up throughout the museum & food will be catered. We will leave the banquet at about 8:30 pm.

Saturday, Jun 2. The Hospitality Rooms remain open until noon. Depart, & Bon Voyage.

For questions, call Chick (803) 422-9486

What You Can Visit in the Memphis Area if You Arrive Early or Leave Late.

1. Graceland -- Home of Elvis Presley. We did not schedule Elvis' home at Graceland because we were told "*our group would take almost 3 hours for a 20 minute tour if there was no one else but us -- and, they don't take reservations.*" However, if you are a fan of Elvis, you won't mind the wait, because just about all you ever wanted to know about this great entertainer and his career is found at this location.



2. Memphis Riverboats.



While the riverboats are not as elaborate as the one we chartered for our Nashville Reunion (*I. E. they are not showboats,*) there is more than one to choose from. They will take you on a pleasant tour of the Mississippi River as it winds its way through Memphis and its environs.

3. The Famous Memphis Zoo.



The Memphis Zoo has over 3,500 animals and is situated on 76 acres of land at Overland Park in the city. In the not too distant past, it was ranked as the Number #1 Zoo in the United States based on visitor opinions and surveys by "TripAdvisor."

HELP!!

HELP!!

HELP!!

*Our Radar Association **Treasury is suffering hunger pains.** As of right now, we have only enough money to print and distribute one more Newsletter – next June. While we have enough to continue our Iceland Radar website for another year, prospects don't look good beyond that. Our money purse is down to \$4,044.*

*In short, **we really need some donations to shore up the coffers.** Many vets have not donated their voluntary annual dues of \$15 -- and the generous donation of \$5,000 by one of our vets a few years ago is long been absorbed by the costs of the website and the newsletters. **PLEASE CONTRIBUTE WHAT YOU CAN!***

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