

WHAT HAPPENED AT NASHVILLE?

BY JERRY TONNELL, H-2, 1959.

Monday, 30 May 2011. By Monday afternoon, nearly all of the 98 vets & 88 spouses had arrived & begun socializing in the Hospitality Room at the Gaylord Radisson Hotel. The Hospitality Room became the focal point because it was there that we renewed old friendships and made new acquaintances. Our past remembrances were triggered by the many volumes of radar site scrapbooks scattered throughout the room. Under the leadership of Fred Schulte, H-1, 62-63, Jerry May, H-1, 62-63, and Ron 'Pappy' Papworth, H-1, 62-63, the room was well stocked with the following: soda, beer, spirits, ice, munchies, and plenty of tall tales. The Registration package included free pens, classy nametags, and some promotional info about future reunions. That evening we were bused to the **Wildhorse Saloon** where we enjoyed an excellent barbeque buffet meal and took in a good country western show. Some folks left a little early & walked or rented a horse-drawn carriage for a tour around the heart of downtown Nashville.

Tuesday, 31 May 2011. On Tuesday morning, we assembled for our Breakfast Business Meeting. Before the food was served, several plaques were presented to key



Fred Schulte
Posting the Colors

members of the Hotel staff for their excellent work in hosting our reunion. After that, the posting of the colors, opening prayer, National Anthem, and introductory remarks were delivered by Fred Schulte, H-1, 62-63, W. C. Chilton, H-1, 62-63, Reed Thomas, H-4, 58-59, and MC Larry Robin, H-1, 64-65. Next, Jerry Tonnell, H-2, 1959, introduced our guest speaker, Col Tom Garza, and his wife Becky. Col Garza was the Commander of the 932nd from 1995-97. In his presentation, he highlighted the challenges of moving H-1 from Rockville to Keflavik while keeping both units operationally ready. He attributed that achievement to the men and women who manned the squadron during those trying times -- people he described as among the best in the USAF. Next, came the business meeting. David Hawk, H-1,

85-86, gave a detailed Treasurer's report. After that, nominations were received for all of the Executive Committee positions – a motion was made and passed to continue the present committee until our next meeting. This was followed by announcing the names of three “west-of-the-Mississippi” finalist locations for the 2013 Reunion: Oklahoma City, OK, Ogden, UT, and Laughlin, NV. In later discussions, another location, St Louis, MO, was proposed. Rich Banta, H-3, 1984, gave a briefing on the plans to establish a Radar Museum in Ohio. I'm sure we will see more on this in the future. The meeting ended and many retreated to the Hospitality Room and awaited the buses for the trip to the **Grand Ole Opry** for an excellent show -- a good time was had by all.

Wednesday, 1 June 2011. Once again, we boarded the buses, this time for a short trip to the river that turned out to be the highlight activity of the reunion. We stepped onto the 300-foot **General Jackson Riverboat**. We were serenaded by a joke-telling, guitar-playing twosome on the upper deck. Then we went down two decks to the grand ball room where we were thoroughly entertained by *Steve Hall and the Shotgun Red Band* – a group that demonstrated superb picking perfection. Wow! The meal that followed was first class in every sense. Before leaving, we gathered on the forecandle deck while Connie Chick took a group photo – when spliced together, it will be posted on our website. Finally, it was time for the end of a most successful reunion, as we said our goodbyes and bid fond farewells and departed for home on June the 2nd.