



STRAFER



498th SQUADRON

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345th Bomb Group Reunion Association

November 1988

Las Vegas Chosen for 1990!

Lots of Laughs, Lots of Memories!

The 1988 345th Bomb Group Reunion was a rousing success, despite the little inconveniences some experienced. Let's recap some of the highlights:

It took **Ken McClure** eight long years to arrange, but he finally did it! The **Airmen of Note**, the AF band of Washington D.C., brought tears to many eyes during the Saturday Group banquet. Forty years disappeared for the attendees as they reminisced to Glen Miller tunes and other great hits. The **Sawyer Sisters** joined the 498th/499th Friday night banquet and sounded more like the Andrew Sisters than the Andrew Sisters. They were just terrific.

The Chesapeake Bay cruise was quite a success. The waiters and waitresses aboard even put on a show for everyone. The Hospitality Room was stupendous. Susan Taylor, who spoke at the women's brunch, gave a wonderful speech on the history of women's clothes.

The staff at the Holiday Inn Water-side bent over backwards to make the reunion pleasant for everyone. When McClure went to settle up the tab, one of the staff members asked, "Did you guys win the war with bombs or booze?"

One staff member even managed to get the TV news in on the event. Attending members were interviewed; the reporter covering the story had originally expected to spend an hour at the banquet, but ended up staying three and a half, saying he could have spent all night there!

Most everything else went smoothly. However, **Buck Banz** and **Lou Higgins**, reunion chairmen, spent the reunion in the hospital! You'll be pleased to know both are home doing fine. One other casualty: **Virgil Gross** (501) suffered a heart attack on his way

to Norfolk. You can wish him well at **RR 07 Box 25, Columbus MS 39701-9201**.

"Tragedies" aside, 1990 is going to be a big year. In conjunction with the *5th Air Force Reunion*, the 345th will be in Las Vegas **October 15-18**. That's Monday through Thursday, because Vegas is so crowded on weekends and rates are cheaper for everyone during this period. The 5th is hoping to get all groups to attend this party, so stay alert for more information.

From Your 345th V.P.

Once again, during the general meeting at Norfolk, the subject of paying maintenance fees to the Air

Force Museum was again mentioned. As no new info was available, I stopped at the museum to obtain the latest status.

I met with Director Col. Richard Uppstrom USAF (Ret). He stated the funding problem was because of hot weather and lack of rain, which caused the Memorial Trees to become diseased. Spraying and watering was necessary and very costly to save the trees.

Col. Uppstrom stated the 345th was "out of the woods" with regard to funding.

Ed Bina

President's Message

My first act as President of the **345th Bomb Group Reunion Association** is to thank all of you for your support and to say this is one of the most cherished honors I have ever received. With all your help, I will try to do my best for the 345th.

My second act: **Ben Fridge** and **Maury Eppstein** have agreed to be

the new Co-Chairmen of the 1990 Reunion in Las Vegas. Our reunion will be held in conjunction with the *5th Air Force Memorial Reunion* at the Riviera Hotel. I advised the 5th AFMA to include the 345th as a participating member of the reunion.

Bill Cather, the current 345th rep-

resentative to the 5th AFMA was elected Vice President of the 5th AFMA and has requested another rep from the 345th be appointed. I appointed Maury Eppstein to this position and he accepted.



Shuler S. Gamble

Thanks again to Maury for the past two years of good service to the 345th Reunion Association and all our special thanks to **Buck Banz**, **Lou Higgins**, **Ken McClure** and the rest of the various committees that made the Norfolk Reunion one of the most enjoyable of all. To all unable to attend, please know you were missed.

Shuler S. Gamble

Headquarters Report

Just a brief note from HQ. **Charles Metzel**, your past leader, is sending me all the material I'll need for this assignment. With the help of my computer, everything should run smoothly.

It is a great pleasure and honor to serve as VP of the HQ Group. I'll do my best to keep you informed!



Ken Gastgeb

498th Squadron Report

Home again! We've returned from **NORFOLK: BEST REUNION EVER!** The 498th attendance was the second best of all. We'll do even better next time. The tours were good, banquets and entertainment excellent. All this was accomplished even though vacancies needed filling because of illness. Congratulations to all volunteers from the entire 345th Group for a job well done.

It was certainly exciting to see everyone again. We had many new and first time attendees. What a tremendous feeling to meet with them again after 43 years. **HOLY SMOKE**, it just cannot be that long ago. I'm not



Henry Reynolds

that old!

Many things happened at the reunion. New officers elected, new location for next reunion; we now welcome sons of members to join our rolls, but they are nonvoting.

Please send your address changes and above all, keep looking for those among the missing.

Henry says, "It's the little things that get to me. I can sit on a mountain, but not on a tack."

"Never insult an alligator until after you have crossed the river."

499th Squadron Report

Approximately 130 499th members and their wives attended the 345th Reunion. Everyone enjoyed the festivities: the tours, the entertainment Friday night with the Sawyer Sisters, the Airmen of Note Band on Saturday night and the local trips in the area.

George Cooper gave an exceptional invocation for both the 499th Banquet and the 345th Group Banquet and we thank him. **Dale Rapp** did a great job the past two years as VP and we'd like to thank **Ken McClure** for all his hard work. We'd also like to thank **Johnny Joseph** for the wonderful jacket patches.

Norfolk was **Jerry Shannon's** first reunion. Terrific! **Otis & Margaret Kesinger** entertained us with dancing. **Ben Miller, Michael Costa, Nick Dovica, Pax Baker** and our wives all enjoyed traveling the area in our spare time.

The 499th welcomes **Pax Baker** as its Reunion Vice President and is very proud to see **Shuler Gamble** as President of the 345th Reunion Committee. For those of you interested in holding 499th mini-reunions in the off years of the 345th gatherings, contact **Pax Baker, 2425 S 25 Rd, Cedaredge, CO 81413-9423** or phone **303/856-6670**.

500th Squadron Report

The 345th Reunion in Norfolk was attended by approximately 40 members. Around 80 attendees were at our 500th banquet.

William Caputo, Lyn Daker, Richard Decker, Roger Lexell, Joseph Mallard, Calvin McCaskill, Ken Stufflebeam and **Rolfe Vanderbilt** were first time attendees. Hope it won't be last time. Received word **Sam Bennett, Cliff Hanna** and **Grant**

Ross were unable to attend because of ill health.

The 1989 Squadron Reunion has been changed to Seattle and will be held the first half of September. The 345th will join the 5th AF in their Reunion in Las Vegas in October 1990.

NEW MEMBERS: Charles Cornish, Charleston, SC; George Culver, Exeter, PA; Lyn Daker, Boulder, CO.

501st Squadron Report

The 1988 Norfolk reunion is now history and I hope everyone attending had a good time. Those of you that didn't make it, believe me, you were missed.

We had a normal amount of **SNAFU's**, the best one being the bus foul up for the squadron dinner. If everything went perfectly, you guys would forget what it was like in the service and you gals wouldn't appreciate their sacrifices!

For me, the reunions serve a twofold purpose. I get to see old friends and swap lies, but at every reunion, my wife



Jay Moore

and I meet and make friends with Air Apaches we never knew before. This makes the reunion something we really look forward to and good Lord willing, we'll make it to a good many more.

Please, all you Black Panthers out there, send in any information you have on squadron members not on our active roll as well as any info you have of interest to everyone.



Your dues are due!

Let's Talk

'Hap' Maloney (499) stayed in the Air Force after his return from the South Pacific in 1945. He and his wife Fran spent four years (1950-54) at Albrook AFB Canal Zone and then a year with the Embassy in the Dominican Republic. They were sent to Biggs AFB in El Paso and were with the SAC until Hap's retirement in October 1962 as Chief Master Sgt.

Since his retirement, Hap has been in industry; the Maloneys have lived in El Paso for 22 years. October 27th marked their 43rd wedding anniversary! Hap and Fran have two daughters, Linda and Debbie, and two grandchildren. Marnie is 16 and a very talented ballet dancer. She performs every December in the "Nutcracker" at the University of Houston/Clear Lake, by NASA. Oscar is 15 and involved in speed skating, soccer and football.

Hap suffers from a rare, incurable lung disease. However, he'll soon be off the high risk drug he's been on since June; the disease seems to be in remission. Despite all this, Hap still works four hours a day, but was advised to avoid long trips and crowds. He was looking forward to the reunion at Norfolk, especially since **Ken McClure** sent him many back issues of *Strafer*. He's been a lifetime member of the 345th for nearly a year.

Fran is from Meridian, MS, and met Hap when he was stationed at Key Field there. They were married in 1945 upon his return.

Hap enjoys his copies of *Warpath Across the Pacific* and *We Band of Brothers* and has held his private pilot's license since 1947. He would LOVE to hear from anyone who remembers him. Write **401- McDermott #501, Deer Park TX 77536** or phone **713/479-8220**.

APOLOGIES FROM THE EDITOR!

It was erroneously reported (August *Strafer*; 5th Air Force Memorial Dedication story) that **Gene Kovacs** was pictured with the 345th attendees. It was **Gene Tincher**. He traveled from Seth, WV, to attend the dedication and I apologize most sincerely for the mistake.

(A sidenote: the mailing list for the 345th has been converted to ZIP+4. Some I don't have. Please check your mailing label. If the address is incorrect/incomplete in anyway, let me know. If your ZIP+4 is not included, call your Post Office for the digit. This makes delivery of your *Strafer* more accurate.)



Friends enjoying one another's company at Norfolk reunion.



Bosworth Memorial Fund Growing

Rev. David Walker, *Inland Empire Church of Religious Service* in San Bernardino, CA, wrote the response in Virginia Bosworth's memory was GREAT; donations exceed \$1500 as of July 1988. Thanks.

In Appreciation

To those members of the 501st Squadron who, for the past 10 years, have unselfishly given their dollars to keep our treasury solvent. I thank you. Without your continued support, there would be no treasury. Hopefully, this trend will continue in future with your newly elected secretary and treasurer, **George & Evelyn Mordecai**.

Also, many thanks for your kind words, phone calls and many sympathy cards upon the death of my wife, Virginia, this past January. It was most appreciated.

Al Bosworth
501st

ATTENTION! DUES ARE DUE!

Dues for 1989 are due beginning **March 1989!** If you're unsure whether you've paid your dues for 1988, chances are you haven't. Dues are only \$15.00 a year; larger amounts always welcomed.

Make checks payable to *345th Bomb Group* and return to: **Ken McClure, 2770 E Main St, Columbus OH 43209.**

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ASSOCIATION OFFICERS:

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VP - Ed Bina, 628 N Deresch, Antigo WI 54409 715/627-2272

SEC - Julius Fisher, 3131 W Drahn Rd, Oxford MI 48051 313/628-1287

TREAS - Ken McClure, 2770 E Main, Columbus OH 43209 614/237-4251

REUNION COMMITTEE VICE PRESIDENTS:

HDQ - Ken Gastgeb, 1730 W Robinson, Norman OK 73069

498 - Henry Reysn, Box 281 Beat-tie Rd, Rock Tavern NY 12575 914/496-5375

499 - Pax Baker, 2425 S 25th Rd, Cedaredge CO 81413

500 - Fred Moore, 4952 Vivaldi Dr, Las Vegas NV 89102 702/871-4405

501 - Jay Moore, 8145 Braun Rd, Groveport OH 43125 614/836-5215

REUNION October 15-18, 1990

345th B. G. Reunion Committee
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