



Recon Recorder

Volume 9, Issue 2

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER**Maurice Cea - President**

Keep 16 - 20 September 2004 open in order to attend our reunion. Phil VanDuesen has a great agenda.

We welcome our new members:

Gene Busboom	Bill Krause
Joe Talarchek	William Cook
Vern DeMay	Bruce Fulks
James Orth	Charles Simmons
Pete Tippen	Harry Bulkley
John McKenna	David Mullen
Don Arsenault	Robert Fieldson
Robert McGraw	Carl Rosenbaum
Robert Glover	Jack Gienty
Frank Hayes	Jon Murray
Frank Himelright (Associate)	
John Fredriksen (Associate)	
Florence "Sug" Covey (Associate)	
Stacy Naftel (Reinstatement)	

91SRWA 2004 REUNION**Phil Van Deusen*******URGENT*****

You all know that the 91SRWA reunion and membership business meeting will be held 16 - 20 September at the Radisson in New London Connecticut. Well - get registered **IMMEDIATELY**. Early registration rates expire 31 July. All the necessary information and a registration form are attached; please get it in **NOW**. I must have a good head count for making arrangements for buses, meals, etc.

VP COMMENTS**Jerry Haines**

With the reunion happening in September, Angie DeFelice didn't want to have a pig roast competing for 91SRWA attendees; so, none this year. He and I will see you in New London.

ADMINISTRATIVE "STUFF"**Jim Bard - Secretary**

Many of you have not completed your dues renewal form. Be sure to do it **TODAY**. Please include your service information; and insert the POC data of a person a few years younger than yourself (i.e., a son or daughter). See page 17.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

Reunions - Annual reunions will be discussed in Connecticut during the business meeting. See page 14.

You are invited to submit other topics to the Secretary.

91st Strat Recon Squadron

I have contacted about a hundred members of the 91SRS (most served at Yokota). Many have already joined our association and will be at the reunion.

91st Bomb Group - WWII

Our predecessors are also having an association reunion - 30 September - 3 October 2004 in Washington, DC.

For information contact:

Ed Gates, President 91BGMA

13311 16th Ave. Ct. S

Tacoma, WA 98444

Tel. 253-535-4246

gainmutual@yahoo.com

91st Space Wing

Remember "Why not Minot?"

That's now the home of the 91st.

The Wing Commander, Col. (BG Select) Mark Owen, wants to arrange for interaction between them, 91BGMA, and us. Expect to see a delegation at our reunion.

MEMORIES**Jim Brennan - Archivist**

I am looking forward to add your service information to the growing collection of our history; please include it on your dues form.

Of particular interest is locating 91SRW squadron patches; be they pictures or cloth. Also, I am always searching for photographs, documents, or even handwritten memoirs related to the 91SRW; send them to me. My address and phone number are on the roster.

FINANCES**Stan Kopala - Treasurer**

For donations, a special "thank you" to Paul F. Kardian for \$20; to Bruce W. Fulks for \$15; to P.A. Weddle for \$15. These donations will go towards our postage costs. We are financially sound. Our latest financial statement is attached as page 7.

******IMPORTANT********MEMBER DUES**

Your membership dues are mailed to me (Stan). **A renewal form for 2004-06 is on page 17. It was due prior to 30 June - if you haven't sent it, do it TODAY.** Be sure to consider a Life Membership; we already have four. Who's next?

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IMPORTANT

Comments from Jim Bard

Straight Talk About Membership & Dues

In just the past six months we have added twenty members, three associate members, and had one reinstatement. These twenty-four people know the value of camaraderie.

We now have the means for members to become "paid up for life." That list already consists of: Bart Bartholomee, Tex Blakeney, Marcus Mitchell and myself.

So, here are the big questions: Why is it that 118 past and current members are delinquent in their dues? Is there something the association is doing wrong? Is there some way for us to make it easier?

Please – Give Moe Cea or me some feedback; or, if you prefer, bring your suggestions up at the September meeting of the membership.

PS: On the Mailing List there is a column titled "Pd06." If that box is blank, you are delinquent.

Recruiting Is YOUR Responsibility

In the past six months I've placed notices in the American Legion and VFW magazines looking for our comrades. As a result, I was able to contact about 150 past 91SRW members; approximately half were members of the 91st SRS at Yokota, Japan. But, that was the easy part; the rest is up to you, the members.

On the attached rosters are about 275 names of 91SRW comrades that are not members of our association. A few were actually members at one time but their memberships have lapsed.

YOU must make an effort to get new members. These guys were your buddies. Call them on the telephone; write them a letter; send up smoke signals; I don't care how you do it, but **YOU** must make a personal effort if our association is to succeed.

Thanks, *Jim*

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RB-45 Request

Dr. John C. Fredriksen wants to contact members who have photos of RB-45C nose art, or those who flew with the 6091st Flight at Yokota, 1954-1958. You'll find his address on the membership roster. E-mail: jfredriksen@sisna.com

VA Information

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
Veterans Benefit Act of 2003 affects some surviving spouses. A recently passed law may provide income for thousands of unknowing surviving spouses of military retirees and other veterans.

Public Law 108-183, the Veterans Benefit Act of 2003 signed into law by President Bush on Dec. 16, allows survivors of members who died of service-connected causes to retain Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) if they remarry after attaining age 57. Previously, surviving spouses lost this entitlement if they remarried at any age. The only provision to regain the benefit was if the latter marriage ended in death or divorce.

Also, those who have already remarried (and were age 57 or older when they did so) have until Dec. 16, 2004 to apply for reinstatement of their DIC benefits.

Nationwide Gravesite Locator

The Veterans Affairs Department has put on the Web 3.2 million records for veterans buried at 120 national cemeteries since the Civil War. It also has records for some state veterans' cemeteries and burials in Arlington National Cemetery since 1999. The site will be updated daily. Annually, about 80,000 veterans are buried at national cemeteries.

The Web site is: <http://www.cem.va.gov>

B-17 Pilot's Story

Journey to Freedom and Beyond
by Robert M. Slane (Colonel, USAF, Retired)
283 pages; perfect bound; catalogue #03-2049;
ISBN 1-4120-1672-X; \$25.95 (Tel 318-797-7655)
Real life experiences of a bomber pilot during and after World War II. (FYI – Later on he was a SAC trained killer that flew B47's.)

WWII B-17 Tales of the 91st Bomb Group

The Relief Tube

This primitive sewer system had difficulties. After it had been used, some of the fluid could freeze at the vent. After being used twice, the vent could freeze shut.

I recall once when Ray and I had already used the device and just prior to the target I had to use it again, the device filled up to the brim of the funnel when I had only partially completed evacuating my bladder. I had to pinch off the stream midway, which was painful. There I sat, holding my appendage with one hand while the other hand was holding the funnel and tube filled to the brim with what should have gone out the vent.

This was a serious situation. The pilot had been rendered useless for a ridiculous reason. I couldn't carry out my part of flying this mission in this condition, plus the fact it was painful. With Yankee ingenuity, I solved the problem.

My flak helmet was in front of the pilot's seat between my legs. I cleverly kicked it over so the open side was up and emptied the contents of the funnel into it. Then to my great relief, I emptied what was left in my bladder. Needless to say, I didn't wear my helmet when the Germans started to pelt us with flak over the target. My helmet served as a substitute for the pilot's relief tube for the rest of the mission.

From Vignettes of a B-17 Combat Crew, Copyright, 1997, M. Banta, All Rights Reserved

Another 91st BG Tale

The mention of relief tube brings to mind an incident in our crew. As the copilot on Frank Kolts crew --- on one mission Frank didn't dehydrate enough before flying so about 30 minutes into the mission he had to relieve himself. We were all strapped in with full combat gear so it was not easy to use the tube. Instead, Frank took off his modified infantry helmet, filled it and then gave it to me. I carefully put it on the cockpit floor and held it between my feet until it froze. Of course it didn't take very long to freeze at our altitude. I'm sure there are others with similar stories.

Ed Merkel

SR-71 Tale

In his book, Sled Driver, SR-71 Blackbird pilot Brian Shul writes:

"I'll always remember a certain radio exchange that occurred one day as Walt (my back-seater) and I were screaming across Southern California 13 miles high. We were monitoring various radio transmissions from other aircraft as we entered Los Angeles airspace. Though they didn't really control us, they did monitor our movement across their scope.

"I heard a Cessna ask for a readout of its ground speed. "90 knots" Center replied. "Moments later, a Twin Beech required the same." "120 knots," Center answered.

We weren't the only ones proud of our ground speed that day as almost instantly an F-18 smugly transmitted, 'Ah, Center, Dusty 52 requests ground speed readout.' There was a slight pause, then the response, "525 knots on the ground, Dusty."

"Another silent pause. As I was thinking to myself how ripe a situation this was, I heard a familiar click of a radio transmission coming from my back-seater. It was at that precise moment I realized Walt and I had become a real crew, for we were both thinking in unison."

"Center, Aspen 20, you got a ground speed readout for us?"

There was a longer than normal pause.... "Aspen, I show 1,742 knots" No further inquiries were heard on that frequency.

The 91st SRS Got Around

I was a photographer with P. Allen Weddle in 1948 when we ran out of gas because of bad weather over an airfield in Camaguey, Cuba and landed in a freshly cut cane field. After being fortified with a few Cuba-Libres by our host, we gassed up from a truck from the airfield and took off again. To this day I don't know how PA managed the landing and especially the take-off in the C-45 Beachcraft! To say both were "rough as a cob" is a gross understatement!

Paul D. Miller

History of the 91st

World War II - Bombing:

Activated 15 April 1942 at Harding Field LA. The first phase of training was at McDill Field FL on 16 May 1942 to 25 June 1942.

Second and third phase of training was in Walla Walla AB WA, between 26 June 1942 and 24 Aug 1942. The ground echelon moved by train from Fort Dix NJ, and boarded Queen Mary on 2-5 Sep 1942. They arrived Gourock UK on 11 September 1942. Air echelon left Walla Walla on 24 August 1942 for Gowen Field ID, where the first B-17s were assigned. Air echelon then moved to Dowfield, ME. But, not until early October 1942 were enough new B-17s available to complete the Group's complement. First squadron flew the north Atlantic route in late September 1942. The group included the 322nd, 323rd, 324th and 401st Bomb Squadrons.

After they won the war in Europe, they redeployed to the USA - First of the air echelon departed on 27 May 1945. Ground echelon sailed on Queen Elizabeth on 24 June, arriving Camp Kilmer, NJ on 29 June. On 2 July 1945 Group was established at Drew Field FL. Scheduled for Pacific service but never fully manned, the Group was inactivated on 7 November 1945.

Cold War Era - Recon:

The unit was activated again at Fort Dix NJ (later McGuire AFB) in 1947 under the Strategic Air Command as a Strategic Reconnaissance Group using RB-17s & RB-29s. Designated 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing 11 October 1948. The 91st Strat Recon Squadron, which earlier had been operating in Central and South America, was reactivated and assigned to the wing 22 January 1949. Equipped at McGuire, the 91SRS was detached to Japan, where it was operational throughout the **Korean War**. The wing moved from McGuire to Barksdale AFB, LA 1 Oct 1949. The 38th, 338th, and 343rd SRS each had a short stint with the wing while at Barksdale. In July 1950 the wing was equipped with RB-45s. The 322nd, 323rd, and 324th were activated as Strat Recon Squadrons 10 Feb 1951. The wing was then moved to Lockbourne AFB, OH 11 Sep 1951 and equipped with RB-47s. On 8 November 1957 the 91SRW was inactivated.

Recon Era (Overflights):

During its 10 year history the 91SRW flew missions from many operating locations throughout the free world, over targets inside the borders of our adversaries.

History of the 91st

Other Subordinate Units:

In addition to the above units, also supporting the 91SRW mission, depending on location and time, were:

91st Headquarters
91st Headquarters Squadron,
91st Air Police Squadron,
91st Supply Squadron,
91st Medical Group,
91st Communications Sqd,
91st Field Maintenance Sqd,
91st Armament & Electronics
Maintenance Squadron,
91st Periodic Maint. Sqd,
91st Reconnaissance
Technical Squadron,
26th Air Refueling Squadron
(28 May 1952-1 Jun 1953),
91st Air Refueling Squadron
(10 Feb 1951-8 Nov 1957)
Thrown loosely into this
mix at various times:
16th Photo Recon Squadron
(10 Nov 1948 - 1 Jun 1949)
31st SRS, and 6091st SRS.

Remembrance Associations:

91st Bomb Group Memorial Association (91BGMA)

President, Ed Gates
13311 16th Ave., Ct. S
Tacoma, WA 98444
Tel. 253-535-4246
gainmutual@yahoo.com

91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association (91SRWA)

President, Maurice Cea
157 Green Valley Drive
Howard, OH 43028
Tel. 740-392-7750
ecea302@aol.com

Vietnam - Bombing:

On 15 Nov 1962 the 91st Bomb Wing (Heavy) was activated as a B-52 wing at Glasgow AFB, MT and flew combat sorties in Vietnam. I could find no record of a remembrance association.

Space - Missiles:

Redesignated 91st Strategic Missile Wing on 25 Jun 1968 at Minot AFB, ND; 91st Missile Wing on 1 Sep 1991; 91st Missile Group on 1 Jul 1994; 91st Missile Wing on 1 Feb 1996; and 91st Space Wing on 1 Oct 1997.

It is still active.

Intelligence:

At Fort Meade Maryland, within NSA, you'll now find the 91st Intelligence Squadron. Their lineage goes back to the 91st SRS.

It is still active.

Disclaimer:

The above is a simple "thumbnail" sketch as of June 2004. I've gleaned this information from various sources including AFHRA Research Division.

I omitted several attached units that had very short stints with the 91st SRW.

If you see a serious flaw, contact:
Jim Bard, 91st SRWA Secretary

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Dear Jim,

So happy to find 91st SRW web site. I mailed application to Stan Kopala and sent the following letter to Phil Van Deusen. Look forward to seeing you at the reunion in September.

God Bless America, Frank Hayes 91st A&E Sqdn

June 20, 2004 Mr. Phil Van Deusen 50 Mansfield Grove Rd East Haven, CT 06572 203-468-2308

Dear Phil,

I am happy to make contact with the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing. Everyone who every served with the 91st has much to be proud of. It was the elite organization of SAC and General LeMay gave it his most trusted commander, Col. Joe Preston. We have many un-sung heroes. I look forward to seeing you in September. I mailed my application to Stan Kopala. I was there with you on 8 May 1954 at the debriefing of Hal Austin, Carl Holt and Vance Heavilin, when you asked about the "bird strikes." What we saw and heard was masked from memory and it feels strange to see the story in books and on the internet. I was the only one on the detachment from my K-Series Systems Radar/Bomb Section of the 91st A&E Squadron.

I was also with you on that C-47 flight to Munich. Austin, Holt and Heavilin were also on that flight. When I got a copy of Paul Lashmar's "Spy Flights of the Cold War," I wrote to all three of them and included copies of my orders, on which their names, along with yours are listed. Sadly, Heavilin passed away a few years ago. I had a nice letter from his daughter. In January 1999, Hal Austin made a presentation on this historic mission to the Quiet Birdmen Rendezvous in Las Vegas, which drew a crowd of about 350. I was given the honor of introducing Colonel Austin. It was great to see him and I since stayed in contact.

I signed in at Lockbourne in January 1952 when we had RB-45Cs and KB-29s. I went back to Keesler for more advanced radar courses. When I returned to Lockbourne we had new KC-97s and RB-47Bs, which were soon replaced with new RB-47Es. I was promoted to Sgt and offered S/Sgt if I promised to sign up for another tour, but I would not lie and with mixed feelings decided to try civilian life. As a Philco techrep, it was back with SAC, on the first Republic F-84Fs at Tinker AFB and later with the first Lockheed U-2s at Del Rio, TX. In Nov. 58 I came to Republic for the F-105s and the first deployments at Seymour Johnson AFB and Bitburg, Germany. When Fairchild Republic closed 29 years later, I went to Grumman for 12 years, then spent my last 16 months of work on hypersonic scramjet wind tunnel tests at GASL, which made the engine on the X-43A.

Guarding security made it difficult to keep in contact. Going from SAC programs to a TAC program on the F-105 was a culture shock, but what I learned in SAC served me well. I kept in contact with my 91st buddy Herb Osler, who later came to Philco, then to Republic and Grumman. We had another sharp radar man named Reinhardt, who I saw at Philco. Another was Gil Powell, who worked for North American Columbus. I saw Gil at Eglin AFB, when he headed up the GBU glide bomb flight tests in 1968/69. At a marketing presentation at the Springfield, Ohio ANG Base in the early 80s and ran into some ANG Technicians from Columbus, Pittsburgh and Richmond, VA, who were former 91st troops and remembered me.

Respectfully,

Frank Hayes

cc: Stan Kopala

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Don Harrison

If you or someone you know from the 91SRW is ill, or if you hear of a passing, please contact me and/or President Cea ASAP.

MEMORABILIA

Art Schocken

I will have memorabilia for sale at the reunion. Sweat shirts, polo shirts, hats, etc. Until then you may contact:

Ron Day for:

Polo Shirts - \$12 Hats - \$5

Sweat shirts \$20 (or less)

Stan Kopala for:

Cups Pins Patches

Our home addresses and phone numbers, and Ron's and my e-mail addresses, are on the roster.

91SRWA MEMBER LISTS

The updated list of association members, and others that should be, is attached. The list includes "Spouse" and "E-mail." Send me updates and corrections to any and all of the data; my address is on the list. If you have e-mail, send it to: jimbardjr@adelphia.net

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MEMBERS' NOTES

Reminders:

1. **Attend the reunion** – Complete and mail the registration form (on page 15) and check to Phil VanDeusen.
2. **Pay my dues** – Complete and mail the renewal form (on page 17) and check to Stan Kopala.
3. **Call an old 91SRW comrade** – Get their promise to join. Have them mail a check to Stan Kopala.

Members may submit short announcements and articles for inclusion in this section.

NOTICE TO NON-MEMBERS

You can join at any time by sending \$30 for two years dues to Stan Kopala. Make your check payable to: "91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association."

Give him your name, spouse's name, address, phone number, 91SRW affiliation, and e-mail address.

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The "RECON RECORDER" is the official publication of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Association. This newsletter is to keep our members informed about the organization, its activities, and pertinent related information.

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Editor/Publisher

As the association's Secretary, I solicit, accept and review items to publish. Send your input to: Jim Bard, 3424 Nottingham Road, Westminster, MD 21157-8304 or e-mail jimbardjr@adelphia.net

GOD BLESS AMERICA AND OUR WARRIORS IN HARM'S WAY.