

THE ACCA FLYER

The Newsletter of the

Strategic Air Command Airborne Command Control Association

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REUNION 1998: It will be difficult for your editor to do justice to a write-up of the ACCA Reunion, 7-11 October 1998, at Colorado Springs, CO, for several reasons: (1) He was unable to attend the reunion due to family health conditions, (2) There was an extremely large program of events, (3) A great deal was accomplished toward insuring the future of the Association and (4) It was such a great reunion that newsletter words cannot really do justice to the reunion and to the people who made it work. So, let's just take it a step at a time:

Rarely does an undertaking of this sort go to completion without a few major glitches, but there were none for the Colorado Springs gathering. Masterful planning and preparation by the *CINC/REUNION*, Dick Doolittle, insured that every event came off as planned. **Welcome and Registration:** The balcony of the atrium in the Embassy Suites Hotel served as the location for registration and other daytime activities. It provided an excellent display site for the great new ACCA banner, which was hung to greet everyone entering through hotel's main entry. The registration team kept things flowing smoothly, while also doing a lot of merchandising by selling the entire stock of ACCA logo sweatshirts.. **Tours and Static Display:** The Thursday afternoon NORAD tour was filled to the maximum allowed thirty participants and all were impressed by the scope of the construction and the operation involved in this major defense facility. Other, smaller group tours, enjoyed some of the many scenic beauties of the Colorado Springs locale. A final opportunity to inspect a *Looking Glass* EC-135 was provided by the 55th Wing which brought the aircraft into Peterson Field for a Friday static display. **Golf Outing:** Beautiful weather on a beautiful AF Academy course were enjoyed by 21 players on Friday. **Social Events:** The evening events which were held at the Embassy Suites were well attended and the hotel did an excellent job of taking care of our group. A Wednesday evening reception and Thursday evening buffet were enjoyed by many of the attendees. Friday evening was "Western Night" for about 120 members and guests at the Flying W Ranch with good food and drink and fine western entertainment. The Saturday banquet at the hotel was MC'd by outgoing President, Jack Suggs. The new officers were introduced and Jim Spence, our new President, presented a thank you gift to Jack in recognition of his work in founding the Association. **The Air Force vs. Navy Football Game:** Naturally, this was one of the reunion highlights. The ACCA attendees stood out as a group in the stands with their white ACCA sweatshirts. The farewell fly-over of the *Looking Glass* EC-135 evoked a lot of nostalgia for our group. And a victory by the Academy team was icing on the cake. **Memorial Service:** The traditional Sunday morning service, honoring our departed members, was the final activity of the reunion.

BUSINESS MEETING: (1) Review of Activities and Financial Condition (2) Election of Officers: President - Jim Spence, Vice President - Don McClain, Treasurer - Fred Kemp (Incumbent), Secretary - George Smeltzer, Historian - Greg Ogletree (Incumbent) (3) Established New Office of President Emeritus; Jack Suggs was elected by acclamation (4)

Selection of Venue for Reunion 2000: Montgomery, AL (Maxwell AFB) and Dayton, OH (Wright Patterson AFB) were considered, but it was decided that the selection will be left to the Board..

THE END OF AN ERA, FAREWELL TO THE EC-135: An impressive (and, for many, very emotional) farewell to the last USAF EC-135 *Looking Glass* mission was observed on 25 September 1998 at Offutt AFB. Ceremonies marking the termination of the final flight and the transfer of the mission to the U. S. Navy were highlighted by remarks by Admiral Richard W. Mies, CINC/STRATCOM, BrigGen Gary Ambrose, Commander of the 55th Wing, which had conducted the *Looking Glass* missions since 1966. And by Captain (USN) Hartwell Trotter, Commodore of Strategic Communications Wing ONE, which assumed the strategic airborne command post mission. Static displays of both the USAF EC-135 *Looking Glass* aircraft and the USN E-6 TACAMO aircraft provided the opportunity for comparison of the two platforms.

A farewell banquet was held that evening at the SAC Museum, in its new home in Ashland, NE, southwest of Omaha. Those attending were presented with several items of memorabilia and an outstanding program reviewed the SAC and STRATCOM reliance on the past, present and future of airborne command and control and was highlighted by the keynote presentation of General Russ Dougherty, former CINC/SAC. Our Association was represented by Jack Suggs, Fred Kemp and by John Irwin, who had served so well as one of the prime movers of the event. Our Historian, Greg Ogletree, provided most of the historical data used in the program notes and in the program itself.

KUDOS: The "atta-boys" that are due for all of the recent events leading up to and including the reunion are almost too numerous for one issue of a newsletter, but it would be a disservice not to extend a hearty "thank you and well done" to our members who have contributed so much. If someone has been missed on this list, please pass their name and a brief summary to your new Secretary/Newsletter Editor , George Smeltzer, whose address is on the enclosed roster.

1998 Reunion Planning and Execution: Dick Doolittle started working on the 1998 reunion while actually still at the 1996 reunion in Omaha. Despite living over fifty miles away from Colorado Springs and still "enjoying" full-time employment with Lockheed-Martin, he personally supervised the arrangements for every activity, often traveling at his own expense and putting in countless hours of negotiation and coordination. The results can best be described by the words of those attending, "Our best reunion yet!".

EC135 Closure Activities Planning Committee: John Irwin deserves a vote of gratitude for representing the ACCA for the EC-135 Farewell activities at Offutt AFB. Our Association was the principal sponsor for the farewell banquet and we could not have asked for a more capable and hard-working representative than John.

Reunion Welcome and Registration: Thanks to all who made things go so smoothly, including Sandy and Fred Kemp, Jan Suggs, Carol and Jim Spence, Dick Doolittle, Arlene & Charlie Jones and Cliff Sonberg

Donation of AF-Navy Football Game Tickets to 55Wing Flight Crew: Several members, who had purchased tickets to the game, found that they were unable to attend. Instead of asking for refunds, they generously donated their tickets to the 55th Wing Flight Crew and ten members of the crew were able to join the group in the stands at half-time. The donors were Col Pugsley, Col Birch, CMSgt Schister and MSgt Hodges.

Organizational Steering Committee and Officers from the Early Days: As the Association has now reached age four years, it is time for a "final" thank you to the individuals who dreamed up the idea of an association recognizing over thirty years of SAC Airborne Command and Control Operations and who carried the idea forward to the make the SAC/ACCA what it is today. Thanks to Jack Suggs, Jack Gatewood, Don Wilson, Russ Evans, Wally Landon, Fred Kemp and Greg Ogletree — and to their ladies who so ably assisted them.

YOUR NEW OFFICERS: During the 1998 Reunion Business Meeting, these members were elected to the offices of President, Vice President and Secretary. Rather than try to give their life's history, following are brief outlines of their participation in PACCS and Airborne Command Control activities. Please give them the support and assistance that the original officers have enjoyed.

President: Jim Spence: Jim served in the 3ACCS, Grissom AFB, on the Airborne Battle Staff (ABS) as Intelligence Officer and later as Chief of the ABS during 1970-1975. He established a historical "first" when he assumed command of the 3ACCS in 1975, thus becoming the first navigator in the USAF to command a tactical flying squadron. He retained this command until the squadron was inactivated at the end of 1975. Jim and Carol live in Auburn, AL, where he is quick to show his loyalty to his alma mater with a lusty yell of "WAR EAGLE", the battle cry of the Auburn University football team.

Vice President: Don McClain: Don spent most of his PACCS time as an airborne radio operator, beginning with *LOOKING GLASS* in the 34AREFS and 1st Comm Group at Offutt AFB, 1961-1965 and the 301AREFS EC-135s at Lockbourne AFB, 1965-1966. He spent one year at Hickam AFB with *BLUE EAGLE*, the PACAF Airborne Command Post, before returning to SAC in the 904AREFS, Minot AFB, which had the ALCS, 1967-1970. After a tour in Thailand, he was assigned to SAC Hq in the PACCS until retirement in 1974. He then continued to work in the command control equipment field with Chrysler Tech Airborne Systems as his "second career". He and Fay now live in Plano, TX.

Secretary and Editor/Publisher of the ACCA FLYER, George Smeltzer: George served in many wide-ranging communications assignments in various commands, ranging from AF Security Service to TAC, and which took him from the Pentagon to Saigon. He served his last four USAF years in the SAC/PACCS with the 3ACCS, Grissom AFB, as

Airborne Communications Officer. He and Joy live just outside the gates of March AFB, CA.

HISTORY OF THE AIRBORNE LAUNCH CONTROL SYSTEM SCHOOL by Major Greg Ogletree (SAC/ACCA Historian)

(Part 3: This will conclude Greg's outstanding and detailed history of ALCS Training programs which are so vital to the airborne capability to launch our country's intercontinental ballistic missiles.)

The collapse of the Soviet empire circa 1990 brought about a restructuring of the military to "downsize" from the Cold War levels and a concomitant reorganization that resulted in the announced inactivation of many units--including the 4 ACCS. Once again the ALCS schoolhouse needed to be moved, but this time there was no choice to make; the only other location with APTs and a continuing ALCS mission was the 2 ACCS at Offutt AFB. Class 91-8, which graduated on 1 November 1991, was the final ORT course conducted at Ellsworth. As it turned out, although no one knew it at the time, it was also the last ORT class to be graduated during SAC's tenure. The Strategic Air Command flag was furled on 1 June 1992 and the 4 ACCS, having operated the ALCS ORT school for almost exactly 20 years, closed its doors for the last time on 30 September 1992.

Although the ORT program was understandably well-established at Ellsworth, it had a rocky start at Offutt. Much of the courseware transferred from Ellsworth was inexplicably misplaced or lost. The first two scheduled classes (92-1 and 92-2) were canceled. The sole student in Class 92-3, a commo, failed to complete the course due to academic deficiencies. Furthermore, the "formal school" consisted of just one ALCS crew member acting as ORT instructor and chief. The major command (MAJCOM) reorganization had placed some of the ALCS officers in US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) and the others were left to look for jobs elsewhere. Incredibly, no provision had been made in the planning stage for ORT and the instructors necessary for its conduction! USSTRATCOM refused to be involved with any formal training programs. Finally, at the urging of the ALCS chief, Maj Mike Dominick, Air Combat Command (ACC) allocated several slots to the 2 ACCS for this purpose and almost everyone had a job once again. This official allocation also had the desirable effect of formalizing and stabilizing the ALCS ORT program at Offutt. The position of Commandant, that had been briefly transferred to the USSTRATCOM colonel in charge of J-362, was returned to the 2 ACCS commander. Also, the "DOA" office symbol that ALCS had used in both ACCS organizations finally was replaced with "ORT"--so that the school's office symbol was now 2 ACCS/ORT.

A significant change also occurred to the ORT instructor staff as a result of the restructuring. During the SAC era, the governing directive for ORT (SACR 55-5, Vol I, Chapter 9) specified that "only the most qualified and experienced officers should be selected for this duty" and "because of the critical importance of ORT to the future knowledge and performance levels of the ALCS crew force, it is essential that ORT instructors remain in that function for at least one year." The reorganization and consequent splintering of the ORT instructors (in ACC) from the ALCS crew members (in USSTRATCOM) meant that selecting ORT instructors from line crew members was no longer considered "natural progression" (i.e., what had been considered a highly desirable career move was now considered a step down--joint billet to a staff job in a squadron). In

fact, when ORT found itself in need of more instructors, missile officers with no previous ALCS experience were selected for ORT duty! Furthermore, two of the three didn't even come close to one year of ORT duty before separating (in one case) and PCSing (in the other case); there was no longer an understood 1-year minimum commitment. Yes, things had certainly changed since the days when SAC ruled. Nevertheless, almost all familiar with the situation certainly agree that in spite of these changes the training standards did not change and the quality of training remained equally high. The ORT faculty met the challenge!

History was made on 16 November 1992 when the first Navy officers entered ORT (Class 93- 1). LCDR Franklin D. Hitt, Jr., and LT Jeffry A. Green were the initial cadre of what would eventually become a Navy-pure Communications Controller staff. An article announcing their graduation on 28 January 1993 appeared on the front page of the Offutt base paper (*Endnote 21*) Subsequent classes added more ALCS-qualified Navy commo's to the USSTRATCOM airborne command post battlestaff, but few serve longer than just a couple of years so nearly every ORT class has at least one Navy student.

Many more changes occurred in 1994. During January, the name of the school was changed from "ALCS ORT" to "ALCS CCTS" (with the final "S" standing for "School," not "Squadron"). This change was made to more accurately reflect the nature of the duties being performed by the school. Furthermore, the term "ORT" was no longer understood by most Air Force personnel--even missileers--even though it once was as widely used and easily recognized as "CCTS" is today. This new name also changed the school's office symbol to 2 ACCS/CCTS. In April, the school was transferred from 2 ACCS to HQ Air Force Space Command (AFSPC), finally bringing the last missileers from ACC into the Space community. Initially, the school was assigned the office symbol of OL-M (Operating Location-Mike), HQ AFSPC/DOMO, but within months the DOM directorate was dissolved and the Offutt operating location was changed so the office symbol OL-B HQ AFSPC / DOTL was soon assigned. This, too, was relatively short-lived; "CCTS" soon reemerged to replace "DOTL" after the slash. A natural result of "moving" to the MAJCOM headquarters level was the assumption of all headquarters-level duties and responsibilities (what in the SAC days had been performed by DOCAL, later DOCMA). These included formulating ALCS policy; accomplishing weapon system training and evaluation; overseeing ICBM follow-on test and evaluation; and establishing special test mission requirements, planning, scheduling, and test conductor training and certification. These functions were transferred from USSTRATCOM/J-3621 effective 1 August 1994. The ALCS officers in USSTRATCOM retained their responsibility for conducting EWO certifications and recurring EWO training.

The following 2 years brought even more change. Since billets at a MAJCOM headquarters are very tightly controlled and extremely limited, and also because the ICBMs are exclusively under the jurisdiction of Twentieth Air Force (20 AF), the ALCS CCTS was transferred to HQ 20 AF on 1 July 1995. Thus, once again the ALCS schoolhouse had a new operating location designation: OL-A HQ 20AF/CCTS. It didn't last long! In a move to reduce, if not eliminate, its operating locations, 20 AF activated the 625th Missile Operations Flight at Offutt on 15 April 1996 to replace OL-A. Concurrent with the creation of this new organization was the replacement of the "CCTS" office symbol with "ALCS" (i.e., 625 MOF/ALCS). This change was made, in part, for two reasons: (1) the five missileers in AFSPC at Offutt were involved in much more than just training activities; and (2) there was a rumored initiative at the Air Force level to transfer all "CCTS" operations into Air

Education and Training Command (ATC's successor). Ironically, in spite of all the realignments, name changes, and office symbol changes from 1994-1996, the ALCS personnel involved in all of this remained in the same building, in the same office, and at the same desks!

As presently established, the ALCS training operation is comprised of a chief and three instructors (two lieutenant colonels and two majors--all four positions are field grade billets). The curriculum is 46 days in duration, including 18 APT sessions, and is structured for as many as five classes per year, each containing up to four students. Four is the optimum number, but many classes have only two or three students and occasionally there is but one.

Although the EC-135 aircraft have been retired this year, the future of ALCS, and thus the ALCS schoolhouse, seems secure at present. A portion of the Navy's E-6A TACAMO (Take Charge and Move Out) aircraft are presently being reconfigured to accommodate a battlestaff, and the ALCS weapon system is being added in the equipment bay. When the first E-6 was postured on ABNCP alert, it was scheduled to have been nuclear certified--"ALCS Green." The ALCS instructors will consequently play a key role in the initial weapon system qualification of future ALCS crew members, just as they've been doing since the first ORT class was conducted 30 years ago this year!

ENDNOTE:

21. "Navy Officers Set Precedent," Air Pulse (Offutt base paper), Vol 45, No 6; 12 Feb 93 (pp 1-2).

(Editor's Note: We will continue to try to stay current and to keep you informed on the progress of the Navy's TACAMO program.)

ANNUAL ASSOCIATION DUES: Please check the symbol following your name on the address label on this newsletter. Two digits such as "98" -- "99" -- "00" -- "01" -- etc, indicate the year for which your dues have been paid ---- and yes, we have the Y2K problem well under control, we think! The two letters -- "CC" -- indicate that this is a courtesy copy, sent to you with our compliments and dues are not applicable.

Dues are payable now and are due on April 15 of each year. All checks should be sent to SAC/ACCA Treasurer, Fred Kemp, 19 Lutz Drive, Bunker Hill, IN 46914-9763. A dues payment form is included in this newsletter.

A Final Note from Jack Gatewood: This is my last edition of the *Flyer*. It has been interesting ---- and even a lot of fun, at times ---- to try to put all of our activities in print in an attempt to maintain your interest. Please give your new editor/publisher, George Smeltzer, your cooperation and feed the news to him. I will now and sign off as they did in the smoke-filled city rooms in the days before computers. This is my last ---- **Thirty !**

REUNION 1998 ATTENDANCE

Baldwin, Norman & Cindy
Bostick, James & Mary Ann
Buglewicz, Fritz & Candy
Campos, Hector
Comfort, Norman & Joyce
Cooper, Robert &
 Nadeane Fulcomer
Denison, Robert & Karen
Evans, Hector & Marie
Gaston, Jeff
Isaacson, Wayne & Dottie
Johnson, James & Barbara
Kilpatrick, John & Jean
Kroskey, James & Betty
Mackenzie, John
Mohr, Robert
Nagle, John & Gyanna
Rokos, Fred &
 Kristie Smith
Sonberg, Clifton & Eileen
Starnes, Harold & Ann
Taylor, Ed & Patricia
Walton, Amy
Woodward, Charles & Pat
Yaroach, Alger & Barbara

Blanchette, Wayne
Bowman, Thomas & Ann
Cabeen, Richard
Canady, Buster & Mary Jane
Conner, Israel & Theresa
Cornish, Theodore &
 Gloria Washington
Doolittle, Richard & Loretta
Fernandez, Alfredo
Graham, James & Elizabeth
Jackson, Clifford & Bev
Jones, Charles & Arlene
Koeppel, Ronald & Shirley
Laughery, Delbert & Elaine
McClain, Donald & Fay
Morrisey, Raymond & Glenda
Folley, Manson & Nancy
Rowe, Kenneth & Dottie
Shirley, Steven
Smeltzer, George & Joy
Stuart, Gerald & Maureen
Tedder, Charles & Ginny
Wilson, Don & Jerry
Woods, David & Eileen
Young, Thomas & Patti

Bose, Leonard & Willa
Bryant, Carl & Bee
Cadola, William
Caraway, Charles & Carol
Cooley, David & Maureen
Creek, William & Josie
Day, Michael & Mary
Dunn, Everett & Jewel
Floyd, Johnny & Lianne
Hersey, Edwin & Doreen
Jackson, Thomas & Pam
Kemp, Fred & Sandy
Kreller, Dale & Betty
Leazer, Steve & Mary
Markley, William & Ada
Mullen, Harry & Janice
Reed, John & Biff
Segrist, Duane & Shirley
Shute, Richard & Peg
Spence, James & Carol
Suggs, Jack & Jan
Tressler, Jay & Lucy
Womack, Mack & Evelyn
Yanasheski, Victor

SAC AIRBORNE COMMAND CONTROL ASSOCIATION DUES PAYMENT - CALENDAR YEAR 1999

Mail to: SAC/ACCA, Fred Kemp, 19 Lutz Drive, Bunker Hill, IN 46914
E-Mail: FKEMP@AOL.COM

Dues for 1999: \$15.00 If NEW MEMBER: Initial Fee: \$10.00 plus 1999 dues.

Name: _____ Street _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail Address (If applicable) _____

New Member RANK: _____ Active: () Retired: () Spouse's Name: _____

IF NEW MEMBER- Brief summary of your affiliation with PACCS/AACS/ALCS with Dates/
Organization/Locations.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NAVY TACAMO FLEET: The following articles are copyrighted material and have been reproduced from recent issues of *Aviation Week & Space Technology* (AW&ST) magazine. They are published with written permission of AW&ST.

(Issue of November 2, 1998, *Filter Center*, Page 69) LOOKING GLASS, the U. S. Air Force squadron of EC-135 aircraft that has been the nation's airborne nuclear command center for 37 years, has turned the mission over to the Navy's E-6B TACAMO (Take Charge and Move Out) aircraft. Tacamo was developed during the cold war to relay instant, long range communications from the President to submerged nuclear ballistic missile submarines. A modification to the E-6B configuration adds communications equipment and command consoles to permit carrying out both missions. Five E-6B aircraft are now flying the dual mission, with the remaining 11 slated for completion by 2002.

(Issue of September 14, 1998, Page 76)

Upgrade Slated For E-6 Cockpit

Seattle

Boeing has begun preliminary design and supplier coordination of a cockpit modernization program for the U.S. Navy's E-6 Tacamo that could open the market for similar upgrades of AWACS and other military special mission 707s worldwide.

The modification will replace more than 100 round-dial instruments with a six-display electronic flight instrumentation system (EFIS) configuration similar to that installed in Boeing's new 737-700 transport. Award of a firm contract is expected by early next year.

The upgrade will significantly improve the navigation and communications capability of the Navy's 16 E-6 Tacamo aircraft while reducing cockpit crew workload and increasing situational awareness, according to Chuck Moss, Boeing E-6 program manager. It also will enable the aircraft to easily accommodate future system upgrades and new requirements.

The new cockpit also will include a new flight management computer and

Award of a firm contract for cockpit modernization of the U.S. Navy's 16 E-6 Tacamo aircraft is expected in early 1999.

Global Positioning System navigation avionics with remote autonomous integrity monitoring. Area navigation (Rnav) and vertical navigation (Vnav) capabilities are planned.

Most of the conversion work will be accomplished at Boeing facilities here and in Wichita, Kan., with all 16 E-6 aircraft scheduled to be completed by 2004. Boeing has assembled an industry team for the project that includes Honeywell Defense Avionics Systems and Smiths Industries Defense Systems North America.

The Navy's E-6 fleet is responsible for passing command and control communications to U.S. submarine- and land-

based ballistic missile forces, even when the submarines are submerged (*AW&ST* Oct. 21, 1996, p. 51). The fleet is transitioning to an airborne command post role as well. Tacamo aircraft operate from a dedicated facility at Tinker AFB, Okla., and are rotated to forward deployment bases at Travis AFB, Calif., and Patuxent River NAS, Md. Once on-station, the aircraft fly a 25-40-deg.-banked orbit and deploy 5,000-ft. and 28,000-ft. trailing VLF antennas simultaneously to transmit messages to submerged ballistic missile submarines. Optimal airspeed during these operations is just 5-10 kt. above stall.

The E-6 airframe is a modified 707-320B and is powered by CFM56 engines. It has a maximum takeoff weight of 342,000 lb. and is hardened against electromagnetic pulses. ●

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