

SAFESIDE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

USAF COMBAT SECURITY POLICE



AIR FORCE LIGHT INFANTRY - JOINED TO FIGHT

1041st SPS (T) - 821st CPCS - 822nd CPCS - 823rd CPCS - 822nd SFS - 823rd SFS - 824th SFS
Phu Cat - Phan Rang - Tan Son Nhut - Nhut Trang - Cam Ranh Bay - Tuy Hoa - Da Nang - Bien Hoa - Pleiku
Binh Thuy - Banmethuot - Vietnam 1967 - 1971
822nd SFS - 823rd SFS - 824th SFS
Kirkuk AB, Iraq - Balad, Iraq

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July 2009

FROM THE PRESIDENT

My Fellow Rangers,

This is an exciting time of the year for the Safe Side Association. We are rapidly approaching the Safe Side Reunion in Valdosta, GA, which is being conducted September 18-20. This is the first stand alone reunion for us in many years. We have worked very hard trying to ensure that arrangements are completed for lodging and the events that will keep everyone entertained while in town. This is also the first reunion that is being conducted with our new "Safe Siders" at Moody AFB and we all are looking forward to that. We will be able to spend the day with them on Saturday, September 19 and enjoy their company. The registration form and other reunion documents are available on the website and were previously forwarded via e-mail. This will be a great event and I very much look forward to seeing everyone there.

If you have not made your hotel reservations, please do so before August 7, 2009. That is the deadline that ensures you receives the Safe Side Association rate. After that date, the Holiday Inn can raise that rate to a higher amount. If you have problems booking on-line, you can call Tiffany, Director of Sales, and she will gladly assist you. Just ensure that you mention that you are with the Safe Side Association. If anyone needs assistance, please give me a call at 210-273-4777 or send me an e-mail.

As many of you know, the 820 SFG is in the process of building a memorial to Safe Side at their Headquarters and previously asked for our assistance in funding. If anyone still desires to donate funds, please send it to the address provided earlier by Pete. As we arrive at Moody, if current plans hold, the memorial should be in place. Additionally, they have agreed to assist in creating a Heritage Hall/Room that will display Safe Side memorabilia. Many of you have donated items to this effort and it will be nice to see the displays. If you still have items you would like to be part of the display, please bring them with you to Valdosta or send them to the 820th Group.

A big "Thank You" to our Secretary/Bulletin Board Moderator Gary Jones on the redesign of the Safe Side web site. The updated site has been modernized and is very user friendly. Recently, our Bulletin Board crashed and we lost the data from all our previous posts. Gary worked tirelessly to rebuild a new Bulletin Board and get us back on track. It is amazing how lost all of us were with the board. Gary

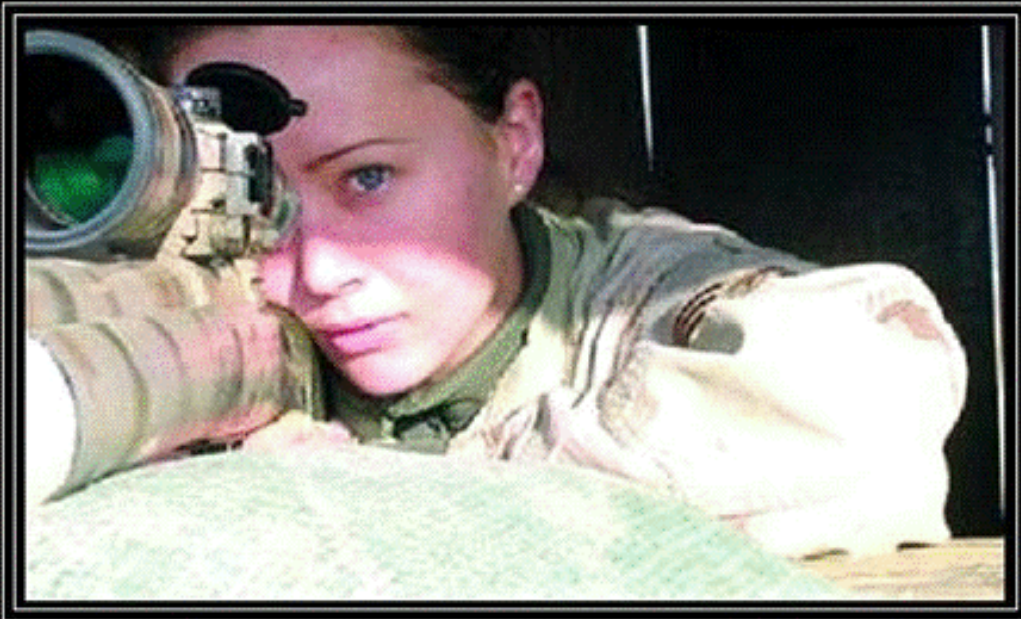
has devoted his time and efforts to many causes for the Association over the years and it is greatly appreciated.

I realize that everyone is not able to attend the reunion; however, if at all possible, I encourage everyone to make an effort. This promises to be a great time and it is always great to visit with our Brothers! I look forward to seeing you at Valdosta, GA.

Drive On!

Jerry R. Nelson
President

SECURITY FORCES SNIPERS



Nothing blends in better with the environment like 1/4 carat diamond earrings and lip gloss

The ex-cheerleader (age 19) and now an Air Force Security Forces Sniper in this picture was watching a road that lead to a NATO military base when she observed a man digging by the road. She engaged the target, and she shot him. Turned out he was a bomb maker for the Taliban and he was burying an IED that was to be detonated when a US patrol walked by 30 minutes later. It would have certainly killed and wounded several soldiers.

The interesting fact of this story is the shot was measured at 725 yards. She shot him as he was bent over burying the bomb. The shot struck him in the butt blowing into the bomb which detonated. He was blown to pieces. The Air Force made a motivational poster of her. HOO RAH!

FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Safesiders, we are counting the days till our reunion on Sep 18. Many of us will be there early in order to participate in the golf tourney, should it become a reality, the morning of Sep 18. I want to thank our President, Jerry Nelson, for all of the work that he did in organizing the reunion, and the rest of the board members, especially Bobby LeFever of the 820th, who has been a wealth of information and assistance.

I am looking forward to the events scheduled at Moody AFB. Of special interest will be the Pre-Ranger Course which includes the water survival course. We will be asking for volunteers, and Art Suess of the 822nd CSP is ready to participate.

We received the following letter from the 820th SFGp, which is of special interest:

“Col Derry and I are working on our building front foyer area improving the retention of history, honor our warriors past/present, and building a tribute wall with a marble base with statue like the one in the Chavis MOUT memorial. We want to place the names of our warriors on small plates on the base to identify those who are past pioneers of the 1041st/82 CSP, ex-820th passed away, KIA, and WIAs to honor all. We are trying to obtain estimates for the marble base, but the statue of the (Helmet/boots/rifle) will be placed on top, was donated. Those who want to contribute for the base will be members of the “Joined to Fight” past and present.

Several glass display cases, pictures and statues are in the works, ordered, or already in place, so it’s starting to look great. We moved the Falcon to an honored place in the foyer with room to add whatever the SAFESIDE Association wants to add in the case.

More info to follow, but we wanted all to know what we are working on for us all and to honor our warriors.

We will send pictures as it progresses soon. Hooah!
Bobby

ROBERT D. LE FEVER, YC-02, DAF
Deputy Commander
820th SFG/CD2
Comm 229-257-8233”

The Safeside Reunion information was mass emailed to everyone and info posted on our Bulletin Board. Should anyone need additional information, call me at 907-388-6942.

Finally, I want to share some personal information. Gloria and I have sold our home in North Pole, Alaska and will be making our permanent home in Corpus Christi, Texas. Our email (villa@santanet.org) and phone number will remain the same.

See ya at Valdosta, Georgia.

JOINED TO FIGHT!
DRIVE ON!
Pete Villarreal,
Vice-President

SAFE SIDE ASSOCIATION ~ 2009 REUNION

Valdosta, GA ~ September 18th – 21st, 2009

Welcome to Valdosta

Valdosta is a vibrant part of the tapestry that makes up the great state of Georgia. A popular vacation destination, the city includes four historic districts, several family theme parks, and many unique shopping opportunities. Valdosta's interesting history, beauty, and hospitality make this city an ideal place to live and visit. The Safe Side Reunion includes a special visit to the *Moody Air Force Base*, located in Valdosta. The base is home to the 820th SFG, which is tasked to organize, train, and employ combat-ready Security Forces (Safe Side) personnel to the war on terrorism. The 2009 Safe Side Reunion will offer many opportunities to relax and catch-up with your family and friends.

Hotel Information

The reunion officially begins on Friday, September 18th and ends on Monday, Sept 21st. You will be staying at the full service *Holiday Inn Valdosta Conference Center*, which is located at 1805 West Hill Ave., Valdosta, GA 31601. The *Holiday Inn* is ideally located close to many of the city's most popular attractions.

Reservation Information

The room rate is **\$109.00** plus tax per night, based on single or double occupancy. For those of you who choose to arrive early or stay late, the same room rate is available 2 days before and 2 days after the official reunion dates, based on availability. You will also receive a special 10% discount on food in the hotel restaurant for the duration of the reunion. Please make your hotel reservations **NOW** by calling the hotel directly at **229-244-1111** *between 9-4 pm EST* and ask for in-house reservations. Mention that you are with the Safe Side Reunion to assure you are associated with your group. You may request specific room types when you call to make your reservations (handicap accessible room, etc.). The hotel check-in time is 3:00pm; please don't expect to get into your room before then. Make your reservations today; you can cancel up to 24 hours prior to arrival without penalty. They will ask you for a deposit or credit card number to guarantee your room reservation. The hotel is holding rooms until they sell out or **August 7th, 2009**, whichever comes first. Don't delay.

Transportation & Directions

If you are flying to the reunion, the Holiday offers complimentary shuttle service from the Valdosta Airport (VLD). Upon arrival at the airport, call using the free courtesy phone in the Baggage Claim area. For those of you driving, the hotel offers plenty of free parking. Contact the hotel directly if you need specific driving directions.

Travel safely and we will

See you in Valdosta!
DRIVE ON!

SAFE SIDE ASSOCIATION

2009 REUNION EVENTS

GROUP WELCOME DINNER

Friday, September 18th (7:00pm at the Hotel)

Join your friends for a casual Welcome Dinner, at the hotel, featuring an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner. This is a wonderful opportunity to see who is here this year, and your first chance to re-connect with your friends. The Hospitality Room will be open prior to the dinner. Cocktails will be available from the cash bar at 6:00pm; the buffet will be open at 7:00pm.

EVENT A: MOODY AIR FORCE BASE TOUR & LUNCH

Saturday, September 19th (9:00am-4:00pm)

Board your motor coach for the short drive to *Moody AFB* for a Greeting and Briefing from the SF Commanders. The tour begins at the Memorial of AIC Chavis for a special Ceremony. Then tour a pre-ranger course, including the training areas where you can climb in and out of the combat vehicles. You will also have the opportunity to fire weapons, smell gun powder, and walk through the 820th SF Group Headquarters Building, where the Safe Side paraphernalia is maintained. Meanwhile, the wives will have a coffee/tea and cake with the 820th SF Group wives. Included in the price of the tour is lunch with the 820th SF Group members. The bus will return to the hotel at approximately 4:00pm.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Sunday, September 20th (8:30am in the Safe Side Hospitality Room at the Hotel)

Join your Association Brothers and friends for a Memorial Service in honor of our fallen comrades. Service will be conducted by Reverend Jim Sutton, 822 CSPPS.

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, September 20th (9:00am in the Safe Side Hospitality Room at the Hotel)

Join your friends for this worship service to be conducted by one of our own, Reverend Jim Sutton, 822 CSPPS.

SAFE SIDE ASSOCIATION BUSINESS MEETING

Sunday, September 20th (1:00pm in the Safe Side Hospitality Room at the Hotel)

Join your Safe Side Brothers for our Annual Business Meeting which will be held at the Hotel. This is an important meeting and everyone is strongly encouraged to attend. Please be prepared to bring forth and discuss any agenda items which concern our Association.

BANQUET DINNER

Sunday, September 20th (7:00pm at the Valdosta Convention Center)

Join your friends for your Banquet Dinner at the *Valdosta Convention Center*. Cocktails will be available from the cash bar at 6:00pm; dinner will be served at 7:00pm. The Convention Center is located about 1 mile from the hotel.

TOUR CANCELLATION INSURANCE

Protect yourself from unforeseen expenses caused by sickness, injury or any other causes that impact your travel plans. This insurance enables a refund of Tour & Banquet expenses up until three (3) days before the start of your reunion. If you need to cancel – please call our office immediately (817-251-3551) for a cancellation number. If you have not purchased cancellation insurance all tour and meal money is non-refundable 6 weeks prior to the reunion.

Important Reunion Notes:

~ Tours may be cancelled if a minimum of 30 people per bus is not met. In this case, full refunds will be given.

~ Be sure to bring photo identification (like a driver's license) on all events.

SAFE SIDE ASSOCIATION ~ 2009 REUNION

RESERVATION FORM

Complete and mail this entire form with a check payable to:

***Military Reunion Planners*, P.O. Box 1588, Colleyville, TX 76034**

REUNION PACKAGE-- Everyone Please Pay: _____ people at \$129 p.p. =

Reunion Package includes the following: Group Welcome Dinner, Event A: *Moody Air Force Base Tour & Lunch*, and Banquet Dinner. Package also includes motor coach transportation to *Moody Air Force Base*, all taxes and gratuities associated with group meals.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH

GROUP WELCOME DINNER: (7:00pm at the Hotel)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH

EVENT A: *Moody Air Force Base Tour & Lunch* (9:00am-4:00pm)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH

BANQUET DINNER: (7:00pm at the *Valdosta Convention Center*)

Tour Cancellation Insurance: (Protect your money) _____ people at \$10 p.p. =

Late Reservation Fee: (If Received after August 7th, 2009) _____ people at \$10 p.p. =

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$

>>> PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

Name (As you want it to appear on badge): _____

Spouse: _____

Guest(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ Phone: (Other) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Emergency contact during the reunion: _____ Ph: _____

Years Served 19____ to 19____

Comments/Suggestions: _____

Reservations are due by August 7th, 2009. Late reservations accepted on a space available basis with a \$10 per person, late fee. You should make a copy of this form for your records. For information call weekdays: 817-251-3551 or Email: info@MilitaryReunionPlanners.com. Requests for refunds must be made in writing and postmarked before due date above. No refunds will be made after this date, unless you have purchased *Tour Cancellation Insurance*. There is a \$10 per person refund processing fee. Your cancelled check is your receipt and proof of purchase. There is a \$25 return check fee for NSF. For a written confirmation please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. MRP will not be held liable for failure of vendors to provide contracted services or any injuries/accidents that may occur during the reunion. Sorry, no refunds will be given starting 3 days before the reunion for any reason. Tours require a minimum of 30 people in order to operate. Full refunds given for any cancelled Event.

Date Rec'd:	Check #	Amount\$	XCL #
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RETIREMENT CEREMONY AT THE USAF SECURITY FORCES CENTER, LACKLAND AFB, TEXAS, ATTENDED BY SAFESIDE ASSOCIATION

Several of us Safesiders attended a Retirement Ceremony at the Air Force Security Forces Center, Lackland AFB on Feb 20. Retiring was MSgt Chuck Sauvage III, a prior member of the 822nd SFS (Safeside).

Gloria and I arrived at Lackland AFB on 2/17/09 and met some friends of ours that were stationed with us in Alaska. Their son, a MSgt in the AF Reserves, was graduating on 2/19/09 from the AF Recruiting Training School. We had a couple of days so we visited all of the missions in San Antonio. What a treat!

On 2/18/09 at 0500 I stood by my open window and witnessed about 250 recruits marching to the PT field. It was 44 degrees and many had gloves and jackets. The first order of business for the recruits was to sing the Air Force song. Imagine 250 young airmen, men and women, the majority of them about 18 years of age, singing at the top of their voices, many which couldn't carry a tune, to the words of the Air Force Song. How patriotic is that!

Sentimental as I am, I remembered that it was 49 years to the day, 2/18/60, that I enlisted and was in these recruits shoes. And also on that field was Pete Piazza. I found out this year when I noticed an AF Order promoting our class to A3C and there was my name and Pete Piazza's name. And now we are both members of the VSPA. He served honorably at Bunker Hill 10, Bien Hoa, RVN during Tet of 1968 and I arrived with Safeside in October of 68 and went through Tet of 69. Little did we know when we met at Tucson VSPA Reunion that we had been in basic training together. I thoroughly enjoyed watching the recruits doing their PT.

But let's get back to the Retirement Ceremony. President Jerry Nelson (821st), myself (822nd), Horace Reibe (822nd) and Tom McLaughlin (1041st) and my wife, Gloria met for lunch at a Cajun Restaurant and had a wonderful meal. We then proceeded to follow each other to Lackland and to the Security Forces Center for the ceremony.

We were a little early, so we got to meet a lot of SF troops and Chuck Sauvage's father, Chuck Sauvage II. Now, for those of you that attended the Vietnam Security Police Association Reunion at Valdosta, Georgia in 2005 and came out to the 822nd SFS/Safeside Combat Dining Out, Chuck Sauvage II was there in a suit, and challenged us warriors of the Vietnam War era, to join him in the obstacle course in order to get to the Grog Bowl.

I remember Art Suess, Larry Ernsting, and Fred Garcia taking up the challenge. These guys got wet, doing sit ups in a tub of water and going through the course in order to get a drink. I still have photos of these guys at the grog bowl, soaking wet.

Chuck Sauvage II came all the way from Florida to be at his son's Retirement Ceremony. Chuck Sauvage III is so lucky to have such a supporting father.

Sitting on the front row of the Conference Room were six full bird colonels, all assigned to the Security Forces Center. The second row was reserved for Safeside Association. We got to meet all of these colonels, and most impressive was a black colonel, Myron Freeman. He mentioned that his first Flight Chief was Safeside and after three or four minutes, he remembered the name, Richard Shultzman who retired in Kansas. We got in touch with MSgt (ret) Richard Shultzman of the 823rd on

Feb 22 and recruited him into the Association and gave him Col Freeman's phone number.

Officiating and the person responsible for organizing the event, was TSgt Perry Geurin, a very sharp individual. He introduced the colonels sitting in front and other visiting dignitaries, and then he introduced "The Safeside Association, the warriors of the Vietnam War".

The invocation was provided by Chief Master Sergeant Parsons, who is presently the Command Chief of the 509th Combat Operations at Hulbert Field, Fl. The Chief was at Moody with the 822nd when we visited in 2005.

Lt Col Don Robertson, our host for the 2005 VSPA Reunion at Valdosta, and presently the Chief, Training & Contingencies Branch, Air Combat Command, Langley AFB, Va, was the Presiding Officer, who spoke for 45 minutes regarding the wonderful experiences he has had with MSgt Chuck Sauvage III. Both are Airborne Paratroopers, and served in Iraq with the Eight double deuce (822nd SFS/Safeside) many times. MSgt Sauvage has had an illustrious career, evidenced by the chest full of medals/ribbons, to include his paratrooper badge. Any commander would've been proud to have had Chuck Sauvage in their command.

Col Robertson presented Chuck certificates from the Chief Master Sgt of the Air Force, President Bush, BG Hertzog (top cop of the AF) and others. The Colonel in charge of the SF Center also presented Mrs. Sauvage with flowers and certificates, and welcomed everyone including the guys from the Safeside Association. He presented MSgt Sauvage III with the Meritorious Medal Award with first Oak Leaf Cluster.

It was Chuck's turn to speak, and he presented his two boys and his wife with gifts, the people responsible for putting the ceremony together with gifts; he thanked all the colonels present for allowing him to have the ceremony at the SF Center and for being present; for Col Robertson coming from Virginia and for CMSgt Parsons for coming from Florida.

He then thanked the Safeside Association for being present. He thanked us for inviting him to the Texas Safeside mini-reunion, and briefed the troops in the audience that we in Operation Safeside are in their Career Development Courses. That when they study about the Vietnam War and Operation Safeside, that we are the guys that they read about. Then he looked at us, and thanked us for honoring him with our presence, and that he would join our Association.

With that we all stood, and guess what???? Everyone sang the Air Force Song. Luckily the words were in the program, so we sang along. But the singing was not as enthusiastic as the recruits' singing.

I noticed a couple of things in the program that got my attention:

"If you don't like the way I provide your freedom, then I suggest you grab a rifle and stand a post". And I also noticed a very impressive poem,

“MY LAST PARADE”

Let the bugle blow
Let the march be played
With a forming of the troops
For my last parade.
The years of wars and the years of waiting
Obedience to orders, unhesitating
Years in the States, and the years overseas
All woven in a web of memories.

A lifetime of service passes in review
As many good friends and exotic places too
In the waning sunlight begin to fade
With the martial music of my last parade.

My last salute to the service and base
Now someone else will take my place
To the sharp young airman marching away
I gladly pass the orders of the day.

Though uncertain of what my future may hold
Still, if needed - before I grow too old
I'll keep my saber sharp, my powder dry
Lest I be recalled to duty by and by

So let the bugle blow
Fire the evening gun
Slowly lower the colors

My retirement has begun.

Congratulations, MSgt Charles C. Sauvage III. Good luck on your retirement, with your new job at Randolph AFB.

OFF WE GO INTO THE WILD BLUE YONDER;
CLIMGING HIGH INTO THE SUN.....

Hooah!

Drive on!



Pete Villarreal, Jerry Nelson, Col Robertson (and he also has US Marine Jump wings on his uniform), Tom McLaughlin of the 1041st, CMSgt Parsons and Horace Reibe as you look at the photo, from left to right.

VALDOSTA

They often fight together, so why not train together? That's the thinking behind the latest joint training at Moody Air Force Base, said Col. Donald Derry, Commander of the 820th Security Forces Group.

Members of Moody's 820th Security Forces are conducting joint training operations alongside Britain's II Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment Feb. 1-14. The first week of the multinational joint exercise will be here at Moody AFB, with week two to be held at Camp Blanding, Fla.

"We've been in a lot of the same operational theaters together, so it makes a lot of sense to train together" Derry said.

Derry's statement was seconded by his British counterpart, Wing Commander "Dutch" Holland.

"We're laying the foundations for success," Holland stated. "Our forces are learning tangible skills and also forming intangible relationships. You never know what it is that will give you the edge you need in a particular situation and lead to operational success, the tangible or the intangible," Holland said.

On Wednesday, members of II Squadron RAF Regiment received training in the methods used by Moody Airmen to storm a building possibly harboring hostile combatants. Corporal Wesley Cummings, a 28 year old Flight Sergeant from Middlesborough, England, said the American methods differ from those they were trained in.

"The American methods are more slow and controlled, whereas the ones we use are faster and more aggressive," Cummings said.

Cummings' statement was reinforced by Stuart Cox, a Senior Aircraftsman from London, England.

"Our techniques and procedures are slightly different," Cox said. "We have less experience than the Americans when it comes to clearing buildings, for example, and there are some areas where they might benefit from learning how we do things in the U.K."

The 820th Security Forces Group and II Squadron Royal Air Force Regiment were brought together by their respective commanders, who attended the Junior Regiment Officer's Training Course in the U.K. back in 1992, Derry stated. Derry and Holland have a longstanding friendship that has translated into a mutually beneficial opportunity for the two Airborne units to work and train together.

The purpose of their training is serious, but they are also making time to enjoy some camaraderie, and to form bonds of friendship that can mean a lot to those involved in military operations far from home, Derry said.

While one group was training in the simulated village referred to as Military Operations in Urban Village Terrain (MOUT), another group of U.K. Paratroopers was engaging in weapons fire familiarization training. Since the two units work side by side, II Squadron RAF Regiment may have occasion to use weapons provided by their American counterparts.

“They’re more of a rifle oriented company,” stated Captain Matt Garvelink. “They’re very proficient at firing heavy weapons, machine guns and things like that, but they really enjoy firing the small caliber weapons used by the 820th Security Forces group. They specifically requested shotgun training before they came over here,” Garvelink stated.

“Corporal Abel Williams with II Squadron RAF Regiment is one of those who enjoyed target practice with the American M-4 shotgun. “It’s a big hitting weapon. When the enemy sees a shotgun, they know you mean business.”

Another phase of the joint training involves parachute jumps.

“We’re paratroopers, so we like to jump,” Williams said. “The more jumps the better.”

Seventy II Squadron RAF Regiment members will jump on Thursday, and again on Friday. On Saturday, they head to Camp Blanding, Fla. for the next phase of training, which will include a 24 hour training period lasting throughout the night, during which they will travel over 20 miles on foot and engage in exercises intended to test their ability to handle casualties in the field, triage, and other skills.

“There’s a famous quote,” Holland stated, “that the battle for the Falklands was won on the mountains of South Wales, referring to the tough training terrain used by the troops deployed to the Falklands. We think the training we do here with the 820th Security Forces Group will lead to operational successes in our own deployed locations,” Holland stated.

POW/MIA Flag

A patriotic Harley Davidson dealer in Gladstone, Ore., recently unveiled the second largest POW/MIA flag in the country; it’s 30 feet by 50 feet. Latus Motors usually flies a equally large American flag, but flew this one from their mammoth flagpole right next to Interstate 205 (“Veterans Memorial Highway”) from noon Sept. 16th to noon the 17th. By law the POW/MIA flag can only replace the American flag for six days each year, plus one day at a given flag’s first showing, in places where both can’t be displayed together. The authorized days are Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day and Veterans Day.

The company hosted an impressive event, largely attended by Harley riders, including a good showing from local Patriot Guard chapters. A few Native American Indian tribes and veterans organizations participated in the flag raising ceremony, including a handful of ex-POWs from WW-II. Those guys had some fascinating stories to tell, and really added some historical depth to the ceremonies, which was dominated by Vietnam vets.

This powerful symbol got its start in 1971, when an MIA wife and member of the National League of Families recognized the need for a symbol. She contacted a design firm, Annin & Company, and an employee designed a flag to represent our missing men. He had sketched out the design in pencil, and intended to later add color, but production began before he was able to return to the project so the stark black and white image stood.

On August 10, 1990, Congress designated the flag “as the symbol of our Nation’s concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation”.

Other than “Old Glory”, the POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever to fly over the White House, having been displayed in this place of honor on National POW/MIA Recognition Day since 1982.



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

COLONEL DONALD T. R. DERRY



Colonel Donald T. R. Derry is the Commander of the 820th Security Forces Group, Moody Air Force Base, Georgia. The group provides first in, highly capable, force protection and contingency response for expeditionary air forces anywhere, anytime, and under austere conditions.

The group staff and squadrons are composed of over 685 people in 26 functional career fields including civil engineering, communications, intelligence, explosive ordnance disposal, transportation, personnel, supply disaster preparedness, biomedical services, logistics plans, and security forces. The 820th Security Forces Group is the first Air Force unit designed specifically to provide fully integrated force protection.

Colonel Derry enlisted in the Vermont Air National Guard in 1982 and received his commission through Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont, in 1985. Colonel Derry began his Air Force career as a security police Shift Commander at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada.

In 1992, Colonel Derry graduated from the Royal Air Force Regiment Junior Officer Course and subsequently served as a Royal Air Force Regiment Exchange Officer at RAF Catterick and RAF Honington, United Kingdom. Colonel Derry was the first U.S. officer to serve as the Air Adjutant for a British airborne squadron.

Colonel Derry became the first Operations Officer of the newly formed 820th Security Forces Group at Lackland AFB, Texas, in March 1997. After graduating from the United States Army Command and General Staff College, Colonel Derry commanded the 822d Security Forces Squadron, Moody AFB, Georgia.

Colonel Derry was most recently assigned as the Force Protection Division Chief for the Joint Security Office, Headquarters U.S. Central Command, MacDill AFB, Florida. He led and directed actions of four branches ensuring implementation of DoD and USCENTCOM standards for multiple

force protection disciplines to include antiterrorism; critical infrastructure protection; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense; and theater air and missile defense.

Colonel Derry is married to Robin Janovsky of Braintree, Massachusetts. They have three children, Robert, Trevor, and Pauline.

EDUCATION

1985 Bachelor of Arts in History, Norwich University, Northfield, Vermont.

1991 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

1999 Master of Arts in Security Management, Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri.

2000 United States Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

2005 Master of Arts in Strategic Studies, Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. August 1986 – February 1988, Shift Commander, 554th Security Police Squadron, Nellis AFB, Nevada.
2. March 1988 – February 1989, Desert Warfare Instructor, 4554th Ground Combat Training Squadron, Silver Flag Alpha, Nellis AFB, Nevada.
3. March 1989 – October 1991, Air Force Officer in Charge of Level IV, 3287th Technical Training Squadron and U.S. Army Company Commander, Company C, Air Base Ground Defense Command, Ft. Dix, New Jersey.
4. January 1992 – May 1995, Royal Air Force Regiment Exchange Officer, Officer in Charge and Syndicate Officer Instructor for the Junior Regiment Officers Course, Air Adjutant, No. II Field Squadron (Airborne), and Course Commander, Officer Commanding, Basic Training Flight, Regimental Training Squadron (Basic), RAF Catterick and RAF Honington, United Kingdom.
5. June 1995 – April 1997 – Chief, Program Management Division, Directorate of Corrections, HQ Air Force Security Police Agency, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.
6. May 1997 – May 1999 – Operations Officer, 820th Security Forces Group, Lackland AFB, TX.
7. June 1999 – June 2000 – Student, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.
8. June 2000 – September 2002 – Commander, 822d Security Forces Squadron, Moody AFB, Georgia.
9. October 2002 – May 2004, Commander, 15th Security Forces Squadron, Hickam AFB, Hawaii.
10. August 2004 – May 2005, Student, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.
11. June 2005 – May 2006, Branch Chief, Risk Assessments Branch, Deputy Director of Operations for Force Protection, HQ USCENTCOM, MacDill AFB, Florida.
12. June 2006 to March 2008, Chief, Force Protection Division, Joint Security Office, HQ USCENTCOM, MacDill AFB, Florida.

BADGES

Master Security Forces Functional Badge; U.S. Army Parachutist Badge

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Defense Superior Service Medal

Bronze Star Medal

Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters

Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Force Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Combat Readiness Medal

National Defense Service Medal with one device

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal with one device
Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal
Global War On Terrorism Service Medal

His awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Parachutist Insignia, Royal Air Force Regiment Shoulder Guards, British Parachutist Wings, and the coveted U.S. Army Ranger Tab.

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant - October 20, 1985
First Lieutenant - October 20, 1987
Captain - October 20, 1989
Major - August 1, 1997
Lieutenant Colonel - January 1, 2002
Colonel - June 1, 2007

Safesiders:

We recently posted a notice about the Tribute Wall and Heritage Hall the 820th SFG is building to preserve the unit's heritage, beginning with the 1041st SPS(T) and continuing through their operations today. The center-piece will be a statue, mounted on a marble base. The statue has already arrived and they are in the process of ordering the marble base. There will be numerous display cases to house memorabilia donated by past and current Safesiders. This will be something that all of us can be proud of, as it will preserve our heritage, long after we are gone.

In order to make this all happen, the 820th is soliciting donations from those of us who proudly served in Safeside. First, they need monetary donations to make the purchases of the statue, base and display cases. Donations will also pay for engravings or letterings to describe the artifacts on display. Second, they want our donations of artifacts that tell our story. They already have the beautiful Gyrfalcon, hand-carved by Jim Kern. Now, we need to hang some meat on the skeleton of this project. We know the fantastic hand-made knife, created by Rich Ryan will have a nice home in the Heritage Hall. Now, the rest of you need to dig through those old duffle bags and find some treasures that are part of our history.

We are taking a two-pronged approach to this effort. Those who wish to make a monetary donation may do so by sending your donations directly to the address below. Those who wish to donate artifacts need to contact Mr. Lefever or MSgt Erskine to make arrangements for them to receive your donations. We have to do it this way, to make sure they can accommodate the item(s) and that it isn't a duplicate of something that someone else already donated.

Send Monetary Donations to:
820th SFG/CD2
9551 Luke St
Moody AFB GA 31699

Contact for Artifact Donations:
Mr. Robert E. Le Fever
Deputy Commander 820th SFG/CD2
(229) 257-8233

Safeside Warriors Poem

WE'RE THE BATTLING BASTARDS OF SAFESIDE;
THE CONG, THEY KNEW US WELL;
CAUSE EVERY TIME THEY WOULD ATTACK,
WE ALWAYS GAVE THEM HELL!

OUR UNIT'S NOT A KNOWN ONE,
NO PRESTIGE, OR FAME;
STILL, WE'RE THE AIR FORCE RANGERS,
AND FIGHTING IS OUR GAME!

WE'LL SET UP ON A BARE BASE,
NO MATTER WHERE IT BE;
AND MAN, THE GUN, UNTIL IT'S DONE--
WE'RE THE AIR FORCE INFANTRY.

WE'VE FOUGHT IN MANY PLACES,
IN THAT HELL HOLE---VIET NAM;
WE NEVER GOT NO MEDALS,
OR, "THANK" FROM UNCLE SAME.
WE'RE LIKE THOSE QUEENS OF BATTLE,
THE ARMY'S PRIDE ELITE.
WE TOO, HAVE SUFFERED HARSHIPS,
AND NEVER KNOWN DEFEAT!
AND WHEN OUR JOB WAS OVER,
THEY'D SEND US ON OUR WAY---
TO ANOTHER FAR-OFF AIR BASE,
TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.

YES, WE'RE THE AIR FORCE RANGERS--
WE'RE KNOWN BUT TO A FEW.
WE'VE SERVED OUR COUNTRY PROUDLY,
AND NEVER GOT OUR DUE.

BUT, ONE DAY, UP IN GLORY,
YOU'LL HEAR ALL HEAVEN YELL--
"WELCOME HOME BRAVE WARRIORS...
YOU'VE SPENT YOUR TIME IN HELL!"

Edward R. Jones,
MSgt, USAFR
2750th SPS/WPAFB, Ohio

Memorial Day, 2062

Catch The Wind...

The Last Vietnam War Veteran

For decades he annually returned to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The Wall... called to him...touched something in him. As a Vietnam War veteran, he felt he owed it to those who went before him. His flagging health and confinement to a wheelchair had prevented visits in recent years. But today was different—today was special. He had donned his old green floppy-hat, the only real keepsake from the Vietnam War he possessed, and on his birthday was going to The Wall—in a limousine!

There was no shortage of volunteers to wheel him wherever he wanted to go—where the heck were they ten years ago? And no shortage of reporters asking if he knew yesterday's passing of that-other-guy made him the last living Vietnam Veteran? Why can't they ever say Dead? Passing sounds like a good BM. Of course he knew, but still found it odd that somehow such circumstances could make him famous.

He knew also that if he hadn't fibbed about how he was feeling, they wouldn't have let him go to The Wall today of all days: Memorial Day. Being an aging veteran—and now the last Vietnam Veteran—was indeed bitter sweet, and all too impossible to fully grasp. I can't be the last...I just can't be...he thought. He also knew that no one knew the name of the last draft-dodging-deserter-sob to bite the dust—and frankly, no one cared. He smiled at God's joke permitting him to outlive all those losers...especially that famous shrew, what was her name, but for some reason took no pleasure when she, like a good BM, finally passed.

He was at The Wall and thrilled, and nothing could spoil this day, even though he still didn't know what the media wanted from him, or expected him to say. Maybe they want me to do something dramatic, like croak, in time for the five o'clock follies, he grinned. Screw'em...I'm gonna live forever—or maybe not, he thought. He didn't feel like he would live forever. He felt tired and exhausted from this gusty day, this week...this life...with its ever-present aches. He felt like a grumpy, gnarly, barkless old tangled tree too many bears had itched against. Can trees be grumpy? he shrugged, the answer not worth the puzzle. But he was mostly just grumpy-tired of being tired.

They wheeled him to the Vietnam Nurses Monument and he gestured for someone, whose name he should remember, to place his store-bought roses just-so, in the lap of the kneeling nurse, and between her hand and helmet—perhaps the roses might ease her grief...a grief he could relate to. The wounded, dying, dead warrior cradled in the nurses' arms...her grief and compassion frozen in recognition that his spirit had left the body, and were it possible by will alone, she would have brought him back.

He thought of Donovan's old song, "Catch The Wind" wishing he could recall its lyrics, and its unintended hope he thought it offered gravely-wounded...hoping to catch the dust off chopper riding on the wind.

"In chilly hours and minutes,
of uncertainty, I don't want to be...
For me to love you now,
would be the sweetest thing,
would make me sing...
we'll try and catch the wind...."

His eyes were drawn skyward, following a nurse's gaze ever searching for the dust-off chopper that would never come, and sighed in resignation that salvation was not upon the wind that day.

As he wheeled toward The Three Soldiers...Three Warriors...someone asked the question he was always asked at The Wall: Did you know my dad...but this time they said their dad had known him. He wanted to remember, wanted to offer some words that for a moment would make a connection for them...but the names had mostly faded generations ago.

He then wheeled left to better read the dedication plaque:

“In memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice.”

He honored and remembered the many friends who had suffered from Agent Orange or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Such a small plaque, he thought, to honor those countless thousands. Their deepest wounds unhealed—with pitiless fates impatiently lying in wait to savage minds and bodies and rot away their spirits. Indeed, too many had later died as a result of their service—a pain without measure. It didn't have to end like that, he thought.

His attention was drawn back to the three young warriors standing vigil. His old eyes recognized and felt the sheer exhaustion forever etched in their eyes...a shared memory of too many sleepless nights...too much pain from dust-off friends...and too certain of a very uncertain future. “Don't mean nothin’,” he recalled was the phrase. Through the decades he realized it did mean something...a great deal of something, in fact: he was now the last man standing, and there was no one left he could really talk with. He shook his head in disbelief...they're...all...gone.

He savored a quiet melancholy moment as his helpers chatted with media covering his birthday visit to The Wall. Being over a hundred years old, he had discovered people wanted to talk to him, especially now; everyone knowing well his time was near.

They rolled him the few yards to see nearby old glory...and she was glorious, catching the cool breeze, rippling gently, as only such beauty could with dazzling colors perfectly backlit by the sun. He thought, if only you could talk...what stories you could tell. The flag always brought joy, and sometimes a lump to his throat, as it waved-to, ever so slowly, then-fro with a crisp snap. At another time...another place...we flew old glory and oh how we cheered to see her fly...but they made us take her down.

They paused briefly at the southwest entrance, and he could see The Wall in enfilade and just make out the black granite of the monument's center where it V'd and pointed toward the Washington Monument. Only a decade ago there were still a few misty eyed old men looking for a buddy's names...but no longer.

With a nod, they rolled him forward slowly down the pathway, and in his wake he listened to the trailing sounds of shuffling feet, like a herd of recruits rote-stepping across a bridge. How once we marched like giants down trails of darkness...and like brothers fought till there was light. He felt like a pointman leading a squad as he followed the list of flowing names like markers along the road of life. Moving closer to The Wall, he could feel the cobble stones beneath his wheels, and reached out with finger tips and touched the flickering stone-etched letters as they tapped a Braille Morse Code...like playing cards pinned to a child's bicycle wheels, strumming spokes.

How quickly The Wall grew in height with names overwhelming and never ending, until suddenly his chair was swiveled facing center. The Wall somehow seemed taller than he remembered. They waited as he knew they would, while his eyes found the name that was more than just a name to him. He thought, You're still here...in my place...just as you have been all these many decades. He bowed his head slightly and they eased him back to lawn's edge. The name blurred with an old man's vision as he remembered that day for the countless time and wondered anew why he made it home, and they had not. Dreams of Home... that's all we ever had.

He could just see the length of The Wall, from the beginning to end of the war. Without realizing it, he sat at attention...as some forgotten sergeant had instilled in him eons ago, and with a start was momentarily angered when someone broke his thoughts and stuck a tissue in his hand. He instantly resented their assumption he would once more blubber like a woman. Maybe it would be different this time—but they knew him too well. And then he sat alone at the edge of the grass in the park-like setting...his eyes brushing The Wall's black granite...feeling the presence...drawing strength and a comforting peace that it always gave so freely.

His makeshift entourage stood back...giving him space, as they called it, and for the moment grew quiet, each slipping into private thoughts of what The Wall and all those names represented. He knew some would smile as his eyes closed, thinking him drifting into another nap. But truthfully he found that sometimes, some places, he could actually see better, see further, with his eyes closed. Even now he could see the miles-long curve of Da Nang's China Beach, feel the burning heat of the golden sands, taste the salt of ocean spray—and there they were...he could see his sun baked friends waist deep in bluest-blue water riding each other's shoulders in horseplay and laughter. He was twenty again...they all were so young...and each celebrating another day of life. Old reminiscences gave life to youthful memories and wandering fraternal shadows of his soul. I would give it all just to be there with them...one more time. His joy faded as thoughts morphed into night black as the deepest black-hole...his eyes following as a drifting pearl string of flares were consumed by the void.

Perhaps he had dozed, he thought to himself...but they were all so alive, so real! He had never returned to Vietnam, as many veterans had, and thought...truth is...I've never felt closer to it all than right here at The Wall. For him, Vietnam was only an eyes-rest away. Another moment and he envisioned parked F-4 Phantoms, wing tip to wing tip, for more than a mile, and a string of Hueys thumping overhead like enraged geese...a door-gunner waved in passing. Air crews scurried about the flight line, and he could feel the ground quake with a distant B-52 strike. Men were joking and laughing as they boarded the Freedom Bird home...as silver canisters were silently loaded by forklift into a cargo bay. And then he could feel his muscles straining in calisthenics amidst thousands of others at boot camp. Mind drifting...his friend was suddenly dead and flown away into the night...tape across a locker...and another scar across his own heart. His eyes swept the sky in denial, searching for shadows of aircraft numerous as stars, and trying to paint the memory with a face. B-57s ...C-47 Gooney Birds, Hueys...fighter planes, war ships at sea, they were all there...thousands of fellow warriors...reflections of my life... when I lived and was alive because I was not dead...and how we drank toasts to everything we missed back in the world... and prayed our Whys? to Jesus.

Just as suddenly his mind's eye could see his old veterans' association of hundreds of members marching so long ago in the 25th Anniversary Parade of The Wall—curb to curb—waving and cheering in celebration...and then the last reunion, where the two surviving members decided to open the last-man-standing legacy bottle of liquor together—neither liked drinking alone, they said—and in tribute shared a toast with the young warriors from a nearby base. A final grand toast, and grand it was...tearful in memories of those who fought and died and fought and lived, and of the many lingering veterans through the years who fought desperately just to live...heart-tugging for the loss of so many friendships...wonderful in having shared the unbreakable bond of taking care of our own. So many things we all remembered...now I alone remember...of life...of death...of war. And in that wordless moment following the final toast honoring all Vietnam-Thailand comrades, he felt the brotherhood was complete. The connection—made...the bond—forever...the torch—safely passed to the young men and women from the base. He knew he was ready. It was time to say goodbye....

He whispered an old friend's oft said words, "I am forever honored for I have marched with heroes." Then thought of the ancient Hollies' song, He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother, and could hear it playing in his mind...nodding at the lyric's simple truth...

"The road is long
with many a winding turn
that leads us to who knows where
who knows when
but I'm strong,
strong enough to carry him
he ain't heavy, he's my brother...."

So true, he thought, once I was a warrior... so very long ago. I carry the pity of war still...it has never let go. A gentle breeze fluffed a lock of his frail white hair, like caressing fingertips of an angel. The same breeze caught the moist tissue in his hand and whisked it away to drift like an autumn leaf...and soared away with his spirit.

Astounded—there really was a white-light—he found himself standing before a multitude of young warriors suddenly cheering and clapping and shouting Welcome Home over-and-over...his old buddies, all forever Vietnam-young, and grinning broadly suddenly surrounding him, pounding his back happily, hoisting him on their shoulders, whistling shrilly and tossing his hat all about like a Frisbee. And when they let him down his forever-young friend of so long ago clutched his shoulders... Welcome Home...we've been waiting a long time for you!

Several days later the presidential motorcade pulled to the curb along Constitution Avenue, and nearest The Wall. A bustle of activity darted about, but only one lone figure walked to The Wall's floodlit center. The president thought of his words spoken earlier that morning, at the last Vietnam Veteran's funeral at Arlington, and how sad it was that nothing he said was worthy of closing the chapter on a war nearly three million Americans had served in...all of them gone now.

The last Vietnam Veteran excitedly pointed, proclaiming, "That's the President!" Taking him by the elbow, his friend replied, "Yeah...isn't that great?...they all find their way here...but check this out...I've got some brothers I want you to meet...and then there are the Korean War guys, and World War II and World War I guys, and Civil War and Revolutionary War guys... and you won't believe all their stories!

The president had come to say goodbye and place a memory at The Wall. He stood reverently, filled with gratitude, reading a few names, touching one here and there. American names... American dead...each an American hero. We haven't forgotten the price that was paid...we will remember your sacrifice...the cost of freedom... as long as there is a United States of

America. He paused for one last look at The Wall, and thought how fitting a place was this hallowed ground for the last man standing to have crossed-over from. His eyes swept the length of The Wall and filled with mist...I just want to thank you, one last time...welcome home sons...welcome home. At that moment he came to attention...old military habits taking hold...held a salute to The Wall...and felt goose bumps on his arms from a sudden whisper-breeze...like the fleeting wind from millions of returned hand salutes...and from a young veteran proud to be...the last man standing.

Memorial Day, 2062
Catch The Wind...
The Last Vietnam War Veteran

by: Don Poss
(Webmaster: VSPA.com and War-Stories.com)
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World War II MIAs recovered in Germany

by 2nd Lt. Kathleen Polesnak
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

HENRI-CHAPELLE, Belgium (AFRNS) – A line in the Airman's creed states, "I will never leave an Airman behind." For the McMurray Crew 801 with the 492nd Bombardment Group, that promise was fulfilled, albeit 60-plus years after their B-24 bomber went down during World War II.

An international crowd gathered Feb. 20 at the Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery and Memorial in Belgium to honor the McMurray Crew's nine members who were listed as missing in action. Their remains were recovered in a field southwest of Berlin in 2002.

At the ceremony, nine rosettes – small flower-shaped pendants – were placed next to each crew member's engraved name on a memorial to signify they are no longer missing.

"When we actually find a rosette by the names of the missing, it's closure. For these parents, there's not a grave, so that's why the name on the wall is so important," said retired Army Brig. Gen. Steven R. Hawkins, director of the European region for the American Battle Monuments Commission.

Relishing a rarity

Of the three and a half years General Hawkins has spent working as the director for American cemeteries and battle grounds in Europe, he has only seen three other rosettes placed next to MIA servicemembers' names. Finding the remains of missing military members, especially from World Wars I and II, is rare.

And the story of how the Airmen with the McMurray Crew were found is even rarer.

Enrico Schwartz, a German native who works for an IBM company, has been part of the Allied Aircrew Research Team since 1998. During the past decade, he's helped recover the remains of American servicemembers, including the nine with the McMurray crew.

"The main part for me is giving closure," Mr. Schwartz said. "There's no closure when there are still open wounds."

It took four years of researching and interviewing witnesses to find the nine men's remains.

"It started as a favor, and when I learned how much impact this has, I carried on," Mr. Schwartz said.

From the years of personal time and expenses Mr. Schwartz spent, to the number of Belgians, Germans and other non-Americans present, it was clear these nine American Airmen had an impact beyond their graves.

"I'm glad I'm here today to pay respects to those who secured our freedom," said Rick Vissers, a Belgian native who works on infrastructure at the NATO Programming Centre. "Two words: Thank you."

Mr. Vissers spoke of the long-time friendship between Belgians and Americans that stems from their support for one another during the war.

"My town was a rest area in World War II – Americans needed ammunition and fuel and were invited by local the people to get inside," he said. "They became so close that after 60 years, they still know each other."

Ralf Klodt, a German photojournalist at the ceremony, echoed Mr. Visser's gratitude toward American troops, as the 78th infantry division liberated his hometown, Konigswinter, during World War II. Mr. Klodt said regardless of which side of the war people were on, it's important to remember the positive stories that still thrive today.

"It's about the human aspect of war; what have they experienced," he said. "It's the German side, the Allied side, the civilian side. It's important to keep it alive and to tell the right stories."

Fog of war

A thick fog and steady rain didn't deter the patriotic group of onlookers at the ceremony. A row of Belgian children waved small American flags as a group of older Belgian men clutched their full-sized Belgian flags. Also present were local mayors, and military representatives from Greece, Great Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Turkey and Slovakia.

Airmen from NATO headquarters in Brussels, NPC, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, Belgium; the U.S. Embassy; Aviano Air Base, Italy; Geilenkirchen AB, Germany; and Spangdahlem AB, Germany, were present for the ceremony.

Staff Sgt. Ralph Oliver, a NPC material manager, stood at parade rest next to a pedestal holding the rosettes during the entire ceremony.

"For me, it was an honor. This is one of the things I enjoy doing in the military," Sergeant Oliver said. "I'm glad and grateful to be honoring our fallen comrades. It was cold, but I think it was well worth it. I held my military bearing as much as I could."

The SHAPE International Band played "Ruffles and Flourishes" and other patriotic music, and the Spangdahlem AB honor guard gave a 21-gun salute to the fallen Airmen.

Capt. Apphia Fairhurst, deputy project leader for Network-interoperable Realtime Information Services and NPC Integrated Solaris Platform, read some of the Airmen's biographies during the ceremony, and said the event was a wake-up call for young military members.

"The biggest thing had been all of us are about 21 to 28 and that was the age of (the B-24 crew)," she said. "A lot of us took it a lot more seriously once we found out the ages of the people involved."

For each of the nine fallen Airmen, someone from their home state placed a rosette next to their names. Staff Sgt. Melissa Johnson, from the NPC customer service desk, placed a rosette next to

Staff Sgt. Walter Schlosser's name, as they both are from Michigan.

"Especially when you hear about personal stories, it's just unbelievable after this many years that they're finally being given the proper respect," Sergeant Johnson said.

Tech. Sgt. Tommy Van, a NPC computer programmer, was the NCO in charge of the event, and had his hands in the process since November 2008.

"The most rewarding thing for me has been getting in contact with the families and learning the history," he said. "It gives you a sense that these are real people. This really puts a name on a face with a personal impact."

Honoring Airmen

Air Force leaders at the ceremony reminded today's generation that we can never leave Airmen behind.

"I think it's an attribute that should stick with all our Airmen. No matter when, there's always people looking for those who are lost," said Maj. Gen. Thomas B. Wright, the SHAPE deputy chief of staff of operations.

General Wright was the keynote speaker at the ceremony, and during his speech, he referenced the Airman's creed and the significance it should hold for all Airmen, past and present.

The responsibility given to the members of the McMurray crew was astounding by today's standards, said Lt. Col. Cindi Deiana, a SHAPE special adviser for international affairs, as they were all younger than 30 and the highest ranking officers were first lieutenants.

"I think that the crew is an example of so many of the Army Air Corps that took an extraordinary request and made it common place," Colonel Deiana said. "It's amazing what we asked of Airmen in World War II. It was typical. We asked things of Airmen that are inconceivable today." (Courtesy of Air Force Print News)

Brig. Gen. Hertog to receive Order of the Sword



3/19/2009 - Brig. Gen. Mary Kay Hertog, Air Force Security Forces director, is surprised with the news that she will receive the Security Forces Order of the Sword. The Order of the Sword, the highest honor Air Force NCOs can bestow upon a leader, will be presented to the general during a ceremony April 29. (USAF photo by Robbin Cresswell)

A True Story from World War 2

This is a great true story of a World War II event. There can be honor among warriors.

Look carefully at the B-17 and note how shot up it is - one engine dead, tail, horizontal stabilizer and nose shot up. It was ready to fall out of the sky. Then realize that there is a German ME-109 fighter flying next to it. Now read the story below. I think you'll be surprised.....



Charlie Brown was a B-17 Flying Fortress pilot with the 379th Bomber Group at Kimbolton, England. His B-17 was called 'Ye Old Pub' and was in a terrible state, having been hit by flak and fighters. The compass was damaged and they were flying deeper over enemy territory instead of heading home to Kimbolton.

After flying over an enemy airfield, a German pilot named Franz Steigler was ordered to take off and shoot down the B-17. When he got near the B-17, he could not believe his eyes. In his words, he 'had never seen a plane in such a bad state'. The tail and rear section was severely damaged, and the tail gunner wounded. The top gunner was all over the top of the fuselage. The nose was smashed and there were holes everywhere.

Despite having ammunition, Franz flew to the side of the B-17 and looked at Charlie Brown, the pilot. Brown was scared and struggling to control his damaged and blood-stained plane. Aware that they had no idea where they were going, Franz waved at Charlie to turn 180 degrees. Franz escorted and guided the stricken plane to, and slightly over, the North Sea towards England. He then saluted Charlie Brown and turned away, back to Europe.

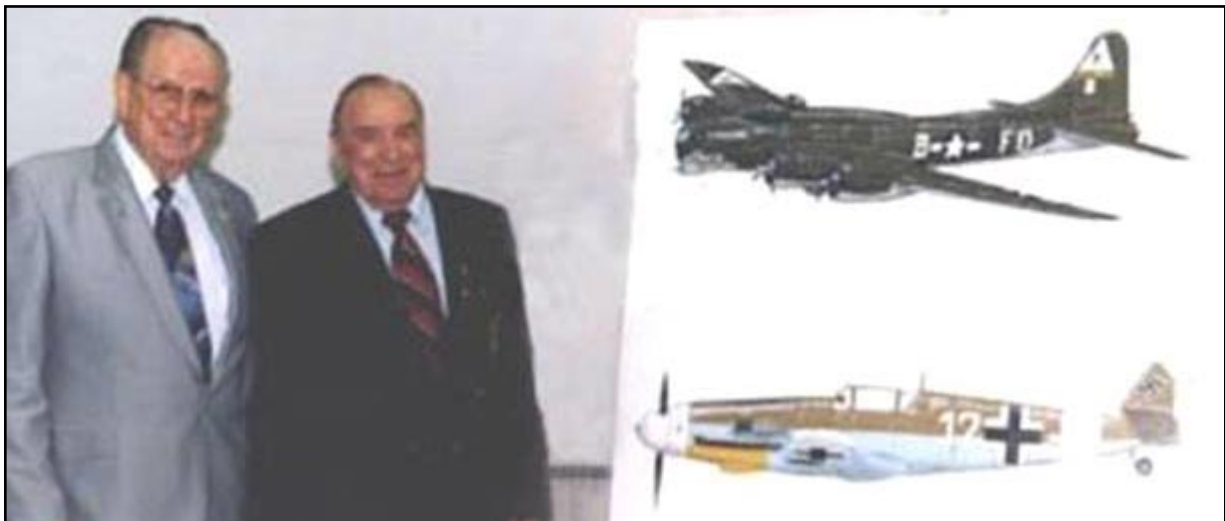
When Franz landed he told the CO that the plane had been shot down over the sea, and never told the truth to anybody. Charlie Brown and the remains of his crew told all at their briefing, but were ordered never to talk about it.

More than 40 years later, Charlie Brown wanted to find the Luftwaffe pilot who saved the crew. After years of research, Franz was found. He had never talked about the incident, not even at post-war reunions.

They met in the USA at a 379th Bomber Group reunion, together with 25 people who are alive now - all because Franz never fired his guns that day.



1033 Dexter
Clay Center, Ks 67432



Research shows that Charlie Brown lived in Seattle and Franz Steigler had moved to Vancouver, BC after the war. When they finally met, they discovered they had lived less than 200 miles apart for the past 50 years!

C-141 Tail Number 60177

C-141 Tail Number 60177 was the last of the 285 C-141's built by Lockheed to leave active service. She flew 100 POWs out of Hanoi on 12 February 1973, some of them tasting freedom for the first time in six years. Each POW put their shot-down date on the face of the oxygen panel during their flight to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. For her retirement ceremony, some of the POWs she brought home were brought back for the ceremony and one last flight by this gracious lady. Most of them are old men now but their enthusiasm, emotions, and excitement were evident during this flight and retirement ceremony. She was then flown to Dayton, Ohio where she will spend her final days in the Air Force Museum.