

Greetings, Fellow Veterans of the Geodetic Survey Squadron and Geodetic Survey Group!

And Happy Earth Day!

This seems an appropriate day for us to celebrate, as we are among the specialized folks who measured our planet so precisely. It's also a good occasion to contemplate what we can do as individuals to help keep our home planet safe for future generations.

I missed sending this out in time for Easter, but I hope yours was wonderful.

Fellow GSS Veteran, **Dick Massetti**, who served the Squadron at numerous times and locations as both a military and civilian surveyor between 1964-2001, wrote in to report that *everything he needed to know he learned from the Easter Bunny!* Among the gems passed on by the Easter Bunny:

- Don't put all your eggs in one basket.
- Everyone needs a friend who is all ears.
- All work and no play can make you a basket case.
- Let happy thoughts multiply like rabbits.
- Keep your paws off of other people's jelly beans.
- To show your true colors, you have to come out of your shell.

All good advice, no doubt---and something to tell the IRS, if you missed the April 15th filing deadline!

Another GSS Veteran Passes...

On a more solemn note, we received word from **Connie Musha** (Survey/Gravity/IPS; Orlando, 1959-62; FEW; 1975-77) on March 25th of the passing of one of the GSS originals, **Curtis E. Barfield**. Connie says:

“Hi Garrett: One of the original GSSer's and long time friend of mine, **Curtis Barfield** passed away on Monday 24 Mar 2014. He was with the Squadron at Orlando, 1959-62 and the Ellsworth, SD, Det.: 1963-64. He resided in Plymouth, NC, after retirement until His death. Connie Musha”

Regrettably, Curtis was not on my e-mail list nor ever provided his contact info. That makes it even more regrettable, because he was apparently one of the original members of the 1381st at Orlando in 1959. We have added his name to our list of deceased GSS veterans. His obituary is at this link:

http://www.maitlandfuneralhome.com/?menuitem=1020&siteid=108&action=1&value=12&obituaries_action=2&obituaryid=158465

About that 1967 Det 4 Photo

Last year **Harry Harris** (Survey, Gravity, Data Reduction, Special Projects, Inertial Positioning System; Detachments 1 and 4; 1961-89) sent us a neat photo, vintage 1967, of all the Det 4 folks together with then GSS Commander, **Martin Selinfreund**. That photo had several names missing or mis-identified, and many of you helped us to resolve who was in the photo. **Ron Nesti** (Survey, Det 3, 1964-68), our Webmaster, has updated the photo and Harry has improved the image. You may view it at: <http://www.1381st-gss.freesevers.com/PhotoHarris.html>. Marty, by the way, still remains off our rolls due to lack of response to our several requests to join his fellow GSS veterans.

There still remains one civilian in the photo (Raymond ---) without a last name, so if you are a 1967 veteran of Det 4, who can help us resolve this final mystery, please do so as soon as possible.

More on That Helicopter Crash in Germany

We have been trying to get more details on that helicopter crash in Germany that killed one GSS man and injured others in the early 1960s. We recently heard from **Jim Unfried** (Astro, Gravity, Data Reduction, Field Survey; Orlando, 1960-64) who had this to say:

“I know of another guy that was present in the helicopter accident in Germany. You may remember **Bob Colonnell** from St. Petersburg, Florida. He and I rode back and forth together on weekends at time since that was my home as well. He had some burns and nothing too severe. I last saw him in 1976 or '77 in the Tri-cities area of SE Tennessee. He was a College Prof. and Dean of Men at the local school there. I intend to take a trip in late summer, and if I can hold up long enough, will plan on hunting [John Allen] up. I have spells and get the vapors at times so I'm a bit limited on how long I can travel.”

Thanks, Jim. Hang in there **and please send Bob Colonell our way**, so we can add him to our roster.

What we know about this elusive event, so far, is that there remain lots of conflicting stories. My main concern is the lack of detailed knowledge on the deceased GSS veteran Williams, who died on duty. We have significant discrepancies on the date of the accident, somewhere between 1960 and 62, and the rank and first name of the deceased, Airman or Sgt for rank; Gary, Larry or Willie Williams for his name, and where he came from---Louisiana, Mississippi or California!

My friends, I am concerned that we have not properly honored Williams, who died while doing Squadron business. He is not currently on our deceased list, because we need to confirm his full name, so we can add him to our honor roll and let him rest in peace. If you knew Williams and can confirm his first name, rank, where he was buried and the actual date of the crash, please send me these details! Please

check your old orders for his name, especially if you were in Orlando between 1960-62!

An Amazing Story from the Multi-talented Mark 'Ty' Warner

Mark Warner (Doppler / IPS / Survey Reduction / Logistics, FEW, 1978-92) recently relayed a personal story about a 2007 incident from his past. In addition to being a GSS veteran, Mark also retains a long-standing interest in music and has his own band in Cheyenne, *Ty and the Twisters*. Here's the amazing story he revealed:

"One thing I have constantly pursued is my musical interest as a singer/songwriter, prior to my joining the AF, and continuing to this day. A couple of years ago, [Robin Munis] my beautiful singer, was murdered by a single rifle shot as we were playing in Cheyenne. [Because of this,] I was peripherally drawn into the cause of the awareness and prevention of domestic violence. I have attached the link to my website, which has the song I wrote about domestic violence, "Blink of an Eye." I am currently pushing this song in Nashville in the hopes someone will pick it up and promote it, donating the profits to local Safehouse Organizations. Please consider pushing this to our alumni, and see if they want to give it a listen."

The details of this horrendous story are reported here: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/2007/07/15/wyoming-woman-shot-and-killed-while-singing-in-bar/>

Mark was on stage next to Robin, when she was shot by her estranged husband, who later took his own life, as the lawmen closed in on his wilderness hideout. To hear Mark's song, go to <http://www.reverbnation.com/changeagents3> and click on "Blink of an Eye."

I promised Mark that we would invite him and his band to perform during our next reunion and 'pass the hat' in memory of Robin. Four children were orphaned by this tragedy.

Another AECP Officer Joins the List

In previous newsletters we highlighted the several GSS officers who earned their commissions via the Airman Education and Commissioning Program (AECP). This was a great program providing qualified enlisted staff the opportunity to earn a degree and a commission in career fields important to the Air Force mission. **Dick Winslow** (Stellar Camera, FEW, 1966-70) checked in recently and reported that he earned both his degree and commission via AECP. Says Dick:

"You can add me to the list of AECP personnel in the GSS. I was at...March AFB, CA when accepted into the AECP program. Studied Geodetic Science at The Ohio State University, graduating in Dec 1965. OTS first QTR 1966: DG. Arrived at 1381 GSS mid-April 1966, to be welcomed by an 8" snowfall - I was wondering what part of Siberia was I being stationed in, since I had always previously been a "Southern boy." Assigned to Stellar Camera Division under Lt

Col Selinfreund. I was TDY extensively during my time at the Squadron. Left the Squadron, and the service, March of 1970. - Dick Winslow”

Congratulations, Dick---ya done good!

Here's the current list of GSS officers who earned their degrees and commissions through the AECP: **Carlos Bush, Joel Cain, Bill Cramsie, Pete Day, J.K. Jerome, Billy Mayo, Al Pettit, Vik Pfeifer, Al Stewart, Del Walkenshaw, Ron Wells and Dick Winslow.**

Regrettably, **Joel Cain, Pete Day, Al Pettit and Vik Pfeifer** are on our deceased list. Of the remaining names, all are on our e-mail list and have sent in their contact information, except **Ron Wells**, for whom we have an e-mail address only.

If you too obtained your commission via AECP, please let us know---we want to brag about you!

Ron Wells, please send us your contact info, so we can add your name to our 'Hall of Fame' on the GSS website!

More War Stories...

We heard from **Karl Geibel** (Survey, Det 1 & FEW, 1972-76) recently who wanted to share an interesting and challenging project story from his time at Det 1, Vandenberg AFB. Says Karl [edited for brevity]:

“Back in the early Seventies, the Soviets had the habit of making each of their satellite types physically unique. Weather satellites might be round, for example, while spy satellites might have a boxy shape with antennae. The Shadow Imaging Program was somebody's brilliant idea of cataloging all the Soviet satellites by photographing their shadows as they eclipsed a star. Yes, taking the photo of a moving satellite while it flashed by a STAR! You had to be in EXACTLY the right place at EXACTLY the right time (down to 0.001 second, plus or minus 0.0006 second). It was our job to put the cameras in the right place by surveying their center point and a line 90 degrees from the path of the satellite. Perkin-Elmer Co. (of Hubble telescope fame) provided the hardware...Surveying in the afternoon in June on Rogers Dry Lake at Edwards wasn't easy. Five to ten mile lines-of-sight between each pair of trig stations on the Mojave Desert in the summer “ain't no piece of cake”. We couldn't even make out the other end of the line most of the time. But in six weeks we were told they actually had three successful events. Amazing!

“One thing I do remember from the early Seventies: my first FAX machine. Det 1 sent copies of the computations to FEW to be checked, and they did this by FAX. But back then, each page took SIX MINUTES [to transmit]. The page to be sent was wrapped around a cylinder and sent to spinning. The number at FEW was dialed, the handset placed into a receiver on the FAX machine, and the FAX started. On the other end, the technician at FEW inserted a heat sensitive sheet into his corresponding FAX machine, and while both machines turned, a stylus

would burn the copy into the chemically-treated paper...the stylus worked its way from top to bottom of the cylinder just like the old record players when the records were cylinders.”

Karl goes on to lament:

“I was one of the junior guys on most of my projects. ***I wish the senior guys would speak up.*** (Some from the Sixties have, but not many from the Seventies.) They could tell many stories with much more detail than us junior grunts, who were just there to turn angles or take notes. We never did any of the planning, and were therefore kept essentially ignorant of the “whys and wherefores.”

So how about it, senior NCOs and officers from Det 1 and other locations! Share your thoughts and insights with the rest of us on those most interesting projects!

Another Proposed Story: Missile Badges

We recently featured stories about our veterans who worked in Antarctica or above the Arctic Circle, the origin and evolution of the detachments, deployments of the IPS and other interesting projects. Now **Jim Porterfield** (Survey, Orlando & Det 5, 1960-64) has suggested another story to tell---the origins and evolution of the Missile Badge and how the GSS got to wear them. Says Jim:

“It occurred to me... that for many who follow your site, an article about the origination and subsequent history of the “pocket rocket” medal or insignia would be interesting and informative. It would take a dedicated individual to do this. I still have my original pocket rocket somewhere. I have put cloth pocket rockets on some of my competitive dog shirts, because I had a rocket of a little dog.
Cordially,
Jim Porterfield”

Great idea! Many of us got to wear those “pocket rockets” on our uniforms, and no doubt someone in the early days of the Squadron went through considerable effort to enable our early GSS veterans to be awarded the Missile Badge for all our work on all the various missile site surveys and the long-running annual check surveys. Here are some general links on the history and evolution of the pocket rocket that I found:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missile_Badge

http://usafflagranks.com/usaf_obsolete_insignia.html

<http://www.afmissileers.org/newsletters/NL2012/Jun12.pdf>

This last link has an interesting note from GSS veteran, **Rick Rogers** (Survey & Sat Tri, FEW 1972-77; Det 4, 1977-79) on page 16.

It would be great to hear from some of the original Orlando crew to find out who succeeded in getting authorization for Squadron members to wear the Missile Badge.

More on Barton Borrasca

In the previous newsletter **Jim Blackburn** (Survey, FEW, 1969-70 & 1972-75; Det 3 Commander, 1970-72) wondered about **Barton A. Borrasca**, a young lieutenant who served in the Squadron in the late 1960s in Cheyenne. His name is on our deceased list and has been there for a long time. Jim inquires:

“One thing I've always wondered about. I know that Lt Bart Borrasca is on the deceased list, but I have always wondered what happened. Anyone out there know the reason or circumstances?

Jim Blackburn”

Thanks to some fine detective work by **Bruce Porter** (Survey, Astro, Data Reduction; FEW; 1969-78 & White Sands; 1982-2000) and **Evan Becker** (Gravity, FEW, 1968-73), we have some answers.

After his service in the Air Force, Bart went on to an intelligence career in Washington. His name popped up in the book, *Spy: The Inside Story of How the FBI's Robert Hanssen Betrayed America* by David Wise, that mentions Bart as somehow linked to the infamous FBI mole, Robert Hanssen. According to the book, Borrasca was a CIA expert on Pakistan during the Clinton Administration. The book also mentions that Borrasca was from the Buffalo, NY, area, which matches our Bart's hometown. Very intriguing! Here's the

link: http://books.google.com/books?id=rWqgln8SahsC&pg=PT221&lpg=PT221&dq=Spy:+The+Inside+Story+of+How+the+FBI's+Robert+Hanssen+Betrayed+America.+%2B+Barton+Borrasca&source=bl&ots=V0YZJlwX9R&sig=F_YrJCYjGG9UBvs8qoc5DBnWFE0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=PJM1U4HQDsG_sQSWi4KgDQ&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=Spy%3A%20The%20Inside%20Story%20of%20How%20the%20FBI's%20Robert%20Hanssen%20Betrayed%20America.%20%2B%20Barton%20Borrasca&f=false

Bart apparently died of cancer at age 49 and is buried not too far from me in Alexandria, VA.

Correction to the Ted Vogely/Bob Dodson Story

Last time, **Bill Carter** (Astro, Orlando, 1961-63 and FEW, 1965-67) sent us two updates on the Vogely/Dodson families, but I made an error in relaying his corrected message. Says Bill:

“I sent a correction to the Dodson information, but I guess it got overlooked. Suzanne was actually Bob Dodson's daughter - not Ted's.”

Sorry about the mix-up.

Correction to the Bobby Bishop Story

Last time, I mentioned that the late **Bobby O. Bishop** (Survey, Orlando & FEW, 1964-69) lucked into an exotic job with Northrop Nortronics in Massachusetts. Bobby was my first team chief, and one of my first TDYs out of Cheyenne was to accompany him on the original Northrop Nortronics survey in August 1967 near Boston with a large team of several others, including an Astro Team. I mistakenly identified the Astro Team Chief as **Frank Church**, and was delighted to hear from **Patrick 'Pat' Church** (NCOIC, Astro,

Orlando & FEW, 1964-68), who provided me with the *correct* name of the Astro Team Chief. Says Pat:

“Hi, The Astro party chief with Bobby Bishop in MA was **Patrick** not Frank Church. I enjoy your newsletters. Most of the guys I knew or worked with are on, shall we say, the *other* list. I'm 84 and going at about 40%.
Thanks, Pat Church”

Hang in there, Pat---we're pulling for you!

Pat has now sent us his full contact info and we are pleased to add his name to our Hall of Fame online.

He also provided the name of the third astro team member, besides himself and **Bob Holtman**, who accompanied us on that interesting TDY, where we brought geodetic and astronomic control *inside* the factory to help align and test gyros for Air Force missile navigation systems. The other astro observer was **Bob Ferland**, who grew up in Wrentham, MA, just around the corner from Nortronics! Says Pat:

“The other [member besides Bob Holtman] must have been Bob Ferland. We, the astro team, stayed at his parents' place in the basement.”

Unfortunately, we have no contact information on either Robert S. “Bob” Holtman (home town: Hackensack, NJ) or Robert “Bob” Ferland (home town: Wrentham, MA), so if you know their whereabouts, please send them our way.

Have You Sent Me Your Contact Information?

This is yet another gentle reminder to send me your contact information (or updates) using the format below, if you have not done so already. Just reply to this newsletter or send me a separate e-mail with your:

NAME:

ADDRESS: (Include street or mailbox #, city, state and zip code)

PHONE:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

MILITARY or CIVILIAN: (Answer “both” if you served the unit in both capacities)

HIGHEST RANK or POSITION in GSS/GSG:

START/END DATES OF SERVICE IN GSS/GSG: (Multiple entries, if you had more than one assignment)

ORGs: (i.e., where you worked: Admin, Astro, Computing, Data Reduction, Detachment #, Gravity, Logistics, Operations, Orderly Room, Sat Tri, Stellar Camera, Survey, etc.)

OTHER: (Whatever else you want to share here about your time in the Squadron or since then.)

If you have been holding back due to privacy concerns, remember that a user name and password protects your contact information, so only other Squadron veterans with user names and passwords will see it. **Ron Nesti** (Det 3, Grand Forks AFB, 1964-68), our Webmaster, will contact you with your user name and password when he loads your info on our GSS/GSG website.

Meanwhile, check out Ron's great website at <http://www.1381st-gss.freesevers.com/index.html>. The homepage tells you what's new and there's also an archive of old newsletters. If your name is on the online roster, log in to check your own profile and see if it's still current. If not, send me your updates.

If you have forgotten your user name or password, contact Ron (ron.nesti@q.com) to send you a reminder or to reset it for you.

If you have not sent yours yet, or if you have updates to your locator information, please send me your current contact information by reply right after you read this newsletter!

Latest Updates to Our Online Roster

In each newsletter I ask for folks to send me their contact info or updates, and each newsletter generates a few more responses. Here are the latest:

Pat Church (mentioned above) sent us his full contact information, so he is now added to our online roster.

Ivan Smith (Admin, FEW, 1989-93) also sent us his contact information, and we have added his name to our online roster. Ivan lists these GSS veterans as people he worked with between 1989-93: the late **Vik Pfeifer**, the late **Hugh Buteau**, **John Rees**, and **Gus Guliuzza**. Ivan is still working with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) in the Human Development Directorate (HD). HD is responsible for recruiting, retaining, and training a high-caliber GEOINT workforce.

Welcome to these newly added veterans!

Final Notes

We are pleased to report that winter is now a distant memory here in the DC region. The cherry blossoms have come and gone, and the trees are leafing out. Our lawn is ready for its third mowing!

My recovery from recent health issues continues, albeit at a much slower pace than I had hoped---but at least it is *improving* and not going the other way!

From Bonnie and me to all of you, Happy Earth Day!

Garrett
Field Survey & Astro
GSS/Cheyenne
April 1967 - May 1970 and January - December 1972

Nothing makes the Earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance—they make the latitudes and longitudes.

--Henry David Thoreau, Surveyor & Philosopher