

Geodetic Survey Squadron/Group, Newsletter #43, 31 March 2015,  
Distribution 8

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

Welcome to Spring---and watch out for April Fool pranks!

Bonnie & I raced out on 4 March a day ahead of a big snowstorm that threatened to ruin our planned trip to the Panama Canal. We got to sunny Ft Lauderdale just in time to learn that we had been wise to leave early---we got 8 inches of fresh snow, and air traffic at Dulles was snarled on the day we were supposed to leave. We smiled smugly as we smeared on our suntan lotion!

Our trip to the Canal via a few other stops in the southern and western Caribbean was wonderful. To prepare for the journey, I also read the excellent book by David McCullough, *The Path Between the Seas*, (available at Amazon here: <http://www.amazon.com/The-Path-Between-Seas-1870-1914-ebook/dp/B002FK3U4Q>). It's a weighty tome of some 700 pages describing the history of the effort to build a canal across the isthmus, very detailed, highly referenced and annotated, and about as complete a reading on this engineering marvel as you will ever read. Highly recommended. Here are a few things I learned that surprised me and may surprise you too:

- At a tremendous cost in lives and treasure, the French made an attempt to build a sea-level canal in Panama between 1879 and 1889. It was a 10-year effort inspired and led by Ferdinand de Lesseps, the man who had successfully built the Suez Canal earlier. The attempt at Panama failed miserably---reputations and great fortunes were lost.
- Presidents as far back as Jefferson discussed the idea of a canal across the isthmus, and after the Civil War, President U.S. Grant actually sent seven survey expeditions to complete detailed topographic surveys of alternative canal routes through lower Central America between 1870-75. The consensus was that Nicaragua was the best place to build a canal.
- A decade following the French failure in Panama, the US still planned to go ahead in Nicaragua---until we acquired the French rights in Panama cheaply at the last minute.
- President Teddy Roosevelt maneuvered through some high-stakes international intrigue to snatch the territory from the Colombians, who owned it, by sponsoring a revolution, recognizing the newly independent state of Panama, and using US gunboats to prevent the Columbians from doing anything about it.

The Canal was a marvel in its time and still works flawlessly today exactly as planned more than 100 years later. In 1999 the US turned over its former assets and the operation of the Canal to the Panamanians, who, despite doom & gloom naysayers at the time the treaty was signed, are managing the Canal quite well. They have already built an expansion of the canals, which will open to ship traffic next year. The expansion will accommodate today's larger container ships, some of which are over a quarter of a mile long.

Much like the building of the first US transcontinental railroad, and the later large-scale efforts to build the A-Bomb and the Apollo-to-the-Moon programs, the engineering achievement of building the canal was unprecedented in the history of the world. It drove the state of the art for managing huge construction projects, including the challenges of building in the inhospitable tropical jungle, the design and manufacture of massive new tools to excavate the channel, to dig through the continental divide at Culebra, and to build the huge canal locks and mechanisms. Building the Panama Canal also spun off a cure for yellow fever and the control of malaria, which had killed upwards of 20,000 workers during the unsuccessful French effort.

But enough of this historic aside, and on with the news...

### ***Another Shocking Loss...***

We were saddened to learn of the death of another of our friends and colleagues, Lt Col **Edwin "Fritz" Friehauf**. Fritz passed away on 9 March. He had a long association with the Squadron throughout his career, almost from its very beginnings in Orlando. Over his 26 years of service, he had served at various times as commander of three detachments---Det 6, Det 2 and Det 3---as Squadron XO, and ultimately, as Squadron Commander in Cheyenne, 1982-86, until he retired. He and wife Fran retired in Cheyenne, owned and operated a custom framing and art shop for 21 years, and attended every reunion since 2003. He was an avid baseball fan and tried out for major-league play after college. View his obituary here: [http://www.wyomingnews.com/articles/2015/03/19/obituaries/10obit\\_03-19-15.txt#.VQwoB0sVxZh](http://www.wyomingnews.com/articles/2015/03/19/obituaries/10obit_03-19-15.txt#.VQwoB0sVxZh)

Donations may be made to the Davis Hospice Center, 6000 Sycamore, Cheyenne, WY 82009, or to the Fritz Friehauf Memorial Fund to benefit the Cheyenne Post 6 Baseball Program, c/o Frances Friehauf, 6230 Kemp Hill Drive, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009. Condolences may be offered to the family on-line by going to [www.schradercares.com](http://www.schradercares.com).

Our Webmaster has already added Fritz's name to our online roster of deceased GSS/GSG veterans.

### **Commemorative Coin Well Underway**

The Northwest Territorial Mint sent me the final edit of the artwork for our commemorative coin, after I had already left the country. As I was unable to receive or send e-mail on the high seas, I did not have a chance to review it until returning. All was as specified, so I gave the go-ahead for production on 17 March. The coins should be ready for distribution in four weeks from that date, around mid-to-late April.

Now that the revised artwork is final, our Webmaster has taken down the four draft images on our website and replaced them with the image of our production coin, so you can see the winning design in all its detail.

Some of you have jumped the gun and requested your coins already. However, I will not be taking any orders until I receive the coins next month and I'm satisfied that they meet our collective expectations. At that time our website will also have instructions on how to order and pay for your coins, including shipping and handling. I will also provide ordering instructions beginning later next month with the April newsletter, and all future newsletters, until the coins are sold out.

**NOTE:** When the coins become available, I plan to distribute all of them by mail order only. The coins will not be available for sale or pick-up during the reunion.

### **More On Reunion 2015, 31 July – 2 August 2015**

Lead reunion volunteer, **Merilou Miller** (Operations, FEW, 1969-77; Admin, 1980-88) has no updates for the reunion. Everything is already set up with Holiday Inn, so you should firm up your plans and make your reservations. Meanwhile, **Mark "Ty" Warner** (Doppler/IPS/Survey Reduction/Logistics, FEW, 1978-92) has this report on Saturday afternoon activities following our group lunch at the Holiday Inn:

"Garrett, [the trip to the FEW Heritage] Museum is a go; still working  
Missile Procedure Trainers (MPT) tour, but should be ok!"

**NOTE:** The MPT is simulator training for Minuteman missile officers, so we will not be going "into the hole" of an actual Minuteman site.

The committee is now working on getting the word out about the reunion to veteran-oriented magazines and the local Cheyenne news media. We also need to notify about 100 of our GSS/GSG veterans about the reunion, who do not have e-mail. Unfortunately, this latter job is a tedious snail-mail

process and will take some extra volunteer effort. **Anita Rakestraw** (Orderly Room, Personnel Office, FEW, 1978-87) has already signed up to take on that task, and I owe the committee an updated mailing list, which I will send out very soon.

**What You Should Do to Register for the Reunion**

With the hotel and menu details now settled, there are two separate actions for each of you to take, if you plan to attend the reunion.

First, make your hotel reservations directly with Holiday Inn in Cheyenne anytime between now and 24 July---the sooner the better! [Call Holiday Inn directly at 307-638-4466 to book your room, and be sure to ask for the discounted room rate \(\\$89\) for the Geodetic Survey reunion.](tel:307-638-4466)

Second, reserve your selected meals and activities and pay volunteer, Liz Starr (Budget Office, FEW, 1980-93), for them by check. (Cost for each meal activity is shown below.) Send Liz a note identifying your selected meals, how many of each (if you are bringing one or more guests), and include payment with a check for the total amount.

**Send your meal reservations and payment (by check only) to:**

**Liz Starr  
P. O. Box 21276  
Cheyenne, WY 82003**

Please reserve your room and meals well in advance of the reunion (no later than 10 July) so that the planning committee and the hotel have an accurate count of how many attendees to expect and how many meals to prepare. [Pay Liz for meals, not the hotel! Pay by check only!](#) Liz will settle with the hotel at the end of the reunion. ***If you try to pay at the door during the reunion, you may be out of luck or there may be a hefty surcharge!***

Here's a repeat summary of the reunion information:

- Holiday Inn has blocked rooms for July 31 through Aug 2 at the special rate of \$89 per night plus tax. (It may be possible to get the same special rate if you plan to arrive a day or two early or stay a day or two later—just ask when you make your reservation.)
- Please note that the registration deadline for special pricing ends 24 July 2015. After that, regular room rates apply.
- Agenda (so far):
  - o Friday - July 31: Meet and Greet from 5pm until about midnight (cash bar), free snacks provided by Holiday Inn. (Room location to be announced

later.)

- o Saturday - Aug 1: Buffet lunch from 11 am until 2 pm - \$21 per person, including tax and tip. (Room location to be announced later.) Ty and the Twisters perform during lunch; afternoon tours on your own or the special group tours at FEW.
- o Saturday Evening - Aug 1: Wine and Cheese Social - \$5 per person, the Rawhide Room hospitality suite. (Time to be announced later.) We also request that those attending bring a bottle of wine or other favorite beverage. The reunion committee will provide snacks, cheese, fruit, etc.
- o Sunday - Aug 2: Breakfast Buffet from 10 am until 1 pm - \$16 per person, including tax and tip. (Room location to be announced later.) Recognition and awards to be presented.

· Lunch menu on Saturday, Aug 1, 2015 - 11:00 am

Mixed garden salad with assorted dressings

Penne Chicken Alfredo

London Broil with Mushroom Demi Glaze

Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Mixed Seasonal Vegetables

Dinner Rolls

Assorted Dessert Bar

Beverages: Coffee, Ice Tea, Lemonade and Water

· Breakfast Buffet, Sunday, August 2, 2015 - 10:00 am

Fresh Seasonal Fruit Display with Cinnamon Yogurt

Assortment of Muffins, Breads and Pastries

Freshly Scrambled Eggs

Hickory Smoked Bacon and Sage Sausage

Home Fried Potatoes

Buttermilk Biscuits & Country Gravy

Orange, Apple & Cranberry Juice

Fresh Brewed Coffee

Assortment of Hot Herbal Teas

***NOTE: In the past, Holiday Inn has accommodated the special dietary needs of our veterans. If you are a vegan or vegetarian, have allergies or other special dietary needs, be sure to make that known to the kitchen ahead of time. There will be no difference in the pricing for special meals.***

It's looking promising for special tours of the FEW Heritage Museum and possibly the Minutemen training facility on Saturday afternoon, but if you plan to take in the local delights Saturday afternoon on your own or with

small groups of old friends, you can get a good idea of some options here: <http://www.cheyenne.org/things-to-do/>.

### ***Entertainment During Saturday Lunch***

Unfortunately, the Rawhide Room for the wine and cheese social is too small to accommodate Ty and his band on Saturday night, so Ty and the Twisters will play a short set during the Saturday luncheon. We plan to 'pass the hat' during this event to help support Ty's efforts to combat domestic violence. His band's lead female singer, Robin Munis, was shot to death on stage by her estranged husband in July 2007, while Ty and the band were standing right next to her during a performance in Cheyenne. As the police later closed in on her husband, he also took his own life, leaving four orphans. Ty has been working to combat domestic violence ever since that tragic event.

### ***For Campers and RVers***

For those of you coming to the reunion by camper or recreational vehicle (RV) or otherwise planning not to stay at the Holiday Inn, here is some information about campgrounds in the vicinity:

- Crow Creek Fam Camp on FEW - 307-773-3874  
<http://www.rvparkreviews.com/regions/wyoming/f-e-warren-afb/crow-creek-famcamp-military-camping-only>
- Terry Bison Ranch, south on I-25 - 307-634-4171  
<http://www.rvreview.net/rvparks/terry-bison-ranch.html>
- Restway Travel Park, east on Hwy 30 (4212 Whitney Road) - 800-443-2751  
<http://restwaytravelpark.weebly.com>

The Crow Creek Fam Camp and Terry Bison Ranch are the closest to the Holiday Inn.

Here's another link that lists and rates campgrounds in the Cheyenne vicinity:

<http://www.rvparkreviews.com/regions/wyoming/cheyenne>

### ***New Book on Minuteman Missile to Feature GSS Mission***

GSS veteran **Rick Rogers** (Survey & Sat Tri, FEW & Det 4, 1972-79) is currently volunteering as a docent at the Titan Missile Museum in Sahuarita, Arizona, near Tucson. There, he met **David K. Stumpf**, author of [TITAN II: A History of a Cold War Missile Program](#) and [Regulus](#):

[America's First Nuclear Submarine Missile](#). (Both available at Amazon.)

See a fact sheet on David

here: <http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=21598>

Rick discussed with David the important role that the Squadron played in establishing the geodetic, astronomic and gravitational control at each missile site, and David felt that he had short-changed us in his previous work on the Titan story. He plans to do another book on the Minuteman and wants to devote several pages (Rick suggested a chapter!) to describing exactly what The Squadron did. In fact, David plans to come to our reunion and would like to hit you up for technical details, personal recollections, anecdotes and human interest stories associated with your experience as geodetic surveyors at the Minuteman sites. He says he will even spring for a round of drinks to loosen your tongues! This should be fun and you may get an acknowledgement in his next book!

### **New Facebook Page for GSS/GSG**

Our new Webmaster, **Richard Winslow** (Stellar Camera, FEW, 1966-70) has established a presence on Facebook for the Squadron/Group veterans. Dick says you'll find our new page by entering "1381 Geodetic Survey Squadron" in the Facebook search line, and he notes that it may work with just the numbers 1381. If you are already on Facebook, look for it and "Like" us and "Friend" us! We are hoping that using other contemporary social media will help us draw in more of our missing Squadron/Group veterans. [Our thanks to Richard for this new and valuable service to our GSS/GSG veterans!](#)

### **See Me on Facebook, Too!**

*I got so excited about our new Facebook page that I finally bit the bullet and joined Facebook myself! After military service, I worked for another 20 years as a contractor on highly classified, special-access systems supporting the Defense-Intell community. The disk readers and inputs on our computers were locked---no outside disks or input devices were allowed in or out of the building--- and it was easy to become paranoid about security. Thus, my aversion to social media, where secrets can go viral and identities stolen, if you are not careful. I'm over it now, so if you are on Facebook, you may 'friend' me and 'like' or comment on my postings, photos and other info.*

### **Send Me Your Contact Information**

**Take a look at our website here: <http://www.1381st-gss.freesevers.com/index.html>.**

***If you don't see your name on the homepage roster, you have not sent me your contact information!***

Please send me your contact information (or updates to your existing profile) using the format below.

It's easy---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: (List multiple entries, if you had more than one assignment)

BASE ASSIGNED TO: (Orlando, FEW, or Detachment location and dates)

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT: (i.e., where you worked: Admin, Astro, Computing, Data Reduction, Gravity, IPS, 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.)

You will receive a user name and password to protect your information, so only other Squadron veterans with user names and passwords will be able to see it. Our Webmaster, will contact you with your user name and password when he loads your info onto our GSS/GSG website.

Meanwhile, check out our website at <http://www.1381st-gss.freeservers.com/index.html>.

The homepage tells you what's new, what's coming, the list of all who have sent us their contact information, and links to the list of our deceased veterans, photos submitted by our members and lots of other useful information, including links to "kindred organizations," such as the AF Photomapping Association, the Defense Mapping School Faculty/Staff Alumni, and the NGA Alumni Associations, East and West. There's also an archive of old newsletters in case you missed any.

***If your name is already on our online roster, please log in to check your own profile and see if it's still current. If not, please send me your updates!***

***New Additions/Updates to the Roster***



We have only one new name to add to the roster this time.

**Michael Dzekunskas** (Stellar Camera, FEW, 1966-69) found us online and asked to join the group.

You may view the contact information of all our former colleagues listed on our home page---IF you have a user name and password, yourself. If you don't, it means you haven't sent me your contact information yet---or you forgot your username and password. If you forgot yours, contact **Dick Winslow**, our new Webmaster, to send you a reminder or to reset it for you. You may reach him at [diskwy@gmail.com](mailto:diskwy@gmail.com) .

***Final Notes:***

Our new commemorative coins should be ready 2-3 weeks from now in mid-to-late April. I'll be back with another newsletter in late April containing more reunion news, details on how to order your coins, and updates on your old friends and colleagues.

***Looking forward to seeing you all in Cheyenne this summer!***

***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.***