

Feature Article

COMMANDER'S RECALL

Background: In light of the ongoing process that is AFTAC, a desire to record the impressions of this "from the top" and the notion we are entering a new millenium, we asked previous AFTAC commanders (for whom we had addresses) to give us a synopsis of their time with the command. We received positive responses from almost every commander to include Gen's Silliman, Gordon, Clapper, O'Lear, Bingham and Shaffer and Col's Meisenheimer, Wigington, Beatty and Dettmer. We thank these gentlemen for taking the time and effort to share their enlightening remembrances with us. We feature replies (one an issue) in the chronological order of their time of command - reCalls in previous issues, Gen (Ret) Silliman, Gen (Ret) Gordon, Col (Ret) Meisenheimer, Gen's (Ret) Clapper, O'Lear and Bingham, Gen Shaffer and Col (Ret) Wigington ...

We have respectfully requested inputs from AFTAC's two most recent Commanders, Col's Beatty and Dettmer. We feel confident they will reply as they find the opportunity in their busy active-duty lives.

We look forward to being able to pass on their 'Commander's reCall' ...

I Remember...

AFTAC History by those who were there

PREPARED FROM YOUR INPUTS We solicit your **unclassified** remembrances of highlights in your AFTAC career (events, people, etc.). Forward these memories to us at 'chrisjohn@juno.com' or ATTN Remembrances column, to the Alumni Address (see left column, page 2) - we will publish them as soon as we can. Thanks for your help.

Yanks And The Law

GEORGE (PORKY) KRAUS

It was really **Mo Walsh's** fault. He made the claim that he had changed the records in the field and made it back to town to analyze them in "X", minutes. I don't remember what that time was, but from then on we were all obligated to try to beat his time.

For you younger hands, changing the 35mm film records on the old 1301 Benioff film recorders involved replacing 8 filmstrips (4 on each recorder), processing the film, drying them and scribing the strips. Of course, they had to be dried before scribing and analysis. At Det 421 we also had to drive 10 miles to town before analyzing the records. Many different procedures were used to speed up the dying process but the weirdest of all was **Bill Alexander's** using the generator fan's output. Of course, he stopped using that when some of the records got caught in the fan blades and he had to use some of his time in taping the record together. Fortunately no data were lost.

My problem came as I was leaving the site at a higher than recommended speed for the trail we

had made from the site to the "strategic highway" (the 1943 road constructed by the US Corps of Engineers). I hit a rock and blew out one of the headlights. I didn't think anything of it until I reached town and was stopped by Sgt. Francis **James Fay** of the Alice Springs constabulary. I explained that this had just happened and I hadn't had time to replace it. He sent me on my way and I thought no more of it. The next night **Bill Alexander** was also stopped by the notorious Sgt. Fay. Old Bill explained that we didn't have a replacement lamp in our stock but that it should be received soon and we would replace it as soon as possible. There were no crossover lamps available in Alice at the time. Again, Bill was sent on his way and he thought nothing of it.

About 2 weeks later, a constable arrived at our office door and presented "A Summons to a Person on Complaint" for both Bill and I. We were to appear in court because we "did drive a motor vehicle, to wit, U.S.A.F. weapons carrier on a public street, between the hours of sunset and sunrise, to wit, 11:15 PM, without having attached on the opposite sides of the front of the vehicle, two lighted lamps to show a bright white light in front of the vehicle. Contrary to Section 38(1)(a) of the Traffic Ordinance 1949/53." **Jake (Major Lester Jackson)** said not to worry. He'd take care of it - but on the day of the "trial" he said the Aussie's leave it up to their troops to handle traffic violations and that we'd have to do it also but that he'd send **Da Loot (Lt. Clentis Bailey)** to speak for us.

When we got to court, there was the Justice of the Peace in his robe and the little wig that they wear and Bill and I were a little nervous. We got real nervous when he said that the maximum punishment could be a 300-pound fine or six months in prison or both. It was at that time that **Da Loot** stood up and requested to speak for us. Permission was granted to do so and he proceeded to lay on a story in that southern drawl that even Bill and I didn't know that he was talking about us and our important contribution to the fight against evil in the world. He went on for a few minutes and I swear that he had that Justice close to tears, probably from laughing at the tale being told. Anyway, it was effective and we were dismissed by paying 15 shillings, court costs. Thanks **Loot**.

Now for **Mo Walsh**, I suspect that the time he claimed was tainted. I think he took his best time and shaved a minute or two off of it.

Porky, great story, and you have jogged my cells also. When I can I will relate my 'film' tale, and you 'B' guys ... give us some of your stories of the 'recorder' days.

Feature Article

A BS (Barely Substantiated) Tale!

PREPARED FROM YOUR INPUTS. We solicit unclassified humorous tales about AFTAC events and people - recognizing these anecdotes may be Barely Substantiated (BS). Forward your BS to us at 'chrisjohn@juno.com' or ATTN BS column, to the Alumni Address (see left column, page 2) - we will publish them as soon as we can. T

Frank & Nedra Check In

FRANK & NEDRA SZACHTA, 3/24

As an AFIT (college student) in the USAF Program at Univ. of New Hampshire in 62-64, some of us were selected to attend the MSEE Program on completion of the BSEE Program. My friend Raoul **Barker** (we were all Captains) was a Regular Officer, and he was selected, and we all expected it. Since I was a Reserve Officer I did not expect to get selected to stay on for the MSEE since my IOU time to the USAF (you must serve 3 years active duty for each year of schooling attended) would put me beyond 20 years active duty time. Since reservists are usually outed at 20 years service, ergo, I did not expect to go for the higher degree. Lo and behold, the Pentagon computer must have been asleep, as I was selected to continue.

A year later my "Regular" Officer buddy Raoul Barker gets a postcard notification that he is selected to attend a special school at Lowery AFB, for some 'mysterious' outfit in Virginia, near Washington. He visited the Generals office at HQ and was impressed, but couldn't tell any of us about this 'extraordinary' outfit, except that his assignment was to a remote detachment overseas. We felt sorry for him, but tried to cheer him up by telling him of the promotion opportunities in such a high class outfit, that this one sounded like.

A few weeks later, as I returned from a cross country flight (I was an instructor pilot supporting SAC during my college days near Pease AFB, NH) my wife had placed a sign on our home window saying "California Here We Come." I had gotten a post card from the same outfit (AFTAC) and was being assigned directly to their West Coast Technical Facility as an Electronics Officer to help a Capt. **Manning** Test a "J" System (whatever that was).

From that day on, I could in no way satisfy my friend Capt. Barker that he was getting the better deal than I was. Since I was a "Reserve" Officer, and he was a Regular, there was no explanation that could satisfy anyone, for this selection scheme we were getting.

Frank and Nedra go on and add:

There are many more BS tales where this one

comes from. George **Thompson** and I remember some of these, since in addition to my "technical" duties, I am a lover of flying and aviation, and my "side" duties of working with the "A" and "F" Troops were many. My flying as an instructor pilot, and having to give my superiors their annual check flights almost cost me a promotion to Major. A fine Commander by the name of Col. Lyle "Mike" **McMichael** saw to it that this injustice did not come to pass. I almost kissed his shoes, after reviewing my OER at Personnel HQ.

Anyway, that's enough BS for one item. With that AFTAC Assignment to McClellan AFB and the 1155th TOS, I later served at the 1159th TOS at McChord AFB, WA, to round out my 20 year career in the USAF. I never met a more qualified and sharper group of people in the USAF, than I did that last 5 years of my AF career. The mission was "adventure" and challenge all rolled up into one. A super outfit in all ways. There are mucho more BS tales, where that one came from. In the start-up phase of my memoirs at this time, the title that comes to mind is "If there is a luckier man out there, I haven't met him yet". PS: Our E-mail "handle" comes from our avocations: I fly and wife Nedra sews, and we both do OK at it, thus email to: flysewgood@earthling.net, I usually sign off with..... Fly Safe with Best Wishes. Frank & Nedra

Thank you Frank and Nedra and we hope you will send us many more BStories

Where are ya?!!!

PREPARED FROM YOUR INPUTS. Where we attempt to get you, the alumni reader, to let us know "where ya are" and "what'cha been doin" - Forward these updates to us at 'chrisjohn@juno.com' or ATTN Updates column to the Alumni Address (see left column, page 2) - we will publish them as soon as we can. Thanks for your help.

No Input Received

