



TAC MISSILEERS

NEWSLETTER

Volume 6 Number 2 2

“Serving the mace and matador missile crews and support

Summer 2004

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Our Story Continued

By **Mike Sweeney**

I use the word “Our” because my wife and I put in the 20 years and we went through the good and bad times together. I left off with leaving Bitburg in 1960. When we returned to Orlando in 1960 I was asked if I wanted to go to factory school on the MACE missile. Of course I did. We kept our household goods in storage and moved on to the Martin Company in Baltimore Maryland. We found a trailer park and rented a small trailer. Less I forget, we now had two children. The guys that came alone lived in a motel rented by the Air Force. Not living in that place was a smart move, I must say. I will not go into details about that place but there were some divorces after that stay. Back to Orlando. My career field was so crowded that it was impossible to get promoted and I didn’t make any easier. I just could not stay out of trouble for a while. Just a lot of stupid stuff and the First Sergeant was on my case constantly. My promotion jacket was full of bad stuff and nothing good. My supervisor, I think his name was Perkins, got me to side and

told me that I had to do something about getting some good stuff in that jacket. I was, I am told, always running off at the mouth about things that was wrong with the MACE. He said I needed to put my complaints down in the suggestion system. I did and several months later I got a call, on a Friday, from the First Sergeant who told me to be in his office in dress blues Monday morning. Now what had I done? Monday I was taken to the base theater and there were all the troops seated and a General gave me some money and a Commendation Metal for one of the suggestions. Another troop named Greenlow, I believe, got a much higher metal far actually saving the missile system. Someone else might have the details. Anyhow, from then on I got promoted on time until I retired. I had been in missile maintenance for several years when in there wisdom I was selected by the Air Force to go to Okinawa as a launch crew chief. Okinawa was not, as compared to Bitburg, a plush tour. Being a launch crew chief was not my first choice in life but I gave it my best shot, as always. I cannot remember ex-

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2005 NASHVILLE REUNION UPDATE

Less than one year and counting. Seems that we just left the high country of Colorado a few weeks ago and here we are again with about 10 months left until the event in Nashville, TN. If you haven’t done so already be sure to reserve the first week of June 2005 for our Tac Missileers Reunion right now. Joe Perkins has already signed the contract for our reunion hotel and you may reserve you suite now. Remember the sooner you do this the better.

Embassy Suites Nashville Hotel Nashville Airport - Tennessee TN

10 Century Blvd

Nashville, TN 37214

Tel: 615 871 0033

More hotel details inside. Spread the word to all of our Missileer friends.

actly where the site was but there was a Marine/Navy post near by. We did a lot of trading with them. One trade was for a electric paint chipper. Forgot what they got out of that deal but I think we lost. We all chipped in for groceries and we had some great cooks on the crew. One guy made an apple pie that would beat anything you ever tasted. The launch commander was a Officer by the name of Voltswagen. That's not the correct spelling but close enough. He was a great guy. The first day on crew he and I had a little meeting out in the tunnel between sites. If those tunnels had ears. I let him know that I was the crew chief and I would run the show. Any complaints, come to me. I think that just about all crew chiefs had the same talk. It was one great crew. Before I went on crew status I was taken down into the site to listen to China radio. Some gal was giving out names of all the guys that had flown in on my plane. I had a \$10,000 reward on my head. That will sober you up! My son was in the Cub Scouts and somehow I got permission to take his den down into the site. Excitement was an understatement that day, both for the kids and the powers-that-be around headquarters. We got the kids down inside and the Launch Officer had them stand at attention with there hands in there pockets. Everyone was on there toes. Everything went great but we never had another like that again. I forgot when exactly it happened but I was transferred to the Command Center due to promotion. The guy in charge was a Colonel who was called "Papa Bear". He would hold shift briefings for the Launch Officers and just raise hell. After they left for duty he would come back and have a big laugh. With all the idiot meters and the like, this was not an enjoyable bird to work on. I figured that all future birds would be like that so I moved on to Computers. That was a good move!

Michael Sweeney

The 2004 Missileers Trip To Germany Called off

Gentlemen, with much disappointment I must notifying you that time constraints, money issues, illnesses and a myriad of other conflicts left us short on the number of people needed to book the trip. I had a lot of other projects going on at the same time and let this happen. I will make up for it by focusing on and organizing the Nashville Reunion in the first week of June next year. There you can chew me out for not putting more action into it. See all of you in Nashville. Joe

Max's Point of view

One of our members ordered a jacket that was to small. It is a size, large, Air Force blue color, Has the 586th Tactical Missile Group patch on the front, right side. On the back is the Tac Missileer patch, with Hahn Air Force Base over the patch, and Germany, under the patch. I can have the name changed if someone would like to purchase it. Please contact me if you are interested.

I now have both style Tac Missileers auto plates available, one with just the basic missile man pocket rocket insignia, and the other with the New style Senior Missile Man insignia. I am going to have to raise the price from \$12.00 to \$13.00. They cost us \$10.00. But the mailing charge has increased to \$1.50. Also I am confident we can now get just about any unit patch anyone may want to order. Our patch vendor is really working well with me in that they don't require a minimum of 100 or so patches to produce any one patch. I have been ordering 10 at a time of the patches that the guys are interested in. Again, please contact me to place your orders.

Some of us have been talking about visiting Wright Patterson in Dayton, OH this fall. I understand they have the Matador and the Mace there at the gate entrance. There may be some guys from the mid-west area that would like to meet over a weekend to visit the museum. If any of you are interested in meeting up there please contact me so we can arrange a little meeting . email me at Quincyandnancy@aol.com or call at 812-339-3933 to discuss our plans. MAX

MAKE YOUR REUNION RESERVATION NOW

**Our 2005 Tac Missileers Reunion Runs from
Wednesday June 1st Through Saturday June 4th 2005**

At The

Embassy Suites Nashville Hotel Nashville Airport

10 Century Blvd - Nashville, TN 37214

Tel: **615 871 0033**

The Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville - Airport has 296 luxurious and Spacious Two-Room Suites. Hotels don't come much more dramatic than this. Each of the suites in the Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville Airport opens into the lush, tropical atrium. All the suites contain a private bedroom and a separate living room. Guests at the Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville - Airport are offered a Complimentary Cooked-to-Order full breakfast every morning, (**remember how good the breakfast was in Denver**), and a Manager's Reception featuring your favorite beverages every evening. Services and facilities at the hotel include an indoor pool and ample meetings rooms. Complimentary parking is a plus. Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville Airport: hotel's rating is - **AAA 3 Diamonds** and **Mobil 3 Stars**. Embassy Suites Hotels has been awarded "Highest in Guest Satisfaction Among Upscale Hotel Chains" by J D Power and Associates

The Hotel Is Located just five miles from all the sights, sounds and attractions of the Opryland complex, the center of Music City, is just minutes from Grand Ole Opry, General Jackson Showboat, and Nashville Shores Water Park. The nearby Opry Mills shopping complex offers the Bass Pro Shops and themed restaurants, and Downtown is filled with fine dining as well as fun eateries like Planet Hollywood. Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville - offers a complimentary shuttle to and from the terminals and within 2.5 miles of the hotel.

Accommodations All the suites contain a private bedroom with one king-size or two double beds, and a separate living room with a sofa bed and a well-lit dining / work table, wet bar and refrigerator. Two telephones...Modem / data port connection / Voicemail Safe-deposit box Free weekday newspaper Mini bar Cable TV with on-command movies Room Service Laundry and valet. Air conditioning alarm clock radio Coffee and tea maker Electronic door locks Hairdryer Iron and ironing board Microwave Refrigerator and special bathroom amenities. The contract rate for our reunion is **\$89.00** and you may reserve you suite at this rate for up to 2 days before and two day after the reunion dates.

The Tac Missileers anticipate having another great reunion in 2005. To insure the continued run of successful get togethers the organization is eliciting everyone's assistance in spreading the word on the time and place of the our Nashville reunion. Since last year many of our friends have not taken the opportunity to pay their annual membership dues, consequently our mailing list has been cut from more than 700 to about 250 paid up members. Many of our potential attendees may not be getting the information on the 2005 reunion. Please contact all of your old Tac Missile buds to insure that they are aware of the reunion's time and location. **Remind them that that they don't have to be a paid member to attend**, if they haven't attended a reunion before be sure to tell them how nice it was in Denver and our other venues and how great it will be in Nashville. We really would like to grow the number of our former officers in attendance so if you still have contact with you old Ops, Maintenance or Launch officers please do some gentle arm twisting to get them to attend. We'd love to see them be there in greater numbers. **ED.**

Our thanks and a free years membership to **Larry N. Smith** Fort Worth, TX and to **Sid Segler** Palm Bay, FL for their contributions to this issue of the newsletter. **Larry** sent in a complete copy of the fictitious Sembach Jet Gazette April fools issue, see only one of many spoofs from that issue on page 6. **Sid** sent in copies of numerous articles on the run away Mace, see just a couple of the cuts from his contribution on page 5. I'll bring the entire mixed bag from these two members to the Nashville reunion and have the entirety of both collections posted in our meeting room. **ED.**

Sembach Jet Gazette

PUBLISHED BY AND FOR THE SENTRY DOGS OF SEMBACH AB

Volume 1 - Number 1

Wednesday, 1 April 1959

Weekdays 25c, Sundays 50c

Missile Gap Shortened The place: Sembach Air Base Germany The Time: The early morning hours of 1 April, 1959. The event: OPERATION FIRECRACKER! While most of the base population sleeping blissful ignorance, a small group of missile experts were writing cosmic history at a remote secret missile site near the base. Nerves were keyed to the breaking point! Visiting scientists, newsmen and engineers paced nervously in the underground bunker, awaiting the "X-Hour" — 0515 hours. Protected by 18 inch thick blast-shatter proof glass, the assembled VIPs tensely watched the seconds tick off. With less than 60 seconds to go the Jet Gazette's fearless staff photographer did a near-fatal thing: Rushing from the protect of the bunker, shouting "Pictures tell the story" T/Sgt James Tyson joined the two volunteer

missile launching experts who expose themselves to the 11million megacycles of radioactivity fall out in order to accomplish this historic project.



Scurrying to the top of the ramp, Tyson caught the blast off of OPERATION FIRECRACKER at the split-second of the fuse lighting. The two courageous launch experts (May They Rest In Pease) 3/Lt. Femer Fesdick (left) and E10 (newly awarded rank for missile-launching technicians) Heath cliff Carollitis can be seen grimacing from the tremendous backlash of cosmic radiation. Seconds after this photo was snapped, after 3 Lt Fesdick's dying gasp of "Onward, Celestial" the two Medal of Honor nominees disintegrated in a puff of smoke. Photographer Tyson, perched precariously above the launching sled, was above the level of the radiation and managed to fling himself to the ground a fraction of a second before the missile Mable-1 streaked into the ionosphere at an estimated speed of 22 miles per second.

Moments after the launching Sembach Scientists officially announced: "... preliminary calculations indicate that Mable 1 has proved the dimensions of the solar system to be somewhat smaller than the previously accepted value Mable 1 is, in appearance, deceptive. Unique among space explorers, Mable-1 resembles a giant firecracker. Its over-all length is 24 inches, yet packed within this tiny frame is enough destructive power to completely obliterate Euro-Asia and Puerto Rico.

Technicians who witnessed Mable-1's maiden flight tagged the launching a resounding success and predicted that the missile will be the "best optical reflector in the heavens." Five minutes after the launching; machines at Sembach's bunker began flashing multi-colored lights as the newly-developed machines "sifted" the returning signals from outer space. Particular details on the project are, as can be expected, classified cosmic-secret. Officials of the 7127th Support Group this morning, in a published amendment to manpower requirements for the fiscal year, reported that some vacancies still exist in the 32 career field (the same AFSC that the departed launch experts held). The amendment outlined cross-training requirements (not over five feet tall, must be from South Carolina, and willing to take a two-grade reduction in rank, etc.) as well as forecasting the promotion outlook for missile men. Applications must be in by 1700 hours today, so that Group personnel can let headquarters USAF know of the number of April first volunteers.

THE OLD BIRD COULD FLY!

As Published in **The Dothan Eagle** (Dothan, AL) January 5, 1967

Phantom Failed To Catch Mace

EGLIN AFB, Fla. (UPI) —An Air Force Phantom jet fighter chased a runaway US missile 90 miles firing antiaircraft missiles and cannon Wednesday in an unsuccessful attempt to destroy it before it reached Cuba. The unarmed missile—an outdated **Mace** 'being used s a drone target'— was only damaged by the fighter and passed over the western tip of Cuba at 25,000 feet before crashing Into the Caribbean Sea. Launched from the air proving grounds at Eglin Air Force Base in the Florida panhandle Wednesday morning, the missile was supposed to circle over the Gulf of Mexico where two F4 Phantom jets were to shoot it down in a fighter-interceptor test. It veered off course how ever, and headed straight for Cuba An emergency effort to fire the missile's destruct system — which would have blown the rocket apart — failed. The missile had no warhead, but could have touched off an international incident had it crashed on the Communist island of Premier Fidel. Castro. To forestall this possibility, the State Department quickly asked the Swiss ambassador in Havana to explain the circumstances of the wayward missile to the Cuban government. A Pentagon spokesman in Washington said the two Phantom jets in the Gulf were in no position to intercept the missile, but that another Phantom gave chase. The jet fired two antiaircraft missiles without effect. The fighter, which can reach more than twice the speed of the 650 m.p.h. missile, overtook the rocket and damaged it with cannon fire, but could not bring it down. The spokesman said the missile passed over Cuba and, according to Its fuel capacity,. would have crashed Into the sea about 100 miles south of the southwestern Cuban coast.

From The **ORLANDO SENTINEL** (Orlando, FL) January 5, 1967



Jet Can't Down Runaway Drone In Long Chase — Wild Missile Eludes Long Chase By Jet

WASHINGTON (AP) A supersonic fighter chased a runaway Air Force missile for 90 miles over the Gulf of Mexico Wednesday in a vain attempt to shoot it down before it passed over Cuba. A Pentagon spokesman said the Phantom jet had hit the unarmed Mace missile — modified as a target drone — with cannon fire. But the 44-foot, 18,000-pound missile continued southward on an errant course which carried it over the extreme western tip of Cuba and apparently to a harmless impact in the ocean 100 miles south of the island country. The 'pursuing jet also fired two air-to-air missiles being tested by the Air Force in an unsuccessful attempt to bring' down the errant craft, 'serving as' a robot plane" for target practice. 'The Pentagon said the surface-to-surface missile, a 650-MPH Mace which had been converted into a target drone, was unarmed — meaning' it

had neither a nuclear nor a conventional warhead. It was in effect a robot plane designed for target practice and carrying only a small explosive charge rigged to blow off its small wings and bring it down in the event of just such an errant flight. The Air Force tried, but unsuccessfully, to touch off this "destruct" capability by radio signal. The missile went aloft from the Air Force proving ground at Eglin Air Force Base at 10:00 a.m. EST, heading out over the Gulf of Mexico to be chased by F4 Phantom jets in a test. It failed to make a scheduled turn and soared at 25,000 feet toward Cuba. At 11:21 a.m., precisely the moment the Pentagon figured the missile would have expended its fuel, a Defense Department spokesman told newsmen of the errant flight. The unarmed weapon, the spokesman said, went into an unprogrammed course that would cause an impact at 11:21 a.m. about 100 miles south of the south west coast of Cuba. The Air Force plotted the impact point from radar-tracking and fuel calculations.

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Tac Missileer Financial Report As of June 20th, 2004

Beginning Balance as of 12/16/03	\$ 12,699.24
Deposit- Donations received	285.00
Deposit- dues paid 2,730.00	
Expenses:	
United Postal Service (Stamps)—Ck # 1043 74.00	
Odessey Health Care—(Robert Conrad Memorial) Ck.# 1044 100.00	
Robert Bolton—(Membership Cards) Ck # 1045 34.00	
United Postal Service (Stamps)—Ck # 1046 37.00	
Nancy Butler—Expense reimbursement (Missileers) Ck # 1047 92.55	
Mckee Printing Service—(Newsletters) Ck. # 1048	

TAPS FOR MISSILEERS

DONALD LINDLEY Don was with the first cadre of "B" Missileers. Was with the R&D group with which attended factory school at Martin Co. Baltimore MD. Then launched 25 missiles at the Cape before going to Okinawa. **Don** was in the Guidance Checkout Maintenance section, on the GSC console. He lived in New Smyrna, FL.

Raymond V. Allin Berkley, MA. He was a Missileer at Hahn in the 1950s



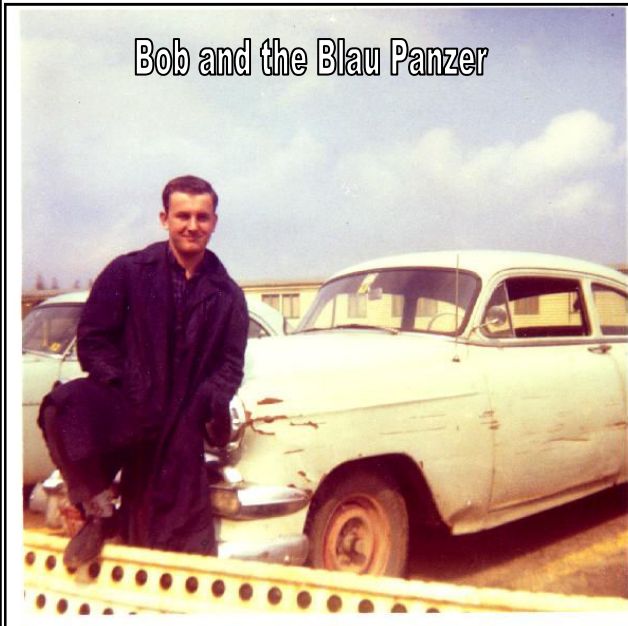
Member **James Bass**, Newport, KY sent in this photo of a bird in its morphing phase between being a Matador B and Mace A. The photo is labeled Martin TM-61 Matador Missile but as can be seen it has the distinctive profile of the later Mace A.

THE 100TH MACE rolled off the assembly line at the same time as a recent follow-on contract for \$ 13,400,000 was awarded Martin by the Air Force for 13 additional "birds," as reported in the **Baltimore press of October 28, 1958**. The contract also covers developmental production and testing of the Inertial Mace B, along with ground support equipment, test equipment and related items, and further engineering development. Number 100 was delivered on schedule as have all of its predecessors and the forty Matadors which were delivered each month for seventeen consecutive months. The ability to change over from "hand tailored" research and development missiles to a steady flow of production models, and do it smoothly marks the Mace Manufacturing Team as real "pros". It takes flexibility, quick accurate decisions, the ability to work under pressure and anticipate problems to keep the line going. The Mace will replace the Matador in operation at Air Force sometime next year. Since its ATRAN and Inertial Guidance systems are self-contained, it will be invulnerable to enemy jamming.

Ski's Remembrance Of An Old Friend On The 26 Anniversary of his Death

Friday, 28 April 1978, My Best Friend, Aircraft Commander, Captain Robert W. Roulston, 35, of Philadelphia, PA died in the crash of his C-130 at Sparrevohn Air Station, Alaska 150 miles west of Anchorage. He left behind, his wife Nancy and 2 sons, Rob and Jay.

Bob was also fondly known to me and his fellow enlisted friends as Ferderich die Dicker, Lady of the Lake, Ram, Blau Panzer driver, Groveller, Mutha, Yellow Rope and later known to his fellow flying officers as Mad Dog. Those of you who had the privilege of knowing Bob will remember and understand the following story and perhaps remember the history behind those nick names.



The few brief years in the early 60's that Bob and I lived, worked and played together in Germany and the New York area will always be one of the high lights of my life. Bob and I spent a lot of our off duty time in the auto hobby shop on the Hill working on our cars. There were at one time 5 cars between us. But usually only 1 of his and 1 of mine were capable of running at any one time. I don't know how we found time to raise any hell for trying to keep just one of those cars running. But, we definitely did! Later in New York, even after Bob's passing he would made the hair on the back of my neck stand up. I would be working on my car, lay a tool down and it was gone. I would swear I could hear him chuckling that chuckle of his! I'd turn around and the tool was back in a different place. He left a legacy of memories that will always be with me. Bob was the poster child for the idiom of *stepping in @\$% and come up smelling like a rose*. He was the possessor of the belief that everything would work out OK. Although

some thought he was just possessed. How we lived through some of the things we did is testament to his belief. In most of the cases he was the instigator of it all too! Following is just one of the many stories left to his memory:

One night in late 1962, Bob drove his light blue 1954 Chevy up the narrow twisting road that led to the 887th TMS. Visibility was zero.....which was not unusual for that time of year. On the Grünstadt hill when conditions were right, we had absolute zero visibility pea soupers that would put old London's reputation for thick fog to shame. On the way up Bob either blew a tire and wound up taking out several rows of grape vines that grew close to the road or, as some say, he hit the grape fields and blew out the right front tire. Anyway, in either case he managed to get back up onto the road. After a few minutes had passed another airman from the Hill came creeping by in the thick fog and stopped to help. The airman couldn't help but wonder what was going on as Bob was attempting to change the left rear tire while the right front was the one that was flat. Bob merely told him that this tire was easier to get at and for the airman to go on his way. Finally, Bob drove the car with the tire still flat, up to the Site. The tire got fixed the next day but Bob was sweating bullets cause he hadn't reported the accident. Sure enough, a day or so later the local politzei showed up at the site to check all of our cars for signs of recent damage and to compare a chip of light blue paint found at the scene of the torn up wine field. Bob was watching from behind the curtains of his barracks room window as the German cops, their AP escorts and the First

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TAC MISSILEERS CORP
3133 RAVINES RD

Shirt walked along the row of parked POVs. The little international posse of detectives get nearer and nearer to his Chevy sitting there in all its splendor with the obvious new dents, scrapes and missing paint. They finally came to the offending car, Bob was standing there exclaiming under his breath , “Oh No, @\$% *&, Oh No @\$% *&”, and some other choice words, finally they held the chip of paint next to the fender of his car, it was a perfect color match.....Bob’s fate was sealed. He just fell back onto his bed and let loose a long stream of expletives and some incoherent sounds, thinking his AF career was ruined. Within a few minutes Bob got called in. In the end, part of his punishment was that he had to repair the damage he had caused to the wine field. Being the top notch, AFSC 33150, Launch Tech 2 that he was, he did such an outstanding job with the repair job that the German owner of the vineyard brought up a few bottles of his best wine for Bob and they soon became good comrades. He even offered Bob a job working in the vineyards keeping the vineyard paraphernalia in good repair. Word of the final outcome of this incident reached the Site Commander and when the next promotion cycle came around, Bob, **smelling like the proverbial rose**, was promoted to A1C, additionally he received a special commendation for helping promote better German/American relations. From then on Bob's 1954 Chevy was forever known as the Blau Panzer because it was blue and had destroyed part the vineyard like a tank. The Blau Panzer and Bob were involved in several other escapades, like rabbit herding, just a touch of Hatari on the hill, but, that’s just one of several other stories to be told.

Ron ‘Ski’ Wiatrowski

I also knew Bob. I was the frequent recipient of many of his ingenious, sometimes insidious but always mind blowing pranks. It wasn't always one way however, he could take them as well as give them. The last time I saw Bob was when he came through Clark AB in 1971, he had supper with Ingrid and me during an all too short evening. He was on his way to Thailand where he served a tour as an AC-130 gunship pilot. He later sent me several letters from there vividly described his night time gun fights over South Viet Nam. At that time his enthusiasm for life to the fullest came through to me again in the verve with which he described his exploits during those hot times in SEA. Your article again reawaken those memories of the Bob we know in Germany. Thanks for the memories Ski.

Editor