



Volume 14, Number 4

TAC MISSILEERS

NEWSLETTER

"Serving the mace and matador missile crews and all support personnel who fought and won the cold war"



Winter 2012 / 13

Keep in touch with the Organization and stay on top of the latest goings-on by visiting your web site often at www.TacMissileers.org.

The 2013 TAC Missileers Reunion

The 2013 TAC Missileers Reunion will be held in San Antonio, Texas ...a really fun place to visit, with LOTS of things to see and do ...and, we will be staying at a Riverwalk / downtown hotel that is in the heart of all the "action."

Date: September 4th (Wednesday), 5th (Thursday) and 6th (Friday), 2013.

Location: Hyatt Regency San Antonio (\$115 / night – double occupancy, no breakfast or \$125 / night – double occupancy with breakfast)

We encourage all TAC Missileers to attend. Let's make this our "most attended" reunion ever...

Note: The Reunion is open to all Air Force and supporting civilian personnel that were associated with any part of the Matador and/or Mace missile programs, regardless of rank or career field. Non-TAC Missileers members will be requested to join our organization by paying one or more years dues.

For more information about things to see and do in San Antonio you may wish to request a copy of the free visitors guide that is made available by the San Antonio Convention and Visitors Bureau.

We are looking forward to seeing you there! This quarterly newsletter and our webpage will be updated as soon more information becomes available. Stay tuned...

Details and more information in the next Newsletter.

887th TMS Reunion and Rhine River Cruise September 2012



The reunion of Launch, Maintenance and old German friends from back in the day was held on the 21st of September at the Haus Sonnenberg, Neuleiningen, Germany. The Grünstadt gang members pictured are: **Kenneth & Gertrud Roberts, Ed & Rita Johnson, Wernfried und Gudrun Wendeln , Jim & Erika Dutcher, Bob & Ingrid Bolton, Mike & Bette Brashear, Christel Nagel und Karl Heinz Nippgen.** In attendance later were **Hank & Donna Barlow.** Karl Heinz the Missileers' old friend, now proprietor of Haus Sonnenberg Weingut, Hotel and restaurant, his wife Ellie and son Kai went all out in making their stay and meeting at the Sonnenberg memorable. There is already talk of doing it again next year. After the get together in Neuleiningen/Grünstadt the **Brashears, Barlows and Boltons** took an eight day Rhine river cruise from Amsterdam to Basel. They enjoyed a leisurely trip up the Rhine revisiting many interesting sites along the way.

The following Document Was Found on eBay:

"Where Are They Today"

An accounting of the whereabouts of that band of missile pioneers, the Matador crew at Holloman AFB from 1948 – 1951

Prepared by C. Jackson Libby of the Martin Marietta Corporation Orlando Division Orlando, Florida 32805 February 1, 1976

(Editors Note: This work contains a listing of the 47 Air Force Officers and Airmen and 81 Martin technicians that worked on the earliest Matador missiles. If anyone would like to know if a specific name is on the list please contact me via the TAC Missileers web site, I'll be happy to search for you.)

**THE BEGINNINGS OF THE FIRST U.S. DEPLOYED MISSILE SYSTEM
(THE MATADOR)**

4:05 PM on January 15, 1949 marked a moment in history at Holloman Air Force Base, NM. This was the moment when the first U.S. Matador missile was fired. Not a very auspicious beginning, as the missile traveled only 2600 feet. But at that instant was born a determination and seriousness of purpose that would lead to the deployment of seven U.S. Air Force Matador (later MACE) squadrons throughout Europe and Asia - the first U.S. missile ever to become operational and deployed overseas.

Partners in this historic accomplishment were the U.S. Air Force and The Glenn L. Martin Company who worked together as an integrated missile firing team at Holloman Air Force Base in the period of 1948 - 1951. In 1951, the operation was transferred to

Patrick Air Force Base in Florida. The Air Force contingent headed by then Captain John Evans comprised an elite group from First Guided Missile Wing, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. The Glenn L. Martin contingent headed by Jack Libby, was from the company's fledgling 100 man Pilotless Aircraft section, even then veterans of zero length launching tests at Aberdeen Proving Grounds and Martin Baltimore plant. Holloman Air Force Base provided project coordination for range support and the officers during this period were Wallace, Wetzel, Pederson, Ellzey, Hombaker. Wright field provided the first chase pilots - Allred and Curtiss. Eglin provided later pilots Evans, Biehunko, Young and Hoover.

This compilation tells about the people who manned this team, those pioneers in the country's missile business who were regarded as dreamers, nuts, and impractical but whose perseverance and learning of lessons by failure and success were largely responsible for successes in the missile and space business 25 years later.

During the 1948 - 1951 period, these people:

- Made the first successful zero length launching of an operational missile capable of 500 mile range;
- Made the first integrated countdown lists performed manually and by word of mouth;
- Made the first passive electronic guidance flight in the world;
- Made the longest guided missile flight up to that time;
- Showed the value of on—the-job training to effect transfer from company technician to service technician;
- ◊ Made possible the first deployed offensive capability.

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William Rinker emailed the following with the above photo attached: "Last summer I was at the Wings Over the Rockies museum and saw this picture hanging on the wall. I plan to go back again and take a close up of the guys there to see if they can be identified."

In the meantime can anyone identify the five trainees for us? There are two SSGTs, two A1Cs, probably all four are retreads and one newbie A3C. Were you in this photo? Let us know if you posed for this shot one day back in Denver.

Only 15 Minutes to Atomic Strike

Part Four

Solely from these sentences alone it is clear that in the early 1960s to the Soviet Union, the cruise missiles in East Germany played an extremely valuable role as part of their nuclear exchange planning, not replaceable by any other weapon system for the targets presentation in the mentioned paper: the nuclear artillery battalions of the M65 atomic cannon of 280mm and the M110 howitzer of 203 mm caliber, and the various short-range missiles of NATO, who because of their short range must be deployed very close to the front line. Previously, it required precise target coordinates, of course. But that was easy for example in the Honest John battery, which at launch left a vast plume of smoke behind. But, to take out a Matador or Mace squadron with the FKR-1, because of their great distance from the front line, was wishful thinking. And that led to the thinking at that time of the one big disadvantage of cruise missiles: its much shorter penetration depth compared to the ballistic missiles.

The Soviet generals counted on losing about 30 percent of the attacking missiles flying in at an altitude 400-600 meters. There also was the later disadvantage - the missiles were more targeted and the opposing fighter bombers became all weather capable - this led to the land-based cruise missiles losing the early advantage. But, in mid-1962 they issued this pithy phrase: "The study of the combat qualities and fighting principles of cruise missiles in the area of the front-line as well as the acquisition of knowledge about the promising use of cruise missiles as part of modern offensive operations is a key demand that the leadership of our armed forces must address."

Where Were the Launch Sites?

Although it is clear where the peace time bases were for the cruise missiles, it is unclear if during peace time positions had been created for launch during hostilities, and if so, where precisely they could have been. The remains of such installations are not found today. Few clues exist that give even a vague idea if such locations were storage bunkers for nuclear warheads or launch sites for the missiles.

A detailed description was found in the location register of the BND under Quedlinburg for the period August 1962 to January 1963 of a "secret property" at Liebfrauenberg, on the road connecting Quedlinburg - Halberstadt, a few yards north of a brick factory. Three German civilians of the VEB explosives division center in Magdeburg were to teach a Soviet sub-lieutenant and six Soviet army soldiers the technique of underground blasting and the operation of an East German Teltow drilling machine. "The plans describe two large underground caverns to be blasted into the mountain on either side of the road, each one with two entrances. Each would be a cavern 660 feet wide, 260 feet deep and 20 feet in height and with a run-in en-

trance of 50 feet, walls and floor had to be smooth." [20] The entrances were 6.5 feet wide, 13 feet high and 20 feet long. Since a launch site would have to be on higher ground with an unobstructed view to the west and have a low angle clearance, it is assumed that the launch positions were surveyed and accessed over a paved driveway from the described bunkers. It also makes one wonder if an underground connection was planned between the ominous caves in Liebfrauenberg and the cruise missile base at Quedlinburg-Quarnbeck.

The southernmost Meteor base in East Germany comes up with similarly difficult to interpret construction works. Northeast of the mentioned Ebersdorfer barracks residents knew a few weeks after the deployment of cruise missiles in December 1960 of four underground bunkers, reported being in a small forest, to which large driveways led downwards, with closed gates, and probably supplied with fresh air ventilation shafts. In fact, an FKR launch group was equipped with four launchers. Were the launch pads, perhaps in those bunkers?

The few facts available suggest that the FKR-1 was replaced the mid-1960s by a new cruise missile, these were the Front-line winged missile complex-2 (FKR-2), originally a ship-based missile. Only two observations are found in the location

register and a single so-called message from the BND files. A reliable statement by the Soviets is still lacking. The FKR-2 was launched from a mobile vehicle (Sil-135K) out of a tube-shaped container. The sleek missile, S-5 has seldom been reported, because they probably only left the storage caverns and tunnels for servicing. From Arnstadt-Rudisleben, descriptions are available that match the exact appearance of eight-wheel vehicle, with its long launch tubes.

Compared to the FKR-1 the mobility of the FKR-2 was significantly improved. It is not surprising that the new cruise missiles were observed far from the known deployment sites - for example, in spring of 1964 at the station Altengrabow and again in the spring of 1966 at the Magdeburg military training area in Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide. [22] In particular, the range was significantly longer than the previous model, up to 500 Kilometers (310 miles) - other sources say, however, only 270 Kilometers (167 miles). In the files of the BND, there are no indications that NATO was aware of this new threat. Western intelligence services, who had for years shown great interest in the "aerodynamic missiles" that were introduced in 1971 concluded that those missiles had obviously left the GDR some years ago...

The matter had now taken care of itself and the files are closed. In fact, the front-line winged missile disappeared from the GDR in the late 1960s. In the garrisons of Rudisleben, Ebersdorf, Quarnbeck and Techent the Soviet moved in new units and used those locations until the early 1990s. .

TO BE CONTINUED

Included herein are who they were, what they did, where they are today and what they have been doing since. Some, unfortunately, are lost. Some are dead. Their deeds and the story of the Holloman operation are the subject of different but equally fascinating story.

A poem from the booklet:

By V. Lew Tatzin - Flight Control System Technician Matador, Mace, Titan II

X MINUS 2

In the midst of the desert, bleak and cold,
The Martin missile did unload.
Poised on its launcher, nose up high;
It awaited the moment to bid us good-bye.

In the wee hour of morning the crew
was in view; all willing and eager their
duty to do.

With wrenches and meters, equipment
galore,
Each man was at work dispatching his
chore. There certainly was aplenty to
do,

And the hour was only X-2.

The sun in the sky steadily rose,
The wind was perfect, right on the
nose. The sky up above was cloudless
and blue,

But the hour is held at X-2.

All lines are connected and hoses secure,
Hydraulic fluid pulsing steady
and sure.

The spoilers are flopping first up and
then down, As fly boys are pushing the
stick box around.

The bottle is sighted with aim sure and
true; the hour is holding at X-2.

The sun is now almost direct overhead,
The crew is getting hungry but little is
said.

With faith still unshaken, with hopes
raised on high, They gaze on their mis-
sile, nose up in the sky.

The chores have depleted, there's little

to do, The hour is holding at X-2.
The sun is now going to bed in the
West

Like the hard working crew, it's in
need of a rest. The sky has now taken a
much darker hue,
The hour is still holding at X-2.

The poem above is strictly untrue,
In fact, those who read it are liable to
sue, for the truth of the matter, re-
corded in books,
Clearly absolves us from a big bunch
of snooks. So what does it say, this tale
of duress,

In capital letters,
THE MX'S A SUCCESS

SEASONS GREATINGS TO OUR MEMBERS

THE TAC MISSILEERS OFFICERS SENT YOU THEIR WISHES FOR A HAPPY AND HEALTHY 2013

We are looking forward to and anticipating a big turnout at the reunion in San Antonio, Texas next September.

It is remarkable that for nearly **fourteen years** we have been meeting to keep the memories of the unique Air Force weapon systems we all worked on alive. Let us try to make this **eighth reunion** a really exceptional one. We would love to have all of our regular attendees out numbered by those that have never attended before. So please, gently push and softly prod those old fellow missileers that you know who have never attended one of our reunions and get them to commit to this one.

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Tac Missileers Corporation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under section 501 (c) 19 of the IRS code. The Tac Missileer Newsletter is published several times a year, special editions as necessary. Membership dues are \$15 per year to run from January through December. Notifications relating to dues will not be mailed to individual members. Announcements in the Tac Missileer Newsletter will be the only notice given.

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This photo of Matador GM-544, the first one launched at the Cape on 20 June 1951, clearly shows that the early XB-61 did have elevators on its fixed horizontal stabilizer.