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# TAC Tanker Tales

## Heading West to San Diego in 2016– Sails, Sites, Shuttles and More!

As promised, I journeyed to California last month to check out the hotel situation and see what they can offer. Went to three places and talked to several others in the area, but their rates were too high. Stayed at the Holiday Inn Bayside that was mentioned in the last newsletter, but found another place which suited us better. It was the **Courtyard by Marriott in Liberty Station** with free parking, an airport shuttle, a part of the ball room for Hospitality, nearby shuttle to Seaport Village where we catch the Hop-on-off Tour Bus and a beautiful facility.

Our dates, however, will be the last week of May beginning on **Sunday the 29th** through checkout on June 2nd. Hopefully you haven't purchased your airline tickets yet.

If you do what Lou did, go on line and visit their website. I am currently checking out the transportation situation and planning on a Luau banquet on their pool side terrace overlooking a lawn and canal. The Officers and Board have approved an assistance with the rates. The hotel brought the \$139 rate down to \$129 and you will only pay \$118 +tax per night while the TAC Tanker Treasury will pay the remaining \$11 per night totaling \$44+ tax per room for the 4 days.

There are also group discounts for some of the events and lots of activity or just hanging out in the hotel Hospitality Room which will be open at all times with the officers/board helping out.

Currently we plan to do a *Prime Rib Dinner Cruise* the first night then the City Tour using the *Hop-On Trolley* on Monday. You will be able to eat on your own at any of the stops during the day and return to the hotel by shuttle around 4pm. We will plan on a dinner at a nearby restaurant that evening.

On Tuesday we will be bussed to *the Embarcadero* (bay front) to see the Maritime Museum, USS Midway ship, and have lunch at *Anthony's* overlooking the San Diego Bay. Evening dinner downtown with several choices. Wednesday, we head to *Balboa Park/Zoo* area with lunch in the park and our *Luau banquet* that evening. A *Farewell Brunch* in the am and checkout.

## Views From Vic-

## The President's Corner

Greetings to all. Several new topics have been submitted by board members and members at large. These are somewhat related but I'll try to encapsulate them into three areas. I then would like each of you who wish, after consideration, to forward your comments to officers and/or board members so that the best resolution can be made.

1. **TAC Tanker news letter** and the member address book are beginning to drain our cash reserves. After some discussion it has been suggested that one or both be printed on our web site as most members have access. And for those who don't we would send them a copy by exception. We would also assist those with access to a local library with instruction on how to go on line in your library and use the libraries' computers to read and/or print any of the matter on our web site.
2. We have had many complaints on the availability of the **hospitality room** during reunions. Some members go only to see and visit with their dear friends and need a place to do this. These members and many others sign up for a couple of events and need a place to sit while perusing the many albums, etc. brought by others. One suggestion is that we pay member volunteers a stipend for manning the hospitality suite. It is my opinion that this suite be opened 2hrs before registration and closed at 10 or 11 pm each evening then opened at 8 am with coffee and pastries. It should also be closed for the banquet but opened immediately after.
3. It has also been proposed that the few of our members who do yeoman like work for our association, thereby keeping this association on the map and glued together, be recompensed by paying for one or more of their rooms during the reunion.

Please let us know how you feel.

Adios for now, Vic

## Board Chairman's Corner

*Greetings to all the TAC Tanker Gang: Shirley and I are getting ready to celebrate our 60th wedding anniversary next week, 4 September, with a dinner cruise on Lake Champlain for about 30 people. Needless to say we're quite busy.*

*Hope you all saw the great, good news for a change, about the American airmen on the French train. They really made all America proud.*

*We're still basking in the after-glow of this year's great reunion. I'm looking forward to what Natalie has in store for us in next year's reunion*

*in San Diego. I believe our President, Vic Ventura will be sharing our new ideas for the TAC Tanker Tales (be sure to read his column).*

*We're having a beautiful Fall here in Vermont. We had a special youth program at church this past weekend where yours truly had the honor of teaching about Joseph, son of Jacob and Jesus, son of God. We helped the kids act out these stories. They seemed to really enjoy it and even remembered. They shared their experience during our Sunday service. Choir starts next week so Fall begins as we see the trees are even beginning to change color.*

*We wish each and every one of you a healthy and happy rest of the year. Bill Wolford*

## *Some of the San Diego Sights We Plan to See in 2016*



*Prime Rib Dinner Cruise*



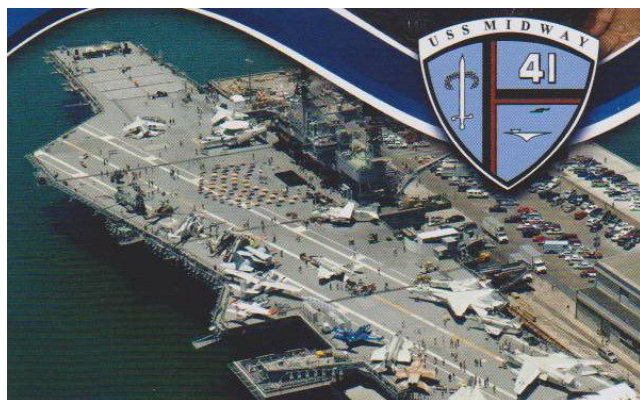
*Courtyard by Marriott Liberty Station*



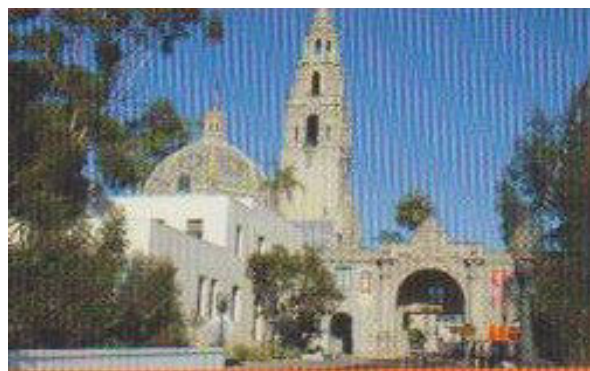
*Trolley Tours Around San Diego*



*Hotel Del Coronado*



*USS Midway Museum*



*Balboa Park*

The information about the paper edition of the newsletter, and the reason for discontinuing it is explained in Vic Ventura's column, so I won't address that decision by the Board. Natalie will still do the newsletter layout and I will continue to handle the placement of the Tanker Tales on our web-site. For those who may have never visited it, the web address is **www.tactankers.com**.

Because of the difficulties some members have had in accessing it, I notified our webmaster to remove the log-in box we had in place. So, for the past several weeks, log-in is no longer required. The reason originally was to limit those who chose not to join or renew their membership from reading about what we were doing and looking through our Reunion pictures.

Nate and I felt these pages should be for the benefit of members only, but since it looks like we will not be adding any more new members, I decided that our website might as well be open to anyone interested in looking at it.

We now have the pictures from the Sarasota Reunion posted and I hope you will take the time to look through them. I know there are a lot of them, but we try to include pictures of the people, the events and places we visited. There is an acknowledgment on the Sarasota page listing all the people who took pictures and sent them so that everyone can see the fun we have each year.

Since there was not enough room in the June issue for our Bits and Obits column, I have sent Natalie the latest information I have on our member and/or spouses losses. If any of you receive word of friends passing, please notify me so we can include the information in future issues.

**Natalie's Notes on Reunions:** Below is a part of a copy of a RFP (Request For Proposal) which is sent to hotels/visitor bureaus when we want to have a reunion in their town. I have up dated this as the years have gone by. For those of you who joined after 2000, here is our history. There is also information on what we want in the way of room rates, hospitality room, free parking, banquet facility, etc. The hotels then respond with an

### Who Are We?

The TAC Tankers Assn is composed of former members of six Air Refueling Squadrons which flew the KB-29 and KB-50 between 1954-1965. The squadrons were the 420th at Sculthorpe RAF Station, England, 421st at Yokota AB, Japan, 427 & 429th at Langley AFB, VA, the 431st at El Paso, TX and the 622nd at Alexandria, LA. Members of the TAC Tanker Association were on the 6 man crews of these aircraft (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, flight engineer and two refueling operators). There were also myriad administrative, logistic, and maintenance personnel.

### Our Reunion History

There were several separate squadron reunions prior to the formation of the TAC Tankers in '98. The 1st Reunion took place in Tucson, AZ (Holiday Inn/Palo Verde) in 4/5-8/2000 with 233; the 2nd Reunion in Tampa, FL (Embassy Suites/Westshore) in 5/3-5/2001 with 195; the 3rd Reunion in Hampton, VA (Holiday Inn) in 5/1-5/2002 with 326; the 4th Reunion in Sonoma, CA (Doubletree/Rohnert Park) in 9/28-10/2/2003 with 106; the 5th Reunion in Colorado Springs, CO (Embassy Suites) in 5/12-16/2004 with 236; the 6th Reunion in Nashville, TN (Radisson/Opryland) in 5/11-15/2005 with 232; the 7th Reunion in Dayton, OH (Hope Hotel/WPAFB) in 5/17-21/2006 with 240; the 8th Reunion in Branson, MO (Radisson/Branson) in 5/16-19/2007 with 134; the 9th Reunion in San Antonio, TX (Holiday Inn Riverwalk) in 5/18-21/2008 with 171; the 10th Reunion in Washington DC (Crowne Plaza/Tysons Corner) in 10/16-19/2008 w/88; the 11th Reunion in Charleston, SC (Holiday Inn Patriots Point) in 5/17-20/2009 with 143; the 12th Reunion in Albuquerque, NM (Hotel Albuquerque) in 5/19-22/2010 with 152; the 13th Reunion in Savannah, GA (Ellis Square Inn) in 5/15-18/2011 with 158; the 14th Reunion in Seattle, WA (Renaissance Hotel) in 5/27-30/2012 with 97; the 15th Reunion in St. Louis, MO (Millennium Hoel) in 5/19-22/2013 with 126; the 16th Reunion in Valley Forge, PA (Embassy Suites) in 5/25-28/2014 with 92; the 17th Reunion in Sarasota, FL (Hyatt Regency) in 5/17-20/2015 with 99.

offer and we negotiate on the contract. Using the internet has been most helpful as I can view the hotels, the rooms and map the location. We try to rotate the sites to give members a chance to join us when a reunion is near their home. If you have any suggestions for future reunions let me know.

## Obits of Members and Spouses

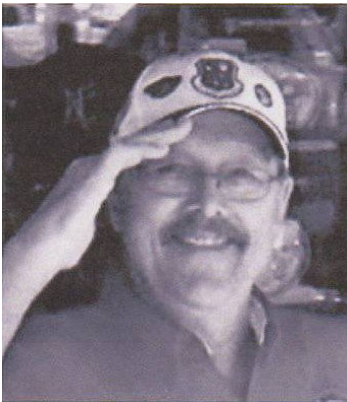


Edward Corbin Miller, Great Falls VA died December 12, 2014. He was born in Connecticut on Nov. 24, 1941. He is survived by his wife Cynthia Marie Miller and 2 daughters. Ed was a military historian and a Life Member of TAC Tankers. He and Cynthia had attended several reunions and donated items for the Door Prize drawings.

Sharon L. Garrah, 71, of La Grange OH, passed away April 28, 2015 at the Ames Family Hospice in Westlake following a brief illness. She is survived by her husband of 50 years, TACTanker member Bernard "Bernie" Garrah.



Bobby Lee Stiers, 83, of Felton DE passed away Dec. 29 2014 at his home. Bobby was born in Wentworth, North Carolina in July 1931. Upon reaching 15 years of age, he passed himself off as 18 and joined the 30 Infantry Division, then enlisted in the USAF. He had a successful career in aircraft maintenance, then became a Flight Engineer. He performed Engineer duties on the KC-97, KB-50(427th-429th), C-124 and C-141 aircraft, before retiring at the rank of Master Sergeant in 1969. He was a Life Member of TAC Tankers and is survived by his wife Margaret.



Joseph Rene Roger Martel (Mr. Joe), 78, of Fort Valley GA, passed away on August 1, 2015 after a valiant battle with leukemia. He watched three older brothers and his uncle go to war in WWII, and he developed a lifelong interest in WWII history. The respect he had for the servicemen in his family led to him to joining the Air Force after graduating from high school. After Tech school, he was assigned to the 427th at Robins AFB GA. It was here that he met a Southern Belle named Pat Little. He is survived by his wife of 57 years. Joe was a Life Member of TAC Tankers.



Thomas "Tom" Lynn Grey, 81, husband of the late Joyce Grey, passed away quietly at his home in Sonoma CA on March 8, 2015. Tom was born in Wisconsin and moved to Sonoma in 1971. He was a pilot with the 431st and 421st, retired as a Major, then went to work for United Airlines as a Flight Engineer for 27 years. He was a Life Member of TAC Tankers.

Virginia "Ginny" Logan Seay, 71, Lock Haven PA, passed away peacefully at her residence surrounded by her family on Feb. 21, 2015. She is survived by her husband, TAC Tanker Life Member Robert "Bob" Seay, whom she married in 1998

## Historian's Corner

by John Bessette

### More Info on the Launch of KB-50s during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

In the June 2015 "Historian's Corner" I discussed the no-notice "operational launch" of the alert KB-50s at (at least) McCoy AFB in late October, after the actual crisis appeared to have eased somewhat. I recalled my own memory, which tells me that my own crew had that morning off alert. Some of us were going to the McCoy BX when we saw the KB tanker fleet roar off the runway. We quickly went to our CP and were informed that the launch was an error and the aircraft were being recalled. I then asked the "TAC Tanker Tales" readership to tell me what they recalled of this incident. I received a pair of very interesting emails from former 427th AREFS pilot Bryce Terrell, who filled me in on at least part of the story.

Bryce had joined the 427th at Warner Robbins in 1957 as a copilot. He upgraded to AC, and the unit moved to Langley AFB in mid-1958. A couple of years later he was temporarily assigned to the 4505th AREFW command post. The TDY became a permanent assignment, and Bryce became the scheduling officer for all Langley-based KB-50 activity. As part of this duty he gained experience working with 19th Air Force Hdqs at Seymour-Johnson AFB, North Carolina. This became very useful when the Cuban Missile Crisis ballooned in mid-October 1962.

Under presidential direction, the Pentagon activated contingency plans for the Crisis. The military response was to be run by the Pentagon through the Joint Command Atlantic (LANTCOM), headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia. Tactical Air Command Headquarters became AFLANT (Air Forces Atlantic Command), consolidating all air responses. AFLANT itself remained at Langley, but it setup its "Advanced Eche-

lon" (or ADVON) at Homestead AFB, Florida, to run the air response in detail.

Given Bryce's experience, he and other aircraft/mission specialists at TAC Hqs were sent TDY to Homestead to set up and run the ADVON. As Bryce says, "Our job was to do the employment planning for any offensive action and to execute the plan as required. I was the senior tanker rep in the Hq and I closely monitored all tanker activity. Also in place were several tanker types who were command post duty officers. The day of the [launch and] recall one of the tanker CP duty officers was surprised and notified me that the tankers had launched. I immediately informed the Commander. Soon after, I was told to recall the tankers." Bryce did so, and the aircraft returned to base. But he and I still wonder why they had launched.

Upon re-reading the 4505th Wing History for July-December 1962, I saw some wording that might be a clue to what had happened. I noticed that it says "...one occasion when TAC directed the immediate launch of KB-50s..." This means that the order came from HqTAC/AFLANT. If true, it may mean that the launch was deliberately ordered to test the tankers' ability to actually launch within the timeframe needed to clear the taxiways & runways to allow the collocated fighters to launch on time. If so, it was (as the Wing History states), "a worthwhile demonstration for those who [had] voiced concern that the tankers would interfere with fighter departures."

I still welcome any other recollections you readers might have about the Missile Crisis, especially from anyone who had been TDY at MacDill. Did the tankers there also launch like the McCoy folks did?

## Book Review Column By Jim “Pappy” Boyington

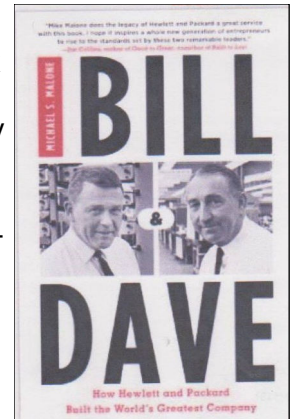
Paul Tibbetts, General Groves and Robert Openheimer along with a bit of help from their friends made history 70 years ago. Reporters and recorders of that history have distorted much of it beyond all recognition. (FUBAR) I offer this caution because like all retelling the following is not perfect.

My introduction to electronics started as a nav student in 1954. I taught all five phases. That, along with a visit to Texas Instruments, Dallas and witnessing the manufacture microchips fully captured my interest. This story of a pair of historical figures, “**Bill and Dave**” and a book by that title became a must read. The book, complete with their pictures on the cover authored by Michael Malone, (obviously a somewhat biased observer) tells their remarkable story. Bill and Dave WHO ? You ask?

Do the names Hewlett and Packard ring a bell? They met when trying out for football as undergraduates at Stanford. Graduating in 1934 with no jobs in sight, their mentor Fred Terman, “guided” them into graduate studies and later provided temporary employment for Packard to lure him back from GE Schenectady, NY to Palo Alto. Bill and Dave decided they would have to create their own jobs. With \$538 investment, they opened what would become Hewlett Packard in Packard’s unheated, dirt floor, single car garage. The preserved site is considered the birthplace of electronics and the forerunner of Silicon Valley. They sold eight copies of their first product (the first reliable audio oscillator) to Walt Disney Studio for the use in making the movie Fantasia, (great pictures, great sound) at \$71.50 per copy. This product became a mainstay in the blossoming electronics industry and helped establish HP as the industry leader in electronic test equipment.

With a \$5.00 Christmas Bonus for all three employees in 1940, HP wrote a book on how to create employee loyalty. Free coffee breaks, profit sharing, stock options, flex time, open floor plans and free time to work on independent projects followed. In the high talent business, HHP retained the best and the brightest and maintained industry leadership as the company grew.

This is the story of great achievers in the electronics field and the products they created. In 1972, Steve Wozniac of Apple fame offered HP what shortly later became the Apple One Computer. As an employee of HP, he was obligated to give HP the first right of refusal. They did! HP could not envision a demand for a personal computer and it did not fit into their product line. From it’s austere start in 1938, by 1977 HP was a 1.4 Billion dollar company with 35,000 employees. Bill and Dave had navigated several reorganizations. The resulting levels of control created upward mobility and promotions that kept the top employees on board.



Dave Packard had served as Deputy Secretary of Defense (1969-71) for Melvin Laird, Reagan’s Appointee. In that capacity he engineered a loan guarantee to bail out Lockheed Aircraft, preserved vital defense programs and prevented cancellation of the C-5 aircraft. Later, Lockheed was awarded the Dave Packard Award for Excellence in Acquisition. In his spare time, Packard reinvented the procurement process for major defense programs. The result was the “fly before you buy” approach for the F-16/F-17. Bill Hewlett had managed the company brilliantly during Packard’s absence (military service WWII) and the D/SecD gig. Dave was instrumental in the thaw with China that President Reagan had championed. Traveling to Beijing as a private citizen, he lead the way in opening the Chinese business market.

Upon their retirement, they continued to serve. The “HP WAY” this dynamic duo created continued when the company was led by their hand picked replacement John Young. When Young retired fifteen years later in 1962, revenues had reached 16.4 Billion dollars and 92,000 people were on the payroll. The final chapter of the book covers the period Carly Fiorina was CEO of HP. Fired by the board, she left with a 28 million dollars severance package. This retelling appears to be a bit one-sided. Carly Fiorina has chosen to enter the Republican Primary contest to become the nominee for president. Perhaps we will hear the other half of what went wrong at HP during those difficult times.

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### ***Bits and Pieces from Walt Larimer***

*The Wall Street Journal and Aviation Week & Space Technology have both published recent articles reporting Boeing's embarrassing problems with development and testing of the USAF's new KC-46 tanker. **Boeing's own expenses to keep the program afloat now total \$1.2 billion.** This is a firm fixed price contract so Boeing must eat the cost overrun themselves. The most recent problem with the program is that Boeing is having problems integrating the fuel system into the aircraft and —during a recent fit check—Boeing was unable to get the boom to pass fuel. Boeing insists no new technology is needed to solve the problem and the “problems are well understood and defined.” Boeing's new CEO Dennis Mullenburg maintains the company is investing the necessary resources to deliver the first 18 KC-46s by August 2016 as required by the Air Force contract. Because of these integrated fuel system shortfalls, Brig. Gen. Duke Richardson , USAF, (the Air Force's Program Executive Officer for Tankers) now states it is unclear when production will begin putting further pressure on Boeing's delivery goal. However, Richardson says “We remain optimistic Boeing will meet the required assets-available target of 18 operationally ready KC-46s by August 2017.” The months-long delay of the tanker's first flight is now scheduled to start in September 2015.*