

The Stratojet Newsletter

November 2008 Volume 29

For Those Who Designed, Built, Flew, Maintained and Loved the B-47



*Bob Bowman, local chairman for the 2008 Reunion, presents a commemorative plaque to Jeff Rhodes of the Lockheed Martin Company. The plaque will be installed in a prominent place at the factory and it reads **To Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company ~ in Appreciation ~ In this plant in the 1950s the Lockheed Georgia Division built 394 B-47 Stratojet bombers that we flew, supported and loved. These aircraft served the U.S. Air Force with distinction and played a critical role in our nation's defense at the height of the Cold War. This tribute to the men and women who built and flew these aircraft was placed by the members of the B-47 Stratojet Association on the occasion of its 2008 Reunion in Marietta, Georgia. The B-47 Stratojet Association, September 27, 2008***

Photo: Augustine Letto

From The President

We had a very successful reunion in Marietta thanks to the efforts of Bob Bowman, Dick Lambert, Jim and Myrna Kraft, and the Reunion Brat, Linda Irvine, and Annie Stiles. The hotel accommodations and service were outstanding. The breakfast buffet was a good incentive to rise and shine, Our banquet speaker, John McKone, held the audience in awe as he related his story of being shot down, rescued, imprisoned, and then eventually released. The hospitality room had the largest display of memorabilia that we have ever had for any reunion. I am pleased to note that we had fifty-one first time attendees at this reunion.

Unfortunately, due the high price of gas and other unknowns the number of attendees was less than planned for and we were forced to pay the hotel for contracted rooms that were vacant. We were able to pay the hotel from the reserve in our checking account.

George Back, who survived the attack on his RB-47 by North Korean MiGs in 1965; Col. Weeks and Col. Livingston, early B-47 instructor pilots at Mac Dill; and Dale Wolfe, the co-pilot on the last flight of a B-47 ever from China Lake to Castle AFB were recognized at the banquet. A complete B-47 crew from the 306th BW was also present: Paul Monroe, AC; John Schofield, copilot; and Bob Zambenini, the navigator. Paul and Bob were the aircrew that won the 1958 bomb-comp. John joined the crew later. Chuck Morrell, the winning aircraft crew chief, and Walter Comeilus, the Bomb-Nav. specialist were also there.

It was a little over ten years ago, that the first Association reunion was held in Omaha. This is a good time to recall Mark Natola's efforts in making the Association a reality. Mark became the leader of the Association by default when Charlie Brown, the original organizer of the Association, died. Without Mark, there would not have been a B-47 Association. Mark, thanks from all the membership.

The 2010 reunion will be held again in Omaha. Dick Purdum has volunteered to run the reunion, and I know he will do a good job. A tentative agenda will be published in the newsletter when Dick develops it. We will be asking the membership to decide, if they are planning to attend the reunion earlier than in past years. In addition, the number of room reservations that will be contracted for will be reduced. You will have to register early, if you want to obtain the reduced reunion rates from the hotel.

I would like to thank our treasurer/ secretary, Bob Griffiths; the editor of B-47 Stratojet newsletter, Mike Habermehl; Dick Purdum, our membership chairman; Bob and Shirley Brierley, the managers of the BX, and Jim Diamond, the website editor for all the fine work they do for the Association throughout the year. Bob and Shirley sold \$1,800 worth of items in Marietta and Dick was able to collect around \$1,800 from members for lapsed dues.

The following is not a Hollywood Oscar testament, but a sincere thanks to the individuals below: David Hitchcock for the beautiful challenge coins he had created (one of which will be sent

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Roll Call of Honor

Richard A. Campbell, Fort Worth TX, passed away in 2008. He flew in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

Luther D. Holliday, Lake Charles LA, passed away in September, 2008.

Flavius J. Patterson, Tucson AZ, passed away in 2008.

John N. "Jack" Schofield Jr., Hampton VA, passed away on November 11, 2008. Jack's cancer was discovered after he attended the Marietta reunion. The memorial service was at the Ft. Monroe Chapel of The Centurion. Internment at Arlington.

Gil Trost, Grants Pass OR, passed away in March, 2008. He was a member of the 442nd BS, 320th BW, March AFB.



Important Reminders

- **Pay your dues for 2009** (the number on your mailing label indicates the year through which you are paid-up).
- Send dues to Bob Griffiths, Treasurer.
- Send address, email, & telephone corrections to Bob Griffiths.
- Send newsletter articles, photos, news about members, etc. to Mike Habermehl, Editor. NOTE: new email address: cmhs@sbcglobal.net
- Invite a friend to join the Association.

The B-47 Stratojet Newsletter is published three times each year. It is intended solely for the enjoyment, camaraderie, and enlightenment of the membership of the B-47 Stratojet Association. Requests to use or reprint any portion of the contents should be directed to the Editor. Contributions of material to the Newsletter should be sent to the Editor, B-47 Stratojet Newsletter, P. O. Box 1144, Brenham, TX 77834-1144, cmhs@sbcglobal.net.

Association Website - <http://www.b-47.com>

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to every dues paying member); Tom Hatten for the eight Cold Warrior prints he has donated to the Association over the past year; Gary Hoselton for the DVD "The Strategic Air Command, a Proud Heritage" (Dick and Alex for the 50 copies they made of the DVD, that are for sale through the BX); Dick Purdum for the B-47 Stratojet decals; Lorraine Purdum for all the chocolates she has supplied to every reunion; Pete Troesch for the work he and his associates did on restoring the XB-47 at Chanute; and Tom Gates for the framed B-47 print and the model of the B-47 he donated as raffle prizes at the banquet dinner. (In all we had three prints and the model as raffle prizes and raised over \$400. Thanks to Marjorie Morrell, who sold the raffle tickets, and Ken Tollin, who collected the money.)

Cold Warrior prints, provided by Tom Hatten now hang in the airport terminals at Salina and Lincoln and base operations at Mac Dill AFB. This was due to the efforts of Tony Minnick at Lincoln, Roe Walker and Leary and Karla Johnson at Salina, and Cappy Bie and Dick Purdum at MacDill.

John Phaler has given me given a complete set of *Combat Crew* from 1951-1991. This is an invaluable research tool for the Association. Eventually, it will be donated to the Strategic Museum. John thanks for your generous gift.

A number of members of the Board of Governors and their families have been sick or have undergone surgery. Our prayers and good wishes for a speedy recovery and return to good health go to Andy Labosky and his wife, Jim Diamond, and Don Cassidy and his family.

A final note, during the Board meeting I remarked that B-47 Association was remarkable in that there was no distinction between the officers and enlisted men. George Brierley replied, "That's because we are all officers in the Association." Well put. *Sigmund "Alex" Alexander, President*

Minutes of the Board of Governors' Meeting Marietta, GA, 25 Sept. 2008

Attendees: Sigmund "Alex" Alexander, president
David Hitchcock, vice president
Bob Griffith, treasurer
Dick Purdum, membership chairman
Mike Habermehl, editor of the B-47 Stratojet news letter
George Brierley, BX officer
Ken Tollin, board member

1. Review of the reunion: Alex discussed the problems associated with planning the reunion and the shortfall of rooms contracted for.
2. Bob Griffith presented the treasurer's report that was accepted.
3. IRS status, Alex will check to see if we are in compliance with IRS regs regarding the amount of funds we may have in our account.

4. Membership report, Dick was able to get members to pay \$1240 in delinquent dues.
5. Restoration on the Strategic Museum B-47E. Dick stated that we are next in line after the B-29 and work should be underway by the time the reunion is held. There is approximately \$36, 000 in the restoration fund.
6. Highlights of the past two years:
 - a. The restoration work on the XB-47 at Chanute has been completed.
 - b. Jim Diamond is to be commended for his work on the web page.
 - c. Mike Habermehl is to be commended for his work as editor of the B-47 Stratojet newsletter
 - d. David Hitchcock for his work on the B-47 challenge coin.
7. The Cold War Warrior prints are up in the Salina and Lincoln terminals and base ops at Mac Dill AFB. Thanks to Tom Hatten for providing the prints; to Tony Minnick at Lincoln, Roe Walker and Leary and Karla Johnson at Salina, and Cappy Bie and Dick Purdum at MacDill for getting the prints framed and displayed.
8. Thanks to Gary Hoselton for providing the DVD, "SAC a Proud Heritage," and to Dick and Alex for making 50 copies of the DVD to sell to the membership.
9. Thanks to George and Shirley Brierley for running the BX and carrying all the BX items to all the reunions.
10. Thanks to Lorraine Purdum for making the reunion chocolates since 1998.
11. Jim Diamond is now a non-voting member of the Board, the purpose is to keep him apprised of all that is going on within the Board.
12. Increasing the number of issues of the newsletter from three to four was rejected. However, emphasis would be put in the fall 2009 and spring 2010 issues on reunion publicity.
13. There will be no B of G's meeting in 2009. Computer correspondence should be able to resolve any issues which arise.
14. The SAC Veteran's Society, we will wait and see how it progresses.
15. David Hitchcock has agreed to take over the presidency of the association in case of Alex's demise.
16. Alex provided a list of DVDs he has converted from VCR tapes.
17. Alex has acquired almost all the "Combat Crew" magazines. Alex will copy portions pertaining to the B-47 and send them to Mike to copy. Alex has forwarded to Dick those issues of Combat Crew printed after the B-47 was retired.
18. Archival materiel, Dick has agreed to accept B-47 archival materiel that would eventually become a part of Strategic Museum. Toward this end, Alex has forwarded to Dick files of materiel that Wen Painter forwarded to him.
19. The summary of the reunion was addressed in a separate e-mail.

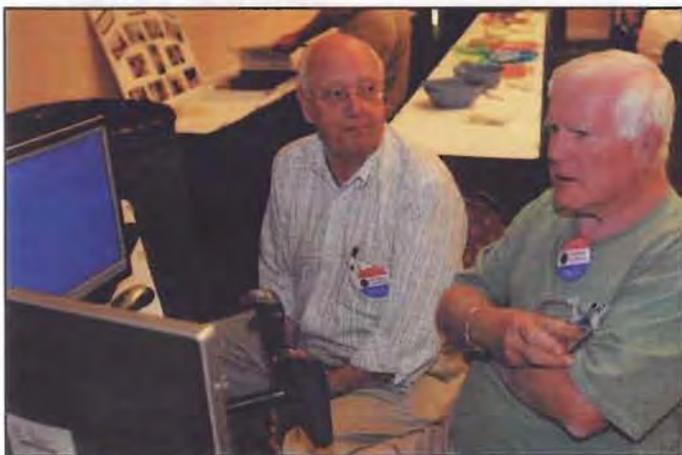
Finally, a number of members of the Board and their families have been sick or have undergone surgery. Our prayers and good wishes for a speedy recovery and return to good health go to Andy Labosky and his wife, Jim Diamond, and Don Cassidy and his family.

Sigmund Alexander, President

Reunion - Marietta



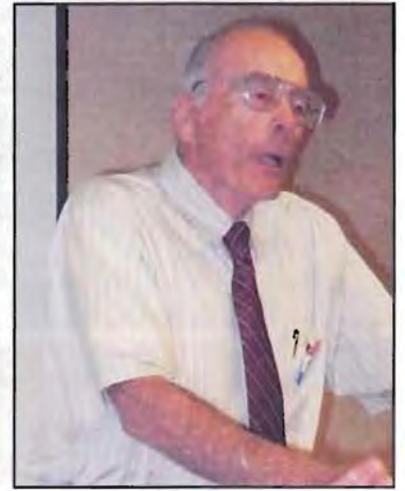
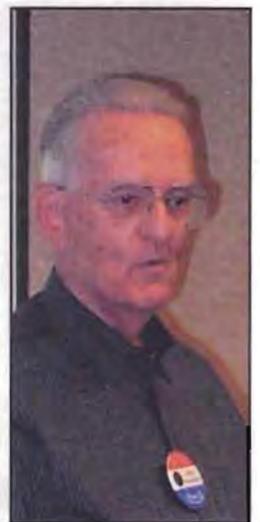
Marietta 2008



Lockheed Tour



Symposium Speakers



Atlanta Yacht Club



Banquet



**Give the gift that lasts forever.
Strategic Air & Space Museum
On Interstate 80 between Lincoln & Omaha Nebraska
Memorial Patio Walk Bricks**

Preserve history and pay tribute to a loved one. The memorial Patio Walk is located in the front of the Strategic Air and Space Museum between the Thor and Blue Scout Missiles. The walk is created out of bricks each engraved with a tribute to an individual or group. The patio provides a resting spot for Museum guests. All of the bricks purchased by the B-47 Stratojet Association members will be grouped together. You can create this permanent remembrance for only \$500. One hundred dollars of this goes to create and place the brick in the walk and \$400 goes directly into the restoration fund for the restoration of the only B-47 bomber model left in the world that is in an indoor protected area. A receipt will be mailed to you. A gift card to the person(s) being honored will be sent upon request. Make all checks out to the **B-47 Stratojet Association** so that these funds will be placed directly into the restoration fund for the B-47. Won't you join us in this most worthwhile project? Please send your check for \$500 and this form to **The B-47 Stratojet Association**, to:

Bob Griffiths, Treasurer, 303 Double Eagle Road, Burgaw NC 28425-8559

Your gift is 100% tax deductible and will help insure that future generations can view a real B-47 Bomber. Include the name you wish to appear on your brick.

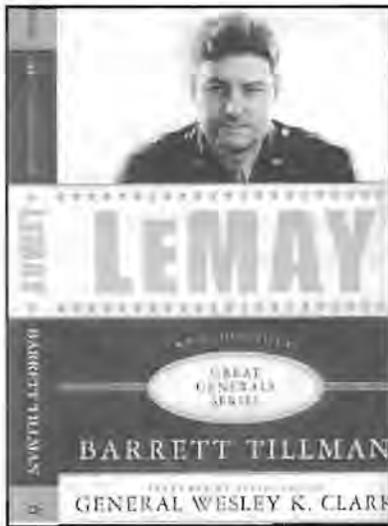
I would like to purchase _____ brick(s) at \$500 per brick.

I would like my first brick to read:
(Maximum of 3 lines/16 characters on each line including spaces)



Dick Purdum, Membership Chairman, is shown with John "Mac" McLean, Executive Director of the Strategic Air & Space Museum, on November 3, when he announced that the Museum's Restoration Team will begin work on the B-47E. Since the Museum is currently restoring a B-29 in the restoration gallery, the team will commence the restoration of the B-47 cockpit while the aircraft remains in the main display hangar. This is an exciting time for the Museum and for all members of the B-47 Association nationwide. Once the B-29 is finished the Stratojet will be moved into the restoration area. The Museum has estimated that the cost of this work will be approximately \$350,000. Donations currently stand at a little over \$37,000. Please consider a brick (see above) or direct donation to complete the only bomber model under cover.

Bookshelf



This small book has not received particularly good reviews but we bring it to your attention because it is showing up at Half Price Books and other bargain book outlets. It originally sold for \$21.95 but can now be purchased for \$7.99 or less. The author has many military books to his credit but this short profile is clearly not a definitive biography of the legendary CINCSAC.

LeMay is published by Palgrave MacMillan,

hardbound, and 206 pages in length. It is the sixth volume in *The Great General's Series*. The B-47 is mentioned, of course, but you will not learn anything new here. The few black and white photos are not particularly notable. The last chapter is an interesting review of Gen. LeMay's legacy.

Thanks For The Memories

These members took and shared many of the 2008 Reunion photos that are featured in this issue of the newsletter.

Gus Letto
 Chuck Morrell
 Dick Purdum

We also thank Jeff Rhodes, Associate Editor of Lockheed Martin's *Code One* magazine for sending photos from the Lockheed plant tour. Security restrictions prevented us from taking our own cameras.

Thanks, guys, for sharing your shots. The content of this newsletter is always dependent on stories, memories, photos, and documents from our members. Do you have any to share?

Lost and *Not* Found!!!

Our Membership Chairman, Dick Purdum, wishes to remind all of our members to update their latest contact information: **addresses, zip codes, telephone numbers, and email addresses**. Newsletters are sent as 3rd class mail and those with incorrect addresses are not returned to us or forwarded to you. Many of us have new area codes or email addresses even if we have not moved. If you have had any changes please send them to our Treasurer, **Bob Griffiths, 303 Double Eagle Road, Burgaw NC 28425-8559**. Bob maintains the membership database that is used for all of our mailings and emails.

Supply Room

Items are available from George Brierley, 5342 6th Place South, Gulfport, FL 33707. Make checks payable to the B-47 Stratojet Association. **Please ADD \$3.00 for shipping and handling**



Association Pin - \$10.00



1000 Hour Pin - \$25.00



Association Coaster (2) - \$2.50

Mug - Association "Horn Button" emblem on reverse side - \$10.00



Association Mouse Pad

\$3.00

Tote Bag from 2008 Reunion at Marietta (side pockets, carrying strap, Association logo)



\$10.00

Association T-Shirt With Pocket - \$17.00 (Size -M,L,XL)



Shirt Front



Shirt Back

More Reunion



Application For Membership - The B-47 Stratojet Association

_____ New Member
 _____ Renewal (Fill in Name only, and address data if changed)

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth (for life members): _____

Military - Your Position In The Air Force: _____

Bomb Wing(s) You Served With:

_____ BW from _____ to _____
 _____ BW from _____ to _____
 _____ BW from _____ to _____

Civilian - Position/Job _____ Company: _____

From _____ to _____

Comments: _____

Dues

One Year: \$15.00

Life Memberships

Age	Dues
59 & under	\$300
60-64	\$250
65-69	\$200
70-74	\$150
75-79	\$100
80 & up	\$ 50

Dues are payable each January.

Payments and this form should be mailed to:

Bob Griffiths, Treasurer/B-47 Stratojet Assn.,
 303 Double Eagle Road
 Burgaw, NC 28425-8559

~This form may be copied to avoid cutting newsletter~

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B-47E, 51-2395, served with the 43rd, 97th, 320th, and 96th Bomb Wings.

Photo: Lockheed Georgia

Pay Your Dues For 2009 Today
2010 Reunion - 23-25 September - Omaha NE