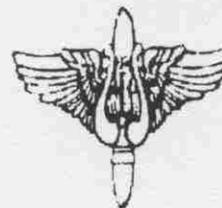




# CODA



THE RETIRED USAF BAND DIRECTORS & SUPERINTENDENTS SOCIETY - FOUNDED 1980

July, August, September, 2000

E-mail address: TheCoda2000@aol.com

Vol. XX No.3

## Nothing could be finer than to be in Carolina... (Myrtle Beach, that is!)



Reunion 2000 Chairman  
John Norse and wife Phyllis

## Reunion 2000 was a Blast!

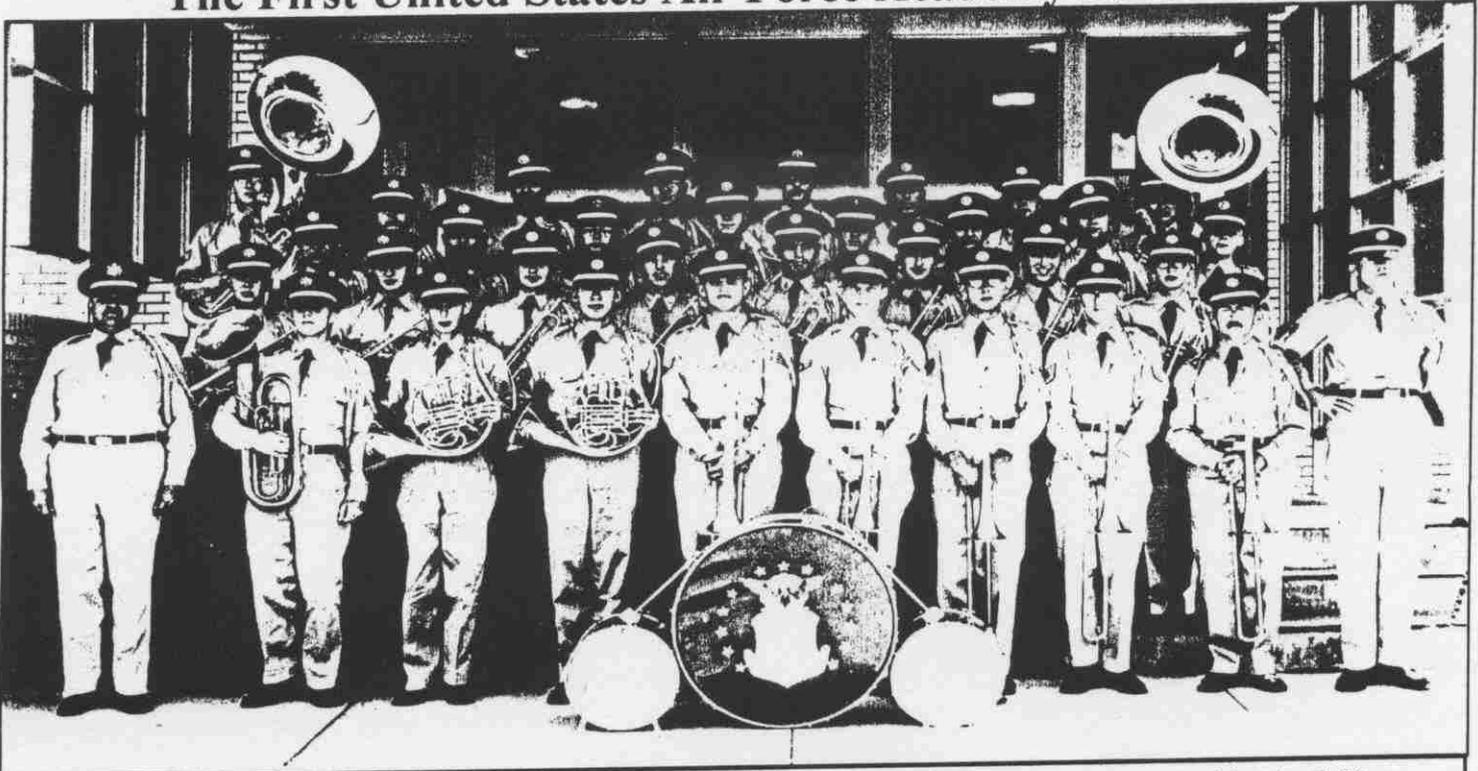
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, August, 2000. Over 150 United States Air Force Retired Musicians and their spouses gathered at the Litchfield Beach and Golf Resort for the sixth musicians reunion which was hosted by John and Phyllis Norse. Thanks you guys for a great reunion!

The four day reunion was highlighted by a 50's and 60's musical review presented by the very talented Air Force Blue Aces group from the Langley Air Force Base Band. Other events included a welcome reception, golf tournament, bus trip to Charleston, South Carolina, a shopping trip to the discount shops, and a wonderful time of renewing old friendships.

Although the next reunion will be held in California in the year 2002, a specific city has not yet been decided. Larry Lawrence and Dick Bordy will be the co-chairman for the event. Your CODA staff will keep you informed as plans develop.

**Editor's Note:** Harry Gleeson will be writing a new series of articles for the CODA spotlighting many of the Air Force musicians of past years. Look for **Spotlight** on page 3 of this issue.

## The First United States Air Force Academy Band – 1955



**First Row:** Carl Costenbader, Larry Z. Smith, Richard A. VanSice, Robert E. Eggestein, Arnold E. Schafer, Ted E. Ashcraft, Howard A. Merrick, Arthur E. Gilmore, Nicholas A. Rossi, William A. Stokes, Jr.  
**Second Row:** Clayton A. Brant, Joel D. Folsom, Richard C. Dougherty, Brent J. Morley, William R. Goode, George E. Mardorf, Cosmo C. Conte, Kenneth B. Schinstine.  
**Third Row:** James J. Byrne, Richard F. Beery, Lee D. Arnett, Jon D. Charleston, Donald C. Anderson, Albert J. Tronti, Carl A. Hardee, Archie B. Wilson.  
**Fourth Row:** Forest A. Ray, Gerald E. Light, John A. Mutu, William A. Roscoe, Gene D. Miller, Donald C. Kimble, Rex J. Williams, Roger W. Sims.

### Personals...

From **Tom Watts**: Seems like yesterday...it was the spring of 1963 when I and two others from the Luke Band along with two members of the Shaw Band were summoned to augment the Langley Band for a TDY to, of all places, Iran...pre Ayatollah naturally.

It was a real experience to travel all that distance in a very cramped C130 and being treated to an endless dissertation...**Costy's** famed (infamous) Rienzi trumpet! We peons from Luke and Shaw were a captive audience...the Langleyites had been previously indoctrinated.

I wonder how many of the current members reading this CODA remember that sojourn? I know **Gene Egge** will never forget the famous camouflaged 'ditches', **John Goodwin** remembers the sand/dust storm of the century, and **Carl Toler** learned first hand (sic) that drinking room temperature (read: hot) Budweiser and needing to visit an Iranian military base restroom (read: bomb sight latrine) don't mix.

That three weeks TDY was a real eye-opener for a first timer like me. Working with great musicians (like the aforementioned), traveling to an exotic locale, and looking forward to more excursions like that probably contributed most to my deciding to re-up that first time! In my nearly 30 years, I never regretted that first decision to re-enlist. I was fortunate to work with the best **CO's**: **Greer, Costenbader, Dieter, Thurston, Sanger, Dries, Knudsen, Hoff, Carl, Schmidt, Peterson, and Chavallard**; some of the best NCOs: **Lemelin, Tardy, Schinstine, Pomerov, Compton, Wilson, Rawl**, and countless others; and I have nothing but the fondest memories of our late colleagues: **Don Kraft** (Yes, the greatest entertainer), Big Daddy **John Lowry**, **Bruce Carter**, **Dick LeBeau**, and so many more!

Excerpts from a letter to **Herman Vincent** from **Ray Toler**: ...physically, I'm great; still have an aversion to flying which I hope will subside. It's really difficult to go very far without flying. Wish we had rail service like Europe!

Catherine and I went to Little Rock on June 1 for the Memorial Service and Reunion of the Survivors of AA1420. I was a bit apprehensive, however I'm extremely glad we went. The hardest part was going out to the hanger and seeing the plane in four segments – that's the way it broke apart. The back portion in which I was riding is totally burned out, no seats, overhead luggage area

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**Personals continued...**

-nothing except a blackened hull. The good Lord wanted me to escape for which I'm eternally grateful.

One of these days I'd like to write a story about the crash. I suspect it would be therapeutic...

**Jim and Louise McMillen** are well, very busy, and enjoying the good life in Oceanside, CA. E-mail us at: jim-lou2@juno.com

**Dick Hartley's** address is: 98 Circle Drive, West Springfield, MA 01089. E-mail: tajoal@aol.com

From **Harry Gleeson**: I will have been joyously married to Lainie DeMore for six years this coming September, and we are both looking forward to seeing everyone at Myrtle Beach.

1998/99 were special years for us because we helped design our new home just west of Cleveland, Ohio. As opposed to the horror stories we had heard from others, we had a builder who, when we signed the contract in August of '98, said that he would deliver our home that December 12th - and he did!

Lainie is a computer consultant, and we designed the house around (1) the kitchen, (2) the great room and (3) our office, which could easily accommodate eight people. And there are large windows/glass doors everywhere.

Lainie and I met through figure skating - she's a National Accountant (scorekeeper) and was the Chief Accountant for the US Championships held in Cleveland back in February.

I've been the announcing coordinator for the US Figure Skating Association since January of '92, and have announced every National Championship since, along with two World Championships, every ProAm to date and so many local events I've lost count. No, we don't make the big bucks on TV - we handle the live audience announcing in the arenas and have great fun doing so. We also have the best seat in the house to see some of the most amazing athlete/artists in the world.

Continued on page 4

**Spotlight!**

By **Harry Gleeson**

Although it's never really been "private," it's now time to "go public" with a project which has been a labor of love since 1992 - gathering material to write the history of the United States Air Force band and the Singing Sergeants.

The project actually started out to produce a biography on Floyd Werle, which will be written simultaneously with the band's history.

One of the most important facets of the history is that, in addition to music performed, dates, times, tours, etc., this will be - first and foremost - a "people" history. Bluntly stated, without the amazing people who created and still populate the band and Singing Sergeants, the "history" would not have happened, because as we all know from experience, instruments and the conductor don't make a band or chorus - people - unique, talented, individualistic people - are the main ingredient necessary for success.

And so this history will be a "people" history of a great musical organization.

Over 100 folks throughout the States have already been interviewed, and research material has been received from throughout America. But that's really just scratching the surface. And since by necessity (you know, little things like helping to keep a roof over the head etc.) this has been a part-time labor of love, I just haven't had the time or the funds to talk with everyone who helped make the Band great.

Already I have five file cabinets overflowing with material, and yet that represents just the tip of the iceberg.

Therefore, I'm asking everyone receiving CODA to contact me with your specific stories. I am especially interested in orders, press clippings, memos, photographs, personal letters, etc. If you can send them to me, I'll copy them and get the originals back to you within a few days. Narratives via e-mail would be appreciated (attachments in Microsoft Word appreciated), or just talk into a cassette recorder and send me the tape. Anything and everything will help and be greatly appreciated.

Please send all information to: Harry H. Gleeson, 8783 Gatewood Drive, North Ridgeville, OH 44039-4375. Phone:(440) 748-9086, Fax (440) 748-0098. E-mail: hgleeson@aol.com

**Out of the past!**

*From the Bolling Field Beam:  
December 5, 1947.*

A new bassoon concerto, "Concerto Orientale," was given its premiere performance by the United States Air Force Concert Orchestra at the Department of Interior auditorium in Washington last Thursday. The concerto was composed by **Eleanor Hindson Meuser** and was performed by her husband, **M/Sgt. Harry Meuser**, bassoon soloist of the USAF Band Concert Orchestra. It consists of three movements, Larghetto, Allegro, and Allegretto and was very enthusiastically received by the audience and critics alike.

Mrs. Meuser received her early musical education in Portland, Oregon. She later studied at the Toronto Conservatory and then won a scholarship to Sherwood Conservatory in Chicago, Illinois. She subsequently completed her studies and was graduated from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. Mrs. Meuser is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota, a national music fraternity.

M/Sgt. Meuser is a former member of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and was the youngest member to hold a permanent position in a major symphony orchestra. He is the third generation of bassoonists in the Meuser family. His father, Hans Meuser, is the first bassoonist of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra while his grandfather held a similar position in the Berlin State Opera.

This musical couple met at the Cincinnati Conservatory in 1939 and were married the following year. Mrs. Meuser had already been interested in composition as well as the piano and had written a composition for two pianos, a string quartet, and many vocal and orchestral works which were performed in concert. With this background, it was inevitable that Mrs. Meuser would eventually write a solo work for her husband.

## The President's Column

By Louis C. Kriebel

In order for you to inform others who might be interested in joining our Society, here are the requirements and benefits of membership.

Any officer or E-8/E-9 (either retired or active duty) that retired from or is serving in the Band Career Field may join the Society. Dues are only \$10.00 per year. Simply write to the President or the Vice-president of the Society as listed on the staff listing on this page.

Benefits include receiving this publication quarterly. We ask our members to send us information about themselves so that others may keep informed of their activities. A membership listing of names, addresses, etc. is included annually. Obituary information about our members and their spouses is also included. A helpful checklist of things to do for a survivor of a loved one is also available.

More about the Society next time...

## Taps...

### Barbara J. Huyett

Mrs. Huyett, 67, died June 1, 2000 at her home in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She was a homemaker.

Mrs. Huyett was born August 12, 1932, in Hyattsville, MD., to Harold and Frederica (Norris) Taylor, who was deceased. She was married February 5, 1955, to Melvin Huyett. She is survived by her husband.

Services were held at the Swan Law cascade Chapel and burial was at the Evergreen Cemetery in Colorado Springs.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of the Comforter, 2345 North Academy Place, Suite 215, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

### June Dietz

June Dietz, wife of George Dietz died on June 2, 2000. No further information is available at this time.

## I Remember...

By Dick Daugherty

- ⇒ Tipping over a row of metal stands while Sam Kurtz was doing an audio check for the Singing Sergeants. That went over big!
- ⇒ Charles Vesely (who used the buzz system) buzzing an F above C sans trumpet. When he put a trumpet to his lips (still buzzing, the note came out of the trumpet. I was impressed!
- ⇒ Harold Copenhaver – one of the nicest men I have ever met!
- ⇒ J. Clifton Williams writing the *Strategic Air Command March* – complete with sonic booms. When we sent a recording up the chain of command for approval, one General sent it back with the comment: "it needs more drums and percussions!"
- ⇒ Meeting Franco's granddaughter and her nanny both of whom spoke perfect Castillian Spanish. My interpreter (bandsman) spoke only Mexican learned from dubious sources. It was hilarious!
- ⇒ Playing for 5 Presidents and, while being within inches of them to give them room near the band, never meeting even one. My wife Arlene, met both Kennedy and Johnson and got her photo in all the papers. (It must help to be beautiful!)
- ⇒ Meeting Rita Hayworth, Fred Astaire, William Bendix, and Robert Mitchum all on the same day.
- ⇒ I was offered about \$300 to enlist for another six years. Today, a new recruit can receive up to \$50,000 after his tour. I must have been a really bad trumpet player!
- ⇒ I was the *number one call* polka band trumpet player in Omaha for a few seasons. There were three basic reasons for this: 1) I could read music, 2) Dan Pasenault was overseas, 3) I would play for \$10 for four hours with one 1/2 hour break.

⇒ Herman Vincent and I appearing with the SAC Band at Solder Field in Chicago. Afterward, we had lunch with a large group that included Lawrence Welk and the Lennon Sisters. I happened to be seated next to Miss Spain. Unfortunately, our conversation was limited since the only Spanish I could remember was how to order a beer. (Actually, I could have ordered up to five at a time if pressed!)



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Personals continued..

New member, Art Gilmore's address is 120 Alvord Place, South Hadley, MA 01075. E-mail: magbg@email.msn.com Art worked at Southern Music then the Warren Covington Band and then a second career of teaching in Massachusetts.