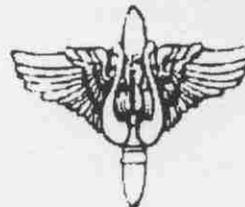




CODA



THE RETIRED USAF BAND DIRECTORS & SUPERINTENDENTS SOCIETY - FOUNDED 1980

October, November, December, 2000

E-mail address: TheCoda2000@aol.com

Vol. XX No.4



*When these very special wishes
Are delivered to your door,
No doubt they'll be accompanied
By many, many more—
Delivered to you yearly,
There couldn't be another
Wished more warmly or sincerely.*

**Have a very
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!**

*From your
Society Staff!
Lou, Vince, Pat, John,
and Ken*

Society to Welcome Retired E-7's! Keeping in tune with Air Force realignment of top three non-commissioned ranks

By Lou Kriebel

In keeping with the present U.S.A.F. directive that gives the rank of E-7 superintendent status, the society now welcomes all active and retired E-7's into full membership. Please help us to spread this information to your E-7 friends.

RAFM is now USAFMAA USAF Musician's Alumni Association is formed

By Lou Kriebel

At the climax of each reunion, past and present reunion chairmen meet to discuss past procedures and ways to make the reunions better in the future. The idea is to assist the newly appointed chairman – whom is selected by the immediate past chairman – to help make the next reunion a success.

After the last reunion in South Carolina, these reunion leaders suggested a few changes. In the past, many of the reunion chairmen had been contacted by former bandsmen (who had spent one or more enlistment's but had not retired) wanting to attend the reunion to reacquaint themselves with some members attending the reunion. And so the change in our title came about – The United States Air Force Musician's Alumni Association.

In this light, we are going to not only contact former musicians, but hope to contact active duty bandsmen and to make them aware of our organization. In this way, the past, present and future will not only be aware, but we hope will become involved.

I also solicit the assistance of each of our members to disseminate this information, so that all may have the opportunity to join the organization according to their eligibility. With the downsizing of the Air Force, we cannot afford to loose contact. Initial reaction to this news has been very positive.

Dues Notice!

Society membership fees of \$10.00 are due to the treasurer on January 1, 2001.

Send to: John Lemelin
4230 Brushridge Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Airman of Note 50th Anniversary Reunion by Larry Trautman

The Airman of Note's 50th Anniversary was held in Washington, DC on September 29th and 30th. A two-hour concert was held at DAR Constitution Hall on Friday night, featuring the Airmen of Note, the Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band with strings, and concluding with the Note and the Symphony Orchestra performing a Duke Ellington original conducted by Colonel Lowell Graham. A video of the Note's history opened the second half of the program, which included vintage black and white footage of the early days of the band. Saturday's agenda included a dinner banquet at the Bolling Officer's Club with a short concert by the present band under the direction of SMSgt. Joe Eckert.

I Remember...

By Dick Daugherty

- ◆ Being given a plaque by the United States Air Force Band that read – "From His Fellow Euterpeans." In my mythology, *Euterpe* was the muse of music and lyric poetry (yes, I had to look it up). Anyway, I was told I was the only person never actually assigned to the USAF Band that had received this award. I'm sure much has changed over the years but I'm still very proud of that!
- ◆ Flying over rural France late at night on Bastille Day. The only thing you could see was celebratory fireworks in isolated villages.
- ◆ Herb Bilhartz who spoke English, German and Spanish as well as being a good musician. His wife, Billie, often appeared as a vocal soloist with our band. Herb tried to become an Air Force Band Director but there were no openings. So, he transferred to the Army and became an Army Band Director. A bold move!
- ◆ Being in the states for a meeting and attending a concert by the U.S. Navy Band. The Master of Ceremonies alluded to an upcoming tour of South America. By the time I returned to Europe, news was received that part of the band had crashed and had been killed during the tour. It was tough getting on an airplane after that!
- ◆ Opening the concert without a conductor or master of ceremonies on stage. We had a secret signal that the Concertmaster sent to a percussionist. He then quietly tapped out the tempo and the band started to play. It never failed to surprise and amuse the audience.
- ◆ Inspecting our band in Japan. I had a day off so I went to visit a friend. I was in a cab in the middle of Tokyo in uniform when I noticed marchers with red flags and red flags held by spectators. Turns out it was May Day and I was right in the middle of a communist parade!

- ◆ Meeting General Chuck Yeager in a Base Operations somewhere in Spain. (I think he was a Major then.) We had a nice chat and I was amazed he would take the time to hear about bands from a lowly CWO.
- ◆ The SAC Band normally traveled in a KC-97 on long trips. However, due to runway length and weight bearing capacity restrictions, we sometimes took a small band of key players in a C-54. Chet Filizoff loaded up a trap set and played all of the percussion parts. (We hardly missed the section!) Chet became Peggy Lee's drummer for many years after he left the Air Force. He was terrific!

Personals

From Carl Toler

Tom Watts' reference to our Iran tour stimulated a few dormant brain cells. Tom...the Iranian water supply ditch was called a "Jube," and Gene Egge wrote a jazz piece for us called "Just Jubin." I also remember, we had completed a concert and some Iranian "big wig" was late, so they suggested we do the concert over. Any questions about the Iranian political confusion?

1969, 16th AF Band, Base Talent Contest... Moron, Spain...show time... the base commander runs into the theater... stops the show... and announced that president Eisenhower has died. No entertainment for a period of time yet to be announced. The next day, we were due to fly to Rabat, Morocco for a gig at the Embassy...no entertainment, but no one would cancel the trip. Prior to landing at Rabat the gig was cancelled. We landed in time to eat lunch and then we were off to Germany to cover a gig for the USAF Band because they were out of the country. Guess what? No entertainment! But... breakfast in Spain... lunch in Morocco...and dinner in Germany...and you guessed it, not a note played! That's got to be some sort of record!

1969, 16th AF Band, Bilbao, Spain. During a jazz concert tour for commanding General Eugene LaBaily, we met with our consulate contact and proceeded to a catholic college to play the concert. While playing the opening number...fruit, bottles, rocks and whatever else came flying through the air with the greatest of ease. We stopped the music, exited the stage quickly and jumped on the bus. Protestors of the Vietnam war had infiltrated the students and "all hell broke loose!" The priest was embarrassed, the consulate was embarrassed, and fortunately no one was hurt. For that I am grateful.

1969, 16th AF Band, Normandy, France. The celebrating was the 25th anniversary of the invasion of Normandy. All Americans should see that sight. There would be a real understanding of what the price of freedom really is.

It was a short 10 months at Torrejon before deactivation but a great experience and a great job completed by a fine group of dedicated Air Force musicians.

From Lou Kriebel

Nova Scotia 22-29 June, 2000. On this trip there were seven of us. This proved to be an advantage as we were to see and go into areas that the normal tour buses were unable to travel. We traveled in a 12 passenger shuttle bus and covered 1500 miles. We flew out of Orlando via Continental Air Lines to Halifax. Our stops were Cape Breton Island, Alexander Graham Bell Museum, Bras d'Or, Cabot Trail, Highlands National Park, Ingonish Beach, Pleasant Harbor, Canso Strait, Sunrise Trail, Caribou, Prince Edward Island via ferry to: Charlottetown, North Rustico. Tea on the veranda of the home of R.M. Montgomery. (Author of *Anne of Green Gables*.) Needless to say, a great time was had by all.

Since then I have motored to Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina visiting friends and attending the Reunion 2000.

Legislative Update

From TROA update of 11/3/00

TRICARE. It's signed and sealed, even though retired service members will have to wait almost another year for final delivery.

On Monday, October 30, the President signed the FY 2001 Defense Authorization Act into law – including provisions authorizing TRICARE-for-life and pharmacy coverage for Medicare-eligible, and allocating part of the government surplus to establish a trust fund that will make this coverage a mandatory entitlement that will not have to compete for funding with the rest of the defense budget.

No more will retired service members or their family members and survivors – as of October 1 – lose their military health coverage upon attaining Medicare eligibility at age 65. No more – as of April 1, 2001 – will those beneficiaries be excluded from Department of Defense retail and mail-order pharmacy programs.

The new law provides numerous other improvements as well which includes Active Duty Family Coverage which eliminates co-payments for active duty family members enrolled in TRICARE PRIME, and provides PRIME-level benefits to families assigned to areas where PRIME is not available.

In a flurry of end-of-year activity, Congress has passed a number of important veterans' bills that significantly improve certain compensation and benefits for service-connected disabled veterans and their families and survivors, including:

- * A 3.5% COLA adjustment to veterans' disability compensation and survivors' dependency and Indemnity Compensation, effective 1 December, 2000. The rate increases will be reflected in January, 2001 checks. (HR4850)
- * Reaffirmation and clarification of the VA's duty to assist veterans in establishing their claims for benefits. This is similar to a provision in the FY 2001 Defense Authorization Act, but provides more definitive rules for the VA to follow. (HR4864)



Spotlight

on
Craig Jessop

By Harry Gleeson

In addition to possessing an absolutely massive talent as a choral conductor, Craig Jessop has displayed an amazing ability throughout his musical career to somehow be the right person at the right place at the right time.

Formerly conductor of the Singing Sergeants (1980 – 1987), Deputy Commander and then Commander / Conductor of the United States Air Forces in Europe Band (1987 – 1991) and Commander / Conductor of the Heartland of America Band (Offutt Air Force Base, NE), Lt. Col. Jessop received an offer to become Associate Conductor of the Salt Lake City Mormon Tabernacle Choir at about the same time the Air Force was offering an early retirement program in 1995.

On October 28th, 1999 he had the honor and distinction of being named the 14th conductor in the 132 year history of what is arguably the best known and definitely the most recorded chorus in the world.

Comparing the two choral organizations closest to his heart, Craig says "The Singing Sergeants was a smooth, sleek little Ferrari, and this (the Tabernacle Choir) is an elegant, marvelous Bentley – but what an instrument it is of dignity and nobility to drive – I love it!"

Back in 1980, his vision, drive and talent, coupled with a core of talented singer artists either already on board or brought in via audition after his arrival, combined to drive the Singing Sergeants forward from its' previously established international reputation as top choral entertainers toward the goal, achieved in a mere seven years, of becoming one of the world's leading choral ensembles.

Twenty two years after his departure, the tradition of professionalism and success created by Jessop and his core group of NCO's, remains to this very day and still serves as the cornerstone and foundation upon which the continuing success of the Official Chorus of the U.S. Air Force is built.

Speaking of being the right person in the right place at the right time, it was Jessop's European assignment which first brought him into contact with choral legend Robert Shaw through Shaw's annual festival in France. That relationship continued and grew through Shaw's untimely death early this year. And sad through the reason be, the relationship will continue when the compact disk of the Brahms Requiem by the Tabernacle Choir and the Utah Symphony on the Telarc label is released – a performance which Shaw was to have conducted in February in Salt Lake City and which Jessop was forced by circumstances to assume.

This choral master considers his Air Force time "just incredible preparation for what I'm doing now." And he remembers fondly his association with his fellow professionals in the Air Force. Starting in DC and continuing throughout his career in military music, "I had these good Chiefs, and it didn't take long to realize that you will not survive without these NCO's."

"It was always my desire to go back to DC, but when this train (opportunity) came along – this is where my heart – this is where I had to be. But I look back, and the Air Force was exactly, precisely what I needed."

Taps...

Dale Chamberlin

Dale St. John Chamberlin died at his Black Forest, Colorado home November 4, 2000. He was born January 28, 1931, in Sidney, NY, to Edwin and Clare (Sands) Chamberlin. Mr. Chamberlin served over 20 years in the U.S. Air Force. His last assignment was as a trumpeter and arranger with the USAF Academy Band. He married Muriel Eldridge on September 7, 1951 at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. His wife Muriel passed away on October 15, 1997, at their home. He is survived by two daughters, Lisa Humble and Paula West of Lincoln, Colorado, and five grandchildren. A memorial service was held at the Black Forest Community Church in Colorado Springs.

Raymond J. Montoni

Raymond Joseph Montoni, 72, of West Chester, PA died suddenly from heart failure on Thursday, September 28, 2000. Born in Bridgeport, Conn., he was the son of the late Joseph and Mary Alice DiLeo Montoni. A violist in the USAF Symphony Orchestra, he received his Bachelor of Music from Hartt College of Music, Hartford, Conn., and a Master of Music from Catholic University of America, Washington, DC.

In 1970, Ray made his first appearance at New York City's Carnegie Hall. He performed as principal violist of the Baltimore, Central Florida and Richmond, Virginia symphonies and taught at Duquesne University, Kent State University, Catholic University of America, University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University. He is survived by his partner, Nanette Ducea; a daughter, Lisa Maria Montoni of Richmond, VA; a son, Lorin Marc Montoni of Edinburg, VA; a brother, Edwin Montoni of Reddington Shores, Florida; and two grandsons.

A memorial service was held at West Chester Friends Meeting, West Chester, PA. Memorial contributions can be made to the Raymond Montoni Music Scholarship Fund in care of the Chester County Community Foundation, 28 West Market Street, West Chester, PA 19382.

Joe Drobny

Mr. Joseph Drobny, who was born in Cadillac, Michigan, died on Thursday, September 14, 2000. Mr. Drobny served in the Navy for six years and then in the Air Force for almost 16 years. He was a Chief Warrant Officer Bandleader. He lived in Spokane for 40 years and worked as a realtor for Carter Lewis Real Estate. He was a member of the St. Andrews Episcopal Church and the Elks Lodge. His wife Ruth died in 1996.

Kenneth Johnson

Your CODA staff was informed of the passing of Ken Johnson on August 3, 2000. He was interred at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. No additional information is available at this time.

Notes from the past

One of the most often heard bugle calls is Taps. The bugle call is more than a hundred years old and was composed by a man who was not a musician but a lawyer from New York who commanded the 12th New York Volunteer Infantry at the start of the Civil War. He was Daniel Butterfield who was awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor and promoted to Major General for his action at the battle of Gaines Mill.

The words which have come to be associated with this call are as beautiful as the music:

Day is done, gone the sun, from the field, from the hill, from the sky.

All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.

Thank and praise for our days, 'neath the sun, 'neath the stars, 'neath the sky.

As we go, this we know, God is nigh.

United States Air Force Musician's Alumni Association

Reunion 2002

at
Sacramento, California

August 7-10, 2002

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Coda is the unofficial publication of the Retired U.S.A.F. Band Directors and Superintendents Society and is published quarterly. E-mail: TheCoda2000@aol.com

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