



An organization of past and present, military and civilian, staffers and employees, their families and friends of the U.S. Armed Forces daily newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*.

NEWS

Winter 2015



Stars & Stripes reunion, Las Vegas, Oct. 5-6

By WALT TROTT (ESS '69-'76)

NASHVILLE – 'Tis said, "What happens in Las Vegas stays in Vegas" . . . but, we beg to differ: Stars & Stripes Association members need to know our unofficial "reunion" in the gambling mecca – Oct. 5-6 at the Plaza Hotel - was anything but hush-hush. From our first breakfast at the Hash House (on premises) to our banquet at Hash House A-Go-Go, it was a fun and noteworthy event.

Including guests, our attendance numbered over 30, marking our first get-together since October 2013 in Nashville, as the announced '14 Reunion in Orlando, Fla., was finally postponed due to disappointing numbers.

Although due to prior commitments, our President Mike Mealey and a majority of board members, were unable to attend, it still proved to be an informative gathering. S&S Newspaper's Joe Gromelski, digital editor, in from Washington, D.C. headquarters, updated us on the unit's operational status. Reportedly, an average of some 600,000 readers comprise the daily newspaper's worldwide audience (pretty impressive).

Joe explained S&S Publisher Max Lederer (Association executive board member) was bouncing back from

recent surgery, but sent his warm greetings; and our Treasurer Cal Posner read a positive financial statement.

Additionally, Joe noted the military's "hometown newspaper" began going digital in May 2004 (stripes.com) and today can be downloaded (PDF) by anyone anywhere off the Internet. He pointed out that S&S, like many major newspapers, now offers its content viewing at a fee (to offset rising costs), but expects association members may be exempt due to allegiance.

Prior to Joe's talk, a former ES&S City Editor Bob Umphress, now in his mid-80s, addressed the crowd, confiding his health had kept him from attending recent reunions, relating with gusto, "Our Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer Red Grandy, now in his 90s, expressed in a Christmas letter, his regrets that there had not been a final Reunion to say farewell to old friends, so this fall's meeting is being nicknamed The Red Grandy Reunion. Hopefully though, it won't be the last."

According to Joe, a possible 75th anniversary celebration, saluting the newspaper's revival as the overseas news source for those Americans serving abroad in the World War II European Theater, may occur in Kaiserslaut-

Stars and Stripes Association Inc. is a California non-profit corporation with more than 300 members worldwide. Address, 1510 West Nottingham, Anaheim, CA 92802

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In memory of Maurice (Maury) Martin, Col., USAF (Ret.), whose efforts as co-founder made this association possible.

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ALLIED WITH

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Stars and Stripes Association News

Editorial matter about The Stars and Stripes and Stripers should be sent directly to the editor, who reserves the option to edit copy. Neither the association nor the editor attests to the accuracy of submitted articles published. Views expressed by authors are their own.



Photo by Hal Slate (PSS '55-'58, '60-'63)

Gary Cooper, Bob Cutts and Jim Hummel

ern, Germany, May 8, 2017. This interested some Association members, who wondered if they might participate in a potential celebration?

Joe also praised past Stripers for setting the pace, along with the contribution of contemporary Stars & Stripes journalists, singling out Travis Tritten, whose well-researched story on NBC anchor Brian Williams, ended the anchor's tale of terror

regarding a March 2003 trip to Iraq, in which he claimed being in a helicopter riddled by enemy fire. Tritten quoted several GI's present when a pair of Chinook "choppers" landing in that desert area during the Iraq invasion, did take damage from a rocket-propelled grenade, adding that Williams was in a third craft landing about an hour later, but did not come under fire. Although an embarrassed Williams' apologized for his oft-repeated earlier report, he was suspended by NBC and replaced as anchor; however, recently he was assigned to MSNBC, the network's subsidiary cable news outlet.

For his hard-hitting "scoop," Tritten reportedly has been nominated for a journalism award. Coincidentally, Stripes boasts an impressive list of 20th century alumni who gained prominence for their expertise, among them Harold Ross, Grantland Rice, Alexander Woollcott, Hal Boyle, Bill Mauldin, Andy Rooney, Paul Fontaine, Shel Silverstein, Steve Kroft and yes, Francis Grandy, whose candid photo of General Dwight Eisenhower's reaction to his Pacific counterpart General Douglas MacArthur's firing by President Truman, during the Korean conflict, went global.

It was nonagenarian Grandy, in collaboration with Umphress, who came up with the idea of holding a Vegas meeting of Association members, despite an earlier decision to pass on a 2015 Reunion, judging by declining numbers in the two years prior.

A few of us had some trepidation about staying at

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Photo by Hal Slate (PSS '55-'58, '60-'63)

Bob Umphress, Walt Trott and Skip Schlaeger, Floyd Thomas (sitting)

the former Union/Plaza Hotel on the old Fremont strip, having “Googled” mixed consumer reviews of the past few seasons. Personally, this writer wanted to be with fellow Stripers, so reserved adjoining rooms for the Mrs. and our son Bill and wife Lisa in the North Tower of the newly renovated Plaza. To our delight, the rooms were good-sized and clean, the service excellent, beginning with our speedy check-in by Mary Rose upon arrival, and most importantly the price is right.

Las Vegas has always been a favorite spot for our Reunions, and little wonder, considering it ranks as the third largest convention venue in the U.S., hosting some 22,000 meetings a year. So thank Bob U. for negotiating this year’s arrangement.

Shortly after settling in, we connected with familiar faces Bob Wicker and daughter Zena Hickey, Yolanda and Floyd Thomas, Nick (Bob) Milham, and our “host” Grandy and grandson Doug Reczko for a memorable exchange of “sea stories,” embellished by bar beverages.

Besides the inviting casino chances as a lure, there’s an eclectic assortment of entertainment and eating establishments on the original strip. Something for everyone, as the saying goes.

During the day, Toshi, our Stripes’ Samaritan extraordinaire, and hubby Gary Cooper “manned” the hospitality suite, while Red and Doug stocked refreshments. Many thanks to Doug for all the hard work volunteered, which helped assure the success of this memorable meeting.

Got an opportunity to tête-à-tête with Barbara Posner, who explained she and Cal were relocating to an even warmer clime in Florida than their Marietta, Ga., residence; chatted, too, with Anita Gosch, (my ES&S successor as entertainment writer) and her amiable friend Rodney Maister; and Vegas-based Philip Schlaeger, who noting a reference to mid-1970s’ ES&S sports writer Mike Korcek being nicknamed “Skip,” shot back, “There was only one ‘Skip’ in sports back then, and that was me!” Ironically,

good-natured Phil and yours truly both have new books being published, his titled “Mickey Mantle Doesn’t Eat Broccoli,” and mine on bluegrass icon “Mac Wiseman: All My Memories Fit For Print.” (Incidentally, ever-helpful Phil’s business card contains a “Tip Chart” on its flipside, citing 15 and 20 per cent suggested gratuities for fares totaling up to \$100.)

At long last, conversed with mentor Umphress and his charming wife Irene, comparing notes on what retirees should consider, regarding residences, in their twilight years. Bob grouched the hardest part for pack-rat journalists like us is downsizing, meaning doing away with a lot of collectibles, adding in mock surprise, it’s memorabilia his sons don’t seem to want. Other Stripe attendees sharing in the festivities included Jim & Haruko Hummel, Jacqueline & Bill Kotoff, Eiko & Bob Cutts, Teruyo & Hal Slate, their daughter Linda Barbuto, and Gale Lilja.

Of course, we noticed the absence of those planning to attend earlier, such as Steve & Suzanne Stibbens, Joe Tartaro, Red’s pal John Michno, his nephew Lloyd Grandy, our editor Joe Schneider and also from his neck of the woods (San Diego), Dave & Betty Feldman . . . and we’re hoping any health problems keeping them away, have cleared up. Nonetheless, we missed them all.

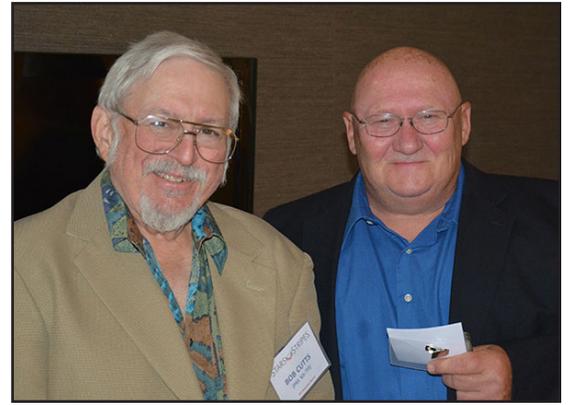
It was a hoot trying to get us all together for an “official” photograph of the Las Vegas assemblage prior to the banquet, as two veteran shutterbugs attempted to choreograph the setting. First off, ex-S&S Pacific’s Hal Slate ordered the tallest to the rear, then urged poor Irene Umphress upfront to scrunch into the same chair as Grandy. Finally, Red took over grandson Doug’s camera, telling Hal to take a seat, and aimed the trusty digital device at grinning subjects. Meantime, Joe Gromelski was snapping away in a most professional manner, hoping to add images to the Association website.

Fortunately, the dinner was a winner, and to top it all off in a Grand(y) Manner, an “anonymous” benefactor insisted on picking up the tab for one and all, and believe me, Skip Schlaeger’s Tip Chart couldn’t have covered that total! (Ask Doug.)

For an extra night in town, we Trotts cantered over to the new strip, staying at the fabulous Bellagio Hotel, with its spectacular fountains and beautiful gardens. That stay was courtesy of the younger two-some, whom we treated to dinner at the nearby Caesars Palace, prior to attending the Cirque du Soleil’s magical “O” aquatic extravaganza in the Bellagio. We learned the Quebec-based artistic company’s mission since its inception in 1984, is to “evoke the imagination, invoke the senses and provoke the emotions of people around the world,” and in closing, we can truthfully exclaim, “It was fantastique! A fitting finale to our fun-filled Vegas visit.”



Red Grandy, Irene and Bob Umphress



Bob Cutts and B.K. Lilja



Toshi and Joe Gromelski



The Hummels, the Coopers, the Cuttses and the Slates, PSS members at Izakaya Japanese restaurant



Bob and Irene Umphress with Doug Reczko



ESS Members enjoy dinner at a German restaurant

Photo by Joe Gromelski (ESS '97, CSS '97-present)



Joe Gromelski and Anita Gosch



Barbara and Cal Posner



Bob Wicker with his daughter Zena Hickey



Skip Schlaeger and Nick Milham



Hal Slate with Christy



Red Grandy with our attractive bartender Christy



Zena Hickey, Bob Wicker, Nick Milham and Rodney Maister



Joe Gromelski speaking at our dinner about ESS's 75th anniversary event in Germany



Red Grandy with Teruyo Slate



Anita Gosch with her friend Rodney Maister



Red Grandy kissing Anita Gosch



Floyd Thomas and Doug Reczko



Walt Trott and Skip Schlaeger



Doris and Walt Trott with their son Bill and his wife Lisa



Bob Wicker and daughter Zena Hickey



Floyd and Yolanda Thomas

S&S Association 2015 Reunion Attendees

Cooper, Gary (PSS '65-'67, '74-'75)
 Cooper, Toshi (PSS '49-'71)
 Cutts, Bob (PSS '65-'77)
 Cutts, Eiko (PSS '62-'74)
 Gosch, Anita (ESS '82-'98)
 Maister, Rodney (Anita's friend)
 Grandy, Red (ESS '51-'86)
 Reczko, Doug (Red's grandson)
 Gromelski, Joe (ESS '97, CSS '97-present)
 Hummel, Jim (PSS '69-'72)
 Hummel, Haruko (spouse)
 Kotoff, Bill (PSS '52-'53)
 Kotoff, Jacqueline (spouse)
 Lilja, Gale (PSS '71-'75)
 Milham, Nick (ESS '72-'75)
 Posner, Cal (PSS '67-'68, ESS '71-'73)
 Posner, Barbara (spouse)
 Schlaeger, Skip (ESS '71-'73)
 Slate, Hal (PSS '55-'58, '60-'63)
 Slate, Teruyo (spouse)
 Barbuto, Linda (Slate's daughter)
 Thomas, Floyd (ESS '66-'74)
 Thomas, Yolanda (spouse)
 Trott, Walt (ESS '69-'76)
 Trott, Doris (spouse)
 Trott, Bill (Trott's son)
 Trott, Lisa (Trott's daughter-in-law)
 Umphress, Bob (ESS '69-'75)
 Umphress, Irene (spouse)
 Wicker, Bob (PSS '57-'59, ESS '59-99)
 Hickey, Zena Wicker (Wicker's daughter)

Report from the Stars and Stripes Museum/Library

September 29, 2015 - Jim and I are disappointed that we will not be able to join you in Las Vegas this year. My sister will be visiting from California to attend her class reunion at that time.

We have been busy at the museum greeting school groups, adult tour groups and visitors from many states, as well as from China, England, Ireland, Russia, and Myanmar (Burma).

Since the museum has no outstanding debt and as of August 31 had \$13,225.12 in a checking account and \$40,216.16 in a money market account, some of the plans for the near future include: (Any help from the S&S Association would be greatly appreciated.)

1. Replace the carpet in the first two rooms of the museum
2. Generate enough income to hire a full time curator
3. Explore the use of digital and mobile technologies to enhance visitor experience
4. Encourage the establishment of endowments to insure the continued operation of the museum
5. Continue to discuss a G.K.Hodenfield exhibit with his family (G.K. was the Stars and Stripes reporter at Pointe du Hoc, Normandy)
6. Develop additional exhibits highlighting Korea, Vietnam and Middle East

On Thursday, October 15 re-enactors will be setting up camp for the 3rd annual Living History Event at the museum. Several hundred students are scheduled to visit the encampments on Friday and on Saturday the event will be open to the general public for special ceremonies, demonstrations, a guest speaker and a jazz band presentation.

We received an advance reading copy of *Writing the War: Chronicles of a World War II Correspondent*, the letters of Stars and Stripes reporter Charles Kiley and his future wife Billiee Gray. The book, published by Prometheus Books, was edited by the couple's son, daughter and son-in-law and provides a look at Stars and Stripes during WW II as well as what was happening on the home front. The book is scheduled to go on sale on October 13, 2015.

Thanks to all who helped support the museum through your memberships and donations. Have a wonderful time together and come to visit us and your museum.

– Sue Mayo, Librarian



THANK YOU!

Stars and Stripes Publisher Max Lederer took the Washington DC Publishing and Media Design team out for a holiday lunch and surprised them with a generous gift from the Stripes Association. Each team member received an iPad and a keyboard case. Words cannot express our thankfulness. You have touched our hearts and our gratitude is overflowing!

Sincere best wishes to each and every member of the Stripes Association for a Happy Holiday Season!

Respectfully, The Publishing and Media Design Team!

Membership Renewal/Change of Address Form

Below is the form needed to renew your membership, activate a new membership, or report a change of address.

Current members wishing to renew their memberships should complete the form below and mail to:

Association Treasurer Calvin Posner 4440 Strathmore Drive, Lake Wales, FL 33859, along with a check for \$20.

New members should also complete the form and mail to Association Treasurer Calvin Posner with a check for \$20.

Make your check payable to Stars and Stripes Association.

New members are asked to include a short biography and current members are encouraged to add any updates to their bios.

The bios will be included in our membership directory.

Change of address, e-mail, phone, fax notifications should be sent to Membership Manager Calvin Posner with no check.

Note: Dues are NOT tax deductible.

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Cell Phone _____

Years with Stars and Stripes (CSS, ESS, PSS) _____

Circle any of the following that you do **NOT** wish to be published in the Assn. Directory

Address Phone Cell Phone E-Mail

Comments:

First Class Mail

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