

# the **HOF CONNECTION** newsletter

Jan 2005

## ¡BACK TO BILOXI – 2004!

The reports are in, and it was another great reunion. Forty-some (or so) years ago, none of us would've thought Biloxi could be fun; either we've lowered the bar, our memory has gone bad or Biloxi has really improved. Go figure. The weather was great, just after a notable hurricane, it was comfortably warm, even if you went outside, and there wasn't any real storm damage that required work crews climbing all over the place with chainsaws and chippers and running amok with dump trucks and other galump. Another noticeable change - they showed their "Southern Hospitality" this time, we weren't criticized for our haircuts being too long or shoeshines not being very shiny, we didn't get yelled at if we stood around with our hands in our pockets or didn't have a hat on, and we could slouch too, that is, unless the wives said something. Life is good.

**Tom Bryson**, Executive Advisory Board, has this firsthand report:

Greetings, fellow Hofers. If you didn't get to Biloxi, you missed a great event. The home of Keesler Air Force Base was no stranger to many of us returnees. But the Keesler of today is a far cry from what everyone remembered of their stays there in the '50s and '60s. It's a totally modern facility with a golf course, modern gymnasiums, shopping facilities and so forth; it's probably one of the most upscale neighborhoods in Mississippi.

Biloxi itself has also changed, even though it's still tucked up in the northeastern tip of the Mississippi Sound (not the Gulf of Mexico), it offered a variety of laid back, comfortable casinos, twenty-six miles of gorgeous, man-made beaches and every kind and style of seafood you could imagine. It is also only about eighty miles from the French Quarter of New Orleans, for those inclined to visit "The Big Easy."

Check-in at the hotel was quick, the staff was courteous, the rooms were spacious and comfortable. The facilities were well maintained and our Hospitality Suite was cozy and intimate. All of the activities were well attended and gratifying to those who participated.

Once again, we all enjoyed an occasion that fulfilled the purpose of reunions in every way: to renew old friendships, to perpetuate the memory of our service in West Germany, to promote fellowship and friendship among all of us interested in the Association and to educate dependents and relatives as to the importance of our time in the East/West border area during the Cold War.

Our next get together will be in Nashville, TN, easy driving from almost everywhere (east of the Mississippi- Ed). Do your best to get there. With mortality breathing down our necks, an opportunity to meet and party with old friends should never be passed up.

**Hospitality Suite Action** - Every year the first step to having a great time is finding the Hospitality Suite and this year was no exception. Tom Nickerson, Dick Obidinski and Jim Riffin headed up a group of faithful volunteers to make this the "Hub" activity, there aren't any schedules, no agenda, no attendance records being kept other than having to register and pick up our "member packages" with any T-shirts and/or hats that may have been ordered. The dress code is pretty accommodating (don't even think about wearing a tie!), as this is where we put out our scrapbooks, set ourselves down, have a beer and a donut, and retell all of the old lies. This is "Activity Central," the location of the Squadron Bulletin Board; posting the schedule of events, the tour rosters, table seating, all the stuff you need to know.

This is where we also need the most help, **Don Riverkamp**, our 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, explains:

Fellow Hofers and Association Members - Every year the Hof Reunion Association depends tremendously on the work of many volunteers to help make our yearly reunion the wonderful success that it has been and will be in the future.

The past two years, I have volunteered in the hospitality suite, working with the registration, passing out T-shirts that people ordered, and this past year I even worked with the committee on the banquet seating arrangements. We are always looking for people who would love to volunteer their services for at least a couple of hours during the initial registration, and later, when the

hospitality room is open for all the members to socialize. The tasks are not physically demanding nor mentally challenging, but they are fun. I can tell you from experience, volunteering during registration and in the hospitality room IS the best way to see everyone coming to the reunion, you'll have first shot at meeting old friends and making new ones.

As a new association officer this year, I'm extending an early offer for volunteers to help with the 2005 Nashville reunion. I guess this is also a commitment on me being there.

I promise that anyone volunteering will NOT be disappointed, it is truly amazing how many people you get to meet, have fun, and help out the association all at the same time. We are not asking for all day, like many of the board members spent this past year in Biloxi, but only a couple of hours on one day of the reunion – of course, some of the volunteers DO like to work the long hours for the reasons stated above. It's fun!

Danke Schön mein fellow Hofers!!

Now, once you cleared through the Hospitality Suite, you check the bulletin board for other activities, and the next one on our official agenda was the afternoon Business Meeting. Listed below is the new roster of officers and board members, and further back are the minutes for the meeting so you can follow all of the intrigue and back room dealing involved in organizing a nefarious group like this.

New Executive Board: President: Dick Obidinski, V.P.: Jim Riggan, 2<sup>nd</sup> V.P.: Don Riverkamp, 3<sup>rd</sup> V.P.: Bobby "Stu" Sturdevant, Secretary: Jerry Mangas, Treasurer: Nathan Sparks, Membership chairman: C.A. Russell.

The Executive Committee is now comprised of: Thomas Bryson, Tom Nickerson and Jim Patterson.

The events were arranged to "ramp up" with Tuesday evening's activity being the Social Buffet Reception, casual dress and a very nice buffet to occupy us, followed by some introductory speeches and activity announcements. We adjourned early so we could hit the slots, the tables, or retreat to the lounges for further planning of critical strategies. Wednesday's activity(s) were a series of lunches and dinners of smaller groups, arranged by the years of service and the organizations the members served in. It worked great!

Then came the BIG evening event on Thursday, the Banquet Dinner. This is where the guys get to show off their new necktie (the one without the gravy stain) and the ladies get to show off their nice dresses. This is the sit-down meal with all the trimmings: speakers, entertainment, and door prizes. The program commenced with the Color Guard from Keesler AFB, Traudl Riggan singing the Star Spangled Banner and Brenda Emery singing America the Beautiful, both of them doing an excellent job. An invocation by Rev. Norman Gunther. Chaplain Francis Fukumoto organized a memorial "The Final Inspection," with Chuck and June Parnell, and the reading of names from the Final Flyby List assisted by Tom Bryson, Bob Alekson, Jerry Middendorf, Stan Heath, Brent Scott, Larry Shriver, Jerry Sommers, Eddie Crump, Bill Toni and Henry Quarterman.

There were several speakers to be thanked, LtCol Jimmy Johnson, Gail Norvell (widow of Robert) and Britt Albritton, for their informative insights. On the more serious side; our guest speaker, James Binnicker, Ninth Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force (Ret), accompanied by his wife Jan, explained to us the history and the workings of the Enlisted Widows Village and how they are helping hundreds of widows that would otherwise be in difficult situations. This is definitely a worthwhile charitable organization and he was quite appreciative of our donation. For those that would like to provide a one time Memorial Gift of \$50 or \$100, or those that can make a monthly contribution of \$5, \$10, or \$20 (or more), contact Anna Skelton, Secretary, Tel 850-651-3766, or email [skelton@afenlistedfoundation.org](mailto:skelton@afenlistedfoundation.org). For more information check their website: [www.afenlistedwidows.org](http://www.afenlistedwidows.org). CMSAF Binnicker expressed his amazement that we could organize a reunion group this large just from the people stationed at one location in Europe. Maybe we are different.

President **Dick Obidinski** reports on the entertainment, and beyond:

I first want to thank all those who participated in the Hof Reunion - Biloxi 2004. It was a fine affair and all the hard work has paid off again. Great job!

The Banquet Dinner was a great occasion, great food, and some great entertainment coming from within, in the form of Traudl and Tanja Riggan. We always expect great music from Traudl, but this time we were also delighted by their lovely daughter, Tanja. Jim was there too but I can't remember if he did anything. How are Jim and Traudl Riggan going to outdo this year's entertainment? Well, this question is asked every year and every year they make it better. Jim will explain a little bit further on.

And maybe, just maybe, we can we get those high-stepping "Hofer Top Hatters" to perform again. Great legs, great moves and timing – they had it all! HA HA.

Of course there were a few glitches that had to be addressed, but all in all, everyone had a good time.

We elected a few new officers; we're up to full strength now as we head for Nashville, TN, for the 2005 Hofer Reunion. We are expecting an even greater turnout in Nashville and plan on having a fun event that we can all enjoy as the committee is working diligently to offer an interesting and fulfilling program.

We keep asking for assistance in locating old friends of Hof and getting them to experience the camaraderie of our reunions. Please keep searching and talking our friends into meeting with us again. It's fun. And remember the 2006 reunion will be back in Hof/Saale, Germany.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Nashville so we can talk about the Germany trip!!! God Bless ya'all

Dick and Evi Obidinski

Following dinner, the entertainment commenced with Dick Obidinski and Jim Riggan handling the introductions. For the prize give away portion of the evening, Tom Nickerson and Dick Barry teamed up to hand out the loot. We did pretty well in this area. For starters, several association members generously donated door prizes. Authors Elizabeth Jung, Dr. Mike Helfert and Gary Schilling donated autographed copies of their wonderful books. Lonnie Henderson donated two lathe-turned, wooden bowls he turned, also autographed. Brenda Emery and Don Riverkamp donated travel bags, Hilde Middendorf and Rita Bennit donated artwork, and Tom and Monika Nickerson donated two bottles of Piersporter wine. We thank you all for your generosity. Those prizes and the other couple dozen prizes made a few people carry a lot of things out that they didn't know how to pack in their luggage. There was one area though, where the prizes didn't represent any packing problems – the 50/50 Raffle. We'll let **Jim Patterson**, Executive Advisory Board, explain:

The Raffle is a great way of making a little extra money for our use at the Reunions. About 2/3 of the money collected was divided into smaller amounts then raffled back to the Membership, and nobody complained about having to find room to pack it. The other third was used to buy snacks, beverages, and other items for our Hospitality Suites. Any excess is turned over to the Treasurer and usually ends up as part of our donations to Charitable Organizations. So your donation large or small touches a lot of people and we all have a good time doing it. Also some of us go home with some really nice gifts. It works out well.

And the results of the drawing left 6 members with \$100 cash prizes and the big one, of \$200, went to Gary Cherpes. Not too bad at all.

Although it's a little early to provide a definitive entertainment program for Nashville, **Jim Riggan**, Vice President, has a handle on this tentative plan.

For the Nashville Tuesday evening show, we are planning to take the folks back in time with music, old songs, country & western, some dance performances and clean comedy. We plan to bring Tanja back next year, Traudl will sing a couple songs, and we are still looking for volunteers to perform. Start thinking about what you would like to do, you do not have to be professional. Please do not wait until the last minute, last minute songs are expensive to have recorded for use during the show, cost is more than \$30.00 for a CD. We can have 5-6 songs recorded for \$30.00. Talks and comedians will be very limited, no more than three for the show and limited to 3-5 minutes, strictly enforced, at 5 minutes the plug will be pulled and the offender taken out and beat up. We are taking requests for songs, let us know what you would like to hear, and let us know early, we are always open for suggestions.

Thanks,  
Jim and Traudl Riggan

Again, we all thank the Riggins for the many hours of preparation and the work they have so unselfishly done for us, the enjoyment they have brought to us all through the years. They have become our very own "von Trapp Family!"

During the daylight hours there were other diversions from the casinos. There were a few tours arranged for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: a visit to Keesler AFB, some historical sites, including Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis' Home and Library, the Seafood Museum and then off to New Orleans. I didn't hear any complaints except a few folks saying they didn't get enough exercise and they ate too much again.

One of the things that make the reunions a success is the members themselves. We've always found our members to be accommodating, willing to reach out to strangers, make new friends and enjoy our times together. And here's a little overall commentary from **Bob Alekson & Tony Donofrio**, Sergeant(s) at Arms,

Can you believe it... our Biloxi reunion is history! We must admit that our group is a well-disciplined bunch. Why we say that is because during our recent get together we all adhered to wearing our nametags to functions requiring them which certainly helped in controlling entry to these events. We try to be helpful to all of our group and their spouses and cannot say enough on how understanding everyone is. It really shows... the respect we have for each other and the pride we have in being a "Hofer".

Come on Nashville...

So, how do we keep the spirit alive between reunions? Well, let **Bobby "Stu" Sturdevant**, 3<sup>rd</sup> V.P., explain a method.

Let me pass on what the members of the Air Police/Security Police and assorted friends are doing. First of all we sent our digital pictures of the Biloxi Reunion to Tom Mikloiche who produced an outstanding CD with music and captions. Now, our initial intent is to send a copy to each of our old friends, with proven addresses, that didn't show up in Biloxi. After they see the proof in the pudding they will be motivated to make plans to go to Nashville, TN, next year. There were a number of our police friends that couldn't make it due to health reasons, prior commitments, budget or work commitments, and this is our way of showing them what they missed. They say a picture is worth a thousand words - well we have over 200,000 words headed their way - we sincerely hope this will help motivate them to attend next year in Nashville. We also plan to continue an email campaign keeping our friends informed. And if anyone else would be interested in the CD, contact Tom, I'm sure he could figure out a way to accommodate them.

I challenge everyone to use the Master Hof Roster to find just one more "missing" person, locate them and pass that info on to the Membership Committee and/or the Air Police friends so we can correspond with them. We can then mail them a copy of the CD to show them what happens at a Hof Reunion

Although it seems like it's all fun 'n' games, here's a few words from the guy that has to pay the piper, **Nathan Sparks**, our treasurer.

It has been a great pleasure working with the officers and members of the Hof Reunion Association this past year. A check for \$1500.00 was presented to the Air Force Enlisted Village, which was accepted by CMSAF James C. Binnicker at the Reunion Banquet in Biloxi. The Air Force Enlisted Foundation provides surviving spouses, requiring financial assistance, a place to live among peers, sharing memories of Air Force life without the stigma normally associated with subsidized housing. A charitable donation of \$350.00 was mailed to the TEE Tournament of Blinded Veterans, Iowa City, Iowa as voted on by the reunion attendees. The mission of the TEE (Training, Exposure, Experience) Tournament is to give legally blind veterans an opportunity to develop new physical skills and strengthen their self-esteem in golfing and bowling events. We also have received a letter from the TEE Tournament Committee thanking the Hof membership for the donation. The bills relating to Biloxi Reunion have been paid and our balance as of December 2004 is \$12,253.25. The greatest costs to the association are the printing and postage of the semiannual newsletter, the quarterly Master Roster and costs of planning the Nashville Reunion. The officers of the association are working diligently to reduce the expenses where possible.

One of the changes for this year is a new Secretary; if you're on the email list you've already seen some of his handiwork with the weekly "Updates," if you're just a Newsletter shut-in, then here is his introduction. He is a very important part of keeping the spirit alive during the rest of the year.

First, "Grüß Gott" and "Hofergrüß" to all from myself, **Jerry Mangas**, at Hof 65-68, 6915th OPN. I am the new Association Secretary, trying hard to fill the size 40 (43 EE. Ed.) shoes that Chuck Wilson has left behind for me to wear. Chuck remains very active with the Board of Directors and the Association in general, and continues to supply us with his expertise and experience. He is also working daily with CA Russell on the Membership Committee and we are in constant communication thanks to the wonders of the WEB.

We are slowly but surely moving business from <www.hofreunion@aol.com> to <www.hofreunion@fast.net> but both addresses will stay active. The phone number and website are unchanged and will remain so. As will the Reunion Post Office mailbox. Newsletter publishing will be moved to PA from CA, and due to cost improvements available here in PA we should be able to produce a bigger, badder, bolder, bi-annual, newsletter for our members. Phil Murray remains ye Editor of the newsletter. Just the production site is moving. And NO, Pennsylvania is not considered offshore. (PA is covered by the NAFTA agreement. Ed)

One of the more challenging parts of the Secretary's function for me is the production of the Weekly Hof Connection email update, Currently at #170 or so and growing. Some members are already contributing and I urge everybody with tidbits, trivia, factoids, questions, old legends and gossip, or identified, or perhaps unidentified pictures (Who IS that masked man?) to send

them along to <hofreunion@fast.net> or to my membership roster USPS address for consideration and inclusion. Anything you send by USPS, and wish returned, will be sent back ASAP. Names and sources can be protected if needed if you are bashful or just plain guilty. We are also including Kreis Hof area websites in the weekly update from time to time which can offer quite a glimpse into the Hof region if you have not been back, and a tour down memory lane for all.

One of the major parts of my contribution to the next mid year edition of the newsletter will be a complete history of 2nd Lt Brian Kingsley, USAAF, MOH, the namesake or "Patron" as the Germans call it of the Kaserne from 1948 to 1985 and the "rest of the story". Once you see the complete details you will agree that it is quite amazing. Hopefully and most fitting, right around Memorial Day.

I am looking forward to another exciting year with the Group as we continue to grow into one of the LARGEST active reunion associations in the Air Force.

**Chuck Wilson**, now the Vice Secretary, is still taking care of business.

Minutes of the General Membership Meeting, 25 October 2004  
Imperial Palace Hotel, Biloxi, MS

4:10pm Association President Jim Patterson called the Hof Reunion General Membership Meeting to order. Jim informed attendees that in accordance with the Constitution and By-laws, and previous announcements, only one member per family was permitted to attend the G.M. meeting. After allowing time for some spouses to leave, Jim gave a brief overview of the Meeting Agenda.

4:15pm Treasurer Nathan Sparks provided a financial report. He informed all members in attendance that the books would remain open and available for the next 2 days if anybody would like to review or audit the Association financial record. Tom Mikloiche made a motion that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as read. Jim Riffin seconded the motion. Accepted by voice vote.

4:20pm Secretary Chuck Wilson was prepared to read minutes from the Las Vegas G.M. Meeting that appeared in the January 04, Hof Connection Newsletter. Tom Nickerson made a motion that the minutes be accepted as they appeared in the Association Newsletter. Tony Donofrio seconded the motion. The motion was carried by voice vote.

Old Business:

4:23pm Jim Patterson requested three different teams composed of members at large to conduct an official tally of 2005 Reunion Location ballots that had been returned to the Association Secretary by US Mail. The official count was announced as 86 Nashville, 77 Branson, and 75 Atlantic City. Jim then requested members confirm the vote by a show of hands. Nashville, TN, received a clear majority. Jim announced that the 2005 Reunion would be held in Nashville.

New Business:

4:30pm Jim Patterson thanked the Association Membership for their support over the past year and turned the gavel over to incoming President Dick Obidinski who, due to Bruce Orr's untimely death, moved from 2nd V.P. to President.

Dick Obidinski opened the floor for nomination to 2nd Vice President. Ken Putman nominated Don Riverkamp. Seconded by Don Fields. Tom Bryson made a motion that nominations for 2 V.P. be closed, seconded by Bob Aleksen. Don was elected by acclamation.

Dick then opened the floor for nomination to 3rd V.P. Tom Mikloiche nominated Bobby "Stu" Sturdevant. Dave Dickson quickly seconded the nomination. Tony Donofrio made a motion that nominations be closed, Seconded by Ken Putman. Bobby "Stu" Sturdevant was elected by acclamation.

Dick then opened the floor for nomination to Secretary. Chuck Wilson nominated Jerry Mangas. Seconded by Tom Nickerson. Dan Scanny made a motion that nominations be closed, seconded by Don Riverkamp. Jerry Mangas was elected by acclamation

Dick then opened the floor for nomination to Treasurer. Jim Patterson nominated Nathan Sparks, seconded by Tom Nickerson. Chuck Wilson made a motion that nominations be closed, seconded by Phil Murray. Nate Sparks was reelected to Treasurer by acclamation.

The floor was opened for nomination for Membership Chairman. Chuck Wilson nominated C.A. Russell and was quickly seconded by Tom Nickerson. Larry Shriver made a motion that nominations be closed. Seconded by Bennie Hopper. C.A. was reelected by acclamation.

4:43pm Dick Obidinski then introduced Robert Hörath. Robert told the Association membership that Hof would be ready for a

reunion in 2006. He recommended July so participants could participate in the Volksparade. He also stated that he would work on possible tours to Potsdam and Berlin. Dresden could be given consideration also. After Robert finished speaking, Dick asked for a show of hands of those that were in favor of returning to Hof for the 2006 Reunion. The Show of hands was about 90% of those in attendance. Some folks mentioned that July would be very expensive for travel. We will go to Hof in 2006 but the month of travel will be decided in Nashville when more information is available.

CA Russell made a motion that the meeting be adjourned, Seconded by Tom Nickerson. Motion Carried.

And, speaking of our returning Membership Chairman, **C.A. Russell**, our delegated sleuth and tracker of lost persons has a few words.

Many of our members have made a genuine effort to assist us in building the Master Hof Roster by mailing in copies of old orders, rosters, bulletins, and other documents that contain a few names of former colleagues. We appreciate your support. We also know that we have a lot of members out there that have not taken the time to dig into their storage closet or old record jacket that has been stored for years. Even the old address book may be a source for coming up with a few names that are not on the Master Hof Roster (MHR). At present we have more than 2900 in the found or missing category, more than 300 on the Final Flyby List (FFL) and about 60 spouses on the Ladies Serving in Heaven List. If every member would take a little time and make that extra effort to provide us with copies of their Hof Documents, we could grow the roster to 4500 and find more of our missing colleagues. I think it is time to ask the ladies to step in and provide more of this valuable information source. That's one way we'll get the job done and done right. Well ladies, can you help us out? Send copies of the old orders, rosters, bulletins and what have you to:

**C.A. Russell, 1206 Achord Rd, Dublin, GA 31021-0715**

Our Webmaster, **Barry Springsteen**, has a few comments on recent improvements.

New Roster Page Change

The roster page of the association web site is going to take on a slightly different look. Currently we have the name, date and type of affiliation with Hof of only active members listed. The new page will expand the online roster to include the names of missing and non-active personnel as well. It is our hope that this will aid in locating additional people and providing them with the opportunity to renew old friendships.

The page will retain its basic look but will have several buttons added. You will be able to select and display a specific category of personnel by clicking on the corresponding button. Additional search and sort features will be reviewed and if they prove to be feasible, they will also be included.

Comments about the current web site, suggestions for improvements or a description of a new feature can be E-Mailed to [hofreunion@att.net](mailto:hofreunion@att.net).

Editor note: If you haven't taken a look at the website recently, you'll be pleasantly surprised. Barry has done an excellent job making the site user friendly. The screens and menus are informative and efficient. He's had a little help from Gary Dempsey and Jerry Mangas, but he's the NCOIC and it's lookin' good. Check it out! I hate to say that everyone should have a computer (myself included), but if you're interested in the association and the time spent in Hof, our website can almost justify the purchase.

A historical suggestion from **Gary Dempsey**, Historian.

As we hang a new calendar on the wall and think about all the years that have already flown by, this is a good time to send your memories of your "Hof Days" (Hof Daze??) to the Association website, to share with others. It's real easy to do. Just go to <http://hofreunion.com/home.html> and when you get there, click on the "Bulletin Board" button on the side of the page. This will take you to a page where you can select the "history" forum to drop off your recollections. At the history forum you can either add to a topic that's already being discussed, or you can start your own topic.

We have our big Reunion just once a year, as you know, and the History forum is a good way to maybe continue a story that you started telling in person, or to get info about what happened when... You can even ask if the other members know "whatever happened to Charley, or Mike, or Joe?"

And, since one picture is worth a thousand keystrokes on your computer, if you have some old pictures gathering dust on the top shelf of your coat closet, drag them down and contact the Association's Webmaster at <hofreunion@att.net> for info on how to submit them for everybody to see.

I'll also be doing my best to keep adding little tidbits as they come to my attention. And, finally, let's all give a huge THANK YOU to Jerry Mangas for the terrific job he's always doing on the research end. The origin of the Kingsley Kaserne name was a heckuva good story.

### **Current association email addresses**

As of 1 January there are three in use:

[hofreunion@aol.com](mailto:hofreunion@aol.com) is the Membership committee and financial center address

[hofreunion@att.net](mailto:hofreunion@att.net) is the website center address

[hofreunion@fast.net](mailto:hofreunion@fast.net) is the "connection update", Nashville Reunion and Secretary address

And another piece of Hofer History from **Jerry Mangas**, perhaps a few remember this plan.

### **What were they thinking?**

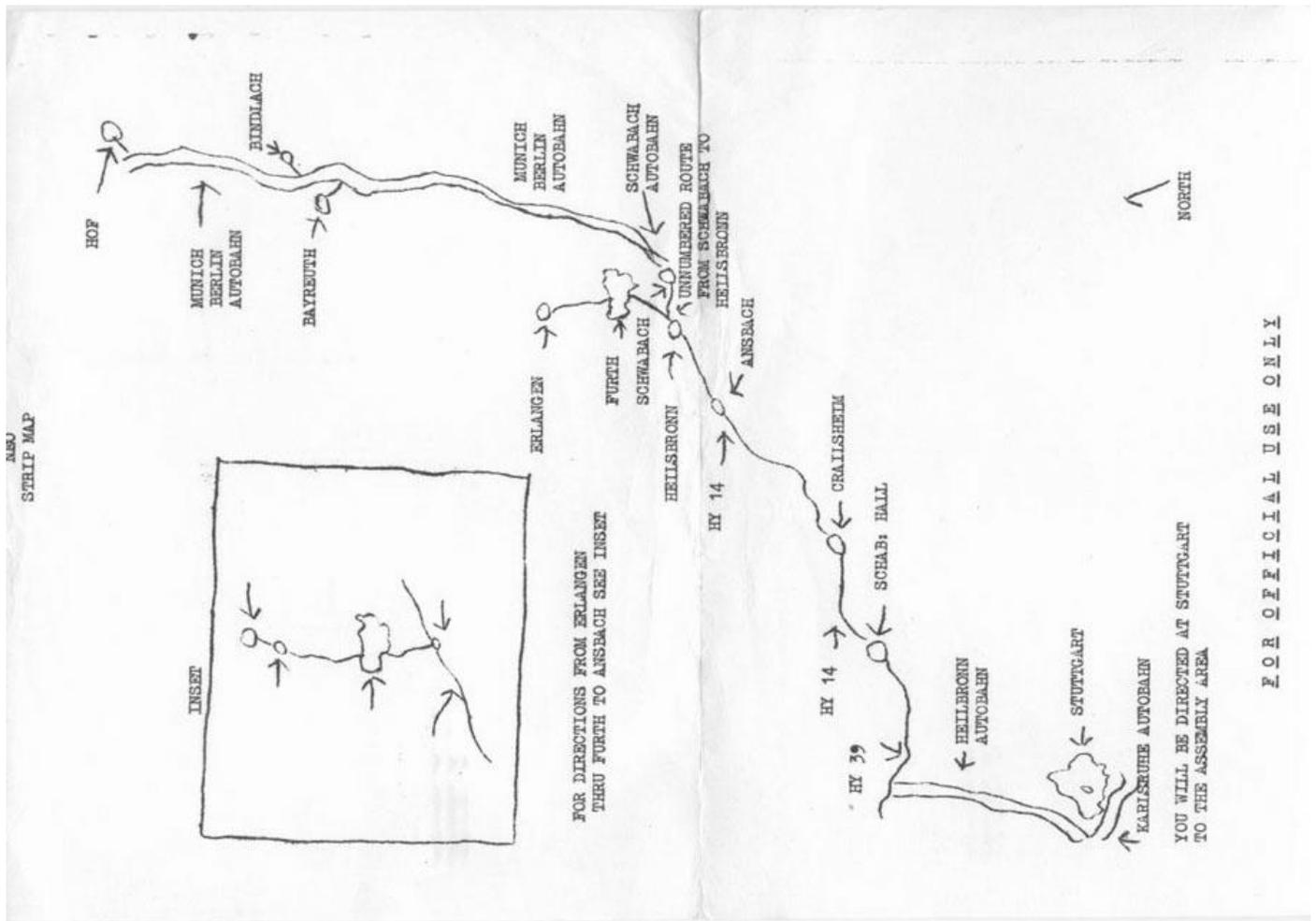
Consider the political and cold war times we lived in, in Hof/Saale. Words like "MAD" were in common use along with multi-multi megaton atomic weapons. We were well beyond the days of duck and cover and had survived the Cuban crisis with our collective butts intact, and even came out ahead. We knew about DEFCON 5's and the stress that went with it.

But here we are, or there we were, 5 kilometers or so from Soviet forces, closer probably than any other air base or station in the world to the red hordes of GSFG with their Tank, Guards and Shock Armies. While we were keeping track of the Air Armies in both East Germany and Czechoslovakia, and the rest of the Warsaw Pact, we have our families, our "dependents", with us and we lived there in the so-called "border lands".

The powers that were decided, in their wisdom, that a plan should be made to evacuate non-combatants if the going ever got tough and things got *real* in a hurry. The answer was the "NEO." There are a couple of interpretations of "NEO;" one is "Nuclear Evacuation Order" and the other is "Non-combatant Evacuation Order". Either way, the plan was simply to alert the dependents via a "tree" system, since phones were not in general use, and warn them to "Get out of Dodge!"

After receiving this warning, the "dependents" (read moms, generally with kids from babes in arms to teen-agers) were to gather up the kids, grab the "NEO-kits", toss everybody into the family car (if they had one to toss things into), grab their "NEO map" and USA windshield sticker and head out, generally south, down the E-5 Autobahn, for what would have been a five hour plus ride through hell following the attached hand-drawn, "Official Use Only," U.S. Government issue map down "un-numbered" roads.

In looking at this map today, I can only shake my head and wonder at the confusion, consternation, tears and fear that would have erupted somewhere about Bindlach or Bayreuth. It is not a situation I would have wanted to put my wife and son or anybody else's wife and kids through. I am constantly and forever thankful that "NEO" was an exercise that we never had to participate in.



The "Official NEO Map"

### Listing of Biloxi Participants – Would you believe 376?

Britt Albritton, Peggy (Cicutto) Adams, Johnnie & Wilma Adams, Bob Alekson, Jim & Jan Binnicker, Chuck Babcock, Jim Bair, Freddy & Helga Bales, Sam Barr, Carole Barron, Dick & Jean Barry, Charles Batte, Gabi Becker, Ron Becker, Rose Becker, Don Fogell, Bob & Rita Bennett, Jim & Gertrude Berry, John & Christa Bienko, Hurley & Mary Blackmon, Gisela Blankenship, Anna Flamos, Ruth Blumenstein, Sam & Sylvia Brady, Kirby & Audrey Braud, Silas & Earthlynn Brewer, Robert & Christa Brock, Tom & Denise Bryson, Hanah Bryson, Len & Marianne Bundra, J.C. Campbell, Ken & Marianne Cash, Gary & Sandra Cherpes, Barbara Chapman, Dallas & Sue Churchill, Jerry & Ina Coleman, Tom & Alba Collucci, Eddie Crump, Don & Ursula Daniels, Carl & Barbara Davino, Jerry & Ellen Decker, Robert Dellacca, Gary & Kay Dempsey, Joe & Carolyn Derringer, Christa Devine, Rees & Susan Dews, David & Karen Dickson, Alois & Rosalinde Dietz, Tony & Joan Donofrio, Rick & Sonja Douthit, Greek Dunigan, Roger & Evie Durdin, Joe Eberhardt, Tom Emerson, Archie & Brenda Emery, Dan & Dee Engelken, George & Christa Fahrback, Don & Toot Fields, Jan Streetman, Bob & Jean Finch, John & Bertha Fontes, Jack & Judith Foster, Gene & Pat Frank, Al & Mary Freddie, John Frivance, Francis & JoAnn Fukumoto, Sid & Gayle Futrell, Bill & MaryAlice Gladis, Norman & Sande Gunther, Marty & Alice Habecker, Deborah Grierson, Ken & Judy Hager, Bill & Karin Hall, Charlie & Susan Hall, Smiley & Elaine Hansberger, Bernie & Lisa Harland, Howard & Marianna Hatcher, Jack Hayes, Stan & Pat Heath, Jim & Dee Helfer, Mike & Kathleen Helfert, Lonnie & Hazel Henderson, Norm & Ursula Hines, Tom & Carolyn Hodgson, Robert & Hanna Hörath, Dan & Darlene Holden, Bill & Susan Holloway, Bennie Hopper & Yolanda Grady, Tom & Jan Hughes, George Jackson, Bob & Marilyn Jarboe, David & Jeannette Johnson, Jim & JayDell Johnson, Paul"PD"Jones, Stuart & Martha Jumper, Elizabeth Jung, Jimmy Kay, Herb & Barbara Kaempf, Ellis & Traudi Holland, John Karnstedt, Otha & Nelda Kennedy, Paul"Tank"Kernan, Karin Kingsley, Pat Kuhlemeier, Lois Neiman, Joe & Dolores Kessler, Ken & Gay Kielbania, Tom & Donna Knight, Greg & Sandy Krcma, Dick & Doris Kreuzer, Ivan I Jane Kukafka, Paul & Erika Laven, Marianne Lengel, Cliff & Shelvia Link, Bill & Karleene Little, Tom & Linda Litzak, Jerry & Pat Mangas, Charles & Renate Mattice, Helga Marrone & Kristina Villafan, Jim McGovern, Tom & Ingrid Mikloiche, Gerlinde Miller, Sonja Wonderlich, Jerry & Peggy Minnich, Doris Moss, Russ Moyer, Walt & Shirley Murch, Steve & Donna Murphrey, Phil & Jo Murray, Art Nichol, Tom & Monika Nickerson, Erich Dunne, Ron & Pat Nigg, Robert & Bonnie Norman, Gail Norvell, Wade

& Phyllis Nottingham, Harry Nowinski, Roy Benifield, Dick & Evi Obidinski, Heidi Pouch, Bruce & Esther Orr, Chuck & June Parnell, John & Aggie Pace, Jim & Eadie Patterson, Pete & Marget Payne, Lance & Kay Peterson, Phyllis Phipps, Jerry & Ginnie Piehl, Keith & Gail Pitchford, Vic & Margaret PoPovitch, Heide Marie Prince, Claude & Doris Proctor, Ken & Kay Putman, Henry & Eleanor Quarterman, Bill & Carol Quednow, Rose Marie Queen, Don Ridgeway, Jack & Pat Rief, Jim & Traudl Riggin, Don Riverkamp, Jerry & Gudrun Robinson, Lou Rocha & Fern Bordlemay, Robert & Mary Rodamer, E.T. & Vera Row, Harry & Jerry Rupperecht, C.A. & Jody Russell, Phil & Rosalie Ruth, Howard & Irmgard Samuelson, Danny & Brigitte Sandifer, Jack Saren & Nancy Morgan, Dan & Carol Scanny, Gary & Eris Sessions, Mike Shanahan, Aubrey & Sandra Shaw, Walt & Virginia Shifflett, Larry & Mary Lou Shriver, Jack Sinagra, Jack A & Madeline Signagra, Chuck & Jackie Sinesh, Ray Sleeper, John & Eva Marie Slutz, Jerry & Helen Sommer, Nathan & Ute Sparks, Claude & Myrtle Spicer, Barry & Sue Springsteen, Jim & Susan Starrs, Raymond Startz, Bobby"Stu" & Marsha Sturdevant, Ron & Marilyn Suriano, Ray & Mary Szyperski, Al & Sally Tews, Dean & Shirley Thompson, Roy & Claudia Tiller, Bill & Helen Toni, Walt & Margot Tribble, Bob & Maggie Trojanowski, Ken & Debbie Underwood, Russ & Pat Vandermartin, Bill & Edith Ward, Art & Karin Weatherwalks, David & Darene Weaver, John & Judy Weckerly, Gene Wetzal, John Wible, Billy Wicker, John & Lottie Williams, Chuck & Monika Wilson, Ursula Wilson, Ethel Burgett, Frank & Shirley Wright, Marty Wright & Judy Gambrell, David Wymard, Jim Yarbrough, Rip & Jean Yarnell.

Some closing words from **Jim Patterson**, Executive Board Advisor:

I would like to thank you all for your Prayers, Cards, E-mails and kind words during my illness. I'm taking Antibiotics to fight an infection but feeling much better than I have in quite some time.

With Biloxi now behind us and Nashville slowly coming into focus, it's time we start making our individual preparations. These Reunions just seem to be getting better and better with each one surpassing the last so I don't think that Nashville is going to be the one to miss.

We are about the largest Veteran's Reunion Group in the Country but compared to our dues paying membership our reunions are small. A great many of our members have yet to attend their first reunion. Let's get out the word about all these good times we have and of the camaraderie we share. Lets make every effort to get a new face to Nashville. Once we get them there we will show them that a few days with the Hofers sure beats getting old and sitting at home waiting for the undertaker. When that dude shows up all your good times are gone forever. Nashville is a much better choice.

## THE MEMBER'S FORUM

### Biloxi Testimonial

This reunion was the best one we have attended, first because there were at least 11 people we hadn't seen in over 36 years, and second, because there were a lot of repeat attendees and other new folks that we took great pleasure in seeing. It was also great because of all the hard work and effort that everyone, especially Peggy Adams, put into making this event possible, and for her efforts scheduling our Group Dinner for 30 plus. There were more tears of Joy, hearty laughs and stories from long ago than I can possibly tell you but I can honestly say that once I got over the shock of the seeing the 6 & 7 year old girls, Inga babysat, that are now 41 & 42 and remembered so many things that happened long ago, I truly could never ever have a better reunion and I have tons of pictures to prove it!! "Thank you" to ALL

Mick & Inga Mikloiche

### Two Cheers for Nashville

Based on genealogical research, Elvis Presley and I were distant cousins whose last names became slightly misspelled over the years. Our family originally came from Hochstadt, Germany, and our common ancestor, Valentine Pressler, immigrated from Hochstadt to New York City in 1792.

I was delighted to learn that the next reunion will be held in Nashville. My wife and I will definitely attend that reunion. We met while we were graduate students at Vanderbilt University in 1969, and I proposed to her while we were students. I'm a native Tennessean and plan to spend some extra time after the reunion revisiting my hometown near Memphis and looking up old friends while there.

Roger Preslar

So, ihr lieben Leute we close out the first Newsletter of the 2005. I want to add my danke's to all that worked so hard to make

this happen and made it happen in a great way. It's amazing that it takes less than five seconds at the reunion to change a person you have never seen before into an acquaintance that shares many of the old memories. I, like many others, led the sheltered life as "trick trash," associating with your trick chums and not many more beyond that. OK, there were the steady personnel that you had to know, Annie in the Snack Bar Newsstand, Karl at the Blick and Jake at Erika's, maybe a few more. But these reunions have given me exposure to those that were on other tricks, day workers that you'd see once a year and forget about in two weeks, those assigned to different organizations or those stationed in a detached area. It's been great running into you, swapping our stories and having a great time. I can honestly say that the Frau und I have really come away from these events feeling good about it and say that even if you go there thinking you don't know anyone, you'll run into a lot of friends. Ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit! – Phil Murray, Editor.

A Prayer for the Nation from our Chaplain, **Francis Fukumoto**.

With the season of Advent just behind us, remind us dear God that you are a God of Peace and Goodwill. With the season of Advent, in your transforming grace, transform your broken world, transform us to be peacemakers and that we may become instruments of thy Peace. With the season of Advent we pray for your presence among our troops, our men and women in harms way. Keep watch, oh Lord, keep watch. Help us dear Lord that our prayers have a deep desire for peace that dwells within our hearts, our land, and our world. As we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child may the love of God surround us and the joy fill our lives as we celebrate the birth of the One who came that we know Peace.

Amen

**The Hof Reunion Association**  
**P.O. Box 276883**  
**Sacramento, CA 95827-6883**  
**Telephone: (916) 366-1811**

**Hof Reunion Association Officers and Staff:**

Executive Board Advisors: Tom Bryson  
Tom Nickerson  
Jim Patterson

German Affairs Repr: Robert Hörath

Executive Board:  
President Dick Obidinski  
1stV.P. Jim Riffin  
2ndV.P. Don Riverkamp  
3rdV.P. Bobby Sturdevant  
Treasurer Nathan Sparks  
Secretary Jerry Mangas  
Membership Chairman C A Russell

Staff:  
Chaplain Francis Fukumoto  
Web Master Barry Springsteen  
Web Photo Master Jerry Mangas  
Historian Gary Dempsey  
Hof Connection Editor Phil Murray  
Sergeant at Arms Bob Alekson  
Tony Donofrio

**NOTE**

If you have an Internet Provider and are not receiving the Association weekly email Update, we probably don't have your current email address. Please contact <[HofReunion@aol.com](mailto:HofReunion@aol.com)> to see what the problem may be. Please provide your name and correct email address. Your attention to this matter will assure that you receive all the weekly email updates.

**Hof Reunion Association**

P.O. Box 276883

Sacramento, CA 95827-6883

All association work is accomplished by volunteers. No salary or wages are paid to any member.

The Hof Reunion Association operates on a fiscal year that runs from 1 October to 31 September of the following year.

The Hof Connection Newsletter is mailed to members in good standing 2 times each year (January and July).

There is a provision in the Association Constitution and By-laws that allow the Executive Board to grant a FREE membership in situations where the \$15 membership dues will create a financial hardship. Free membership must be requested.

Free membership is provided to widows (widowers) of previous members in good standing and they are entitled to all the privileges of membership except the paying of dues, voting and holding office. We ask that Widows complete and return the Membership Renewal form for the purpose of maintaining records and to assure a new Master Hof Roster is mailed to you. Failure to return the form could result in your name being removed from the roster.

If your spouse is from Hof/Saale or Oberfranken, please include maiden name. This information will assist the ladies from Kreis Hof in their quest to locate former friends.

**PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING FORM & RETURN TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS**

----- cut along line -----

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for FISCAL YEAR 2005**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(You may use the email address of a relative or friend)

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Nine-Digit Zip Code Please)

Years stationed at Hof: 19\_\_\_\_ to 19\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a check for \$15.00 made out to: Hof Reunion Association. I understand the Association operates on a FY, which is from October 1 thru September 30 of the following year.

\_\_\_\_ I am a widow (widower) of a previous member in good standing and want to continue my membership in the Association.

\_\_\_\_ I am no longer interested in the Hof Reunion Association. Please remove my name from the email and US Postal listing.

**HOF REUNION ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 276883  
SACRAMENTO, CA. 95827-6883**

**A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
HOFREUNION@AOL.COM  
HOFREUNION@FAST.NET**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

# the **HOF CONNECTION** newsletter

June 2005

Pack up the truck Martha, we're goin' to town! ... **DESTINATION NASHVILLE**

How-dee loyal Members;

With the selection of Nashville, TN, as our site for the 2005 Reunion, our desires were to present the membership with an interesting and informative program, of interest to all members, memorable to all who attend, and financially feasible, so all can attend.

Our trip to evaluate the prospective accommodations was enlightening and informative. We found that Nashville is a large, modern town, with major changes completed and many more still in progress. The major highways and local streets are improved and construction continues, improving Highways and thoroughfares to help move traffic more smoothly to the attractions.

Arriving at the Airport we found the facility has been greatly improved over the last 20 years; enlarged and updated, with more and better accommodations for the traveler. Transportation has also improved with the major rent-a-car companies represented, access to public transportation for hotels and attractions was convenient, and best of all, it's only about a 7 minute shuttle ride to our hotel with shuttles available every 15 minutes or so.

All the hotels we surveyed have updated in the past year but the Holiday Inn seemed to have done the best job; having a better lay out, very clean and well decorated, offering a great place to relax and get together without having to run all over the place trying to figure out where you are. The Southern Hospitality was also evident as the folks were real nice to us and answered all the questions that we brought up.

We were also chauffeured around downtown Nashville to see what was available for entertainment. There is an abundance of history in this town, from the early settlements to the major music studios of today. There is a local Memorial Park where the history of Tennessee is presented, the Country Western Museum, the Ryman Auditorium, the area with the Honky Tonks where a lot of great stars got "discovered" and propelled into stardom, and many other sights. Downtown is interesting! And then there's "Opryland, only five minutes from the hotel; the gigantic Opryland Hotel, its surroundings, the Opryland Mall, with all its shops and eating places; I guess you could spend all day there. There is also the paddle wheel cruise boat, "the General Jackson," which makes for an interesting and entertaining trip down the Cumberland River to the Downtown area and back while entertaining you with music, food and beverage all the way.

"FOOD," did I say "FOOD"? I found the cuisine to be excellent, with a variety that will cater to anyone's desires, the prices were within reason, you just have to decide on the high road or just plain good fixins'.

So, the Holiday Inn is where we'll be; we chose it for the "homey" atmosphere, the bright, well decorated furnishings and where all events are "right there," with plenty of room to meet your "Buds" and be relaxed. We are looking forward to visiting with y'all in Nashville and having a great time with our Reunion comrades.

**Dick Obidinski**, President

For some seasoned perspective, here are some comments from **Tom Nickerson** and **Tom Bryson** of the Executive Committee. Tom Nickerson mentions that every year, for the past six years, we have been getting together to meet with friends out of the past and rehash the events of those days. Each year we have grown in numbers and those attending for the first time, have been amazed and totally elated after becoming reacquainted with the old gang. We

owe a debt of gratitude to all of the people involved in setting up these annual programs, who make these events as memorable as they are. So once again, it's time to meet with friends from the "Hof Era" and rekindle the friendships we have made over the years. Even if you have not attended before, this is the year to bring new stories and share them.

Tom Bryson reminds us of the "mortality" that's breathing down our necks and this is the time to do the things we think we're gonna do tomorrow – today's the day, make that commitment to be there. We've always thought that we're going to see ole what's-his-name but if one of you pass, the chance may be lost forever. We are all a piece of a jigsaw puzzle and id takes us all to be there to see the big picture. And for those East of the Mississippi, it's and easy drive that will be well worth it.

So, what's the first item on the Association agenda? Find the Hospitality Suite! This is where you register and pick up your reunion packages with your nametags and tickets. This is where you'll probably find Tom Nickerson, Dick Obidinski, Jim Riggins, Don Riverkamp, Chuck Wilson and a bunch of "volunteers," not to mention a bunch of other people that you've probably met before. This is also where you drag your albums and put them out for display, have a cup of coffee, a doughnut, a Bier, or whatever else is available. This is usually the best place to be – at the hub of activity.

With Nashville located in the "Volunteer State" of Tennessee, **Don Riverkamp**, Vice President, has this announcement to make:

To All Hof Association Members and Fellow Hofers - If you don't know already, let me enlighten you to how important ALL members are to making our Hof reunion a successful one. It takes many volunteers to make our yearly reunion the success that it has been, and will continue to be in the future. So, with that said, please consider volunteering for a couple of hours on one day of the reunion week. The duties and/or tasks are not physically demanding, and I promise you will have fun meeting fellow members whom share many of the same experiences you had while stationed at Hof. We would love to have you help with handing out the registration packages, helping set up the snacks and drinks, chatting with ole and new friends, and remember you are not only helping out the association, but there having fun, and reliving old tales of the past and what's new in the future. Ohh, and the dress code is whatever you are comfortable wearing – NO TIES while volunteering in the Hospitality Suite. THANKS A MILLION!!

Here's the Official Schedule of Events: (It's rigorous, but we're tough)

- |             |      |   |
|-------------|------|---|
| September 5 | 1100 | Registration – Reunion Packages (Name Tags, Tickets, Show list, and Special Instructions)                                 |
|             | 1100 | Hospitality Suite open. (Bring you photo albums and memorabilia)  |
|             | 1200 | Group Leaders post Group Dinner signup Forms – Hospitality Suite  |
|             | 1600 | Association Meeting – Election of Officers/Selection of 2006 Reunion Date   |
|             |      | Evening Dinner on your own  |
| September 6 | 0900 | Hospitality Suite Open – Coffee, rolls & War Stories  |
|             | 1300 | Casual Reception – Social Buffet Luncheon. (Name Tags worn for admission)   |
|             |      | Another great program by Jim & Traudl Riggins and Tanya. Five minute talks by selected speakers, Singing & Fun (Cash Bar) |
|             | 1830 | Grand Old Opry Reserved tickets only  |
| September 7 | 0800 | Hospitality Suite Open – Coffee & War Stories. Tours (see sign up form at the end of the newsletter.                      |
|             |      | Evening Group Dinners – Nashville at Night  |
| September 8 | 0800 | Tours -Times and costs to be announced  |
|             | 1730 | Banquet Room open (name tags worn & dinner tickets shown for admission)   |
|             |      | Dress: Men: Sport coat of nice shirt Ladies: Dress or dressy pants suit   |
|             | 1800 | Posting of Colors by Honor Guard (Our dinner guests)  |
|             | 1810 | Memorial Services by Francis Fukumoto & assistants to be named.   |

1830 Five minute talks by selected speakers.  
1900 Invocation – To be announced  
1905 Dinner Served – Dinner tickets prominently displayed to assist Servers.  
2000 – 2300 Dance music – “In negotiation”

September 9 0830 – 1000 Auf Wiedersehen Breakfast

If it's Nashville, it's entertainment time and who better than Vice President, **Jim Riggin**, to speak of the entertainment.

Our theme for this year's program is "Simply Country". We will have a variety of old and new “country” songs and music prepared, and we will be bringing Tanja to Nashville too, as we've had several requests for us to bring her back.

We are also looking for talent for the Tuesday Afternoon Social. If you can sing, play a musical instrument, dance or are a comedian, we would love to hear from you. Any group, like the Hofer Top Hats would be welcomed. For those that would need musical backup, we will need a copy of your music no later than 1 August so we can get it “burned” on a CD – or bring your own CD to Nashville. There will also be a need for “speakers” of tales or Hofer history to fill in during an intermission break. The talks will be limited to 3 – 4 minutes (which will be monitored).

We want this to be an entertaining event and would like as many people as possible to contribute to the success we hope it to be. So, If you can perform, please let us know by 1 August, contact Jim Riggin [jmriggin@yahoo.com](mailto:jmriggin@yahoo.com) so we can put a program together.

### **Jim and Traudl Riggin**

Our Sergeants at Arms, **Bob Alekson & Tony Donofrio**, would like to mention a few things from the operational standpoint:

Another year has just flown by – Dad told me this would happen! We're looking forward to seeing everyone again in Nashville. Just remember the first step is stopping in the Hospitality Suite to register and pick up your reunion packages, these contain your Nametags and tickets for the reunion functions. In the process you'll probably run into a stranger from out of the past – but don't let this sidetrack you, stay focused and make sure you get your reunion package. Then you can talk to strangers and show them the albums from Hof you remembered to bring.

In the past we have had exceptional cooperation from all the members wearing their nametags – it really helps to control the crowd and also helps some of the old comrades in arms who remember the face but can't remember your name. And a note about one of the problems from last year's business meeting: due to seating constraints and general keeping of the peace, the Board requests that only one member per family attend the Business Meeting. The crowds are getting larger and it's getting harder to count the votes.

Now let's check the finances, where do we stand and how does it look for the future?

Our goal is to provide all members of the Hof Reunion Association the best service for their money. The association operates on a fiscal year that runs from October 1, to September 30, of each calendar year. This is a reminder that all paid membership in the association expired on September 30, 2004 and the 90-day grace period ended December 31, 2004. To keep your membership current, please mail in your renewal check at your earliest convenience. If the \$15 a year annual membership fee will create a financial hardship for any person meeting Association membership criteria, the Board of Directors may grant a FREE membership upon request by the individual.

The Association's finances are in excellent condition with a balance of \$19,499.77 in our Association bank account as of April 30, 2005. However, the large amount reflects the registration fee for the Nashville, Tennessee Reunion, already sent in by over 100 association members. The association books will be available in Nashville for the current Fiscal Year for inspection by any member with a desire to review them.

**Nathan Sparks**, Association Treasurer

**Bobby “Stu” Sturdevant**, 3rd V.P. has some great ideas for the “off season”

Maintaining Contact with our Friends: Okay, you attended the reunion in Biloxi and had a great time. You met some old friends that you spent a couple years with in Hof (a very memorable time of your life and service career). So what's next, do you forget them until Nashville? The answer a very emphatic "NO". You have their names, addresses, phone numbers and in most cases their email address. This is what the Security Police attendees are doing. We are in constant contact with all are known friends passing emails back and forth, especially if another of our friends has been located by one you or by Super Sleuth, C.A. Russell. We send recent photos thru email or snail mail. At the past reunion, I cut an outline of our Security Police Shield out of wood and put a small battery powered clock in it and gave one to each of my friends; another of our members, Rees Dews, had an address book that you can carry in your billfold or purse that had USAF Hof 2004 Reunion 2004, Biloxi, MS so we could collect our friends name, address, etc. This did not cost much but you can rest assured that in each instance when our friends look at my clock or Rees address book in brings back memories of our time at Hof and Biloxi. So I challenge everyone to think about you can jog our friends' memories and motivate them to join us in Nashville. Remember they don't know how much their friendship means to you unless you tell them and sometimes it takes some remedial training by telling them more than once a year!!! Ya All Come Ya Hear!!!

Association Status from the Secretary, **Jerry Mangas**, giving us a report on our health.

The Hof Reunion Association as it now stands has approximately 800 or so very active members on email and many, many more than that listed in the Master Hof Roster, which contains approx 3800 names to date. We have about 300 names on the "Final Flyby" roster and there are still approximately 1500 or so listed as missing. These are people we have not yet contacted or located and we have found no addresses or phone numbers to do so. Our on-staff head- hunters are excellent at finding people. But they can always use a little help from our friends. We are rapidly becoming one of the LARGEST military reunion groups in the country thru the efforts of our membership committee! Any help or leads or names you can offer them along these lines is most appreciated!

The wonderful result of all of this is that old friends and neighbors are re-united and great new friends are made, both electronically and in real time at the reunions. Until you attend a reunion you have NO idea of the feeling of “Family” that goes on. You know everybody, whether you have actually met or not! The faces have changed a little, the bodies have changed a lot, as well as the hair color, but the voices (and the Hofer accents) remain the same. And the grins are totally genuine!

We also invite you to personally contribute to the newsletters, the weekly updates and the reunions. We always need and appreciate input of almost any kind to our printed matter and input to the various forums and sections on the [www.hofreunion.com](http://www.hofreunion.com) website. You are the sources of our developing history effort. If you have done some research on the web you know that very little information other than the various reunion efforts is all that is available in many cases.

What we find is that the more people contribute, the more people remember and then they contribute and it forms a never-ending information flow. Our active members date themselves from the 1940's thru the 1970's and include all facets of the various organizations that have been stationed at Hof Kaserne through the years. The range and breadth of the memories is wonderful as is the continuing Unit interaction, which seemed to be missing when we were there. I personally know far more now about Hof and the people and history of our Kaserne than I ever did while I actually lived there.

One of the most interesting aspects of our Reunion effort is that you never know what will trip somebody's trigger and prompt a response or a new contribution to the Group. Or who you will run into in person or via email. The recent run of pictures of the "GLR-1" and the articles on Ernie Curtis have prompted a good deal of response, as has almost any article on "Bier", or “Jakes” or the “Schönblick.”

Input comes from everybody: Wives, Retirees, Hofer's, Army, Döbra-ites, Day-ladies and Trick-trash, Officers and Enlisted, even the now 40 year old rug-rats we used to complain about in the snack bar. It is all incredibly satisfying!

Join in! Get involved and somebody will make you smile! Or better... You'll make somebody else smile!

Membership Chairman, **C.A. Russell**,

I think all of you will agree, with the help of many Association members, we have produced a marvelous Master Hof Roster that is a very useful tool for locating former Hof Colleagues and renewing dormant friendships. Even the "Final Flyby List" serves a useful purpose. We thank all of you that have made a contribution to this effort. We are again asking the entire Association Membership to become involved in the search effort to find former Hof Colleagues. We recommend you use the following tools when conducting your search for missing friends. After you find him or her, please send the information to:

[russca@bellsouth.net](mailto:russca@bellsouth.net) or [hofreunion@fast.net](mailto:hofreunion@fast.net)

The following websites are very useful for finding where a missing friend may be living today. We do not recommend buying search information from any of the following sites.

Just type one of the following search engines into your Internet Browser and give it a try.

1. <http://www.zabasearch.com/>
2. <http://www.ussearch.com/>
3. <http://find.intelius.com/search-name.php>
4. <http://www.privateeye.com/>

The following search engines are useful for obtaining current telephone and address info.

1. <http://www.switchboard.com>
2. <http://www.langenberg.com/> (Conduct any search listed in the left margin)

Our Webmaster, **Barry Springsteen**, mentions there have been several changes made to the Association Web Site (<http://www.hofreunion.com>) over the last year. They have all been the result of suggestions or comments made by our members.

The first change was to the MEMORIAL PAGE. When our site first came online the MEMORIAL PAGE listed our members alphabetical by first name. The format seemed sound at the time but proved to be difficult to navigate. It has now been changed to list our members by last name.

The second change that has been completed was on the ROSTER PAGE. In addition to providing the names and related information of active association members, we now include the names of those people that we have not been able to find and those that are inactive in the association. Since the web site servers as a beacon on the Internet it is our hope this will help find and attract more active members.

Over the summer the Association Web Site will receive an update in the software that is used to create, maintain and load our site. Hopefully, this will be completely transparent to all members. If it becomes less than transparent please let me extend my apologies now.

Future plans are centered on being able to perform on-line sorts of the ROSTER and MEMORIAL PAGE information. Hopefully, we will be able to present the information sorted by NAME, YEAR or ORGANIZATION.

As always, comments about the Association Web Site, suggestions for improvements or the description of a new feature can be E-Mailed to [hofreunion@comcast.net](mailto:hofreunion@comcast.net). *Please note the change from att.net to comcast.net*

**Chuck Wilson** has been in seclusion for the last couple of months reviewing the Constitution and By-laws. Like all things, they need to change with the times and Chuck has some amendments ready to go. So get out your copy of the Constitution and By-laws and check this out, there's going to be a test at the business meeting – you're gonna have to vote

In accordance with Article X, para 2 of the Constitution, the following proposed amendments to the Association Constitution and By-laws will be presented to the membership at the Nashville Reunion General Membership meeting.

#### PROPOSED CHANGE TO CONSTITUTION:

##### Article IV – ELECTED OFFICERS

- Para 1 - Sub-paragraph d. Remove 3rd Vice President. Replace with Adjutant.  
- Add Sub paragraph h. Web Master
- Para 3 - Delete the sentence: In addition, the Executive Committee will include Past Presidents.

##### Article VII – Fiscal Year

Change to read: The Fiscal Year shall run from January 1 to December 31 of the Calendar Year.

##### Article IX - APPOINTED POSITIONS BY THE PRESIDENT

- Para 2 - Remove Membership Chairman. Replace with: Reunion Site Committee Chairman

#### PROPOSED CHANGE TO BY-LAWS:

##### ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

- Para 2 - Delete (PM) from sentence.
- Para 3 - Replace October 1 with January 1. In second sentence, change January 1 to March 1.

##### ARTICLE II - DUES & DONATIONS

Para 1, sub para a. – Change October 1 to September 31 to read: January 1 to December 31.

##### ARTICLE III - REUNIONS AND MEETINGS

Change Para 1 to read: The annual reunion location will be selected by the Association membership.  
The ballot will contain a minimum of two and a maximum of four cities selected by the Reunion Site Committee.  
The ballot will be provided to the membership with the July, Hof Connection Newsletter. Selection Ballots and vote results will be tallied at the Annual General Membership Meeting.

##### ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Change Para 1, sub para d. – delete 3rd Vice President and add Adjutant. Add sub para h. Web Master  
Change Para 6 to read: The out going President will serve as Advisor to the Board of Directors for one year or until the next reunion.

##### ARTICLE V - DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICERS

- Para 4 – Delete 3rd Vice President Add Adjutant.
- Change Para 4, sub para a., and b., to read:
  - a. - Receive and distribute all Association mail to the appropriate office.
  - b. - Maintain records of all receipts and distribute to the Treasurer.
  - c. - Shall keep an organized list known as “Master Hof Roster.”
  - d. - Assist the President and Secretary in the performance of their duties.
  - e. - Is the Vice Treasurer
  - f. - Is the sixth ranking officer and in the absence of the other five shall perform their duties.
- Para 5, delete sub para a., e., and g.:
- Change sub para b to read a:
- Change sub para c. to read b.:
- Change sub para d. to read c.
- Change sub para j. to read d.
- After making these changes, add the following sub paragraphs:
  - e. - Serve as the Association Control Center for all reunion activity.
  - f. - Maintain the Association Internet address book.
  - g. - Provide a weekly Internet update to members with an Internet service.
- Add Para 8 – Web Master
  - a. - Is Master of and maintains the Association Internet Web Site.  
- Coordinates activity with the Secretary and Adjutant

##### ARTICLE VI - APPOINTED COMMITTEES

Para 1, sub para a. Delete the sentence: A pamphlet called the reunion guide is available from the Secretary.

## History 101 – KINGSLEY KASERNE: Why we called it that.

By **Garrett Dempsey**, Association Historian.

Hof Base, Kingsley Barracks, Kingsley Kaserne, Hof Air Station: our familiar old home away from home in our military days has had a few different names. This is the story of who “Kingsley” was, and why the base bore his name.

It goes back to World War II and Italy, not Germany, would you believe it? It seems that there was this young man from Spokane, Washington, who had wanted to be a pilot at the beginning of the war. He actually took flying lessons, but for some reason—maybe because at that time early in the war we needed real sharp pilots to counter the good ones flying for Hitler—or for some other reason, he didn’t quite make the cut, as they say.

So, rather than lose its entire investment of time and money, the Army Air Corps said that he’d still be a flier, but that he’d sit in the very front of the plane and drop bombs on the bad guys below.

And that’s how come our brave airman came to find himself assigned to the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force at a base in Amendola, Italy. He was assigned to the 341<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) of the 97<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy), beginning around the early part of April, 1944. He flew nineteen missions with the 341<sup>st</sup>, before the mission to the oil refineries at Ploesti, Romania on June 23, 1944. He had been to Ploesti before—it was one of those targets where the top commanders all said, “If we can knock this one out, it will shorten the war a lot.” And so it was, but it was taking a lot of brave airmen’s lives to do it. Not an easy target at all. The more we hit it, it seemed, the more the Germans tried to protect it.

And it was on this June 23<sup>rd</sup> mission that Lieutenant David Kingsley performed the deed that earned him the Medal of Honor—and cost him his life. The official MOH citation tells the story well:

**Citation:** For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, 23 June 1944 near Ploesti, Rumania, while flying as bombardier of a B17 type aircraft. On the bomb run 2d Lt. Kingsley’s aircraft was severely damaged by intense flak and forced to drop out of formation but the pilot proceeded over the target and 2d Lt. Kingsley successfully dropped his bombs, causing severe damage to vital installations. The damaged aircraft, forced to lose altitude and to lag behind the formation, was aggressively attacked by 3 ME-109 aircraft, causing more damage to the aircraft and severely wounding the tail gunner in the upper arm. The radio operator and engineer notified 2d Lt. Kingsley that the tail gunner had been wounded and that assistance was needed to check the bleeding. 2d Lt. Kingsley made his way back to the radio room, skillfully applied first aid to the wound, and succeeded in checking the bleeding. The tail gunner’s parachute harness and heavy clothes were removed and he was covered with blankets, making him as comfortable as possible. Eight ME-109 aircraft again aggressively attacked 2d Lt. Kingsley’s aircraft and the ball turret gunner was wounded by 20 mm shell fragments. He went forward to the radio room to have 2d Lt. Kingsley administer first aid. A few minutes later when the pilot gave the order to prepare to bail out, 2d Lt. Kingsley immediately began to assist the wounded gunners in putting on their parachute harness. In the confusion the tail gunner’s harness, believed to have been damaged, could not be located in the bundle of blankets and flying clothes which had been removed from the wounded men. With utter disregard for his own means of escape, 2d Lt. Kingsley unhesitatingly removed his parachute harness and adjusted it to the wounded tail gunner. Due to the extensive damage caused by the accurate and concentrated 20mm fire by the enemy aircraft the pilot gave the order to bail out, as it appeared that the aircraft would disintegrate at any moment. 2d Lt. Kingsley aided the wounded men in bailing out and when last seen by the crewmembers he was standing on the bomb bay catwalk. The aircraft continued to fly on automatic pilot for a short distance, then crashed and burned. His body was later found in the wreckage. 2d Lt. Kingsley by his gallant heroic action was directly responsible for saving the life of the wounded gunner.”

And so, that’s why, by General Order #51, HQ European Command, the former Hof Kaserne was renamed Kingsley Barracks (later Kingsley Kaserne) on 2 June 1949.

“This is Our Quest” from our Chaplain, **Francis Fukumoto**

Some time ago I stumbled across a quotation by Jim Goodwin, "The Impossible Is Often The Untried." Take a moment and ponder this, "The Impossible Is Often The Untried." From the musical play, "Man Of La Mancha," the song "The Impossible Dream," lyric by Joe Darion runs in parallel with the quotation by Jim Goodwin. Hear the words of "The Impossible Dream."

To dream the impossible dream,  
To fight the unbeatable foe,  
To bear with unbearable sorrow,  
To run where the brave dare not go.

To right the unrightable wrong,  
To love pure and chaste from afar,  
To try when your arms are too weary,  
To reach the unreachable star!

This is my quest, to follow that star,  
No matter how hopeless, no matter how far;  
To fight for the right without question or pause,  
To be willing to march into hell for a heavenly cause!

And I know, if I'll only be true,  
To this glorious quest,  
That my heart will lie peaceful and calm,  
When I'm laid to my rest.

And the world will be better for this;  
That one man, scorned and covered with scars,  
Still strove with his last ounce of courage,  
To reach the unreachable stars.

Many life experiences fit-in with "The Impossible Is Often The Untried" and "The Impossible Dream." Our hope is that we take the challenge. There are many names to be searched and to expand our Hof Reunion community. Let us continue our search for a stronger Hof Reunion Association and for our future celebrations.

## WIEDER ZU BEWUSSTSEIN KOMMEN NASHVILLE FÜR WUNDERBAR FESTSPIEL:

Hof, and the surrounding Bavarian towns, cities, and countryside were part of our lives which brought us together as acquaintances, friends, family, and part of a lifetime experience that remains with us today. If you are contemplating whether or not to make the trip to Nashville this September for the Hof Association Reunion, think no more, make that decision, and come on down.

I have only been a member of the Hof Association since 2001 when Chuck Wilson found me living in Austin, Texas. It was too late to make the reunion in Colorado that year, and I missed the Hof, Germany reunion due to the death of my mother in October 2002. However, the reunions in Vegas in 2003, and Biloxi in 2004 were fantastic, and I know that this year's in Nashville, and 2006 in Hof, Germany will match and/or exceed those wonderful reunions. This reunion is a fabulous time to meet, reunite, and get together with old and new friends that were part of making us what we are today. It is an experience that will remain in your memories, and hearts for a lifetime.

Come, join us in a trip down memory lane, and your future will be brighter and full of memories and friendships. I sure hope to see you all in Nashville in September 2005.

Remember – You may bring friends, family members, and anyone you want to accompany you for this great event.

## **Don Riverkamp**

The Editorial Page by Editor, **Phil Murray**,

There are many out there whose only Association contact is the semi-annual newsletter. Although it is a fairly large document, it has a narrow scope. There are also those out there that have a computer without Internet access. Here's where I'm going. Our secretary, Jerry Mangas puts out an excellent weekly update. It's hard to describe it as it covers all fronts: it's got history, it's got gossip, it's got tall tales from the past, it's got pictures, it has links to interesting websites, it's got the "latest" Hofer news and it comes to your email inbox. Barry Springsteen has put together a pretty nifty website. It's clear, simple and it works. It's got photos, it's got history, it's got links to a variety of places, it's got a chat room too. Both of these guys have done this with the help of others; they are receiving input from people all over the globe that have become interested. If you take the time to check your inbox or log on to the Hof Reunion website, you will find some fun and interesting times. If you have a computer and you

don't have Internet access, consider signing up with an internet service provider, you can get it for less than \$10 a month. And if you don't have a computer, consider getting one and then consider signing up with an internet service provider. I didn't think I'd ever recommend anyone buying a computer nor even signing up with an internet service provider, but these two guys have just about made it worthwhile. And then, when you got it all going, get involved, send Jerry and Barry your bits of news, your hints for improvements and anything else you want to get off your chest.

And my parting comment is it would be great to get more female involvement in the Association. We need the ladies to speak up about what's wrong with everything and I'm sure they have easy ways of improving the situation. You're part of it and should be an active part – we need some “curtains on the windows.”

**NOTE**

If you have an Internet Provider and are not receiving the Association weekly email Update, we probably don't have your current email address. Please contact <HofReunion@fast.net> to see what the problem may be. Please provide your name and correct email address. Your attention to this matter will assure that you receive all the weekly email updates.



**TO  
2<sup>ND</sup> LT DAVID R. KINGSLEY USAAF  
MEDAL OF HONOR. 21 JUNE 1944  
NAMESAKE OF KINGSLEY KASERNE, HOF/SAALE, BAVARIA 1948-1985**

**AND TO THE 910 MEN AND WOMEN CURRENTLY LISTED ON  
THEIR FINAL FLYBY  
IN THE HOF MASTER ROSTER**

**MEMORIAL DAY, 2005**

**THANK YOU!**

**Hof Reunion Association**  
**P.O. Box 276883**  
**Sacramento, CA 95827-6883**  
**916-366-1811 email: hofreunion@fast.net**

All association work is accomplished by volunteers. No salary or wages are paid to any member.

The Hof Reunion Association operates on a fiscal year that runs from 1 October to 31 September of the following year.

The Hof Connection Newsletter is mailed to members in good standing 2 times each year (January and July).

The hardcopy of the Master Roster & Constitution is mailed immediately upon receipt of a new membership application and at the end of the quarter in which a membership is renewal is received.

There is a provision in the Association Constitution and By-laws that allow the Executive Board to grant a FREE membership in situations where the \$15 membership dues will create a financial hardship. Free membership must be requested.

Free membership is provided to widows (widowers) of previous members in good standing and they are entitled to all the privileges of membership except the paying of dues, voting and holding office. We ask that Widows complete and return the Membership Renewal form for the purpose of maintaining records and to assure a new Master Hof Roster is mailed to you. Failure to return the form could result in your name being removed from the roster.

If your spouse is from Hof/Saale or Oberfranken, please include maiden name. This information will assist the ladies from Kreis Hof in their quest to locate former friends.

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING FORM & RETURN TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS

----- cut along line -----

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for FISCAL YEAR 2006**

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(You may use the email address of a relative or friend)

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. No.: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

(Nine-Digit Zip Code Please)

Years stationed at Hof: 19\_\_\_\_ to 19\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a check for \$15.00 made out to: Hof Reunion Association. I understand the Association operates on a FY, which is from October 1 thru September 30 of the following year.

\_\_\_\_ I am a widow (widower) of a previous member in good standing and want to continue my membership in the Association.

\_\_\_\_ I am no longer interested in the Hof Reunion Association. Please remove my name from the email and US Postal listing.

**Hof Reunion Association**  
**P.O. Box 276883**  
**Sacramento, CA 95827-6883**  
**916-366-1811 email: hofreunion@fast.net**

**Nashville Reunion Registration – September 5 – 9, 2005**

The 2005 Nashville registration fee is \$87.50 per person. The registration fee is to cover the cost of the Sep 6 reception Buffet, the Sep 8 Banquet Dinner, Dance Music, Special Awards, Door Prizes, Nametags, Hospitality Suite, Reunion Packages and other administrative cost.

FIRST & LAST NAME: *[as you want it to appear on your name tag(s) & banquet ticket(s)]*

Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse/Friend: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest: \_\_\_\_\_ Guest: \_\_\_\_\_

**BANQUET DINNER MENU**

NOTE: All Entrees include Chef's choices of Fresh Seasonal Vegetables and their Potato, Rice or Pasta Creation that best compliments the entrée selection. Freshly baked rolls, coffee decaf or tea. A Cash bar will be available.

Dinner 1 – Grilled London Broil w/wild mushroom sauce

Dinner 2 – Pan seared Chicken

Dinner 3 – Char-Grilled Salmon with Horseradish Mashed Potatoes

Dinner 4 – Vegetarian

I choose Dinner # \_\_\_\_ Spouse/Friend # \_\_\_\_ Guest if Applicable # \_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_

Please find \_\_\_\_ X \$87.50 for a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Registration fees.

Make Checks payable to: **Hof Reunion Association**

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Hotel reservation information: **Holiday Inn Select Opryland/Airport**  
**2200 Elm Hill Place**  
**Nashville, TN 37214**  
**(800 633 4427 of (615) 883 9770**

The room rates are \$72.00 per night plus applicable taxes (15%); no charge for triple or quadruple occupancy, and a complimentary "Egg to Order" Breakfast Buffet is included. For this rate, you must use the reservation code of "HRA" when making reservations. This rate is available up to three days before and up to three days after the reunion.

There is more information available on the Hof Reunion Association web site <http://www.hofreunion.com>.

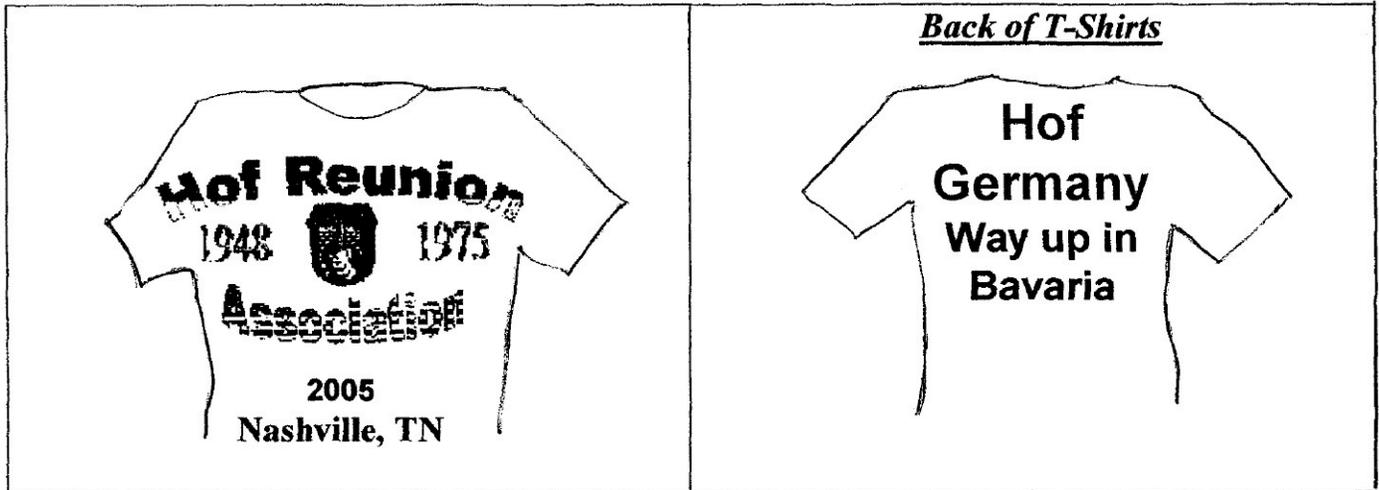
# NASHVILLE REUNION T-SHIRTS

T-Shirts are Fruit of the Loom, 100% Preshrunk Cotton.

White with 5 color Front & 2 Color Back

Size: S,M,L = \$9.50    Size: XL, XXL, XXXL = \$10.50

T-Shirt order must be received by August 5. Delivery t Holiday Inn Registration




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## NASHVILLE REUNION T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

Order and Payment must be received by August 5, 2005

Make Check Payable to: Hof Reunion Association

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number Ordered \_\_\_\_\_

Size at \$9.50      Small \_\_\_\_\_      Medium \_\_\_\_\_      Large \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_

Size at \$10.50      XL \_\_\_\_\_      XXL \_\_\_\_\_      XXXL \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

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*Nashville tour choices and prices will be forthcoming as soon as available*

**The Hof Reunion Association**  
**P.O. Box 276883**  
**Sacramento, CA 95827-6883**  
**Telephone: (916) 366-1811**

**Hof Reunion Association Officers and Staff:**

Executive Board Advisors: **Tom Bryson**  
**Tom Nickerson**  
**Jim Patterson**  
German Affairs Repr: **Robert Hörath**

Executive Board:  
President **Dick Obidinski**  
1st V.P. **Jim Riffin**  
2nd V.P. **Don Riverkamp**  
3rd V.P. **Bobby Sturdevant**  
Treasurer **Nathan Sparks**  
Secretary **Jerry Mangas**  
Membership Chairman **C A Russell**

Staff:  
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Web Master **Barry Springsteen**  
Web Photo Master **Jerry Mangas**  
Historian **Gary Dempsey**  
Hof Connection Editor **Phil Murray**  
Sergeant at Arms **Bob Alekson**  
**Tony Donofrio**