

the **HOF CONNECTION** newsletter

January 2006

Nashville Comes Through

It had a lot to offer and it offered a lot. The Hollerday Inn was easily accessible from the airport – a great convenience, especially with the free shuttle running about every 15 minutes. The hotel and the rooms were recently remodeled and provided a relaxing setting for our get together. The only negative was a little bit of roadwork in front of the hotel, but that didn't apply to just the hotel, that applied to Nashville on the whole – they are making a big effort to upgrade the entire city.

With 2 x 4 in hand and a whip in his hip pocket, Bobby Sturdevant (with a lot of help from Marcey) arranged a great force of “volunteers” to work the reception area, man the refreshment stand and direct traffic in the Hospitality suite. The enthusiasm of the volunteers was demonstrated when a record was set by Jo Murray and Karin Kingsley for the sale of beer during one 3 hour shift. The downside was Nate Sparks, Jerry Mangas and Andy Brads were working overtime as “beer runners.” If there were any hitches in the Hospitality Suite, Bobby covered them like a pro. Of course the stalwarts, Monika Wilson, Ute Sparks, Traudl and Jim Riggan, Monika Nickerson, Jody and CA Russell, Barry and Sue Springsteen, Pat Schiermeister, Eadie Patterson, Dick Obidinski, and Don Riverkamp were right in the midst of things like they normally are, handling the reception packages, the hat and t-shirt sales, arranging the banquet seating, the day trips/tours, answering stupid questions and all the other things we take for granted.

The business meeting was held the first afternoon with elections of officers and the ratification of changes to our by-laws. The changes included deletion of the office of 3rd V.P. and creating the office of Adjutant, with this coveted office going to Chuck Wilson – a new guy.

The daily tours were also well received. There was the “Discover Nashville” tour that gave an excellent overview of the town. The Grand Ole Opry, with the Martha White flour commercials, was a hoot and “Little” Jimmy Dickens is still performing (I remember him from my childhood days which was a long, long time ago). The General Jackson cruise down the Cumberland River offered great entertainment with equally great food. These were the only “organized” tours, but that town has a gazillion things to see on your own – you couldn't go wrong (Well ... actually you could ... there were a couple of ladies downtown that would show you the way). The town was loaded with all types of attractions – old battlefields, museums, theaters, music venues from Pickin' an' Grinnin', Blues, Honky Tonk and Rock, not to mention, the Classics, there were great restaurants and even a shopping mall or two for those that were suffering from pangs of shopping withdrawal. The list goes on forever – there are so many things to see you gotta go back.

And how did the Social and the Banquet turn out? Well, amazing! At the start, it looked like it was going to get bummed-out big time by Hurricane Katrina.

The Tuesday afternoon Social was hit pretty hard. The entertainment program was centered around Tanja Riggan, who is a pretty and good country entertainer. Father, Jim, had set up the program, burning the appropriate background music on CD's, setting up the sound system, lights, and all the other “roady” tasks. Tanja, however, had another challenge. Being a civilian with the Fort Polk Transportation Division, she was given the opportunity to see Hammond, Louisiana, just north of New Orleans, from a different perspective – that of disaster relief. Each day presented a different challenge but she and Jim were hopeful that she would still be able to appear, but the final result; she couldn't make it, leaving a big hole in the entertainment.

The show must go on, so Jim, who is quite agile on his feet, restructured the whole show on the fly. Our in-house performers, Traudl Riggan, Brenda and Archie Emery, and John Pace stepped up and did a superb job of singing. Ralph Glover did a little song and dance, and some comedy, and JoAnn Fukumoto provided a show of grace from the Islands. What a bunch of troopers!! And, not to forget, the talk given by Margot Payne as she describes the “shock and awe” upon arriving in America from Germany for the first time. As a young lady running barefoot

through the Frankenwald in a dirndl, collecting mushrooms and picking Himberrn, then thrust into the high-pressure caldron of the U.S.. She captured the moment quite well.

While this part of the show was going on, Andy Brads, attending his first Hofer Reunion ever, contacted Jim to see what songs his play list had, and Andy, a great fan of country/western music, knew the words to just about all of them and was willing to sing. What a break, right? Well, Jim, with Pete and Margot Payne, auditioned Andy's voice and thought it would be a good idea to have a real auction instead of just the Silent Auction, and decided to take the chance, making Andy the auctioneer instead of singing. The rest is history. Andy took the stage (Jim went and got a Bier) and proceeded to get people into a competitive bidding war that was a really fun time. Everyone feels that Andy, by getting everyone into the spirit, generated more cash for our Biloxi Hurricane Relief Fund than any other effort, while at the same time, provided a very entertaining event. The top items auctioned off were a beautiful, patriotic themed, handmade quilt by June Parnell, bought by a very happy Walt Whisner, and a large pair of "Hummels" hand-painted by Hilde Middendorf. There were many, many more items donated by our generous membership but there's not enough room to list them all.

The Thursday night Banquet fared a little bit better, but there was still enough "unknown" to keep the tension level up.

After the local Air Force Reserve Unit and the Army National Guard failed to return calls to Archie Emery (our local "feet on the ground" Nashville guy), Chuck Wilson contacted the Commander of the 118th Military Airlift Wing of the Tennessee Air National Guard, Colonel Kenneth Jones, to see if he could arrange a Color Guard. Colonel Jones was quick to mention they had a group, led by SMSGT Steve Williams, which goes beyond the presentation of the Colors; it's a historical program about our Flags and what they mean. Also, while they were on the phone Chuck convinced the Colonel to be our Keynote Speaker. All was well – that is until a couple of days after Katrina, Col Jones called and had to cancel his speech because of Disaster Preparedness. Chuck checked with SMSGT Williams, and even though his group had a similar problem, they would be able to muster enough people to do the show. So Chuck lost one and saved one.

Starting the evening with the Flag Presentation Show, which SMSGT Williams and his people did with great professionalism, an outstanding performance that brought a few tears to a few eyes. To conclude the performance, SMSGT Williams led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chaplain Francis Fukumoto, assisted by Tom Bryson and Brent Scott, gave a memorial service for our former colleagues, with Barry and Sue Springsteen providing a memorial plaque honoring them. Mrs. Billie Townsend, widow of the late Chaplain James Townsend (Hof 1961-64) gave the Banquet Invocation.

We then enjoyed a great dinner; some short talks from selected guests and then the "hired" band, a group brought in by Archie Emery, called "The Bandaleroes." took over. The overall opinion I heard was it was the best ever band that we have ever had at a reunion.

During band breaks, the Silent Auction winners were announced and then the 50/50 drawing, organized by Bobby Sturdevant, was held (it was set up with 50% going to Biloxi Disaster Relief and 50% going out as cash prizes). All the winners in the 50/50 drawing donated their 50% back to the Relief Fund.

After all was said and done, the Hof Reunion Association was able to present a check for \$4,137.50 to the Biloxi Salvation Army for hurricane relief. Maybe its not mega-bucks, but not too bad at all, so pat yourself and each other on the back for a job well done.

To recap the event organization, Dick Obidinski, Jerry Mangas, with the able help of our local guy, Archie Emery, took a long list of hotels available in Nashville, eliminated the ones with less than 200 rooms, leaving about 50, broke it down by price, accommodations and locations, ending up with a final three and picked a winner. They did a great job and it was reflected in the mood of everyone – I didn't hear a single disparaging word. A real win/win situation, and they are to be congratulated and thanked for a job well done.

Friday morning, the Auf Wiedersehen breakfast, one last omelet from Walter, the Cajun Omelet König, another bowl of prunes and we're outta here. Thanks Nashville, we had a great time.

The 2006 reunion in Hof/Saale – September 17 - 23

This is going to be a great event. Again, the Quality Hotel, in Hof, has been selected as the central gathering point for the 2006 Hof Reunion Association get together. The Quality Hotel was constructed in 1981 and has 111 rooms with shower, WC, telephone, Cable TV, & Pay TV. A sauna, fitness center and Internet service are also available for use by Hotel Guests. The Quality Hotel Management has agreed to block 80 rooms at a rate of 58€ (\$72.50) per room, per night and includes breakfast. Questions may be sent to hofreunion@dejazzd.com

Quality Hotel
Ernst-Reuter Straße 137
D-95030 Hof/Saale
Deutschland

Mgr: Frau Manuela Kara
Tel: 011-49-9291-7030
Fax: 011-48-9281-703-113
Email: quality-hof@web.de

Reservations can be made between April 1 and June 15, 2006 by contacting the Quality Hotel via any of the methods listed above. Please provide your AMX, VISA or Master Card number and expiration date. Discover Card **CANNOT** be used in Europe.

Registration fee for the Reunion is \$77.50 (62€) per person, a fully refundable \$50.00 (40€) per person deposit must be received by April 1, 2006. The \$50 will be applied to the registration fee of \$77.50 (62€) which must be paid in full by June 15, 2006. After June 15, a \$22.50 (18€) Surcharge will apply to late registrations, for a total of \$100.00 (80€). The sign-up sheet is toward the end of the newsletter with all the disclosures and rules, check it out and fill it out.

This is the tentative itinerary of events.

Sep 17 1000 Reunion packages containing official preprinted Name Tags, Tour Tickets, Banquet Tickets, and Oberfranken Visitor Information.

1700 General Membership Meeting (one person per membership please).
The evening is open. Gather in the dining area or go out on the town.

Sep 18 0700 Buffet Breakfast

0845 Briefing in Hotel Foyer and Dining Area

1100 Reception at Rathaus, with the Lord Mayor of Hof

1300 Fernweh Park, the sign forest, with Klaus Beer - TV & News Media.

1400 Teddy Bear Museum (donations at door welcome – nice Café)

1500 Souvenir Shopping Tour led by Christa Devine.

The evening is open. Renew acquaintances and make new friends.

Sep 19 0600 Buffet Breakfast

0700 Tour 1A - Berlin tour bus departs Quality Hotel – returns 2300

0700 Tour 1B - Dresden tour bus departs Quality Hotel – returns 2300

Note - Reunion Attendee's not participating in one of the above tours should review their reunion package to check the local bus schedules and tour possibilities so they can adventure about out on their own.

Sep 20 0700 Buffet Breakfast

0830 Tour #2 – Kaserne, Hof Site, Döbraberg, Surprise, Mödlareuth.

1830 Group Dinners – 3 Minute Talks – Divide 2 Groups – Check the bulletin board.

Sep 21 0600 Buffet Breakfast

0800 Kulmbach & Vierzehnheiligen

Evening Open for Socializing & Hof at night.

Sep 22 0700 Buffet Breakfast

1800 – 1830 Social - Open Bar

1830 – 1930 Introductions – Award Presentations

1930 Banquet Dinner (Rouladen, Schweinebraten, Schnitzel)
 Bavarian Dance Group - Magician - Music – Dance

Sep 23 0800 Auf Wiedersehen Breakfast at the Quality Hotel for those that wish to participate. (9€ for those not staying at Quality)

Although the 2006 Oktoberfest will begin September 16, we do **NOT** recommend going to the Oktoberfest before September 24 or 25th. And due to the large crowds, we do recommend using a money belt. You could consider forming some groups so you'll have some festing partners in the tents.

The site selection for 2007

The site selection committee has come up with the following possible sites for the 2007 reunion. Please bear in mind we are trying to move the reunion around the country so that sooner or later, everyone will have a reunion in their backyard, but these sites have to have enough "draw" to bring people in from other areas too. While a major consideration is the quality and cost of accommodations.

The sites being offered:

AUSTIN, TEXAS - CAPITOL OF THE LONE STAR STATE

HOWDY from the Capitol of Texas, I'm Austin, Texas, and I'm located in central Texas.

I am one of the possible sites that you, the members of the Hof Reunion Association, will be voting upon for a chance to host the 2007 reunion. I am approximately one hour north of San Antonio, three hours south of Dallas, and two and a half west of Houston. In addition to being the State Capitol, I am the home of the University of Texas (Hookem Horns), St Edwards University, Concordia University, and Huston Tillotson College, the LBJ Presidential Library, Zilker Park with natural Barton Springs, the Governor's Mansion, Lake Austin, Lake Travis, and the famous "Sixth Street." Just west of us is Fredericksburg, which is home of the Nemitz Museum, German Restaurants, and numerous Antique Shops, and just south of us is New Braunfels, where the annual Wurstfest occurs every year starting the Friday before the first Monday in November and lasts for ten days. In 2007, that will be November 2-11th. If I am chosen by you to host in 2007, I would host between November 5th and 10th. Thanks for considering me for your host city in 2007.

DENVER, COLORADO – "THE MILE HIGH CITY"

Denver is the state capitol of Colorado, and if you stand on the 11th step on the state capitol building, you will be "A Mile High." It is the home of Lowery Air Force Base with an Air & Space Museum. Denver is in the Top Ten of safest downtowns in America. Denver brews more beer than any other city in the world. Over 80 different beers are brewed daily with Rocky Mountain water. Denver's airport offers 1300 daily flights. Denver has three colleges, the Denver Mint, White Water Rafting, \$100 million aquarium, and over 300 restaurants. In nearby Fort Collins is the Anheuser-Busch Brewery. In nearby Golden is the Coors Brewery, and the Mother Cabrini Shrine with 22 foot statue of Christ on a hill overlooking Denver. South of Denver in Colorado Springs is the United States Air Force Academy. Other attractions in Colorado Springs are Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods, Cave of the Winds, and Seven Falls. The surrounding area of Denver has many mountains, rivers, and streams to enjoy, and if Denver is chosen by the membership, the annual reunion will probably be between Mid-August and Mid-September 2007. Denver is known to have 300 days of sunshine. And there is 24 hour legalized gambling available in the foothills, about 45 minutes west of Denver.

OGDEN, UTAH – WILLKONNEM FROM THE SISTER CITY OF HOF

Located at the base of the Wasatch Mountains just north of Salt Lake City, Ogden's majestic landscape compliments the beauty of the rolling hills of Hof, Germany. Like Hof, Ogden has a rich railroad history, small town charm, fabulous food, and great locally brewed beer by Ogden's own award winning brewmeister. Ogden features many attractions sure to please. Hill Air Force Base with the Hill Aerospace Museum boasts a vast

collection of aircraft, vehicles and artifacts dating from 1903. Step back in time on our notoriously charming Historic 25th Street. Hear the tales of Mountain men, Pioneers, Indians, and Troops that traveled through Ogden by rail during the war. Visit Union Station and enjoy the Browning Firearms Museum, Utah Railroad Museum and Browning-Kimball Car Museum. Admire the Great Salt Lake and experience Antelope Island. See where East met West at the Golden Spike National Historic Site. Visit Olympic Venues of the 2002 Winter Olympics. Spend time at the world famous Temple Square and listen to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Experience the true West. Ogden, the Sister City to Hof would be honored to host the Hof Reunion Association's annual get together in 2007.

RENO, NEVADA – THE BIGGEST LITTLE CITY IN THE WORLD

Reno is located in the western part of the state near the California border – in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. What the city lacks in glitz or reputation it more than makes up for in attractions and amenities. There are first-rate, reasonably priced hotels, golf courses and casinos to rival its southern counterpart, Las Vegas. Reno has access to many fine attractions such as Lake Tahoe, Emerald Bay, Truckee River, Pyramid Lake, Virginia City, Francis Newland's home, Nystrom House, National Bowling Stadium, University of Nevada, and the State Capitol, Carson City. Other Reno recreational places are Wingfield Park Amphitheater, Peppermill Hotel Casino, Silver Legacy Resort & Casino, Atlantis Casino Resort and Comstock Hotel & Casino. Don't forget about El Dorado Hotel Casino, Circus Circus, the Keck Museum, the Wilber May Museum, the Nevada Museum of Art, the National Automobile Museum and the Nevada Historical Society Museum. The National Championship Air Races are held the 3rd week of September. Among Reno's art places are A Wildflower Village, Acquavella Modern Art, Addi Galleries, Alexandratos Gallery, Amaranth Gallery, American Visions Art Gallery, Art on Earth and Artistry in Bronze Gallery.

We look forward to hosting the Hof Association 2007 Reunion.

So, there they are, if you have any doubts about selecting a site, you can check them out on the web, check with their local Chambers of Commerce and/or with the Auto Club Tour Guides. There are many attractions that aren't obvious when you first take a look and you will be surprised how much all of these places have to offer. You just might find that one of these places might be a destination that you been looking for. So do your research then go to the end of the newsletter, grab your crayon, fill out the selection ballot and mail it in – it's that simple.

Membership Chairman, C.A. Russell

It will be great going back to Hof/Saale for the 2006 reunion as it has all the makings of being as great or greater than the 2002 reunion. We hope that all of you will make every effort to attend. Bear in mind; many that would love to go, just aren't physically able to make the trip anymore, and in 4 more years there will be even more of us in that situation. So we hope to see you there this year!!

We make every effort to locate our Hof friends, and many times are successful. We have about 3100 names on our roster, and discounting the "missing" we have approximately 2300 that are eligible to be a members, but of those people, only about a third of them have become members. It is discouraging to go down the list of names of people that we have found, only to see that they never did send their registration back in to us, or they joined for a year then dropped out. We aren't trying to create a large roster, we are trying to reunite a group of old comrades so we can get together and reminisce about the good ole days and fill each other in on the lives after service. When you see the name of an old acquaintance appear in the weekly update as a "new find" or you see their name on the roster, get in touch with them and let them know you are glad to see them surface, urge them to join and encourage them to participate. We will send you a complete copy of the roster, and you will receive weekly email "Updates." Please communicate this information to your friends, and ask them to be a part of the second largest military reunion association. And if finances are a problem, membership in the HRA is free if you request it, as it states on the membership form.

The Financials from Nathan Sparks, Treasurer

It has been a great pleasure working with the officers and members of the Hof Reunion Association this past year. The Reunion in Nashville, Tennessee was considered a very joyful and successful reunion by all that attended. All the bills have been paid and the cost in dollars and cents were as follows: Social, Banquet and Band in the Holiday Inn Select \$22,848.01, the tours of Grand Ole Opry, General Jackson Luncheon Cruise, and Discover Nashville \$12,905.56, Souvenir, "T" shirts \$744.28, gifts, gratuities, and miscellaneous expenses \$268.81, and donation to the Enlisted Widows Village \$1000.00. The Association donated \$500.00 from treasury and the members attending the reunion donated \$3,637.50 by cash, checks, and fundraisers. A check for \$4,137.50 was delivered to the Biloxi Katrina Salvation Army Corps.

We are anticipating a great attendance at the Reunion in Hof Germany where it all began. We have budgeted for the Social, Banquet and Band \$17,050.00, Bus Tours in and around Germany \$14,340.00, Souvenir Sweat shirts \$3,630.00, gifts, gratuities and miscellaneous expenses \$500.00, charitable contribution \$1,500.00. An estimated cost for the reunion \$31,890.00; of course the actual amounts will depend on the conversion of Euro in Europe.

The Association voted in Nashville to change the Fiscal Year in the Constitution & by-laws to run from January 1 through December 31 of each calendar year. Our goal is to provide all members the best service for their money. Each new member and the renewing members receive an updated copy of the Master Hof Roster. All paid membership in the association expired on December 31, 2005; the 90-day grace period ends March 31, 2006. 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 \$16,716.41, in our Association bank account, as of November 30, 2005. However, we will be confronted with some heavy expenses in the near future. The publication and mailing of the January 2006 "Hof Connection Newsletter" and much larger deposits required than in the USA for the upcoming reunion in Hof. The Association books will be available in Hof Germany for fiscal year 2006 for inspection by any member with a desire to review them.

Association status from Jerry Mangas, Secretary

We are currently pursuing a membership drive to update old or non-renewing members from FY1 thru FY4 with postal mailings and email teasers. The registration effort for Hof2006 is ongoing as well as the continual hunt for new finds and new members by our elite headhunter team. The weekly connection Email update is now much expanded in format and content and has more and more input coming from the members and is sent to known active email addresses weekly and weekly tracking and correction of null or changed email addresses is a continuing priority

Association status: Currently (12/27/05) there are 3450 last names on the roster, consisting of 3084 potentially active names of which 1092 are listed as missing, and including the 74 women and 384 men on Final Flyby. We have people in the group from 1946 to 1985 and located from Japan to Afghanistan. Currently we have 669 active members with the Connection Update reaching 544 every week via email.

Website Status from Barry Springsteen

Over the summer the Association Web Site received two updates in the software that is used to create, maintain and load our site. Both updates went without incident and now we can move forward with additional features.

One item that has been causing concern for the membership for a long time is navigating through the pictures. Available features for the photo albums did not support navigation buttons. Two processes were developed this summer to display pictures and help correct this problem. The first process created a slide show that could be

viewed using a broadband connection. The second process created a photo album that looked like a separate web site (subdomain). Both are available for membership use and can be accessed from the association home page.

The Bulletin Board is still available to all members and would be a great way to communicate. For example, someone heading out on a trip can start a discussion of gas prices and the stations and the exits that offer the best value. The use of the Bulletin Board is only limited by our imagination and perhaps several state and federal laws.

Future plans are centered on the expansion of photo display processes. Our main concern is still with those members that have dial-up access and their access to quality pictures.

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.

Official History of the Hof Reunion Association

The first advertised Hof Reunion was organized in 1996. The reunion was open to anybody that had ever been assigned to the Hof Kaserne or Döbraberg and was advertised in the V.F.W. & American Legion Magazines. Leon & Dotty Weston and Mike and Barbara Jean Buttell organized the reunion. (Leon, A former 606th Commander and Dotty had been a teacher at the dependent school. Mike was a former USAF Officer and B.J. had also been a teacher). The primary motivation for the reunion was to welcome a group of Hofer's that had worked with the USAF in Hof. The Hofer's were led by Helga Lange, Erika Thümling, Anna Müller, HannsKarl Ritter, Erich Rohleder, Helga Würdinger, and a few others.

The Westons & Buttells selected the Sahara Hotel-Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. In attendance were several former teachers and Officers. Also in attendance were John & Inge Traub, Rees & Susan Dews, Larry Thall, Phil Hughes, Art & Karen Weatherwalks, Bob & Mary Fernandez, and Art Darling. Everybody had such a great time that a committee was formed, led by John & Inge Traub, to plan a 1998 get together in Hof.

In 1998, our German Friends reciprocated: Franz Anders, Robert Hörath, Erika Thümling, Anna Müller, Erich Rohleder and Helga Würdinger joined with the Traubs to plan a fantastic gathering in Hof in which the Americans marched in the Hofer Volksfest Parade. Approximately 37 Americans traveled to Hof for the event.

In 1999, Chuck & Monika Wilson organized a 602/606 Reunion in Reno, NV. The event was held at the Circus Circus Hotel Casino. Some of the folks that attended were Bob & Jeanette Thornburg, Nate & Gwen Fetrow, Stan & Betty Rushton, Hank & Sally Green, Marty & Alice Habecker, Eddie & Dot Crump, Wayne Bennett, Larry & Jackie August, Wade & Gladys Fink, Larry & MaryLou Shriver, Bob Alekson, Francis & JoAnn Fukumoto, Tony Donofrio, Rich & Terri McGoldrick, Tom & Monika Nickerson, Claude & Myrtle Spicer, Rees & Susan Dews, Dick Nelson, Phil Hughes, the Darling's and about 50 others.

Shortly after that, a Hof Reunion for 2000 was being planned, to be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Colorado Springs. The 2000 Reunion was being planned by Richard & Beverly Hurliman, Assisted by Hal & Dot Olson, Jim Smith, and Jim Riggan. As the word spread via the Internet, an all out effort was made to promote the three-day get together. About 215 people attended. The tours were all very well planned. The Banquet consisted of a buffet luncheon, short memorial service, and introduction of Barron Ernst Von Waldenfels a Host of the 1998 Reunion.

At the Banquet, Hal Olson asked, "How many people are interested in returning to Hof in 2002?" Nearly everybody in attendance held up his or her hand. Hal then asked, "Do we have any volunteers that could help with a 2002 Reunion in Hof?" Chuck Wilson raised his hand - Hal then announced, "Chuck Wilson just volunteered to plan and organize the 2002 Reunion to be held in Hof/Saale." Ho-Ho-Ho!

Hal Olson's roster was combined with Chucks list and the Master Hof Roster was created. Phil Ruth provided a list of about 200 names that he had extracted from old orders. Dick Metz contributed names and Gordon Allbritton and C.A. Russell soon joined the search effort. Many more names and addresses were added to the newly formed Association Roster.

Tom Bryson, Tom Nickerson, Jim Patterson, Dan Scanny, Sam Suber (deceased), Dean Reed, Mike Becker (deceased), CA Russell, Barry Springsteen, Francis Fukumoto, Ted Bey, Bob Alekson, Tony Donofrio and several

others were contacted and asked if they would serve as Association Officers until an official organization was formed. A mail-in ballot, containing the names of officers, was provided to the membership with the Hof Connection Newsletter. The membership officially elected the first slate of officers. The membership was also asked to vote for the month they wanted to hold the Hof/Saale Reunion. September was selected by a majority vote.

In the meantime, Chuck & Monika Wilson flew to Germany to seek support for the planned 2002 Reunion. They met with Hanns Karl Ritter, Erika Thümling, Robert Hörath, Manfred Köhler, Klause Beer and Frau Kara. All of the above offered suggestions, guidance, and support. A tentative itinerary for the 2002 reunion was agreed upon and tour contracts with Alexander Viol Tours were signed.

It became clear that it would be necessary to officially form an Association to organize the group and provide financing to search for former Hof Colleagues, and produce a Newsletter four times a year to maintain the interest, and keep everybody on the same sheet for planning. Chuck produced a Constitution & By-laws of Association that were reviewed by Attorney Jim Slothower and approved by the newly formed Board of Directors. The Hof Reunion Association was then registered with the State of California, Secretary of State. The Hof Reunion Association was "OFFICIAL." Initial Association membership fees had been set at \$10 a year. The Board of Directors soon realized that \$10 would not be sufficient for printing and mailing a newsletter four times a year, administrative postage, telephone service and the many other expenses involved when running the organization, so the membership fee was raised to \$15 a year and the Hof Connection Newsletter publication was reduced to two times a year.

The Hof Reunion Association held its first official reunion, organized by Chuck & Monika Wilson & Robert Hörath, at the Quality Hotel, Hof/Saale, Germany, September 15-22, 2002. Approximately 150 Association members and 35 German Guests were in attendance. President Tom Bryson called the first General Membership Meeting to order at 1700 hours, September 17, 2002. The first order of business was membership ratification of the Constitution & By-laws of Association. Tom Bryson then turned the meeting over to the incoming President, Tom Nickerson. Nathan Sparks was officially elected to replace the deceased Sam Suber as Association Treasurer. Jim Patterson was confirmed as 1st V.P., Bruce Orr replaced Dan Scanny as 2nd V.P., Dick Obidinski as 3rd V.P. and C.A. Russell, Membership Chairman.

The first official Hof Reunion Association get together was very successful. The Bürgermeister held a reception at the Hof Rathaus and each attendee was presented a "Hof in Bayern Ganz Oben" coffee cup. Ken Putman presented the Bürgermeister with a red, white & blue baseball cap. We were then served Wienerwurst, Bier and wine. After the Bürgermeister's reception, we went to Klaus Beers' Fernweh Park for a TV promotional, pictures, and city sign display. This activity was followed by a visit to the Teddy Bear Museum. Ladies from the Hof Chamber of Commerce (Pro-Hof) prepared cake and coffee.

On the third day we toured the Kaserne, Döbraberg, Security Service Site and Mödlareuth Museum; the German Air Force treated us to a wonderful luncheon at the Kaserne; The German Air Force Commander gave us a briefing about their Sound Research Mission and allowed us free access to the dorms and the other facilities we once called home.

The fourth day was a tour of Tettau Porzellan Fabrik and lunch with the Bürgermeister of Tettau. Following lunch, we proceeded to the Hummel Factory near Coburg where many members purchased figurines at a discount and were treated with a small Hummel gift to commemorate the occasion.

On the fifth day, 3 buses departed the Quality Hotel for an overnight tour to Prag (Prague). This Tour was the highlight of the 2002 Hof/Saale Reunion. We visited old town Prag and then enjoyed a sunset cruise on the Moldau River. There was a band on each deck for dancing and of course, everybody enjoyed the lighting of the city. We continued the guided sighting tour the following day. On the return trip to Hof, we visited the Becherovka distillery in Karovary, and sang all the way home to the Quality in Hof.

On the seventh Day, the Hof Family held its Auf Wiedersehen Breakfast. Helen Tony closed the 2002 Association Reunion with her Scottish Ballad, "Haste Ye Back".

Since the great 2002 Hof Reunion, and membership ratification of the Constitution and By-laws, many improvements in Association operating procedures have been made. Treasurer Nathan Sparks researched and prepared the documents for obtaining Internal Revenue Service, nonprofit, charitable, tax-exempt status under

section 501 (c) (19) of the IRS Code. Barry & Sue Springsteen reconfigured the Association Website and has continued to make improvements to the Associations greatest exposure for public viewing. Phil Murray accepted the position of Hof Connection Newsletter Editor and continues to improve the semi-annual publication. Membership Chairman C.A. Russell has employed his skills and uncanny ability to find the missing by locating more than 800 former Hof Colleagues. Chuck Wilson has submitted proposed Amendments to the Constitution and By-laws that have resulted in improved volunteer workload and has resulted in increased management efficiency.

Since the first official Hof Reunion Association event, the reunions have progressively improved with each gathering of the Hof Family.

The 2003 Association Reunion was held at the Stardust Hotel-Casino, Las Vegas, NV, organized by Tom Nickerson, President, and Chuck Wilson, Secretary. We had 330 members in attendance. The Stardust provided connecting hospitality suites with a patio near the pool. Tom Bryson provided the duty schedule for volunteers and Tom & Monika Nickerson made sure beverages & snacks were plentiful. Ute Sparks made the Association photo albums available for everyone to view. Unfortunately, a few, one of a kind pictures were removed from the albums. We hope that those photographs will one day show up in the Association P.O. Box so everybody will have the pleasure of viewing them at our annual get together.

Tom Nickerson called the General Membership Meeting to order, Nathan Sparks provided the financial statement, and we waived the reading of the minutes giving Chuck Wilson a rest. Tom then turned the meeting over to incoming president Jim Patterson, with Bruce Orr moving to 1st VP, and Dick Obidinski moving to 2nd VP. Jim Riggin was elected to the 3rd VP, while Nathan Sparks was reelected Treasurer, Chuck Wilson was reelected Secretary and C.A. Russell was reelected as Membership Chairman. The 2004 Site Selection Ballots were counted and Branson, MO. Won by 14 votes. Jim Beard, the Branson coordinator recommended we bypass Branson and go with the runner up, San Antonio, Texas. (The Association Board later moved the 2004 Event to Biloxi, MS due to a breakdown in negotiations with San Antonio Hotels & Visitors Bureau.) The membership then approved a \$1000.00 donation to the Air Force Enlisted Widows Home and \$350.00 to the V.A. Blind Veterans Golf Tournament.

Jim & Traudl Riggin, JoAnn Fukumoto, Ralph Glover, Dick Obidinski and several others put on a great Reception-Social program. Traudl's beautiful voice filled the Stardust Convention Center with the singing of German & American folk songs. Steve Murphrey, E.T. Row, and Tom Mikloiche delivered magnificent 5-minute talks about their experiences at Hof.

A Tour of Boulder Dam, lunch in the Lake Mead Recreation Area, and a visit to the Valley of Fire served as an escape from the quarter machines.

The Banquet was marvelous. Francis Fukumoto provided the memorial service, and Col. John Eledge the invocation. Boeing Eng. Norman Hines, Col. John Stevenson, Col. Marion Bacon Oelke, Col. Leon Weston and USAF Thunderbirds Executive Officer, Capt. Sean Cotter, delivered humorous but informative messages. Bruce Orr "M.C.'d" the show and German dance music was provided by the "Dummkopfs" which reminded us of the great times at the Hof Freiheitshalle.

The 2004 Reunion that was held at the Imperial Palace in Biloxi, MS, organized by Jim Patterson, President, and Chuck Wilson, Secretary. With more than 370 members in attendance and a few non-members showing up for a quick look. We were honored with the presence of the 9th CMSgt of the Air Force, Jim Binnicker, who also serves as Chief Executive Officer of the USAF Enlisted Foundation.

Dick Obidinski and Tom Nickerson operated the hospitality suite and bar, keeping it well stocked with beverages and snacks. C.A. Russell provided a DVD player that was hooked up to the T.V. for a continuous display of photos from the good old days at Hof. Ute Sparks provided the Association photo albums.

Jim Patterson called the General Membership meeting to order. Chuck Wilson suggested the Las Vegas minutes be accepted as published in the Hof Connection Newsletter. Nathan Sparks gave the financial report. 1st VP Bruce Orr passed away ten days before the Biloxi Reunion therefore 2nd VP Dick Obidinski became the Association President. Don Riverkamp was elected 2nd VP, Bobby Sturdevant was elected 3rd VP, Nathan Sparks was reelected as Treasurer and Jerry Mangas was elected Association Secretary.

Tours of the Biloxi area and Keesler AFB were held Tuesday morning and a tour to New Orleans on Wednesday.

Another great reception and social program was provided by Jim & Traudl Riggin and their talented daughter Tanya. Brenda & Archie Emery also contributed to the outstanding roster of talent, Norman & Sandi Gunther demonstrated the Carolina Shag and "The Top Hats" (Don Riverkamp, George Fahrback, John Pace) had the audience rolling in the aisles with their "Top Hat Dance". E.T. Row and Bobby Sturdevant gave 5-minute talks.

Dick Barry, M.C. began with the introduction of the Guest of Honor, 9th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Jim & Mrs. Binnicker. Association Officers, and Peggy Cicutto Adams and Aubrey Shaw were provided special recognition for their part in making the Biloxi Reunion a success. Dick Barry then called on the Keesler Air Force Base Honor Guard for presentation of the Colors. Francis Fukumoto and his ten assistants delivered the memorial service. Jimmy Johnson, Gail Norvell, and CMSgt Binniker gave 5-minute talks. Chuck Wilson presented Chief Binniker a \$1500.00 donation for the Air Force Enlisted Foundation.

The Nashville reunion is well stated above in Dick Obidinski's introduction Some added facts: The Constitution was amended to drop the 3rd VP slot, limit the "Advisor" position to one year, add the Web-Master position to the Board of Directors and change the fiscal year to read the same as the calendar year. All elected positions were re-elected or advanced per the Constituion.

NASHVILLE REUNION ATTENDANCE ROSTER

254 Of the Greatest People In the World

Johnnie & Wilma Adams, Bob & Sandy Smith Alekson, Ron & Karen Atwiid, Jim & Dolores Aue, Chuck Babcock, Freddy & Helga Bales, Jim & Gert Berry, Gisela Blankenship, Ruthie Blumenstein, Andy & Martha Brads, Aubrey Brewer, Tom & Denise Bryson, Hanna Bryson, Dennis & Anne Zimmerman Burr, Ken & Marianne Cash, Barbara Chapman, Gary & Sandra Cherpes, Dallas & Sue Churchill, Bill & Marcia Combs, Bruce & Brigitte Cook, George & Irmgard Coursey, Jim & Sue Coyle, Eddie & Dot Little Crump, Jim Pierce, Garrett & Sue Dempsey, Joe Dernoga, Alois & Rosi Dietz, Tony & Joan Donofrio, Rick & Sonja Douthit, Erich Duenne, Joe & Sue Eberhardt, Jim & Mary Eccles, Bob & Jean Epperson, Archie & Brenda Emery, George & Christa Fahrback, Anna Flamos, Al & Mary Freddie, Francis & JoAnn Fukumoto, Sidney & Gayle Futrell, Jack & Vanda Blackburn Gallimore, Roger & Elfriede Gentilini, Milton & Virginia Gibbs, Ralph & Joan Glover, Dan & Barbara Haywood, El & Ilse Hamil, Jerry & Mary Hartjes, Jim Helfer, Dick "Herb" & Shirley Herbert, Hertha Hetzel, Dan & Darlene Holden, Bennie Hopper & Sophye Pullen, Jesse & Judy Jones, Lee & Shirley Ingram, Bob & Marilyn Jarboe, David & Jeanette Johnson, Jay & Sherii Kallas, Karin Kingsley, Donn & Sue Koenig, Greg & Sandy Krma, Dick & Doris Kreuzer, Bill & Roberta Landers, Ed & Bonnie Leach, Billy Main, Jerry & Pat Mangas, Keith & Mary Martin, Bob & Pauline McAullife, Phyllis McKeag, Ken Meadows, Jerry & Hilde Middendorf, Len & Karin Montie, Steve & Donna Murphrey, Walt & Shirley Murch, Phil & Jo Murray, Dave & Karin Natalie, Ron & Fran Neiswander, Miles Nelson, Arthur Nichols, Tom & Monika Nickerson, Wade & Phyllis Nottingham, Dick & Evi Obidinski, John & Aggie Pace, Chuck & June Parnell, Jim & Eadie Patterson, Eldon "Pete" & Margit Payne, Bernie Pieper, Rod & Marion Pintello, Ron & Zella Pohle, Heide Pouch, Larry & Heidemaria Prince, Jack & Patti Rief, Jim & Traudl Riggin, Larry & Nancy Riney, Don Riverkamp, Robby & Katrina Roberson, Jerry & Gudrun Robinson, Robert & Mary Rodamer, E.T. & Vera Row, C.A. & Jody Russell, Phil & Rosalie Ruth, Brent & Linda Scott, Dan & Carol Scanny, Lis Siefried, Pat Schiermeister, Gary & Ann Schilling, Harvey Schmit, Mike & Connie Shannahan, Bob & Lilo Scherwood, Walt & Ginny Shifflett, Jack Sinagra & Jean Jackson, John & Eva-Maria Slutz, Jerry & Ruth Smeal, Carl & Linda Smith, Nathan & Ute Sparks, Barry & Sue Springsteen, Bobby Starr, Raymond Startz, Bobby "Stu" & Marcey Sturdevant, Ray & Mary Szyperski, Billy Thomas, Dean & Shirley Thompson, Ray & Jo Thompson, Billie Townsen, Walt & Margot Tribble, Bob "Troj" and Mary Trojanoski, Kate Unger, Dirke Vallo, Russ & Pat Vandermartin, Jean Vinson, Bill & Jeanette Waitman, Bill & Eadie Ward, Bob & Ginny Ward, Gene Wetzal, Walt Whisner, John Wible, John & Lottie Williams, Chuck & Monika Wilson, Frank & Shirley Wright, Rip & Jeannie Yarnell, Lorryne Zobrack.

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@dejazzd.com> to see what the problem might be. Please provide your name and correct email address. Your attention to this matter will assure that you receive all the weekly email updates. If you do not have internet service, perhaps a family member, neighbor or friend would be willing to accept mail for you? If so, have them forward your name via their email with a note to <hofreunion@dejazzd.com> and we will take care of the rest.

Hof Reunion Association
PO Box 276883
Sacramento, CA 95827-6883
916-366-1811 email: hofreunion@dejazzd.com
www.hofreunion.com

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

The Hof Reunion Association operates on a fiscal year that runs from 1 January to 31 December of the calendar year.

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

The Master Hof Roster & Constitution is mailed immediately upon receipt of a new membership application and at the end of the quarter in which a membership renewal is received. Please select how you wish to receive the Master Hof Roster below.

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 her 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 ASAP

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

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for 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: _____

What form do you wish to receive the Master Hof Roster (Please check one)
 Email Excel CD Hardcopy

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

Enclosed is a check for \$15.00 made out to: Hof Reunion Association. I understand the annual dues are to be used for the printing of "the Hof Connection Newsletter" mailed each January and July, the Master Hof Roster, mailed to all members upon payment of the annual dues, and the associated fees for postage, printing, envelopes, address labels, telephone expenses, search for missing colleagues, web site, Insurance and other operating costs.

I am the widow (widower) of _____ and want to be a member of the Association.

I request to be granted a FREE 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.

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2006 Hof/Saale Reunion Registration Form

The 2006 Hof/Saale Registration fee is \$77.50 (62€) per person. The registration fee is to cover the cost of The Banquet Dinner, Hall Rental, Group Dinner, Floor Show, Music, Dance, Special Awards, Nametags, Kaserne Lunch, and other administrative cost. *A \$22.50 (18€) Surcharge will apply to registrations received after June 15, 2006.*

Cancellation and Refund Rule: Registration fee's are 100% refundable until August 15. After August 15, tickets are only 100% refundable for certified & documented emergencies. Otherwise, due to Association cost and contract commitments a 50% forfeiture will apply.

First and last name as you want it to appear on your Name Tag, Banquet Ticket and Tour Ticket's.

Member: _____

Spouse/Friend: _____

Guest: _____

Guest: _____

DINNER MENU

Dinner #1 = Beef Rouladen with red cabbage and Bavarian dumplings

Dinner #2 = Hunter Schnitzel with mushroom gravy and home made Spätzle.

Dinner #3 = Pork roast in beer gravy with Sauerkraut and Bavarian dumplings.

Dinner #4 = Vegetarian meal: Vegetable Lasagna

Desert will be Apfelstrudel with Vanilla sauce and vanilla ice cream, coffee or tea.

I choose Dinner # _____ Spouse/Friend chooses# _____ Guest if Applicable _____

A fully refundable \$50.00 (40€) per person deposit must be received by April 1, 2006. The \$50 will be applied to the registration fee of \$77.50 (62€), which must be paid in full by June 15, 2006 to avoid the \$22.50 (18€) surcharge for late registration.

Make Checks Payable to: Hof Reunion Association
And send to the address above.

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2006 TOUR REGISTRATION FORM

The 2006 Hof/Saale Reunion Tour Registration form and payments will be accepted until the limited supply of tickets for each tour are depleted. A standby list will then be established. All tickets are available on a first come, first serve basis.

Cancellation and Refund Rule: Tickets are 100% refundable until August 15. After August 15, tickets are 80% refundable for certified & documented emergencies only. Otherwise, due to Association cost and contract commitments, a 100% forfeiture will apply unless the tour tickets can be resold to another reunion participant.

You must make a choice between tour 1A – Berlin, and 1B – Dresden, because these tours will be held on the same day, Tuesday, September 19, 2006. A limit of 70 Tickets is available for Berlin and 70 Tickets are available for Dresden.

Tour 1A – Berlin Depart the Quality Hotel at 0700. Stop in Leipzig, short coffee break. Arrive Berlin at 1100 hours. Visit Reichstag. Lunch (Dutch) will be in a typical Berlin restaurant. An English Speaking Tour Guide will then join us for a 2.5 hour sight seeing tour of the most important places in Berlin such as: Brandenburg Gate, Potsdam Square, Check Point Charley, City Hall, Victory Monument, Bellevue Castle, Memorial Church, Olympia Stadium, and the Soviet Memorial. We will have about 2 hours to shop on the famous Kurfürstendam (Main Street) for souvenirs. On the return trip to Hof, we will stop for dinner at a special restaurant. We will arrive at the Quality Hotel in Hof about 2300 hours (11pm).

I/We want _____ tickets for the Berlin Tour at (39€) \$48.50

Tour 1B – Dresden Depart Quality Hotel at 0700. We will stop at the Goeltschtal Bridge (Worlds largest all brick bridge) and arrive in Dresden about 1100 for a guided tour through the gorgeous old Semper Opera House and then go to lunch (Dutch). The English-speaking guide will then take us on a sight seeing tour of Dresden. The drive by tour will include Theater Square, Castle, Taschenbergpalace, Old Residence Church, Bruhlache Terrace, and Historical monuments. We will then take a short break to view the Elbe River. We will board the Tour Bus for the return trip home at 1730 and stop at a special location for dinner. We will arrive at the Quality in Hof about 1100.

I/We want _____ tickets for the Dresden Tour at (44€) \$55.00

TOUR 2 – I/We want _____ tickets for the former Kingsley Kaserne, Hof Site, Döbraberg and Mödareuth Tour at (16€) \$20.00 each for a total of \$/€ _____ . Lunch included at a surprise location. (Limited to 160 tickets on a first come, first served basis)

TOUR 3 - I/We want to reserve _____ tickets for the Kulmbach, Plassenburg, Souvenir Shop, a Brauerei Tour (Free Beer-Dutch Lunch), and the pilgrimage church of Vierzehnheiligen (Balthasar Neumann), perhaps the greatest of Rococo churches and return to Hof. Cost is (18€) \$23.00 each for a total of \$/€ _____ . (Tour limited to 120 tickets on a first come, first served basis)

Please find _____ X \$ (1A - \$48.50 / 39€) (1B - \$55 / 44€) for a total of \$/€ _____
(Black out one of the above.)

Please find _____ X \$20 (16€) for a total of \$/€ _____ to cover Tour 2 Tickets.

Please find _____ X \$23 (18€) for a total of \$/€ _____ to cover Tour 3 Tickets.

A TOTAL OF \$/€ _____ ENCLOSED.

Make Checks Payable to: Hof Reunion Association
And send to the address above.

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2007 SITE SELECTION BALLOT

Member name: _____

MY CHOICE FOR THE 2007 HOF REUNION ASSOCIATION REUNION SITE IS:

AUSTIN, TEXAS _____ DENVER, COLORADO _____

OGDEN, UTAH _____ RENO, NEVADA _____

Vote for only one, please

PLEASE COMPLETE AND MAIL NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 15TH, 2006.

Mail to:

2007 SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE
HOF REUNION ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 276883
SACRAMENTO, CA 95827-6883

** THANK YOU – *Site Selection Committee*

Executive Board:

President	Jim Riffin
1stV.P.	Don Riverkamp
2ndV.P.	Bobby Sturdevant
Adjutant	Chuck Wilson
Treasurer	Nathan Sparks
Secretary	Jerry Mangas
Membership Chairman	C A Russell
Web Master	Barry Springsteen
Advisor	Dick Obidinski
German Affairs Repr:	Robert Hörath

Staff:

Chaplain	Francis Fukumoto
Web Photo Master	Jerry Mangas
Historian	Gary Dempsey
Hof Connection Editor	Phil Murray
Sergeants at Arms	Bob Alekson
Tony Donofrio	

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HOF CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

July 2006

Ahh . . . the smell of Bratwurst is in the air . . . and it's Hofer Bratwurst . . . maybe find a Pils too . . . Life just can't get much better than that.

For those that haven't returned to Hof since their tour of duty, you should still remember the Bratwurst, Bier and maybe a Schnitzelbrot or two at the 'Blick', but you'll probably be surprised at the changes to Hof itself; the city has undergone some improvements. Those that have been back since then may not be surprised by the difference, but you still remember the Bratwurst and the Bier. Too bad the 'Blick' is no longer there or you'd still appreciate the Schnitzelbrot. Regardless, a real, honest-to-goodness Hofer Bratwurst is one of the real wonders of the world and if you toss in a Bier, well...it will bring back great memories of the past and create new ones for the future. It seems that every time you sit down for a Bratwurst and a Bier you are with friends and you're going to have a good memories.

With all the changes, it will be a great time. Hof is still a city with a lot of heart and even though we might belittle it once in awhile because of the winter weather and the fact that hardly anybody has ever heard of it, (even in Germany) there are a bunch of friendly, receptive people there that remember us from before and will still talk to us. A lot of the old is still there, along with the new.

I imagine that everyone who has signed up for the reunion has already reserved their flights. If not, it seems that there isn't just one 'right way' to do it. I've heard good reports about the online brokers, such as *Travelocity*, *Expedia*, etc. Many members have gone directly to the airline websites themselves and found good deals, schedules and/or travel packages that are attractive. There have been several hints in the weekly updates. Hope you were paying attention.

Regardless, this Hofer reunion is going to be a good one. Our men on the ground in Hof, **Robert Hoerath**, and his able sidekick, **Alois Dietz**, have set up a great program that will please the most difficult of us. They'll be readily available for consultation and recommendations for any additional adventures you might want to



undertake on your own. From **Robert**, and his wife, **Hanna**, and **Alois**, and his wife **Rosi**, a "Herzliche Willkommen" and have a safe trip, they are waiting to greet us.

The Association has set up scheduled tours to Berlin, Dresden and Kulmbach, and as we go to press they are all booked. For those on the Berlin tour, it will include a visit to the Reichstag. We will receive a short briefing, in English, in the visitors gallery of the Plenary Assembly Hall. Due to increased safety/security regulations, HRA must provide a list of attending members to the German Bundestag thirty (30) days prior to our visit. After our visit, the list will be destroyed. We are required to provide the name and date of birth as it appears on your passport.

Please email your name and date of birth, EXACTLY as it appears on your passport, to: hofreunion@aol.com as soon as possible, **but no later than August 15th**. THANKS!!

After (or even before) the reunion, there are other chances for adventure. For those that haven't been back since your tour of duty, this will be the first time you can legally see the 'Ost Zone' and the Czech Republic from

within. You won't notice the 5K signs anymore, but you'll probably have a funny feeling when you realize you're 'across the border' the first time, just 'buck-up' and don't let it bother you, there are some great sights to see in the old target countries and you'll enjoy it. Most of the countries have 'rebuilt' and are very pleasant places to visit.

RENT-A-CAR ?

If you will be doing some additional touring or just puttering about Hof, here are a couple of good deals set up with some car rental agencies.

Chuck Wilson writes:

Arrangements have been made with *Auto Europe* of Portland, Maine for a Hof Reunion Association Group Rental Rate. CODE: 99007341, Project Manager: Garrett; Telephone: 1-888-223-5555 Ext. 1302.

Auto Europe is a broker that will look for the best deal and guarantees the lowest rates. After you complete a rental agreement, if you find a better rate from any other rental company in Germany or the Czech Republic, call Garrett and he will beat that rate by 5%.

When using your *VISA* or *MASTER CARD GOLD* (or higher) to rent an automobile, you will normally receive FREE Insurance coverage for 2 weeks (check with your specific credit card provider to verify the rules). If the rental period exceeds 2 weeks, you should make arrangements to turn your car in at Hof and get a new contract on the same vehicle. We recommend you contact your personal insurance agent to check for extended rental car coverage.

If you plan to stay in Europe for more than 3 weeks, we recommend you discuss the possibilities of a New Car Lease with Garrett.

As *Auto Europe* is a broker, not the actual rental agency, we suggest that you ask for *Euro Car* or *Sixt* and avoid *Avis Europe*. Our experience with the *Avis Air*

port vendors is they have a habit of charging a fee for any little minor scratch, spot, or nick on the vehicle upon return. We can almost guarantee people renting an *Avis* vehicle from an airport vendor will encounter this problem and it will probably be very noticeable on your next credit card billing. If you bypass the airport vendors and rent a vehicle from Herr Holz, the *Avis* vehicle vendor in Hof, the above statements may not apply.

Tom Mikloiche has an additional recommendation:

Thrifty Rental Car has special codes to use if you need a rental car at a decent price. If you are renting in Frankfurt, use the code "HOF6" if you are under 55. (not many of us are) Use the code "HOF7" if you are over 55. That will give you the biggest discount. If you are flying into a different airport use "SNRS" as that will get you a 10% discount off the base rates.

If you are flying directly into Hof, there isn't a *Thrifty Rental Agency* there - sorry.

Jerry Middendorf has these experiences.

Of all the vehicle vendors, i.e. Thrifty, Auto Europe, etc., Europcar has provided me the best rates. I went through Henry Turkowski, in Hof telephone from the U.S. is 011-49-9281-64041. The fax nr. is 011-49-9281-61166. the email is: de.st.hof@mail.europcar.com He speaks English and when I asked him about a 'Seniors' discount, he came back with a 8 1/2% reduction, which was pretty good. Also, my VISA Cards cover 30 days of insurance coverage (Ed: my Master Card also provides for 30 days of coverage).

Regardless from whom you rent a vehicle in Germany, you should check the vehicle for small scratches, chips and dents near the trunk, front of vehicle, and along the sides where car doors may bump the vehicle **before you drive away**, noting and damage or inoperable features on your contract, and check with the agency to make sure which countries you are allowed to drive in. They all have restrictions. Also verify with your credit card provider the period of time they provide insurance for your rental. As mentioned above, if you need the car longer than the period offered, whether 15 or 30 days, turn the car in and get a new contract on the same vehicle, or perhaps another one, but you'll probably have to do this at the agency that initiated the contract.

Due to the unpredictable weather in Hof during the month of September, the Association upgraded the traditional Reunion T-shirts to sweat shirts this year to handle the weather variables. So, besides the souvenir sweatshirt, what should you take to wear for this time of the season in Hof? Fatigues are always stylish, but perhaps you want something a little more casual. Lose the shorts and sandals though, you won't need snowshoes or parkas either, but take a sweater and/or a light jacket, at a minimum. An umbrella is always a good choice. Even though it can be very pleasant during this period, be prepared to dress warmly. Even though there normally isn't any snow, the weather can have a little bite this time of year. And remember to include a coat and tie for the gentlemen, and a nice dress for the ladies, to be worn at the Friday night banquet dinner as the Buergermeister, the Herr Baron and all of our German friends will be in attendance.

Here's a message from Mom: Don't forget to check with your medical/health insurance provider to see if you are covered overseas (Medicare doesn't cover you). There are companies that will write a supplemental policy for occasions just like this, just as if it was a normal thing to do. And your medications -- don't forget to take your meds along, in fact it might be wise to take a spare prescription along with you as a back-up, just in case. If you normally use a face cloth, take one with you, they typically are not a standard provision in the Hotels of Europe. Also, complimentary hand soap isn't always provided either, so you may want to take a spare bar of soap with you to be safe. You do remember about fresh underwear don't you? And who can forget the rescue of one of us by another with the foresight in 2002 to bring Lomotil?



So, who's making the Pilgrimage to Hof?

Peggy Adams, Bert & Kay Arnold, Mike & Ursula Assenmacker, Elfriede Baumgartel, Jim & Sue Beard, Eric Bergstrom, Gisela Blankenship, Tom, Densie & Hanna Bryson, Robert Butler, Scott & Lori Byer, Hilde Calisti, Jay C & Mary Roth Campbell, Ken & Marianne Cash, Mark & Peggy Clemons, Jack & Sue Coker, Bruce & Brigitte Cook, George & Irmgard Coursey, Eddie Crump & Dot Little, Carl & Barbara Davino, Jerry & Ellen Decker, Anita Deleranko, Jack & Joyce Denham, Ed & Nancy Desch, Christa Devine, Pat & Kathy DiCincio, Dave & Karen Dickson, Alois & Rosi Dietz, John & Robyn Dorsch, Erich Duenne, Archie Emery, George & Christa Fahrbach, Anna Flamos, Faye Fletcher, Mario & Renate Forgione, Francis & JoAnn Fukumoto, Malcolm Gaissert, Randel & Penny Gash, Ralph & JoAn Glover, Melvin & Arlyne Goodweather, Paul Genung, Deborah Grierson, Marty & Alice Habecker, Helga Haese, Mel & Ilse Hamil, Smiley & Elaine Hansberger, Carmen Hardman, Stan & Pat Heath, Jim & Delia Helfer, Barry & Carmen Hibbard, Norman & Ursula Hines, Robert & Hanna Hörath, Dan & Rich Holden, Ken & Lily Holley, Gina Hutchins, John Inman, Jean Jackson, Dave & Jeanette Johnson, Wayne & Judy Jones, Arnold & Emma Joyce, Kathie & Kristie Joyce, Margaret Kaiser, Joseph & Dolores Kessler, Ken & Gay Kielbania, Tom & Donna Knight, Greg & Sandy Krema, Susan Kren, Dick, Doris & Heidi Kreuzer, John & Diane Krug, Paul & Erika Laven, Marianne Lengel, Richard & Barbara Learned, Jerry & Erika Librizzo, Bill Little, Dot Little, Jerry & Pat Mangas, Diana McFarland, Jim McGovern,



Phyllis McKeag, Phipps & Jolene McKeag, Ron & Sheila Meier, Jerry & Hilde Middendorf, Tom & Inga Mikloiche, Russell Moyer, Bob & Susan Morrisson, Susan Morse, Walt & Shirley Murch, Steve & Donna Murphrey, Phil & Jo Murray, Claude & Suzanne Niebuhr, Wade & Phylliss Nottingham, Dick & Evi Obidinski, Jay & Linda Ogles, Joe Olenik, John & Aggie Pace, Pete & Margit Payne, Lance & Kay Peterson, Bernie & Sandra Pieper, James Pierce, Heidi Pouch, Gary & Rose Marie Queen, Jim Traudl & Tanja Rigglin,

Don Riverkamp, Michael Rockelmann, Clint & Katrina Roberson, Harold & Helga Robinson, Leo & Ilse Root, Les Runkle, CA Russell, Danny & Brigitte Sandifer, Dan & Carol Scanny; Paul, Susan & Aubrey Schefft, Pat Schiermeister, Sandra; Liz & Manfred Seigfried, Walt & Ginny Shifflett, Mike & Connie Shanahan, Robert & Lois Shinko, Walt & Jay Silveria, Jack Sinagra, John & Eva Maria Slutz, Gerald & Ruth Smeal, Nate & Ute Sparks, Joerg Spielmann, Don & Diane Spirk, Gerd & Irmgard Sprissler,

Jay Steeger, Stu & Marcey Sturdevant, Ray & Mary Szyperski, Dean & Shirley Thompson, Francis & Priscilla Thompson, Walter & Margot Tribble, Joey Trujillo, Kathe Urban, Bill & Edith Ward, Marianne Way, John & Judy Weckerly, Gene Wetzal, David & Lynn Williams, Chuck & Monika Wilson, Marty & Judy & Becky Wright, Carl & Anita Wyatt, Dave Wymard.

TROUBLE ON THE NET

Barry Springsteen

This April, the Association web site experienced three major problems. The problems were centered around the Chat Room and the Bulletin Board. These are free services supplied by third part vendors.

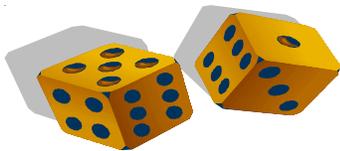
The Chat Room was hosted by CHATZY.COM. One day the server just stopped responding. Research revealed that the host was removed from the network and no one knew why. A week ago CHATZY returned to the network, a new chat room was established and is now up and running.

The Bulletin Board experienced two unrelated problems that eventually led to its demise. The first was that someone hacked into the administration section and downloaded their pictures and audio. Anytime someone tried to access the bulletin board they received the hackers messages. Secondly, the bulletin board was infected with a virus. The virus caused thousands of pages to be displayed and 100's of thousands of bytes of through put to be consumed (no cost to the association). The bulletin board is going to remain out of service for some time yet.

If we experience additional interruptions, then we will have to determine if we want to go to other providers, at a possible cost to us for its use.



OK, so what's next? Well, we can all start thinking about the 2007 Reunion. The search for a hotel and facilities has begun with Don Riverkamp and Chuck Wilson scurrying about Reno, doing the preliminary on-site expedition to narrow the choices (and even though this is hard work, they volunteered to do it).



Reno, Nevada was chosen by our members for the site of the Hof Association Reunion in 2007. At the foot of the snowcapped Sierra Nevada, with the Truckee River winding through the center, Reno, *'The Biggest Little City in the World'*, lacks the arid desert climate of Las Vegas, and doesn't have quite the glitz of 'the strip', but there are many fine hotels and casinos downtown along Virginia Street on either side of the railroad tracks, featuring all the gambling you'll need, fine restaurants and entertainment and a host of other distractions that you will leave you with a great choice of activities.

Not far from Reno you'll find Lake Tahoe, Sparks, Virginia City, Carson City, and others, that offer many scenic, recreational and historical attractions. I'm sure that several of the places named above will be included in tours set up by the Association. And for those that are a bit more Spartan, there are plenty of forested areas that provide great hiking, camping and scenic vistas.

The Board of Directors are hoping that all our current members assist in making the 2007 reunion a very successful one. We would like every member's assistance in contacting past members who have let their membership expire, assist us in having them consider bringing their dues up to date and joining us in Reno. Our past reunions have been very successful, and our members have had loads of fun and laughter talking about the good ole Hof days, and what's going on in their lives today. I personally look forward to our yearly reunions, and all the good folks and spouses that make our association successful.

Think on it, get your tour books out and start making your plans. We should have some fairly solid information available before we head for Hof; be sure to check the weekly updates for the latest news.

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The site selection committee has been set up for the 2008 reunion by President Jim Riggin. Dick Obidinski, of Arlington, Tx will be the Chairperson, with Jerry Mangas of Mohnton, Pa. John Pace of Atlanta, Ga. Gary Cherpes of Caledonia, Mi. and Phil Murray of San Diego, Ca. rounding out the rest of the committee, plus an alternate, Bruce Cook of Dayton, OH. was selected. These folks will be doing a little leg work to see what's available in their parts of the world and any hints you have would be appreciated. We've been moving around the country trying to eventually hold the reunion in **YOUR** backyard so you don't have to fly or drive for 8 days. What attracts us is a location that provides interest, which could be the entertainment, the history, the scenery, the recreation, or preferably a combination. It must provide good accommodations at a reasonable price. So think about it and if you have a good idea that you think will appeal to everyone else, send it to your local selection committee person, their email addresses are in the roster, and if that doesn't work, send the email to the Hof Reunion address. You just might be the one to pick the winner.

Another activity in the mill: an 'Official' Hof Reunion Commemorative Coin. Jim Riggin is heading the effort, collecting design ideas. Here's what he has to say about it: "The final selection of the Coin design has been postponed until we meet in Hof". The suggested format is to have one side *Deutschland/Hof* and the other side *American*. We don't want to tie it down to a specific year, i.e. *Hof Reunion 2006* -- we want it to be 'timeless'. We don't want it to be tied to any one group stationed there, or any one branch of the service. We want it all-encompassing. If we are going to have a Hof Reunion coin, we want it to be the best, one that everyone can be proud of. One that reaches out and grabs you. One that people would be happy to show off and maybe brag about. Not something that you are going to throw into a drawer at home and forget about.

Maybe seeing Hof again will inspire some of our members to submit a design. Some suggestions: The German Eagle, or an old map of the 'two' Germanys, the 'Wurstla Mo', the Hof shield, the 5km Zone sign, or other cold war memory. There's a bunch of them, so wrack your brain and come up with a 'grabber'.

I encourage each and everyone of you to bring a coin design with you to Hof so that we can decide on a perfect coin at our General Membership meeting. Our time before we meet in Hof is getting short, just around the corner, so let's get to work on your thoughts for a Hof Reunion Coin today! And if you're not going to Hof yourself but have a great design, contact someone you know that's going and have them be your champion and present the idea.

Jim Riggin
President

FINANCIAL REPORT

So, how are we doing financially? Treasurer, Nate Sparks has it under control and has this to say about it. The 2006 Hof Reunion in Germany is shaping up to be a great affair. There are 238 members registered to attend the reunion as of 30 June 2006. The Board of Directors has been working very hard to provide its members the best service for the present and in the future. We purchased lapel pins (2000 @ \$ 0.72 = \$ 1,440.00) with the Hof Reunion Association logo for each member in good standing and for future members. We purchased 151 sweatshirts for \$ 1,818.72 with the Hof Reunion Association logo. (see 'Hof Connection Update #247) They are available on first come first serve to each current member and the cost of shipping was included in the purchase price.

Other expenses that exceed a \$ 100.00 year to date are First Class postage (\$ 387.14) and printing (\$800.44).

We have collected funds for the 2006 Hof Reunion as follows:

Registration of members	\$ 15,582.50
Tours in Germany	\$ 13,541.50

We budgeted for the Social, Banquet and Band \$ 16,050.00, and charitable contributions \$ 1,500. An estimated cost of the reunion is \$ 32,390; of course, the actual amount will depend on the conversion of Dollars to Euros.

We transferred \$ 11,000 to the Raiffesenbank in Hof to take advantage of the best Euro current rate.

The Association's finances are in excellent condition with a balance of \$ 35,777.48 in our Association bank account, as of May 31, 2006. However, after the targeted amount for the 2006 reunion is subtracted, (\$ 18,124) the bank balance would read \$ 17,653.48. The only other expense that is due in the near future is the July 2006 "Hof Connection Newsletter". The Association books will be available in Hof, Germany to be reviewed by any member with a desire to do so.

MEMBERSHIP

An item that has been touched on in the past, and still is an item, is our 'Active Members'. Our Membership Chairman, C. A. Russell, has put a huge effort in locating thousands of people (literally) from our past. We'd like to see more of them, and feel that they would enjoy seeing us too. If you look at the Master Roster, you'll find over 3,000 names listed, but check to see how many of them are active members. Sadly, only about 1/4 of them are active. We'd really like to see this percentage increased, not to build up the numbers, but to get more of our friends active enough to get together for a visit.

The people that regularly attended the reunions don't do it because they don't have a life, they do it because they DO have a life. They have a chance to visit with friends from the past, friends that shared the same experiences, then bring each other up to date with what life has done for them since those service years - they make the reunions work for them.

If you notice one of your old buddies on the Master Roster with an outdated membership and you think you'd like to see him again, why not give him a call. Ask him to renew and be a real active member, and join us for the next reunion. If you haven't attended a reunion yet yourself, consider attending the next one too. Personally, I have yet to find anyone that feels attending the reunions as being a waste of time. To the contrary, this whole newsletter could be filled with testimonials from very enthusiastic members. Everyone I've talked to has taken positive memories home with them from every reunion they attended and I don't think this will change. If we take mortality into consideration, we need to think this might be the last reunion that we'll be able to attend. Make CA's hard work pay off, stay 'active' yourself and encourage others to become and stay 'active' too. The re-enlistment form is attached to help this effort, don't be afraid to use it.

REFLECTIONS

Jerry Mangas, our Secretary that does the weekly update & delivers it faithfully to your front door via email -- has a few reflections of note.

The Joys of Reunions....

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When I first discovered, or was discovered by the Association, my first thought like everybody's, was to reconnect with friends of yesteryear that my wife and I had lost contact with.

That very pleasant bonus happened and is still happening today but there is an added and totally unexpected side to this whole 'Reunion' thing. Not only have we re-discovered many of the friends we were looking for, but we have discovered many others...all people from the same place. Perhaps not always the same time, but people with the exact same background and many of the same memories that my wife and I have not forgotten over the years. When you walk into the Reunion environment for the first time, and for us that was in Hof/Saale in 2002, there is a tingle of anticipation and expectation. Who do you know? What do they look like? 40 some years disappear in an instant and you are back-slapping and hugging and crying and laughing. Then you discover people that you didn't know then or don't remember. People from other shifts and other units who spent their time in the same micro-cosm that you did. Day Ladies and Trick Trash. Guys from the Border Troops or the Luftwaffe, Support & Operations guys. Guys that did Kaserne duty and went out of the gate only to party or travel or just walk about. They did the same things and other things, went to the same bars or someplace totally different. We lived on the Kaserne or in Hof or in the smaller towns and villages scattered all over Oberfranken on the economy where we created friendships that are still connected today. I, for one, have never been in or near Jake's. Heresy to some but then I can't believe there are people not

aware of Herr Korn's hospitality with his Kulmbacher and Schinkenbrot, or 'La Femina' or that incredible 13 km stretch of curvy road south of Oberkotzau just made for testing the traction of your Michelin X tires. I think each of us, the guys anyway, are familiar with the 'Blick', now a Mexican Restaurant, featuring Spare Ribs, but our various worlds opened for us from there, always to the west or south, or downtown but rarely beyond those 5-K limits. We all lived and worked, hemmed in by the Zone and the wire, in probably the most gemütlich, friendliest part of Bavaria, right up there in Bayrischer Siber, on the Dreigrenze Ecke. Did you know that the Germans were calling Hof/Saale 'Bavarian Siberia' long before the Americans came on the scene? No troops were garrisoned there for years because of the severity of the winters.

Those of us who are now thoroughly indoctrinated with the Reunion disease know this. Being the people we are, we want to share and rekindle and re-create the connections with the past and the history of those times and that place, including the adventures and mis-adventures we were involved in. The history and legend of Kingsley Kaserne and the place called Hof/Saale during a time of great international tension and stress where we all in our way and fashion did our share. The Cold War lasted a long time. So did our presence in Hof/Saale.

We would like each of you to contribute your thoughts, memories, pictures, war stories, lies legends to this printed update, the weekly e-mail connection update or the web-site. We would like you to assist in the location of the lost members of the tribe, the guys listed as 'missing' on the roster or perhaps approach those who have been identified but never been brought into the Reunion fold for what ever reason. Some people would never volunteer but will respond in the positive when asked. Particularly if an old friend asks. If the technical aspects of the Web intimidate you, we all know how to dial a phone.

Especially in these days of free weekend minutes, you can carry on for hours with your old roomies, neighbors or just good friends or find new ones. The best part of our Reunion is the new friends you will make of the people that you never knew in the past. The guys on the opposite shift or from different years or even different decades! Our membership stretches from guys that served in Hof as Occupation Troops right after the war to guys that were still on the Border in the 80's! We pay no attention to past rank or even the color of your uniform or which flag you salute, the American flag or the Bundesflagge.

WE ARE ALL HOFERS!

Have you noticed a new look to the newsletter? Well, a tip of the hat goes to David Sallinger of Goldsboro, NC. He has a great talent for printing and composition. He offered his expertise, we accepted and we really appreciate it. The Newsletter is looking just a little more polished and a little more professional and he has been the major reason for the improved format. Thanks David

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@dejazzd.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.

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Executive Board:

President	Jim Riggin
1st V.P.	Don Riverkamp
2nd V.P.	Bobby Sturdevant
Adjutant	Chuck Wilson
Treasurer	Nathan Sparks
Membership Chairman	C A Russell
Web Master	Barry Springsteen
Advisor	Dick Obidinski
German Affairs Repr	Robert Horath

Staff:

Chaplain	Francis Fukumoto
Web Photo Master	Jerry Mangas
Historian	Gary Dempsey
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All Association work is done by volunteers. No salary or wages are paid to any member.

The Hof Reunion Association operates on a fiscal year that runs from 1 January to 31 December of the callendar year.

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

The Master Hof Roster & Constitution is mailed immediately upon receipt of a new membership application and at the end of the quarter in which a membership renewal is received. Please select how you wish to receive the Master Hof Roster below.

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 re requested.

Free membership is provided to widows (windowers) 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 asure a new Master Hof Roster is mailed to you. Failure to return the form could result in your name being removed from the 'active' roster.

If your spouse is from Hof/Saale or Oberfranken, please include her 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 TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for 2006/2007

Last Name: _____ First: _____

Spouse: _____

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

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
(Nine Digit Zip Code Please)

Years stationed at Hof: 19__ to 19__ Organization _____

What form do you wish to receive the Master Hof Roster? (Please check one)
 Email Excel CD Hardcopy

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

____ Enclosed is a check for \$15.00 made out to: Hof Reunion Association. I understand the annual dues are to be used for the printing of 'the Hof Connection Newsletter' mailed each January and July, the Master Hof Roster, mailed to all members upon payment of the annual dues, and the associated fees for postage, printing, envelopes, address labels, telephone expenses, search for missing colleagues, web site, Insurance and olther operating costs.

____ I am the widow (widower) of _____ and want to be a member of the Association.

____ I request to be granted a FREE membership in the Association.

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