

# US RADAR SITES of ICELAND NEWSLETTER

June 2010

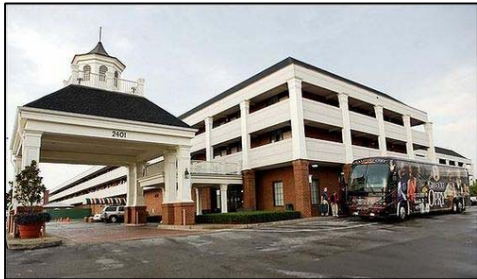
NEWSLETTER # 18. EDITOR, JERRY TONNELL, H-2, 1959.

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN. William Chick, H-2, 1959-60.** After our 2009 Reunion in San Antonio, I did not think we could find a better place in 2011. After a 4-



day search in Nashville -- with Larry & Marguerite Robin and David Alcorn -- I think we found a better place. Nashville, Tennessee is a tourist town -- or as Hank Williams might have said, *'the honky tonks, the shows, and the good times are in Nashville.'* Our hotel is the Gaylord Radisson which is just a short way from the new Grand Ole Opry and just a few miles

from downtown -- the Radisson is a great place for our reunion. We have planned a vacation week which begins on Monday night at the Wildhorse Saloon -- for food, music, and the show. Then on Tuesday morning, we have scheduled a breakfast meeting. On Tuesday night we will have free transportation to a Grand Ole Opry show. On Wednesday (before noon) we will have free transportation to the General



Jackson Show Boat where we will enjoy the ride, the food, and the show. Next door to our hotel is the Gaylord Hotel Complex -- a 17-acre area under glass, with shops, restaurants, trails, flowers, and flowing water. Next to it is a very large shopping center. This is our plan, so start making your reservations now. If you arrive early

or leave late, our special hotel room rates begin 2 days before and last 2 days after the reunion. In our December newsletter, if necessary, we will refine the details, so make your plans now. By the way, more folks will be getting this newsletter than ever before thanks to our dependable Membership Chairman, Jerry Blackwell, who keeps finding new members each week. Hope to see you all in Nashville.

## **NEXT STOP -- NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 29 May-2 June 2011**

**Where:** Nashville, TN. We will be housed at the Gaylord Radisson Hotel.

**Hotel Costs:** \$85 per night for two. Parking is free. For reservations, call 1-800-333-3333 or use the local number 1-615-889-0800. Say you are with the Iceland Reunion.

**Registration Only Costs:** Each person is expected to pay \$27 per person which includes \$10 for the Hospitality Room and \$17 for the Breakfast Meeting on Tuesday. Bus transportation to all scheduled events is free.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:** 29 May, Sunday Afternoon: Hospitality room open.

30<sup>th</sup>. Mon Night: Wildhorse Saloon & dinner. Bus leaves at 5 PM. Cost: \$47 per.

31<sup>st</sup>. Tues: Business Breakfast meeting catered by the hotel, commencing at 8 AM.

31<sup>st</sup>. Tues Night: Grand Ole Opry Show. Bus leaves about 6 PM. Cost: \$38 per.

1<sup>st</sup>. Wed Noon: Gen Jackson Showboat/lunch. Bus at 10 AM. Cost: \$53 per.

2<sup>nd</sup>. Thurs. Departure Day. Social time in the Hospitality Room, 7 AM until Noon.

**PAYMENT for REUNION REGISTRATION & EVENTS:** For registration and all events, make your \$165.00 check (per person) out to *Iceland Reunion* and mail to: David Hawk, 500 N Ash St., Pauls Valley, OK 73075. Refunds honored before May 1, 2011. For each event you skip, subtract the appropriate amount from the total. However, the minimum payment is \$27 per -- for Registration and the Breakfast Meeting.



**ADMINISTRATOR and WEBSITE DIRECTOR.** Reed Thomas, H-4, 1958-59. Our Site address is [www.usradarsitesiceland.org](http://www.usradarsitesiceland.org) No need for a password or to sign-in. Again, I have a new home address: Reed Thomas, 9001 Sweetbrook Lane #104, Raleigh, NC 27615. My new phone number is: (919) - 846- 4764.

**HISTORIAN.** Jerry Tonnell, H-2, 1959. The *History of the US Radar Sites of Iceland* book heralds the accomplishments of those of us who served in Iceland. It is the story of what you did for your country during those very warm Cold War years while stationed in Iceland. Books cost **\$10 including postage (our cost.)** Write checks to "Iceland Reunion" and mail to: William Chick, 104 Summit Point Court, Chapin, SC 29036. [littlechick@msn.com](mailto:littlechick@msn.com)

**WEBSITE PHOTO CHAIRMEN.** Jerry May, H-1, 1962-63, mayjw60@suddenlink.net and Bob Haines, H-4, 1957-58, and RAMAC1440@aol.com. We are still in need of new photos for our website. If possible, E-mail them - please provide a caption, with date if known, so we can properly label the picture.

**TREASURER.** David Hawk, H-1, 1985-86. Special thanks to those who have paid their annual voluntary dues of \$15 per year. Please make your \$15 check out to "Iceland Reunion" and mail it to: David Hawk, 500 N Ash St., Pauls Valley, OK 73075.

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN.** Jerry Blackwell, H-2, 1960-61. If you have any old orders with names or if you recall a name please pass it on to me at: 2300 E. Silverado Ranch Blvd #1047, Las Vegas, NV, 89183. email [BlckJerr@aol.com](mailto:BlckJerr@aol.com)

**BOOK REVIEW.** Dave Alcorn, H-3, 1962-63, found an interesting book written by one of Iceland's finest mystery writers. In his fiction thriller, *The Draining Lake*, author Arnaldur Indridason relates, *"Following an earthquake [in 2000], the water level in Lake Kleifarvatn drops precipitously, exposing the partially buried bones of a long-decayed body, weighted down with what appears to be an old Soviet radio transmitter."*



We are sad to announce that our Memorabilia Chairman, **Mike Mangone, H-1 & H-4 1960-61,** passed away on March 11, 2010. Mike apparently died from a heart attack. He will be missed.

## TO THOSE WHO SUPPLIED THE SITES

Your editor would like to include a story of how the US Navy provided key support to H-3 from 1961-88 by the weekly supply flights from Keflavik to Hofn. This is how Lee Corbin, USN, recalled his days as a crew chief on a C-117 Gooney Bird in '75-76.

*"Prior to my arrival, I had learned that the station [Keflavik] maintained two C-117 "Super DC-3" aircraft for the H-3 supply missions, and a C-118 for the weekend R & R flights down to Europe... my sponsor took me to the hangar to meet the division chief. After exchanging initial greetings I said 'Chief, I want to fly,' which started the most enjoyable tour of duty during my 4- year enlistment in the Navy.*

*"The Air Force flew these supply missions... until July of 1961 when the Navy took over the MATS mission. In fact, not only did the Air Force hand over the mission to the Navy, they handed the aircraft over as well...The C-47 was used until the C-117's were brought to Iceland, sometime in the early*



Photo by Lee Corbin

*70's... Trips to H-3 normally occurred three times a week, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The normal routine would be to push the aircraft out of the hangar, hop in and start the engines and, after doing a runup to ensure all was working, taxi the aircraft to base operations... An Air Force truck would back up to the doors and we'd start loading everything that was needed that day at the site into the aircraft. Our loading philosophy was 'if it fit through the doors we'd take it, and if it was heavy*

*put it over the wings.' One side of the aircraft would be configured for cargo, with the other side having about 8 or 10 rows of double seats. This usually left a very narrow aisle to reach the back of the aircraft. The guys who drove the truck and loaded the aircraft were H-3 personnel who would be rotated for a week or so back to Keflavik to give them a change of scenery. The following month they'd be greeting the aircraft at Hofn.*

*"After loading the aircraft... off we'd go for the two hour flight up the southern coast. After takeoff, there wasn't much for me to do but enjoy the scenery. Unless we flew into icing conditions. The C-117's propellers were de-iced with isopropyl alcohol. Depending on the severity of the icing, at times the reservoir for the alcohol needed refilling. This tank was located back near the cargo doors, in the floor of the passenger compartment. I would take great delight in running to the back of the aircraft as if in a panic, grabbing a 5 gallon plastic jug of alcohol, and furiously pouring it into the tank. With the passenger seats facing aft, every neck was strained to see what was going on. Invariably, I'd mutter something about "extra gas" to any inquiries about what I had been doing.*

*"We would land on the gravel runway outside the town of Hofn. The arrival at Hofn was always an event, sometimes for us if the weather was bad, but always for the H-3 folks that came to meet us. Our arrival meant mail, fresh fruit and vegetables, and an occasional USO show... When it came*



Photo by Lee Corbin

*time to leave, the same routine took place although the outbound cargo load was nothing like the inbound. But the passengers always seemed to be happy. And that was the routine three days a week...I consider myself very fortunate to have had the experience of crewing the C-117 and knowing some of the H-3 folks.*

*"I'd like to hear from anyone who was at H-3 during the mid-70's. Especially one Doug Baggett, who I remember greeting almost every C-117 flight into*

*Hofn. I'd also be interested in hearing about the air travel to the other sites in the 50's and 60's. Aircraft photos would also be of interest."* My email address is: [KeflavikOMD@yahoo.com](mailto:KeflavikOMD@yahoo.com)



May 31 - June 2, 2011

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