

Sign Oral History Project

Oral History Interview with William E. Smith, Jr. (USAF, Staff Sergeant, ret.)

Oscar-Flight Security Controller
Minot AFB, ND, 24 October 1968

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Thomas Tulien
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WS = Bill Smith
TT= Tom Tulien
JK = Jim Klotz

[Tape start]

WS: —admirable one it's one that tries to make sense and maybe in the future these historical things can at least be—or maybe all the patterns you're documenting come into something, you know? And so the focus is on those of you who had this idea. I think it's a great thing for society and for posterity that you document these things and take your time and money and put them into some type of format that's understandable.

- TT: You go by Bill Smith?
- WS: I go by Bill. Yes, but my full name is William E. Smith, Jr.
- TT: So your father's name was William Smith as well?
- WS: Yes, and my son, of course, was the third.
- TT: OK, going to keep them going?
- WS: Oh we hope!
- TT: How about if we start out walk us through your career, where you did your training and how you arrived at Minot.
- WS: OK. Well, I was born in Middletown, Ohio and we lived most of my young years, up till about 13, my father died, we went to Toledo, Ohio and I graduated from Scott High School in 1959 at 17 years old. I went into the military. My mother had to sign me into the military of course at that time if you were under eighteen. Went to Lackland AFB¹, and spent a little more than three months there. I had some oral surgery so they had to keep me in training for a while. I remained a few days in the hospital so I had to go from training to training and finally by the time I left there it was late October I think it was. I went to Bunker Hill Air Force Base, I think they've changed the name to Grissom² Indiana. Spent a year there. I went from there to Glasgow, Montana³, and I spent three years at Glasgow, got out of the military and went to college for a year, university of Toledo. I went back in the military, of course, and I first went to Maine, Loring Air Force Base, Maine⁴, so I've spent a lot of time in the cold climates [laughs].
- TT: Yeah, along the Northern Tier.
- WS: Yes, the Northern Tier. Well, being in Strategic Air Command that's what happened. Once I got in the Strategic Air Command that was it. So I went from Maine overseas. I went to Ankara Turkey as a custodial agent, and spent a year there, a short tour, came back and was assigned to Minot, North Dakota.
- I'd gotten married when I was in Maine. I came back to pick up my wife... she was from northern Ohio where I had been raised, and we then went on to my station at Minot. I arrived at Minot mid to late September 1967. I was in missiles all the time I was there.
- TT: Were you an Air Policeman?
- WS: Yes, as a security policeman, yes. I'd had four years nine months in the Air Force in my first tour, and I had a year in Maine and had another year overseas, so by the time I arrived there I had considerable experience.
- TT: Was it a SAC facility in Turkey?

- WS: No. They called it TUSLOG⁵ at that time. It was a US Air Force in Europe Command and we were controlling certain assets, aircraft and other types of assets for the United States and making sure we could turn those over in case there was a war to the Turks. We had those Dets all across Germany, we had them all across Europe, and of course Turkey was one of those Dets that we had. Greece we had them, France and other places.
- JK: Was the U-2 program there where you were?
- WS: No. Not at our—we had a small Det... we were on a Turkish base... the actual base was in Ankara Turkey. But we were about 40 miles I guess, close to 40 miles north of the actual capitol city. It was a Turkish Air Force training facility and had a runway of course, and we built our bunkers out there. There were 80-some people on a detachment; well the Turks had about 2000 troops I think. They were basic trainees and all levels of people, and so we were responsible for control of the assets, the Air Force assets there. And it was an enjoyable tour. It really was. I learned an awful lot.
- TT: So when you came to Minot, you started out doing security police work, at some point you were moved up to a Flight Security Controller?
- WS: When I first got there I went into the missile field at Minot, let me go back and explain. We had security of the aircraft on base. It was a Strategic Air Command base that had both aircraft bombers, tankers and fighter wing, and also the missile wing that spread itself out all across the countryside. I was assigned the missile side of that. So when I first went out there, I took the training required and I think I was first assigned in the missile field, up in the northern sector, and I think it was at Oscar initially, and then I went to Mike, took over as Flight Security Controller, and came back to Oscar. When this incident happened, of course, I'd come back to Oscar Flight.
- TT: Were you a Sergeant at the time you arrived at Minot?
- WS: Yes, I think they changed the rank a little bit. I think I had three stripes and they changed that to mean Sergeant, but I was promoted to a Staff Sergeant by the time I then got into the missile. So I came here with three stripes and ended up with four before I left.
- TT: How did you end up becoming a Flight Security Controller?
- WS: As a result of my experience, and as a result of the tests. You see they would test us almost daily. They had a Standardization Team that would come out, we had training people that would come out and ask you questions, Supervisors that would come out, and so you had to read a lot of these technical manuals. You had to know how to go to a site, how to, with just two of you, make sure you back each other up. Generally, there were always some people watching you, whether it was your direct supervisor or somebody from the base, and they would go out and tinker with the sites and make them to go off [alarm], and we had response times we had to make, and on and on. Based upon that they suggested that I was one of the sharper people there, and based upon my knowledge, you had to know how to open the doors properly and let people in properly, all those procedures. There were just a myriad of things to protect those assets. And so over a period of time I was selected to be one of the FSC's because they had to be the best.

I was very fortunate, and as a matter of fact I became very close friends to one of the Sergeants on the [Standardization] team. He was an African-American, he had bragged, well, says “I was so good when I came out here, that I nearly maxed the test,” because they gave you an oral test and a written test. He says, “I nearly maxed it. I think I got a 98.” So my goal was to... he was a nice person but he was always bragging, and he would come out and throw little bombs everywhere and you’d have to find them, and he had guns hidden on the people, so my goal was to out do him.

He set the standard. So in fact, it was at Oscar I remember he came out and they tested us. I maxed everything. I maxed the written test, and I think it was a 150-question test. And I maxed the oral test. Now all the people were starting to come around, they were saying, “well, when is he going to stop?” because he kept throwing questions: [snaps fingers] “what happens if you do that?” He says, “OK, the whole thing is over. You maxed it, but I’ve got to get you on something!” And in fact he finally asked me a question that I wasn’t sure of. He said, “I finally got you! You couldn’t be so perfect as to know everything.” And ‘you’ve only been here just this many years.’ So anyway we had a great time with that.

And then I got on the Stanboard team after while. They pulled me out of there... they said “Well, you know so much you shouldn’t be out here, you should be testing people.” So I was on the Stanboard team after a bit, but it was all in good fun and I tried to be very contentious as I am in my every duty that I have, and the people who worked for me I tried to make sure that they were contentious as well. When we were on duty, we were on duty.

TT: Explain your duties as a Flight Security Controller.

WS: Day-to-day operations, we spent three days out in the field and three days off. It amounted to less than three days off because by the time we returned to the base—if it was a helicopter flight it was pretty quick getting back—but then we had to file reports, especially if you were the supervisor you had to file reports, make sure all your people got there safely and all the people from the whole section. Then you would spend your two-and-a-half days—you’d come back out into the field, and it was my responsibility to check in at the FSC’s office there. We were responsible for making sure that all the codes and books that we had—the coded material had to be destroyed after use.

TT: Every day?

WS: Immediately upon use. We had certain codes in books that other people out on the site would have. Since I wouldn’t be able to see that person directly, when he wanted to, or she, well he at the time, wanted to get in I would have to identify them. And so I’d go through a certain procedure to find out, number one, who it was, and then that person would have to be on the same page with me and I could identify him by number and when I identified him by number, immediately I’d have to destroy that page right then. And so we’d go through this check and balance procedure.

Keys and codes type things, and it was a very intricate procedure. If something happened and we couldn't identify the person, my team would have to go out and make a visual identification or put them under arrest, depending on what would happen. And so I had to make sure all the material was there for those codes, because then I'd have to issue some of those codes to my team because when they went out and something happened, I'd have to make sure they were not under duress. They would have to communicate with me verbally as well as through this code system. And then I had codes for the Capsule Crew downstairs. I also was responsible for the door that went to—I don't know how many feet it was down below, but there was a huge door that had keys, and then, of course, a vault into their capsule area—two doors actually, one very large door and a smaller one that went into their capsule.

JK: So when a relief Missile Combat Crew would come on [they would] authenticate to you, sign in and you would give them access to the elevator... and as I understand it from talking to other people, the Capsule Crew on duty is the ones that could open that blast door down below and that they would have an exchange then.

WS: They would have the exchange the same way, they'd have to identify one another to make sure, so we had all this thing going on at the same time, and then I would have to communicate with the new crew and they would give me instructions as to what they wanted and how—generally there was not much of a problem between crews, but some crews didn't want certain things to happen. We would have to identify the cook every time he went down, we would have to identify the maintenance people any time they went down, so we were the keeper of the keys and the lifeline to that Capsule Crew. On a couple of occasions, when we had serious power outages, i.e. snow drifts where we couldn't get aircraft in to pick us up or things like that, we'd have to stay out there. I think the maximum we stayed one time was six days in a row, two tours.

It was really intricate because one crew member would have to come out, and it was a two-man policy, of course, while one of our officers would sit in the door making sure that the other crew member didn't touch anything or didn't try to launch anything and we had orders that we could use deadly force against that person if they were trying—course, it would be almost impossible to do but not impossible to do.

JK: They had the separated dual keys

WS: Separated and dual keys and all of those things, so we had to monitor and control that, while one crew member came out and just relaxed for... got the heck outta there for a... stir crazy for a while 'cause... supposedly, the rules were the maximum they could stay was 48 hours if we couldn't get anybody out there to relieve them, so they'd have to get out of there for a while just to be sane and so then the other crew member would have to come up and we'd have to watch. So we had all kinds of things we were responsible for: The security of that facility as well as the security of the ten missiles that we had in our field.

TT: And the procedures for monitoring the security for the missiles in the field?

WS: We had a panel, a board that would tell us the status of the security alarms, we had two level of alarms, one was the motion—

TT: And what were the alarm systems that you were monitoring?

- WS: They were motion detectors and contact alarm systems. We called them banana antennas that would focus toward one other in a triangular method, and these big things would shoot the beams, I guess, back and forth, and if you broke one of those—once you worked those things for a while you're able to make some certain decisions. If it just went off [claps hands] and came right back up within a few seconds, you probably weren't concerned with it that much.
- TT: It was a rabbit or something?
- WS: Some of them were very very sensitive. Sometimes a bird would start to build a nest, would set up, we'd have to go out and pull the stuff out of there. But generally, you could tell if it set up after a couple of minutes, you had to be a little bit worried, because that would give somebody time to set something else up, so we would have a certain timeframe in which the officers would have to respond to it. And we were not overly worried if the outer system was going off, because there was always something happening with that one. Now if we had two levels of alarms going off that means someone had made a contact alarm go off, and typically our contact alarms would go off in our Maintenance Bay, there was a huge Maintenance Bay with a door that opened up, [motions opening horizontal door] I think in some of the material it talks about the door would come open... um and when our teams would go out they, they would have a certain checklist, they had to call me and let me know what was going on, I could give them directions from where I was, and so we had little hand-held radios, and we could go down the...so when they first got to the site, when they first saw it they'd have to check in, when they got closer, and they would do a visual inspection of it, and then of course, you had a certain Strike... we called it the Strike Procedure. And it was a thing of beauty. It really was. These two guys following this, and in many cases uh...we had a lot of students from the local areas that would play games at certain times and we knew that and there were situations where we actually caught people on site saying "what the heck is this?," what...[laughs]... you know what's... farmers were no problem...
- JK: Inside the fence?
- WS: Oh, inside the fence. Oh, you bet and when you saw that—
- TT: You mean they climbed over the fence?
- WS: They'd climb over the fence, or they'd pull the fence up and go up under it. The alarm wouldn't go off if you just yanked on the fence. The alarms were inside, and there was a huge lock on the front. Sometimes the gates had separated a little bit where you could almost squeeze through, there were, you know, some maintenance things needed to be done, or they could pry this or pry that to get in say "what the heck is going on out here?" So we would have to arrest them and they would be charged with trespassing, because there were signs, of course, keeping people out of there.
- TT: It is amazing that there's this nuclear tipped warhead just sitting there out in the middle of nowhere, and everybody's just driving by—

- WS: Oh, yeah and those things were put in, and I guess the locals were briefed on what was happening, and there would be no danger. But and most of the local people didn't care one way or the other. We've had occasions where farmers would call us and say, "Look, there's somebody out there nosing around" we'd go out and usually warn people to stay away, that kind of thing. I saw just the other day, yesterday as a matter of fact, where they blew up one of the sites.
- JK: The last one at Grand Forks.
- WS: I guess they're going to keep a couple for history's sake but it was really interesting how impenetrable they were. From what I understand, most of them could take almost a direct hit and still be able to launch, and the doors, the access we had to the site, were in the Maintenance Bay predominately, that supported the missile and all of its electrical things the cooling systems and the monitoring systems. And then of course we had an "A" and a "B" hatch. The "A" could be opened by officers, our police officers could open that hatch to let the "B" people inside to open the next vault that then they'd have access to the machinery that would open the actual door, so...
- JK: That's for the combination?
- WS: The two combinations, yes. We'd open the outer hatch, once they were identified, and then they would open the "B" hatch, "A" and "B" we could not have the same codes. We were always "A" side and they were always "B" side.
- TT: Were there always four people out there to go into the facility?
- WS: There had to be at least four people, minimum because once they opened the "B" side, you had access to the actual missile itself, so you had to have someone who was qualified to know what was going on. So we would be able to open our side, which was in many cases, was a Camper Crew member, and they'd have to have at least two people, so minimum three people to enter a site at any given time.
- JK: You were saying at your dispatch desk you had an annunciator that showed the security status of the sites.
- WS: Yes.
- JK: I was just under the impression that the Capsule Crew got those and alerted you rather than you having that directly.
- WS: You know my memory's a little bit blurred there. I'm sure the impression that had we had the outer alarms so when it went off we were able to reset I remember. So yeah, we had a panel there so it probably was redundant.
- JK: OK, I wanted you to talk about Camper crews and say a Targeting Team coming on to on the site.

WS: A Camper Crew was one or two officers who were dispatched from our central office. We had a system of Camper Crews that would provide topside security. They were from a separate pool of officers [but] were still assigned to the Missile Wing. They worked at odd times, they could out and spend two days or three days, or we've had them out there for a long time. And they would exchange themselves—another Camper Crew would come out. Again, they'd have to go through the procedure of identifying through us, and we would get that person off the site and the other person on. And in many cases it was nothing more than just changing persons because they'd leave the vehicle right there, hooked in, they had an umbilical cord, their electricity and those kinds of things. Most of the time they had two people in the Camper Crew, so that one would sleep and one would be awake. There were occasions when they didn't have enough people then one person would have to provide that. We would have to give the breaks. Typically, we're talking 12 on and 12 off type off. They'd have to call us on the radio every so often, and that was one of the things we had to log in: when the person called. If we needed to talk with them then they could find a phone down in the service area.

JK: Let's say a Targeting Team was going to come onto a site, what would happen?

WS: We would get information that they would be coming out; typically, they would try to get a Camper Crew out there as quickly as possible. Typically, the Camper came out on it's own, not directly with the Team, but they would have their own set up with their own radio, their own food. However, if the Targeting Team had plans to stay out just a short time, our people would have to provide as much of that as they could. But there always had to be someone topside when you had the missile open that was just a standard procedure. I remember many times we had arguments and complaints because the Targeting Team would say "Oh, just going to be out here an hour or so" well that ties up my team, so the Camper Team would be dispatched. They would check in with us on the radio, he'd open the "A" side, they'd open the "B" side, then he would start to provide security topside once they opened the missile and started their work.

JK: As I understand it, at an LCF there would be two Flight Security Controllers?

WS: Yes.

JK: Is "Strike Team" a correct term?

WS: "Strike Team" is a correct term. There were six of us that would go out on a site. There would be an FSC day, FSC night. We worked 12 hours; I think typically we worked six to six.

JK: I suppose that would be timed to overlap the arrival of the Capsule Crew?

- WS: On many occasions we would be taking off at the same time the Capsule Crew members were taking off. That was pretty much coordinated by—especially by helicopter. Most of the time when we weren't using helicopters, we would have our own transportation. I think most of the time when we changed the whole crew we tried to be out there about 8:00 in the morning, between 8:00 and 10:00 I think the change had took place. And we were all changing about the same time. On some occasions, I remember flying with the Capsule Crew members, and other occasions we didn't, because with six people in a chopper that's about all you're gonna get with our gear—took out a whole bag of cold weather clothing and other types of required gear we were supposed to have.
- JK: Right you'd have a briefing at base?
- WS: Have a briefing at base. We would be required to be on the chopper pad by a certain time, transportation out to the aircraft, take off and then bring the other crew back. Normally I would be home probably about 11:00 unless there were major reports, things that had to be done. It was a laborious process getting everybody in and out and checked in and all the equipment; all the weapons checked in, and everybody home before you had to leave the office [chuckles].
- TT: How often did the alarms go off?
- WS: Inner alarms would go off on occasion—that was rare. When both sections went off at the same time that was relatively rare the years that I was there. But it did happen, and when it happened, there were certain procedures we had to go through. In many cases we found there was a maintenance flaw, there was something going on electronically that we couldn't fix. Well, guess what? When that happened, we had to have a Camper Team there until Maintenance would come out and set the alarms up. They'd have to sit out there until those sites were back to par. And you'd have to have two people on site at all times just for the two-man policy.
- TT: Hey here's another question just so we ask it, so we don't forget, but, in the documents we read, there's a case where the outer perimeter alarm went off...
- WS: OK, the front gates were not alarmed. The gate you could open, go on site, pull down on the fence, you could take the fence entirely down unless you made enough vibration for those sensors the radar detect... radar, they were not alarmed. So, many times, I would get on the site when I was doing little tests for my troops. I'd open the gate, get on site, close the gate and go do things on the site to set up like little bombs, "this is a bomb," that they were supposed to find as they were getting there, and, of course we used to check the entire outer perimeter first and then we'd go to the inner part, and that way, if you had something wrong outside, now we stop; it's a different procedure where we notify people something's wrong, there's this bomb over here, this kind of thing and we would back off and do other kinds of procedures.
- TT: Is it possible that anybody else would have keys to that facility other than you?
- WS: Oh, it's obviously possible but highly unlikely because they were all accounted for, we had stringent accounting procedures.
- JK: You saw that in the documents there were a couple of incidents of this in the past where AP's had kept keys.

- WS: Right. No, when I saw that, I said “That doesn’t sound right,” because we, of all people had to be the most accountable. Now the locks would malfunction some of the time due to wear and tear and weather, but then of course we’d get them replaced, and then get all the keys reissued. But to have someone have a key it would be highly unlikely, as far as I—
- TT: Do you remember that specific evening—remember that sighting?
- WS: Oh absolutely.
- WS: Well see, as I mentioned to Jim before, we’d been seeing this over a period of time so, it—
- TT: Over a period of time?
- WS: We’re talking over a period of months. We had seen things that didn’t look right and we had talked about it. And I worked the day shift, being the person that was in charge, and that’s where most of the stuff was going on anyway. When I say stuff—most of our Camper Teams coming out, crews coming out, most of the things happening. So they wanted the most experienced person on duty. And at night, there was nothing much to do. So I’d go out and jog and do other kinds of things, do some physical fitness, do some studies, and I’d come back and you’d sit around and talk to the FSC on duty, and his console was looking straight out the gate and where we were at Oscar headquarters, you could look directly south and see essentially the lights of the base. We were that close and on a clear night it was not a problem. We were about 20 miles from the base and were elevated enough, we could almost distinguish the lights that were there and you could see B-52s coming in for a landing—the lights anyway, not the actual aircraft.
- JK: Do you recall which direction they went?
- WS: When I say “traffic,” I’m talking we could see the lights.
- JK: Yeah.
- WS: We knew there were aircraft up there because sometime they would come over us and they would be going from my left to my right [looking south towards the base traveling in a westerly direction], because the runway, if I’m not mistaken, runs east-west. But then we saw things that were different also [small laugh]. Over a period of time, I remember, just prior to this night, the activity just got more; we’d see more of these lights. And the lights would be different in that they’d go in a straight line pattern, but then they’d be going this way as well [indicates reversal of flight direction], which was odd, and they would stop, and then they would move this way [indicating another reversal of direction]. And after we started detecting them, I said, “wait a second.” One of my people said “those lights they’re not doing the right things,” so we called the base and asked if they had any helicopters, and they said, “no, we’re not flying anything.” Especially certain times of day and night you’d know there wouldn’t be any helicopters out, but it’s possible of course. Then we thought crop dusters, maybe somebody’s out doing something like that, well, many times we’re talking one, two o’clock in the morning and that just doesn’t work. So, our interest was piqued over that few weeks up to that night. And boy, a few days before just a lot of activity, just a lot of flying around and so I called the crew—

- TT: Define what you were seeing—white light?
- WS: Seeing a white light, and on clear nights you could see it almost change colors it was dark. When I say “colors,” let’s see, we’re talking about a reddish-dark, light almost like a light bulb in the distance that would have almost somewhat of a reddish hue to it and you could even see it change a little bit, almost like an aircraft that might be a long distance away, that would have red lights and green lights with it and it would revolve and—not bright white, dull reddish white. More of a dim light as I recall it. But the lights themselves were doing different things, and there was more than one. I mean, in many cases we talk about one light, but we saw several on occasion, and they were just not doing things we thought aircraft should be doing this time of the night, [chuckles] or this time of the morning.
- TT: At what elevations were you seeing them?
- WS: Just above the horizon.
- TT: 15 degrees?
- WS: 10 to 15 degrees yes, there was enough space between them and the horizon that would be significant [gestures indicating distance above horizon], we knew that they were flying.
- TT: And they wouldn’t go up overhead?
- WS: Most of what we saw was just back and forth patterns. They weren’t going very high.
- TT: And in a general direction to the south?
- WS: Well, since we were north [of the base] it would be east-west.
- TT: OK.
- WS: They were moving back and forth in that regard. So we couldn’t from that distance see any movement like this [gestures indicating motions north-south] we were seeing [gestures back and forth] from where we were. We were looking south seeing this, so they were moving east-west, west-east, they would stop, and they might go up a little bit and go slower, and we’re saying “a helicopter might do that but—”
- TT: Now wouldn’t you report that and wouldn’t base investigate?
- WS: Well we did. We reported it not only to our crew since we had Oscar-1 and 4 that were somewhat south of us. And then of course, the other missiles circle around us from behind, so we were not knowing exactly precisely where they were, where these lights were, but this was in our area. So we did call and make the reports as we were supposed to of anything that you can’t explain, but nothing was done, so I talked to the Capsule Crew again, and I said, “sir, we’re just not happy with what we’re seeing” and as I recall, we had reported this before. And they said “well, just keep them under observation.”
- TT: In the documents the control tower is saying, ‘those damn missile guys are seeing things again.’
- WS: Again! Yes, that’s true. And we’d report them over a period of time, and ‘well OK, and just keep it under advisement if we get any sites going off.’

- TT: If I'm sitting up there looking at these lights, I'm gonna call base operations, I'm gonna say, "I'm seeing this thing and I'm gonna give you the coordinates, you tell me what you see." Did that ever happen?
- WS: Well, that did happen in an informal way. Here I'm the Staff Sergeant and I don't usually call out of my chain of command unless I'm really frightened. So I used my chain of command, I called back the people that I deal with so I've done what I'm supposed to do and I just keep it under advisement. I talked to my Capsule Crew. Depending upon the crew they were interested or not interested. But it got frustrating, we got really angry that nobody was listening to us. So, I remember after I got my crew interested even more they then called. Now the plot thickens because they started calling people, and they said "my people upstairs are saying here's what's happening and we want some more information," so they did call the tower and matter of fact, I remember listening on the phone that we had. They were now talking to other people and they let me stay on and listen, so they called their Operations who, in turn, said "OK, let's get somebody else to think about this." And then of course the B-52 Crew was called in, they said, "Well we have a '52 that's out and we'll see what they can see." That's how we got the crew involved.
- JK: Would this sort of thing go in your blotter?
- WS: We did have a form that we would document everything of what would happen, and I'm sure it probably did.
- JK: Sort of a shift log? But when I asked the Air Force for the ones from this event, they said, "Oh, those are long since destroyed."
- WS: Right. We would have logged information because I did send my team out, and there were so many things coming back about the sighting that I felt it was significant; I know we would have made a record of that. I actually went out, I think I mentioned to you, Jim, on the phone, I actually went out because we did have some alarms that had gone off. I did go out with my team because we were interested in trying to find what was going on when we found out the B-52 crew had seen some things—
- JK: I want to get back in sequence—you had seen some things a few nights previous—
- WS: Yes. So now we're at this evening and I had gotten off duty and was sitting and talking with the Vice Security Controller on duty and the conversation then gravitated to that—matter of fact, we were sort of anticipating it because things had been working up and we had been seeing more and more activity with these lights. I remember personally talking to the Capsule Crews and so now, this evening we said "look, there's a lot of activity out here is there some way we can get verification of what's going on from the base?" We found out there were no aircraft operating, no helicopters the base was aware of. The [Capsule] Crew found that out for us. And so as we go along a little further, the B-52 Crew actually gets things going because now they lent some credibility to what we were saying, and the events that happened with them, now everybody's on alert—when I say "alert," we're saying "ah gosh, what's happened here?" is there something—
- JK: But you did hear some of that—

- WS: Oh, I heard the traffic. Absolutely. They left me on and, 'cause I'm looking at my people and saying "gosh, guys, they're really, see we told them all these times" [laughs]. And so when the crew did that my Capsule [Crew] also were excited, really excited, so one of them I think had an idea that they might call Air Defense Command, I think he had some connections or knew some people there or something. And from what he was saying to us they were able to use some radar manipulations, and they were able to see something operating they said 50 miles above where we were in the general vicinity—they couldn't pinpoint it but they said—50 miles above. And now everybody's heightened, you know, and we're talking about what's going to happen. We did have something happen at one of our sites, of course, and our team went out and checked that, and later the Lieutenant—matter of fact I was out there the next day. The Lieutenant did find radiation, found, he said, some forms of radiation. They used to carry these little Geiger counters, of course, to make sure the missile wasn't leaking, and they could...
- JK: That's a normal piece of equipment
- WS: Normal procedure I think for people coming out doing maintenance. They would want to make sure that—matter of fact they even wore little—
- JK: Dosimeter?
- WS: Dosimeter, yes. And so I think he said that he found—because he came out to investigate and found certain minute traces of radiation on the site. And I just said, "This is going bizarre now," because it obviously was not from the missile, it was in the area where you would land an aircraft, because we had enough space on there within the perimeter, definitely. You had a huge parking area. In most cases if you had go to the site by helicopter you would land in that area. It was very large, large enough to land a helicopter.
- JK: Outside the LF fence?
- WS: No, it was inside the fence where they would park the vehicles that would come there, and so the radiation was found in that vicinity. I went with the Lieutenant out to the site as a matter of fact, and we talked there. He didn't want to say very much about it, "we're investigating and we can't talk about it," and those kinds of things, of course—
- TT: You mentioned that it was in a circular pattern? What diameter?
- WS: I have no idea. And I can't remember the Lieutenant's name now, but I know he was one of our officers doing the investigation on that site. It would have been one of the people in our command.
- JK: You dispatched your team to the site with alarms. Do you recall what they encountered?

WS: The key thing if I remember correctly was that the gate was, the lock was undone on the gate. That normally heightens us big time because now, it could be that someone left it unlocked because that happened from time to time. A crew would go out and they would think they locked it and didn't. But you could go out and you'd be able to pull on it and it would be open. That was one of our first procedures. And, from what I understand they could see that it was open, and so we went to heightened alert at that point, and now we know somebody was on the site. We assume that somebody is there, and we find, you know, we were using, get our weapons charged and ready to go, which they are generally anyway but now our level goes up of security. So we reported and they do their whole process, and of course don't find anything. I'm not sure if we put a camper on that site or not—if it would reset because both "A" and "B" went off.

JK: In the documents it says, I assume it was smaller hatch with access to the combination locks, it said those were moved—

WS: I don't recall if it was open, but I do know that on occasion, those things could be set off that would be the part of the contact alarm, it could be set off and that door would still be closed, so we found that on occasion, so the door wouldn't have to be all the way open. Matter of fact, I would do that many occasions when I was on Stanboard. I would go out and I would unlock that hatch and I would move it enough so that that alarm was set off and they would know that one of those doors had been moved. I just can't recall whether it was wide open or not. But I remember the standard procedures: you just go through that thing, the checklist, and we try to find if there are people there, and then we searched that thing for a long time because we knew that this was out of the ordinary. When any site had that happen to it, either a Stanboard Team was out—and gosh, you could go under the subfloor, and you'd really have to be, you know, looking for somebody because I was able to hide under all those subfloors, being small. But we were pretty sure Stanboard wasn't out, although that's always possible—well we could come out any time, but with all the things going on we doubted that Stanboard would try to pull something like that. So we were pretty sure that if in fact somebody was on that site, they were dangerous and we had to be very careful, or it was something happening related to what we saw that was going on.

JK: Well, if it happened to have been Stanboard that would be known.

WS: That would be known, yes. And, and one other thing, I guess around the same time we had a team on in another area that had a sighting, and the word got back to us what they seen. They had seen this light, a large glowing object go down by some trees not far away [gestures indicating object descending]. I think it was a Targeting Team on one of the sites. And so, things were just happening too quickly.

JK: Is it reasonable that where that Targeting Team was, is where the Camper Team was?

WS: Yes, that's very reasonable.

JK: I've indicated those positions on the map. The documents say that the intrusion was Oscar-7, and the Camper Team was Oscar-6 and those are quite close.

WS: [Reading from map] break-in and the Camper Team. I can't remember which site it would have been, but they would have had a Camper Team there. I just can't remember the site. Now, we could have had two Camper Teams out. Matter of fact, Oscar-6, if

I'm not mistaken was notorious for having difficulty with the alarms, and on some occasions we had Camper Teams out there almost continually. So it could have been that there were Camper Teams on both.

JK: Oh, OK.

WS: But if that team were working and as I recall the officer called it in, notified the officer in charge, a captain in charge, and they shut the site up. He said "we're leaving here." Some of his crew had seen, from what I understand, had seen the light as well, not just the Camper member but also some of the Targeting Team.

JK: Pretty close.

WS: Pretty close, they said "very close." It went down by some trees not far away, that is what they were saying to us, and we said "Oh my gosh, what's going on here now?" I remember him calling in said "well, we can do this another time it's just not worth us being out here."

JK: So how unusual would it be to have a Targeting Team working at that time of night?

WS: Well they'd come out at midnight sometimes and work all night. That would not be unusual, no.

TT: How unusual that they would stop their procedures?

WS: Highly unusual.

TT: So they were concerned about security?

WS: They were concerned about their lives probably or not being able to explain what was happening. They weren't so concerned about security, that's our business, and this guy wanted to get his team out of there because he wasn't sure what was going on, and of course, our people were happy to leave too [laughs].

JK: Now we did have one man who was air conditioning guy from the 91st MIMS who was out there that night, and his memory is that Oscar-6 was a training site and never on strategic alert while he was there.

WS: That may have been true based upon what they were doing, but we had to treat them all the same. If it didn't have a missile in, it was a category "B" resource. If it had a missile in it, it was category "A." Many times they had missiles on them, we had other training facilities around the system too. My understanding was that when it had a missile and a warhead, whether it was armed or not, it was category "A" and we had to treat it the same for security purposes.

- WS: In my three years there I don't ever recall having a missile in a hole and not having officers there, not ever. Once they put a missile in, we had to be on site, and from that point on it was... you know... and it normally had, at least the... well, warheads probably, whether they were armed, or whether they were targeted or not, but once that warhead was there, it was a category "A" resource just like on the base. If we had aircraft sitting out there and as long as there was nothing on it, B-52, it was a "B" resource, and we had to protect it in a general patrol. Once it had a warhead on it in any way, we always had to have two officers there, so yeah... so that, what he was saying could be absolutely true but we treated it as though it were hot.
- JK: Hot... I would imagine, sure.
- WS: Yeah, yeah. As a matter of fact, that may also go along with what he was saying because, I remember, as I said before, a lot of times we always had Camper Crews on that site, the security wouldn't set up or—
- JK: It's the closest one to base. I think that might be a logical choice for—
- WS: —for a training facility, sure.
- JK: Did you ever see this thing come close?
- WS: No, we didn't.
- JK: Did you ever see it move quickly accelerate or do any maneuvers like that?
- WS: Well, much more quickly than a normal aircraft would, yes. And that's what, you know, really piqued our interest. We saw it moving at odder angles than an aircraft would and erratic flight patterns and as it were hovering, but it was still a point of light. It was still pretty much a point of light because it was still quite a bit away, you know we're still talking 15 to 20 miles from uh
- JK: You think between Oscar-1 where you were at—
- WS: —and the base, it was between us and it would never get—I saw some of the size reports they had. We never saw it since it was such a huge ball of light, we never saw that. Ours was more of a pinpoint—well, I say "pinpoint," bigger than a star, not as big as the moon, of course. But it was still, making those movements that if it were an aircraft that had a light on the side of it, we'd know that. I had many years of service at that point being around many air force bases so I knew what aircraft look like. We didn't get close enough so that we heard anything, because we'd stand outside and look, we couldn't hear anything.
- TT: It always a straight-line sort of flight? Were there ever any curves in the patterns?
- WS: Well, from the distance we were we couldn't tell that.
- TT: Any odd drops of the object?
- WS: Odd, yes, there would be odd drops, it would be yes, up and down movements [gesturing vertical movements].
- TT: But always linear?

- WS: Always kind of linear, yes, angular to some degree [gestures 45 deg angle to floor] but still linear. I don't recall it making any flip-flops [gestures loops] or anything like that, no. But still jerky movements. Aircraft don't move jerky. [small laugh] They move slow, they're laborious even jet aircraft don't move that way, 'course and they'd have to be going faster, this thing would be slowing down. Even a helicopter doesn't because that's dangerous. 'Course we have new aircraft today that might be doing something like that, but that was a long time ago.
- JK: Right.
- TT: Who knows what they are doing.
- WS: Who knows what they are doing? [smiles]
- JK: Just for asking those kind of questions, did you ever see it go down, apparently go to the surface or above the surface?
- WS: Yes, we were able to see that and it; sometimes it would disappear for a while. Say "Oh, it's gone!" All of a sudden: "Hey! It's back again!" And we'd all get to the window and look.
- TT: And again, you saw more than one object most of the time?
- WS: We saw, generally I think most of the time we were looking at two objects.
- TT: More than that on some occasions?
- WS: No, I don't recall any more than two at any given time. That seemed to be the number because if there had been even more then, of course, I think it would have heightened us more. But generally, you could see two of the things moving. Sometimes they'd be moving in concert, and another time, the other one might go down [gesturing positions] and the other one would be going [gesturing zig-zag trajectory across] like this you know, and down. But from our position, going across, back and forth, you couldn't tell whether it was, you know, angular except this way [gesturing motion east-west] across our field of vision. I went out with my team—
- JK: During the night?
- WS: Yes, still quite early in the morning. Matter of fact, I had trouble getting up the next day [laughs] but I remember we said, "Oh, well let's go out!" Now, things were happening. They'd come back in and so now we went out on patrol.
- JK: They had returned from this alarm?
- WS: Yes, because now we're talking about wee hours of the morning. After I had gotten off the phone because I was on the phone quite some time while some of these other things were going on. And of course I wanted to make sure that I was there in control of things in case my controller needed help. And I was one of those on the phone to the Capsule Crew most of the time, so I was, sort of giving ideas [gesturing differing positions] where it was now, and that kind of thing.
- JK: You mentioned that you heard, on this telephone patch, that the B-52 was being diverted to the area or?

WS: It was diverted to the area. It was, they said, “We have a B-52 crew that’s going to Tower and we’ll divert them.” Matter of fact, we had an officer I think on the phone with the Capsule Crew, and of course I was patched in, they were asking me questions and they said, “Well OK, we’ll have a diversion of this B-52 Crew coming in,” and they gave a time when it would be coming and—

JK: Did you see it make a pass?

WS: We didn’t see the ’52. I don’t know from which way it came, whether it was east-west or whatever, but I listened to them, they did say that they did see something and that it was behind them and at one point it did follow them. And then I was not getting the stuff, you know, they were patchy the radio transmissions were sort of difficult to hear through all that. But they did say they saw something. It was a large, very large light, and that it was following them, there was something—they estimated how far away it was from them and I can’t—

TT: Would that possibly be a very large [radar] return?

WS: It wasn’t radar. They actually saw a light, a large object, they said, behind them.

JK: [Provides a B-52 radarscope print to WS]. That’s from the B-52.

WS: B-52, OK—Yeah but they—this was a visual they were talking about? They described it said, “We’re breaking off,” and then it followed them back for a certain time, and my understanding was that from the tower, they lost them on radar, and we were able to hear that, they said “We don’t have them on radar right now.” And so the conversation was, “My gosh what may have happened?” People were thinking about crashes or that kind of thing. And so then when it got within so many miles of the base they were able to pick them up on radar again, and the traffic came. Matter of fact, I remember they kept calling them trying to get them on radio and there was no radio transmission either and everybody was concerned at that time because they hoped they didn’t crash. But, at any rate, the crew came back to the base and lands without a problem.

JK: I was just going to ask that... they made a, they really made two passes...

WS: OK.

JK: ...and their recall, their recall is that the radar contact was on the first normal high level penetration, that they were making a penetration...

WS: Right.

JK: ...they started at 20,000 [feet] and they go down, they end up at landing attitude and speed...

WS: Right.

JK: ...and during that time, they had this radar contact. Then they were asked to go around at a visual height level, which was 1500 hundred feet and that was why I asked you that because that’s low enough for you to clearly hear and see if they came close to you.

WS: No, they didn't come close to us, and again, when we saw the aircraft in normal patterns, we could generally tell that they were aircraft. Typically, you saw a light pattern that was very far away. What we were seeing is a glob of light [gestures round shape] and what we saw with aircraft was typically, you could generally tell what it was.

TT: I would think they'd have a landing light coming in.

WS: Oh sure. You could see a landing light probably and those kind of things, but what we saw was a glob. What we saw, a larger sphere in one spot, and aircraft patterns are totally different. Number one, they're not that bright anyway from that distance. On a clear night, you could barely see them, see the lights, but what we saw was much larger, so we would not have been able to—and there were so many things going on it's very possible that whether they passed over us or not, I just couldn't tell. Plus being inside we wouldn't have heard them anyway.

[Switches tape]

JK: The suggestion from Wright-Patterson was that people were, at least part of the time, seeing stars and the B-52 itself, and what I think I'm hearing from you is this object you were seeing was clearly neither of those things.

WS: Clearly, from the perspective from Oscar, where we were at Oscar. Now it's possible some of the other people in the region may have seen some of those things, but where we were, we definitely could tell the difference between that object. What I'm saying is it's possible others people may have seen the '52, but from our perspective I'm sure we didn't.

JK: Well, in fact, other people do report seeing the B-52 come over...

WS: Right. But another thing that sort of struck me as strange because I know we have charts to show where Sirius was because we're talking about a star pattern that moves from east to west, and if that's true, that should be way above the horizon looking south.

TT: Also we're talking about a three-hour period.

WS: A three hour period of time. And Sirius doesn't bounce around [laughs] and move, go over this way to that, we just know that.

Were there some observations that gave dimensions of the object?

TT The pilot.

WS From the pilot. As a matter of fact, I remember them talking about how large it was and they were giving on the radio and the telephone as I was listening to it, some size dimensions, and I just can't remember precisely what they were, but they gave some general dimensions of what size they thought it was.

TT They did compare to a KC-135.

- WS Right, and I remember hearing some things on the radio that said, “Here’s the thing—here’s where it is,” if I’m not mistaken, they were saying at one point five miles from where they were. They estimated five-mile distance and then it was off to one side of the aircraft or the other, and then behind them to some distance.
- TT You remember a lot.
- WS I don’t remember the exact one, but I remember hearing those come across the—what we were listening to, yeah, the size. And it would have to be big from 15-20 miles away for us to see it moving that way; it would have to be quite large.
- JK When we spoke on the phone previously, you talked in a little more detail about going out with the team—
- WS After all this had happened and things had calmed down I went out with the team, and we were just checking sites I guess, and looking around, and we thought we saw something on the ground, and again the glowing light, the coloring was pretty much the same, and, “Oh my gosh, here we go again.” I wanted them to go closer and they said “No.” This was in a field not close to a site, and I had one young man driving he was just scared to death, and the guy in the back I heard him put a round into his weapon which we were not supposed to do, of course, unless we were confronted with deadly things. But here this thing was and we’re all frightened, so I’m sitting in the front and since he had it pointed at me I had to give him an order “Put that thing out the window—!” So anyway, we’re driving and we’re going north of Oscar [1] near Oscar-2 and we see this thing and it has some movement to it. It’s hovering close to the ground and we’re saying “We’ve got another one!” Well, I think I did call and say, “Stand by, we’ve sighted something. Let me get a little closer and we’ll identify it,” so this is the FSC on duty and he keeps calling back “Are you guys OK?” [Laughs]. So we get closer and my driver says, “I’m not driving any further!” And I gave him a direct order “You will drive this thing or get the heck out of here and let me drive it.” So he drives further, gets closer, and guess what? We find out it’s not a UFO at all, it is a light that’s under a plastic tarp. You can see through it of course and this farmer had put this in his field to cover his hay. And I say this because that light, glowing through that transparent thing looked exactly like what we saw, except now it was much larger and on the ground. But the sighting was exactly like that, a sort of a yellowish light glowing under this tarp. And you talk about tension and stress!
- We were all sweating, they all had their weapons ready to go and all I was thinking about was I want to get close enough to be able to describe and show that we’d seen this thing, they say “Would you have gone if they asked you to go with them?” Of course I would have.
- We didn’t see an awful lot after that. We did see some lights on occasion after that, but the activity level was not the same. We’d see them every so often and report it, and that would be it.
- JK What do you think maybe the total duration was?

WS That night— We typically didn't see them until late, 11, 12 o'clock at night, but it took most of the night, especially after things started happening. By the time we drove around and got tired, we're probably talking about six in the morning or so. We're talking between one and about three [o'clock] when most of the activity would happen. By the time we finished running around trying to find ghosts [laughs] and anything we could find, we're probably talking five or six [o'clock] in the morning.

TT Do you think that the setting off of the alarms had anything to do with these objects going over?

WS I really don't know. It's surely possible. But I know this for a fact: on occasion that did happen. Now that was a rare occasion that both alarms went off, and especially, it was even rarer since the gate was open, or unsecured without having a Standardization Team there. But we know that it did happen on occasion, and matter of fact, the data, they should have that data someplace because they kept data on the gate being open, kept data on one alarm or two alarms, and they kept data on whether doors were open or closed. I know they kept that because that gave us a profile of the sites we needed to focus on and be aware of. And the base would set up, from what I understand, I didn't see it, but from what I understand we had people that could go out and monitor them out from a distance, and sometimes without letting us know that they were there. Supervisors probably would go out and maybe monitor hot—they call them "hot sites" where you might have some activity with vandalism and that kind of thing and try to catch people. It was a very rare occurrence to have that happen, and then to have all the other things happening at the same time that makes it suspect.

TT The B-52 crew in a briefing the following morning were told by a general officer that this object hovered over a vehicle with two people inside, very closely over the top of the vehicle to the point where these guys were scared and that there was a light emitting around these guys. And when these two guys, apparently security personnel saw the B-52 approaching, all of a sudden the lights went out on the object, it went black and this thing took off after the B-52. Now that's what this general officer told them.

WS OK.

TT Anything like that?

WS Not that I know of. But no, it was too far away for us to have had that happen in our area. And I would have known about it, of course, immediately. If they were in my area they would have reported via radio “Look, here’s what’s happened to us.” We were told also, after, and I’m not sure who gave me the briefing, I know I was debriefed by somebody within our command structure on base, and I was also debriefed, or not debriefed but talked to by somebody from Operation Blue Book that came out. But in our command structure the next day, or when we came back, I’m not sure when we got back, but we were told that we were not to talk to anybody about it, not to talk to any of the press especially about this incident, that people would be coming and checking with us and all those things. The only people we could talk to were people within our chain of command. And so when the person, I think he was a Lieutenant Colonel, that’s what I remembered, but for some reason I guess I thought he had come from some other—because I didn’t know him. He interviewed me and from what I understand some of the people, I was briefed on this, were going to be coming out and setting up campers. Some of our Camper Crews had told us, and some of our officers had told us that they had seen lights up at Oscar-2. A lot.

So when I briefed him on that, he literally took a camper and went out there for a while. I think he spent some time on some of our sites. So we were told that he would be out near our sites, to be aware that he’s there and don’t bother him. We could identify him if we wanted to, but as long as he was not on the property he was OK. And I think he spent some time up near Oscar-2, because we’d had some sightings up there.

JK He was a Lieutenant Colonel you say?

WS He was a Lieutenant Colonel.

JK OK was it the same person?

WS That I don’t know. Since I didn’t know him, when they talk about Operation [Project] Blue Book, I assumed that he had come from Wright-Patterson or something. I don’t know where he came from, I know he was on our base, I just assumed that he was—

TT Nobody came from Wright-Pat, but apparently some days after the event, a group came from Washington and they reviewed the radar film with the radar operator. You had no contact with that group?

WS No. But I just remember, I was debriefed by our security people, I talked to this Colonel and I remember him saying something about Operation Blue Book—

JK He was reporting to them.

WS That’s where I got my information then. That makes sense ‘cause we were just told not to talk to anyone else, and this would be something we would keep quiet and not discuss it.

JK Now you went out again the next day?

WS Went out and met an officer on one of the sites, and I’m not sure who the officer was. I remember he was a Lieutenant and he indicated to me he was investigating the incident that happened out there and he wanted to find out what happened and how—and of course I was aware of what had gone down as far as the site being open and that kind of thing.

JK This is the same site that had the alarms?

WS Yes. The team had gone to check it out. And he indicated that he had found a low-level type of radiation on the site, and so I was concerned about that of course because he had indicated that it was not where the missile was, but was off to the—I'm trying to think what they called it, the support part of the site where you—it's graveled area. I want to say just a huge parking lot essentially is what it was.

TT Within the perimeter fence?

WS Yes. It was inside the perimeter fence and was somewhat elevated on the actual sites; everything was contained within the fence. The access road, of course, was outside the fence, but when you got there, you opened up and the fence just went down a little bit, everything was somewhat elevated I'm sure for drainage and everything sort of set up a little bit, but then there was a huge area for parking and that's where he said he found the radiation. He said it was a large circular pattern of radiation. He did indicate that.

JK I would think it would be tight to land a helicopter in there.

WS I know they would take somebody out by helicopter and drop them off from time to time. It's elevated and raised, so once you set that thing down, got the people out you could take off without a problem. All of the security part was much removed from that. We had many times set up the security on the site while vehicles were still on the site itself because it didn't cover everything. It just covered the part where the missile was and the entry part, and parts of the missile, so there was a large parking area off to the side, but it was big enough to land an aircraft.

[Responding to questions regarding his the work environment at Minot AFB].

WS As a matter of fact, I don't think I worked at that site very long come to think of it. I think right after that—I was telling you about how I went to the Standardization Team. I think fairly soon after that I left and, let's see this is October 24th so I think I became Standardization personnel later than that. But if I'm not mistaken, they moved us around too, you know I went to Mike [Flight] for a while, and I was at Oscar, then Lima. I worked three sites while I was there and when they need to train someone, or to be the person in charge they moved you around. So on many occasions, I just met the guys, they worked for me and that was about it, so we didn't have long-lasting relationship in many cases.

TT Were impressed by this event?

WS It had an impact on me that even in my classes from time to time when we talk about various things that happen, they say, "Well, do you believe in UFOs?" I don't discount that could be a possibility because I think I've had a significant event happen in my life that shows me that anything is possible. People will tell me "Well, you probably didn't see anything," and that may be true, but I know I saw something that I can't explain, that's not explained by the normal parameter of things that normally happen in my rational mind so therefore, I have to leave it open as a possibility. And so, I didn't see enough. I'd loved to have seen more to be able to report, but what I saw was not, uh, and the events that happened around me let me know that I don't control all that I need to know about these things, and so I respect it. Very definitely, it was a changing event in my life.

I've talked to my parents about it of course, my spouse and family, other people, other friends when we start talking about anecdotal things that happen. "Well, guess what happened to me when I was a young officer in the military" [laughs]. And there are other people that I can bring in, such as the pilots because, again, I heard them talk about that, and other professionals, and so, none of us, I mean maybe all together it sounds like a major event. Individual parts of us put together like in a recipe would say that something did happen that was significant enough that people are willing to investigate and that's what you folks are doing, so I applaud you for that, for sure.

[Transcription end]

NOTES

¹ Lackland AFB, San Antonio Texas - Lackland Air Force Base was established on June 26, 1942, when the War Department separated part of Kelly Field and named it San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center (SAACC) to support the war effort.

From its inception, SAACC witnessed rapid growth and transitioned from a former field training and bombing range through a variety of missions: the hub for flying training, site for the officer training and commissioning orientation, a staging area for all veterans returning from WWII for reassignment or separation, and eventually, established as the basic military training center for officers and enlisted personnel entering the Army Air Forces.

Unfortunately, the acronym SAACC ("sack-c") evolved into the less affectionate name of "sad sack" which underscored the makeshift and haphazard configuration of the base. Coupled with numerous name changes, a significant identity crisis emerged for base personnel.

Fortunately the base's downhill reputation was checked in 1947 when it was renamed Lackland Air Force Base in honor of Brigadier General Frank D. Lackland. Brigadier General Lackland, a former Kelly Field Commander, had originally proposed and campaigned for an aviation and cadet reception center on this site. Honor as the "Gateway to the Air Force" was secured.

Lackland established itself as a cohesive training base and formalized training evolved to support the Air Force Mission: " To Fly, To Fight, To Win." The basic training and commissioning programs inspired Air Force pride. A technical training group was established to oversee the many courses now taught at on base.

The Korean and Vietnam Wars severely tested Lackland's capacity to train new recruits and satisfy mobility demands. Training populations in the 1950s soared to 55,000 with only a maximum capacity of 25,000. Rapidly built wooden structures, built in 1941, to include the "Mobilization Open Bay" (MOB) dormitories, burst at the seams and forced the mass erection of a tent city. Temporary facilities, to include the "I" dormitories, were hastily erected as a quick fix to house the new recruits. Base operating support requirements force reactive planning, which often resulted in inadequate implementation.

During Vietnam, resourceful leaders split training shifts, increased flight sizes, and compressed training from 30 to 24 days to satisfy the urgency for military readiness. Training requirements also expanded to include teaching English to allied military members from foreign countries.

As a result of the contingencies of the 1950s and 60s, construction of permanent facilities, to include the 1,000 person steel and brick Recruit Housing and Training (RH&T) facilities for basic military training, cemented Lackland's training responsibilities. During the 1990s, Desert Storm revalidated our training value. Also, from the Cold War demise, base realignment and closure (BRAC) actions relocated several specialized training programs at Lackland.

In 1992, Lackland celebrated its fiftieth anniversary and also opened the doors for IAFA's people and its training mission in the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Andrew. Air Education and Training Command emerged in 1993 under Air Force reorganization and relocated OTS to Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

Lackland AFB exists today with the 37th Training Wing as the host installation command, flanked by the largest Associate, the 59th Medical Wing (i.e. Wilford Hall Medical Center From: <http://www.lackland.af.mil/info/heritage.html>

² Grissom AFB, Peru/Bunker Hill Indiana – Grissom ARB is located in north-central Indiana, in Miami and Cass counties. The base consists of 2,722 acres of Air Force property and an additional 457 acres of easement land. The base is approximately 65 miles north of Indianapolis and 6 miles southwest of Peru, Indiana. The area surrounding Grissom ARB is employed predominantly in agricultural production of corn and soybeans, although

small dairies, pig farms and orchards are also present in outlying areas. The areas to the south and west of the base are generally agricultural land uses, with few residences and commercial establishments. Adjacent to the airfield, on its northwestern side, is a beech and maple forest conservation area.

On the northern side of the base are residential areas, an elementary school primarily used by the base, an air museum, a trailer park, and an Indiana Bell office. Agricultural lands are present across from State Highway 218. Public/recreational land uses associated with Pipe Creek also exist on the northern side of the base.

The eastern side of the base is more developed than the others and includes residential; commercial establishments such as a restaurant, RV sales, and a gas station; industrial areas are intermixed with agricultural land uses.

The location and size of the base's airfield safety zone prompted the Air Force to purchase a 40-acre parcel across U.S. 31. This includes a former residence and trailer park. This land is vacant with an empty, deteriorated farm house.

Grissom AFB was established in 1942 as Bunker Hill Naval Air Station (NAS) and remained an active naval training site for both the United States and British Royal Navy Pilot Training activities throughout World War II. The primary land use during this time period was for training pilots to perform carrier-based takeoffs and landings. In support of these activities, various types of routine aircraft maintenance activities were performed. Bunker Hill NAS was deactivated in 1946, with the land and facilities being leased to local business and agricultural interests.

In March 1954 the base was transferred from the U.S. Navy to the U.S. Air Force. The base remained inactive until August 1955, when it was reactivated as Bunker Hill AFB and assigned to the Tactical Air Command. The Strategic Air Command (SAC) assumed control of the base in 1957 when it became the home of the 4041st Air Base Group (4041 ABG). From 1957 to 1959, preparations for mission changes at the base included the installation of advanced refueling system capabilities and the placement of fourteen 50,000-gallon underground storage tanks. In 1959 the 4041 ABG was redesignated to 305th Bombardment Wing. Aircraft operations of the 305th Bombardment Wing consisted of maintenance and operation of the B-47 bombers, followed by the B-58s. Additionally, in spring 1959, the base received its first KC-135 Stratotanker, which led to its primary mission change as home to a refueling wing.

In 1970, the 305th Bombardment Wing was deactivated and the 305th Air Refueling Wing (305 ARW) was created. From 1977 to 1980, installation underwent a number of upgrades, including the construction of a new base heating plant, housing two oil/gas and three coal-fired boilers. The three coal-fired boilers have been converted to natural gas.

In 1984, the IRP was initiated at Grissom AFB. The records search conducted during the Preliminary Assessment (PA) was completed by Engineering-Science, Inc. in 1985.

Following the records search, a Site Investigation (SI) was conducted by Engineering-Science, Inc., and was completed in 1990. The initial Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) was completed by Environmental Science and Engineering, Inc. in 1993. A supplemental RI was submitted in March 1994.

Grissom AFB was aligned under the Air Mobility Command (AMC) in 1992 following the deactivation of SAC. As of the realignment 1 October 1994, the Air Force Reserve's 434th Wing (434 WG) is assigned to Grissom AFB and is expected to continue its mission of refueling operations. The Army Corps of Engineers is currently overseeing the construction design for the Cantonment Area, the portion of the base to remain in active use by Air Force Reserve. As other parcels of the base are classified as environmentally sound, they will be leased (and eventually transferred) for non military use.

The NEPA Record of Decision for Property Reuse was placed in the Federal Register in October of 1995. From: <http://www.in.gov/idem/land/federal/derp/grissomafb.html>

³ Glasgow AFB, Montana - Glasgow Air Force Base was located in the northeast corner of Montana, 26 miles north of the city of Glasgow, Montana. The 91st Bombardment Wing was stationed at Glasgow Air Force Base at of Glasgow, Montana, in new facilities, which were completed in 1960. In February 1961 the 326th

Bombardment Squadron, equipped with B-52 aircraft, moved to Glasgow Air Force Base, Mont., as the nucleus for the organization of the 4141st Strategic Wing. In its first year, this became the top wing in Fifteenth Air Force. The 4141st Strategic Wing at Glasgow inactivated on 01 February 1963, and its aircraft were transferred to the 322nd Bombardment Squadron assigned to the 91st Bombardment Wing at Glasgow, which inactivated in 1968.

The former Glasgow Army Air Field (AAF) is situated on 2,798 acres adjacent to the city of Glasgow (population: 8,239) in northeastern Montana, not far from the Canadian border. Prior to DOD ownership, 605 acres of this land were used as a municipal airport and the rest for agricultural purposes.

Glasgow AAF, also known as the Glasgow Satellite Airfield, was activated on 10 November 1942. It was one of three satellite fields of Great Falls Army Air Base, which accommodated a bombardment group. There were four Bomber Squadrons within this group, one located at the Great Falls Army Air Base and one at each of the three satellite air fields at Lewistown, Glasgow and Cut Bank. The 96th Bombardment Squadron of the Second Bombardment Group arrived at Glasgow Army Air Field on 29 November 1942. Heavy bomber squadrons of the time usually consisted of 8 B-17s with 37 officers and 229 enlisted men. The satellite field was used by B-17 bomber crews from the Second Air Force during the second phase of their training. Actual bombing and gunnery training was conducted at the airfield's associated sites, Glasgow Pattern Bombing Range and the Glasgow Pattern Gunnery Range, though other training sites within the bombardment group were probably also used. The target-towing aircraft assigned to the Fort Peck Aerial Gunnery Range were also stationed at Glasgow. The last unit to complete training at Glasgow Satellite Field was the 614th Bombardment Squadron of the 401st Bombardment Group, which left for England in October 1943. On 01 December 1944 a German prisoner-of-war camp was established at the site. On 15 July 1946 the Glasgow Army Air Field was classified surplus and it was subsequently transferred to the War Assets Administration on 18 November 1946.

Glasgow AFB began shutting down in the late 1960s, and is an example of failed local policies. Currently, the former Glasgow AAF is used as a municipal airport, a light industrial park and for agricultural purposes. When the base closed, 16,000 people left the Glasgow area, a trend that continued among the civilian population. As of 1990 the base and all its infrastructure remained almost completely idle. In 1970, Glasgow had an emigration rate of 33 percent; in 1980 the population fell to 4,500, and it was expected to fall below 4,000 in 1990.

Glasgow AFB, which closed in the 1970s, was so isolated and without business advantages that it sat idle for years until Boeing Company recently began testing planes there. The Boeing Company, of Seattle, Wash., owns most of the former air force base, including the old officer's club facility. In February 1997 Montana Senator Conrad Burns announced that he had helped set up negotiations between the Saint Marie Condominium Association (SMCA) and Boeing regarding the possible lease of the officers club on the old Glasgow Air Force Base. With the exception of the Glasgow Industrial Airport located in Glasgow, Montana, which is company-owned, runways and taxiways used by Boeing are located on airport properties owned by others and are used by the company jointly with others. From: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/facility/glasgow.htm>

⁴ Loring AFB, Maine - In 1953, Loring AFB was activated and occupied approximately 8,900 acres. This base was home to a series of state-of-the-art bombers and support aircraft. Loring AFB was officially deactivated on September 30, 1994.

Originally constructed to accommodate B-36 bombers, Loring AFB was sited to take advantage of Maine's proximity to Europe and the Soviet Union. Situated at the tip of the 600 mile New England promontory, Loring AFB is the closest continental US (CONUS) base to virtually every potential conflict area east of the United States. Loring AFB straddled the primary great circle route for the entire eastern half of the United States to Europe, the Soviet Union, the Middle East, and the Persian Gulf. As the 'last stop' along that route, Loring AFB was ideally situated to provide tanker support in both wartime and peacetime operations.

Loring AFB was the closest base in the continental United States to the Soviet Union east of the Urals, to Europe and to the Middle East. Loring was a megabase, with enormous capacity, second in all of SAC. It had two runways, and only two other SAC bases had two runways. It had the largest capacity for weapon storage and for fuel storage in all of SAC. It had the most operational flexibility or the greatest expansion for the future beyond the turn of the century of the three SAC bases in the Northeast.

Loring AFB lies approximately 2 miles northwest of the town of Limestone, 8 miles northeast of Caribou, and 5 miles west of the Canadian border at New Brunswick, Canada. The land surrounding the base is primarily rural and agricultural. The topography of the base is gently rolling, with several brooks running through the terrain. The main base elevations range from 746 feet above mean sea level on the main runway to approximately 570 feet above mean sea level on the southwestern portion of the base.

Loring AFB was built in the 1950's to accommodate 100 B-36 bombers. At Loring in May 1948, SAC had anticipated 10 thin-shell hangars, built one after the other—an arrangement that would have accommodated 20 B-36s, two per maintenance hangar. By August 1950, the Loring construction program did not specify the projected number of hangars, but instead recorded that 10 additional B-36s required hangars at an overall estimated facilities cost of five million dollars. While what is immediately noticeable is the 50% reduction in number of bombers to be in maintenance at any one time, what is also pertinent is the lack of enumeration for the planned hangars.

The 42d Bombardment Wing (Heavy) was established on 25 February 1953, assigned to Strategic Air Command (SAC) at Limestone (later Loring) AFB, Maine, flying the B-36 Peacemaker bomber. The first Boeing B-52C Stratofortress assigned to the wing arrived at Loring on 16 June 1956. The 42nd Bomb Wing at Loring AFB deployed Detachment 1 to McGuire AFB from 01 January 1970 through early 1975 [possibly only with KC-135s].

At 14,300 acres, Loring AFB was the 2nd largest base in SAC. There is ample space to accommodate any number of new missions and there is no threat of encroachment from the surrounding community. Loring's ramps, parking areas, weapons storage, and fuel storage capacities all far exceed current requirements. Loring AFB's overall capacity ranked second among all 21 SAC bases. This capacity, coupled with Loring AFB's strategic location, provides defense planners with unparalleled flexibility for future expansion. Loring AFB is one of only three (3) SAC bases, which have two fully capable runways. The second runway was completed in 1985. Loring AFB's ramp space exceeds 1.1 million square yards. It ranks 2nd among all SAC bases in total ramp space and 1st in excess ramp space. Loring AFB's weapons storage capacity is 10,247,882 NEW (Net Explosive Weight)--the highest in all of SAC. Plattsburgh AFB, NY had less than 28% of Loring AFB's weapons storage capacity. Further, Loring AFB has one of two fully capable conventional weapons storage facilities in CONUS maintained by SAC. This facility represents a significant warfighting capability. Loring AFB ranked 1st in all of SAC in fuel storage capacity (9,193,374 gallons). The nearest SAC base to Loring AFB, Plattsburgh AFB, NY, had less than 35% of Loring AFB's fuel storage capacity.

Loring's air space was unencumbered, in contrast to every other SAC base in the Northeast. CERT (Conventional Enhanced Release Training) is a bombing range located adjacent to the runway on which B-52's can drop practice ordnance. Loring AFB was one of only four (4) SAC bases that had a CERT. A major Low Level training area entry point lies just 165 miles from Loring AFB. This area contains several alternative routes and training opportunities, and provides varied training options throughout the year. The preponderance of bombing and navigation training is accomplished during Low Level flight activity.

While Loring AFB's location was ideal for wartime, it had the disadvantage of being far from the western Strategic Training Route Complex (STRC), and the Nevada and Utah bombing ranges--the only U.S. ranges where B-52's may drop live munitions. Since SAC training requirements only require crews to drop ordnance on these ranges twice a year, this is a relatively minor inconvenience. Far more frequent training is conducted in the Low Level route structure adjacent to Loring AFB and on the CERT, which is located at Loring AFB. Furthermore, since all eastern based B-52's must fly several hours to reach the STRC and live bombing ranges this problem is not unique to Loring AFB. From: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/facility/loring.htm>

⁵ The United States Logistics Group (TUSLOG) - The United States Logistics Group, a cover designation prescribed by US European Command, was headquartered in Ankara, Turkey. As of 1 April 1969, 16th AF assumed responsibility for all USAFE's units and bases in Spain, Libya, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. Until this reorganization The United States Logistics Group (TUSLOG) had supervised USAFE and other US units in Turkey. TUSLOG continued to exist, but as a subordinate unit of Sixteenth Air Force from 1970 onward, with its bases and units in Greece assigned directly to HQ Sixteenth. By 1994 TUSLOG was inactivated. See: <http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/dod/eucom/tuslog/>

