NAAV NEWS

Members' Publication of the National Association of Atomic Veterans

VOLUME 2 SUMMER 2015 ISSUE 1

Gillie Jenkins

JULY 16 WILL BE ATOMIC VETERANS DAY IN VIRGINIA THIS YEAR

Del Roxann Robinson

Virginia has designated July 16 as National Atomic Veterans Day in honor of military personnel who were involved in the development, or were affected by the deployment, of the nuclear bombs that ended World War II. *(Continued on Page 2.)*

From the Desk of the Commander: NAAV is growing support of our campaign and membership. Our current checking account is rising. We have not needed to touch our saving account during the last year. NAAV is still 100% volunteers. No one here is drawing a salary. In visiting with Fred I found that we sustained close to 1430 members at the start of the year. Since the renewal of the newsletter, we have grown by some 30 to 40 new members. Fred continues by wishing to thank the Board State Commanders, Area Commanders and Newsletter Editors for all you effort. He wishes to let you know that without you we would not be here. I would like to prompt you that Commander Fred writes on our web-page (www.naav.com) "Desk of the Commander." He keeps you updated with timely information and I encourage to read his messages.

Change of Address, Membership or Renewal....Write or E-Mail

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Deadlines are the 1st of every 4th month and any material submitted after that time may be delayed until next issue. All submissions are to be e-mailed to newsboynaav@gmail.com or mail to **Darryl Hirst ----- Managing Editor 1925 S. Saint Charles, Spokane Valley Road, WA 99037.** All photos must be sent in JPEG format preferably at 300dpi or mail us an original and we will copy it and get it back to you.

National Association of Atomic Veterans Reunion 2015

Our Reunion will be held on September 17, 18 and 19th at the Doubletree by Hilton Washington, DC. – Crystal City. The meeting agenda on Thursday from 4pm until 8pm will be the registration in WKH KRWHO /REE\ ULJKW QH[W WR WKH ÀDJV 7KH Let Gillie Jenkins know if you will be attending. On Thursday the 17th you may check in at the hotel. Friday the 18th can be used for a full day of sightseeing in Washington DC. The regular business meeting will be, at the hotel on Friday at 7pm. Everyone and their guests are welcome to attend the business meeting. The regular meeting will be held on Saturday the 19th, as will the dinner, in WKH 0DGLVRQ 5RRP &KHFN RXW RQ 6XQGD\ PRUQLQJ 7KH KH 3DUNLQJ ± 'LVFRXQWHG VHOI SDUNLQJ DW D VSHFLDO UDWH R 'RXEOHWUHH LV ORFDWHG MXVW DFURVV WKH 3RWRPDF IURP :D complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport.

Gillie Jenkins is offering free NAAV a tee shirt to WKH ¿UVW UHJLVWUDQW before attending the meeting providing the size of tee you wish M, L, or XL.

Information

Contact Gillie Jenkins, Director of State Commanders, 1-804-3348585, atomicgillie@verizon.net

DoubleTree by Hilton Washington DC – Crystal City 300 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA 22202 tel: 703-416-4100

Haskel "Hack" Watts

Haskell Watts with Gillie Jenkins would like to share a few words DERXW 1$$9 VKLUW VDOHV ´7KH VKLUW 7KH\ VROG VKLUWV IURP PHPEHUV LQ WKHLU JRDO RI UDLVLQJ IRU 1$$9 PH WKDW ´,·P QRW VXUH ZH ZDQW WR GL DGG ´ 0D\EH ORQJ VOHHYHV QH[W WLPH -HQNLQV ZKR OLNH WKH UHVW RI XV DUH

$QG RQH PRUH LWHP 7KH 1$$9 VWRUH DQG GHFDOV 7KH VWRUH LWHP SDJH LV :H QRZ KDYH 1$$ 19 /LIH 0HPEHUVKLS & /LFHQVH 3ODWHV IRU 6R JR WR WH www.naav.com

JULY 16th WILL BE AN ATOMIC VETERANS DAY

7KDQNV WR *LOOLH -HQNLQV ZKR KDV EHHQ LQVWUXPHQWDO :KLFK LQ SDUW UHDGV 'HFODUH -XO\ DV 1DWLRQDO $WR 'D\ LQ 9LUJLQLD ,W LV QRWHZRUWK\ WR SDVV RXU WKDQNV DFWLRQ WKDW VDZ :HVW 9LUJLQLD VXFFHVVIXO LQ SDVVLQJ 6 ´$WRPLF 9HWHUDQV 'D\ RI 5HPHPEHUDQFH µ 7KHVH WZR VWDW the words... **and in each succeeding year** SODFHG LQWR WKHLU OHJLVODWLRQ 1DWLRQDO $WRPLF 9HWHUDQV· 'D\ ZKLFK ZDV VLJQHG E\ W WKDW ZRXOG KDYH 1DWLRQDO $WRPLF 9HWHUDQV· 'D\ ZKLFK ZRXOG EH LQ SHUSH 1DWLRQDO $WRPLF 9HWHUDQV· 'D\ ZKLFK ZRXOG EH LQ SHUSH unfolds.

and in each succeeding year

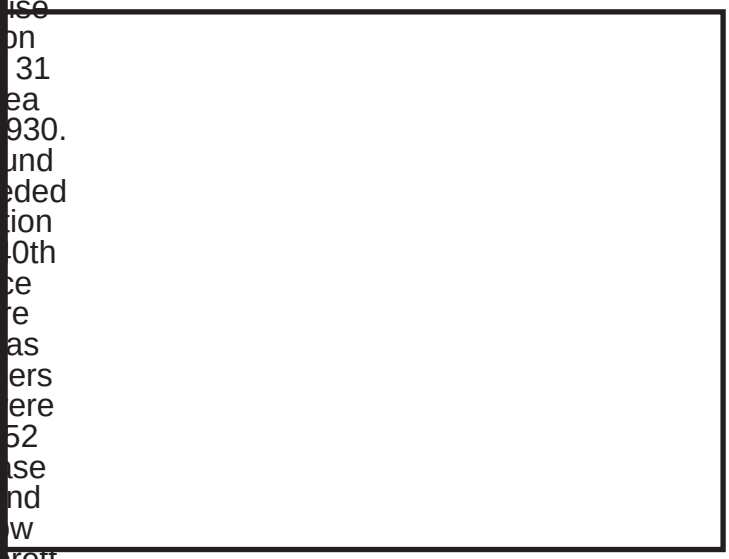
BAKER ARTICLE • Submitted by: Thomas Baker

On April 22, 1952 my father, Donald Baker, witnessed the detonation of a nuclear weapon and was in the tactical operation phase of Exercise Desert Rock IV of the Charlie Shot of Operation Tumbler-Snapper at Yucca Flat, Nevada. The 31 kiloton bomb was dropped from a B-50 over Area 7 and detonated at 3,447 feet above ground at 0930. An hour after the detonation, he went near to ground zero to observe the destruction. Then they proceeded to march through to the other side of the detonation and back through ground zero. He was in the 140th Fighter Bomber Wing which was the only Air Force unit involved. Most of the troops involved were from either the Army or Marines. The event was called the “atomic open house” as 197 members of the media and 200 distinguished guests were invited and it was written about in the May 5, 1952 edition of Life Magazine. Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine who authored the book “Hope and Fear” wrote of attending the detonation with fellow Senators Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas and Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts. The whole event was well choreographed and achieved the unstated public relations objectives of making the testing more acceptable to the public and giving a false sense of security about the survivability of an attack.

GUESTS ON NEWS NOB waiting for the blast surround AEC Chairman Gordon Dean (*front row, third from right*). At left halfway up hill is mirror in which Photographer Eyerman took picture at left.

Photo from Life Magazine

As written in the May 5th edition of Life Magazine, ³7KH ¿UVW SXEOLF SHUIRUPDQFH was never more intended to be safe and almost easy.” The television broadcast was on the leading edge of technology as it was the ¿UVW PDMRU HYHQW WR HYHU be tested beyond it’s known capabilities. Unlike other nuclear detonations, the military personnel were encouraged to tell of their experience and not sworn to secrecy. The letter he sent Mom on the 25th when he got back to Clovis AFB, NM.



His drawing on the letter

My dad wrote, “I was among the GI’s who were 3 ½ miles from ground zero. It was an experience I’ll never forget. Believe me. I’ll try to give you an explanation of the atomic bomb. We were dug in 3 ½ miles from “ground zero” in trenched about 4 ½ ft deep. During the last two minutes the radio was cut in on the B-50 and then came the countdown, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, bomb away. Then a silence, I FDQ¶W H[SODLQ , KDG RQ DOO & covering for my eyes. I had my face in my lap, with a pair of leather gloves over my eyes, yet I VDZ WKH ÀDVK 7KHQ VHFRQGV wave and dirt was blown into the foxhole. The blast wave returned to the explosion area and rushed over, then the most horrid, wicked thunder followed like a million rain thunders in one. The ground began to tremble with a continuing rumble. This all happened in about 7 seconds. I rose up out of my shelter and saw the greatest, most powerful sight in the history RI PDQNLQG 7KH ¿UH EDOO G upward. The whole valley below me was in an uproar. Then the ball formed a giant ring going up 35,000 ft into the heavens. It almost took an hour for the valley to clear up. After word we hiked into the valley to “ground zero”. There was destruction that I can’t start to explain. There were various tanks and armored vehicles, jeeps, goats, etc. twisted, burned to a state I can’t start to explain. To be perfectly honest, I was never more frightened in my life during the explosion. Thank God we have this weapon on our side. I hope it is never dropped on human beings again. I’ll be glad to get back to the States.”

Floyd Boland went out to Operation Bigshot with my father and described the following. “I remembered being out there for about one week staying in 16 man

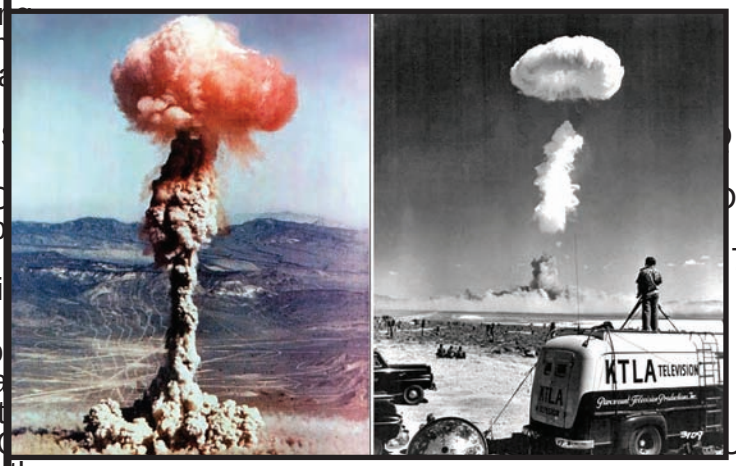
--Continued on Page 4--

BAKER ARTICLE • (Continued)

--Continued from Page 3--

V T X D G W H Q W V D W & D P S ' H V H and going into the Impact Area. It was also to prove through indoctrination training classes on the affects and the process of what was going to happen. When we were off they provided shuttle buses into Las Vegas which ran until 11pm. We were up at 6 am for roll call and the paratroopers would go by at about 4 am trying to rouse them. One of the lieutenants hollered out, "Pick up your feet, we are still tryi to sleep". Needless to say there was a lot of in service rivalry going on. The day before the bla they took us out to see what ground zero looked E H I R U H W K H G H W R Q D W L R Q animals were tethered in every 3rd to 4th trench R W K H U W U H Q F K H V Z H U H ¿ O C an M4 Sherman Tank that was set in the middle o D V S K D O W S D U N L Q J D U H D D E asphalt was the target for the detonation and pai with a bull's eye. The tank was painted green the outside and white inside. The test site perso dug trenches 60-80 feet long, about 30-40 feet a from each other for the troops to get into. All of t H O H F W U L F D O H T X L S P H Q W D C off after the bomb had been release because they were afraid that it might set it off prematurely. preparation, we pulled up our collars, covered e and hunkered down in the trenches. A couple of guys from the unit didn't get into the trenches time. Their exposed skin received third degree bu and looked red as a beet. Then the shockwaves D Q G À D W W H Q H G W K H P Z K L F K hit by a semi. Needless to say they had to be se the hospital but I never knew what became of th At 2 ½ miles there was a B17 that was buckled two, at 2 miles the animals were burnt severely one side and were dazed. At 1 ½ miles they w dead. Helicopters came over head with sharpsho to put the animals out of their misery. The tank h been pushed about for about 300 feet to the en the asphalt at the edge of the dirt. It had sank ½ foot deep into the asphalt. The outside was a rusted color and the inside was black. After observing the damage, we were marched through ground zero and back again."

physiological effects of witnessing a detonation up close. Z H U H V R P H V F L H Q W L ¿ F H [S H U L P H canceled at the last moment. The articles were saved by my father and are more propaganda pieces than actual reporting.



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Spectacular Display Of Power Terrifying

By BOB BRAY
Amarillo Globe-Times Staff Writer

NEWS NOB, Nevada Proving Grounds, April 22—My fervent prayer today is that all people of the world can soon safely feel, watch, and hear an atomic blast.

Then war would be no more.

The atomic bomb is the handwriting on the wall of civilization, the message de "Peace on

in the Tri-State area, began their simulated ground attack.

* * *

THEY SWARMED into the target area and completed preliminary tactics toward taking an enemy communication stronghold. Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Swing, commanding general of the Sixth Army, who also went through the blast in a foxhole, reported, "The kids came through laughing."

Flown to the foot of News Nob in his helicopter minutes after the blast, General Swing said the test was a complete success from a military standpoint. He declared that success of this test mission and other similar tests will open a whole new field of weapons to military use.

The last minutes preceding the explosion were almost as dramatic as the actual detonation of the bomb. Newsmen, some 200 of them from across the country, arrived on the scene shortly after 7 AM. The bomb, flown here from Kirtland Air Force Base near Albuquerque, was exploded at 3,20 feet. It was dropped from a B-5 bomber on the third run over th target.

* * *

THE DROP PLANE was trailed approximately 7 miles by two othe B-50s carrying vital scientific in struments to record immediate re sults of the blast.

As the nervously awaited "bombs away" report came over the radio, almost complete silence gripped the crowd. Only the squeaking of a radio tape recorder broke the quiet.

Forty-two seconds elapsed from the time of release until the earth shaking detonation which mad most observers dreadfully aware of a power they had never known before.

Troops Uninjured by A-Blast

By ELTON C. FAY
Associated Press Military Affairs Editor

ATOM BOMB SITE, Nev., April 22 (AP)—An atom bomb, its searing heat and blast of unusual ferocity, was exploded today as 1,500 troops huddled in fox holes along an atomic warfare "battle front."

The soldiers were unhurt by the mighty explosion, proving that foxholes can shelter men from even the world's most destructive weapon. Seconds after the explosion of the bomb, dropped from a B-50 and detonated at 3,500 feet only about 3½ miles from the troops, the soldiers and the generals who were with them stood up and laughed.

These men were nearer than any human had been, except in heavy concrete bunkers—and except for the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who saw the bomb closer and died.

Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Swing, one of three generals in the foxholes, was flown back to the observers' post to report. He said:

"The young men were laughing and cracking jokes. They are confident that ordinary fortification can protect them."

Swing, Sixth Army commander, his coveralls gray with the dust that blanketed the troops in a tremendous cloud as the explosion hammered the desert floor, said, "The worst most of us got was a mouthful of dirt."

On May 19 at Clovis AFB he went to see the movie "Without Warning" where a news reel of the atomic blast he had been at was shown. Watching it really gave him the shakes.

The pictures below are of the actual detonation he witnessed. The stated reason the Charlie Shot was done was to measure the troop reactions and