


From: Garrett Moore garrettmoo@verizon.net 
Subject: Geodetic Survey Squadron/Group, Newsletter #68, 22 November 2017, Distribution 8
Date: November 21, 2017 at 10:22 PM
To: Garrett Moore garrettmoo@verizon.net



***Greetings, Fellow Veterans of the Geodetic Survey Squadron and Geodetic Survey Group!
And Happy Thanksgiving!***

This will be a short one, as I mostly just want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving weekend as we head into the holiday season and the rapid winding down of 2017. It has been an eventful year, for sure, harder for some due to so many natural disasters and personal problems, but we all still have much for which to be thankful.

Thanksgiving holiday never fails to remind me of America's tenuous origins nearly two centuries before we even thought of becoming a nation. There's a bit of a rivalry between Virginia and Massachusetts as to which place held the first Thanksgiving celebration. Jamestown in 1607 was the first English settlement; a lonesome outpost on the banks of what is now the James River. It nearly collapsed by 1610 for various reasons, none of them pretty---internal squabbling, laziness, squandering of resources, poor relations with the local indigenous peoples, etc. The colony was saved by the arrival of more people and a stern disciplinarian as leader, Lord Delaware. Virginians claim to have held the first thanksgiving at Berkeley 100 Plantation. In 1619, 38 English settlers arrived at Berkeley Hundred in Charles City County, Virginia. The group's London Company charter specifically required "that the day of our ships arrival at the place assigned... in the land of Virginia shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God." So, technically, that was the first official thanksgiving.

Meanwhile, the pilgrims, seeking religious freedom, landed at Plymouth Harbor in 1620 after a long and arduous Atlantic crossing, having been blown far off course. They arrived just in time for a harsh New England winter. Of the 102 Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower, only half survived the winter. The following year (1621) the survivors established rules, built and fortified their colony, enjoyed good relations with the natives and brought in a fine harvest. Despite coming later, it is these pilgrims' informal thanksgiving in 1621 that is the one we emulate today, and its origin is best told in the words of two of their number who wrote about it.

First, from Governor William Bradford's diaries:

"They began now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fit up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength and had all things in good plenty. For as some were thus employed in affairs abroad, others were exercised in fishing, about cod and bass and other fish, of which they took good store, of which every family had their portion. All the summer there was no want; and now began to come in store of fowl, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they can be used (but afterward decreased by degrees). And besides waterfowl there was great store of wild turkeys, of which they took many, besides venison, etc. Besides, they had about a peck of meal a week to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corn to the proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty here to their friends in England, which were not feigned but true reports."

Next is Edward Winslow, in *Mourt's Relation*:

"Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruits of our labor. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms [firearms], many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deer, which we brought to the plantation and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others. And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want that we often wish you partakers of our plenty."

May it always be so, and for those who suffered loss from storm, illness or other bad luck in 2017, may

may it always be so, and for those who suffered loss from storm, illness or other bad luck in 2017, may they not be far from food, shelter or good health now and forever more.

Reunion!

One thing for which I am *not* thankful is the lack of response for my repeated call for reunion volunteers, especially from Cheyenne. As noted last time in this newsletter, our next reunion will be in Cheyenne in August 2018. The actual weekend date will depend on what we can arrange with the Holiday Inn. [I desperately need someone from Cheyenne to settle details of our hotel arrangements by expediently renegotiating our old contract, which has served us well in 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015.](#)

In fairness, I did receive a volunteer reply from **Kathy Cobeen Martin** (Orderly Room, FEW, 1968-70):

“My husband and I will volunteer for any help you need!”

We welcome that spirit and attitude, but last time I checked, Kathy and her husband live in Aurora, CO. We will certainly put their services to work during the reunion, but...

[We still need a Cheyenne resident to bird dog the hotel contract ASAP!](#)

Update on Commemorative Coins

As noted in the October newsletter, the company that made our last two commemorative coins, the Northwest Territorial Mint, has become involved in a financial scandal and reorganized under bankruptcy protection. They made a high quality product for us on two occasions and also produced the commemorative coin for our colleagues in the Air Force Photomapping Association. They were easy to deal with, but I do not have high confidence that they will survive their current financial and bankruptcy difficulties.

We decided last time to mint coins that commemorate the Squadron's various designations during its history from July 1959 to October 1993. As you may recall, our unit went by five different designations, and consequently, had five different emblems:

- 1381st Geodetic Survey Squadron (Missile), 1959-64
- 1381st Geodetic Survey Squadron, 1964-68
- 1st Geodetic Survey Squadron, 1968-72
- Geodetic Survey Squadron, 1972-89
- Geodetic Survey Group, 1989-93

We already minted the first version (Missile) and sold all of them before the 2015 reunion.

If it's not too outrageously expensive, my plan is to mint the next four coins at 50 coins each. I would have to personally front the money to go ahead with production, then later hope to recoup my costs by selling all of the coins at cost plus shipping and handling. If that up-front investment turns out to be too prohibitive, I will just go with the next two versions of the emblem and then the final two for the reunion in 2021.

“Chief Swede,” **Bob Carlson** (Survey, Orlando, 1959) one of the “originals from Orlando,” who was there when the 1381st first stood up in 1959, has stepped forward to give me some prospective new commemorative coin manufacturers with whom to deal. I'm working that problem now...

Final Notes:

That's all for this edition...

If you are driving somewhere this holiday weekend, please be careful out there!

If you are on Facebook, I invite you to be my Facebook friend. Find me at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009342009837>

There is also a Facebook page for the Squadron/Group at
<https://www.facebook.com/1381GeodeticSurveySquadron/>

Garrett
Field Survey Branch & Astronomic Positioning Branch
GSS/Cheyenne
April 1967 - May 1970 and January - December 1972

Nothing makes the Earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance—they make the latitudes and longitudes. – Henry David Thoreau, Surveyor and Philosopher