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**Geodetic Survey Squadron/Group, Newsletter #77, 12 October 2018, Distribution 8**

1 message

**Garrett Moore** <garrettmoore@verizon.net>

Thu, Oct 11, 2018 at 10:17 PM

To: "garrettmoore@verizon.com" &lt;garrettmoore@verizon.com&gt;

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

And Happy Columbus Day! I know, we already celebrated the official federal holiday on Monday, but October 12<sup>th</sup> is the *actual* date that Columbus sighted land after five weeks at sea, most likely Hispaniola, the Caribbean island today shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

There has been a recent movement gaining some traction to change the holiday to *Indigenous Peoples' Day*, due to the impact that colonialism had on the original inhabitants of the Americas. Columbus Day was first enshrined as a legal holiday in the United States as recently as the 1930s. Since 1971, the holiday has been fixed as the second Monday in October.

Interestingly enough, Columbus made four voyages from Spain across the Atlantic still looking for "the Indies," and never fully comprehended what he had stumbled upon--two continents mostly unknown and unmapped by Europeans, or anyone else, with the possible exception of Vikings, who had established settlements in Vinland 500 years earlier, believed to be in eastern Canada. (See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinland>.)

It's ironic that many US citizens still think that his "discoveries" included what is now the USA, because in *none* of those four voyages did Columbus ever touch the North American continent, in particular, no part of it that later became the United States. He only explored a number of Caribbean islands, and the coasts of Central America and South America as far as the Orinoco River in what is now Venezuela. However, his arrival and the subsequent arrival of Spanish conquistadors soon after, revealed to the dismay of the original inhabitants what their real intent was--the ultimate enslavement of the original residents, the theft of their resources and the replacement of their culture with Christianity. Columbus had exhibited great daring and expert seamanship, navigation skills and knowledge of the prevailing wind patterns at various latitudes, and that may be his greatest achievement. But his legacy, and the legacy of all the colonial powers that followed, is quite checkered with regard to the cruel disregard and tragic impact it had on those who were already here. Maybe we should share the holiday, honoring not only the historic achievements in exploration and the advance in knowledge of planet Earth, but also honoring the people who originally inhabited the Americas.

After a road trip of more than five weeks, you might think we'd want to settle down for a while, but as I write, we are packing up to head west to California again, this time by air. Bonnie and I signed on for a month of babysitting our two grandkids, while their Dad is away on international business travel and their Mom is at work all day. We guarantee that these kids will be spoiled rotten by November!

One last item before we move on to our usual business--

As I write, Hurricane Michael has come ashore in the Florida panhandle and has wreaked untold damages. It is progressing through the Southeast as a tropical storm inflicting more damage in place already reeling from earlier floods. Many of our veterans live in this region, so our thoughts and prayers for their safety and well being are with them...

**The Dave Marcum Project:**

As mentioned in the September newsletter, one of the highlights of the August GSS/GSG reunion was a presentation by a guest speaker, **David Marcum**, who was a last-minute add-on to the agenda for Saturday's luncheon quite by serendipity! Dave is currently an instructor in Government Studies at Laramie County Community College (LCCC) in Cheyenne. Dave had stumbled upon one of our brass gravity markers somewhere in Wyoming, which peaked his curiosity about the Squadron. He traced the marker to our website and contacted me. He has ambitious plans to do a history of FEW's role during the Cold War, including the role played by our Squadron. Dave has already been in contact with some of you, and he had this to say in a recent e-mail:

"I am still in the process of teaching myself the basics of geodesy. However, I wanted to give you a heads up about a couple of things.

First, Neill deGrasse Tyson has written a new book titled [Accessory to War: The Unspoken Alliance Between Astrophysics and the Military](#). I have not read it yet, but grazing the index tells me he might have overlooked geodesy during the Cold War. Given my interest in the politics of technology I will undoubtedly read the book at some point (but only after I have taught myself the basics of geodesy of course).

That Tyson possibly overlooked geodetics is not surprising. Donald Mackenzie, author of [Inventing Accuracy: A Historical Sociology of Nuclear Missile Guidance](#), still the standard work on the subject, also ignored geodesy. All of which tells me that our little project is an absolutely necessary one.

I am not sure if you are aware of this, but the May 12, 1958, issue of *LIFE* magazine had a nice article about the military and geodetics. It is probably the best introduction to the subject I have encountered (much more useful than the 1956 *National Geographic* article). I have attached a copy of the article. In doing so I am probably violating copyright law, so please do not distribute or post it to any websites. What you could do instead is send interested individuals to [Google's LIFE archive](#) and have them find the issue in question (May 12, 1958, p. 124).

Finally, I have just finished reading "Political Geodesy: The Army, the Air Force, and the World Geodetic System of 1960" by Deborah Jean Warner (*Annals of Science*, Volume 59, n. 4 [2002]; pp. 363-389). In her article, Warner does a very nice job documenting the intense competition that occurred between the Army (which emphasized astrometrics in its geodetic work) and the Air Force (which relied more on gravimetrics). Fun stuff.

That's it for now. Now, on to *Geodesy for the Layman*.

Take care.

Dave

David Marcum

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You may contact Dave directly at [dmarcum@lccc.wy.edu](mailto:dmarcum@lccc.wy.edu) .

### **More on Alternative Reunions...**

We now have yet another suggestion for a change-of-pace reunion supplied by **Bruce Porter** (Survey, Astro, Data

Reduction, FEW & WSMR, 1969-78 & 1982-2000).

Hey, Garry, if the next GSSq newsletter goes out soon, please include the below -- I'm curious to gauge the level of interest (if any). Maybe Bonnie would like you to take her!

Consider making a 10-day cruise from Tampa on the *Norwegian Pearl* starting January 17<sup>th</sup> as an alternative to a GSS reunion. I'm booked on Deck 11 and it looks like a fun time. On an NCL [Norwegian Cruise Line] cruise you have the advantage of seeing as much or as little of your shipmates as you want. Feel free to e-mail Bruce Porter [<mailto:bporter1@juno.com>] with questions, if you're interested -- or just book with your favorite travel agent. See you soon?

See all the shades of island paradise on a 10-day journey to the Eastern Caribbean on board Norwegian Pearl. Hop on a jeep tour and enjoy the wonderful views of Tortola and the surrounding islands. Experience the Dutch and French personalities of bicultural St. Maarten. Soak up the rays on St. Maarten's "airport beach," where arriving planes practically touch the treetops, or cross the border to the French side and enjoy the European ambiance of Marigot. Your cultural tour takes on a distinctly Spanish flavor in San Juan, Puerto Rico, rich in Spanish colonial architecture.

Bonnie and I have done various Mediterranean cruises before, including the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, and one that cruised into the Panama Canal. We have never been disappointed. Many different carriers operate in the Caribbean throughout the year, but December through March present welcome opportunities to escape from winter latitudes into the tropics. ***If interested in the Norwegian cruise, contact Bruce at his e-mail above for more info.***

We also still have an open suggestion from **Werner Koslowski** (Computing, Orlando and FEW; Geodetic Technician (Gravity), and Geodesist, Data Reduction at FEW, 1967-91; DMA, St Louis, 1991-97, Det 4 Patrick AFB, 1997-2003) to have an off-year reunion in 2019 in Orlando on the occasion of the Squadron's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The 1381<sup>st</sup> Geodetic Survey Squadron (Missile) was established on 1 July 1959 in Orlando. In the several times that I have asked, including last month, I have received only about 30 responses in favor of it and none against. A few of those yeas were "iffy" responses, and most of those replying yes said **only if** politics is left out of it. (Werner had originally suggested inviting political speakers.) I have not heard back from Werner lately, so not sure if he is still motivated, but if so, I will happily turn it over to him, if he is still game to do it.

This is my last time on this topic in 2018. Early next year I will bring it up again to see if there is any added interest and to try to narrow down an agreeable timeframe. Werner will decide whether to pursue it any further at that time.

#### **GSS/GSG Commemorative Coins and Pendants:**

There are still plenty of coins of design A,B and D available, but I am sold out of C. The only pendants left are for coin D. All previous orders have now been mailed. (Sorry for the delay, if you ordered while I was on the road.)

If you are still interested in getting a coin or pendant, I'm asking you to hold off ordering until after I have returned from California in mid-November. I will repeat the how-to-order info in the November newsletter. A coin or pendant might make a nice holiday present for yourself or your loved ones. Depending on demand, I can reorder more pendants and coins for designs A, B and C early next year, and if you missed out on the original sold-out coin offered in 2015--1381st Geodetic Survey Squadron (Missile)—I can reorder that one too.

#### **Gains, Updates and Losses:**

There are no new names to add this time.

Two veterans updated their e-mail addresses, **Dave MacCloud** and **Richard Jones**.

We have, regrettably, sad news to relay about two losses to our GSS/GSG veteran community, both of them reported by **Ray Allen** III (numerous GSS/GSG assignments, 1978-93) with an assist from **Mary Wilson** (no info on file).

Garrett;

Two things for you:

I was looking around in the GSS web page and noticed that **Sam Bangaoil's** info was not on the deceased page (nor was it in the member listing)...here is his obituary:

I do not have access to my files right now to get you a picture of Sam and his wife Teresa but he was a very well liked and respected member of GSS both as a military member (FEW ( Vandenberg) and as a civilian (Vandenberg). He was in the class after mine at Ft Belvoir in 1978...

Secondly, my daughter, Jamie, is in David Marcum's class at Laramie County Community College...by her account, he was very excited to learn that I was a member of the GSS and I recently received an e-mail from him. Interestingly small world we live in.

Passing along more sad news that I meant to include in the 1st e-mail... **Lynn Hay** recently passed away...**Mary Wilson** let me know last week. Here is her obituary:

[Mary Lynn \(Stang\) Hay - View Obituary & Service Information](#)

Text of Mary's e-mail follows:

On Wed, Oct 3, 2018 at 10:41, Mary E. Wilson

<[wilsonmet@hotmail.com](mailto:wilsonmet@hotmail.com)> wrote:

Hi Ray,

I'm not sure if you remember Lynn Hay but wanted to let you know that she passed away last Friday from cancer. You are still in touch with folks that may have known her so thought you might want to let others know. But, it was Lynn's express wish that nothing get posted on social media.

You can give my email address to anyone who wants more info. Lynn's obituary hasn't been published yet but I haven't checked yet today. Her service will be in Fort Collins, CO on Saturday the 13th.

Sorry to forward sad news.

Mary

Thanks, Ray.

May Sam & Lynn both rest in peace...

**Dick Winslow**, our Webmaster, will add Sam's and Lynn's names to our online list of deceased veterans and also update the changes in e-mail address for Richard and Dave.

**Messages from the Field:**

**Bev Millians** provided an update on her ailing husband, **Bob Millians** (Survey, numerous locations, 1963-83), who is now in hospice care.

"Hi Garry, Bob is still fighting the cancer but he is getting weaker and less able to do much for himself. Gets thinner every day. Thank you for your concern."

This message was passed on by our colleagues at NGA Alumni Association-East, but pertains mostly to residents in the DC area:

We thank our loyal member, Dr. Jeff Kretsch, for this information on an interesting outing.

From: "Jeffrey Kretsch" <[jkretsch@verizon.net](mailto:jkretsch@verizon.net)>  
Date: September 14, 2018 at 9:33:40 AM EDT  
Subject: Friday Night Public Viewings

For those of our members interested in an activity for their grandchildren as well as themselves, there are free telescope viewings on clear Friday Nights at the Turner Farm in Great Falls, VA located at [925 Springvale Road](#). Over the next few months excellent viewing is possible for Mars, Saturn and Jupiter as well as deep sky objects like star clusters and galaxies. More information can be found at [www.analemma.org](http://www.analemma.org)

Jeff

The Turner Farm is the former Nike Missile site in Herndon, VA, later occupied by DMAHTC staff, who tracked satellites and maintained geodetic equipment (gravity meters, chronometers, electronic distance meters, etc.). Fairfax County, Virginia, bought the property, and with the help of donors has turned the site into a place for amateur astronomers, complete with telescopes, binoculars and related equipment.

**Boe Borchardt**, well known to many in GSS/GSG, although not a veteran of the unit, sent this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OlzpHRTqglo>

Not sure if you [have] seen this video. One of the CEVG troops posted it on their site. It may bring back some memories. I hope you enjoy. Of course 9 days on a Laos mountain top by yourself is not an enjoyable memory. No TV and computer. Did you spitshine your boots everyday?

Boe

CEVG refers to the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Evaluation Group, a unit to which many of our geodetic surveyors and geodetic computers were assigned and saw lots of duty in Vietnam. The video link above depicts the then top-secret radar site at LS-85 in Laos, which was overrun by the North Vietnamese, resulting in the largest single ground combat loss of United States Air Force members during the Vietnam War.

Here's another one that shows the actual facilities on top of LS-85 and the North Vietnamese Army's attack plan. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wgw4QRayRSE>

**Ben Billings** and **Larry Hootman**, two of our own GSS veterans (now deceased) spent a couple of weeks at LS-85 doing an astronomic position (T4) and astronomic azimuth shot (T3) in late 1967 under very challenging conditions. I was personally involved in a 1968 survey in Thailand with several colleagues from GSS to reposition a Skyspot radar from Vietnam to Mukdahan right across the Mekong River from Savannakhet, Laos. You can read the story of Ben & Larry and me and my crew, including the 1370th Photo-Mapping wing's HIRAN support for LS-85 at this link:

[http://geodeticsurvey.mysite.com/Documents/Moore/Photomapping\\_support\\_of\\_SkySpot.pdf](http://geodeticsurvey.mysite.com/Documents/Moore/Photomapping_support_of_SkySpot.pdf)

**Troy Carpenter** (Survey, FEW & Det 1, 1982-85) sent this interesting video link about an early aerial mapping mission in the Pacific.

An interesting story I had not heard before.

[Flight of Old 666 - amazing mapping mission in the Pacific.](#)

Click on the link below:

***[The Flight of Old 666](#)***

A number of folks commented on my reflections on our road trip of more than five weeks. This one from **Ron Lecki** was typical:

Garry, I read this in its entirety and was most impressed with your personal reflections.

Many blessings to you and yours and I could not help but mentally share in your 8000 mile adventure. Memories were brought back as Judy and I visited so many of those same locations when we spent time on the road from 1990 until 2014. Unfortunately, health issues have prevented any appreciable travel for the past four years, but I can boast that I visited the Grand Canyon twenty-one times....so who needs twenty-two...



( answer: I do...Ha ). Life is good.

Ron

Thanks to everyone who also sent in their comments!

### **Final Notes:**

We are steadily losing the extra daylight of summer months, so it's getting dark much earlier than just a few weeks ago. Soon it will be time to "fall back" and return to standard time from daylight saving time. Meanwhile, watch out for school kids in the early morning and evening hours and little trick-or-treaters on Halloween!

If you are on Facebook, I invite you to “friend” me there. Find me at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=10000934200983>

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*