

Report to the Membership (cont.)

Secretary Robert Moore then made the Membership report. At this time we have 3,622 members in the computer. Of these members 580 dues paying members are shown as Active (but not necessarily current in dues), 1,783 are shown as Life Members, and 1,259 are shown as Inactive (unknown).

Only 15 Active dues paying members are presently shown as current. At this time we are mailing newsletters to 15 current dues paying members, 1,783 Life Members, 312 wives of deceased Life Members and 38 who made donations to the Association. Total newsletters currently being mailed out – 2,148.

A report was then made on the Museum of Aviation, Warner-Robins, GA, by Associate Museum Director Dudley Bluhm. Mr. Bluhm reported the approval has been received to proceed with the construction of a new building for the Museum. This new building will house a World War II display. One of the features displayed will be the CBI exhibit. That will include bringing the C-46 and C-47, now on open display, inside the building and out of the weather.

At this point a presentation of a bust of the late Lt. Col. Darwin Edwards, a highly decorated veteran of the Vietnam conflict, was made to the Museum by benefactors HPA member Dudley Whitman and his wife Phyliss. Dudley read the inscription on the sculpture for the benefit of the membership. Col. Edwards had been with The Museum for 14 years prior to his death and had served most of that time as the Museum's First Curator. He was very well known to HPAers who attend reunions. The bust was completed by sculptor Robert Henderson who did the bronzed C-46 sculpture now located at the U. S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO. The bust was accepted on behalf of the Museum of Aviation by Mr. Bluhm who thanked the Whitmans for their contribution. (NOTE: the bust was placed on display in the Museum area for the rest of the day. The dedication of the bust at the Museum of Aviation is scheduled for December 7, 2004.)

Under New Business President Vinyard told the members about a planned celebration to be held by the Chinese in China next year in recognition of the 60th Anniversary of the end of hostilities between China and Japan on August 15, 1945. A special representative of the Beijing Aviators Association (BAA), one of the primary sponsors of this event, Mr. Ross Lui was then introduced. Mr. Lui read a letter from the President of the BAA which contained an invitation for members of the HPA to go to China and attend this celebration in August of next year. He also asked members to contribute memorabilia for display during this celebration. All memorabilia used will be returned following the celebration. The letter also made reference to a banner which was to be presented to the HPA at the time of the reading of this letter honoring the Hump operation. Unfortunately the banner had not yet been located at the time of the meeting. (NOTE: the banner was later found and shipped to the Amarillo HPA office where it is now on display.)

Nick Hudson was then introduced for a report on the Denver reunion. Mr. Hudson has been working with the HPA on reunion planning for around 14 years. He reported the reunion was better attended than had been expected. Around 350 people were expected to be served at tonight's banquet. Ten different tours had been planned and most of them were full.

Golf Chairman Bill Kelso was then called forward to report on the results of the reunion golf tournament. He read the winners of the various categories of competition. He reported the big winners were Hugh Killingsworth, low gross, and Craig Comontofski (son of Gene), low net. Chairman Bill Kelso was second low gross and Druce Henn was second low net.

At this point President Vinyard issued a "how goes it" call and opened the floor to questions or comments. First up was Past President Les Herbert who asked if it was not possible to provide some compensation to Jay and Sally Vinyard who have been operating the HPA office in Amarillo since May 2003 on a voluntary basis. Les stated that funds for this are available primarily as a result of savings to the Association due to the way the office is now being operated. He said if no compensation was paid the excess funds would just have to be given away. Why not use some of them for this purpose. Board Member Al Gardner asked to answer this suggestion. He stated this had been discussed in the Wednesday Board meeting and that Jay and Sally prefer to continue in a voluntary status for the present time. He gave the membership assurance that the Board is planning to take care of this matter.