



Sound Off!

Association of Military Musicians

Website: www.milmusicians.com

2021/2022 Officers

- Karen Mayfield—President
- Judy Kessler—Vice President
- Walter Nail—Treasurer
- Tom Zale—Secretary

Serving AMM:

- Allen Lawless—Jackson, TN Reunion Host for 2022
- Rickey Lumpkin—Chaplain
- Dave and Kay Smith—Librarian
- Walt Nail—Historian
- Toni Furan —
Sound Off! Editor



SAVE THE DATE (2022 REUNION)

At the 2021 Reunion in Augusta, GA, the attending members voted to have the 2022 reunion in Jackson, Tennessee.

The dates are Thursday through Sunday, September 15-18, 2022.

Location as of now – The Doubletree Hotel, 1770 Hwy 45 Bypass, Jackson, TN 38305. I say "location as of now" because we still do not have a negotiated contract with the hotel. We have a verbal agreement at this time, but not a formal contract. I will be working to finalize this before the end of the year. We ran into a snag following the Augusta reunion when the sales manager of the Doubletree had a sudden and unexpected death in her family, which created a gap in business dealings.

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The anticipated registration cost is \$75 per person.

Room costs, as verbally quoted, are \$89 per night (King or Double) without breakfast; \$100 (King or Double) with breakfast. Two-room suites are available (\$139 with breakfast). State and local taxes are 7.6% and 4.0%, respectively. Those are not factored into the room price. Example – A room with a King bed would go for \$89 + 11.6% - \$99.32 per night. There is an in-hotel restaurant called the Twist Midtown Grill & Bar.

We anticipate a traditional steam table banquet with two entrée choices. During the banquet, we've secured the services of a solo piano and the dance portion will feature a small ensemble called "Holy Smokes." Holy Smokes has invited any and all to sit in and play and their set and song list is long and varied.

Jackson is located within Madison County and is the county seat with about 68,000 residents. Jackson has several universities – Union University, Franklin University, Lane College, and a few others. The sheer amount of retail establishments, especially north of I-40, is impressive. There is no shortage of restaurants and bars.

Jackson also offers a number of museums, including the Rockabilly Hall of Fame (Carl Perkins lived in Jackson until his death in 1998), the Casey Jones railroad engineer legend Home and Museum, and if you're into TV and movie cars, Rusty's TV and Movie Car Museum.

The Augusta reunion featured an AMM first – a performance in public representing ourselves, with a few local musicians augmenting AMM. The business meeting revealed an interest in continuing this activity, so we are exploring that possibility. There is a community concert band in the area which we've already contacted, and the West Tennessee State Fair is scheduled during that particular weekend. Mike Herrmann has contacted a rep for the State Fair, so we'll see how that shakes out. For those who continue to play, please stay tuned. We will attempt to set something up, but there are no promises at this time.

As usual, all of the above is subject to change. We will adhere to these arrangements as much as possible, but without a written contract at the moment, these are anticipated costs. We should have more definitive information in the next newsletter.

Allen Lawless, 2022 Reunion Host

Treasurer's Report

I accepted the duties of Treasurer at the reunion in Augusta in September 2021 and will do my best to serve the Association in the best way I know possible.

I was given a check for the balance of our checking account plus checks/cash for payment of several dues, plus \$120.00 excess funds from the 2021 reunion host. I opened an account on the 21st of September for that total amount. That amount I will share with members at the next business meeting. Dave Ratliff has accepted the responsibility of being on the signature card in case anything happens to me.

Because of the COVID virus, dues for those who were up to date in 2020 was suspended until 2022. This means that, including those who paid at the 2021 reunion, everyone (except lifetime members of course) must pay dues in 2022 (for the period September 2022-2023). If you have not paid your dues for 2022 before or at the 2022 reunion, you will no longer receive the newsletter after September 2022.

I encourage everyone to send their dues (\$15) to me before the reunion to keep from waiting in line to do so at the reunion. Any check received by me before the reunion will show dues paid up until 2023. They can be sent to:

Walter Nail
4635 Brittany Dr.
Evans, GA 30809



Make check or money order payable to AMM or Association of Military Musicians.

Walt Nail
AMM Treasurer

President's Report

Our 35th reunion was one to remember even if it was a year late due to COVID!

We started with dinner at a German restaurant with musicians who were stationed together in Germany a few years ago. They treated us to a wonderful time talking about some of their performances and the building they were in, including ghost stories they swear were true. Who am I to say they weren't but I would not want to be the supply person in that building!

We had our normal annual rehearsal but this time the group performed for the first time as an organization at a local festival, The Heart of August Festival. The people who performed did an awesome job and had the audience clapping along. Many in the audience were impressed and thankful for us being there. Something that will never leave us is our love of music!!

Karen Mayfield
AMM President



Editor's Greeting

Greetings fellow AMM members! That you're reading this newsletter at all is somewhat of a miracle...it's a bit rough but I'm learning.

I attended the 35th AMM Reunion in September as a former member of the 298th Army Band in Berlin, Germany. The 298th 'piggybacked' on the AMM Reunion. The entire weekend was a huge success and I thoroughly enjoyed reminiscing with other members of the 298th and meeting many of the other AMM members. I share your love of military music and treasure our shared experiences.

My mission as the newsletter editor is to put together content that you need and want. This is YOUR newsletter. I welcome your ideas and contributions ~ please send them to me at:

tfuran@att.net

Toni Furan

AMM Newsletter Editor

News from the VP



AMM has some funds they would like to donate to groups and/or organizations. There really have been no guidelines set as to what type of group we will donate funds to. School band programs, community bands, arts organizations are some of the types of groups to which we've given in the past. We have a committee in place to choose worthy groups with who to share our funds.

If you are a dues paying member and would like to make a suggestion as to where we might donate, please send an email to me. Please include:

- Name of group
- Why they need our support
- How many people will benefit from the support
- Contact info for the group
- How the funds will be utilized

Judy Kessler

VP, AMM

Email: Judy Kessler



The gang's all here! Group photo of the AMM Reunion Dinner attendees!

Reunion Recap



298th Army Band Alumni Make Music at the 2021 AMM Reunion in Augusta, GA

For many of the alumni from the 298th Army Band (Berlin Brigade), this was a first to attend an Army Band reunion and the reactions from so many were very positive. It was quite a feat to have 20 former members commit to attending during a pandemic! The highlights of the reunion were being able to play together for the opening ceremonies of the Arts City Fest in Augusta and seeing friends from perhaps 40 years ago. There was a lot of catching up to do and reminiscing about our shared experiences. It was fabulous. The other SPECIAL part about this reunion was having our old commanders back to conduct us. Chief Dave Ratliff and Chief Danny Jaynes were there and once again we were under their baton. What a treat! We have much gratitude that each of you were willing to rehearse us and prepare music for this event. Playing *Berliner Luft* can take one back to Berlin just like that. It was so enjoyable to pepper our program with German pieces we played so often when stationed there.

It was important to have the FLAVOR of a German experience like we had experienced in Berlin, and we were able to all meet at Villa Europa for a German meal and some German beer too. We had such fun looking at old pictures from our time being stationed in Berlin and got a chance to hear German music and sing a few tunes from the beer tent gigs. Funny how not one of us forgot the words to: *Ein Prosit..ein Prosit....* A big thank you to Jeff Gottwig for putting together the slide show!

Alan Lawless was also so gracious to share with us the history of the 298th from his book: 298th Army Band: A History. Many people purchased that book to take home as a treasure. We have a long legacy to be proud of as former members of the 298th Army Band and even though the 298th was deactivated in September of 1994, the music and legacy lives on in all of the alumni who attended the reunion. We would like to thank Walter Nail for his willingness to help us be a part of the reunion and make some exceptions to enhance the experience. Also a big thanks goes out to Wayne Hoey for making it possible for us to do our mission of music at the reunion!

Dave Ratliff and Danny Jaynes had a few reflections regarding the reunion:

“What a terrific reunion in Augusta! First, a major shout-out to Walt Nail for organizing and hosting the event for 2020 (cancelled) and 2021. A second shout-out to Wayne Hoey for getting us the performance venue. For the first time in AMM history we performed for an audience! Every previous reunion we "performed" for whoever walked into the rehearsal area. The band survived a 2+ hour rehearsal and sorting music from three sources. The performance on Friday night was superb. The audience thoroughly enjoyed our music featuring American Marches and Patriotic songs along with several German tunes to recognize the members of the 298th Army Band and the other players who served in other bands in Germany. Thanks to Danny Jaynes and Rob Kessler for serving as conductors (Rob also played - unfortunately he plays sax!) The 298th spouses had a chance to talk and relive memories of Berlin. This was one of the best attended reunions in several years. Let's make Jackson, TN bigger and better!!”

Dave Ratliff

“Thanks to Cheryl and Jeff for making this reunion possible. What a privilege it was to attend the 298th AB reunion in conjunction with AMM in Augusta, GA. Seeing the many fine musicians who served with us in Berlin and hearing them perform was a such a reminder of the great performances we did in Berlin. It was a special and "Unique" assignment that contributed to several marriages which were represented at our reunion. It was great to conduct these outstanding musicians once again. Attending the dinner at the Germany Restaurant reminded us of the excellent food and German customs we learned to love and enjoy. Hope to see the 298th members again at the AMM meeting next September in Jackson, TN. Thanks to everyone for an excellent reunion.”

Love to all, Danny & Mary Jaynes



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AN OLD BOTTLE OF SCOTCH.....

Some of you may not know this, but Dave Smith (trumpet) brought an old bottle of scotch he had bought at the Class VI in Berlin and had saved it all of these years for a special occasion. This bottle had been confiscated after the Allies came in and took over. They found a lot of Nazi alcohol stashes and these bottles were saved and authorized for sale several times a year to the Allied Forces. Well, about 8 of us tried it out and that bottle reminded us of mission we were given while being stationed in West Berlin. The Infantry was there to deter Soviet aggression, counter wide-spread civil unrest, and defend the city from a Soviet threat. Somehow, the history of that bottle and the burn of it going down, made us all realize we were part of a significant chapter in the history of the Cold War and defending such a vibrant city. We inspired, entertained and educated many audiences and Soldiers over the years. We made a difference! We made a difference in Augusta, GA too!

Cheryl Wason (Sax 1976-77)

Top Photo: German Restaurant get together for the 298th!

Bottom Photo: 298th Army Band members after playing with the AMM Band at the Heart of Augusta Festival.



Pictured: 1st Row seated: Victor Rios, Cheryl Wason, Jeff Gottwig 2nd Row seated: Toni Furan, Greg Sackreiter, Kay Larson Smith, Back row standing: Mike Hermann, Allen Lawless, Robert Brinkofski, Sam Smith, Laurie Searle, Joe Hessman, Stan Jewel, Danny Janes, Paul McKenzie, Dave Smith, Dave Ratliff



Pictured left to right: Paul McKenzie, Joe Hessman, Sam Smith, Greg Sackreiter, Jeff Gottwig, Danny Jaynes, Cheryl Wason, Laurie Searle and Vic Rios.

Photos from the 2021 AMM Reunion in Augusta, Georgia



Association of Military Musicians

AMM's Mission

The Association of Military Musicians is a fraternal organization that strives to preserve the proud tradition of military music. Military musical ensembles don't just play marches and ceremonial music—today's audience demands much more than that, and with panache to boot!

Membership is open to any and all who have served in a military musical organization, whether a band, orchestra, fife & drum corps, or a vocal group.

Toni Furan, Editor
827 E. Mifflin St.
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