Section Three The Mature Military Years

This group of photos begins with Desert Storm and continues with an overview of a very rewarding military career

What a career!! The need for speed, the education and opportunities that only travel and hands on experience can provide. There it was and Mike had it all retained in that steel-trap mind of his. This was the kind of career dreams are made from. From the time he was very young he would have an instant recall whenever anyone would speak about places of interest or if his text books were not as accurate as being there in person, or maybe a news reel or movie would trigger a memory.

He traveled extensively and was proud to have friends around the world. During Dessert Storm his crew was assigned to General Schwarzkopf, an impressive assignment. For the families it was good as we would watch the televised news and know immediately they were safe and at times we would know where they were. For the crew, they felt as though the plane was flying with a bull's eye painted on the side.

The Awards and Decorations continued to multiply and made us proud. He was proud too but it didn't show. When home visiting he was just one of the guys, unpretentious and down to earth. Partly that was because most folks would be clueless anyway unless they were of such a military mind. He would comment about being pleased to bump into someone he would know but how it was often times difficult to explain what he was doing in the Air Force as most civilian friends grew up and stayed at home so to speak, and really didn't understand his position. Time stood still for the majority and the more things changed the more they remained the same. He didn't care, he was on a mission, the pursuit of happiness.

As this career was nearing an end he was making solid plans for another career and had all the foundations solidly in place for a bright future. The fact your parents are business people in a growth community isn't a bad thing. We were all good to go and grow.

When ordered back to Saudi he told us not to worry, 'been there, done that' and other than being bored he had no problem with the assignment, in fact he would say, 'no sweat, I can do that standing on my head." Meaning, the next 3 years would fly by.





MANY SUCCESSFUL DIPLOMATIC MEETINGS BROUGHT THIS WAR TO A QUICK ENDING



Dear Troops,

You are our sons and daughters, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, grandchildren - family - friends. You are our future and our past.

Everything worthwhile in life is said to have a price. With each privilege comes a responsibility. How well we know that and how we prayed that you would not be made to pay for our privileges.

We hope you felt our love and not our fear, our pride and not our anxiety. Mentally, we spent our days with you in the sand; physically, we went through the motions of normality - if you could call our daily patterns "normal". Our days and nights centered around reports from the Gulf. We became "news junkies" who resented having to leave our information centers because we might miss something.

Your efforts gave us as much as you gave to Kuwait. You gave us new friends. You gave us back our pride. You gave us a reason to wear our colors. You made us discover hidden strengths. Most of all, you gave us yourselves.

Thank you.

Flagler County Desert Storm Support Group



"with warm personal regards"



Par Soldier I hopthatevery our ofyou git home saitlestoo yure familes Elivingpangle Iliketowok on Spangle crick frame Larry

Sample letters were sent to the desert by a second grade class.

Dear Solder How are you, I am hopeing that you will come to your home Mr. be has been taling us a baout you like Have been doing loved of suf. we are statening ring your friend

Dear Soldier Jon. 23199 How are you dewing? are you a ground troop or a pidit? Osman do you no himp My favorite mourse is top Bun. Your Friend Ryan Vantine



AND THEN I THINK OF THOSE I LOVE AND WHO LOVE ME





Farewell, Saudi Arabia Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of U.S. and coalition forces in the Persian Gulf, waves goodbye before boarding his plane in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Saturday. The general returns today to MacDill Air Force Base near Tampa. Story, **Page 10A**.

With mixed feelings They bid farewell to The Bear



Oil wells burning!

*************** WELCOME HOME COMMITTEE 6 Commerce Boulevard Palm Coast - FL 32137 Torrensco 0 au ~ Caribbea america ritage Organizati 55 (AACHO 0 100 -1 QOUNTS



COMMANDER IN CHIEF UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND OPERATION DESERT STORM, APO NY 09852

8 April 1991

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Heiser,

I want to express my sincere thanks for your letter voicing support for our valiant troops. The tremendous outpouring of encouragement by the American people has been the foundation and driving force behind our success in both Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm.

You and thousands like you have provided us the strength and determination to liberate Kuwait and fulfill the United Nations Resolutions. It is because of this visible demonstration of concern for your son and all our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and coastguardsmen that we in the military are proud to be serving our country and its citizens.

Again, thank you as we look forward to the day when your son and our last servicemember returns safely to the shores of our great nation.

Sincerely,

NORMAN SCHWARZE General, U.S. Army

Fran & Gary Heiser 39 Old Kings Rd N Palm Coast, FL 32137 The short war was over and the nation united in celebrations around the country. Flagler County welcomes home this county's last returning warveteran.





A memorable holiday in Europe. Olympic Stadium in Innsbrook, Austria

Fran & Mike George & Jackie Bushey



Aunt Jean is trying to communicate with a Mime in downtown Munich. Looks like someone is speechless. Not Jean!





Where's the imbis stand?



From-Admiring the beautiful Frescos in the Monastery of Ettal To- enjoying a herd of sheep. Might as



well stop and watch, you can't cross the road anyway



Gary waits by Weinstube in Oberammergau in Bavaria

Group of tourists enjoying a meal at the Horney Gasthaus





Tom Heiser and Michelle and Shawn were stationed in Italy at the time of our European visit so they joined us in Germany and a good time was had by all.



Home base was the Ramstein Hotel.

Vacation is almost over, but first a visit to Mike's bachelor pad in Ramstein, Germany.



Looks like reading is A popular past time





Heiser Hotel was built in 1992. We will always remember Mike's first visit home. He had seen several videos and photos during construction but it's not the same as the real thing.



He had lived overseas in a small flat in England and a cute little German apartment which all had low ceilings and a closed floor plan. The openness was noticeable immediately. In Florida the open plan and high ceilings are a norm but for a first impression, he looked up and looked around and then asked if we issue plat maps to find your way? It's just one of those things, you had to be there.



This was a creation and dream come true. Fun watching it evolve from a pile of dirt into a lovely new home





Note the signature on the dollar bill. This was personalized by Sec of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen and one was given to each crew member after a trip.



FRIENDS IN RUSSIA BY McDONALD'S AND BY PLANE WITH RUSSIAN INTERPRETOR



MIKE WITH BEST FRIENDS IN GERMAN APARTMENT WITH ANGIE CASPARI AND WITH ROB WITT



Flying around the world with dignitaries became a major part of the job, interesting and demanding but very rewarding at the same time. Bob Dole is better known but Sharyl is better looking.

71





SHARYL ATTKISSON



Show me the money, Honey





HAPPY NEW YEAR, ENJOYED BY CREW AND SPECIAL GUESTS THE POINTER SISTERS





THEY EXCHANGED GIFTS AND SMILES







TWO BIG SUPPORTERS OF THE TROOPS





Biking is a great exercise and to ride around a 125 mile lake is quite an accomplishment, especially 3 times during different years. Above is the American Bike Team with Ralf Caspari, Mike's German landlord and friend, all wearing our familiar Red, White and Blue.



Above we see the crew ordering their prayer rugs and magic carpets while below they are designing mosaic tables to bring home from India. International shopping is an experience.



The crew kept busy taking photos and shopping and making Memories.





AIR CREW TAKING MUD BATHS. THIS IS HEALTHY?????

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

September 23, 1994

MSgt Mike Heiser 76th Airlift Squadron 86 LG/CD Unit 3225 APO, AE 09094

Dear Master Sergeant Heiser:

Thank you so much for all of your help during my trip to Ramstein Air Force Base. Your efforts contributed significantly to the success of my visit.

Sincerely,

7 Sin Clinton

Palm Coast man meets president

PALM COAST — During President Bill Clinton's European visit July 11, he stopped at Ramstein Air Base, Kaiserslautern, Germany, to speak to military people stationed there.

That's where Master Sgt. Mike Heiser of Palm Coast is stationed as an airborne radio operator on Gulfstream airplanes.

He was home recently visiting his parents, Fran and Gary Heiser, his aunt and uncle, Michelle and Tom Heiser, great-aunt Jean Munoz and grandparents Marie and John Sullivan.

Heiser was one of the primary people selected to work with the Secret Service, White House Communications Agency, White House Press Corps and other government agencies. He received an Air Force Achievement Medal July 15 for his involvement in the success of the secret



FYI- MIKE IS THE ONE ON THE RIGHT



Another fun memory was the day these orders were cut, Mike called Heiser Realty to give 'referral' information which he so often would do, but this time he took great delight in telling all about this young single airman who would like to buy a home at his new home base. At the end of the want list, you could hear the smile in his voice as he said, 'let me give you his name.' The rest is history!

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Holiday Letter 1995



When Holidays were Fun Days!

Feel Great. Pop By With A Gift.

HOLIDAY NOTES FROM FRAN AND GARY

It's that time of year again and it seems like it was only yesterday---

This year for us has been pretty much routine, lots of work, a couple cruises, more work, and here we are. Our newest business venture opened in June, it's the **Coast Title Insurance Agency** and it is supported by and compliments our real estate business.

We feel very fortunate to have been visited by so many good friends during this last year. It must be the military ties that bind! It's great to pick up where we left off so many years ago and see how none of us has changed a bit. Look in the mirror, don't you agree?

Mike will soon be facing some major changes in his career life. After being stationed in Europe for more than 9 years, he will be reporting to **Patrick Air Force Base** in January, only two hours from home. He's also taking with him the title of USAFE Enlisted Aircrew Member of the Year 1994 for all of Europe. Needless to say we're proud parents.

The **Daisy dog** took about 5 minutes to adjust to her new home. She is gaining a little weight, now 12#, must be a Heiser tradition., she's a cutie.

Every year we try to take some time off, like long weekends and a few days here and there and then the real vacations twice a year. We did an anniversary fly/cruise to the Southern Carribean on **Costa Lines** but nicknamed it the Pasta Lines.

In Oct we attended a Coldwell Banker mini conference for brokers and managers. Nice trip to Lake Lanier in Georgia. Took the scenic route and saw the leaves turning to Autuum colors. Nice change after living with flat land and palm trees.

Now it's the hustle bustle of holiday madness. Each year we say we will cut back but it doesn't seem to work that way. Gary is running **Toys for Tots** for the 7th year. Good it's only once a year, right?

It's time to make some serious plans for 1996 trip to Alaska. Several of you have asked if we have finalized plans. The answer is Yes, it is a really good itinery with Cunard Lines, peak season, June 21. There will be a menu of choices for anyone interested in joining us or meeting in Anchorage. This is booking really fast so if you want more information let me know and we'll get it right out to you. Our E-Mail address is gheiser444@aol.com or cbheiser @njcenter.com.

We want to wish you all a terrific 1996. Stay well and stay in touch.

As always,



Three Heisers Having fun

Mike, Tom Gary



These prestigious awards only go to the top few in each class. Mike was used to excelling and took it all in stride, just hung them in his home office in Fl and that was the first time we had even known about this achievement. It wasn't until later that Rob Witt shared how he attended the ceremony and was proud for his friend who keptbeing called up to the stage to accept more awards.



NEW YEARS EVE (95-96)WITH FRIENDS GEORGE AND JACKIE BUSHEY WHO EVER COULD HAVE KNOWN THIS WOULD BE THE LAST?



Looking forward to beginning a new job at Patrick AFB. Search and Rescue would not be the plushy assignment of flying dignitaries from Ramstein, but the base was on American soil, in Florida and HOME.





When sent home with plans to retire, it is sometimes referred to as a 'terminal assignment'. At the time it meant the end of a military career but now the choice of words has a much different meaning.

Especially when the squadron motto is That Others May Live



THE AMERICAN DREAM TO IS YOUR OWN HOME, AND HE DID-FIRST REAL ESTATE PURCHASE WAS A SMALL CONDO IN SOUTH DAKOTA THEN HE PURCHASED A LITTLE BRICK 'FLAT' IN RED LODGE, ENGLAND WHERE HE CALLED HOME WHILE STATIONED THERE FOR THREE YEARS, THEN HE CALLED IT A WRITE OFF WHILE IT WAS RENTED FOR 7 MORE YEARS UNTIL HE DIED. HIS DREAM HOME WAS PURCHASED AFTER THE RAMSTEIN TOUR. HE WANTED ROOTS IN FLORIDA AND THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN THE WEEK HE MOVED IN.MOVE WAS EXHAUSTING BUT THEY WERE PROUD MOMENTS!



Let's Party. Celebrate the home coming and the home buying! What could be better than this?



Looks like, Hi Mom, I'm Home

STILL UNPACKING SO MANY BOXES OF 'STUFF' - SPECIAL ITEMS FROM ALL AROUND THE WORLD SOON GAVE THIS NICE HOUSE A WARM AND HOMEY FEELING. THESE PHOTOS WERE TAKEN THE WEEKEND HE MOVED IN. BEING LOCATED SO CLOSE TO PALM COAST WOULD MAKE IT EASY FOR US TOVISIT FREQUENTLY.



Not only is it out of sequence, it is too big to copy but this was another of the many special awards that Mike earned while serving in Ramstein, Germany.

FAMILY,

TOGETHER AGAIN.



AIR CREW MEMBER OF THE YEAR IS A LOT MORE THAN AN 'ATTA BOY'



Since we are out of sync anyway, the pictures on the left were taken in Mike's first condo. He was a proud homeowner at age 23. Nothing real exciting but a good starter home and a home base off base, **Ellsworth**, South Dakota.

This was one of those forever. We spent a

days that you hang on to nice productive day

adding a few mom touches to his home and sharing dinner that he and his friend cooked on a new grill and then we kicked back and talked about

everything and anything including the trip to Dhahran. Mike's only interest was to get this behind him and have some time to enjoy the new house. We planned to be able to run up and down Interstate 95 for regular visits. We talked about watching a launch together at the Cape when he came home.



After all these years, we were soon going to be a family again where visits were frequent, and holidays would have meaning. We even planned to take a family cruise as all the flying time never allowed for cruising time and we were all excited about our cruise to Alaska that was to depart on June 23. For the moment, Life was Good.

That was a perfect day. We drove home later that evening feeling satisfied that everything would soon be normal, like our friends kind of normal, get togethers, kids, and family fun. We reminisced about the past and planned for the future.

If I Knew ...

If I knew that it would be the last time that I'd see you fall asleep, I would tuck you in more tightly and pray the Lord your soul to keep.

If I knew that it would be the last time that I see you walk out the door, I would give you a hug and kiss and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise, I would videotape each action and word, so I could play them back day after day.

If I knew it would be the last time, I could spare an extra minute or two, To stop and say that "I love you," instead of assuming that you KNOW I do.

If I knew it would be the last time I would be there to share your day, Well, I'm sure you'll have so many more, so I can let this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow to make up for an oversight, And we always get a second chance to make everything all right.

There will always be another day to say our "I love you's," And certainly there's another chance to say our "Anything I can do's."

But just in case I might be wrong, and today is all I get, I'd like to say how much I love you and hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike, And today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one tight.

So, if you're waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today? For if tomorrow never comes, you'll surely regret the day.

That you didn't take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss, And you were too busy to grant someone what turned out to be their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today, whisper in their ear, Tell them how much you love them, and that you'll always hold them dear.

Take the time to say "I'm sorry," "Please forgive me," "Thank you," or "It's ok." And if tomorrow never comes, you'll have no regrets about today.

MIKE HEISER, AGE 35, MARRIED TO THE AIR FORCE, HIGHLY DECORATED, AND EVER SO PROUD

