



The 485th Tactical Missile Wing, as a part of the GLCM program, played an important, though relatively unknown, role in ending the Cold War. I'd like to focus on the "relatively unknown" part of that sentence.

It has been almost thirty years since the Initial Cadre first set foot on Base J. Offenberg outside a little-known Belgian town called Florennes, and set forth our part in what some historians have deemed to be the chink in the armor that brought down the Soviet Union. Nearly twenty-five years have passed since Colonel Chasteen rolled up the 485th TMW banner, marking the end of what part we played. As time passes, memories fade and the richness of the history becomes more difficult to retain.

The time has come to put our story on paper. With the Alumni Association; the very active and highly successful Facebook group; an unbroken succession of annual reunions; and this very website, our history has been and continues to be preserved. What we lack is the depth and personal perspective that the telling of individual experiences can add to our story.

It is my intention to bring together the myriad aspects of the history of the Wing. If only the official history is written down, the story will lack the human perspective. If the people who actually did the work tell it, we will have a much richer narrative. Instead of a few sentences about the austere conditions of the first winter and the details of guarding the WSA, we can have, "I darn near froze out there," says Senior Airman John Doe, from Puyallup, Washington. "It was ten below with a 20 mph wind from the southwest, but my supervisor, Master Sergeant Smith, made sure we weren't out there for too long at a time." And so on.

Together we can do this. There were approximately 5,000 Air Force members assigned to Florennes Air Base over the five years of its mission. There were many Civil Service, local civilian contractors, Army Corps of Engineers, and military dependents who had a vital part in our success, too. Each person has a story to tell, and each story enriches the whole.

A link to a basic questionnaire is provided below. If you haven't yet filled it out, please take the time to do so and send it to the email address for the book, [gryphon8489@gmail.com](mailto:gryphon8489@gmail.com). Also, let me know if you would be interested in joining a group helping to put it all together. Initial Cadre and First Wave personnel are key to the project, as are Field commanders, Security Police, LCOs, Comm, AGE, Resupply, aggressors, Chemical Decon, field chow, base support personnel from Supply, CE, Air Base Group, Chaplains, Army Corps of Engineers. If you can name it, you are needed.

Thank you!

Mike Rasmussen