

Author's Preface

The purpose of this reminiscing and perhaps a little rambling historical review is to cover the period of time roughly from the early 1960's through the mid 1970's. It also permits me to vent my wistful musings, which at times threaten to engulf my mind in waves of nostalgia. I hope this story will also serve to remember and bring to mind many individuals who are no longer with us but at one time figured prominently in AFTE history. I am sure that some readers will feel that I neglected certain people or spent too much time with certain others. This is however, my recollection, bolstered by my notes and personal files. I am also including selected input from other AFTE "old fogys" like myself. We will take a special look at the "Original AFTE 36" and where they are today. Again it is a look at that range of years that is rapidly disappearing from our memories and into the mists of time. As a poet once said: "Time dissipates into shining ether, the solid angularity of facts." This is neither a complete and certainly not a modern history of AFTE. We "old Coot's" tend to look at this period of time as the "good ole days." In many ways they were and in others they were not. With that said, on with the story.

AFTE's Birthplace

The birthplace of the Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners (AFTE) in 1969 was Chicago, Illinois. If AFTE could be said to have parents, they would surely be two great organizations. One would be the American Academy of Forensic Science (AAFS) and the other would be the Chicago Police Department. Both organizations played important and key roles in setting the stage for the later birth of AFTE.

American Academy of Forensic Sciences

In the several years immediately preceding the formation of AFTE, it was traditional for the American Academy of Forensic Sciences to hold their annual February conferences at the Drake Hotel in Chicago. Two sections of the Academy (Criminalistics and Pathology) had programs and papers that were of interest to forensic firearms people. A number of firearms people (myself included) belonged to and were members of the Criminalistics Section of the Academy. Many other non-members, who were interested forensic firearms people, attended the Academy meetings to hear some of the latest papers on forensic firearms and related matters. A dedicated group of firearms people would usually get together on their own in the evenings for further "one on one" and small group discussion. Such discussion would frequently end in the early morning hours. Walter Howe would usually make his suite at the Drake available and act as the host for those evening meetings. Walter always arranged to have a generous supply of liquid refreshments and room service snacks. It was during such evening gatherings that the idea for an organization dedicated wholly to the needs and interests of firearms and tool mark people originated. It can be said that the American Academy of Forensic Science Conferences was the mechanism that brought together at one location, interested forensic firearms people from all across the U.S. and Canada and who later gave birth to AFTE.

The Drake Hotel

The Drake Hotel in Chicago is one of the old deluxe historical hotels that first opened its doors in 1920. It is a 10 story hotel with over 500 rooms located on Michigan Avenue overlooking Lake Michigan. It had both simple and very deluxe accommodations. One of the Drake's three restaurants featured game animals and game birds on the menu. I used to joke about dining in a restaurant where one could order Pheasant under glass. Well, this was such a place. I remember my typical room in the mid 1960's (AAFS Conference rates) was one of the budget single rooms with little more than space to turn around in. Such rooms were a far cry from the accommodations that I later had in June of 1978. At that time I was a guest lecturer at Northwestern University Law School. The University had an agreement with the Drake to provide lodging for their guest lecturers. Apparently the agreement called for a room with a lakeside view. The Drake was out of such rooms when I arrived, so in order to comply with the lakeside view requirement they put me up in a suite that had such a view. It was the biggest suite I have ever seen. The suite was complete with statues, paintings and other artwork. Needless to say, I was impressed.

Chicago Police Department

The Chicago Police Department and particularly the Firearms Laboratory also played a very important and a key role in the formation of AFTE. The 1969 AFTE organizational meeting of interested forensic firearms people took place at the facilities of the Chicago Police Department. The meeting was again coincidental to the AAFS February Conference. The Chicago Police Department also later hosted the second annual conference of the newly organized AFTE organization. The Chicago Police Department Firearms Section has always served as a willing and friendly host to visiting firearms people during the AAFS conferences. For anyone interested in visiting their laboratory, there was always a friendly firearms person from the Chicago PD laboratory willing to provide transportation from the Drake Hotel and back. During the early years leading up to AFTE's birth, personnel from the Chicago Crime Laboratory served as key people at the evening get-togethers in the Drake Hotel. They have always provided an input of their experiences and perspectives that were valuable to the other members of the group.

In particular for that general time period I remember: Bob Boese, Joe Celovsky, Richard Chenow, Jim Gainer, Don Gunnell, Vince Lomoro, Burt Nielson, Art Paholke, John Sadunas, John Sojat, Don Smith, Bob Smith, John Stauffer, Reg Templin and Ernie Warner. Bob Boese who had additional expertise in Chemistry was later transferred to that section.

I looked at John Sojat and John Stauffer (who were older members of the lab.) as sort of the lab's fatherly figures. Both had distinguished themselves by earlier research and the publication of "A Study of Class Characteristics of Autoloading Weapons". (October 1958, Journal of Forensic Sciences) Both have other publications. John Stauffer is considered by many to have been the principle driving force behind the first Chicago meeting of AFTE. If any individual could be said to be the father of AFTE, it is probably John Stauffer.

Jim Gainer on the other hand was one of the "Young Turks" of the Chicago group. Jim advised me that he was usually the one sent to replenish the liquid refreshments during the evening Drake

Hotel room meetings. Walter Howe is said to have instructed him – “Here is \$20 kid and I want my change back and make sure it is a decent Scotch.” Jim recently commented to me about his – “great, great memories. I miss the guys and the satisfaction of doing firearms identification the old fashion way. And I mean the old fashion way. Bob Smith and I were the last to be trained on the monocular AO scopes used in the early days of firearms ID. After we proved ourselves on those scopes Stauffer, Sadunas and the other “old “ guys would let us use the new AO binocular scopes. Those old AO and Spencer monocular scopes would give you headaches...after about three hours using one eye trying to make ID’s on some of the .22 fired bullets they would give us as tests to see if we could make it as firearms examiners. What a great time!! ” I remember having a discussion with Jim back in 1980. According to my notes, Jim advised me that when he first came to the Chicago Crime Laboratory in 1967 their caseload was 5,400 gun cases a year. He also indicated that the size of their staff when he started was 10 examiners. In 1980 the staff was still 10 examiners but the caseload was expected to go over 20,000 that year. As a result, only limited processing of each case was possible. They no longer were able to check all incoming guns against their unsolved bullet case file without a specific request to do so.

I must admit that I have always had a special fondness for the Chicago Crime Laboratory. This fondness was both an admiration of their history as well as a respect for their staff and their work product. The department is steeped in historical romance and drama. I have enjoyed a good relationship with them over the many years of our association. It is this relationship that I am sure was responsible for my being selected by the Corporation Counsel’s Office of the City of Chicago as the outside expert and examiner in certain lawsuits brought against the City of Chicago in cases involving firearms.

Two of the most publicized and the most controversial cases were the following.

Iberia Hampton et. al. v. City of Chicago et. al.

This was a Civil litigation (1975) case for the Deaths of Black Panther leaders Fred Hampton, Mark Clark with injuries to 4 others resulting from a pre-dawn police raid on a Black Panther apartment flat on 4 December 1969. (Nine (9) people were in the apartment.) Fourteen (14) Chicago Police Officers assigned to the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office were executing a search warrant for illegal weapons. It is recorded that the police did in fact find and seize from the apartment one illegal sawed off shotgun, one stolen police weapon and some seventeen other weapons, which had not been registered. This lawsuit involved the Chicago Police Crime Laboratory, as a party defendant in the action as well as the City of Chicago. There was an allegation of a conspiracy to deprive the plaintiffs of their civil rights. The plaintiffs alleged that a misidentification of certain shotshells (same make and model gun) indicated a Crime Laboratory conspiracy. I examined the questioned evidence in behalf of the Crime Laboratory. My examinations were made using the Chicago Crime Laboratory facilities. I remember working into the evening hours and Dick Chenow assisting me with the photography of some of my comparison microscope exhibits. Don Smith also assisted me with some of the “grunt” work. At my request he was kind enough to disassemble some of the laboratory reference shotguns in order that I might photograph representative shotgun breech faces/bolts as jury exhibits. It was not my objective to dispute the misidentification but rather to show the jury that there were similarities that could result in a close question for the examiner. That this was an error not a

conspiracy. The plaintiffs retained Herbert L. MacDonell for an on scene reconstruction analysis. The suit was eventually (6/21/1977) dismissed and declared a mistrial after a jury could not reach a verdict. The dismissal climaxed an 18-month trial in U. S. District Court. I was not required to testify inasmuch as the Judge (Sam Perry) had early on dismissed the Crime Laboratory from the suit based on his finding of no evidence of conspiracy on their part. It should be noted that in this case, the firearms examiner involved in the questionable identification, John Sadunas was literally inundated with evidence the morning after the raid. The final total evidence tally in this controversy consisted of forty-six firearms with 230 bullets, fired cases, shotshell wads and pellets. As might be expected, Sadunas reported much pressure from the States Attorney's Office for an early report.

Note: Herbert L. MacDonell was an early AFTE participant. He was not at the February 1969 meeting however the Roster of Participants in AFTE Newsletter No. 1 indicates his was one of the roster sheets received by May 5, 1969. He apparently never progressed beyond the Participant stage. He did not appear on the AFTE Membership listing for 1970-1971. His initial listing indicates that he was a Deputy, Steuben Co. Sheriff's Dept., Bath, N.Y. Apparently he later submitted a new application. The AFTE Journal for April 1973 lists Herbert L. MacDonell of Corning, New York as an applicant for membership. It is noted that he appeared on the last published 1998 AFTE Roster as Provisional member No. 1622 with the Laboratory of Forensic Science, Corning, NY address. He is no longer listed in any membership capacity. If a provisional member does not apply for regular membership within the required time limit, he or she is dropped from membership.

The second case was also a case of civil litigation directed against the City of Chicago.

Curtis Jefro et al. v. City of Chicago

This case involved the death of a small boy resulting from gunfire in the Chicago riots following the Martin Luther King Assassination in April of 1968. A full-scale civil disorder had developed in the aftermath of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Guardsman and Chicago Police Officers were all on the scene. As a part of the disturbance it was alleged that rioter snipers were firing in the area. The victim was on a 12th floor balcony porch of a 15-story high-rise apartment building. The Jefro case revolved about the questionable origin of the fatal bullet fragment. Was it a police bullet or did it have other origin? In my opinion it was not a police bullet. This case was eventually tried to a Chicago Jury. I appeared in behalf of the defendant, the City of Chicago. Joseph D. Nicol appeared in behalf of the plaintiff. Robert J. Smith of the Chicago Crime Laboratory initially examined the fragment. The jury rendered a defense verdict in behalf of the City of Chicago.

While both cases were controversial ones, the Hampton case was embroiled in controversy from the very start. A Coroner's Inquest was held shortly after the raid. The raid was further investigated by the Cook County Grand Jury, which resulted in some Panther member indictments. (Later dismissed.) The case was later investigated by a Federal Grand Jury, which returned no criminal indictments. In addition to the lawsuit described above, the case eventually involved additional (1976) Federal lawsuits by the Panthers against the FBI, CIA and IRS for

violation of their civil rights. A Congressional House Panel was even requested to probe the Panther deaths.

Interesting Personalities of the Period

Charles “Charlie” M. Wilson - was the head of the Wisconsin Crime Laboratory at Madison. Charlie was one of AFTE’s original founding participants, and served as our first Treasurer. His history is very impressive. He was born in Washington D.C but grew up in California. He attended the University of California. In 1930 he joined the staff of the new Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory at Northwestern University in Chicago. In 1938 when the Crime Laboratory was transferred to the Chicago Police Department, Wilson also transferred. He was the Director of the Laboratory while at the Chicago Police Department. In 1947 he resigned from the Chicago Police Laboratory to accept the job of establishing a new Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory. He was apparently a very tough taskmaster to the employees who worked under him. A few of our early members were either working for Wilson or had done so in the past. Many of the evening sessions in the Drake Hotel were replete with interesting and sometimes amusing anecdotes about Charlie Wilson and his management style. Some of our Charlie Wilson graduate members would include Al Biasotti, Cleon “Red” Mauer, Joe Wilimovsky and Al Wilimovsky. Red Mauer recalled an amusing incident that took place at the time he was working for Wilson. Apparently Charlie was late for a flight to a California appointment and simply abandoned his car at the airport terminal building with no keys in the car. Wilson later called the lab with instructions for them to move the car to a more legitimate parking place. Red recalled hearing the secretary comment “Just fine Mr. Wilson, your not here.” Al Wilimovsky got the assignment to hot wire the car in order to get it started so that it could be moved. The Milwaukee Journal for Thursday April 17, 1969 contained an article – “Crime Lab Director to Step Down July 2.” The article starts out describing Wilson as the “controversial head of the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory”. He was both praised and criticized. A quote by Attorney General Robert W. Warren describes Charlie “as Wisconsin’s pioneer in this field, you have had a unique role in creating and developing one of the country’s foremost facilities for scientific analysis of physical evidence.” The paper described Wilson as one “who has frequently clashed with local law enforcement officers during his 22 years (1947-1969) as state crime laboratory director.”

Note: Cleon “Red” Mauer advised me that he missed the first AFTE meeting because “someone had to mind the store” and that he was “low man on the totem pole.”

Burton D. Munhall - It would be misleading to say that the early year evening get together were all work and no play. Chicago certainly offered many interesting nightspots, restaurants, bars and social venues for visitors. Many of our firearms people can be said to both work hard and play hard. During this early time period, the Playboy Club building and the Playboy Club were both located just across the street from the Drake Hotel. Burt Munhall who was at that time the Manager of the H. P. White Laboratory (Ballistics Engineering Laboratory) was also the holder of a Playboy Club Card/Key. Admission to the Club was restricted to Club members and their guests. Burt was also a very social person and seemed to be a friend to everyone. Burt would have made a great politician. Burt and his Playboy card/key provided a means of admission to the Playboy Club for an evening’s entertainment for any of his invited friends. I was happy to be counted as one of his friends. All meals and beverages had to be charged to a member’s card.

There were no cash transactions. At the end of the evening everyone would pay Burt for their share of the bill. After a year or two, Burt had to give up his Club Card, as apparently Mr. H. P. White did not think that a Playboy Club Card was in keeping with their general business posture. That also ended forever, my and everyone else's Playboy Club days. Burt was one of the original-founding members of AFTE. He was very active in the association during the early days both in attendance at the annual conferences as well as presentation of papers. Burt was instrumental in my joining the AAFS and served as one of my sponsors in 1964. He had previously sponsored Walter Howe in 1962. In 1965 Burt left the H. P. White Laboratory to take a position with the Federal Cartridge Company in Minneapolis and Anoka, MN. I remember our family socialized with Burt and his wife Grace during those early years. In 1977 he retired from Federal Cartridge Co. intending to make his retirement home in Hendersonville, NC. The untimely death of his wife Grace followed almost immediately after his retirement from Federal. Shortly thereafter, much as MacArthur's "old Soldier" he just "faded away." The AFTE Journal (Spring 1998) published a short eulogy about his death in March of 1997.

Shane "Rip" J. Kirby - For many of the conference attendees, this was also their vacation time. Many made the most of it especially during the evenings. Memories of Shane J. "Rip" Kirby who was then the Head of the Firearms Section, RCMP, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada are legion. He was both admired for his abilities as a firearms examiner as well as his abilities to play hard. He was certainly a colorful personality. It was rumored that he got the nickname of "Rip" following an evening of Chicago partying and then going to bed with his boots and spurs on. "Rip" had reference to the effect of his spurs on the bed sheets. Charlie Meyers has referred to "Rip" as the "Mad Mountie." Shane was an avid goose and duck hunter. During one of his goose hunting expeditions and some partying he suffered a broken leg when he fell into one of the goose pits. It was a bad break that resulted in his hobbling about the office-laboratory for some time before it healed properly. He retired from the Firearms Section of the Regina RCMP Laboratory in 1981. He retired as a staff sergeant in charge of the firearms section.

Vaclav "Jack" Krcma - Canada has produced a number of colorful characters and Vaclav "Jack" Krcma was also certainly one of them. I first became acquainted with him in 1961. At that time he was a firearms examiner in the Firearms Section of the Attorney General's Laboratory, Toronto, Ontario. Later Jack (Ca. 1969) became the head of the Ballistics Section of the Laboratory of Legal Medicine and Police Science in Montreal. I remember Walter Howe commenting that he (Walter) ran a disciplined operation at NRA headquarters but most of that disciplined atmosphere went out the window when Jack was visiting. Jack was also a very prolific writer with many publications to his credit. He later became one of the original Chicago 36 who attended the first AFTE inauguration meeting in 1969. Walter Howe's memo to the John Stauffer (Secretary) and Charlie Wilson (Treasurer) dated 4 April 1969 has the following comment. "I talked to Krcma and he will handle a few German publications." (A reader reporter reference.) Thereafter his association with AFTE was short lived and like his friend Burt Munhall, just faded away. I last heard from him in 1984. At that time he was a private consultant living in Willowdale, Ontario.

Robert "Bob" C. Nichol - The Canadian contingent as already noted was clearly a memorable group. Robert "Bob" Charles Nichol of the Center of Forensic Sciences in Toronto was a very personable and friendly member of this assembly. He would chidingly refer to his brothers in the

RCMP as the “Government Cowboys.” In the early days it was not possible to fly from his laboratory in Toronto to certain destinations on the far West side of the large Province of Ontario without first flying to the U.S. for a connecting flight. I recall Bob having a trial in Fort Francis that required his coming to Minneapolis first for a layover. From Minneapolis he could get a connecting flight to International Falls and Fort Francis. He called me and I met his flight at the Minneapolis airport. He came in on what was then called the old North Central (Flying Goose) Airlines. We had a few hours of drinks and pleasant conversation before he continued on to his trial. Bob an avid fisherman, enjoyed these trials in the remote areas of the Province as he would frequently be able to work in some fishing. Finn Nielsen advised me that - “Nichol took part in the ammunition testing which resulted in the .38 Special + P ammo being adopted by most of our Police departments when they were still using revolvers. He also did a great deal of work with body armor, and he is probably one of the many unknown people who are responsible for officers not dying because they wore the armor he did so much work on.” Bob became the second AFTE Secretary in 1970. I recall Bob advising me at the 1970 conference that he was already working on a presentation for the following years conference at Phoenix. The title he jokingly informed me was “Going to Phoenix.” The implication apparently was that his boss was more likely to approve his travel funds if he was on the Program. It appears that his boss decided to send him because of his position as an officer in the association. He was listed as an attendee at the conference but was not on the program. Bob was later Co-Program Chairman with Edward Anderson for the Toronto AFTE Meeting in 1976.

Dr. J. Howard Mathews - The Pre and early AFTE days were also the times of Dr. J. Howard Mathews of Madison, Wisconsin. As most of you will recognize, this was the gentleman that produced the massive two volumes and later three volume works “Firearms Identification”. He was also one of AFTE’s original Chicago 36. It was my honor and privilege to have been one of his friends. My first contact with Dr. Mathews was by way of a letter in January of 1957. That letter resulted in a steady stream of correspondence up until his death in April of 1970. The letters I have since bound into a 1.5” binder. For several years thereafter I continued correspondence with his daughter Jean Watson. Dr. Mathews graciously and meticulously answered all my letters in great detail. Following an invitation, my wife June and I visited Dr. Mathews in his laboratory at the University of Wisconsin in August of 1960. Although Dr. Mathews was retired from the University, (Professor Emeritus) they provided him with sufficient space in the Chemistry building for his office and laboratory. Dr. Mathews was a gracious host, and spent whatever time was necessary to explain the operation of his specially designed equipment. (Comparison camera, rifling meter, stereomicroscope set up for measuring rifling, etc.) He was at that time totally immersed in making his firearm rifling measurements and related tabulations for the first edition of his book. Shortly after our visit, I purchased a cutaway Colt Government Model pistol from Dr. Mathews for \$15. He had previously used the cutaway for courtroom demonstrations. At the time I acquired the pistol, I failed to realize what a bargain it was. Dr. Mathews was not above poking fun at himself. I recall pointing out an error he had made in a model designation. He wrote back to me with the following comment. “You are quite right about the Savage Mod. 298. There “aint no such animal.” But there is a careless fellow (J.H.M.) in my lab. Who made a typographical error or such...” The University of Wisconsin eventually published the first edition of his two volume works “Firearms Identification” in 1962. Volume I has 400 pages. Volume II has another 492 pages. I am fortunate to have received an autographed copy of the first edition. In addition a personally autographed picture of Dr.

Mathews holding a revolver accompanied it. Volume III (730 pages) was published posthumously by Charles C. Thomas in 1973 following Dr. Mathew's death. The Volume III publication was made possible by the editorial assistance of Allan E. Wilimovsky. I was pleased to be honored by Dr. Mathews on an acknowledgment page where he referenced the "hundreds of fired rim-fire cases" I had provided to him for photography and inclusion in volume III. Prior to his retirement he was the Chairman of the Department of Chemistry at the University where he also served as Professor of Chemistry. He had previously served as an Officer in the Ordnance Department of the Army in WWI. He died at the age of 88. He was a person for whom the term "gentleman" was a perfect fit in every way.

Joseph "Joe" C. Wilimovsky Jr. - Another interesting character of the pre and early AFTE times. Allan Wilimovsky was Joe's bother. It is said that Joseph Wilimovsky Jr. and John C. Stauffer started agitating for an AFTE like organization during the informal evening meetings at the Drake (AAFS Conferences) up to 12 years before AFTE was formed. He was noted for being one of the more vocal and provocative members of this informal group. His friends referred to him affectionately as "Brother Joe." He began his career with the Cook County Illinois Coroners Office in the late 1920's. He was said to have been called on to assist Calvin Goddard with his investigation of the notorious St. Valentines Day Massacre in 1929. It was also said that when Goddard left the Crime Laboratory at Northwestern University he left all the firearms cases in Cook County in Joe's competent hands. It was in 1946 that I graduated from Rice Lake High School in Rice Lake, WI. As I pondered my future education and training and being interested in "forensic ballistics", I decided to go straight to the "horses mouth." I wrote a letter to Lt. Col. Calvin Goddard at the Army War College in Washington, D.C. Goddard was kind enough to respond to my letter with a reference to Joe Wilimovsky Jr. His letter to me dated 29 November 1946 contained the following suggestion – "Since you live in Wisconsin, I suggest that you get in touch with my friend and former assistant, Major J. C. Wilimovsky, Jr. of 1514 West 18th Place, Chicago 8, Illinois. He is newly out of the army, and so far as I know, still in Chicago. He has been doing criminal identification work ever since I left Chicago (1935) while I have done none since that time and am far from up-to-date on the subject. He will know the answers to your questions and will be glad to help you, I am sure." Unfortunately for me, I did not follow up on this suggested career lead. At the time AFTE was formed in 1969, Joseph Wilimovsky was working with the Wisconsin Department of Justice in Madison. Unfortunately Joseph Wilimovsky never made the transition from early participant to a regular member of AFTE. John. Stauffer and Don. Smith provided the answer to what happened. "Loss of a postal money order and stubbornness (a Wilimovsky trait) on Joe's part prevented his becoming a regular member of AFTE." He passed away in July 1976 as a victim of a form of cancer.

The First AFTE Conference

The morning of 26 February 1969 dawned with bright expectations as 36 invited participants ("The Chicago 36") journeyed to Conference Room 514 in the Chicago Police Department. The meeting was set to start at 10:30 in the morning. The purpose of this meeting was set forth in the program agenda as follows: "This meeting is being held to determine the advisability of forming an organization of Firearms and Tool Mark Examiners. It is hoped that the organization will consider future meetings that could be devoted to the presentation of scientific and technical

papers, description of new techniques and procedures, review of instrumentation and the solution of common problems encountered in these scientific fields.”

The number of invited participants that actually arrived at the Chicago PD for the meeting that day (“The Chicago 36”) consisted of the following (Arranged alphabetically):

Stanton O. Berg, Minneapolis	Edward G. Bigler, Tallahassee	Robert A. Boese, Chicago
Donald Brocksmith, St. Louis	Douglas Caywood, U.S. Army	Joseph R. Celovsky, Chicago
Donald Champagne, Tallahassee	Kenard Christensen, Michigan	Edward Finnegan, Chicago
James M. Gainer, Chicago	August Hoppe, Trenton	Walter J. Howe, Wilton
Warren G. Johnson, Wash. D.C.	Shane J. Kirby, Regina	Vaclav Krcma, Montreal
Vincent J, Lomoro, Chicago	J. Howard Mathews, Madison	Charles R. Meyers, East Lansing
Burton D. Munhall, Anoka	Robert C. Nichol, Toronto	Joseph D. Nicol, Chicago
Burt C. Nielson, Chicago	Arthur R. Paholke, Chicago	David J. Purtell, Chicago
William Rathman, Cincinnati	John R. Sadunas, Chicago	Donald E. Smith, Chicago
Robert J. Smith, Chicago	John G. Sojat, Clifton Hill	John S. Stauffer, Chicago
Malden D. Waite, Wash. DC	Ernest N. Warner, Chicago	Allan E. Wilimovsky, Madison
Charles M. Wilson, Madison	DeWayne Wolfer, Los Angeles	Joseph C. Wilimovsky, Madison

I had expected to leave on an early morning flight to Chicago that day in order it arrive in time for the opening of the meeting. Unfortunately for me, it was snowing heavily in Minneapolis that morning and my flight was delayed. I finally arrived in Chicago around noon. I checked into the Drake Hotel as soon as possible. The Drake was again the site of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences conference being held in conjunction with but separately from the AFTE meeting. Bob Boese was kind enough to quickly pick me up at the hotel and shuttle me to the conference site. I did not arrive until the afternoon break period so I missed the morning business part of the program and most of the formal program for the day. I was however, able to participate in late afternoon activities and the usual evening sessions. Shane Kirby of the RCMP in Regina also arrived late, apparently held up by the same weather system that delayed me.

A short article prepared by Burton D. Munhall and published in AFTE Newsletter No. 1 (May 15, 1969) clearly lays out the results of that first meeting. “At that time it was agreed to form an independent technical group under the title of “Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners”. A slate of officers was elected for one year, with Walter J. Howe (Private Consultant), President; John C Stauffer (Chicago Police Crime Laboratory), Secretary; and Charles M. Wilson (Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory,), Treasurer. It was further agreed that all those in attendance, as well as others who would ‘join’ in the coming months, would be designated as participants, pending the recommendations (and attending participant approval) of a membership committee. Warren Johnson, Federal Bureau of Investigation; J. D. Nicol, University of Illinois; and John Sojat, Private Consultant, were designated as membership Committee members.

Captain D. J. Purtell, long active in the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, accepted a special appointment from the officers to draw a Code of Ethics. When the Code of

Ethics and the sections dealing with Membership are ready, the officers will submit these, along with other pertinent sections (based on the QD Society Constitution), for review, comment and recommendations. After receiving such comments and recommendations, a proposed final draft of the Constitution will be submitted to a special Committee (to be named by the officers at that time) that will prepare a final draft to be considered and voted on by the attending participants at the Association's annual meeting in Chicago in February 1970. An assessment of fifteen dollars (\$15.00) will be levied on each participant for the first year."

The selection of Walter J. Howe as the first president of the newly formed AFTE was a natural and a very wise move on the part of the new organization. Walter who had previously been the Editor of the NRA's "American Rifleman Magazine," was noted for his organizational abilities. The astuteness of this move became readily apparent at an early date as Walter quickly and efficiently took over the management of the fledgling organization. He also voluntarily assumed the duties of the editor of the "Newsletter."

As a part of Walter's function as the "editor" he set up "a Reader-Reporter (RR) arrangement to monitor periodicals and books that deal with firearms, ammunition and related subject matter." In this regard Walter made a number of Reader-Reporter assignments in the first "Newsletter". "Beginning with the May issue, The American Rifleman will be handled by M. D. Waite, ... A. Paholke has the RR assignment for monitoring all tool mark literature until the President hears from other tool mark men as to what they might handle...each participant should be alert to the "gems" and advise Stan Berg, 6025 Gardena Lane NE, Minneapolis, MN 55421, who is the participant charged with compiling a "Review of Commercial Literature" each month." Walter then asked for volunteers to handle other RR assignments in the future.

Walter noted that (in less than 3 months) by the time of the first Newsletter on 15 May 1969, the 36 original participants had grown to a total of 91 participants.

Notice to the American Academy of Forensic Sciences

Walter J. Howe published the following information in regard to the AAFS. "At their second business meeting in Chicago, the charter participants in AFTE recommended to the officers that official notice be given to the AAFS relative to the formation of this new association of firearm and tool mark examiners. Through the good offices of Charlie Wilson and Robert J. Joling (member, Executive Comm., AAFS) arrangements were made for Walter J. Howe to appear before the Executive Boards of AAFS on Saturday, March 1st, 1969. The Executive Board was most interested in learning of the reasons for formation of the new association, and members Joling and Tuchler, as well as AAFS President Jim Osterberg, asked questions that further enabled Howe to emphasize that AFTE was by no means a break-away group...Rather, that most of the charter participants at the formation conference were not AAFS members. And, further, that the variety of subject matter which had to be dealt with in the AAFS Journal understandably did not permit the depth of coverage on firearms and tool marks that these subjects must now have. The brief presentation and discussion concluded with all hands fully aware of the good intent of AFTE, and with the promise that AAFS would be kept fully posted by the very direct means of sending a copy of each issue of the AFTE Newsletter to President Osterberg."

This was the first step in what was to later become an eventual total separation from the AAFS.

Soviet-American Symposium in Forensic Science – October 3-17, 1969.

Later in the year of AFTE's formation, my wife June and I had the opportunity to attend a very unique Symposium to be held in the Soviet Union. This was a special adventure for us, as it took place at the height of the "Cold War". The first meetings were to be held in Moscow with later meetings in Leningrad. (Leningrad is now St. Petersburg.) This first ever meeting of American and Soviet Forensic Scientists was organized and sponsored by three prominent and world recognized Forensic Pathologists. They were Dr. William G. Eckert, Dr. Cyril H. Wecht and Dr. Thomas T. Noguchi. They were all members of the AAFS. Dr. Noguchi has been referred to as the "Coroner to the Stars." During his tenure as the Deputy Medical Examiner and later Chief Medical Examiner of Los Angeles County, he was responsible for the autopsies on Marilyn Monroe, Robert F. Kennedy, Sharon Tate, Janis Joplin, William Holden, Natalie Wood and John Belushi. Dr. Eckert was Editor of INFORM (International Reference Publication in the Forensic Sciences) and Director of the Laboratories at St. Francis Hospital in Wichita. He would later become the President of the (IAFS) International Association of Forensic Sciences. Dr. Wecht was Director of the Institute of Forensic Sciences in Pittsburgh and later a President of the AAFS. Visits were arranged for me to meet and have conferences with Boris J. Shevchenko who was professor of Criminalistics at Moscow University with a specialty in firearms identification or "ballistics" as they called it. The Professor indicated that there were three ballistics laboratories in the Moscow at the time. One Laboratory was in the Moscow University, one in the Institute of Criminalistics and the third one in the Militia or Police Department. Only one expert would appear at a trial. The Ministry of Justice provided all testimony. There was no such thing as an expert for the defense. The professor would be called in on special cases. He indicated that all Moscow ballistics experts are selected from graduates in technology at Moscow University. The Professor seemed very knowledgeable about American firearms identification practices and procedures. I also had visits with Vladimir Nicholaichik who was Professor of Criminal Law at Moscow University. The results of the Soviet Conferences were reported at length in the October 1971 issue of "Identification" under the title of "Firearms Identification in the Soviet Union." The American Rifleman Magazine for April 1970 reported on my visit to a Russian Gun Shop. I also provided a detailed slide presentation describing the Russian Conferences at the 3rd AFTE Conference in Phoenix in 1971. But alas, fame is fleeting. In 20 years all was forgotten about my adventures in Russia. In the 1991 AFTE Conference at Houston, Lucien "Luke" C. Haag presented a paper in which he described a trip he had made in July of 1990 to the Soviet Union. Much to my surprise, he indicated that his trip resulted in the first such exchange with Soviet Criminalist's and Firearms Examiners. Obviously Luke was totally unaware of my trip to the Soviet Union 20 years before. I could not resist a later temptation to rib Luke from the podium and suggest that in 20 years everyone would probably forget about his trip also.

The 2nd AFTE 1970 Chicago Conference

The second conference again took place at the Chicago Police Department on 24 and 25 February 1970. The printed Agenda has an opening statement that reads – "One year has passed since a meeting was held to determine the advisability of forming an organization of Firearm &

Tool Mark Examiners. We are meeting today to evaluate the Association, and if warranted, to set guide lines for its future.” The conference was also timed to coincide with but immediately precede the meeting of the AAFS then taking place at the Drake Hotel. This permitted the AAFS members such as Howe, Meyers, Munhall, others, and myself, the option of also attending both the AFTE Conference as well as the AAFS conference.

Burton D. Munhall served as the Program Chairman for this conference.

The opening Welcome was by Pierce J. Fleming, Deputy Superintendent of the Chicago Police Bureau of Staff Services. This was followed by an Introduction by Chicago Police Crime Laboratory Director, Captain D. J. Purtell.

This conference had a total attendance of 88 participants. That represented a remarkable increase in attendance for a new organization in only one year.

The morning session was a business meeting.

While the first 1969 conference resulted in the election of a skeleton staff of officers (President, Treasurer and Secretary) to run the new organization, the second 1970 conference elected a full slate of officers.

Charles R. Meyers of the Michigan State Police was elected as the new President to replace Walter J. Howe. Edward G. Bigler of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement was elected to the new position of Vice President. Robert G. Nichol of the Center of Forensic Sciences in Toronto replaced John C. Stauffer as the Secretary. Robert J. Smith of the Chicago Police Department replaced Charles M. Wilson as the Treasurer.

A new three man Executive Committee was set up. Elected were Stanton O. Berg from Minneapolis and DeWayne A. Wolfer from the Los Angeles Police Criminalistics Laboratory. Walter J. Howe as the outgoing President automatically became a member of this Committee. It was my honor to be elected to serve on this first Executive Committee.

The original Membership Committee was replaced with a Board of Admissions. Elected to the new Board of Admissions were Arthur J. Paholke of The Chicago Police Laboratory, John G. Sojat from Clifton Hill, Missouri and Allan E. Wilimovsky Sr. from the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory.

Walter J. Howe had been handling both the duties of President and the Editor. The duties of an Editor were obviously too demanding to be handled in addition to Presidential duties. Steve Molnar Jr. of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation was elected to assume the Editor's duties. Steve served in this position until 1972 when James E. Hamby became the Editor. Steve was always a frequent contributor to the AFTE Newsletter and later the AFTE Journal.

This conference also adopted a new or the first AFTE Constitution and Bylaws.

The next day and half consisted of a series of technical papers.

The program Chairman appointed for the following year was DeWayne A. Wolfer of the Los Angeles PD.

By the time of the 2d AFTE Conference in February of 1970, there were a total of 175 AFTE Participants who had paid their assessment for the previous year. This represented almost a skyrocketing of membership in just one year. Thereafter the membership would taper off to a more gradual but consistent yearly growth.

This initial group of 175 first year Participants were quite a powerful dynamic group. They provided a basic core of members who served as the backbone of AFTE for many years thereafter. They were frequent contributors to the AFTE Journal and appeared frequently as AFTE Conference speakers. This initial group produced 17 AFTE Presidents. In fact, the first 12 AFTE Presidents (1969-1981) were all from this group. The following list of Presidents came from this initial group. (Arranged alphabetically) Edward J. Anderson (1977-78), Edward G. Bigler (1971-72), John Cayton (1986-87), Donald E. Champagne (1978-79), Patrick V. Garland (1973-74), Walter J. Howe (1969-70), Richard J. Janelli (1979-80), Peter Law (1983-84), Monty C. Lutz (1975-76), Charles R. Meyers (1970-71), Andrew M. Newquist (1976-77), Arthur R. Paholke (1972-73), Donald E. Smith (1991-92), Robert J. Smith (1984-85), Gerald R. Styers, (1993-94), James Warner (1974-75) and George R. Wilson (1980-81). In addition, many members of the first year's 175 participants also served in several other officer positions as well as numerous committee assignments.

This initial first year Participant group also contained the first real pioneer in the area of "Firearm and Tool Mark Identification Criteria." That Pioneer was Alfred A. "Al" Biasotti. His initial work predated AFTE by some period of time. He indicated early on that his purpose was "to make firearms identification more a science than an art." In 1955 he prepared an unpublished Master's Thesis entitled "Bullet Comparison, A Study of Fired Bullets Statistically Analyzed." This was then presented as a condensed summary to the AAFS Meeting at the Drake Hotel in Chicago in March of 1957. The paper was subsequently published (January 1959) in the Journal of Forensic Sciences as "A Statistical Study of the Individual Characteristics of Fired Bullets." This was not received with any enthusiasm but rather a mixed reaction. Al's letter to me in March of 1964 reported on the objective of his papers – "It is nothing more than a plea for objectivity in firearms identification decision making. As Mr. Howe may have told you, the plea fell mostly on deaf ears." In the early years there was a faction that did not want to be bothered with such theoretical nonsense and held to the idea that "I know an identification when I see one." His concept of "Consecutive Matching Striations" CMS is now well known and respected basis for identification. Biasotti's early pioneering work was and is carried on by John Murdock, (also one of the initial 175 participants) Uchiyama and others. Al was certainly many years ahead of the times. The impact of the more recent years "Daubert" case only serves to highlight the importance of Biasotti's early work. Al was a native of California where he attended high school and later the University of California. He served in the United States Air Force in WWII flying combat missions with the 9th Air Force. (B-26 gunner, navigator and bombardier.) Al's career first started as a laboratory technician with the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory in 1951. In 1953 Al became a criminalist at the Pittsburgh Allegheny County Crime Laboratory. In 1956 he

returned to California where he joined the Santa Clara County Laboratory. In 1972 Al transferred to the Department of Justice as a Criminalist Manger. In September of 1975, Al was appointed to a national "Panel of Experts" by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert Wenke for the re-examination and testing of the firearms evidence in the case of the People of the State of California v. Sirhan B. Sirhan. (Robert Kennedy Assassination) More about this later. Al was awarded the Key Man of the Year at the 1981 AFTE Conference. He retired from the CA Department of Justice, Bureau of Forensic Services in 1990. He retired as Assistant Bureau Chief. Al passed away June 24th, 1997 at his Orangevale, CA home from the complications of Parkinson's disease. He was 71.

Note: Cleon "Red" Mauer advised me that an early copy of Al's thesis (described above) is in the Wisconsin Crime Laboratory library and has Al's comments and notes written on the margins of several of the pages.

My longtime friend Andrew "Andy" B. Hart was also one of this first group of 175 participants. Andy joined the New York State Police as a trooper back in 1937. In 1944 he was assigned to the New York State Police Crime Laboratory at Albany. He retired in 1965 and continued his firearms work as a private consultant. In addition to AFTE he held memberships in the IAI and AAFS. For some period of time he taught the subject of firearms identification at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, N.Y. where a two-year police science course was offered. In the area of firearms identification, Andy was a prolific writer and made many significant contributions to the literature in the field of firearms identification. . Many of his articles were published in the period of the 1950s and 1960s. The articles were published in The "Bulletin of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation" of the New York State Police, "Identification News", "American Rifleman" and others. After the formation of AFTE a few of his articles were published in the AFTE Journal during the early years. Andy was also the AFTE Membership Secretary for an unprecedented 15 years. (1976-1991) Andy was the subject of a feature article by Mason Williams that appeared in the old "Guns & Hunting Magazine for August 1967 under the title "One Man Crime Lab." The opening comments reveal the following – "Firearms Consultant Andy Hart is a scientific sleuth whose gun knowledge has solved many a mystery for the police – and whose expert testimony has helped hundreds of juries bring in the right verdict. " Andy is not one to "Toot his own horn" but is quick to offer encouragement, assistance and compliments to others. My first contact with Andy was by way of a letter he sent to me in December of 1956. His letter reads as follows – "I have just finished reading your extremely interesting article entitled "Identification Peculiarity of the .32 caliber Iver Johnson Revolver." ... "This information, I feel, is of great value and although I have been the "Firearms Identification" man for this Division for some years, I have never paid any particular attention to these markings. ...too often a man's concrete contributions, to a particular field of endeavor, go apparently unrecognized. Therefore, I feel that a few remarks, such as mine, at least will serve to indicate to you that your efforts have been noted." This kind letter from Andy was indeed very much appreciated. In looking back however, I suspect that such remarks would have been more aptly directed towards "Andy's" efforts than towards mine. Thereafter through the 50's and the 60's we enjoyed a lively exchange of correspondence. Unfortunately the 70s and 80s saw this correspondence exchange gradually dwindle away. In his quiet friendly manner, Andy became a friend to many and as a result, touched many lives. It is unfortunate but probably true that at this time, very few of our current active members remember or have ever heard of Andy Hart. So I

would say, “hats off” to this early days gentle, humble man of achievement. He presently resides in Rensselaer, New York.

First AFTE Membership Cards Issued

After adopting a Constitution and a set of By-Laws at the second AFTE meeting 24-25 February 1970, the mechanism for processing memberships was placed into operation.

On August 17, 1970, I received a letter from Edward G. Bigler the AFTE Vice-President. This letter forwarded to me my first membership card. The Secretary Robert C. Nichol signed the card. The card (3-1/2x2-1/2”) has a gold AFTE emblem and certified that I was a “Regular” member for the year 1970. No membership number was assigned. This general format was continued for several years. In 1976 the Gold AFTE emblem was changed to a black one.

First AFTE Life Memberships

The Life Memberships did not become available until 1982. I have a letter dated September 10th 1982 from David J. Brundage, AFTE Treasurer that reads as follows –

“Here is your LIFE MEMBERSHIP card! Sorry it took so long to get to you, but I wanted it special and perfect for the twenty of you that have become our first life members. Hope you like it.”

(The card is an attractive plastic laminated card.)

Assignment of Membership Numbers

One might expect that the “Original 36” members that arrived in Chicago on 26 February 1969 would have been assigned the first 36 membership numbers. Well “it ain’t so McGee.”

In researching this matter it appears that most of the first 36 numbers are not presently assigned to anyone. Only nine (9) of these numbers are presently assigned to anyone. The assigned numbers are 1, 2, 4, 7, 12, 21, 26, 27, and 33. The other numbers are unassigned. Curiously none of the assigned numbers are assigned to any of the earliest members. None are assigned to the “Original 36”. None of the 36 numbers are assigned to anyone on Walter Howe’s roster listing of 25 February 1970. (This listing was of the first 175 participants who completed application and paid their initial dues.) Nor are any of the 36 numbers even assigned to anyone on the 2nd year membership roster for 1970-1971.

Walter Howe for example, who was one of the “Original 36” and the first AFTE President, is currently member number 1502.

Walter Howe advises that during his first year as President, (1969-1970) no membership numbers were assigned. The records were simply kept in alphabetical order.

All of my old membership cards running from the first card issued in 1970 until I received my Life Membership in 1982 do not contain a membership number.

Our current membership chairman, Terry Eaton advises that currently membership numbers are assigned sequentially and the present numbering is over 2500. He does not know when this system was first started.

As best I can deduce, it appears that the first membership numbers were not assigned until after the new membership admission requirements were adopted (1974) and were actually put in place. Probably 1978 and later. Sometime subsequent to the new admission requirements being adopted, it was determined that all of the existing memberships would have to complete new membership applications that required the signature endorsement of three (3) members and accompanied by letters of recommendations from the same endorsing members. In other words there would be no grandfathering of existing members.

I have an undated letter (received in mid 1978) from Richard Janelli, 1st Vice President and Chairman of the Board of Governors. It reads in part as follows:

“We the Board of Governors are now in the process of reviewing all the regular members of AFTE. Enclosed is your new application and please be sure to fill out same COMPLETELY which will include the three (3) letters of recommendation and a new photograph. The reasons for the letters of recommendation are that on our original application no letters were required only signatures and in some instances this caused a minor problem. Under our new By-Laws ALL members are required to submit three (3) letters of recommendation.....”

I noted that on the top of my new application referred to above, it contains a stamped number of 00114. Number 114 is my current membership number.

Apparently the new application forms were all pre-numbered. Further, it seems that there was no effort made or method devised to match the new numbering to the early original 36 members or even to the first two years members. The numbers seem to have been given out at random or as was convenient to the processing of the new applications.

Unfortunately AFTE missed the opportunity to utilize the numbering for significant historical purposes.

The 3rd AFTE 1971 Phoenix Conference

The conference was held on February 22-23, 1971 at Del Webb's Townhouse, Phoenix, Arizona. This meeting was once again held in conjunction with the meeting of the AAFS. The AFTE presiding President was Charles R. Meyers. Charlie recalled the 1971 meeting very well – “We didn't have hardly any funds, but I was able to arrange with the AAFS Program Chairman and the President to meet with AAFS and they footed the bill outside our banquet meal with one proviso; we had to allow any AAFS members that wished, to sit in on our papers. The meeting rooms were the expandable wall types; after the first couple AFTE papers, we had to expand two

or three times to get them all in. Afterwards, the AAFS Program Chairman told me that AFTE had the most interesting presenters at the joint meeting!”

Note: In those early days when the AFTE Treasury was low, the Michigan State Police was kind enough to provide AFTE with printed letterheads, application forms, certificates, and other printing needs at no cost to AFTE.

The Program Chairman was DeWayne Wolfer. The two-day conference featured 26 technical presentations. The first day’s presentations ran until 9:PM that night. The AFTE banquet was held on the evening of the 2nd day.

The newly elected incoming President for the 1971-1972 year was Edward G. Bigler. (Florida Department of Law Enforcement) The new Vice President was DeWayne A. Wolfer, (Los Angeles PD) the Secretary was Herbert E. Binsbacher, Jr., (Kansas City, MO PD) the Treasurer was Robert J. Smith (Chicago PD) and the Editor was Steve Molnar Jr. (Ohio State Bureau of C. I. & I.) The new 1971-1972 three-man Executive Committee members were Stanton O. Berg, (Minneapolis) Arthur R. Paholke (Chicago PD) and Charles R. Meyers. (Michigan State Police) The new board of Admissions was Allan E. Wilimovsky, Sr. (Wisconsin Department of Justice), John G. Sojat (Dade County Florida Department of Public Safety) and Peter S. Gazey. (Royal Canadian Mounted Police)

First Historian Appointed - 1971

President Edward G. Bigler appointed the first AFTE Historian in June of 1971. Ernie Warner of the Chicago PD was appointed Public Information and Historical officer for the association. This appointment was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting in Chicago in June of 1971 and then again later at the general membership business meeting during the 4th AFTE 1972 Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Warner retained this position until replaced by the appointment of James “Jim” L. Pickleman (Michigan State Police) as reported in the November 1st 1975 “Information Letter No. 1” issued by President Monty C. Lutz.

Note: The reference to “Public Information” as a part of the first “Historian’s” title was the first of two brief forays by AFTE into the public relations arena. This title was soon dropped. The second reference to public relations came in July of 1979 when President Richard J. Janelli appointed me as the Chairman of the “Public Relations Committee”. The AFTE Journal for July 1979 has the following note in the President’s Message. “The final committee that was set up was the Public Relations Committee. Stanton Berg suggested the committee and you can guess who is heading it up. Stan will work with a person from the area where the next meeting is to be held plus give us the exposure due us. In my opinion, AFTE is as important, professional and prestigious as the Academy or any other forensic group anywhere. If any member has any ideas which might be of help to Stan, please contact him.” Because of the lack of any real interest by AFTE members in regard to public relations, this committee was phased out after 1980.

The 4th AFTE 1972 Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia

The 4th annual AFTE meeting was held at the Sheraton-Biltmore Hotel, in Atlanta, Georgia from Monday 28 February 1972 through Wednesday 1 March 1972. This was a three-day conference as this was leap year and February had 29 days. The first day Monday was registration day. The 2nd day Tuesday was a full meeting day that ran until 9 PM that night. The annual business meeting was in the morning. Wednesday was another full meeting day with the AFTE Annual Banquet held that evening.

The presiding President was Edward G. Bigler.

The AFTE conference was once again held in conjunction with the AAFS conferences. The AAFS again provided the meeting rooms and handled the general meeting expenses other than the AFTE Banquet. Once again, the AAFS members were welcomed to all AFTE meetings except the business meeting.

The Program Chairman for the meeting was Patrick V. Garland of the U.S. Army Crime Laboratory at Fort Gordon, Georgia. There were 10 technical presentations plus a “bring your own slides” evening session. Arrangements were made for a special 3-hour visit to the Military Armament Corporation at Powder Springs, Georgia for a weapons demonstration.

AFTE Incorporation. The Treasurer Bob Smith informed the membership that the association had to be incorporated and paper work filed with the IRS in order to become a charitable organization. This would also prevent individual memberships from having legal liability. The necessary steps to implement the changes to make AFTE a legal entity were placed in motion at this meeting.

The conference elected the following slate of officers and committee’s for the 1972-1973 AFTE year. - The newly elected President for the year was Arthur R. Paholke of the Chicago PD. The new Vice President was Patrick V. Garland of the Army Crime Laboratory at Fort Gordon, Georgia. Treasurer would again be Robert J. Smith of the Chicago PD. The new Editor would be James E. Hamby also of the Army Crime Laboratory at Fort Gordon, GA. The Executive Committee would be Edward G. Bigler, (FL Department of Law Enforcement), John S. Bates Jr. (New York State Police) and James H. Warner (Los Angeles County Sheriff Dept.). The Board of Admissions would be Allan E. Wilimovsky, Sr. (WI Department of Justice), Peter S. Gazey (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and Donald E. Champagne (FL Department of Law Enforcement.)

First AFTE Journal

The first issue of the new AFTE Journal came out 10 August 1972 as Volume 4, No. 3. Betty Garland was pictured on the front cover with this caption – ‘Mrs. Betty Garland is shown sitting with the AFTE Flag that she designed and sewed for our Association.’ I do not know if the picture was intentionally set up in the manner it was, but it was not unlike a similar portrait I have seen of Betsy Ross.

The first issue contains an explanatory editor's note on page one by James Hamby. "With this edition, you will note that the name of the AFTE Newsletter has been changed to AFTE Journal. One of the many reasons for the change of name was to place the efforts of those members who write for the association on an equal par with other individuals who appear in court as "Expert" witnesses. The majority of professional publications use the name or title of Journal. Our use of the title Journal should equate to the jury more easily than Newsletter. I believe that the AFTE has reached the time when we can begin to move upward and upward. I'm proud to announce that the membership in our Association has reached and passed the 200 mark...."

The Ladies of AFTE

In the early pre AFTE days, firearms examiners were all men and not much thought was given to the matter. That's just the way it was. The handling and shooting of firearms was considered a man's sort of thing. It was definitely a men's club. Shortly after the formation of AFTE a young lady burst onto the scene like a thunderclap and forever changed the gender complexion of the profession of firearms examiners.

This young lady was **Susan M. Komar**. She was featured on the front cover of AFTE Newsletter No. Eleven (11) published December 10th 1970. The cover picture has the reader looking down the business end of a revolver held by Ms. Komar. The title under the picture read – "Miss Susan Komar – AFTE's only girl type firearms examiner." At that time Susan was a Crime Laboratory Analyst II, with the Illinois Bureau of Identification at Joliet, Illinois handling all firearms cases for the northern half of Illinois (except Chicago). Susan first began her career in September of 1967 under the supervision of Joseph D. Nicol, Superintendent of the Illinois Bureau of Identification. Susan had just graduated from St. Louis University with a major in Biology. In July 1986 she became a Special Agent/Crime Lab analyst with the North Carolina Bureau of Investigation. In August of 1989 she transferred to her current position (Senior Crime Lab Analyst) with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in the Orlando Crime Laboratory. She has made a number of contributions to the AFTE Journal. Her current membership status is Life Distinguished Member.

Since that day in 1970, ladies and AFTE have become a common association. Two ladies have now held the office of President.

Louise H. Walzer - a distinguished member was AFTE's first lady president. She was the 24th president serving in 1992-1993. She is currently an Assistant Director/senior firearms examiner of the Crime Laboratory of the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, Metairie, Louisiana. She joined AFTE in 1979. She has served on the AFTE Nomination Committee during 1984-1986, and the AFTE By-Laws Committee 1987-1990. She was the AFTE Treasurer 1987-1990, AFTE 2nd VP 1990-1991, AFTE 1st VP 1991-1992. In 1988 she was the AFTE Member of the Year.

In spite of these fine accomplishments, I tend to think of the "Dinosaur Club" whenever I think of Louise Walzer. Of course, being a "Dinosaur" myself has something to do with this reaction. The formation of the "Dinosaur Club" dates back to 1992. Her President's Message of July 1992 tells the story. "The second group would be older members, the "dinosaurs" (a term I was introduced to, and became quite fond of, by Dan Gunnell.) These are the AFTE Members who

have seen it all...these members are the backbone of our organization as well as the founders...During the banquet, I asked younger members to adopt a "dinosaur". (I must add that not all of the older members appreciated being referred to as a "dinosaur", so please be careful who you label.) This adoption went very well and I have information from a reliable source that a "dinosaur" club will be formed." (Louise was recommending younger inexperienced members team up with the older experienced "dinosaurs" for the mutual benefit of both.) When first formed in Raleigh, NC in 1993, the "Dinosaur Club" was headed up by "Ole Dinosaur" George Wilson. The Dinosaur Club has its own membership cards, fees, pins and shirts.

Ann L. Davis - Ann is a Supervisor, Forensic Scientist IV with the Virginia Division of Forensic Science in Richmond, VA. She is also a Life Distinguished Member. She was elected as the AFTE 35th President at the annual Seminar in Philadelphia in 2003. She will be our presiding President as we celebrate our 35th anniversary year in 2004. Since Ann joined AFTE in 1984 she was been a very busy young lady. She has hosted 2 of the AFTE seminars. The first in Virginia Beach with John Ward in 1989 and the second in 1999 where she served as the Financial and Registration chair. She has been on the Board of Directors for 10 years. She served as Membership Secretary from 1992-1998. She has also served as Member at Large, 2nd Vice President and 1st Vice President prior to reaching her summit position. With this history of achievements what could she possibly do for an encore?

I am advised by Michelle Kuehner (who researched this subject) that at the present time "there are at least 84 females with 13 unknowns" in our membership roster. The reason for this question appears to revolve around the fact that gender is not a part of the AFTE roster database. Michelle was forced to make her determination based on reviewing the names in the roster. The name did not always suggest the gender. She advises, "most unknowns are from Japan, Singapore, India etc." In any event, this is remarkable change from the year 1970 when we had only one female member.

The First Distinguished Members.

It was during President Arthur R. Paholke's term of office (1972-1973) that the first AFTE Distinguished members were designated based on a participation point system.

I was honored to be in the first group of Distinguished Members. I received a letter (2/23/1973) signed by Ernest N. Warner the Historian and Arthur R. Paholke the President, advising me that I had been selected as a Distinguished member and would be awarded an honorary plaque at the May 1973 AFTE conference.

The April 1973 issue of the AFTE Journal listed all of the AFTE members that qualified and had been selected for the new Distinguished Membership designation. The first "Distinguished Members" are listed below in alphabetical order. There were 29 in total.

John S. Bates Jr.	Stanton O. Berg
Edward G. Bigler	Herbert E. Binsbacher Jr.
Edward B. Crossman	James M. Gainer
Patrick V. Garland	James E. Hamby
Lonny R. Harden	Robert Horn
Walter J. Howe	Ray R. Lambert
Vincent J. Lomoro	Monty C. Lutz
Charles R. Meyers	Steve Molnar
Burton D. Munhall	Thomas V. Nicholson
Burt C. Nielson	Arthur R. Paholke
George W. Roche	Donald E. Smith
Robert J. Smith	John G. Sojat
John C. Stauffer	Malden D. Waite
Ernest N. Warner	James H. Warner
DeWayne A. Wolfer	

The 5th AFTE 1973 Conference in Chicago, Illinois

The 5th annual AFTE conference was held at the Ascot House Hotel in Chicago, Illinois on May 14-17, 1973. This meeting was of special historical significance. This was the first meeting that was not scheduled and timed with the AAFS meetings. This represented AFTE's first total independence from the AAFS. From this time forward, the AFTE meetings would never again be scheduled coincidentally with the AAFS meetings. AFTE had finally come of age and had the financial resources to conduct their meetings independent of any other forensic organization. For those AFTE members who were also AAFS members, and who wanted to attend both conference meetings, this move of independence proved to be a financial handicap. Suddenly their travel expenses had doubled as well as the problem of scheduling time away on 2 separate occasions. The combination members however represented a minority and no thought was ever given to reversing this move of independence.

The program chairman for this meeting was Donald E. Smith, (Chicago PD) with James M. Gainer (Chicago PD) handling local arrangements. The presiding President was Arthur R. Paholke of the Chicago PD.

Registration was on the afternoon of the 14th. The meeting started off at 9:00 AM on Tuesday the 15th. The AFTE Business meeting was held that morning. In the afternoon the technical program presentations were started. There were a total of 20 technical presentations ending on Thursday afternoon the 17th of May.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Burton D. Munhall who spoke on "Accomplishments and Endeavors of the Association, a Look at its Future Potential."

The Annual AFTE Banquet was also held on the evening of the 17th. It was at this Banquet that the first Key Person of the Year award was made. I was honored to receive the first such award. The award was to cover the year 1972. Steve Molnar made the award presentation to me.

Note: The award first called the Key Man of the Year was later changed to Key Person of the Year Award. In 1996, the Key Person of the Year award was renamed the Steve Molnar award.

I had previously received a letter from Arthur R. Paholke in March of 1973 that advised me of the pending award and the purpose of the award. "As you will recall shortly after I was selected President of the Association of "Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners, I appointed a Chairman (Steve Molnar) to work with a Committee, to select a member of our Association most deserving of the Key Man Award. The member selected for the Key Man Award was to be selected from those members contributing to the Association of Firearm and Tool Mark Examiners Journal. The contributor had to be....not only for articles printed but he must also be consistent in submitting articles."

There were 122 attendees at this conference of which 97 were members and 25 were non-members.

The conference elected the following slate of officers and committee's for the 1973-1974 AFTE year. For President, Mr. Patrick V. Garland of the US Army Crime Laboratory – Europe. For Vice President, Mr. James Warner of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Crime Laboratory. For Secretary, Mr. John S. Bates of the New York State Police Crime Laboratory. For Treasurer, Mr. Robert J. Smith of the Chicago Police Crime Laboratory. For the Executive Board, Mr. Warren Johnson of the Commonwealth of Virginia Regional Laboratory, Richmond, VA, Herbert Binsbacher of the Regional Center for Criminal Justice, Kansas City, Missouri and Arthur Paholke, Chicago Police Crime Laboratory. For the Board of Admissions, Mr. Frederick M. Hurst of the North Carolina State Police Crime Laboratory, Peter S. Gazey of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Allan E. Willimovsky, Wisconsin Department of Justice and Donald E. Champagne of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The Editor would be Otis L. Hensley, U. S. Army Crime Laboratory at Fort Gordon, GA.

The year 1973, AFTE's 5th year, saw the membership climb to approx. 250 members in total. This represented members from 16 different nations.

The program chairman for 1974 would be George Wilson, Metro Police Department, Washington D.C.

New Admission Requirements for 1974

The Executive Committee meeting minutes for October 7-8, 1973 contained details from the Board of Admissions on a new membership application. The application would have the effect of tightening the admission requirements. "The Board of Admissions reported that a revised membership application form is being prepared. The form will require more pertinent information on an applicant's training and duties within firearms and/or tool mark identification. In addition the applicant must have the form personally signed by three regular members who

recommend membership, or have letters of recommendation submitted with the application. The form will be ready about January 1.”

Note: The final version required both the three endorsing members signatures on the application and three supporting letters to be sent to the Board of Governors. Eventually it was decided that all the membership would have to conform to the new application requirements. There was to be no grandfathering as it related to the new requirements. I was honored to have Al Biasotti, Don Smith and Pat Garland endorse my new application and provide the required letters to the Board of Governors.

The 6th AFTE 1974 Meeting and the 5th AFTE Anniversary - Meeting at Washington, D.C.

This meeting was both the 6th AFTE Meeting and the 5th Anniversary Meeting. It was scheduled for February 10-15, 1974 at the Statler-Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C. One could now feel safe in predicting that AFTE was here to stay. It was both a growing organization and a financially sound one. The Treasurer had reported a year-end cash account of approx. \$4270. Not bad for a young organization that needed whatever help (financial and otherwise) they could get during the first few years.

The program Chairman for the conference was George Wilson. George arranged a V.I.P. Tour of the White House. In addition there would be a tour of the Firearms International factory to observe the manufacture of firearms. The NRA Headquarters and Museum would also be open special hours for AFTE.

The Key Man Award for 1973 went to Monty Lutz. The Man of the Year 1973, award went to George Wilson and Maurice Stack jointly.

The Officers elected for the 1974-1975 AFTE year is as follows: President, James Warner, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office. Vice President, Herbert Binsbacher, Kansas City, Missouri PD. Secretary, John S. Bates, New York State Police. Treasurer, Robert J. Smith, Chicago Police Department. Executive Committee, Patrick V. Garland, USACIL – Europe, George Wilson, Washington DC Metro Police Department and Andy Newquist, BCI, Iowa.

Otis Hensley, Fort Gordon Crime Laboratory continued as Editor of the AFTE Journal.

Note: The October 1974 – December 1974 issue of the AFTE Journal announced that effective with that combined issue, a new Editor would replace Otis Hensley. George Wilson, Metro Police Department, Ballistics Lab., Washington D. C. would be the new Editor.

First Proposed Code of Ethics

Russell Wilhelm was appointed as chairman (1974-1975) of an Ethics Committee to prepare a “Code of Ethics”. Also appointed to the committee were Cortlandt Cunningham and Col. Edward B. Crossman. A proposed “Code of Ethics” was recommended and published in the AFTE Journal October 1974 – December 1974. It was simple, concise and consisted of five brief paragraphs. The committee requested comments as well as any suggested changes and

recommendations. It was republished again in the March 1975 issue of the AFTE Journal with the further advisory that a final version would be submitted to the AFTE Business Meeting in Dan Diego, CA on April 22, 1975. The AFTE Business Meeting report of 22 April 1975 contains the following reference to the "Code of Ethics". "AFTE's proposed Code of Ethics was read to the members present. Joe Reitz moved, and Jim Hamby seconded a motion to adopt the Code as read. The motion was carried."

The 1975 Re-Examination and Testing of The Robert Kennedy Firearms Evidence

Following Senator Robert Kennedy's assassination on June 5th, 1968, Sirhan B. Sirhan was charged with the crime and found guilty after a California jury trial. Thereafter, the California Appellate Court and Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court denied every appeal and writ filed by the defendant Sirhan. A quote from the Los Angeles Times (7/13/75) may serve to place the matter in historical perspective – "Was there ever a plainer case. Perhaps 90-100 persons were jammed in the Ambassador's (Hotel) pantry when Senator Kennedy was shot. Close friends and associates were in nearly physical contact with him. Suddenly Sirhan rushed across the room, screamed an oath, reached past an assistant maitre d' escorting Kennedy and fired at the Senator. Sirhan was captured. His gun was seized and his captors protected him from enraged members of the crowd. Not a single person who was in that crowded pantry ways now says anyone besides Sirhan was seen firing a gun. A television film runner once said he saw a guard fire a weapon, but he has since backtracked. At the trial, Sirhan admitted he shot Kennedy, and his attorneys focused attempts to save his life on grounds of diminishing mental capacity." As the Times said – "Was there ever a plainer case?"

Despite all of this legal and other history, there soon developed pressures and demands in many quarters and by the news media to reopen the case. As is almost always the case, a number of assassination buffs emerged to join the chorus. The National Enquirer (Oct 31, 1971) headlined "Claim New Evidence Shows Sirhan did not Assassinate Senator Kennedy." This story outlined the charge by a California Criminalist William W. Harper that there were differences in the rifling angles found on certain evidence bullets. Later the Chicago Daily News (2/21/1975) published a story that arose out of the AAFS Conference in Chicago and a panel discussion. The paper described Harper's allegations that there was a difference in the rifling angle between Exhibit 47 (Kennedy bullet) and Exhibit 54 (Weisel bullet). Weisel was one of the injured bystanders. This he said suggested that different guns had fired the 2 bullets. Herbert MacDonell had also joined Harper in support of this allegation. Herbert MacDonell also raised the question of a different number of cannellures between these 2 bullets thus suggesting different brands of ammunition and because all the fired cartridge cases in Sirhan's gun were of the same brand, another gun must have been involved. Both felt there was a difference in the rifling clarity thereby suggesting different guns. They also could find no matching individual characteristics on Harper's Balliscan photos to suggest they were fired from the same gun.

Almost simultaneously, (early September 1975) Paul Schrade (one of the wounded bystanders) and CBS news made application to Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Robert Wenke to inspect and test certain ballistics exhibits. CBS based its application for the inspection and testing on the rather unique argument of "the public's right to know." Judge Wenke ordered the retesting and

provided that each of the interested parties could select an expert to serve on a special experts panel.

Judge Wenke's order for retesting dated 9/18/1975 identified the seven (7) experts who would do the retesting and examination. "Under the supervision of the Court, and subject only to the terms and condition set forth in this order, the following seven (7) firearms experts shall conduct scientific examination of the exhibits and material delineated in this order:"

1. Cortland Cunningham, F.B.I, Washington, D.C. (Selected by the Attorney General of California.)
2. Stanton O. Berg, Minneapolis, Minnesota. (Selected by Los Angeles County.)
3. Alfred A. Biasotti, California Department of Justice, Sacramento, California. (Selected by District Attorney's Office of Los Angeles.)
4. Lowell W. Bradford, San Jose, California. (Selected by CBS News.)
5. Ralph Turner, East Lansing, Michigan. (Selected by gun shot victim Schrade.)
6. Charles V. Morton, Oakland, California. (Selected by Defendant Sirhan.)
7. Patrick V. Garland, Tidewater Regional Laboratory, Norfolk, Virginia. (Selected as Expert at Large.)

The seven-member panel was uneven in number to prevent a tie vote in the event of a dispute. Five (5) members of the panel were AFTE members. Only Ralph Turner and Charles V. Morton were not members of AFTE. Morton and Turner were however members of AAFS.

In accordance with the provisions of the Court's order the seven panel members assembled in Los Angeles. On Tuesday, September 23rd, 1975, the panel members were present at a meeting of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, where they were introduced to the supervisors, press and public. Patrick Garland was selected by the panel members to serve as the Court Administrator, to comply with the Court's order. That afternoon the panel was taken to their selected work area, a jury room in Department 3, Los Angeles Superior Court to get settled and commence work. Equipment consisted of two AO forensic comparison microscopes, one Leitz comparison microscope, several stereomicroscopes and camera equipment. Several of the panel members brought items of specialized equipment to supplement the equipment provided by the County.

The Panel was charged with the responsibility of determining if there was any ballistic evidence of a 2nd gun and to analyze the questions relating to (1) rifling angle, (2) rifling clarity and (3) number of cannelures on the evidence bullets.

The panel spent 10 days making their examinations and preparing reports. The panel worked from 8:00 AM until 7:00 PM including Saturday and Sunday. During that time they examined 26 bullets or bullet fragments (10 evidence and 16 test bullets including 8 panel test bullets.) and Sirhan's Iver Johnson Model 55-SA Cadet .22 caliber double action revolver. The panel worked without payment or fees however, Los Angeles County paid their individual travel expenses, lodging and meals. The County arranged for all the experts to stay at the Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. This was relatively close to the area where the panel members would be working. Most of the panel members would return to the Biltmore for dinner and relaxed

conversation after the days work was done. It was during such an evening that I became acquainted with a favorite California drink, the Margarita. Al Biasotti talked me into trying my first one. It has also since become my favorite drink for relaxing at the end of a long day.

Because the original controversy on rifling angle arose as a result of Harper and MacDonell's observations and measurements on Balliscan photographs, (photographs made as the bullet is rotated in front of the lens) this area was also looked into. Apparently because I was the only one who had a protractor eyepiece (Wild) for my stereomicroscope, I was selected along with Ralph Turner to analyze this area. We made direct angle measurements on the bullets in question (Kennedy and Weisel Bullets) using my protractor eyepiece. We found no demonstrable difference in rifling angles. We also made angle measurements on enlarged Balliscan photographs on a drafting machine. The Balliscan photographs represented two rotations of the bullets. It was concluded that the Balliscan camera did not provide a reliable means for rifling angle measurements. It was noted that there were very substantial differences in rifling angle noted between the same reference points on the bullet on the 1st and 2^d bullet rotation in the same Balliscan photograph. Also noted were very substantial differences between the same reference points on Balliscan photographs of the same bullet made by the same Balliscan camera but made on different days.

The Panel conclusions were that:

- A. No difference in the number of bullet cannellures.
- B. No difference in rifling clarity – just difference in impact damage.
- C. No difference in rifling angles.
- D. No evidence of a second gun.

As to the bullet examinations - Berg, Cunningham, Bradford and Garland identified the Kennedy, Goldstein and Weisel bullets as having been fired through the same firearm. Biasotti reported that the same three bullets very probably were fired through the same firearm. Berg, Cunningham, Garland and Biasotti also suggest a strong indication that the Sirhan revolver had fired the above mentioned bullets Turner and Morton's findings were inconclusive.

All of the experts were subjected to cross examination in open court as to their findings.

When the panel reports were opened in court they received wide press coverage. Some examples of headlines would be - "2nd Gun is Ruled Out", "Two Gun Theory Smashed", "A Theory Disarmed" etc.

The complete details on the examination and testing including the entire individual and combined panel members reports can be found in a "Special Edition" (Volume 8, No. 3) of the AFTE Journal published October 1976. Patrick Garland prepared the Special Edition narrative.

All of the AFTE Members of the Panel were later honored by AFTE, receiving a "Special Honors Award" for their work as a part of the panel. The award was presented at the At the AFTE Meeting in 1976. The award read "For outstanding professionalism in examination of firearms evidence of Robert F. Kennedy assassination."

To the credit of Herbert MacDonell, I quote the following from an article by Mark Pinsky prepared for the 10 July 1977 issue of Tropic – (A Florida Sunday Supplement) entitled “Bloody Murder.” “MacDonell was one of the primary developers of the “second gun” theory of the Robert Kennedy killing, which he now says was a “beautiful theory, shot down completely.””

Note: This was not the last time that a special panel made up of AFTE members examined and reviewed firearms evidence in a notorious case.

The July 1979 AFTE Journal has a short article under the heading – “Assassination Committee Firearms Panel.” “In August of 1977, AFTE was requested to provide a list of examiners to serve as the Firearms Panel to the Select Committee on Assassination, United States House of Representatives. This panel was given the task of reexamining the firearms evidence for the John F. Kennedy and Martin L. King, Jr., Assassination inquiry by the above committee. Selected by the select committee to serve on the firearms panel were: John Bates, Don Champagne, Monty Lutz, Andy Newquist and Russ Wilhelm with George Wilson as technical assistant. Between August of 1977 and until March 1979, when the firearms panel made their final visit to Washington, DC for the purpose of reviewing the final report, the panel spent several hundred hours in the painstaking examination of the tremendous amount of evidence involved with both specific cases. This reexamination process was conducted in Washington, DC utilizing the Washington Metropolitan Police Department Laboratory which was graciously made available by George Wilson. Russ Wilhelm assisted in the King re-examination but was forced to resign from the Kennedy portion of the reexamination for personal reasons.”

Mid 1970's

As we bring this narrative to an end in the mid 1970s our President was Monty C. Lutz of the Wisconsin Department of Justice. (1975-1976) The Vice President was Andrew M. Newquist of the Iowa State Crime Laboratory. John S. Bates, Jr. of the New York State Police was still the Secretary and Robert J. Smith of the Chicago PD Criminalistics Division was still the Treasurer. The Executive Committee was James Warner (Los Angeles County SO), George R. Wilson (Metro PD, Washington D.C.), and Bobby D. Blackburn (FBI Laboratory). As of the April 1975, the total membership exceeded 300. (302) Pending memberships totaled 18. The membership breakdown indicated 192 Regular Members, 107 Associate Members and 3 Emeritus Members. We also had 34 Distinguished Members.

President Monty Lutz established an “Examinations and Standards” Committee. The Chairman was Donald E. Smith of the Chicago PD Criminalistics Division. The committee members were Al Biasotti (California Department of Justice), Stanton O. Berg (Firearms Consultant – Minneapolis), James E. Hamby (Army Crime Laboratory) and Evan Hodge (FBI Crime Laboratory). The purpose of this committee was to establish some minimum standards for firearms examinations. This committee eventually evolved into the AFTE National Peer Group on Certification. (1978) The make up of the committee at that time was Al Biasotti (Chairman) Stanton O. Berg, John Cayton (Secretary), Pat Garland, Evan Hodge, Art Paholke, Charles Meyers, Don Smith and John Ward. (Three alternate members were also selected. They were Bob Christansen, Monty Lutz and Al Della Penna.) Apparently AFTE members were not then

ready for certification. AFTE's goal of certification eluded this committee and subsequent committees for almost 25 years before the first certification examinations were held.

Membership – Historical Notes: As of December 18th, 2003, the total membership was 810. This number indicates a steady growth over the years. I doubt that the original-founding members at the February 1969 meeting would ever have imagined that the small group of 36 would grow to this size. Even the 1975 membership of 300+ would probably have been surprised at this continued rate of growth.

In the middle 1960's (1965) Lyndon B. Johnson was President, the U.S. Population was 193,526,000, and the Dow Jones was at \$969.26. By the time of AFTE's formation in 1969, the country had undergone a recession. Richard M. Nixon was President, the U. S. Population had increased to 201,385,00 and the Dow Jones had dropped to \$805.04. As we end this narrative in the mid 1970's (June 1975) Gerald R. Ford was President, the U. S. Population was up to 215,465,00 with the Dow Jones was starting to recover at \$859.81.

AFTE's Original 36 – A Summary and an Update

Note: There have been two numbers used to describe the original 1969 meeting attendees. One number was 35 and the other was 36. The number 36 is historically the correct number. One member in effect fell through the cracks. Joseph Wilimovsky was originally listed as an attendee but because his first year's participant dues were never received, he was dropped from the listings. Walter Howe's "Complete Listing of All AFTE Participants" published in February of 1970 shows a total of 35 members that are indicated to have been at the 1969 Chicago conference. Joseph Wilimovsky did not appear on the list because of his lack of follow through on dues payment.

(Arranged in alphabetical order.)

BERG, Stanton "Stan" O. Originally in 1969 he was a private Firearms Consultant in Minneapolis, MN. He has been a frequent speaker at AFTE Conferences as well as a frequent contributor to the AFTE Journal. He was elected to the first AFTE Executive Committee in 1970 and served for two terms. He was AFTE's first recipient of the "Key Man Award" given out at the 1973 conference covering the year 1972. He was in the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He received an AFTE "Special Honors Award" in 1976 for work on a national panel that reviewed the evidence in the Robert Kennedy Assassination. He was named to the new "Examinations and Standards Committee" in 1976 and later the AFTE National Peer Group on Certification in 1978. He is a Distinguished Life member and still works and resides in Minneapolis, MN

BIGLER, Edward "Ed" G. Originally in 1969 he was Chief, Crime Laboratory Bureau, at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in Tallahassee. Previously he had spent 15 years with the Dade County Crime Laboratory in Miami. In 1970 he was AFTE Vice President. In 1971 he became the third AFTE President. He was on the Executive Committee for 1972-1973. He was in the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He is currently retired and living in Loveland, Colorado.

BOESE, Robert “Bob” A. Originally in 1969 he was with the firearms section of the Crime Laboratory in the Chicago Police Department. He later became the Coordinator of the Bureau of Technical Services in the Criminalistics Division. Bob eventually went into private consulting work by establishing his own firm under the name of the B and W Consulting Forensic Chemists. He was listed as the President with the company location at Downers Grove, Illinois. The 1989 AFTE roster shows him at that location. He passed away a few years ago.

BROCKSMITH, Donald. Originally in 1969 he was the Forensic Services Laboratory Director of the St. Louis County Police Department at Clayton, Missouri. Previously he had been the Firearms Examiner for the St. Louis City Police Department. In 1969 he left the City Police Department to accept the Director position with St. Louis County. He appeared on Walter Howe’s 25 February 1970 listing of 175 paid up participants. He also appeared on the 1970-1971 AFTE Roster. He did contribute a short item to AFTE Newsletter No. 4 (12/15/1969) concerning an automobile ignition puller used by car thieves. Other than this short item, his name does not appear in the early AFTE Newsletters or Journals. He continued as laboratory director until his death. The Social Security Death Index shows that he passed away in October 1978 at Florissant, MO.

CAYWOOD, Douglas “Doug” A. Originally in 1969 he was with the United States Army Crime Laboratory in Germany. During that time he was one of Lockhoven’s co-authors of the significant 3 volume works “Arms Archives” published by International Small Arms Publishers in 1969. M. D. Waite reviewed this publication in the December 1969 issue of the AFTE Newsletter. In the 1982 AFTE directory, Doug is shown as an independent consultant at Cannon City, Colorado. He later went into private consulting under the name of J. M. C Laboratories at Grand Junction, Colorado where he was listed as Senior Criminalist. In The 1989 through 1992 AFTE rosters he was listed with Western Forensic Sciences at Grand Junction, CO. I remember Doug as a frequent annual conference attendee in the early years.. He does not appear in the AFTE rosters after 1992.

CELOVSKY, Joseph “Joe” R. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He was an AFTE Journal contributor in the early 1970s. He retired from the Chicago PD in 1985. The 1992 AFTE roster shows him as a distinguished member residing at Clearwater, Florida.

CHAMPAGNE, Donald “Don” E. Originally in 1969 he was at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in Tallahassee. He served on the Board of Admissions from 1972-1974. Don was the 2d. Vice President in 1976-1977. He was the 1st Vice President in 1977-1978. He became the 10th AFTE President in 1978-79. He served on the Executive Committee in 1979-1980. Don served on the Special Firearms Panel to the Select Committee of Assassination, U.S. House of Representatives during 1977-1979. He is currently an Emeritus Member living in Port St. Joe, Florida.

CHRISTENSEN, Kenard “Ken” K. Originally in 1969 he was with the Michigan State Police at Plymouth, Michigan. Kenard joined the Michigan State Police on 20 June 1949. He was the Commanding Officer of the Plymouth Regional Crime Laboratory. He later moved to the Northville, MI Crime Laboratory. He retired from the Michigan State Police as a Captain on 13

October 1978. During his retirement he organized a hospital laboratory specializing in serological paternity and child identification testing. He passed away on 23 December 1989.

FINNEGAN, Edward V. Originally in 1969 he was with the American Optical Company in Rosemount, Illinois. In 1970 he became an associate member. A report from the Treasurer (Robert J. Smith) dated September 27th, 1971 recommended he be dropped as a member for failure to pay his 1971 dues. No further record is noted of Mr. Finnegan.

GAINER, James “Jim” M. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He started at the Crime Lab in April 1967. John Stauffer was his mentor in those early days. Jim was in the first group of 29 Distinguished Members in 1973. Jim was also the joint program chairman for the 1973 meeting in Chicago. He retired from the Chicago PD Crime Lab. In June 1995 (supervisor) after 28 years. He was then employed at the Illinois State Police Forensic Science Center in Chicago as a Criminalistics Section supervisor. He is now a retired (July 1999) Emeritus member living in the Western suburbs (Burr Ridge) of the Chicago area.

HOPPE, August O. Originally in 1969 he was with the New Jersey State Police, at Trenton, NJ. He apparently did not progress beyond the early participant stage. He was shown on Walter Howe’s February 25, 1970 roster as one of the 175 paid participants. He did not however appear on the 1970-1971 AFTE roster.

HOWE, Walter J. Originally in 1969 he was listed in the roster as a firearms consultant at Wilton, Connecticut. Previously he had been the Editor of the American Rifleman Magazine from 1953-1966. While the Editor he has such people as General Julian Hatcher on his technical staff. In 1962 he became a member of the AAFS sponsored by Burt Munhall. In 1968 he became associated with Ruger as a legislative and marketing consultant. Walter became the first AFTE president in 1969. He was more than just the first President. Walter was the AFTE guiding light in the early years. In 1970 he became a member of the first Executive Board. Walter was a frequent program participant and a contributor to the AFTE Journal.. He was in the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. In 1974 he became Vice President of Manufacturing at the Ruger Southport CT plant. He retired from Ruger in 1984. He is currently an Emeritus member living in Fairfield, Connecticut.

JOHNSON, Warren G. Originally in 1969 he was with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington D.C. He served on the first Membership Committee 1969-1970. He also served on the Executive Board in 1973-1974. He is currently a retired Emeritus member living at Manakin-Sabat, VA.

KIRBY, Shane “Rip” J. Originally in 1969 he was with the Crime Detection Laboratory of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Regina, Saskatchewan. He first entered the Regina Laboratory in 1957. He retired from the RCMP Regina Laboratory in 1981. When Shane retired he was a RCMP Staff Sergeant in charge of the firearms section. He did private consulting for a period of time following his retirement from the RCMP. Shane is currently living with a daughter on a ranch near Prince George, BC, Canada.

KRCMA, Vaclav “Jack”. Originally in 1969 he was listed as head of the Ballistics Section of the Laboratory of Legal Medicine and Police Science in Montreal. Previously he had been with the Firearms Section of The Attorney General’s Laboratory in Toronto. His membership never progressed beyond the “participant” stage in 1969-1970. Early newsletters contain several of his articles. The published 1970-71-membership roster does not list him. Although he advised me in 1974 that he submitted an application Ca. 1972. There is a strong disagreement between Jack and AFTE Staff as to why there was no follow through. In any event and whatever the reason, AFTE lost one of the original founding “Participants”, a man with much knowledge and experience. When I last heard from Jack in July of 1984, he was a private consultant in Willowdale, Ontario. (See earlier notes.)

LOMORO, Vincent J. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He was a frequent AFTE Journal contributor in 1969 and 1970s. He was in the first group of 29 AFTE Distinguished Members in 1973. He retired from the Chicago PD in 1990. He is now a retired Emeritus member living in Orland Park, IL.

MATHEWS, J. Howard. Originally in 1969 he was Emeritus Professor (Chemistry) at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He passed away in Madison on April 15th, 1970 at the age of 88 years. He is noted as the author of the massive 2-volume book “Firearms Identification” published in 1962 by the University of Wisconsin. He published the first edition at the age of 81. Charles C. Thomas published a second 3-volume edition after his death. Volume III of the second edition was published with the Editorial Assistance of AFTE Member Allan E. Wilimovsky.

MEYERS, Charles “Charlie” R. Originally in 1969 and until 1973 he was a Det. Lieut. Heading the Crime Laboratory, Department of State Police, East Lansing, Michigan.. He became AFTE’s 2d President for the term 1970-1971. In 1971 he became one of the AFTE Executive Committee members. He was a frequent AFTE Conference speaker and a contributor to the AFTE Journal. He was in the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. Later in 1976-1988 he served as a Senior Analyst in Firearms and Tool Mark identification with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement at the Sanford and Orlando Crime Laboratories. In 1989 he retired to do independent firearms consulting. He is currently an Emeritus Member living in Mountain City, TN.

MUNHALL, Burton “Burt” D. Originally in 1969 he was a Technical Consultant with the Federal Cartridge Co. in Anoka, MN. Previously he had been the Manager of the H. P. White Laboratory in Bel Air, MD. He retired from Federal in December 1977. Burt served as the Program Chairman for the 2d AFTE Conference in Chicago in 1970. Burt was in the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. Prior to his retirement he was a frequent speaker at the AFTE Conferences as well as a contributor to the AFTE Journal. He passed away in 1997.

NICHOL, Robert “Bob” C. Originally in 1969 he was Firearms Section Head with the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto, Ontario. He was elected as the Secretary at the 2d AFTE Conference in 1970. He was Co-Program Chairman for the 1976 AFTE Conference in Toronto. In 1981 he left his job with the Centre of Forensic Sciences to work with the Ontario Police

Commission in the installation of new computer equipment. He later retired to Westmeath, Ontario. He passed away in the spring of 2002.

NICOL, Joseph D. Originally in 1969 he was with the University of Illinois in Chicago. He had previously been the Superintendent of the Illinois Bureau of Identification. He served on the first Membership Committee in 1969-1970. He apparently never advanced beyond the participant membership stage. He did appear on the 25 February 1970 roster of paid participants. He did not however appear on the 1970-1971-membership roster.

NIELSON, Burt C. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He was an AFTE Journal contributor in the early 1970s. Burt was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. Burt retired from the Chicago PD in 1988. He is currently an Emeritus member operating the B. C. Nielson & Associates organization in Chicago.

PAHOLKE, Arthur "Art" R. Originally in 1969 he was with the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory specializing in tool mark identification. Arthur was a very active AFTE member. He was a frequent AFTE Conference speaker and an AFTE Journal contributor. In 1970 he was elected to the new Board of Admissions. He served as the 4th AFTE President for the year 1972-1973. He was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He was on the 1973-1974 Executive Board. He retired from the Chicago PD after 35 years and moved to Hot Springs, AR. While living in Arkansas he served as a Forensic Science Instructor at the Arkansas State Crime Laboratory. He passed away on 7 October 2002.

PURTELL, David J. Originally in 1969 he was a Captain and the Director of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He did not advance his membership beyond the participant stage. He did appear on the 25 February 1970 list of paid participants. He did not however appear on the 1970-1971 memberships AFTE roster. He made the opening introduction at the 2d AFTE Conference in 1970. His background expertise was questioned documents. His service to AFTE was in the formative stages when he assisted with the Constitution and By-Laws.

RATHMAN, William E. Originally in 1969 he was a Firearms Examiner with the Cincinnati Police Department. His final position was with the Florida Department of Criminal Law Enforcement at Sanford, Florida. He passed away in 1975. His son Garry A. Rathman was also an AFTE member who trained under his father until his death.

SADUNAS, John M. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He appeared on Walter Howe's February 25th, 1970 listing of paid participants. He later withdrew his membership application and thus did not appear on the AFTE 1970-71 roster. He received some criticism in connection with his examination of the evidence in the aftermath of the Chicago Police raid on Black Panther Headquarters in December 1969. He retired from the Chicago PD in Circa 1979. He is said to have suddenly passed away several years ago.

SMITH, Donald "Don" E. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He later retired from the Chicago PD and moved on to the

Illinois State Police Laboratory in 1987. Don was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He was the joint program chairman of the 1973 meeting in Chicago. In 1976 he was appointed as chairman of the newly established "Examinations and Standards" Committee. He was later in 1978, a member of the AFTE National Peer Group on Certification. In 1989-1990, Don was elected to AFTE 2d Vice President.. Don became 1st Vice President in 1990-1991. He was the 23rd AFTE President in 1991-92. Following his term as president, he moved on to the Board of Directors for 1992-1993. He is currently a retired Emeritus member living in Glendale, AZ.

SMITH, Robert "Bob" J. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He was elected as the 2d Treasurer at the AFTE Conference in 1970. He served as the Treasurer for several years. Bob was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. Bob was the 2d Vice President in 1982-1983. He became the 1st Vice President in 1983-1984. In 1984-85 he became the 16th AFTE President. He continued on to the Board of Directors in 1985-1986. He retired from the Chicago Crime Laboratory in 1996. This is the same year he started work for the Illinois State Police Forensic Science Center in Chicago where he is currently employed as a Group Supervisor. He presently resides in Orland Park, IL.

SOJAT, John G. Originally in 1969 he was a private consultant living at Clifton Hill, Missouri. Previously he had been in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory for 11 years. This was followed by 8 years in the Dade County Crime Laboratory in Miami. In circa 1971 he returned to work in the Dade County Florida Department of Public Safety .He served on the first Membership Committee 1969-1970. He also served on the Board of Admissions 1970-1972. John was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He passed away several years ago. The Social Security Death records show a John Sojat passed away in the New Port Richey area of Florida in October 1984.

STAUFFER, John C. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory where he was the Supervisor. He was the first Secretary elected in 1969. He retired from the Chicago PD Crime Laboratory in 1972 after 20 years in the Laboratory. He then started working in the Northern Illinois Police Crime Laboratory. John was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He was our first Emeritus member. He is credited with being one of the members that pushed for the first meeting that resulted in the AFTE organization. He passed away several years ago.

WAITE, Malden D. Originally in 1969 he was the Technical Editor of the American Rifleman Magazine at NRA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. He was a graduate of the University of Illinois in 1941 and served as an officer in World War II and the Korean War. He was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members selected in 1973. In 1974 he was awarded the AFTE Man of the Year. He died of a heart attack on April 25th, 1976 while on vacation leave from his job as Technical Editor. He died at the early age of 59.

WARNER, Ernest "Ernie" N. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Chicago Police Department Crime Laboratory. He became the first AFTE Historian in 1971 and held this position until 1975. He was a frequent AFTE Journal contributor in 1969 and the 1970s.

He was also one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He retired from the Chicago PD in 1997. He has now passed away.

WILIMOVSKY, Allen “Al” E. Sr. Originally in 1969 he was with the Crime Laboratory Bureau of the Wisconsin Department of Justice in Madison, WI. His career at this laboratory dated back to 1949. His career also embraced a 2-year period at the Fort Gordon, Georgia Crime Laboratory. While at Wisconsin he was an understudy of Charles M. Wilson and Joseph Wilimovsky. Al was one of our Distinguished Members. Al served for several years on the early AFTE Board of Admissions. (1970-1974) He passed away on August 13, 1990.

WILIMOVSKY, Joseph “Joe” C. Jr. Originally in 1969 he was with the Crime Laboratory Bureau of the Wisconsin Department of Justice in Madison, WI. The initial May 5th 1969 list of participants contained his name, however, the February 25th, 1970 “Complete Listing of all AFTE Participants” no longer listed his name. He is not listed on the detailed membership roster for 1970-1971. He never made the transition from initial participant to regular member. His early career was a distinguished one. He started out with the Cook County Coroner’s Office in Chicago. He later became an assistant to Calvin Goddard in his Crime Detection Laboratory at Northwestern University. He passed away on 16 July 1976 as a victim of a form of cancer. He was Allan Wilimovsky’s brother.

WILSON, Charles “Charlie” M. Originally in February 1969 he was Director of the Crime Laboratory Bureau of the Wisconsin Department of Justice in Madison, WI. His career dated back to 1930 when he joined the staff of the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory at Northwestern University in Chicago. In 1938 when the Crime Laboratory was transferred to the Chicago Police Department, Wilson also transferred. In 1947 he resigned from the Chicago Police Laboratory to accept the job of establishing a new Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory. He was the first AFTE Treasurer during the 1969-1970 year. In July of 1969 he resigned from the laboratory and became a private consulting criminalist residing in Madison, WI. He passed away in Madison on 14 August 1973.

WOLFER, DeWayne Allan. Originally in 1969 he was in the Firearms Section of the Los Angeles Police Crime Laboratory. Wolfer was also Assistant Professor at California State College. He was elected to the first Executive Committee for 1970-71. He served as the Program Chairman for the 3rd AFTE Conference (1971) in Phoenix. He was Vice President in 1971-1972. He was one of the first group of 29 Distinguished AFTE Members in 1973. He later received some critical attention in regard to his part in the Robert Kennedy assassination investigation. He handled the firearms evidence examinations for Los Angeles Criminalistics Laboratory and later testified at Sirhan’s trial. My last recall of seeing Mr. Wolfer was in November 1975 when he was seated as a spectator at the rear of the Judge Robert A. Wenke’s Los Angeles, CA Superior Court Room. At the time I was giving testimony as a part of the open court hearings on the results of the re-examination of the Robert Kennedy Assassination firearms exhibits.