

SHAPE Officers' Association (S.O.A)

Historical Background

The SHAPE Officers' Association (SOA) was founded in 1961 by a group of officers at SHAPE, at that time located in Paris. They established not only our Association but began what has become a fine tradition, an annual reunion. The first such event occurred on October 7, 1961. It was attended by General Gruenther, a previous Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), General Norstad (then SACEUR) and about 200 other officers from all NATO nations. General Gruenther became the first President, a post he held until 1975. He was followed by General Lemnitzer (from 1975 to 1987), General Rogers (1987-1997) and General Shalikashvili (1997-2004), all previous SACEURs. General Peter CARSTENS, DEU A (Retired), a former Chief of Staff was our fifth President from 2004 to 2008, and currently General George A. Joulwan (JAHL'win), USA, (Retired) is the sixth President of the Association. Our activities are planned by the Executive Committee, headed by the Chairman, Major General Jean-Paul CRAVILLON, BEL Army (Retired).

Today, the SHAPE Officers' Association counts some 1,750 members.

Aims of the SOA

The aims of the Association are threefold:

to foster friendships among officers/civilians of equivalent rank who serve at SHAPE and with those who have served at SHAPE;

to keep members informed about SHAPE and the military situation in NATO; and

to enable members to serve the Alliance even after retirement. In short, to perpetuate the traditions of SHAPE and to support and propagate the mission, ideals and objectives of NATO.

The SOA Today

Briefings and luncheons are held throughout the year which feature distinguished political or military leaders on current military or political topics.

Beer calls which feature a speaker.

An Annual Symposium (usually the first weekend of October) which includes such activities as cultural visits, a golf tournament, briefings, a presentation by

SACEUR, etc. The formal Annual Dinner features a leading political or military figure as the guest speaker.

There are Chapters in Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Three newsletters are published per year. (For members' only)

A list of members is distributed every two years. (For members' only)

SOA items for sale: silk and polyester neckties (dark blue with SHAPE crest), Parker rollerball pens, and cufflinks.