



# AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

November 2007

### Air Commando Still Involved

By Sam, ACA President

During the reunion I had an interesting conversation with life member Frank Orr. Frank sent a note complementing the volunteers and stating how much he enjoyed the reunion. Frank's friend, Doug Blair, served with him in the munitions maintenance/ weaponer career field at Hurlburt Field many years ago. Both of them are experts and have been real contributors to the success of their career field. According to Doug, Frank even flew some mission in the A-26 in Vietnam.

Frank now works for Omega Training Group as an IED expert at the U.S. Army Infantry

See **INVOLVED** pg. 3

### ACA Member 1st Lt. Lukasik Addresses 36th Reunion

1st Lt. Lukasik gave us a first hand report of what was happening in Iraq as an Intel officer. She was a very dynamic speaker and everyone was very impressed by her speech and performance.

### Reunion Wrap Up

By Ken Lengfield, ACA Vice President, and Reunion Chairman

The 2007 Air Commando Reunion is in the books now. All went as planned and friends gathered to relate old times and war stories. Some, perhaps, were even true.

The Hospitality Inn was the center of most activities as usual. The fish fry and barbeque where up to the usual good standards. The banquet at the Soundside Club maybe last at that club. The club is scheduled to be demolished to make room for a new and greatly

enhanced club. We're not sure about the banquet location next year so stay tuned. We'll let you know as things progress. At the banquet we were entertained by the Madrigal Singers from Choctaw High School and they were excellent. It was encouraging to see such a group of good kids for our next generation. Our speaker for the evening was Lt. Christine Lukasik. Christine has had tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. She gave a very favorable account of some of our achievements in that theatre.



**1st Lt. Christine Lukasik**  
Read her Bio on page 3

Information not usually found in our national news media.

Next years reunion is already in the planning stages so mark your calendar. See ya then.

### Inside Features

A-26 Nimrod 'Pic' .....	pg 30
General Meeting .....	pg 5
Book Reviews .....	pg 28
Hall of Fame .....	pg 21
Letters .....	pg 7
McCoskrie T.F. ....	pg 26
Membership .....	pg 4
Presidents Corner .....	back page
Reunion Report .....	pg 14-19
Rossel Report .....	pg 27



### McCoskrie Threshold Foundation and TLC make donations go a long way

Through the generous donations of the Geno Valentine family and others, projects such as the computer and sound rooms were refurbished, with all systems updated and some new computers added. For more information on Thailand-Laos -Cambodia Brotherhood, Inc. initiatives see page 26.

## AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION, INC.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### OFFICERS

President, Felix Sambogna 2008  
Vice President, Ken Lengfield 2008  
Treasurer, Felix Sambogna

#### DIRECTORS

Tom Bradley 2010  
David Harrington 2010  
Joe Harris 2008  
Bob Powell 2010  
Ted Saunders 2010  
Gordon H. Scott 2009  
Bob White 2009  
Fred Platt (Field Rep)  
1st SOW Rep, Christine Lukasik

#### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Pete Bowman

#### CHAPLAIN

Howie Pierson

The Board Of Directors normally meet at 9:00 AM the last Saturday of each month (Except December) at 2502 W. Hwy 98, Mary Esther, FL.

### McCoskrie/Threshold Foundation, Inc.

**Director:** Harry C. Aderholt

**Asst Director:** John Grove

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Butch Sluschewski

**Field Advisor:** Karen Kramer

**Medical Advisors:** John Peters, MD

### ACA Newsletter

Published Quarterly By The Air Commando Association, Inc.

Jim Boney, *Editor*

Jim Yealy, *Asst Editor*

Eugene Rossel, *Editor At Large*

Jeanette Moore, *Graphic Designer*

Gloria Doster, *Type Setter*

Fred Nowak, *Photographer*

Circulation: The Air Commando Association Newsletter is distributed free to members and other interested parties for a combined circulation of 3000 copies. Submit Copy Or Letters To The ACA Newsletter, PO Box 7, Mary Esther, FL 32569 or  
Email to: [aircomando@aol.com](mailto:aircomando@aol.com).

This publication is for the information, interest, and enjoyment of our readers. Views and opinions expressed are of the author or source of material and do not necessarily reflect opinions, views, or endorsements of the ACA. Material in the ACA newsletter may be reproduced provided the source is credited. Located 4 miles west Of Hurlburt on Hwy 98, The ACA Hq Office is open 9am-noon, Monday-Friday. Mail: Box 7, Mary Esther, FL, 32569. Phone: 850-581-0099. Fax: X 8988. website address is: [www.specialoperations.net](http://www.specialoperations.net)

# Editorial: August 1957:

## *The summer before Sputnik was launched*

*By Ralph Petroff*

Last month in my column I described the "Rocket Roll" - moving the original Saturn V rocket into its monumental new home on Interstate 565.

The 20th century's most magnificent machine - that century's Santa Maria - received a boisterous welcome from an overflow crowd at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center.

Apollo astronaut Walter Cunningham predicted that the new Davidson Saturn V Center would elevate the Center to equal the world's most-visited museum, the National Air and Space Museum in Washington.

The 160 million horsepower Saturn V will get the global attention it deserves at its grand opening on Jan. 31, 2008 - which also marks the 50th anniversary of America in space.

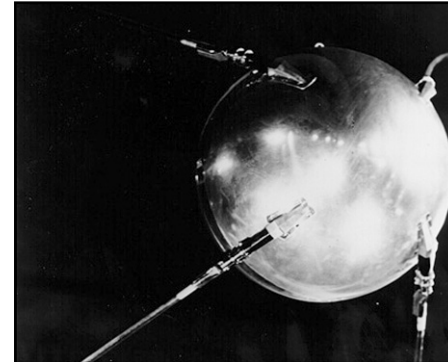
Celebrating these twin milestones together owes more to karma than coincidence: The same core team that put America in space in 1958, put America on the moon in 1969.

But the team might never have gotten the opportunity to do either if it hadn't been for what author Paul Dickson describes as "the Shock of the Century" - Sputnik.

The 50th anniversary of the Oct. 4, 1957 Sputnik launch will soon dominate the world's headlines. Sputnik was a shock to America as seismic as Pearl Harbor or Sept. 11, 2001. The Soviets couldn't make a reliable car, yet somehow leap-frogged the mighty United States into space!

It was a dazzling feat of exploration so unprecedented that no one could talk about anything else. For the first time in history, something that went up, did not come

down. If a satellite could be put in space, then nothing was impossible.



And it gave Wernher von Braun and his team the chance they had long been waiting for.

First, let's return to the von Braun's team arrival in Alabama in 1950. They faced the challenge of going from almost no engineers to thousands. They scooped up recent engineering graduates from Alabama and neighboring states. These were "greatest-generation" types: typically farm boys and/or war veterans on the G.I. Bill. Many were first in their family to graduate.

They supplemented these southern "Rocket Boys" with engineers recruited from across the country - and from around the world - to form the core team that put America in space, and then on the Moon.

Meanwhile, after 5 years of official silence, von Braun was finally free to go public with his bold vision of space travel. By 1952, he became the first scientific "rock star."

His vision for space occupied eight Collier's magazine covers. He became a regular on Walt Disney's TV program. Suddenly, everyone was talking about space, and everyone - even the Russians - assumed that the charismatic von Braun would lead the U.S. satellite effort.

But the Army/von Braun team

was passed over. Not once, but five times.

For 40 years, no one knew precisely why that happened. In 1997, the details of a program so secret that no paperwork existed were finally revealed: CORONA - the first spy satellite program.

President Eisenhower reasoned - correctly - that spy satellites could significantly reduce the chance of surprise nuclear attack. He was concerned that an Army rocket might run the risk of being denied the right to fly over Soviet air space. A civilian or research satellite would appear less menacing.

Ike's first space priority was missiles to protect America from nuclear Armageddon. He wanted his "A-Team" rocketeers focused on defense, not "exploration." The Russians appeared unlikely to beat the United States to space anyway.

But von Braun and his Army bosses were tenacious - even bootlegging unauthorized space research and hiding key parts. In 1956, wary higher-ups ordered von Braun to inspect a Redstone rocket himself to ensure no satellite was "accidentally" aboard.

Ironically, they finally got the go-ahead when Sputnik's orbits established global satellite fly-over rights.

America could certainly have been first in space. But because of Eisenhower's primary concern to deter nuclear war, it didn't.

When asked 15 years later if he had any regrets, von Braun said, "Perhaps it depends on whether it is better to be the first to put a machine into orbit, or the first to put men on the moon!"

This article previously appeared in the Huntsville Times. Ralph Petroff is a Times community columnist and can be reached at [ralph@magnavistagroup.com](mailto:ralph@magnavistagroup.com)

# Reunion

*Continued from page 1*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Christine Lukasik

Christine Lukasik was born in Oklahoma City, OK and raised in Tampa, FL. Following in her father's footsteps, she attended the United States Air Force Academy where she earned her Bachelors of Science in Management in June 2005. Upon graduation, she was

assigned to Goodfellow AFB, TX for six months training as an Intelligence Officer. Among her peers, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Lukasik was selected to join the 1<sup>st</sup> SOW at Hurlburt Field, FL in August 2006. She promptly volunteered to deploy and was soon granted her wish.

She deployed to Iraq in December 2006 as the Senior Analyst in support of the

Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component. Shortly after she arrived in theater, she volunteered to extend her tour an additional three months to support the 319th SOS. Her request was approved and her tour was extended through July 2007. Upon arriving back to the United States, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Lukasik took leave and promptly began educating herself through courses at both the Joint Special Operations University and the University of Oklahoma, where she is currently enrolled in a Masters in International Relations program. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Lukasik is slated to return

overseas to Afghanistan in December 2007.

She is a life member of the Air Commando Association (ACA) and serves on the ACA board as the liaison with the 1<sup>st</sup> SOW.

Lukasik Street on Hurlburt Field is named after her grandfather who received the Air Force Cross for an extraordinary action while flying a T-28 during the Vietnam Conflict.

Her other grandparents, Dee and Robby Roberson, played a key role in the formation of the ACA and have been constant supporters.

## Involved

*Continued from page 1*

Center at Fort Benning, GA. Supporting the CONUS Replacement Center they train deploying service members from all military branches and civilians prior to deployment to overseas locations including Iraq. According to Frank, IEDs are the number one killer and cause most

of the wounds of coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. In recognition of his service, Frank was recently awarded a Fort Benning coin.

It is always interesting and rewarding to hear/read about ACA members who are still doing their thing.

## ***Humor: WHY I FIRED MY SECRETARY***

Last week was my birthday and I didn't feel very well waking up that morning. I went downstairs for breakfast hoping my wife would be pleasant and say "Happy Birthday", and possibly have a present for me. As it turned out, she barely said good morning, let alone "Happy Birthday".

I thought... well, that's marriage for you, but the kids will remember. My kids came into breakfast and didn't say a word.

So when I left for the office, I was feeling pretty low and somewhat despondent.

As I walked into my office, my secretary Jane said, "Good morning, Boss, Happy Birthday" It felt a little better that at least someone had remembered.

I worked until one o'clock and then Jane knocked on my door and said, "You know, it's such a beautiful day outside, and it's your birthday, let's go out to lunch, just you and me." I said, "Thanks Jane, that's the greatest thing I've heard

all day. Let's go."

We went to lunch, but we didn't go where we normally would go. We dined instead at a little place with a private table, we had two martinis each and I enjoyed the meal tremendously. On the way back to the office, Jane said, "You know, it's such a beautiful day...we don't need to go back to the office, do we?" I responded, "I guess not. What do you have in mind?" She said, "Let's go to my apartment."

After arriving at her apartment Jane turned to me and said, "Boss, if you don't mind, I'm going to step into the bedroom for a moment, I'll be right back."

"O.K.," I nervously replied. She went into the bedroom and, after a couple of minutes, she came out carrying a huge birthday cake...followed by my wife, kids, and dozens of my friends and co-workers, all singing "Happy Birthday."

And I just sat there.. on the couch...naked.

*Submitted by member Keith Moore*

## ACA Memorial Bricks

Enclosed are four applications for memorial bricks in the names of Col. Patrick M. Fallon, Captains Michael J. Masterson and Robert F. Coady, and the crew of Candlestick 44 plus a check for \$400.00

I was Information Officer for the 56<sup>th</sup> SOW. Colonel Fallon was my first line supervisor. I admired him greatly. We had talked about my flying with him as a combat photographer, a role for which he approved my flight status. That never happened.

Morgan Donohue asked me to do a story on the first all lieutenant crew in the officer crew positions to fly a Candlestick mission. I had drawn PE, attended the pre-flight briefing and was getting ready to get on the bread truck as Candlestick 44H to go out to the aircraft when BG Dyas tracked me down and told me to come over to his quarters. His son had been severely injured in an Alabama motorcycle accident and he wanted to talk to someone. I promised the crew I would meet them when they got back. That never happened.

I met "Bat" Masterson several times. My memory is that he was "Mr. Vice" at the Dining-In held for

7<sup>th</sup> Air Force Commander General George Brown's visit. I may be foggy there, but he had a deserved reputation as a wit.

I only met Robert Coady once. He was fairly new to NKP and had just been assigned the collateral duty of squadron awards and decs officer. Since I held that slot at wing level, he met with me to learn what he had to do. He spent a couple of hours gleaning everything he could about the process, procedures, and regulations involved. He was shot down the next day.

I would like these brave and enthusiastic professionals to have a permanent place in the Air Commando collective memory. If there are any questions or recommendations on the working of the bricks, please let me know.

Sincerely,  
William H. Webster, Jr.  
3701 George Mason Dr #117N  
Falls Church VA 22041  
(703)-671-1961  
[bwebepa@verizon.net](mailto:bwebepa@verizon.net)

*Ed Note:*

*The four bricks you requested are all in place on the Wall of Fame.  
Thanks*



# Membership News



## TAPS

### *In Memory of:*

Bernard Glabby  
August 2007

Thomas M. LaFrance  
Unknown

John Pattee  
October 2007

**FOUND MEMBERS**  
Charles R. Hutson  
PO Box 278  
Montezuma, IN 47862

William K. Smith  
3690 Hwy 66  
Loris, SC 29569

**ON THE MOVE**  
Thomas J. Beck  
2330 Heartland Blvd #8  
O'Fallon, IL 62269

Robert D. Blough Jr  
939 Clear Brooks Dr  
Signal Mountain, TN 37377

William E. Brown  
17129 SE 93 Tallfier Terr  
The Villages, FL 32162

Norman J. Brozenick Jr  
7598 Holly Bush Way  
Falls Church, VA 22043

Joseph S. Castronova  
1575 S Esperanza St  
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Lawrence J. Clausen  
5104 Blue Harbor Dr  
Panama City, FL 32404

Gary E. Crowther  
Po Box 186  
Mary Esther, FL 32569

William H. Diggins  
322 Gobblerknob Rd  
Cullowhee, NC 28723

Frank M. Fabijan  
2052 State Road 17 South  
Avon Park, FL 33825

Rick Feeser  
1010 Rocky Bayou Dr  
Niceville, FL 32578

James Fleming  
PO Box 487  
Manuel, TX 77578

Dan Fleicher III  
2750 Shadow Pine Dr  
Roswell, GA 30076

Charles W. Goodson  
PO Box 14  
Lavonia, GA 30553

Dianne Gorski  
3298 Fox Tail Trl NW  
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Mike Grimm  
1374 W Calle Las Gulas  
Sahuarita, AZ 85629

Manson L. Grubbs  
2807 Kirksey Rd  
Murray, KY 42071

Jeffrey A. Hoyt  
3560 Olde Moss  
Schertz, TX 78154

David P. Jones  
1391 Cumberland Dr  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Karen K. Knight  
2131 Poplar Park Dr  
Kingwood, TX 77339

Nicholas Morris  
242 Alkane St  
Kailua, HI 95734

Lawrence A. Neal  
9960 E Andrada Rd  
Vaik, AZ 85641

Mrs. Charles Penney  
221 Beachview Dr NE #E  
Ft Walton Bch, FL 32547

Matthew A. Powell  
PSC 37 Box 98  
APO AE 09459

Francis A. Rauch Jr  
3436 High Bluff Dr  
Dallas, TX 75234

Melvin D. Sloan  
13420 Phoenix Dr  
Orlando, FL 32828

## ACA Scholarship Winners – 2007

During the annual reunion we awarded four \$1,500 scholarships. The winners determined by random selection (names with-drawn from a commando hat) are:

*Derek Ondrusek,*  
University of Pennsylvania  
*Katie J. Brozena,*  
Texas Christian University  
*Heidi Elaine Cohen,*  
Brigham Young University  
*Whitley Esteban,*  
University of Notre Dame

This year 19 names were submitted. The Scholarship Application form is published in the May newsletter each year.

Persons who were not winners this year may continue to apply as long as they meet the criteria listed on the application form.



I had a brief visit with Fred and Rosemary Nowak (pictured above) last month. Their home is beautiful on 6 acres in Liberty, SC. You can see the Blue Ridge Mountains from their back yard. Rosemary makes a delicious apple pie.

*Jim Boney, ACA Editor*

### NEW ANNUAL MEMBERS

Gary R. Bartling  
Cleveland N. Carter Jr  
Billy L. Colston  
Brian R. Gagne  
Roger D. Graham  
Joshua E. Harris  
Ray L. Merritt Jr  
Donald S. Mulder  
Frank W. Nelson  
James T. Pedriana  
Edward D. Pitkus  
Douglas K. Rhodes  
Eugene R. Schroeder  
Bobby Sears

### NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Ronald L. Bible  
Mike Clothier  
Travis L. Norton  
James D. Shaffer

### CONVERTED TO LIFE

Kenneth R. Dority  
Andrew I. Martin  
Dwayne Meyer  
Francis A. Rauch Jr  
David Wolfson

### LOST MEMBERS

Theda Boggs  
BGen George Gray III  
Timothy M. Moyd  
Richard G. Schweikhart

# AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION MINUTES GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 6 OCTOBER 2007

1. Meeting called to order at 0900 in the auditorium of the 20th SOS on Hurlburt Field, FL. All Executive Board members were present plus past presidents BG Aderholt, Bill Brown, and Chuck Keeler. There were approximately 80 ACA members present.
2. Howie Pierson, ACA Chaplain, performed the invocation, and Bob White led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Motion made by Bill Brown to approve the 2006 minutes, seconded by Joe Harris, and unanimously approved.
4. President Sambogna, also acting as treasurer, used a PowerPoint briefing. (Briefing is on file in the ACA office.):
  - a. Total assets including cash, CDs, promissory note, Country Store inventory, and real property and lot equals \$496,599.
  - b. Budget for 2007 was discussed. Not counting anticipated profit from the reunion a deficit of \$5,990 is programmed. Increased costs in most areas were discussed. However, financial status remains very good.
  - c. Membership report showed a total of 2,868 members reflecting a gain of 30 so far in 2007.
  - d. It was agreed that dues and scholarship donations would remain unchanged.
  - e. The newsletter is placed on the ACA Web site.
  - f. Hall of Fame procedures were reviewed, and it was announced that five persons would be inducted into the HOF at the banquet.
  - g. The Soundside Club may not be available for the 2008 reunion. Alternate plans will be made if necessary.
5. President Sambogna mentioned some recent accomplishments:
  - a. Revitalized the brick option and the response has been very good. Additional space on the building walls was made available.
  - b. Computerized the inventory in the country store
  - c. Continued improvement of displays in the back room (Hangar) by Roger Klair and Willie Hall.
  - d. Quality newsletter
  - e. New fence, new improved PC
  - f. Improved financial procedures
  - g. Rapport with the 1st SOW and active duty folks
6. Election was conducted to fill four board member positions. There were no candidates for the VP slot. Board members are Tom Bradley, David Harrington, Bob Powell, and Ted Saunders.
7. Scholarship drawing was held. The four winners are: Whitley Esteban, Derek Ondrusek, Katie J. Brozena, Hiedi Elaine Cohen
8. New business
  - a. It was suggested that the ACA roster, previously printed on hard copy at significant cost, be placed on the Web Site, password protected. This suggestion will be evaluated.
  - b. Gene Rossel made a motion for the ACA to submit a proposal to the Hurlburt Field Memorial Committee to name a facility (Hurlburt theater) in honor/memory of BG King. Chuck Keeler seconded the motion. During discussion Gene Rossel highlighted the impressive air commando accomplishments of General King. President Sambogna stated he felt one dedication for BG King was appropriate and adequate. He mentioned the impressive dedication ceremony held during the 2006 reunion where an auditorium in the 9th SOS on Eglin AFB was dedicated. The motion was called and approved. There were only four dissenting votes.
9. John Grove presented an impressive briefing on the McCoskrie Threshold Foundation showing photos of the results of

contributions to Honduras and Thailand. John visited Honduras and his comments with the pictures highlighted the poverty and the good the MTF is doing. The Thailand project initiated by BG Aderholt is a huge success. Funds are sent to a representative of the TLC (Thailand, Laos, Cambodia) organization who manages the various projects that are funded by the MTF. Of special note was a great photo of the computer lab identified with an impressive sign over the entrance showing it was dedicated in honor of Geno Valentine. Geno's brother Ben made a special donation of \$5,000 to the Thailand project.

10. President Sambogna outlined the remaining events and encouraged all to attend the "burger burn" behind the 20th SOS.

11. The meeting adjourned at 1115.

Felix "Sam" Sambogna, President, ACA



**Russ Truitt and Travis Norton**

After the business meeting Capt Travis Norton and Lt Russ Truitt gave an interesting briefing on the Predator. Both these officers are assigned to the 3rd SOS to be located at Cannon AFB as a unit of the 27th SOW. Travis a previous A-10 pilot and Lt. Truitt an intelligence officer gave a dynamic briefing on the capability and performance of the Predator. Travis is the son of Jay (A-26 pilot) and Ellen Norton who both attended the briefing and reunion.

# 2007 Air Commando Association Reunion

## 3 Oct Wednesday

Heinie had his welcome mat out for early reunion members' arrivals and held his yearly court in his new office at the Far East Imports. It is always great to stop in and see the legend and find out the latest in Air Commando happenings and Special Operations deployments, the newest management at Hurlburt and favorite of all our new aircraft. Heinie looks well and is very conversant after his medical problems. He now has his office on the western end of his business and you can park on the side of the building and enter from the street. For someone approaching 88 and freshly married he is still an energy bunny.

## 4 Oct Thursday

The fun begins. The ritual stopover at the ACA HQ finds all the people around who make the organization hum. Missing this year from the ACA movers was Hap Lutz. He was at the bedside of his wife, Shirley, who had fallen and then had a mild heart attack. We pray and hope the recovery is quick and complete. Hap's absence for this reunion just didn't seem to be the same. Also missing was Joyce Harrington who was injured recently but later showed up at the Country Store sales in the Hospitality Suite at the Quality Inn. Jeanette our fabulous graphics and newsletter layout artist was not on hand. The wall in the building now has more brick space and the bricks are selling at a brisk pace. There are some new pictures in the ACA HQ thanks to Don Maxwell. The frames for these pictures are very expensive and what we need to do is have someone in the organization make the frames at the base hobby shop to cut cost. Maxwell's photos are excellent but the cost of framing is

ruining a good thing. Pete Bowman was there to greet everyone and to help with whatever members may need.

The Hospitality Suite was opened for early registration. Pete was there to make sure you got your tickets for the weekend festivities and to collect your money for the ACA bank account. The Hospitality Suite was full of laughter, great stories and Dick Geron serving the best bar fare around. It was rumored that 9 other units having reunions wanted his body to tend bar at their reunion because of his expertise in that area.

Ran into Bill Davis at the Hurlburt BX. He is one of the original Air Commandos who flew B-26s. He was aware of the ACA reunion and remembers all of his old comrades.

The food at Mr. T's that night was excellent. Heinie's new bride attended the feast and everyone got to meet her. Howie Pierson and his lovely wife were also there. Howie looked very well after his cancer treatment. The golden voice has returned once again.

Chuck Paradise, a CCT killed in Vietnam in a C-123, was remembered for his contributions to the team. Howard Cody, a B-26 driver who was killed in a B-26, is remembered at Kessler AFB with the largest building in the USAF named after an Air Commando. Jim Stanford had some additional information of the crash of a C-123 at Hurlburt when the load shifted in the aircraft. Jack Wallace was remembered for his piloting skill in many aircraft and there were two stories that he is still alive and the other is that he has died. Good old Jack a force to remember. Sugie Jones attended Mr T's luncheon and the CCTers were on hand to greet her. Robby

and Dee Roberson were on hand to see old friends. John and Kitty Connors were seen tasting some of the good food made by Mr T.

Later that evening the Hospitality Suite was merry with old commandos, Dick's good drinks and new & old war stories which were suspected to be a little embellished. Jim Dreaver who was with the Australian Canberra's bombers attended as a guest of Bill Brown who had some help from his squadron during the war which saved his AC-119 on one occasion (see Bill Brown's email below)

HI Gene:

First, the RAAF gentleman was Jim Dreaver of 2 Squadron, stationed at Phan Rang. On my last mission in 1969 flying out of Nha Trang in an AC-119 Gunship we were patrolling in Laos on one of the rail lines when my rear scanner called "Flashes from 6 o'clock. I Had Col. (Later Lt.Gen) Bill Ginn in the left seat and I immediately took over and racked the plane in a sharp turn to the right. As we did so four to eight SAMs passed to our left. I notified Moonbeam (I think was their call sign) and they sent help. A couple of minutes later we heard "G'Day, Mates, need some help"? My navigator passed them the coordinates and they told us to stand by and they would be back. About three or four minutes later we again heard the Aussie again, "G'Day Mates, your problem is solved, Got the Bugger. Was on a Rail with the train moving but is no more, Have a Nice Day, G'Day." I thanked them and we resumed our business.

When I first heard from Colin Benson, I asked him if it would be possible to find out the names of the Pilots who were flying the Canberras that night and he gave me Jim Dreaver's name, address, e-mail and phone number. I then

contacted Jim and we became friends, at least via e-mail. Jim was the Historian for the 2 Squadron (Retired Warrant, same as Benson) and did the leg work for me. He found out that one of the pilots had died and the other had gotten a divorce and was living in the Outback, somewhere between Alice Springs and Perth and Did NOT want his location revealed, in fact his retirement was forwarded through two different entities to keep anyone from finding out his location. There is a bit more but this is the general gist of the story. I did visit Jim in Australia, also Benson, during my trips in 2002 and 2003 but was unable to get any further info concerning the Pilot.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some of our members tried to drink the Aussies under the table but from last report the Aussie was still standing. Fred Platt kept the tradition of the Ravens up as well as himself by supporting the bar. He came with a new self designed shirt, his always present Havana cigar, his glass of scotch and never tiring with stories. What would we do without the party genius? Bill Brown showed up with his new wife, Dawn, and announced he is heading to Rome and a vacation on the big boats. Wade Everett told us how he was dropping napalm barrels from his C-47 at Det 2, Vietnam in 1962 until one barrel hit the horizontal stabilizer and shattered his unexciting test. The Napalm test from the C-47 was discontinued after this jolt and he doesn't remember it being tested again from a C-47. But you got to remember that in 1961 we had to agree or be agreeable to drop bombs or to use forward firing guns from C-47 and other unusual attack methodology. Almost

# Letters

## DEAR COMMANDER AND FRIENDS,

I am writing this letter of appreciation to you as my brother Commando's and wish that it will find you well and happy.

I am very appreciative of your selection of my grandson, Derek Ondrusek for a \$ 1,500.00 scholarship at Wharton School of Business. Derek is doing well there and is a beginning Junior this year. Wharton~is a very expensive school and the cost per year runs approximately \$40,000.00. Even though it's very expensive it is worth it because it is the best. Your kind and generous gift will help very much to offset this high cost to his family.

I regret that I haven't been able to attend the annual reunion since we moved away from Ft. Walton Beach in 1988 but hopefully I will be able to attend the next one. I try to keep up with your activities by reading the Air Commando paper each time I receive it.

I'm not so far away now that we have moved back to Florida.

My best wishes to all of you!  
Lt Col Herman Baldwin PhD  
133 Tiger Lilly Drive  
Parrish, FL 34219

★★★★★★

## DEAR JIM AND HAP,

Just back from two weeks away and just started a new classified contract assignment today so much is on my mind. But one matter has come screaming to my attention, the movie "Rescue Dawn."

Gerry's brother, Gene, was a rookie classmate of mine in 1959 at Missoula smokejumper base. In September 1963 an Air America C-46 was shot down over Laos. Two pilots went down with the

plane. Three Thai "kickers", a Chinese radio operator, and Gene, also a "kicker", bailed out successfully and were taken prisoners. Later they were joined by an Air Force helicopter pilot, Duane Martin, and a Navy pilot, Dieter Dengler. In 1966 the group escaped and that is what the movie is supposedly about. If the movie producers said it was fiction, they can do whatever they want with the story. But the local ads say it is a "true" story when it is anything but.

If this interests you at all, I would appreciate the widest possible dissemination calling attention to Gerry DeBruin's article or perhaps reprinting it. This article is already being widely distributed in the Air America alumni community and also the intelligence community Inside the Beltway and hopefully further.

As I said earlier, I will work on minor revisions to Jerry Daniels article in next few weeks. I would certainly appreciate any feedback from General Aderholt, either as to how he thinks Jerry died or what he thinks of the article in particular before I go too far fixing it.

Thanks,  
Fred Donner

★★★★★★

## AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

Dear Sam and Fellow ACA Members

On behalf of my daughter Katie and our family, I would like to thank you for the great news we received informing us that Katie was selected as one of the winners of the Charles Hicks ACA Scholarships. Katie is a member of the AFROTC program at Texas Christian University, she will

serve as the cadet wing commander for the spring semester and commission as a second lieutenant in the USAF later in 2008. She was also a member of the TCU Women's Soccer team this past year. She appreciates the support of ACA.

Sincerely,  
Joe Brozena  
23726 Verde River  
San Antonio Tx 78255

Please note this is an updated address.

★★★★★★

## ACA FRIENDS,

It will be no secret to anyone in the Air Force Special Operations and rescue communities that the career field of aerial gunner is alive and well in today's Air Force.

I am writing a book about aerial gunners, to be published by Potomac Press in 2009, and would like to be in contact with anyone who'd like to help. I would especially like to hear from anyone who served as an aerial gunner on an AC-130, MH-60G, or HH-60G aircraft. Contact me by post, phone, or e-mail.

Best wishes,  
Bob Dorr  
3411 Valewood Drive  
Oakton, Virginia 22124  
(703) 264-8950  
robert.f.dorr@cox.net

★★★★★★

## AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION,

I am grateful and honored to be the recipient of your 2007 scholarship. I am currently studying architecture at my dream school, the University of Notre Dame. Your scholarship is helping me to fulfill this pursuit of mine, so with

utmost sincerity, thank you. I will continue to strive for excellence in all facets of life. Thank you again for your support and GO IRISH!

Sincerely,  
Whitley E. Esteban  
University of Notre Dame

★★★★★★

## JIM,

As requested, a signed copy of my recently published book "In The Shadows".

Thanks,  
Marc Stanley

P.S.

Because of a printing error, it has gone into a reprint and will be again available before your August news letter.

*Ed Note:*

*Marc, thanks for your enjoyable book (a good read). Sam says good things about you.*

★★★★★★

## DEAR HAP

Okay Chief, you showed up on my wing, keyed the mike and reminded me to make sure I updated my flight plans list of addresses. You were so right - again.

Lisa and I are now in northern Virginia.

Thanks for your note - here's hoping you have a great reunion.

All the best

Col Norman Brozenick  
(BG selectee)

★★★★★★

## TO OUR CinC,

(Commandos in Charge) Friends.

A serious illness in the family will keep us from joining you hearty ACAers this reunion. I passed the details to Jim Boney,

# Letters

*Continued from page 7*

including our regrets. We have been very fortunate to be present for most of the reunions during the past 39 years and look forward to being with you for the 40th in 2008. More importantly, thanks to all of you who so generously give of your time and other resources to keep the organization alive and vibrant. The rest of us are very much in your debt.. Keep up the good work and know that you are appreciated.

Best regards always,  
Larry and Phyllis Harwood  
614 Periwinkle Ct  
Sumpter SC 29150-2326

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**THANK YOU FOR THE GREAT MAIL**  
Jim,

It was so nice of you to send ALL the wonderful stuff to me, with a copy for my Sis, June Lear. I will forward it all to her next week. Thank you so much. I looked at the video and boy, oh boy, Gene was pretty funny. Quite a character. It seems the crowd really liked him.

Again, thanks for all the goodies, I have a great file of Gene's things, and will place these with them

Sure hope I do see you and all the good guys at ACA really soon. And if you are in the neighborhood, please give me a call and drop by.  
P.S. Tris says to give you a big "HI" too.

Connie Perry  
1915 Mariposa St  
Sea Side CA 93955  
(831)915-9444  
(Geno Valentine's Sister)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**HAP,**

I am sorry that I will not be

able to get to the reunion this year. Things are going not as planned.

I did not realize how much paperwork is required.

Enclosed is a check for a brick for Sam.

He always said it would be nice to be remembered as a commando. This will do it.

Thanks,  
Martha Baley  
3668 Hwy 167  
Dry Prong LA 71423.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN AND CARING.**

To all those wonderful, caring friends out there that showered me with cards, calls and e-mails, kind thoughts and prayers after I fell and broke my leg. I am in physical therapy to get it back to normal functioning. Thank to Jeanette the country store did not suffer and I am back to work. It is wonderful to have so many caring friends supporting me during this time. God Bless you all.

Joyce Harrington, C.S. Manager  
116 Taylor Cr  
Fort Walton Beach FL 32547  
(850)-581-8659

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION**

Please accept the enclosed donation in memory of Shirley Valentine.

Lamar & Gloria Doster  
304 Holmes Blvd NW  
Fort Walton Beach FL 3254  
(850)-243-1447  
LHDGMD@aol.com

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**HELLO ALL**

Just a note to say my wife and I are looking forward to the

reunion in October.

I have enclosed a page from the Ft Benning paper "The Bayonet". Something about me and job training troops. Also a copy of my company's news letter.

Hope everyone is well, give my best to Hap and Heinie.

Regards,  
Frank B. Orr  
6142 Windsor Dr  
Columbus GA 31909-3829

*Ed Note:*

*Frank, we enjoyed "The Bayonet" and your company news letter. "Blue Skies"*

*Jim Boney*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DEAR JIM,**

As you can see by the new address above, we have moved to a retirement Home in Roanoke, VA. It had reached a point where we needed some help and all three meals are served here. It was difficult to leave Orange with our many friends there for the past 30 years, but the move has been good for us.

We closed down operation of the WWII Air Commando Assn. On Jan. 1,2007 and had \$310 left in the treasury, so it is being sent to the ACA. Perhaps you could keep my name and Joe Billings' on the roster for a year or two.

Please deposit the check as soon as possible and then we will be a pleasant memory. There are a few from our unit who have been members of your ACA and hope they will continue.

My association with you and the ACA has been most enjoyable and I have always enjoyed your friendship. Too bad, old age caused us to disband. We tried to hold one more reunion but had very little interest. Travel is too

difficult for us old warriors. I passed 90 on July 24th and have fair health except for walking. I need a walker at all times. Anna Belle has the same problem, but we both keep on the go.

Sincerely,  
W. Robert Eason Col USAF (Ret)  
Sec/Trea/Editor  
WWII Air Commando Assn.  
4920 Woodmar Dr SW Apt 217  
Roanoke VA 24018  
Tel: 540-206-3939

Dear Robert,

Thank you so much for the \$310 donation to the Air Commando Association. We certainly appreciate the donation and our association with you wonderful members of the greatest generation.

Your name and Joe Billing's name will be kept on our roster. It is difficult to express the admiration and respect we have for all the WWII air commandos. Be assured the spirit and performance is being carried on by the current air commandos in the vitally important battle against terrorism.

We wish the very best for you, your wife, and all members of your association. Thank you again.

Respectively,  
Felix "Sam" Sambogna  
President, Air Commando Association

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**DEAR JOE HOLDEN,**

Seeing pictures of the P-26's at the Chino Air Show and some the older airplanes that you flew in the past should bring tears to your eyes; those were the days! Should also bring to mind some gosh awful exciting gut-wrenching war stories which need to be told.

See **LETTERS** pg. 9



# Letters

*Continued from page 8*

They had a couple of exciting gun-ho very young people (both male and female) giving interesting briefings on their activities in Iraq this year at the Air Commando Reunion; which I enjoyed much better than the usual senior officers giving us dull uninteresting and unexciting speeches on stats and numbers of aircraft in the inventory. These young, and I mean really young and exuberant folks came with the fire in their eyes and excitement in their voices that we haven't heard for years; brought back many memories of what we so often saw in "Heinie" and other leaders when we were their age. Our country's Special Operations are in good hands; now if only Congress could get their act together. How and why do we keep electing such dull, unimaginative and unworthy folks, I will never understand nor comprehend!

Anyway, these energetic and bright young "Turks" brought back many exciting memories of the days we spent together keeping Al Shinkle's little "butt" alive and mostly out of trouble! Ah but, if memory serves me correct; Al was blessed with a "god given talent" for staying in with the upper echelons; God love him, he always managed to keep the very best of them fired-up, highly motivated, very busy and deeply incensed.

Missed you at the Air Commando Reunion this year!  
Robert Downs

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES,

I am now just past the midway point in the chemotherapy treatments. The last treatment is scheduled for November 12.

I asked my doctor what to expect for the next half of the

process in the way of expanded side effects since the drugs are supposed to have a cumulative effect over time. He stated some good news and bad news. First, the bad news...he could not say with certainty (So what else is new? After all, waking up in the morning is always a pleasant surprise!). The good news...he guessed they would get no worse than they already are.

And, how is that? Not real bad. I am able to get around ok, but have a loss of stamina and tire easily. The dog and I are having a hair-shedding contest. So far, the dog is leading, but I'm gaining. My hair has definitely "thinned" out, and Jean has now seen me for the first time without a mustache. Yup, and it scared the dog, too! Somewhere along the line, my upper lip has fallen off. Some say I look younger, but I've yet to be carded. Others say I looked better with the mustache since it covered more of my face. Now what's that supposed to mean? The rest of the side effects are more annoying than anything else is and can be fended off by a medicine cabinet crammed full of various and sundry potions. That all translates to a stinky golf game...but I'm playing and do manage to hit a decent shot from time-to-time. A couple of times I've only been able to play nine holes and in one instance just seven. However, Florida's summer heat and humidity also has a lot to do with that. We are all ready to see the beginning of some cool weather.

I am still on track to attend the Air Commando Reunion on the first weekend of October. An old military friend of mine from the west coast is taking a boondoggle business trip this way, and we will be driving to the reunion in Ft. Walton Beach. It will be a hoot

catching up with him. I visited his place in Santa Barbara several years ago, and he was building a twin-engine, metal skinned, ultra-light in his workshop...a converted stable. It really looked great and remains a work in-progress.

Best of all...Jean and I are scheduled to attend our daughter's wedding in Cabo San Lucas on the second weekend of October. She has promised a nifty Panama hat to keep the sun off my "thinning" hair. With a prize like that, how could I not go! Tip to Sandra...the original and best Panama hats are actually made in Ecuador...no joke.

That's all for now folks. I will let you know the outcome of this continuing saga in November.

All the best,  
Paul Tobey  
4271 Congreve Place  
Sarasota, FL 34241

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR MR. BONEY

Thank you for including information about the National Museum of the United States Air Force in the August 2007 issue of Air Commando Association Quarterly Newsletter. Would you like to be added to our press release distribution list? We use this list to send out updates on new exhibits, upcoming events and museum news. If this interests you, please let me know where to send the press releases to.

Thank you,  
Sarah Swan  
Public Affairs Division  
National Museum of the United States Air Force  
1100 Spaatz St  
Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433  
[www.nationalmuseum.af.mil](http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil)

*Ed Note:*

*Yes, please add the ACA email*

*address to your list.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## TO THE VALENTINE FAMILY,

To All Concerned: Please convey Julie's, and my, deep and sincere condolences to the family of Shirley Valentine's family and friends. Time waits for no one, and now, at 80 years of existence on this earth, I humbly believe that Shirley is in a better place of peace and happiness.

With best regards,  
Jim Baker  
2943 Parrish Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32309

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## DEAR ACA,

Thank you for the message about Shirley Valentine. We are unable to attend the service but we send our condolences to the family.

Thank you,  
Michael and Susan Custance  
315 Waugh Road  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
ACA Life Member

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## BLESS EACH AND EVERYONE

Bless each and everyone of you for the dedication and efforts in South East Asia. You men make me proud to be an Air Commando. As ever, "Any time, anywhere, any place"

Col Richard Guertin USAF Ret  
108 Devonshire Dr  
Williamsburg VA 23188-0722

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## FLYING TIGER ACE 'TEX' HILL, 92, DIES

From Air Force Public Affairs

Famed Flying Tigers ace and Texas Air National Guardsman  
See **LETTERS** pg. 10

# Letters

*Continued from page 9*

Brig. Gen. David Lee "Tex" Hill, died Oct. 11 of congestive heart failure at his home in San Antonio. He was 92. The general is scheduled for burial at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.

Hill flew with Gen. Claire Chennault as a member of the Flying Tigers, a volunteer group of American aviators who flew during World War II to defend China, which had no air force of its own.

He served as both flight leader and then squadron leader of the 2nd Squadron, flying the Curtis P-40 fighter with the distinctive shark's teeth paint scheme on the nose of the plane. During his time as a Flying Tiger pilot, he was credited with 12 aerial victories.

When the Flying Tigers were disbanded in July, 1942, Hill continued to fly, eventually commanding the 23rd Fighter Group. By the time he left active duty, he was a triple-ace, credited with some 18 confirmed aerial victories.

In 1946, he joined the Texas Air National Guard as the youngest brigadier general in the history of the Air Guard. He was 31.

"Tex Hill has forgotten more about leadership and what's important than most of us will ever know," said Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force chief of staff.

Hurlburt Patriot  
678-1080

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## REMEMBERING OUR WOUNDED THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

As we all know, receiving a get well card or note during recovery can be an uplifting moment. If you feel inclined please take a minute and send one of our brave soldiers a get well card for the holidays,

you can be assured it will be gladly received. Send to:

A Recovering American  
Soldier or Marine  
C/O Water Reed Army  
Medical Center  
6900 Georgia Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20307-5001

Kindly submitted by ACA member: Al Russell.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### TO ROBERT DOWNS,

Just to let you know, Robby had heart surgery this past Monday morning at Sacred Heart Hospital, in Pensacola, Florida and is doing just fine and is home resting.

Sincerely,  
Renee Robinson  
569 Batten Blvd  
Pensacola, FL 32507

*Renee,  
Thanks for the information about Robby. I was unaware that he was having heart problems.  
We Air Commando's are glad that Robby is making a speedy recovery and wish both of you well.*

*Robert Downs*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION,

Enclosed find my membership renewal, after having been absent for a time.

Is it possible to have the following placed in the forthcoming newsletter?

Fellow Members,

As a writer specializing in military and aviation subjects, I am researching AC-47, AC-119, AC-130, and NC-123K gunships in preparation for an in-depth book devoted to their history. I'd like to

hear from anyone who worked with them, or continues to do so in the case of the AC-130. I'm seeking photos and information, which is copied and credited.

Contact:  
Wayne Mutza  
8523 W. Holly Rd  
Mequon, WI 53097  
(262)\_ 238-9561  
Email: Wmutza@wi.rr.com

Thank you very much. You may be interested in knowing that my book, "Green Hornets: The History of the 20th Special Operations Squadron," is available for purchase from Schiffer Publishing. If you'll consider reviewing it, I'll be happy to provide a complimentary copy.

Sincerely,  
Wayne Mutza

*Editor's Note: Wayne, with many of our members associated with gunships I'm sure you'll get some input. Your book arrived here at ACA headquarters yesterday.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### VETERANS AND THE SALUTE

Senator Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) Today praised the passage by unanimous consent of his bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. law to allow veterans, and servicemen not in uniform to salute the flag.

Current law (US Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states that veterans and servicemen not in uniform should place their hand over their heart without clarifying whether they can or should salute the flag.

"The salute is a form of honor and respect, representing pride in one's military service," Senator Inhofe said. "Veterans and service members continue representing the military services even when not in uniform.

"Unfortunately, current U.S. law leaves confusion as to whether veterans and service members out of uniform can or should salute the flag. My legislation will clarify this regulation, allowing veterans and servicemen alike to salute the flag, whether they are in uniform or not.

"I look forward to seeing those who have served saluting proudly at baseball games, parades, and formal events.

I believe this is an appropriate way to honor and recognize the 25 million veterans in the United States who have served in the military and remain as role models to other citizens.

Those who are currently serving or have served in the military have earned this right, and their recognition will be an inspiration to others."

This Bill was passed July 25, 2007. Let your veteran friends know about the Passage of this Bill.

Ron Furtak  
Courtesy of  
The A-37 Association Newsletter

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

### A HEART FELT THANK YOU

A few years ago, Ann Margaret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing.

When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted.

See **LETTERS** pg. 22

# Reunion

*Continued from page 6*

everything with the C-47 was dropped after testing except the side firing guns in the AC-47 Spooky Gunship. We also found out that they had four designations for the C-47 gunship which included the FC-47. When the fighter jocks heard about this they cancelled that designation. I recall a B-47 pilot who was with me during our Jungle Jim evaluation who almost went bananas when the psychiatrist asked him about dropping bombs from a C-47 which he objected to as unfeasible and as a result never made it into the Air Commandos. Jack Wallace, Joe Orr, Bill Palank, original CCT members including Capt Egleston, Bob Gleason, Mike Doyle, Don Maxwell, Col King, Mike Kadenacy and other living and deceased commandos were remembered for their famous and infamous contributions to our history. The AC-47 Spooky group were holding up the bar and enriching the ACA bar revenues. Their presence for late night missions over FWB or the Trail is always memorable to be around to hear them except they are famous for closing the bar late in the morning. Keep the good work up because we need your support. Don Maxwell's absence was notably observed with the story that he was missing due to an accident while riding his bicycle at 40MPH on the Autobahn when hit by a pursuing lady in a BMW. Apparently he was hurt and couldn't make the reunion. Max we missed your presence, your great stories, books and pictures. Dave Henry said Lori Miller, B-26 driver, 605ACS DO and former Korean War POW, was at our reunion two years ago. Bob Gleason said Lori signed for one of his "Air Commando Chronicles" book and very few

people recognized him. Lori you're a great guy and we need you to come to the next reunion, drop me a line wherever you are at.

## 5 Oct Friday

Jim Boney came through with his golf games but with fewer players than before. They had a great time and renewed Jim's faith in old commandos still enjoying golf. Next year he promises to bring Tiger Wood to liven the game and players.

Registration continued at the Hospitality Suite with Pete Bowman and his wife, Carol keeping commandos happy that they came. What would we do without them? The hospitality was again filled with commandos who wanted to see old friends or find old friends they no longer could recognize but the ACA ID badge solved some of these problems. The friendship, the bar, the drinks were flowing freely and if this didn't make your day complete there was always Joyce and the Country Store memorabilia.

The A/B-26 crews were in their own Hostility Suite on the ground floor of the Quality Inn. The Hostility Suite was filled with old memorabilia to include VHS tapes, books, pictures, newspaper clippings etc on A/B-26 history. Dave Henry shared some great stories with everyone. He wanted to get data on one of first Counter-insurgency demonstrations at Nellis AFB in 1962. Nolan Schmidt got interested in aviation while at the age of 13 while harrowing his father's Indiana field on their tractor when a P-51 from a near airbase made a simulated strafing run on him which was followed by a second P-51 making the same simulated attack. They then came after him at low level on either side of the tractor. Nolan

got off the tractor and rode his bike to the base and observed the P-51 land and parked near where he was standing outside the fence. The pilot came over and asked Nolan if he would like to see the P-51 and of course he did. The pilot took Nolan to the P-51, showed him everything he could and then asked if he would like to sit in the P-51 and see what it was like. This was the ultimate for a 13 year old farm boy. Nolan knew then that aviation was his calling. The rest is history. Tom Smith attended the reunion this year and was in the Hostility Suite. Paul Windle, one of the original B-26 Commandos but was KIA as a FAC in Vietnam, was remembered.

Tom Wickstrom needed a source for making patches. Will provide him a Pakistan source which is  
PAK Sparrow & Co,  
PO Box 125  
Wazirabad-Pakistan  
[Email\\_paksparo@hi.net.pk](mailto:Email_paksparo@hi.net.pk)  
[www.geocities.com/paksparrow](http://www.geocities.com/paksparrow)

Paul and Sue Marschalk were at the B-26 Hostility Suite. Paul came in with one hand in a white glove. His hand got burned from a fire when he was maintaining his plane. The fire wasn't big so he still has an airplane. We mentioned that his marriage with Sue was an outstanding way for an Air Commando to get married. Sue was head of the Corvette association in San Diego and so her friends delivered her in a fleet of corvettes for the wedding. Paul was going to fly in with a B-26 but due to problems with the aircraft he flew in with several T-28s. They met together at the old San Diego Airport hangar and were married in a very memorable ceremony.

One of the original escapees of the Cuban AF who came to the US when Castro came in power and

later joined the USAF was Jose Rosa. He was a maintenance officer in the Air Commandos. Jose also was stationed at England when we had Air Commandos there. He was later stationed at Torrejon AB, Spain and he entertained Heinie when he visited Spain in the 70s. He lives in Miami and still is involved in aviation. He was a Cuban not to be forgotten.

Someone with the group told us ESPN made an announcement that Bob Schneidenbach made the longest pass in the Orange Bowl history during a recent football game. When he did it Bob said he wasn't aware of it being a record which since then has been beaten. The story they were talking about happened on Jan 1, 1951 at the Orange Bowl where Clemson beat Miami 15 to 14. The Orange Bowl record that day was for the longest completed pass when Bob Schneidenbach tossed to end Ed Lute for 78 yards. Later Bob played for the Steelers and then went to play for the Argonauts football team in Canada until he had to come into the USAF for his ROTC commitment to become a navigator. He was awarded the Silver Star for rescuing a downed fighter pilot in 1964 in Laos and that is quite a story. Later he headed the Combat Controller Team at Hurlburt. He is in the ACA HOF. This is some urban legend of Bob that we did not need to verify with SNOSES.

The fish fry was exceptional this year as many compliments heard. The fish should be bought from the same source for next year's reunion. The fish fry crew did an excellent job in feeding the fish and multiplying the catch. George McNamara and his wife came from Washington to attend

*See REUNION pg. 12*

# Reunion

*Continued from page 11*

the ACA reunion.

A number of Col Gleason's mauraders from Panama attended to include Hank Steidl, Bill and Mary Leach, Gene Rossel, John Connors, George McNamara, and others.

The Hospitality Suite continued making profits for the ACA with the many satisfied customers. Dick Geron and his adventures with the Aussies (he was an ALO with the Australians in Vietnam) and General Momyer entertained the crowded bar. The Aussies were irreligious in what they put on aircraft and General Momyer was not too pleased with Dick for kangaroo decorations on his O-1 during a visit to the unit. Before he left Gen Momyer found his aircraft decorated with kangaroos and forgave Dick for the unexpected Aussie present. He smiled at Dick and left. Dick said this was the first time he ever saw Momyer smile. Dick pulled several things over on Momyer who was attempting to sabotage Air Commando operations by withholding support. Gen Momyer did not like an organization that used propeller aircraft.

## 6 Oct Saturday

Our grand moment arrived when the AF blue bussed pulled up at 0800 in front of the Quality Inn to take us to the 20th Sq Auditorium. John Grove again setup an excellent reception with coffee and donuts etc. The Auditorium is as modern as you can get in the military. We first had the business meeting which the ACA President went over the health status of the ACA. It turns out that the ACA is in very good financial shape.

This was followed by a briefing by the 3rd SOS who fly the Predator and the Reaper

Unmanned Aerospace Vehicles (UAV). The Reaper is the newest UAV, more capable than the Predator, which is now flying in Afghanistan. They control it from Nellis AFB and takeoff and landing is done by forces in Afghanistan. It was a real interesting briefing. We thought we would see the Osprey CV-22 which is now in the USAF at Hurlburt for testing etc but for some reason it wasn't available. We'll probably see it next year.

The ladies had a lunch in the Hospitality Suite while the briefings were going on at Hurlburt. It was very successful.

Rain was coming down when members arrived at the club and despite this the social hour help relieve the weather problems. The banquet was a success with some excellent food and great camaraderie. We were entertained by singers from the local high schools. They did an excellent job in performing for us. Dee Roberson was recognized for her contributions to 1st ACW commander as his secretary. You had to see her before you saw him. Our guest speaker was the first woman and first Lt we have had addressing our reunions. She was 1st Lt Christine Lukasik, a USAFA graduate. Her grandfather was Capt Bernard Lukasik, KIA 19 Feb 1964 in a T-28D in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. Dee Roberson is her grandmother. She gave us a first hand report of what was happening in Iraq as an Intel officer. Her next assignment will be Afghanistan in Dec 2007. This was followed by the introduction of 5 members into the Hall of Fame (see Hall of Fame article on page 21)

The McCoskrie Threshold Foundation presented its presti-

gious Humanitarian Award to Jerry Gilbert and Howie Pierson for outstanding service.

The ACA Banquet came to an end but not before Pete Bowman got hurt going outside in the rain and had to be taken to the hospital because of a bad fall. We hope Pete recovers soon.

The Hospitality Suite was open late for those who were in the partying mood.

## 7 Oct Sunday

The ACA HQ had an open house to show members what they did in the building and all the new items added to their collection. Don Maxwell does a good job in providing the additional yearly gifts we add to our Air Commando/Special Operations library.

A Memorial Service for our fallen comrades was held at the Hurlburt Air Park. This year we had the Emerald Coast Pipes and Drums provide memorial music. Howie Pierson was the Chaplain this year. The weather was hot and the sun was bearing down on the attendees but it was a very impressive ceremony. TSgt Tammie Pyne sang "God Bless America." President Sambogna read the list of the recently deceased Commandos.

This was followed by the reading of the deceased of the A-1, A-37, CCT, Stray Goose, 1st SOS, helicopters, Nimrod, Ravens, Rustic FACt, and 720 Special Tactics. Dick Secord reminded everyone that the A-37 group had the only jet fighters and pilots in the Air Commandos.

Col "Brad" Webb, the new commander of 1st SOW, congrat-

ulated us on a great weather call to use the Air Park and the Chapel for the Memorial Service. It was reminiscent of General Eisenhower's D-Day decision. Colonel Webb started with the roll call of the deceased AFSOC members this past year followed by a nice review of the 1st SOW highlights including the move of assets to Cannon AFB, NM, and the acquisition of Osprey aircraft. He was very optimistic about the future of Special Operations.

The Emerald Coast Pipes and Drums ended the memorial service with their amazing music.

The Hurlburt Air Park looks great with a number of improvements. The A-1, C-46 and the CH-53 are being repainted. It is a great park to the memories of some fantastic airplanes and men who served our country. There is a lot of building going around the park and next year we should see some new buildings for the next reunion.

The BBQ was held at the Quality Inn and we got to enjoy another great meal served by our own chefs. Fred Platt ran his auction in the Hospitality Suite. We must provide more things for him to sell next year since he does an excellent job in salesmanship. The Reunion came to an end at 1600 and was taken over by the A/B-26 Hostility Suite who ran their bi-annual banquet Sunday evening.

The rest of us headed home with some great memories and elations of seeing old friends and comrades who we served with in distant and dangerous operations. May God bless all and we pray we can all be together for the 2008 reunion.



# Air Commando Association addresses history, future

*Organization honors former commandos, raises money to help less fortunate*

By Greg Davenport

Located about 4 miles west of Hurlburt Field is probably one of the most significant buildings in special operations - the Air Commando Association building. Housed in the hallowed walls of 2502 W. Highway 98 is the history of special operations from its very beginnings.

tion is a great opportunity for those within this unique community to bond and network.

"The old guys from the war they like doing this stuff," the president said. "They want to keep together some of the relationships they have."

ACA members stay on top of what's going on in their world

number of items from clothing to school supplies to locations across the world, but primarily in Honduras.

He added ACA members hold a special place in their heart for the country of Thailand since many of the older members served there in the early days of special operations. Because of that, the ACA, through the McCoskrie Threshold Foundation, have been making strides to help those less fortunate in that country by providing financial aid to help build schools and provide basic needs.

Sambogna said the organization is able to do all of these things through the financial support the ACA gets through dues, the items sold at its country store and the occasional fund-raiser.

The president said the organization is always looking for new

blood to help carry on the tradition and hints that the Airmen at Hurlburt Field are great candi-



**The Air Commando Association Wall of Fame contains bricks from those honoring former Air Commandos.**

dates.

"We work hard trying to bond with active duty," he said. "We admire and support the current guys. We're very impressed."

This article appeared in the Hurlburt Warrior. Greg Davenport can be reached at [gregd@hurlburtwarrior.com](mailto:gregd@hurlburtwarrior.com)



**Photos by GREG DAVENPORT | Hurlburt Warrior**  
**Countless artifacts from history of Special Operations line the wall of Air Commando Association's headquarters in Mary Esther.**

But, what ACA president Felix "Sam" Sambogna wants people to understand is that the ACA isn't just about the special operator's past, but also the present and future.

"When you join the Air Commando Association, you're joining an elite organization," Sambogna explained. "We're here to keep alive the Air Commando Spirit."

The ACA was started in 1967 by retired Brig. Gen. Harry "Heine" Aderholt as a way for members of the small special operations community to keep in contact, honor special operators and preserve the history.

Sambogna feels the organiza-

tion through the quarterly newsletter, socials held twice a year and the annual Columbus Day reunion. However, the organization is more than just networking and keeping in contact with old friends.

The ACA also gives out a number of scholarships to local community members with links to the ACA and does humanitarian work across the globe through the McCoskrie Threshold Foundation.

"The McCoskrie Threshold Foundation is the Air Commando Association's humanitarian arm," he said. "We felt like we need to help people who are less fortunate."

The foundation often works with Hurlburt Field and provides a

## Smiles Across the Miles

By Bob White

Our association has found another way to help our Hurlburt Air force Commandos. The base has an on going program whereby deploying warriors can pick up donated items as they process through the mobility line. With so many commitments through out the world, mobility1 deployment processing is going on all the time. Someone is always going somewhere these troubled days. In the last three weeks we have collected over 100 items and taken them to Hurlburt. We affix a sticker on the label with our logo and a note thanking them for the service to our country.

The kind of stuff the men and women ask for include:

-Toiletry items, men/ women  
-Playing cards

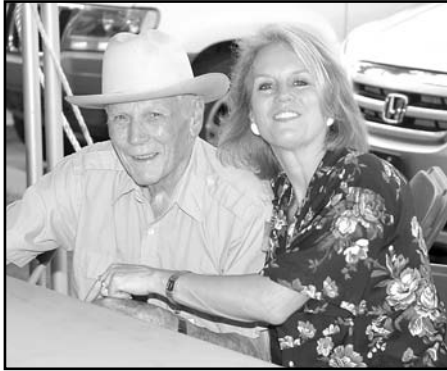
-Hard candy, gum, mints  
-Munchies; nuts, jerky or any long shelf life items  
-DVD's  
-Music CD's  
-Books, magazines  
-Crossword books  
-Stationary  
-Games

Want to help in this great effort? Send or bring items to the ACA any Mon, Wed, or Fri from 9- 'til noon. Another way is to send a check to the ACA marked for this project, "Smiles Across the Miles". We will purchase the needed items. Bob White works the programs for the ACA and sees that the donations get to the troops through our Hurlburt POC TSgt Diane Thomas of the Airman and Family Readiness Center.

# Thurs Night Social at Mr T's

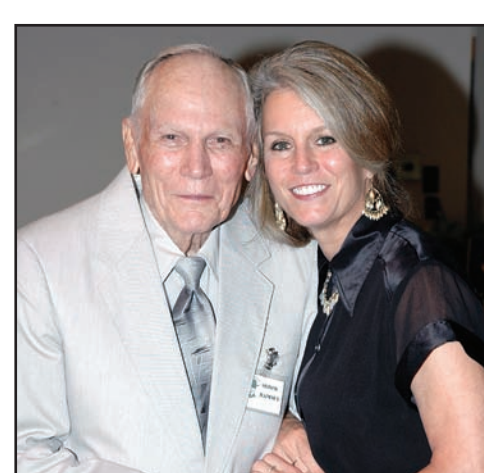


# Friday Fish Fry





# Air Commando Association 2007 Reunion Banquet

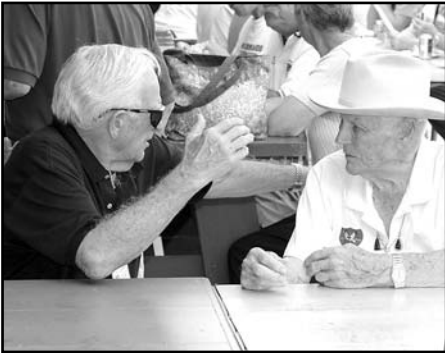
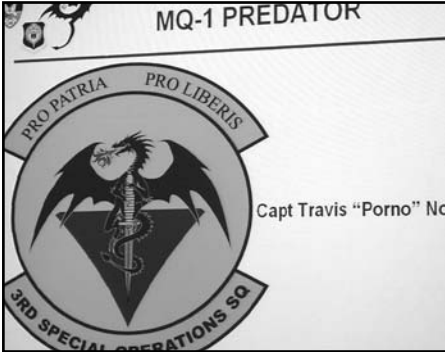




# *Sunday's Memorial Service*



# Saturday Business Meeting



# Bar-B-Que & Auction



# ACA 2007 Reunion Attendees

BGen Harry Aderholt	Mike Connaughton	Ronald Haren	Christine Lukasik	Judy Pflughaupt	Richard Second
Anne Aderholt	John Connors	David Harrington	Donald Luke	Steven Pflughaupt	Joann Second
Roy Aderholt	Kitty Connors	Joyce Harrington	Dave Lunnen	Howard Pierson	John Shippey
Jim Alberts	Donald Cooper	Joe Harris	Paul Marschalk	Gilberta Pierson	Pat Shippey
Jerry Alberts	Frances Cox	Francis Hayes	Sue Marschalk	Fred Platt	Donald Shirkey
Barry Alford	Bill Cox	Carol Hayes	Andrew Martin	Leon Poteet	Al Shortt
Merle Andrews	Barbara Cox	Bruce Hendrix	Gina Martin	Mimi Poteet	Butch Sluschewski
Kathleen Ard	Bill Cullen	Marilyn Sue Hendrix	Les Matheson	William Powers	Brenda Sluschewski
Velma Atkins	Ruth Cullen	Dave Henry	Robert McGarry	Spider Ramsey	Bob Smith
Jo Bailey	Ted Dake	Mern Henry	Steve McJunkins	Frank Rauch	Ann Smith
Stretch	Thea Dake	James Henthorn	Marilyn McJunkins	Jerry Rhein	Thomas Smith
Ballmes	Romaine Daniels	Charles Hicks	George McNamara	Dusty Rhodes	Shirley Smith
Beni Ballmes	Fran Daniels	Dan Howell	Laura McNamara	Sue Rhodes	Bonnie Smith
Nancy Bannon Smith	Jennifer Denham	Marie Howell	Leroy Melton	Jeff Richardson	Gloria Smith
Dennis Barnett	Bobby Dixon	Walt Humphrey	Janice Melton	Donna Riley	Jenifer Smith Hogan
Mrs Barnett	Lamar Doster	Irma Hunter	Sam Messel	Robby Roberson	John Sodergren
Phyllis Bates	Robert Downs	Roger Huntington	Kathy Messel	De Roberson	Clemmie Sodergren
Val Bednekoff	Joy Downs	Myra Huntington	Jack Mezzo	Jimmie Robertson	Joan Sorflaten
Eirean Bednekoff	Ray Doyle	Robbye Ivie	Gloria Mezzo	Ruth Robertson	Ken Spring
Bob Bieber	Jean Dutton	J. T. Ivie	Michael Gilbert	Greg Robertson	Chris Spring
Carol Bieber	Jerry Faddis	Lindsey Jackson	Michele Gilbert	Powell Robertson	Al Sproul
Jim Binnicker	Linda Faddis	Andrew Jessup	Mike Mikulec	Robby Robinson	Jim Stanford
Tim Black	Gary Fisher	Marty Jester	Fran Mikulec	Renee Robinson	Helen Stanford
Doug Blair	Andrea Fisher	Teri Jester	Bob Moneymaker	Jasmine Robinson	Howie Steen
Bennie Blansett	Kevin Foy	William Johnston	Robert Monroe	Joe Robinson	Nita Steen
Sue Blansett	Marie Freeman	Sugie Jones	Fred Moomau	John Roddick	Henry Steidl
Jim Boney	Joan Fregly	Jesse Joyce	Sue Moomau	Caroline Roddick	Mai Steidl
Kay Boney	Richard Gaebler	Lynette Kallutz	Mona Moomau	Jose Rosa	Cyndi Stone
Maury Bourne	Kenneth Gaebler	Kimberly Keeler	Jim Moore	Frank Rose	Amanda Stone
Ray Bourque	John Gargus	Chuck Keeler	Jim Moore, Jr	Joyce Rose	Rebecca Stone
Joanne Bourque	Anita Gargus	Kitty Keeler	Clyde Morehouse	Gene Rossel	Katherine Stone
Edward Bowling	Ginny Gates	William Kennedy	Katie Morehouse	Anne Rossel	Alvin Tanzey
Pete Bowman	Robert Gates	Jeffrey Kennedy	Charlene Murphy	Al Russell	Paul Tobey
Carol Bowman	Bill Gates	Betty Kenyon	Richard Murphy	William Ryan	Russ Truit
Tomiko Branch	Dick Geron	Doug Kenyon	Frank Nelson	Dottie Ryan	John Vasilik
Walt Brigman	Denise Glover	George Kinkade	Norma Nelson	Felix Sambogna	Kathy Warner
Laverne Brigman	Harry Gornto	Charlene Kinkade	Jay Norton	Fred Sanders	Brad Webby
Dottie Brittain	Louise Gornto	Roger Klair	Ellen Norton	Barbara Sanders	Dawna Webby
Bill Brown	Roger Graham	Dorothy Klair	Travis Norton	Ted Saunders	Robert Weller
Dawn Brown	Dianne Graham	Bruce Kramer	Nordy Norwood	Karl Schaefer	Margaret Weller
Mel Bryant	Lee Griffin	Lorraine Lafaver	Connie Norwood	Nita Schaefer	Sheri Whitman
Glenda Bryant	Rita Griffin	Gary Lange	Fred Nowak	Nolan Schmidt	Bradley Whitman
Leonard Butler	John Grove	Willie Leach	Frank Orr	Diana Schmidt	Tom Wickstrom
Joe Cherniga	Al Gummerson	Mary Leach	Maureen Orr	Bob Schneidenbach	Franklin Wimberly
John Christian	Miriam Gummerson	Ken Lengfield	Gene Overton	Edna Schneidenbach	Janice Wimberly
Peggy Christian	Bruce Gustafson	Debbie Lengfield	Carol Overton	Snake Schoknecht	MGen Wurster
Frank Clements	Gaylord Hall	John L'heurux	Frank Owens	Michael Scott	Mrs Wurster
Dorothy Clements	Gerry Hall	John Lindsay	Bob Paquette	Gordo Scott	Jim Yealy
Renee Coleman	Woody Halsey	Virginia Lindsay	Gregg Peters	Bobbie Scott	Richard Young
Frank Collins	Robert Hamilton	Mark Lukasik	Thomas Petty	Bobby Sears	
Evelyn Collins	Sarah Hamilton	David Lukasik	Gary Pflughaupt	Elaine Sears	





# Air Commando Hall of Fame Inductees

Five special air commandos were inducted into the Air Commando Hall of Fame during the banquet. Each new member was presented with a certificate and a special nametag. A special thanks to the HOF Committee: Dennis Barnett (Chairman), John Connors, Wade Everett, Jim Ifland, Wayne Norrad, and Gordon Scott.



## RAY C. DOYLE

CM/Sgt Ray C. Doyle distinguished himself by exemplary performance during over forty four years of service in the United States Air Force. Throughout his career he epitomized the professional airman; an outstanding Special Operator, Loadmaster, Instructor and above all, a superlative leader of men. From his early days flying special operations missions into Vietnam as a C 123K Loadmaster through missions conducted during Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Chief Doyle was at the tip of the spear. He flew as the Lead Loadmaster on Operation Eagle Claw, the Iranian hostage rescue mission and was there when it ended in tragedy. In 1983 Chief Doyle flew as the primary Loadmaster on the aircraft responsible for the initial airdrop of Rangers into Point Salines

Airfield, Grenada. The crew was awarded the Mackay Trophy for the most meritorious flight of the year. In addition, he flew on the wave-in during Operation Just Cause in Panama. Although now retired from active duty, Chief Doyle has continued to foster the development of Air Commando's. He has worked as an aircrew Instructor at the 19th Special Operations Squadron since 1993. In this capacity, he has been directly responsible for the initial qualification of hundreds of Combat Talon Aircrew Members. During his illustrious career he flew over 400 combat missions and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with 2 OLC's, the Air Medal with 18 OLC's, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal with 1 OLC. Chief Doyle's extraordinary dedication to the special operations mission and the USAF reflect great credit upon himself, Air Force Special Operations and the United States Air Force.



## ROBERT W. GATES

Colonel Robert W. Gates distinguished military career began as an Aviation Cadet in 1941 and continued with outstanding performance until his retirement at

Hurlburt Field in 1972. His many noteworthy achievements extend from WWII where he served in the D-Day invasion as a pilot and Squadron Commander to his assignment to AFSOC as Deputy Commander to General Prichard from 1962 until 1965. He returned to Special Operations in 1968 to Hurlburt Field as Commander, 1st Special Operation Wing. The Vietnam War was reaching its height in operational tempo and personnel requirements. Col Gates was responsible for almost 200 aircraft of 15 different types with both a tactical and a training mission. Responsible for training SEA replacement combat crews, his students ranged from UPT graduates to high time B-52 pilots all needing to transition into vintage prop aircraft. His outstanding success in leading the Wing can best be summed up with a quote from General Mommyer, Commander TAC. "This officer has the hardest Wing Commander's job in the Command. The sheer diversity of aircraft has made his job almost unmanageable, but the sheer drive, enthusiasm and intelligence of this officer has made this the outstanding Wing in TAC". One of his more significant accomplishments was the creation of the Hurlburt Memorial Air Park, a special operations treasure. Col Gates many decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with 1 OLC and the Croix de Guerre w/SS. Col Gates extraordinary dedication to the special operations mission and the USAF reflect great credit upon himself, Air Force Special Operations and the United States Air Force.



## ANDREW I. MARTIN

Master Sergeant Andrew I. Martin distinguished himself in a career long history of exemplary performance in support of numerous Air Commando combat and training operations across the globe. A highly skilled combat warrior, outstanding leader and dedicated team member when working with coalition forces or combat missions in conjunction with U.S. Army Rangers/Green Berets, Navy Seals and Marines special operations. Recognizing his outstanding professionalism, MSgt Martin is the go-to-guy who has admirably represented Air Commando's whether in support of direct combat actions, training issues, research and development projects or the fielding of Special Operation Forces unique systems. Throughout his career he has risen to the occasion and consistently represented Air Commando's in a manner that is keeping with the proud traditions of Air Force Special Operations Command. His combat exploits include missions in support of Operations; Just Cause in Panama, Desert Shield/Storm in Kuwait and Iraq, Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraqi Freedom in Iraq. In these engagements he has earned an



# HOF

*Continued from page 21*

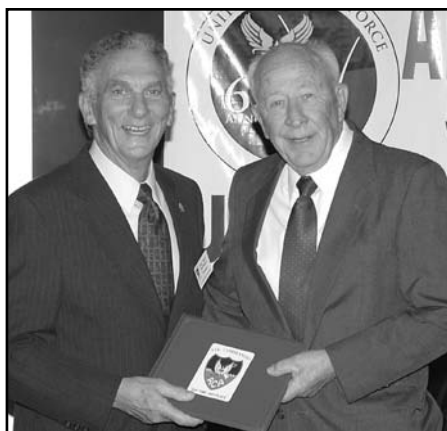
impressive list of combat awards and decorations to include the Silver Star Medal, four Bronze Star Medals, two with Valor devices, the Meritorious Service Medal with 1 OLC and several Joint Service and Air Force Commendation Medals. Master Sergeant Andrew's extraordinary dedication to the special operations mission and the Air Commando's reflect great credit upon himself, Air Force Special Operations and the United States Air Force.



## ROBERT E. MONROE

Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Monroe distinguished himself by exemplary performance during a career firmly rooted in the AC-130 gunship community. As an elite AC-130 Spectre and AC-130 Spooky pilot, this special operations warrior flew sensitive CAS missions supporting all conflicts/contingencies through the present day. As Commander of the 4th Special Operations Squadron, Lt Col Monroe led his squadron in combat during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Under his dynamic leadership, his unit and its members were highly decorated in the pursuit of destroying Taliban and Al-Qaeda targets. His outstanding performance extends well beyond his many command and leadership positions. He wrote

the AC-130H Ten Year Plan to take the aging fleet into the future, led the implementation of numerous modifications for the aircraft to include dual target attack, hot gas refueling, television data link and 30mm gun upgrades. Lt Col Monroe was the 2005 Aviation Week Laureate Award winner, AF Chief of Staff Individual Safety Award for 2004, nominee for the 2005 Lance P. Sijan Leadership Award and garnered AFSOC's Squadron of the Year award for 2006. Lt Col Monroe's many decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal with 6 OLC's and the Aerial Achievement Medal. Lt Col Monroe's outstanding contributions reflect great credit upon himself, Air Force Special Operations and the United States Air Force.



## JIMMIE R. ROBERTSON

Colonel Jimmie R. Robertson distinguished himself in the service of his country for 32 years. With over 12 years in special operations units he has made significant contributions to Air Commando mission accomplishment in both operations and maintenance assignments. His initial exposure to the unique area of special operations was at Nha Trang AB, Vietnam, followed up with ever increasing responsibilities of command. The 548th and the 603rd Special Ops Tng Squadrons as well as the 834th AMS, 834th FMS and 834th AGS all benefited by his dynamic

leadership and more importantly, his extraordinary vision of the role of special operations in modern warfare. His outstanding ability to integrate the operations and maintenance personnel into a cohesive and highly productive team was exemplary. His final assignment as DCM, 1st Special Operations Wing culminated a distinguished career in special operations and garnered a legendary reputation

# Letters

*Continued from page 10*

Richard was disappointed, but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home. Ann Margaret came out looking as beautiful as ever and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn.

He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it."

She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen'."

With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd

with those who served with him. Col Robertson's many decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with 2 OLC's, Bronze Star Medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal. Colonel Robertson's outstanding contributions reflect great credit upon himself, Air Force Special Operations and the United States Air Force.

like to talk about it, my big strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the



Army." he said.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to have been a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margaret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband.

I now make it a point to say "Thank You" to every person I come across who served in our Armed Forces. Freedom does not come cheap and I am grateful for all those who have served their country.

On behalf of those who DO appreciate all that you did for us, thank you to each of you who receive this message who have served or are serving our country. Richard's wife

*Ed Note: Does anyone know Ms Richard??*

# April Fools Day - Kong Le Style

By: Mike LaDue

A year of employment with Air America, based primarily in Laos, certainly tended to make one feel that the phrase "routine work-day" was every bit as much of an oxymoron as was the previously mentioned modern Vientiane.

For the twelve months following my arrival in April 1962, almost every day seemed to hold in waiting, something unique from those that preceded it. The drop schedule rose to four missions (occasionally five) per day as sorties to the besieged garrison at Nam Tha were added to the drops we were already making in support of the forces of Colonel Vang Pao and the northern refugees, as well as to the White Star teams throughout the country. In addition, there were occasional (& never boring) "nocturnal drops" to be conducted. The permanent office building/restaurant and separate operation building were completed at the end of the ramp and the sometimes-pyrotechnic Mama Chu was hired to do the cooking. The Russians donated, some LI-2 transports to help the leftists offset the work which we and Bird & Son were doing, but they were stingy with their spare parts, so the olive colored C-47 wannabe's mostly just sat on a nearby ramp and rusted. Dutch Brongersma introduced two Pilatus Porters into Laos but soon found their piston engines to be under-powered. Both had crashed within seven months of their arrival and the next Porters to be seen were powered by French Astazou turboprop engines (which though quite an improvement power-wise, suffered from prop-reverse problems, besides being noisy as hell).

Other new aircraft to be intro-

duced were 851 & 853, the first two of the wonderful Caribous from Canada, complete with their own DeHavilland tech rep. Thereafter, we Air Freight Specialists began to get to know the up-country areas more immediately as a result of the Caribou landings made there courtesy of such PIC's as Ed Eckholdt, Tony Durizzi, Joe Hazen, Paul Crews, Don Schwabel Bob Laturner, Paul Quackenbush and others. It was early during this period that Chief Pilot Fred Walker took one of the

however, mostly just hunkered down in their many camps to wait and to watch for a chance to strike.

Sadly during these twelve months, Tom Dieffenbach was shot down and killed south of Padong (the crash site was only located when his badly burned Meo (Hmong) passenger Gu Yia walked out). Bill Bird's C-46 "77 Victor" hit a hill near Phu Fa, while making a low-level drop in bad weather to PARU Capt. Dachar at the LS-16 strip - the crash taking the lives of pilots

this occasion the four-man-crew was able to jump from the burning aircraft on its way to impacting in high elephant grass. While one kicker died from injuries suffered as he landed by parachute, the two pilots and the other kicker were successfully recovered the following day. ("The Black Knight," who had been the PIC, was yelling something about having to defend himself during the previous night against "man-eating-pigs," as he was being helped into the rescue H-34, but that's another story.)

On the evening, of 1 April 1963, I was (following a long day of missions and Gray House giant prawn dinner - the hired cook's specialty) sitting at a corner table of the Lido's outdoor street level veranda, watching the cars, buses, samolors, and bicycle traffic pass by while ingesting a few cold ones and talking over some business with a company associate (the old city generator was being cranky again and a nice light breeze was blowing, making the veranda far more attractive than the nightclub upstairs with it's ceiling fans stilled). The Constellation Hotel's open bar was lit up down and across the street to our left: the That (pagoda) Dam near the U.S. Embassy could be seen across the Samsenthai intersection and further down Chanta Khumman and an expensive-looking, Mercedes was just pulling up to the French-style white house diagonally across from us, to the right-front obviously the vehicle of some Lao royalty and/or politician. Some Indian merchants down towards Jack & Johns were arguing with each other over whatever and the smell in the air was that given off by the flat-spiral-formed lengths of



N544Y was another Caribou operated by the Central Intelligence Agency's airline, Air America. The aircraft was an early production Caribou rated at 26,000 pounds gross weight.

"Boos" up to Long Chieng, to make the first "larger-than-a-Dornier 28" multi-engine landing on that small village's dirt runway - this original strip being considerably shorter than, and aligned on a somewhat different azimuth from, the later-constructed and better-known paved runway at what was then LS-30.

In late summer, as demanded by the Geneva Accords on Laos, many of the White Star teams were assembled at Wattay Airport and physically counted by Canadian, Indian & Polish members of the "International Control Commission," before being flown out of the country. Their North Vietnamese Regular counterparts

Campbell, & Reno, PERU trooper Manop and his two indigenous "kicker" trainees. On November 27", Fred Riley and Don Heritage lost their lives when their C-123 was ambushed on final approach to a Plain of Jars airstrip - this mission. Being a part of a Lao Government-approved plan to aid General Kong Le's neutralist paratroops force (the shoot-down was ironically, ordered by none other than Kong Le's second-in-command, Colonel Deuan Sunnalath, with whom Kong Le had had a recent falling out). Little more than one month later (5 Jan '63), Bird & Son's converted Lockheed Ventura, 55 Charlie, was shot down east of Ban Houei Sai. On

# April Fools

Continued from page 23

punk which the waiters had placed on the tables and lit to repel mosquitoes.

The sound which suddenly, put an end to this tranquil scene, erupted from the direction of the white house across the street - an unmistakable burst of about eight rounds of sub-machine gun fire, followed shortly thereafter by two or three more single shots. Immediately, my associate and I cleverly reacted by launching our beers straight into the air and freezing for a second or two, dumbly wondering if what we had heard was something else - the celebration of some obscure Lao holiday perhaps. We both then dove for the cover of the low concrete retaining wall which skirted the outside of the veranda and provided about a foot of vertical cover between us and the suddenly dangerous far side of the intersection. When all was quiet for a time and we chanced a quick look, we could see two or three of General Kong Lee's neutralist paratroopers walking around the front yard of the house near the Mercedes. Later still, following a strategic withdrawal back in the direction of the Gray House, a Lao we met told us - in a broken style which seems funny today, Those soldiers have

been busy shooting seriously at the foreign minister. And so - as we learned later - they had been. It turned out that Kong Le had held a grudge against left leaning Lao Government Foreign Minister Quinim Pholsena ever since the previous February's assassination of the General's friend Ketsana Vongsavong by communist agents on the Plain of Jars. And April Fools day just happened to be chosen as "pay-back time." Quinim's house guards (who belonged to Kong Le's airborne unit) shot him and his wife in the legs as they stepped from their car following an ambassadorial reception given by King Savang Vatthana. After the couple was down, one of the soldiers walked over to the helpless diplomat and provided the coup de grace, thus squaring the score for Ketsana's murder while also providing yet another unexpectedly exciting evening for those of us sitting on the Lido veranda across the way. So exciting even, that I don't believe I ever had the presence of mind to pay the evening's bar tab and leave a tip.

Printed with permission from the author, more stories from Mike LaDue are at Air America's website: [www.air-america.org](http://www.air-america.org).

## LOOKING FOR FAC MATERIAL

I am searching for a copy of the training POI for the FAC (0-1 qualification) course that was conducted at Hurlburt Field during 1965-1972. This research is feeding a book project concerning the operational history of the 0-1 Birddog in South Vietnam.  
Contact:  
Bob Woolley, (USA Ret),  
4007 SW 325th St., Federal Way, WA 98023  
(253) 874- 3982, email: [bjdubu@aol.com](mailto:bjdubu@aol.com)

*Editor note: Bob is a retired Lt Col U.S. Army pilot. He has been researching material for his book for four years. Any info on his request would be appreciated.*

# Country Store Items Available

ZAP Patch.....	\$3.00
Original Air Commando Group Patch .....	\$3.00
ACA Cloth Patch.....	\$3.00
POW/MIA Patches .....	\$3.50
ACA "AIR COMMANDO" Cloth Tab.....	\$3.00
ACA Challenge Coin (Bronze).....	\$5.00
Thai Wallets available in black or brown leather .....	\$8.00
Pens with "Air Commando Association" .....	\$1.00
ACA Bumper Sticker .....	\$2.00
"AIR COMMANDO" 8" decal car window display .....	\$3.00
ACA Decal (4"x 5") .....	2/\$1.00
Golf Towel (24"x16" with ACA Logo) .....	\$8.00
ACA Lapel Pin (Large & Small) .....	\$4.00
B26 or Truck Gorski Poster .....	\$20.00
**50th Poster (full color) (20"x 24").....	\$1.00
POW/MIA Flags .....	\$12.00
POW/MIA Decals .....	\$2.00
<b>Aircraft License Plates</b>	
B-26 "Over the MeKong"; B-26 "in SE Asia in the 60's"; B-26 "Nimrod Over Loas"; "Son Tay Raiders"; "A1-H Hobos" .....	\$10.00
<b>NEW</b> ACA License Plates, white or blue .....	\$12.00
ACA License Plates, white.....	\$10.00
Printed Plastic License Plate Holders .....	\$4.00
ACA Ball Cap (navy, royal & lt blue, black ,white, gray, denim, camo, & red) ACA logo or lettering .....	\$10.00
Air Commando Bush Hat- <b>Firm Only</b> (M, L, XL) .....	\$20.00
ACA T-Shirt (white only) (S, M, L,XL) .....	\$10.00
ACA T-Shirt (white only) (XXL) .....	\$12.00
ACA Golf Shirt (misc colors, white, red, royal blue, waffle weave, with crest (navy and black with lettering).....	\$15.00
Denim long sleeve shirts (Ladies M, L, XL• Mens M, L, XL, & XXL) .....	
available with lettering or crest.....	\$20.00
Jackets - (M to XXL- Tan, Navy, Black, Royal Blue) .....	\$35.00

## ORDER FORM

ACA, Post Office Box 7, Mary Esther, FL 32569-0007

Qty	Color	Item	Size	Unit Price

Sub Total

20% Shipping & Handling

Grand Total

Please understand that we do not accept credit cards or cash through the mail.

# ACA Country Store

Joyce Harrington, Country Store Manger



Denim Long Sleeve w/crest or lettering-\$20



Black or Navy Blue Golf Shirt w/ lettering - \$15  
& Ball Cap w/ lettering - \$10



Golf shirts - \$15 w/ crest  
avail in red, white, royal blue



T-shirt - \$10 white only (S,M,L,XL)  
(XXL) - \$12

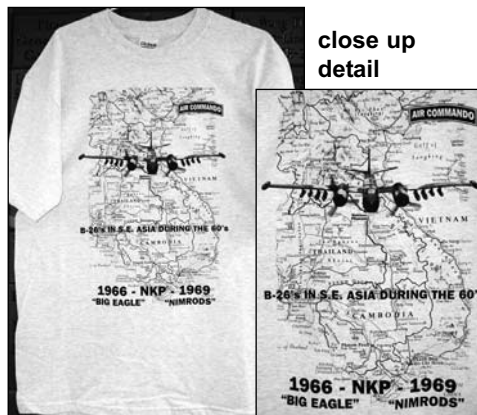
See the Country Store price list for a full list of items and prices. If you have questions on any of the items please call Joyce Harrington on Tuesdays or Fridays from 10am - 12 noon. The ACA will try to accommodate all orders but we cannot guarantee availability on all products. If the item is no longer available we will gladly refund your entire purchase.



Bush Hat - \$20 - Firm (M,L,XL)



Jackets - \$35 (M-XXL) Blue, Tan, Navy, Black



B-26 T-shirt - \$10 (M,L,XL) Limited supply



## NEW ITEM!

Genuine  
Thai wallets  
\$8.00



Golf Towel - \$8



ACA  
Decal  
2/\$1.00  
4"x5"



POW/MIA  
Decal  
\$2.00



Ball Caps - \$10  
(ACA lettering or crest)  
Available in Navy, royal &  
light blue, black, white,  
gray, denim, camo & red.



NEW Lic Plate - \$12 /blue



NEW Lic Plate - \$12 /white



Lic Plate - \$10 /white



50th Poster - \$1.00 (20"x 24")



Beer Mugs - \$10 (Logo or Lettering)



Bumper Sticker - \$2.00



Aircraft Lic Plates  
Son Tay Raiders - \$10



Aircraft Lic Plates  
B-26 Over MeKong - \$10



Lic Plate holder- \$4



Aircraft Lic Plates  
Nimrod over Laos - \$10



Aircraft Lic Plates  
A1-H Hobos - \$10



Aircraft Lic Plates  
B-26 - \$10



Lapel Pin - \$4 (sm/large)



ACA Challenge Coin - \$5  
bronze (front/back)



Window Decal - \$3.00 8" wide



POW/MIA Flag - \$12



# *The McCoskrie Threshold Foundation Update*

By John Grove

## Thailand Initiative Exceed all Expectations

The MTF continuing effort to help North East Thailand has been in progress for about a year. To see just how successful it is and to look at the

progress, Clyde Howard went to NKP to check it out. He went on his own dime in keeping with our policy of 'no one gets paid'. He reports that what gets done for the small amount of funds is just fantastic. ACA members have contributed to 6 projects so far and will have more in the works by the end of the year. These photos are from some of our funded projects.

The TLC does a lot of work in the area. Dr John Middlewood, a missionary who has served in the area for 7 years, has a very good relationship with the people, and is the TLC representative. His effort on helping the needy is invaluable. He limits their support to within 20 kilometers of Nakhon Phanom.



### KAM PHUEY:

Geno Valentine family funded this project. The computer and sound rooms were refurbished, with all systems updated and some new computers added.

Note. The school was tipped that we were coming for a visit, so the musical arts department put on a surprise show for us and it was absolutely beautiful!



### KOH KONG:

MTF/TLC funded for construction of bathrooms and water purification system at this school (grade 1-6). All is complete except replacement of well pump to support the added tank for bathrooms. Pump is on order.



### BAN NA RATCHAKWAI:

MTF Funded for two (2) water purification systems at this school (grade 1-6).



### NUNG SAWANG:

MTF funded the picnic tables in the dining area at this school (Grade 1-6). Tables are in place.

## Airman's Attic Update

by Bob White

The Eglin Airman and Family Center has tasked the Attic to present and oversee the annual base wide toy distribution program. This will be the third year to plan and execute this highly visible morale function, and we look forward to making it better than ever.

This year finds us in our new location within the former Federal Prison Camp area. We will transform our furniture showroom to create a holiday setting complete with lots of decorations, trees, and tables loaded with new toys. Advanced planning enabled us to obtain large quantities of toys that we will distribute on Thursday, November 29 from 9 AM to 5 PM rather than in mid-December as done in the past. This will enable shoppers to get help before the end of month payday.

We also have been collecting toys, food-

stuff, shoes, and clothing items to satisfy the needs of 250-300 families expected to take part. Last year 237 families received 2,265 toys for 473 children. Refreshments will be provided by G & W meals on wheels.

Families and others identified by the Unit First Sergeant may come by and pick out gifts for their children. A free wrapping service will be available.

Aside from the Christmas program, some 35 customers on average visit the Attic every day that it is open. From January to October 2007, we had 3,890 customers, issued 6,797 items including everything from diapers to dining tables. Individual donations from Eglin and the surrounding community totaled 572. We also made 31 deliveries and picked up 79 donations.

We anxiously look forward to carrying on this wonderful quality-of-life program and assisting our brave warriors and their families.

# Rossel Report

## ADDRESS CHANGE

Gene, Please update my contact information as we recently relocated to Bend, Oregon. Thanks, Maj Gen (ret) John and Debbie Dorris, ACA member # L-3476, 1288 SW Simpson Ave, Suite I-56, Bend, OR 97702-3196, Home: 541-306-3748. Cell: 314-616-5920

*Will have the changes made.*

## AC47 CREW LISTING

I stumbled across your website for the Air Commando Association. It has a page listing all of the AC47D Gunship Crews and contact information. My father, BL Grady (Call sign "Rosie") was a Spooky Flight Engineer for the year of 1966. He served onboard AC47D #80274, the same Aircraft that collided with an OV10 in December of 1968. (He returned to Viet Nam in the year of 1969 serving onboard a U10). Anyway, I would like to add him to this listing. Please tell me exactly how I can do that for him. I am ex-military as well and very proud of his service. I appreciate your time on this.

Respectfully, Brian L. Grady, email: bigbritxs@yahoo.com

*Will get it done.*

## NKP QUESTION

Here is a question for any of you that were at NKP during Sep.15, 1967 to Sep.10, 1968: Do you remember any plane that was battle damaged and returned to NKP under its own power? If so, please tell me what you remember.

Harry Bright, NKP 1967-1968, Hurlburt Field 1966-1967.

Email: rosetat2@atlanticbb.net

*I will put this in the ACA Newsletter*

## THE WALL-USA MEMORIAL

Eugene,

My name is Dennis Lewis and I became an Air Commando in Nov. 1962. That is a wonderful photo of Robert you posted on his memorial .. remembering is so important .. I hope you can get the info you need for his family. My guys and I arrived at Bien Hoa on Feb. 13, 1963 aboard a Navy C-118D after a long flight from Hurlburt, I was 19 years old. Captain Condon Hunter Terry was with us and as I am sure you know we lost him out of Soc Trang on June 27, 1963. While helping him into the cockpit of #375 that morning I was the last person to touch him in life. I visit his grave in Dallas every year and was there just last month. Website: [www.virtualwall.org/dt/TerryCH01a.htm](http://www.virtualwall.org/dt/TerryCH01a.htm)

I spent 18 months with the 605th ACS in Panama 64-66 and was in Peru with Capt. James Harper when he was killed, he was a pall bearer for Connie in 1963 in Dallas. You may have already seen this photo but I'll send it anyway, it is one of my favorites, Maj. Gochner was killed in an ultra lite accident in 05, after all he went through in Nam. and Eric Koutchak passed in 1999. Best Regards, Dennis Lewis, MSgt, USAF, Retired, Alvin, Tx  
Email:DWLVNV@aol.com

## LOOKING FOR INFO ON DAVID AILI

I had a childhood friend that was either aircrew on Spooky or Spectre gunships. He was killed in a crash at Udorn on landing - I believe. I have provided what information I could to the remaining relatives of his death but wonder if any of your org. can provide any further information. His name was David Aili, Staff Sergeant, ID No: 19418734 . Thanx , Ron Knief, Email: ronknief@sbcglobal.net

*I will put this in the ACA Newsletter and you should get some help.*

## WIKIPEDIA FILE FOR COMBAT CONTROL

I have opened a Wikipedia file for Combat Control.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User\\_talk:USAF\\_Combat\\_Control\\_Team\\_%28CCT%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User_talk:USAF_Combat_Control_Team_%28CCT%29)

I am looking for wide-spread distribution of the URL and lots of input from Combat Controllers, past, present and future. Your assistance is spreading the word would be appreciated. If we do it right, we will be writing our own history book. Sincerely,

Gene Adcock, CMSgt, USAF (CCT) Retired, Tactical & Survival Specialties, Inc. (TSSI). Email: gadcock@tacsurv.com

## PROJECT HEAVY GREEN

I never hear of Project Heavy Green dealing with Laos, fill me in. I know the Coast Guard had Loran Stations in Thailand, but do not think they ever headed to Laos. Were you saying the Coast Guard wore Uniforms in Laos? DEPCH sent Air Force and Army Personnel to Laos and ran or supported several Projects, I know of 404, Waterpump and Peppergrinder. Ran is the wrong word, guess I should of stayed with supported, but they provided the military personnel, supplies etc for these different Projects. Heavy Green is unknown to me.

OD, Email: odiorneta@charter.net

## HEAVY GREEN

"Heavy Green" was the project name for the LS 85 radar site on Phou Pha Thi, Laos. Commando Club was the code name used to identify the ground directed bombing unit there (Combat Skyspot was the code name to identify the GDB units in VN and Thailand). The personnel that operated the equipment in Laos as part of Heavy Green were sheep dipped, were employed by Lockheed and carried a Lockheed ID card. The crews that constructed/built the radar site were AF, wore civilian clothes and carried no ID cards or weapons. Transportation and support was furnished by Air Am. Operations which were cross border could be identified usually by the "Heavy" label.

Jim Avery, Combat Skyspot, Email:JimAvery@schumacher-dugan.com

*Thanks for the information.*

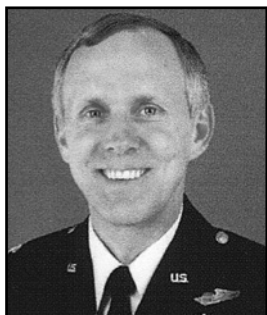
## WATERPUMP '65

When I was with Waterpump ('65) everyone who worked up country for any length of time was interviewed by Sullivan's AIRA (I believe his name was Col Greene) prior to receiving an ID card. The Ambassador was very gracious and invited us to his home from time to time (even the



# BOOK REVIEWS

## 'The Nimrod': Author Shares Personal History of A-26 Nimrod Crews, Relevancy to Today's Struggle for Freedom



Although the events may have taken place 40 years ago, their impact and the lessons to be learned from

flew countless high-intensity combat missions in the Vietnam War from 1966-1969.

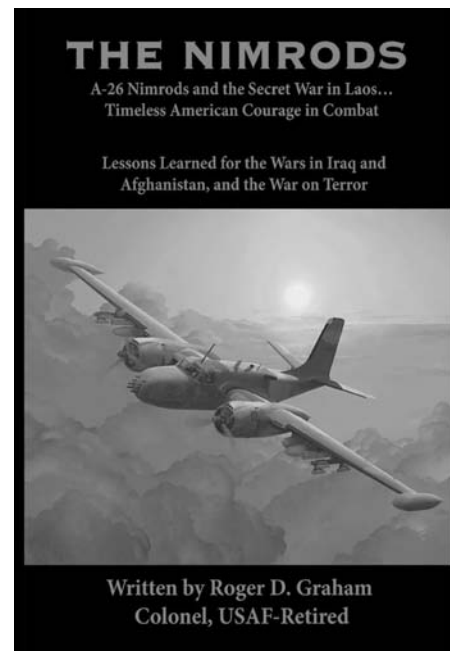
Colonel Graham, a former B-52 navigator-bombardier, and a former A-26 navigator and co-pilot who flew 182 combat missions during the Vietnam War, tells readers the incredible true story of the Nimrod, whose courageous, nighttime dive-bombing attacks in Steel Tiger, Barrel Roll and along the Ho Chi Minh Trail made up an important part of U.S. efforts in the Vietnam War. To illustrate the intensity of the A-26 missions, Col. Graham describes more than 20 distinct missions. Even more

importantly, he describes the "personalities and psychological reactions of all the unforgettable characters who were a part of the 609th Special Operations Squadron." He emphasizes the pain of separation for military families during times of war, as well as the joy and challenges families face after the war.

According to Col. Graham, "The Nimrod" is highly relevant to the current wars taking place in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the global war on terror, "because it addresses the lessons learned in the Vietnam War (and World War II and the Korean War) and advocates that Americans and their allies apply those lessons learned to the war in Iraq, to terrorism, and to renewed threats of nuclear war from tyrants and terrorists around the world."

"The Nimrod," therefore, is written not only for aviation buffs, military history enthusiasts and military family advocates, but for freedom-loving people around the world. Col. Graham reviews and analyzes recommendations from "The Iraq Study Group Report" and President Bush's new Iraq strategy, articulating "a new vision that can be embraced by the entire world." The author leaves readers with two choices: unite and have the courage to defeat tyrants and terrorism, or suffer continuing terrorist acts that could one day lead to nuclear war and Armageddon.

Colonel Graham, raised in Athens, West Virginia, and currently living with his family near Atlanta, Georgia, is a 1963 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and a 1972 graduate of the College



of Law at West Virginia University. He received a master's degree in government contract law from George Washington University in 1978, and had a long and decorated career in the U.S. Air Force, including a two-year assignment with the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, and assignments in the Washington, D.C. area spanning more than a decade. After Air Force retirement, Col. Graham worked for 12 years with the Lockheed Martin Corporation in Marietta, Georgia, as the F-22 program attorney.

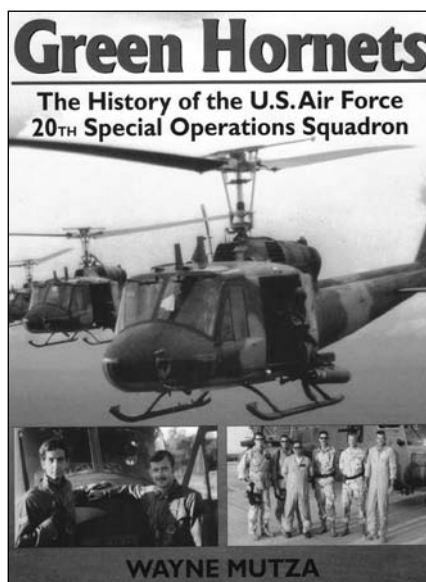
Colonel Graham and his wife, Dianne, very much enjoyed attending the Air Commando Association and Nimrod Reunions in October 2007. The dinners and the Memorial Service at the Air Park were especially meaningful.

If you would like to purchase a copy of "The Nimrod," simply log onto [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com) click on Book Store. Type in "The Nimrod" in the search function. The book is available in both hardcover and softcover versions. This book makes Air Commandos, Nimrod, and members of our families proud of our service to our country.

## Green Hornets: The History of the U.S. Air Force 20th Special Operations Squadron

By Wayne Mutza

In this fascinating, detailed account, Wayne Mutza takes a look deep inside this extraordinary, little-known, but very special unit of the U.S. Air Force. Published here for the first time is the colorful history of the men and their helicopters that made their living with the legendary SOG teams of the Army Special Forces. From secret cross-border missions during the Vietnam War to current operations in the Middle East. Also included is a special section of Green Hornet emblems, and detailed lists of every aircraft flown by the 20th Special Operations Squadron.



To buy this book on the internet go to: [www.schifferbooks.com](http://www.schifferbooks.com) and search for Green Hornets. The price is \$35.00, shipping and handling fees may apply.

# Rossel

*Continued from page 27*

enlisted). In about 1998 I attended a Hmong reunion in Indiana. One of the attendees was the then Ambassador to Laos, Wendy J. Chamberlin....a fox!!!

Ed Douglas, Email: edouglas@stx.rr.com

## WENDY CHAMBERLIN

Ed--That was Wendy Chamberlin's third Lao tour. 2nd was about 1977 as a junior State Dept officer. Her first tour was 1972 for a couple years with IVS, International Voluntary Services. She was a teacher at the Lycee' up near the Monument on Lane Xang Avenue.

FYI, Wendy came out and made two jumps with the skydiving club an Ozzie friend and I started in 1973. Yes, great gal! some great web sites below

[www.mideasti.org/about/about\\_officers\\_chamberlin.html](http://www.mideasti.org/about/about_officers_chamberlin.html)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wendy\\_Chamberlin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wendy_Chamberlin)

MacAlan Thompson, Email: mactbkk@gmail.com

## GENERAL OLDS FUNERAL

I just got around to looking through the Air Commando August edition and noticed the nice coverage on General Olds. Maybe this is news that is too old to be of any more interest, but I took a few hundred photos. When the mortuary officer saw me show up with my camera, she asked if I'd get a lot of pictures of her honor guard. I'd done some good things for her at past funerals of classmates. So I gave her pics and she passed them on to his family, as well. If you see an opportunity to publish any, I could send you a few whenever they might be useful. I'm starting a radiation sequence tomorrow for an early diagnosis of prostate cancer this spring. So I'm hoping to have that all finished and behind me by November.

Jimmie Butler, Email: jimmieb@earthlink.net,

*Jimmie we are praying for you to recover totally.*

## 432ND USAF HOSPITAL

I was assigned to the 432nd USAF Hospital as a medic but often went on Mekong Patrol with the T-28 guys and, on occasion, with the Jolly Green Giants. We knew how to get them better food than what came from the flight-line kitchen and having a medic along for any flight was always a welcome deal for most officers. I have never seen anything about the guys with Continental Air Services on any of the Thailand websites but I was good friends with several of them and those dudes did some pretty amazing things for Air America at Udorn. I would love to hear from anyone with the hospital, the T-28 drivers or with CAS/Air America during 1968/69/70.Thanks.

Jerry M. Karnes, President, Texas Applications Specialists, Inc., 2915 Hollow Creek Dr., Houston, TX 77082, (281)558-4696

Email: Jkarnes@texapp.com, Udorn RTAFB

## DINING OUT GUEST SPEAKER

I have found my guest speaker -- Lt Col Mike McKinney from the 71 SOS at Kirtland. I have a number of crewmembers interested in the

CV22 and I think he will be just what they want to hear. Thanks so much for your help. I would not have reconnected with Mike if it was not for your search. Respectfully. Lt Col Larry McLaughlin, 37 HS/CC. Email: Lawrence.McLaughlin@warren.af.mil

*The recommendations came from a variety of ACA members.*

## TO ALL OF MY FATHER'S FRIENDS,

I am writing to inform you, if you haven't already heard, my father Richard French died peacefully yesterday morning. Today we are making arrangements and I will send another email with the details just as soon as I can. Marinda French-Frye, (some of you know me as Bukie) The Services for my father was held at:

Victor Valley Mortuary, 15609 11th Street

Victorville, CA 92392 (760) 245-8164

You can contact me on my cell phone 541-531-1015 if you need any additional information. Richard French, moungsoui108@yahoo.com

Dick French was RO at Mounq Soui, L-108, and Vang Vieng, L-16, with the Neutralists. MacAlan Thompson, Email: mactbkk@gmail.com,

*Thanks-I remember Dick very well and may his soul rest in peace.*

## TDY ORDERS

Guys, I have ex military "Old Fart" friends who find it hard to believe that we were issued TDY Orders that stated "Items 1 through 25 on reverse apply". If anyone has a copy and could copy both sides and email them to me, it would be greatly appreciated. The set for the 2nd deployment to det 2, which I was on would be icing on the cake. Snail mail address is D Husher, 503 Cheri Whitlock Dr, Siloam Springs, AR 72761. David Husher, 1daveh@cox.net,

*We'll put this in the ACA newsletter and you should get some inputs.*

## VISITING THE COUNTRY STORE

<http://www.macleodinternational.com> Visiting the Country Store, ACA Member Life Member #3803. Col Dick MacLeod

Email: hilanderd@msn.com,

## CHECKED OUT YOUR GREAT SIGHT

Waxahachie Texas Member weapons load crew Son Tay Raid A1-E at NKP Thailand 1970. Just stopped in and checked out your great sight. Noel R. Fairholm, Email: nrchf@yahoo.com

## IN NAM FOR 6 YEARS

I was in Nam for 6 years work with SOH Mike Force and 5th sfga rvn rangers. I was a CWO4 then work with CCT all so I flew UH1D choppers. Ltc Charles E Capach, Email: sfod1732@yahoo.com

*Thanks for the email.*



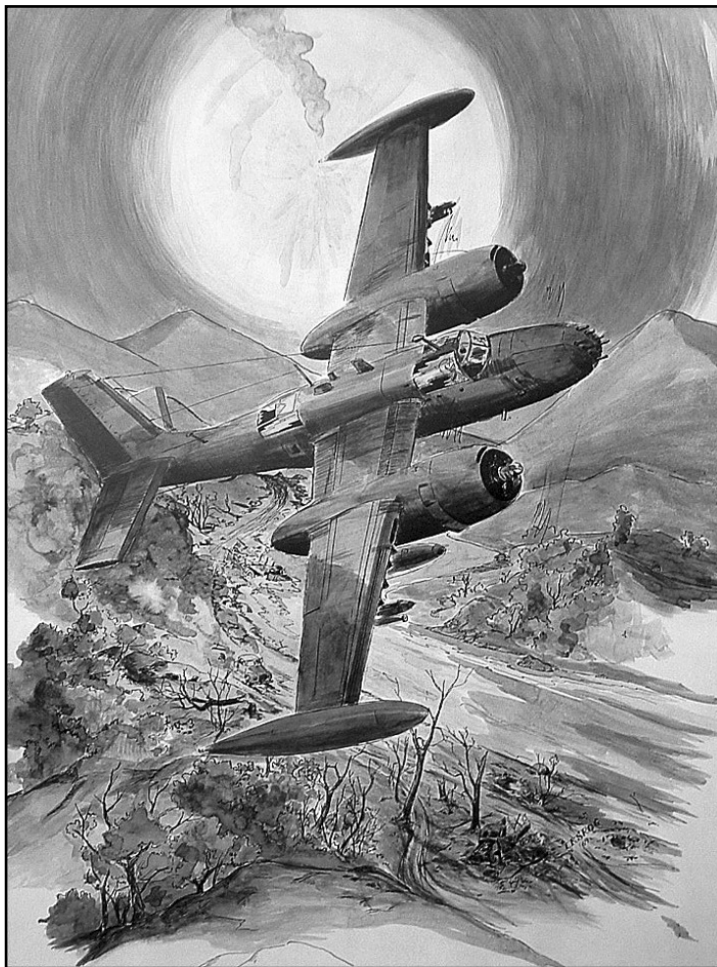
# Gorski prints available for a limited time at the ACA Country Store

Frank Gorski was a great artist in addition to being an air commando. He flew the A-26 and AT-28. As a result of his experiences on the Ho Chi Minh trail, he has created numerous paintings. We have several on display in the ACA building.

After Frank passed away, his wife Dianne sent us a package of two large colored prints to be sold through our country store. We still have many on hand and they are available for the nominal fee of \$20 which includes shipping and handling. The prints are 22 inches by 28 inches.

These great prints can be ordered by sending your check for \$20 with your written request to:

ACA  
PO Box 7,  
Mary Esther, FL 32569



## The A-26 Invader and The Nimrod Crews



A/B-26 REUNION  
2007



## Email Etiquette

Please be considerate when sending email to the Air Commando office. Over 100 plus emails are received DAILY and can be quite time consuming to sort through. If a member could send something of Air Commando or personal history or recollection, it would be more useful to the assn.

## ACA Newsletter Advertising Rates

FULL PAGE .....	\$160
HALF PAGE .....	\$90
QUARTER PAGE .....	\$60
ONE COLUMN INCH .....	\$7
Frequency discounts available.	

**Quarterly Deadlines:**  
15th of each

**Jan, April, July & Sept**

Checks must accompany copy unless prior approval. Mail copy and disk to  
Ad Manager - ACA  
PO Box 7,  
Mary Esther, FL 32569.



# Rossel

Continued from page 29

## JUST CHECKING IN

Hurlburt Field 1980-1989, 8SOS Loadmaster, Rhein Main 1989-1992, 7 SOS Loadmaster, Hurlburt Field, 1992-1996, 23 AF/IG. Russell E. Painter, Email: famousg@roadrunner.com, Ashland, KY

Thanks for the email.

## SURFING YOUR SITE

Just happened to surf onto your site as it was a link on the Special Operations Association web site. Most interesting site but it should be updated. Served with the 20th SOS Vietnam, crew chief/doorgunner Jan 1970-71. Tom Skaug, Email: greenhornet929@aol.com, Oshkosh, WI

In the process of updating it right now.

## WHERE IS JACK MERCY

Does anyone know where Jack Mercy (UH-1F pilot) is?  
Tom Garcia, tom@garcia.net  
http://www.eastwindrain.com, NM

We'll put it in the Newsletter and you should hear from someone.

## DAD'S MILITARY STUFF

While going through boxes of my dad's military stuff, I found copies of the Air Commado Assoc rules. He is dead, or I would ask him about it. I was just curious about it. I didn't know if he had been a member. We were stationed there when I was young. His name was Thomas LaFrance.  
Suzanne Eppley, Email: suzme93@mchsi.com

Can anyone help the young lady?

## FAC REUNION IN CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA

All members of the FAC Association are invited the Australian FAC Reunion to be held in Canberra Australia in April 2008. The Registration Package is attached and a mud map of Canberra City Centre detailing the location of accommodation, Canberra Club and Australian War Memorial is available on request. Looking forward to seeing you "down under".  
Mac Cottrell, Sidewinder 34, Reunion Coordinator, macthfac@tpg.com.au

## WRITING A BOOK

Writing a book, my main character is an ex-Air Force Commando. If anyone wants to be an ex Air Commando in his book here is your chance to be a real stud. Al Paris, Email: alconnie@frontiernet.net, Fort Mohave, AZ

## TASK FORCE OMEGA

The Firefly33 link is :www.firefly33.com I'm on the board of directors

of Task Force Omega, a non-profit organization pushing for the accountability and return of all our warriors. TFO was organized and is still chaired by Col Earl Hopper, a WWII, Korean and Vietnam veteran after his son, Earl Jr was shot down over North Vietnam. The TFO website is a work in progress with the addition and update of case work and biographical information of our POWs and MIAs. The most complete information we have about brother James Wayne Herrick, Jr. disappearance is on the TFO website at:  
www.taskforceomegainc.org/H115.html.  
Roger Herrick, Email: rl\_herrick@hotmail.com

Thanks for the information

Eugene D. Rossel  
Tel/FAX 909-591-7342, E-mail aircommando1@earthlink.net  
ACA Home Page Web site www.specialoperations.net

# President

Continued from page 32

upgraded the storage area in the back room (called the hangar) to make it suitable for displaying more memorabilia and books, we are running out of space. We have no intention of establishing a real museum and our building does not fit the bill. I realize that disappoints Don, but I have advised him that he must move here to achieve his dream.  
Stay well and cheers,  
Sam

## COMMEMORATIVE ACA BRICK

Commemorative bricks are again available for you, a beloved family member, or a devoted or departed friend. The donation remains at \$100 and there are currently only 57 spaces available and are allotted on a first come, first served basis. Roger Klair and Willie Hall are eager to start so please submit your request ASAP. Forward requests to: Air Commando Association, ATTN: Brick, P.O. Box 7, Mary Esther, FL 32569-0007

Yes! I would like a Commemorative Brick displayed on the Wall of Fame in the hallway of the Air Commando Association Building. My three (3) lines should be crafted as follows:

I understand that my three (3) lines are limited to no more than 17 characters per line. By definition that means letters, spaces, periods, commas, dashes, etc. Here is an example:

LARRY MOORE

311 ACS 67-68

SMSGT RETIRED



# AIR COMMANDO ASSOCIATION, INC.

NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

MARY ESTHER, FL  
32569  
PERMIT NO. 3

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



**November 2007**

## President's Corner

By Felix "Sam" Sambogna

130 Hercules  
June 3, 1959 - First class graduates from the AF Academy  
Nov 16, 1961- Operation Jungle Jim/Farm Gate -air commandos arrive in Vietnam  
Aug. 5, 1964 - USAF moves in force into Thailand and Vietnam  
June 3, 1965 - USAF Major White makes first space walk  
April 3, 1967 - CMSgt Airey becomes first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force  
Feb. 12, 1973 - Operation Homecoming - return of POWs  
April 24, 1980 - Desert One mission to rescue hostages in Iran fails  
March 19, 1989 - First flight of V-22 Osprey  
Dec. 20, 1989 - Operation Just Cause in Panama  
Jan. 17, 1991 - Operation Desert Storm, Persian Gulf War  
Oct 7, 2001 - Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan  
Mar. 20, 2003 - Operation Iraqi Freedom  
Mar. 20, 2006 - AF receives first operational CV-22  
Oct. 14, 2006 - AF Memorial dedicated in Arlington

\*\*\*\*\*

I was concerned about the Sunday memorial service because Charlie Jones did such a fantastic job for so many years. However, John Connors took the initiative and organized another wonderful event. Howie Pierson, our new ACA chaplain, did a great job. We

will always miss Charlie's devotion and eloquence, but we must carry on, and we did.

There are so many behind-the-scene folks who make the reunion a success. They are your board members and other volunteers and their wives who do such a great job. The wives under the guidance of Dee Roberson decorate the club each year. The names are too numerous to mention, but each volunteer can know in their heart they are appreciated and their true reward is the success of the reunion. But I must make special mention of Joyce Harrington who manages the country store. Although she was seriously injured in an accident and was hospitalized for several days, she still worked the country store during the reunion. What a champion! We also thank the many 1st SOW folks who support the reunion each year: Colonel Webby, 1st SOW/CC; CMSgt Richardson, 1st SOW/CCC; protocol, 20th SOS; Transportation, Communications, and the Honor Guard.

There is a strong possibility that the Hurlburt Soundside Club will not be available for next year's reunion. There are plans to build a new club and tear down the Soundside. We will locate a back-up facility for the banquet.

The two great volunteers who have managed our office for so many years are temporarily not avail-

able. Hap Lutz's wife, Shirley, is recovering from a fall, and Hap is assisting her during her recovery at home. Pete Bowman was injured in a fall and is recovering and receiving therapy. These two super air commandos and their families are in our prayers. We look forward to their return to office management.

We have two new board members effective on 1 Nov 07, Tom Bradley and Bob Powell. We lost "Mac" McDaniels due to work requirements and health reasons, and John Connors' term is up. We thank them for their service and trust they will stay involved.

As you might imagine, the warriors from the 1st SOW deploy frequently. As suggested by Board member Bob White, we provide small items (CDs, playing cards, and other goodies) in the deployment line for the warriors to pick up. We have a label on the items indicating they are from the ACA with good wishes for a safe return. Good idea Bob.

Don Maxwell, a life member who lives overseas, is an ardent special operations historian. He has a dream that a special ops museum be established on or near Hurlburt Field. He frequently sends books and extraordinary pictures (nicely framed) that he wants displayed. Even though we have