

The AC-119 Gunship Association

November News Flash



Association President's Message:

WOW! AC-119 Gunship "Operation Legacy" Reunion at Albuquerque was a resounding success. The reunion was action-packed from arrival to departure. My compliments for mission accomplished to Steve and Nancy Mac Isaac. On behalf of the Association, I sincerely thank them for a Great Reunion.

We had **thirteen** (13) brothers attend their first AC-119 reunion this year. We missed all of you brothers who could not attend. A total of 250 brothers and guests attended the reunion.

Military Friday at Kirtland AFB was very enjoyable; weather perfect. USAF busses transported our group to tour aircraft on the base flightline, have lunch prepared/served by active duty personnel (even officers) of the 58th Special Operations Group which includes the 71st Special Operations Squadron (Legacy Squadron). One hundred twenty-five of our group attended an hour-long briefing conducted by two pilots (Captains) and an "Osprey" flight engineer (now called an "Aviation Systems Specialist).

Prior to the Meet & Greet activity on Friday evening, an unforgettable, unique memorial service was held in honor of our brothers lost in Vietnam. Families of lost brothers and surviving crew members of lost aircraft were honored in the ceremony conducted by the Administrators of our Facebook Page. Four custom-brewed ales with dedicated "Call Signs" of our four aircraft lost were ceremoniously presented and adorned with an individual "dog tag" as each name of all AC-119 brothers lost in SEA was read.

The Association business meeting on Saturday started at 0900 hours, adjourning at 1100 hours. Highlights of the meeting were:

- The Board-approved recommendation of the IT (Information Technology) Team to contract with True World Enterprise (TWE) for a **new AC-119 Gunship Website** was presented to the membership. The new website will have the same website address, i.e. www.ac-119gunships.com.
- For additional funds needed to launch a comprehensive website (above & way beyond our present website) as soon as possible, members present were asked for donations. A Shadow Gunner (CMSgt, Ret) stepped forward, giving the first donation of \$1,000.00 and challenged all AC-119 Chief Master Sergeants to match his donation. Shadow & Stinger Generals and Colonels were quickly challenged to match or exceed the donation. A Stinger Gunner stood and challenged all Association Life members to donate \$119.00 to match their original life membership dues. CHALLENGES were established for "new website" donations. Any donations to the Association for the new website by annual members/associate or honorary members will be greatly appreciated and recognized. Our Legacy "heartbeat" for AC-119 Shadow & Stinger gunships will live long with your contribution. Be Proud and send your donation to Treasurer Doug Wohlgamuth. Donations are Tax-Deductible! Our Association is a designated 501c (3) non-for-profit, tax exempt organization.
- The 2014 Board of Directors was re-elected to serve another year in 2015. Anyone interested in serving on the Board after the 2015 Reunion in St. Louis is welcome to contact a current Board member.
- Reunion XVI will be held in St. Louis at the Crowne Plaza Hotel on September 15-22, 2015. Reunion Coordinators are Ev Sprou and Wade Dunn.
- Reunion XVII will be held at "Homebase" Fort Walton Beach, Florida in 2016.
- Reunion XVIII will be held at Wright-Patterson AFB; Dayton, Ohio in 2017.

The Reunion Banquet on Saturday evening included a delicious dinner and a great guest speaker. Colonel Dwight Davis, Commander of the 58th Operations Group, 58th Special Operations Wing provided a most informative speech about current special operations, tying the fact that we AC-119 Shadows & Stingers established gunship guidelines and tactics that are still used today in USAF Gunship Special Operations.

The AC-119 Gunship Association's Terence F. Courtney "Above & Beyond" Award was presented to Stinger Bruce Byrd and to Shadow Michael Drzyzga. Shadow William George traveled the longest distance to the reunion from Hawaii to earn the Magellan Award. All three recipients are GUNNERS!!

Immediately following the Banquet, Gus Slinger reported raffle winners and silent auction results before conducting our first-ever open-auction for donated items not assigned to the raffle or the silent auction.

Our Farewell Feast on Sunday evening featured delicious Brisket and terrific Pecan pies. Everyone signed the "Uncle Sam" hat for our true patriot Stinger brother Paul Campbell who is very ill and unable to attend reunions. Thank you, Jerry Hester for organizing this tribute and delivering the hat to Paul.

Until we meet for Reunion XVI in 2015, blessings to all brothers and their families.

Meet Me in St Louie,
Larry Fletcher

HELP! HELP!

2016 Reunion Coordinator Needs Your Opinion

Gus Sininger would like to schedule the 2016 Reunion at Fort Walton Beach during the last week of October from Wednesday Oct. 26 thru Sunday Oct. 30.

The reason for the late dates is that we can get reasonable room rates for that week at \$119 or below plus taxes. Room rates before these dates are much higher!

The average temperature for late October in Fort Walton Beach is 71 degrees for a high and 55 for nighttime lows. It's still nice weather plus the Hurricane Season is ending and the humidity drops off considerably.

What Gus needs to know is: Will you attend or plan to attend the AC-119 Gunship Reunion at Fort Walton Beach on October 26-30, 2016? Gus needs to know ASAP so he can get room rates set with the Hotel.

Please respond to Gus Sininger at stinger7172@gmail.com or call him (850) 863-9649 as to your choice of options, listed below:

1. I prefer to attend the 2016 Reunion at an earlier date (September) even at higher room rates.
 2. I prefer to attend the 2016 Reunion (Oct. 26-30) at the room rate of \$119 or less plus tax.
 3. I would attend the reunion regardless of dates or room rates.
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Reminder from the Secretary

IF YOU RECEIVE THIS BY U. S. POSAL MAIL DELIVERY, AND YOU DO HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS, let me know if you want future Newsletters and FLASHES sent via email. It will SAVE us a lot in "office expenses"! Contact Association Secretary: drzyzga513@hotmail.com

FINAL FLIGHT addendum – May they rest in peace.

1. Timothy K. Grauer, Life Member 150, 18th SOS Gunner, March 2014
 2. Frederick W. Eggert, Life member 63, 18th SOS, FE, Oct. 2014
 3. Kelly L. DeLoache, 18th SOS, NAV, Feb. 2013
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Thanks to Ev Sprous, 2015 Reunion Coordinator for having this created:



Are you interested in some AC-119 historical facts, current events, and interesting dialogue about AC-119s?

If you have Internet (web-www) access on your computer, then you have to browse to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/195912423919726/>

Join the Facebook group, which now has over 200 interesting members!!

AC-119 Gunship Association - Merchandise

The Association Quartermaster, Gus Slinger, has many items to offer. These FOUR items are "just arrived from a resupply mission".

CONTACT GUS at: stinger7172@cox.net or tele home at (850) 863-9649

Window Decals for the 71st, (not pictured), 17th and 18th. They are 8" by 8". They are \$7 each plus \$3 shipping for a total of \$10 ea..

Ascots for the 17th and the 18th. They are \$20 each plus \$3 shipping for a total of \$23 ea. Only have 4 each of the Shadow and 2 each of the Stinger.



Welcome newest Members to the AC-119 Gunship Association

Steve Sirois Jr. Associate LIFE, C-130 FE and Craft Brewmaster of “Call Sign Brewery”

Col. Arthur D. Davis Honorary LIFE, Commander 58th SOW, Kirtland AFB, NM

William H. Reigle Fire Control System, PhanRang/TSN, 70 - 71

Linda Bright Associate LIFE, wife of 18th POC and 119 maintainer, Andy Bright

Jeffrey J. Dunn Associate LIFE, Ret. USAF MSgt., and Son of Jim Dunn (18th SOS NOS/FLIR)

Thank you to all the Annual Members, who respond promptly to the Secretary’s request to renew membership every year, especially to those who are now using email (saves \$) !!! 😊

Continuing Reminder from the Secretary: if you change contact information PLEASE remember to notify the Secretary or your group POC, – it is important that we do not lose contact with you.

Information from Association President Larry Fletcher regarding a AC-119 Shadow/Stinger Gunship Memorial Bench at the National Museum of the United States Air Force (NMUSAF) at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

The AC-47 Gunship Memorial Bench dedicated at the “Spooky” Reunion on the grounds of the NMUSAF brought attention to the desires of some AC-119 Gunship Brothers to have a Shadow/Stinger Memorial Bench at the NMUSAF for our 2017 Reunion in Dayton. I started looking into that possibility over a year ago and found two major Museum hurdles to jump over, in addition to funding such a project.

1. There is already a Memorial for the AC-119 Shadow Gunships on the park grounds of the NMUSAF. The 71st SOS funded and dedicated a memorial ground plaque on July 13, 1995. We held our 2004 Dayton Reunion Memorial Service at the site of this memorial plaque. The plaque recognizes the 71st SOS and 17th SOS Shadows, but does not recognize the 18th SOS Stingers. The NMUSAF allows only one memorial per group (AC-119 gunships) for each time period, i.e. WWII, Korea, Vietnam. In order for our AC-119 Association to get a bench approved by the Museum, the current Shadow Memorial Plaque would have to be removed or incorporated into a new Memorial. The 71st SOS leadership would have to be involved and agree to whatever is proposed for an AC-119 Gunship Monument that includes Shadows and Stingers.

2. Squadron Patches displayed on NMUSAF monuments must be officially approved by the USAF. Guess what? The 17th SOS Shadow and the 18th SOS Stinger patches were NEVER officially approved

by the USAF. We were too busy fighting a war in SEA to submit paperwork to get the patches approved. Thus, official USAF approval of our patches has been ongoing by some dedicated Association members, but no results.

Funding a NMUSAF memorial bench or any other memorial will have to come from private donations. The "ballpark" cost of a bench ranges between \$4,000.00 and \$5,000.00 while meeting all NMUSAF requirements. The Association would need "Boots on the Ground" i.e. someone living in the vicinity of Dayton willing to coordinate and oversee this project. The project from planning to completion would take at least one year. If you are interested in wearing Jungle Boots again, contact me.

Right now, the #1 priority of the AC-119 Gunship Association is the construction of a first-class, up-to-date, user-friendly, comprehensive NEW website that is currently under contract. The #2 priority is continued funding for our new website through donations of members. Donation Challenges were made at the Albuquerque Reunion. All AC-119 Generals, Colonels, and Chief Master Sergeants were challenged to meet or exceed a \$1,000.00 donation made by a CMSgt Gunner. Another Challenge was made by another Gunner for all life members of the Association to meet his donation of \$119.00 for the NEW website. All donations are Tax Deductible. Send donations to our Association Treasurer Doug Wohlgamuth.

The AC-119 Gunship Website is the Heart of our Association. Our Facebook page is the Heart Beat of our Association. Our Facebook page doesn't need funds to operate, but the Association still needs additional donations to sufficiently fund our NEW website. The target date for the NEW website (still found at www.ac-119gunships.com) to become fully operational is January 2015.



Following are TWO PAGES OF IMAGES FROM THE ALBUQUERQUE, NM REUNION XV, this year.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday September 20, 2014

AC 119 Gunship Reunion Hospitality Meeting Dinner	Crest Ballroom Embassy Ballroom Embassy Ballroom	9:00am 6:00pm
ASA Okinawa Reunion Group Hospitality Banquet	Atrium I & II Atrium	6:00pm



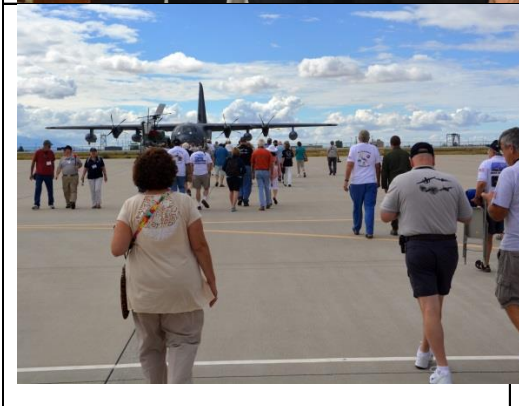
WE REMEMBER

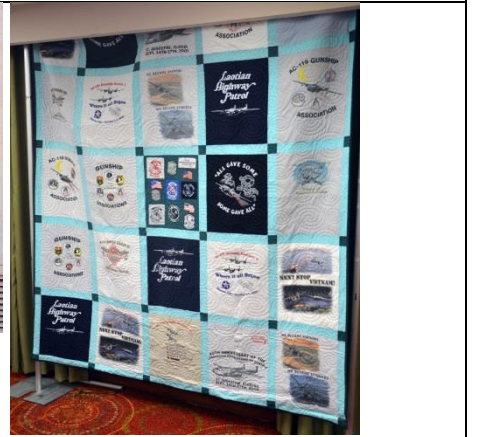
Stinger 41 A/C 53 7626

Shadow 76 A/C 52 5987

Shadow 78 A/C 53 8355

Lemon 10 A/C 53 5955





INTERESTING FINAL PAGE, DOWN ONE MORE!

WINGS OVER HOUSTON 2014

AC-119 Gunship Association President Larry Fletcher was one of 20 invited guests in the Legends & Heroes Autograph Tent at the **November 1-2** "Wings Over Houston" Airshow at Ellington Field, Houston, Texas. Fifty thousand spectators attended each day of the airshow which concluded with aerial performances by the U.S. Navy Blue Angels on Saturday and the U.S.A.F. Thunderbirds on Sunday. Fletcher wrote, "It was an honor to be included with the prestigious group of Americans who served our great country. Nearly all guests had written books that were for sale. Fans crowded the tent for autographs in their Souvenir Program which contained photos and brief biographies of invited guests. From Medal of Honor winners to World War II Aces and Astronauts in the tent, I felt right at home with AC-47 "Spooky" Pilot, Mike Trahan at the table on my right and AC-130 "Spectre" Gunner, Wes Fields at the table on my left. I think the three of us gunship vets educated a lot of people about USAF fixed-wing gunships. I know I autographed a lot of programs and sold a few books. But mostly, I told the story about AC-119 Shadow and Stinger gunships using my AC-119 Gunship model as a teaching tool. The whole experience was exciting and fun. And I think Sue enjoyed the experience as well."



Larry with WWII re-enactors

Occupants of the Legends & Hero's Tent.

"This is the End, My Friends" – MDrzyzga Nov 18, 2014