



The Straphanger Gazette



Volume 9 Issue 4

Find us on the web at <http://www.araassociation.com> April, May, June, 2017
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AerialRocketArtilleryAssociation>



“Aerial Rocket Artillery”....when called on by those who were in danger, our units were there laying it on the line.

We were proud of our Aerial Rocket Artillery Team then and still proud of it now. The Straphanger Gazette is a quarterly publication of the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association. Issues will be published on or about the 1st of January, April, July and October. Members who have e-mail will receive a copy as an pdf.

A Chance to Walk Where Our Forefathers Walked. The 20th Reunion of the ARA September 13—17, 2017 Williamsburg, VA



President's Corner

Spring is on the Wing

By the time you read this, winter will be in the rear view mirror. In southern California, the daffodils are finishing and the roses have their first bloom. The “pineapple express” or atmospheric river has done its work and the draught has been quenched. I hope you have all survived the snow storms and shoveling and our looking forward to spring.

As I reflect back on past reunions and look forward to the Williamsburg Reunion, I am so proud of the Association and our members. It doesn't matter when you were in Vietnam or your rank; it is the shared experiences that we all remember. The congeniality and friendship will make the 20th reunion special.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the support of the ladies. Especially those that were married when their husbands deployed, We thank you all for your support, caring and grace.

We can now make reservations at the Embassy Suites. The code for our special rate is ARA. Our rooms are all two bedroom suites. You just need to specify if you want a king bed or two double beds. The contact number for the Embassy Suites is (757)229-6800. If you are having a problem ask for Heidi Watkins, Sales Manager. Hilton's main national reservation number is (800) 774-1500.

On Thursday, September 14th, we have all day free and on Saturday, September 16th, we have a half day free. I encourage everyone to do some research on places that you would like to visit. One of the primary areas is Colonial Williamsburg. It gets a little confusing because some of the historic buildings require a single-day pass which costs \$42/adult. The buildings requiring a pass include the Governor's Palace, Bruton's Parish Church, the Court House, the Capitol, Public Gaol, Art Museum, and trade stores. A walking tour is included in the admission ticket. Tickets can be purchased at several locations, but the location at Merchant's Square is probably most convenient.

Remember on Friday, we have the bus tour for Jamestown and Yorktown. There is a full schedule for those that choose, but you can always hang out at the hotel with friends.

Please make your reservations and send in your registration forms soon as possible.

Best to all,
ARA 6
Dave Borgeson



ARA WILLIAMSBURG REUNION
20th ARA REUNION, Williamsburg, VA Sept 13 – 17, 2017
Reunion Registration Form

Information	
Name/Membership #	
Wife/Guest name(s)	
Additional Guest(s)	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Telephone/e-mail	
Any special assistance/ needs required	

Arriving on _____ Departing on _____ Flying _____ Yes or No

Please list name(s) as you would like for them to appear on NAME TAG(S)	Where From
Member	
Spouse/Guest	
Units(s)	
Dates	

REGISTRATION/EVENT FEES	Details	Price	# In party	Total
Registration Fee	per member in party over age 18	\$30.00		
Annual Membership Dues	If not already paid for 2017	\$25.00		
Wednesday Dinner	per plate charge	\$34.50		
Friday Bus Tour to Jamestown and Yorktown**	Per person charge is \$49; if 50 people sign up; the charge goes to \$41. Refund as needed	\$49.00		
Saturday – Farewell Dinner	Dinner at Fort Magruder	\$47.00		
Total for Reunion		185.50		

****Registration forms will be numbered in order received to insure seating on bus.**
Please complete out and return by August 1st so that we may finalize all plans and secure set prices for events. Please send a confirmation of attendance e-mail to reunion host for head counts. Thanks and hope to see you all in September in Williamsburg, VA.
E-mail address for host –David Borgeson is dborgeson41@gmail.com; Telephone # 310-773-1295

Please make checks payable to **ARA ASSOCIATION and mail to:**

**ARA ASSOCIATION
 c/o Herbert Hirst
 PO Box 220
 North Plains, OR 97133-0220**

The Latest “Skinny” on the Reunion—Courtesy of Bruce Wilder

The information is divided into three main topics: The Embassy Suites, the Jamestown and Yorktown bus tour, and the Fort Magruder Farewell Dinner.

EMBASSY SUITES:

After reviewing several properties in Williamsburg, the Board of Directors approved the Embassy Suites. The Embassy Suites has a very competitive room rate of \$89/night for Wednesday and Thursday and \$119/night for Friday and Saturday. These rates do not include an 11% sales tax or \$2.00/night occupancy charge. If you include the taxes and the occupancy charge, the bill for four nights is \$470 or an average of \$117.44 per night. This is a little confusing, but we don't want anyone to be surprised at check out. The breakfast included for two people has a value of \$25.00 and then we also have the “happy hour” from 5:30 -7:30 PM every day.

The Embassy Suites has two styles of rooms. They include an Executive King Suite w/sleeper sofa and Executive Double Suite w/sleeper

sofa. Both are priced the same and have a living area and bedroom. We have a block on reserve until August 14th, 2017. After this date unreserved rooms will be released for general sales.

Individuals are responsible for making their own reservations. Individuals may contact the hotel directly at (757) 229-6800 or toll free at (800) 774-1500 and request the ARA room block. In addition, the hotel will furnish a “reservation Link” in which individuals may reserve their room directly through www.embassysuiteswilliamsburg.com.



We will have our welcome dinner at the Embassy Suites on Wednesday evening. The cost for a two entrée dinner is listed at \$28.95, but our cost will be \$26.95 net of 10% sales tax and an 18% service charge. The per person charge is \$34.98 with tax and service charge included. The menu will consist of Grilled Herb Roasted Boneless Breast of Chicken, Carved Roast Beef au jus and selected vegetables.

In addition, they are providing a two bedroom suite at no cost. There is a onetime cost to remove the furniture. This room is to be used as a hospitality suite. We are permitted to have snacks and drinks in the room (including alcohol), but it must be kept within the room.

We will also have access to the dining room after breakfast for our Saturday meeting and an additional meeting room at no charge if someone else has not paid to rent it.

The Jamestown and Yorktown Bus Tour:

On Friday September 15th, we have scheduled a bus tour of the Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown. In 1607, three ships landed at Cape Henry. They soon proceeded up a river to establish the first permanent English settlement in America. We will visit Jamestown first on our bus tour.

After Jamestown, we will visit Yorktown the site of the final battle of the Revolutionary War. When we arrive at Yorktown, we will have lunch. There are a variety of restaurants with different prices. Our participants are on their own for lunch, but our guides are available for suggestions.



Our bus capacity is 55 people. The cost per person based on 40 paid participants is \$49 and drops to \$41 based on 50 paid participants. The cost includes roundtrip motor coach transportation, admission to Historic Jamestown and the Yorktown Battlefield, escort/guide to accompany the group, applicable taxes, and gratuities. If you travel by yourself without a Golden pass the price is about \$14.00 for admission to the parks. Scooters are available if needed, but this cost is not included.

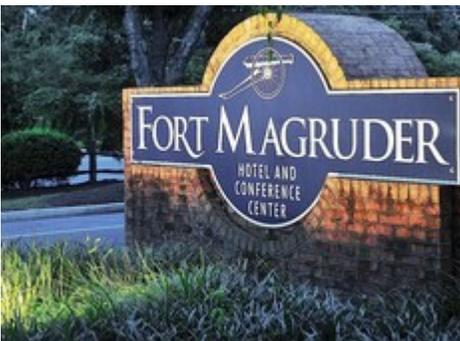


Fort Magruder Final Banquet:

It is important to remember that Williamsburg is not so much a convention destination as a tourist destination, so many of the hotels do not have large banquet rooms. For this reason, the Board felt it was necessary to choose a facility that was better suited for our farewell banquet on Saturday, September 16th.

Their banquet facilities have recently been renovated and will easily accommodate our group with tables in the round. Since we are not staying at the Fort Magruder, there is a onetime charge of \$500 to reserve the room plus applicable taxes due on March 1st. All food and beverages must be provided by the hotel. The group agrees to spend a minimum of \$2,500 in food and beverage revenues not including sales tax or service charges.

The cost for a two entrée buffet dinner is \$34.95 per person net. If you add sales tax (10%) and the service charge (22%), the cost per person is \$47. In order to break even on the billing minimum (\$2500/\$34.95), we need to have 72 people sign up for dinner.



Now, let me throw in my two cents worth. The Embassy Suites is a good choice for our Association because they have the breakfast included, a happy hour from 5:30 to 7:30 PM, reasonable rates, a hospitality suite where we can have liquid refreshments, a central location, and the hotel has 160 rooms so we will not be overwhelmed. The hotel will provide a special reservation code for the ARA rate. (CODE=ARA)

Colonial Williamsburg is the center piece of the historic triangle consisting in part of the restored capital of Colonial Virginia. The area includes 88 original buildings, 100 acres of gardens, and the active practice of more than 30 historical crafts. It can be interesting and educational to stroll around and see people in their original costumes. The remainder of the historic triangle includes the Jamestown Settlement and Yorktown.

Jamestown was settled in 1607 (long before the Pilgrims) and Yorktown is a must see for history buffs. For the ladies there is the notorious Pottery—a sprawling collection of shops and treats. The guided bus trip to Jamestown on Friday morning, a no host lunch in Yorktown, and a tour of the Yorktown battlefield will be a great day. There is so much to do in the Williamsburg area. And to top it off, the Hotel Magruder provides a great setting for our farewell banquet.

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ATTENTION ALL ARA MEN:

DO NOT DELETE THIS PUBLICATION UNTIL ALL SPOUSES, SIGNIFICANT OTHERS AND COMPANIONS HAVE READ IT.

THE INFORMATION IS FOR ALL IN THE FAMILY.

AS I GET OLDER, I REALIZE:

1. I talk to myself because sometimes I need expert advice.
2. Sometimes I roll my eyes out loud.
3. I don't need anger management. I need people to stop pissing me off.
4. My people skills are just fine. It's my tolerance of idiots that needs work.
5. The biggest lie I tell myself is, "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it".
6. When I was a child I thought naptime was punishment. Now it like a mini-vacation
7. The day the world runs out of wine is just too terrible to think about.
8. Even dust tape can't cure stupid, but it can muffle to sound.
9. Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes; come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller.
10. "Getting lucky" is walking into a room and remembering why I am there.

Meeting called to order 1005 am by President Larry Mobley

Brother Bruce Wilder gave the prayer for all. Secretary O'Dell read the minutes from the meeting held on May 9, 2015. They were accepted by the body. Treasurer report given by Jule Szabo and gave information on the year's income and expenses and reunion checking and savings accounts. The final treasurer's report will be published in a future Straphanger Gazette. President Mobley request for approval of the 2016 Treasurer's report from the body was seconded and it was approved by the body. Dave Borgeson had gotten a \$4000.00 grant from the American Legion to purchase 6 plaques to commemorate the ARA's presence at Fort Rucker, Fort Sill, Fort Benning, Fort Hood, Fort Bragg and Fort Campbell. Larry talked about the challenges we face in getting the plaques placed at the various locations throughout the country. To place them at each location will require Secretary of the Army approval and we may incur additional expense to mount them at each location. There was much discussion about obtaining paver bricks at Ft. Rucker and numerous men were for this idea and donated \$100.00 each. (I hope I have gotten all of their names). **Larry Mobley, Calvin Hyatt, Michael O'Keefe, Jim Fleming, Mike Russell, Huey O'Dell, Clovis Jones, Jim Castillo, Lynn McKinnie, Jesse Hobby, Bruce Wilder, Jule Szabo, Ed Miller, Jim Foreman, George Govignon, David Cooper, Richard Tokar, George Wachs, Bill Retterath, George Padilla, Claude Gomez, Frank Trevino, James Giles and Charles Voeltz**, who wanted to make sure the 3/377th, 11th Air Assault was mentioned in this project. This unit was activated on 13 July 1963 and was de-activated on/about 1 July 1965. According to the 1st Cav Div Assn. web site, all assets of 2/20 came from 3/377 when 2/20 and 1st Cav Div. were activated at Ft. Benning on/about 1 July 1965. before it was sent to Viet Nam. Asa agreed with this. Asa talked about the issue that not even the military or others even know what the Air Assault was/is.

Next, Jule Szabo proposed buying a brick at the US Army Museum being constructed at Ft. Belvoir in northern Virginia. He recommended buying an 8X8 brick so more text could be used to describe the organization and its involvement in Vietnam. Motion by Larry Mobley to buy the \$500.00 brick was seconded and carried by the body.

New Business: Reunion next year 2017 is in Williamsburg, VA. Tentative date: Sept 13, 2017. Reunion for 2018: motion to have it at Ft. Sill, OK seconded and passed by the body. Jesse Hobby talked about the web-site and would like some help from anyone that has any knowledge of computers. Board Elections: For Secretary Huey O'Dell, for Treasurer Herb Hirst, for Vice-President Jim Castillo and Jule Szabo, (Jule withdrew), for President David Borgeson; motion made and seconded and approved by the body and all were appointed to the board.

Meeting adjourned 1205pm Sept 10, 2016

Huey O'Dell Secretary

<http://www.araassociation.com>, <http://www.facebook.com/AerialRocketAssociation> and [www.http//armyav.org](http://www.armyav.org)

Editor's note: The Association is proceeding with the acquisition and placement of the pavers. Since Mr. Murphy is a life member of every unit, we have encountered some administrative problems on the engineering side, and the Association will have some serious money out there to cover the project. Larry Mobley has done a great job spearheading this project but we have found that the cost of the bricks has risen to \$150 for the smaller and \$300 for the larger. If you pledged for a brick, want to pledge, or want to join forces with someone to pay for a brick the time has come. Please send your contribution in to our Treasurer Herb Hirst at Aerial Rocket Artillery Association, C/O Herbert L. Hirst, P.O. Box 220, North Plains, OR 97133-0220, and mark it for the pavers. If you want to share this privilege with someone it is necessary that you work out the deal.. Please be prompt in your remittance.



Ground Breaking for US Army Museum – contributed by Jule Szabo

The US Army Museum will be located on 84 public acres of Fort Belvoir. Fairfax Virginia is scheduled to be completed in 2019. Its 186,00 square feet will showcase hundreds of the Army's 30,000 artifacts, documents and images never before seen by American public, and many of the 15,000 pieces of soldiers artwork from the Army art collection. The museum is expected to attract 500,000 to 750,000 visitors annually. The three main galleries will be soldiers stories fighting for the nation and the Army Society. The fighting gallery will be broken down into six sub-galleries that cover different periods in the Army history starting at revolutionary war and including the most recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The outside areas of the museum campus will include a memorial garden, amphitheater, parade ground, and Army trail. Outdoor space is planned to accommodate ceremonies, reenactments, lectures, education programs, conferences and reunions.

We will be purchasing a brick that will represent the Aerial Rockets Artillery Association at the US ARMY museum and making our association to be a part of the museum. The link to the US Army Museum web site <http://www.armyhistory.org/>

Cobra Arrived at Smithsonian Air and Space Museum

In January 2016, the Cobra arrived at Smithsonian Air and Space Museum at, Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly Virginia (Next to the Dulles Airport). The museum plans to restore the F model Cobra on the museum floor. This has never been done in the museum's history. The Bell helicopter company has donated \$25,000 to help with the restoration. There no completion date identified for the completion of the restoration. The Cobra is located on the lower floor, right side of the museum. The link for the National Air And Space museum is : <https://airandspace.si.edu/udvar-hazy-center> . The entrance fee is \$15.00 per car until 4 pm; then its free for the last hour.

Below are some pictures of the Attack helicopter Cobra Model AH-1F and Huey helicopter just after the delivery in January 2016.

Cobra Model AH-1F



Huey helicopter



Please consider making a donation to help museum in it's efforts to restoration of aircraft; you can designate your donation for the cobra restoration.

Cody Green was a 12-year boy in Indiana who was diagnosed with leukemia at 22 months of age. Cody loved the Marines, and his parents said he drew strength and courage from the Marine Corps. as he bravely fought the battle into remission three times. Although he was cancer-free at the time, the chemotherapy had lowered his immune system and he developed a fungus infection that attacked his brain.

Two weeks ago, as he struggled to fend off that infection in the hospital, the Marines wanted to show how much they respected his will to live, his strength, honor and courage. They presented Cody with Marine navigator wings and named him an honorary member of the United States Marine Corps.

For one Marine, that wasn't enough ... so that night, before Cody Green passed away, he took it upon himself to stand guard at Cody's hospital door all night long, 8 hours straight. Nowhere on the face of country as blessed as we women such as this



this planet is there a to have men and

Marine on Guard Duty - SGT Dolfini, USMC

In July of 2016 I received a letter from Joseph S. Lahnstein (COL USA Ret) who is the son of Joseph J. Lahnstein (LTC US Ret). The letter held documents and photos from the early days of ARA at Ft. Benning, GA during the period 1963 – 1965 and photos and documents from the deployment to RVN through late 1966. Those of us who served with the 3/377th Arty (ARA), 11th AAD will remember that {then} MAJ Lahnstein served as Acting Battalion Commander prior to the arrival of LTC Mahone, then served as Commander, A/3/377 and Commander A/2/20/ and as XO 2/20th Arty (ARA) until his return to CONUS. Below is one of the documents from the letter.

Jesse L. Hobby
Armed Falcon 29F1

UNIQUELY AERIAL ARTILLERY



Major J. J. Lahnstein

During the development and subsequent commitment to combat of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's Aerial Artillery Battalion, the same questions are raised time and again by those who are unfamiliar with the concept of Aerial Artillery. "Why is Aerial Artillery different from any other "gun ship" unit? To answer these questions we must first take a brief look at the background and organization of this unique unit.

The 2nd Battalion (Aerial Artillery), 20th Artillery, initially activated as the 3rd Battalion (Aerial Rocket), 377th Artillery in the 11th Air Assault Division, stands alone as the first and only unit of its type in the United States Army today. All tactics and techniques were devised, tested, evaluated and revised by members of the unit during the Air Assault test conducted at Fort Benning, Georgia from 13 February 1963 to 1 August 1965 and presently under actual combat conditions in the Republic of Vietnam.

The Battalion follows the normal field artillery organization with a Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Battery and three firing batteries. Each firing battery has twelve UH-1B helicopters armed with forty-eight 2.75" rockets per helicopter which constitutes the major fire power of the battalion.

Headquarters Battery has three UH-1B's each mounting a combination machine gun and rocket system for a total of thirty-nine aircraft organic to the battalion. In addition, all helicopters are capable of a rapid change from the rocket system to a system which fires up to six SS-11 wire guided missiles for use against hard or point targets. The Aerial Artillery Battalion also has the capability of providing battlefield illumination with helicopter mounted searchlights and can drop riot control agents on hostile positions. The range of Aerial Artillery is limited only by the range of its helicopters with the result that the battalion can provide fire support for the Air Mobile Division throughout its area of operations.

The differences between Aerial Artillery and cannon or rocket artillery are few. Aerial Artillery has merely substituted helicopters and aerial rockets for the ground weapons of conventional artillery. This permits the Aerial Artillery to attack targets up to seventy nautical miles distant from the friendly base locations and adds a great range capability to the airmobile artillery. As is the case with conventional artillery, the mission of Aerial Artillery is to provide accurate and timely fire support to the ground commander in sufficient volume to inflict the maximum casualties and damage on targets that jeopardize the accomplishment of his mission.



Learning to use "the planes with the boxes on the sides". Field training in North Carolina - early 1965



WO-1 Jesse L. Hobby in North Carolina maneuvers. Check out that haircut

With few exceptions, aerial artillery fire missions are initiated and controlled through artillery channels by artillery personnel and, to the fullest extent possible, standard artillery terms are used. Aerial Artillery fires are included in the artillery fire plans which are prepared in conjunction with and may influence the ground maneuver plan of each operation. Aerial Artillery is available to the ground commander throughout all phases of a combat mission and its employment includes fires to "soften-up" areas for troop heliborne landings and subsequent ground fire objectives; disrupt and destroy the enemy's communications network and supply and assembly areas deep in his territory; and neutralize armored or fortified targets through use of the SS-11 missile. Target information is provided by divisional acquisition means, Air Force reconnaissance and photographic flights, through the division's vast intelligence network and often by the airborne Aerial Artillery crews themselves.

Since the current Aerial Artillery weapon is a direct fire system, a high degree of accuracy is achieved. Fires are frequently planned within thirty to fifty meters of friendly front lines. Frequently this capability has neutralized and in some cases annihilated



Sometimes the learning curve was steep.

hostile forces heavily engaged with friendly troops. Cannon Artillery is normally assigned short and medium range targets while Aerial Artillery is committed on long range missions and against fleeing or moving targets at any range.

Beyond this, the difference between aerial and conventional artillery becomes insignificant.

The primary difference between Aerial Artillery and "gun ship" units lies in the basic concepts and underlying principles which govern the tactics and techniques of these units. The "gun ships" are normally available to protect the lightly armed troop lift, resupply and medical evacuation helicopters. They are not normally available, nor do they possess the firepower capability to influence the ground tactics. The fires can be preplanned only to the extent of providing light suppressive fires in the landing zones. Their method of attacking targets is normally one or two aircraft in numerous firing passes. Whereas, Aerial Artillery masses the firepower necessary to place the maximum amount of metal on the target in the shortest time thereby completely neutralizing the target with one firing pass. This technique will insure maximum surprise and minimize the exposure of the attacking aircraft to hostile ground fire.

This discussion has attempted to provide an insight into the Aerial Artillery Battalion as a member of the artillery team and why its concepts are unique in armed helicopter techniques. The departing Commanding General of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, Major General Harry W. O. Kinnard, stated in his farewell address to the officers and men of the 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery that Aerial Artillery was the most questionable concept in the Air Mobile Division prior to the division's commitment to the Republic of Vietnam, and then added that the Aerial Artillery has more completely fulfilled the promise of the air mobile concept than any other unit in this division.

Aerial Artillery continues to prove its worth daily in counterinsurgency operations in the Republic of Vietnam and has equal application in a conventional warfare environment.

From the files of LTC Joseph J. Lahnstein – Submitted by his son Joseph S. Lahnstein.



Officers of A/3/377/11th AAD taken during Carolina Maneuvers, 1963 - 1 CPT Joe Lenochi, 2 CPT Bob Arnold, 3 1LT Bob Natchaas, 4 MAJ Joe Lahnstein, 5 CPT Cal Carr, 6 CPT John Bradish, 7 CPT Jere Spence, 8 WO1 Jesse L. Hobby, 9 WO1 Ed Harbold, 10 WO1 Donald Begay, 11 CW2 George Gay, 12 1LT Joe Schelke, 13 WO1 Willis Patterson, 14 WO1 Bob Roth



Officers of A/2/20 Arty on board the USNS Uphur somewhere in the Pacific Ocean August/September 1965. 1 CPT Bill Goodspeed, 2 WO1 Ray Hatfield, 3 MAJ Bob Furney, 4 CPT Bruce Wilder, 5 WO1 Ross Patterson, 6 CPT Eugene Capner, 7 WO1 Arnold Bailey, 8 1LT Jin Mimbs, 9 CPT Frederick Beck, 10 MAJ Joe Lahnstein, 11 MAJ Paul Smith, 12 CPT Bill Swann, WO1 Tom Cochran



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Lineage and Honors

3d BATTALION, 377th ARTILLERY

Organized November 1921 in the Organized Reserves at Green Bay, Wisconsin, as Battery C, 377th Field Artillery, an element of the 101st Division. (Later the 101st Airborne Division)

Reorganized and redesignated 30 January 1942 as Battery C, 377th Field Artillery Battalion

Withdrawn 15 August 1942 from the Organized Reserves as an inactive unit and redesignated as Battery C, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion (75mm Pack, How), in the Army of the United States

Activated 16 August 1942 at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana

Inactivated 30 November 1945 in France

Redesignated 18 June 1948 as Battery C, 515th Airborne Field Artillery Battalion and allotted 25 June 1948 to the Regular Army

Activated 6 July 1948 at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky

Inactivated 15 April 1949 at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky

Activated 25 August 1950 at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky

Inactivated 1 December 1953 at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky

Activated 15 May 1954 at Fort Jackson, South Carolina

Redesignated 1 July 1956 as Battery C, 377th Airborne Field Artillery Battalion

Transferred (less personnel and equipment) 1 March 1957 from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to Germany; relieved from assignment to the 101st Airborne Division and assigned to the 11th Airborne Division. (Later the 11th Air Assault Division). Concurrently, reorganized and redesignated as Battery C (Honest John) (Atn), 377th Artillery

More of the adventures of the First Team in the sandbox of North Carolina, floating blissfully across the seas, and triumphantly in the beautiful land of South Vietnam where they will enjoy building the Golf Course and other colossal works will appear in future issues of the Straphanger Gazette.

If you recognize these heroes please feel free to share their identity with the Editor.

Most of the pictures in this issue are B&W because color photography was for the rich and famous and life was B&W.

3d BATTALION, 377th ARTILLERY

Inactivated 1 July 1958 in Germany

Redesignated 17 July 1963 as Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3d Battalion, 377th Artillery. (Organic elements constituted)

Battalion activated 18 July 1963 at Fort Benning, Georgia

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDIT

World War II
*Normandy (with arrowhead)
*RhineLand (with arrowhead)
*Ardenne-Aisne
*Central Europe

DECORATIONS

*Distinguished Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered NORMANDY

*Distinguished Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered BASTOONE

*Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 with Palm, Streamer embroidered BASTOONE; cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action at BASTOONE

*Belgian Fourragere 1940

*Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action in FRANCE AND BELGIUM

*French Croix de Guerre with Palm, World War II, Streamer embroidered NORMANDY

*Netherlands Orange Lanyard

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

J. C. Lambert
J. C. LAMBERT
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

18 JAN 1964

Ladies of the Association

Hi Ladies

I'm watching "Dancing With The Stars" and wishing I had those moves and those bodies!! We have just returned last night from a family ski trip to Park City and age definitely reared its ugly head!! Lots of blue runs and no blacks—lots of stops to catch a breath. It was great to be together!

Dave and the men have been busy planning our trip to Williamsburg and it all sounds exciting. I hope there will be record attendance to such an historical area! The planning has been a real team effort! They learned that well in Nam!

As you are all aware the West Coast finally had some good rain and we are as green as can be with the wild flowers in full bloom --- at last! Am sure you are all ready to spring forward and enjoy some balmy weather if you experienced some of last week's big storm in the Northeast.

Enough about all of this! I would really really LOVE it if you would send me some news about what you are all up to as it would make my message much more about all of us!! Please send me any news about your travels, activities, health, grandchildren, so we are all apprised of what our ladies are doing! pborgeson@lalique.com
Have a Happy and Blessed Easter and other celebrations for this time of year!

Cheers

Pat

The power behind the Six

Email addresses for Ladies of the ARA Association:

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NEVER LET A FEMALE LAWYER HANDLE IT!



"Then it's settled. She gets the house and cars, and you get a participation trophy."

AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME



"Moving it out here was a great time-saver."

DEAD BUG !

- A Tribute to the Army's first generation of combat helicopter pilots.
(Yes, by God, we flew in Vietnam and we were winning when I left.)

By J.C. Pennington

As we get older and we experience the loss of old friends, we begin to realize that maybe we ten-foot tall, bullet-proof Army aviators won't live forever. We aren't so bullet-proof anymore. We ponder...if I we're gone tomorrow, "Did I say what I wanted to my Brothers?" The answer is "No!" Hence, the following random thoughts:

When people ask me if I miss flying, I always say something like, "Yes, I miss the flying because when you are flying, you are totally focused on the task at hand. It's like nothing else you will ever do (almost)." But then I always say, "However, I miss the unit and the guys even more than I miss the flying."

Why, you might ask? They were a bunch of aggressive, wise ass, cocky, insulting, sarcastic bastards in smelly flight suits who thought a funny thing to do was to fart and see if they could clear a room. They drank too much, they chased women, they flew when they shouldn't, they laughed too loud and thought they owned the sky, the bar, and generally thought they could do everything better than the next guy. Nothing was funnier than trying to screw with a buddy and see how pissed off they would get. They flew helicopters that leaked, that bled RPM, that broke, that couldn't hover, that burned fuel too fast, that never had all the radios and instruments working, and with systems that were archaic next to today's new generation aircraft.

But a little closer look might show that every guy in the room was sneaky smart and damned competent and brutally handsome in his own way! They hated to lose or fail to accomplish the mission and seldom did. They were the laziest guys on the planet until challenged and then they would do anything to win. They would fly with rotor blades overlapped at night through the worst weather with only a little position light to hold on to, knowing their flight lead would get them on the ground safely. They would fight in the air knowing the greatest risk and fear was that some NVA anti-aircraft gunner would wait 'til you flew past him and open up on your six o' clock with tracers as big as softballs. They would fly in harm's way and act nonchalant as if to challenge the grim reaper.

Finally, I miss hearing DEAD BUG! called out at the bar and seeing and hearing a room full of men hit the deck with drinks spilling and chairs being knocked over as they rolled in the beer and kicked their legs in the air—followed closely by a Not Politically Correct Tap Dancing and Singing spectacle that couldn't help but make you grin and order another round.

We are ARMY AVIATORS. We are Few and we are Proud to have been the first combat helicopter pilots the world ever saw.

Contributed by Joe Pullano.

Editor's Note: Memorial Day is fast approaching and the shadows are growing long for many of us. These is the musings of a unique man who was one of our own and a chronicler of who we all once were. Charlie took his last fire mission in July of 2012.

Lets Smoke on this....

By VHPA Columnist Charlie Gossett

"Why We Went"



I was visualizing Old Lodgeskin sitting in his Tepee with Braves of his tribe passing the pipe around an smoking away. I imagined them talking of the battles of long ago, of fallen comrades and acts of bravery. So, one day, while you all were at the VHPA Reunion, I sat back in my den and thought about the old days in The Nam.

We were so young back then. Your bodies were free of chronic aches and pains and you were strong. Your hair was blond, brown, black or red but not gray and a lot of you also had plenty of it. You could actually run to helicopters and jump in without huffing and puffing. Your keen minds would scan a myriad of switches, circuit breakers, instruments and gauges, your hands would set the throttle and off you went. Strong heart's pumping the vital adrenaline allowed you to set the frequency, make the radio call and head to the fight or to the rescue area; all in less than three minutes.

Cherries lost long ago and combat hours building; you knew what had to be done and gave the mission your all. After missions were completed and you were released from being "first up, you would meet together at the beloved sanctuary built of ammo boxes and sandbags called "The Club". There one could have fire water, check for mail and talk of the missions and the extraordinary things seen and done that day. Some days many of you would cry together for fallen brothers who would never again join in this ritual. A pilot might tell what the crazy crew of a Dust-off Medivac, Slick or gunship had done and that they would never do that because it smacked of insanity; when it was actually a case of "steel balls"! How could you ever explain to anyone outside of this brotherhood that, while you were in a hot LZ, NVA or Vietcong soldiers would load their wounded on your helicopter? Could you make a civilian believe you got an emergency radio transmission in perfect English, crying for help, then guided you to their location only to find a .50 cal triangular ambush waiting for you? Did you ever have a pack of giant rats steal all your Cheetos and Wheat Thins while you were sleeping?

How about those days when the Vietnamese employees at your compound didn't show up for work and later you were rocketed or mortared; but your faithful Hooch Maid didn't know anything about it! And who could possibly forget the black oily stinking smoke billowing from burn cans, assaulting you every day and no place to hide.

While you were at the Reunion "smoking" together, I put my 60s and 70s music on and smoked too. I thought about so many of you and the extraordinary things we had done together. When I reflected, I could see you from way back then, your moustaches weren't white, and you didn't have a paunch, didn't wear glasses and you were smiling and laughing at foul jokes. I remember how unique you were and how you looked with your dirt colored flight suits matching your orange skin. I saw you scramble to your helicopters in boxer shorts and tee shirts when the special Claxton sounded, telling you that a fellow pilot was downed. I remember how brave you were and how easily you would go in Harm's Way for each other and those poor grunts on the ground. You were the best of the best, Vietnam helicopter pilots. You were and still are my greatest friends and heroes. I will never forget you.

Charlie Gossett
Blue Max 49J
DAT 21 July 2012

Final Flight

COL (RET) DONALD EUGENE “GENE” WILSON



Gene was born May 27, 1934 to Lester “Buck” and Edna “Edd” Wilson in Shinnston, West Virginia. Eugene was the preferred name by his mother... hence, Gene. Gene was called away by his Maker on December 8, 2016 at the age of 82 after a valiant 7-year battle with Corticobasal Degeneration.

Gene went through school in Shinnston and completed 2 years of pre-engineering at Fairmont State College before receiving an appointment to the United States Military Academy. After graduating and being commissioned in Artillery June 1958, attending additional training programs and getting his wings as an Army Aviator, his first tour of duty was Bad Hersfeld, Germany with 3/14th Armored Cav Regiment Aviation Section as the East-West German Border pilot. It was here that Captain Gene Wilson met Ellie Gabler, a “school-marm” from California teaching 4th/5th grade on the Army Post. Their year-long courtship and marriage on January 12, 1963 led to 54 years of raising 3 children, 18 moves, many friends and new adventures.

Gene’s military career of 30+ years provided us the opportunity to travel and explore. He was an avid reader of military history. Washington D.C. area was one of those places where history could be found around any corner. It was here that Gene was able to attend night school at American University and earn his Masters Degree. Gene found his assignments challenging and rewarding, especially if he could fulfill his passion of flying. The 220th Aviation Company was one of the highlights of his career. Gene took pride in knowing his troops, always looking out for their welfare. His assignments included -- two tours in Germany, two in Vietnam, one in Korea; stateside – Fort Sill OK, Fort Bliss TX, Battle Creek MI, Fort Leavenworth KS, Washington D.C., Onalaska WI, Fort Lewis WA and Boise ID, Governor’s Advisor to the National Guard. His military retirement in 1988 was followed by Manager of JAC-ACAP at Fort Lewis.

Gene was dedicated as much to his family as his military obligations. He also took pride in the accomplishments of his wife and three children and supported their activities even when he was away from home – by phone or through letters and tape recordings. (No cell phones or face-time yet) Family activities included sports of all kinds, camping, hiking, biking, fishing, coaching, refereeing soccer, gardening, music and coin collecting. Gene was also actively engaged with several organizations – Boy Scouts, the Oakbrook Swim and Tennis Club, Normanna Male Chorus of Tacoma, Fort Lewis Military Museum, MOWW, Lakewood Racquet & Sport Club, 220th Aviation Company Historian, the West Point Ski Club, the Puget Sound Miata Club and Treasurer of Stonebriar HOA 7-A. Gene, a loving and giving man, touched the lives of many people and will be missed.

Gene is survived by his wife, Ellie of Lakewood, daughter, Genevieve of Oakland CA, son, Doug, wife Suzy, granddaughters, Maddie and Emily of St. Charles MO, Son Chris, wife Teresa and grandson, Michael of Folsom CA, his brother Richard Wilson of Clarksburg WV, sister -in-law Joan Poimiroo and her family of El Dorado Hills CA, brother-in-law Walt Gabler and his family of Ukiah CA.

We also wish to thank Jodie, Bethany, Tammy and the staffs of Madigan Hospital, Toby Jones Care Center and Franciscan Hospice of University Place for their kindness and support during Gene’s last journey with us. Rather than flowers please consider a gift to Brain Support Network, PO Box 7264, Menlo Park, California 94026-7264 – a 501©3 non-profit organization. Visit the website of www.220thaviationcompany.org/genewilson for additional information.

Col. Wilson was, by far, the best Commander I had in my career. He was a True American and an inspiration to all of us in Battery C 2/20, The world is a better place for him having passed through it and he will be missed. I’m certain there is a very special place for him now God Bless him and his. My sincere condolence to the family; - George Alexander

Colonel Gene Wilson was an inspiration to all those who served in his command. He was a true professional who led by example, Duty Not Reward.—David Newman

As you know, Gene was a GREAT commander at “C” battery and also at the Blue Max headquarters during his tour of duty in 1969/1970. He mentioned many times of his enjoyment in being with us during our Vietnam year and he was always there for us.— Paul Garrity

Gene" Wilson was one of the strong supporters and driving force in the initial ARA organization, - Bert Topel

So may it be said of us

IVAN “VAN” WOOD III

Ivan T. “Van” Wood III died on December 16, 2016, in Santee, SC. Van was born in 1936 in Marion, SC, the son of Ivan T. Wood, Jr. and Margaret E. Wood. He married his best friend and high school sweetheart, Margaret Jones in 1955, and moved her to Davidson, NC, where he was a Distinguished Military Graduate from the ROTC program in 1958 and was commissioned a 2nd LT in Field Artillery with detail to Military Intelligence Branch. Van served in RVN as one of the First Team, 2/20th Arty (ARA) as Bn S-2. After his military service, Van taught school in SC until 2000, when he moved in retirement to Spring Hill, FL, for fourteen years when he moved back to Santee, SC. His wife Margaret of 57 years preceded him in death in 2014. He is survived by his sons, Mackey Wood (Patty) of Manning, SC, and Tim Wood (Bonnie) of Marion, SC; his sister, Rose Wood of Spring Hill, FL; three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren: Megan Smolka (Adam) [Wyatt] of Columbia, Jared Wood (Bralyn) [Camden] of Aiken, SC; Randy Bradshaw (Carole Anne) [Sage, Tyson, Wren Oliver]. A graveside service with military honors was held in the Rose Hill Cemetery in Marion, SC, on December 21, 2016. Van was Bruce Wilder’s big brother in the Kappa Alpha Order Fraternity and his Platoon Leader in ROTC .



DONALD M. STEIN

Donald M. Stein took his final flight on February 14, 2017 in Snyder, NY. He is survived by wife Maurine E. Baker-Stein, sons, Clark, Michael, Donald and Brett Lambrix, and many others who loved him very much. Donald served with C Battery, 2/20 ARTY (ARA) at Quan Loi. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.



Chaplain's

Corner

“You are the Salt of the Earth!”

While reading a book about early trade and transportation, I learned that during the Roman Empire days the owners of “old salt” which had lost its taste poured it on roads to improve the strength of the road bed. That fact made sense to me although I never had any “old salt” around the house which had to be thrown out! We were the user of the old standby “Morton Salt” (When it rains, it pours!) and its additive of iodine. We believed in using salt! And we used it all up!

Fast forward to my days in Bible 201 at Davidson and the study of Matthew 5:13: *“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled underfoot.”* What a coincidence – that is what I read back in my college days: throw it out and trample it. The best place to ensure it would be trampled would be a well traveled road!

Jesus was not giving us a command, or a declarative of what we should be; and it wasn't even an expectation. Jesus was giving us a promise that we are “the salt of the earth!”

Since that is a fact, then how are we to fulfill that promise? How are we to retain the taste; the saltiness? We can accomplish that by the way we treat our neighbor.

Just look at the definition of salt. It is a mineral used for seasoning and for preserving. It can purge bad things. It is a healing compound. It can relieve a sore throat. It can sterilize. It gives liveliness, piquancy, or pungency. In its verb form it is used to cure, preserve, or treat. It can melt snow or ice! It can add interest or excitement to a novel salted with witty dialogue! And add to all this, the ability to grow as in a salt marsh.

What if all of us were able to be the salt of the earth to our neighbor – to help in the healing of another's wound, to save, to preserve, to melt the ice in a relationship, to help them grow, and to be worth one's salt!

Can you remember being the salt, helping others? May we be the salt the to cure the diseases of the world! We need to examine ourselves to ensure that we are the salt, because we have been blessed by God!

Peace,
Bruce Wilder, Chaplain





AERIAL ROCKET ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION

Membership Application/Renewal Form

This form may be used for Applying for New Membership or for Renewing Existing Membership. Please circle that which is appropriate.

Name _____ Wife's Name _____

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(At time of service in ARA) (If known)

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List all ARA Units that you served in.

<u>Battery/Battalion</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>	<u>Call Sign</u>
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Current Address: _____
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Association membership is on an annual basis (unless member opts for life membership) running from January 1 to December 31 and is past due on January 31.

Annual dues are **\$25.00** regardless of when submitting.

Life membership (if paid in full) is **\$250.00**. Life membership may also be paid in **\$50.00** installments on a quarterly basis until paid in full.

Total amount enclosed _____ (Please indicate in remarks section of check whether this is Initial Membership, Membership Renewal, Life Membership in full, Life Membership payment #.

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