

Message from the Prez

It is my pleasure and privilege to serve you as President of the AC-119 Gunship Association. Thanks to past president, Chuck James and his crew, the Association is airborne with gear up! The engines are roaring with power and there's a full load of fuel, ammo, and flares onboard.

Just like Southeast Asia where it took every man in the 71st, 17th, and 18th Special Operations Squadrons to accomplish assigned missions, every member of the AC-119 Gunship Association is essential to the preservation and betterment of the Association. As a member, your interest and participation in the Association is critical for the life and survival of the Association.

As a member, you can help solidify and improve the Association by attending reunions if possible, contacting and enlisting new eligible members, making suggestions, and communicating with me or any of the Association officers. The current crew of Association officers are working together to maintain present standards while preparing for

Gunship Reunion III. Reservations have been made for Reunion III at the Eglin NCO Club for the weekend of September 27, 28 & 29, 2002.

Headquarters for our Reunion will again be the Sheraton Four Points Hotel. The hotel is located at 1325 Miracle Strip Parkway, Fort Walton Beach FL, telephone 800-874-8104. ***When you make room reservations, be sure to tell them you are attending the AC-119 Gunship Reunion.***

I certainly want to recognize, commend, and thank our Website Master, Chief Bill Petrie. Through his expertise, we are able to communicate-at-will on the Internet. For those Stinger and Shadow personnel not on the Internet, we will communicate via USPS.

This December, we lost a Stinger Brother, Fred Graves. He was instrumental in rallying our gunship troops for our first-ever reunion in the year 2000 and consequently the formation of our Association. May his soul rest in peace knowing that his work on earth bore fruit.

Mark your "short-timer" calendar now for the last weekend in September, 2002. Plan to reunite with fellow-warriors both ground and flight crews and buddies who share the common bonds of the gunship brotherhood.

Any Time, Any Place

Dutch Payne