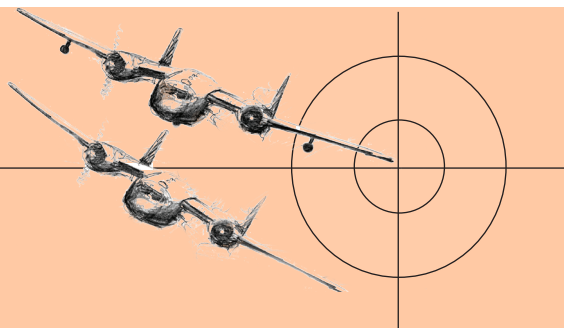


# Firing Circle



Spring/Summer 2013

A Newsletter of the AC-119 Gunship Association

## Reunion Update

AC-119 Gunship Association Reunion XIV  
El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel, San Antonio, Texas  
26-29 September 2013  
**"Back to Basics"**

### **"Bienvenidos a San Antonio!"**

(Welcome to San Antonio!) from **Jerry and Ellen Hester** - your Reunion XIV Coordinators.

To our fellow AC-119 Gunship air and ground crew members, families, and guests, we'd like you to remember **Reunion XIV** as the "*Fiesta in the Alamo City*" Reunion. We've added some tours to this Reunion so you and your families can get out and visit some of the famous historic and cultural attractions around San Antonio and the Texas Hill Country, but you'll also have plenty of time to hang out with your former crew members, families, and friends.



Our fourteenth AC-119 Gunship Reunion is in beautiful San Antonio this year. Although the formal Reunion events will run from 26-29 September, we've built in some optional pre-reunion events for you. The "Hootch" will open at noon Wednesday, 25 September, and you'll be able begin to rekindle old friendships, make some new ones, and reinforce that "we were.... and are....AC-119 Gunshippers!"

...more on page 2

### **How do you sign up for Reunion XIV?**

**You need to do two things**, (1) fill-out/mail in your Reunion Registration Form and (2) make your own hotel registration!

**1. Reunion Registration:** fill-out the registration form located in this newsletter or online at [http://www.ac-119gunships.com/association/reunion/2013Regis\\_form.doc](http://www.ac-119gunships.com/association/reunion/2013Regis_form.doc) Write a check, then send the form and the check to **Doug Wohlgamuth**, 504 Shea Place, Sun City Center FL 33573-5726.

**2. Hotel Reservation:** Register with the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel, 110 Lexington Ave, San Antonio, Texas 78205 by using their **Special Hotel AC119 Web Site:** <http://booking.ihotelier.com/istay/istay.jsp?groupID=668470&hotelID=75553>

or by calling them direct, toll-free, at 1-877-214-9768. Tell them you are with the AC-119 Gunship Association.

**Remember**, you need to register for both the Reunion and hotel separately!



### **Inside This Issue...**

- San Antonio Reunion Coordinator message
- Reunion Agenda, Tour Info, Registration Form
- Who's Coming and Things To Do
- Commemorative AR-15 Raffle information
- Stinger Ops Building Logo story ....**And More!**

This publication is issued by the AC-119 Gunship Association. Any use of the material in this newsletter is strictly prohibited without the expressed permission of the AC-119 Gunship Association.

## 2013 Board

President

**Wayne Laessig**

Vice-President

**Bob LaRosa**

Secretary & Circulation Manager

**Mike Drzyzga**

Treasurer

**Doug Wohlgamuth**

Past President

**Gus Sininger**

Members-at-large

**Jim Dunn**

**Joe Goryl**

**Jim Mattison**

## Appointees

Chaplain

**Larry Hunter**

Newsletter Editor / Webmaster

**Bill Petrie**

Next-of-Kin Locator

**Wayne Laessig**

Assoc. Awards & Decorations Officer

**Steve "Mac" Mac Isaac**

Association Videographer

**J.P. Mac Isaac**

2013 Reunion Coordinators

**Jerry & Ellen Hester**

## Squadron Contacts

71st SOS Coordinator

**Jim Alvis**

17th SOS Coordinator

**Mike Drzyzga**

18th SOS Coordinator

**Everett Sprou**

Maintenance Coordinator (All Sqdns)

**Robert "Andy" Bright**



## Reunion Update Continued

Our first optional tour will be an all day outing to the beautiful Texas Hill Country on Thursday, 26 September. During this tour, we'll focus on Fredericksburg, a quaint historical German community. You'll be free to have lunch (*on your own*) at a wide variety of local restaurants. During your visit you can enjoy shopping and browsing at quaint gift boutiques, antique shops on Main Street; Sample Hill Country wines (a tasting fee may apply); or visit the *National Museum of the Pacific War* which includes the Admiral Nimitz Museum, George Bush Gallery of the Pacific War, Plaza of the Presidents, Japanese Garden of Peace, Memorial Walk and the Pacific Combat Zone. Next, you'll travel to the *LBJ Ranch*, where National and State Historic Parks tell the story of our 36th President — From his ancestors to his final resting place. You can also tour LBJ's Texas White House. Basic tour fee is \$35. Additional admission fees for the National Museum is \$8 and LBJ's White house fee is \$3.

Thursday evening, enjoy an optional dinner at one of San Antonio's exceptional Mexican Restaurants. (*Sign up sheets will be in the hootch*).

Our second optional tour will be a half-day tour, Friday morning, to visit some of San Antonio's historic and cultural sites. First, we'll visit two historic Spanish Missions along the San Antonio River – Mission Conception (the oldest un-restored stone church in the USA) and Mission San Jose ("Queen of the Missions" – the largest San Antonio mission; almost fully restored). From there we'll go to the San Fernando Cathedral (the oldest standing church building in Texas).

*Firing Circle 2*

The final stop will be at Market Square (or El Mercado) which features working artists and the largest Mexican market north of the Rio Grande.

Friday night, we'll kick off our traditional reunion events, starting with our Welcome Reception. Saturday morning, we'll have our Association and spouses' meetings, and Saturday evening we'll have our annual Association Banquet featuring a sax quartet and vocalist from the *AF Band of the West* (Lackland), a brief presentation by Colonel Ron Terry, and our annual Association Awards and Raffle

Sunday morning golfers hit the links, and Sunday evening we'll close with our traditional BBQ.

For those coming in RVs, our reunion website has a list of local RV Parks with their phone numbers and/or websites.

This year's room rate is \$122.59 for a single/double (taxes included, with parking available for \$9). Rate includes up to two complimentary hot breakfast buffets per day and free WiFi, and will apply 3 days prior to and 3 days after the Reunion.

Please keep in mind our **reservation cut-off date is August 26, 2013**....AFTER this date, reunion rates will be based on availability!

Our website [www.ac-119gunships.com/association/reunion/reunioninfo2013.htm](http://www.ac-119gunships.com/association/reunion/reunioninfo2013.htm) provides an extensive list of things you can do before, after, and even in-between our Reunion Events! Come early or stay late, and you can make this a terrific vacation!

# A piece of history

From Ron Soderquist.

- Colt H-Bar Sporter Match Grade AR-15
- CAL. .223 OR 5.56 NATO
- Custom baked on finish
- A-2 Sight System. Fully adjustable rear, front adjustable or elevation
- Custom presentation grade walnut wood stocks

**Drawing to be held  
at the San Antonio  
Reunion.**



**You can win** this customized one-of-a-kind semi-automatic rifle, complete with a custom wood display case, plaque with the “lady of the Night” poem and the 71st, 17th and 18th SOS squadrons listed.

This unique rifle was custom built to honor Captain Terence Courtney and the sacrifices of the crew of **Stinger 41**. The crewmembers of stinger 41 are also listed on the weapon. In addition, the names of the three crewmembers that are “still on duty” are laser etched on the butt stock.

***“I also hope to draw attention to the dedication of each person who flew and supported our “lady of the night”. As time goes on, we tend to let our memories dim from time to time, it is a good thing to bring forth our past and remember what the word “brother” means.”***

**Ron Soderquist, FE**  
18th SOS

**It's one (1) Ticket for \$10, Six (6)  
Tickets for \$50, Thirteen (13)  
Tickets for \$100.**

**Send your Check to:  
Doug Wohlgamuth  
504 Shea Place, Sun City Center, FL.  
33543-5726.**



## Important Contact Reminder for Association Members

If you change your contact information, email or postal mail address, please remember to contact the Association Secretary, Mike Drzyzga, at Drzyzga513@hotmail.com or call (973) 208-2385 with your updates. Also, mailing costs are increasing. If you are getting the Newsletter by postal mail, and are also able to read it on a computer, please tell the Secretary to change the distribution list from postal to email. *Thanks for your help.*



# Danang's Stinger Ops Logo

## Where did it come from?

as told by (at the time) Sgt Tom Graham



Sgt Tom Graham

Many of you assigned to the 18th Special Operations Squadron at Danang Air base will remember "The Stinger Logo on the Ops Building at Danang" But not many knew who painted it. Yup! It was me, Tom Graham.

In 1969, I finished my five level in the 42350 electrical career field at Perrin AFB near Sherman TX, which allowed me to work without supervision. When they closed Perrin AFB, I was sent to Luke AFB to the FTD school on the F-100 – enroute to Vietnam.

After arriving in Vietnam in May 1970, I was stationed at Phan Rang. I spent my first week in the transit barracks which had been hit by mortars two days

before. My first combat was a battle with the mosquitos.

I was assigned to the F-100 electric shop but I guess they had all the electricians they needed, so I was sent to the electric shop that maintained the 119G Shadow and 119K Stinger gunships. After working on T-33, F-102 and T-37 I was glad to get to work on something with room to work.

Two months later they moved a number of gunships to Saigon and they volunteered me to go with them.

That was about July 1970.

Saigon was a learning experience. I guess there

was a big move by the North Vietnamese and they moved a number of 119s to Saigon because of that. There was always TIC (Troops -in-Contact) missions going on at night, and when they landed it was all hands on board - when the birds came everyone helped out to get quick turn arounds.

I learned how to load ammo and support the ground crew wherever needed. At least the nights went by fast. There are a lot of good memories from the thirty days I spent there.

I spent another month back at Phan Rang and then on to Danang where I was technically assigned to the electric shop for

F-4s. Although I was supposed to work out of the F-4 shop, they didn't know the 119s and I didn't know the F-4, so they put me in with the other AC-119 maintenance personnel across from the flight crew hootch. I was glad to learn that I wouldn't be wasting my knowledge of the 119K while trying to learn the F-4s. I was placed in the maintenance hootch with the gun plumbers, electronic techs, and other maintenance staff.

It was sometime in late 1970 or early '71 when someone wanted a logo painted on the flight line. I don't know if Doug Metcalf requested it or the first sergeant. I put in the order for the paint and other supplies, and away I went.

The first one looked more like a crab than a scorpion.



Tom's First Stinger Logo

About a month later a request came from the commander to paint another one on the "Ops" building on Gun Fighter Row. Seems like there were several logos on that building.

Between the time I finished the one on the maintenance building at the flight line I was able to see the "real" squadron mascot – a huge, black, Asian Scorpion someone had acquired and kept in the First Sergeant's

*(Stinger Ops Logo continued)*

room. I believe the scorpion was nicknamed "Herbie."

A short time later I made changes to the Operations building logo which reflected the scorpion mascot a lot better.

As that famous Oklahoman Paul Harvey often said, "*And now you know... the rest of the story.....*"

***The graphic to the right is Tom Graham's final rendition of the 18th SOS Logo. This is an old photo taken of the logo on the 18th SOS Operations building at Danang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam.***



## **AC-119 Gunship Reunion XIV – “BACK TO BASICS”**

El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel, San Antonio TX, 26-29 September 2013

Our 14th AC-119 Gunship Reunion includes Thursday through Sunday reunion and tour events from September 26th through 29th, as well as tons of great things to see or do while you're in the area!

The El Tropicano is situated on the banks of the San Antonio River and is one of the original River Walk's hallmark hotels; a well-kept and super bargain for the location, with our Hootch Room opening right onto the River Walk. Features include up to two free full breakfasts per day per room for AC-119 Reunion folks staying in the hotel, high-speed internet, a fully equipped fitness center, and heated outdoor pool.

From the hotel, you can hop on a *VIA trolley* (\$4 for all day) or a *Rio (River) Taxi* (\$10-\$15 daily or \$25 for a 3 day pass per route); both of which can take you just about anywhere in downtown San Antonio.

Please be sure to complete both your (1) Reunion/Tour Registrations and (2) Hotel Reservations. Instructions are on our website at <http://www.ac-119gunships.com/association/reunion/reunioninfo2013.htm> If you don't have computer access, or need additional information, contact Jerry or Ellen Hester at 210-663-3159, 210-663-9245, or [jhester7.satx@gmail.com](mailto:jhester7.satx@gmail.com)

## REUNION AGENDA

### Wednesday, Sept 25th

**12:00 PM: Hootch opens** & stays open till 6 PM Sunday night in Trinidad Room of the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel. Soda, Beer, and Snacks FREE to Reunion Attendees, except 'during' Friday Meet & Greet, Saturday Banquet, and Sunday BBQ. Bring your albums & memorabilia to share – we'll scan pictures and documents for inclusion in our AC-119 Historical Archives. Videotape sessions (sign-up in the Hootch) all weekend – tell your stories about AC-119s for our kids, your family, friends, & history.

### Thursday, Sept 26th

**8:30 AM – 4 PM: Hill Country Tour (Optional)** Deep in the heart of Texas, the tour will focus on Fredericksburg, a quaint historical German Community, where you'll be free to have lunch (on your own) at any of the restaurants in Fredericksburg. During your visit, you can also enjoy shopping and browsing at quaint antique shops and gift boutiques on main street, sample a variety of Hill Country wines (tasting fees apply), or visit the National Museum of the Pacific War, which includes The Admiral Nimitz Museum, George Bush Gallery of the Pacific War, Plaza of the Presidents, Japanese Garden of Peace, Memorial Walk, and the Pacific Combat Zone. From Fredericksburg, you'll travel to the LBJ Ranch, where National and State Historic Parks tell the story of our 36th President – from his ancestors to his final resting place. You'll also have a chance to tour LBJ's Texas White House. Basic Tour Fee: \$35. Additional Admission Fees for the National Museum (\$8) and LBJ's Texas White House (\$3).

**7:00 PM: Informal Dinner at one of San Antonio's Excellent Mexican Restaurants.** (Sign-up sheet will be available in the Hootch.)

### Friday, Sept 27th

**8:30 AM – 12:30 PM: San Antonio Tour (Optional)** Visit two historic Spanish Missions along the San Antonio River – Mission Conception (the oldest un-restored stone church in the USA) and Mission San Jose ("Queen of the Missions" is the largest San Antonio mission, and has been almost fully restored). Also see the San Fernando Cathedral (the oldest standing church building in Texas). The final stop will be at Market Square (or El Mercado) which features working artists and the largest Mexican market north of the Rio Grande. *Tour Fee: \$25.*

**6 PM – 10 PM: Meet & Greet** in the El Tropicano Coronado Room. Buffet Style. Fee \$29. Dress casual or Party Suits; Pay as You go Bars; with Mariachis during the first hour.

### Saturday, Sept 28th

**8:30 AM – 10:00 AM: Membership Meeting** in El Tropicano La Habana Room.

**9:00 AM – 10:00 AM: Spouses' Meeting** in the El Tropicano Trinidad Room (Hootch).

**6 PM – Happy Hour** in El Tropicano Coronado Room. Dress up a bit or wear your Party Suit; Pay as You go bars; enjoy the music of a sax quartet and vocalist from the USAF Band of the West at Lackland.

**7 PM – Banquet Dinner** in El Tropicano Coronado Room.

**8 PM – Presentation by Colonel (Ret) Ron Terry**, who as a Captain in the early 1960s was instrumental in establishing fixed wing gunships as a valuable and effective war fighting tool.

**8:30 PM – Association Awards**

**9 PM – Raffles** (please consider bringing and bidding on raffle items; they help keep us solvent!)

### Sunday, Sept 29th

**9 AM – Golf Tournament:** Entry Fee \$10 (plus Greens Fees); details from Doug Wohlgamuth & Col Mac.

**5 PM – 9 PM – Farewell Tex-Mex BBQ** in El Tropicano Coronado Room. Buffet Style. Fee \$28. Dress casual; Pay as You Go bar.



# Tons of Things You Can Do in or near San Antonio!!

*(see internet links on website or electronic version of this document)*

- **The River Walk** A public park, lined with restaurants, hotels, attractions, & art vendors.
  - **Market Square** The largest Mexican market outside of Mexico; dining, shopping, & events.
  - **La Villita Historic Arts Village** Art galleries, boutique stores, & restaurants/cafes.
  - **The Alamo** Where William Travis, Jim Bowie, & Davy Crocket defended liberty.
  - **Alamo IMAX Theater** Features "ALAMO...the Price of Freedom!" & other movies.
  - **San Antonio Missions National Historic Park** Four Spanish missions along the San Antonio River.
  - **San Antonio Zoo.** Enjoy the animals &/or ride the train through Brackenridge Park.
  - **Tower of the Americas.** Has an observation deck, revolving restaurant, & 4D Theater Ride.
  - **Institute of Texan Cultures** Exhibits & displays tell the stories of Texans (UTSA/Smithsonian).
  - **The Witte Museum** Contains collections in natural history, science & South Texas heritage.
  - **San Antonio Museum of Art** Located in the former castle-like Lone Star Brewery.
  - **San Antonio Children's Museum** No children needed to enjoy this interactive experience.
  - **Buckhorn Saloon A Café, Gift Shop, Shooting Gallery, & the Buckhorn & Texas Ranger Museums.**
  - **Pearl Brewery** A variety of restaurants & boutiques are now located at this former brewery.
  - **Ripley's Haunted House Adventure Guinness World Record Museum; Tomb Rider 3D adventure ride**
  - **Ripley's Believe It or Not** Has Ripley's Moving Theater 4D & Louis Tussaud's Wax Works combo.
  - **Ultimate Mirror Maze** See 1,000's of Mirrors & Endless Hallways.
  - **Sea World** A 250-acre marine mammal park, oceanarium, & animal theme park.
  - **Six Flags Fiesta Texas** A 200-acre park with wild rides, great shows, & attractions (21-22 Sept.).
  - **Natural Bridge Caverns** The largest & most spectacular show cavern in Texas.
  - **Natural Bridge Wildlife Ranch** Over 500 animals from 40 exotic, native, & endangered species.
  - **Bracken Bat Flight** Home to the world's largest bat colony.
  - **San Antonio Tours** 48 guided tours include Alamo Trolley, Grand Trolley, Double Decker, & River Tours, all with hop-on-hop-off access at designated stops, except for the River Tours PLUS self-guided tours
  - **Local Shopping** Forbes.com rated San Antonio in the top ten of America's 25 Best Shopping Cities.
  - **San Antonio Vacation Experience** Provides discounts & special offers on local can't-miss attractions, museums, sightseeing, shopping, & theme parks.
  - **San Antonio & Beyond** A pre-paid card providing free access to up to 19 of the city's top attractions over 3-7 days; save up to 48% while you explore museums, family attractions, & sights.
  - **Show Us Your Badge** Provides free or discounted appetizers, desserts, meals, & drinks just by showing your reunion badge at participating downtown establishments. For those flying out, your badge can also provide a 10% discount at San Antonio Airport retailers & restaurants.
  - **Joint Base San Antonio** The largest base organization in DoD, with three primary locations:
  - **JBSA – Lackland** AF Basic & Technical Training; Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance Agency; & the USAF Airman Heritage Museum with the AF Enlisted Memorial where a plaque with Bill Petrie on it represents all enlisted Airmen. (MWR)
  - **JBSA – Randolph** Known as "the Showplace of the Air Force" because of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style architecture (including the "Taj Mahal"), Randolph is home to the AF Personnel Center, AF Education & Training Command, & the 12th Flying Training Wing. (MWR)
  - **JBSA – Fort Sam Houston** Home of the US Army North, US Army South, Army Installation Management Command, Army Medical Command (MEDCOM), DoD Medical Education & Training Campus (METC), & Center for the Intrepid (amputee/ prosthetics therapy). (MWR)
- Possible day or overnight trips: (see links on website or electronic version of this document)
- **Texas Hill Country** (varies) Beautiful towns, shopping, countryside, parks, & restaurants.
  - **Texas Hill Country Wineries** (varies) More than 30 unique & visually stunning wineries.
  - **New Braunfels** (35 miles) A little bit of old Germany smack dab in the middle of the Texas Hill Country, including **Gruene Hall (Texas' Oldest Dance Hall)** in the Gruene Historic District.
  - **LBJ Ranch & National Historic Park** (60 miles) Halfway between Fredericksburg & Johnson City (location of the LBJ Ranch Visitor Center).
  - **Fredericksburg (70 miles)** Historic sites & museums (including the National Museum of the Pacific War), shopping, attractions, & wineries.
  - **Austin (80 miles)** Over 167 attractions, including the State Capitol, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, University of Texas at Austin, & the LBJ Presidential Library.

***This list is all within 100 mile of the reunion site but there is much more.***

# 2013 AC-119 GUNSHIP REUNION XIV REGISTRATION

SEPTEMBER 25 - 29, 2013 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

## Back To Basics

This is **NOT** your Hotel Registration (this is your Reunion Registration Only!)

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an AC-119 Gunship Association member? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Years Served with Gunships \_\_\_ - \_\_\_

Squadron: 71<sup>st</sup>\_\_\_ 17<sup>th</sup>\_\_\_ 18<sup>th</sup>\_\_\_ other (\_\_\_\_\_) Crew Position/Role \_\_\_\_\_

Address (include Zip+4) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest Name: (First, Middle Initial, Last) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Guests (#) \_\_\_\_\_ Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you staying at the Reunion Hotel? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ If staying somewhere else, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your 1<sup>st</sup> Reunion Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Do you have a DOD ID Card Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Your Guest(s)? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

**REUNION FEE**.....# attending \_\_\_ X \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### YES! I / We will attend:

• Thursday Hill Country Tour (enter # attending for each of the following and compute the total cost):

Basic Tour \_\_\_ X \$35 Pacific Museum Option \* \_\_\_ X \$8 LBJ TX White House Option \_\_\_ X \$3 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(\* will be refunded if we don't get 20 people for the group rate; on-site admission fees vary; WWII vets free)

• Thursday Mexican Restaurant (Informal gathering; order off the menu).... # attending \_\_\_\_\_

• Friday Half-Day San Antonio Tour (2 Missions, Cathedral, Market Square) # attending \_\_\_ X \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

• Friday Night Meet & Greet (see web or Newsletter for menu)..... # attending \_\_\_ X \$29 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

• Saturday Night Banquet

▶ Pecan Crusted Chicken Breast w/Serrano Cream Sauce..... # of meals \_\_\_ X \$34 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Beef Tenderloin w/Demi-Graze..... # of meals \_\_\_ X \$36 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Roasted Salmon w/White Wine Sauce..... # of meals \_\_\_ X \$35 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

• Sunday Morning Golf Tournament (Green Fees separate)..... # playing \_\_\_ X \$10 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

• Sunday Tex-Mex BBQ Dinner (see web or Newsletter for menu) ..... # attending \_\_\_ X \$28 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Total Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: For gluten-free, vegetarian, or other special meal needs, contact Jerry & Ellen Hester at 210-663-3159 or [jhester7.satx@gmail.com](mailto:jhester7.satx@gmail.com). After filling-in this page mail it (if you use the web version, **print it first** since it will not save your info) with your payment (make check payable to **AC-119 Gunship Association**) to:

**Doug Wohlgamuth (AC-119)**

**504 Shea Place**

**Sun City Center, FL 33573-5726**

Mailing this page with your payment completes your **Reunion registration**; **you still need to contact the hotel direct for your Hotel registration!** Use this link for the hotel: [AC-119 Gun Ship Association](http://www.ac-119gunships.com) or go to the

Newsletter or web for details. You can get our Reunion rate up to 3 days before or after the Reunion!

Questions? Check the web at <http://www.ac-119gunships.com>; contact Doug at 813-938-1886 or 813-781-5728 or [Busch791@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Busch791@tampabay.rr.com); or Jerry & Ellen Hester at 210-663-3159 or [jhester7.satx@gmail.com](mailto:jhester7.satx@gmail.com).

*See You in San Antonio, Texas*

PLEASE NOTE: Cancellation Policies

- Reunion Registration cancellations on or before **September 1st** = refund or donation as requested
- Reunion Registration cancellations after **September 1st** = we have to pay hotel "guarantees," so no refunds (but talk to us if there are special circumstances like family emergencies or losses)
- Hotel Registration: If you cancel after the minimum **72 hour notification**, you **will** be charged for one day.



## Who's Coming to Reunion XIV *(As of this printing)*

Bey, Victor & Ann  
Cole, Ernest  
Connolly, Bob & guest Cathy Henry  
Davis, Leslie & Judy  
Fletcher, Larry & Sue  
Graves, Karen  
Hester, Jerry & Ellen  
Hinton, Ron & Carol  
Hunter, Larry "Baby Huey" & Soncy Hunter  
Krauss, Mike  
Laessig, Wayne & Lynette  
Macey, Guy & Son Randy  
McIsaac, Steve "Mac" & Nancy  
McCall, Cash & Mary  
Moore, Jim & Catherine & daughters Helen  
Nelly, Lorraine McElrath, Karen Johnson  
Newmyer, Michael  
Petrie, Bill & Karen  
Posey, Bill & Cindy w/ guests Greg & Denise  
Stachowski  
Stearn, Ken & Veronica  
Raveling, Vern & Betty w/Son Dan &  
Daughter-in-law Maria; & Granddaughter  
Danielle  
Rios, Dave & Maria

Sininger, Gus  
Sproul, Al  
Sprou, Ev  
Voisey, David & Mary  
Wohlgamuth, Doug

**NOTE:** If you sent in your registration and do not see your name here, please contact Doug Wohlgamuth at 813-938-1886 or 813-781-5728 or [Busch791@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Busch791@tampabay.rr.com)

## San Antonio RV Parks *(For those traveling by RV)*

- **Admiralty RV Resort**, 210-647-7878, [www.admiraltyrvresort.com](http://www.admiraltyrvresort.com)
- **Blazing Star Luxury RV Resort**, 210-680-7827, [www.blazingstarresort.com](http://www.blazingstarresort.com)
- **Braunig Lake RV Resort**, 210-633-3170, [www.brauniglakervresort.com](http://www.brauniglakervresort.com)
- **Cactus Country RV Park**, 210-635-9337, [www.cactuscountryrv.com](http://www.cactuscountryrv.com)
- **Dixie Kampground**, 210-337-6501
- **Greentree Village North Travel Park**, 210-655-3331, [www.greentreevillage.com](http://www.greentreevillage.com)
- **Mission Trails RV Park**, 210-928-8285
- **San Antonio KOA**, 210-224-9296, [www.koa.com](http://www.koa.com)
- **Tejas Valley RV Park & Campground**, 210-679-7715, [www.tejasvalleyrvpark.com](http://www.tejasvalleyrvpark.com)
- **Traveler's World**, 210-532-8310, [www.carefreervresorts.com/texasrvparks/Travelers\\_World\\_RV\\_Resort](http://www.carefreervresorts.com/texasrvparks/Travelers_World_RV_Resort)
- **Fort Sam Houston RV Park**, 210-221-5502, <http://www.fortsammwr.com/recreation.html>, base access and reservations required
- **Lackland FamCamp**, 210-671-5179, [http://www.lacklandfss.com/loac\\_famcamp.html](http://www.lacklandfss.com/loac_famcamp.html), base access required, no advance reservations

# Old Nav Wings Shine Again!

**Captain Rod Slagle** was the Table Navigator and one of three crewmembers lost on Stinger 41 when it was shot down while defending An Loc on May 2, 1972. Life finally went on for Barbara Barker (Rod's wife) and their daughter Traycee, and a few years ago Barbara decided to put together



George Charette

some Shadowboxes about Rod's career for her three Grandkids, Kylie, Kendall, and Cole. She contacted a local Shadowbox maker, George Charette, who was intrigued with Barbara's plans and Rod's service. The Shadowboxes started to come together, with George working the shadowbox frames, and with medals, insignia, aircraft patches, flags – everything except a

set of silver Senior Navigator Wings.

Barbara wanted to get the correct wings, so she called some Stinger friends and before you could say 'please', Bob Wells, Larry Barbee, and Cash McCall were offering a set of their own Nav Wings, accompanied by a personal letter, for the Grandkid's shadowboxes. Bob had been Rod's room-mate; Larry was NAV/NOS on Stinger 41 when it was shot-down; and Cash McCall had been stationed with Rod. Each one wrote a letter to their selected Grand-child, and those came from their hearts. Let me quote the last part of one of their letters: "As for these wings, these were the last ones I wore in the Air Force and they have travelled

with me over much of the world. When a flier earns them, they are worn proudly because it means the person has achieved a cherished goal and has now joined a rather special group. Over time the wings become such a part of your everyday life that they become a part of you, and barely noticed. But I believe the wings also bring with them a sense of duty to serve, and to wear them shows that you accept a responsibility for more than yourself. Usually that duty is just a part of your everyday life. But sometimes, because you wear the wings, you are expected to stand forward and accept a more significant burden. The wings proclaim you will.



*Your grandfather certainly did. You can always be proud of him."*

Our AC-119 Gunship Association is about old and new friendships, and our place in history. We remember - and will never forget - our brothers we lost. Yes, we've lost loved ones and friends, and hopefully we'll enjoy our old friendships and make some new ones as we continue. For reunions, we try to find a theme as a focus for that Reunion. As far as themes go, it doesn't get much better than "these Old Nav Wings Shine Again".

## Mark Your Calendars

Reunion XIV  
San Antonio, TX  
El Tropicano  
September 26 - 29, 2013

Reunion XV  
will be in Albuquerque  
Sep 17 - 21, 2014

*Firing Circle 10*

# Final Flight



**Kelly Lee DeLoache**, 80, of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina died February 18, 2013 and was buried in Mount Pleasant Memorial Gardens with full military honors. He is survived by his two daughters; son, six grandchildren, two great grandchildren and two sisters; he was preceded in death by his wife of 52 years, Linda DeLoache. Kelly retired from the Air Force in 1976, as a Lt Colonel, after serving 22 years as a Nav in AC-119K Stingers and C-141s and in the Minuteman and Apollo Space Programs. He was a member of the Masons and the First Baptist Church of Mt. Pleasant. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, Kansas 66675.



**Walker "Dale" Cullop**, 76, of Camden, DE died February 5, 2013 and was buried with full military honors February 15, 2013 at the Veterans Cemetery in Millsboro, Delaware. He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 36 years, Somjai Cullop, in 2008. Dale was an AC-119 Stinger IO and FE and flew C-5s, retiring as a CMSgt after serving more than 30 years. He also owned and operated Delaware Assembly Service. Dale's daughter Pam sent this message: "I wanted to let everyone know that my father passed peacefully. Thank you to everyone that sent him an email, I read them all to him and I thank you for your kind words and support." To his friends, he was a loyal and trusted confidante. To his family, he left a legacy of honor, faithfulness, and love. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made to Delaware Hospice - Kent County Office, 911 South DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901

**Bruce W. Hodgkins**, 73, of Laconia, NH, passed away December 22, 2012, from complications of Parkinsons and Alzheimers. Bruce retired from the U.S. Air Force as a Master Sergeant in 1981 after more than 22 years of service, including 17th SOS Shadow Maintenance Flight Chief, 1969-1970. Bruce's son Mike told us "My Dad told me of many stories of his time on the AC-119Gs. Keep up the neat work and thank you." He was an avid train enthusiast, who was often found 'rail fanning' with his son, son-in-law and friends. His wife Beverly Ann, of Jackson, predeceases Bruce in death. In lieu of flowers, the family requests monetary donations be made to Genesis Healthcare-Westwood Center (formerly Westwood Care and Rehabilitation Center), Attention: Activities Department, located at 298 Main Street, NH, 03431.



**John J. Drislan, Jr** of Mt. Pleasant, SC, died October 17, 2012 and was buried in Mount Pleasant Memorial Gardens, with The Charleston AFB Honor Guard providing full military honors, along with a bag-piper. He is survived by his wife, Eileen Drislan of Mt. Pleasant, SC, three daughters and five grandchildren. John retired as a Lt. Colonel and was one of our 18th SOS Stinger triple-qualified NAV/FLIR/NOS crewmembers during 1972-1973. John also retired as the Classified Personnel Director with Charleston County Schools. He loved his God, his country, his wife and his family.





# My Crew

My Crew is one  
It has to be to get the job done.  
It's not just one by himself, But the sum of  
everyone.  
It has to be this way,  
Night or day.

It's like links of a chain.  
We are all inter-connected,  
Thinking as one brain.  
It has to be this way,  
For when we are through,  
Be it sunshine or rain,  
We each share each other's victory or pain.  
This is the way it is,  
This is the way it has to be.

My crew is one as it should be.  
But if one is lost, We all die a little bit in paying  
such a high cost.  
This is the way it is,  
The way it has to be.

**J.D. Smith, Gunner**  
Aug 12, 1986

*This poem is dedicated in honor of Maj. Dick  
Brims, who made the ultimate sacrifice on the  
night of May 21, 1986; saving the lives of his fellow  
crewmembers and his sixteen passengers.*

## Help Save Association Resources

If you receive multiple copies, or wish to receive the newsletter via e-mail, contact Association secretary Mike Drzyzga at drzyzga513@hotmail.com so we can update our mailing list.

AC-119 Gunship Association  
38 Pecan Lane  
Oak Ridge, NJ 07438



Place  
Stamp  
here