

Association Operational Change and Bylaws Summary – May 12, 2020

Something very special began in 1968 and grew through 1973; a new mission – AC-119 Gunships - with a brotherhood of warriors bonded in combat.

Years later, those bonds were proven strong, when four men decided they would try to get us together again, and over 400 AC-119ers showed up at a Reunion in 2000!

That gathering was the genesis of our AC-119 Gunship Association; and within a year we were a certified Non-Profit with Bylaws and annual Reunions!

Since then, our heritage has grown and evolved, with changes coming from our Association Membership Meetings, our Association Board, and some just from how we unofficially operate.

Association Operational Changes

1. Who we are:
 - We initially focused on Shadow and Stinger Aircrew from the 17th and 18th Special Operations Squadrons.
 - It didn't take many gatherings to realize the 71st SOS Shadows had both a rich, multi-war 71st heritage, as well as one as the progenitors of our AC-119 heritage, and we formally invited them to join us.
 - The same occurred for our Maintenance and other support ground crew. An AC-119 is nothing without bullets, gas, engines, avionics, and the list goes on. We formally incorporated our Ground Crew Warriors into our Membership.
 - We understood that our families; who supported us in so many ways, were and are part of our larger AC-119 family, and added them to our Memberships.
 - Our Squadrons were deactivated after SEA, but over the years, our Squadron Names, Numbers, and Call Signs became a legacy inherited by today's generation of Warriors, who we proudly embrace as our 17th, 18th, 71st, and 73rd Legacy Squadrons.
2. How we operate:
 - We realized politics and rank were not why we were gathering, so our unwritten policy became "no politics". There are plenty of other venues for that.
 - We use our given names and nicknames, not our "rank." Our gatherings are about the year we spent together, and the brotherhood created then. That brotherhood is the heart of our Association and survives today. Brothers Forever.

Association Bylaw Changes

1. Between 2001 and 2019, we added Life and Associate Memberships; changed Board composition and roles; added/clarified Appointed Officers and roles; Reunion location determination; expanded a website presence; dedicated Memorials; and provided an AC-119 history in stories, History Biographies, and videos. Those Bylaw changes are documented in Association Membership and Board Meeting Minutes.
2. In 2020, the Board reviewed the Bylaws to more accurately align them with how we actually manage our Association and how we operate, including the list below. Details are included in the May 2020 **Firing Circle** Newsletter.
 - IRS Non-Profit criteria
 - Membership criteria and voting
 - Financial management
 - Board and Committee roles