



2009 Mail bag

"Mail Call" Has replaced our guest book

To post a MAIL CALL entry email the webmaster at retcmsgtatatt.net

Put Gunship Mail Call in the subject line or it may be ignored. If you want your e-mail address posted so members can contact you please put it after your name & location.

Your message will be reviewed & posted as soon as possible.

Important Note: *To help cut down on harvesting of email addresses I will use at instead of the @ sign in e-mail addresses. Remember to change the at to @ when sending an email to someone you want to correspond with.*

2009

A request from Rod Slagle's (Stinger 41) widow

I got the history books & they are beautiful. I will really enjoy reading it.

I got a couple of notes on Facebook after the reunion. I deleted the notification that came on my email & now I can't find anything on facebook. One of them said he had flown several missions with Rod, I think out of Da Nang.

Is there some way I can find out through the association who wrote to me? I would really like it. Maybe whoever has the email list could just send out an email & ask. I would really appreciate any help.

Barbara Barker

mabarker00@yahoo.com

So guys, if you were the person who contacted Barbara about Rod please contact her again as she would like to hear from you. webmaster

Thank You from a satisfied customer. Surfing the web, came across your site. First off, I want to thank you for it. I am a Vietnam Vet, 1965-70 era. Two trips in the Plieku / Ban Me Thout AO's; Two trips at Cu Chi / Di An AO's; Assigned to MACV, 25th ID & 1st Avn Bde. Been both in the Jungle & Air. (Helicopter Units.)

When working with MACV, had the occasion to get assistance from a unit of your type. Gunship Support. They got us out of a couple of hot areas. With that said, *I thank you, thank you all for a job well done.*

God Bless.

Artie, Scout's Out

Arthur C. Bonevich

Newport News, VA.

ACBaircav17ataol.com 7/26/09

Dan McDuffie has made his final flight. Fellow Stinger Brothers, Sad news; Dan McDuffie passed away June 14th, at 9:45 pm, at the VA Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana .

His memorial service is being held on June 18th, in Kokomo, In.

Ellers Mortuary

725 S. Main St .

Kokomo, IN 46901

Shirley & I will be attending his memorial, leaving tomorrow, 16 June.

Frank & Shirley Bartlett

Our thoughts & prayers are with Dan's & his family

The AC-119 Gunship Association

6/15/09 *Updated 4:pm 6/5/09 Jim Terry has made his final flight. I am deeply saddened to tell you Jim passed away about midnight last night.

Jim told me many times "it's in God's hands" & I know our brother is at peace & with God now.

As with you, I'm grateful I knew & worked with Jim & met his family. His faith & commitment to our veterans touched so many of us.

Jim's Memorial & Viewing will be at Bryan-Braker on Tuesday night from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

His Funeral Service will be at Bryan-Braker on Wednesday morning at 10:00 AM.

Bryan-Braker Funeral Home is on 1850 Texas St, Fairfield, CA (707) 425-4697

For those who asked about flowers or donations, Jim's request was for donations in lieu of flowers sent to:

VFW Post 2333

427 Main Street

Suisun, CA 94585.

If you choose to send something, please identify it as "In Memory of Jim Terry."

Please continue your prayers for Gloria & family during their grief & celebration of Jim & his life with all of us.

Yours in the Brotherhood,

Wayne Laessig

6/12/09 Jim Terry is poised to leave on his final flight. It is with deep regret we inform our 119 gunship brother's that Jim's cancer has returned. Wayne Laessig recently spoke with Gloria & his son; Jim has been in David Grant Medical Center at Travis AFB since Sunday.

Gloria asks everyone to send prayers to help make him peaceful – it is only a matter of time before he'll be with God. Jim cannot keep food in & the best they can do now is anesthetize his stomach to reduce the retching reflex & give him comfort. He is mostly sleeping & can make eye contact but not talk. Wayne asked Gloria about visitors or calls. If anyone wants to visit, it's OK, with the understanding that Jim may be asleep & if awake, only able to make eye contact. For those of you who were very close to Jim or served with him, he can't talk so he can't take phone calls. Gloria is able to receive phone calls on her cell phone at 707-386-3191, & Jim's son is sometimes at the house number of 707-422-6774. It's OK to call them, & if you decide to visit, please call Gloria as a courtesy first.

As many of you know Jim is a strong supporter & member of the AC-119 Gunship Association. He always displayed great strength & compassion as he handled the personal contacts with the families of those we lost in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, it is now our turn to keep Jim & his family in our prayers. Gloria, Jim, & the family can use your strength & faith. Your prayers are welcomed.

Yours in the Brotherhood

Retirement thoughts: I was fortunate enough to be on the crew that flew UPS DC8 tail number 807UP from Greensboro, NC to it's final resting place in Roswell, NM on 14 May. It MAY be sold, but probably will be parted out & scrapped, along with the rest of the 45 DC8s that UPS owns & has retired.

When I entered that flight in my logbook I also closed out my own 42 year career in aviation.

I grew up in Wakefield, MA about 10 miles North of Boston, & somehow got a Bachelor's Degree in Modern Languages from Northeastern University in Boston. Since I graduated in 1966, the draft board wasn't just sniffing around, it was snapping at my heels, so I made the rounds of the other services' recruiters. When the Air Force said they would pay me an extra \$100/month as a pilot, I said Why not, & joined in October, 1966. I got my commission through Officer Training School in January 1967 (on my birthday, a nice gift from Uncle Sam) I finessed my way through UPT (Undergraduate Pilot Training) at Craig AFB, Selma, AL, & Webb AFB, Big Spring, TX, getting my wings in February, 1968. Due to my mediocrity as a student I was assigned B-52s at Kincheloe AFB, near Sault St. Marie, MI. After two years there I went to Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, flying AC-119K "Stinger" Gunships.

In early 1972 I went to Kirtland AFB, Albuquerque, NM to fly WB-57Fs, a highly modified "Canberra". We wore full pressure suits & flew at the same altitudes that the SR-71s & U-2s did. Ours was pretty much a scientific mission, we did a lot of R&D work. But we did have one interesting project that used the plane as it was initially intended....atmospheric nuclear sampling. Originally the plane was to fly through the clouds after an atmospheric nuclear detonation, collecting radioactive samples. By the time I got into the program, about all that remained of that was "Project Airstream". Four times a year we deployed to Alaska, Panama, & Argentina, & over about a two week period we essentially flew the entire western coast of North, Central, & South America. The data we collected was analyzed to determine dispersal patterns from past tests.

When the 58th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron was deactivated in July 1974 I went to Travis AFB, Fairfield, CA to fly C-5s. Between flying in the 75th MAS & working in the Airlift Control Element & Combat Operations at the wing & Numbered Air Force levels, I managed to stay at Travis until I retired in April, 1987. At that time, the Air Force had decided to use civilian contractors as C5 flight simulator instructors, & I was hired by United Airlines Services Corp. I took off my uniform, put on a sport coat, & went to work with the same people I had flown with for the previous 13 years.

In early 1988 one of my neighbors told me that United Parcel Service was hiring pilots, so I applied. In August of 88 I was hired as a 747 Flight Engineer. In January 1990 I moved up to the First Officer's seat of the DC8, & in

January 1995 I became a DC8 Captain. I remained on the DC8 until the FAA decided I was too old & decrepit to sit up front any more, & I moved back to the Flight Engineer's seat in January, 2004 (still on the DC8). UPS sprung a surprise on us in mid-April with an early, & sudden, retirement of the DC8. We expected the plane to be around through at least the end of this year, but they said that by the end of May all the planes would be gone. As I am 65 & can only sit in the Engineer's seat, & as UPS has no other planes with engineers, the DC8's retirement is MY retirement.

I have had a very unique career, seeing places I would never have been otherwise, & I have had the pleasure of flying some fantastic airplanes with some fantastic people. Now I can fill out applications & in the blank for "occupation" I can FINALLY put DILETTANTE!!

Most of the following was written by someone else, whose name I do not know. But I think it is appropriate.

"You see them at air base terminals around the world. You see them in the morning early, often at night. They come in Nomex flight suits & hatted, wings over their left pocket; they show up looking ready to fly. There's a brisk, young-old look of efficiency about them. They arrive fresh from home, from hotels, carrying hang-up bags, battered book bags bulging with a wealth of technical information, data, & manuals filled with regulations & rules.

They know the new, harsh sheen of Charleston's runway. They know the cluttered approaches to McGuire; they know but do not relish the intricate instrument approaches to various foreign airports like the checkerboard in Hong Kong; they know the volcanoes near Sigonella.

They respect foggy Travis. They know the up-&-down walk to the gates at Dallas, the Texas sparseness of Abilene, the very narrow Berlin Corridor, New Orleans' sparkling terminal, the milling crowds at Washington. They know Butte, Boston, & Beirut. They appreciate Miami's perfect weather; they recognize the danger of an ice-slick runway at JFK.

They understand short runways, antiquated fire equipment, inadequate approach lighting, but there is one thing they will never comprehend: Complacency.

They marvel at the exquisite good taste of hot coffee in Anchorage & a cold beer in Guam. They vaguely remember the workhorse efficiency of the DC-3s, the reliability of the DC-4s & DC-6s, the trouble with the DC-7 & the propellers on Boeing 377s. They discuss the cramped beauty of an old gal named Connie. They recognize the high shrill whine of a Viscount, the rumbling thrust of a DC-8 or 707 on a clearway takeoff from Haneda. The remoteness of the 747 cockpit. The roominess of the DC-10 & the snug fit of a 737.

They speak a language unknown to Webster. They discuss ALPA, EPRs, fans, mach & bogie swivels. And, strangely, such things as bugs, thumpers, crickets, & CATs, but they are inclined to change the subject when the uninitiated approach.

They have tasted the characteristic loneliness of the sky, & occasionally the adrenaline of danger. They respect the unseen thing called turbulence; they know what it means to fight for self-control, to discipline one's senses. They buy life insurance, but make no concession to the possibility of complete disaster, for they have uncommon faith in themselves & what they are doing.

They concede the glamour is gone from flying. They deny a pilot is through at sixty. They know tomorrow, or the following night, something will come along they have never met before; they know flying requires perseverance & vigilance. They know they must practice, lest they retrograde.

They realize why some wit once quipped: "Flying is year after year of monotony punctuated by seconds of stark terror." As a group, they defy mortality tables, yet approach semi-annual physical examinations with trepidation. They are individualistic, yet bonded together. They are family people. They are reputedly overpaid, yet entrusted with equipment worth millions. And entrusted with lives, countless lives.

At times they are reverent: They have watched the Pacific sky turn purple at dusk & the stark beauty of sunrise over Iceland at the end of a polar crossing. They know the twinkling, jeweled beauty of Los Angeles at night; they have seen the snow capped Rockies.

They remember the vast unending mat of the green Amazon jungle, the twisting Silver road that is the father of waters, an ice cream cone called Fujiyama; the hump of Africa. Who can forget Everest from 100 miles away, or the ice fog in Fairbanks in January?

They have watched a satellite streak across a starry sky, seen the clear, deep blue of the stratosphere, felt the incalculable force of the heavens. They have marveled at sun-streaked evenings, dappled earth, velvet night, spun silver clouds, sculptured cumulus: God's weather. They have seen the Northern Lights, a wilderness of sky, a pilot's halo, a bomber's moon, horizontal rain, contrails & watched St Elmo's Fire dance on the windows.

Only an aviator experiences all these.

It is their world. And once was mine."

Tailwinds & blue skies,
Bob Frederick 6/5/09

To the survivors of Stinger 41- Hi, I just found your site & it is well done. I was Sandy lead on the SAR for Stinger 41 at An Loc in '72. Please post my interest in connecting with any of the survivors where all can see. I have a photo of the crew members who survived that we took in front of A-1 #738, *The Proud American*, a Medal of Honor bird from earlier in the war, which was the tail number I was flying that day & on that week long deployment to Ben Hoa.

I will be pleased to scan & mail that photo to the "participants". My name & email are below as well as phone. It has been a long time but the memory is strong. You Stingers did good work night after night & sometimes in daylight too.

Hats off!!

Lamar C. Smith

lamarsmithatearthlink.net

www.ImprovingYourBalance.com

817-732-4872

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Luck & Cheers

- Col Mac

Col Steve 'Mac' Mac Isaac

colmacmacatmac.com

Wed April 8, 2009 To all AC-119 Shadow's, or anyone who is intrested, you may now purchase an AC119 Shadow Street Sign. You can get them from Amazon Marketplace, they look pretty good.

Ray Barradale (Ray46atptd.net)

Wed Feb 4, 2009

Hi all, looking for anyone who may have known an AC-47 Spooky named "Wiley". I've been in touch with family members of Lt Roy Williams who was the Co-Pilot of the last Spooky shot Down 1 Sep t69.

Roy's sister said he apparently was flying a gunship that night behind Williams & saw them get shot down. He also had the unenviable task of bringing Roy's body home. If anyone has any info on "Wiley" please contact me.

Thanks,

Any Time, Any Place

Bob McGarry, spooky1969ataol.com

Monday, January 26, 2009 Looking for anyone who knew Lt Col Bill Whitesell when he was a pilot for the 17th SOS.

Hello Sir. I am sorry to bother you I got your email address off of the website. I was wondering if there was any way you could possibly help me. My Grandfather Lt Col Bill Whitesell was a pilot for the 17th SOS. He is not doing very well at the current moment & I was looking for possible people that may have worked with him that would be able to give us an insight as to how Grandpa was as an officer.

My husband is AD Navy & I know once you hit the command it is like your almost a different person & I know that Grandpa was very proud of his achievements & his time served in the Air Force.

Any help that you could provide me I would greatly appreciate.

Thank you, Jackie Forrester

jacquelineforrester@yahoo.com