

AC-119 Gunship Association

Annual Meeting Minutes, September 18, 2010, Fairfield, CA

1. Association President Gus Sininger called the annual meeting to order at 0900 hours, with Larry Hunter offering the Invocation followed by Gus leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Gus also formally made note of the USAF's birthday and the passing of USAF Gen. Heinie Aderholt.
2. Gus presented the Secretary's report on behalf of Jim Alvis
 - a. Membership decreased slightly again, from 413 to 412 members. We did gain some AC-47 members, yet Annual Membership drop

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s primarily from the increase in Life Membership.
 - b. Newsletter mailing cost rose to \$573 annually; as was stressed last year, updating your e-mails can save us some money that may be put towards running the Association.
3. Doug Wohlgamuth presented the Treasurer's report:
 - a. Expected account balance after this Reunion will be close to \$14,118. We are keeping records to demonstrate that our funds are below the IRS reporting level of ~~\$25k-25k~~.
 - b. History books are selling at 20 per yr. Members should continue to look for libraries and museums to offer donations. A number of members did speak to successful donation projects.
 - c. Litho sales are slow. Gus suggested we lowered the price. **A motion was made and passed to lower the price. The membership agreed that the Board can decide on the new price** (At Sunday's Board meeting, the Board agreed on \$35, still sufficient to be profitable). **Last years minutes indicate that "Shadow & Stinger" lithographs are reduced to \$25 each, 2 for \$40" ?? Mike that was for that reunion only at St. Augustine.**
4. Wayne Laessig discussed our Association communication tools:
 - a. Website & Newsletter:
 - i. Bill Petrie's website maintenance is commended. He is embarking on a needed switch to "Dream weaver" base developer's tool and is working to provide a more easily navigated web site, with a cleaner look. It may be a year-long endeavor. Our website needs a volunteer that knows the newer developer's technology.
 - ii. Tony Pakutinski sent out ~~3~~ 3 Newsletters – lots of information and excellent presentation – Great work formally noted. We continue to assure secured email address to avoid propagating spam.
 - iii. A few members asked about getting a hard-copy of the newsletter. The answer indicated: to send a request to the Association Secretary, Mike Drzyzga at Drzyzga513@hotmail.com.
 - b. Points of Contact (POCs). Currently, the Association's POCs for the various groups are working well, except for the Maintenance Support – due to Bob Farmer's illness. The Board will discuss options, with the possibility of moving the Maintenance members into the 17th/18th groups.
 - c. A suggestion was made to make the Master Contact List available for distribution as an Adobe PDF file, but again the concern was for protecting email addresses.
- e.d. 4. Points of Contact (POCs): we considered again revising their role, this time with the Secretary sending only "all e-mails and postal mails" -- and POCs in primarily aprimarily a "new contact" or helping folks contact each other mode. At Sundays Board Meeting, the Board decided the Secretary will send all snail mails and the POCs will send all e-mails. Ron discussed the process of information flow and cautioned the Board on complexity (DID WE DECIDE???). **NO WAITING FOR Ron to come back to us on that.**
5. Active Duty Squadron Liaisons:
Gus's slide in the agenda listed FOUR contacts and Association reps. Steve Mac' indicated that the 71st at Kirkland is having a change in command again, and Col. Cordosa is returning as the 58th SOW wing Commander.

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6. Original Shadow and Stinger paintings.

- a. The AFSOC Commander at Hurlburt Hurlburt believes that the original AC-119 paintings by Darby Perrin should be displayed there. Both paintings are currently archived in the USAF Museum in Dayton (and not displayed). Since the Museum is in the USAF chain of command, this is a situation that the Association can have little, if any, influence. The Association provided the AFSOC Project Officer with our picture donation information. AFSOC will work with the AF Museum to borrow the pictures for prominent HQ AFSOC display.
- b. ?? HELP ME WITH THIS: Re-do the patches: The original two 18th SOS patches were never officially approved by the Air Force. Now there is one-a proposed combined patch - a new one for both units by our active duty Squadron, the 18th FTS, that combines elements of our unofficial AC-119 Stinger patch with the 18th FTS patch. This does not change our unofficial Stinger patch – it's still ours even though the AF never approved it. The way I see it is the patches that we both have was combined into one patch for the 18th FTS. This should get approved by the Air Force. Ours will remain the same which was never approved by the Air Force. The real 18th approved patch was that no one liked it so some guys got together and made the Scorpion one

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7. JP MacIsaac continues to collect video interviews at our reunion. He and Ev Sprous continue to prepare and sell DVDs of all prior video interviews for \$1 plus S&H. Steve Mac' made a point that our Book is capturing only 1/3 part of our history, yet 2/3 another part comes from the videos. Together they create we have a true living history. Steve put us on the spot and called for a show of hands for those who already DID a video! Too many have not yet and were encouraged to sign up. Note: about 20 folks finally did an interview this reunion, bringing our total to well over 140 total videos that JP and Ev Sprous can customize into any combination you'd like.-

Commented [WFL1]: Was it \$1 or \$5 – please contact Ev for the correct recommended donation.

8. Libraries and the History Book.

- a. Lesson learned: Many libraries have a Reference Section for books that are not intended for check-out. You often have to find the correct person on the library staff to contact in order to make a donation.
- b. Ralph LeFarth reported on the possibility of an "e-book" for us. Currently, e-books are text-strong and image-weak, while our History Book is to the contrary. We will wait until the technology catches up in the future.
- c. Larry Fletcher reported on his effort to initiate a US Certificate of Copyright, and was initially snagged by the simple "who's the author's name"? Actually, the "AC119 Gunship Association" is the author, and he submitted TWO hard-cover books to the Library of Congress, and we are now waiting for the Certification.
- d. Larry also reported on a major project he's working on to do a "a-third" book (Larry authored both Shadows of Saigon and The Shadow Spirit). This His third is a non-fiction history. He has obtained now declassified quarterly reports from the USAF, and a 90 page text which had been transcribed from tape recording interviews taken in-country.

9. Major Projects:

- e. Stinger Monument: the damage and discoloration was due mostly from the grounds sprinkler system. Gus worked with the Air Park staff to solve the problem and repair the monument.
- f. Reduce Inventory – sell lithos: Gus suggested we auction two at the Banquet. One each will be set out for all attendees to sign.
- g. As previously discussed, the History book represents \$26K in inventory. We reduced the price during the reunion and sold a fair number.

10. AC-47 Membership: The concern here is that a group of AC-47 folks met at Branson a week earlier. Therefore, we may have lost 40 attendees. John Pitts attended that reunion affair, and spoke about his ~~concerns-observations~~ that they have no formal association, ~~peer-limited~~ communications within the group, and the group's longevity may fade. **Steve Mac'** motioned that we should suspend spending Association funds on purchasing an AC-47 Flag until the situation stabilizes. ~~There were three opposes, Wayne indicating that this action is a slap in their face.~~ We are in process of spending a small amount to make a flag representing both the 3rd/4th SOS. The motion was not carried, and deferred to the Board for further consideration.

11. Out-Reach efforts: Goal is to obtain more information on potential members, and make contact. The Large-sized Master Contact List will be improved for member's interaction next year. Ron Julian (our MCL-meister) Ev will assure to keep the POCs updated.

12. "850" at Ho Chi Minh Airport: Bruce Byrd made another excellent presentation about the status of the only known AC-119 gunship, #53-7850, a K-Model. Aerial images show that the airport is being renovated for more commercial air traffic, and that the "military museum" and 850 have been moved. Based on last years directions (and carried motion), Bruce spent NO money on this effort, and discovered that the USA has no Air Attaché. From informal on-the-ground sources, "850" is not available. ~~Some in attendance Those with familiarity in Southeast Asia nuances~~ believe that means the subject may still be open for discussion. A suggestion was made to use the footwear manufacturer, NIKE, as a contact for Vietnamese authorities. We may "talk out-loud" about this subject, but use NO contact names. Bruce will update us next year.

13. Reunion's Comparison Chart (see a sad face): Gus showed a table comparing 2006 – 2010 reunion costs. Air Fare is getting more costly, the membership consumes more and more for the Meet & Greet and when the hootch is open, and hotel prices are difficult to keep at a low level. We discussed two lessons learned:

- a. Use servers to control the distribution of food at the main affairs -- will be added to the reunion "checklist",
- b. Have sufficient number of bar tenders to address the number of attendees.

14. Next Reunions:

a. Jimmy Ward volunteered as reunion coordinator for Reunion XII in 2011 in Charleston, SC, on Sept. 28 – Oct. 3. Gus is having difficulty communicating with Jim, and has increased his involvement to see it through. He will travel to Charleston to meet with the Hotel Management. Room rate is set at \$119, all events will be at the Hotel, there is a lot to see and do with much history, and there are two RV parks. Wayne stressed that attendees stay at the hotel to help keep costs under control.

a.b. We have many who were in AC-119s, or who were helped out by AC-119s, that have no idea of our Association's existence. Motion was made and carried to advertise the reunion-Association in magazines such as the Military Times, VFW and American Legion – with the Board in control of spending. The goal is to find those who were in AC-119s as well as guys on the ground who were helped by a Shadow or Stinger overhead.

b.c. Members approved via the by-laws voted that we return to Ft. Walton Beach for Reunion XIII for 2012. Steve Mac' and Norm Evans will be co-coordinators.

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15. Election of officers for 2009-2010:

- a. President: Association members nominated and voted for Gus. **Gus accepted a consecutive term.**
- b. Vice-President: Association members nominated **Mike Krauss**, and members voted him in.
- c. Secretary: Gus nominated **Mike Drzyzga**, and he too was voted in.

Commented [WFL2]: The By-Laws DO NOT REQUIRE we go to FWB – they strictly say we vote where we're going two years out.

- d. Treasurer: Doug Wohlgamuth ~~will-offered to~~ continue for another year, ~~and the members voted him in again.~~
 - e. Past Board Member: Association members nominated Larry Fletcher, ~~and with some hesitation,~~ ~~Larry Fletcher~~ ~~who accepted, and he was voted in.~~
16. We closed the annual meeting at 1120 hours, and proceeded to have an array of group "pictures" taken.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael J. Drzyzga, Secretary

10/2/2010