



2011 Mail bag

"Mail Call" Has replaced our guest book

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

Put Gunship Mail Call in the subject line or it may look like spam to me. 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 Notice:

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.

2012 Mail Call

Need Help moving C-119 to museum in Cresson, Tx - Jan 4, 2012 - There is a group in Texas, who are attempting to move a C-119 from just southwest of Fort Worth, at the *Pate Museum of Transportation* to another museum. They are looking for guidance, & a few strong backs with this upcoming move.

The C-119 that is the last remaining piece of the Pate Museum & needs to be moved 16 miles from where it currently sits, to the "new" *Granbury Veterans Museum* where it is slated for renovation. The problem lies in the fact that the project had reached a stand still. The guys that have been working on it are a very small group of veterans that are up in years. It is going from a non-profit museum to a non-profit museum, so I'm sure you can see the funding/manpower problem inherent in that. I personally have a history with the Pate, & while I am in the military & have a varied range of mechanical & electrical experience, I am not well versed in aviation. I was asked to help because the powers that be know I will do everything I can. If you live in the DFW area, or are close enough to want to make the drive, I am going to start organizing weekend work trips starting sometime in mid-January. I know as far as Texas goes, these are our coldest months, but this project can't be abandoned now, cause I have a feeling thats where it will end.

Texas Department of transportation has offered us a permit to tow it down the highway to where its going on its own wheels without a trailer.... however.... all 6 tires are not only flat, but cracked & in some places shredded. I got hold of some guys in Alaska who still fly one of these babies, & they graciously offered to lend us wheels & tires, but we have to cover the shipping there & back. I should have mentioned this next very important fact earlier... I am not asking for nor will I accept your money. The Granbury Veterans Museum has a spot on their site for donations if thats what you want to do, & it will be appreciated. What I'm looking for is a like-minded group of people willing to volunteer their time &/or resources (i.e. tools, equipment, etc.) to help tackle this project. I know times are tough for everyone, & I'm not expecting a giant group of people to come rolling in & save the day. More so than anything else, I grew up loving this museum, & this plane, & I now have the chance to work with & touch the very thing I idolized as a child, & I'm hoping some of you will be as excited as I am to have the chance to hands-on work on this piece of history too.

Feel free to drop me a line as a message or reply to this post. Step one will probably just be getting everyone involved out there one weekend in January to spit ball ideas about how we can make this work. If interested Please visit: <http://warbirdinformationexchange.org/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=3&t=43767>

2011 Mail Call

Special on Squadron History Books - Dec 1, 2011 - We only have 12 Hard Cover copies of our History Book available. The Hard Cover edition makes a great gift or donation.

Also, we still have many Soft Cover editions available & we're offering a holiday special - Soft Cover History Book for only \$20.00 plus \$5.00 shipping. Contact Gus Slinger stinger7172atcox.net
don't forget to replace *at* with the *@* sign in the e-mail address

Gunship Veteran needs assistance - Dec 1, 2011 - I am applying to the Veterans Administration for a bilateral hearing loss disability. I served in Vietnam as a navigator on the C-123J. When returning stateside I was assigned to the 4413th Combat Crew Training Squadron at Lockbourne A.F.B. as an instructor navigator. While I believe that most of my hearing loss came from my time in Vietnam I feel that some may have resulted from the 18 months that I flew in the AC-119 as a result to my close proximity to the guns. In the past forty some

years I have lost contact with all the men I was acquainted with while flying the C-123J & the AC-119G/K. As you know or at least can image VA requires all sorts of documentation for disability claims. While I realize that there is no one that can speak to my personal disability I am sure there are several that can speak of their own hearing loss or at least the intensity of the noise level at the navigator's station.

Possibly you, or someone you know has, filed for a hearing disability as a result of AC-119 noise level. I would greatly appreciate any statement that might help support my claim for the above. An email to wayner1939@aim.com would be of help. Thank you, Loren Wayne Reynolds Columbia, MO

Nov 28, 2011 - Shadows Lose a Brother from the 71st



Funeral services for *Ret. Lt. Col. James "Jim" Davis*, 76 of Austin, Texas & formerly of Blue, Texas, are scheduled for 2:00 pm on Wed, Nov 30, 2011 at the Blue United Methodist Church located at 4184 FM 696 West in Blue, Texas with Rev. Lance Richards officiating. Burial with full military honors will immediately follow at the Burns Cemetery in Blue. Visitation will be held Tues, Nov 29, 2011 from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm & Wed, Nov 30, 2011 from 7:30 am until 12:00 pm at Phillips & Luckey Funeral Home in Lexington. The Davis family will be present for visitation Tues evening from 6:00 pm. until 8:00 pm. Jim passed away the evening of Wed, Nov 23, 2011 at The Lighthouse at Altenheim in Round Rock, Texas following an 8 1/2 year battle with cancer *James Elbert Davis* was born on September 15, 1935 in Mount Vernon, Indiana to Harvey E. & Hazel M. (Thompson) Davis. He graduated from Indiana University with a Marketing Degree & was united in marriage to Janice Steele on August 24, 1957 in Greenwood, Indiana. He began his career with the United States Air Force shortly after their marriage & proudly served in the Vietnam War in the 71st Special Operations Squadron where he flew missions along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. He also contributed to the effectiveness & success of Air Force Reserve air refueling units while at Bergstrom Air Force Base. Jim retired as a Lieutenant Colonel from the United States Air Force on September 10, 1985. He was a member of the Blue United Methodist Church, the National United Methodist Campers & a former member of the American Legion Post #12 in Lexington, TX. Jim enjoyed camping, traveling in their RV, watching sports, reading, crossword puzzles & always took an avid interest in politics. He was preceded in death by his parents & a sister, Jeanne Ashley. Jim is survived by his wife of 54 years, Janice Davis of Austin; his son & daughter-in-law, Brad & Jeanne Davis of San Marcos; his daughter & son-in-law, Joyce Davis & Mike Hagye of Bee Cave; his four grandchildren, Chelsea Davis & Happy Davis both of San Marcos & Carlianne Hagye & Van Hagye both of Bee Cave; his sisters & brothers-in-law, Katy Flack of Pinellas Park, FL, Doris & Chuck Fletcher of Greenwood, Indiana & Jill & Melvin Chenoweth of Greenwood, IN as well as many nieces & nephews. Memorials may be made to the Blue United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 116, Lexington, TX 78947-0116.

Shadows & Stingers Lose another brother. Word has been received that our friend & fellow gunshipper Bill Gregory passed away in August. Bill was a life member of the AC-119 Gunship Association. Col. William "Bill" Gregory February 29, 1932 ~ August 18, 2011 We just found out the details of Bill's Memorial Service in Austin, TX: Saturday, October 15, 2011 at 10:00 Umlauf Sculpture Garden & Museum 605 Robert E. Lee Rd. Austin, TX 78704 <http://umlaufsculpture.org/> Cards can be sent to: Pat Gregory 1118 County Road 325 Glen Rose, TX 76043-5716 We will post more info when it is received

More Kudos to the group - Another great reunion in Charleston, SC. The number of attendee's was low, but everyone had a great time. As always, it was great to see old friends & make some new one's. I can never show enough appreciation to the guys who started this Association for the men who flew, maintained & supported the Gunships. I am already looking forward to Ft Walton Beach next year & San Antonio the following year. Thank you all, Everett (Ev) Sprou, 18th SOS POC, East

Kudos to the AC-119 Association - I applaud the fine work done by the officers & the board of the Association... Day after day, year after year. Kudos go to those who put in the time & effort to make the Association such a great organization.

I don't know of that many military units that have YEARLY reunions, but the AC-119 Association is able to do so, thanks to the hard work of both the officers/board & also of the "members at large" who do the footwork to make it so at the various locations.

I can't tell you how proud I am to be a member of an organization with such camaraderie, even four-plus decades after their original mission.

Regards,
Paul C. Robertson
Battlefield, MO

Important reminder to membership

Sep 19, 2011- It was recently brought to the AC-119 Gunship Association's, & my attention, that there is a presumption our board is letting our Association membership list be used for purposes other than Association business.

This notice is to assure you the Association Board simply does not allow the Association's membership list to be used for political or any other reason other than official Association business.

If a member creates their own network of contacts, for whatever reason, that's their individual right. Many of us receive countless e-mails & other communication about political issues from our friends & members, but NONE via our Association membership list, or as an endorsement by the AC-119 Gunship Association.

As an Association, we do not, & will not, engage in politics at all - period. That has been our policy since day one. Again, we value our members privacy concerns & take great care insuring our membership list is kept under close wraps & used for official Association purposes only.

The board shares my feeling that our current policies enable us to stay true to what our Association is all about - *old friends, new friends, & the brotherhood of those associated with the AC-119 Gunships.*

Sincerely,
Gus Sininger, President
AC-119 Gunship Association

AC-47 group loses one of their own - Harry Richard "Dick" Lewis died Aug. 21, 2011, at Long Point Farm in Easton, MD. He was born Nov. 2, 1947. Lewis was an avid fisherman, hunter, & gun enthusiast. He served two combat tours in Vietnam with the 4th Special Operations Squadron at Nha Trang Air Force Base. He was a gunner on the AC-47, Spooky, gunship. Mr. Lewis was nominated for the Silver Star & a recipient of the Bronze Star. He served 23 years as Project Supervisor for Willow Construction.

Dick Lewis was a very giving person who loved life to the fullest & will be greatly missed by all who loved him. *Courtesy of Skip Marvel. UDORN 70-71, UBON 71-72*

Gunner Bails Out...of a tree! - Last week, Tony P (our beloved Pakman) fell out of a tree he was trimming & busted his pelvis badly plus other injuries. Mary Ellen was able to get him to the hospital & it did not look good for a while. But God takes care of Stinger Gunners, & maybe even FEs, IOs, & even officers. Tony is now on the road to recovery, albeit a long road. He's black & blue & yellow all over from all the bruising, getting physical therapy several times a day in a Rehab Center, & able to stand with assistance. He wears a corset-type affair to hold everything in place, & the Docs say he can go home in a few days to continue his recovery.

Tony now has his computer, & believe it or not, wants to work on the final pre-reunion Newsletter but Gus is there regularly & will make sure he does what the Docs & PTs order.

Tony's son arrived to help Mary Ellen, but if you live in the FWB area, I'm sure Mary Ellen will appreciate it when you call; maybe offer to pick up some groceries, visit Tony to give her an hour off, or just drop by with a pizza.

Contact Gus if you want to send Tony a message or call him. Please keep Tony & family in your thoughts & prayers. We'll miss him at the Reunion! *Your Association crew*

Association loses a family member - Bob Krueger's Fiancée, Maria Gombas, of Lebanon, Pennsylvania passed away at home on Monday morning, August 15, 2011.



Maria was born in Budapest, Hungary & is survived by Bob, her two sons, Wallace A. Vitez, of Lebanon & William Bela C., husband of Dawn A. Vitez, of Cornwall; 2 grandchildren, Christina Vitez of England & Samantha Vitez of California. Maria brightened our Reunions for several years & she is missed by all who were fortunate to meet her. Please keep Bob & family in your thoughts & prayers. For more info or to leave a memorial message, visit: <http://hosting-14750.tributes.com/show/Maria-C.-Gombas-92147616>

Hot! All Stinger Pilots & Navs, we are looking for the cockpit crew of "Stinger 09" flying on 26-Nov-71, when Fast Fac "Owl 08" went missing near the Ban Karai Pass, Laos. If you were on that crew please contact the webmaster. More in depth info will follow. Webmaster: retcmsgt@att.net

Request from a Stinger's Son - Steve Simmons, the son of Herb Simmons realized that after spending several days going through his Dad's military records etc. he couldn't believe that they only had one picture of him during his wartime service. If any former Stinger has any pictures of Herb Simmons in Vietnam, or during training, or if you know of anyone who does, or a particular memory they would like to share with the Simmons family please send them to Steve at wrangler102801@yahoo.com. or contact the webmaster for his mailing address & phone number. *Yours in the Brotherhood your Webmaster*



Crew member of the famous "8 Tank Mission" passes. Herbert S. Simmons of Brockton, formerly of Taunton & Middleboro died on Fri, Jun 3, 2011 at the Brockton Hospital. He was 76 years old. He was born in Taunton; son of the late Stanley C. & Methyl (Caswell) Simmons. He was the devoted husband of 55 years to Audrey L. (Lovell) Simmons of Brockton, & loving father of Steven C. Simmons & wife Leslie of Braintree, Kenneth S. Simmons & wife Rosemary of Middleboro, & Daniel W. Simmons & wife Kimberly of Plainville. He was the brother of Fred E. Simmons of NC, Leavitt C. Simmons of Lakeville, Susan M. Miller of Wareham, & Betty-Joyce Glynn of Brockton. He was the proud grandfather of Nathan, Molly, Cameron, & Lindsey Simmons.

Herbert was a graduate of Bristol County Agricultural High School & Massasoit Community College. He was a retired Master Sgt. of the US Air Force serving for 22 years during the Korean Conflict & the Vietnam War. He was a three time recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross during the Vietnam War. Herb was a member of the Air Force Sgts. Association & the American Legion. He also worked for the US Postal Service for 27 years & managed the West Hanover Post Office Annex.

Herb was a longtime member of Christ Congregational Church in Brockton, where he served as a Deacon for 18 years. He was a former Oddfellow. He enjoyed gardening & fishing, but most of all loved being surrounded by his family.

Calling hours will be held on Tuesday, June 7, from 4-7 pm in Christ Congregational Church 1350 Pleasant St., Brockton & a funeral service will be celebrated on Wednesday at 10 am in the church. Internment will be at Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne at 12:45 pm. Relatives & friends are respectfully invited to attend. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Herbert's memory to enhance the handicapped accessibility of the Christ Congregational Church 1350 Pleasant St., Brockton, MA 02301. Arrangements by Sampson-Hickey-Grenier Funeral Home in Brockton. To send an online condolence visit www.mackinnonfuneralhomes.com

Remembering Col. Lee - I recently learned that Col. Gareth Lee passed away & wanted to express my condolences to his family. Col Lee was my aircraft commander during training at Lockbourne OH. He put up with several of us getting airsick during the initial flights (I thought I was going to die) & never said a word, just a wry smile as he surveyed several of his crew in less than ideal condition. I also flew with him several times in country & always thought of him as a total professional.

I was surprised to learn from his obituary that he flew during WWII as a member of the 308th Bomb Group, the "Hells Angels". Farewell Col Lee. Bruce Abbott