

Here are the 2019 Mail Calls

December 24, 2019 Tony Perez notified us that his Dad, Mario Alfaro was ill, and sadly a few days later informed us that Mario, 71st/17th Flight Line Supervisor, passed on December 24, 2019. Services were held in Antioch, CA on January 8, 2020

December 8, 2019 Just talked to Shirley Bartlett concerning Frank. The docs diagnosed Frank with Colon Cancer, and possibly surgery at the Palo Alto VA, in CA. Please pray for Shirley and Frank during this difficult time.

December 6, 2019 17th SOS Shadow Nav Bob Lindley's daughter wrote us: Writing to let you know that my father, Robert (Bob) H. Lindley passed away on April 4, 2017, and should be added to your Final Flight list. On the alpha roster, you should list his position as Navigator. I was happy to find this site, and wanted to update his information. Thank you, Virginia Lindley Wereszynski Colonel, USAF, MSC (retired).

November 23, 2019 18th SOS Stinger FE Don Cooling's daughter contacted Ev to tell him her father passed away November 17th. "He was a proud member of the Gunship Association and enjoyed the reunions he was able to attend. Thank you all so much for the camaraderie you enabled him to experience with your group. Towards the end of his life, I would let him watch the videos you posted, he enjoyed those memories. Deborah Cooling Davis." Don was life member # 81 and attended most reunions up until the last couple of years due to failing health. His family asks that any Donations go to the Colorado Airlift Outreach team at Coloradoairliftoutreach.org.

October 13, 2019 Robert "Bob" Stough, 80, passed away Monday, Oct. 7, in Vacaville, CA after a long illness. Bob was an AC-119K Stinger Flight Engineer and participated in multiple night time combat missions over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos and Cambodia. Please keep Bob's wife Kay in your thoughts and prayers. Funeral service is Thursday, Oct. 17 at 12 p.m., at McCune Garden Chapel, followed by graveside service with full military honors at the Sacramento Valley National Cemetery, Dixon at 2 p.m. Donations in Bob's memory may be made to the [Alzheimer's Association www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).
Obituary: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thereporter/obituary.aspx?n=robert-stough-bob&pid=194147691>

September 26, 2019 Lisa Murray informed us of the passing of her Mom, Pam Seiferd. Pam was the sister of 17th SOS Shadow Pilot Tommy Lubbers, Shadow 78 KIA in April 1970. Please join us in prayers for the family. Pam's Interment will be in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. Memorials to the Shriner's Hospital for Children, appreciated.

September 25, 2019 It is with sadness that Jim Alvis reports the passing of another 71st SOS reservist. MSgt. Ronald E. Wheeler passed on September 23, 2019. Ron was the Flight Engineer on Burl Campbell's crew #6 at Tan Son Nhut AB, South Vietnam in the spring of 1969. Sincere condolences are extended to the Wheeler family and friends.

September 14, 2019 17th SOS Shadow Pilot Bruce K. Brown passed away peacefully on August 23, 2019 in Potomac Falls, VA after a brief and courageous fight with cancer. He was the Special Operations Wing's Chief of Operations at Phan Rang AFB; and flew 400+ combat missions in

"Shadow" and "Puff the Magic Dragon"; retiring as a Lt General. He was interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

August 6, 2019 Roy Davis asked Ev Sprous to see if he could locate 17th SOS Nav Clarence Black. Ev learned Clarence died 23 May 2016 and was interred in the [National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona](#); Obituary <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/163392518/clarence-black>

August 5, 2019 From Don Craig: Gunship brothers, It's with great sadness that I tell you of the passing of yet another of our brothers. Dennis Vincent was a Gunner in the 17th at Phan Rang. I believe that his tour was during 1970 but I am not positive. He was the First Sgt. for Peggy's active duty unit (AF Clinic) at McGuire and retired in this area. I had a good conversation with Dennis and his wife a few months ago and saw him sitting in a car at the BX just a couple of weeks ago. I tried unsuccessfully to talk to him at that time.

July 28, 2019 **Join us in Salt Lake City for our 50th SEA Anniversary Reunion, and SEE the friends you still can.**

July 27, 2019 Jim Alvis learned from Mary Ann Hightshue that 71st SOS Shadow MSgt Rudy L. Wilson passed on Tuesday, July 23, 2019. Rudy worked in the phase dock at Bakalar AFB and Nha Trang AB. Pastor Rick Finney will officiate a service celebrating Rudy's life immediately following visitation at 2:00 pm Friday at Neal & Summers Funeral Home, 110 E Poston Road, Martinsville, IN 46151. Burial with military honors will follow at Friendship Park Cemetery in Paragon. Memorial contributions may be made to the Morgan County Humane Society, 690 W Mitchell Ave, Martinsville, IN 46151. Sincere condolences are extended to the Wilson family and friends.

July 19, 2019 Linda Miller, the wife of 18th SOS Stinger Navigator Eugene Miller, called Ralph Lefarth & Informed him Eugene died April 10, 2013. Per her request, she's now on our Association's Family & Friends list. Linda, our condolences and welcome to this fine group.

Updates: Ev Sprous continues his "outreach" to find guys we've lost (or never had) contact with. Here's some updates from his efforts; sad to know some of our guys are gone but good closure, plus it reinforces how important it is to get together to refresh old friendships & make some new ones at Reunions :->)

- Wayne Boling, 18th SOS Stinger Co-pilot, passed October 11, 2011
- Paul Crotty, 18th SOS Stinger Nav, passed February 12, 2010
- Ben McPherson, 71st SOS Shadow Pilot, passed March 29, 2017
- Bruce Mohan, 71st & 17th SOS Shadow Maintenance, passed July 1, 2015
- Spencer Nichols, 71st SOS Shadow Nav, passed September 7, 1997
- Duane O'Berg, 71st SOS Shadow Nav, passed May 16, 2012
- William O'Brien, 71st SOS Shadow Pilot, passed February 1, 2016
- Frank Richards, 17th SOS Shadow Nav, passed March 12, 2017
- Frank Rostkowski, 71st SOS Shadow Pilot, passed April 27, 1989

July 8, 2019 Update on Fred Rider Services: CMSgt Frederick "Fred" Rider, USAF Ret. Memorial Service will be Thursday July 11 at 1:30pm at Holy Cross Church 3836 Oak Grove Rd, Loganville Georgia 30052. Inurnment services will be Friday July 12 at 9:00am (arrive at 8:30) at the Georgia National Cemetery, 2025 Mt Carmel Church Lane Canton Georgia 30114. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the American Legion Post 233, PO BOX 127, Loganville, GA 30052 or to the Wounded Warrior Project, 3343 Peachtree Road NE #M20, Atlanta, GA 30326. Brewer Road, Loganville, GA 30052. www.stewartfh.com/obituaries/Frederick-Rider-Usaf-Ret/#!/Obituary

July 5, 2019 Jean Rider informed us that Fred Rider, 18th SOS Stinger Gunner, passed today. His paintings and heart touched many. Please include Jean and family in your prayers. R.I.P. Fred

May 29, 2019 In calling folks about releasing their video, Ev Sprous learned that Marcus Schultz passed on July 28, 2018. Marcus was in 56th/18th Fire Control. Please send prayers to his wife and family.

May 29, 2019 Bob La Rosa's Funeral service will be at Alamogordo Funeral Home, 2301 First Street, Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310. Visitation is Thursday, May 30 from 5pm to 7pm . Funeral service is Friday, May 31 from 11am to 1pm ending at Monte Vista Cemetery, 1590 E 1st Street, Alamogordo, NM 88310. Ev Sprous and Steve "Col Mac" Mac Isaac will be pallbearers.

May 25, 2019 Ev Sprous was notified By Lynn Morrow that Bob La Rosa, 18th SOS Stinger Lead Gunner, passed away today. A sad day, with one uplifting note to it: Bob rejoins the fallen heroes he epitomized and honored with all his heart. God's blessing to Bob and all his Brothers no longer with us. **Remember them all - and include Bob's family in your prayers.**

May 23, 2019 Steve Meleen notified us that he learned Art Serumgard, 18th SOS Stinger IO, passed in 2003. *Sad...good guy. Friel and I visited the two of them in 1999 at their home near Ogden and of course he was at the first couple of reunions.* Arthur Serumgard Jr, age 69, of Roy, Utah, died Dec 19, 2003 from injuries sustained in a riding accident. Art served two tours of duty in Vietnam, retiring from the Air Force in 1978. Art rests at the Veterans Cemetery at Fort Harrison.

May 6, 2019 Michael Sullivan notified us that his Dad, 18th SOS Stinger Nav Tom Sullivan passed away April 6, 2019. His family requests that any remembrances go to [Gigi's Playhouse](#), a Down Syndrome Achievement Center that Tom's Grand Daughter, Kristi, attends. Additional details at www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/stafford-tx/thomas-sullivan-8241462.

April 23, 2019 Karen Graves gave us the sad news that Marilyn James passed away at age 90 in Buhl Idaho. Marilyn was the wife of our first Association President Chuck James, who passed April 2017. Marilyn will be interred with Chuck in the Boise VA Cemetery.

April 19, 2019 Ev just received word from Mike Bennett that Betsy Alau, Hank's widow passed. She had a heart attack right before Hank's funeral and never recovered. Please keep Hank & Betsy's family in your prayers.

March 24, 2019 Bill George updated us on Hank Alau's burial: *Aloha, Attended Hank Alau's services yesterday. Betsy, his wife, is in the hospital after a heart attack. She watched the services on Skype & is doing fine now. Represented the 17th as a proud and supportive crew member. People asked about the unit, as Hank was pretty quiet about his part in HISTORY. He was remembered very fondly by family and friends. Met a female Purple Heart awardee Captain that Hank had worked with in one of his many jobs after the military at Fort Shafter. Met another Army Reserve Officer Hank worked with at Schofield Barracks. They flew in from Honolulu just for the services. One of Hank's grandsons is a WWII history buff who did know the AC-119 and asked a lot of questions. A good human being will be missed... Aloha, Flyin' Hawaiian*

March 18, 2019 Update on Henry "Hank" Alau (17th SOS Shadow Nav), who passed away on March 6, 2019 at his residence. Visitation is 9 a.m. on Saturday, March 23, 2019, at Holy Ghost Church in Kula; mass 11 a.m. Urn burial will be held at the Maui Veterans Cemetery at a later date. Henry, Hank to his friends, joined the United States Air Force in 1965, and served meritoriously for 20 years. Hank was an expert in military intelligence, and upon retiring from Air Force, spent 10 years serving as the US Army's chief civilian intelligence officer in the Pacific Rim. He continued to serve in various roles for Army until he retired in 2014 and returned to Maui to live in his family home. Please remember Hank's wife, Betsy and family in your prayers. More info at <https://memorials.ballardfamilymortuaries.com/henry-dale-kailianu-alau/3772504/index.php>

March 11, 2019 Col Mac asked us to post this. *Call to All Gunshippers!! Too many of our Brothers have Not done what they Must Do! If you have Not gone to a VA Hospital/Regional Clinic and asked to get on the Agent Orange Registry - do it! It's not hard; they will ask for any Official document that shows you were in VIETNAM for at least for 24 hours. You will be scheduled for an AO 'physical'; easy - they will ask you if you are having problems. if any one of your answers is on the now 16 list of AO Diseases, you are 100% covered, No further proof required - You are now in the AO System; You will receive, every 6 months, a 2-3 page color mailing from the AO Registry telling you the status of All studies, & what Your rights are! PLEASE! You must do this! Also, Go to web site www.eBenefits.va.gov to register with the VA, easy! This will open up many communication channels; submit claims for benefits and/or upload documents directly to the VA; request to add or change your dependents; request a Veterans Service Officer to represent You (I like the DAV for this Service); track the Status of Your Claim/Appeal; and Much, Much more! You may not care about Yourself, but do this for your Wife, Kids, Grandchildren. Luck & Cheers Always - COL Mac*

March 7, 2019 Henry (Hank) Alau, 17th SOS Shadow Nav, passed away last night, 3/6/19. Hank's wife Betsy called Bill George, 17th SOS Shadow Gunner who lives about 15 miles away. Funeral is tentative 3/15-16. Mike Bennett also notified us: *I just wanted to let you guys know that Henry (Hank) Alau passed away last night at his home in Kula in Maui. I was his son-in-law for a while before an amicable divorce from his daughter, Maile, but I am still close with the family. We will provide updates as we receive them. Please keep Betsy & family in your prayers.*

February 13, 2019 Jim Alvis learned that Tommy Peterson, 71st and 17th SOS Shadow Pilot on Ferry crew #2, passed October 7, 2017. Further details at <https://www.grant-johnsonfh.com/obituary/697/tommy/peterson/>

February 10, 2019 Al Heuss informed Jim Alvis that Maury Ray, 71st SOS Shadow Co-pilot on Jack Morgan's crew at Nha Trang, passed November 29, 2017. Further details at <https://www.heritagegardensfuneralhome.com/notices/Maurice-Ray>

January 23, 2019 Carolyn Minett informed Ev Sprous that her husband Wallace, 71st SOS Shadow Nav, passed in 2016. He was buried with Honors at Arlington. Donations in his name can be made to The Fisher House Foundation at <https://www.fisherhouse.org>

January 15, 2019 Ev Sprous found the phone number of Elton C Bates. Elton's widow informed Ev her husband had passed April 11, 2010 at his home. Elton was in AC-119 Maintenance. Services included burial with full Military honors.

January 15, 2019 Ev Sprous got a call back from Clinton Fraser's widow who notified Ev that her husband passed in 2016. Clinton was a NAV and VNAF Instructor in the 17th SOS.

January 15, 2019 Ev Sprous reached the wife of 71st SOS Nav Mortimer Hall ; she informed Ev her husband passed in 2005. He was on Lt Col Mulgrew's Crew #10 at Tan Son Nhut. Ev reminds us: It's very sad, but we all get closure by knowing where our Gunship brothers are.

January 12, 2019 Blount County VA posted the following: D. Harley Lowe, 71st SOS IO, passed away December 21, 2018. Harley entered the Air Force reserves in 1964. In April, 1968 he was called to active duty & served in Vietnam in 1968 as a Illuminator Operator on the AC-119G gunship. He participated in 37 combat missions and accrued 155 combat hours. He received the Air Medal with 2/OLC. Harley received his Honorable Discharge from the Air Force in June, 1969. Just last month, Harley received a Quilt of Valor! We send our sincere condolences to his family and friends. We are very proud of Harley's service in the US Air Force. May he rest in peace.

January 12, 2019 Ev Sprous learned that Merle "Max" Maxhimer, 18th SOS Pilot, died June 2, 2018. Max was an Air Force Retiree, Pilot and Vietnam Veteran. Funeral services were held at Crestwood Chapel with Burial in Crestwood Cemetery.

January 3, 2019 Cela Vellines posted in our AC-119 Facebook: It's with a heavy heart that I post the passing of my beloved husband, Charlie Vellines, this morning (January 3, 2019) at his home following Alzheimers. Most of you know that he has been ill for some time and steadily going downhill since Xmas. Please pray for his family and that his passing is a blessing for all. We will miss him greatly. He was such a good husband, father, grandfather and friend. Charlie was a 17th SOS Shadow NAV. Funeral service was held on Tuesday, January 8, 2019 at Emerald Coast funeral home with full military honors. Major Charles Herbert Vellines will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. Expressions of love and sympathy may be placed and viewed online at www.emeraldcoastfuneralhome.com

January 14, 2019 Betty Voos notified Ev Sprous that her husband of 63 years, SMSgt Ernest G Voos, Line Chief in Stinger Maintenance with the 18th SOS, had passed away Sept 29, 2015. "Miss him dearly and all our friends in the Air Force of 28 years."