



LATE SUMMER 2004

# MARINE AIR TRANSPORTER

The Quarterly Publication of The M.C.A.T.A.

www.mcata.com

## WILLIAM C. LOOK WHO IS COMING BARNESLEY TO BRANSON WRITES

July 27, 2004

Re: "The Search", by Jon Filina

Dear Con,

I have just received my copy of the Summer Issue 2004 of the Marine Air Transporter Newsletter. I was particularly interested in reading "The Search", by Jon Filina.

Time oftentimes erodes good memories while the original images and facts seem to blend into a well mixed cocktail that somehow conveys an aura of "straight scoop" to the particular event now being recalled.

Since 1969, I have listened to, or read about the mid-air collision that took place between a VMGR-152 KC-130F and an F-4B over Hue Phu Bai. Some of those many renditions included

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Con and Carol Shuck  
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Dick and Roberta Edwards  
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Tommie and Mary Ellen Mabe  
Henry (Bud) Wildfang  
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Gene and Helen Plach  
John Carres  
Al Toca  
C.J. and Betty McQueen  
Tom and Dawn Tracy  
Bill and Denise Scott  
Spike and Pat Krenik  
Lou Bland  
Ed and Mary Linton

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

LOOK WHO'S COMING	P 1
MEMBER LETTERS	P 1-17
FROM THE PRESIDENT	P 12
ADDRESS CHANGES	P 14

# MARINE AIR TRANSPORTER

## EDITOR

Con Shuck, USMC (Ret)

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972-293-2670 PHONE AND FAX

Opinions are those of the Authors of submitted letters and articles, are true to the best of MCATA ability to verify. They do not reflect the opinion, views or policy of the Department of Defense, Navy department or Headquarters United States Marine Corps.

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MCATA is a 501(c)(19) non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Texas in 1991 to foster, encourage and perpetuate the memory and spirit of friendship among our comrades in arms who are or have been members of any Marine Corps Air Transport Squadron and to preserve incidents and memories of our association together. The Marine Corps Air Transport Association represents a complete cross section of all those who are or have served our country in Marine Corps Air Transports regardless of rank, flight status or MOS.

**Total 2004 & Beyond Paid Up Members: 340**

**Members Expired 2003: 190**

**Total Contacts In Database: 1055**

# MCATA REUNION OCT 2004 SHUTTLE SERVICES

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**1 person \$65.00**  
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**3 people \$90.00**  
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**5 people \$125.00**

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**1 person \$70.00**  
**2 or more military**  
**\$35.00 each**

# Death of a members & Friends



I heard through the grapevine that Francis T.(Frank) O'Connor has passed away. Frank was a retired KC-130F pilot from the Viet Nam days. No other info at this time.

Harold Rowilson, retired RO Loadmaster has also passed

Margaret A. "Maggie" Ambrose, wife of Jerry Ambrose USMC retired passed away on 18 June 2004. Our sincere thoughts and best wishes are with Jerry and family. away No additional details at this time.

**NOTE: PLEASE DON'T CONFUSE THIS WITH THE MCATA MEMBERSHIP FORM**

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# LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

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William C. Barnsley Continued

details that were off the wall; some have included circumstances that simply did not exist, while others simply were not factually correct.

A few years ago, a retired Marine called me to recount his rendition of the accident that he had recently conveyed to one of the family members of the crew. After patiently listening, I encouraged a follow up telephone call to “adjust” some of the erroneous statements made to a surviving family member.

I have had a long-standing interest in, and an attachment to, that fatal event for two primary reasons: First, my KC-130F would have been on-station on May 18, 1969 if the flight schedule had not been changed for those earlier BARCAP missions. Secondly, I was a member of the AAR Board that investigated the accident and was responsible for writing the first draft of the accident report.

As a bonus third point, I was on the ground at Danang AB with Major Bruce Peterson, the OIC of Sub-Unit #1, when we were informed that a KC-130F Tanker was down in the South China Sea. We were also told that two crew members were picked out of the water and were being airlifted to the Danang hospital.

Major Peterson and I hopped into a set of wheels and raced to the hospital to see which crew

members had been rescued. We were both surprised and dumbfounded when we saw two jet pilots in the hospital. Both appeared uninjured and were non-communicative, but obviously they were not from VMGR-152, so we quickly departed for the Sub-Unit.

The following narrative was constructed from my firsthand notes and records made immediately after the mid-air collision and should put to rest the many well intentioned, but not too accurate accounts of the events that took place on that terrible day.

As Paul Harvey often says, “Here is the rest of the story.”

## KC-130F & F-4B Midair collision:

*[All Quotes contained herein were not included in the First Marine Air Wing Joint Aircraft Accident Investigation Board’s Report captioned as indicated below and submitted to CGF-MAW on June 2, 1969:]*

**“AAR-VGMR-152 SERIAL 4-69A, KC130F BUNO 149814, PILOTS WILLIAMSON, SELLS; VMFA-542 SERIAL 7-69A, F4B BUNO 151001, PIGOTT; GMFA-314 SERIAL 5-69A, F4B BUNOS 152270, 151450, PILOTS GILLESPIE, MOODY; 18 MAY 1969.”**

Flight Crew on KC-130F  
BuNo 149814:

## Crew members

A/C Major  
Jimmy D. Sells

C/P Major  
John C. Williamson

NAV Sergeant  
Robert A. Bonebright

FE Master Sergeant  
Edmond C. Polinski

FM Master Sergeant  
Carroll F. Hersey

ROBS Corporal  
James Al. Cox

On May 17, 1969, two VMGR-152 USMC KC-130F aircraft were assigned to fly the nighttime Yankee Station (off-shore, East of Hanoi)BARCAP Mission. Major Jimmy D. Sells, USMC was the Aircraft Commander for the first aircraft, BuNo 149814. Major William C. Barnsley, USMC was the aircraft Commander for the second aircraft, BuNo 148892. Both aircraft terminated their operations at Ubon Air Force Base in Thailand.

Major Sells departed Ubon AB in the morning of May 18, 1969, in order to be on station in the vicinity of the Hue Phu

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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# LETTERS FROM MEMBERS



William C. Barnsley Continued

Bai to refuel Combat Air Patrol aircraft. By late morning Major Sells returned to Danang AB for additional fuel for the aircraft and chow for his flightcrew.

*“At 1205 on 18 May 1969 Major Jimmy D. SELLS, USMC and his assigned crew of five departed DaNang AB, RVN in a KC-130-F BuNo 149814 on a routine operational tanker mission.”* Major Sells flew his aircraft to the Hue Phu Bai Area for the KC-130F in-flight refueling mission. The aircraft was scheduled to come “off-station” and return to the Danang Air Base at 1330 local time. “The tanker had departed its assigned track by this time and was proceeding toward the ocean before turning southeast to DaNang.” As Major Sells proceeded southbound for the Hue Phu Bai airfield area his aircraft was refueling two USMC F-4B fighter aircraft, BuNos 152270 and 151450. All three aircraft were descending in a “tobogganing” maneuver while heading southbound in the vicinity of the South Vietnam Coastline. At the same time, a separate USMC F-4B fighter aircraft, BuNo 151001, was heading in a generally westbound direction toward the Hue Phu Bai military area.

*“The two aircraft approached each other nearly head on with a closing rate of approximately 700KTAS. [700 knots true air speed.] The initial impact by the F-4B was in the vi-*

*cinity of the number four engine and the starboard refueling pod on the KC-130F. The radome on the F-4B cleared the propeller on the number four engine as the cockpit initially impacted with it.”*

Both aircraft met over the Hue Phu Bai coastline in a violent, fatal mid-air collision. The single F-4B crashed and the pilot and RIO died instantly. *“All of the KC-130F impacted at sea.”* All six crew members perished. One of the refueling F-4B’s was severely damaged from the initial crash debris. *“BuNo 151450 plugged into the starboard drogue, was sprayed with fuel and apparently ingested an undertermined amount of debris into both engines...The F-4B aircraft flipped uncontrollably to an inverted position while the drogue and a portion of the hose remained attached to the aircraft.”* Its engines could not sustain power and the F4-B BuNo 151450 crashed at sea enroute to Chu Lai Air Base. Both crew members successfully ejected and were recovered and brought to Danang Air Base Medical Facility for treatment. The final refueling F-4B fighter, BuNo 152270 *“...was plugged into the port refueling drogue [and] sustained limited damage in the form of two small holes in the port aileron and a 1/2”*

*hole in the starboard wingtip. He [the pilot] observed the spinning tanker, and when it was apparent he could render no further assistance returned to Chu Lai Air Base without further incident.”*

I was immediately detached from my VMGR-152 squadron flying duties and assigned to the First Marine Air Wing Joint Aircraft Accident Investigation Board. As an experienced Field Trained Aircraft Accident Investigator, I along with other Board members were ordered to conduct an immediate crash-site investigation for time sensitive evidence. This ground search took place over several days in hostile territory.

*“The Board commenced the investigation by gathering all pertinent information and documents available. On the afternoon of 18 May 1969, shortly after the crash, several members of the Board proceeded by helicopter to the accident scene in an attempt to view the wreckage prior to its being disturbed.”* [I was one of the first Board members to arrive at the crash site area.]

*“On 19 May the [full] Board made the first of three ground visits to the scene.”* “Normal crash search procedures were modified because of the loca-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



# LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

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William C. Barnsley Continued

*tion of the wreckage in a hostile area. The use of security forces and helicopter gunships were required.”*

*“The salvage ship USS BOLSTER was on the scene with scuba divers.” As a part of the salvage effort, “the minesweeper USS IMPLICIT located most of the larger pieces with SONAR, which were plotted and marked for BOLSTER divers.”*

Initially, the Marine Infantry Platoon (or Squad) was assigned to keep the hostile area neutralized while the wreckage field was examined and I looked for clues in order to determine what caused the crash.

During the initial search period Marine helicopter gunships provided air cover. However without notification the air cover was prematurely withdrawn and the Marine rifle platoons were redeployed. I was inadvertently left behind in the wreckage field while other Board members proceeded to the South China Sea coastline to interview members of the USS BOLSTER. Unexpectedly, I remained alone on the ground within the wreckage field: without support troops; without air cover; and without a plan of how to get out of the hostile crash-site area prior to nightfall and back to friendly lines.

Later in the day, I was incredibly fortunate enough to flag down a southbound Marine

transport helicopter. It landed and safely returned me to Danang Air Base.

Many other details of the accident and the recovery efforts exist, but they are not germane to the actual mid-air impact and have been omitted from this article.

Over the years, I have continued to reflect on the above events relating to that mid-air collision and have often considered that they may have occurred primarily because Major Sells was senior to me and used that seniority to arbitrarily switch the published flight departure time for my aircraft for that May 17, 1969 refueling mission. That unexpected, unilateral revision of the previously approved flight schedule was designed to allow Major Sells several hours of additional crew rest time at Ubon Air Base, Thailand. However, it probably saved my life along with the lives of the rest of the crew.

Major Sells’ actions inadvertently placed himself and his flight crew into harms way and they were killed in the above-described mid-air accident. An irony of the tragedy was that , as the only University of Southern California School trained aircraft accident investigator in the VMGR-152 transportation squadron, I investigated the crash.

As a footnote, the KC-130F

did not circle the area until the rescue crew arrived, and my still vivid recollections do not include any displaying of the bodies at the Hue Phu Bai. However, it does include my conversations with the divers and crew members from the USS Bolster who stated that sightings of sharks were observed in the vicinity of the wreckage.

My recollections are the bodies of the F-4B crew were recovered near the beach, but none of the VMGR-152 air crew members were recovered from the ocean. [The KC-130F wreckage covered approximately five square miles and the major components of the VMGR-152 Tanker were located in the South China Sea, more than ten miles east of the point of impact and more than a mile from the shoreline.]

Hopefully, this will be the last chapter of a saga that has periodically surfaced in print for more than thirty-five years.

Sincerely,  
William C. Barnsley



# MARINE AERIAL NAVIGATION SCHOOL DECOMMISSIONED

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## MARINE AERIAL NAVIGATION SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS

### **Director**

Chief Warrant Officer 5 David R. Gorton

### **Staff Non-Commissioned Officer In Charge**

Master Gunnery Sergeant Jeffrey W. Hampe

### **Syllabus Officer**

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Edward C. Ricke III

### **Chief Instructor**

\*Gunnery Sergeant Randolph E. Richter

### **Instructors**

Staff Sergeant Christopher W. Passino  
Sergeant Joseph S. Alley

### **Administrative Clerk**

Sergeant Ricardo Almeida Jr.

## CLASS 004-01

**LCPL Jason D. Hartwig**  
Belvidere, IL

**LCPL Christopher F. Menz**  
Cincinnati, OH

**LCPL Sky R. Mote**  
Placerville, CA

**PFC Mark A. Romero**  
Fort Worth, TX

**LCPL James J. Schuler**  
Waterloo, IA

**LCPL James R. Worsech**  
Melena, MT

## HISTORY OF MARINE AERIAL NAVIGATION SCHOOL

In May of 1919, eight years before Lindberg's famous solo flight, three small planes set out from Newfoundland headed for London in an attempt to make the first trans-Atlantic flight. Only one of them made it. Twenty-five hundred feet below on board a station tracking ship, a young navigator, Lt. Cdr. Weems, U.S. Navy, gazed up and thought there must be a safer and simpler way of aerial navigation. Weems taught navigation at the Naval Academy in the 1920's and went on to establish his own school in Annapolis to teach The Weems System of Navigation. Charles Lindberg studied with Weems before attempting his trans-Atlantic flight. Admiral Byrd, a classmate of Weems at the Naval Academy, came to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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\*Senior Instructor for Class 004-01

# PHOTOS FROM 2003 REUNION

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# PHOTOS FROM 2003 REUNION

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# HISTORY OF MARINE AERIAL NAV SCHOOL

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Continued

Weems for instruction before setting out for the North Pole. As did many others. The Marine Corps came in 1942 when it assigned five Marine officers to the school and established the Aerial Navigation School at the Weems School of Navigation.

In the earliest days of aviation, the military had little need for aerial navigators because their planes had limited range and capability. For the Marine Corps, that need did not exist until the advent of the Douglas C-47 (R4D). Formed in March of 1942, VMJ-253 was the pioneer squadron of Marine Corps aerial transportation as well as the parent squadron for the joint air transport organization dubbed the South Pacific Combat Air Transport Command (SCAT). Crews were quickly formed and ordered to report to the Douglas Aircraft Company in Santa Monica, California to begin training on the new aircraft. Working with the aircraft engineers, they helped design an area of the aircraft for the navigators compartment. The first aerial navigators were recruited from some of the existing pilots and crew chiefs and trained by the U.S. Navy at NAS North Island, California. By November of 1942 they had already supported combat operations on Guadalcanal and

the surrounding islands. Other squadrons quickly formed and navigator training became more urgent, taking place at bases that included MCAF Corvallis, Oregon, NAS El Centro, California, and Ewa Field, Hawaii.

The Aerial Navigation School formed at Annapolis



moved to Camp Kearney in Mesa, California in late 1942. A year later the school was on the move again, this time to MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina, where they graduated their first class of navigators in January of 1945. However, this training program existed only as a ground school and was deactivated in March 1948.

In March 1952, after the beginning of the Korean conflict, the Aerial Navigation School was reactivated as part of the Airborne Operators Schools

(AOS), located at MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina. The AOS consisted of the Aerial Navigation School, the Radio Operator School and the Electronic Countermeasure (ECM) School. During this time, Marine navigators trained in such aircraft as C-54's, R4D-6's (C-478), and R4D-8's (Super DC-3). The Aerial Navigation School remained at Cherry Point until January 1971, at which time it was moved to NAS Pensacola, Florida, when the Navy assumed responsibility for the flight support. A detachment, VT -29, of T -29 aircraft from NAS Corpus Christi which had been previously assigned for Navy support, now provided flight support for the Aerial Navigation School at Pensacola. At this point, the name of the school was changed to the Marine Aerial Navigation School (MANS). After two years at Pensacola, the Navy moved the detachment of T -29's and MANS moved to NAS Corpus Christi in order to continue the T -29 flight support. Finally, due to the phasing out of the T -29's at Corpus Christi, the school moved once again in 1976 to Mather AF8, California and joined with the U.S. Air Force. MANS operated as a separate organization at Mather, with the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

# REGISTRATION FORM

Marine Corps Air Transport Association 15th Annual Reunion  
Branson, Missouri • October 27-31, 2004

## Radisson Hotel Branson

120 South Wildwood Drive • Branson, Missouri 65616  
Telephone: (417) 335-5767 • Fax: (417) 335-7979

Wednesday October 27, Early arrivals

1200

Registration in Lobby  
Registration required for all attendee's  
\$25.00 per person attending.

Member

Qty 1 \$25.00

Spouse and Guest

Qty \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

????

Golf (details later)

Thursday October 28

0800 - 2300

Hospitality Room Open (Taneycomo Room)

1100 - 1700

Registration in lobby

????

Golf (on you own)

Friday October 29

0800 - ????

Hospitality Room Open (Taneycomo Room)

0900 - 1100

Registration in main lobby

1230 - 1330

Ladies Luncheon (Freedom Room)  
Gentlemen are welcome if not required elsewhere

Qty \_\_\_\_\_ \$23.00

1230 - 1330

Board of Directors Meeting (Table Rock Room)

1400 - ????

General Membership Meeting with Election of Officers

???? - 2300

Hospitality Room Open After Meeting (Taneycomo Room)

Saturday October 30

0800 - 1750

Hospitality Room Open (Taneycomo Room)

Closed During Banquet

1830 - ????

Banquet, \$35.00 per person  
Guest Speaker **LtCol "Triple A" Ray Descheneaux**

Qty \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

unless he is operationally unavailable.

Sunday October 31

0800 - 1100

Hospitality Room Open (Taneycomo Room)

Checkout

Membership dues (must be current)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to General Fund

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship Fund \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED

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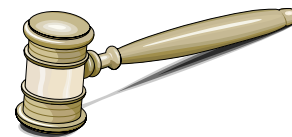
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Return this form with check to: MCATA, P.O. Box 59765, Dallas, TX 75229

Page 11

*Marine Corps Air Transport Association*

# FROM THE PRESIDENT



C o n S h u c k

Solar scanning while wondering what happened to Rich Driscoll, Chuck Mullins, Herb Nuskern, Dick Majewski, Tom Fuller, T.R. Brown, Frank Chiarillo, Ed Fugier, Frank Smith, Gary Olsen, Mort Sanford, Chris Downey, and so many others that just seemed to drop off the ramp and not tell anyone where they were off to.

October 27 and the 15th annual Reunion of Marine Air Transporters (MCATA) is almost upon us. As you can see by the list of those attending, listed elsewhere in this newsletter, there are going to be bunch of us in Branson having a good time. It looks a little short on Pilots, but that will change.

SCAT is having a Reunion in September. Bud Wildfang tells me that group is getting smaller and smaller. Although several of our members are in SCAT, it would make sense for them to join us.

There are some first timers registered as well as those of us who have not missed one yet, and do not plan to as long as I am able to travel and get around. Somehow I find the time to do it.

Still I am amazed at those who are aware of us and what we do at the Reunions that do not even make an effort to attend. As

I have said many times before, even those who may not have made the Marine Corps a career, have someone they served with or worked for that made a difference in their life or career.

For those of us who have chosen to come it gives us a chance to reflect on the past and renew those friendships.

As all know by now, this is my last Reunion as President. C.J. McQueen takes the seat at Branson. Kind of hard to think of that, but, reality has set in and in my mind this was the correct thing to do. MCATA needs some new ideas and possibly direction. Maybe he can get some additional support from the Cherry Point Air Transporters.

I have got an enormous amount of support from VMGR-234, however no memberships. I have tried about everything I can think of to get them to at least join the association, but no such luck. Somehow I believe they still think you have to retired to join.

As you all know I sent the initial registration out by first class mail. This was done as a means to check the address's on our mailing list. It is in pretty good shape as I only got 3 back that were not delivered or forwarded. There is a copy in this

newsletter, just in case you misplaced yours. Don't procrastinate, send it in today.

As you can see by the registration form, the Guest speaker will be Lt. Colonel Ray "AAA" Descheneaux, who is returning from his second tour in Iraq. We had Lt. Col Tom Dietrich scheduled but he saw a conflict coming in the form of orders back to either Iraq or Okinawa which stood a good chance of conflicting with our schedule. So Tom made the arrangements to get "Triple A Ray" Tom did say that if he was stateside he also would attend and assist with Ray giving the new and Tom the old. Regardless it will be a very good presentation.

There has been an improvement in the number of donations to the sponsorship program. If the rate continues we should have the ability to sponsor several Marine Air Transporters to the New Bern Reunion next year.

Jack and Sharon along with Dick and Jeanne Dickson have worked hard to assure a successful Reunion. It will be as all the others before have been. Branson is such a fun place with so much to do. If you have never been, it is like Nashville with a little more class and a lot more

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Continued

to do.

The Raddison Hotel has a wall of honor down stairs that will amaze you. I don't want to spoil the surprise, but you can browse for hours at the memorabilia that has been donated.

PLEASE, Try to get your registrations in to me as soon as you can. It makes the planning process so much easier if we have advance notice or your coming. Don't misunderstand me here. Walk-ins are welcome, and always will be. Just don't surprise us unless you have to.

My present plans call for Carol and I to arrive in Branson on Wednesday afternoon. That will give us a chance to see a couple of shows from the many to choose from in Branson, and just plain relax with maybe a round of golf. "Weather Permitting".

Well, I have rambled on long enough, I will see ya there, don't miss this one.

Semper Fi,

Con Shuck

## ONLINE DATABASE

We have well over 900 Air Transporters in the "Online Database," 500 of which are current members. What a great tool to look up an old friend. Here are some tips:

1. To view the full records (name, address, phone #, etc) you must log-in with your username and password. If you do not know what your username and password are, email [conshuck@mcata.com](mailto:conshuck@mcata.com) for the info.
2. Keep your record up to date. We send out emails periodically, and if yours is not correct, you will not receive the notice.
3. Tell a friend about the database. They can view name, date of service and email address without a username and password.

# HISTORY OF MARINE

## AERIAL NAV SCHOOL

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Continued

only Air Force contact being the sharing of the sophisticated facilities, the T -43 aircraft, the T -45 simulator, the Navigation Procedures Laboratory, the Planetarium and the Learning Center. The school remained at Mather for 17 years and in January of 1993 made it's final move to Randolph AF8, Texas.

During the past 62 years MANS has supplied the worlds finest aerial navigators in support of Marine Corps aviation. Presently, there are approximately 115 active-duty Marine navigators. Over the years the school has furnished navigators for aircraft such as the R5C (C-46), R4D (C-47), P84Y-2 (single tail 8-24), P8J (8-25), R4Q (C-119), R5D (C-54) and currently on the KC-130 F/R/ T.

Marine instructors utilizing the 12th Flying Training Wing navigation training facilities staff the Marine Aerial Navigation School. The mission of MANS has been to train and qualify enlisted Marines in the "Science and Art of Navigation" as navigators aboard tactical transport aircraft in support of Fleet Marine Forces.



## ADDRESS CHANGES

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### **Ed Delehant**

1312 Penny Lane  
Keller, Texas 76248  
**817-655-8792**

### **John Carres**

2003 Golf Lane  
Boynton Beach, Florida  
33426  
**561-737-4533**

### **Dan O'Connor**

3910 Garden Avenue  
Western Springs, Il 60558

### **Ted and Liz Newman**

853 Concerto Glen  
Escondido, Ca 92025  
760-294-8065

### **Dennis McGonaghy**

8202 Laurel Ridge Road  
Riverside, Ca 92508  
Phone 951 237-8925



## E-MAIL ADDRESSES

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John "Red Dog" Paul is now

Mike Shonk is now

Marv Mann is now

Otto Peyer is now

Norma Pittman is now

Mike Shonk is now

Bill Seaton is now

Hamlin Perkins is now

Johnharumi@aol.com

michaelrshonk@msn.com

IAMMANN@msn.com

opey31@yahoo.com

nkpitman25@webtv.net

usmcmrshonk@adelphia.net

BWSICS@hotmail.com.

rebelp@pcez.com

## NEW PHONE NUMBERS

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**T.Z. Hamilton is now**

**904-259-1711**

**Red Doktor**

**951-734-0312**

# FINANCIAL NEWS

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## DONATION TO THE GENERAL FUND

Russ Swisher  
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Spike Krenik  
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Bob and Enid Cole  
Bob and Sharon Meyer  
Ted and Liz Newman  
Dick and Roberta Edwards  
John Landolphi

John Carres  
C.J. McQueen  
Bob Stuart  
William Smith

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## MEMORIALS

Red Doktor in memory of Bill Green

Norma Pittman in memory of Kenneth Pittman

Mrs. Harold W. Allen in memory of Harold Allen

Helen McLennon in memory of Barbara Baumwart

Dick and Roberta Edwards in memory of those  
who have gone before us

William Smith In Memory of those who have passed on

*Article, reprint from the Times,  
By Robert F. Dorr  
Sent to us by Norma Pittman,  
widow of MSgt. Ken Pittman  
Thank you Norma for sending it  
our way.*

## “FLYING BOXCAR” HANDLED CORPS HEAVIEST LOADS

The heavy hauler of the Marine Aviation in the 1950's was the Fairchild R4Q Packet, also known as the flying boxcar.

The Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics gave the plane its name to signify that it was the fourth transport built by Fairchild Aircraft (Q) of Hagerstown, Maryland. The big transport was known more widely by its Air Force name C-119.

With its fuselage between twin booms and huge clamshell doors at the rear of a generously sized cargo compartment, the R4Q was capable of carrying most equipment used by the Marines in the 1950's, not include tanks or self propelled howitzers.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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# LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

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Continued From Page 18, Robert F. Dorr

While their primary job was to haul combat cargo, R4Q Flying Boxcars also carried up to 64 troops and dropped parachutists and supplies. For air drops, the rear loading doors were often removed.

The R4Q had a wingspan of 109 feet, 3 inches, a maximum speed of 395 knots and a range of 2800 miles.

The first version, the R4Q-1, began service with Marine Transport Squadron 252 at Cherry point, NC. in 1950 only weeks before the start of the Korean war. It gave Marines a freight hauling capability they hadn't possessed before, but it also gave unprecedented headaches to maintainers.

The 3500 horsepower Pratt and Whitney R-4360-20WA Wasp Major radial engines were among the most complex ever used in a propeller driven airplane. One Marine mechanic said the engines "were constantly in need of attention".

After the Marines received 41 R4Q-1's, production moved to the R4Q-2 model, of which the Marines received 108.

The R4Q-2 shifted to the 2800 horsepower Wright 3350-36WA engine, which proved easier to maintain. In early operations the R4Q earned a reputation for being accident prone, and tests showed the booms were structurally weak; as a result the tail shape was

redesigned on the R4Q-2 model. But some Marines say the tail design was never perfected, with vertical stabilizers never quite large enough for early control while turning in flight.

The R4Q Boxcars supported Marines in the Korean War from 1950 to 1953. In fighting at the Chosin Reservoir in December 1950, R4Q's air dropped tons of supplies. The R4Q's were also used to drop flares to guide night bombers during nocturnal combat operations north of the 38th parallel.

The Marine Corps began disposing of it's 149 R4Q aircraft in the 1960's- Rapidly swapping with the newer and more capable C-130 Hercules.

When the Pentagon system for naming military aircraft was overhauled in 1962, the R4Q-1 became the C-119C and the R4Q-2 was redesignated the C-119F.

A roster of Marine museum does not include an R4Q aircraft. An R4Q-2 was part of the collection of a private museum in Pueblo, Colorado for many years, but it's current status is not known.

Robert F. Dorr, an Air Force veteran lives in Oakton, Va. He can be E-Mailed at [robert.f.dorr@cox.net](mailto:robert.f.dorr@cox.net)

Editors Note: In contacting Bob Dorr for permission to print his article we had an extremely interesting conversation. He

has written several articles about Marine Transports. He is extremely interested in following up with another article and would like some assistance from MCATA members. Anyone hat has a story to tell is encouraged to contact him at:

Robert F. Dorr  
3411 Valewood Drive  
Oakton VA 22124  
(703) 264-8950  
[robert.f.dorr@cox.net](mailto:robert.f.dorr@cox.net)

I have taken the liberty to provide him with some names that I think have a story to tell. However there are so many of you out there that I have never met and I know you have stories as well. I am going to provide Bob with a copy of several of our past news letters as he has an interest in seeing what we have done throughout the years.

I guess one of the things which really impressed me during our conversation was that he was writing this new story to appeal to the younger Marines. To let them know that there is something else out there in the Marine Corps. I look forward to giving him as much assistance as I can and hope each and everyone of you will do the same.

Semper Fi,

Con

# LETTERS FROM MEMBERS



Norman Pittman • Ray Prittie Update

## Letter from Norma Pittman, widow of MSgt Ken Pittman

Dear Con and Associates,

I thought this was an interesting article about the R4Q's. I cut it out of the Marine Corps times.

I am also sending an article about our wounded military that now number well over 5000. Most of them come to Walter Reed Army Hospital or to Bethesda Naval Hospital for treatment and recuperation. They need many things as they arrive with nothing.

My news paper publishes an article about this every week with names and phone numbers so people who want to donate can. I am sure a lot of people would do this if they knew what was needed and how to go about doing it.

I think it is necessary to show our support for the military. I think donating is one way of doing this and I am also sure there are other ways. Perhaps there are others that get the same information I do, but just in case I decided to send this.

As long as there are troops in those countries there will be more wounded. "Marines take care of their own", but they also do not let others fall by the wayside. Donations are for ALL of the wounded. I think we all will agree that the wounded should get all the things they need for recovery and rehabilitation.

I better quit as I as I'm beginning to sound like a

politician.

Norma Pittman

Norma, sorry, but your article was a little to long to print and quite possible the info was out of date as this newsletter gets out.

Here though is the list of needed items:

Prepaid phone cards  
Men's clothes, all sizes  
AA Batteries for use in electronics  
Men's rolling backpacks  
Portable CD players  
Electric razors  
CD Music  
DVD Movies  
Watches and bedside clocks  
Hand Held electronic games  
Weightlifting gloves, for rehabilitation  
Stamps, no paper or envelopes, just stamps

I know the VA Hospital here in Dallas accepts donations and all the veterans groups have drives to collect and distribute. If you want to help and don't know how, contact Norma for information.

Norma Pittman  
16853 Francis West Lane  
Dumphries, Va 22026  
703-221-3467

Thanks to all for your help and support.

## RAY PRITTIE UPDATE

As you know, Ray had brain surgery this last Tuesday. I am very happy to report that he made it through the ordeal with flying colors and came home this weekend.

I talked with Ray and his wife, Donna, this evening. He sounds good. During the last six months, or so, he'd sounded on the phone like his health was deteriorating rapidly. His emails reflected the same. I am glad to report that he sounds almost like the old Ray!

He's weak from the surgery. From what both Ray and Donna told me, he has a tube running from the base of his skull (a catheter?) to his stomache. The excess fluid being created in his brain is now draining into his stomache. He can't keep his head upright for more than five to ten minutes, but expects that problem to go away within about three weeks.

He'll be checking his email, printing it up so he can read it later, but probably not responding much until he can hold his head up.

I'd post this message on the website, but don't have a password to get into it.

Semper Fi,

Jon

# FROM THE AGENT ORANGE REVIEW

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Viet Nam Veterans with illnesses that they believe were incurred or aggravated by exposure to Agent Orange or other aspects of military service, contact a VA Veterans Services representative at the nearest VA regional office or healthcare facility and apply for disability compensation. The counselors have information about the wide range of benefit programs administered by VA.

The national toll free number is 1-800-827-1000. Veterans who encounter difficulties at a VA medical center-- contact the "patient advocate" or "patient representative" at that facility for assistance in resolving the problem. Ask the medical center telephone operator of the patient advocate or representative.

Note: Viet Nam veterans (plus veterans who served in Korea in 1968-1969) and other veterans who may have been exposed while on military service to Agent Orange or other herbicides elsewhere during the testing, transporting or spraying of herbicides for military purposes and who are concerned about the possible long term effects of agent orange

exposure-- contact the nearest VA Medical center and request an agent orange registry health examination. More than 300,000 Viet Nam veterans have already participated in this program.

I want to repeat that the County VA Service Officer can be a big help here. That should be your first step and is usually enough.

Those of you with a computer can go to [www.va.gov/agentorange](http://www.va.gov/agentorange) and get more information and sign up for more information.

There is also a VA Kids page on the internet. [HTTP://www.va.gov/kids/](http://www.va.gov/kids/). This site is a good source of information about the VA, scholarships, Veterans day, and special events for disabled veterans. For younger kids there is other activities like puzzles, coloring pages, other contests plus info on a number of patriotic topics.

Do it now, I can assure you that the VA today is there to help us.

**Con**



## THIRD TIME'S A CHARM: NEW YORK MARINES, AIRCRAFT DEPLOY IN SUPPORT OF OIF

Submitted by:  
New York City Public Affairs

Story by:  
Computed Name: Cpl. Beth  
Zimmerman

Story Identification  
#: 2004825115744

NEW YORK(August 25, 2004)  
-- Sergeant John Ferguson and  
his wife Rachel celebrated their  
first wedding anniversary two  
months ago. Now, like many

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

other Marine Corps families, they will spend half of their second year of marriage away from each other.

“This is the first time he’s leaving since we’ve been married,” said 20-year-old Rachel. “But I’m proud of him,” she said with quiet intensity as she held her husband’s hand. “These guys are who America stands for.”

Sergeant Ferguson seemed much more nonchalant than his wife. “This is my third time deploying in two years,” said the 22-year-old. “But I don’t mind going. This is our job.”

Marines from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 452 (VMGR-452) deployed from Newburgh, N.Y. in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom yesterday.

Ferguson isn’t the only one with a sense of déjà vu.

“This is this squadron’s third deployment,” said Chief Warrant Officer Tim Noble, Administration Officer for Marine Aircraft Group 49, Detachment Bravo, at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh.

Reserve Marines from VMGR-452 were activated for Operation Enduring Freedom in January 2002, and they deployed to

Bahrain last year. The unit maintains and flies KC-130T Hercules aircraft, which makes them an important resource for the Marine Corps.

“We’re extremely excited to do our part,” said Maj. Andrew Barr, Executive Officer for MAG 49, Det B. “The Marine Corps’ KC-130s play a vital mission in the Middle East.” The Corps uses the KC-130s for aerial refueling and transportation.

“Since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, we’ve had planes supporting Marines from all over,” said Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Dixon, MAG 49, Det B Sergeant Major. Since then, the squadron has transported more than 3 million pounds of cargo, distributed more than 3.5 million pounds of fuel in aerial refueling, and transported over 3,000 passengers in the Middle East. VMGR-452 has also transported rescued prisoners of war from Iraq.

As part of a reserve unit that has taken such an active role in overseas operations, the squadron’s Marines have spent more than their share of time away from home.

“They’re sacrificing time with their families and their (civilian) jobs,” said Noble. “But they are doing it for the Corps,” said the Lake George, N.Y., native. “And they’re doing it because they want to.”

Lance Cpl. Joel Pasqualino, a

reservist from Johnstown, N.Y., left for his second deployment with the squadron. “I enjoy deploying,” said the 23-year-old student. “I get to work with ordnance over there,” he said. “I can’t do that in New York.”

Sergeant Jason Jones also left for the second time. “It’s round two,” the 27-year-old native of West Kingston, R.I., said calmly. “We all train for this, so the next thing to do is just go out and get it done.”

The Marines have plenty of support from their families. Jones’ family traveled from Rhode Island to send him off. “I’m nervous and excited for him,” said Debbie Murphy, who is Jones’ mother. His sister, Keri Jones, finished her thought. “He’s doing what he went into the Marines to do.”

This group of VMGR-452 Marines have the next six months to do their part in the war on terror.

“We’re doing the right thing there,” said Cpl. Jason Christofferson, as he hugged his wife Erin goodbye. “I’m looking forward to doing my part and serving this country.”



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Years of active duty (i.e. 1942-1975)

19\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

I served in the following war or conflict during the period indicated (approx. years).

- World War II \_\_\_\_\_
- Korea \_\_\_\_\_
- Viet Nam \_\_\_\_\_
- Desert Storm \_\_\_\_\_
- Other Cold war \_\_\_\_\_
- Afganistan/Mid East \_\_\_\_\_
- Iraq \_\_\_\_\_

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