



*315th Airlift Wing Alumni Association
315th Airlift Wing Excellence over the Years
Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina*

8 February 2022, #2

Visit our website at: <http://www.315awaalumniassoc.com/>

You may view this newsletter and all previous issues at this website.

CMSGT Tom Clemmons, our webmaster, built this website after we were founded July 1994, and activated by our Jag Officer Lt Colonel Andy Savage September 1994. Best website we've ever seen. Check it out!!

History Newsletter, Issue #2

Introduction: The 943rd Military Airlift Group was activated on 3 October 1962. The first Commander was Colonel William Willis, 1969 – 1970. There was a First Anniversary celebration for the 943rd MAG and it was attended by Secretary Mickey Davis and Navigators Colonel's Jerry Yarchever and Ed Lusk. Later celebrations were held for the 300th and the 701st Squadrons. The conference room and auditorium in Building 51 was named the "Willis Room" in his honor.

A *Final Fly Bye* was held for Colonel William Willis September 2011.

Today's Introduction: The first issue of the 315th AWAA Newsletter was published by SMGT (ret) Ray L. Ardis, charter member. Twenty four years ago Ray reassigned that position to me. By this time Chief Dick Fuller was President. Lt Col (ret) Tom Alton, former Deputy Commander of Maintenance, was our first 315th AWAA President. Dementia set in and Tom moved to Florida to be with his daughter. Dementia also set in for Chief Dick Fuller and he could no longer

maintain the position as President. In the past I had asked Col Jim Roberts to be our President and he asked if we could find someone else and we did. Then the day came when I asked Jim that same question again during our Alumni board meeting. Jim fully understood our situation and he immediately accepted the position as President without any hesitation.

Please keep in mind, everyone, that mental health issues could be inflicted on anyone of us at any time, myself included. First, we start making mistakes that we can't explain but keep it a secret from family and friends, trying to cover it up so they won't know. Eventually we may avoid our email messages, the telephone and no longer make postings on Facebook. We begin to fade away. Our facial appearance changes beyond recognition. I saw this with Col Ed Lusk, Navigator and Commander. He posted a full length photo of himself. We did not recognize him and he did not maintain that same sharpness in his clothing. This was his way of saying his good byes to us. Six weeks later the Colonel flew west. I published his *Final Fly Bye in the Newsletter*. *At the end, I wrote the inscription Forever aloft on Silvery Swept Back Wings*

All of us, no exceptions, loose our family and friends during our life spans on the planet. It's a part of life. It's hard. We handle the grieving process in our own way. Getting back to a normal life again depends on how emotional we are, and the kind of relationship we had with them. My own personal experience is 56 years of marriage and now I am widowed for the first time at 86 years of age. Life goes on and we make it happen.

Our Next Luncheon Reminder

Our next quarterly luncheon will be held on Friday, 4 March 2022. Luncheons are no longer held at the Charleston Club as they have been basically shut down in the past because of the Virus. I visited Judy, the Club Manager, and she does not expect the Club to get back to normal operations ever, at least not at this time. However, we have a very good alternate. Joanne Gillespie of 315th Public Affairs, has us set up in building 60, the 315th Wing Headquarters in a portion of the auditorium. We've held one other luncheon there at Christmas time and it worked out great! It's not the same atmosphere we enjoyed at the Club, but it's our only option and we're good to go. Thanks to Joanne.

Once again, the luncheon will be held on Friday, 4 March 2022. The following schedule applies:

09:30 – 10:30, the Alumni Association board meeting

10:30 – 11:00, set up

11:00 – 12:30, quarterly luncheon. You may hang around long as you wish.

The food is catered, brought in, and set up. Please let Linda Skillman know if possible, if you plan to attend so that we can have enough food. You may reach Linda at (843) 553-5045, or Linda.Skillman@outlook.com

If you would like to enjoy some good camaraderie with the troops, this would be the time to do so. We are not trying to twist any arms. It's up to you and you are welcome.

Delanda D. Oxford

27 January 1936 – 27 January 2022

My family set up a great celebration for me at my favorite watering hole, the Wine & Tapas in Summerville on Main Street beside the railroad tracks. I introduced many of my friends I hang out with to my family. We let the good times roll like I have never seen before in my long and incredible life time!!

We talked briefly about my life span and how all of recorded history repeats the past. My late wife Brenda was a History Professor at Trident Tech for over 21 years and my alternate degree at N. C. State University was world history which included all of the world wars. I'm a big history buff of World War II and the B-17 G models out of the 8th Air Force in England. My number one favorite book is "I could never be so lucky again" by General Jimmy H. Doolittle. I met Jimmy at Patriots Point aboard the USS Yorktown when the Tokyo Raiders were having their reunion. I found Jimmy to be just a regular every day kind of guy. Lt Col Eileen Wilson, 31/315 AES Flight Nurse was there on that day but we did not meet. I have ran out of time here but will continue in #3 Newsletter tomorrow.

Del Oxford, Communications