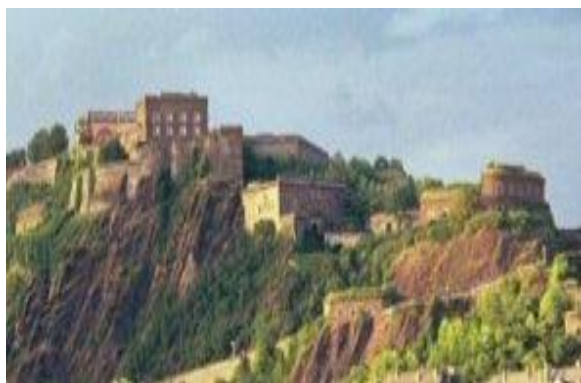


THE CASTLE NEWSLETTER



**17th ARTILLERY
REGIMENT**



ASSOCIATION

Issue 40

July 2023

President's View

By Gil Bernabe

By the time that you receive this edition of the Castle – it will be about two months before we meet in Savannah for our 2023 17th Artillery Regiment Association Reunion.

So – get ready to make your plans to meet your 17th Artillery friends September 18 through 22 at:

Country Inn & Suites - 7576 White Bluff Road - Savannah, GA 31406

To make your room reservation – call Country Inn & Suites Savannah – (912) 692-0404.

**Ask for: Haleena or Barbara - Inform her that you are with the 17th Artillery Regiment Association.
Of course, have your credit card ready.**

Our 2023 reunion will begin with the Opening Ceremony, and we have asked officials at Hunter Army Air Field (HAAF) to provide our ceremony with their Color Guard. We are also working to bring in a guest speaker for Monday evening.

Tuesday, we will have an early morning formation; we will be taking a tour of Hunter Army Air Field. Our bus is scheduled to arrive at 8:00 and we should be at the HAAF gate at 8:30 to meet our tour guides.

Of particular interest in this *Castle* Newsletter is Tom Kurtz's history report on the 537th Field Artillery Battalion. Tom notes that the history and pictures were taken from the battalion's 1957 yearbook. "In January 1950, the 537th Battalion took part in the Alaska maneuvers, 'Operation Sweetheart,' designed to test the northern defense of the American continent. During the months of May, June and July 1950, Battery B and Battery C were levied from the battalion and shipped to Korea to participate in the Korean War as part of the 17th Field Artillery Battalion. The 537th Field Artillery Battalion remained at Camp Carson throughout the Korean War." Check out Tom's contribution in this *Castle* Newsletter.

Richard Smith's contribution, as our association Chaplain, always provides us great guidance and positive reading. Don't miss it. Our Association Secretary, as usual, has provided lot of reunion information in this *Castle* Newsletter.

This newsletter also lists this year's 17th Artillery Regiment Association scholarship winners. Our four winners are granddaughters with very high academic achievements and are certain to be successful in all their future endeavors.

On Monday evening, we will discuss possible locations for our 2024 reunion. Final selection will be voted on Thursday at the General Membership Meeting. We are throwing in some guidance so you will play a significant part in this selection. Recently, locations have been tossed out without regard to hotel prices. This really complicates the hotel selection – especially when nightly charges for decent hotels are in the \$150 to \$170 range. After the COVID pandemic, prices for everything have increased tremendously.

So – if you have a site nomination – we ask you to check out a few hotels and ask for their group rate for our 2024 reunion. I have a checklist for you to use as you negotiate with a hotel manager. You will not be held accountable for any hotel. You are just seeking information. The Board will do the final negotiating and sign the contract. The Board of Officers requires a hotel contract be available by December 15. After that date, hotel managers are swamped with end-of-year activities and it is very difficult to communicate with them. Also, the Association's Secretary needs all the reunion facts for the January Newsletter.

So, help us – help you!

17th Artillery Regiment Association's 24th Annual Reunion Savannah, Georgia September 18 to 23, 2023



Country Inn and Suites in midtown Savannah is located at 7576 White Bluff Road. It is near a variety of shopping, dining, historic and tourist attractions.

MAKING YOUR ROOM RESERVATION

Call Country Inn & Suites Savannah –
FRONT DESK at (912) 692 – 0404

ASK FOR: Haleena or Barbara (very important)

Tell hotel personnel you are with 17th Artillery Regiment Reunion.

GIVE DATES: September 18 to 23

Have your credit card (and your hotel rewards number) ready!

Room Rate: \$89.00 per room per night plus tax = \$107.35
(A new tax increased the cost nearly \$2 since the last newsletter.)

Reservations Deadline: September 01, 2023

Bed Choices: queen or king

CANCELLATION POLICY

Call hotel 24 hours before arrival to avoid being charged.

Reunion Fee: \$65.00 per person

Send Registration Form To: Rich Siebe, 3060 64th Street,
Sacramento, CA 95820-2004

Reunion Registration Deadline: September 01, 2023
(Form is on page 3.)

Savannah information on page 10

WHEN: **September 18 to 23, 2023**

Board of Officers Arrives
September 16 & 17, 2023

Annual Business Meeting
Sunday, September 17, 2023

WHERE: **COUNTRY INN & SUITES
BY RADISSON**

7576 WHITE BLUFF ROAD

SAVANNAH, GA 31406

Come Meet Your Military Tour Hunter Army Airfield September 19, 2023 *Tentative Schedule*

0800	Bus arrives at hotel*
0820	Bus Departs for HAAF
0830—0845	PAO at Montgomery Gate for security check and pickup
0845—0900	Depart Montgomery Gate
0900—0945	Truscott Air Terminal Command Briefing
0945—1130	Ranger/GANG/Static Display Tour
1130—1300	Lunch In Consolidated Dining Facility*
1300	Bus returns to hotel

For the Hunter Army Airfield Tour, we **must provide the following individual information to obtain a security pass for the tour:**

- First, middle and last name
- Date of birth (Day/Month/Year)
- Last 4 digits of SSN
- Race
- Gender

This information is needed one month in advance so they can run background checks prior to our arrival. **This is only for those without a DoD ID card. If you already have a DoD retiree card, you do not need to provide the information. This is only for people who need access to HAAF on the tour. Call Judy Dingman (417-860-0029) to provide the information no later than August 10 or you will not be able to go on the tour.**

**Provided by 17th Artillery Regiment Association*

17th Artillery Regiment Association's Reunion

Registration Form

September 18-23, 2023

Please fill out the information below.

The association's registration fee will cover Monday evening's Welcome Social, Annual Banquet and a portion of the Hospitality Room refreshments and snacks.

Please make your check or money order payable to: 17th Artillery Regiment Association.

Mail the registration to the association treasurer:

Rich Siebe
3060 64th Street
Sacramento, CA 95820-2004

CUT/TEAR AND MAIL THE FOLLOWING TO OUR TREASURER.
(With your check or money order to arrive no later than September 1, 2023.)

Name _____
(Please print)

Battery _____ Battalion _____ Dates Served: From _____ to _____

Name(s) of Spouse, Relatives and/or friends attending as they should appear on name tags:

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Registration fee is \$65 per person X number attending _____ = \$ _____
(number in your party)

Please donate toward the Hospitality Room Expenses: \$ _____

CHECK TOTAL \$ _____

17th Artillery Regiment Association Awards Scholarships to Four Outstanding Students

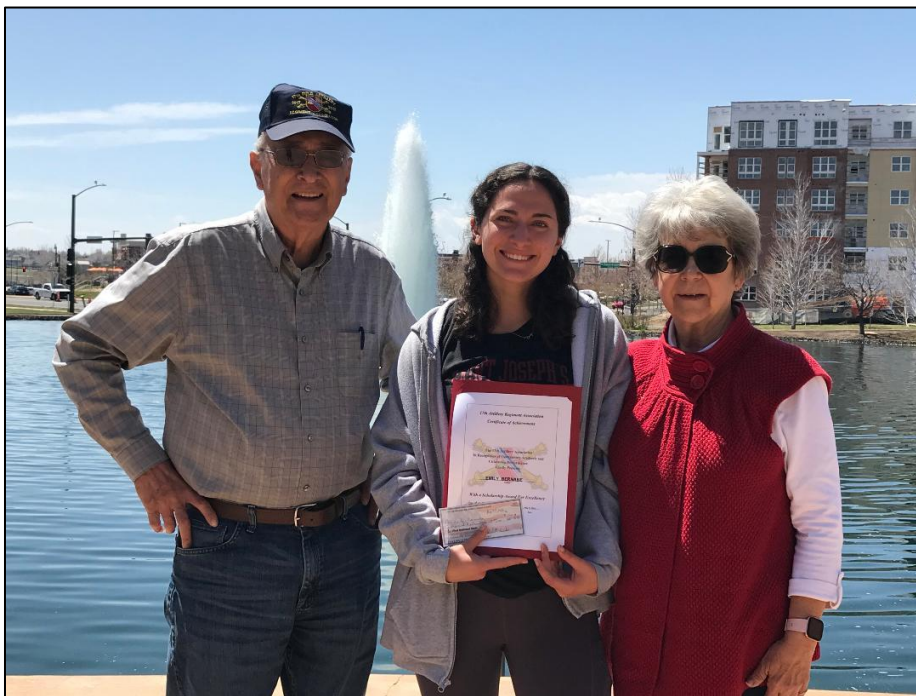
The 17th Artillery Regiment Association recently awarded scholarships to four very deserving granddaughters. The four scholarships totaled \$7,000. Each scholarship winner received a monetary award, a congratulatory letter and a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Certificate of Achievement. Each year the 17th Artillery Regiment Association awards scholarship grants to children and grandchildren of veterans and current active-duty soldiers who have served with this proud regiment. Applicants must meet the association's eligibility requirements and are evaluated on academic achievement, community service, extra-curricular activities at school, an essay on a different annual topic and a faculty member's Letter of Recommendation.

Emily Bernabe

The top 2023 winner was Emily Bernabe, a student from Suffield High School, in Suffield, CT, and from St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia PA. In high school, Emily was the Senior Class President and the vice president of the National Honor Society. She was also active in school athletics, playing volleyball all four years, running cross country for three years and participating in outdoor track for two years. Her weighted GPA in high school was 5.9196. Despite her busy school schedule, she found time to work at a local restaurant throughout her high school years.

In her college years, she was in the Honor Program and wrote an Honor Thesis. Additionally, she conducted research on "COVID-19 Behavior Patterns" and presented her paper at the Eastern Psychological Association Annual Research Conference. She was part of the university's Hawk Host Tour Guide program for new students; and was vice president of the University's Psychology Club. Her college GPA was 3.92. An interesting fact is she took 41 college courses and received an A grade 38 times and a B grade three times.

For her outstanding accomplishments, Emily received a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Award of \$2,500. Her connection with the 17th Artillery Regiment Association is through her grandfather, Gil Bernabe, who served with the 17th Artillery in Viet Nam and Germany.



Emily Bernabe receives her 17th Artillery Regiment Association scholarship award and check and stands with her proud grandparents, Gil and June Bernabe.



The photos reveal Barry Matthews, Melissa (Matthews) Briske (daughter), Barry Matthews (son), Piper Dickson and Melia (Matthews) Dickson (daughter). Piper's uncle Barry and aunt Melissa presented the 17th Artillery Association awards.

Piper Dickson

Piper Dickson is another 17th Artillery granddaughter who was awarded a 17th Artillery Scholarship. Piper graduated from Liberty High School in Frisco, Texas. During her four years of high school study, Piper accumulated a weighted GPA of 4.847. Despite her challenging academic load of Advanced Placement courses, she was very active in school and community extracurricular activities and worked during the school year and in the summer months.

As a participant in school extra-curricular activities, she played on the varsity softball team for two years and was selected as Rookie of the Year and made the Academic All District Team. She was inducted into the National Honor Society, accepted into the Mu Alpha Theta

Mathematics Honor Society and served as the vice president of her school chapter of the National Charity League. The lead teacher for the school's Peer Assistance and Leadership Program was very complimentary of Piper's leadership skills and talent as a mentor of elementary students.

For her outstanding overall performance in academics, school activities and service to her community, Piper Dickson received a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Grant of \$2,000. Her sponsor with the 17th Artillery is her grandfather, Barry Matthews, who served in Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970.

Hailey Dingman

Our next recipient is Hailey Dingman – the granddaughter of Judy and the late Edward Dingman. Hailey is the epitome of an “Army Brat.” As a teenager, she and her mother, brother and sister have followed their father/husband from U.S. Army base to U.S. Army base. In Hailey's high school years, she traveled to several states and military bases: Clarksville, TN; Fort Campbell, KY; Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) virtual schooling, El Paso, TX; and Texas Virtual Academy at Hallsville, TX, while her father is assigned to ROTC Advisor Duty at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in Brownsville, TX.

At Fort Bliss, she was able to work at the base commissary, putting in 23 hours per week. She was also a member and main contributor to the Fort Bliss High School Leadership Club.

Hailey is applauded for meeting her many challenges and always finding a way to overcome them. Like with many students her age, the Covid-19 pandemic struck right in the middle of Hailey's high school experience. For Hailey, as for many other students in the United States, she had to switch from in-class learning to virtual learning. Not one to complain, she quickly adapted to virtual learning and found that she liked it. In her senior year of high school, she preferred to stay with virtual learning and selected the Texas Virtual Academy at Hallsville for her last year of high school. Hailey represents many other military children who find themselves changing often from school to school. This unique experience has prepared her for changing environments as she enters college and later the professional ranks.

For her outstanding overall performance in academics and community service, Hailey received a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship of \$1,000. Her connection with the 17th Artillery is her late grandfather, Edward Dingman, who served in Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, in the 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968.

Isabel Guerrette

Isabel Guerrette graduated from Weedsport Senior High School in Weedsport, NY. She challenged herself in selecting her high school courses and, in her senior year, included three dual credit college courses. During her four years of high school study, Isabel achieved a grade point average (GPA) of 4.0. Despite her challenging academic course load, she was very active in school and community extracurricular activities and worked during the school year and in the summer months.

With her outstanding academic record, Isabel was selected to the National Honor Society. She was an extraordinary student-athlete, playing on the varsity volleyball team for three years; she was selected as the team captain, and earned All-league Honors. She also played on the varsity golf team for two years. Isabel was very dedicated to improving her volleyball skills and played on an elite traveling volleyball team. Being on an elite volleyball team required practices during the week and traveling to tournaments on the weekend. She is highly motivated to play volleyball in college. As busy as she was with her regular school work and activities, she made time to work part-time at a spa and as a camp counselor.

Isabel's high school counselor praised her in describing her as a conscientious and respectful student who was always prepared for class. Her counselor noted that Isabel served the community as a volunteer since middle school as a member of the National Junior and National Honor Society.



Hailey Dingman is featured with her father, Eric Dingman, son Judy and the late Ed Dingman. However, this photo is outdated; since the presentation, Eric Dingman was promoted to Sergeant Major (E-9). The family will be relocating to Fort Carson, Colorado, this summer.



Isabel Guerrette is pictured with her grandfather, James Shernesky, who served in Vietnam with Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery in 1968-69.

Stuck in a Rut?

Richard A. Smith, Chaplain
(rsmith3024@nc.rr.com, 919-995-2163)

I hope this article finds everyone doing well. I am very happy to say that as of this writing I do not have any deaths to report from the membership or their families!

Sometimes we feel like we're in a round room and told to sit in the "corner." Or as the old saying goes: One step up and two steps back. We catch ourselves getting frustrated with something that we're doing. We've all had times like this, and, as long as we're still walking and talking, we'll continue to have them. But, we have someone we can turn to, Jesus Christ the Son of God the Father.

Satan has a way of making his way into our minds at times like this. He changes our way of thinking quickly. The apostle Paul writes, *I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves.* (Romans 6:19) Paul continues: *What benefit did you reap at that time from the things that you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness and the result is eternal life! For the wages of sin is DEATH but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.* (Romans 6:21-23) I think it's safe to say that we all have more days behind us, than in front of us. Think about it.

I ask that you keep the following members in your prayers: 1) Bill Dahlin –cellulitis, kidney problems and other health problems; 2) Harry Fetsick - long rehab from knee surgery and infections; 3) Jack Stroud – cancer; 4) Buford Calfee - tests on possible heart problems; 5) Tom Kurtz – caregiver; 6) Gene Johnson - kidney problems; 7) Norm and Annette Jones - health problems; and 8) Bert Ryan and his wife – recovering from Covid. If you know of any members or their families who are sick or passed away, please contact me at the contacts listed above.

I hope all of those attending the reunion in Savannah take a lunch or a dinner cruise on the Georgia Queen on River Street. (Shrimp and grits at lunch are GREAT!) There are many different tours of Savannah offered and I can't think of a bad one. A good dinner meal, historical place, gift shop and former eating establishment of Blackbeard and several of his other "cohorts" is The Pirate's House. A good lunch buffet is Paula Deen's The Lady & Sons. For the best crab dip in the U.S. and more historic newspapers then I've ever seen is Crystal Beer Palace on Jones Street. (Get there early because they fill up fast!) Get tired of walking? Call Pedi-Cab Savannah and they will pick you up on a bicycle with a two seater carriage on the back.

On a final note, I'd like to say thank you for the cards, emails and calls we've received over the last several months for my diagnosed illness. Mostly thanks to God and my wife Cathy for all they've done and continue to do for me. Until then...

God bless.

Computer Tips from the Editor

By Judy Dingman, Editor

Two questions I hear people (myself included) asking these day are:

- Why is everything sent via email and not as a hard copy via the postal service?
- How am I supposed to read that small print?

The answer for the first question is that it is much easier to send things like our newsletter via email versus having to pay for printing, paper, postage, etc.

The answer for the second question is that you can make things easier to read by using a "hot key" method as follows:

- highlighting the text in question, then holding the Control (CTRL) key down and at the same time pressing the + key repeatedly until the selected text is in a readable size for you. (To reduce the size, hold Control and press the – key until it reduces in size.)
- selecting View on your tool bar at the top of the page and zooming it to a comfortable size type for you

Thank You

Thank you for sending me the remainder of the scholarship money. It will greatly help with the tuition fees I have left.

*Thank you,
Jack Cody*

17th ARA Financial Report

The financial state of the association is very good at this time. We have \$23,464.46 in the bank as of June 21, 2023. That breaks down to \$7141.84 in the Scholarship Fund and \$16,322.62 in General Fund.

I am proud to say that since the association was formed, we have given out \$93,740 in scholarships and have donated \$17,588.25 to charity and support to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 17th Field Artillery Regiment.

It's sad to say that as we age our yearly membership and dues payers have dwindled down to two in the last two years. On the good side, that also means that most of the remaining members are Life Members. Hopefully, we can get new members in the future.

Here's to a good showing in Savannah!

Rich Siebe, Treasurer

History of the 537th Field Artillery Battalion



MOTTO: *Nous soutenons l'assaut (We support the advance)*

(The following history and pictures of the 537th Field Artillery Battalion were taken from the battalion's 1957 yearbook.)

The 630th Field Artillery Battalion was redesignated on February 5, 1947, as the 537th Field Artillery Battalion. The 537th Field Artillery Battalion was activated on October 1, 1948, at Camp Carson, Colorado.

In 1949, the 537th Field Artillery Battalion along with other units from Camp Carson participated in rescue work. "Operation Hay Lift" was a disaster relief project in the snowbound states of Wyoming and South Dakota. The units from Camp Carson opened 9,000 miles of snow bound roads to liberate 25,000 snowbound persons. During the summer of 1949, the battalion supported the training of the Reserve Officer Training Corps and Officers Reserve Corps at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin.

In January 1950, the 537th Battalion took part in the Alaska maneuvers, "Operation Sweetheart," designed to test the northern defense of the American continent. During the months of May, June and July 1950, Battery B and Battery C were levied from the battalion and shipped to Korea to participate in the Korean War as part of the 17th Field Artillery Battalion. The 537th Field Artillery Battalion remained at Camp Carson throughout the Korean War.

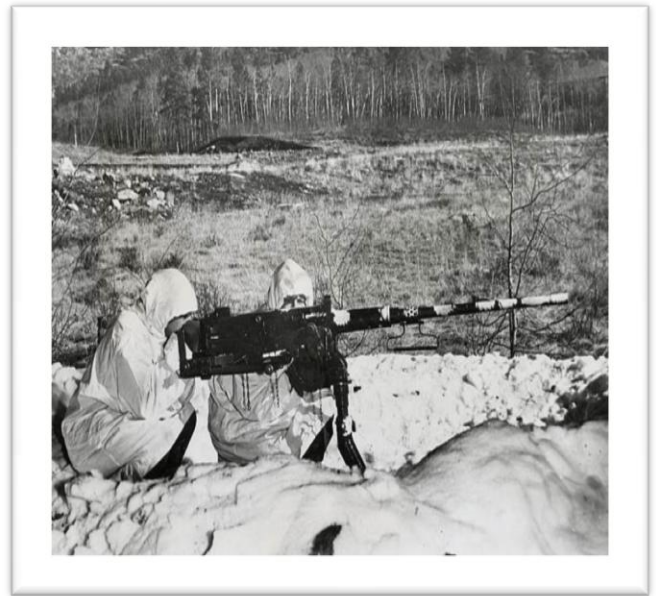
The beginning of the year 1953 found the battalion stripped of all personnel, with the exception of a skeleton cadre which was preparing for a training cycle to take 500 recruits and build them into a new battalion.

At the end of the six months training cycle, the battalion's three firing batteries were tested under the Army Training Test 6-1 and received an overall average of 90 percent. As a result of the test, the Artillery School at Fort Sill selected the battalion to test a newly decentralized fire direction system. After the testing period, the battalion completed Army Training Test 6-2 and Army Training Test 6-3 in December 1953. The battalion received ratings of superior and excellent respectively.

The achievements of 1953, however, were not limited to Army Training Test. Battery B twice won the General's Trophy, an award presented to the unit at Camp Carson accumulating the most points for participation in military and athletic competitions. Also in 1953, the battalion exhibited its athletic powers when Battery B and A won the 40th Field Artillery Group Battalion level championship and placed four of its players on the 40th Field Artillery Group team which won the post championship.

Early 1954, the battalion started preparation for its move to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, which ended the phase in the 537th History at Camp Carson with the transfer to Fort Sill. While the battalion started preparation for the move, Headquarters Battery found time to win the 40th Field Artillery Group volleyball championship, which was its first athletic championship.

After a three-day motor march from Camp Carson, the battalion arrived at Fort Sill on March 25, 1954. The new mission of the battalion was to support the Artillery School 100 percent. Following a relatively short period of settling down, the 537th again was in the thick of things. In the first five weeks of school support, units of the battalion received eight commendations for outstanding performances in executing demonstrations. By September 1954, the battalion had 18 commendations. During the settling down period at Fort Sill, the battalion formed Battery D, consisting of 100 new men that received their second eight weeks of basic training in the unit.



Sergeant Edwin Stenbridge of Buffalo, Texas, and Private Raymond M. Stetz, of Berlin, New York, both of Battery A, 537th Field Artillery Battalion participating in an exercise by manning a Browning .50 caliber automatic machine gun from a snow-covered camouflage pit during pre-exercise conditioning maneuvers at Camp Hale, Colorado, January 28, 1950 (ACME Photo)



First Sergeant Battery B with 40th Field Artillery Group Battalion level volleyball trophy (1954) (Photo from 1957 yearbook)

On September 5, 1954, the battalion was relieved from School Troop Requirements to undertake Battery and Battalion Tests. After the successful Battery and Battalion Tests held in October and November, the battalion returned to part time School Troop Requirements, combined with a Post Training Cycle.

The majority of activity of the battalion during 1955 from January to May was preparation for "Operation Breechblock Able," a five-day field maneuver held 3-7 May 1955. In February, LTC Richard R. Watson became the new Commanding Officer. In March of 1955, the battalion had moved to a new area on post and assigned to the 52d Artillery Group. Upon return from "Breechblock Able," the battalion began preparation for the Annual Inspection General's Inspection. The 537th completed the inspection with the highest score of units at Fort Sill.



A three-quarter ton truck with trailer is on the move and filled with troops. (Photo from 1957 yearbook)

During November-December 1955, the battalion detached 64 men to "Operation Sagebrush" units to enable these units to accomplish their mission in the Louisiana Maneuvers.

On 15 January 1956, the battalion was relieved from School Troop Requirements to commence Post Cycle Training. On 20 February 1956, the battalion started planning for an additional mission, Project 2855, which was conducted in New Mexico.

In the month of October 1956, the battalion was on the move again with LTC Neumann commanding, by convoy, to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, to train and qualify basic RFA, six months, trainees in the Field Artillery. On 22 October 1956, Battery B and a detachment from Headquarters Battery were the advance elements of the battalion

and departed Fort Sill for Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, at 0400 hours by convoy. Upon arrival at Fort Chaffee, Battery B and Headquarters Detachment secured necessary equipment for the coming training cycle. Batteries A and C departed Fort Sill on 29 October 1956 to join Headquarters and Battery B at Fort Chaffee. Battery A, 6th Armored Field Artillery, commanded by Captain Paul F. Pearson, was attached to the 537th at Fort Chaffee during this time period. The battalion with the training cycle completed returned to Fort Sill on December 15, 1956.

The mission of the battalion throughout 1957 was to: maintain a readiness potential required by STRAC classification; support the Artillery and Missile School by providing demonstration teams in Artillery organization, techniques and fire; and provide research and training as directed.

To fulfill the mission, on 12 February 1957, Battery A, (Plus) travelled by road march to Fort Huachuca, Arizona, a distance of approximately 925 miles. The mission was to furnish troop support for electronic tests at the Army Electronic Proving Grounds. A flash ranging platoon with a survey section from the 529th FA Observation Battalion, one FA Section from Battery C, 36th FA Battalion (155mm Howitzer towed) with weapons, prime mover and crew; and one (1) FA Section from Battery C, 18th FA Battalion (8" Howitzer towed) with weapons, prime mover and crew were attached to Battery A for this research mission.

The Annual General Inspection was conducted on 22 and 23 April 1957 and this battalion attained an overall rating of Excellent.

On 1 May 1957, LTC Jack W. Morris was assigned to command the battalion upon reassignment of LTC Neumann to G3 Section, USAAMC.

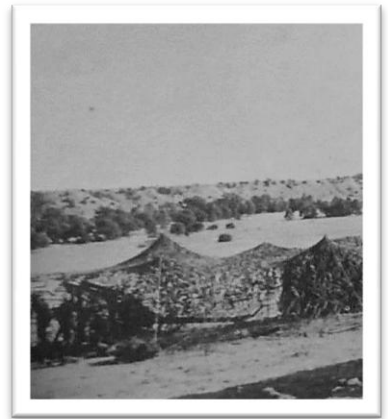
On 15 June 1957, Battery A rejoined the battalion from Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Many letters of appreciation and commendation followed attesting to the quality of support and assistance furnished.

During the period 11 August thru 20 December the battalion was commanded by Major George T. Swift while LTC Morris attended the Associate Command and General Staff Course at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

On September 25, 1957 the battalion was reorganized with strength of 37 Officers, two Warrant Officers and 537 Enlisted.

The 2d Howitzer Battalion (105mm) (towed), 17th Artillery was activated and designated on June 25, 1958 with the personnel and equipment to be provided from the 537th Field Artillery Battalion, with LTC Jack W. Morris as the Battalion Commander. With the transfer of its equipment and personnel the 537th Field Artillery Battalion was inactivated. Per Authority of Letter, AGAO-O (M) (16 Mar 58), Department of the Army, Office of the Adjutant General, dated 2 June 1958 Subject: "Change in Status of Certain Units."

The mission of the 2d Howitzer Battalion, 17th Artillery was to support the United States Army Artillery and Missile School; maintain a combat readiness in accordance with STRAC requirements; provide artillery training and retraining of artillery replacements; and provide personnel for Department of the Army experiments as directed.



A 105mm towed Howitzer position at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in 1954. (Photo from 1957 yearbook)



A BC Scope is at the forward observer position. (Photo taken at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in 1954. Photo from 1957 yearbook.)



Soldiers of the 537th Field Artillery Battalion fire a 75mm Howitzer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma 1957 (Photos from 1957 yearbook)

Reference:

537th Field Artillery Battalion Yearbook, dated 1957.

**LINEAGE AND HONORS
537th FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION**

Constituted 3 June 1916 in the Regular Army as the 2d Battalion 17th Field Artillery
 Organized 6 June 1917 at Camp Robinson, Sparta, Wisconsin
 Assigned to the 2d Division, 21 September 1917
 Relieved from the 2d Division, 18 September 1920
 Assigned to the 1st Division, 22 July 1929
 Relieved from the 1st Division, and assigned to the 2d Division, 1 January 1930
 Relieved from the 2d Division, 16 October 1916
 Reorganized and redesignated 14 February 1944 as the 630th Field Artillery Battalion
 Inactivated 22 February 1945 at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey
 Redesignated 5 February 1947 as the 537th Field Artillery Battalion
 Activated 1 October 1948 at Camp Carson, Colorado
 Inactivated 25 June 1958 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma
 Consolidated with the 17th Artillery, 31 July 1959

Campaign Streamers

World War I

Aisne
 Aisne-Marne
 St. Mihiel
 Meuse-Argonne
 Ile de France 1918
 Lorraine 1918

World War II

Tunisia
 Sicily (with arrowhead)
 Naples-Foggia
 Rome-Arno
 Southern France
 Rhineland
 Central Europe

Decorations

French Croix de Guerre with Palm, World War I, Streamer embroidered AISNE-MARNE
 French Croix de Guerre with Palm, World War I, Streamer embroidered MEUSE-ARGONNE
 French Croix de Guerre, World War I, Fourragere
 French Croix de Guerre with Palm, World War II, Streamer embroidered VOSGES.
 French Croix de Guerre with Gold Star, World War II, Streamer embroidered ROME-ARNO

COAT OF ARMS



SHIELD: Gules a mount issuing from base argent bearing a linden leaf proper, charged with a fleur-de-lis of the second. The field is red for artillery. The descent of the 537th Field Artillery Battalion from the 17th Field Artillery is depicted by the use of the crest of the regiment's coat of arms on the shield and symbolizes service in France during World War I and II.

MOTTO: *Nous soutenous l'assaut (We support the advance)*

References:

1. Lineage and Honors 537th Field Artillery Battalion and 17th Field Artillery
2. Field Artillery Battalions of the U.S. Army, Volume Two-Volume Set, Compiled and edited by James A. Sawicki, dated 1978.

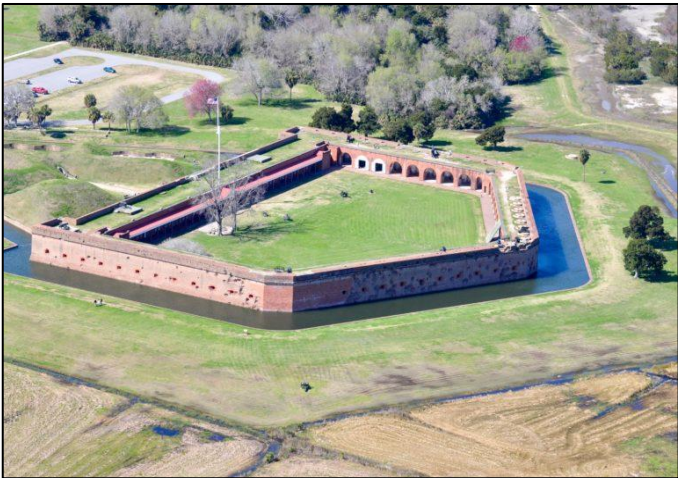
The insignia is the shield and the motto of the coat of arms. The sample of the insignia was approved 8 August 1952.



We're Heading to Savannah



River Street next to the Savannah River is a scenic and historic location where ships have been arriving since the early 1700s.



Fort Pulaski is about 11 miles east of Savannah. It was occupied by both Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War.



The lighthouse on Tybee Island is one of seven colonial era lighthouses remaining along the eastern coast. It has been modified various times since the original tower in 1736.

By Judy Dingman, Editor

Savannah's recorded history begins in 1733, when General James Oglethorpe arrived with a group of 120 people to begin settling the area. It is the oldest city in Georgia and features a series of squares laid out by Oglethorpe.

The city and nearby areas offer a variety of attractions for visitors. Following are just a few sites of interest guests might consider while there.

River Street bordering the Savannah River has been privy to many a newcomer strolling along. Today, River Street offers a variety of dining and shopping options. River tour boats board here and offer dining and sightseeing options during the day and into the evening.

Fort Pulaski, a pentagonal-shaped fortification, was completed in 1847 and featured walls 11-feet thick. It was thought to be impenetrable. However, with the invention of rifled cannons, the Union Army in the Civil War breached the fort during a siege in April of 1862. The breaching rendered brick forts obsolete.

Fort Pulaski belonged to what is known as the Third System of coastal fortifications, which were characterized by greater structural durability than the earlier works. Most of the nearly 30 Third System forts built after 1816 still exist along the Atlantic and the Gulf Coasts.

The fort is named after a Polish soldier, Casimir Pulaski, who fought under George Washington in the Revolutionary War.

Traveling a little further past Fort Pulaski, one can see the lighthouse on **Tybee Island**. It is one of seven colonial era lighthouses remaining along the eastern coast of the United States. It is approximately 11 miles from Savannah. Tybee Island is a popular beach area.

Another location of military interest is the **National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force** located in nearby Pooler. Tickets for seniors/retired military are \$11. It is open from 10-5, Tuesday-Saturday, and noon to 5 on Sunday.

Located a short distance from Downtown Savannah, where the Eighth Air Force was activated in January 1942, the museum features over 90,000 square feet of exhibits, interactive experiences, artifacts and a collection of aviation art to engage you in the history of our nation's most storied air force, the Mighty Eighth. Fly a mission, stroll the beautiful memorial garden and walk beneath the wings of the museum's restored B-17 Flying Fortress, *City of Savannah*, while there.

Gil Bernabe has arranged for the 17th Artillery Regiment Association to take a tour of **Hunter Army Airfield** not too far from our hotel. The tour includes a bus for transportation and lunch at HAAF, cost for both courtesy of the association. The tour schedule is included in this newsletter on page 2. ***Pay attention to the deadline for submitting your information for the security clearance for admittance to HAAF. The deadline to submit the information is NO LATER THAN August 10.***

More information about sites in and around Savannah was included in the January 2023 newsletter on page 6.

Don't forget to have your AAA, AARP, senior/veteran National Park Service cards, etc. for your trip in case you need them for a variety of discounts. Wednesday and Friday are open for on-your-own tours.

I'm lookin' forward to seein' y'all in Savannah! (That's delivered in my best southern drawl!) Where's my sweet tea?

17th Artillery Regiment Association – 2023 REUNION – Schedule of Events

September 18 through September 23, 2023

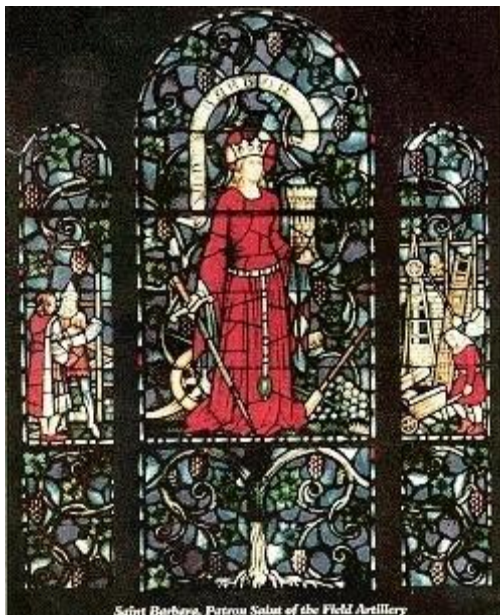
[BY: August 10 – please provide your personal information for the Hunter AAF Tour security check. Coordinate with Judy Dingman!](#)

Saturday Sep 16	Sunday Sep 17	Monday – Sep 18	Tuesday – Sep 19	Wednesday – Sep 20	Thursday – Sep 21	Friday – Sep 22	Saturday – Sep 23
	Breakfast 10:00 am – set up tables and chairs and shop for Hospitality Room	Breakfast - Complimentary 8:00 a.m. - *Bus Arrives 8:30 a.m. – Bus Departs for Hunter Army Airfield	Breakfast On Your Own – Tour Savannah	Breakfast 9:00 - 11:00 Membership Mtg	Breakfast On Your Own – Tour Savannah	Breakfast On Your Own – Tour Savannah	Breakfast
By 3:00 pm – Board of Officers Arrive	Annual Business Mtg Board of Officers 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm Coordinate Hospitality Room	Noon to 5:00 p.m. – Members check-in 4:30 – Color Guard Arrives 5:00 – Opening Ceremony POW Ceremony (The LAST 13) 5:15 to 7:00 – * Welcome Social – <u>MENU – by VPs</u>	9:00 to 1:00 <u>Tour – Hunter Army Airfield</u> POC: Daniel Mata (912) 977 – 7947 *Lunch in Consolidated Dining Facility at HAAF	11:00 am to 1:00 pm - - Auction 3:00 pm *Annual Banquet Carey Hilliard's Restaurant – 8410 Waters Ave - Savannah	11:00 am to 1:00 pm - - Auction 3:00 pm *Annual Banquet Carey Hilliard's Restaurant – 8410 Waters Ave - Savannah	11:00 am to 1:00 pm - - Auction 3:00 pm *Annual Banquet Carey Hilliard's Restaurant – 8410 Waters Ave - Savannah	CHECK OUT BY NOON
	6:00 p.m. – Group Supper Site: TBD	Guest Speaker 6:30 to 7:00 pm – Colonel John Gilbert, (USAF, Ret.)	Evening – prepare for auction			10:00 PM – SHUT DOWN HOSPITALITY ROOM - CLEAN OUT EVERYTHING	

The Legend of Saint Barbara

According to legend, Saint Barbara was the extremely beautiful daughter of a wealthy heathen named Dioscorus, who lived near Nicomedia in Asia Minor. Because of her singular beauty and fearful that she be demanded in marriage and taken away from him, he jealously shut her up in a tower to protect her from the outside world.

Shortly before embarking on a journey, he commissioned a sumptuous bathhouse to be built for her, approving the design before he departed. Barbara had heard of the teachings of Christ, and while her father was gone spent much time in contemplation. From the windows of her tower she looked out upon the surrounding countryside and marveled at the growing things — the trees, the animals and the people. She decided that all these must be part of a master plan, and that the idols of wood and stone worshiped by her parents must be condemned as false. Gradually, she came to accept the Christian faith.



As her belief became firm, she directed that the builders redesign the bathhouse her father had planned, adding another window so that the three windows might symbolize the Holy Trinity.

When her father returned, he was enraged at the changes and infuriated when Barbara acknowledged that she was a Christian. He dragged her before the prefect of the province, who decreed that she be tortured and put to death by beheading. Dioscorus himself carried out the death sentence. On his way home he was struck by lightning and his body consumed.

Saint Barbara lived and died about the year 300 A.D. She was venerated as early as the seventh century. The legend of the lightning bolt which struck down her persecutor caused her to be regarded as the patron saint in time of danger from thunderstorms, fires and sudden death.

When gunpowder made its appearance in the Western world, Saint Barbara was invoked for aid against accidents resulting from explosions—since some of the earlier artillery pieces often blew up instead of firing their projectiles, Saint Barbara became the patroness of the artillerymen.

Saint Barbara is usually represented standing by a tower with three windows, carrying the palm of a martyr in her hand. Often, too, she holds a chalice and a sacramental wafer and sometimes cannon are displayed near her. In the present calendars, the feast of Saint Barbara falls on December 4th and is traditionally recognized by a formal Dining-In or military dinner, often involving presentation of the Order of Saint Barbara.

The Order of Saint Barbara is an honorary military society of the United States Field Artillery. Both U.S. Marine and Army field artillery along with their military and civilian supporters are eligible for membership. The order is managed by the U.S. Field Artillery Association and two levels of recognition exist. The most distinguished level is the Ancient Order of Saint Barbara, and those who are selected for this honor have achieved long-term, exceptional service to the field artillery surpassing even their brethren in the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara. The order links field artillerymen of the past and present in a brotherhood of professionalism, selfless service and sacrifice symbolized by Saint Barbara.

(Information from <https://www.17thartilleryregiment.org/saint-barbara/>.)

Don't Forget to Support Our Auction

On Thursday, September 21, will have our Annual General Membership Meeting followed by the always entertaining auction. As you know, the auction *raises funds to support our scholarship program*. Please remember to bring an item or two for the auction. We will wrap up Thursday with our 2022 Reunion Annual Banquet. Of course, in between all these exciting events we will have plenty of time to socialize and enjoy each other's company.

Before you forget – find the Reunion Registration Form in this Newsletter, fill it out and mail it, along with your \$65 per person to Rich Siebe. See you soon at our Headquarters at the Country Inn and Suites Savannah Midtown.

Deadline to register is September 1.

And, of course, hurry and make your hotel reservation, also at the Country Inn and Suites Savannah Midtown (part of the Radisson Hotel group).

Deadline to register for a hotel room: September 1, 2023.

Membership Application

To become a member, life member or to renew your membership with the

17th Artillery Regiment Association

Please disregard if you are already a member for the year 2023 or a life member.

Complete the form below and mail it with your check or money order payable to **17th Artillery Regiment Association**. Mail to: Richard Siebe (*Association Treasurer*), 3000 64th Street, Sacramento, CA 95820-2004. Upon receipt of your 2023 dues or renewal, a membership card will be mailed to you. Life members will be mailed their numbered 17th Artillery Regiment Association Life Membership Coin. Members will be given the PASSWORD to access the on-line veteran's roster located on the association's web site (www.17thartilleryregiment.org). The password will be sent to you by U. S. Mail or email. The password is changed January 1 of each year.

Join or renew now: 2023 Membership Dues is \$30.00 (January – December) (Annual dues \$30.00 per year)

Life membership fees: Through age 30---\$270.00 31-40---\$260.00 41-50---\$240.00 51-60---\$220.00
61-70---\$190.00 71-80---\$150.00 81 plus---\$110.00

First Name: _____ MI: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ FAX or Email: _____

I served with the 17th Artillery from (year) _____ to year _____

Please check those that apply:

Battery or Batteries:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Field Artillery/Battalion/Group/Regiment (Prior to 1958) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1st Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1958 – 2013) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1958 – 2008) (2010 - Present) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1958 – 1995) (2007-2010) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4th Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1959 – 1996) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5th Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1959 – 1996) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6th Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1959 – 1963) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7th Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1960 – 1972) | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8th Battalion, 17th Field Artillery (1967 – 1971) | _____ |

NOTE: Please enclose a copy of your DD Form 214 with your application. (Mail a COPY, do not send the Original.) If you have previously mailed a copy of your DD Form 214 to the association, there is no need to send another copy.

ACTIVE DUTY: If you are on active duty check here. __ You may not have a DD Form 214 yet.

Richard (Rich) Siebe
3060 64th Street
Sacramento, CA 95820
Email address: R47S89SP@comcast.net
Cell Phone: (916) 798-6329

Receive “The Castle” By Email

To help defray the cost of postage and printing of the association’s newsletter, please sign up to receive “The Castle” by email.

To receive the electronic newsletter, notify the association’s secretary, Judy Dingman, at jdingman@centurytel.net with your **current** and **correct** email address and receive the newsletter much faster.

We will continue to mail the newsletter to anyone who does not have an internet connection.

You must be a **PAID-UP, ACTIVE MEMBER** to receive the newsletter.

Association Officers 2023

Gil Bernabe, President

Dave Rowell, First Vice President

Mike Klingeman, Second Vice President

Judy Dingman, Secretary/Editor of *The Castle*

Richard Siebe, Treasurer

Richard Smith, Chaplain

Tom Kurtz, Historian

Richard & Phyllis Flowers, Quartermasters

Edward (Ed) Hitchner, Webmaster

Gil Bernabe, Scholarship Chairman

This Newsletter has been approved by the Board of Directors.

Gil Bernabe
Association President
www/17thartilleryregiment.org

DoD Changes Names of Army Bases

In January 2023, William A. LaPlante, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, directed all Department of Defense organizations to begin full implementation of the Department of Defense Naming Commission recommendations. This directive includes the renaming of nine Army installations by January 1, 2024.

The affected Army installations will undergo official naming ceremonies and will retain their former names until those ceremonies are held and the Secretary of the Army officially approves each change.

To date seven installations have been officially renamed. The two remaining will be renamed by the January 1, 2024 deadline.

Names changed thus far include:

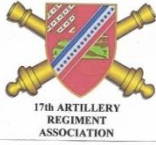
- Fort Picket in Virginia is now Fort Barfoot, named in honor of Medal of Honor recipient Colonel Van T. Barfoot, a soldier in World War II. He received the Medal of Honor for his actions in the Italian Campaign, where he took out a German machine and its crew and advanced to a second machine gun where he killed two soldiers and captured three. By the time he reached a third machine gun, the entire crew surrendered to him. Later that day, he disabled a tank, killed part of the crew and turned the German attack. He was a tech sergeant when he took the actions and was subsequently promoted to second lieutenant. Upon learning he would receive the Medal of Honor, he requested to receive it in the field so his soldiers could attend.
- Fort Hood in Texas has been renamed Fort Cavazos after Gen. Richard E. Cavazos, a native Texan and the US Army's first Hispanic brigadier general and four-star general. He received a Silver Star and Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in the Korean War and a second Distinguished Service Cross in the Vietnam War, each time for leading assaults on fortified enemy positions.
- Fort Lee in Virginia is now called Fort Gregg-Adams after Lieutenant General Arthur J. Gregg, the first African American to achieve such a rank, and Lieutenant Colonel Charity Adams Earley, the first African American woman officer of the Women's Auxiliary Corps. Gregg, now 94, became the only living person in modern Army history to have a base named after him.
- Fort Polk in Louisiana is now known as Fort Johnson, to honor William Henry Johnson, a Black World War I veteran from the New York National Guard unit known as the Harlem Hellfighters. He received the Medal of Honor for fending off a German attack, fighting hand-to-hand with a knife and preventing a fellow soldier from being captured.
- Fort Bragg in North Carolina is henceforth known as Fort Liberty, the only installation not to be named after a specific person or people.
- Fort Benning in Georgia is now known as Fort Moore, after Lieutenant General Hal Moore and his wife Julia Compton Moore, both of whom are buried on post. General Moore received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Army's second highest decoration for valor; he was in command of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment at the Battle of Ia Drang in 1965, a battle detailed in the book *We were Soldiers Once...and Young* coauthored by Moore and made into the film *We Were Soldiers*. Mrs. Moore's efforts and complaints in the aftermath of the Battle of Ia Drang prompted the U.S. Army to set up survivor support networks and casualty notification teams consisting of uniformed officers, which are still in use.
- Fort Rucker in Alabama is now known as Fort Novosel, after Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael J. Novosel, an Army aviator and Medal of Honor recipient from the Vietnam War. He is credited with repeatedly braving enemy fire to rescue injured troops during action in Kien Tuong Province in October 1969. He was also a veteran of World War II and the Korean War. He had the distinction of extracting his son, Michael J. Novosel Jr. in Vietnam; the following week, the son returned the favor by extracting his father after he was shot down.

Forts yet to be renamed include:

- Fort Gordon in Georgia which will be renamed Fort Eisenhower, after Dwight D. Eisenhower who served as Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe, achieved the five-star rank as General of the Army and later served as the 34th president of the United States.
- Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia will soon become Fort Walker, being named after Mary Edwards Walker, a doctor who treated soldiers in the Civil War and later received the Medal of Honor. She tried to join the Union Army at the start of the Civil War but was turned down; eventually, she was hired as a surgeon for the Union Army. In 1864, Confederate forces took her as a prisoner of war. After the war, she asked President Andrew Johnson for a retroactive military commission for her efforts. Officials determined there was no precedent for commissioning a woman and instead Johnson awarded her with the Medal of Honor, making her the only woman in history and one of eight civilians to receive the distinction.

The renaming comes in the wake of a plan to remove the names, symbols, displays, monuments and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederate States of America.

(Editor's Note: Information for this story came from various military sites, Wikipedia and <https://americanmilitarynews.com/2022/05/pentagon-unveils-new-names-for-9-confederate-named-bases/>. The stories of these people are outstanding. I would recommend taking the time to research them. Who knows, it might even help to remember the new names!)



Judy Dingman
16351 Lawrence 1200
Aurora, MO 65605-7188



Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Soldiers of (Cougar Battery) Battery C, 1st Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment (TF 1-17) pose in front of Camp Wyatt sign. Camp Wyatt was named for SP4 Stephen E. Wyatt who died of wounds caused by an improvised explosive device (IED) on October 13, 2003. Battery Commander is CPT Robert W. Walker; First Sergeant is 1SG Jose R. Pepin.

17th ARTILLERY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER
THE CASTLE