

# — NEWSLETTER —

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## Presidents' Message

The sharp-eyed readers among you will have noticed the apostrophe is placed after the "s" for this message as it has two authors. First, Phil Caine.

All of us have experienced significant disruption in our lives because of the COVID-19 virus. The Friends have also undergone change this past eight months. In February, I announced that I would not be a candidate for President for the coming year. Subsequently, Lindy Royer was nominated and elected by your Board of Directors to succeed me. Lindy then conducted a series of virtual Board meetings to manage The Friends' other elections and business normally handled at our annual Board meeting in conjunction with our May luncheon, which was canceled due to the virus. I would like to review some of the highlights of my 10-year tenure as President of The Friends before turning it over to Lindy to discuss our coming year.



As I leave the office of President, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the hard work, dedication, friendship, and support that you have given me. Your support has allowed The Friends to do really amazing things during my tenure. We have evolved from a small organization with the mission of giving modest assistance to the library to having a million-dollar investment, whose income supports not only the library but also the preservation of the Academy heritage. Publishing numerous books, ranging from the biography of General Harmon to the recently

released history of the USAFA's permanent professors, and preserving the monumental oral history of the Academy, including over 50 interviews of key players in the evolution of the institution are just examples. Our web site, which now has hundreds of visitors each month and includes such key information as the Academy graduates who have been killed in the service of their country and will soon include graduates who have been astronauts, are but mere examples. Our independent contractors working cataloging and preserving so many other collections relating to the Academy is but another area, and the list goes on. I know that all this and much more will continue under Lindy's leadership and with your continued support. While it is hard to leave a position that one has held for so long, it is much easier knowing that the organization is in such good hands. I am honored by being given the title of President Emeritus and look forward to continuing to serve The Friends and the Academy. Thank you again for your support.

It is a privilege to attempt to fill Phil's shoes. I say 'attempt' because Phil served as our President for 10 very productive years and significantly increased our support of the Academy Library. As President Emeritus, Phil continues to serve as a valued advisor to the Executive Committee. The Board elected a new Vice President, Brig Gen (Ret) John Andrew, and Secretary, Brig Gen (Ret) Jim Head. There were five new Board members elected to succeed the five who moved to Honorary Director status. We currently have three contractors working with the McDermott Library Special Collections to process donated collections, improve digital access to collections, and preserve audio/visual materials. We plan this level of support for the coming year. We have suspended advertising Clark-Yudkin fellowships due to access restrictions because of the virus. *(Continued on page two.)*

## The President's Message (continued from page one)

We will continue developing the new Graduate Astronauts database and to updating existing Memorial Wall, Distinguished Graduates, Jabara Awardees, and Prisoner of War databases that can be accessed on our website. Finally, we will continue to expand the site by linking to other relevant places such as the AOG Significant Events Chronology created by Steve Simon, a member of our Executive Committee. I look forward to your continuing support of The Friends and will gladly work with you if you would like to donate a collection to enhance the Special Collections of the McDermott Library.

## Website Traffic Continues to Increase

Brigadier General George Fagan's history of the Academy, added to The Friends' website in March 2019, helped boost website traffic significantly in 2019. This increased traffic was apparent in the number of visits, amount of bandwidth downloaded, and average duration of visits. Total annual visits increased by 52%

(from 10,903 in 2018 to 18,770 in 2019).

Total bandwidth increased by 87% (from 3.35 GB to 6.28GB).

Average duration of visits increased by 80% (from 187 seconds to 336 seconds).

For 2020 we expect the high volume of traffic to continue, driven in

part by coordination of website content with the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. The Friends will celebrate the anniversary by showcasing the Library's holdings from one of the best known heroes of that war, General Jimmy Doolittle.

## The Friends' Honor Memorial Program

The Friends of the Air Force Academy Library offers an attractive and meaningful program for those who would like to ensure perpetual recognition for individuals, organizations, or groups (e.g., an aircrew). Among the honorees are veterans who have served in the nation's wars; individuals who have served the nation, the Air Force, or the Academy in other ways; and Academy cadets, graduates, and

family members. Honorees may be military or civilian, living or deceased.

For donations totaling \$50 or more, a handsome certificate will be prepared and placed in an Honor Book maintained by The Friends and prominently displayed in the Clark Special Collections Branch of the McDermott Library. To date, over a thousand honorees have been commemorated through

this program and memorialized in more than 400 certificates placed in The Friends' Honor Books. The Honor Books are readily accessible to cadets and visitors in the Library. Additional information about the Honor Memorial Program may be requested on The Friends' patron flyer enclosed in this newsletter or accessed on our website.

## The Friends' Graduate Database Projects

In 2006, The Friends initiated a long-term heritage project in support of the Association of Graduates to collect and preserve all available, publically releasable data on the lives of those graduate combat losses listed on the Graduate War Memorial Wall. That initial project had, over time, spawned three like efforts to also preserve available data on Graduate Prisoners of War, Graduate Jabara Award winners, and Distinguished Graduates which also includes: Graduate Distinguished Service Award winners and Class Award winners. Those four efforts are

now complete and available for public access through The Friends' website.

A fifth database documenting Graduate Astronauts who have served with NASA in space since 1969 is currently under development and will join the four existing databases prior to the end of 2020. As the United States returns to sponsoring space activities, we fully anticipate that future graduates will join the original 40 astronaut graduates as military members of NASA, the Air Force, the Space Force, and as civilian astronauts serving with the several private

corporations poised to perform space activities.

The Friends will continue to maintain and update all five electronic databases to further promote and record Academy heritage. As future names are added and additional information becomes available for those currently in the databases, The Friends are committed to accumulate available public data related to their lives and ensure that information is made accessible from our website.

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## Showcasing the Doolittle Collection with Photos and a Movie

The Friends' website provides over 250 captioned photos selected from 122 albums in the Doolittle Collection. These photos reveal fascinating details of Doolittle's family and his life.

Early photos show his childhood in Alaska during the Alaska gold rush. Later photos show his achievements as an aviation pioneer. We see him as a

border patrol pilot, test pilot, leader of the Doolittle Raiders, senior Air Force commander, and aviation advisor to government and industry.

Along with photos from the Doolittle Collection, the Doolittle page on The Friends' site provides a link to *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*, an award-winning film with Spencer Tracey, Van Johnson,

and Robert Mitchum based on the 1942 Doolittle Raid. The film appeared in 1944, including actual footage of the Doolittle Raiders' planes and the USS Hornet from which they flew. Film critics call this one of the best, most authentic films from World War II.

Use the link on The Friends' website to view *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*.

## Friends Help the Library



*The Friends' Independent Contractors working in Special Collections: Christopher Schrek, Ashley Swendsen and Tawnie Mizer*

The Friends of the Academy Library have hired three contractors who are contributing to progress and preservation for the Special Collections Branch. Chris Schreck and Tawnie Mizer were hired this spring to process donated collections and to make records available on the library website. Ashley Swendsen has been preserving and digitizing audiovisual holdings for several years.

Tawnie Mizer is balancing her job at Pikes Peak Library district with her project to post the McDermott Library digital holdings on the library website. Using her MLIS from Emporia State University, she has been evaluating and editing the collections posted on the new library website. The

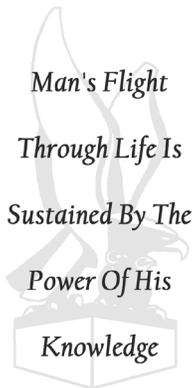
library contracted with a new vendor in September 2018 which initially included inadequate software for the digital assets. The new system integrates the Special Collections holdings with books and has a lot of potential, but needs a knowledgeable professional to make it accessible for users.

Chris Schreck, an archivist who brought great experience working at the Steelworks Center of the West in Pueblo, has processed and is making available a large collection of papers donated by Bruce Bolinger dealing with escape and evasion during World War II. Mr. Bolinger, an independent researcher and website manager, assembled many materials about Dutch and Belgian resistance which complement the

current holdings donated by Ralph Patton (Air Force Escape and Evasion Society) and Brad Bradbury (Special Operations). In addition, Chris has been working with Tawnie on reposting digital assets.

Ashley Swendsen now has room on the 6th floor to store audiovisual materials. Her latest database contains over 2000 items: reel-to-reel tapes, VHS tapes, audio cassettes, vinyl records, beta film, 8mm and 16mm film. The VHS tapes are currently the most endangered because they are old enough to break and disintegrate while she is digitizing them. Her latest project was graduation tapes; although there are many still photos, there are very few moving images.

**Visit The Friends website at: [www.friends.usafalibrary.com](http://www.friends.usafalibrary.com)**



## Update From the McDermott Library's Director, Ms. Diane Klare

The 2019/2020 academic year has been a very busy one for the library with a reorientation of priorities and then the library's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In fall 2019, the entire library embarked on a strategic planning effort, the library's first. Soliciting input from library staff and key stakeholders at USAFA, the resulting plan was completed in February 2020. The library has refocused its priorities on outreach to the USAFA community, using technology to enhance services, reshaping the internal organization to address recognized gaps in services, and developing synergistic relationships to benefit USAFA cadets, faculty, and researchers. These efforts include filling current vacancies with individuals who have a deep understanding of 21st century academic library practices. These actions will help shape the library for the foreseeable future.

In spring 2020, the library responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by moving many services to on-line support in a remote environment while the installation was closed. Although the library has returned to limited services since USAFA reopened in late spring, online support continues and will be enhanced as new communications technologies are incorporated into regular practice. Although the McDermott Library prides itself in personalized service and this approach will be reestablished more fully as the COVID-19 crisis abates, the library looks forward to continuing the use of these new tools to more fully support cadets, faculty, researchers, and alumni.

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\*Former Superintendent of the Academy

## Dr. Mary Elizabeth Ruwell Retires



Dr Mary Elizabeth Ruwell bid farewell to Special Collections and to The Friends on August 31. With the help of The Friends much was accomplished since her arrival in August 2004. Significant collections received included the Eagle Squadron research by Phil Caine, records from Paul Carlton, PK Robinson, John Guilmartin, Harmon items donated by Eula and Kendrick Harmon, and Hap Arnold letters donated by Robert Arnold. Many collections were made available digitally particularly Stalag Luft III. She is particularly grateful to Peggy Litwhiler for sorting and identifying photographs, Carolyn Lemp for the oral history index, and for all The Friends outreach projects like the Memorial Wall database, the Clark-Yudkin fellows, and posting the Doolittle photos and digitizing the Kuter scrapbooks.

The Friends have been blessed by our long, rich working relationship with "M.E." and we wish her all the best retirement has to offer.

***In these uncertain times of Covid-19 virus, any new information concerning the date and time of next year's annual luncheon will be posted on our website:***

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