

# A Moment in History

By CW4 (Ret) Don Hess

## IN MEMORIAM

A Washington Post obituary on 14 July 2013 brought back a very early memory from the history of your Association. The obituary announced the death of LTG (Ret) Sidney B. Berry, on 1 July 2013, at age 87. Then-MG Berry was the banquet speaker at our first Annual Meeting of the Members (AMM), held in the Holiday Inn next to the Hoffman Building, on 12 July 1973. He developed a special relationship with your Association and the reason for that relationship is described below, to give younger Warrant Officers a better understanding of the Warrant Officer culture of the early 1970s.

At the time of our first AMM, MG Berry was the Commanding General, Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN), at the Hoffman Building, Alexandria, VA, which controlled officer and enlisted career branches, including Warrant Officers. Our Association was only one year old, lacking identity and often viewed by many senior commissioned officers from a historical Warrant Officer vantage. This history included a vision of many earlier local Warrant Officer social organizations, often referred to as Warrant Officer Protective Associations (WOPA). A formal Warrant Officer Association existed in the 1950s and mid-1960s, but it became inactive a few years later due to a lack of support by Warrant Officers and the Army leadership.

A USAWOA office visit with MG Berry was requested and granted.

The purpose was two-fold: (1) to explain the formation of our Association as a professional association dedicated to working within the system to bring the WO Corps into the mainstream of the officer corps; and (2) to invite him to be our banquet speaker at the conclusion of our first AMM. A 20-minute office call turned into more than an hour of Q&A on why Warrant Officers needed a separate association; and why Warrant Officers were not joiners of existing Army associations and officers clubs, or active participants in social activities. These questions were all pertinent issues related to the Warrant Officer culture of the 1970s. My response was that the Association was attempting to change the existing culture, because most Warrant Officers

felt overlooked in pay and allowance increases, including inequity of flight pay, housing assignments, career management, educational opportunities, professional development and other officer issues. As examples, I provided him with copies of prepared resolutions scheduled for discussion and vote by our members at our upcoming first Annual meeting. The approved resolutions would be forwarded to the appropriate leadership at the Army level. MG Berry was also informed that guest speakers from the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel (DCSPER) staff had agreed to speak at our business meetings and numerous Chapters around the United States and Europe were sending their representatives to our first meeting. He agreed to be our banquet

speaker at our first Annual meeting, which set the tone for furthering our identity as a professional association.

To our surprise, MG Berry slipped in – unannounced – to the afternoon business session, prior to our banquet, and quietly observed our meeting. He stated before he left our session, “I learned more about Warrant Officers in my 3-hour visit to your meeting than in my three years as commander at MILPERCEN.” In his banquet address he noted that true professionalism will lead to the kind of recognition and representation that we all desired.

The USAWOA welcomed the support of MG Berry, which helped open the door for acceptance of other Army

leaders, including the Secretary of the Army and numerous DCSPERs, including LTG Hal Moore, author of *We Were Soldiers Once, and Young*. The resulting publicity in future NEWSLINERS helped to create a willingness of Army leaders in the field to address our many Chapters around the world, and enhanced our professional recognition.

The MG Berry story doesn't end there. His follow-on assignment as Superintendent at West Point triggered a letter from USAWOA (in those days email was not available) to congratulate him on his new position. In the letter I made a comment that his support of Warrant Officers could now be transmitted to the cadets at West Point. MG Berry's surprising response was an invitation to visit West Point to person-



ally brief the senior cadet class on the changing role of the Warrant Officer. Along with USAWOA President CW4 Bob Hamilton (now deceased), and member CW4 Lloyd Washer, we flew to West Point and delivered a slide presentation to the senior cadet class as requested by MG Berry, followed by a lively Q&A session. We also met with Warrant Officers stationed at West Point and encouraged them to organize a local chapter. The death of one of the first senior officers who supported the newly formed USAWOA reminded me of the important role he played in the beginning of our Association.

That was a long time ago, but we live in today's world. Following in the footsteps of MG Berry, many senior officers have supported our cohort through the years, allowing us to survive and grow. Building relations with generals and field grade officers is essential to the continued growth of the Warrant Officer cohort. Today's Army leaders in the field will be tomorrow's senior Army leaders, determining the future of our Army. Invite them to address Warrant Officer issues even if there is no organized Chapter in your area.

Today's Warrant Officers are given opportunities to develop skills to serve at every level within the Army, including the skill of building relationships. As individuals, you have the clarity of hindsight to look back to those who mentored or supported you in your career. That is good. This ability to look back doesn't mean you are stuck in the past. Use your rich heritage to view and interpret the present and provide insight for the future. Sometimes it's tempting to become impatient with the present and look too quickly to the future. You serve in a bureaucracy with a strong tradition, slow to change. Don't neglect opportunities, problems and issues in front of you in plain sight, which need to be addressed now. Look around you. Do you have to accept those situations? Can you make a difference? Take the time to develop relationships outside your career field, which may help you understand larger issues. Be a leader on the job, at home and with a local chapter, if one exists where you are. If not, help to organize one. Look at the big picture. Hindsight, plain sight and insight are all essential tools for today's Warrant Officers as they continue to change our culture and make a difference in our cohort and our Army. 

# Ordnance Corps Reserve Component Warrant Officer Challenges

By CW4 Nichole Rettmann

*Ordnance Reserve Component Proponent Warrant Officer Manager*



## FOCUS ON SUSTAINMENT

*Editor's Note: On 30-31 July 2013 I was privileged to attend the latest meeting of the ARNG Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Counsel (WOSAC), at Fort Lee, VA. While there, I had the opportunity to engage in substantive discussions with several senior Warrant Officers in the sustainment branches of the Army, including the new Quartermaster Corps Regimental Chief Warrant Officer (RCWO), CW5 Roberto L. Figueroa and CW4 Paul M. Thurston, his Reserve Component Warrant Officer Personnel Developer.*

*In briefings and conversations with these two great professionals (and several others), it became clear that one of their top priorities is addressing critical shortages of reserve-component Warrant Officers in multiple military occupational specialties, across all three sustainment branches. Among other things, it became clear that concerted efforts must be made to encourage sustainment Warrant Officers who are separating from the Army to consider follow-on careers in the ARNG and USAR, and place leadership emphasis on the early identification and mentoring of young enlisted Soldiers, who would make excellent sustainment Warrant Officer Candidates, by Commanders, senior enlisted leaders and Warrant Officers alike.*

*The following is the first in a series of three articles we are publishing addressing this issue, written by senior Warrant Officers in the Ordnance, Quartermaster and Transportation Corps. Special recognition goes to the aforementioned CW4 Thurston, for his work in corralling these articles and personally writing the one on the Quartermaster Corps that will appear in a future issue.*

The Ordnance Corps is a very large part of the sustainment structure in the Army, with seven accessed Warrant Officer specialties and two senior Warrant Officer specialties, accounting for 45% of the sustainment Warrant Officer structure. Ordnance core competencies of ammunition, explosive ordnance disposal, and maintenance touch nearly every unit across the force, in all components. Yet we are critically short of Reserve Component Ordnance Warrant Officers in six of the seven accessed specialties.

Here at the Ordnance School, COL Jack Haley, the 38th Chief of Ordnance, is very concerned about Reserve Component Ordnance Warrant Officer strength. The regimental team has initiated an aggressive approach toward reaching out to the field to encourage enlisted Soldiers to consider the Warrant Officer Career path, as they build their career map. We also are reaching out to Soldiers and Warrant Officers currently filling vacancies

for potential reclassification or career development possibilities. Between June and July of 2013 CW4 Nichole Rettmann, Ordnance Personnel Development Office, sent emails out to more than 4000 Soldiers and responded to numerous telephone and email responses. We are currently working with the other sustainment branches – Quartermaster and Transportation – to engage the Reserve Component Career Counselors (RCCC) with the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) offices, encouraging Soldiers leaving the Active component to consider continued service opportunities through the Reserve components.

Analysis of the available pool of enlisted Soldiers in feeder specialties for Ordnance Warrant Officer specialties shows that on-hand force structure is insufficient to fill the shortages of 913A Armament and 948D Electronic Missile Systems Maintenance Warrant Officers. These specialties require more creative approaches toward meeting requirements. Our analysis also determined that with the structure we currently have, along with the End Strength Objective announced in the "STAND-TO!" message dated 4 Feb 2013, we have the Soldiers available for career development into Warrant Officers to fill shortages of 915A Automotive and 919A Engineer Equipment Maintenance Warrant Officers. Although the available enlisted feeder structure in the field is limited for 890A Ammunition and 948B Electronic Systems Maintenance Warrant Officers, there are enough Soldiers in feeder specialties to fill the shortages for these Warrant Officer specialties as well. These specialties require focused recruiting to meet current and future requirements. This is where we need your help.

We need leaders in the field to encourage their high-speed Soldiers to submit packets for Warrant Officer. We need leaders in the field to help identify potential military occupational specialty (MOS) reclassification candidates from those Soldiers currently filling vacancies, or those whose civilian skills meet the prerequisites, even if their particular military specialty does not. We need leaders in the field to build up their Soldiers' technical skills – keeping in mind the fact that in nearly all cases you own the solution to **your** shortages. Invest the training time to build up your Soldiers' technical proficiencies – send them to the Advanced Leader Course as soon as possible to encourage these high-speed Noncommissioned Officers to submit packets for Warrant Officer, so we can continue to access our pool of prospective Warrant Officers to fill the void where we need these technical experts. ■■■



# Life Member Helps Thousands with CAC Issues!

By CW4 (Ret) Don Hess  
& CW3 Mike Danberry

## ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

In anticipation of the Army's decision to limit AKO access only to holders of military Common Access Cards (CACs), the USAWOA warns all retirees to log into the USAWOA portal site ([www.usawoa.net](http://www.usawoa.net)) and change their email addresses to a different one, if they haven't already done so. No definitive date for the change has been announced, but all indications are that sometime summer of 2014 based on this article (<http://www.army.mil/article/106692/>) Users will no longer be able to connect with any AKO services (including email).

That being said, we know that the majority of our Members have a CAC. With the cessation of password access to AKO, many will be struggling with the task of setting up their home computers to facilitate CAC usage. As such, we thought it appropriate to introduce Lord Fairfax Silver Chapter Member CW3 Mike Danberry.

In November 2007, CW3 Danberry, an expert on "all things CAC," set up a self-funded website ([MilitaryCAC.com](http://MilitaryCAC.com)) in his personal crusade to fill what he viewed as a force-wide deficit in CAC training. Since then, he has devoted thousands of hours of his personal time to helping CAC users with almost every conceivable problem they may have. We hope that our interview with him will be instructive, and that all readers will appreciate his dedication and personal commitment.

### **Q: How did your interest in CAC-related information start?**

A: In 2005, the requirement for CAC logins started to increase. I knew this could present a problem for many Soldiers. Realizing that my knowledge on CAC could be helpful to others, I set up MilitaryCAC.com (<https://militarycac.com/>) in November 2007. It now provides more than 114 individual pages of CAC information, including how to set up a home computer for military business and other benefits afforded to military personnel, such as free antivirus software and the discounted Microsoft Office via the Home Use Program.

### **Q: Do you really answer emails (and call confused users) on your own personal time?**

A: Yes. I answer emails as often as I can during the day. During my free time, I'm on my phone replying

to people's questions for both MilitaryCAC.com and the AKO CAC Resource Center. I take calls mostly on weekends (unless I have Reserves). I help a few people during the week as well. But the majority of support is via email.

### **Q: How much time do you typically spend assisting people and managing both sites?**

A: It is hard to say since I have integrated it into my life, but on average it's between two to six hours per day. I check email during lunch and before I leave work, and call people during my drive home. Some evenings I'm on the phone until I go to bed. Together with site-maintenance, it seems like a full-time job some days.

### **Q: What is your motivation for dedicating so much of your personal time and income to this project?**

A: I grew up believing that some people like to create problems, so I've taken it upon myself to create solutions. When the government decided we would use CACs for everything, there was little information provided to users. For example, commanders require personnel to digitally sign evaluations, but many Soldiers don't know how – this is where the two websites I maintain come in. This education effort should be done by the government (which is mandating CAC usage). Even though it isn't, I want to be part of the solution and not just another Soldier complaining about why or how it "should" be done and taking no action. No one can accuse me of being part of the problem when it comes to CAC use.

### **Q: So users find your site through Google, but where do you find your information, and how did you learn so much about CACs?**

A: I am a former mechanic, so I know how to troubleshoot problems. When CACs were initially issued to government personnel in the early 2000s, I used those same skills to start learning about CACs. I was a DA civilian for the Army Reserve and issuing ID cards for Soldiers was one of my additional duties. I now look at every email and every phone call as a learning opportunity. I guess you could say my experience comes from never taking the easy way out by saying "It can't be done." I do receive occasional emails from other IT personnel who have found some fixes, but the majority is from my time helping people individually.