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interest.

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The Civil Air Patrol National Historical Journal is published quarterly by professional volunteer staff. As academic historians by trade, we recognize the demand for quality publications reflecting a variety of interests to Civil Air Patrol readers, and strive to offer the best in feature and thought provoking articles. We trust you will enjoy what the e-journal has to offer and will consider contributing to the mission of our staff in providing a forum for the great traditions our organization enjoys.

Military Insignia as the Embodiment of Organizational Heritage

Louis Toms

“When a wing patch is changed, the history of the unit is changed.”¹

During the Peninsula Campaign of 1862, an infuriated New Jersey general perceived a lack of discipline and leadership in the Military Division of the Potomac. In contrast, Major General (MG) Phillip Kearny considered his division far superior to those participating in the engagement.² This sentiment seemed vindicated when he attempted to dress down three straggling officers. The officers respectfully took the verbal tongue lashing before stating they belonged to another command. MG Kearny pardoned himself before exclaiming that “I will take steps to know how to recognize my own men hereafter.”³ The General directed his soldiers to wear a red diamond shaped cloth

affixed to their caps. This mark would come to symbolize “good character and a badge of honor.”⁴ Almost a year following Kearny’s fateful decision, MG Joseph Hooker ordered divisions to design their own “Kearny patches” in order to boost soldier pride and morale.⁵ Confederates would fell MG Kearny at the Battle of Chantilly so he would not live to witness Hooker’s corps badge decree.⁶ Legend tells of a Confederate unit burying a Union colonel with full military honors out of respect for the bravery embodied in the little red patch.⁷

MG Kearny’s badges would fade from history following the American Civil War. With the demobilization of regiments, the War Department failed to see a need to continue identifying divisions and corps with distinguishing marks. Folklorists, heraldic scholars and historians would have to wait over fifty years before America’s military would have such distinguishing marks.

As heritage is an intangible concept, we ought to approach the subject through the lens of *folkloristics*.⁸ Through this prism, researchers should understand

¹ Col Leonard Blascovich regarding the approval of wing patches, Meeting minutes of the Civil Air Patrol National Board, 19-20 August 2004, http://members.gocivilairpatrol.com/media/cms/2004_Aug_NB.pdf (accessed on 13 November 2014).

² Cecil D. Eby, Jr., “The Source of Crane’s Metaphor, ‘Red Badge of Courage,’” *American Literature* XXXII, no. 2 (May 1960): 205.

³ John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee or the Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston, MA: George M. Smith & Co., 1887): 255.

⁴ Eby, 205.

⁵ J. Watts de Peyster, *Personal and Military History of Philip Kearny* (New York, NY: Rice and Gage Publishers, 1869): 367.

⁶ *Ibid*, 369.

⁷ Eby, 205.

⁸ Folkloristics – the academic discipline of folklore.

these totems are visual representations of an organization's lineage and achievements.

For the serious historian or heraldist, it is important to establish a baseline definition for insignia. Too often, seniors and cadets catalog insignia as patches. This categorization negates the heraldry and lore symbolized in these pieces of cloth. During a World War II interview, the Chief of the Heraldic Section was asked about the significance of patches. Arthur E. DuBois promptly corrected the reporter by stating "a patch is a piece of cloth to cover a hole."⁹ Insignia serves as a heraldic representation of *something*. Within Civil Air Patrol, wing and squadron insignia connects past, present and future through the use of symbolism. Patches have no heraldic meaning other than to serve as an instrument used by tailors to fix clothing. Identifying insignia as patches negates the significance of a unit's achievements, history, personnel and traditions.

For simplicity purposes, American military and Civil Air Patrol organizational markings fall into two categories. There are devices and insignia. Devices can be metal or plastic. Worn on collars and hats, these symbols identify corporate membership. Beginning in 1851, the War Department adopted collar and hat devices to identify the soldier's regimental affiliation as cost cutting effort.¹⁰ These simple designs allowed the Quartermaster Department to quickly manufacture and issue to troops. The metal devices could also save money by allowing supply sergeants to reissue turned in badges. Before devices, soldiers wore uniforms with differing color trims to identify unit specializations.¹¹ The new devices featured a hunter's horn for infantry, crossed sabers for cavalry, crossed cannons for artillery and others. There were variations, but generally blue adornment identified infantry grunts, yellow

distinguished cavalry troopers and red characterized artillerymen. Hues on uniform trim became regimental colors in today's United States Army.¹²

The appearance of cloth emblems is a bit tricky to nail down. As a general rule, the War Department frowned on distinctive organizational insignia. America's history provides examples to the contrary appearing during periods of conflict. The "Kearny patches" of the Civil War period, and corps devices of the Spanish-American War provide illustrations to exceptions in official policy. Although worn, these unique concepts failed to transition into a post-war environment. If we need to fix a point in time for modern insignia, the World War I mobilization of the 81st Division might be the best place to start. This unit comprised raw recruits from Tennessee, South Carolina and North Carolina. In the civilian world, many of these soldiers grew up on farms or worked in small communities. Travel was a luxury many in that day could not afford. Although all southerners, the regional distinctions provided a barrier to unit cohesion. Division leadership had to dissolve these individuals into a cohesive element quickly.

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Staff & Acknowledgements

National Commander

Maj Gen Joseph R. Vazquez

Chief Historian

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Lt Col Richard B. Mulanax

National Historical Journal Editor

Capt Kurt Efinger

⁹ Barrett McGurn, "People on the Home Front: Arthur E. DuBois," *Yank – The Army Weekly* 4, no. 20 (November 2, 1945): 8.

¹⁰ Robin Smith and Ron Field, *Uniforms of the Civil War – An Illustrated Guide for Historians, Collectors and Reenactors* (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2001), 126.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² U.S. Department of the Army, *Guide to the Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, Army Pamphlet 670-1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, December 2, 2014): 91.

Above and Beyond

Hershel E. Fannin

Editor's Note: *As a young Staff Sergeant serving in Vietnam with the United State Air Force, Hershel "Hank" Fannin, was likely not thinking he would walk away from the conflict with a Silver Star, as well as the Distinguished Flying Cross with a first and second Oak Leaf cluster (see page 8). When I first met Hank, no one could have convinced me he served in Vietnam—he didn't look to be a day over fifty. In the few years I have had an opportunity to interact with Hank, we have often spoken about him giving a presentation to some of our local squadrons. Much of that depends on when he will eventually "retire" from his otherwise busy schedule. The following account first published at <http://www.rotorheadsrus.us/documents/244.html> describes in his own words the circumstances for which he earned the gratitude of his nation.*

26 AUG 1972

This particular SAR started out routinely. We departed NKP at first light and headed North across the Mekong River to a holding zone up near the NE Laotian border to provide support for air strikes. I can remember test firing our *miniguns* shortly after crossing the river and also remember we were flying between two layers of clouds, a layer of morning fog and mist that blocked our view below, and a higher layer that blocked the sky above. The sun was rising to the East and when it reached the clear space between the two layers it was completely surreal.

Before we even reached the area where we were supposed to do our holding pattern we heard a "May Day, May Day, I've got two chutes" and then some coordinates. A Marine F-4 fighter had just been shot down by a NVAF Mig-21 and the two pilots had bailed out and were floating down into an area full of bad guys. The second F-4 was still somewhat busy making sure there weren't any other MiG's on his tail and for a while things were just a little frantic.

Meanwhile the Marine Pilot, Capt Sam Cordova, was talking to US Aircraft over his survival radio and then later radioed that he had fallen into a ravine and could hear bad guys approaching (this was the only Marine jet to be shot down by *enemy aircraft* during the

Vietnam War). We were in the area shortly after the two fighter jocks hit the ground. Our A-1 Sky Raiders escorts trolled over the Pilots reported position and met heavy ground fire. Several attempts to raise Capt Cordova on his radio were unsuccessful and it was sort of a given that he had been captured or worse (I found out later that Capt Cordova's remains were returned for burial in 1988). I wish we could have gotten to him in time.

The F-4 *back-seater*, Lt Darrell Borders, landed his parachute on a small ridge and then high tailed it away looking for better cover. By the time our two HH-53's got to his location the Sandy pilots were laying down fire trying to keep the bad guys away and buying us some time. On the low bird, Pilot Capt Thomas Laud decided to give it a go and headed down and into a hover over the survivor only to be hit with extremely heavy small arms fire. The Combat Photographer, TSgt Don Looper, was wounded in the leg; they had several leaking hydraulic lines and possibly damaged flight controls as they pulled up and away (later, MSgt David McLeod told me he was thinking he was on his last mission and couldn't believe only one guy got hit. Everywhere he looked there were bullet holes and battle damage).

The pilot on my chopper, Capt Mike Swager, (about as cool a Pilot I've flown with) asked us all if we wanted to give it a try. I think he already knew the answer. He set up our approach and as we headed downwind in a very fast approach. The Sandy pilots were laying down about everything they had as close to the survivor as they dared. As soon as we got into a hover all hell broke loose with small arms fire hitting us from all directions. The two PJ's, TSgt Mike Walker, on the ramp gun, and Sgt Charles McQuoid, in the left window, were returning fire and it sounded like we were in the middle of a war. Not long after, I spotted the survivor and started the tree penetrator down I felt a blow on the right side of my flight helmet and then lost intercom. A small arms round had hit my boom mike and severed the comm. line. I signaled the Combat Photographer, Sgt Jim Cockerill, who happened to be standing right behind me, trying to take pictures I think, and he jumped up into the FE seat and started relaying hand signals to the Pilot.

The damn tree-penetrator got tangled in some bamboo and I had to spend a minute or so getting it free— *though it seemed more like hours*. I could see the survivor slipping and sliding in the mud and finally managed to place the penetrator right into his hands. Luckily he had the strength and resolve to hang on for dear life because, believe me, I was reeling that cable in at max speed. I think it took me all of five seconds flat to get him in the door, onto a seat and get my *minigun* swung out the door and firing.

We were still taking lots of small arms fire and as Capt Swager rolled the nose over and started pulling up and out of there I could see at least two dozen bad guys that had reached a point in a trail that put them close enough I could see their eyes. Lucky for us, one of the Sandy's was making a run straight at them and they were ducking for cover instead of firing at us. I lost sight of them as we made a turn, but I doubt many were left intact after that Sandy (USAF A-1 Skyraider) rocked their world. As soon as we were in the clear we did a quick personal assessment and were truly surprised to find out that not one of us had been hit. Our chopper was riddled with holes. It looked like Swiss cheese around my door position and we were dripping hyd. fluid in several places plus streaming JP-4 from our fuel tanks. I tried to transfer fuel from the tank that was losing the most fuel into the undamaged tank but that didn't work. We contacted a C-130 tanker, plugged in for some air to air refueling, and took on enough fuel to make it back home.

On the way out of there we had to make a stop at one of the LIMA sites on top of a Karst in Laos where we picked up the crew from our shot up low bird. As luck would have it they had made it to a relatively safe and friendly (at the time) LIMA site. Their chopper had so much battle damage that they barely made it to the landing site and we had to leave the chopper to be repaired and flown out later. To this day, I'm not sure that Chopper was ever recovered. It might have been destroyed.

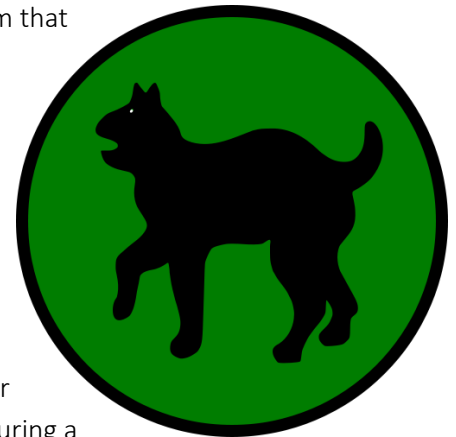
Hank Fannin has been a commercial diver for over forty years, and while not participating in historical salvage operations, he teaches wilderness survival and family skills.

(continued from page 2)

The 81st Division commander had an idea. Before America's entry into the conflict, MG Charles Bailey served as an advisor overseas where he observed British forces wearing organizational insignia. These pieces of cloth seemed to reinforce unit cohesion and *esprit de corps*.¹³ Upon America's war declaration, the War Department would give MG Bailey the 81st Division. Taking an option from the British playbook, the General ordered subordinates to create a Division totem. Colonel (COL) Frank Halstead brought forward an idea.

Inspired by a stream that crossed the unit's training area, COL Halstead proposed a wildcat.

With command approval, Asheville's SGT Dan Silverman designed a shoulder sleeve insignia featuring a silhouetted cat in a circular field.¹⁴



Division personnel cut out their insignia from old wool Army blankets and quickly affixed the new design to their uniforms. This was all accomplished without the official blessing from the War Department. MG Bailey understood the implications of wearing unauthorized insignia upon arriving in France. Not being someone who rested on his laurels, General Bailey took the request of divisional insignia directly to the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces. Upon review, General John J. Pershing stated: "All right, wear it. And see that you live up to it."¹⁵ From this one act, the Expeditionary Forces commander would mandate the

¹³ "Once Upon a Patch," *Army Reserve Magazine* XXII, no. 3 (May-June 1976): 24.

¹⁴ Clarence Walton Johnson, *The History of the 321st Infantry with a Brief Sketch of the 81st Division* (Columbia, SC: The R.L. Bryon Company, 1919), 137.

¹⁵ "Once Upon a Patch," 24.

creation of distinctive marks for every division. Traditional officers viewed General Pershing's edict as an affront to good order and discipline. War Department officials would endorse insignia during the war with the intent of phasing them out following the conflict.¹⁶ Unlike the previous conflicts, unit esprit de corps overtook Army policy. Insignia worn on the Western Front continue within the ranks of today's active, guard and reserve elements. The 81st Regional Support Command carries on the "Wildcat" heritage bestowed upon them by the sacrifices of Division veterans.

GEN John J. Pershing's decree produced an avalanche of theater inspired creations. Within the fledging U.S. Army Air Service, aircrews wore the emblems of their assigned division, corps, or army.

Modern U.S. Air Force squadron and wing insignia owe their existence to the period's "knights of the air."

GEN Pershing's decree did not allow squadrons to create a distinctive insignia. Squadron's aviators could paint a distinctive unit marking on their aircraft's fuselage. The only requirement was that a Squadron had to perform for three months over the Front.¹⁷ When compared to modern aerial combat statistics, three months may appear to be a cakewalk. The reality is that World War I combat aircrew life expectancy was between three to eight weeks.¹⁸ Upon achieving the benchmark, aircrews feverishly worked to design and paint their emblems on aircraft before the next patrol.

Assigned to the Third Corps Observation Group, the Ninetieth Aero Squadron began combat operations on



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24 May 1918 along the Western Front. At the end of hostilities, the Army would credit the Squadron with 104 combat missions resulting in 21 downed enemy aircraft.¹⁹ Upon completing the requisite time and service, unit aviators rushed to design their distinctive emblem. Witnesses recall that "there was a frenzied fortnight of verbal strife between the parties" proposing designs.²⁰ Eventually, the group adopted a red and white

pair of dice design proposed by Major (MAJ) William G. Schauffler. This design formally flew with the First Aero Squadron before being dropped for the American flag emblem. MAJ Schauffler desired to preserve the "seven up" scheme with the 90th Aero Squadron.²¹

On 25 November 1919, the War Department officially approved the pair of dice design for the Ninetieth

Aero Squadron.²² The "Dicemen" would go on to participate in the major engagements of the twentieth century. Since its inception, the unit's combat role ran the full spectrum. These included bombing, observation, special operations and tactical. The unit served under the Army Air Service, Army Air Corps, and Army Air Force before ending with the United States Air Force. Through each of these metamorphoses, MAJ Schauffler's insignia design remains a historic constant. Much like the "Wildcats," airman wearing the 90th Fighter Squadron emblem carry the heritage of the squadron, personnel and achievements.

There are hundreds of examples where lineage and heritage merge in the symbolism displayed within the cloth emblems worn by service members. However, our

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Leland M. Carver, Gustaf A. Lindstrom, and A.T. Foster, *The Ninetieth Aero Squadron* (Hindsdale, IL: Greist F. Harold, 1920), 51.

¹⁸ Linda Robertson, *The Dream of Civilized Warfare: World War I Flying Aces and the American Imagination* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 106.

¹⁹ Carl Mann, *Air Heraldry* (New York, NY: Robert M. McBride & Company, 1944), 227.

²⁰ Carver, 51.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Squadron Insignia Approved by the War Department," *The Aeroplane* XVII, no. 26 (December 24, 1919), 2114.

story would be incomplete if it failed to explore the history of at least one wing's insignia. Pursuant to the War Powers Act, the Office of Civilian Defense established the Civil Air Patrol in December 1941.²³ The Office of Civilian Defense authorized Civil Air Patrol members to wear a circular insignia featuring a three-blade propeller design embedded within the civil defense triangle image.²⁴ This pattern symbolized the Civil Air Patrol's commitment to support America's wartime obligations to serve its citizens. The three-blade propeller design worn during World War II is the same sported on members' uniforms today. When donning this symbol, we informally accept the sacrifices of those who have come before while promising to preserve the organization's heritage for future generations.

Within Civil Air Patrol's organizational history, there is our connection to the past at our wing and squadron level assignments. One very interesting emblem belongs to the Connecticut Wing. The insignia features a flying dog. During World War II, Fairfield County's Squadron 153-1 members approached Carl Rose for an insignia design. Mr. Rose worked as a cartoonist for the *New York World* and *Boston Herald*.²⁵ The final product was *aero-pup*. Upon seeing Mr. Rose's design, Connecticut's Wing leadership requested that Squadron 153-1 turn over the image to the Wing.²⁶ To this day, *Nutmegger's* wear Carl Rose's whimsical design. Connecticut members wore this insignia while engaging in civil defense, disaster response and aircrew rescue activities for over seventy-two years.

There are rare occasions when units must change their insignia design. The catalyst transforming patches may come from a unit reclassification, repurposing of mission, political sensitivities or organizational morale.

²³ Civil Air Patrol. *Civil Air Patrol Manual*, vol. 1.1 (Washington, DC: Civil Air Patrol National Headquarters, 1 August 1949), 1-3.

²⁴ Civil Air Patrol, 1-9.

²⁵ "Carl Rose of Rowayton designs Conn. C.A.P. insignia." *Norwalk Hour* [CT] (November 9, 1942), 12.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

This brings us to the Thunderbird Division's insignia. Comprised of Southwest National Guard elements, the 45th Infantry Division initially chose the Native American symbol of a *swastika*. Unit personnel wore the image on



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the Western Front during World War I. Following the Great War, the National Socialist German Worker's Party organized and adopted the swastika emblem. The American public associated the division's image with the brutality of the Third Reich. Division personnel solicited the War Department to change their emblem.²⁷ In 1939, soldiers would stop wearing the swastika-like emblem, and begin sporting a thunderbird design. The new insignia preserved unit morale while hushing criticism of the division's choice in totems.²⁸

The nature of the beast limits one's ability to provide an exhaustive examination of insignia. Civil Air Patrol historians should understand that they are preservationists of heritage. This responsibility requires historians to actively engage and advise leadership about the implications of proposed changes to insignia—*especially when you consider that the organization has very few ties that bind past, present and future members together*. Organizational insignia provide that historical bridge. If we fail to understand this basic principle, there is a likelihood that members will forget their heritage and willingly seek to change traditions as they have no meaning or relation to the past.

TSgt Louis Toms serves as Assistant Squadron Historian with MER-NC-019.

²⁷ "Swastika will go as guard emblem," *Winona Republican-Herald* [MN] (February 6, 1939), 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Letters to the Editor

The Editor at the CAP NHJ welcomes your comments and feedback. Please submit letters for review by emailing the editor at the address provided. All comments will be reviewed by the entire editorial staff prior to publication. The CAP NHJ Editorial Staff reserves the right to refuse publication to any member based on the content of the letter. CAP members are encouraged to maintain a professional, and collegial attitude when submitting correspondence. kefinger@sercap.us

Eyes on the Home Skies: The 75th Anniversary of Civil Air Patrol

Edited by Richard Mulanax, assisted by Kurt Efinger, and Frank Blazich

As Civil Air Patrol (CAP) approaches its 75th Anniversary in 2016, it is a time to reflect on the contributions of the hundreds of thousands of members who have served in the organization, from the dark days at the beginning of World War II to the 21st Century.

This book is being written by historians with a link to Civil Air Patrol. Some have been members for decades, while others have volunteered to serve more recently. They include the grand-daughter of Gill Robb Wilson, who will write the chapter on the foundation of Civil Air Patrol, the sons of World War II veterans, retired Air Force officers, graduate students in History, and college professors with Master's and PhD degrees in History. All have a common link – a bond with Civil Air Patrol and the United States Air Force through CAP membership and an interest in CAP.

The book will be organized chronologically, as follows:

Chapter 1 - The foundation of Civil Air Patrol by Gill Robb Wilson, working with the Director of Civil Defense, Fiorello LaGuardia, and others.

Chapter 2 - World War II service in support of Civil Defense and the Army Air Forces, including important and dangerous wartime missions such as the anti-submarine patrols.

Chapter 3 - Establishment of CAP as the official auxiliary of the newly created United States Air Force and definition of its peacetime mission in support of search & rescue and support of the nation and the Air Force.

Chapter 4 - The changing mission of Civil Air Patrol in response to America's role in the war in Vietnam and continuing Cold War tensions.

Chapter 5 - The evolution of Civil Air Patrol toward more internal management by the membership and the expansion of flying operations through CAP expansion of aircraft acquisition and management.

Chapter 6 - The changing mission of Civil Air Patrol as the Cold War ends. This results in new and refined missions such as Counter Drug Operations and Hurricane relief.

Chapter 7 - Expansion of Civil Air Patrol involvement in Homeland Security as a result of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks. CAP assisted the Air Force and the Army immediately after these attacks and continues to do support them on a continuing and permanent basis. CAP also assisted in domestic emergencies such as the Gulf Oil Spill.

The Civil Air Patrol has a legacy of almost 75 years of support of the United States Air Force in support of its mission. This book will demonstrate how this was done in the past and how CAP will continue to provide essential services to the United States Air Force and the nation.

Editor's Note

The views expressed in the *Civil Air Patrol National Historical Journal* are those of the authors only and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Journal Staff, Editorial Board, the Civil Air Patrol, its officers or members, nor the United States Air Force.

Text from Hershel E. Fannin's Silver Star, and Distinguished Flying Cross Citations.

Editor, K.J. Efinger

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR TO HERSHEL E. FANNIN

Staff Sergeant Hershel E. Fannin distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force in Southeast Asia on 26 August 1972. On that date, Sergeant Fannin, a Flight Engineer on an HH-53C Rescue Helicopter, with full knowledge that a previous recovery attempt had been met with intense automatic weapons fire, courageously volunteered to attempt the rescue mission for a downed American airman. Although his aircraft was being riddled by bullets as it hovered within meters of the North Vietnamese gunners, he stood in the open and unprotected crew entry door while operating the rescue hoist to raise the downed airman to safety. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Fannin has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS TO HERSHEL E. FANNIN

Staff Sergeant Hershel E. Fannin distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a Flight Mechanic of a CH-53C helicopter in Southeast Asia on 19 October 1972. On that date, Sergeant Fannin was in a formation assigned to airlift a contingent of allied soldiers deep into hostile territory to a tactical objective long held by hostile forces. Despite heavy antiaircraft, small arms, and automatic weapons fire directed at his aircraft from all sides of the contested landing zone, Sergeant Fannin remained at his exposed position giving accurate approach instructions to the pilots and calling out ground fire. Although his aircraft sustained numerous hits from the heavy hostile fire, Sergeant Fannin willingly disregarded the safety of his own life to ensure the survival of a beleaguered allied force and to aid the initiation of a new offensive in a vital area. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Fannin reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER) TO HERSHEL E. FANNIN

Staff Sergeant Hershel E. Fannin distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as Helicopter Flight Mechanic of a CH-53C helicopter in Southeast Asia on 24 October 1972. On that date, Sergeant Fannin flew in a formation of six helicopters carrying allied soldiers mounting an offensive to regain valuable territory captured by a hostile force. Despite the proximity and threat of enemy small arms fire and mobile antiaircraft weapons, Sergeant Fannin made repeated landings in the landing zone to off-load his troops thus making possible the success of the allied offensive. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Fannin reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS (SECOND OAK LEAF CLUSTER) TO HERSHEL E. FANNIN

Staff Sergeant Hershel E. Fannin distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as Helicopter Flight Mechanic of a CH-53C helicopter in Southeast Asia on 20 January 1973. On that date, Sergeant Fannin flew in a formation of seven CH-53C helicopters assigned to airlift a large contingent of allied soldiers to a vital route junction deep into territory long held by hostile forces. Despite automatic weapons and small arms fire directed at his aircraft from both sides on the run into and final approach to the landing area, Sergeant Fannin remained at his exposed position giving accurate approach instructions to the pilots and calling out ground fire. Sergeant Fannin's willing disregard for his own safety aided the insertion of the allied force and insured the initiation of a new offensive in a vital area. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Fannin reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.



PHOTO CREDIT: Public Domain

Editor's Column

K.J. Efinger

Not only is it understandable, but it is also a justifiable tendency to associate CAP history with World War II. So much history of the organization rests with those early formative years, and it would be a disservice to the many sacrifices of the men and women who were part of that specific era to fundamentally ignore it. However, it is equally important for CAP historians to become the *standard-bearers* of a history that extends well into the 21st century. We often forget the "space-race," and *Cold War* period—so much that aerospace education classes for Cadets, and professional development for Senior Members are scarce the only purveyors of such information. In other words, unless one specifically enters into the AE Specialty Track area as a SM, there is little exposure to the history.

Squadron, Group, Wing, and Region history should be a continual, effective process of record-keeping, and reporting. Every change of command at all levels, noteworthy events in the unit history, influential leaders, special activities, promotions, etc., should all be placed within the context of a fluid and organic historical record. In other words, the unit historian is responsible for collating data, and recording anything of historical value that may tie that unit to the past from any point in the future.

Suffice it to say, history is important, and those educated in the craft should take it as seriously as any other responsibility with which we are tasked in the organization. CAP historians are part of the greatness of what transpires on a daily basis within the framework of the vast and growing influence we have in the United States.

When first joining the Civil Air Patrol in 2010, I heard a SM remark that the Civil Air Patrol was "the best-kept secret in America." Let us strive to eradicate such thinking, and establish a precedent of exposure within our communities, and service to the good citizens of the United States and our friends abroad.

Capt Efinger is the former Deputy Chief of Staff for A-5 Plans, Programs and Requirements at Southeast Region HQ. He currently serves as the Deputy Historian for A-1 SER HQ, and is a full-time teacher of Economics and Adjunct Professor of History at Indian River State College in Ft. Pierce, FL.

Call for Submissions

The Civil Air Patrol *National Historical Journal* (NHJ) welcomes articles, essays, and commentaries not exceeding 2,000 words on any topic relating to the history of the Civil Air Patrol, or military/civilian aviation history. CAP's history extends to the present day, and the NHJ seeks accounts of on-going activities and missions, as well as those of earlier years.

All historiographical works and essays must be submitted in Chicago Manual of Style (CMS), or they will be rejected unless otherwise permitted. We encourage authors to submit digital photographs (minimal resolution of 300 dots per inch) and illustrations for publication. All content should be the work of the author or open source. Adjustments to pixel saturation, color and size will be made according to the editorials staff's recommendations. Please note that when submitted to the editor at the Civil Air Patrol National Historical Journal, all works and related media are released from copyright infringements if published.

Editorial changes are at the sole discretion of the editorial staff, but will be discussed with the author prior to publication, and require a signed release from the author.

The CAP NHJ editorial staff reserves the right to refuse any work submitted. All submissions must be sent as MS Word attachments and mailed to the editor at kefinger@sercap.us.

