



## From the President's Pen:

**Max Elliott**  
FMS Class of 1958

We received several positive comments on the last newsletter. I hope you all are enjoying them. Whenever I write this column, I think of many of you that I knew from then or have met or spoken to during our attempts to locate former FMSers.

We have several unique articles for this issue and are working on others for future newsletters. **Asa Dean (1960)** has been working hard for us, using his company resources to create and maintain our FMSA website. Asa has written a piece for us on the web site and other internet stuff and, I hope, will turn his efforts into a standard column for our newsletter! In his article, he refers to two FMS-related web sites, one run by **Andy Staley (1968)** and the other by **Tim Tyndall (1968)**. He also talks about a chat room started by **Steve Fulford (1960)**. Asa, we are looking for you to help us all to get right with the "net!" Check out the web site – it is really great! Asa, thanks for all you have done and are doing - we are indebted to you!

**Lee Hansen (1964)**, interviewed **Col. Prentiss (Faculty)** and the results of that interview are included in this newsletter. Just think, the CIA could have reaped the benefits rather than FMS. Lee, thanks for the good work and all your efforts.

The Col.'s son, **Paul Ward (1971)**, submitted an article which addresses his particular memories and take on FMS - Alpha to Omega. Thanks for the bird's eye insight, Paul.

There is another article we are waiting for and if it arrives in time will be in this issue, if not, in a future issue. It's by **Robin Kolb (1974)** who will give us a view of FMS from a co-ed's viewpoint.

Sue and I went to a special birthday party for **Bob Lee** (See the last issue for our story on Bob) at the Bob Lee Airport. Also, recently Sue and I conducted another search for FMSers. Sue has provided write-ups on both these events – as well as much more as she is the Editor-in-Chief! Also of interest - we have located many of those that attended the elementary school mentioned in Paul Ward's article.

**Thornton Ridinger (1959)** submitted the Treasurer's report. Incidentally, Thornton is our Historian and Archivist and in charge of our museum. I just turned over to Thornton some mementoes sent to us by **John Hartman (1960)**. Thanks, John, we truly appreciate you sending us all those historical FMS items.

Every so often, I get a call from **Bob Dunbar (1960)** relating his latest ventures. His work takes him to some very interesting places. He usually calls in-between his ports-of-call. You cadets from the early years of FMS may remember him as Bruce Dunbar. I always enjoy hearing from Bob.

**Jim Turner (1959)** coordinated with the Daytona Speedway in researching our historical involvement with them. It seems that we actively participated with them in their (and our) early days (1959-1062). The FMS band and drill team preformed in the infield on several occasions and there was even a car with the FMS logo in some of the races!

This last February, Sue and I were visited by **Keith Bentley (1964)** and his wife, Katherine. Keith and Katherine are currently living in Minnesota and were in Florida visiting friends in The Villages. We had a great time visiting with them and, of course, a lot of talk about FMS went on!

**Harry Silvis (1965)**, our official vendor, continues to impress us with his efforts to explore FMS memorabilia. He is working on some video presentations and is still searching for the old FMS colors. Keep it up, Harry!

The 2006 Golden 50<sup>th</sup> reunion is planned for the first weekend in August, 2006 – Friday the 4<sup>th</sup>, Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup>! Mark your calendars now and arrange for the time off. All you locals (or even not so locals) that can help with this event please contact Max or Sue and let us know of your willingness to help! We have past the two-year-out mark and are about 4 months away from the one-year-out mark. If you have ideas about activities, let us know. And, if you can provide some or all of the resources to implement your ideas, so much the better!

Starting with the next issue, and on the FMSA website, we will begin to piece together the plans for the 2006 August reunion – The Golden 50<sup>th</sup>. Stand by!

## AUGUST 2006 – Happy 50<sup>th</sup> FMS!

The Lollapalooza is history. Before we know it, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations will begin. The first will be in 2006, to commemorate the opening of the school. And then a class will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> every year thereafter.

It is time to begin our planning and be ready to implement those plans by the year end. Will you be part of this? We certainly hope so. It will take the combined efforts of many to make these celebrations a success. Distance does

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not preclude participation in this planning. Thanks to e-mail, snail mail and Ma Bell, we can all remain in the loop. **YOUR** input is most important at this stage.

## Our Dean of Ed Might Have Become A "Spook" Instead

By Lee Hansen, FMS '64

*Lee, a 1964 FMS graduate, is a journalist by profession. Recently he had the opportunity to interview former Dean of Education Colonel William Prentiss. Here is his report:*

Had William Prentiss not accepted a job offer from Florida Military School, he might have gone to work for the CIA.



The year was 1957. Prentiss was 25 and had earned his master's degree in foreign affairs. As an Air Force ROTC graduate, he'd also recently completed his tour of active duty as an intelligence officer with a top secret clearance.

He married Sally Trawick that August and now was considering what to do with his life.



He enrolled in the University of Florida law school but quickly decided against law as a career. Then, while job hunting in Washington, he had an opportunity to interview with the CIA. "When I went to the address I'd been given it looked like a vacant storefront," he recalled. "But I knocked anyway." To his surprise, a man answered the door.

Following a lengthy interview young Prentiss was informed that the agency would then do a background check and a second interview. They'd call him.

In November, he and Sally were visiting his parents in New Smyrna Beach. "I'd heard about

the new military school in DeLand so we drove over to see it and meet Colonel Ward."

It was a Thursday. The headmaster offered him a job on the spot and he reported for work the following Monday morning. "I called the CIA and told them I'd changed my mind," he chuckled.

That was the beginning of a relationship that would last for most of the school's 15 years of operation.

Soon after, then-Captain Prentiss was given an office in Allyene Hall and put in charge of cadets there in addition to his teaching duties. A year later he was moved to the Cannon Administration Building, promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and named Dean of Education.

"I continued to teach but also became responsible for recruiting and interviewing students, setting up class schedules, hiring faculty, and the like."

The school grew rapidly and so did Colonel Prentiss' involvement in it. Among other "duties as assigned" he became advisor to the Knight yearbook.

"Chris Bolton was editor of the 1965 Knight," he recalled. "It was put out by Taylor Publishing Company. After it appeared the company called me and said they were very impressed with it. They asked permission to distribute it as an example of the work they'd helped to produce."

Laughing, Colonel Prentiss said Taylor also took the opportunity to offer him a job. "But I declined."

Nearly all faculty were saddled with irreverent nicknames, compliments of the cadet corps. It wasn't long before Colonel Prentiss joined the ranks of "Fuzzy Lip," "Meeky Mouse," "Dink," "Nutter" and others as "Penguin." "I guess it was the way I walked," he reflected.

He remembered coming into class one day and being greeted by a large, comic penguin drawn on the board. Naturally, no one knew how it got there.

After ten years and hundreds of cadets whose lives he had helped to shape Colonel Prentiss announced his resignation. The community college movement was growing and, always the educator, he wanted to be part of it.

He returned to the University of Florida, earned his Ed.D in education and became the social sciences department chairman and an instructor at the new Valencia Community College (VCC) in Orlando.

He remained with the college and also served as the Orlando coordinator for Nova University until retiring in 1994.

Apart from his academic interests Colonel Prentiss also became involved in national political support efforts, particularly for Senator George McGovern, and an active outreach to disadvantaged youth. Aided by VCC he founded Operation Comeback to help troubled teens make better lives for themselves. Later he created the Talako Indian Dancers, this time to provide guidance and a positive influence for

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youngsters of American Indian heritage.

Along the way the many young people he's helped since his FMS days gave him his second nickname, "Doc," from his doctoral degree.

Whether known as "Doc" or "penguin," the man who has devoted his life to improving the lives of younger generations has become a valued, personal part of all of us.

But the one moniker he never acquired was "spook."



*William and Sally Prentiss now live just north of Universal Studios in Orlando. They own the Western Crafts & Gifts store and have three grown children, Elizabeth, Bill, and Charlie, as well as seven foster children.*

## Spin the Web



by Asa "Ace" Dean '60  
FMSA Webmaster

### Hello

This is the first article of what might become a regular column. At this point, I'm not sure that I can come up with enough material to justify the space in the newsletter. So, this will be a work in progress.

OK, so what the heck is a Webmaster, anyway? Here's the scoop per Microsoft® Encarta® Reference Library 2004:

Web-mas-ter [wéb màster]  
(plural Web-mas-ters) or web-mas-ter  
n

creator or maintainer of Web site:  
somebody who creates, organizes, or  
updates the information content of a  
World Wide Web site

Since I am both creator *and* maintainer, I guess that qualifies me for the grandiose title "FMSA Web Master Sergeant", the rank duly bestowed upon me by Harry Silvis.

Florida Military School Association's (FMSA's) official World Wide Web Site can be seen at this URL: <http://www.fms-assn.org/>

URL = Uniform Resource Locator. Now is that techie or what?? In short, it is simply an Internet address to a computer that has the web site.

### Other Sites

This is not the only web site available for FMSA. I know of these that follow (please tell me if you know of any others).

### FMS Photo Site by former FMS Cadet Andy Staley '68:

<http://fmsphotosite.tripod.com/index.htm>. See his "Then and Now Photos" for a fun comparison between cadet photos (then) and more recent photos (now). This must have taken Andy a LOT of time. He also has a page devoted to "Deceased Cadets, Faculty, and Staff".

### FMS Site by former FMS Cadet Tim Tyndall '68:

<http://www.ediscountheaven.com/fms/>. This site is great for finding telephone numbers of former cadets and staff. It is sorted several ways so you can easily find someone for whom you have forgotten his or her name. Also is a nice write-up and pictures of the Lollapalooza. Here's a direct link to that write-up:

<http://www.ediscountheaven.com/fms/Lollap.htm>

NOTE: the following URL for Tim's old site is no longer active:

<http://home.comcast.net/~t.tyndall/fms/>

**FMS Forum.** I've heard that there is a new chat-room style site on Yahoo! that **Steve Fulford '60** has developed, but I don't know where it is. You must be a member of Yahoo (simple) and a member of the forum for this link to work. To become a forum member, email Steve Fulford ([sheffield42@yahoo.com](mailto:sheffield42@yahoo.com)) and request an invitation to join.

### More

See the Links page on FMSA's web site for these and other web sites of interest. And, if you will permit me this plug, FMSA's web site has been donated by my company, Asa Dean Computing <http://www.AsaDeanComputing.com>

### "But I don't have a computer", you say?

The web site is still handy, even for those of you who like to hold paper in your hand. Many of your relatives and friends have computers and would love to hear about you and your former school. Send them the information from this column in a "snail-mail" letter and let them see what's going on! You can ask a family member, friend or neighbor to run their computer while you watch. Or, you can go to your nearby library and use their computers, FREE of charge.

In some ways the on-line newsletter is better than paper! The pictures are sharp instead of photocopy quality. Online you'll see color! You can resize (enlarge) the newsletter and pictures for our tired eyes. And, if you lose the paper copy, you can print another.

### Next Time

In the next column, I'll explain how to navigate our new web site and I'll comment on what's new since the last newsletter.

### Questions & Comments

Send me your questions, comments, criticisms (ouch!). [IRAPilot2@cox.net](mailto:IRAPilot2@cox.net)

# MORE HISTORY...

## "Memories of the Colonel's Son...." -

Paul Ward  
FMS Class of 1971

Dad started FMS from scratch. He had no capital and had to get partners to start the school. I believe one of the partners was associated with Stetson University and knew about the buildings at the former naval base by the airport.



I believe Dad got the idea to start FMS while he was an instructor at Carlisle Military School in Bamberg, South Carolina. He taught social studies and coached basketball there in the mid-1950s. Prior to teaching at Carlisle Dad and my mother had taught at Mainland High School in Daytona Beach. Jerry Alleyne was a Carlisle student Dad recruited to come to FMS in 1956. (Editor's note: Max Elliott and several others were also recruited.)

Dad was part of the "GI Bill" generation. He was the first person in his family to attend college. He was a Marine infantryman in World War II and saw combat on Okinawa. After the war he met and married my mother Mary and attended Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College on the GI Bill. He and Mary later returned to obtain masters degrees from this college.



I think the Marine Corps instilled much of the stamina and toughness Dad later needed in starting and running FMS and in other matters.

After getting FMS off the ground, Dad later managed to buy out his partners. A later investor named Schaefer was involved but Dad managed to buy him out as well.

Marcene Evans was Mary Ward's sister. I believe Dad convinced Marcene to join him in starting FMS. She was there from beginning to end.



During its existence FMS was the great focus of Dad's life. He was not averse to trying new methods to keep the school going. As the military school enrollment declined from 1968 to 1971, he started an elementary school and allowed girls to attend day classes. By October 1971, though, FMS had become untenable as a business. Enrollment had so declined that only Howard Hall was used for cadets. Though I know it was a crushing decision for him, Dad made the right decision to close the school in October 1971.



I personally have good memories of growing up on the FMS campus. As a young boy I would walk with Dad to breakfast at the Dining Hall. We would watch the cadets march into the dining hall, listen to them sing the Lord's prayer and eat "SOS". Christmas was special with the way the cadets decorated the dormitories. I remember playing basketball with cadets on the basketball courts in front of the dining hall. The dress parades with the "Lancers", band, etc. were always special events, even to the end.



With that said I fully realize that the military school was not always wonderful for the students. I'm sure some have less than positive memories of the experience (and, alas, my father). However, I am inclined to believe these are in the minority. For many boys FMS must have been an experience which later paid dividends to them in later life. And for many of them my dad will forever be a father figure, for better I hope.

For a long time Dad did not much discuss FMS, perhaps because he viewed the school's closing as such a negative event. However, I know he was touched greatly by the interest shown in him and the school at the 2002 reunion. This event meant a great deal to him. Excepting perhaps his family, no one means more to him than the FMS cadets.

## MONEY \$\$\$ TALKS...

Thornton Ridinger, Treasurer  
FMS Class of 1958

### Treasurer's Report 3/31/2005

Following the Annual Meeting, \$2,359.01 was received from our former Treasurer, Andy Staley.

Since then we have had two donations totaling \$40.00 and sold one directory for \$5.00 -- for total credits of \$45.00. Debits have been for \$514.79 as follows:

- December Newsletter expenses: \$309.34
- NASCAR Archival Research expenses: \$100.00
- Corporation Annual Fee: \$ 61.25
- Postage for mailings to newly found alumni: \$ 44.20

This leaves a current balance of \$1,889.22.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thornton Ridinger, Treasurer

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## The SEARCH GOES ON

**Sue Elliott**  
FMSA Secretary

Much of the cold and dreary days of January and February were devoted to an intensified search for more former FMS cadets. Computer searches, phone calls and postcards galore. Max and I did our best to follow every clue we could find and the search yielded 53 new additions to our roster. The average cost for finding each cadet was about \$1.00 which we feel was well spent, especially with such energetic and productive new finds as Asa Dean and Lee Hansen.

Many of you have contacted us with updated information and we sincerely appreciate that effort. The last newsletter mail-out still had about 30+ returns. Our policy now is that we will update our records but we do not re-mail the current newsletter as it is cost prohibitive. We are attempting to stretch our financial resources to be able to continue printing and mailing the quarterly newsletters until the 2006 celebration, without soliciting a subscription fee or such. Our thanks go to **Harry Silvis, '65** for printing envelopes with our return address and donating them to the effort. It certainly saves us both time and money and is really appreciated.

If we renew the search for former cadets, it may be necessary to cut out one newsletter a year but with the big celebration in 2006 approaching, we do feel it is important to contact as many former cadets as possible for this opportunity. If you have any clues to the whereabouts of any of the still missing former cadets, we would welcome the information. We will attempt to follow up any lead we can locate.

**Please forward your information to:**  
**Max Elliott**  
**135 Deer Lake Circle**  
**Ormond Beach, FL 32174**

## FROM THE RANKS -

### AS I RECALL . . . .

## "Where did all the Military schools go?"

**Harry Silvis**  
FMS 1965

Over the past few years, I have done some research on "Where did all the Military schools go?" 130 of the 169 that were open in the late 1960's, closed during the 1970's and early 1980's. The most popular answer I have gotten for decades is that, "the Viet Nam war closed them all." This really bothered me, as it was far too simple an answer, so I started looking and came up with some other information that better answers the why's. While a single problem alone probably did not close a single school, but taken in totality, they caused the closure of 80% of the military schools in this country, in a relatively short period of time. Here is what I found out:

Yes, the Viet Nam war and the resulting anti-military feelings in the country were a contributing factor to decreased enrollments at military schools. During that decade of the 1970's, there was double-digit inflation almost every year. A school would need to raise tuition 15% a year and when they did, it cut heavily into the enrollments. The steep increase in heating oil and natural gas costs also, was a real problem to deal with in older facilities where the heating systems were very inefficient, and the buildings were not insulated very well, as may have been the case in several instances.

Schools that were in older buildings, may have had facilities which were at the end of their realistic useful life, without replacements being available. The building of replacements was probably not possible at that time, with interest rates were approaching 20%. Financing was not possible, as enrollments were going down so quickly. Asbestos was a real problem in many older buildings with siding, as well as the coverings on the heating pipes. This was becoming a real issue nationwide in schools and other public buildings and the removal continued for two more decades. At some point in time, local building inspectors and fire marshals would close all of the remaining WWII era buildings that did not meet the newer, tougher building and fire codes. I am told that all businesses in the city of DeLand in the early 1980's either came up to code or closed. Tom's Pizza only survived by expanding, to meet these new building code requirements.

By the 1970's, parents were not abandoning the public school systems over integration, as some had been doing earlier. In Florida, the Duval county school system, the second largest in the state at the time, after losing their accreditation in the mid 1960's did finally get it back.

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### Those that Transitioned

"Bolles Military School" in Jacksonville (has 4 campuses & 1800 day students) as well as "Georgia Military Academy" in Atlanta are two that have transitioned from military schools into coed prep schools. These two schools started in the early 1960's to change from military boarding schools to co-educational schools with boarding and day students. Both are now two of the top prep schools in the southeast. How many other military schools made this transition, I have not found out, but those in larger cities, like the two mentioned above, had a much better chance of surviving than those that were in smaller communities.

### Today's Military Schools

There are 39 military high schools in existence today. Admiral Farragut Academy – St Pete - \$32,200 a year. Cadets in good standing can leave the campus every week-end and demerits are not "walked off", you only lose privileges. Florida Air Academy – Melbourne - \$27,500 a year, has both a surfing and a skateboard club. These are the only two military schools that remain in Florida.

Georgia, has Georgia Military College (HS & MS, also) – Milledgeville – cost unknown. Georgia Military College is a state run school. Dress reviews can not be held on Sundays, and the cadets can not be required to attend church. The state attorney general made these decisions after complaints. Riverside Military School – Gainesville - \$24,000 a year and has 500 cadets, making it the largest military school. While Riverside has dress reviews on Sundays, they are nowhere the quality that we put on. A NCO there apologized to us that they were "by the book" and ran exactly 27 minutes. Most of the parents did not come to the field but sat in their cars waiting for the review to be over, so they could leave campus with their children. Nothing like the productions we put on. They have a nice paved quadrangle for the Corps to form up on. Their cannons were chained down.

In Alabama, there is Marion Military Academy – Marion, AL - \$16,000. per year is the oldest Military school in the nation. They just hired a golf pro and will graduate 21 cadets from the high school division this year.

The last military school opened, which remains open, opened back in 1965. In our day, military schools were all college preparation in nature. What I read now is that some are a place for teens with drug and behavior problems, if their parents that can afford the costs of the military school.

As I said in the beginning, the closure of 80% of the active military schools was sudden, and multi-faceted in nature. While the schools might be able to take on one or two of these problems, when they reached the third and fourth, they were forced to close. They had no school system or government to bail them out. Those that survived had property, with solidly built buildings, as well as large alumni groups, to help them survive. Almost all of the current military schools are not proprietary, but rather have 501

(c) 3, non-profit status, which allows alumni to get tax breaks on their donations!

My next project is a listing of each military school with a little information about the schools operations, that we would have loved to have. Like leave every weekend, TV's, frigs, micro-waves and computers in their rooms. NOT walking the Bullring. Being able to skip lunch and eat in the canteen. I promise it will be much lighter and for us a stroll down memory lane.

## FMS Mementoes – Make a Wonderful Gift

Harry has put together a catalogue of FMS Mementoes that are perfect for a birthday or special occasion. His contact information is below:

Harry C./Zora Mae Silvis  
> Kennesaw Printing & Promotional Products  
> 2690 Summers Street, Suite D  
> Kennesaw, Georgia 30144  
> 770.421.1415  
> Fax: 770.421.1745

> [printers@bellsouth.net](mailto:printers@bellsouth.net)

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, Bob Lee



Max & Sue Elliott were recently invited to a very special birthday celebration for Bob Lee in a hanger at the Bob Lee Airport. Bob was 88 and still the life of the party. About 60 friends and family joined in the potluck picnic celebration.

Bob particularly enjoyed the special cake that was decorated to represent his airport.

*(Follow-up to a featured article in our last issue of the Newsletter)*

## Media Correspondents & Contributors Wanted –

As the 2006 celebration approaches we will need media contacts in various areas. Haven't you always wanted to be a media correspondent? It is not as involved and difficult as it seems. Most newspapers offer a free "reunion" service and submissions could be made to them. How about it? Don't you want your moment of fame? Contact us today.

### COMING – Next Issue:

"Girl Company, All present and accounted for, SIR"