



Florida Military School



Volume 2, Issue 2

June 2004

From the President's Pen:

Max Elliott
FMS Class of 1958

Since the last newsletter, things have been a bit slow on the FMS front. All the board members have been pursuing those other-than-FMS activities commonly referred to as their lives. In some cases, a touch of spring fever may be implicated! We do have a board meeting every quarter at which time we discuss where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. If anyone wants to have input to us at these meetings, please call, write, or email Sue & Max Elliott, prior to the meeting, with your input and we will be glad to present your information to the board.

The search for additional FMS folks has cooled considerably over the past year or so. Our efforts have been targeted mainly on maintaining the association that we forged. Aside from the quarterly board meetings and the annual members meeting, our newsletter has been the primary focus. We try to put out a newsletter every three months. We have noticed that about two or three newsletters from each mailing are returned and we are unable to forward them. So, if you have a change of address, please let us know! If you run across any other FMS people that we have not yet found (or have been lost), please put them in touch with us!

Every now and then, I check the Classmates.com web site and try to contact any new listings for Florida Military School. Recently, I made contact with two more cadets who were listed on the Classmates site. We now have FMSA listings for Kerry Walker (71) and Bill Brigham (61). Welcome aboard!

The FMS 50th Golden Anniversary is set for the first weekend in August, 2006. It seem like a long way off now, but we all know all too well how quickly time can slip by and the day will be upon us. We are in contact with the Holiday Inn and have coordinated our dates with them. They had really great compliments about the last reunion that we held there. To know us is to love us! If anyone has some ideas about getting the word out about the FMS 50th Golden Anniversary, let us know. For example, we could write up an article about our upcoming reunion that you could submit to your local papers for publishing in their reunion section.

Volunteers Randy and Deborah Mueller are helping to plan the FMS 50th Golden Anniversary. They both attended Florida Military School in the last days of the school. They subsequently married each other and currently live in DeLand and are active in local business and social organizations. They are in the process of contacting local merchants for

planning purposes and organizing the DeLand area volunteers. Thank you Randy and Deborah!

Planning is underway for the next Annual Meeting to take place sometime in October 2004. If you have any input for the annual meeting, please let me know.

The school sign restoration project, graciously taken on by representatives of the class of 1965 (John Kendrick, Jim Gibson, Steve Nash, and Harry Silvis), is proceeding along on schedule. Harry, also our official vender, has completed the lettering for the FMS sign at the brick column entrance (where our plaque is displayed) and John is preparing the letters to ship to Steve. Steve is also working on the physical repair of the sign. Good luck fellows, we are rooting for you!

Harry Silvis (65) is in the process of obtaining a copy of a film that was made about FMS in the early years. He said he will keep us posted on his progress. Apparently the film was used as some sort of documentary about the school.

If you were able to make the first Annual Meeting last October, the FMS 2004 calendar you received has a photo of the school sign, as it was in the past, on the front cover. The last newsletter has a photo of the school sign as it currently exists and another of how we anticipate it will look upon completion. We are deeply indebted to the Roger Davis Trucking Company for letting the sign stay on their site and allowing our restoration efforts.

We hope you all have a wonderful spring and a glorious summer!

AUGUST 2006 - Happy 50th FMS!

The Lollapalooza is history and also the first annual meeting of the FMSA, Inc. Before we know it, the 50th anniversary celebrations will begin. The first will be in 2006, to commemorate the opening of the school. And then a class will celebrate their 50th 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 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.

The Holiday Inn has again agreed to be our headquarters for the event and is promising us super rates on their rooms. The August date was selected because it is a "slow" time for conflicting events, and it is also during the "vacation" time for many people. With this in

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mind, maybe more people would include the celebration as part of their extended family vacation. An expanded choice of activities will be arranged to accommodate other family members. With the close proximity to the major attractions such as Universal, Walt Disney World, St. Augustine, Daytona Beach and the Space Center a weekend in DeLand is a natural starting point.

Not only do we need your ideas for this celebration, we need your personal commitment. A concerted effort will again be made to search out those still missing from our ranks and volunteers will be needed to make phone calls and searches in their areas, or on the internet. As plans progress, volunteers will be needed to guide various activities.

The Annual Meeting in October will provide a platform to further discuss this celebration and the direction we wish to take. 2006 seems like a long time away but it really isn't. We have about 14 months to pull this together. We have heard so many people say they were sorry they didn't participate in the Lollapalooza, and now they will get a second chance. Mark your calendars now....that first weekend in August 2006, the 4th, 5th and 6th, and plan to be in DeLand.

2nd ANNUAL MEETING FMSA, Inc.

As provided in the By-Laws the second Annual Meeting of the Florida Military School Association, Inc. will be held in DeLand on a Saturday, in October, 2004. This meeting is open to all and everyone is encouraged to attend. The exact date and location will be announced in the next newsletter but we wanted to give you advance notice so you can plan to attend. Consideration, of course, will be given to the football schedules. We are currently considering using The Perfect Spot at Sky Dive DeLand again, and the private hanger provided for us by Steve Nash. Plan to attend and make it a mini-reunion.

These officers were elected at the Annual meeting last year and unless there is any objections or nominations, they will continue to function in that position.

Officers:

- **President:** Max Elliott
- **Vice President:** Thornton Ridinger
- **Secretary:** Sue Elliott
- **Treasurer:** Andy Staley
- **Member at Large:** Rex Riley
- **Member at Large:** Jerry Alleyne
- **Member at Large:** Dennis Eyre

EDITOR'S NOTE: We need your input and participation to keep this newsletter and this organization functioning. Please submit your photos, stories and suggestions to: sgcourtney@att.net or mail them to: FMS c/o Sue Elliott, 135 Deer Lake Circle, Ormond Beach, FL 32174.

In The Beginning - MORE HISTORY...

Thornton Ridinger
FMS Class of 1959

As reported in the last newsletter, Colonel Ward was a teacher/coach at Carlisle Military School in Bamberg, South Carolina when he conceived the idea of establishing a military school for "scholarly gentlemen" in DeLand. With two founding partners, an agreement was negotiated with the City of DeLand calling for a three year lease on three buildings, with a renewal option.

In August, 1956, the Florida Times-Union of Jacksonville reported that Volusia County's first military school was about to open its doors. Remodeling, painting and furnishing of three buildings at the DeLand municipal airport marked its startup. The former hospital building would be used for classrooms, barracks, and recreation, the officer's club as dining hall and the big structure as an armory and indoor rifle range. The hospital building and officers club had been remodeled in 1953 by the St. Louis Cardinal farm system at a cost of approximately \$40,000.

On September 4, 1956, Florida Military School opened its doors to 63 cadets. Colonel Carl Ward, with founding partners Arthur Seesholtz and W. K. Beman, started the school in a converted World War II Infirmary at the old DeLand Naval Air Station. The Mess Hall was in the old Officers Club, which later became the Canteen. During the second semester they moved into the Naval Station's Bachelor Officers Quarters that was later named Howard Hall.

At Christmas break, Seesholtz and Beman left the school, and Carl C. Schaefer, Sr., a trucking company executive from Dayton, Ohio, bought into the corporation and was given the title of Vice President (to Colonel Ward's President and Headmaster). He maintained a partnership interest in the school until about 1961.

There were five graduating seniors the first year. Their names would be remembered by all subsequent cadets because the major buildings on campus were named in their honor.

An undated newspaper article entitled "New Military School" by Jim Moore (probably in the Daytona Beach News Journal) reported:

DELAND-"Our job is to prepare boys for life to help them prepare themselves for leadership in their chosen fields." Headmaster Carl Ward of the new Florida Military School declares. "We will teach basic curricular subjects, with few electives and no frills," the 31 year old Kentuckian stated in an interview last week in his school offices at DeLand airport.

"Discipline, while firm, will be fair." states the headmaster, called colonel because of his school position. And with a determined glint in his eyes, he goes on to say, "And there will be

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no hazing." This does not mean that cadet officers won't have plenty of authority to maintain discipline.

When a cadet exceeds the demerits allowed for a two week period, he takes a long walk -- about 35 minutes worth, back and forth maintaining "rigid military bearing." But the headmaster doesn't anticipate too many "tours". The boys will have a full time of it just keeping with the program," he said.

Classes will be small -not over 20 cadets in a group --and to graduate, freshmen entering classes this Sept 4, will perform satisfactorily four years of English, four years of mathematics, four years of science, four years of social studies and physical education, three years of military science and two years of foreign language To this basic program the cadet will be able to electives Such as flight training -- conducted by Bob Lee at the nearby main hanger, and band.

"Under Maj. W. K. Beman a former coach at Seabreeze High School, FMS plans a comprehensive varsity and intramural program. The school will enter most major sports this Fall. we won't field a football team this year, but we do plan a team in the future." the headmaster states.

Cadets [William V. Howard of New Smyrna Beach and Jerry Alleyne of Jacksonville transferred from Carlisle Military Academy to become the principal cadet officers at the new school. Cadets will use the hanger gym formerly used by the Stetson Hatters. The building which presently houses students, five faculty families -- apartment suites have been installed in each wing -- classrooms and administrative offices, was originally a small hospital at the U.S. Naval Air Station during World War II. Later it was refurbished for the St. Louis Cardinals when they trained here a few years ago.

The old officers club has been converted into a dining hall, and the brig, barred windows and all, has been converted into an armory. The school has an option on several other nearby buildings which they plan to use as dormitories as the school expands.

School enrollment presently numbers slightly less than 60 cadets. One of the goals of the school is to build the student body to more than 100 boys, as this number is needed to obtain federal assistance with training aids and military texts, as well as college freshman military credit.

Commandant of Cadets is Arthur Seesholtz with school rank of Lieutenant colonel. He and Ward are graduates of Eastern Kentucky State College, Richmond, Ky.

Other members of the staff are Lt. Col. Burrell Barnes, U.S.A. (retired), who will be school adjutant and instructor in military sciences Maj. John T. Pearson, science instructor; Capt. John Hill, English and sub-freshman classes; Capt. Carl Evans, staff assistant. Ward, who formerly taught at Mainland High School, will teach social sciences and Beman will teach mathematics.

Ward, Seesholtz and Beman are the "big three" of the school, as they are partners in the

ownership and policymaking of FMS.

Distaff helpers are Mrs. Ward, who will manage the school canteen; Mrs. Seesholtz, school secretary; Mrs. W. K. Beman, librarian; and Mrs. Carl Evans, dining hall supervisor.

While Mrs. Evans will be around to see that things are done properly, actual preparing of meals will be done by Morrisons Cafeteria staff in the school kitchens.

Daytona area cadets already enrolled in the school are Henry G. Aitken, David Dees, Kenny Lovett, Earl E. Moore, Daytona, Beach; Bobby Angell, Bill Dubberly, John Hudson, Frank Sica, Jack Turner, Holly Hill; Billy Howard, Alan Wolking and Max Elliott, New Smyrna Beach; Geoffrey Gentil Ormond Beach; Larry Laisy, Howard W. Savage, Thomas Sweeney, DeLand.

FROM THE RANKS -

AS I RECALL

Alex Nelson
Class of 1963

I really liked FMS; I just wonder how public school students would have regarded us if they'd known that we took pleasure in mastering the art of zinging coat hangars the length of Howard Hall, throwing fencing staples so they'd spiral and stick into their targets (ok, sometimes other cadets), wet toilet paper fights, etc. Let's face it, our frame of reference wasn't exactly the public school norm.

An enforced study period was simply taken as an opportunity to break another rule. Or two. Or three.

One perfectly stupid rule, not written down anywhere that I know of, was that cadet Regimental Commanders were not allowed to tie tin cans to stray cats, apply wintergreen from the athletic department liberally to the cat's tender privates and set it loose in the barracks. No one knows why this rule was never explained to Geoff Gentil, but there's dull and downright dull so when things got downright dull Geoff and Bobby Dick, ever the enforcers of order and decorum, set out to enliven the nightly study period. The way they did it was to sic a crazed, thoroughly spiced stray cat past the person of Donald Meeks, Captain.

But I get ahead of the story.

Jim Pappas and I had settled down to hour number two or three of study period when there came a quiet mewling from outside the door. Lo and behold there was a stray in the hallway, probably lost, probably just looking for a little action as stray cats often do. Geoff and Bobby lived across the hall and offered the cat a little attention. Plots hatched and thickened, as plots do, and somehow there appeared from here a little string, from there some tin cans, some wintergreen We couldn't help it, the thing just took on a life of its own. Our biggest concern

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was that Paul Knowles, the Sergeant of the Guard and the only soul authorized to be in the hallway, might witness the launch so a diversion of some kind was initiated and the stage was set.

"5-4-3-2-1" The cat, decidedly uncomfortable, was placed on the floor. Nothing but a little scooching along the floor by said cat in a vain attempt to cool his backside. So after a little more wintergreen Bobby dropped the cans and we were off to the races. Bangety, clatter, the cat was gone, yowling, full blast, scared as hell and burning from his nether parts like the very coals of Hades. Paul Knowles, ever alert, got to the intersection of the main hallway and the northern west wing of Howard Hall just ahead of the cat, waved his arms to do whatever that was supposed to do and successfully sent the flying feline down the west wing where lived the faculty protector of A Company, one Captain Donald Meeks.

Imagine the ruckus. From all quiet on the western wing to bedlam. Order was out the window. Study period was shot. All the rules were up for grabs, if only for a little while. Charging in the fray to restore order was Capt Meeks. If only he'd come out of his quarters a second later, the cat might have made the stairs. As it was, the cat saw this tall, gangly creature attempting to block his way or worse, inflict more discomfort upon him and decided to get past any way he could ... in this case, off the landing and - CRASH - BANG - down the full flight of stairs and somehow out the door. The last we heard of it was a fading clatter, way off in the distance past the parade field.

A Company was in riot mode. The cat was a hero.

Almost immediately, Colonel Gentile and Major Dick were on the scene, assisting Captain Meeks as he glared and strode and issued orders and vowed to get to the bottom of whatever happened. Paul Knowles, an inveterate practical joker, was an immediate suspect but was cleared of complicity very quickly. There were persistent inquiries for about a week, but no one ever found out who launched that cat. And I promise I'll never tell.

MONEY \$\$\$ TALKS...

Andy Staley, Treasurer

FMS Class of 1988

Treasurer's Report 1/23/04

This version of the Treasurer's Report reflects the results of all activity through 1/23/2004. Expenses incurred since the last Treasurer's Report include expenses for the 4th Quarter newsletter (\$344.67) and a filing fee for the annual State of Florida Corporation Report (\$70). The forecasted expenses for the 1st quarter of 2004 were approximately \$350 for a newsletter, but we were unable to put together that first quarter newsletter, and thus these expenses were never incurred. Now we have a similar projection for this second quarter.

A complete version of the Treasurer's report has been posted on the website <http://fmsphotosite.tripod.com/>.

Don't Be Left Out

Sue Elliott

FMSA Secretary

Max Elliott is keeping the "official" database for the association. Please keep him posted on any changes in your information such as address, phone, and e-mail, etc. Don't assume that your information will be updated if you have told someone else because that is not always so and we don't want to lose you. Max's database will be used for all mailings, and any future directory updates.

If you locate someone who is not already in the database (directory) or if you have a change of information for someone else, please forward that to Max as well. Several new names have been added. There will be lots of things coming up that we don't want you to miss out on.

Note: Max moved across the street so house number is different.

Please forward your information to:

Max Elliott
135 Deer Lake Circle
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
Phone: 386-672-8686
sgcourtney@worldnet.att.net



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YOU "Otter" SEE THIS -



A friendly otter welcomes you to the private museum of former cadets, Randy and Debbie Mueller.

In a recent visit with the Muellers, (FMS Class of 1970), we were privileged to visit a small museum that they have established to display the extensive arrowhead collection of Randy's grandfather. It is truly a labor of love and very professional in its appearance.



Randy & Debbie operate the All State Insurance Agency in DeLand as well as being active in many civic organizations and are active supporters of their son's activities. The establishment of this "museum" is a fulfillment of a life long ambition of Randy's. Randy's grandfather had painstakingly collected and mounted much of the collection and now Randy has continued his work. We are sure his grandfather would be both pleased and proud.



Great work Randy!

[**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We are always interested in receiving articles and photos of interest. We know there are many talented people in our group and would like to include articles about them in future issues. Now in the age of Digital photography, you can e-mail things to us for inclusion. Or you can always send us hardcopy. Let's hear from you.]

For Memory's Sake

By Gary Aiken
FMS Class of 1960

When bugle calls ruled the day
Drums beat a stirring cadence sound
The band would rousing marches play
As we strode in step across the ground,
All now silent.

Under fair Florida's sweltering sun
In blue wool and white webbing clad
Polished, shining, sharp-creased as one
Uniformly displaying the pride we had,
A memory.

In decrepit empty classrooms, musty, old
No teachers of math, science or historic deeds.
No teams compete in black and gold
The gym is empty, the fields just weeds,
No one cheers.

Abandoned barracks buckle, soon to fall
The home in which we slept, studied, stayed
Where boys became men and stood tall
Buildings age, crumble, are all decayed,
In ruins.

But even if those sounds are erased by years
And time has worn buildings down to dust,
Many men march today through life's fears
Made better by their time there and must
Remember.

Old cadets hear the cadence, still stand tall
We have our honor, duty, discipline, pride.
And in our hearts we now also hear a call
To tell us our special school has not died
It lives on.

HGA '60