

THE USAF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AGENCY
PRESENTS

PIONEERS IN BLUE



photo by Tech. Sgt. Bernard Wilson



CAROL LAMPKIN-HARRIS

BIOGRAPHY

Master Sergeant (Ret.) Carol Lampkin-Harris is a 23 year Air Force veteran who served as a Medical Administration Health Care Technician from 1984 to 2007 to include deployments in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. She describes the defining moment in her Air Force career as the time she spent assigned to Headquarters 8th Air Force, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, as the Medical Wartime Planner for both Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM.

Lampkin-Harris is currently the drug testing program Administrator and Manager at the 628th Medical Group, Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina.

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photos by Pat Nugent

JAMES LATHAM



BIOGRAPHY



Brigadier General (Ret.) James Latham is an Air Force veteran who served for over 27 years, from March 1969 to August 1997. He was a command pilot with over five thousand flying hours to include 383 combat missions in Southeast and Southwest Asia. On October 5th, 1972, while operating near Dong Hoi City in the lower panhandle of North Vietnam, he was shot down while flying a mission in his F-4 Phantom II jet. "During my brief period as a Prisoner of War, many things became apparent to me. But the one that really made an impression on me was the value of Freedom. I'm afraid people will never know how valuable freedom is until they have to live without it," Latham said. After being held prisoner for four weeks in lower North Vietnam, Latham unsuccessfully attempted to escape. "Although I was free for only six or seven hours, and the punishment received upon recapture was brutal, I became aware for the first time why men were willing to give their lives to be free," said Latham. After spending 175 days in captivity, Latham was released during Operation HOMECOMING on March 29th, 1973.

Latham and his wife Carol Sue currently reside in Virginia.

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photos by Tech. Sgt. Anika K. Williams



JOHN LINDQUIST

BIOGRAPHY

Major (Ret.) John Lindquist is a 20 year World War II veteran who served in the Army Air Corps and Air Force from May 1942 to May 1962 as a Bomber Navigator on the B-24 Liberator and later the B-17 Flying Fortress. "The most unforgettable Air Force moment I had was the time we lost our top turret gunner on a bombing mission. The turret gunner was in the process of tapping me on the shoulder with his foot for an oxygen tank refill when a piece of flak hit our plane. It took out an engine, the radio operator's controls and later I realized it took out the turret gunner's foot and started an engine fire. We returned to the base in one piece, but our turret gunner didn't make it," explained Lindquist. Major Lindquist completed 35 missions and in 1944 volunteered for three more missions in aid of ground troops at the Battle of The Bulge.

Mr. Lindquist' hometown is in Ogden, Utah. He is currently running the family mortuary business there.

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photo by Tech. Sgt. Bernard D. Wilson



CONIE LINDSEY

BIOGRAPHY

Master Sgt. (Ret.) Conie Lindsey is a 26 year Air Force veteran who served as a Laboratory Technician and later cross-trained into the Aviation Resource Management career field. She served on active duty from 1983 to 2009, during Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. Lindsey was an Operations Manager at Yokota Air Base, Japan, arranging C-130 aircraft to support aid efforts in the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. She considers this mission the defining moment of her career. Lindsey is also a combat veteran who served in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM from 2008 to 2009 with the 836th Expeditionary Airlift Group. The Group provided C-17 Aircraft Support throughout combat zones in Iraq, delivering supplies, equipment, and troops to the war effort.

Conie Lindsey was born in Newton Falls, Ohio and currently resides in Charleston, South Carolina.

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photo by Lance Cheung

HECTOR MARTINEZ

BIOGRAPHY



Airman (Ret.) Hector Martinez is a 4 year Air Force veteran who served in the Vietnam War from 1970 to 1974 as an Aerial Porter. In 1972, Martinez and some fellow Airmen were heard by their Officer-in-Charge speaking a variation of Spanish, known as Caló, Chicano, Pachuco or Tejano. This sparked an idea in the officer. Martinez and his crew were directed to use their language to prevent the Vietcong from eavesdropping on his company's radio calls. Martinez prides himself on the many lives they saved by using the language they grew up with in Texas. He is also proud for taking part in a few military milestones in technology. First, the dropping of BLU-82B/C-130 Daisy Cutters, huge bombs that blew away jungle so helicopters could make rescue landings. He also utilized airdropped sensors used to pick up enemy movements.

Martinez is currently 100% disabled but he keeps busy with his wife Linda and dog Gigi in San Antonio, Texas.

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photos by Staci Miller

JENNIFER MIRANDA



BIOGRAPHY

Senior Airman (Ret.) Jennifer Miranda is a four year Air Force veteran who served as an Assistant Dedicated Crew Chief on the F-16CG Block 40 Fighting Falcon. She was medically retired 22 July 2008 for injuries sustained in Balad Air Base, Iraq in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. She believes that the Air Force provided her with a wealth of character building tools. "The Air Force has done a lot for me as a person. It not only accentuated my core values and beliefs but instilled new ones that have helped me persevere and overcome any obstacle put in front of me. It gave me the motivation and determination to make a difference no matter where I am. It is something that will stay with me forever," said Miranda.

Miranda is originally from Sunnyside, Washington. She is currently a Principal Assistant to the Business Operations Director, 390th Maintenance Wing at Hill Air Force Base in Utah.



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photos by Ken Hackman

DOUG MORRELL



BIOGRAPHY

Chief Master Sergeant (Ret.) Doug Morrell is an Air Force veteran with a military career spanning over 30 years. He served in World War II as a combat cameraman and flew 32 combat missions before being shot down over the "Iron Gates" of Romania. He evaded the enemy by walking across Yugoslavia and Albania for 27 days and bribing an Albanian fisherman for a ride to Italy. Back in action, he was flying his fifth raid over the Ploesti, Romania, oil fields when he was shot down again. "Oh, no! Here we go again," Morrell said. "I was really thinking about having to walk back again." He parachuted to the ground. This time, the Germans were waiting. He spent four-and-a-half months as a Prisoner of War in Bucharest before the advancing Russian army freed him and other captured troops. In 1969, two months before his 50th birthday and in the thick of his third war, Vietnam, Morrell was documenting a sensor drop over the Ho Chi Minh trail when he was shot down again. Nine hours later, with the help of 34 aircraft, he was picked up by an HH-3 Jolly Green Giant. Chief Morrell retired from the Air Force in 1973.

Morrell currently lives in Highland, California. With over 75 years of experience, Morrell is still shooting video and telling stories through the lens.



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photo by Lance Cheung

CAROL POYNOR



BIOGRAPHY



Chief Master Sergeant (Ret.) Carol Poynor entered the Air Force in August 1958 and became an Administrative Specialist. From 1971 to 1972 Poynor participated in the Vietnam War from Korat Air Base, Thailand, and served as Basic Military Training Superintendent. Chief Poynor witnessed female Airmen who were over tasked to show them failing. Others were over-protected or deferred to administrative duties. Her advice to women today, if challenged, is to “take proper action and stick it out and be proud. Don’t let it stop you. And always take pride in your work!” Chief Poynor witnessed firsthand how long it took before the gender inequities were resolved. “They have so much today,” Poynor said. “They need to know how hard it was for some. I would want them to find out what it was like in the past, to know what got them there.”

At the time of her retirement in 1983, Chief Poynor proudly stated, “I loved my 26 years in the Air Force!”

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photo by Senior Airman Jennifer L. Flores

THOMAS RISHER

BIOGRAPHY



Senior Master Sergeant (Ret.) Thomas Risher is a 22 year Air Force veteran who served as an Aircraft Superintendent, a Fuels Supervisor and a Postal Specialist. Risher entered active duty on the 26th of October, 1968. As a Postal Specialist, he worked with the Air Force Inspector General in Europe conducting postal inspections at various overseas air bases. "Overall the Air Force was and has been the best part of my life for me and my wife. We won't hesitate to tell anyone how good the Air Force was to us. It was a great way of life and a way for us to see many different locations in the United States and overseas," Risher said. "I would do it all over again!"

Thomas Risher is from Moncks Corner in South Carolina. He retired from the service in 1990.

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photos by Staff Sgt. Timothy Charcon

WILLIAM ROBERTS



BIOGRAPHY

Major (Ret.) William Roberts served in both the officer and enlisted ranks of the Air Force, and is a former Prisoner of War. Roberts was a Staff Sergeant Aerial Gunner with the Army Air Corps assigned to the 463rd Bomb Group. On July 7th, 1944, his B-17G Flying Fortress was shot down near Velehrad, Czech Republic. He spent 11 months as a POW in various camps in Poland. Major Roberts' camp was eventually liberated by a British tank force in May of 1945. He recently recalled many details of his conduct as a Prisoner Of War. "You call up an inner-self to do what is needed and to keep going," he said.

Major Roberts continues to honor POWs and MIAs by being a public speaker, a national director for the American Ex-Prisoners of War and in several veterans' organizations. His son, Colonel William Roberts III, is currently a B-1 Lancer pilot in the Air Force.



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