



## AMMO Chiefs Association (ACA)

# "Shell and Flame"



Issue Number: 2

July 1, 2004

Welcome to the second edition of the AMMO Chiefs Association "Shell and Flame" newsletter. This special edition newsletter is being sent to you to provide useful information about the upcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> ACA Reunion being held at Hampton, Virginia.

### The President's Corner



### 3rd ACA Reunion 22 to 26 September 2004 Hampton, Virginia Schedule of Events

The ACA has graciously approved the Virginia Chapter the privilege of hosting the 3rd ACA Reunion. The following is a tentative schedule of events and happenings during this year's reunion. **Hotel reservations should be made as early as possible.** Contact the Holiday Inn directly at 1-800-842-9370 or 1-757-838-0200. Reservations can also be made by sending an e-mail to their reservation department at [holiday-resev@worldnet.att.net](mailto:holiday-resev@worldnet.att.net) or at their web site at [www.hamptonva.holiday-inn.com](http://www.hamptonva.holiday-inn.com). All Reservations **MUST** be made by August 25, 2004. Inform the receptionist that you are making reservations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> ACA Reunion to

receive a discount. See our web page for more info [www.ammochiefs.com](http://www.ammochiefs.com).

### 22 Sep 2004 – Wednesday - Travel

#### Day - Arrival

- ☼ Travel to Hampton
- ☼ Check in to accommodations,
- ☼ Sign-in; Pick up Reunion Package at Front desk, Get settled in
- ☼ 1730– 1830: Holiday Inn Manager's Complimentary Open House (Atrium)
- ☼ 1830 – 2300: Opening Ceremony (Drinks, Light food, Hors d'oeuvres) (Social Hall)

### 23 Sep 2004 – Thursday – Events

- ☼ 0700 - 0900: Breakfast (One Free w/Rooms)
- ☼ Daily Options:
  - 1200 - 1800: Golf Tournament (Lunch & Dinner) - Langley AFB - Eaglewood
  - Virginia Aerospace Museum/IMAX Theater
  - Shopping, Colonial Williamsburg, Pottery
- ☼ 1200 - 2300: Hospitality Room is OPEN
- ☼ 1800 -???? Ladies Night Out - Restaurant and Night Club.

### 24 Sep 2004 – Friday – Events

- ☼ 0700 - 0900: Breakfast (One Free w/Rooms)
- ☼ Daily Options:

- 0700 – 1300: Fishing Excursion
- Battleship Wisconsin Tour;  
Local River Cruises; Harbor  
Center
- Shopping, Colonial  
Williamsburg, Pottery
- Virginia Aerospace  
Museum/IMAX Theater
- ☛ 1200 - 2300: Hospitality Room is  
OPEN
- ☛ 1800 – 2100: ACA Membership  
Meeting (Meeting Hall)

### **25 Sep 2004 – Saturday – Events**

- ☛ 0700 - 0900: Breakfast (One Free  
w/Rooms)
- ☛ Daily Options:
  - 1200 – 1500: Langley Aircraft  
Tour
  - Busch Gardens; Mariner’s  
Museum
- ☛ 1800 – 2200: Dinner; Shell & Flare  
Award Ceremony; Worldwide  
AMMO Bowl XI Trophy  
Presentation, Closing Ceremony
- ☛ 1200 – 2300: Hospitality Room is  
Open

### **26 Sep 2004 – Sunday – Travel Day – Departure**

- ☛ 0700 - 0900: Group Breakfast
- ☛ Check Out of Accommodations;  
Travel Home

### **Directions to Hampton Virginia.**

Flying:

Two airports service Hampton; Norfolk International Airport in Norfolk and Patrick Henry Airport in Newport News.

Driving:

Traveling North or South along the East Coast, take I-95 to Richmond. Then get on I-295 East to I-64. Follow I-64 to Exit 263b, W. Mercury Blvd (Route 258 East). The Holiday Inn is at 1815 W. Mercury Blvd.

From I-64 East, Take Exit 263A, W. Mercury Blvd. Turn right at light.



## **ORDER OF THE SHELL AND FLAME CEREMONY**

**Selected: Leo Marquez, Lt. Gen (Ret) is the winner of the first Order of the Shell and Flame Award.**

### **BACKGROUND AND HISTORY:**

The *Order of the Shell & Flame* is patterned after the U.S. Air Force Order of the Sword program. The Order of the Sword is an ancient ceremony rich in tradition and is conducted by Air Force non-commissioned Officers (NCOs) to honor their greatest officer-warriors & civilian equivalents who have made significant contributions to the enlisted corps.

Gustav I, in recognition of military service, established the purely military Order of the Sword in 1522.

King Gustav I enjoined the noblemen commissioned by him to appoint officers to serve them. These people became the NCOs, as we know them today. These accountants, builders, craftsmen, teachers, scribes and other leaders were responsible for conducting the ordinary daily affairs of the kingdom. The system worked so well that it was incorporated into the army as a way to establish and maintain a cohesive, disciplined, well trained force for the protection of the

lives and property of the kingdom. Thus the NCO Corps was born.

These ancient NCOs would, on occasion, honor a leader and pledge their loyalty by ceremoniously presenting him a sword. The sword stands as a symbol of the truth, justice, and power rightfully used. The ceremony became known as the "ORDER OF THE SWORD".

The Ammo Chiefs Association (ACA) is an organization of active & retired U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sergeants established to encourage and facilitate camaraderie and well being among all Ammo Chiefs. They also endeavor to provide useful services to the membership; promote the welfare of their dependants, survivors and the Ammo Community at large. This outstanding group is recognized world wide and bound together by their unique symbol, the Shell & Flame, or as it is affectionately called, the Flaming Piss Pot, the oldest and most widely known device of all U.S. and foreign military insignia in existence.

Factions of the various European armies introduced the Shell & Flame to the U.S. military during the revolutionary war. It soon became the symbol of the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps, and as such saw distinguished action during the Mexican American War, World War I, and World War II.

In 1947 when the Army Corps became the U.S. Air Force, Ordnance Air Corps personnel brought the Shell & Flame insignia with them. Over the years Ordnance became Munitions and Munitions became Ammo. As such, the Shell & Flame further distinguished itself in combat air and ground support actions in Korea, Vietnam, Panama,

Desert Storm, & Operation Enduring Freedom.

## THE FORMAL INDUCTION CEREMONY

The *Order of the Shell & Flame* ceremony consists of a cocktail period and a formal dinner. Participants will be as follows:

HONOREE, Leo Marquez, Lt. Gen (Ret)

HONORED GUESTS: Individuals as determined and selected by the ACA BOD to sit at the head table.

Musicians: Any type of musical accompaniment to provide background music during the dining period, and afterward, as applicable.

Head Table Arrangement: The head table will be arranged as determined by the ACA.

Guest Tables: Tables for other honored guests may be arranged in any manner suitable to the area where the ceremony is being conducted, as determined by the Honoring committee.

Conclusion of Formal Ceremonies: The ACA President will make a formal proclamation stating that the formal Shell & Flame procedures are now closed and that the informal part of the evening now begins. After the Shell & Flame Award ceremony, the ACA President will present the AMMO Bowl XI trophy to the 1<sup>st</sup> Place winning team.



### 🎖️ Chapter News 🎖️

We are proud to announce the establishment on June 5<sup>th</sup> of another new Chapter of the ACA, the **Mid-West**

**Chapter** in Ohio, by Mark Gossett and Billie Campbell. Members include: Mark Gossett, Billie Campbell, Ron Ruff, Gary Knighten, Bob Trout, and Bart Ivy. A well deserved AMMO IYAAAYAS for our new chapter!! We wish them the very best.

Other Chapters under consideration are at Hill AFB, Utah (Fred Schoettler), and the West Coast areas (Mike Roylance). Chiefs in those surrounding areas should contact the ACA or the area Chief for more information.

Have an AMMO story you'd like to pass on? Send it to John Matthews or Rich McVey for inclusion in the next Shell and Flame Newsletter.



**'Shell and Flame'**  
***The story of the  
Ordnance Corps  
insignia***

*(This article first appeared in  
Military Collector and  
Historian, Vol. 5, No. 4,  
December 1953)*

Although the Ordnance Corps is younger than many other branches of the Army (it having been constituted in 1812) its distinctive device is claimed as being the oldest of the branch insignia presently in use. Whether or not the famous "shell and flame" (or "grenade," "bursting bomb" or "flaming bomb" as it has variously been

called) meets this challenge depends upon how certain changes in insignia are interpreted. At least, the device is the oldest and most widely known among military insignias.

Actually, the "shell and flame" and the "grenade," although essentially the same device, represent separate origins and different developments. Explosive or bomb shells were used in Europe as early as the 14th century and soon became a common form-n of artillery ammunition. A smaller size of bomb was brought into general use in the 17th century, which could be tossed by hand. It came to be called a "grenado" from the Latin word for the pomegranate. From this we got the term "grenade" and the word "grenadier" for the man who threw it. Both hand-tossed and artillery projected bombs were spherical in shape and for many years carried in a projecting neck or collar for the fuse hole.

The earliest use of the bomb as a device was to represent the grenadier. By the mid- 18th century these soldiers had ceased to throw grenades except in siege operations and had developed into an elite corps in most European armies. They remain so today. Thus, the crack company of an 18th century British infantry regiment was its grenadier company. The Foot Grenadiers of Napoleon's Imperial Guard was the foremost corps in France at that time, as the Grenadier Guards are in modern Britain. When Adolf Hitler changed the designation of his infantry regiment to grenadier-regiment in 1942, it was to honor the

infantry arm by calling all its men grenadiers. Throughout the years, the grenade or bursting bomb was used as the device of most of the various grenadier corps.

The right to wear the grenade was zealously guarded, and in Napoleon's armies there was constant agitation over the tendency of other troops to appropriate the device. The voltigeur companies seem to have been the major offenders, having already arrogated to themselves mustaches and epaulets. The horse carabineirs and the cuirassiers, on the other hand, were considered elite troops and so were given the right to show the grenade insignia on their saddle housings. As mentioned, in the British Army the fusiliers at length established their rights to the grenade. But during the American Revolution, the device was almost exclusively the property of the grenadiers.

Possibly because the grenadier with his tall cap was the arch-symbol of the King's army, the grenadier title was never popular in America, and grenadier organizations were extremely rare here. Thus, the bursting bomb was rarely used in America as a grenadier insignia. Our use of the device springs rather from its artillery background, and this is borne out by the fact that here it was (and still is) called officially the shell and flame.

The story, however, is complicated by another usage. In European armies there had been for some while a sort of infantry soldier called the "fusilier," originally associated with artillery. Very often these men used the grenade as an insignia. The seven fusiller regiments in the British infantry all wear it today. Artillery also adopted it; the grenade first appeared on the Royal Artillery uniform in 1828. This growing acceptance by both fusillers and artillery led to its early adoption by some of our military corps. Thus the first use of the bomb device in America cannot be determined with certainty. But it can be shown that the adoption of the shell and flame as a Regular Army insignia dates from 1832, when it was selected as a symbol for Artillery and Ordnance on the one hand, and as a general military device on the other. Before describing these, we must turn back and look at the earlier insignia of the Ordnance Department.

During the Revolution and until 1812, artillery officers performed ordnance duties of the Army. On May 14, 1812 the Ordnance Department was established and, thereafter, he was in touch with ordnance officers on the subject. We have no written description of the device adopted at this time, but surviving samples show an eagle quartering to the right, head to the left, on crossed cannon barrels, with three cannon balls below. A variant form shows the eagle in reverse. Thus, the earliest ordnance insignia appears to have been, in part, the crossed cannon, much as used by artillery today. The artillery of this period displayed a full cannon

surmounted by an eagle as its device.

On March 2, 1821 the Ordnance Department was merged with the artillery, and artillery officers detailed for the purpose again performed ordnance duties of the Army. No distinctive device was authorized to indicate this detail and, apparently, the ordnance button was adopted.

Eleven years later, in April 1832, the Ordnance Corps was re-established as a separate branch of the Army. Two months after this, new uniform regulations were published, which specified that "gold embroidered shell and flame" was to be placed on the skirts of the tailcoat worn by both ordnance and artillery personnel. The uniform of the two branches was almost the same; ordnance personnel were distinguished from artillery only by the absence of all-red facings and braid.

Incidentally, the grenade was, in this same year, introduced into the Marine Corps - also as a device for officers' coat tails. Termed officially a "gold embroidered shell and flame," it was worn as long as the tail coats were regulation, that is, until 1859. At a much later date, in 1916, the Corps again adopted the device to identify its marine gunners, a newly created warrant rank. This rank, along with its insignia, was abolished on October 21, 1943.

In December 1832 a new dress cap was approved for use by the Army. From its crown projected either a pompon or a plume, to the bottom of which was fastened a

brass "tulip" whose wire end fitted into the plume socket. Fixed to the front of the leather band around the crown of these new hats was a brass shell and flame device; when the pompon was on the cap, the device seemed to be part of the tulip. This shell and flame was worn, apparently, until the cap was abolished by the dress regulations of 1851. It plays no important part in this account, since it was a general decorative device rather than a distinctive insignia. Also, ordnance officers wore chapeaus rather than caps, and ordnance enlisted men wore the same cap as artillery soldiers.

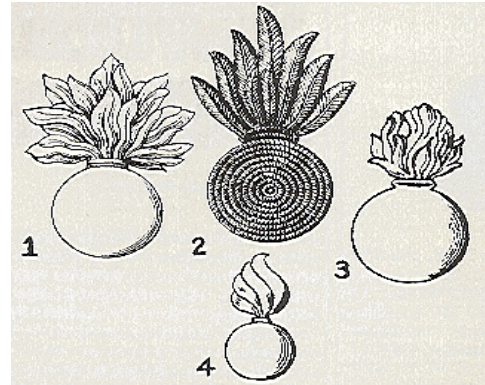
In May 1833, J.H.L. & W.H. Scovill of Waterbury, CT, prepared Ordnance Department designs for a new and distinctive button for Ordnance at the request of Lieutenant D. Tyler. After some alteration, a button containing crossed cannon barrels, with a "U" on one and "S" on the other, having approved by General-in-Chief of the Army. The Corps, however, continued to wear the artillery buttons on their uniforms until a year later when the Commissary General informed Colonel Bomford that as soon as he had received the new buttons from the manufacture he would send them to the ordnance stations to replace those then being worn. This button, except for the "US" was an almost exact copy of the French artillery button of the period. It introduced the shell and flame into Ordnance, and at a time when its use by other branches as a distinctive device was negligible.



In 1851 came wide uniform changes. The shell and flame was removed from the uniform of all other elements of the Army and thus became the distinctive insignia of the Ordnance Corps. A new ordnance button was also authorized about the same time - of gilt, convex in shape and with a plain border, having the crossed cannon and bombshell and a circular scroll, over and across the cannon, containing the words "Ordnance Corps." This device is still in use today and is called the "Ordnance Escutcheon." The shell and flame became the cap insignia and was also added as a device on the collar of enlisted men of Ordnance.

In 1858, when a black felt hat was adopted for the entire Army, a gold embroidered shell and flame on a black velvet background was approved for wear by ordnance officers on the front of this hat. Enlisted men of Ordnance wore the same insignia in yellow metal.

For more than 75 years, except for minor changes, this early Ordnance shell and flame withstood the test of time, remaining in use until about 1924. At that time the present streamlined device was approved as a result of designs prepared in connection with guidons to be used by ordnance troop units. A later Chief of Ordnance called this new design "reminiscent of the black spherical oil burning lamps" used by street repair people to warn the unwary, and felt that the old type insignia, which attempted to portray a "flame which is burning from gasses under pressure," was more symbolic of the Corps.



*Some variations in the shell and flame after 1873. (1) Ordnance enlisted men's forage cap device approved in 1873. (2) Ordnance officers' embroidered forage cap device, 1882. (3) Saddle cloth insignia, 1907. (4) Ordnance officers' collar device, 1944. All are actual size and of yellow metal or gold embroidery.*



## 🔴\* 2nd Ammo Chiefs Reunion 🔴\*

The second Ammo Chiefs Reunion was great. If you were not there you missed one fine Ammo Occasion. Planning and execution by our Chiefs down in the Eglin area and others who helped was damn near flawless. We managed to raise funds for the Gauvin Scholarship Fund and for the Enlisted Widows Village primarily through our Golf Tournament and the fund raising activities of Dwight Howard and a few of the others who extorted funds out of the local merchants. The golf tournament made the local news. One of the local car dealerships even offered a brand new car to anyone who shot a hole in one, although no one was

able to make good on that opportunity. Another group of our members took a tour to the Armament Labs to get the Intel on the latest munitions developments. A hearty crowd of our Chiefs turned seamen and caught a passel of fish served at the Friday evening Ammo Call. Ammo Call was open to any and all Ammo Troops and we managed to get a few of the younger guys from Eglin to show up. It was also a time to renew friendships, break out the war stories and have a beer with old friends. While the Chiefs were at Ammo Call a bunch of the wives made a trip to a local comedy club. While the Chiefs were rather well behaved considering the occasion, the wives came back telling tales of some persons of questionable gender sucking each other's lollipops. To avoid any embarrassments, no further questions were asked of that particular event. My guess is you had to have been there to enjoy the humor of it all. We also had the opportunity to take a cruise to watch the dolphins and plenty of time just to relax either on the beach or at the pool. On the business side of this get-together, we had our annual membership meeting. Our President, Mark Madamba, again laid out the ten goals he sought to achieve during his tenure as president and talked briefly on what had been accomplished and what remained to be done. At some later time (once I receive them) I'll let John Greer's notes of that event help my failing memory to make sure we have the full story. Mark also surprised some by announcing that he was stepping down as President and turning that office over to Jim Shelingski. If memory serves me correctly Jim will take over as President on January 1, 2003. The high point of the reunion had to be our semi-formal

dinner on Saturday evening. During the dinner we inducted our first honorary members, Col. Jack Elle, Lt. Col. Brian Timmons, and Lt. Col. Bill Swezey. The dinner was followed by live music and a chance to dance the night away. Sunday we had a breakfast and the chance to see each other one last time before the next reunion. By any standard, this reunion was an outstanding success. Thanks again to the efforts our fellow Chiefs in the Eglin area and those from other areas who came down to help to make this event the superb occasion that it was! See the AMMO Chiefs web page for pictures and information about our past reunions.



### 🎆\* AMMO Trivia 🎆\*

#### **“Cold Enough To Freeze The Balls Off A Brass Monkey....”**

In the days when every ship had cannons for protection, cannons required round iron cannonballs. The Captain or Master wanted to store the cannonballs so they could be of instant use when needed, yet not roll around on the gun deck. The solution was to stack them up in a square-based pyramid next to each cannon. The top level of the stack had one ball, the next level down had four, the next had nine, the next had sixteen, and so on. Four levels would provide a stack of 30 cannonballs.

The only real problem was how to keep the bottom level from sliding out from under the weight of the higher levels. To do this, they devised a small brass plate (“brass monkey”) with one rounded indentation for each cannonball in the bottom layer. Brass was used



because the cannonballs wouldn't rust to the "brass monkey," but would rust and stick to an iron one. When the temperature falls, however, brass contracts in size faster than iron. As it got cold on the gun decks, the indentations in the brass monkey would get smaller than the iron cannonballs they were holding. If the temperature got cold enough, the bottom layer would pop out of the indentations, spilling the entire pyramid over the deck.

Thus, it was, quit literally, "cold enough to freeze balls off a brass monkey."

(Author Unknown)

### 🎯\* "The Whole Nine Yards" 🎯\*

Ever wonder where the term "**The Whole 9 Yards**" came from?? In World War II, aircraft gun belts loaded with AMMO were exactly 27 feet long, or nine yards. Whenever a pilot talked about staffing his target, he referred to it a giving the enemy "The whole nine yards". Now you know the rest of the story....

(Source: Military Trivia).

