



Remembering our brothers who have passed from this life

Mark Henry Femrite, '71

February 22, 1952 - July 15, 2018



Mark was a three year cadet.

Capt. 3; Honor Committee, 3;
Roller Rifles, 2, 3; Junior Roller
Rifles, Commander, 3

July 23, 1952 July 15, 2018 I'm writing this because I don't want anyone to feel sad, but instead to celebrate life. As life goes on, we all have a limited warranty. My warranty ran out but you'll never see me in a coffin because I believe in recycling. I have no regrets. I always wanted to be a father and am proud of all my children. I am proud watching them raise my grandchildren. I earned a "PhD in raising kids" and am proud of the life I've lived with Sherri, and my grandchildren – my little diamonds who are still growing. Keep in touch with people. Don't lose touch with Sherri, who has been my rock. Stay active and keep your mind rolling. These are my thoughts, Mark was born on July 23, 1952 to the late Carolyn and Hawley Femrite.



Mark was a proud graduate of Augusta Military Academy, an all-boys school in Staunton, Va. which he discovered via an advertisement in the back of a National Geographic magazine. It was at "AMA" that he found his lifelong Band of Brothers. These friends are spread out around the world but have managed to still keep in touch, and when one would call the house asking for "Henry", Mark knew it was an AMA guy. He acknowledged that the stories told among these guys were highly embellished.

After graduating, Mark decided that he wanted to pursue higher education. However one year was enough ("I had too much fun" and "I wasn't an academic guy"). Mark entered the labor force, holding numerous jobs, and then decided to try the education-thing again. This time, he earned several certifications at community colleges while

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also working full time. Mark appreciated all those who believed in him and those who gave him jobs and opportunities. Being a dad was Mark's "most special achievement" and a dream come true. The next greatest thing was bringing four children together in one family. He enjoyed being involved in the school PTA, Brownie Troops, and taking the kids to Salem baseball games.

Mark is survived by his wife Sherri; children Kyle, Cameron (spouse Travis), Beth (spouse Nathan), and Jacob (spouse Lauri); grandchildren Josh, Delia, Zoey, Keira, and Carsyn. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the Augusta Military Academy or Sherri's church, The Presbyterian Church of Floyd. Online condolences may be made <http://www.gardnerfuneralhomefloyd.com> or on Facebook @gardnerfuneralhomefloyd. The family is being served by Gardner Funeral Home..

The following tribute by classmate Garry Granger, '71, appeared in the Fall 2018 edition of the AMA Bayonet.

"Henry," as he was known at AMA, was Battalion Commander his Post Graduate year and Company Commander of "F" Company his senior year. Henry attended AMA four (4) years from 1969-1972 and celebrated graduation with the Class of 1971.

Born in Minneapolis, MN, his parents soon moved to Greensboro, NC. Henry found AMA from an ad in National Geographic and convinced his parents to allow him to attend. He loved fencing and was a member of the 1971 undefeated Fencing team at AMA. He was a master story teller...Henry could tell a story about a trip to the grocery store and have you rolling in the floor with his mastering of delivery and facial expressions. Henry had a Harley Davidson and rode for many years with the Roller Riders. Rick Smail '67 commented that "no one caused me to laugh as hard as Henry".

While there are numerous recollections of Henry's stories...a few memorable ones include; riding on the back of Colonel Hoover's BMW Motorcycle; the lady working with him on a construction site with piercings; how he found relief after getting his long beard caught in a drill ...another classic was describing his sweet mother's reaction to a classroom visit with Colonel Hoover during parents weekend....extremely funny !!!

Henry was a Certified & Licensed Insurance Agent, a Carpenter / Contractor, one of Virginia Tech's biggest fans and an avid Civil War Reenactor. He started as a private in the 28th Virginia more than a decade ago. He was extremely respected as an authentic cook and was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant - Ordnance Aide. Classmate Charlie Hillsman '71 (Founder & Commander of Longstreets Corps) was a Major General and known as "General Chuck", who recruited Henry as well as Nicky Syropoulos '69 into Civil War reenacting.... Nicky is a Lt. Colonel - Ordnance Officer and Acting Adjutant for Longstreets Corps.

Henry's cancer caused him to be in Hospice for @ 11 months...during that time...he lived as he had forever, to the fullest...Henry had cancer...Cancer didn't have him...he remained active, sharp and focused on living a happy and productive life. His wife Sherri was his rock and his children and grandchildren were there to bring him joy.

Cameron Crocker (Henry's daughter) was quoted saying "My Dad always told me he didn't care what I did in life, just be the best you can possibly be. I learned to be the best because of him and what he taught me. He was my hero and as it turns out, he was a hero to so many as well"

The house he built on the 50 acre property in Riner, VA (Floyd County) was his sanctuary....he'd often carried guests on his "golf cart" across the creek to the cleared picnic and camping area where he felt most comfortable or entertained in his garage (AKA "Man Cave").

Henry wrote his own obituary, saying "I always wanted to be a father and earned a PhD in raising kids and am proud of the life I've lived with Sherri, and my children & grandchildren" "Mark taught us how to live.....he also taught us how to die" said Gordon Metz '68 (AMA Chaplin) who spoke at Henry's service. Gordon and his wife Brenda visited Henry & Sherri numerous times over the past year and a half.

God Speed Henry !!