

Augusta Military Academy

Oral History

Lowell Tackett, '61
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It's been just about a year ago, now, that I took a hand in delivering to AMA a 105mm Howitzer, brought down from the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Harford County, Maryland, near where I live. What a year to savor the meaning of that trip, both to Augusta and to me, and how that moment closed a great circle...or triangle more correctly, I might say.

That gun took watch over a special spot prepared for it, close to the spot once guarded by the old field gun it replaced, and where, in 1959, my father took a picture of me resplendent in new AMA 'grey'. A similar pose was struck and photographed in January 2003, as the new gun took its' place, and if I closed my eyes real hard and held my breath, for one brief moment I, and all those around me were 15 again, filled with wonder and future.

I certainly had 'motive and opportunity' to contribute. My employer (Allied Contractors, Inc.) was graciously willing to provide the equipment and personnel necessary to make the move a reality, and, after at least one false start, the weather and all the capricious gremlins cooperated. And I was afforded a rare and wonderful opportunity to return 'triumphant' to AMA's beautiful grounds once more, and after so many [!] years. Unofficially, I had walked the halls on Christmas Eve, 1976 accompanied only by one weary old collie dog. I'd been on something of a 'walk-about', and had wandered back thru the Shenandoah valley. Prior to that? I visited AMA the winter of 1965, on a motorcycle, taking a last fling before answering orders for Vietnam. My job? I was an artilleryman...on 105mm Howitzers.

Why did this last visit close the great triangle? Since my days as a Marine artilleryman, I have earned my living as a surveyor; the 'art' of artillery is an elegant, if somewhat heavy-handed, exercise in triangles and surveying.

And so I returned to AMA to bring back a symbol of how my life has played out, and when it all occurred to me, to say a quiet 'thank you' to the eccentric, devoted, inspiring, wonderful man who imparted in me, as he had many of my fellow cadets, a love of math [in general], and geometry in particular. So, I realized, I had come back to close the triangle where it began (and ended!) in the classroom of **Col. Hoover**, and how its' shape had so shaped my life, and how that unforgettable gentleman had, so long ago, set a path [for me] that would wander so far, and for so long, and finally come back to where it had begun.

There is, in my life, no other symbol of continuity or sentiment that shines so steadily as AMA. So many years later she still stands, and so many of the old warriors who once wandered her halls also still stand, and all welcomed me back heartily and happily, and for one wonderful moment, I stood so tall and proud and happy that I had been able, in some small way, to contribute again to ol' AMA.

You can view the 1961 RECALL here:

<https://galleries.amaalumni.org/Recalls/Recall-1961/>