



**Artillery OCS News and Commentary
June 14, 2025**

Happy Birthday to the U.S Army

June 14, 2025



Greetings From Fort Sill

The US Army was officially established on June 14, 1775, and a lot has happened in the last 250 years, including the birth of the Field Artillery OCS on July 10, 1941.

On Friday June 13 Fort Sill celebrated with a live fire event at MOW WAY House, with a drone swarm and Field Artillery and Air Defense Artillery static displays open to the public. The weather put a damper on things, but those who hung around witnessed the noise and expenditure of some cannon and rocket artillery.

Due to credible security threats and planned protests, the Army Birthday parade scheduled for Saturday, June 14, in Lawton was cancelled.

Artillery OCS Heritage Hall Classroom Update:

We are pleased with the frequent use of our facility for various functions, including promotions, retirement ceremonies, quarterly training briefings, Family Readiness Group meetings, Leader Professional Development, Community Coffee with the Commander, and classroom instruction. We recently had a quarterly AUSA regional meeting and on May 14th MG Phil Brooks stopped in on a Combat Lifesaver class for a unit preparing for European rotation. On Thursday, two OCS graduates from 1967, who were unaware of our existence, visited the museum. Museum Curator Gordon Blaker called me and patiently stood by in the classroom while they talked to me on his cell phone for 13 minutes. It is all good now!



The Heritage Hall classroom can be set up in any way desired for small or large groups. This was a unit preparing for a European rotation. MG Phil Brooks, the Fort Sill CG, stopped by, answered questions and offered tips for living overseas.

Official Reply on Museum Closure Status for Fort Sill:

“The Fort Sill National Historic Landmark and Museum is currently on the proposed closure list, but no final determination has been made regarding its future. However, I can confirm that the U.S. Army Field Artillery Museum and the Air Defense Artillery Training Support Facility at Fort Sill are not on the closure list and will remain open and fully operational.”

F. Lee Reynolds, PAO U.S. Army Center of Military History

An updated PDF of Army plans to **reduce 41 museums and other facilities to 12** can be viewed: [Army Museum Closure Update 6-13-25](#)

Some Thoughts on Army OCS History:

You will find that some of the dates, locations, and numbers I share here do not match some of the outdated information circulating on the internet.

The Army Officer Candidate Schools came to life on July 1, 1941. **The first classes did not open at Fort Benning or Fort Sill**, as some claim.

Three schools opened on July 1 at Fort Knox, KY (Armor OCS), Carlisle Barracks, PA (Medical Admin OCS) and Fort Monmouth, NJ (Signal OCS). Infantry OCS opened on July 5 and Field Artillery OCS opened on July 10.

Those OCS officers commissioned from September 1941 through September 1943 were the “**90 Day Wonders**” of WW II. It was a 13 week (91 day) course. Those commissioned from October 1943 until November 1947 inherited that nickname, even though the course had been lengthened to 17 weeks (119 days) in July 1943.

By the time D-Day arrived on June 6, 1944 most of the Army Ground Forces officers were from OCS programs. The Field Artillery OCS at Fort Sill had already graduated 24,263 2LTs and the Infantry OCS had graduated 47,928. By the end of the War, more than 30 OCS programs provided the Army with more than 280,000 Second Lieutenants. They paid a heavy price in World War II and again in Korea. Then there was Vietnam and the Global War on Terrorism. What a Legacy this is for us to preserve.

We continue our efforts to preserve an accurate history of all the OCS programs for presentation to the new crop of candidates at Fort Benning and the public. The candidates at Fort Benning deserve nothing less. It is unacceptable for OCS graduates who are unaware of their own history to pass on that lack of knowledge to others.

The purposes of the Army OCS Alumni Association include perpetuating the history and traditions of the Officer Candidate program: commemorating and memorializing those graduates who lost their lives in service to their country; and encouraging recognition of those who have distinguished themselves in military careers or in civilian pursuits.

OCS graduates have been awarded 74 Medals of Honor, more than 1,000 Distinguished Service Crosses and thousands of Silver Stars.

We are still working on a comprehensive database of OCS graduates killed in action during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, as well as all the Distinguished Service Crosses awarded to OCS graduates.

You cannot recognize and memorialize those individuals without a database of the names of all OCS graduates to start with. That is being compiled by Infantry OCS graduates Emory Deason and David Roe.

We built a database years ago for Artillery OCS, which contains biographical information on all our fallen and battlefield heroes.

The historic information presented in the kiosks in the National Infantry Museum and the Army OCS Hall of Fame (in Wigle Hall) is not up to standard, in my opinion.

We reached a point long ago where my research does not always match what is being put out by the Army OCS Battalion and the Army OCS Alumni at Fort Benning. Those entities are not always in agreement. OCS history is not a static list of facts. It's a continuous process of research and refinement based on the available evidence. Newly released records help us gain a more accurate understanding of the past, but we must ensure that we keep up with it all.

The problem we are facing is that much of what has been written about OCS comes from individuals combining two or more facts, or pieces of information into one resulting in something inaccurate or misleading.

Then we have the “Wayback Machine” that has everything (accurate and inaccurate) just waiting to be used as fact by people carelessly gathering information that often ends up on Wikipedia. And around and around we go.

Speaking of going around in circles, I had an interesting conversation with the keeper of the kiosks at Fort Benning a couple weeks ago. It was not as productive as I had hoped, but I may have convinced her that at least a few things in her version of OCS history need some work. I'm not sure, but I think she now realizes she has a real mess in her hands. In the end, she reminded me that she is not a historian and is not responsible for the errors. Her expertise is organizing and entering the data provided to her.

So here we are getting close to 85 years after the birth of the US Army Officer Candidate Schools and we cannot agree on how many weeks long the first OCS classes were in 1941. 17 weeks or 13 weeks (hint: “90-day wonders”). There are three versions of when OCS closed at Fort Benning after World War II (1945, 1946, and 1947). Hint (10 classes graduated in 1947).

I will soon be providing the Army OCS Battalion and the Army OCS Alumni Association at Fort Benning with a copy of every version of OCS history they have presented to the public and to the candidates with notations containing the correct and sourced information.

I hope they take a look at it. I will also make that information available on our website, ensuring a single, accurate source of information.

Fort Benning OCS News: Change of Command on June 10

LTC Wilford L. Garvin served as the Battalion Commander of the 3rd Battalion, 11th Infantry Regiment for two years, overseeing the training and commissioning of over 4,000 Army officers during his tenure at the Federal Officer Candidate School and Direct Commission Course. His leadership and dedication during his command were evident and greatly appreciated.

The incoming Commander is LTC Jonathan D. Kingsley, who takes on the responsibility of shaping and mentoring the next generation of Army leaders. His leadership will play a vital role in upholding the proud traditions of OCS while guiding candidates through one of the most transformative experiences of their military careers.

Contributions to the Artillery OCS Alumni Chapter:

The Artillery OCS Alumni Chapter is an IRS 501(C)3 charitable organization. Donations are tax-deductible. Tax ID: EIN # 74-3052514. You can send a check to Artillery OCS Alumni, PO Box 33612, Fort Sill, OK 73503.

Click on the link below to see how you can support our efforts:

<https://artilleryocshistory.org/support-us.html>

The "Support Us" page has a PayPal link for making credit card donations. Thanks for your continuing support,

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