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## Connecting

July 26, 2021

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Colleagues,

Good Monday morning on this July 26, 2021,

Our colleague **Peter Arnett** tells me that older Vietnamese patrons of the coffee shops of Little Saigon near his southern California neighborhood are buzzing with gossip about the growing drama of America's military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

To many of these Vietnamese who fled with their families as South Vietnam fell to communist North Vietnamese forces in April of 1975, the reported collapse of some U.S.-trained Afghan government units and the loss of important provincial capitals to the Islamic Taliban's forces bring back bitter memories of the fate of their own country after the American military withdrawal from the Vietnam War in 1973.

Arnett covered much of the Vietnam War for the AP (and won a Pulitzer for that coverage) and remembers the "never again" resolve of U.S. government leaders and the American public ever to be drawn again into such unwinnable conflicts. Yet, as Arnett writes here of his international news coverage for CNN in the years following Vietnam, within decade American policymakers were initiating actions that would

again draw US soldiers into another unwinnable conflict, that of Afghanistan. This is the first of a three-part Arnett series on his coverage of Afghanistan over a 20-year period.

In Part 2, to appear soon, Arnett will cover the CIA retreat from Afghanistan and a raging civil war producing violent Islamic terrorism that spills over its borders and into America itself.

**SERVICES FOR ROBERT SHAW:** A gathering of family, friends and AP colleagues of **Robert Shaw** was held Saturday in North Little Rock, Ark., and our colleague Lindel Hutson ([Email](#)) filed a report and shared a photo.

Sometimes you hear the terms “fake news, alternative facts, enemy of the people,” Lindel told the 30 people at the services. But, he said, anyone who says those things never met Robert Shaw.

Shaw, who died July 15 at the age of 79, was a newsman and correspondent and then bureau chief in Oklahoma City, Indianapolis and Little Rock during his 42-year AP career. Robert’s daughter, Erin Moore, read tributes from former AP colleagues that recently were in Connecting.

[Here](#) is his obituary as it appeared in the Arkansas Democrat Gazette. It is a remarkable story of his life.



Pictured at Robert's services, left to right, Andrew DeMillo, current Little Rock staffer; Harry King, former AP Little Rock news editor and sports editor; Lindel Hutson, former Little Rock and General Desk staffer, Indianapolis news editor and Oklahoma City bureau chief; Linda Franklin Sargent, former Oklahoma City news editor and former

staffer in Little Rock and Dallas, and Jamie Stengle, former Little Rock staffer now a staffer in the Dallas bureau. Also attending but not pictured was Tom Yates, who worked with Shaw at AP Little Rock and later joined UPI in Little Rock.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GENE!** – Our colleague **Gene Herrick** celebrates his 95<sup>th</sup> trip around the sun today – and I know you join me in wishing this remarkable man - whose photos for AP chronicled the Korean War and the Civil Rights Movement - a very happy birthday and many, many more to come. Gene is at – [gherrick@jetbroadband.com](mailto:gherrick@jetbroadband.com)

Readers of Today in History will note: **Mick Jagger** shares the same birthday as Gene - 17 years Gene's junior. Rock on, Gene!

Have a great week – be safe, stay healthy!

Paul

## Watching how Russia lost its Afghan war and America was soon dragged in



**DRESSED IN LOCAL GARB, PETER ARNETT (left) and two Dutch journalists trek across Afghanistan's Kunar Valley in autumn, 1983, to an anti-Russian Islamic mujahadeen combat base in the Hindu Kush mountains. Arnett was on assignment for Parade Magazine with freelance photographer Ed Hille while on vacation from CNN. The**

guerillas they clandestinely crossed the Pakistan border which required that the 40-mile trip be made without breaks and warned that the route would take them close to Russian military outposts.

**Peter Arnett (Email)** - I walked into the Russian war in Afghanistan war in 1982 with Ed Hille, a young freelance photographer from Texas, who was on his first combat assignment. My former AP colleague, photographer Eddie Adams, set up the trip with his contacts in Parade Magazine after I had complained to him that my employer, CNN, was not interested in coverage of the Russian war. I had a month-long vacation coming and was grateful that Parade, edited at the time by the dynamic Walter Anderson, was willing to take responsibility for the assignment.

The Soviet Union's military invasion of Afghanistan was already two years old, and even though President Jimmy Carter in retaliation had pulled the United States out of the 1980 Moscow Summer Olympics and dispatched naval forces to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean to secure oil resources, serious concerns about Russia's broader intentions had lessened. There was growing awareness that an expanding tribal insurgency fueled by Islamic nationalism was seriously challenging Soviet attempts to prop up the communist leadership of the notoriously ungovernable state with a historic dislike for foreign occupiers, and the war was being described by some as Russia's Vietnam.

Ed Hille and I began our story in Peshawar, the major Pakistani town at the entrance to the Khyber Pass border with Afghanistan, and the center of the growing international covert assistance effort for the insurgents, particularly by the CIA. We quickly learned the ropes of coverage from the army of young western freelance male and female reporters and photographers whose bold travel inside Afghanistan was fueling the world's appetite for war information. The stringer journalists from many western nations shared rooms and income in cheap hotels and rooming houses and were able to function, even though Pakistan had officially closed off access to the war zone to journalists; the mountainous border through the self-governing tribal areas stretching many miles from Peshawar could be crossed on foot with willing tribal combatants. With the help of freelancers, that's how Hille and I made it.



**AFGHAN MUJHADEEN GUERILLAS, who allowed reporter Peter Arnett and photographer Ed Hille to join them for two weeks in their operations against Russian occupation troops in 1982, plan the days actions outside their cave hideouts in the Hindu Kush mountains.**

We began our journey after a late-night bus ride from Peshawar to a nondescript tribal village near the border, accompanying a small group of Pushtun fighters from the extremist Herb-1-Islam party. One of them, a young soldier man who spoke English, warned us, "We are not here to escort you. This is an operational mission, and we are required to reach our base within 24 hours. We will not stop moving for anyone or any reason, so do not get too tired or injure yourself. You'll be left behind." By dawn we had scrambled down the rocky pathways of the mountain border to the Afghan side, and the Kunar Valley stretched out before us, a vast, empty desert expanse with the Hindu Kush mountains rising high to our near north. We carried brown blankets like Mexican serapes to throw over ourselves as camouflage if caught in the open by Russian aircraft.

By evening we passed through farmlands watered by the Kunar river and entered a quiet, white-walled village a mile or so from a Russian outpost, its dark shape visible in the moonlight. We were served tea then joined by a villager who led us through paddy fields to the banks of the river. We forded the swift waters on rafts made from the inner tubes of truck tires lashed together with branches and twine. The water lapped at our knees and soaked our pants as the current and hasty paddling carried us to the other side. The cooperation of the local people reminded me of the reportage of the Australian journalist Wilfred Burchett who traveled with the Vietcong through the forests of Vietnam within hearing distance of unsuspecting American soldiers.

Beyond the river was the last stretch, a mujahedeen encampment in a deep ravine near the entrance to the valley. We twisted our knees and ankles on loose rocks as we

headed up a steep, dry riverbed to the caves where the guerrillas lived. Machine gun tracer rounds were smacking into the cliff face above us; we were told a guerilla gunner was trading fire with a Russian military outpost about two miles down the valley.

In a real sense we were following in the footsteps of CBS correspondent Dan Rather, a good friend from Vietnam War days and the first of a very few American mainstream reporters to cover the insurgency. Rather smuggled his TV team across the border, spending six days in the mountains in eastern Afghanistan with Afghan fighters for a "60 Minutes" account late in 1980. These were the first images seen in America of the distant war, but Rather's commendable enterprise was savaged by some critics including the Washington Post's Tom Shales who wrote in a column titled "Gunga Dan" that the reporter's story, showing him clad in the billowing garments of traditional Afghan dress, "smacked of showy one-upmanship and theatricality". The column title invoked images of Rudyard Kipling's obedient Indian manservant character Gunga Din, a malicious sobriquet that stayed with Rather for some time. After that, American news organizations including CBS covered the war with stringers.

As Tom Shales had written, Afghan dress did indeed "smack of showy theatricality," but for Hille and me wearing the loose cotton trousers, flowing shirt and white head scarf the outfit the Afghans call the Shalwar Kameez, made good sense because that is what many of the insurgents we met were wearing.



**EACH DAY WHILE IN AFGHANISTAN Peter Arnett (center) and photographer Ed Hille (not pictured) joined patrols with Afghan mujahadeen fighters whose main task was to conceal themselves on the rocky hillsides to ambush passing Russian armed columns on the Kunar highway below, and to retreat to protective caves when airstrikes and helicopter gunships retaliated against them. The outpost also guided**

**long columns of Afghan soldiers moving across the Hindu Kush towards the capital Kabul, eventually putting the capital under siege.**

The Afghan rebels we met and befriended in the Kunar caves rejected the analogy to America's Vietnam or with other modern insurgencies. "We derive our strength from Allah and our knowledge from the Holy Koran," said 23-year-old Husain Ahmad, who spoke moderately good English learned at Kabul University before the Russians sent him into the hills. He manned a rocket launcher. The name mujahedeen, he said, meant holy warrior. "The Russians are godless communists. We will willingly die for our cause." Everywhere, among boys as young as 14 as well as gray-bearded and bent, we discovered this same enthusiasm for the struggle.

Imamul Haq, an 18-year-old infantryman with a high-school education in Pakistan, said, "Russian soldiers are dangerous to all Muslims. I think I have killed three or four Russian soldiers in fighting along the highway, but we never get close enough to find out for sure. It is very difficult to take Russian soldiers' prisoner. My friends tell me that when they have got close enough to capture them the Russians would shoot themselves rather than be captured. I believe Russian prisoners were routinely shot but now we are under orders to keep them prisoner."

The devoutness of the guerillas was always apparent to us. They first gathered for prayers at dawn, under a shelf of rock. In all they stopped to pray a half-a-dozen times each day, prostrating themselves on the ground. They also adhered strictly to the social tenets of the Koran. We met no women with the fighting forces. The guerilla fighters were modest about their person, again an injunction of the Koran. They were always fully dressed, even in the heat of the day. When they bathed, they made sure they were alone and concealed inside a shower stall built of rocks into which stream water had been piped through a hollow bamboo.



**AN AFGHAN GUERRILLA DISPLAYS his RPG rocket launcher to photographer Ed Hille as he prepares to join an observation post on the Kunar highway. The portable, shoulder fired anti-tank rocket propelled grenade was the work horse weapon for the Mujahedeen earlier in the war. Eventually the CIA supplied more sophisticated weaponry.**

During our visit the Russian military were unwilling to risk moving up the narrow, rocky ravine to our caves because of ambush from guerillas nestled in the cliffs. But they were often spying from above. During our first day in camp some fighter-bombers peppered us with bombs but fortunately there were no injuries. Each day after that we ventured to the highway, watching from the safety of very large boulders to see the Mujahedeen try to ambush Russian patrols as Soviet Mi-24 helicopters droned overhead. But the huge flying machines were vulnerable to the RPG rocket launchers carried by some guerillas and were careful about approaching. I asked the unit commander, Niani Tola, what to do if the helicopters decided to attack. "Just press against the wall like this," he said. "The Russians are very poor shots." But what if the Russians got lucky? The guerillas medical assistance was comparable to that of the Revolutionary War. There were 12 French medical teams each with two doctors assisting what was estimated as a 200,000 Mujahedeen force. There was additional help in refugee hospitals across the Pakistan border, but it could take 12 days to reach it. A hit in the extremities meant gangrene and eventual amputation. The border hospitals were crowded with former rebels hobbling on makeshift limbs. Our unit had no first aid supplies.



The longer we stayed the more I marveled at their calm acceptance of risk. The small band admitted to 48 of their number being killed fighting the Russians on the highway in the previous two years. In the face of Russian tanks and air power, most of the guerillas had to rely primarily on old bolt-action Enfield rifles, aging submachine guns and copies of modern Soviet weapons manufactured by village gunsmiths.



**LOCAL AFGHAN VILLAGES WATCH** as a mujahideen pack-mule caravan heads for the distant mountain passes along the Pakistani border, one that Arnett and Hille joined at the conclusion of their reporting trip .

Our vantage point during our 1982 visit was but a little window on a war that was being waged in anonymity. While there we were told of battles fought but that no one on the outside heard of them and if they did it was months later. We could see the war was getting bigger. Every day or so in the evening long lines of Afghan guerillas holding small bags of food and weapons filed up the ravine past our caves. We were told they were en route across ancient paths through the Hindu Kush mountains to major battlefields close to the capital, Kabul.

“We are helpless and alone,” said the commander of our guerilla unit Commander Niani Tola to me through an interpreter. “But we will fight on. We will eventually liberate our country at any cost. We will fight a lifetime. No one can predict when the Russians will withdraw. What we need are anti-aircraft weapons to bring down the planes. But no one gives us any.”

There was something I could do to help. Our diet was as bare as the landscape. It usually consisted of flat corn bread called *nan* cooked on a griddle, sometimes supplemented with boiled red beans or a simple candy made of raw sugar. When

photographer Hille started to complain about the lack of meat, I had to agree. We had noticed a small farm in the valley, and from there we were able to make a dramatic addition to our diet: Parade Magazine brought a goat for \$50. The camp butcher dressed it and served us the first cuts, thick kebabs on a skewer broiled over an open fire. Later meals included soups, stews and ribs. That goat fed the whole camp for three days.

*A distinguished correspondent slips into Afghanistan*

# Report From A WAR ZONE



Peter Arnett and Ed Hille (2nd and 3rd from left) with anti-Communist rebels. These small bands use primitive weapons, have few first-aid supplies and suffer heavy losses. Yet they're giving the Russians cause to worry.

**T**HE NIGHT WAS SPLIT WITH THE crack of dueling machine guns, but our guides did not break stride.

We were already 18 hours inside Afghanistan, now more than 30 miles by my guess from where we had crossed clandestinely at the Pakistan border. We had negotiated stony mountain trails that climbed into the clouds and descended dry riverbeds that twisted our knees and ankles.

"Just put one foot after the other—we're surely getting there," I muttered to photographer Ed Hille as we stumbled along. Our protests at the fast pace were muted by the realization that we had to reach a distant rebel camp by dawn or risk being caught in the open.

The machine guns ahead pointed the way. The tracer rounds carved arcs of smoldering light before they thwacked into the cliff face at the entrance to the small valley where we were heading. Our Afghan guides told us that a rebel machine gunner was trading fire with a military outpost about two miles down the valley.

Hille and I were very anxious to reach our journey's end—and as soon as possible. Our feet were blistered and our bodies ached. I had covered wars ranging from Vietnam to Cyprus, Central America to West Beirut, but rarely had there been a need to walk so far so fast. I kept recalling advice from a colleague who was experienced in this part of the world. He had said, "No matter how tough the going gets in Afghanistan, you have to keep telling yourself that you can do it. And there's no

choice: You have to do it."

I frequently repeated that advice to Hille, who was relatively new to war coverage and who had the added burden of heavy camera equipment. His response was usually a grunt of exertion.

Finally, we entered a quiet, white-walled village, and then came our last obstacle: the Kunar River. The Kunar is fed with icy waters from the mountain ranges that rise toward Everest. Because boats are difficult to

conceal from enemy helicopters, the rebels ford the Kunar on rafts made of the inner tubes of truck tires lashed together with branches and twine. A dozen of us clung together on these rafts, the water lapping our knees and soaking the seats of our pants while the current and hasty paddling carried us to the other side.

"No one told me it was going to be like this," said Hille as he sorted through his camera bag on the riverbank to see if his equipment had survived the journey.



War booty: Rebel fighter with Russian belt buckle.

While the world looks the other way, a struggle of mythic proportions is being played out in the mountains of Central Asia. Pitted against the tanks, helicopters and warplanes of one of the earth's most powerful nations are a people whose main weapon is courage.

Afghanistan is a country the size of Texas that is as desolate as the most inhospitable places in our own Southwest. Distance is measured not in miles but in days. The population of 15 million lives in deep valleys accessible by mountain passes up to 20,000 feet high. The Soviet Union is Afghanistan's northern neighbor, and the two countries share a border that runs along some of the highest places in the world.

Within a 24-hour period ending on Dec. 27, 1979, the Soviets airlifted 30,000 to 50,000 troops across the mountain passes to give the Communist government in the Afghan capital of Kabul from collapse. The number of Soviet troops there now is estimated at

*continued*

BY PETER ARNETT

PAGE 12 • FEBRUARY 20, 1983 • PARADE MAGAZINE

Parade Magazine published Arnett's Afghan story over several pages in the February 20, 1983, edition. When CNN managing editor Ed (no relation to Ted) Turner, who had turned down Arnett's request to cover the war for the young cable news network, saw the story in the February 20, 1983, edition of Parade Magazine, he told a staff meeting, "only a crazy guy like Arnett would spend his vacation in Afghanistan." At that time Parade was an influential publication and had a circulation of 3.5 million.

I was assigned to Moscow as CNN's bureau chief early in 1986 as the new Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev was loosening the government's tight control over official information with his Glasnost and Perestroika policies. Up to that time all

Russian military information from Afghanistan was classified top secret, and the Russian people knew little of the growing costs of the conflict. But Gorbachev's openness policies began allowing Russian journalists freedom to cover the war, and television and newspaper began publishing graphic accounts of the Russian combat losses and injuries suffered by the 100,000 soldiers currently serving there and the 400,000 who had previously been posted. One of the most popular young television personalities in Moscow, Artyom Borovik, began visiting me at the CNN bureau for detailed briefing on my coverage of the Vietnam and later wars. He began covering the conflict himself in 1987 and his thorough accounts of the growing Russian military disaster in Afghanistan and the tell-all book, *The Hidden War*, published in 1990 made him media hero in the post-Soviet years, only for him to die in a private plane crash in Moscow in 2000 at age 39.



**ABC NEWS PRODUCER Eileen O'Connor, Peter Arnett of CNN, and other western Moscow-based reporters were given their first official press trip to Afghanistan in late autumn, 1987. Here they ride in a military truck to a Russian outpost outside the Afghan capital Kabul on a rainy afternoon.**

The western press, on its first official visit to the war, was flown to Kabul airport in an old Russian Antonov transport plane. Landing on the runway required a terrifying corkscrew descent to avoid being hit by murderous anti-aircraft Stinger missiles recently provided the Mujahedeen by the CIA. To further secure our aircraft as we plunged through the sky, three Russian helicopters flew in circles around us, randomly firing off small exploding projectiles in the hope of distracting any approaching missiles off-target. On the ground we saw the wreckage of a dozen small and large aircraft that had not been as lucky as we were. Russian press officials brushed aside

our suggestions that Kabul was under Mujahadeen siege, blaming the airport scene as hit -and-run kamikaze actions by guerillas concealed amongst the Local population swollen in size by the war.

The Russian military had already been in Afghanistan eight years and had encountered the same problems faced by the U.S. forces fighting the Vietcong in the 1960s. The 40<sup>th</sup> Soviet Army sent to fight the Afghans was trained to fight a high-intensity war with large armored and air forces, as were the American troops in Vietnam. But these were low-intensity wars. The Russians settled into bases along the main highways and near key cities and towns, as had the Americans, ceding 80 percent of the rugged terrain to the Mujahadeen who were dispersed throughout the country and proved to be rugged and highly motivated fighters.

Russian officials in Kabul insisted that the military commitment was an intervention to assist a friendly government rather than an invasion to conquer the country and were reluctant to talk about their own casualties that journalists in Moscow were estimating at around 12,000 dead. We were getting the impression that the Russians were tiring of the war.



**Peter Arnett with Russian soldiers from a 152 mm self-propelled artillery battalion at Khotso province in 1987 during a government press trip to show progress in the war. Later that day unexpected mortar fire from insurgents in the nearby hills hastened the visiting group's departure from the provincial airport.**

I was ending my Russian assignment when President Ronald Reagan visited Moscow in May 1988 for a cordial summit meeting with Gorbachev. The Soviet leader had already realized his military forces were in a no-win situation in Afghanistan and he was seeking an end to the war. The American president obliged by agreeing to an accord between Russia, the United States and Pakistan that provided for the survival

of Kabul's communist government but also the complete withdrawal of Russian troops by early 1989.

I was to assigned CNN's national security beat in Washington DC when the war ended. I'll leave it to Wikipedia to succinctly sum up the Mujahadeen victory: "Amazingly, Afghan foot soldiers had defeated a World superpower, but their country lay in ruins. With 1.5 million dead, 6 million refugees, cities and water supply wrecked, and the countryside strewn with as many as 15 million active mines. Significant foreign aid was never forthcoming, from the United States or elsewhere. The various groups that had coalesced to fight the Soviets immediately began fighting one another for control of the country. Factional fighting reduced much of the capital to rubble."

## Robert Shaw was pro's pro who influenced countless young AP staffers

**Joe Bonney** ([Email](#)) - Like everyone else who worked with or knew Robert Shaw, I was saddened by his death. He was a pro's pro who did his job well and influenced countless young AP staffers. He also had an appreciation for life's humorous moments.

Soon after arriving in Jackson as correspondent, Robert recognized that one of Mississippi's top stories in 1976 would be the state's Democratic presidential caucuses, billed as the first Deep South showdown between candidates Jimmy Carter and George Wallace. Robert also saw that coverage would be challenging -- the caucuses would use a convoluted system of proportional voting and paper ballots, overseen by rival party factions that were barely on speaking terms. If AP members were to get a timely, accurate tally, we'd have to do it ourselves.

Robert spent weeks building a system for reporting and counting the votes. His work paid off on election night, when AP had the only substantive and accurate results. UPI, which relied on party officials' tally, was two or three days behind. It proved a turning point in our battle with UPI for dominance in the state.



By 2 a.m., AP's total victory was apparent. Robert and Ron Harrist decided to take a celebratory break at the Mayflower Cafe, an all-night joint down the street. The waitress handed them menus and asked what they'd like to drink. Robert said he'd love a cold beer.

"Sorry, city ordinance. We can't serve beer after midnight," she said, nodding toward a pair of policemen at a nearby table. Disappointed, Robert settled for a glass of iced tea.

A couple of minutes later, the waitress reappeared. "Here's your milkshake," she said loudly, speaking in the cops' direction. She set a large stainless-steel cup on the table.

Robert looked up, puzzled. "But I ordered iced tea," he said.

"Here's your milkshake!" she repeated, this time more forcefully.

The waitress gave him a firm nudge, and Robert looked down at the metal milkshake cup. It was filled with Budweiser.

He grinned, and the waitress winked. Robert left her a good tip.

## Shocked by Stephan's death

**Hal Bock** ([Email](#)) - I was shocked beyond words by the news of Stephan Nasstrom's death, We had been in frequent e-mail communication after he moved to Peru. He seemed to be living a good life. A cool guy with a great sense of humor. I can't believe he's gone.

## Balloon festival in New Jersey



**Guy Palmiotto** ([Email](#)) - My wife, Carmela, and I, attended the New Jersey Lottery Festival Of Ballooning Saturday morning at the Solberg Airport, Readington, NJ. This photo shows the balloons filling the morning sky. According to the festival's website, 58 balloons participated in this years' event, though I'm sure that number was underestimated. See the link: <https://balloonfestival.com/balloons/pilots>. Overall it

was an amazing sight to see, and a nice photographic opportunity. This is an annual event held at this Central New Jersey airport.

## Buck Moon over LA



Nick Ut ([Email](#)) – Here's a photo of July's full Buck Moon of 2021.

### *Best of the Week*

**Dedicated source work produces rare video as Tigray forces retake regional capital**



#### AP PHOTO

Through months of patient contacts, Nairobi-based senior producer Khaled Kazziha built trust with an Ethiopian freelancer who had promised AP first refusal on video and photos he made as events unfolded in the embattled Tigray region. That promise was fulfilled recently with images that included celebrations as Tigrayan forces retook the regional capital Mekele, prisoners of war in detention and an on-camera interview with Tigray's leader, among other rare scenes.

An airstrike on a crowded market the day after Ethiopia's June election signalled that the conflict in Tigray had entered a new phase. As AP's crew tried in vain to board a flight from Addis Ababa to Tigray, events moved quickly. Ethiopia's government announced a unilateral ceasefire, and their forces fled Tigray, allowing the region's former leaders, the Tigray People's Liberation Front, to return.

Internet, phone lines and transport links to Tigray were cut off, but Kazziha, who had recently returned from assignment in Tigray, knew that eventually he would get footage of the historic events — he just didn't know when. He had trained the freelancer in AP style and quality standards, and knew he was in Mekele.

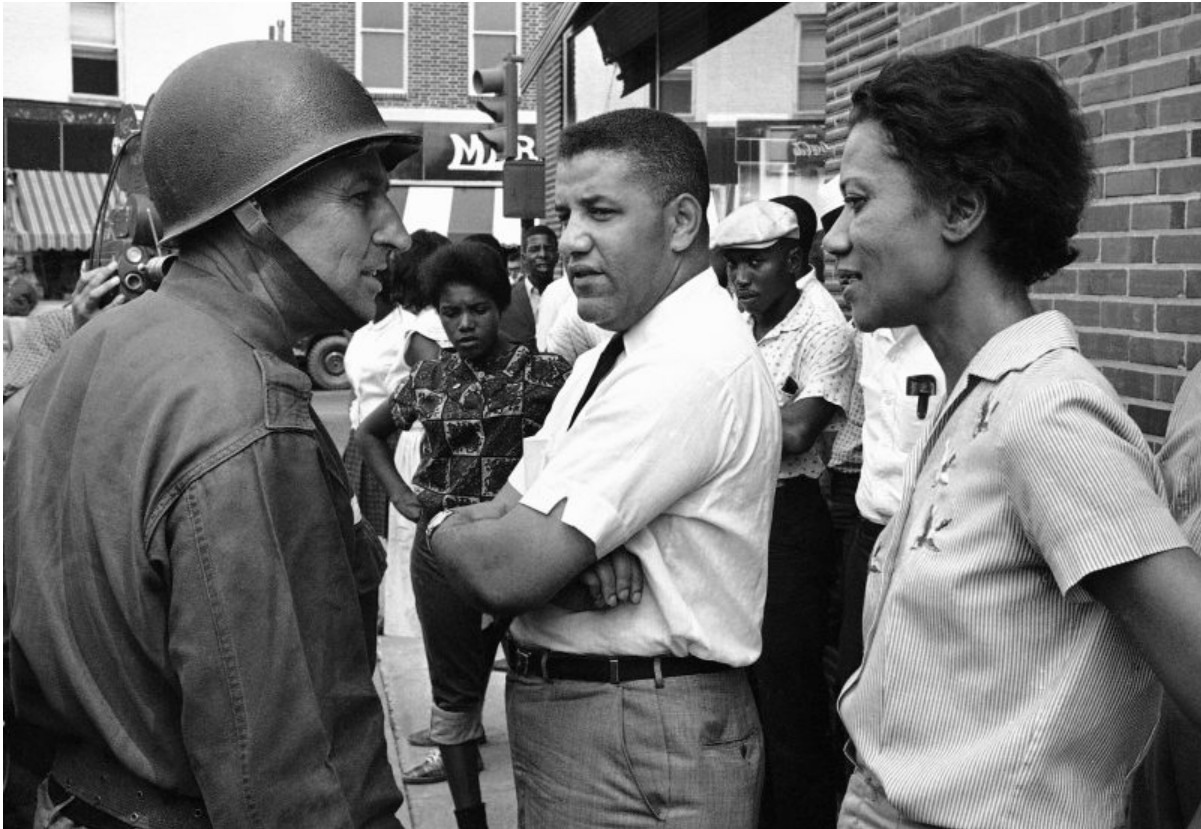
Days went by, and a few journalists fortunate to be in Tigray smuggled out some reporting and images, but media outlets around the world had little imagery with which to tell the story.

Read more [here](#).

### ***Best of the States***



# Smart prep, sharp execution put AP out front on obit of prominent civil rights leader Gloria Richardson



AP Photo/Harvey Georges

Among the toughest obits to write on the fly are those for people who were hugely influential but rarely heard from in their later years. AP's Brian Witte, however, was fully prepared when he got an exclusive tip on a Friday evening that prominent civil rights figure Gloria Richardson had died.

Witte, AP's Annapolis, Maryland, statehouse correspondent, used carefully crafted, detailed prep and source work to break news of the death of the first Black woman to lead a sustained desegregation movement outside the South. South editor Pam Sampson then fast-filed the story with images, beating all the competition.

Thanks in part to a striking AP photo, Richardson symbolized fearlessness among civil rights activists: It shows her pushing away the bayonet of a National Guardsman during a 1963 protest in Cambridge, Maryland. She would also share the stage with Martin Luther King Jr. at the March on Washington, personally negotiate with Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and help launch the Black Power movement. Then she all but disappeared.

Read more [here](#).

# Connecting Regional Reunion: September in Texas

## *- Plus a generous bonus event!*

You are invited to attend the Sept. 18-19, 2021, AP Connecting Regional Reunion in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Co-hosts are Mike Holmes of Omaha, Brent Kallestad of Tallahassee and Diana Heidgerd of Dallas. To register, email Diana at [heidgerd@flash.net](mailto:heidgerd@flash.net)

Please register by Monday, Aug. 2, which is also the deadline to get the reduced AP Connecting Reunion rate at the group hotel (see below). Pay your own way for events Saturday, Sept. 18, and Sunday, Sept. 19.

There's also a generous bonus event, hosted by David and Ellen Sedeño, on Friday night, Sept. 17 (see below). All events are casual attire.

### **Registration list:** (will be updated):

- Amanda Barnett
- Barry Bedlan
- Betsy Blaney
- Joei Bohr & Mark Woolsey
- Sally Carpenter Hale & Rick Hale
- Mike & Sondra Cochran
- Pam & Frank Collins
- Schuyler Dixon
- Katie Fairbank
- Stephen & Andrea Hawkins
- Diana & Paul Heidgerd
- Mike Holmes
- Brent Kallestad
- Dave & Darlene Koenig
- Mark Lambert
- John & Eileen Lumpkin
- Scott McCartney
- Steve & Teri Mace
- Charles & Barbara Richards
- Rod Richardson & Kia Breaux Richardson
- David & Ellen Sedeño
- Kelley Shannon
- Ed & Barbara Staats
- Jamie Stengle
- Terry Wallace & Liz Eaton

**Group Events:** A Tex-Mex dinner Saturday night, Sept. 18, and going to the Texas Rangers vs. Chicago White Sox game on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 19, at retractable-roof Globe Life Field in Arlington. Baseball tickets are \$45 each and must be reserved in advance via Diana. Details on the registration form.

**Bonus Event!** Friday night, Sept. 17:

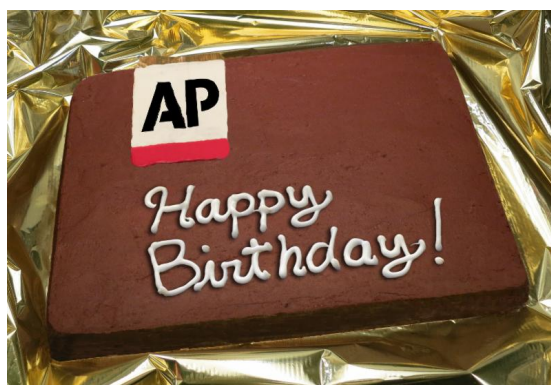
David and Ellen Sedeño of Dallas have graciously offered to host and pick up the tab (for reunion early arrivals or those who live in the Dallas-Fort Worth area) for dinner Friday night at their family's BBQ restaurant: Meat U Anywhere BBQ in nearby Grapevine. For more information or to confirm for Friday night, email [david@meatuanywhere.com](mailto:david@meatuanywhere.com)

**Group Hotel:**

SpringHill Suites Dallas DFW Airport South/CentrePort, rates \$109-\$114 per night, plus taxes & fees, AP Connecting Reunion rate is available Sept. 15-20. Please make your reservation by Aug. 2. Details on the registration form.

See you in September!

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



Gene Herrick - [gherrick@jetbroadband.com](mailto:gherrick@jetbroadband.com)

Mark Scolforo - [markscol@hotmail.com](mailto:markscol@hotmail.com)

## Stories of interest

*With AP 1967-69*

***Laura Foreman, Reporter Whose Romance Became a Scandal, Dies at 76*** (New York Times)



**Laura Foreman in 1976 at the Republican National Convention in Kansas City, Mo., as a reporter for The Philadelphia Inquirer. She was the first woman to be named political writer at the paper.Credit...Robert L. Mooney/The Philadelphia Inquirer**

**By Katharine Q. Seelye**

Laura Foreman, a reporter for The Philadelphia Inquirer in the 1970s, was surely not the first journalist to become romantically involved with a source. But she was among the first to have that romance, with a powerful politician, blow up into a public scandal.

By the time the affair was disclosed — and The Inquirer learned that the politician had given her more than \$20,000 worth of gifts, including jewelry, furniture and a fur coat, and helped her buy a 1964 Morgan sports car — she was working in the Washington bureau of The New York Times. The disclosure cost Ms. Foreman her job and her journalism career at 34. It gave The Inquirer a black eye. And it led the paper to adopt one of the first ethics policies in what was still a largely freewheeling, unprescribed profession.

The politician, State Senator Henry J. Cianfrani, who was known as Buddy, went to jail on unrelated charges of corruption. He was released in 1979, and he and Ms. Foreman were married in 1980.

While Mr. Cianfrani successfully regained his status as a ward leader in South Philadelphia, Ms. Foreman, a quick and facile writer with a literary bent, went to work for Time-Life Books in Alexandria, Va. She was the author of more than 40 volumes,

many of them centered on historical figures or true crimes. She and Mr. Cianfrani later went their separate ways, but were still married when he died in 2002 at 79.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Sibby Christensen, Richard Chady, Mike Feinsilber, Chris Connell.

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## ***Danish Siddiqui's Singular Images Captured Our Uncomfortable Truths*** (New Yorker)

**By Rahul Bhatia**

On July 13th, Danish Siddiqui, the Pulitzer Prize-winning chief photographer for Reuters in India, posted footage of the Humvee he was riding in coming under fire in southern Afghanistan. Within days, Siddiqui, who was embedded with Afghan troops, was killed during a clash with the Taliban. In the days after his death, news organizations have posted collections of his most striking images. On social media and in conversations with me, people were astonished that one photojournalist had been responsible for so many singular images that captured uncomfortable truths. They also expressed surprise at the depth of their grief; it felt like being robbed of conviction.

India has grown more politically repressive in recent years, with new limits on images and language settling like layers of dust. A nebulous greater good has been invoked by Indian officials in a seeming effort to turn lived experience into something smaller. India is "too much of a democracy," a prominent administrator close to the Prime Minister said last year. Siddiqui's images enlarged the country's disquiet, its people's sufferings and their murmurs of dread. When major events unfolded, as they have at speed in India recently, Siddiqui was there. This past April, as hospitals ran out of oxygen and officials downplayed covid deaths, his photograph of funeral pyres at a New Delhi cremation ground was undeniable evidence that Indians were dying in vast numbers.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

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## ***Meet Julie K Brown, the woman who brought down Jeffrey Epstein*** (Guardian)

**By Andrew Anthony**

The town of Palm Beach in Florida, the crime writer Carl Hiaasen has observed, "is one of the few places left in America where you can still drive around in a Rolls-Royce convertible and not get laughed at." It's an unironic island, filled with the super-rich and famous, plastic surgeons and, of course, the former US president, Donald Trump, who holds court at his ostentatious Mar-a-Lago resort.

A satellite of Miami, the island prides itself on its many flamboyant charity balls, but no amount of good-cause fundraising can remove the whiff of corruption that hangs heavy in the subtropical air. If money talks in most places, in Palm Beach it speaks with a confident authority that's seldom questioned. Never has that understanding been more egregiously demonstrated than in the case of the inscrutable financier and sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

In 2008 Epstein was sent to prison, having pleaded guilty to the charge of procuring for prostitution a girl below the age of 18. It was the culmination of a three-year investigation, involving first state and then federal authorities. The local police had uncovered evidence that Epstein had sexually coerced and abused scores of young women and girls, some as young as 13 or 14. There were also a number of testaments to rape.

Read more [here](#). Shared by Richard Chady.

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## ***Olympic broadcasters curb sexual images of female athletes*** (AP)

By GRAHAM DUNBAR

TOKYO (AP) — At an Olympics aiming to set the highest level of television standards, the head of broadcasting at the Tokyo Games is trying to banish overly sexualized images of female athletes.

“Sport appeal, not sex appeal” is one mantra Olympic officials push in an effort to reach gender equity on the field of play and on screen.

“You will not see in our coverage some things that we have been seeing in the past, with details and close-up on parts of the body,” Olympic Broadcasting Services chief executive Yiannis Exarchos said Monday.

That can be difficult with state-of-the-art technology filming sports — such as beach volleyball, gymnastics, swimming and track — where female athletes' uniforms can be scant and skimpy.

Read more [here](#).



## Celebrating AP's 175th

### 175th anniversary Polo shirts



AP is offering a variety of 175th anniversary merchandise, but one item that isn't available and that many staffers like is a Polo shirt. Adam Yeomans, AP's regional director for the South, has taken care of that. He recently ordered Polos for AP staffers in the South, a few members and retirees, other AP fans. Now you have the opportunity to order one of these limited-edition shirts emblazoned with the AP's 175th anniversary logo. The cost is \$30 per shirt, including shipping. Adult sizes are S, M, L, XL and XXL. The Navy Blue shirts are a 50/50 blend and tend to run a little large. If you'd like to order one, please email Adam Yeomans at [adamyemans@yahoo.com](mailto:adamyemans@yahoo.com) with your name, phone number, home address, and the size(s) and quantity by July 30. Adam says he will collect payment once the shirts are ready for shipping. He's trying to cover his cost; if there's anything left, he says he will donate it to the AP Employee Relief Fund.

### AP store for 175th, vintage merchandise



The AP has created a store with 175th anniversary merchandise available for purchase, as well as items branded with some of AP's most historic logos.

Click [here](#).

### AP Through Time: A Photographic History



AP Through Time: A Photographic History” - created by Director of Corporate Archives, Valerie Komor, is a keepsake commemorating AP’s 175th year. Small in size (6 ¾ x 6 ¾ in.), it is organized chronologically in eight segments that trace the broad outlines of AP’s development from 1846 to the present: Beginnings, Evolution, New Century, Modernity, Expansion, One World, Speed, and Transformation. Click [here](#) to view and make an order.

## AP at 175 video

This video celebrates the unique role AP has played since 1846.

# Oops!

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## Today in History - July 26, 2021





## By The Associated Press

Today is Monday, July 26, the 207th day of 2021. There are 158 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On July 26, 1775, the Continental Congress established a Post Office and appointed Benjamin Franklin its Postmaster-General.

### On this date:

In 1788, New York became the 11th state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

In 1847, the western African country of Liberia, founded by freed American slaves, declared its independence.

In 1908, U.S. Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte ordered creation of a force of special agents that was a forerunner of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In 1945, the Potsdam Declaration warned Imperial Japan to unconditionally surrender, or face "prompt and utter destruction." Winston Churchill resigned as Britain's prime minister after his Conservatives were soundly defeated by the Labour Party; Clement Attlee succeeded him.

In 1953, Fidel Castro began his revolt against Fulgencio Batista (fool-HEN'-see-oh bah-TEES'-tah) with an unsuccessful attack on an army barracks in eastern Cuba. (Castro ousted Batista in 1959.)

In 1956, the Italian liner Andrea Doria sank off New England, some 11 hours after colliding with the Swedish liner Stockholm; at least 51 people died, from both vessels.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In 2002, the Republican-led House voted, 295-132, to create an enormous Homeland Security Department in the biggest government reorganization in decades.

In 2006, in a dramatic turnaround from her first murder trial, Andrea Yates was found not guilty by reason of insanity by a Houston jury in the bathtub drownings of her five children; she was committed to a state mental hospital.

In 2013, Ariel Castro, the man who'd imprisoned three women in his Cleveland home, subjecting them to a decade of rapes and beatings, pleaded guilty to 937 counts in a deal to avoid the death penalty. (Castro later committed suicide in prison.)

In 2016, Hillary Clinton became the first woman to be nominated for president by a major political party at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

In 2017, President Donald Trump announced on Twitter that he would not "accept or allow" transgender people to serve in the U.S. military. (After a legal battle, the Defense Department approved a new policy requiring most individuals to serve in their birth gender.)

Ten years ago: The White House threatened to veto emergency House legislation that aimed to avert a threatened national default. Democratic Rep. David Wu of Oregon announced he would resign amid the political fallout from an 18-year-old woman's allegations of an unwanted sexual encounter with him, charges that Wu denied.

Five years ago: A former employee stabbed 19 disabled people to death and injured two dozen others at a residential care facility in Japan. (Satoshi Uematsu, who said he was trying to help the world by killing people he thought were burdens, was sentenced to death.)

One year ago: A processional with the casket of the late U.S. Rep. John Lewis crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Alabama, where Lewis and other civil rights marchers were beaten 55 years earlier. Authorities declared a riot in Portland, Oregon, after protesters breached a fence surrounding the city's federal courthouse; thousands had gathered for another night of protests over the killing of George Floyd and the presence of federal agents. Florida surpassed New York as the state with the second-most confirmed coronavirus cases in the U.S., behind only California. A day after roaring ashore as a hurricane, Hanna lashed the Texas Gulf Coast with high winds and drenching rains. Oscar winner Olivia de Havilland, best known as the kindly Melanie in "Gone With the Wind," died at her home in Paris at the age of 104.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Robert Colbert is 90. Actor-singer Darlene Love is 80. Singer Brenton Wood is 80. Rock star Mick Jagger is 78. Movie director Peter Hyams is 78. Actor Helen Mirren is 76. Rock musician Roger Taylor (Queen) is 72. Actor Susan George is 71. Olympic gold medal figure skater Dorothy Hamill is 65. Actor Nana Visitor is 64. Actor Kevin Spacey is 62. Rock singer Gary Cherone is 60. Actor Sandra Bullock is 57. Actor-comedian Danny Woodburn is 57. Rock singer Jim Lindberg (Pennywise) is 56. Actor Jeremy Piven is 56. Rapper-reggae singer Wayne Wonder is 55. Actor Jason Statham (STAY'-thum) is 54. Actor Cress Williams is 51. TV host Chris Harrison is 50. Actor Kate Beckinsale is 48. Actor Gary Owen is 48. Rock musician Dan Konopka (OK Go) is 47. Gospel/Contemporary Christian singer Rebecca St. James is 44. Actor Eve Myles is 43. Actor Juliet Rylance is 42. Actor Monica Raymund is 35. Actor Caitlin Gerard is 33. Actor Francia Raisa is 33. Actor Bianca Santos is 31. Actor-singer Taylor Momsen is 28. Actor Elizabeth Gillies is 28.

# Got a story or photos to share?

Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.
- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.
- **"A silly mistake that you make"** - a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.
- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?
- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.
- **Most unusual** place a story assignment took you.



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 Editor, Connecting newsletter  
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