

## Colonel Clarence E. Shillings Pampa High School Class of 1944



Colonel Clarence E. Shillings (USAF – Ret.) was born near Hooker, Oklahoma, on December 12, 1925. His father's work required the family to move frequently so that by the time they arrived in Pampa, Texas, for his junior and senior years, he had attended thirty-two different schools in Oklahoma.

On August 2, 1944, two months after graduating from Pampa High, Colonel Shillings was drafted into military service and assigned to the Army Air Corps. After basic training at Sheppard Field, Texas, and teletype school at Chanute Field, Illinois, he was assigned to Batista Field, Cuba, and a year later was transferred to Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, as teletype maintenance and cryptographer.

Upon his return to the States in 1948, Colonel Shillings was assigned to MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, where on October 20 of that year he received a direct commission as a second lieutenant. He was transferred immediately to Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, as communications-electronics officer and went TDY to England with the 97th Bomb Group as its ground communications officer. In 1949 he attended communications officers school at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, and in 1950 was assigned to the 30th Communications Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, as crypto and communications security officer. Two years later he became staff crypto and communications security officer for Headquarters Strategic Air Command. During his four years at SAC Headquarters, he earned a bachelor of science degree from the University of Omaha by attending night school and one semester on the Bootstrap Program.

From 1954 to 1957 Colonel Shillings was on a joint services assignment in England as chief communicator for Field Representative Europe. He returned to Offutt Air Force Base with assignments as OIC of the communications center, the telephone flight, and as executive officer of the 30th Communications Squadron.

Two years of undergraduate engineering study at Arizona State University (1960-62), were followed by an unaccompanied tour at Sidi Slimane AB, Morocco, where Colonel Shillings was the last commander of the 1975th Communications Squadron. He moved to Torrejon AB, Spain, in 1963 as director of plans and programs and director of operations for the Spanish Communications Region.

Upon his return to the States in 1966, Colonel Shillings was assigned to the Defense Communications Agency in Washington, D.C., as plans and budget review officer and later as executive officer to the deputy director of plans. From March, 1969, until his assignment to the Far East Communications Region in March, 1971, he was deputy commander of the White House Communications Agency where his duties were to perform command, staff and administrative functions in a joint agency responsible for providing all communications-electronics functions for the President of the United States, the First Family, the Vice-President, Secret Service and other activities of the Executive Branch as directed, and to function as the commanding officer in the absence of the commander. This support was provided within the White House, on all trips and at all relocation sites.

Colonel Shillings was Vice Commander of the Far East Communications Region (AFCS) at Fuchu Air Station, Japan, a subordinate unit of the Pacific Communications Area. The Region's mission included the management and execution of Air Force responsibilities for communications-electronics operations and air traffic control services for the Air Force and other federal and civilian agencies throughout the Far East. He also served as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Communications-Electronics, Headquarters Fifth Air Force until his retirement in September, 1972.

Throughout his military career Colonel Shillings maintained his citizenship as a Texan by keeping his driver's license current and by voting in all general elections; therefore, it was natural that he returned to Texas to retire. After three years in the Hill Country, the cool nights and crisp mornings of the Panhandle beckoned. During the following twenty-eight years in Amarillo he was a real estate broker, taught real estate courses at Amarillo College for five years, and served on the Potter-Randall County Appraisal Review Board for three years, and then on the Randall County Appraisal Review Board for five years.

Colonel Shillings married the former Allene McKinney of Pampa, Texas (also Class of 1944) on June 1, 1944; and they have four children (Sharon, Teresa, Kent, and Candace), seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. They now reside near family in Goldthwaite, Texas.