

Florida Military School

Sky Harbour Station DeLand, Florida

General Orders

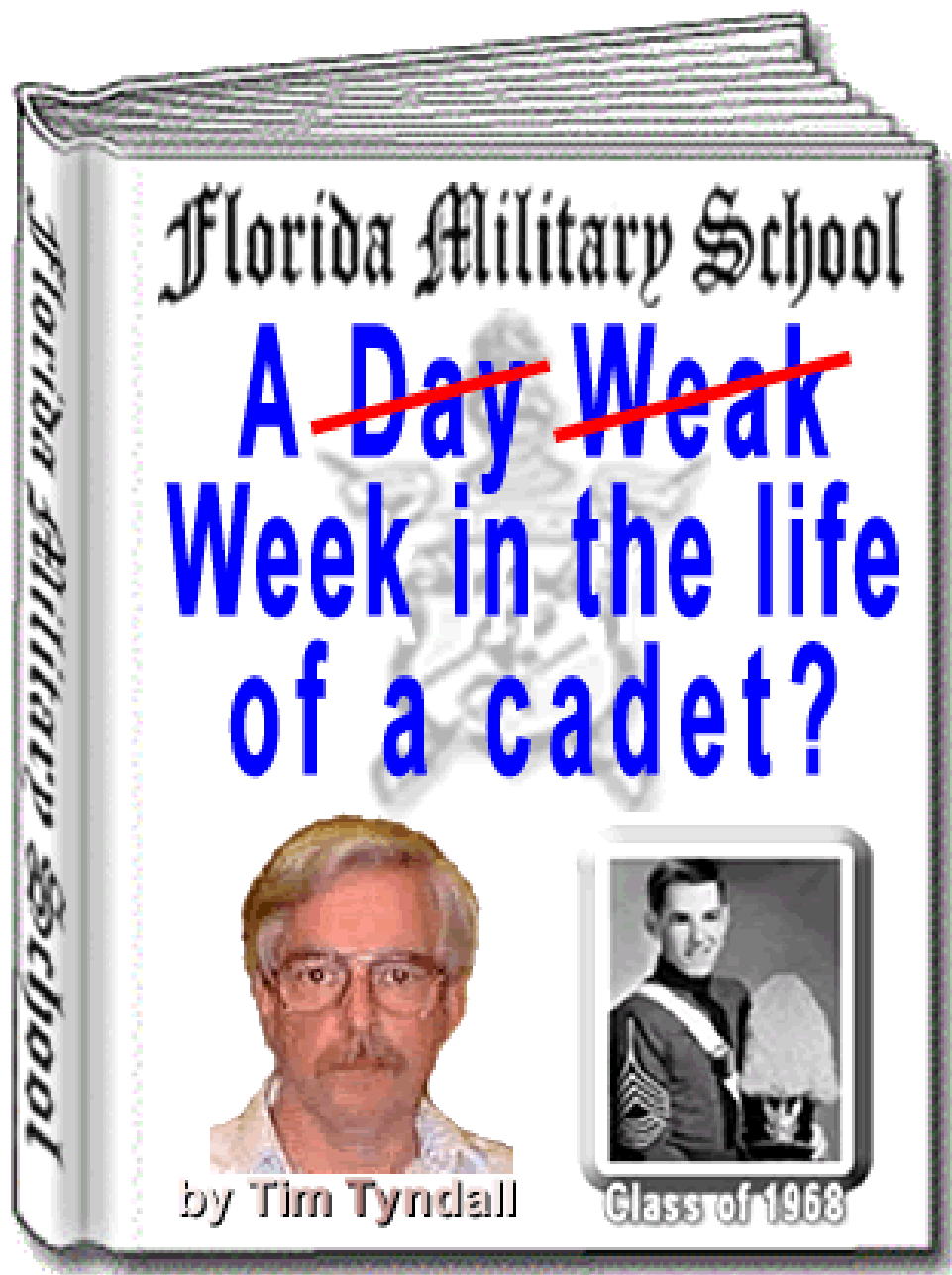




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Dedication



The two better halves of this Delk Family

Susty and Colonel Ed Delk, US Army

You'll always be Eddie to us



In 1965, Eddie Delk was a Senior and I was a Sophomore, so we really didn't communicate that much, but last year (2015) I had the pleasure of reuniting and extensively talking with Eddie and his lovely wife Susty. What a pleasure and honor it was to get to know them. Eddie is the only former cadet (that I'm aware of) who joined the Army and attained the rank of Colonel, and

according to Eddie, Susty is his Colonel. I had the pleasure of talking on the phone with Susty several times and she is one of the most delightful, caring, and best “better halves” that any man could ever ask or wish for.

It is for this reason that I am proudly dedicating this book to **Susty Delk** and the friends and lover she surrounds herself with.

Introduction



Welcome to this story of Military School life and how the memories didn't really become fond memories until the 35th year reunion. If that sounds strange reading it ... well, I guess it wasn't that bad, but I just didn't realize it until the reunion because I guess I really hadn't thought that much about it since I heard Col George Graham say that infamous command "**Regiment Dismissed!**" in 1968..

The school, Florida Military School, in DeLand, FL operated as a top notch academic institution between 1956 and 1972. The uniforms were West Point like uniforms and looked very sharp.

My Six years (in a nutshell)

In mid-November, 1962, my parents and I came down to DeLand to investigate the possibility of my attending FMS, beginning in January, 1963. My mom had talked with Mrs. Lauwereins (Mike's mom), who told my mom that Mike was down there. I had known Mike since I was 5 and he was 6 – we rode our horses made of sticks (sounds like lyrics to “Ringo”, by Loren Green). Well, anyway mom, dad and I met with Lt/Col Prentiss for an introduction to Florida Military School. After the interview (which went very well) as we were leaving the Administration Building, we passed a display case, which housed the American Flag, a sabre and a shako with a gold plume (among other things), and I remember commenting “I’m going to get a sabre and a gold plume”. Oddly enough, there was no mention in the display case of continuously shining shoes and brass, uninterrupted practice drill on the bull-ring, academic restrictions (which included study-hall in the mess hall) and other obvious omissions from the display case, but for this first chapter I’m just concentrating on the sabre and gold plume.



My FMS tour spanned six (6) CLASS of's (1963-1968). As the years flew by (like a herd of turtles) so too did my sequential rankings.

My second year I leaped from Private to PFC, and my third year I catapulted to corporal. After three successive years of lower sleeve chevrons, I was immediately promoted (my fourth year) to my first two layers (and years) of sergeant. Upon completion of my first year of sergeant (buck-sergeant) after getting used to being called Sgt. Tyndall, my fifth year I shot right up to Sgt 1st Class, where on the plus side (I didn't have to get used to a new title (it was still Sgt Tyndall)).

Well, Lo-and-Behold (my Senior Year), I was promoted to Captain on Staff. This was obviously a clerical error or they just didn't sell enough Captain chevrons the year before. Who Knew?!?

There were three officers on staff – the Cadet Colonel (David Moroz), the Adjutant (Lt/Col Bill Weir) and myself.

This was a DREAM Rank (if indeed there was such a thing), but getting back to "I'm going to get a sabre and a gold plume." Well beating the odds of mediocrity I got 50%. I did get the sabre. But mind you – the ONLY YEAR (out of 15 years) that FMS DID NOT use the "Salt & Pepper" West-Point Uniforms was my Senior Year (when we wore regular Army Uniforms). You gotta laugh – what were the odds???

...but I never got to wear the gold plume on the shako.

REGIMENT DISMISSED!!!

Uniforms

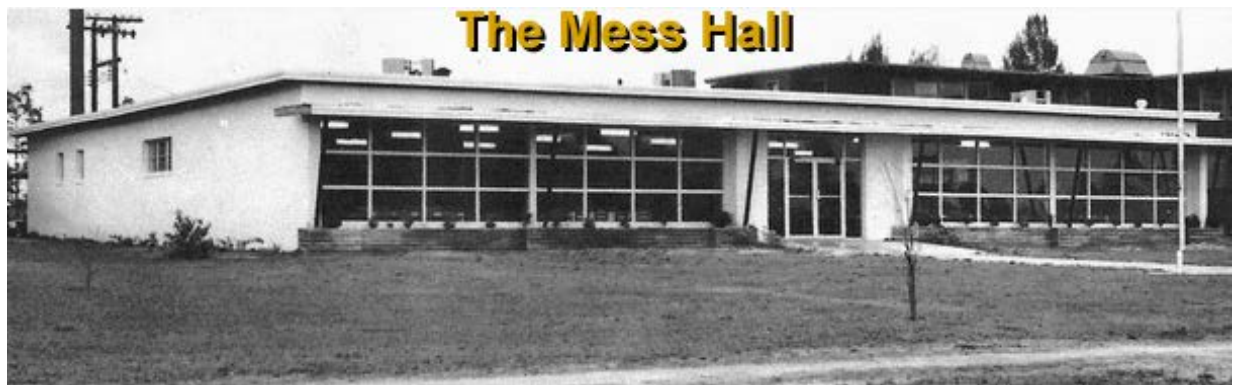
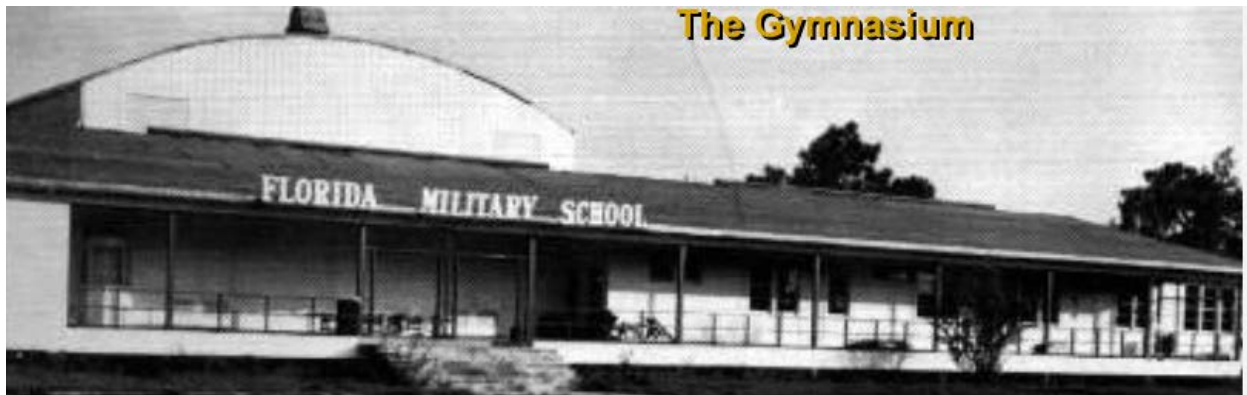


These were the uniforms of the day from 1956 – 1972, except for the 1967 – 1968 school year. They were based on the West Point uniform with Salt & Pepper and dress blues and it was a very sharp, clean look.



In the 1967 – 1968 school year we were addressed as an official Junior ROTC school and resorted to the Army Dress Uniform. Now the standard Army Uniform was a good clean look, but it just didn't have the pizzazz^{sp} of the uniforms (above) so FMS reverted back to the uniforms (above) for the duration following the 1967 – 1968 school year

Campus Buildings



No GOOD pictures of Howard or Alleyne Hall or Canteen

Changes in Terminology

When looking back, the 1960's had some terminology that today, would have a completely different meaning. The one main phrase we said back then that would conjure up a totally different definition today was:

Keep off the grass!



The Seniors were the only cadets who were allowed to walk on the grass (parade field and anything that wasn't a road). Underclassmen had to navigate the roads when walking and if an underclassman was caught walking on the grass, he was invited and commanded to participate running through a Senior Class belt-line.

Being a senior at FMS came with two(2) privileges and one(1) assurance. The two(2) privileges were:

1. Seniors got to walk on the grass
2. Seniors got to wear their neck ties out

Being a senior at FMS also came with one(1) assurance, which was they weren't coming back next year!

Changes in Technology



By today's standards the 1960's were technologically lacking. Don't get me wrong, we did have a telephone and to my knowledge Robert Mouro (Class of '66) probably contributed more (DIMES) to AT&T than other participants who used the phone. Rumor had it that Robert had access to another communication device (who knew???) but in the 1960's cell phones had not even been thought of by the common population. I think Robert might have had two dixie-cups and a piece of string but that would have even been technologically advanced.



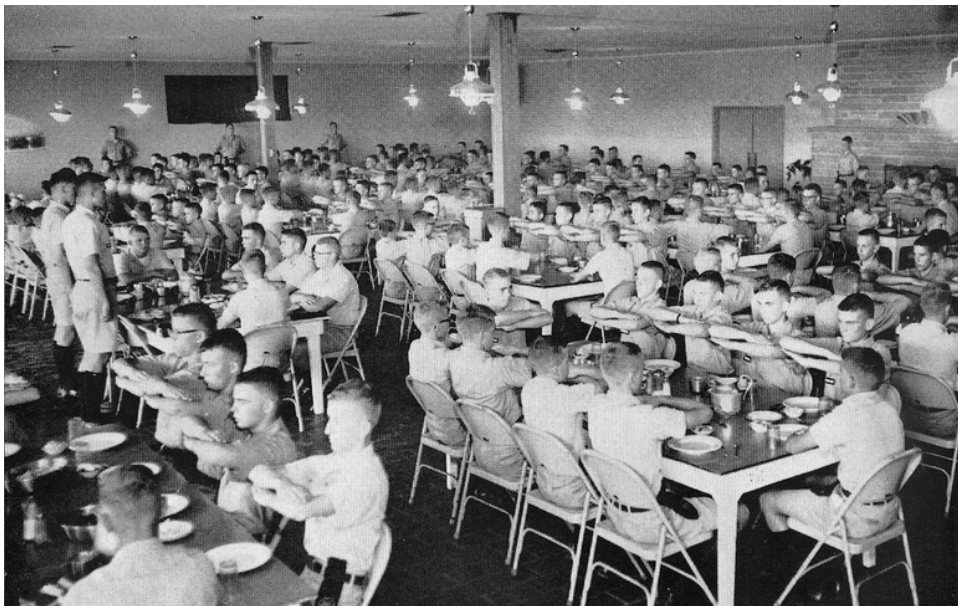
Also, how could we forget Saturday Night at the movies ("Shane" more times than not). We all had to bring our own chair. We had a formation in front of the barracks and had to march over to the gym (with chairs in hand. Some of the under-classmen would get out of having to participate in the formation, by helping to carry upper-classmen Officer's recliners to the gym. Also remembering there was NO concession at the movie in the gym, so the memory of watching a two or three hour movie with nothing to eat or drink - Oh the memories are starting to cascade now.

Military life

Morning, noon and night we would have a formation on the road in front of the mess hall and we would march into the mess-hall for breakfast, lunch or dinner (soupee). As we entered the mess hall, “Hats Off!”, we’d locate our assigned table seats, and stand-by for the blessing.



I will have to admit, I don't remember us ever changing uniforms that quickly!?!



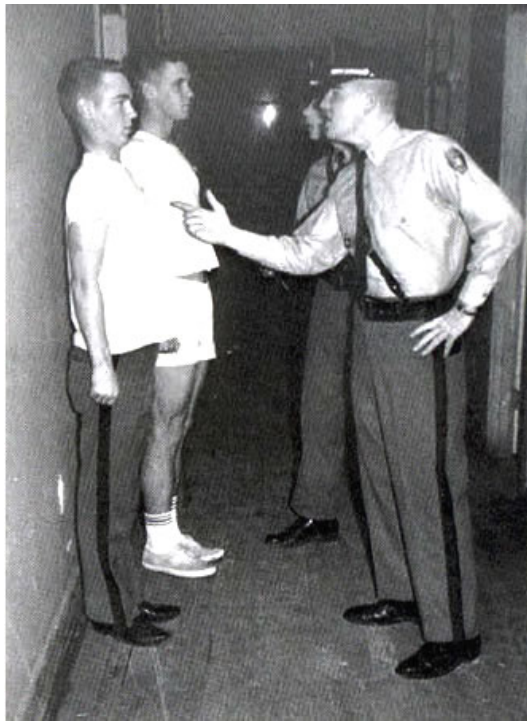
After the blessing, we'd hear "Seats", at which time we'd sit down at attention. You think standing at attention is boring. You ought to try sitting at attention for a while. Usually it didn't last more than 4 or 5 seconds and then we were told to "Rest", which meant eat your meal made for a king -uh- cadet.



After lunch, there would be Guard Mount, where the daily guard would be mounted. Wait a minute – that didn't sound right. And speaking of not sounding right, the two guys to the left were the cadets in charge of the school for the day, as a matter of fact they were said to be **OD**. Rather than an **Over Dose**, back then it meant **Officer of the Day**.

Who Knew?

Then as the day went on the halls got swept and mopped several times, to insure cleanliness and sometimes those



cadets who opted not to participate were encouraged to do so. I think that's Major Barry, giving an encouraging word in the day of the life of a cadet. I don't think he's trying to "Win Friends" but it definitely looks like he's "Influencing People" so I guess that Dale Carnegie would at least half approve of this.



... and if you weren't sweeping or mopping something, you'd better be shining something.

We did, for a fact, look like a very sharp military unit, but the title of this place also included the word SCHOOL. More on that later.

Well I guess this would be a good place to insert a brief daily

schedule.

We were awakened in the morning with a bugle (tune) and then went to formation for breakfast. After breakfast we would go to formation for an hour's worth of drill. After drill we would go to formation for four(4) periods of classes. After 4th period we would go to formation for lunch, immediately proceeded by Guard Mount and Office Hours with Commandants Major Steeley and Major Pendarvis (and later (after 1966) Major Dinkins). After Office Hours (50 minutes) there were three (3) more class periods.

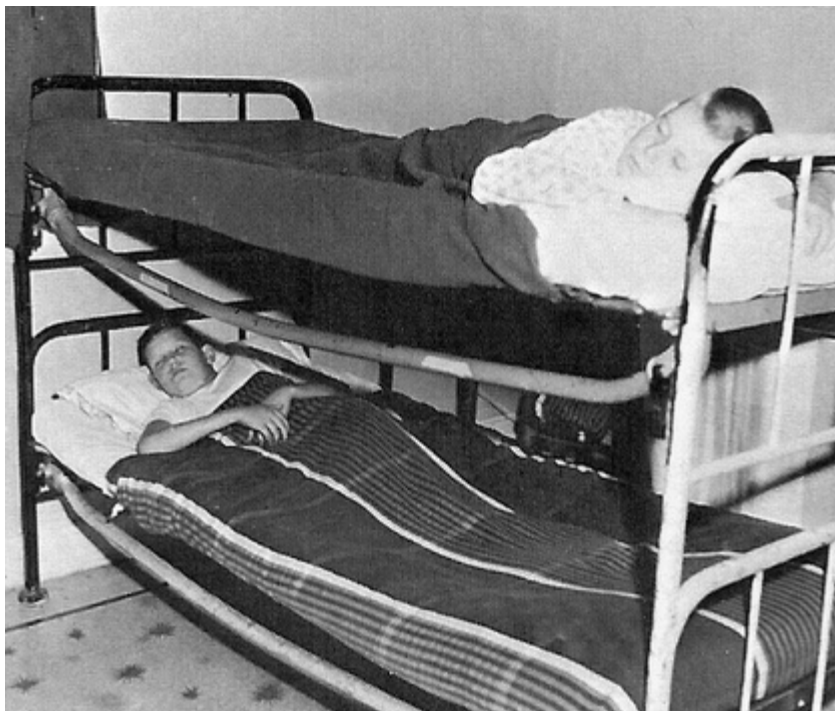
Immediately after classes we had about 1 and a half to 2 hours of free time unless you were on the bull-ring, which generously cancelled out any free time.

During this free time (once again) if you weren't sweeping or mopping something, you'd better be shining something.

After that, it's time to get cleaned up and ready for retreat (formation) for soupee (dinner or supper or whatever).

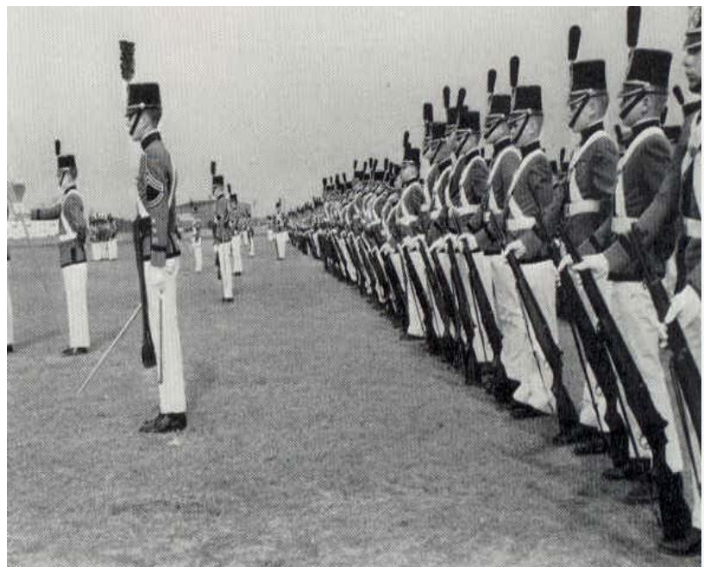


After the evening meal there was about an hour until a 2 and a half hour study period in the barracks. Then there was a 15 or 20 minute break before taps



And as much as that sounds like the end of the day before the next morning. All night (every night) on a rotating basis ALL cadets (in 2's) (excepting Officers) held a one and a half hour night guard shift until First Call when we got up and repeated the process.

Saturday started out like any other day (with breakfast) and remember most teenagers, I believe, look forward to the weekend. Well at FMS it was no different (except for the dreaded weekends). They started out like any other day (with breakfast), but then rather than drill and classes, we got to prepare for a 2 hour inspection (Saturday Morning Inspection (SMI)) outside on the Parade Ground and (you guessed it)



We got to get inspected inside the barracks, also!



Saturday afternoon was pretty much **FREE TIME - town-leave – or bull-ring** (what a selection) until dinner retreat and then it was off to the Saturday Night at the Movies (previously discussed).

Sunday started out like any other day (with breakfast) and then being bussed to Church services in DeLand (various churches) and then formation for lunch if you didn't have visitors..

Sunday was Visitor's Day for parents, relatives, friends and / or acquaintances.

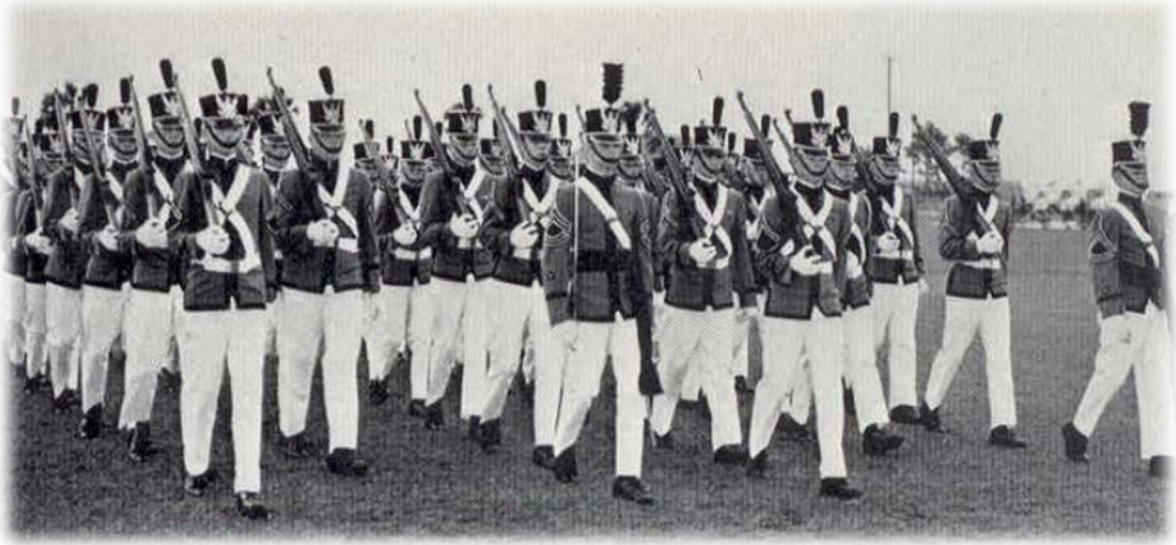
My folks usually came down every other weekend and we'd go over to the Holiday House for lunch and then go back to the campus and we would park about the same place every time around the parade field. Then we'd put chairs out where they were going to watch the Dress Parade from and as soon as we got settled down, I'd take the car (with a several other cadets and we'd just drive around (back behind Sky-Habour Station). We'd come back after driving around (now I'd only do this if I wasn't on restrictions (otherwise we'd have to stay on campus) and didn't drive around on campus). Anyway, we'd do this until right before "Fall-In". At "Fall-In" we'd go to the barracks and get ready for the Dress Parade





This was known as **“The Review Stand”** and was where the faculty were as we **“Passed in Review”**





I don't know why, but when I see this picture (above) I think of the Monkee's Theme Song:

Here we come

Walkin' down the street ...

I also feel that it would be a huge omission if I didn't include some of my academic achievements during my 6 years at FMS.

- 7th grade Honor Roll (for one 3-week grading period)

Ok, granted, this didn't get me scholarship offers to Harvard, Yale or Princeton.

- In 1968 they had to add 3 fake names to our Class List so that my ranking could be a positive number.

Well, that was my experience (and I considered that winning) and speaking of winning, remember when your company won a Dress Parade? Remember what you did?

That's right!!!



You RANG the VICTORY BELL!!!

Imagine if we had of had cell-phones – we'd be chatting with our friends on Facebook and wouldn't have time to ring the Victory Bell, so I guess that's one of the reasons cell-phones hadn't been invented yet (also Robert Mouro wouldn't have ever had time to go to another formation) so we can also thank Robert for the lag in time before cell phone development..

Parades



During the latter part of November and ALL of December, we became one of the most paradingest^{SP} groups you can imagine.



People looked forward to seeing us in parades and it was a great advertisement for the school as well.

We appeared in Orlando, Daytona Beach, West Palm Beach, Tampa – Bradenton, Jacksonville, St Augustine, Sanford, Mt Dora, Bunnell, and a host of other cities

Multiple cities each year

(mostly in Florida)





Florida Military School was a very good learning environment, for both academics and personal discipline development.

There was a “Code of Conduct” and it was pretty much based on what “law abiding” citizens would normally be expected

to do.

Discipline issues were handled a little more strictly than Public Schools (probably) in the 1950’s and 1960’s. In today’s world I think “Child Services” would probably have to add another wing on their building to deal with some of our issues, but by and large I believe most of us came out ok and didn’t we look sharp?!?!

