

COL WILLIAM H. GARDNER
US Army, Retired



COL Gardner received his commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps through the Reserve Officers Training Course at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, in 1957. He entered the Army in October 1957 at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, where he attended the Signal Officers Basic Course and the Communications Center Officers Course. He served as a Platoon Leader from March 1958 to August 1959 in the 178th Signal Support Company, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. It was during this tour that he requested and was integrated into the Regular Army.

1LT Gardner began Army flight school at Fort Rucker, Alabama, in September 1959 but was forced to withdraw for personal reasons. From November 1959 until September 1960, he served as the Adjutant of the Signal Aviation Test and Support Activity (SATSA), Fort Rucker. He reentered flight school in October 1960, graduating as a fixed wing aviator in August 1961. He was assigned back to SATSA and served as a project officer until attending rotary wing transition training in August 1962 enroute to Korea.

From October 1962 to October 1963, CPT Gardner served as a Platoon Leader and S1 in the 7th Aviation Battalion, 7th Infantry Division, Eighth US Army. From November 1963 to June 1965, he served as a Platoon Leader, Battalion Communications Officer, and Battalion S1 in the 227th and 229th Assault Helicopter Battalions of the 11th Air Assault Division, Fort Benning, Georgia. In May and June 1965, he served as the Communications Officer and S1 of the 11th Air Assault Division Task Force deployed to the Dominican Republic.

After attending the Signal Officer Advanced Course, where he graduated with honors, CPT Gardner served as a helicopter flight instructor at the Aviation School until September 1966 when he was promoted to Major and assigned to Korea. He served as Aviation Advisor to the First Republic of Korea Army at Detachment L, Korea Military Advisory Group from October 1966 to October 1967.

MAJ Gardner returned to Fort Rucker in November 1967 and served as a helicopter instrument flight examiner/instructor. He was also the author of the 1969 Army Aviation Annual Written Examination, which was administered to over 25,000 Army Aviators

worldwide. Assigned to Vietnam in June 1969, MAJ Gardner was assigned to the 224th Aviation Battalion (Radio Research), part of the 509th Radio Research (RR) Group of the Army Security Agency (ASA). From July 1969 to December 1969, he commanded the 138th Aviation Company (RR) at DaNang with distinction and then served as the 224th Battalion's Executive Officer from January 1970 to June 1970. His outstanding performance in both positions resulted in the MI Branch request that he transfer from Signal to be one of MI's initial aviators. He agreed and became an MI Officer in June 1970.

From July 1970 to June 1971, Gardner served as Aviation Officer at ASA Headquarters, Arlington, Virginia, where he played a major role in shaping the future of MI Aviation force structure in the post-Vietnam period. From July 1971 to June 1972, he attended the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where he graduated with honors.

From July 1972 to February 1975, LTC Gardner was assigned to the Cryptology Division, Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of Army. This third key assignment was characterized by some outstanding staff work as Chief, Budget Division, and on all MI Aviation actions to include serving as the sole action officer for the highly successful GUARDRAIL IV system which was deployed to Korea in 1975. It was during this period that he completed a Master of Science in Systems Management.

From March 1975 to June 1976, he became the first MI Officer to command a non-MI Aviation Battalion/Combat Battalion, when he was selected to command the 19th Aviation Battalion (Combat) in Korea. His outstanding performance as the 19th commander set the stage for MI Aviators becoming the sole commanders of all Aerial Exploitation (MI) Aviation Units.

Selected to attend the Naval War College in July 1976, COL Gardner graduated with honors in June 1977. From July 1977 until his retirement in August 1982, he served at Headquarters, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, first in the Planning Directorate of Combat Developments (CD), and then in the Intelligence and Electronic Warfare (EW) Directorate of CD. From June 1978 to September 1978 and from May 1979 to July 1982, he served as its Director. His outstanding performance contributed directly to the Army's MI Force structure and equipment for the 1980s and 1990s. As Chairman of the Quadripartite Working Group (QWG) for Electronic Warfare (EW), he significantly improved the ABCA (America/Britain/Canada/Australia) countries' EW interoperability and understanding.

COL Gardner's decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Air Medal (9), Meritorious Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), and the Korean Samil Medal.

COL Gardner was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1992.



COL Gardner receives his Knowlton Award from MICA Representative COL (R) John Black in 1995.