

Jack Oswald Biography

Jack Harrison Oswald was born in DeKalb, Illinois on August 13, 1933. He lived in that northern Illinois town until high school graduation. Then it was off to higher learning at Northwestern University's School of Speech where he was a Radio -Television major. He was a drummer in the marching band and concert orchestra for his freshman year and a member of the Air Force ROTC. He was also deeply involved in radio and TV production and he was the first student to be hired as manager of WNUR; the University radio station during his senior year.

Jack wasn't called to active duty for another 6 months and remained as an instructor at Northwestern University. Jack married his college sweetheart, Jean Williamson on August 28, 1955. 2nd Lt Oswald began active duty at Lackland AFB in Texas on December 7th, 14 years after Pearl Harbor. From there it was on to Ellington AFB for navigator training. He said it was like getting a master's Degree in Navigation, electronics and weather.

From Texas it was on to the 67th Air Rescue Squadron at Norton AFB in Southern California. In 1958 a portion of the squadron was sent to Eniwetok for project Hardtack; the last large atomic test. The squadron flew cover on the atomic tests in SA16s and resupplied surrounding Islands. When they returned in August, the 67th was dismantled and Jack selected the 64th ARS in Prestwick, Scotland. It became the place for raising a family and having a great bunch of guys to work with. Jack worked as a navigator and served as PIO for the squadron. The area of responsibility included most of Europe, North Africa and Greenland.

The Oswald family returned to the states in September 1962 along with their children, Jeff (3) and Sheri (2) where Jack was assigned as the Base Information Officer of Scott AFB, Illinois. During that assignment, he was sent to Boston University for a semester of Graduate Communication Studies. Jack was the first person to receive straight A's since the program had been established several years before.

Soon after returning to Scott AFB, He was transferred to Military Airlift Command Headquarters where he became Chief of Internal Information. He had applied for the AFIT Graduate program and was selected. The family moved to Los Angeles in May of 1964 where Jack started the Master's Program at USC Cinema. Completing that program in January of 1966, he was transferred as Chief of Radio/TV at Command Services Unit, a part of Secretary of the AF Office of Information at Bolling AFB in Maryland. Jack was promoted to Major.

Most of his work dealt with producing material for recruiting purposes such as Music in the Air and Serenade in Blue and Serenade in Stereo. This provided Jack with the opportunity to work with Air Force bands, particularly the Airmen of Note, the official Jazz Orchestra. During that time, he introduced the practice of bringing in more well

known vocalists such as Jack Jones, Nancy Wilson, Lou Rawls, June Christy, and others. This made the public service material more acceptable to radio stations.

Jack also produced two Air Force Christmas television shows using star names such as Sandler and Young, Skitch Henderson and Marilyn May along with the Airmen of Note.

In early 1969, Jack moved over to the Pentagon as Chief of Internal Media in the Internal Information Division and was given the task of revising the Commander's Call program. The Oswald family was also growing with the addition of daughter, Catherine, born in January. This included a monthly program of film and discussion. The film had become very outdated, boring and was still in black and white. Jack did this by putting together a group of young USAF film makers to break tradition. This included creative lieutenants and captains like Andy Chiaramonte, Rick Vaughn, Ron Rand, Tim White, Phil Robinson, Bill Lenz, Mike Robe, Mike Conaway, Jay Welsh and the staff at AAVS from Norton AFB in California. After many meetings and discussions, the eventual result became The Air Force Now.

In June of 1970, Jack left the Pentagon to serve as Chief of Film and TV, Public Information Division, at Headquarters MACV Saigon, Vietnam. His main job was supervising five military film crews covering events of the Vietnam War. During that time, he produced a powerful documentary on drug abuse called What's the Answer? This film brought to light the serious drug abuse problems in Vietnam within the military. In June 1971, Jack returned to the United States and was assigned to Norton AFB as liaison officer for SAFOI.

After a couple of years at Norton AFB, Jack became the Executive Producer of the Air Force Now. In addition to the monthly films, they completed several single subject titles such as teenage Civil Air Patrol, Hawaii, the return of Vietnam POWs, a short documentary on the Air Force Chief of Staff and others. During this time, Jack was promoted to LT. COL. He continued that assignment until 1977 when he decided to retire from the Air Force.

In 1978, Jack and his family moved from Highland, to Pasadena California where Jack devoted himself full time to developing GOAL Productions. The end results varied from short sales films for Sears, a complete revision of AETNA's driver simulator training of more than 20 titles, and to developing programs dealing with the wine industry. Sales and marketing films were produced for the Callaway, Mirassou, and Papagni Vineyards. GOAL Production also produced a film on Champagne for the Monterey Wine Festival. That experience led to a long-term involvement producing a series of feature length TV shows about Buddy Bombard Balloon Adventures in France's Burgundy, Loire Valley, Switzerland and Italy. These films were sales-oriented documentaries. The timing was right because The Discovery Channel was just starting up. They gladly paid viewing rights and the films were so popular Bombard had to hire more people to handle incoming phone calls because of all of the interest.

Along with other occasional government awarded video and film projects, GOAL won the contract in as primary subcontractor to Dynalectron Corporation. GOAL did production and post production at the Aerospace Audio Visual Center. At this time, Jack added John Gura, retired AF Lt. Col., to GOAL Productions as 2nd in charge.

In 1980 Jack was invited to join the faculty at USC Cinema. He remained as an adjunct faculty member until the year 2000 teaching film and television production.

One of the best things that ever happened was the privilege of working with the Pasadena Tournament of Roses. For 18 years GOAL Productions was an Official Filmmaker of the Tournament of Roses. That totaled 18 Parades and 17 Rose Bowl games, working with the Tournament staff and some of the best people in the industry such as the late sportscasters Keith Jackson and Merlin Olson.

In Jack's spare time, he became involved in the Mammoth Lakes Jazz Festival. For three summers he taught a documentary class, through USC, during the festival. He worked as a volunteer with Ken and Floss Coulter, the directors, producing several music CDs and videos. This went for many years until Ken and Floss stepped down as directors of the festival.

In the year 2000, Jack decided to retire, this time for good, in the Phoenix, Arizona area. But along with several USC film grads, he developed a TV series about Single Malt Scotch distilleries in Scotland called The Malt Project. The 8 volume, 14 DVD series was distributed and sold all over the world. It became a labor of love for all those involved especially Todd Rainsberger, Dylan Weiss, Jeff Oswald and Jean Oswald.

Finally, Jack really did retire. Since the early 2000s, Jack and his wife Jean traveled all over spending a lot of their travels in Scotland and cruising the world. They settled in El Dorado Hills, California in 2015.