

KENNETH L. HACKMAN

“Ken”

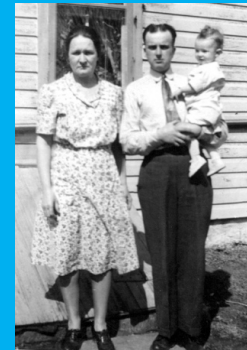
Ken was born April 20, 1938 at home in Willow Street, PA. He was the sixth child of Annie M. and Ira L. Hackman. His siblings were Dan, Ruth Ann (Sis), Ira Jr. (Buzz), Erma, and Raymond. Richard was born three years later in 1941.



Baby Ken-1938



The family house at RR #1
Willow Street



Mother & Dad with Rich

Along with his Mother, Dad and Mother’s Dad they all lived in a small four-bedroom house, without indoor plumbing on two acres of land. Dad was employed as a carpenter at Armstrong Cork Company- later Armstrong Linoleum for his entire career. Mother was a homemaker and cleaned houses for other people. This was during the Depression, so they raised hogs for butchering, vegetables and chickens for eggs. Everyone was expected to contribute, kids when old enough worked at jobs picking strawberries, tomatoes, potatoes, etc. to support the family.



Camping out in the backyard



The Family Hackman, Circa 1947



Ken & Ray in the pig pen

Ken’s earliest job, at age 9 was carrying water for the workers picking tomatoes for \$.25 an hour. Later he cleaned house and apartments stoops in Lancaster. Summers were spent working for Frank “Pop” and Lizzie “Mom” Bradley on their farm where they grew tobacco, corn and warehoused chickens and turkeys to sell.



Mom & Pop Bradley
with Mother & Dad



Students at Pequea Valley School in 1947



My portrait-Circa 1946

Ken and his siblings attended Pequea Valley School, a one-room school with 30 to 50 students and one teacher who taught all grades one thru eight. In 1949 the school closed, and he was transferred to another one-room schoolhouse in West Willow. He would have been in the 5th grade but was advanced to the 6th grade. After finishing elementary school, in 1952 he attended Manor High School which became Manor Joint High School and graduated in May 1955 at age 17.

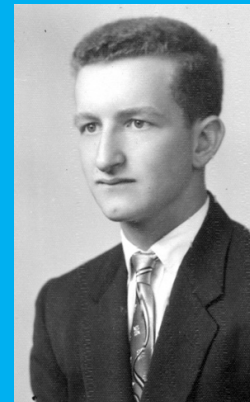
When he was young, he and the rest of the family often gathered to watch Bob & Sis' photo slide shows of their vacations. He developed an interest in photography after witnessing the power of photography to connect. Mentored by his brother-in-law, Bob, he got a camera and began to develop and print his photos. He joined the Photography Club in High School.



Working in basement darkroom



Graduation Day – May 1955.



Yearbook Portrait

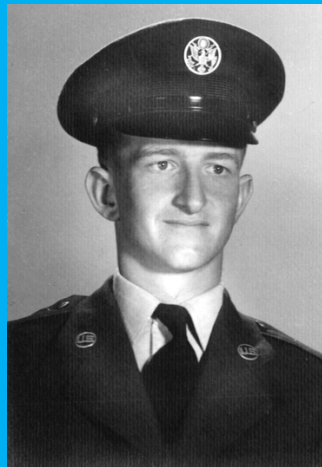
All of the Hackman family men, including in-laws, served in the military. Dan was in WWII in the Pacific with the Army. Buzz served in the Army during the Korean War. During the Cold War, Ray stationed with the Army in Paris and Ken spent three years with the Air Force in Japan. Richard spent one year at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam in 1967. Also serving in the Army in the Pacific during World War II was Sis' husband Bob Graver. Erma's husband Johnny Herr pulled his World War II duty in Europe.

After high school he went to work at Steinman's Hardware Store in Lancaster. Failing to see any potential for a photography career in Lancaster on Nov.29, 1955 he enlisted in the Air Force. He rode the train from Lancaster through St. Louis and San Antonio to Lackland AFB, TX for 3 ½ months of basic training. After basic he was sent for four months to Lowry AFB in Denver Colorado to attend the Photography Technical Training school. He was promoted from Airman Basic to Airman Third Class.

A sidebar about my time at the Photography School in Denver: *The school schedule for classes was 6:00am to 12:00 Noon or 12 Noon to 6:00pm. I was on the early schedule and in the afternoon, we would have “additional duties”. Since I was there in winter our additional duties were shoveling coal for the coal fueled furnaces. Not a pleasant job and cold! While standing in an after-class formation the NCO in charge ask if anyone could type? I had taken typing for two years in high school, I knew where the keys were, but I wasn’t very fast, so I raised my hand. I was placed in the Squadron Training Office. I was there for three months and never used a typewriter! However, the Training Office was responsible for all the student’s follow-on assignments. Having made friends with the NCO, when it came time for my post-school assignment, he asked me where I wanted to go? My answer? Japan and that is how a high school typing class played a major role in my future career!*



Basic Training-Lackland AFB. TX



Airman Basic Hackman-1955



Ken’s Still Photography Specialist class photo June 1956 at Lowry AFB

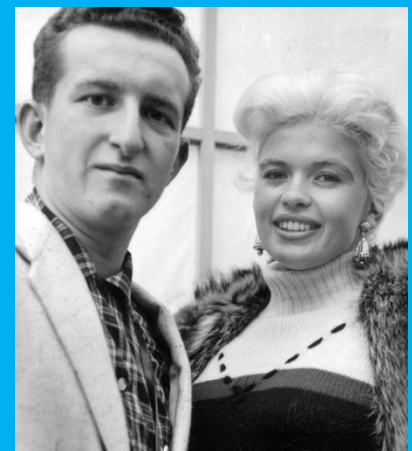
At the completion of Photo School, he was assigned to the 1362d Photo Flight at Yokota AB, Japan arriving in August 1956. The mission of the 1362nd was to accomplish still and motion picture photography of notable Air Force events and activities occurring in the Far East.



At 1362nd PF, Yokota AB, Japan



Being creative



Ken with Jayne Mansfield

His first assignment was to photograph the brand-new F-100 Super Sabre Squadron at Itazuke AB, Japan. Over the next three years he photographed many varied assignments throughout Asia.



F-100 Super Sabres



Angkor Wat, Cambodia



Floating Market-Bangkok



Aberdeen Harbor, Hong Kong

A few of the more interesting projects were; Bob Hope's Christmas 1957 tour to entertain the troops in Okinawa, Japan and Korea A story for Stars & Stripes on airmen on R&R in Hong Kong. A SEATO military exercise in Thailand. The U.S. military assistance groups in Singapore, Bangkok and Saigon. The crisis in the Taiwan Straits in 1958. Filming airmen acting, alongside actors Robert Stack and Dorothy Malone in the "The Last Voyage" a Hollywood film production "shot" on the SS Ile de France in Osaka harbor.



Bob Hope on ship in Okinawa 1957



Jayne Mansfield in Korea 1957



Bob Stack during filming in Japan



Maj. Murray & Ken at Angkor Wat, Cambodia

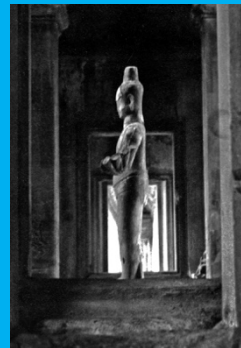
Initially his overseas tour to Japan was for two years. He was promoted from Airman 2nd Class to Airman 1st Class. As a country boy from Lancaster county he was now mesmerized by this whole new "world" and so seduced by exotic Asia, that he extended his tour for a third year.



Kamakura Buddha



Japanese woman ready for rice planting



Khmer statue in an Angkor Wat temple



Japanese man dressed for a traditional festival

In July 1959 after three years he returned back to the CONUS. With only four months left on his enlistment his options were to reenlist or separate from the Air Force. It was a difficult decision, for three years he had an incredible time. If he chose to stay in the Air Force what would my next three or more years be like? Would he be as lucky with another four years in the Air Force? Not willing to take that chance he chose to get out and see what he could do as a civilian photographer.



Aberdeen Harbor, Hong Kong



Crown Prince Wedding



At Yokota Air Base

He was very fortunate with all his career choices, much of it was because of the guidance and support he received from some incredible caring mentors, starting with his brother-in-law Bob. Followed by the training assignment NCO, Bob Allen at Lowry who gave me the Japan assignment. His first supervisor in Japan, TSgt Roy A. Fitzgerald, his commander in Japan, Major John Murray and the many other who helped mold his blue-suit career.

Upon separation from the Air Force at Travis AFB, CA he returned home, via Los Angeles, to family and friends in Lancaster, PA. Six weeks later he returned to Los Angeles to job-seek and six months later on Feb 29, 1960, he was hired at Lookout Mountain Air Force Station (LMAFS) as a civilian still photographer.



The family Hackman Circa 1961



Mother & Dad Hackman



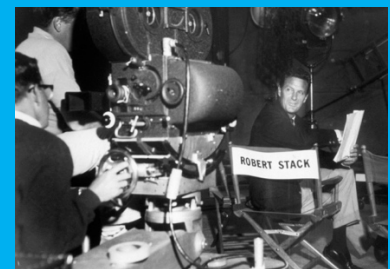
Mother Hackman with her siblings



Lookout Mountain Air Force Station



Circa 1960s



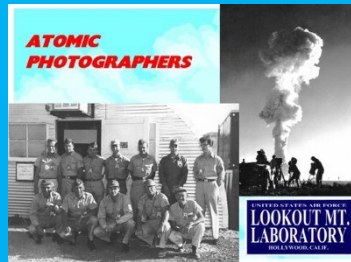
Bob Stack on LMAFS sound stage

LMAFS started out in 1941 as a World War II air defense center to oversee Los Angeles area air radar sites. Later in 1947 with the dawning of the nuclear age and the burgeoning requirements from the Atomic Energy Commission for motion picture and still documentation of the United States nuclear

tests the Lookout Mountain Lab was secretly established as a studio. In 1949 it became the 1352 Motion Picture Squadron with the mission: “to provide in-service production of classified motion pictures and still photographs for the Department of the Air Force in support of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) programs”. The facility had all the capability of a major motion picture studio including a large sound stage, a film laboratory, three screening rooms, four editing rooms, an animation and still photo department, sound mixing studio, and numerous climate-controlled film vaults to store the AEC classified films. LMAFS was staffed with producers & directors, script writers, editors, sound technicians, still & motion picture camera personnel They were mostly civilian employees, all with Top Secret clearances.



Operation Ivy- Eniwetok Island 1952

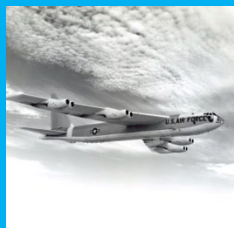


Crew photo on location



Operation Upshot Knothole 1953

Many of his co-workers were at Lookout in the early days and had worked on most of the nuclear tests in the Pacific and the U.S. deserts. Lookout had some of the best professionals in the business, many were veterans from working in the Hollywood studios. To be able to work with these “old” hands in the business was a fantastic, learning experience.



B-52 aircraft used to drop nuclear bombs



Operation Dominic Composite Images



Mushroom Cloud From Truckee Test



B-57s sampler aircraft that flew thru clouds

In 1962 as part of a documentary crew he was sent to photograph what turned out to be the United States’ final atmospheric nuclear test series. Named Operation Dominic it was based in Hawaii, Christmas and Johnston Islands in the South Pacific. During the tests with his friend Jim Berry, basically two kids, were given an aircraft with a crew to fly throughout the Pacific to photograph Operation Dominic scientific monitoring sites on Samoa, Kwajalein Atoll, Midway, Wake, Tongatapu, Rarotonga, Fiji, Canton, and Palmyra.



Filming on Christmas Island



Midway Island home of the “Gooney Birds”



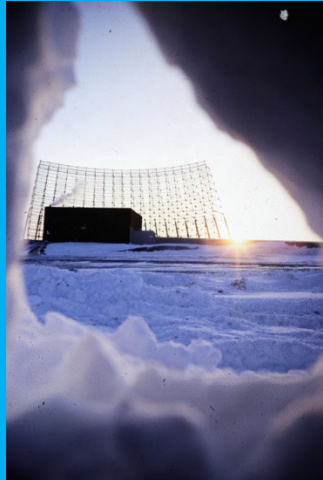
Cruise ship at Raratonga in the Cook Islands



Sandy beach on Wake Island

After a visit to the altitude chamber and physiological training he was cleared to fly and photograph the Air Force’s top fighter aircraft. It was thrilling, exciting, and often uncomfortable. Many of his air-

to-air image were reproduced in the Air Force lithograph series that consisted of hundreds of sets of 12-16x20" photos. Over 100 of his photos of aircraft and scenes of Air Force life, were name-credited to him. This was helpful in getting name recognition, enhanced his professional reputation and credibility throughout the Air Force and Department of Defense.



BMEWS Radar Site at
Thule, Greenland



Barbara Eden "Jeanie"



100' balloon for hi-explosive test
at Suffield Exp. Station, Canada

During his career he traveled the world making photo essay of five of the major Air Force Commands. He photographed military training exercises, humanitarian events, hi-explosive TNT tests in Canada. Being located in Hollywood many movie stars were often used as actors, and narrators in LMAFS films.



Flying high! Ken in the
backseat of a fighter aircraft



After a mission at
Danang AB- 1966



With some of Air Force
Lithographs he photographed

After for four years of dating Vida Ratzlaff, a fine artist and teacher, they were married on March 26, 1966 in Burlingame, CA. Two years later they were blessed with the birth of their son, Jonathan.



In 1966 his commander at Lookout Mountain was getting a lot of “heat” from Air Force Public Affairs in Pentagon about the lack of acceptable color photography of the Air Force participation in the Vietnam War. Being a civilian, the commander asked Ken if he would volunteer to go to Southeast Asia and document the Air Force mission there. He had been to Vietnam a number of times, teaching photojournalism seminars and photographing projects so he agreed to go for an unspecified time. He actually stayed there for 2-3 months photographing at number of different bases in Vietnam and Thailand. He flew multiple combat missions photographing F-4 and F-105 fighters refueling as they headed to bombing missions in North Vietnam. The project was successful, and the “bosses” were happy! Six year later he returned to photograph more of the Air Force in the Southeast Asia war.



A-1E Skyraiders



Napalm drop on VC target



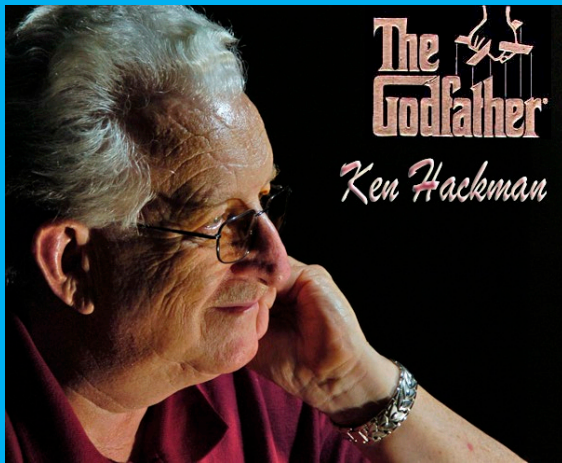
Puff the Magic Dragon gunship.



Flight of F-4 heading North

In a 1969 a consolidation closed Lookout Mountain AFS and the functions moved to the new Hq. AAVS facility at Norton AFB in San Bernardino, CA. He and Vida decided not to relocate but to stay in their Studio City. Home. The downside was a 70-mile drive to work! Fortunately during his time at Norton, he averaged over 150 days a year TDY on the road.

With the move to Norton came added responsibilities. He was given the title, Chief Photojournalist of the Air Force with a staff of military and civilian photographers. He was one of the founders of the Air Force’s university-level Photojournalism Program, where a group of Air Force photographers were selected to attend Rochester Institute of Technology or Syracuse University for one academic year to hone their photojournalistic skill. He selected the students, monitored their training and upon graduation assigned them to select AAVS units. He became known as “the Godfather”.



Upon getting full-access accreditation to photograph military participants in the Olympic Games, his first Olympics was the 1976 summer games in Montreal followed by the winter games at Lake Placid in 1980. Later the 1984 summer games in Los Angeles, 1988 winter games in Calgary, 1988 summer games in Seoul, 1992 summer games in Barcelona, 1994 winter games in Lillehammer and the 1996 summer games in Atlanta. In 1987 he also covered U.S. military athletes in the Pan American Games in Indianapolis and later Argentina in 1995.



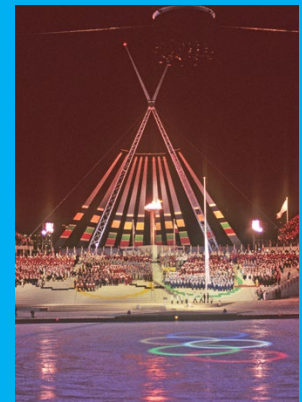
Los Angeles – 1984



Montreal - 1976



Calgary - 1988



Lillehammer - 1992

During his career from 1955 to 1995 he traveled to all seven continents photographing the military and civilian members of the Air Force doing their jobs often in hazardous conditions. The assignments were always different, challenging and usually fun! Two notable assignments were both with the Air Force Reserve Band when they marched in the Russian Victory Day Parades. In 1992 they became the first U.S. military unit to march into Red Square since World War II. Later in 1995 they marched in the St Petersburg Victory Day parade.



Satellite capsule recovery near Hawaii

In 1995, after 39 years of military and civilian service and that 140-mile roundtrip drive to work, He decided to retire from the 8-5 job and focus on his free-lance photography business. For the next fifteen years there were assignments to China, Bosnia, Germany Thailand, India and Kenya. For ten years he traveled with the Air Force Reserve Band and guest artists like Hootie and the Blowfish, Ricochet, Jamie O’Neal, Kid Rock, etc. as they entertained the deployed troops in Iraq, Japan, Korea, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Germany, Italy, England, Turkey and the Azores.



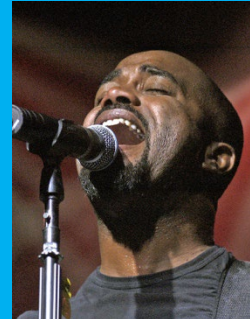
Kid Rock - Baghdad
Iraq



Jamie O’Neal - Kirkuk
Iraq



Melina Leon-Mildenhall
England



Darius Rucker - Misawa
Japan

In 1999 he and Jon had a personal tragedy, Vida after valiantly fighting her cancer for nine years she passed away. They were both devastated over loss of a loving wife and mother.

In 2002 he was asked by Syracuse University to teach their “semester abroad” photography program in London. The 21 young students and he had a great time exploring and photographing in London and then on a three-day field trip to France and the American Cemetery in Normandy. It was a wonderful and rewarding experience that he shall remember and treasure forever



Bobby & Big Ben In
Parliament Square, London



The London Eye alongside
The River Thames



“Spirit of American Youth
Rising from the Waves”
at Normandy cemetery.



Headstone of Theodore
Roosevelt Jr. in American
Cemetery, Normandy

After Vida’s passing, he was resigned to remaining single for the rest of his life. That all changed in 2004 when he was introduced to the beautiful Manola Ensign, who was also a widower. Born in Spain she had met and married an Air Force officer, Richard Ensign, and became an American citizen. They had three children, Monica, Fred and Matil. Richard passed in 1999 the same year as Vida.



Restaurant where I proposed

In 2006 He and Manola made a trip to the White House News Photographers Awards Gala with a side trip to Lancaster to introduce her to his family. After that he proposed, and they were married on September 9, 2006. Their shared love of travel took them to Spain multiple times, also China, Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong and throughout the United States. When Manola suffered a life altering stroke, Ken devoted his life to loving and caring for the “love of his life” After years of declining health Manola passed away on July 19, 2021.



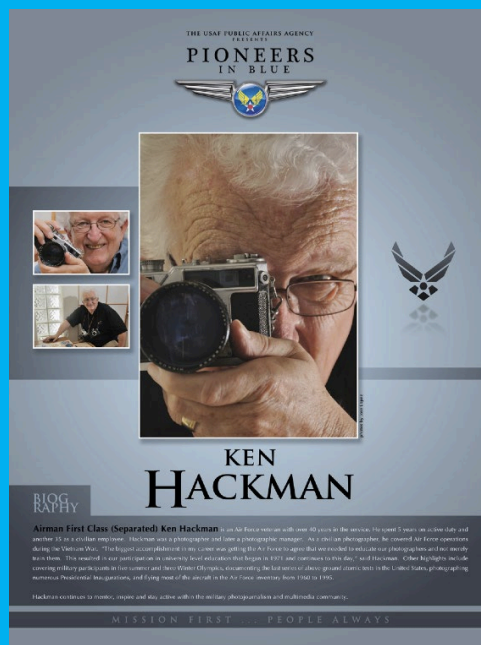
Having accumulated thousands of photographic images over his sixty plus years, he now spends his time editing and digitizing these “visual diaries” of his life.

RECOGNITIONS & AWARDS – FROM HIS MILITARY/GOVERNMENT SERVICE

- 1959 Good Conduct Medal. His only medal as an Airman!
- 1971 Designated as an “Honorary Crew Chief” by the USAF Thunderbirds
- 1974. Dept. of the Air Force presented the “Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service”
- 1993 Selected as “Outstanding Civilian of the Year” by Hq. AAVS/Combat Camera
- 1993 Air Combat Camera Service – Lifetime Achievement Award
- 1995 Selected as “Outstanding Civilian of the Year” by Military Airlift Command
- 2011 “The Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Exceptional Public Service” by the Secretary of Defense

RECOGNITIONS & AWARDS – FROM PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- 1993 “Kenneth P. McLaughlin Award of Merit” presented by the Natl. Press Photographers Assn.
- 1995 Honorary Diploma from S.I. Newhouse School at Syracuse University
- 1995 One-man exhibition, “Photographic Nomad a 40 Year Odyssey” at Cal State University
- 1996 “President’s Award from the National Press Photographers Assn.
- 2001 “A Sense of Order- Two Westerners Look East” a joint exhibition with Vida, at Taft College
- 2002 Adjunct Professor for Syracuse University’s “Semester Abroad Program” in London, England
- 2013 Received the “Joseph A. Sprague Award from the National Press Photographers for a lifetime service to professional photography
- 2015 Recognized as a “Distinguished Graduate Wall of Honor” Inductee from Penn Manor High School
- 2016 The Phil Stern “Lifetime Achievement Award” for Photo Exhibit at Los Angeles Veterans Center
- 2018 “President’s Award from the Air Force Public Affairs Alumni Association’s
- 2021 Inducted into the USAF Public Affairs Hall of Fame
- 2015 Selected by USAF Public Affairs in the inaugural group of 12 for the “Pioneer in Blue” exhibit in the Pentagon.



Honorable Discharge



from the Armed Forces of the United States of America

This is to certify that

KENNETH L HACKMAN AF13538853 A1C AFRES

was Honorably Discharged from the

United States Air Force

*on the 28th day of NOVEMBER 1961. This certificate is awarded
as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service*

R. P. Locke

R. P. LOCKE
LT. COLONEL, USAF

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