

## **Bob Cappock Electrical Section**

On a Friday morning electric shop inspection Col. Chapman asked what I thought about putting the Sunset Parade under lights. Needless to say, I thought he had to be kidding since I didn't think there was any way to change such a tradition. I was wrong.

The following Friday Col. Chapman asked what I had done about securing the necessary lighting to conduct a night parade. I mumbled something along the lines that I was waiting for calls from both Paramount studios and Quantico. He just smiled, twitched his head and said he would be interested in what I found out as he left the shop.

When he left I was on the phone to Quantico and was told that in no way would they lend me any lighting. I think I talked to the S4 who said he would talk to Quantico. Within twenty minutes I had a call asking me how many and when I wanted the Lights. I was also told that they would deliver them.

The first material we received were 10- 500 watt floodlights from an old 5kw Floodlight unit, 2- theatrical spotlights (indoor use only) and 1- 10,000 watt manual dimmer. We soon found out that the dimmer had an internal short and we had to keep both dimmer and operator on a piece of plywood or it would shock the daylighters out of you. S/Sgt Faro was the designated operator. We also received several hundred feet of 500MCM electrical cable. Then the fun began.

We strapped the floodlights in the trees along Officers Row, erected temporary scaffolding to hold the two spotlights and the control panel and proceeded to run the cable and tie everything in.

We didn't have the extra available power to handle the lighting load so we ran the cables across the parking lot and down the stair to the disconnect that powered the band hall air conditioner. We would disable the A/C unit and tie the lighting into that panel.

We erected the scaffolding, ran the cable and tied all the lighting in every Fri. morning and tore it back down every Mon. morning. We were thankful for the help we received from the Ceremonial and MCI troops.

Someone who was very much involved in the beginning was Mr. Joe Loveless, a civilian electrician. He was there during the day but not available after hours since there was no overtime money in the budget.

Everyone still remembers the many rehearsals before we put out a product worthy of Col. Chapman's approval. For most of the first parade season we placed a EE8 phone alongside the Cols. Chair and it was tied into our

communication circuit. Not often, but on several occasions the Col. Would advise that I should have done something one to two seconds sooner or later. He was a perfectionist but a great man to work for. When most of us doubted him, he proved once again that he knew what he was doing.

As far as digging holes in the parade ground, that was done when one of the major television networks wanted to feature segments of the parade on "Wide - Wide World." Since color T.V. requires much higher footcandles of light, we had to almost double our light output and therefore we did borrow a large generator from the city.

We blew a cable about ten minutes before air time and with a lot of scrambling we had everything back on line with two minutes to spare.

When Col. Chapman thought of the rampart horns he asked if we could put lights on the roof. By this time I thought anything was possible and answered "Yes Sir"

We had no power on the roof so we ran an extension cord down the roof scuttle hole to the D & B squad bay and plugged it into a wall outlet. We then mounted a spring operated buffer switch on a piece of 1x4 along with 3 par 38, 150 watt floodlights. The center musician would place his foot on the switch, and on signal, would depress the switch to turn on the lights.

Everything went well until the last or next to the last parade of the season. It had rained earlier in the day and when the switch was depressed it arced and smoked, but in true Marine Corps spirit, the young Marine kept his foot on the switch until the completion of the fanfare. Needless to say we modified this operation prior to the next parade. I don't think we made the good Col. aware of this incident.

I will say that it was an interesting year but I was very glad to get the appropriations to install everything on a permanent basis the following year.

I don't think anyone ever forgets their tour at 8<sup>th</sup> and neither they nor I regret serving there. It certainly was a great experience for me.