



20 May 2022

Marines,

This year marks the 110th year anniversary of the day when First Lieutenant Alfred A. Cunningham reported to the Naval Aviation Camp in Annapolis, Maryland, “for duty in connection with aviation.” 1st Lt Cunningham’s arrival in Annapolis on May 22, 1912 sparked the birth of Marine Corps Aviation. On August 20, 1912, he flew his first flight as a Marine Aviator at Marblehead, MA, solidifying his place in Marine Corps history.

Throughout our history, Marine Aviation has pushed the boundaries in the sky to provide the lethality, mobility, and sustainability capabilities required of our service. Aviation enablers remain the lifeline for our community—there is no Marine Aviation without our aircrew, maintainers, air traffic controllers, avionics and ordnance technicians, aviation logisticians, and airfield services.

As we reflect on this tremendous milestone in our history, let us not forget all those who came before us and paved the way through their selfless sacrifice and incredible grit in overcoming uncertainty and challenges. For example, Sergeant James Maguire became the Marine Corps’ first aircraft mechanic when he reported to Naval Aviation Camp on Sep. 18, 1912; Second Lieutenant Ralph Talbot and Gunnery Sergeant Robert G. Robinson who were the first Marine Aviation personnel to be awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions in World War I; or trailblazers like Colonel Karen Brannen and Captain Vernice Armour who were among the first female combat aviators. We walk with a bit more pride—more confidence—because of those who were bold and chose the path of Marine Aviation.

It is my privilege to serve with all of you and celebrate this monumental accomplishment. Your efforts, dedication, and sacrifices provide our service, joint force, and our allies and partners the right capability at the right time. Continue to push the envelope!

Handwritten signature of Mark R. Wise

Mark R. Wise

Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
Deputy Commandant for Aviation