Inside Story

We’re just wild about Harry

It goes without saying the AMC Museum owes a lot to Harry Heist. He’s been editor of the Hangar Digest since 2002 and he’s also the Museum’s archivist, the expert on all things past.

Harry has decided to lighten his workload by relinquishing the task of overseeing the Hangar Digest, though he will continue as our go-to guy if we need a photo or a long-lost tidbit of information.

I recently was selected by the AMC Museum Foundation’s board of directors as editor of the Digest, and am humbled by the opportunity. I’m a bit different from many members of the staff here in that I come from an administrative, not maintenance or flying background. I still have trouble remembering “righty-tighty, lefty-loosey.” In determining my career field — personnel — back in 1972, the Air Force wisely decided to keep me as far away from a flightline as possible.

Fortunately, in a much earlier decision, the Air Force made an even better choice by placing Harry Heist in the navigator’s chair of many Cold War-era aircraft. From the C-47 to the C-5, he guided airplanes and their crews to far-flung destinations and back again. He trained other navigators, ensuring the safety of countless other aircrews. He accumulated 236 combat missions in Vietnam and earned numerous decorations, to include the Meritorious Service Medal.

Harry took on the task of editing the Hangar Digest in January 2002. Although a fine publication at the time, it pales in comparison to the last Digest he edited in October 2010. Many of those improvements are due to his influence and hard work. It was a great marriage, and like all great marriages, Harry was ever faithful to the task at hand, producing four issues a year of ever-improving content.

As the new editor of the Hangar Digest, I’ll be working to find my own way as future issues come and go. But like those Air Force navigators trained by Harry Heist in his own career, I’ll be guided by his instruction and example.

Jeff Brown, editor

LOOKING BACK

Dover’s aircraft alert apron, or “Christmas tree” was built to accommodate the KC-97L tankers stationed at the base under the aegis of the Strategic Air Command.

The nearby Building 1303, or “mole hole,” was a specially-constructed alert facility for the aircrews, containing everything from sleeping quarters to classrooms.

Dover’s two-story mole hole was the smallest of three designs, and could accommodate 70 men.

The planes and their crews were in constant readiness to support refueling for SAC’s retinue of aircraft, to include the B-47 and Century series of fighters. The apron allowed the KC-97Ls to taxi directly to the runway.

The SAC mission at Dover ended in 1965, and the mole hole was demolished in 2005, but the apron, adjacent to the Museum, still is used for transient aircraft.

Source: AMC Museum Eyewitness to History
The **Hangar Digest** is published quarterly and is dedicated to the preservation of our airlift and tanker heritage. All articles, unless otherwise noted, are written by the editor. All photographs are courtesy of the Air Mobility Command Museum unless otherwise noted.

**Viewpoints** in this publication are those of the contributing authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AMC Museum Foundation or of the Museum’s staff.

**Subscriptions** are free and are mailed via nonprofit standard mail to paid-up members of the AMC Museum Foundation Inc.

**Contributions.** Reader’s comments, articles and ideas are solicited for future issues. Mail to The Hangar Digest, P.O. Box 02050, Dover AFB DE 19902-2050; fax 302-677-5940; or email amcmuseum@us.af.mil.

**Contact** Editor MSgt. Jeff Brown, USAF (Ret.) via email at ntrprz@dmv.com.

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**From the Museum Store:**

Didn’t quite finish your holiday shopping? Maybe there’s a birthday or anniversary coming up? The AMC Museum store has hundreds of items in stock and ready to be shipped.

Contact store manager Jim Stewart by phone at 302-677-5992; by fax at 302-677-5949; or email at storemanageramcm@comcast.net. Members, be sure to ask for your 10% discount when ordering. Not yet a Friend of the Museum? Join now by filling out the membership application on page 15.

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The **Hangar Digest** is printed by Farley Printing Company, Dover, Del. Mailed by D&B Printing Services, Newark, Del.
From the Director

Jim Leech, our illustrious museum curator, will be gone from January through March. He is going TDY (i.e., temporary duty to those who don’t speak jargon) to help another museum put together all the files required to operate a museum in today’s world of digital documentation. He also will advise them on aircraft restoration and security. It will be interesting, to say the least, for us to work for 90 days with just John Taylor and me covering daily goings-on. Our volunteers are great but there just are some jobs we have to take care of to keep us on track and having only three people in the rotation is cutting it close as it is.

One of the very time consuming jobs we do here involves registering and documenting all the artifacts donated to the USAF Heritage Program. They aren’t ours; we hold them in trust for the nation and that takes an inordinate amount of time for a “no longer small” museum with a still small staff.

Accountability is one of the cornerstones of professional museum operations. Fortunately we have been dealing with these issues for years and have a solid foundation of both paper and electrons. Also fortunate is the fact we have a collections manager that thrives on detail and understands the evolving processes of caring for a rather unique collection.

Deborah Sellars started working at our Museum as a volunteer in 1989 when the collections area was an 18-by-18-foot closet with a chicken wire roof and a computer that is now in the collection itself as an artifact. Today Deborah and son Hal, who’s also the museum’s webmaster and exhibit designer, own Dunrovin Design & Copy. We are lucky to have them as contractors that provide both collections work and top notch graphics.

As we have mentioned before, the old control tower cab from the Dover Air Force Base flightline is being mounted on a new shorter tower at the Museum to become a part of the educational experience that our visitors can enjoy. Plans call for tower chatter recorded by our friends in the real tower to be played back at random times so those people can see and hear what the sounds of air traffic are like here at Dover AFB. We are actively collecting tower equipment so we can reequip our tower to resemble a tower in the 70s-90s era. By late spring we are looking forward to a ribbon cutting ceremony.

We’ve restored some massive aircraft here, some in deplorable condition, and some just cut into chunks and needing lots of TLC. I’ve always felt comfortable that we can preserve or restore anything – but I had my doubts about one of the smallest planes our restoration team has ever tackled. Our crew has been working on a CG-4A for about two years and I truly am amazed at their progress.

In case you don’t live and breathe old aircraft, this World War II-era combat glider is made of steel tubing with wood stringers tied onto the frame with string. I kid you not.

The wiring is secured with old fashioned friction tape and the flooring of the cargo compartment, which was strong enough to haul a miniature bulldozer into combat at nearly 150 miles an hour, is of a very thin plywood latticework. The four bench seats that could hold a dozen troops are made of mahogany plywood. Each seat could hold three combat ready soldiers, yet weighed only 15 pounds.

Our glider was a pile of rusted and rotting parts when we received it. Some of the tubing was bent, none of the fabric covering was in good enough condition to save and half the wood was either crushed or rotted. Not good odds, but there are fewer than a dozen original CG-4As in the world and we wanted to tell this very important part of airlift history. There still is a lot of work to do but what has emerged so far is a fuselage that soon will be ready to cover with fabric. Our friends at the Massey Airdrome near Massey, Md., are lending a hand to show our guys how to do the detailed fabric work this project will require. We are going to leave one side of the aircraft exposed so visitors will be able to look inside and see how fragile these combat tested gliders looked.

John Demory restored the cockpit and nose section of the glider many years ago. Sometime in 2011 we will be ready to mate the two together and put the glider on display. In the short term it will be missing its wings, but don’t underestimate what our hardcore wizards can achieve. I’m a believer.

Mike
Crusin’ with the Curator

Well folks, a lot has happened since our last contact so fasten your seatbelts and let’s get going.

Construction has started on the base section for the top part, or cab, from Dover Air Force Base’s original control tower. If you’ve visited the museum in past months, you’ve surely seen the cab sitting in our parking lot. The base for the cab is being built just outside the canteen and will be connected to the building via a hallway. Access to the cab will be from the inside the base section and will provide our visitors with a unique view of our ramp and the base flightline in the distance. Estimated completion date is March 2011.

After many years of possessing Hangar 789 on the main part of Dover AFB, we kind of received an eviction notice to vacate the premises. The wing mission has a need for “vertical” storage and our restoration hangar will provide just that. So, what does that mean for us? A move of the restoration area to Hangar 1315, just over the fence from the Museum. We’ve been given another bay in that facility and it will serve as storage as well as our restoration area. Thankfully we have just the CG-4 glider in restoration and not a sizeable aircraft because the hangar opening only will allow a piece less than 20 feet to pass through. By press time, the move should be well under way.

A contractor arrived in late October to paint the C-133 and C-124. Both aircraft needed this attention and it brought two more aircraft into proper display condition. And since I’m talking aircraft, our restoration guys have been busy rehabbing our UH-1 helicopter. It received an in-house paint job and an interior facelift. Just can’t keep a good team down now, can’t we?

Another addition to the museum complex is Quonset hut No. 2. Funding allowed the purchase of the hut and it will be assembled next to the existing one. Plans for what to do once it’s erected still are being negotiated but it either will serve as a display building for our vehicle fleet or additional storage if warranted. We’ll let you know.

And here’s a bit of news I bet you didn’t expect to read. On Saturday 13 Nov., the Delaware Ghost Hunters was invited to our facility to investigate possible … how should I say it … sightings, unexplained noises, muffled whispers. They set up their scientific equipment throughout the hangar and in several planes outside around 6 o’clock that evening and gathered information until about 2 a.m. Sunday. Most of the “experiences” centered around the C-47 and it was evident something out of the ordinary was happening with that plane. I’ll reserve judgment until their official report is issued after they scrutinize all the data they collected that evening.

Suffice it to say, it was an interesting process to be a part of. More to come!

That’s it in a nutshell, folks. See you next issue!

Jim

Meet Museum Volunteer Don Rynes

Don Rynes could easily carry the moniker of “Mr. C-124” for his efforts at leading the restoration crew for the Museum’s Globemaster II, as well as his organizing the semiannual Old Shaky reunion, a gathering of crewmembers and ground personnel who serviced the C-124 during its time at Dover Air Force Base.

Born in Omaha, Neb., Don entered the Air Force in April 1955 as an aviation cadet and earned his commission and navigator’s wings in September 1956.

“I was young and I wanted to see the world,” he said. “And I always wanted to fly. Why is kind of hard to put into words. I just enjoy everything about it.”

Don’s first assignment was to Dover AFB in 1956, and it also was his last when he returned in 1981. He’d held a number of assignments beforehand, including tours at both 22nd and 21st Air Force, where he served in the navigation and aircraft standardization division. He retired in October 1984 after more than 29 years of service.

Don holds a master of business arts degree from Southern Illinois University; in addition to the C-124, his flight experience included time aboard the C-141 and C-5.

Following his Air Force retirement, he taught at Delaware Technical and Community College and worked in the information technology field. Today, he’s fully retired and lives in Dover with Jean, his wife of 48 years. When not volunteering at the Museum, Don travels with Jean to Vermont and Texas to visit their children and grandchild.

“I have a lot of friends who volunteer here, and I enjoy it,” he said of his work at the Museum. “It gives me a lot of close ties to the Air Force and to flying.”
AMC Museum honored as Kent Attraction of the Year 2010

Air Mobility Command Museum members always have known their museum is something special, but Kent County Tourism made it official Nov. 5, naming the facility its 2010 Kent County Attraction of the Year.

The award was handed out during a gala dinner at the Museum, where AMC Museum Director Mike Leister accepted the honor on behalf of the Museum and the AMC Museum Foundation’s board of directors.

The AMC Museum has proven to be one of the county’s top attractions, noted Monica Weber, president of the board of directors for Kent County Tourism.

“It has grown to become the third-largest field museum in the Air Force, where visitors can learn about aviation history and explore magnificent vintage aircraft,” Weber said.

The Museum attracted more than 61,000 people from every state, its largest number of visitors for any year in which an air show was not held. So far for 2010, guests from 19 different countries have toured the facility.

Kent County Tourism has selected an attraction of the year for nearly 20 years, said Executive Director Cindy Small.

“The Air Mobility Command Museum was selected in 2010 for multiple reasons, including having its highest visitation year on record; providing a unique, high-quality museum and learning center that attracts local residents and visitors from all over the world; having ‘can-do’ attitudes whenever asked to partner with Kent County Tourism; and for being among the area’s top attractions in terms of visitor feedback,” she said.

“The AMC is an attraction we can count on to provide a positive experience for our travel writers, motor coach and school groups, meetings and reunions as well as the leisure visitor. The Museum is truly one of our most marketable tourism attributes.”

Attendees at the awards celebration were encouraged to dress in 1940s-era clothing, to include military uniforms of the period. Music for dancing was provided by the Milford Community Band, which played a number of World War II-era selections, as well as the First State Harmonettes, which entertained the audience with a number of barbershop style tunes.

To get the audience in the swing of things – literally -- Justin David and Marianna Melnikova, members of the University of Delaware’s Competitive Ballroom Dancing Team demonstrated a number of 1940s dances, to include swing and the jitterbug.

Museum Director Mike Leister expressed his thanks for the honor.

“The amazing thing to me is that we are no longer a small museum,” he said. “We’ve grown to have 29 rare aircraft and a volunteer force that keeps them looking good. People come from far and wide to climb aboard our planes, and watching a child’s face as they see how big some of them are is worth all the work.”

Museum Store book pays homage to an “Unsung Giant”

“Remembering an Unsung Giant” is a highly enjoyable and more importantly, informative, volume on the history of the Douglas C-133 Cargomaster. Written by retired U.S Air Force Lt. Col. Cal Taylor, a former C-133 navigator, the book is a massive, 420-page project containing numerous black and white photos of the aircraft and its crews, diagrams (to include several fold-out sections) and a special 16-page color section that includes six interior shots of the AMC Museum’s restored Cargomaster.

Taylor conducted extensive research, including digging through official records, news accounts and crew remembrances, to compile the book. The book includes a chapter recounting the loss of 10 Cargomasters in crashes that included several crews from Dover.

Copies autographed by the author are on sale at the AMC Museum for $29.95. Museum members will receive a 10% discount.
FOUNDATION NOTES by Don Sloan

Congratulations are in order for one of our Museum volunteers, Don Clark of Smyrna, Del.. Don was inducted into the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame (DAHF) in September. A C-47 Douglas Skytrain pilot during World War II, he flew 27 combat missions in France. After the war, he came home, joined the Reserve, got his civilian ratings and started his own cropdusting business in Kent County. He’s seen here reminiscing with another hometown “boy” and Delaware Aviation Hall of Famer, Joe Jenkins and his son Joey. Joe flew P-61 Black Widows and Bristol Beaufighters during the war.

AMC Museum Store volunteer Pat Titus points out the group tail code “Square K” on a newly-arrived B-17 Boeing Flying Fortress model. The “Square Ks” were flown by the 709th Bombardment Squadron out of RAF Rattlesden, England, from 1943 until 1945. The unit was later designated a B-29 unit and ultimately redesignated the 709th Military Airlift Squadron in 1973, flying the C-5A Galaxy here at Dover AFB. Part of the 512th Airlift Wing, they are now the 709th Airlift Squadron, flying C-5Bs and the new record-setting C-5M. Special orders don’t upset store manager, Jim Stewart. Give him a call at 677-6854 or stop by and see what’s new.

Colonels Manson Morris and Randy Bright, the 436th and 512th Airlift Wing commanders, gave their traditional “State of the Wing” addresses to an enthusiastic crowd at this year’s Annual Mixer. The continued support of both Dover wings is a welcome asset to the Museum. Here, Col. Morris receives the first presentation of the AMC Museum 25th Anniversary Challenge Coin. Get yours at the Museum store today!

Store volunteers Jan and Sam Marinucci are all smiles as they stand with Joe Cummiskey, winner of this year’s Annual Mixer Raffle. Joe was looking forward to hanging David Godek’s original painting, “The Outhouse Mouse” in his just-finished “man cave.” A frequent visitor, Joe always brings his out-of-town guests to the enjoy the AMC Museum — just what we like to hear. This year’s winning ticket was sold in the Museum store. Once again, we are very grateful to David for his continued support to the Museum. Thanks, David!

We were certainly sorry to see treasurer Sidney Erickson, resign from our Foundation Board this past fall. Sidney has done a great job of moving our finance department into the computer age. On behalf of the Board, I’d like to take this opportunity to publicly thank her for her hard work and perseverance. She’s laid some fine ground work for our incoming treasurer, Leonard Heavner.

Some of you might remember Leonard as the 436th Operations Group commander here at Dover until his retirement in 2007. A 1981 Air Force Academy grad, he served as a program analyst on both the Joint Staff and Air Staff. He’s been a chief of Wing Safety, a director of staff for Eighteenth Air Force and an Ops Support squadron commander prior to his promotion to colonel and taking the reins of the Ops Group. He’s a command pilot with more than 3,100 hours in C-141s and C-5s. Since retiring he completed a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting and was hired by Chesapeake Utilities as an accountant in their corporate office with responsibilities including bank
reconciliations, fixed asset management and cost allocations. His current position is as a gas supply analyst for Chesapeake Utilities Corporation here in Dover. He’s responsible for the daily purchase of natural gas for the company’s Delaware and Maryland divisions. Leonard also serves on the board of Chesapeake’s Sharing Fund, which helps the elderly, ill, and those facing financial hardship with their energy bills during the winter months. Married for 25 years to another Board member, Melody, they and their son Jack have made their home in Delaware. We’re looking forward taking advantage of his talents as our new treasurer. Welcome Leonard.

Our Hangar Flying event featuring local World War II veteran Clarence “Wogy” Wolgemuth was an incredibly interesting afternoon. Wogy spoke about “joining up,” his training and his subsequent arrival in the Pacific Theater. First-hand accounts of flying the P-38 Lightning in combat don’t come around often, but Wogy did an outstanding job of giving us some insight into what it was like. The range of folks in his sizeable audience stretched from several kids to a few of his fellow war veterans. This picture shows Wogy responding to a Marine who told of being on a beachhead in the Pacific, watching the American P-38s in aerial combat with Japanese Zeros. “You guys saved our lives,” he said. It was one of those “I must have something in my eye” moments.

Another interesting afternoon of Hangar Flying was during the Air Transport Command Association (ATCA) Reunion, held in Dover this year. Several Air Corps Ferry Command veterans and their families shared their experiences with our guests and Dr. Milton Rhodes gave a presentation that explained the roots of today’s Air Mobility Command. He covered the lineage (i.e. Air Corps Ferrying Command, Military Air Transport Command, etc.), the components (domestic, ferrying and foreign), major air stations (too many to list here), and of course, the aircraft. Our own volunteer, Bill Voigt, a Berlin Airlift veteran (and also a Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame honoree) shares some war stories (really) with Jack Kinyon. The following day, World War II veterans Kinyon and Dave Nathan, and ATCA event coordinator Claire Saxon were able to share some “blue skies and tail winds” in a restored Stearman, the same type of trainer used to give military pilots their primary training nearly 70 years ago.

Pack up the kids and come out at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 11. Once again our featured speaker (and now one of our newest board members), Mr. Bill Ayrey of ILC Dover, will tell the fascinating story of how a little Delaware company became the world’s leader in spacesuit development. Bill will narrate a riveting review of what worked and what didn’t and how it affected the space race. ILC has been making all of NASA’s spacesuits since the before the first manned Apollo mission; their space suits now have more than 1,600 hours protecting astronauts from the hazards of the space environment. Bill will provide information on the designs of space suits, including the past (Apollo), present (space shuttle/International Space Station) and the future (Constellation). ILC Dover also manufactures just about all of the manned airships flying around the world. The air bags that safely landed the Mars Exploration Rovers Spirit and Opportunity and the earlier Pathfinder rover onto the Martian surface also were designed and built at ILC Dover. Bill’s been with ILC for more than 30 years and along with his primary job as test and calibration manager, he also acts as company historian. And just how DO they go to the bathroom? Bill tells all. It’s worth your Sunday afternoon if you like space and aviation, interesting local history or just want to try on some neat ILC-produced gear (like Hal Sellsar). Come on out and learn something while having fun. As usual at our Hangar Flying events, there will be light snacks and door prizes. It’s FREE for members and kids 16 and under, with a $5 donation requested from others.

Look for an upcoming Hangar Flying with noted author Robert Dorr. A frequent Hangar Flyer, Bob has written 70 books and thousands of magazine articles about the Air Force and aviation. He will discuss his latest book, “Mission to Berlin” (due to be released in spring 2011) and give some insight about the 8th Air Force raid of 3 Feb. 1945 over what was left of Hitler’s Third Reich. Watch our website, www.amcmuseum.org, for a confirmed date.

And if you’re not receiving your eNewsletter from the AMC Museum, go to the website and sign up! You’ll get reminders and updated information of our premier events — and it’s all still free, of course.

Fly safe!

Photo credits; Leonard Heavner, Melody Heavner; book image, Amazon.com; astronaut poster, Dunrovin; all others, Don Sloan
When he was born in Lancaster Co., Pa. almost 90 years ago, everyone thought Clarence Wolgemuth’s destiny lay strictly within the limits of the 78-acre farm owned by his parents.

“It was expected I’d be a farmer,” Wolgemuth said. “I’d get up at 4 or 5 a.m., milk the cows, feed the chickens and livestock, have breakfast at 7 and walk to school. In the summer, we all worked the fields. I was driving my father’s John Deere when I was 9 years old.”

But fate had other plans for the man who has come to be known by his nickname of “Wogy.” Even though he was granted a farmer’s exemption from wartime duty after the Pearl Harbor attack of December 1941, Wolgemuth yearned for an opportunity to escape the farm and serve his country. In an era of barnstorming pilots, bolstered by the exploits of people such as Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart, Wolgemuth also decided he wanted to fly.

“I was interested in flying while picking tomatoes in the 1930s, and seeing all those planes flying overhead,” he said.

Brought up as a member of the pacifist Church of Brethren in Christ, Wolgemuth defied his church’s views on military service and asked his draft board to remove the exemption.

With the country in dire need of pilots for its fledgling U.S. Army Air Forces, Wolgemuth took and passed his aviation exams at the Harrisburg, Pa., post office and was sworn in as a flying cadet the day before his scheduled induction.

Despite his own religious convictions, Wolgemuth’s father, a church deacon, fully supported his son’s decision, a position that eventually resulted in his being dismissed from the congregation.

Commissioned in December 1943, Wolgemuth was sent to New Guinea as a P-38 pilot. But before he could get his first combat mission under his belt, he ran out of fuel while on a training flight and made a wheels-up landing near an isolated native village. He was considered MIA for almost a week before being rescued.

Dover Airlift Memories — Lt. Col. Clarence E. Wolgemuth

Wolgemuth is awarded one of his four Air Medals while in Vietnam

Wolgemuth finished the war with 108 combat missions and decided to remain in uniform if he could be assigned to a base on the East Coast. When a personnel sergeant told him he was “too little and too late,” i.e., not enough rank and seniority to pull one of the coveted positions, Wolgemuth accepted his discharge in September 1945 and spent the next few years as a salesman. But there was something missing.

“After the life I’d led and being in the war, I didn’t really know what I wanted to do.”

By 1950, escalating tensions in Korea put Wolgemuth back in uniform, incongruously as a member of a ground observer corps stationed at the railroad station in Richmond, Va. After two years in that unfulfilling assignment, and itching to get back into the air, he finagled a berth as a C-119 pilot. That choice led to his second wartime experience, transporting troops and supplies across the Korean peninsula in the ungainly cargo aircraft known as the “Flying Boxcar.”

Wolgemuth liked flying the twin-boomed airplane, though the machine did have its drawbacks.

“It was a good airplane,” he said. “But the way it was built, it was one you didn’t want to crash. It was built like a sled.”

Based at Ashiya AB, Japan, Wolgemuth flew numerous missions in support of operations in Korea. Ashiya’s prime mission was supporting the U.S. Army’s 187th Regimental Combat Team, and Wolgemuth took part in scenarios that involved flying in formation with other C-119s in airborne assault training sessions and actual missions. The Boxcars also delivered everything from tanks to buses to the troops on the ground.

The pace sometimes was brutal.

“We flew our asses off,” Wolgemuth said. “You were either flying off on a mission into Korea with supplies or fresh troops or to airdrop something to somewhere in the field.

Now retired in Dover, Lt. Col. Clarence “Wogy” Wolgemuth enjoys lecturing high school students about his wartime experiences.
“And, if you weren’t doing that, you were flying airline routes all over Japan, delivering supplies to the different bases. “We always had a mission.”

Wolgemuth also took part in a then-classified effort in Southwest Asia when he flew the C-119, in civilian clothing and without military ID, in support of French army forces in Vietnam. Following his Japan assignment, he was given a ground assignment with the Continental Air Command.

“I hated it; I wanted to be out flying,” he said.

But the job led directly to his assignment to Dover. Frustrated with life outside the cockpit, Wolgemuth haunted the personnel division during night shifts and soon discovered a message citing a need for pilots at Dover. He was accepted for the job after retraining to fly the C-54 Skymaster and was assigned to the 39th Military Airlift Squadron, arriving on Thanksgiving Day, 1956.

At first, Dover did not impress the young captain as he searched for a home for his wife and daughter. The town was small, with less than 6,000 inhabitants. Route 13, instead of the busy highway it is today, was little more than a two-lane road and White Oak Road was considered the north end of town.

“There wasn’t really anything beyond that,” he said.

Dover was not a sought-after assignment and many dragged their feet when it came to relocating here.

“When we first got here, we were told it wasn’t smart to go downtown in uniform,” Wolgemuth said. “There was a lot of anti-military sentiment. A lot of people wished they didn’t have to put up with us.”

As Dover transitioned from the C-54 to the larger C-124 Globemaster II, Wolgemuth ended up flying missions literally all over the planet; one week he’d be delivering humanitarian supplies to Ecuador, another would find him on classified missions delivering atomic weapon components in Europe, another mission would take him to Lebanon, Turkey, Iran or the Congo, the latter in support of United Nations forces following that nation’s independence in 1960.

Those missions involved crossing the Atlantic, arcing down through Libya, then crossing the empty Sahara. Navigation, in those days before satellite positioning systems often involved dead-reckoning and star sightings, which sometimes was complicated by desert windstorms that kicked obscuring dust high into the air.

The situation on the ground wasn’t always conducive to a crew’s peace of mind, either. A Dover crew was mobbed by angry Congolese on one mission, and on another Wolgemuth and a fellow crewmember locked themselves in their room after a machete-carrying native paid a visit to their quarters.

Finally, after eight years at Dover, Wolgemuth moved on, first to a C-124 reserve unit in Missouri and then to a tour in Vietnam as his wing’s chief of aircrew standardization. That position allowed him to fly the C-7 Caribou, resupplying Special Forces units and moving U.S.-friendly Montagnard fighters around the country.

“What made that aircraft so good was that you could land on a 500-foot runway if you had to,” Wolgemuth recalled. The technique involved reversing the Caribou’s engines just as the aircraft touched down.

“You’d never want to do that, but it came in handy if you had a short strip,” he said.

The flying also was complicated by North Vietnamese or Viet Cong forces that often sent short-range ammo fire at the aircraft as they landed. Wolgemuth estimates his aircraft took more hits on these missions than he did during his entire World War II combat tour.

He also was reminded of the cost of war whenever the Caribou would drop off new troops, then return with a cargo of filled body bags.

“I remember hauling in those kids, they were 18 or 19 years old,” he said. “I always wondered what those kids thought when they got off the plane and saw those body bags.”
Airlift Memories
CONTINUING FROM PAGE 9

Looking familiar? Well, it will soon. This artist’s rendering of planned renovations to the AMC Museum’s store shows what the area will look like following a $90,000 facelift, planned by the AMC Museum Foundation. The store is designed by the Thinking Outside the Square design firm of Buffalo, N.Y., who also devised plans for the National Baseball Hall of Fame and the Children’s Museum at Saratoga. Museum Store Manager Jim Stewart reports work will begin in January. For more information and to support the Museum Store, go to http://amcmuseum.org/new_store.

Wolgemuth takes a break at Phu Cat AB, Vietnam, circa 1968.

Bill Ingler, who is retired from the 160th Air Refueling Group of the Ohio Air National Guard, spotted our KC-135E on the Museum webpage, and immediately emailed Museum Director Mike Leister with the news that the aircraft, tail number 571507, was the first KC-135 transferred to the Air National Guard, back in 1974. “1507 was always a great flying aircraft, and I’m glad to know it has been saved from the boneyard,” Bill wrote via email.

Following his stint in Vietnam, Wolgemuth served a two-year tour with the 21st Air Force inspector general, a job he did not particularly enjoy.

“One of my jobs was to kick off ORIs at Dover,” he said. “I’d drive through the gate at 4 a.m. and hand them a card saying, ‘This is your notification of an ORI.’ That’s how we did it in those days.”

Wolgemuth ended his military career as vice commander of the 625 Military Airlift Support Squadron at Torrejon Air Base, Spain, in 1973, and then retired to Dover. Returning to the First State was an easy decision.

“We’d lived here for eight years and we had more friends here than anywhere else,” he said. Wolgemuth first worked in building and engineering for the Agway company, moved to the Better Business Bureau, and then back to Agway. He finally retired in 1989 at the age of 68.

Wolgemuth now spends his time traveling, going to reunions and visiting his two children and three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He has shared his military experiences with students at Dover and Caesar Rodney high schools, as well as back in his hometown of Mount Joy. He also has published a book, “World War Two Memoirs of a Fighter Pilot,” which details his experiences on earning his pilot’s wings and his service in the South Pacific.

He’s justifiably proud of his military service, both to the nation during the Cold War and for his years at Dover AFB.

“Those 26 years were years I wouldn’t trade for anything else I could have done,” he said. “You don’t get rich doing it, but it is an exciting and exhilarating experience. There was always something new about to happen.”

“Not too bad,” he said, “for a Pennsylvania Dutch Mennonite farm boy.”

Photo credits: Page 8, right: Jeff Brown, left, courtesy Clarence Wolgemuth; page 9, left, courtesy Clarence Wolgemuth; right, Jeff Brown; page 10, courtesy Clarence Wolgemuth.
The AMC Museum’s Art Event, held June 12, drew crowds of artists and art aficionados, to include Lee Kukulka of Harrington. Kukulka works with his sister, Dorothy Michels, in the custom framing business. He has an ongoing fascination with Civil War re-enactments, as his photos show.

Pat Walker shares her love of pottery with a hands-on demonstrations for the many children who attended the Art Event. Bowls, vases and practical gifts, many formed on her foot-controlled potter’s wheel, are Walker’s specialty.

Airman 1st Class Timothy Blake of Dover Air Force Base demonstrates the strenuous art of the Highland Fling, the Sword Dance and various victory dances associated with Scottish games and traditions. Dressed in a Tam O’Shanter, lace ruffled shirt, sporran and the official Air Force tartan as his kilt, Blake performed a number of solo routines, accompanied by the bagpipes.
Museum volunteers Kevin Wysopal and John Demory work Nov. 6 to reassemble a barrier around the Museum’s glider exhibit. “We knew what we were doing when we started,” Demory said, “but now we’re not so sure!”

Eric Folmer, 11, of Kennett Square, Pa., takes a look at the ball turret gunner position aboard the Museum’s B-17, Sleepy Time Gal. “It’s cool,” Eric said of the Gal, “and big, too.” Eric, his family and some friends were taking a trip to the beach Nov. 6 when they decided to make a stop, their second, at the Museum.

Abby Young of Wilmington, a student at Archmere Academy, examines the Museum’s 463L cargo pallet during a stop Nov. 6. Abby and her mother, Sue, were making their first visit to the Museum in quest of fulfilling a photography class assignment.
AMC Museum visitors watch a Dover Air Force Base C-17 Globemaster III conduct touch-and-go landings Nov. 6. Flightline operations are easy to watch from the Museum’s complex on the south side of the base.

Mike and Josh Sappington of Charlotte, N.C., look over the Museum’s Dover Air Force Base timeline exhibit. The father and son, along with the rest of their family, were visiting over the Thanksgiving holiday, and made it a point to visit the fighters on display outside the Museum. “This is a great place,” said Mr. Sappington, adding his father had worked on F-102s in Washington state. “He can tell the grandchildren all about them.”

Cathy and Eugene Rossi of Lake Hiawatha, N.J., chat with AMC Museum volunteer Pat Ford during a Nov. 27 visit. The Rossis, who have a condo in Milford, also signed up as members of the Museum during their trip. “We don’t just come [to Delaware] to go to the casinos,” Mrs. Rossi said. “We come here.”

All photos on pages 12 and 13 by Jeff Brown
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<td>Crew member benefits plus *challenge coin for each family member (maximum 5)</td>
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<td>Group commander benefits plus one crew member membership for friend, *signed and numbered aviation print, *museum golf shirt personalized with name and donor category</td>
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<td>Eagle Donor</td>
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<td>Wing Commander benefits plus special engraved plaque for your home or organization. All Eagle Donors receive further benefits and recognition. Please contact the museum at 302-677-5938 for more information</td>
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*Initial and 5-year anniversaries

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Thank you for helping to preserve U.S. Air Force airlift and air refueling history. The AMC Museum Foundation is a non-profit, educational organization that raises money and generates support for the AMC Museum. Dues and donations are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

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DOVER AFB DE 19902-2050
This illustration shows the Museum’s F-106A Delta Dart, tail No. 59-0023, as it appeared in April 1972 while assigned to the 95th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Dover AFB, Del. The F-106 was seen primarily as an all-weather interceptor, and this particular craft served with units in Indiana, California, Maine and New Jersey. The aircraft was manufactured by the Convair division of General Dynamics Corporation, San Diego, Calif. Delivered to the U.S. Air Force on 29 Jan. 60, it was retired to the Museum on 20 Feb. 1998.