



VOLUME 7, ISSUE 3

JULY 2007

# Hangar Digest



*C-124C #20998 on the ramp at Don Muang Airport, Bangkok, Thailand on 5 February 1960. Two days later, on 7 February 1960, this aircraft and its crew would fly the record-breaking non-stop flight from Hickam AFB, Hawaii to Dover AFB, Delaware logging 18 hours and 40 minutes.*

A few months ago, Museum Director Mike Leister asked that I put together a piece about my earlier years at Dover AFB. Since those early years, the airmen's uniforms are somewhat different, the features of the base have changed, and more sophisticated airplanes are on the ramp. However, the mission remains much the same: Airlifting Anything, to Anywhere and at Anytime. See Dover Air Force Base "The Earlier Years" on page 5.

Tickets will be on sale soon for your chance to win an original oil painting of B-17s in combat, titled "Man O' War". The painting is one of two that were recently donated by Col David Godek (USAF Retired) to raise funds to purchase a top gun turret for our B-17 "Sleepy Time Gal". Several of Col Godek's pieces have been accepted into the Air Force Art Collection. Look for a Museum Foundation Board member to purchase your \$5 tickets or stop by the Museum Store.

In the next issue - "World War II Transport and Troop Carrier Operations".

Enjoy the summer and visit your AMC Museum!

*Harry E. Heist, Editor*

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## LOOKING BACK

In August and September of 1958, MATS C-118s, C-121s and C-124s airlifted a Tactical Composite Air Strike Force and an Air Defense Command squadron of F-104 Starfighters to Taiwan to strengthen the position of the Nationalist Chinese against the threat of a Chinese Communist invasion of the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu and, possibly, of Taiwan itself.

*Source: Toward The Air Mobility Command 1994 Revised*



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 the courtesy of the Air Mobility Command Museum unless otherwise designated.

**Viewpoints** expressed 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: Harry E. Heist c/o The Hangar Digest, P.O. Box 02050, Dover AFB DE 19902-2050; FAX (302) 677-5940 and email: [harry.heist@dover.af.mil](mailto:harry.heist@dover.af.mil).

## Air Mobility Command Museum Mission Statement

**The mission of the Air Mobility Command Museum is twofold:**

- **The primary mission is to present the history and development of military airlift and tanker operations.**
- **The second closely aligned mission is to portray the rich history of Dover Air Force Base and Dover Army Airfield, its predecessor .**

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**Museum hours: Tuesday through Sunday - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.  
Closed Federal Holidays.**

### From the Museum Store:

Summer is in full swing, time to get into those shorts and T-shirts along with that cool refresher by your side. So, if you have not already ordered your can and bottle cozies, BBQ items and Air Force theme summer wear, now's the time.

Contact store manager Jon Rehm by phone at (302) 677-5992 or by FAX at (302) 677-5949 and email: [jon.rehm@dover.af.mil](mailto:jon.rehm@dover.af.mil). Members be sure to ask for your 10% discount when ordering. Not yet a Museum member? The Museum's Membership Application appears on page 11.

## From the Director

Harry's theme for this issue is Dover Air Force Base "The Earlier Years". I may not have arrived at Dover as early as Harry but when I did report on base in 1973 as a C-5 crew chief from Charleston AFB, there was still an old twin recip Convair T-29 assigned to Base Flight; the F-106, Dover's last fighter, had already departed earlier in the year and the C-141s were on their way out to make room for more C-5s.

Since 1973, Dover has been an all C-5 base. That changed last month with the arrival of the new C-17 Globemaster III. I'm careful to say Globemaster III because there have been two significant earlier aircraft to carry the name Globemaster. The first, the C-74 Globemaster I, was an innovative design but only a few were built and they quietly faded into obscurity. The Globemaster II, the famous C-124 and better known as "Ol' Shaky", was the Air Force's Cold War workhorse. We are proud to have the oldest Globemaster II in our collection and the only "A" model in existence.

We were invited to tow our C-124 to the main ramp as part of the ceremony celebrating the arrival of Dover's first C-17. At that one moment, we had the world's oldest surviving Globemaster and the world's newest, parked nose to nose. Pretty exciting stuff and I'll say Ol' Shaky still cuts a pretty imposing figure when compared to more modern aircraft.

We have added a T-38 cockpit simulator to our growing collection of interior exhibits. Now, T-38s don't have anything to do with airlift or air refueling but this addition allows our visitors to climb into the cockpit of a high performance aircraft and get a feel for what it is like to strap on a supersonic jet.

We are scheduled to receive a KB-50 air refueling tanker from MacDill AFB sometime in the future. I was recently asked when we can expect to see that aircraft and why we want it in the first place. Good questions, I can answer one better than the other. As to when, it will depend on whenever a KC-135 can be retired to MacDill AFB to replace the KB-50, which is now on exhibit. That process is way above our pay grade. And why do we want it? First off, it is one of only two KB-50 tankers in the world. It is also significant as it used the hose and drogue method - the first practical method of air refueling. The most interesting aspects of this system is that a KB-50 could refuel three aircraft of different types at one time, one from each wingtip and one from the aft fuselage.



*KB-50 refueling an F-100, B-66 and an RF-101*

Till the next time,

*Mike*

## Cruisin' with the Curator

Dover Air Force Base "The Earlier Years", um - I'll have to park the PT Cruiser for now and pile into my 1965 Mustang "Pony" ragtop. Okay, okay...I'll put the top down!

It's December 1967 and I just arrived at the Dover Air Force Base following graduation from tech school. Trained as an aircraft mechanic and having completed all the necessary education on a T-28, I was more than shocked to see the size of the C-124 that I was expected to maintain during my first tour of duty with the Air Force. Forty years later I'm still here and so is the C-124. And it still gives me the WOW every time I look at it.

**(Continued on the following page)**

## Cruisin' with the Curator (Cont.)

Hey, watch what happens to the Pony when I put the pedal to the metal and listen to those four barrels (that's carburetor talk to us)! Hold on, we're going so fast that.....geez we're back in the PT and look it's 2007, on a clear cool morning and the crew is at the nose of our C-121 "Connie" ready for their pre-departure briefing.

Having gone over the necessary items, we all took our positions and awaited our turn as there were two other aircraft taxiing ahead of us. Once they departed, we received clearance to access runway 14/32. I made sure that my crew was ready and we then positioned the plane on centerline. I gradually applied power and the Connie started smoothly down the runway. Several thousand feet of runway passed under us and then it happened! I had to make a right turn onto Echo Taxiway and slowed as we passed Fire Department Station #2 and the Museum ramp. One more turn to the left put us on Foxtrot Taxiway headed to the old SAC



*The Connie on Runway 14/32*

Christmas Tree aircraft parking area. I had to stop the plane to get my bearings and then we expertly backed the Connie onto Spot #3. TOW COMPLETE! He-he-he...had you going didn't I?

Yes folks, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May we towed the C-121 closer to the Museum and finally moved it onto our ramp following the C-17 arrival ceremony. The water blasting is complete and now the contractor has a bit of sanding to do before applying the paint. The scheme will be a white top and gray bottom. Hopefully by summer's end the plane will be painted and the MATS markings applied. In the meantime, the restoration crew is still working on the interior.

Now a quick check of the C-124. Wait until you see the work that crew has put into the restoration of the inside. Amazing! Keep up the good work guys and thanks again for your efforts. They'll be appreciated for years to come.

My, how time flies, from a brief trip down memory lane to the present and who knows what lies ahead..... THE SHADOW KNOWS! See you all in the next issue.

I wish I still had that Pony!

Jim

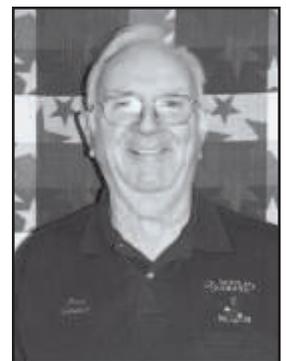
## Meet Museum Volunteer Dave Doyle

Dave, a Museum Flight Simulator Instructor, has been a volunteer since 2005.

He entered the Air Force in 1952 with his first assignment in aircraft maintenance. He worked on the F-94, T-33, B-47, B-52 and the KC-135. Transitioning into the flight engineer career field in 1963, he flew the C-130, C-141, ending his active duty career at Dover AFB on the C-5. In addition to Dover, his duty stations included: Sampson AFB, New York; Amarillo AFB, Texas; Naha AB, Japan and Charleston AFB, South Carolina.

Retiring as a Master Sergeant in 1977, Dave entered the Air Force Reserves in 1978. He finally left behind his flight suit in January 1993 after accumulating over 11,000 flying hours. He added another 5,000 hours of flight engineer time as a civilian, flying the Douglas DC-8, Lockheed 382 and the Boeing 747.

Dave and his wife Catherine "Pat" live near Felton, Delaware on 36½ acres that includes a 2,000 foot runway and a hangar that houses two classic airplanes: a 1947 Stinson Voyager and a 1953 Piper Tri-Pacer.



## Dover Air Force Base “The Earlier Years” A Personal Account by the Editor

I arrived at Dover Air Force Base in 1955, soon after its 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Gassing up my 1953 Ford Victoria at the Delaware/Pennsylvania state line I asked for directions to Dover. Not familiar with the area, I asked the station attendant what was the size of the town? I was told that Dover was similar to Wilmington. As I approached Salisbury, Maryland I figured that I had overshot the place. After doing a 180 and retracing my route, I finally arrived in Dover. Needless to say I found that it was quite a bit smaller than Wilmington. At that time, the City of Dover had a population of approximately 3,500 and Dover AFB had at least that number and the base would grow to more than 10,000 within two years.



*Dover AFB main gate 1955*



*Dover Tower under construction 1955*

I reported to the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Transport Squadron, a C-124 unit, which was assigned to the 1607<sup>th</sup> Air Transport Wing (Heavy) under the jurisdiction of the Military Air Transport Service (MATS). Our squadron’s operations office was in a Quonset hut on the flight line. Each squadron had its own airplanes along with a squadron maintenance officer and maintenance personnel. Repair work, including engine changes, was done out in the open with engine stands covered only with a tarpaulin. Our maintenance officer was bound to keep our squadron’s fleet in the air and it was not unusual for him to make a few midnight requisitions for parts from the other squadrons. However, when he decided that the 15<sup>th</sup> should have white sidewall tires on its airplanes everything more or less collapsed around him and he was then promoted to a job in wing headquarters.

During 1956, ‘57 and ‘58 there was a huge building boom on the base. The hospital was constructed with 154 beds; nose docks were built for both the C-124s and C-133s along with the first phase of base housing. An on-base school and a nine-hole golf course would follow. Later on, in the early 1960s, my family and I would move to 822A Hickam Place in a cedar sided ranch style duplex near where the Shoppette is now located. Lebanon Road, which now terminates in base housing, went all the way to Lebanon through a tidal swamp and over a rickety bridge. High water often meant a front end alignment if you were unfortunate to drop into a submerged pothole.



*The Heist's Residence  
822A Hickam Place 1962*



*NCO Club 1957*

The Base Exchange was located where Finance now is and it had an exceptional annex with everything from bicycles to an extensive line of fishing and hunting equipment. It was a pleasure shopping there. That annex is now the Class 6 store. The Commissary was more of a small warehouse than a grocery store and was located to the west of the Skills Center. The NCO Club was located at the current site of the Burger King and would move to

**(Continued on the following page)**

## Dover Air Force Base “The Earlier Years” (Cont.)

its new location in 1958 where the Landings is today. The Officers Club was demolished in 1999 to make room for the new Eagle Creek club house. The Officers Club, during the 1950s and '60s, was rated as the best in MATS, offering some of the greatest names in show business: Les Brown, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Stan Kenton and Lionel Hampton. Each squadron designated an entertainment officer who worked with the club's secretary to promote the club's activities. The squadrons sponsored monthly stage shows. Yours truly was in the chorus line of the 15<sup>th</sup> Squadron's performance of “Damn Yankees.” The show was so popular that we took it on the road to McGuire Air Force Base for two performances.



*Officer's Club 1960*

As a junior officer, one duty that I had occasionally was that of Officer of the Day (OD). During my 24 hour shift I was required to see that the clubs closed on time, check each of the base's guard shacks, count the prisoners in the stockade and generally see to it that the base was secure. One other responsibility was to accompany the wing commander in meeting incoming DV (Distinguished Visitor) aircraft. One night, due to bad weather, an aircraft was diverted to Dover from Andrews AFB. On board was General Omar Bradley. What an experience it was for me to meet him and check him into quarters for the night!

During the 1950s and into the mid 1960s, the base would play host to (3) C-54 squadrons, (5) C-124 squadrons, (2) C-133 squadrons, (2) C-141 squadrons along with a ferrying squadron. In addition, fighter squadrons assigned to the Air Defense Command would fly the F-89, F-94, F-101 and F-106. Also an HH-43 Detachment would offer fire protection for the flight line and a CH3C helicopter unit would have a classified support mission. In 1960, the Strategic Air Command would locate a KC-97 air refueling squadron here along with its klaxons (horns) located throughout the base including those inside the base theatre. You would jump three feet out of your seat when the things went off. Needless to say the airlift guys were not sorry to see SAC go in 1965.

Many airlift records and humanitarian operations were accomplished by the 1607<sup>th</sup> Air Transport Wing and I was fortunate to have participated in a few:

- I flew many missions into the Far North Country in support of the construction of the DEWLINE in Canada and the BMEWS sites and to the weather outposts in Greenland.
- In 1957, I was a crew member on the second C-124 of a formation of five that flew from Khartoum, Sudan via Dhahran, Saudi Arabia to Amman, Jordan in support of Operation Good Hope; a mission that supplied arms to Jordan's new ruler, King Hussein. A photo of our formation arriving overhead Amman appeared in the September issue of Life Magazine that same year. Hosted by the King's representatives, Jordan's national dish of lamb, rice and goat milk “Mansaf” was served to the crews upon arrival.
- In 1960, I was on the C-124 crew that flew the record breaking non-stop flight from Hickam AFB to Dover, logging 18 hours and 40 minutes. It was the first time a cargo aircraft, on an operational mission, covered this distance without refueling.
- I participated in the Congo Airlift “Operation New Tape”. At the time it was history's longest lasting airlift, 3½ years from July 1960 to January 1964.
- I was on several missions in support of NASA's early manned rocket program by delivering tracking equipment downrange and over to Ascension Island. I remember one trip into St. Lucia where we had to make several passes over the island in order to scare the natives' cattle off of the antiquated runway it in order to land. We couldn't know then that St. Lucia would become a popular tourist destination.

**(Continued on the following page)**

## Dover Air Force Base “The Earlier Years” (Cont.)

- I was on the communications support aircraft for John F. Kennedy’s historic visit to Ireland and to the Berlin Wall just prior to his assassination in 1963. As his thank you, each of our crew received a letter of appreciation, an engraved Zippo cigarette lighter with the presidential seal and the President’s calling card.
- I was on the crew of one of Dover’s two C-124s that were launched in support of the victims of the Alaskan earthquake in 1964. In Anchorage, the quake swallowed up entire houses and hundreds of vehicles. Literally, the bottom had fallen out of the city.
- During the Cuban Missile Crisis, we worked at peak capacity airlifting troops and supplies from bases throughout the United States to Florida and Guantanamo Bay. History would show that we were within 36 hours of a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union.

Other noted airlifts by the 1607th ATW included the four month round the world tour of John Glenn’s space capsule “Friendship VII”; setting the weight to altitude record by a C-133 by lifting 117,900 pounds to 10,000 feet; humanitarian airlifts to Buenos Aires to help combat a polio outbreak; mercy missions to Santiago, Chile when an earthquake literally re-made parts of that country and the movement of troops and supplies into Southeast Asia.

When the 1607<sup>th</sup> Air Transport Wing deactivated on January 1, 1966 and MATS became MAC and the 436<sup>th</sup> Military Airlift Wing was activated, there were 70 heavy transport aircraft assigned with over 8,000 military and civilian personnel. During the 1607<sup>th</sup>’s twelve year history at Dover, it had accumulated over one million transport flying hours or an equivalent distance of approximately 240 million nautical miles. In accomplishing these milestones the cost was high, the wing lost ten airplanes and 65 crew members.

With the deactivation of Dover’s last C-133 squadron, the 1<sup>st</sup> MAS in April 1971, along came the Cadillac of the airlift Air Force, the C-5 Galaxy. It would be assigned to the 9<sup>th</sup> Squadron. I was one of the first crew members assigned to that squadron and enjoyed a few years there until the 3<sup>rd</sup> MAS moved up from Charleston. I was then reassigned to the 3<sup>rd</sup> at the request of its squadron commander who was my old tactical training officer when I was an aviation cadet.

Since those “Earlier Years”, Dover Air Force Base has seen many changes: an all airlift mission with C-5s and the arrival of the new C-17s, a gigantic new Aerial Port facility with the largest air freight operation in the Department of Defense (supporting 25% of the Air Force’s Global Airlift Capability), the only stateside Joint Services Mortuary, privatized base housing and of course the Air Mobility Command Museum. Together, the 436th and the 512th (Associate Reserve) Airlift Wings make up a total force strength of approximately 11,000 Active Duty, Air Force Reserve, Civilians and Dependents generating an economic impact of more than \$470 million to the local economy. The base ranks as Delaware’s third largest employer.

### Membership Recognition

*The AMC Museum Foundation expresses its gratitude for the generosity of the following who have contributed \$100.00 or more in support of the AMC Museum through new and/or renewed memberships:* **Richard W. Bauermeister, BGen Richard B. Bundy, David Burke, Jack Carpenter, William H. Freeman, LtCol Harry E. Heist, Philip E. Hope, Robert B. Jenkins, CMSgt Efrain Lozano Jr., MGen William G. MacLaren Jr., John E. McKillop, LtCol Chuck McManus, Robert C. Moore, LtCol Donna Parry, Robert J. Penny, William Robinson, SMSgt Hugh M. Sheppard, K.C. Sheth, Col Charles X. Suraci, Howard E. Taylor, LtCol Robert R. Thomas, Maj Douglas W. Thompson, David D. Wilson, LtCol Donald Wolpert.**



*One of three of the Air Force’s new C-5Ms arriving at Dover AFB to undergo its first ever ISO (isochronal) inspection.*

## ***“Name the Plane”***

The airplane that I asked you to identify in April’s issue of the Hangar Digest is the North American L-17B Navion.

The L-17 was used by the military services from the late 1940s through the early 1960s for liaison, reconnaissance, personnel and light cargo carrying missions (six became target drones). It was originally designed for civilian use by North American Aviation, Inc. First flown in April 1946, it was introduced later that year as the NA-145 Navion. The Army Air Forces ordered 83 military versions under the designation L-17A.



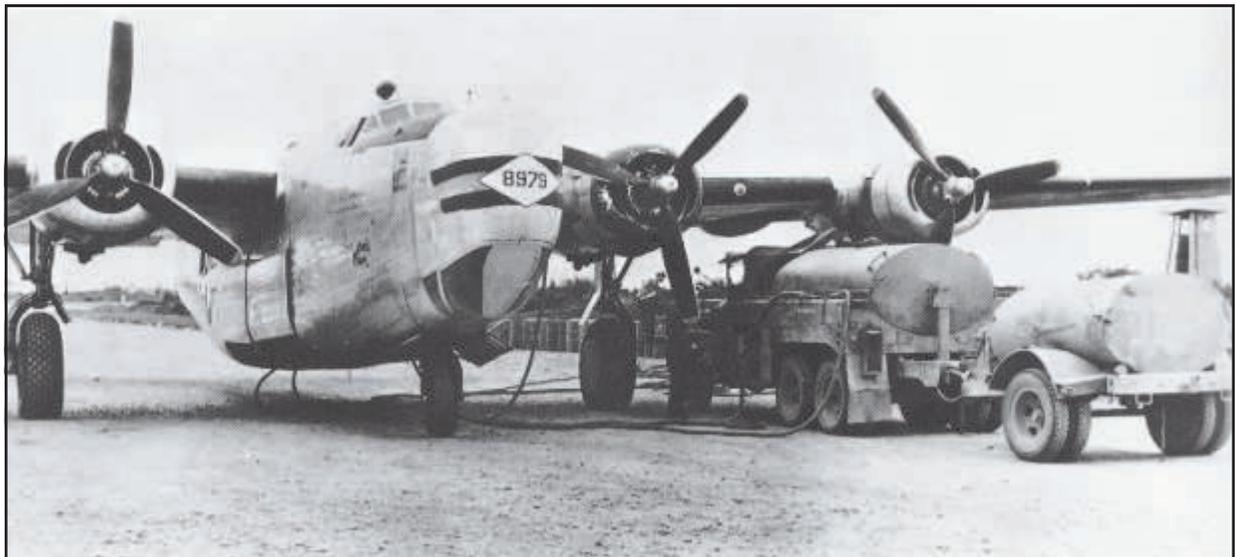
In the summer of 1947, the Ryan Aeronautical Company acquired the design and manufacturing rights from North American. Shortly thereafter, the Air Force ordered 158 improved Navions from Ryan as L-17Bs, the first of which was delivered in November 1948. Five more were purchased in 1949 and by February of that year, regular production ended. Later, 35 L-17As were converted to L-17Cs with improved brakes and more fuel capacity. All L-17s were redesignated U-18s in 1962.

The L-17B pictured, tail # 48-1069, was assigned to the Pennsylvania National Guard. It is now privately owned, undergoing restoration, and is located in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Of the readers submitting an entry, not all identified the aircraft as the L-17 “B” model. However, I have accepted all entries that identified the aircraft as the L-17 or the U-18. Our randomly selected winner of ***“Name the Plane”*** contest is Mr. Gerry Wright of Dover, Delaware and he will receive a selection from the Museum’s store. Congratulations!

This time I ask that you identify the airplane depicted below including the manufacturer, mission, design and series (if applicable); i.e., Boeing B-17G. Please send your entry by letter, email, FAX or post card to any of the addresses listed on page 2. I will designate each correct answer with a number ID from which I will randomly select one winner. Please send your entry as soon as possible and please include a return address. The winner will receive an aviation related selection from the Museum’s gift shop. Good luck and thank you for your participation.

(Museum staff and volunteers are not eligible)



## [Around the Bases: NAS Rota, Spain](#)

Strategically located near the Strait of Gibraltar and halfway between the United States and Southwest Asia, Naval Air Station Rota, Spain is the home of the **725th Air Mobility Squadron (Air Mobility Command)**. And, because of its ideal location, the base is able to provide invaluable support to both the U.S. SIXTH Fleet in the Mediterranean and to the Air Mobility Command units transiting into and through the theater.

Naval Station Rota and its tenant organizations are located within the boundaries of the 6,100 acre Spanish 'Base Naval de Rota.' Under the guidance of the Agreement for Defense Cooperation, the United States and Spanish navies work together to share many of the facilities.

The U.S. Navy has the responsibility for maintaining the station's infrastructure, including the 670-acre airfield, three active piers, 426 facilities and 800 family housing units. The Spanish Navy is responsible for the external security of the base.

Naval Station Rota provides support for U.S. and NATO ships; supports the safe and efficient movement of U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force flights and passengers and provides cargo, fuel and ammunition to units in the region.

The base also provides Quality of Life support to Moron Air Base, NATO headquarters in Madrid and the Military Sealift Command's Maritime Prepositioning Squadron. Rota also supports the NASA Space Shuttle missions and ongoing operations in the European Theater of Operations.

The Air Mobility Command maintains the **725th Air Mobility Squadron**, a unit of the 721st Air Mobility Operations Group based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. The 725th AMS is tasked with providing enroute maintenance and recovery support for all Air Mobility Command strategic, theater and contract commercial aircraft transiting Naval Air Station Rota and the Naval Air Station at Sigonella, Italy. The squadron also operates a forward supply location and two forward supply points and provides technical expertise to U.S. Navy personnel on AMC Command and Control systems. The unit also supports Department of Defense, NATO and Higher Headquarters taskings.

Enabling the base to accomplish its mission are its people. The more than 3,000 U.S. service members and their families provide unparalleled support, innovation and effort to provide quality service and support to the European Theater. From its inception in the early 1950s, the Rota Naval Base has developed into one of the most modern, advanced naval installations in the world.

Sources: [www.rota.navy.mil](http://www.rota.navy.mil), [www.globalsecurity.org](http://www.globalsecurity.org).



### [An Artifact Fact by:](#) [Deborah Sellars](#)

If you were an officer stationed at Dover AFB in the late 1950s and looking for a little relaxation and fun, where would you go? You might have stopped in at the Officers Club on Bingo Night, grabbed a card like the one in the photo and played Bingo!

This bingo card made by The "Bingo Master" Corporation was "the only bingo board with 'See Thru' metal shutters." Unlike today's disposable cards, these cards were used over and over again.

The card was discovered at an auction in Lincoln, Delaware and was donated to the Museum in October 2005.



For an updated Pave a Path to History  
brick form, please visit:

<http://amcmuseum.org/support>

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## **Become a Member—Support the AMC Museum**

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*The*  
AIR MOBILITY COMMAND MUSEUM  
*Foundation's*



*Annual Members Mixer*

Friday, 14 September 2007 at 4:30 pm at the Air Mobility Command Museum

Cover charge: \$10 (**FREE for Foundation members at Squadron Commander Level and above**)

- Visitors joining the AMC Museum Foundation that evening will have their cover waived
- Foundation Report by Board President Mike Quarnaccio (BGen, USAFR, Retired)
- Director's Report by AMC Museum Director Mike Leister
- Many additional aircraft open for tours, lots of door prizes, free hors d'oeuvres, pay-as-you-go bar, membership packages showing restoration progress, *minimum program, maximum mixing*

**Please RSVP to (302) 677-5996 and leave a message.**

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