Museum Director Mike Leister, contract supervisor Harry Brown, AMC Foundation board Vice President Paul Gillis, 436th AW Vice Commander Col. Kevin J. Gordon and contractor Mike Main cut the ribbon on April 7 for the AMCM’s new entry gate.
The mission of the Air Mobility Command Museum is twofold:

- To present the history and development of military airlift and tanker operations.
- In a goal closely aligned with the first, to portray the rich history of Dover Air Force Base and its predecessor, Dover Army Airfield.

What is the Air Mobility Command Museum?

Located in Hangar 1301 on Dover Air Force Base, Kent County, Delaware, the AMC Museum is part of the National Museum of the United States Air Force’s field museum system. Hangar 1301 was built in 1944, and was used during World War II as the 1301 Base Unit. During the Korean War the facility was home to the 7th Air Force. The Museum opened in the former hangar, which houses the USO, a wall of Honor, and a rest area. The area is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. It is closed on Memorial Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. For more information, call 302-677-5939.

The Hangar Digest is printed and mailed by Associates International, Wilmington, Del.
Pave a Path to History in Commemoration Park

With Only One Brick...

...you can accomplish two things — become a permanent part of history in Commemoration Park and join The AMC Museum Foundation in supporting the museum.

And what a great idea — there are so many reasons to order your brick today!

• Offer tribute to or memorialize a loved one.
• Give a holiday or birthday gift.
• Commemorate a special date.
• Recognize a special group.
• Show your personal or business support for the AMC Museum.

To acknowledge the purchase of your brick, you will receive a certificate of recognition suitable for framing or presenting to the person you’ve honored. Bricks may be purchased by individuals, businesses, groups, or organizations.

All letters are capitalized. Don’t forget to count spaces between letters, too.

BUSINESSES — Have your logo engraved on a brick! Designs must be pre-approved by the engraving company.

Call the AMC Museum Store at 302-677-5992 for more information.

Name (Mr. Mrs. Ms. Rank) ____________________________________________

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Notify me of my brick’s location

Mail form and payment to:

BRICK PROJECT MANAGER

AMC MUSEUM FOUNDATION INC

1301 HERITAGE ROAD

DOVER AFB, DE 19902-5301

Name as it appears on card ______________________________________ Phone (Needed for credit card payment) ____________________

Credit Card Number___________________________________________ Expiration Date ________________________________________

Signature (credit card only) ______________________________________

Amount Enclosed $__________

Please order the size brick I’ve checked below:

☐ Individual 3-line $65

☐ Individual 6-line $125

☐ Business 3-line $125

☐ Business 6-line $250

Photocopy this form if you’d like to order more than one.

Questions? Email member shibmcm@comcast.net.

THANK YOU!

From the Director

You’ve got questions — we’ve got answers

As museum director, I get a lot of interesting questions, so I thought I’d try to answer some of those recurring queries from our visitors this time along with a little background information so you can know more about your Air Mobility Command Museum.

Why aren’t all of the AMCM’s “walk through” aircraft open every day? Safety — both for our visitors and for the aircraft. The two aircraft that are open out side every day have been carefully configured to reduce risks and tripping hazards. Obstacles on the deck have been removed. Sharp edges have been covered and we inspect them to make sure nothing is broken or has come loose. Also we secure everything that is normally removable, such as fire bottles and first aid kits. Unfortunately other aircraft just have to have a guide onboard to allow us to open them. This is one of the few museums in the world that allow visitors inside aircraft and we have a responsibility to protect these priceless artifacts as well as our priceless visitors.

Why don’t you get an AV-8A “Harrier” (or B-52 or F-15)? Our mission is 70 percent aircraft and air refueling, 20 percent Dover Air Force Base and 10 percent Air Force general history. When it comes to planes, the 10 percent general history is allotted to trainers or support aircraft. We stay very close to our mission, so a B-52 is not appropriate and it’s not going to happen.

Why don’t you get parts or more aircraft from out in the desert “Boneyard”? Many reasons. The Department of Defense “boneyard” at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona (actually called the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group) has been operated for years as a way to reproc some of the costs of the aircraft they hold. It is too far difficult and expensive for us to try to get parts from there.

As for whole aircraft, once they are at the Boneyard we would have to pay the entire cost of preparing them for flight again. If we want an aircraft that is being retired we have to transfer it from the last operating unit to Dover and then to the museum program. That is how we received our C-5A Galaxy. If it makes it to Davis-Monthan, it’s too late for us. Also the idea that there are still rows of Cold War aircraft out there is erroneous. Another big reason is that we have to be very careful what we accept. We just don’t have the time, space or money to take every aircraft we may be offered.

Up Close

Ron Bauer —AMC Museum’s Volunteer of the Quarter, Jan-Mar 2015

Bauer was part of the team that journeyed to Warner-Robbins AFB early in 2015 to recover a C-60 Lodestar, which they took apart, loaded onto a C-5, flew to Dover and then reassembled.

“It was a lot of fun, I really mean that,” he said.

When not at the Museum, Bauer enjoys time with his wife, Violet. His family includes three children — all boys — and five grandchildren.

“I didn’t think that working only a couple of days a week would be this satisfying,” he said. “I’m learning a lot of different skills at this point in my life, stuff that I’ve never done before.

“I found I’ve adapted pretty easily.”
Restoration team

Link’s ‘pilot trainer’ flies again at the AMCM

“For the things that we have to learn before we do them, we learn by doing them.”

— Aristotle

Just as no parent would put a child behind the wheel of a car without having given them driving lessons, no one will put an untested pilot in the seat of military aircraft without proper training.

But training that pilot in the early days of aviation was a problem, one that Edwin A. Link solved with some plywood, vacuum pumps and a little ingenuity.

An Air Mobility Command Museum restoration team recently completed work of one of Link’s “pilot makers,” an Army-Navy Trainer Model 18, donated by the National Museum of the United States Air Force. The ANT-18 now is on display in the AMCM’s main hangar.

Led by Mike Wood and Roy Brower, the team included Ken Konesey, Ron Pawlowski, Tom Galish and Marty Martel.

“I like getting into technical things,” said Wood, who served four years in the Air Force as a medic and later worked for DuPont as a mechanical designer.

“After I retired, my wife wanted me out of the house,” he said. “I figured I know which end of a screwdriver to hold, and I was part of the team at the AMCM, so I said, ‘Let’s go check it out,” Denise said.

Larry Koewing photo

Mike Wood checks out the dusty Link-trainer and its control desk before moving both to the AMCM’s restoration hangar.

Seat of the pants training

Like many great ideas, Link’s “pilot maker” came about as a way to solve a problem that seemed to have no solution: how to train fliers without risking lives and valuable equipment.

The question had vexed the fledgling aircraft industry almost from the beginning.

In the early days of flight, some of America’s first pilots were trained aboard actual aircraft by the Wright brothers themselves. Crude attempts at creating viable training devices went on during World War I, but most candidates learned to fly in real aircraft, accompanied by a veteran pilot.

Although long fascinated by early aviators, Link, who worked in his family’s Binghamton, N.Y., piano and organ business, could not afford flying lessons. Instead, he practiced taxiing a friend’s plane around a runway until he got a feel for the controls. In 1928, at the age of 24 he started work on the “pilot maker,” using his knowledge of vacuum pumps and bellows to create his first machine.

It took a good 18 months, but by 1929 the machine was ready. Link received a patent for what he called the Link Trainer in 1931.

Painted a bright blue with stubby wings that were strictly ornamental, the trainer was mounted on a universal joint. The machine’s cockpit was outfitted with typical aircraft instrumentation that simulated the real thing.

But the key to the trainer was the electric vacuum pumps that Link knew so well from work in the family factory: the pumps activated bellows that controlled valves connected to mechanisms that would make the trainer yaw, pitch and roll, much like an actual aircraft.

The mechanism was controlled from a central desk whose operator could radio instructions to the trainee. The console also featured a device that traced the course the trainee “flew” on a map.

U.S. Army brass at first saw little use for Link’s “Blue Box.” However, it was public outrage over the deaths of a dozen military pilots in a disastrous plan to use the Air Corps to deliver the U.S. mail that prompted the generals to take a second look.

Link planned a demonstration at Newark, N.J., in 1934. That day, however, the weather was so bad the officers sent to observe began to leave, convinced it was too miserably for Link to make the trip from Binghamton. Their opinions changed when Link arrived, having flown the 130 miles using only instruments.

Convinced of the value of Link’s invention, the Army shortly afterward placed an order for six of the trainers at a cost of $3,500 each.

The Blue Boxes became the standard for pilot training during World War II and could be found at every training school in the United States and Allied nations during the conflict. Overall Link sold more than 10,000 trainers to the military; at one time 10,000 trainers to the military; at one time
Jumping into history: The soldier and the Skytrain

Airmen 1st Class Zachary Cacciacon, 456th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

“Sailors and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force! You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you.”

These remarks made by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, prior to the launch of the Allied invasion of Normandy, still carry weight for one of the soldiers he was addressing, the now 93-year-old George Shenkle.

On April 18, almost 71 years after jumping into Nazi-occupied France and history, with eyes of the world set upon him and his comrades-in-arms, Shenkle, formerly of Easy Company, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, reunited with the same C-47A Skytrain he jumped out of on D-Day, June 6, 1944. The Skytrain is the cornerstone of the AMC’s inventory, being the first aircraft brought into collection in 1986. “This is the culmination of the long process to bring this airplane back into the condition like it was on D-Day,” said Mike Leister, AMC Museum director. “To have George come back one more time is a tribute.”

Shenkle travelled from his home in Pennsylvania to visit the Douglas C-47 Skytrain, No. 42-92841, known as the “Turf & Sport Special,” cargo plane that is permanently on display inside the AMC Museum. During his visit, Shenkle took time to talk with and pose for photos with the many museum visitors and volunteers. One of the museum volunteers who spoke with Shenkle, retired U.S. Army Col. Bob Leicht, is part of an all-volunteer team of aircraft restoration experts. They have spent the past several months to bring the C-47 back to its D-Day configuration.

“Last month we repainted the interior of the airplane back to an original color,” said Leicht. “We found the paratrooper seats, we restored those and just put them in.”

But for Leicht and many of the other volunteers, having the former soldier visit the aircraft was the final piece to a larger puzzle.

“Now the aircraft, as best we know, is restored to the condition it was on D-Day,” Leicht said. “The cherry on the cake, if you will, is having the D-Day veteran coming back and re-entering his airplane; it ties it all together.”

Shenkle himself was impressed with the condition of the restored aircraft.

“I think they’ve done a wonderful job,” Shenkle said. “I’m glad to see they’ve put the effort into this thing.”

A highlight for all those who attended the event was the involvement of a group of World War II-era 82nd Airborne Division re-enactors. The nine men came dressed in the same uniforms and were equipped with same weapons and materials, as were the paratroopers who jumped over Normandy.

“Today, we are representing the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment,” said Tech. Sgt. Neil Baughman, of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard’s 193rd Special Operations Wing. “We are here for George Shenkle, the veteran who jumped out of this C-47 on D-Day.”

The re-enactors boarded the C-47 with Shenkle to pose for photos, allowing the veteran to sit in the same seat position as on D-Day, position number three. Shenkle maintains an active lifestyle, veteran to sit in the same seat position as on D-Day, position number three. Shenkle maintains an active lifestyle, participating in various World War II commemorative and re-unions throughout the United States and Europe, including visiting Normandy every June 6 for the anniversary of his jump.

“I will spend this May and June in France,” Shenkle said. “We will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day and the 71st anniversary of D-Day.

Events like this, Shenkle’s visit, are becoming fewer and farther between as America’s World War II generation of veterans is diminishing every day.

“it puts a face on a piece of history,” Leicht said. “It’s a personal connection to history, because when you think about it, the man jumped into history.”

Rare photo of AMC Museum’s C-47 Turf and Sport Special resurfaces

AMC Museum Director Mike Leister recently received this photo of the Museum’s C-47 Skytrain, Turf and Sport Special, which was posted on the Friends of the C-47 Skytrain Facebook page.

The photograph comes from the collection of the daughter of the pilot C.R. Wolfe, Leister said.

“The photo was taken in April 1946 in Athens, Greece, and confirms the Museum’s suspicions the Turf and Sport nose art had been removed shortly after the end of World War II.

Squadron markings and radio call signs also had been removed, covered with mismatched paint.

“I was stunned to see this picture of our C-47,” Leister said. “How incredibly great to see it and to see the serial number so that we are sure it is ours.”
From cocktail lounge to AMC Museum treasure

Back in 1967, Pennsylvania businessman James Flannery was looking for something unique to snazz up his family restaurant. The business, which he had named after himself, was doing well, Flannery knew, but he wanted something that would catch people’s attention and draw them into the Penn-del, Pa., eatery.

An airplane, Flannery decided, would be the answer to his problem.

“Jim had flown bombers during World War II, so he had an aviation background,” said Bill Majors, a longtime friend. “And his family had been in the restaurant business forever.”

Although some thought the idea a little offbeat, Flannery was not to be deterred.

“He came up with the idea that he wanted an airplane on top of his restaurant to use as a cocktail lounge and as an adjunct to the restaurant itself,” Majors said.

His mind made up and having settled on the idea of buying a C-121, Flannery and Major’s father, William G. Major Sr., set out on a quest to find just the right Constellation for his needs.

“They went on a journey across the country, looking for airplanes for sale,” Major recalled. “I don’t remember how many aircraft they looked at.”

Ironically, after searching for months, Flannery and Major discovered the perfect candidate – a C-121C Constellation, registration number N1005C, just an hour’s drive to the south, in New Castle, Del.

“After traipsing around the country, they found it in their own back yard,” Major said.

The C-121 had been owned by Capitol Airways, which used a fleet of Constellations on international charter flights operat- ing out of the New Castle County Airport. The plane was retired when Capitol transitioned to the new DC-8, becoming one of the first charter airlines that used jet aircraft.

In a history of his restaurant, written by Flannery himself, the entrepreneur said his Connie had logged more than 15 million miles during its career.

A press agent’s dream

Flannery, with Major’s engineering and surveying company, William G. Major Associates, to fit the Connie above the restaurant.

Getting the airplane to Penn-del required close coordination with both Delaware and Pennsylvania officials and police, Flannery wrote.

“The entire dismantling procedure took 200 hours, with three crews working around the clock to meet the tight transportation schedule,” he wrote. To lessen the impact on local traffic, the convoy was only allowed to move in daylight on a weekend and under police escort, Flannery said. The plane, which had been taken apart by Capitol Airline mechanics, was moved across the Delaware Memorial Bridge into New Jersey and then across the Walt Whitman Bridge and into Philadelphia.

“As you can imagine, this entire project was a press agent’s dream,” Flannery wrote.

“I was helping out, part time, after school,” Major recalled. “They had taken the wings off and brought the airplane up from Wilmington. They brought it up to the parking lot and reassembled the airframe where the landing gear normally was attached, Major said.

The design was unique in that not only did it hold the airplane up, it also had to hold weights on it, and the plane started to pull down, got the right weights and picked it back up again.”

There were a few heart stopping moments, Major recalled.

“They had brought the crane in to lift the plane, but it didn’t have enough counterweights on it, and the plane started to pull the crane over,” he said. “They put it back down, got the right weights and picked it back up again.”

The AMCM’s C-121 was perched atop Jim Flannery’s restaurant in Penn-del, Pa., from 1968 until 1997, becoming a landmark for the small town north of Philadelphia. Celebri- ties from Muhammad Ali to Arnold Schwarzenegger dined there and it was a favorite meeting spot for families celebrating birthdays, anniversaries and graduations.

The business, which he had named after himself, was doing well, Flannery knew, but he wanted something that would catch people’s attention and draw them into the Penn-del, Pa., eatery.

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With N1005C suspended above the ground, mechanics moved in and removed the landing gear, and the crane operator went back to work, hoisting the plane 50 feet into the air.

It was a delicate operation, Major said.

“Everyone was sweating bullets, hoping everything would line up, that everything was where it was supposed to be,” he said.
A highlight of the day was on the 16th hole where Col (Ret) George Chabbott again sponsored a Caskey. We’d like to give a SPECIAL THANKS to our corporate sponsors: Ameriprise (Ron Scheff), Townsend Chevrolet (Jeff Townsend), Marion Klein and George Chabbott. Here’s a listing of the businesses, organizations and individuals who sponsored holes (including those who sponsored more than one hole):

AMCM Foundation’s 11th Annual Golf Tournament was held Friday, June 5, 2015. It was a huge success as our golfers turned out for an afternoon of golf in great weather on a beautifully conditioned course.

The Tournament results follow:

Winning Low Net team (54): Andrew Vitale, Mathew Cunningham, Nicholas Day, and Patrick Abel

Runner-up in the Low Net: Tony Soligo, Mike Wright, Chuck Miller, and Phil White

The same bolts used to attach the landing gear to the wing spar were used to secure the aircraft to the pylons.

The plane, when lowered, had to align perfectly with the 12 bolts. Flannery wrote, “The challenge was like threading 12 needles simultaneously with a 200-foot pole.” It was, in a word, “Extraordinary!” Flannery wrote.

“Flannery took about nine months to refurbish the interior, Major said.

“We didn’t see my father for three days.” Flannery wrote. “My father was all set to go [on that flight], but there was some emergency who was not related to Jim Flannery, Major said.

“We were killed.” Flannery wrote. „We didn’t see my father for three days.” Flannery wrote. “My father was all set to go [on that flight], but there was some emergency who was not related to Jim Flannery, Major said.

“He didn’t know until I got home that my dad was dead.” Suzanne Flannery, a waitress at the restaurant, wrote.

Pilot Robert Trauger and passenger Suzanne Flannery’s husband and two children witnessed the crash.

“My father was all set to go [on that flight], but there was some emergency somewhere and he had to leave,” Major recalled. “The crazy thing was that I found out about it from my bus driver when I was coming home from school. I didn’t know until I got home that my dad had missed the flight.”

Flannery installed blue translucent panels around the top of the restaurant building which, when lit from behind, helped create the illusion the Connie was flying through a perimeter with glass to resemble an air traffic control tower, brought customers from the restaurant up to the lounge. Each landing included a mural showing historic milestones of flight including Neil Armstrong’s walk on the moon after that event in July 1969.

Instead of turning the Constellation into something resembling the Connie’s original control tower, Museum Director Mike Leister said plans were made to restore N1005C as a plane assigned to the Military Air Force Command. Museum volunteer John Demory led a restoration team to South Carolina, where the plane was found. The Constellation remained even after Flannery sold the restaurant in 1980, although it was eventually closed and not used as a lounge. The restaurant itself reopened in 1981 as Amelia’s Restaurant, but that incarnation lasted only five years. The building actually sat vacant until 1992, when it became the Airplane Family Restaurant and Diner.

After closing in 1992, the restaurant didn’t remain owned only until 1996, when the Amoco Oil Company bought the land, intending to tear down the restaurant and build a gas station/convenience store.

By then, almost 30 years since Flannery had bought the airplane, it was in poor shape, Major recalled. The paint was peeling and rainwater leaking inside had damaged the interior, he said.

“It was very sad,” he said. “They’d let it go downhill. Jim used to have airplane inspectors go through the structure to make sure everything was satisfactory and safe. Once he sold it, the new owners didn’t do any of that.”

Instead of turning the Constellation into scrap, however, wiser heads prevailed, and the company donated the aircraft to the AMC Museum. In July 1997 the Connie was raised from its pylons and workers began taking it apart. Split into several sections, the aircraft was not put in storage until being moved to the AMC in October.

Although C-121s were never stationed at Dover AFB, Museum Director Mike Leister said plans were made to restore N1005C as a plane assigned to the Military Air Force Command. Museum volunteer John Demory led a restoration team to South Carolina, where they recovered landing gear, engines and other equipment from a wrecked Connie.

Rehabilitation work took several years, in part because the wings, which had been cut off in 1997 when workers found the bolts had rusted, had to be reattached and strengthened. The restored C-121 joined the AMC’s fleet in August 2003.

The gas station on the former restaurant site now is owned by the HP corporation, but many in Penndel still remember Flannery, who died in 2011, and his Connie almost 20 years after it was trucked away to Dover. A monument of sorts remains, however: customers checking the price of gas need only look up a little higher to see a fiberglass model of the plane perched atop the store’s business sign.

The model was donated to the town by Amoco as a way of reminding everyone about the 30-year restaurant landmark, which now serves to inform the public about an important piece of Air Force history.
The Tournament results follow:
Winning Low Net team (54): Andrew Vitale, Mathew Cunningham, Nicholas Day, and Patrick Abel
Third Low Net: Joe Zingaro, Rich Derre, Steve Welde, and Mitch Berger

The Tournament was held Friday, June 5, 2005. It was a high success as our golfers turned out for an afternoon of golf in great weather on a beautifully conditioned course.

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Once the Connie was secure, the celebrations began, Major said.

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Joy, then heartbreak
But tragedy struck on Sept. 19, 1968, as Flannery held a grand opening for the new cocktail lounge. As more than 350 people watched, a hot air balloon, used as part of a publicity campaign, hit high-power lines which, when lit from behind, helped create an illusion the Connie was flying through a cloudless azure sky.

Despite this misfortune, the restaurant proved a popular draw in the upper Philadelphian area and became well-known in other parts of the country as well. An advertisement in the Levittown, Pa., Courier Times invited customers to see the Constellation lounge, “complete with five music, study drinks and [mistaken]-clad stewardesses.”

An item in the May 9, 1969, Long Beach, Calif., Independent, called the plane “an attractive eye-catcher.” “It appears to be flying over the restaurant’s roof. Motorists driving past sometimes slam on their brakes, afraid the big bird is about to land in the street,” it read. Major and his family dined there often, he said.

Workers had partitioned off the cockpit, leaving it mostly intact, and installed a 10-seat bar with white and blue carpeting. They turned some of the seats around, installing a cocktail table in between. All told, the Constellation Lounge could hold 72 customers.

There was even a small dance floor. A stairwell tower, topped around its perimeter with glass to resemble an air traffic control tower, brought customers from the restaurant up to the lounge. Each landing included a mural showing historic mileage of flight including Neil Armstrong’s walk on the moon after that event in July 1969, Major said.

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The AMCM’s fleet in August 2003.

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Jim Flannery’s Connie

From cocktail lounge to AMC Museum treasure

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Although some thought the idea a little offbeat, Flannery was not to be deterred.

“He came up with the idea that he wanted an airplane on top of his restaurant to use as a cocktail lounge and as an adjunct to the restaurant itself,” Major said.

His mind made up and having settled on the idea of buying a C-121, Flannery and Major’s father, William G. Major Sr., set out on a quest to find just the right Constellation for his needs.

“They went on a journey across the country, looking for airplanes for sale,” Major recalled. “I don’t remember how many airlines they looked at.”

Ironically, after searching for months, Flannery and Major discovered the perfect candidate – a C-121 Constellation, registry number N1005C, just an hour’s drive to the south, in New Castle, Del.

“As you can imagine, this entire project was a press agent’s dream,” Flannery wrote. “The entire dismantling procedure took 200 hours, with three crews working around the clock to meet the tight transportation schedule,” he wrote. To lessen the impact on local traffic, the convoy was only allowed to move in daylight on a weekend and under police escort, Flannery said. The plane, which had been taken apart by Capitol Airline mechanics, was moved across the Delaware Memorial Bridge into New Jersey and then across the Walt Whitman Bridge and into Philadelphia.

“The design was unique in that not only was it the first person inside once it was put together,” Major said. “There were a few heart stopping moments, Major recalled. “They had taken the crane into the air, but it didn’t have enough counterweights on it, and the plane started to fall.”

His father had to take into consideration the problem that, being designed to fly, winds flowing under a plane’s wings tend to lift it into the air. Spoilers eventually were fitted to the wings to solve that problem, Major said.

The work, done on a cold, overcast day in December 1967, was recorded by several newspaper reporters and television crews.

“With N1005C suspended above the airframe where the landing gear normally was attached, Major said. “The design was unique in that not only did it hold the airplane up, it also had to hold it down. Got the right weights and picked it back up again.”

The UC-121 was perched atop Jim Flannery’s restaurant in Penndel, Pa., from 1968 until 1997, becoming a landmark for the small town north of Philadelphia. Celebrities from Muhammad Ali to Arnold Schwarzenegger dined there and it was a favorite meeting spot for families celebrating birthdays, anniversaries and graduations.

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-- Phil White, Chairman, AMC Museum Foundation Annual Golf Tournament

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We’re already planning for next year’s 12th Annual AMC Museum Foundation Golf Tournament. Please plan on joining us for a day of fun in 2016. See you next year! FORE!

-- Phil White, Chairman, AMC Museum Foundation Annual Golf Tournament
Jumping into history: The soldier and the Skytrain

The 436th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Shenkle travelled from his home in Pennsylvania to visit the Douglas C-47 Skytrain, No. 42-92841, known as the “Turf & Sport Special,” cargo plane that is permanently on display inside the AMC Museum. During his visit, Shenkle took time to talk with and pose for photos with the many museum visitors and volunteers. One of the museum volunteers who spoke with Shenkle, retired U.S. Army Col. Bob Leicht, is part of an all-volunteer team of aircraft restoration experts. They have spent the past several months to bring the C-47 back to its D-Day configuration.

“Last month we repainted the interior of the airplane back to an original color,” said Leicht. “We found the paraatrooper seats, we restored those and just put them in.”

But for Leicht and many of the other volunteers, having the former soldier visit the aircraft was the final piece to a larger puzzle.

“Now the aircraft, as best we know, is restored to the condition it was on D-Day,” Leicht said. “The cherry on the cake, if you will, is having the D-Day veteran coming back and re-entering his airplane; it ties it all together.”

Shenkle himself was impressed with the condition of the restored aircraft.

“I think they’ve done a wonderful job,” Shenkle said. “I’m glad to see they’ve put the effort into this thing.”

A highlight for all those who attended the event was the involvement of a group of World War II-era 82nd Airborne Division re-enactors. The nine men came dressed in the same uniforms and were equipped with same weapons and materials, as were the paratroopers who jumped over Normandy.

“Today, we are representing the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment,” said Tech. Sgt. Neil Baughman, of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard’s 191st Special Operations Wing. “We are here for George Shenkle, the veteran who jumped out of this C-47 on D-Day.”

The re-enactors boarded the C-47 with Shenkle to pose for photos, allowing the veteran to sit in the same seat position as on D-Day, position number three.

Shenkle maintains an active lifestyle, participating in various World War II ceremonies and reunions throughout the United States and Europe, including visiting Normandy every June 6 for the anniversary of his jump.

“[I will spend this May and June in] Europe Day and the 71st anniversary of D-Day,” Shenkle said. “I will spend this May and June in Europe, because when you think about it, the factory was turning out a completed machine every 45 minutes.

Likewise, all of the trainer’s rubber tubing had petrified, Wood said, and also was replaced. While still in good condition, the black bellows mechanisms had discolored over the decades; their appearance was spiffed up using ordinary shoe polish.

Clear plastic has replaced some of the panels on the trainer’s sides to give the public a good view of the inner mechanisms and the pilot’s controls.

Because the unit only is intended for display, the team decided not to replace some of the missing internal parts.

“When we are representing the 82nd Airborne Divi- sion re-enactors, the nine men came dressed in the same uniforms and were equipped with same weapons and materials, as were the paratroopers who jumped over Normandy. Shenkle sits in the same seat position he occupied while jumping out of this aircraft on June 6, 1944, over Normandy.

Shenkle is sitting in the same seat position he occupied while jumping out of this aircraft on June 6, 1944, over Normandy.

His factory was turning out a completed machine every 45 minutes.

Like Christmas morning

While the AMC Museum’s restoration teams always have some project to work on, Director Mike Leister made refurbishing Link’s trainer a priority.

Wood and Brower’s team got the trainer out of storage and set to work early in 2013. Shenkle to pose for photos, allowing the veteran to sit in the same seat position as on D-Day, position number three.

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“I will spend this May and June in Europe,” Shenkle said. “I will be celebrating the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day and the 71st anniversary of D-Day.

Events like this, Shenkle’s visit, are becoming fewer and farther between as America’s World War II generation of veterans is diminishing every day.

“It puts a face on a piece of history,” Leicht said.

“It’s a personal connection to history, because when you think about it, the man jumped into history.”
Link’s ‘pilot trainer’ flies again at the AMCM

“‘For the things that we have to learn before we do them, we learn by doing them.’

– Aristotle

Just as no parent would put a child behind the wheel of a car without having given them driving lessons, no one will put an untested pilot in the seat of military aircraft without proper training.

But training that pilot in the early days of aviation was a problem, one that Edwin A. Link solved with some plywood, vacuum pumps and a little ingenuity.

An Air Mobility Command Museum restoration team recently completed work of one of Link’s “pilot makers,” an Army-Navy Trainer Model 18, donated by the National Museum of the United States Air Force. The ANT-18 now is on display in the AMCM’s main hangar.

Led by Mike Wood and Roy Brower, the team included Ken Konesey, Ron Pawlowski, Tom Galish and Marty Martel.

“I like getting into technical things,” said Wood, who served four years in the Air Force as a medic and later worked for DuPont as a mechanical designer.

“After I retired, my wife wanted me out of the house,” he said. “I figured I know which end of a screwdriver to hold, and once I was retired I had a little time on my hands.”

Wood’s abilities quickly led him to the Museum’s restoration team, and he was part of the group that brought the AMCM’s C-119 Flying Boxcar back to display condition.

Brower has a similar story.

“After I retired, my wife also wanted me out of the house,” he said. He signed up for the restoration team because “I have mechanical skills but didn’t have the money to go buy a hot rod.”

Seat of the pants training

Like many great ideas, Link’s “pilot maker” came about as a way to solve a problem that seemed to have no solution: how to train fliers without risking lives and valuable equipment. The question had vexed the fledgling aircraft industry almost from the beginning.

In the early days of flight, some of America’s first pilots were trained aboard actual aircraft by the Wright brothers themselves. Crude attempts at creating viable training devices went on during World War I, but most candidates learned to fly in real aircraft, accompanied by a veteran pilot.

Although long fascinated by early aviators, Link, who worked in his family’s Binghamton, N.Y., piano and organ business, could not afford flying lessons. Instead he practiced taxiing a friend’s plane around a runway until he got a feel for the controls. In 1928, at the age of 24, he started work on the “pilot maker,” using his knowledge of vacuum pumps and bellows to create his first machine.

It took a good 18 months, but by 1929 the machine was ready. Link received a patent for what he called the Link Trainer in 1931. Painted a bright blue with stubby wings that were strictly ornamental, the trainer was mounted on a universal joint. The machine’s cockpit was outfitted with typical aircraft instrumentation that simulated the real thing.

But the key to the trainer was the electric vacuum pumps that Link knew so well from work in the family factory: the pumps activated bellows that controlled valves connected to mechanisms that would make the trainer yaw, pitch and roll, much like an actual aircraft.

The mechanism was controlled from a central desk whose operator could radio instructions to the trainee. The console also featured a device that traced the course the trainer flew on a map.

U.S. Army brass at first saw little use for Link’s “Blue Box.” However, it was public outrage over the deaths of a dozen military pilots in a disastrous plan to use the Air Corps to deliver the U.S. mail that prompted the generals to take a second look.

Link planned a demonstration at Newark, N.J., in 1934. That day, however, the weather was so bad the officers sent to observe began to leave, convinced it was too miserable for Link to make the trip from Binghamton. Their opinions changed when Link arrived, having flown the 130 miles using only instruments.

Convinced of the value of Link’s invention, the Army shortly afterward placed an order for six of the trainers at a cost of $1,300 each.

The Blue Boxes became the standard for pilot training during World War II and could be found at every training school in the United States and Allied nations during the conflict. Overall Link sold more than 10,000 trainers to the military; at one time $3,500 each.

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Pave a Path to History in Commemoration Park

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... you can accomplish two things — become a permanent part of history in Commemoration Park and join The AMC Museum Foundation in supporting the museum.

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THANK YOU!

From the Director

You’ve got questions — we’ve got answers

As museum director, I get a lot of interesting questions, so I thought I’d try to answer some of those recurr- ing queries from our visi- tors this time along with some little back- ground information so you can know more about your Air Mobility Command Museum.

Why aren’t all of the AMCM’s “walk-through” aircraft open every day?

Safety — both for our visitors and for the aircraft. The two aircraft that are open out- side every day have been carefully config- ured to reduce risks and tripping hazards. Obstacles on the deck have been removed. Sharp edges have been covered and we inspect them to make sure nothing is broken or has come loose. Also we secure every- thing that is normally removable, such as fire bottles and first aid kits.

Unfortunately other aircraft just have to have a guide onboard to allow us to open them. This is one of the few museums in the world that allow visitors inside aircraft and we have a responsibility to protect these priceless arti- facts as well as our priceless visitors.

Why don’t you get an AV-8A “Harrier” (or B-52 or F-15)?

Our mission is 70 percent airlift and air refueling, 20 percent Dover Air Force Base and 10 percent Air Force general history. When it comes to planes, the 10 percent general history is allotted to trainers or sup- port aircraft. We stay very close to our mis- sion, so a B-52 is not appropriate and it’s not going to happen.

Why don’t you get parts or more aircraft from out in the desert “Boneyard”?

Many reasons. The Department of Defense “boneyard” at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona (actually called the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group) has been operated for years as a way to rework some of the costs of the aircraft they hold. It is far too difficult and expensive for us to try to get parts from there.

As for whole aircraft, once they are at the Boneyard we would have to pay the entire cost of preparing them for flight again. If we want an aircraft that is being retired we have to transfer it from the last operating unit to Dover and then to the museum program, but that is how we received our C-5A Galaxy. If it makes it to Davis-Monthan, it’s too late for us. Also the idea that there are still rows of World War II aircraft out there is erroneous. Another big reason is that we have to be very careful what we accept. We just don’t have the time, space or money to take every aircraft we may be offered.

Up Close

Ron Bauer — AMC Museum’s Volunteer of the Quarter, Jan-Mar 2015

Like so many, Ron Bauer volunteers at the AMC Museum because, as he puts it, “I like to keep my fingers in aviation.”

It’s clear the flying bug bit him a long time ago.

The 73-year-old Smyrna, Del., resident spent 20 years in the Air Force as a flight engineer and instructor, retiring in 1979 as a master sergeant.

He then worked 35 more years in corpora- tive aviation.

Bauer came to the Museum in 2010, and quickly found his niche as part of the AMC Museum’s restoration team.

“There were a lot of guys out here I used to fly with, and that’s why I’m here,” he said.

Bauer was part of the team that jour- neyed to Warner-Robins AFB early in 2015 to recover a C-60 Lodestar, which they took apart, loaded onto a C-5, flew to Dover and then reassembled.

“it was a lot of fun, I really mean that,” he said.

When not at the Museum, Bauer enjoys time with his wife, Violet. His family includes three children — all boys — and five grandchildren.

“I didn’t think that working only a cou- ple of days a week would be this satisfying,” he said. “I’m learning a lot of dif- ferent skills at this point in my life, stuff that I’ve never done before.

“I’ve found I’ve adapted pretty easily.”
The mission of the Air Mobility Command Museum is twofold:

- To present the history and development of military airlift and tanker operations.
- In a goal closely aligned with the first, to portray the rich history of Dover Air Force Base and its predecessor, Dover Army Airfield.

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. 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 comments, articles and ideas are solicited for future issues. Mail to The Hangar Digest, 1301 Heritage Road, Dover AFB, DE 19902-5301; fax 302-677-5940; or email ntrprz@dmy.com.

Contact Editor Mast Sgt. Jeff Brown, USAF (Ret.) via email at ntrprz@dmy.com.

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What is the Air Mobility Command Museum?

Located in Hangar 1301 on Dover Air Force Base, Kent County, Delaware, the AMC Museum is part of the National Museum of the United States Air Force's field museum system.

Hangar 1301 is the largest airtight hangar in the world. The 5300 ft long, 430 ft wide building, which can house four C-5A’s or C-17’s at one time, is the largest single span structure in the world in terms of cubic volume and gross floor area. The 150 million cubic foot of volume and 20 million square feet of floor area are large enough to accommodate the entire Boeing-747 plane blast. The end walls are 14 feet thick, and the frame is a massive, giant, steel girder system designed to withstand a hurricane wind of 200 mph, and an explosion force equivalent to a 100,000 lb dynamite bomb. The floor is made of 12 foot thick concrete, and the cantilevered roof is supported by 100 million pounds of steel. The roof provides an area for the airperfectly still air, which is essential for jet engine testing. The hangar is also equipped with a 10,000 lb overhead crane and a 30,000 lb overhead crane, which can lift and move 10 million pounds of equipment.

The hangar is open to the public daily from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It is closed on Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas. For more information, call 302-677-5959.

The Hangar Digest is printed and mailed by Associates International, Wilmington, Del.

Cover photo: The AMC Museum got a lot of visitors, including many Dutch folk who enjoy the Museum's exhibits as C-5A. (Used with permission).
Museum Director Mike Leister, contract supervisor Harry Brown, AMC Foundation board Vice President Paul Gillis, 436th AW Vice Commander Col. Kevin J. Gordon and contractor Mike Main cut the ribbon on April 7 for the AMCM’s new entry gate.