THE AMCM HANGAR DIGEST IS A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE AMC MUSEUM FOUNDATION INC.
Air Mobility Command Museum
Mission Statement

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.

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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.

One of the reasons your AMC Museum continues to provide a great educational experience is that we stick very closely to our reason for being. So exactly what is our “mission”? Broken down by numbers our mission is 70 percent airlift and air-refueling, 20 percent Dover AFB history and 10 percent Air Force general history. Our aircraft and artifact collection sticks very closely to that breakdown. But we work hard to be much more than numbers. We tell the stories of the people who have served in our nation’s Air Force, and we offer the only opportunity for many visitors to see the actual aircraft and meet the people who have served our country.

Hangar 1301 was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994. Although located on Dover AFB property, entrance to the Museum may be made from Delaware Route 9, south of the base. Admission to and parking at the Museum is free and military identification is not required. The Air Mobility Command Museum is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. It is closed on Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day. For more information, call 302-677-5938 or 302-677-5991.

We like to say we are a window to your Air Force. Let us know how we can continue to improve our outreach and family friendly experience.

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On the Shelf

Here’s what’s available at the AMCM Gift Shop

“Flying Over Delmarva” is the first hardbound illustrated history of military and agricultural aviation on Delmarva and it’s a must-read for anyone interested in real seat-of-your-pants flying.

For those who aren’t aware, Delmarva is a portmanteau of the states Delaware, Maryland and Virginia (or at least a tiny part of Old Dominion), all or parts of which occupy a large peninsula south of Pennsylvania. It barely rises above sea level which makes it perfect for flying biplanes for recreation, banner planes for advertising over the peninsula’s many beaches, and spray planes to cover the region’s agricultural fields.

Author Dr. Joanne K. Guilfoil only took up a major interest in these types of planes in her later years. She met and interviewed pilots and numerous other aviation experts, who told her their stories and supplied photos. An entire chapter of the book is filled with these unedited stories, right from the pilots themselves.

Guilfoil said, “This great story was written first and foremost to honor local aviators and as a thank-you to them for sharing their time, expertise, precious documents, and family heirlooms.”

She began work on the book in December 2014, producing the finished product after about 18 months. Released on Memorial Day 2017, it includes maps, diagrams, a glossary, and paintings. Guilfoil also plans two follow-up books, an activity book for young readers about Delmarva aviation and an ABC book for pre-readers about Delmarva’s pilots and planes.

“The ultimate purpose of this book is to celebrate and preserve a part of Delmarva’s historical and cultural heritage, with a focus on the aviation community,” Guilfoil said.

The book includes a foreward by Larry D. Kelley, executive director of the Delaware Aviation Museum Foundation.

Published in 2017; 250 pages; $45

As the nation’s second-smallest state, Delaware is one of those places where “everybody knows everybody.” This sense of community led to the creation of Nancy Lynch’s “Vietnam Mailbag: Voices from the War, 1968–1972.”

In 1968, Nancy Lynch was a recent graduate of the University of Delaware and a newly-hired reporter for the former Wilmington (Del.) Morning News. When her editors decided they wanted a personal connection with Delaware’s roughly 800 troops then in Vietnam, she wrote them, asking for letters about their lives.

The responses poured in.

Published in the Morning News from May 1968 until the end of 1972, the letters helped those soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines keep in touch with their home state. Lynch saved almost 900 of those letters, preserving them in the barn of her home. It took two years to assemble the letters into this book.

Editor Harry Themal said, “The letters are filled with humor and sadness, reality and imagination, hardship and complaints.” They reflected not only life in Southeast Asia, but worries about what was happening back home, particularly in the turbulent year of 1968, which saw the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the occupation of the state’s largest city, Wilmington, by the Delaware National Guard.

Andrew Carroll, founder of the Legacy Project to preserve servicemen’s letters, calls “Vietnam Mailbag” a “timeless, breathtaking tribute and a gift to us all.” “Vietnam Mailbag” is the recipient of the first prize gold award for best regional non-fiction in the Mid-Atlantic states in the 2009 Independent Publisher Book Awards competition.

Published in 2008; 456 pages; $54
AMCM Collections

Donation recalls DAFB’s first Mackay Trophy

Back in 1977, US Air Force security policeman Airman 1st Class John M. “Mike" Thompson was walking down the hall at work when his boss offered him a unique assignment.

“He told me a mission was coming up where we’d be going to Russia,” Thompson recalled. “He told me, ‘We’d like you to go.’”

In the midst of the Cold War, this would be a mission of peace, and one Thompson’s sense of adventure couldn’t let him turn down.

And there was an extra twist: “For some reason, they wanted someone from Delaware,” Thompson said, “I never found out why.”

Today, 40 years later, the Newark, Delaware native is glad he took up his flight chief’s offer. The mission, taking an electromagnet and flying it deep into the heart of the world’s largest Communist nation, was unparalleled, and Thompson considers it a highlight of his military career.

The mission, flawlessly carried out between June 17 and June 22, 1977, became a testimonial to the both the aircraft and its crew, resulting in award of the Clarence H. Mackay Trophy for 1977. That year marked one of the occasions a Mackay recipient has not been an aircrew member.

Thompson was on hand a year later as Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Lew Allen Jr. presided over a Pentagon ceremony where he received a plaque designating the award.

In July 2017, Thompson donated his plaque and other memorabilia to the Air Mobility Command Museum. "I was immediately interested in Mr. Thompson’s story about his Mackay Trophy mission because he was stationed at Dover AFB and was part of the Dover crew that took part in the mission,” Collections Manager Debbie Sellars said.

“His story about his personal experience in Russia was fascinating and even a little funny.”

A bit apprehensive

Thompson, now 60, still lives in Newark, a small city of 34,000 in northern Delaware.

Except for his father, who served as a Marine during the 1950s, Thompson believes he is one of the few members of his family to sign up for the military.

He joined the active duty Air Force in February 1976, following a short stint as a roofer.

“It was out of the blue,” Thompson said. “I just went out and joined. I never really thought about it.”

Thompson was delighted with his assignment as a security policeman, and after training found himself stationed at Dover, only 48 miles from home. As a junior airman, he spent a lot of time walking a perimeter on the flight line or guarding airplanes.

“Working out on the flight line was the first time I learned to love coffee,” he recalled, taking a sip. “I still love it.”

(Continued on page 5)

Dover crews are three-time MacKay recipients

The Mackay Trophy was first presented by millionaire Clarence H. Mackay in 1912 and later was deeded to the National Aeronautical Association.

The trophy is awarded for the “most meritorious flight of the year” by an Air Force person, persons, or organization.

The Air Force determines the winner and the National Aeronautical Association now presents the trophy at its annual Fall Awards Dinner.

It is kept on permanent display in the National Air and Space Museum.

The first Mackay Trophy recipient was 2nd Lt. Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, who received the honor following an Oct. 9, 1912 reconnaissance competition flown over Virginia.

Arnold again won the award in 1934 as a lieutenant colonel.

Personnel from Dover Air Force Base have been awarded the trophy three times, 1977, 1978 and 1988, all for missions flown using the C-5.

The first was for delivery of a magneto hydrodynamic generator to the Soviet Union; the second for supporting free world forces fighting rebels in Zaire; and the third for carrying nuclear test monitoring equipment to Kazakhstan.

The trophy, originally known as the Mackay Army Aviation Cup, was created by Tiffany and Company and features four depictions of the Greek goddess Nike holding the Wright Flyer.

The cup is mounted on a large wooden base with each years’ winners names engraved on small plaques attached to the mahogany base.
Thompson was elated -- and just a little apprehensive -- when learning about his proposed trip to Moscow. He was just 20 years old at the time and felt ready to take on the world.

No weapons, no uniforms
During briefings on the trip he learned just how special the mission would be.

Although the United States and Soviet Union had been at political odds for years, there still was cooperation along scientific lines. One of these was a project to generate electricity using the superconducting magnetohydrodynamic, or MHD generator.
The cargo was so heavy it only could be airlifted by the workhorse of the American air cargo fleet, the C-5A Galaxy.

A Dover C-5, manned by crews from the 436th Military Airlift Wing and personnel from the Reserve’s 512th MAW, would fly to Chicago, pick up the device and associated equipment, and fly it all more than 5,190 nautical miles to Moscow’s Sheremetyovo Airport.

There were some other, unusual requirements. Although armed, Thompson’s weapon and that of his fellow security policeman were kept in a secured locker aboard the aircraft. The men were required to wear business suits, meaning uniforms were left at home.

“I didn’t own a suit, so my mother had to take me to JC Penney’s to buy one,” Thompson recalled. “Someone else had to show me how to tie a tie.”

The American flag and Air Force lettering were supposed to be removed from the C-5 as well, but Thompson doesn’t recall that being done.

When Mission AAM 1962-01 lifted off from Dover, it carried 13 airmen as well as members of the media. The first stop was Chicago, where the magnet, built by Argonne Laboratories, was carefully loaded aboard.

In an article published in the base newspaper, The Airlifter, loadmaster, Chief Master Sgt. Ronald Euscher said it took a lot of ingenuity to load the magnet and its 26-wheel tractor trailer aboard. During the work, they realized the trailer sat too low to the ground and would not clear the C-5’s loading ramp by three inches. The loadmasters shored up the ramp and finished their work in about four hours.

Although the magnet itself weighed about 80,000 pounds, all of the extra equipment meant the C-5 would be flying with a load that tipped the scales at 125,000 pounds.

The flight also was joined by a Soviet navigator and radio operator as well as 24 scientific and support personnel from Argonne and other agencies.

In addition to guarding the plane while in Moscow, Thompson was not to let the Soviets see any of the newly installed cockpit navigational equipment nor could they inspect the C-5’s complicated landing gear system.

That latter requirement proved a problem later on.

‘No problem at all’
Once the C-5 left Chicago, there was little for Thompson to do during the 16-hour flight. The aircraft underwent two en-route refuelings, one over Nova Scotia and the second over Scotland. Thompson napped and occasionally went down to the cargo deck, where the 14-by-6.5-foot generator was secured to the deck.

Once the Galaxy entered Soviet airspace, it was joined by a MiG fighter escort, which accompanied the aircraft to Moscow.

Aircraft commander Capt. David M. Sprinkel admitted to a little apprehension when crossing the border, but said flying over Russian territory was, “No problem at all … just like flying over any other country in Europe, giving position reports and following airways.”

Having the two-man Soviet crew along was more of a comfort than necessity, Sprinkel added.

The landing was uneventful, but what happened afterward shook up the young airman.

“Once we were on the ground, we were supposed to cordon off the aircraft and not let anyone near,” Thompson said. “But as soon as we got off, about 30 to 50 people ran up and started taking pictures in the wheel wells.

“I was starting to panic, wondering what to do.”
Looking for direction from Sprinkel, Thompson was told he shouldn’t interfere. Years later, he speculated the Soviets wanted to copy the Galaxy’s complicated landing gear design since they couldn’t do it on their own.

Frustrated, he had to let the photographers snap away.

“To me, it was a mess,” he said.

The plane was met by a phalanx of VIPs, including American Ambassador Malcolm Toon who were given a tour of the aircraft by Sprinkel and his crew.

In the meantime, workers unloaded the MHD generator using a huge, red-white-and blue painted tractor trailer, taking just nine minutes to pull it out of the C-5’s belly.

What was that 40-ton magnet used for?
The electromagnet cargo guarded by Mike Thompson was designed and built by the Energy Research and Development Administration’s Argonne National Laboratory near Chicago.

The ERDA now a part of the US Department of Energy.

The magnet was part of a test of an experimental magnetohydrodynamic process for generating electricity, according to information provided in a 1977 Argonne press release.

The magnet was installed at the Soviet Union’s U-25 MHD facility which was the world’s largest NHD facility at the time.

The largest and most powerful magnet of any type ever built, it could produce a field more than 250,000 times that of the Earth. Hot gases, often exceeding 4,500 degrees, would be forced through a duct in the magnet, accelerating close to the speed of light. Moving through the magnet, which was cooled to a temperature of 453 degrees below zero, the hot gases generated electricity that was transmitted outside by electrodes in the duct’s walls.

While conventional fossil fuel plants at the time were considered to be 35 to 40 percent efficient, it was thought MHD generators would be up to 60 percent efficient.
The C-123 Provider: a rugged, reliable aircraft

It wasn’t pretty, but it got the job done. The Fairchild C-123 Provider was one of the hardest working aircraft of the Vietnam War. A significant element of American tactical airlift, it’s capabilities were called on extensively as the aircraft that could get in and out of small clearings and trouble spots few others could manage.

Initially developed in the late 1940s as a glider, they served with the Air Force and Air Force Reserves from 1955 until the mid-1980s, continuing on in the air forces of 11 other nations.

The mainstay of the fleet was the C-123B, powered by two Pratt and Whitney R-2800 radial engines. More than 300 -B models were built and 183 of those eventually were converted to the -K model with the addition of two J-85 turbojet engines, which boosted its speed and ability to work out of confined airfields.

The Museum’s C-123K, tail number 54-658, was manufactured in 1956 in Hagerstown, Maryland and in April of that year was assigned to the 513th Troop Carrier Squadron at Sewart AFB, Tennessee.

Seven years afterward saw the beginning of its service in South Vietnam, where it served until 1970 and its transfer to Howard AFB, Panama.

From 1971 until 1987 it was stationed at Lockbourne (later Rickenbacker) AFB, Ohio.

As the Air Force was phasing out the C-123 airframe, 54-658 was sent to the Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center, aka The Boneyard, in 1987 but remained there only a short time until it was returned to service with the US Department of State. Registered with the Peruvian National Police, for three years it flew in support of that nation’s drug interdiction efforts. The Museum’s Provider was known as “El Burro” because it was both tough and reliable.

Although it never was assigned to Dover AFB during its operational lifetime, 54-658 was brought to the AMC Museum Oct. 14, 1990, because of the C-123’s important role in military airlift history.

Jarring landings

Retired US Air Force Reserve TSgt. Robert “Bob” Johnson Jr. is intimately familiar with the Museum’s Provider: he worked as its crew chief for eight years while at Rickenbacker AFB.

Early in his career, he was tasked with fixing just about any system on the aircraft that broke. Later, things got more specialized, much to his frustration.

“You got to do everything,” he said. “If you could fix it, you’d fix it. But later, if you had an electrical problem you had to wait for an electrician, even if you knew how to do it yourself.”

He enjoyed his time working on the Museum’s C-123.

“It was simple to work on, and you did a lot of work, but it wasn’t hard or complicated,” Johnson said. The plane never aborted a flight while he was crew chief and was considered one of the most dependable in the unit.

Flying sometimes was a challenge, Johnson recalled.

“We were tactical airlift, so we’d go make assault landing where you had to stop as soon as you can,” he said. Pilots would slam the airplane onto the ground, and since the flight mechanics didn’t have a seat, they’d have to stand at the cockpit entrance, Johnson said.

“We had a lot of teeth-jarring landings,” he said. “It was all you could do to keep from falling into the cockpit.”

Although he never made it to Vietnam, Johnson’s Provider often was used as a jump platform for paratrooper training. That included some Vietnamese soldiers who were brought over to the United States, he said.

The plane was manually piloted, with no autopilot, he said.

“It was loud, real loud, and you couldn’t talk unless you were on the intercom. It didn’t fly very fast to get to where it was going so when you went somewhere, it took forever.”

Those poor young kids

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Paul Roy considers the Provider, “A pretty good airplane.”

“It thought it was easy to work on except when I had to work on the engines. You had to have stands to get to those engines up high, and when I first got [to Tan Son Nhat Air Base] we didn’t have a whole lot of equipment. We always had to look for stands.

“I tinkered a lot on my when I was a crew chief. Those engines used to throw a lot of oil and I decided I would change as much as I could to stop some of that leakage.

“I flew with my aircraft a lot and got to see a lot of small fields in Vietnam at that time,” he said. “The C-123 was a pretty unique aircraft. It did well for paratroop drops and when we weren’t carrying cargo, that’s what we did.

“We also dropped South Vietnamese paratroops. It was interesting to see those young South Vietnamese, they looked scared to death. I think it was their first jump after training. Those poor young kids. They almost had to throw some of them out.”

Landing on the beach

The noise generated by the Provider’s four engines are some of retired Master Sgt. Marty Martell’s most vivid memories of the time spent flying around Alaska and northern Canada.

During the height of the Cold War, the United States maintained a number of distant early warning radar posts -- the DEW Line -- to warn against a possible over-the-Arctic Soviet attack.

“The aircraft wasn’t insulated,” Martell recalls. “It was built for cargo. If you sat next to someone you had to holler at them right in their ear for them to hear you.”

Most of his missions were routine, but one day they made an emergency flight to Little Diomede Island, a tiny chunk of land less than three miles from Soviet Russia.

“A woman was having trouble giving birth,” Martell recalled. “There wasn’t any runway, so we landed on the beach. But most of the time we were just hauling cargo.”

It was one of those examples of where the military would help with civilians, and vice versa, he said.

“Everyone was very cordial to each other. It was nice.”

A kick to fly


He currently pilots the only flying C-123 left, nicknamed Thunderpig. The plane is owned by the Air Heritage Museum in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and visited Dover during its 2017 Open House.

The aircraft may be old -- it’s in its sixth decade -- but it’s rugged, Schillig said. In its...
Thompson
(Continued from page 5)

Cheeseburger and fries
Sprinkel and the rest of the crew had a chance to play tourist once the plane was secure. While Thompson was left behind to keep an eye on the C-5, everyone else got a tour of Moscow, including Red Square. They also were taken through the NHD generator’s new home at the Institute of High Temperatures laboratory where, amazingly, they found the generator already had been installed, less than three hours after being offloaded.

In the meantime, Thompson was guarding the C-5 from the cab of a pickup truck. Except for a single Soviet guard -- at least that was the only one he saw -- he was alone.

He tried a little informal international diplomacy by offering the guard a Coke, but soon afterward another truck pulled up and took the man away. Thompson figured the man’s superior must have seen the friendly gesture and quickly had him replaced.

Thompson was relieved by 512th MAW Staff Sgt. Robert A. Mooney.
“When that happened, I got my own special tour,” he recalled. An English-speaking Russian from the American embassy picked him up in a battered station wagon, but all Thompson wanted was a hot meal. After a quick trip to the embassy for a cheeseburger and fries, the Russian took him sightseeing around the Soviet capital.

“To me, it all looked so glum,” he said. “The place just looked sad. No one had a smile on their faces. That really stuck out.”

The trip back home was anticlimactic. Instead of the aircrew being debriefed back at Dover, the C-5 diverted to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, where everyone, including Thompson, was quizzed about the trip. He dutifully reported the photography incident, but never heard what might have happened as a result.

‘A lot of brass’
Life went back to normal until about a year later.
“One day, out of the blue, I was told we had to go to the Pentagon for the award of the trophy,” Thompson said.

Many of the mission’s crew had been transferred to other bases, so they and their spouses were flown to Washington DC for the ceremony; Thompson just drove across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge.

Although Thompson had heard President Jimmy Carter was supposed to be there, he instead received the plaque and certificate directly from Allen and later was given a photograph of himself and the chief of staff.

As an airman first class, being honored by so many senior officials left him a bit starstruck, Thompson admitted.

“There was a lot of brass in that room,” he said.

Thompson left the Air Force Dec. 31, 1979, having spent his entire career assigned to Dover. Shortly afterward he was hired at the US Postal Service and now is retired after 31 years on the job.

A small corner of his home contains memorabilia of his Air Force career including a security police badge, the brown suit tie he wore to Moscow and a small pendant decorated with the emblem of the Soviet airline Aeroflot.

A blank spot on the wall once was occupied by the Mackay Trophy plaque, now in the AMCM’s collection.

“We’d visited the Museum in 2016 and I thought they might want my stuff from the Moscow trip,” Thompson said. “I talked to [Collections Manager Debbie Sellars] and she said she’d love to have it.”

“I hope to add Mr. Thompson’s story and the plaque and certificate he received to the museum’s website in the future so more people can learn about Dover’s role in this unique American-Soviet endeavor,” Sellars said.

Thinking back, Thompson realizes he was in the right place at the right time to have taken part in a history-making event.

“It’s one of the things I’m really proud of,” he said.

C-123 Provider: The Air Force’s reliable cargo hauler
(Continued from Page 6)

heyday, it was just what the Air Force needed when supplying those very small posts in Vietnam.
“It can take you to quite a few different kinds of strips and unprepared fields,” he said.
“It was pretty amazing that way. But it couldn’t haul as much as some people would have liked.”

When the C-123 first arrived in Vietnam, it had trouble taking in some of the shorter landing strips. Then Fairchild added the J-85 jet engines.
“They really were a kick to fly,” he said, later adding, “It gives you a pretty good jump out of the chocks.”

“It’s really heavy on the controls and one of the few aircraft I’ve flown that doesn’t have any assist with the controls. It’s just straight cable/pulley, no hydraulics, no electrical assist.
“It requires a little more arm-power than most, but it’s still pretty agile.”

And the plane definitely was built to make the assault-type drops for which it became famous.
Schillig made an assault approach when they came into Dover, and “The people in the tower said it was one of the best landings they’d seen all day,” he said.
“We get that a lot when I do those kind of approaches at the air shows,” he added.

Several motorcycles were among the items carried aboard the Museum’s Provider during its career with Peruvian drug interdiction forces. This scene was recreated in the recent Tom Cruise film, “American Made.”
September’s 2017 Foundation Board member election was unique in that we got five new members, all of whom were already Museum volunteers. After this past year’s loss of several board members, we’re certainly confident that this influx of experienced Museum volunteers will prove to be a welcome addition to the Board.

It’s not a secret that the Foundation has always recognized the value of AMC Museum volunteers, and we have been fortunate to have had some outstanding folks work with us in the past, bringing in their new ideas and getting word back to their fellow-volunteers about what goes on within the Foundation. Additionally, we’re also fortunate to have new treasurer join the board, and finally, an old familiar face who is now a Foundation Board member.

This year’s group of new board members is gung-ho and seems to be ready to roll. We’re looking forward to developing a better the communication level between the Foundation and the volunteer force and we’re looking forward to some fantastic results. Welcome to all.

And finally, our thanks go out to our past board members who donated so much of their time and their efforts – usually behind the scenes -- to help keep our Air Mobility Command Museum great!

So let’s meet our new members.

With a dad who served in the Air Force and two sons who also sported Air Force blue, it can be said Robert “Bob” Czeizinger comes from a military family. He came to Dover when his father was sent here and spent his career working for the state of Delaware.

“I hated moving around,” he said. “Since I’ve moved to Delaware, I’ve only lived in two houses. I just swore to myself that I’d never move.”

To say Bob has a good technical background is an understatement. He served in Delaware’s Department of Education information technology division collecting and reporting data on schools, teachers, and students. By the time he retired four years ago, he was in charge of preparing and collating all of that data for all of the reports needed by the state and federal governments.

Although he retired at the young age of 58, Bob found his woodworking hobby -- he also sells some of his creations -- wasn’t keeping him occupied, so he began casting about for something else to do.

“I enjoy woodworking and things like that, but I have to admit there only is so much you can do for yourself,” he said. “I wanted to get involved in something that would benefit the Museum and Delaware.

“Every time I go out to the Museum I really enjoy myself,” he added.

After attending a couple of AMCMF board meetings, Bob decided to try out for a seat with the group. “I was interested in the work they were doing and how the Foundation supports the Museum,” he said.

“I thought I’d really like to get involved in that.”

From his earliest days, Paul Roy had a fascination with airplanes, but in the 1950s there weren’t too many flying machines in his native Rutland, Vermont. The way to find them, he said, was to join the US Air Force.

“I was very curious about airplanes,” he said. “Everyone else in Rutland seemed to want to join the Navy. I never figured that one out. I liked airplanes and wanted to learn more about them.”

Starting in 1959 with a four-year hitch, Paul retired in 1989, finishing up 30 years of service as a chief master sergeant.

Even though he was turning wrenches on aircraft such as the C-123, Paul didn’t stay on the ground for very long. Within his first enlistment, he’d done a temporary tour in Southeast Asia, flying all over South Vietnam as part of Operation Mule Train. By 1963 he’d had become a flight mechanic on the VT-29 and the C-131D and later served with an air rescue squadron out of Goose Bay, Labrador.

While aboard the HC-54D, his unit supported the two-man Gemini space program and he took part in the recovery of Gus Grissom and John Young following their inaugural mission in Gemini 3.

Paul came to Dover in 1967 as a C-141 flight engineer and later was part of the initial cadre that brought the C-5 to the base. He stuck with the Galaxy for the remaining 18 years of his career, closing it out as the 436th Military Airlift Wing’s flight test evaluation engineer.

Although Paul had long considered joining the Museum as a tour guide, he held out until the arrival of the AMCM’s C-5 in August 2013. “I realized afterward I don’t know why I didn’t join earlier,” he said.

Paul relishes his role as a storyteller for Museum visitors.

“I enjoy telling the story of airlift and aerial refueling, and really enjoy being a tour guide and relating the stories of the various airplanes,” he said.

He decided to run for a seat on the AMCM Foundation board so he could do even more.

“I thought maybe I could contribute in some way and hopefully I can do that,” he said. “It’s a great museum and if I can do anything to make it better yet, that would be my goal.”
James “Jim” Fazekas comes to the AMCM following his retirement from a career in civil aviation.

A resident of Smyrna, Del., Jim served in the US Army from 1963 to 1987, flying both fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. He also worked as an instructor and administrator, managed unit operations, handled personnel programs for more than 2,500 soldiers and worked to ensure the security of his unit’s communications centers. While handling all of those responsibilities, he also designed and then operated a multi-million dollar flying program involving 450 aircraft.

Following his military retirement, Jim signed on as a civil pilot, serving as chief pilot and captain for several companies, including Wayfarer Aviation and HeliFlite.

He also holds a Bachelor’s Degree of General Studies in History and Geography from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. During his military service, he racked up 1,400 hours of combat flight time, earning the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal and 33 Air Medals. As a civilian, he has logged more than 9,500 accident-free flying hours.

He became interested in the AMCM when driving past the Museum after his Delaware retirement.

In addition to becoming a member of the AMCMF board of directors, Jim can be found escorting visitors through the Museum complex and regaling them with tales of his own service and information about what’s available in the hangar and out on the ramp.

If need be, he even can chat with visitors in German, as he speaks that language fluently.

“I like meeting visitors and relaying information on our aircraft and United States history,” he said.

Eventually that interest extended to running for board membership. As one of the directors, he’s looking to moving both the Museum and the board into new territory.

When he’s not at the Museum, Jim enjoys studying military, aviation and American history, Vietnam Army aviation history, being with his family and staying informed on current world and national events.

For Rodney Moore, the Museum’s C-5A is a very special aircraft: he was crew chief of tail number 90014 when it became the only cargo aircraft to launch a Minuteman missile.

That happened back in 1974 when the retired chief master sergeant served as Zero One Four’s crew chief. In fact, Rodney’s name, bearing his 1974 rank as a staff sergeant, still is painted on the Galaxy’s fuselage.

But Rodney didn’t take that history-making flight.

“I was told I wasn’t needed because they had adequate numbers of personnel that mission,” he said. To this day, he wishes he’d been a little bit more vocal about wanting to go.

“I should have told them I really needed to go with my airplane.”

Working on Zero One Four is just one highlight of Rodney’s 37-year career. He enlisted in 1967, and came to Dover Air Force Base three years later. He left active duty for the Reserves in August 1975, taking on jobs of greater responsibility until his retirement in January 2004.

Rodney says former Museum Director Mike Leister pestered him for years about signing on at the Museum, but it wasn’t until he learned Zero One Four was to be retired at Dover that he finally relented.

But it wasn’t without some doubts. “I knew that aircraft would require a lot of TLC once it got here, and I told my wife, ‘I’m not a young puppy anymore, I don’t know if I can handle it,’” he said. But then he saw his old Galaxy soaring in on its last flight.

“Once I set foot on that deck, the love affair began all over again,” he said. “Talk about fate: that aircraft belongs here. It was stationed here when it launched that missile, and it belongs here.”

His reasons for wanting to be a part of the Museum’s governing board is simple.

“I love this place,” he admits. “I want to see this place move onward and upward. It’s a fabulous place. I think a little bit of fresh thinking, some new ideas are good. I think that some of us, being hard-core volunteers, can bring in some ideas for the board.”

Our incoming treasurer, Chris Godek, always loved numbers. She grew up in Colorado doing all facets of accounting/finance for a family run and operated logging and sawmill business. When the family business sold, Chris went to work for the Air Force as a civilian employee at Lowry Air Force Base. At the time, Lowry was a flying and training base. Chris was enamored with airplanes as her stepfather trained Air Force members in Stearmans. She was very excited when she was given a ride in a Stearman by Don Sloan in 2015, fulfilling one of her dreams.

Chris has lived a military life for the past 33 years by being married to David Godek, a retired Air Force major, traveling the world during his Air Force career until his retirement. They moved to Colorado from Munich, Germany, and later to Oregon where she switched from Department of Defense employment to the US Forest Service. Despite all this moving around, Chris held several finance and accounting positions with the government, all of which will serve her well as our treasurer.

In 2013 the Godeks moved from Oregon to Delaware to enjoy their retirement with friends and family. If the name Godek is familiar, it’s because David has donated many of his paintings to our Museum.

While Chris enjoys many hobbies, including sewing and knitting, she’s very excited about her new duties as the Foundation’s treasurer. She’s adamant about wanting our Museum to stay “Number One” and keeping it “the best there is!”

(Continued on Page 12)
Fairchild C-123
23 “Provider”
Like a lot of people, Jeff Kirwan found retired life, well, not quite what he thought it would be.

“After I quit working, I had a couple projects on the ‘honey do’ list around the house and maintaining some rental properties,” he said. “But that slowed down and I really got bored.

“I’d spent my entire life turning wrenches on aircraft and I wanted to get back into that a little bit,” Jeff said.

Jeff’s had a busy career, but spent all of it at Dover. He enlisted in the Air Force back in 1980 and transferred to the Reserves, where he served as an Air Reserve Technician. In 1997, however, he was caught up in a reduction in force program, losing his slot, but being able to stay on as a civilian worker. He also kept working as a regular Reservist, retiring from that component in 2012 as a senior master sergeant. He completed his career as a civil service worker at the base in 2015.

It was an acquaintance with Museum Restoration Director Les Polley that returned Jeff to the fold in March 2017. Since then, taking advantage of his avionics background, he’s finished work on restoring a C-5 systems trainer that soon will be on display.

He’s since been named crew chief on the C-9 Nightingale.

It’s a beautiful aircraft, he said of the flying hospital, which joined the Museum’s roster in August 2005. The plane is one of those accessible to the public during the AMCM’s Open Cockpit Day events.

Jeff hopes to make visiting the C-9 a memorable experience, saying “I’ve got a few things in my mind that I want to do with it.”

And Jeff’s always there whenever members of the Museum’s restoration crew need an extra hand or a little bit of avionics-specific knowledge.

As one of the Museum’s newest members, Jeff sought a seat on the AMCM Foundation’s board because he wanted to take something great and make it even greater.

“It was for the betterment of the Museum,” he said. “I hope I can make, at some time in the future, a difference.

“I think there’s always room for improvement and sometimes new faces, new thoughts, new minds can make that difference.”

And last, but not least, that “old” familiar face, Mike Leister, founder and former director of the Air Mobility Command Museum.

In 1986 Mike and a handful of dedicated people started the Dover AFB Historical Center which grew into the AMC Museum. He managed the Museum from its start until his retirement in December 2016.

Prior to that Mike started the 512th Antique Aircraft Restoration Group, an AF Reserve project to bring the last surviving combat veteran B-17G back to flying status. This was, and still is, the most complex aircraft restoration ever undertaken by an AF Heritage Program field museum. Since flying back to the National Museum of the USAF under its own power, “Shoo Shoo Baby” has been a star attraction for more than 25 years.

He served 25 years in the USAF and USAFR, starting out as a C-5 crew chief and ending his military career as the superintendent of Aircraft Plans & Scheduling at Dover AFB. He was the first flying crew chief on the Lead-the-Force C-5. When he left active duty he became the first Air Reserve Technician assigned to the LTF program. Among other accomplishments he developed a curriculum and taught aircraft systems to reservists at the base Field Training Detachment and took maintenance teams to overseas locations to assist assigned personnel and give practical training to reservists. He retired as a senior master sergeant.

Mike has been active with small museums and non-profits for over 40 years, having served as president of the Small Museum Association, founder of the Delaware Museum Association and member of the Kent County Tourism Board for more than 20 years. For many years he taught sessions on museum management both within the USAF system and in the civilian sector. Mike helped write the current Air Force Instructions for the entire USAF Heritage Program. In total he served the Air Force in uniform and as a civilian for more than 46 years.

He now is a volunteer instructor engineer at the Marshall Steam Museum and a volunteer exhibit preparer at the Milford Museum. Mike is happily married to Claudia, has two wonderful grown daughters and two awesome grandchildren who – as you might guess -- like planes and trains.

So that’s our new roster. We’re moving forward. Greatness will continue!

Fly safe!

Don Sloan
Local youngsters from around Dover Air Force Base literally got a ride into the wild blue yonder during an educational camp dedicated exclusively to the study of flight.

The flights were the culmination of a four-day annual Aviation Summer Camp, held at the Air Mobility Command Museum.

“It was pretty cool,” said Hunter Keel, after climbing from the Cessna 172, piloted by Joe Nickle, manager of the Dover Air Force Base AeroClub. “It was the first time I’ve ever flown.”

The camp is overseen by Tricia Upchurch, the AMCM’s staff educator. Certified as both an elementary and high school teacher, Upchurch also is a military wife whose husband is a C-5M SuperGalaxy pilot stationed at the base.

This was her second year in charge of the program, which is presented twice a day during weeks in July and August. One half-day session is geared toward younger students, while the second features advanced concepts for more senior learners.

“We work to relate it to the STEM concept — science, technology, engineering and mathematics,” she said. “I try to change up the curriculum because we have kids who come in for the camp more than once. We had 14 repeaters from last year.”

The camp was set up as an educational tool for youngsters and teens interested both in aeronautics and the Air Force, Upchurch said.

But the emphasis isn’t on the military aspects of flying. In addition to taking a 20-minute flight around Kent County, students learn the history of flight, the science of aeronautics and try out their knowledge in aircraft simulators.

“Aviation is the main focus,” Upchurch said. “Schools today are teaching science and technology as career opportunities and I think this will broaden a lot of horizons.”

During their time at the museum, youngsters get inside tours of the many aircraft on display, including the B-17 Flying Fortress, which normally is closed to the public.

Upchurch is assisted in this regard by the museum’s volunteer tour guides.

“That was great,” she said. “Some of these guys have flown on these aircraft and they all have some interesting personal stories to tell.”

Last year’s camp included a special talk by retired NASA astronaut Terry Hart, who once flew out of Dover AFB; this year special guests included a C-5 flight crew and a drone demonstration by a team from the Dover Police Department.

Campers also went onto Dover Air Force Base proper to see how an airfield functions.

Students visited the base air traffic control tower, saw where airmen are issued their flight equipment, explored the base radar approach control center, or RAPCON, and visited the kennels where the base’s security K-9s live and train.

“Not all of the kids come from a military family,” Upchurch said. “Some never have been on the base before and have no idea what goes on there. They were really surprised by all the different jobs and what it takes to fly.”

Eleven-year-old Mason Moritz was part of the most recent camp, which he attended with his younger brother.

He was particularly interested in how humans mastered the art of flight.

“I learned that it took a long time before the Wright Brothers learned how to fly an airplane,” he said. “I also learned about flying a hot air balloon.”

Mason’s dad, Lt. Col. Brian Moritz, is a C-17 pilot who said the camp gave his sons a better idea of what he does for a living.

“I love airplanes and I think I’ve infected them with a love of airplanes,” he said. “I think this has allowed me to be able to talk with them more about what I do and who I work with when I’m on a trip. It gives them a better idea of what I do other than just flying.”

Upchurch already is planning next year’s summer camp, which she hopes will include a series on navigating while in flight.

“One thing we try to do is show the students the many different careers in aviation or careers that are aviation-related,” she said. “I think it’s pretty awesome.”
Thunder Over Dover


The weekend featured demonstrations by the USAF Thunderbirds, parachute teams and aerial acrobatics by a number of civilian aircraft, as well as a two-day Open Cockpit event for those wanting a close-up look at the Museum’s aircraft.

At least 60,000 people poured onto the base to celebrate three anniversaries: 300 years for the city of Dover, 75 years for Dover Air Force Base and 70 years since the U.S. Air Force separated from the U.S. Army.

Four Thunderbird F-16 aircraft fly in close formation on the first day of the open house. At times only three feet of space separated the wingtips of each aircraft.

Two aircraft perform a Calypso Pass over the Dover air field. The upside-down aircraft is Thunderbird 5, whose number also is painted upside-down on the aircraft so it appears correctly during inverted flying.

Valerie Arnold relaxes in the shade of a Dover AFB C-17 Globemaster III wing. “I’m loving it,” the Magnolia, Del. resident said of the air show and open house. “I’m really enjoying the different displays and being out here with my family.”

Staff Sgt. Jacob Rische of the 709th Airlift Squadron at Dover AFB, relaxes aboard a C-123 Provider with his son, Macklin. The Provider, owned by the Air Heritage Museum outside Pittsburgh, Pa., is the only flying C-123 in the world.
A Dover C-5M lets loose a volley of flares, part of the aircraft’s anti-missile defensive package. The fiery display of pyrotechnics drew gasps of amazement from the crowds below.

A B-2 “Spirit” Stealth bomber flies over Dover AFB from its home field at Whiteman AFB, Missouri. Two of Whiteman’s B-2s, each with a crew of two, flew a more than 34-hour mission in January 2017 to strike an ISIS training camp in Libya.

Australian Federal Police officer Grant Edwards strains mightily in his successful effort to pull a 282,000-pound C-17 aircraft. Edwards, who is stationed at the Australian embassy in Washington, is considered that country’s strongest man.

Alaina Barnes of Wilmington, Del., gets a close up look at the cramped interior of a B-1 Lancer bomber. “It was the best thing in my whole life,” she said of the experience.

Aviation enthusiasts were content to wait in long lines for the chance to see the interiors of some of the United States’ most valuable aircraft.

U.S. Navy veteran Charles Lockwood, of Dover, Del., is reflected in the shiny surface of the AMCM’s VC-9, “Air Force Two,” as he watches the Thunderbirds overhead. His wife, Joan, relaxes on one of the Museum’s memorial benches. Lockwood served aboard the USS Wasp.
Kim Cole of Allentown, Pa., and her Great Danes Axel and Sebastian spent some time with Museum volunteer Dakota Palmer on a beautiful Sunday afternoon.

Grace Shinholt visits the Museum’s B-17, Sleepy Time Gal, with son Isaac. Mom and son hail from Milford, Del. Grace said her grandfather flew as a B-17 belly gunner during World War II.

Addison Desch of Magnolia, Del., gets a ride from dad Chuck Desch. Addison found out there’s just so much to see and do at the AMC Museum that she couldn’t help but get tuckered out.

Museum volunteer Chuck Lyon talks about the Museum’s C-141A Starlifter with Joshua Scott, Shelby Smith and Isiah Scott, all of Dover, Del.

Col. Ethan C. Griffin, commander of the 436th Airlift Wing, briefed Museum volunteers about activity on base and in the wing. Griffin said the volunteers are the Museum’s most valuable asset.

Randall Grebe, of Jasper, Georgia, works to repaint the nose of the Museum’s KC-135. Grebe works for contractor Envirotech.
Jack Thomas of Salisbury, Md., brought in his 1959 Plymouth Fury to the Sept. 16 classic car show. He’s owned the Plymouth for about 15 years; the car was built in Wilmington, Del., and sold new from a dealer in Harrington, Del.

Rich Lanning, Bill Starkey and Jake Schroll relax in the shadow of the Museum’s C-7 during the classic car show Sept. 16. Lanning brought a 1965 Camaro, while Starkey contributed a 1962 Impala and Schroll arrived in a 1968 Camaro. “I love it,” Schroll said of the AMCM. “The Museum has good people and has been an amicable host.”

Marilyn Cleeton of Dover, Del., poses with the 1929 Ford Model A she owns with her husband. The couple have had the vehicle for 43 years. Ford produced more than 4.8 million Model As between 1927 and 1931; depending on the model, back then the vehicle cost between $500 and $1,200.

US Army vet Keith Harper and his wife, Marie, took a tour of the VC-9, Air Force Two, during Open Cockpit Day, Sept. 16. “I think the Museum is cool,” Harper said. “I loved the F-106 Delta Dart when I was a kid, and now I got to see one here in person.”

New names added to AMCM’s Commmemorative Garden

An additional 15 memorial bricks are being added to the walkway at the Air Mobility Command Museum’s Commmemorative Garden in conjunction with Veterans Day 2017.

The bricks, which are inscribed with names, organizations or other tributes, are added to the garden each Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

AMC Museum Volunteer Ron Bauer, 1,000-plus hours
Diane DeFlavio, May you always walk with angels, 1944-2017
Pete Ferrari, Korean War, 1934-1997
AMC Museum Volunteer Thomas Galish, 1,000-plus hours
Sergeant John F. Griffin, USAF, 1966-1970
Paul H. Guemmer, Brig. Gen., USAF
Capt. Alvin Heath, USAF, Retired, World War II
AMC Museum Volunteer John Masters, 1,000-plus hours
AMC Museum Volunteer Art Norton, 1,000-plus hours
Lt. Sylvia Patki, USAFR, 1957-1960, Love from Scott
AMC Museum Volunteer Ken Smith, 1,000-plus hours
AMC Museum Volunteer Donald Strong, 1,000-plus hours
In memory of James Taylor, Mar. 1934 - Aug. 2017, Korean War Veteran
Kathryn Weiss, Col., Thank You! 24.5 years served

(Because of formatting requirements, the information presented in this listing may not exactly match the inscriptions on the bricks.)
**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!

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- 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’ll 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.

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

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Questions?
Email us at: membershipamcm@comcast.net.

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The USAF Thunderbirds, led by commander Lt. Col. Jason Heard in Thunderbird 1, head for their parking area following their first show during the 2017 Dover AFB Open House, “Thunder Over Dover.” It was the first time the team visited Dover since 2009.