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 proper, entrance to the Museum must 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 and all federal holidays except Veterans 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.
Meet the staff
Deputy Director Eric Czerwinski is on the job

Eric Czerwinski lives in the present but is one of those people who has his eye on both the past and the future.

Perhaps it’s those qualities that have brought the retired master sergeant to the post of deputy director of the AMC Museum.

The 49-year-old Czerwinski was appointed to the job in January 2019.

That selection is both an honor and a challenge, Czerwinski said.

“So many people have had their input at the Museum, and many of them are now gone. Living up to their legacy is really important,” he said.

“I want to make sure that I meet the expectations of those who came before me, and those who will come afterward.”

Starting early
A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Czerwinski comes from a family that actually has no long-standing military tradition.

“My father was in the Army but only for two years,” he recalled. “I was one of seven kids and I was the weird one who knew he would be joining the military ever since he was five years old. I just liked tanks and airplanes.”

Czerwinski essentially started his military career by joining the local Civil Air Patrol when he was 12 and remained a member through high school. It’s where he learned to fly – soloing at age 17 – and where he met his future wife, Kim.

“There were only five cadets, four guys, and one girl. Her,” he said. The future Mrs. Czerwinski eventually became a flight instructor. The couple also has a daughter.

Being in the CAP taught Czerwinski a lot about discipline and a lot about the military could do.

The unit had five former Air Force vehicles and three aircraft that they used for CAP’s primary mission, which was performing emergency services.

“It was pretty cool,” Czerwinski said. “We’d go out and look for missing airplanes and missing people. It was pretty heavy stuff.”

Graduating high school in 1987, Czerwinski took classes in airframe and aircraft powerplants in college and then went to enlist.

But then it seemed the Air Force didn’t want him.

“I was going to be put into a mechanical career field because of my [aptitude test] scores, and I told the recruiter I wanted to be a crew chief. He told me the Air Force couldn’t do that.

“So, I told the recruiter I’d join the Army instead and be a helicopter crew chief.”

Someone a little higher up the chain must have decided the Air Force needed another good mechanic because the slot Czerwinski needed suddenly opened up. He was assigned to train as a C-5 mechanic instead of his preferred aircraft, the C-130, but he wasn’t about to quibble.

“I went right over, and signed up,” he said.

Before heading into his dream job, however, Czerwinski first had to get past the TIs at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

“I only had two weeks of basic because I’d been in the CAP,” he said. “It’s called proficiency advancement, and the TIs didn’t have to let me do it, but they did and they made my life hell while they were at it.”

Czerwinski was assigned both as a chow hall runner and his flight’s guidon bearer. Like all basic trainees, he also carried several of the dreaded old ATC Form 341 discrepancy reports in his pocket – and he needed a large supply.

“I had 14 341s pulled, and you only needed two to get recycled. I think they did that as a mind game to make think I was going to be held back.”

But he wasn’t, and Czerwinski escaped Lackland with an extra stripe on his sleeve. After tech school, he drew his first assignment at Travis AFB, California.

Rapid advancement
California proved to be the beginning of a long career working on aircraft. But before he really could get going, however, Czerwinski had to overcome another hurdle: acrophobia.

He quickly learned it wasn’t easy being on a C-5’s tail and looking down at the ground, 65 feet below.

“I have a fear of heights,” Czerwinski said. “But I didn’t want to be that guy who said, ‘No, I’m not going up there.’

“So, I bit my lip and I did it. Eventually, I ended being the go-to guy for fixing the leads in the T-tail.

“You get used to it,” he said. “If you’re careful and don’t do anything stupid, you’re fine.”

Czerwinski advanced quickly in his career field. He became a certified mechanic as a senior airman, allowing him to sign off on tasks, a job normally reserved for technical sergeants. He was loving it.

An overseas assignment to RAF Mildenhall in the United Kingdom followed, where he finally achieved his goal of working on the Hercules aircraft, specifically the MC-130P Combat Shadow.

His assignment to Dover Air Force Base followed, with the Czerwinski family arriving in Delaware in August of 2001. What followed, especially in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, was a flurry of job assignments.

Czerwinski was assigned as a C-5 flight line production supervisor, a line chief and went on to be the maintenance operations center superintendent. After a year at Quality Assurance, he was assigned as the first lead production supervisor and acting first sergeant for the new 736th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron which was activated April 30, 2007. Czerwinski also designed the unit’s squadron patch and motto.

A groundbreaking study
Finally, after more than 20 years in uniform, Czerwinski decided it was time to move on.

Retiring in 2009, he pursued a history degree at Dover’s Wesley College, graduating in 2011, and taught as an adjunct professor there until 2016. While teaching, he completed his master’s degree in historic preservation from Delaware State University.

While working on his degree, Czerwinski pursued his interests in local history by researching the housing market at Dover beginning with the base reopening in 1952 after a long period of being in a caretaker status.

He learned that from 1954 through 1957 the base’s population increased almost five-

(Continued on page 15)
Dover AFB and the F-101 Voodoo

Defending the East Coast from surprise attack

Versatility is perhaps the first word that comes to mind when describing McDonnell Aircraft’s F-101 Voodoo.

Conceived during the Cold War as a long-range escort for Strategic Air Command bombers, it was a supersonic fighter, all-weather interceptor and photo reconnaissance aircraft that served during the Cuban Missile Crisis and saw combat during the Vietnam War.

Developed by McDonnell from the XF-88 prototype, the Voodoo had a number of variants, the best known being the F-101B two-seat, a long-range interceptor that could carry two AIR-2A nuclear-tipped Genie rockets.

It was this model that served with the 98th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS) at Dover Air Force Base.

As part of the Air Defense Command, the 98th was one of several units whose job was to defend the East Coast against possible attack by the Soviet Union.

The F-101 had a distinctive, high-mounted horizontal stabilizer, thin wing and tail surfaces to reduce drag and, to reduce compressibility, wings swept back at a 35-degree angle.

McDonnell delivered 807 F-101s beginning in May 1957; the last was retired in 1986.

Many examples of the Voodoo survive today, and one of those aircraft, tail number 59-0428, is on display at the Air Mobility Command Museum.

Bringing in the Voodoo

The Museum’s Voodoo spent most of its service life in the northeast United States. Delivered to the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Griffis AFB, Rome, N.Y., in April 1960, it served there and at Otis AFB, Cape Cod, Conn. as well as at the Niagara Falls Air National Guard Base, N.Y. until 1982. It then was used as a training airplane at Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls, Texas.

The Museum’s F-101B was one of the early additions to what then was known as the Dover AFB Historical Center. Former Director Mike Leister and a crew of four drove to Sheppard in June 1988, where they disassembled the aircraft during a sweltering heat wave so intense technical training students were not allowed outside.

Several weeks later, a Dover C-5 stopped at Sheppard and using the mission as a training scenario, packed up the pieces of the Voodoo and flew it to Delaware.

Reassembled in two days, it was painted in the livery of the 98th FIS which flew the Voodoo out of Dover AFB from April 1958 until July 1963.

Fatal flight

The 98th traced its lineage back to 1942 when it served as a training unit during World War II. Inactivated during the war, it was reactivated in 1953 flying the F-89 and assigned to Dover as part of the Air Defense Command.

The squadron’s Scorpion aircraft soon became a familiar sight in the skies over Delaware in the days after Dover AFB itself had been brought out of mothballs.

The 98th was assigned to facilities at the southern end of Dover AFB, including shops, administration buildings, an alert facility and the hangar that now houses the AMC Museum.

Conditions at the time were relatively primitive. Declassified historical reports from the period generally describe the physical facilities as “inadequate” and “overcrowded.” The hangar was a favorite roosting spot for species of birds that normally called the marshes around Dover AFB home, giving maintainers one additional problem in keeping their planes airworthy.

In 1958, the Air Force announced plans to equip the 98th with the new F-101. This raised some concerns among the local civilian populace that noise from the larger, more powerful Voodoo would disturb the peace and quiet of rural Kent County.

In March 1959, a public affairs officer from the unit, interviewed on a local radio show, sought to reassure those living near the base they’d barely notice the new aircraft flying overhead.

Sonic booms coming from the new Voodoo aircraft would be rare, Lt. Bernard Bradach said, and if they came, the blasts would be “inadvertent, and, we hope, never.”

Bradach told listeners any “sonic echo caused by the new jets will be a small price for the defense of our freedom.”

A publicity blitz, including a beauty contest to name a “Miss Voodoo” preceded the arrival of the first F-101 in April 1959; the title was awarded to 17-year-old Joan Rochelle, whose name was painted on the nose of a squadron aircraft.

Loaded up and ready to fly, but not under its own power. Former AMCM Director Mike Leister led a team to Sheppard AFB in 1988 to disassemble their F-101 and add it to the Museum’s collection. The plan was shipped in pieces on a C-5 and reassembled in two days.
Historical reports show that by June 1959 the 98th had 487 officers and airmen assigned, including 65 pilots and radar operators, although none of these officers were considered combat ready because of the continuing aircraft changeover. The unit had 21 F-101B and three T-33A trainers in its inventory.

One year later, the squadron’s manning stood at 453 officers and airmen, which was just 81 percent of the 560 authorized. In his report to Air Defense Command headquarters, commander Col. John R. Delapp cited a shortage of personnel as a major concern about his unit’s combat readiness. Despite this, the unit’s maintenance personnel kept the Voodoos flying, with an in-commission rate of 79 percent. In his report three months later, Delapp noted a shortage of spare parts was keeping that number lower than expected.

The Voodoo squadron suffered its only fatal accident Jan. 6, 1961, when an F-101B piloted by 1st Lt. Kent H. Waring, along with radar operator 2nd Lt. Donat C. Derosiers, was lost in the Atlantic Ocean about five miles off Cape Henlopen, Del.

News reports at the time gave no reason for the crash, although a pilot in an accompanying plane reported seeing two parachutes from the stricken plane. Both were flying at between 32,000 and 35,000 feet. Derosiers’ body was found in the ocean about 25 miles south of where the Voodoo last was seen. He still was strapped into his ejection seat.

A post-mortem examination indicated Derosiers had drowned while unconscious and probably had been rendered insensible during the ejection.

Part of a seat cushion and an inflated one-man life raft, presumably belonging to Waring, also was spotted. Several days later, the crew of a fishing boat working off the Delaware coast reported they had recovered a body, but that the remains had slipped out of its nets.

A Coast Guard cutter and a helicopter from Dover AFB were sent to search the area but were unsuccessful in recovering what was thought to be Waring’s body.

The Air Force eventually abandoned its search efforts, declaring Waring “missing and presumed dead.”

The 98th lost a second Voodoo on Aug. 3, 1961, when it went down about 10 minutes after leaving Dover. The pilot, 1st Lt. Joseph O. Kilkenny and radar observer 1st Lt. Royce E. Oliver, ejected from the crippled aircraft. Oliver suffered a broken leg while both men sustained a number of cuts and bruises from the experience.

The F-101B dug a 14-foot-deep hole when it slammed into a patch of woods near the small town of Milton, in Sussex County, Del.

This scene is reminiscent of many Air Force bases during the Cold War: F-101s, cocked and ready to fly on a moment’s notice. Dover once had an alert hangar such as this one at Malmstrom AFB, Montana, as part of the 98th FIS compound. The recently demolished structure was adjacent to the AMC Museum’s Hangar 1301, which housed the unit’s maintenance shops.

The 98th underwent an Operational Readiness Inspection in early 1962, receiving a satisfactory rating. Unit commander Lt. Col. Franklin C. Crain repeatedly told higher headquarters he didn’t have enough manpower. Maintenance efforts continued to suffer because of a seemingly chronic shortage of spare parts.

The ORI team, however, seemed impressed with efforts to improve the 98th’s working environment, noting the unit had installed color televisions – unusual for the time – in the nearby alert hangar and another in the operations building.

Crain later reported a new ground crew scramble shack was being built next to a similar building for the aircrew; this was to help ensure personnel would be ready to launch their aircraft within a five-minute window practiced in exercises and called for in real-world situations.

It turned out, however, that all of these improvements would be of little use to the men of the 98th. In another realignment of East Coast air defenses, the Air Force early in 1963 announced the 98th and its contingent of F-101 aircraft would be transferred from Dover to the Sussex County Airport, Long Island, N.Y. The 95th FIS, with its contingent of F-106 Delta Dart aircraft, would move from Andrews AFB, Maryland, to Dover.

The 98th packed up and was gone from Dover by June, with the first Delta Darts touching down early in July.

Self-contained

James Roberts served as a crew chief at the 98th FIS for two years beginning in 1961 and has vivid memories of his time at Dover.

“Our barracks were next to where the base hospital is, and we had to drive out to the other side of the base to get to work,” he said.

The 98th facilities were pretty much self-contained and rarely had need of facilities on the other side of the runway, Roberts said. Most of those were dedicated to the Military Air Transport Service’s fleet of C-124 and C-133 cargo aircraft.

“My job was to make sure the plane was ready to go on its missions,” Roberts said. “The crew would fly out and come back and tell me if anything needed to be fixed and I’d call in to have people come out and do the repairs.”

Roberts often ran the F-101’s engines following any repair work, revving them up on the trim pad while the plane was tied down.

Roberts had trained for his job on the F-100 SuperSabre and found the F-101 to be an aircraft unlike any other.

“It was completely foreign to me when I first saw it,” he recalled. “For a country boy from Vermont, it was a real eye-opener, completely different from what I’d learned in tech school.”

One of his sergeants told Roberts he neededn’t worry about working on the big aircraft.

“He said don’t be awed by it. Forget everything you learned in school because we’ll teach you our way.”

Roberts was with the 98th during the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 and recalls a tense four-month temporary duty assignment to a New Jersey National Guard base during the standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union.

“They didn’t want all of the F-101s together,” he explained. “We did all of our

(Continued on page 8)
Welcome to our newest Foundation Board member, retired USAF Chief Master Sgt. George Roof. Born in 1946 in South Carolina to a World War II B-24 flight mechanic/waist gunner, George grew up with a love and admiration of flying machines. After graduating high school in 1964, he enlisted in the Air Force. Upon completing basic training and Jet Engine Technical School, his first assignment was to Naha, Okinawa working on C-130s. While there, Vietnam heated up and he volunteered for a concurrent assignment in August 1966 to Tan Son Nhut working on UH-1 and HH-3 helicopters, and later to Nha Trang.

In September 1967, he returned to South Carolina, assigned to Charleston AFB working C-141s until the C-5 project began. He was qualified to be on the C-5 Test Team and was sent to Dover to prepare the TF-39 engine shop soon to be built.

George worked on the aircraft at Charleston until they were transferred to Dover in 1973. He became the Industrial Safety NCO for maintenance until he was assigned to Kadena AB, Japan. After extensive training on the F-15, he was part of the advance cadre of the F-15, replacing the venerable F-4, as serving as liaison for the F-100 engine to Pratt-Whitney and to Kelly AFB, Texas.

Back to Dover in 1980, George served in multiple positions in maintenance before being assigned as superintendent of Quality Control. Having worked extensively with Public Affairs, he was temporarily assigned as community relations director. He coordinated with the U.S. Navy during the USS Iowa and USS Stark incidents. He was the cartoonist for the Airlifter and in 1987 was awarded the DOD Thomas Jefferson Award for military cartoons. He helped establish the DABF Chief’s Group and was one of its first officers and president. It was his design that graced the first Dover AFB Challenge Coin.

George retired in 1993 when his wife, Connie, suffered terminal medical problems. He resumed his profession of taxidermy that he’d done since he was 12. He was elected to and served five terms on the board of directors of the National Taxidermy Association. For 23 years he wrote a weekly column for the Dover Post newspaper. After Connie’s passing in late 2014, he retired again in 2017 by closing his taxidermy business of almost 40 years.

He still does a bit of freelance writing for outdoor publications and frequently contributes to the editorial page of the Delaware State News. George is a Master Instructor in the Delaware Hunter Education Program and a life member of several outdoors oriented organizations. Almost in earshot of the base, George has lived in Magnolia (at the southwest end of the runway) for 32 years. We’re very happy to have him on the Board.

The Foundation is excited to be able to support the AMC Museum’s upcoming D-Day event featuring a “lead the force” C-47, That’s All Brother. Here’s Paul Gillis presenting a check to Bob Leicht. As the Museum’s resident Skytrain expert on our Turf and Sport Special, it seemed fitting for Bob to be the representative to showcase the donation for the 3-4 May event. It will highlight the Commemorative Air Force Central Texas Wing’s visit of their newly restored Gooney Bird while enroute to Normandy for the 75th anniversary of D-Day. That’s All Brother led more than 800 C-47s to Normandy, which dropped more than 13,000 paratroopers.

Since I first arrived at Dover AFB in 2001, I’ve seen the Hangar Digest go from a 10-page black-and-white publication to a 20-page, glossy, color magazine. We’ve seen many impressive steps taken over the years by our past editor, Harry Heist, and our current editor, Jeff Brown. Having been somewhat involved with the process of getting the publication to print for the past several years, I can confirm that putting the HD together is no easy task for the editor. The research, the interviews, the photos, the actual writing and the final editing must seem endless. Yet the standards that Harry and Jeff set for themselves have always been evident in the finished product, making it very easy for the AMC Museum Foundation to have always been extremely proud of our Hangar Digest.

It turns out we’re not the only ones who appreciate good work. Imagine how excited we were when we recently learned one of Jeff’s HD articles on the C-133 was picked up by the Air Force Museum Foundation magazine, Friends Journal. Originally published in the July-September 2012 edition of our Hangar Digest, Jeff’s very extensive article on the first C-133 Cargomaster crash in 1958 was a great choice. His exhaustive research, interviews and writing skills were recognized by the folks at the National Museum of the US Air Force and the rest is history. Jeff won’t brag about it, but it’s a big deal. Join us in congratulating him for a great job next time you see him.

Speaking of Jeff, he recently phoned a World War II veteran, William Willis about a potential interview for our Hangar Digest. When Mr. Willis mentioned he was thinking of making a donation to the AMC Museum Foundation, and when Jeff heard the amount, he told Mr. Willis that perhaps the board president could be giving him a call – which I did.

What a great conversation we had. Mr. Willis, Dover born-and-raised, graduated from Dover High School in 1943 and then enlisted. In late 1944, he was assigned to the 467th Bombardment Group in Rackheath, England, where he flew as a B-24 nose turret gunner – for a
short while. Shot down over Holland 16 February 1945 while on only his third mission, he spent some time in a POW camp in southern Germany until he was liberated on 29 April 1945. I won’t spoil the rest of that story – Jeff will fill in the details in the next Hangar Digest – but in March Mr. Willis came to the Museum and presented the AMC Museum Foundation (Paul Gillis, Jeff Brown and William Willis in the photo) with a check for $15,000! Wow! What an honor to receive such a donation from a great American hero.

Finally, 117 Friends of the Museum joined us in our 2018 Annual Fundraising Campaign. What began in 2006 as a request to the AMC Museum Foundation Life Members was later expanded to an appeal to ALL Foundation Members a few years ago. What a great idea that turned out to be! What began as an average $2,500 annual fundraiser is now over averaging nearly $13,000 per year. Helping reach that average was this year’s total of more than $14,500.

Donors to the fundraising campaign also are recognized in a random drawing with the choice of receiving a ride in a PT-17 or one of our giclées. The winner this time around was Charlie Grant of Camden, Del., who elected the flight. Congratulations, Charlie!

To be clear, ALL donations are appreciated, no matter the amount. Our 117 donations ranged from $20 to $1,000, with the average donation nearly $125! Our donor-level breakdown follows: 24 Crew members, 20 Flight Crew, 19 Squadron Commanders, three Group Commanders and 47 Lifetime Eagle donors. And we had four NON-members who donated $1,900 between them!

This annual campaign has consistently been one the Foundation’s most successful fundraising opportunities. Be sure that we realize the sacrifice it often takes to write a check to help support an organization – even a non-profit organization as lovable as the AMC Museum. With that in mind, the Foundation’s promise to you is that we will continue to work hard to ensure that the dollars entrusted to us are used as wisely as possible.

As you all know, the AMC Museum Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible within IRS regulations. Those donations help us to fulfill the mission of the AMC Museum as an aviation and aerospace education, scientific, cultural, historical and inspirational facility for the public and the Air Force community.

Here are the names of those who so graciously contributed to this year’s fundraiser:

Mr. Kenneth L. Ablett
CMSgt. Donald A. Adams (USAF, Ret.)
American Legion of Seaford, Del.
Maj. Dewey J. Barich, (USAF, Ret.)
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Mr. Thomas F. Bayard IV
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MSgt. Charles E. Grant, (USAF, Ret.)
Lt. Col. Justus W. Gromme, (USAF, Ret.)
Mr. David Hackett
Ms. Kay Hardie
missions and sorties from there. I think they did that all up and down the East Coast.”

Aside from the manpower shortage and lack of spare parts reported by his commander, there were other minor annoyances, the kind that don’t make it into the official reports, Roberts said.

“Dover is right near the ocean and we had problems with birds,” he said. “They’d come in and roost up in the hangar. We had some issues on the flight line because of the birds.”

A Voodoo flown by Capt. Philip M. Harvell was seriously damaged in April 1963 when he flew into a flock of seagulls on takeoff. Flying safety personnel later found about 40 dead and mangled gulls on the runway.

The pitch-up problem

Many aircrew members and maintenance personnel have their own stories to tell about the Voodoo.

Timothy Bopp, now 70, was a staff sergeant electronics specialist stationed with Det. 1, 28th Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Logan Field in Billings, Mont. He calls the F-101 a “very fast, maneuverable and powerful plane.”

Like many ground techs, he was used to unscheduled alerts to test a unit’s effectiveness or scrambles, usually real-world responses to a suspected threat.

These alerts tested whether an interceptor squadron could get a specified number of planes—usually four—into the air in a very short amount of time, usually about five minutes.

“I took part in multiple alerts and at least two scrambles,” he said. “I can tell you that the scrambles really caused the adrenaline to pump.”

Bopp also took an occasional ride in the F-101 to help verify components were working properly.

“My most exciting flying experience was when my commander allowed me to fly below the rim in between the Yellowstone River Canyon walls like Clint Eastwood did in the movie ‘Firefox,’” he said. “Only I did it about 20 years before it was filmed and released.”


His first impression was that it was “a good-looking aircraft,” that even standing still, looked fast.

“It was a relatively light airplane with lots of power and very rapid acceleration,” he said.

Sometimes those characteristics proved a little too much for prospective back-seaters, Wilson recalled.

“When our unit converted from the F-100C to the F-101B, we needed to recruit rated navigators to become radar operators,” he said. “One of the first volunteers was a navigator who transferred from a nearby airlift unit. When he started flying in the F-101B, he often became sick and could not continue as a radar operator (R/O).

“From then on, we flew any applicants on an F-100 low-level route, flew some formation and aerobatics.

“If the applicant survived, we transferred them into our unit and trained them as an R/O,” Wilson said. “We had no further problems.”

The Voodoo did have one serious problem, Wilson said. Although relatively easy to fly for a high-performance aircraft, air flowing around the T-tail at high angles of attack would cause the plane’s nose to suddenly pitch up.

It was a problem encountered by a number of pilots, said retired Lt. Col. William A. “Bill” Pfeiffer, who flew as a radar operator.

“It was because of the shape of the wing and the high mounted horizontal stabilizer on top of the tail,” Pfeiffer said. There were procedures to deal with this in case the aircraft was above 10,000 feet, procedures that included cutting speed and popping the drag chute.

“It would stabilize you, point your nose from straight up to straight down,” he said.

“You’d get control,” Pfeiffer said.

But if you were below 10,000 feet, there wasn’t enough time for that maneuver, leaving only one option.

“You punched,” he said.

McDonnell eventually attached sensors to the outside of the aircraft that would sound a warning if a pilot was coming close to a pitch up condition. A computer would push the control stick forward to lower the nose, but engineers overlooked a second, important step, he said.

“They forgot you also had to push the throttles forward,” he said. “Pushing the stick without adding power would not get you out of that situation.”

Pfeiffer was deployed during the Cuban Missile Crisis and was flying aboard a Voodoo armed with AIR-2 nuclear rockets. The missiles weren’t designed to be dropped on a Soviet city, but to destroy Soviet vessels that might break through President John F. Kennedy’s naval blockade of the island.

On one sortie, Pfeiffer’s Voodoo was unable to jettison its external fuel tanks and so came in for a heavy landing while carrying the missiles inside its belly.

“We landed on an icy runway and didn’t deploy the drag chute because that would have turned us sideways,” he said. “But the airplane was able to handle it.”

The crisis was a chilling experience, one that nonetheless called for complete professionalism, Pfeiffer realized.

“When you’re there for the very first time with the knowledge that you had some tremendous firepower and you could go out and kill a lot of people with that weapon, it was pretty scary,” he said. “But we would go.”
It did its job well

Now 73 years old, Jerry Roberts — no relation to James — served from 1964 to 1968, also at Logan Field in Montana, as an airborne communications/navigation repairman.

From his point of view, the F-101 was not a difficult aircraft on which to work, he said.

More than once he had to replace a key component while the Voodoo was sitting on the runway, ready to launch.

“They’d just set the engines back to idle, I’d pull a panel off and stick my right foot into a support slot between the fuselage and engine intake.”

With a helpful R/O holding the external panel covering the recalcitrant part, Roberts would reach inside the fuselage, pull the faulty part, replace it and then reattach the panel.

“They’d never shut the engine down and you’d have that noise going all the time,” he said. “But that’s just how we got things done.”

The unit also would go through fast turn-around practices, where a Voodoo would complete a mission and had to be refueled, rearmed and the drag chute replaced within 15 minutes.

During one Operational Readiness Inspection, Roberts and his crew finished the job in a record 11 minutes and 30 seconds.

“ar the inspector said if we could do it like that, there’s no reason to do anything else,” and terminated the inspection, Roberts said.

AMCM volunteer Bill Whited served as an F-101 crew chief from 1966 to 1968 while stationed at the former Oxnard AFB, Camarillo, Calif. It was his first assignment out of technical training.

“My first impression of the aircraft was, ‘This thing is big and it looks fast,’” he said.

“For me, it was easy to work on. I’d call it a mechanic’s airplane. It has easy access to whatever needed to be done.”

But still, there were some difficult tasks, Whited said. Working on fuel lines was a problem because no matter how much fuel was pumped out, there always seemed to be a few gallons left in the tanks.

“Breaking the last bolt, you knew you’d get drenched with ice-cold jet fuel,” he said. “There was no way you could get your hands out fast enough.”

Changing the air/oil coolers was a two man job that often required working blind because the bolts were set where they couldn’t actually be seen.

Whited recalled that one of his first tasks was a repair job after a seagull had been sucked into the Voodoo’s engine intake.

“I was a one-stripper, low man on the totem pole,” he said. “It was a stinking job, and we didn’t have respirators. You’d go in, hold your breath, clean, hold your breath, clean again and then come out for fresh air.”

Just as the F-101s were being withdrawn from service, Whited took a ride in the back seat.

“We sat at the end of the runway, you’d hear the engines spooling up, the brakes would release and you’d start moving,” he said. “You’d feel the afterburners come on and the kick of those twin engines and about 12 seconds later you’re airborne.”

“It was a beautiful day. It was awesome.”

Whited thinks the Voodoo has an enduring legacy among American aircraft.

“It was designed for the air defense of the United States and basically was used as a deterrent,” he said.

“The Russians knew it could get out there and do its job, and I think it did that job very well.”

New names added to AMCM’s Commemorative Garden

An additional 13 names on memorial bricks will be added to the walkway at the Air Mobility Command Museum’s Commemorative Garden in conjunction with Memorial Day 2019.

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

Tim Anderson, AMC Museum Volunteer, 1,000-plus hours
In memory of Sgt. David Arensdorf, 1945–1968, 95th FIS, Dover AFB
Dick Caldwell, educator, AMCM, 1996–2018
Jan Caldwell, volunteer coordinator, AMCM, 1998–2018
Greg Carter, Lt. Col., USAF 121AW Ohio ANG
Kevin Kille, AMC Museum Volunteer, 1,000-plus hours
Glenn A. Larson, B.A. 12740007, Sp5
Colonel Peters, Craig and Cathie, 512AW/CC, Jun 17-Apr 19, Best Wishes and God Speed!

With love and pride we honor Gary L. Phipps
Dennis R. Rankin, MSgt, USAF, 1/2/39 – 3/17/11
Harold T. Reece, US Air Force, 47th Bomb Wing, RAF Sculthorpe
Deborah Sellars, AMC Museum 1989 – 2018, collections manager, exhibit design, “Pioneer”
Gene Thornton, Colonel, US Army, First female guest speaker, Veterans Day 2018

Because of formatting requirements, the information presented in this listing may not exactly match the inscription on the bricks.
101 “Voodoo”
98th Fighter Interceptor Squadron

Joan Rochelle: The Beauty and the Voodoo

It was the late 1950s and the Cold War held the world tight in its grip. Protecting against Soviet intrusions into America’s airspace was at the forefront of the nation’s strategic plans. So with the idea of providing better protection for the East Coast, the Air Force decided to upgrade its air defenses.

With that in mind, Dover Air Force Base held a beauty contest.

In February 1959, the Air Force decided to station a squadron of the new F-101 Voodoo interceptor aircraft at the base. The plane, which had been introduced into the inventory only nine months earlier, would replace the venerable F-89 Scorpion flown by the 98th Fighter Interceptor Squadron.

The first F-101 was to arrive at Dover in April, flown in by 98th FIS commander Lt. Col. John Delapp. To welcome the plane, which had been introduced into the inventory only nine months earlier, would be the guests of honor at the plane’s official reception.

And there were other perks, as noted by an article in the Wilmington, Delaware, News Journal.

*“The lass selected, along with the title and many prizes, will be declared an honorary member of the 98th, and the first F-101 will be christened by, and named for, her,”* the article read.

The lucky winner’s first name also would be carried in the aircraft’s official records and her name would be inscribed, in heat-resistant paint, on the airplane’s nose.

The winner, announced March 7, was 17-year-old Madeline Joan Rochelle, who beat out two other contestants for the title.

**All American girl**

Rochelle, who used her middle name professionally, was a natural for the role, said her brother, John.

“My whole family was from Norfolk, Virginia, including our parents,” he said. John and Joan had another brother, Rick, and another sister, Linda.

“Because of our southern background, my sisters were raised to be quintessential Southern belles,” John said.

“She and Linda were both cheerleaders and I remember as a little boy they had these slumber parties. They’d walk around with books on their heads to improve their posture, and I used to tease them about it. They were just bobbysoxer, all-American girls.”

Their father, Tech. Sgt. Dumas W. Rochelle, had been a combat engineer in World War II, and later enlisted in the Air Force. The family had arrived in Delaware in August 1958, moving into on-base housing. Joan attended the nearby Caesar Rodney High School and planned to study drama in college while seeking the chance to become a professional model.

Standing 5 feet, 3 inches tall, with blond hair and blue eyes, Joan also seemed a natural contender for beauty contests, which led to her seeking the Miss Voodoo title, John said.

“From the first, my sister had brains, John said his sister had one shortcoming: she couldn’t sing and couldn’t play music.

So Joan did the next best thing. “To be in a beauty contest, you have to have a talent,” he said. “Hers was to pantomime songs. I always thought that was funny. I didn’t think that was a talent, but it seemed to work.”

Apparently, it did. Only days after being named Miss Voodoo, Joan won the title of Miss Dover and the chance to represent the state capital in the Miss Delaware beauty contest.

For the talent portion of the Miss Dover competition, she pantomimed the song, “Seventeen.”

Unfortunately, Joan did not win the Miss Delaware crown but soon was afforded another chance at a title when her father received orders to move the family to Edwards Air Force Base, California.

By August 1959, barely three months after moving to the West Coast, Joan had been named that year’s Miss Edwards AFB and was photographed with members of the USAF Thunderbirds, perched atop the wing of a T-38 Talon.

That win earned her a screen test and a visit to the lot at Warner Brothers studios, where she met with several stars of the day including Van Williams and Will Hutchins.

However, the military again intervened, and after only five months in California, the family was uprooted again and sent to the now-closed Nouasseur Air Base, near Casablanca, Morocco.
That’s where his sister met and eventually married Air Force pilot Capt. James R. Slagle, John said.

“That was a really big deal, that she married an officer,” he said. “Service always has been a thing in our family. We go back to the Continental Army and my grandfather was on the Hindenberg Line during World War I.

“But there never had been any officers in the Rochelle family.”

A Lovelier You

Unfortunately, Joan’s marriage to Slagle ended in divorce after several years. She married another Air Force pilot, Capt. Byron Eshelman, and the couple and Joan’s children were sent overseas to the former Naha Air Base, Okinawa.

There, she put her knowledge of beauty secrets and background in participating in beauty contests to work

“She started teaching a charm school to the enlisted and officers wives on base,” recalled son Scott Slagle.


A year later, the family, including Scott’s siblings Rick and Kim, were stationed at Tyndall AFB, Florida, where Joan was featured in a base newspaper article. Interviewed about her experiences in beauty contests, she said her participation in those contests helped her mature.

“Whether you win or lose, you gain something and profit from mistakes,” she told the writer, adding, “You can be a beautiful person but inward appearance is most important.”

A Lovelier You

The author also noted Joan’s involvement in the Officer’s Wives Club, her love of golf, cooking and political activism.

Sadly, however, this marriage also did not last. Joan moved to the St. Paul, Minnesota area to be near her sister, Linda, and in 1974 married Naval aviator Howard C. “Nick” Nickerson Jr. There she earned her real estate agents’ license and gained a reputation as one of the area’s most successful Realtors.

She also was well known in St. Paul’s social circles.

“Up until the time she left, she held a summer party and then a winter party at Christmas,” Scott said. “They were the ticket to have. People always looked forward to Joanie’s parties.

“She actually made the cliché, ‘the hostess with the mostest,’” he said.

Joan and her husband eventually moved to Palm City, Fla., where they lived in retirement until her death from emphysema on May 3, 2002.

Thinking back, Scott calls his mother, “One heck of a mom and one heck of a friend.”

His mother was a woman who, despite her material success, had piled up some regrets about her life, including her marriages.

“She was extremely bright,” he said. “But she had these self-doubts because she never went to college and she always regretted that.”

His mom also had a rebellious streak, Scott said.

“She had a bit of the feminist in her,” he said. “She didn’t like it that women were told they couldn’t do certain things. I think that’s what propelled her to success as a Realtor.”

John remembers his sister best for her poise and her drive for success and social status, whether it came from competition in a beauty contest to being known as an effective high-end real estate agent.

“She had a very outgoing personality, she did very well on her own and she made a lot of money,” he said.

“I don’t think anybody could say anything bad about her.”
Six years ago, Airman 1st Class Rachel Simmons was practicing in simulators at the AMC Museum, aiming to earn a commission and a chance to fly one of the Air Force’s remotely piloted aircraft (RPA).

Fast forward to now: although circumstances kept her from a slot as a drone pilot, Simmons did achieve her primary goal and now wears the silver bars of an Air Force first lieutenant.

Currently, she’s the executive officer for Col. Neil R. Richardson, commander of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, and the 87th Air Base Wing.

It was a long road that included more than a few obstacles, all of which just proved another challenge for Simmons to overcome.

“I’m really happy,” Simmons said about her current job during a telephone interview. “I really love being in the military, I always have. I was really happy being enlisted and I loved my job and I’m really happy being an officer, too.”

Flying simulators at the AMCM

Simmons initially was profiled in a 2013 edition of the Hangar Digest when she was serving as a maintenance data systems analyst for Dover AFB’s 436th Maintenance Operations Squadron.

Coming from a military family, Simmons always had a commission as one of her goals when entering the service. Already in possession of a college degree, she was ready to apply for officer training, but the board was called off. Wanting to get her career under way, she went ahead and enlisted.

She arrived at Dover in May 2012.

Once there, she had simultaneous goals: advancing her enlisted career while at the same time aiming for those second lieutenant’s bars and the chance to fly a remotely-piloted aircraft.

To achieve the latter, she spent many hours in the AMC’s cockpit simulators under the watchful eye of retired flight engineer, Master Sgt. Dave Doyle, flying digital Predator and Global Hawk drones.

Despite all that effort, however, the wings of an RPA pilot were not in Simmons’ future: a change in how applicant scores were calculated left her just short of achieving that goal.

“How they compiled the score, I was no longer eligible, I was two points below the wire,” she recalled. “You needed a score of 10 and I got an 8. I wasn’t eligible to apply for the RPA position.”

Simmons admits she was disappointed by that turn of events.

“It was pretty devastating. I was obviously not very happy because I’d spent a lot of time working get to get to that point.”

But that dark cloud had the proverbial silver lining.

Simmons’ drive and determination had caught the eye of the 436th Mission Support Group commander, Col. Lisa Pike, who reached out to her group commander, Col. Charles S. Nesemeier, in getting permission to give Simmons pointers on strengthening her commissioning application.

“I sat down with her one afternoon and she examined my package and helped spruce up some pieces that could make my package a little stronger.

“Of course, I wasn’t eligible to apply for an RPA position, but I was eligible to apply for any of the line officer positions,” she said.

While all this was going on, Simmons kept working to further her enlisted career. She was selected for below-the-zone promotion to senior airman and later for promotion to staff sergeant.

And she got a bombshell announcement while receiving her Airman Leadership School diploma.

“At the conclusion of the ceremony, Col. Nesemeier, Col. Pike and a number of other commanders and first sergeants and supervisors all gathered around me and announced to me I was selected for OTS.

“[It was] a pretty wild night,” Simmons admitted. “I cried immediately.”

That was in December 2015; it had taken Simmons five years to reach her goal.

Her family was just as thrilled with the news.

“They were really excited for me,” she said. “They knew it was a big struggle. It took a long time. I started the OTS process in 2010 and hadn’t been selected for all those years until I was selected in 2015.

“It was a long time coming.”

Looking ahead

However, Simmons faced another challenge: she was hit by a car while cycling and necessary shoulder surgery delayed her departure to OTS.

Finally, in January 2017, she passed through the gates at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, graduating a little more than nine weeks later. Her first assignment as an officer was to the 87th Logistics Readiness Squadron at JB M-D-L.

(Continued on page 15)
Czerwinski

(Continued from page 3)

fold, placing a huge demand on housing stock in the area. The base commander at the time was pleading for local Realtors to find homes for his airmen, including African American families.

This dearth of affordable housing eventually led to the construction of Dover’s first dedicated military-only housing area, situated on farmland west of the base. By 1961, almost 1,300 units had been built.

“I went to college because I wanted to learn,” Czerwinski explained. “I was absolutely obsessed with history and knew there were a lot of things I didn’t know about. I loved being a student.”

Czerwinski’s fascination with history and military history in particular found its roots when he accompanied his father to local gun shows as a kid. The service-related uniform patches he could buy for just a few cents spawned his now impressive collection of medals, photos, and equipment.

Planning ahead

Czerwinski began his career with the AMC Museum in 2012 by working as a volunteer, which he did for six years. He jumped at the chance when the job of deputy director opened.

“I wanted to have the ability to contribute to the preservation of our aircraft and of our hangar,” he said. “I’ve learned there’s nothing more pure than the enthusiasm of our volunteers. They come in here and they do all this work for nothing. ‘That tells you everything about this Museum, and it’s something I really wanted to be a part of.’”

As deputy director, Czerwinski is in charge of everything from budgeting to the restoration staff, from oversight of the Museum’s artifact collection to running its computer network.

His main focus right now is completing a strategic plan that will set future priorities, focus the Museum’s resources, strengthen its operations and make sure everyone is working toward having the Museum continue to flourish.

“We’re really looking to grow, so that’s important,” he said of the blueprint.

A major focus is on maintaining the aircraft collection. While many museums can keep their artifacts in controlled conditions, under glass or inside a protective building, the size of the AMC’s aircraft fleet – 35 and still growing – means most are outside, exposed to the elements.

This means they need constant maintenance.

“We have to forecast out what our expenditures are, including the aircraft that need to be painted over the next calendar year,” Czerwinski explained.

“If not, the paint fades and chips. You need protection from birds. They’re open to the elements, and they’re not covered.”

Simmons

(Continued from page 14)

But it seems Simmons was not fated to become a logistics officer, at least not right away.

She’d spent several months learning her new job before going to formal technical training at Sheppard AFB, Texas, but shortly after her return to New Jersey learned of her selection as wing executive officer.

It’s a job with a lot of responsibility as Richardson’s command requires he coordinate with both Army and Navy contingents on the base.

“I have my hands in a lot of pots, working with anything Col. Richardson is working on,” she said.

Just promoted to first lieutenant, Simmons is looking at options for the future.

“I do intend to PCS but we’re still working on a timeline, where to go and the rest of the details on that,” she said. “But I’m not sure of the timeline or where.”

Reflecting back on her career so far, Simmons is proud of the more than five years she spent as an enlisted airman.

“All in all, I’m really glad I enlisted first,” she said. “It taught me a lot about myself and it definitely taught me a lot about the Air Force.

“Generally, officers commissioned without having any prior service struggle to understand the Air Force culture at first. Once they’ve understood that, then they really can hone their leadership style.”

Already being familiar with the Air Force allowed her to concentrate on becoming a good officer, Simmons said.

“You can’t stop that, but you can slow it down,” he said.

When he’s not at work, Czerwinski relaxes by reading military history, playing computer games, building printed paper ship models and star gazing. He’s a member of the Delaware Astronomical Society and owns a 10-inch Newtonian reflector telescope.

Czerwinski truly relishes the opportunity to take his personal and professional interest in military history and combining it with the opportunity to preserve the legacy of the past.

“A military museum is an extension of the service it represents,” he said. “The main reason you have this museum is to inform the public about what airlift and aerial refueling are all about.”

A museum such as the AMCM can ignite a youngster’s own interests and help them toward a career in science, aviation, technology or any other number of forward-looking industries, he said.

It also can be rewarding in other ways.

“There are so many ways, so many facets about how this Museum can affect people,” Czerwinski said. “Veterans come in and can remember their service, and people who know nothing about the military can learn about it.

“Regardless, at the end of the day, we want to see eyes widening as they come in and smiles when they leave.”

Is your name on the bench?
Be a part of our AIRCRAFT BENCH PROGRAM
Learn more at www.amcmuseum.org
The AMC Museum on March 16 hosted the 436th Security Forces Squadron’s annual Chosin Ruck March, commemorating the 1950 Battle of the Chosin Reservoir during the Korean War. This year marked the 20th time the march has been held.

During the war, about 120,000 Chinese communist forces attacked about 20,000 soldiers, Marines and members of United Nations forces near the reservoir in North Korea. Fighting during the 19-day ordeal claimed the lives of 15,000 allied forces and more than 40,000 Chinese. This year’s march saw 37 airmen and civilians taking part either individually or in teams of four. Each individual ran or walked the 6.7-mile course carrying a 30-pound rucksack. Proceeds from registration fees were awarded to the Korean War Veterans Association.

Mick Schroeder, John McGinley, and Walter Koopman salute during the playing of the National Anthem. The men all served during the Korean War and represented the Delaware Korean War Veterans Association.


Alyssa Hermusisima gets ready to head out for the 436th SFS Ruck March with eight-month-old son Corbin along for the ride.

AMCM Display Coordinator Hal Sellars adjusts a newly-installed mannequin for the Museum’s Operation Varsity display. The new exhibit combines the restored WA-CO glider with a new scenic setting and information display to tell about the World War II operation to secure a bridgehead across the Rhine River.

Volunteers Rodney Moore and Bill Reilly look inside the AMCM’s Minuteman III intercontinental missile, moments after removing its nose cone. The display is being refurbished and will look like the missile the Museum’s C-5 dropped out of its cargo deck as a test during the Cold War.

It was a family reunion of sorts as Michael Estes, son of Gen. Howell M. Estes Jr., his wife, Dafri, and their grandson, Michael, visited the Museum. Gen. Estes commanded the Military Air Transport Service, later the Military Airlift Command, from July 1964 until his retirement five years later. The AMCM’s display includes Estes’ uniform and awards, as well as a mannequin in his likeness.

Retired USAF Lt. Col. Robert Aceves takes some detailed photographs of the Museum’s C-5 simulator. Aceves, who as an Air Force pilot flew both the C-5 and the KC-10, now teaches aerospace education at the City University of New York.

Julie Kreamer of Lansdale, Pa., tries out the controls of the Museum’s C-5 simulator. She was accompanied to the AMCM by her cousin, Tony Rhone, who was visiting from Brandon, United Kingdom. “I loved this place,” Julie said. “It’s amazing.”
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15 CHARACTERS AND SPACES ON EACH LINE

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Donate $100 to the AMC Museum Foundation Bench Program and have your name printed on a plaque on the bench of your choice. We’ll also recognize you in the museum’s quarterly newsletter, Hangar Digest, and on our website.

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D DAY
75th ANNIVERSARY

AMMUSEUM MAGNET, C-47 SKYTRAIN
CHILD GI HELMET
CANTEEN AND PISTOL BELT

CLICKER (PARATROOPER CRICKET)
D-DAY ANNIVERSARY T-SHIRT
D-DAY CHALLENGE COIN

$4 $5 $12.50

$9 $20+

$9

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.AMCMUSEUM.ORG