**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 is 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.

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Cover: Two of the Air Force’s war horses of the 1950s and 1960s, the C-133 Cargomaster and the C-124 Globemaster II sit on the ramp outside the AMCM hangar, awaiting the return of Museum visitors. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic caused Delaware Gov. John Carney to order museums and other venues to be closed. The AMCM began a partial reopening on June 18, with visitors allowed to tour the outside static displays, but without access to the hangar itself.

The Hangar Digest is printed and mailed by Delmarva Printing, Salisbury, Md.
AMC Museum announces partial reopening

Air Mobility Command Museum Director John Taylor announced June 15 a partial reopening of the facility, but with a reduced operating schedule.

The Museum closed temporarily March 16 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new schedule was effective Thursday, June 18. Updates on the Museum’s status are posted at amcmuseum.org/news/museum-statement-regarding-partial-reopening-phase-2.

Under the operating plan, only static display area outside the Museum hangar itself will be open to the public, Taylor said. The Museum will be open from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Thursday through Saturday only. Gifts and mementoes still may be purchased, but through the AMCM Foundation’s portable Mobile Museum Store. This red trailer will be manned during operating hours.

Interested shoppers also may visit the AMCM Foundation’s online store by visiting store.amcmuseum.org.

Although all of the Museum’s 25 historic military aircraft will be on display, none will be open for public inspection. Visitors may take self-guided tours, relying on information presented on signs outside each aircraft.

Portable restrooms will be available, Taylor said. Social distancing will be required, and masks will be required when social distancing cannot be maintained.

Additionally, military ceremonies, such as retirement ceremonies, will resume on a limited basis, with attendance limited to 30 individuals, Taylor said. Social distancing and masks will be required, he said.

Ceremonies may be presented via virtual video presentations.

Taylor said anyone experiencing any COVID-related symptoms or anyone having contact with a person with COVID-19 should not visit the Museum.

In other news, because of the pandemic the Museum’s staff has completed virtual tours of 12 aircraft; these are the A-26C, B-17G, CG-4A, C-47, VC-9C, C-130E, KC-135E, C-5A, C-133B, KC-97L, C-124A, and the C-121.

In addition, there are 360-degree panoramic tours of seven aircraft: the C-47A, C-124A, C-54M, C-123K, CG-4A, VC-9 and the B-17G.

All of these video tours may be found at amcmuseum.org/at-the-museum/virtual-tours/ or at the AMCM’s Facebook page.

Gunship crews reschedule 2020 Florida reunion

Retired Lt. Col. Jim Dunn of the AC-119 Gunship Association has rescheduled the group’s 2020 reunion due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The group is made up of military personnel associated with the AC-119 gunships used from 1967 to 1972 in Southeast Asia as well as those who flew the AC-47.

“We’d like to find aircrew, ground crew, support personnel, friends, families, and anyone whose bacon we saved,” Dunn says.

Dunn was one of seven navigators from Dover’s 1st Military Airlift Squadron and 39th Military Airlift Squadron, who transitioned to the AC-119K when the C-133 units shut down. Many then returned to Dover to fly C-5s.

Dunn said the reunion, scheduled for Oct. 28 through Nov. 1, 2020, in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, instead will take place in Fall 2021. The exact date has yet to be determined.

The AC-119 Gunship Association includes members of the 17th, 18th, and 71st Special Operations Squadrons who maintained, flew, and supported the AC-119G Shadow, AC-119K Stinger, and AC-47 Puff the Magic Dragon gunships during the Vietnam War.

For more information about the planned reunion, go to https://www.ac119gunships.com/mail-call/mail-call/ or their Facebook group, AC-119Gunships.

New names added to AMCM’s Commemorative Garden

An additional 15 memorial bricks were added to the walkway at the Air Mobility Command’s Commemorative Garden in conjunction with Memorial Day 2020.

SSgt D. Degraves, June 78 – Sept 99, Desert Storm
Terrence Greene, AMC Cmd Chief, 2020 CIC Speaker
Ericka Kelly, CMSgt (Ret.), 7 Mar 2020
Jolene Klinger, Beloved Sister, 10/30/57
Timothy Maurer, AMCM Volunteer, 1,000-plus hours
Patrick O’Neill, AMCM Volunteer, 1,000-plus hours
Gene and Doris Olzewski, Forever Loved
D.A. Olzewski, Doris Ann, 8/28/43 – 7/19/17
Shirley C. Ozio, 512AW/CCC, 1/10/16 – 1/12/19
Robert Rossey, AMCM Volunteer, 1,000-plus hours
Col. J. Safranek, 436AW/CC, 30 May 18 – 7 Jan 20
Marshall Siler, AMCM Volunteer, 1,000-plus hours
Maj. Chris Sweet, 46 APS, Retired, 20 April 2020
Joel Safranek, Colonel, USAF, 436AW Commander, Guest Speaker, Veterans Day 2019

(Because of formatting requirements, the information presented in this listing may not exactly match the inscriptions on the bricks.)
Operation New Tape
Dover, the Air Force, and the 1960 Congo airlift

July 2020 marks the 60th anniversary of Dover Air Force Base’s participation in an operation that quickly surpassed the achievements of the Berlin Airlift, only 12 years earlier.

Dubbed Operation New Tape, it involved the movement of United Nations troops and supplies into the Republic of the Congo.

The country, which had been a Belgian colony since the 1870s, was granted independence June 30, 1960. But the coming of independence meant widespread turmoil, which was particularly violent against Belgian authorities and military personnel. Patrice Lumumba, premier of the newborn Congo-Lese government, called upon the UN to step in and stabilize the situation.

It was understood the only way to move thousands of soldiers and tons of equipment and food into the Congo was by air, and the only country with that capability was the United States.

Safari to New Tape

There would be no American ground forces involved during New Tape. However the job of moving other nation’s troops to the unsettled country fell to the US Air Force and its Military Air Transport Service (MATS), the forerunner to today’s Air Mobility Command.

The 1607th Air Transport Wing (ATW) at Dover Air Force Base, as well MATS units at other bases, were deeply involved in that airlift, originally named Operation Safari.

The name “New Tape” was coined when MATS airlift planners began marking freshly established air routes into the Congo on briefing room maps with new, brightly-colored cellophane tape.

There were extraordinary difficulties to overcome as the airlift began: in addition to these unfamiliar new routes, communications facilities and information about landing patterns for airports in central Africa were almost non-existent. Navigators learned their maps were unreliable and electronic navigation aids often unavailable, sometimes because they simply were turned off at dusk when their workers went home.

An initial Movement Control Team, sent out to chart routes, discovered landmarks were often several degrees and up to 100 miles in error. Two navigators made corrections by sighting prominent terrain features, locating them by celestial fix and charting them for later use.

One correction fixed a terrain height error that could have seen an aircraft crash into a mountain.

Weather also was a problem: wind storms over the featureless dunes of the Sahara Desert could toss sand as high as 10,000 feet. This would foul engines and making it impossible for navigators to make the celestial sightings needed to stay on track. Aircraft flying over thick jungle south of the desert had to detour around violent and unpredictable thunderstorms.

Chateauroux and points beyond

To manage the huge airlift operation the MATS Air Transport Wing (Provisional) was established, and eventually merged with the 1602nd Air Transport Wing at Chateauroux Air Station, France. Four MATS bases, including Dover, were provided 48 aircraft and 104 crews for the effort, plus a C-124 unit already on routine temporary duty at Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany.

Members of the 15th Air Transportation Squadron (ATS), the 20th ATS, and the 31st ATS, all subordinate units of the 1607th ATW, made up Dover’s contribution to New Tape.

The first orders came down July 8, 1960, putting Dover’s supply and aircraft maintenance personnel on 7-day, 12-hour shifts to prepare for deployment. Much of this included stockpiling ground support equipment and spare parts for the C-124 Globemaster II aircraft, which were to play a major role in the effort.

Launch day was July 16, and within hours of the operational order being received, 14 missions already had been dispatched. More than 500 personnel and their equipment headed for the 1602nd ATW at Chateauroux. Many more were to follow.

After arriving at Chateauroux, MATS control teams from Dover and other bases fanned out from the French base to coordinate the airlift and to make repairs on transiting aircraft. They soon found themselves in exotic locales such as Libya, Nigeria, Morocco, Ghana, Senegal, and even Ireland. The main destination for the Air Force aircraft was to be the Congolese capital of Leopoldville (now Kinshasa), more than 5,800 miles away, which would serve as a base of operations in the country.

A unique undertaking

After several months of flying, the Air Force changed the deployments to 60-day temporary duty assignments involving entire squadrons at one time.

On Oct. 1, 1960, the entire 20th ATS left Dover on a 60-day temporary duty assignment and within two days were at Chateauroux, ready to go to work. During their two months of duty they flew deep into the African continent, delivering into the Congo 1,900 troops from Mali and Nigeria as well as 297 tons of cargo.

Later in the month Dover had deployed an entire squadron, which included 12 aircraft and 20 augmented crews.

During the last week of November, the 20th ATS returned to Dover, and was replaced by airmen and aircraft from the 15th ATS. Sixty days later, they were supplanted by personnel and aircraft from the 31st ATS.

These early months of the airlift were particularly hard on the Dover crews. Some were on duty for more than 24 hours before getting any crew rest, and many were forced to sleep on or near their aircraft. One aircrew reported they had to retreat inside their Globemaster when they spotted a large number of cobras on the runway where they were trying to sleep.

By December 1960, American aircrrews had accumulated more than 21,304 flying hours, almost half of which was credited to Dover airmen.

When the 31st ATS took over airlift duty in February 1961, their first mission saw the movement of about 1,000 tons of food into the famine-wrecked town of Kamina, about 1,800 miles away from Leopoldville. Later, two 31st C-124s flew more than 18,600 nautical miles and 115 flying hours in an operation that took them from Chateauroux to Jordan, Singapore and back to Leopoldville.

Another operation by the 31st, which was completed by the 20th when it returned to Chateauroux, brought in more than one million pounds of cargo and more than 2,000 troops from India.

All of this took place while the three Dover units also were flying shorter missions throughout Africa and Europe.

By the end of its first 12 months, the 1607th had flown more than 16,600 hours during Operation New Tape. By the end of December 1961, Dover crews had logged more than 20,000 flying hours.

Beginning in January 1962, the C-133 Cargomaster aircraft entered the scene, allowing larger cargo loads to be carried. The first mission used five Cargomasters, which carried a
load that would have required 16 C-124s. Up to 30 hours of flying time and several days transit time were cut by using the bigger and faster C-133.

In April 1963, MATS also began flights with the newly-deployed C-130E Hercules, allowing a transitioning to that aircraft and the C-133 for long-distance missions and the use of the slower Globemasters mostly for in-country missions.

MATS crews flew their last mission on Jan. 3, 1964, when they returned a contingent of Indian troops to their homeland.

By the end of the operation, Dover airmen and their MATS compatriots had overcome problems of fatigue, a lack of mess and rest facilities, poor communications, and sleep deprivation to accomplish a difficult mission. They dealt with a lack of reliable weather information, improperly marked and weighed cargo and the need to calm foreign troops, many of whom had never flown before and others who were unfamiliar with the use of Western sanitation systems.

One aircrew even discovered foreign troops cooking over an open fire in the cargo compartment.

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Dover missionary rescued

The struggles inside the Congo led to MATS flying evacuation missions to remove Belgian, American and other foreign nationals from the new country. Between July 15 and Oct. 3, more than 2,500 refugees, including some 300 Americans, flew out aboard MATS C-124s and C-130s.

The story of those evacuees was told in the July 23, 1960, issue of the Wilmington, Delaware, News Journal. It included an interview with 67-year-old Baptist missionary Mary Bonar of Dover, who was one of 122 Americans evacuated back to the United States two days earlier.

Bonar had been teaching in the Congo for 37 years, and spoke two African dialects as well as French and English.

She described gangs of rebellious Congolese soldiers vandalizing, raping and looting as they roamed through the country. Most of the Americans said they were not molested by the rampaging soldiers and that many civilians had risked their own lives in protecting the missionaries.

“I did not see any violence but I talked with people who saw it or who were subject to it,” she said. “It was terrible and we all were afraid.”

Bonar told the newspaper she felt some Congolese imagined they would automatically be given houses, money and cars once they were free of colonial rule. The trouble started when they later realized this would not happen, she said.

Although many of her former students had become part of the Congolese government, the forces of civilization still had a “very thin coating” in the country, Bonar said.

“For the first time in my memory, we were all in fear of our lives,” she said.

Sandstorms and thunderstorms

Writing to his hometown newspaper, the Hartford, Conn., Courant, Maj. James E. Bouchard, chief navigator with the 20th ATS, described a November 1960 mission.

Bouchard said his first thoughts were about the difficulty of flying missions out of Chateauroux into the Congo.

“The most challenging routes flown by the US Air Force’s Military Air Transport outside of polar flights are into ‘darkest Africa,’” Bouchard wrote, using a now-outdated term to describe the continent.

He also was concerned about the human dangers inherent with the 20th’s mission.

“My second thought took me back to the indiscriminate killings and raping of the innocent which occurred so recently in the Congo which would be the ultimate destination in this, our latest, mission,” he wrote.

The 20th left Dover Oct. 2 with 200 officers and airmen, and arrived in France the following day, Bouchard wrote. After about a month of flying throughout Europe and North Africa, 10 crews were sent to Kano, Nigeria, to move Nigerian troops and their equipment to Kindu, Congo.

He described his six-hour trip over the Sahara as “1,200 miles of the most desolate country I have ever seen in 17 years of flying.” Navigators aboard the Globemasters only could use star sightings to stay on course, he added.

On a Nov. 12 nighttime trip from Kano to a refueling stop at Leopoldville, Bouchard described an encounter with one of the climate’s notorious thunderstorms.

“Capable of tearing apart our 185,000 pounds of airplane, the thunderstorms erupted with terrific displays of lightning,” he wrote. “Needless to say, we always circumnavigate this type of weather, using radar, but we were all highly impressed with these equatorial storms.”

Landing at the Leopoldville airport, Bouchard noted the modular terminal was pockmarked with bullet holes. A family of refuges was camped inside near where a Congolese terrorist had been shot earlier while trying to blow up the building.

Bouchard continued on to Kindu. Operations there only could take place during daylight hours, as the air strip’s lighting and radio facilities had been wrecked by roaming mobs.

Although the Globemaster landed without incident, Bouchard learned that a day earlier a group of Congolese had threatened to stone any arriving American aircraft. This threat went away when the UN commander at the site “calmly told them that his troops would shoot the hands off the first person who raised their hands to throw a stone.”

As insurance against any violence, the commander had stationed machine guns, manned and ready, all along the airstrip.

Things were becoming tense as Bouchard continued his trip, writing about the ambush

Continued on Page 6
of 11 Irish soldiers in the Katanga province by natives from the Baluba tribe.

A contemporary story published in the Windsor, Ontario, Star, reported the soldiers had been trapped by about 100 Baluba warriors as they removed a roadblock.

"This has often happened to the boys in the past and they have always managed to talk their way out of tough spots," a sergeant with the Irish military told the reporter. "This time, I guess they didn't make it."

Bouchard reported nine of the soldiers were killed and their bodies mutilated. Two remained missing, Bouchard wrote, adding, "If the missing two Irishmen were dead, it was considered merciful rather than [to] endure the tortures of the Balubas."

Bouchard, however, was unaware that the two missing soldiers had survived the ambush and were rescued.

With his crews almost ready to max-out their 125-hour per month flying limit (which could be waived to 150 hours, he added) and the Globemasters scheduled for maintenance, the 20th's contingent headed back to France.

"So, we left the troubled Congo," he wrote. "Sometimes our crews groan about the long hours they have to work and the even longer hours they spend away from home and family, but come another emergency airlift and the 20th Air Transport Squadron will be there."
Abandoning the Congo  By Col. Mike Sibbald, Editor, MAC Flyer (1966-1967)

In 1963 the United Nations, giving up on what it correctly perceived to be a bad job, decided to remove all of its foreign peacekeepers from the former Belgian Congo. We were invited to participate. Upon receiving the call, our smoothly functioning, highly coordinated, and totally standardized segment of Dover’s aerospace team climbed into our C-124 and leaped into the air and headed for the Heart of Darkness.

Our mission was to establish ourselves in Entebbe, Uganda (this was before Idi Amin came to power), and then airlift Ethiopian troops from Stanleyville (now Kisangani), Congo, back to Addis Ababa. No one knew how many troops there were in Stanleyville, so we planned to fly a full load each day until the city was evacuated.

From Dover, it took five days to get there via Goose Bay, Newfoundland, RAF Mildenhall, England, Wheelus Air Base, Libya, and the Sudanese capital of Khartoum. On crew rest at Wheelus, we stocked up on the essentials: cigarettes, assorted beverages, Oreos, and the old Military Air Transport Command standby, the Beanie-Weenie. Whatever the Dark Continent held for us, we knew we’d have a balanced diet.

In Entebbe, we were billeted in the Lake Victoria Hotel, a class act right on the shores of the famous lake (and source of the Nile for you Jeopardy fans). Up and about at the crack of dawn, we’d rumble over to Stanleyville, fill the airplane with Ethiopians, and head for Addis. If we did everything right, we’d discharge the Ethiopians and make it back to Entebbe in time for afternoon tea on the verandah. Very civilized, we were. Flying under visual flight rules (air traffic control was virtually non-existent), we saw some of the most spectacular scenery our planet affords. A crucial navigational beacon at Lake Awasa, between Stanleyville and Addis, was never on the air. We’d requested its activation coming through Wheelus, and every day as we left Entebbe, we’d ask again. No joy. Finally, we located the village and spotted the antenna and the shack that housed the generator. We enthusiastically buzzed the town and even dropped a note. Fat chance. It finally came on the air: the day we left for home, and we later learned to turn it on, a soldier was dispatched from Addis on a nine-day trek mounted on a donkey.

One day the weather went sour on us, and we had to fly under instrument flight rules. That was then we discovered the minimum en route altitude, not to collide with the scenery, was 16,000 feet. We wondered about the genius of the individual who sent an unpressurized Old Shaky to haul passengers at 16,000 feet. In clear violation of Air Force regulations, we went anyway. The flight engineer pushed up the throttles on those big engines, and up she went. The crew was on oxygen, of course, but all the guys in the back went to sleep for an hour and woke up with a headache. We were running late that day, and while we were working the tower, maneuvering for landing and in the clouds, the clock struck 5 p.m., and the locals turned off the tower and the approach beacon, and they all went home. That’s what they did every day. Why do it differently today? We continued our approach by guess as we radio compass needles spun aimlessly. We broke out at about 1,000 feet and landed.

Several times we got stuck with weather or maintenance problems and spent the night in Stanleyville or Addis. We slept in the airplane at both places but made it downtown once in Addis. We saw Haile Selassie’s palace with lions loose in the garden. After the sun went down, the airfield was infested with bad-looking laughing hyenas, so we’d button up tightly before hitting the sack.

We made a total of four airlift missions, and when we’d removed everyone, including the Indian tower operators, we headed home. At Wheelus, the flaps failed to extend, and we had a three-day delay and a test hop before pressing on. We arrived at RAF Mildenhall, having exceeded our flying time limits. The MATS duty officer offered to get us a waiver so we could press on. We all collapsed in hysterical laughter, and when we recovered headed for London.

Some interesting numbers/facts:
- It took five days to get into position, and we were in-country for 20 days and moved 400 troops.
- It took 11 days to get home due to maintenance and excessive flying hours.
- We wore civvies so no one would know we were Americans (of course, the airplane had the Stars & Stripes on the tail and “U.S. Air Force” in three-foot letters on the nose).
- We were totally out of touch with the MATS tracking system (which wasn’t that hot anyway), and not once were we able to raise any military high-frequency station.
- Every few days, the U.S. embassy would send a minion out to check on us. He’d say, “MATS says you guys are in big trouble and wants to know what you are doing.” We gave him our movement reports and said send them to MATS. Did they ever get there?
- Years later, when I was an Air Force Reserve and TWA pilot, I was summoned to the Dover Airlift Command Post late one night. There, some guys claiming to be from the Defense Intelligence Agency swore me to secrecy and quizzed me about the layout of the Entebbe passenger terminal. Twenty hours later, Israeli commandos stormed the terminal where passengers from a hijacked EL AL plane were being held. I’m still waiting for that Israeli medal.

New Tape

Continued from Page 5

not yet been granted authority to take on passengers, even if they wanted to.

The Belgian authorities at the airport made the aircraft commander an offer he could not refuse. “They wouldn’t give us any fuel unless we carried the refugees out,” Merck said. “Contrary to our orders, we loaded them up.”

The crews flew to Brussels to offload the refugees. While there, Merck went to file a flight plan, but in a hallway encountered a man wearing an unusual white suit.

Worn out from the 36-hour mission and only wanting to head home, Merck said he just pushed past the somewhat distinguished-looking visitor and kept on going.

Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I greets a US Air Force C-130 crew during a mission to move his country’s troops from Addis Ababa to the Congo.

“Someone later asked me if I knew who I’d pushed, and I said I didn’t,” he said. It turned out the visitor was Belgian King Baudouin. “Nothing happened to me,” Merck said. “I guess he just wanted to thank us.”

Merck made more trips to the Congo to bring in UN troops over the next few weeks.

One mission took him to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where Emperor Haile Selassie I invited the airmen to his palace. The man known as the Lion of Judah had trained lions wandering the palace grounds.

The Ethiopian troops they airlifted to the Congo were said to be tough fighters, but also tended to ignore instructions, Merck said. “We had a hard time getting them to stay in their seats,” he said. “It was a lot of trouble making them follow the rules. A lot of them got sick on the airplane.

“We didn’t think very much of them.”

Sources for this story include information from the 1607th Air Transport Wing historian.
Hangar Tales

Flying the C-130 in Desert Shield/Desert Storm

Former US Air Force Capt. Paul R. Maynor has a personal attachment to the Air Mobility Command Museum: he piloted the Museum’s C-130 Hercules while stationed at Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina.

Maynor served his entire career at the base now known as Pope Field, and was deployed with the C-130s to the Middle East with the Military Airlift Command’s 317th Tactical Airlift Wing from Aug. 11, 1990, to March 21, 1991.

It was seven months of preparing American and allied forces for the fight to liberate the country of Kuwait from the military of Iraq’s Saddam Hussein.


I remember the night the hot war started,” Maynor said, thinking back. He and his crew had been at King Fahd Air Base, Saudi Arabia, for only a few days.

Assigned to one of many tents reserved for aircrews, Maynor heard a radio announcement about the first attack on the Iraqi capital.

At first, he thought he was dreaming, but the reality of the situation quickly became apparent.

“A flight engineer from another crew came in, and he was saying, ‘Hey, man, we’re bombing Baghdad!’”

“The whole camp was awake, and we were erupting in joy and laughter when all of a sudden, the air raid sirens started blaring.

“Everyone was scrambling to put on their chemical warfare gear and to get to the bunkers. I got there wearing only my flight suit, gas mask, and shower sandals.”

His crew’s loadmaster, nicknamed Weasel, stood by the door watching the action when the area was lit by the flare of a defending Patriot missile destroying an incoming rocket.

The Iraqis were dropping Scud missiles onto the airbase as retaliation for the attack on Baghdad.

Maynor remembers thinking Weasel had lucked out, being able to witness such a display of firepower.

“I heard the sound, a swoosh, and I saw the flash of the explosion reflect off his face,” he said. “I was wishing I could have actually seen that.”

No one in the bunker was hit, but Maynor recalls an immediate realization that things had gotten real.

“It was like, ‘Hey, this is serious. They’re trying to kill us,’” he said. “But then I thought, ‘Well, OK. That’s what we’ve been trained for.’”

The allure of flight

Like many military aviators, Maynor recalls being fascinated by flight from an early age.

“I went on my first plane trip when I was 8, flying with my mother from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to visit my uncle.

“She had been there before and had told me that flying in a plane was easy, sort of just like sitting at a table unless you get a little turbulence.

“The flight attendant gave me a set of Eastern Airlines wings, and I still have them,” Maynor said.

His family was moved to help others, with his grandfather having earned and then given away three fortunes.

“His family was moved to help others, with his grandfather having earned and then given away three fortunes.

“Hey, this is serious. They’re trying to kill us,’” Maynor said. “But then I thought, ‘Well, OK. That’s what we’ve been trained for.’”

The more he flew the Hercules, the more Maynor grew to respect the aircraft.

“The C-130 is a fun aircraft to fly, its very responsive,” Maynor said. “When you’d throw the gas to it, it would instantly accelerate, even more than a jet fighter.”

Ultimately, all of that flying simply was preparation for what was to come while preparing for the war. It was an effort MAC Commander Gen. H.T. Johnson later would call “the largest sustained airlift over a short period of time.”
The airlift mission to bring all of the necessary equipment to the Middle East has been likened to the Air Force packing up and moving a small Midwestern city.

According to “Anything, Anywhere, Anytime: An Illustrated History of the Military Airlift Command, 1941-1991,” military and Civil Reserve Fleet crew moved more than 244,000 tons of supplies and more than 220,000 service members. There were more than 7,000 missions flown in the first 127 days of Operation Desert Storm.

Under a plan developed by Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of coalition forces against Saddam, Maynor and his C-130 crew began a furious program of flying supplies to near the Iraqi border.

“We had aircraft landing or taking off every six minutes for three solid days,” he said. “There were only three aircraft on the ground at once. We flew in bullets, beans, and bacon, whatever the Marines and the Army needed. They had this stuff positioned hundreds of miles into the desert before it all began.”

The crews used a 40-foot-wide, 3,000-foot-long runway created from one of the few well-paved roads in the region. Officially designated Main Supply Route (MSR) DODGE, but nicknamed TAPLINE Road, it paralleled the Trans-Arabian Pipeline.

Each mission to MSR DODGE meant about five hours in the air.

“We were trained for it,” Maynor said. “We were short field guys, so we were used to it.”

Like others, Maynor’s group ran into their share of glitches, considering the frenetic flying pace.

“Once, our No. 3 engine was acting up, and sure enough, right after takeoff on the second mission of the day, the loadmaster said there was oil pouring out all over. So, we feathered the prop and flew back.

“They didn’t have any additional airplanes, so we got off a little early that day.”

But the snafu also illustrated the C-130’s versatility, Maynor said.

“It really showed off the plane’s capabilities,” he said. “It flies great on three engines, and it definitely was designed for wartime situations.”

These missions highlighted the Hercules’ role as an intra-theater airlifter. According to a 2011 story by the Air Mobility Command’s Public Affairs Office, there were more than 145 C-130s deployed in support of Desert Shield/Desert Storm. They were credited with almost 1,200 tactical airlift missions, moving units to forward bases once they arrived in theater.

“You know what to do’

While flying in a combat zone never can be considered dull, things did settle down after a while, Maynor said. Most sorties came under the heading of “no big deal,” he said.

“In a way, it did get to be routine because the Air Force trains you very, very well,” he said. “Even in hot spots, you know what to do.”

The crew continued to haul necessities for the Army, Air Force, and Marines, and once served as the backup plane for visiting Vice President Dan Quayle.

“We almost became Air Force Two,” Maynor said.

Because they were so busy all the time, news about the war itself was sparse, even though they were part of the conflict.

“We were over there, doing all those missions, we didn’t have much time to think,” he said. “All we had over there was CNN, and people in the States were getting the news the same time we were.

“It was, as they say, a ‘need to know situation.’ They didn’t tell us much, because we didn’t need to know, we just needed to do.”

Once in a while, however, things got a little anxious, Maynor recalled.

“There was never anything truly life-threatening that I was aware of,” he said. “We had things like having to shut down engines and such.”

One time, however, they were flying at night, with the aircraft blacked out. One of the crew spotted another aircraft at about 2 o’clock, which suddenly turned toward them.

“We didn’t know what it was, and we didn’t have any armament,” Maynor said. “The pucker factor was pretty high, but I think it was a C-130 from another unit. They turned their lights on and lit us up.”

“When you’re flying in combat, it’s hairy, and it’s tense, but it’s what you do, you live with it,” he said. “You just rely on your training.”

Maynor started his tour as a first lieutenant but received his promotion orders while deployed. It was a very low-key event – and he didn’t even get to wear his new bars right away.

“We were sanitized – just flight suits, no name tags, no rank, so I couldn’t even put it on,” he said. “We couldn’t have anything identifying us, except our dog tags.”

The personal cost

American forces during the war lost 28 fixed-wing aircraft, including an AC-130 gunship, codenamed Spirit 03. Its loss came as a personal blow for Maynor.

A close friend, 1st. Lt. T.C. Bland, 26, was flying as copilot on that plane, Maynor recalled. He and Bland had graduated together from pilot training at Williams AFB.

Continued on Page 15
No longer able to leap into the sky,  
They await the coming of the crowds.  
The groups of wide-eyed children,  
Who run free-spirited among them  
And look excitedly at the towering shapes above.
Patiently waiting
And look excitedly at the towering shapes above.

The white-haired grandparents who,
Once young and vibrant,
Rode them to distant lands,
Return now, memory-laden,
To tell their stories and perhaps to fly again.
The Foundation welcomes a new board member, Ms. Beverly Williams. A self-described Army brat, Bev is a graduate of the University of Delaware. She took her first job as an inventory specialist at the Philadelphia Naval Supply Depot during the Vietnam War.

After several months, Bev embarked on the career path that would define her as a person and establish her as a primary provider of children’s emergency services in Delaware. She worked as a foster care social worker in Elkton, Maryland, for four years, then moved to Dover. There she became the supervisor of services for the Kent County Drug Clinic, operated by the state of Delaware, followed by a short stint as a juvenile services corrections counselor in Kent County.

In 1975, Bev helped found the Eight-O-One Emergency Shelter in Dover. She remained there for the duration of her career as executive director, during which more than 6,000 children in need of emergency services were served. Bev returned to college and earned her master’s degree in Psychology from Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland. She became a nationally-certified counselor and remains a licensed mental health counselor in Delaware.

In 2002, Bev re-entered government service when she was elected to the Dover city council. She remained on the city council for 14 years, serving six of those years as the council president, and three months as the interim mayor. Her relationship with Dover Air Force Base is extremely important to her. She worked hard to maintain the close base/community relationship that had been initiated by the late Mayor Crawford Carroll. She served many years as an honorary commander.

Bev retired in 2015 and continues to serve on several community boards. She lives in Dover with her sons, Sean and Chris. Her grandson, Cody, recently graduated with honors from Delaware Military Academy and now is a sophomore at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. He is a recipient of a presidential scholarship and is active in the Reserve Officer’s Training Corps. Cody plans a career in supply chain management and hopes to serve in the Marine Corps after graduation.

Bev’s granddaughter, Riley, recently graduated from Northern High School in Owings, Maryland, plans to attend Towson University in Maryland, where she will study to become an elementary school art teacher.

For fun, Bev enjoys playing cards with friends, particularly bridge, canasta, and most of all, poker. She also is an avid Mahjong player. Always busy, she is embarking on a new adventure of launching a business for the sale of customized arts and crafts which she makes at home.

Last month saw the arrival of our newest AMC Museum challenge coin. It celebrates our Korean War veteran aircraft, the C-119B Fairchild Flying Boxcar. Besides the aircraft model and serial number, it also features the date of the bridge segment drop at Chosin Reservoir. Check out the eStore at store.amcmuseum.org to get yours.

Most of you are familiar with the raffle the Foundation holds for donors to our Annual Fundraising Campaign; winners were announced in the last issue. My small part in the campaign is flying the winner of the PT-17 Stearman flight around Delmarva for a while. This year’s winner, Roger Cox, is a relatively recent Friend of the Museum. An old C-141 guy who flew out of Norton Air Force Base, California, he and I had lots to talk about. The greatest thing about giving flights is I have at least as much fun as those I take up – this flight was no exception. And it’s sometimes tough to decide which is more satisfying after a trip – seeing the smile on an aviation novice or the smile on a highly experienced pilot. Life is good!
As long as I’ve been flying, I’ve been taking pictures out of a cockpit. For the last several years, it’s been a wonderful experience to have a terrific subject like our AMC Museum appearing in my lens. Flying, while staying legal (and hence, safe) distances from buildings and people, and working with the always-cooperative folks in the Dover AFB air traffic control tower, has enabled some great opportunities of getting some pretty decent images of the ramp. It gives quite a different perspective of our planes. They’ve been in the *Hangar Digest*, used as postcards and frequently as guides for aircraft on the ramp.

One of my first AMC Museum “rampshots,” taken in 2009, was out of an open-cockpit 1941 Stearman. It was taken by a buddy, Erik Panger, who worked with me back at McGuire AFB, New Jersey. We were doing some approaches at the base, and it happened to be the same day members of the DelRods street car collector’s club were having their annual event at the Museum. Although I love pictures of airplanes, the “rods” certainly added a nice splash of color to the ramp. Besides presenting a nice photo-op, the DelRods always were very generous with their donations to the AMC Museum Foundation after each of those events.

That same year, Theresa and Steve Franks, owners of Dover’s Glasgow Deli, were among the first local businesses to receive one of the AMC Museum aircraft rampshots for display. You may also have seen them in the Camden Lowe’s Home Improvement Warehouse and the former “Where Pigs Fly” restaurant in Dover. Great wall-art for them and great advertising for the Museum! The many different aerial perspectives allow for a multitude of sizes and layout possibilities from which businesses can choose.

Over the years, several of the rampshots have been taken by retired Museum Director, Mike Leister. Sporting his Nikon and telephoto lens, Mike often was able to get terrific shots while I tried to give him in the right spot and a stable platform from which to shoot -- productive flights with a good bit of fun thrown in.

*Fly—and stay—safe!* Don Sloan
In memoriam

Coronavirus takes the life of a WWII hero

By Andrew West

George A. Shenkle Jr. was special to Normandy.

His daughter, Rebecca Shenkle Goff, witnessed it in recent years when the World War II paratrooper returned to France.

And it overwhelmed her when expressions of sympathy poured in after they got word of his death on April 9.

The love inspired her to write, “Normandy is Crying.”

Normandy is crying, they lost a hero
A man his family couldn’t understand
But then how can we
We know not heroes
How can Normandy cry, they hardly knew him.
But then again, maybe they did
And it is we who failed to see

The poem speaks to the lasting gratitude extended to the soldiers for the country’s liberation from the Germans and ties it to the world’s current war on a pandemic.

“When we’re over here, we’re heroes,” Shenkle said once during a trip to France. “When we go back home, we’re just old.”

Shenkle, who was planning another trip to France this year, died of complications of COVID-19 in Southeastern Veterans Center in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

He was 98.

“The war couldn’t get him,” said his daughter, “but the COVID did.”

Goff said she planned to accompany him on the trip to France in June for the fourth time.

Last year, he was on a stage, seated behind President Donald Trump, during a 75th anniversary ceremony.

In recent years, Goff said she began to better understand him.

“He wasn’t always easy,” she said. “With his family, he was not the warm fuzzy he was with the public. But I had the opportunity to witness him in all this glory the last three years.”

Ties to the AMC

In Dover, Shenkle’s connection is to the “Turf and Sport Special” – a restored C-47A Skytrain that is the centerpiece of the Air Mobility Command Museum and the very one that carried him on June 6, 1944.

In the late 1980s, Mike Leister, then director of the museum, contacted him to see if he was the George Shenkle listed on the D-Day manifest for the plane. Reluctantly, he came to Dover to see it and reunited with several men that were on that flight.

“The museum’s volunteers brought this down from Pennsylvania when it was scrap and spent hours restoring it,” Shenkle told this editor in a 2015 interview. “Up to then, I was never interested in anything to do with it, and I was glad to get out of the service.”

Said Leister, “George was every bit the paratrooper even in his later years – a bit brash but full of confidence and ability. He liked people and was justifiably proud of what he and his buddies accomplished.”

In 2015, he was invited back to tour the plane and see additional authentication results, including the installation of jump seats. He assumed the same place he had on D-Day, surrounded by young soldiers.

“You could see his pride,” said Leister. “When he looked at the re-enactors in full battle gear sitting in the seats next to him, he was remembering his buddies, and he had to take a few moments before he could talk.”

Bob Leicht, a retired U.S. Army colonel who committed countless hours to bring the C-47A back to its D-Day look, was thrilled that two of the paratroopers, Shenkle and Joe Morettini, were able to see it.

“What drew me to the Museum was the chance to help restore an aircraft that had dropped members of the 82nd Airborne Division into France on D-Day,” Leicht said. “Since both my son and I are vets of the 82nd, the opportunity to connect to this piece of history was something I had to do.

“I’ve seen a lot of warbirds, and met a lot of World War II vets, both my parents included, but to be present when George and Joseph visited ‘their’ aircraft was priceless. The aircraft couldn’t talk, but George and Joseph sure could.”

Memories of the jump

In his 2015 appearance at the museum, Shenkle recounted the story of landing near St. Mère-Église, France, where his unit was tasked with securing bridges to keep the Germans from the beaches.

“It was OK until we hit the coast, and then the flak starts coming up,” he said. “We hit a cloud bank, and when we came out of that, it was panic. We got scattered all over the peninsula, and most of our regiment was dropped on the incorrect side of the river.”

Shenkle, a communications corporal during the war, was among 18 men who jumped from the C-47A.

“It’s funny how things come back to you,” he said. “I can remember being dropped and coming in and landing backward. I remember it like it happened yesterday.”

His son, Peter, said his father found himself separated from the rest of his unit.

In the darkness, he remained quiet, confused by odd noises around him. When daylight crept in, he realized he was in a cow pasture.

It was three days before Cpl. Shenkle met up with the rest of the unit.

“He took pride in telling the stories as accurately as he could – down to the details of what it felt like, what it was like with the flak in the sky,” said Peter. “He made you feel like you were there.”

Reluctant hero

It wasn’t always that way. Shenkle was not one to talk with his family about the scar on his shoulder. He took a bullet in the Battle of the Bulge.

Goff remembers him being secretive about the Purple Heart.

Shenkle also jumped during Operation Market Garden in Holland in September 1944.

“I remember sitting at the table and asking him about the war, and little bits and pieces he’d share,” said Peter Shenkle. “He did tell me more as years went by.

“Over the last two years at the vets’ center, I had a couple of purposeful conversations. He would fill in gaps. I was very grateful for that.”

Shenkle lived in Lansdale, Pennsylvania,
before his final two years as a resident of the highly-rated Veterans Care Center.

After the war, he worked for Alan Wood Steel, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, starting as a clerk in the mill and retiring as an assistant secretary in the company.

Shenkle’s wife of nearly 60 years, Dolores, died in 2005. He is survived by four children, David, Peter, Rebecca, and Victoria, along with 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by a fifth child, William.

Peter Shenkle said his father enjoyed traveling in the years that followed, and he regularly attended gatherings of the 82nd Airborne.

It was difficult, at first, for the “free spirit” to move into the Veterans Care Center.

The center has been hit especially hard by COVID-19. The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that at least 26 residents had died there.

Goff and her brother both said they were grateful for the care he received. The center, they said, was among the top and revealed he had COVID-19.

“He was on a floor in a building that was impeccable,” said Ms. Goff. “He was blessed the last days of his life to be there.”

The family learned that Shenkle had a fever and pneumonia on Friday, April 3. Test results came back on the following Monday and revealed he had COVID-19.

“Of course I’m 56 years old and making more money now than being an airplane pilot, I have better job security, a better retirement, and I’m sleeping in my own bed at night.

But Maynor’s connection with Desert Storm wasn’t over. He spent two months deployed to Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, as deputy mission commander overseeing the effort to rotate war equipment out of theater. He later spent more than a month doing similar duties at 21st Air Force at McGuire AFB, New Jersey.

Maynor earned both the Air Force Commendation Medal and the Aerial Achievement Medal for his work during and after Desert Storm. Later he flew missions into Sarajevo and, in September 1992, delivered the first echelon of Pakistani troops into Mogadishu, Somalia. There, his crew had to avoid small arms fire from ground troops as they landed and took off.

“We descended over the water, made a short run to the runway, and taxied off,” he said. “We did an engines-running offload. I think we were on the ground for about 18 minutes. Then we took off, back over the water.

“That was an interesting mission.”

However, as the end of his military commitment approached, Maynor decided to leave the Air Force.

“It wasn’t part of my overall plan,” he said. “I got out for family reasons. My wife at the time said, ‘You’ve been in three war zones in five-and-a-half years. It’s time for you to get out.’

Maynor could have gone to fly with the airlines but didn’t take that path. Now working as a certified financial planner, he values his time in the Air Force but feels he made the right decision to leave.

“I’m 56 years old and making more money now than being an airplane pilot, I have better job security, a better retirement, and I’m sleeping in my own bed at night.

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“Now work as a certified financial planner, he values his time in the Air Force but feels he made the right decision to leave.
A PT-17 Stearman may not have quite the panache of a modern airliner or even the C-141 Starlifter he once flew, but Roger Cox doesn’t care.

The brightly-colored, blue-and-yellow aircraft had carried the 73-year-old aloft for a half-hour long flight in the skies over Maryland and Delaware. It was piloted by retired USAF Reserve Col. Don Sloan, president of the Air Mobility Command Museum Foundation’s board of directors.

Cox, who lives in Annapolis, Md., claimed the trip as part of the AMCMF’s 2019-2020 Annual Fundraising campaign. Wall and two other Foundation members were randomly selected for prizes at the end of the campaign.

“We had a blast!” former Air Force pilot exclaimed after completing a June 12 flight in the biplane.

The other winners were Edwin T. Wall of Somis, California, who was awarded an aviation art print, and Eileen Owsiany of Narvon, Pennsylvania, who won a ride in a glider piloted by Foundation board member retired Lt. Gen. Bob Dierker.

Wanting to serve
Cox caught the flying bug as the son of an Air Force officer who served several tours in the Washington, D.C., area, as well as holding a faculty position at the Air Force Academy.

“I grew up in the service, and the first thing I wanted to do was serve my country,” he said. Despite a job in the military not being a common career choice given the anti-war sentiment of the times, Cox joined the Air Force after graduating college in 1968.

“I wanted to serve, partly because it was wartime and partly because I thought it was the best way to learn to fly,” he said. “I might add that not many of my college classmates felt the way I did.”

Someone choosing to serve in the military during an unpopular war has to have a strong motivation to do so, he said.

“If no one is willing, then how do we survive as a country?” he said.

Cox spent his active duty and Air Force Reserve tour all at Norton Air Force Base, California, flying the Starlifter to sites across the planet. In all of that travel, however, he managed only one short stopover at Dover Air Force Base.

After his discharge, Cox flew with several civilian airlines before retiring at the age of 60. He moved to Annapolis after taking a job with the National Transportation Safety Board, where he investigated airline accidents. He retired in 2016.

Looking forward
Although he’s flown many types of general aviation aircraft, Cox had never been behind the control stick of a PT-17.

“It was really special, flying in a World War II trainer,” he said. “My dad had flown one as an aviation cadet in 1942, and we used to talk about it. But I never had the opportunity before.

“I was very much looking forward to being able to do this.”

Following takeoff from the Massey, Maryland, Aerodrome, Sloan leveled off at about 500 feet, then turned the aircraft over to Cox.

“We flew down the Sassafras River, heading west until we got to the Chesapeake Bay,” he recalled. “I turned around and, we headed the other direction. I did some turns and climbs.

Sloan took back the controls as they returned to Massey.

“We had a beautiful landing on that grass strip,” Cox said.

Cox became a Foundation member in 2016, soon after moving to the East Coast. He has nothing but praise for the Foundation and the Museum’s staff of volunteers.

“I really enjoy going to the Museum,” he said. “I get a sense of tremendous pride from the people who work there and in everything they do putting it together. I want to congratulate all those volunteers for the time and effort they put in to make it a great museum.”

Sloan said that, as in the past, the Foundation will continue to offer similar prizes during the upcoming Annual Fundraising Campaign, which runs from September 2020 through March 2021.

Anyone who donates at least $50 to the effort automatically is entered into the prize contest. Winners are selected at random after the fundraiser ends.
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Continued on Page 6
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