UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

FALCON FOOTNOTE

Volume 37, October, 2026 Academic Year 2026-2027

Commander's Call: Colonel Meg Martin



Hello DFHers! This edition of the *Falcon Footnote* is unlike any we have created in the more than 10 years I have been the Permanent Professor. If there is a theme for our present moment, it is change. The most immediate and direct shift has come in our department's alignment in the academic enterprise.

As I mentioned in the last *Footnote*, Brigadier General Valpiani hit the ground running this last spring, and that pace continued over the last few months as he implemented the organizational vision of senior Department of the Air Force leaders. Specifically, he now serves as the Provost and Commander of the Academic Wing while still carrying his statutory role as Dean of the Faculty, meaning that he oversees four integrated Schools with Group-level Commanders leading a collection of departments. I have taken the inaugural command of the School of Integrated Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, a structure that includes the Department of History as well as 9 other departments, making us rightly the largest of these new organizations. I am excited for this new opportunity, which allows me to connect with and lead the phenomenal people across these departments while still serving as the Permanent Professor of History. Fortunately, that also means I can remain involved with many of the great events happening in and around the department, including the wonderful Harmon Lecture from Dr Rob MacDonald of the US Military Academy. Rob's discussion of George Washington and the invention of a selfless understanding of civil-military relations struck a chord with the cadet audience, who attended the post-lecture reception in large numbers. That crowd included quite a few surrounding our own department alumnus, Dick Rauschkolb, who regaled them with his great stories of the operational Air Force! We cannot succeed in our mission To Teach History for the Profession of Arms without your support, including for some of our upcoming events such as the Historical Weapons Shoot and a growing number of research opportunities for our cadets.

While I am sad to leave the comfortable confines of the department to work in my new role, know that I leave it in the skilled and experienced hands of Dr Doug Leonard, who many of you may remember from his last several decades of connection to the department as cadet, officer, and civilian professor. No matter the organizational names we might gain or the roles we might assume, one thing is always true: Once a DFHer, Always a DFHer!

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Alumni Association
Larry Weaver

Welcome to the Fall *Footnote*! Fall is a time of transition, and this edition has some transitions in it. First, as many of you may know, Meg Martin is now one of the three deans in the new faculty structure, and Doug Leonard is now the head of the department. This is not the last we will hear from Meg, and we wish her well. We welcome Doug, and a short bio is included in this *Footnote* (see below).

We provided short bios of the latest additions to the faculty teaching in their first semester in the July *Footnote* that you can read on our website. We also have a great article by Dawn Hewitt discussing the GLCM effort that exposes many of the challenges with that operation and for her as well. Don Bishop gives us a glimpse behind the curtain of the Congress of the International Commission of Military History held this year in Brazil.

We offer Phil Meilinger our hardiest congratulations on receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Air Force Association, and to just put a stamp on that award you can read the short review of his latest book, *Building an Air Force* and then go buy it!

We also have several items for your calendars. We have posted the next reunion in previous *Footnotes* to remind you of the dates (12-14 October 2027). We are now within a year. This means that **YOU** need to mark those days off and plan on joining us. Our two previous reunions have been smashing successes, and we have begun planning.

The second item for your calendars is the annual giving date (1 December 2026). See page 11 for the link. Last year we raised the money to support the cadet weapons shoot. We want to do that again. Unfortunately, government funds no longer support some activities. This project goes directly to enriching cadet history majors' sense of our discipline. There is no better way to give to posterity.

Lastly, because we believe that you deserve a good laugh, we have included pictures of the chapel in a box…with a picture of the chapel displayed on the east face. This should prompt memories of similar interesting decisions in your active duty lives. With all of that, let me close by saying…plan for the reunion, give to the weapons shoot, and we will see you in the Holiday edition.

Meet DFH's New Department Head



Dr Douglas Leonard is the new Head of the Department of History. When he graduated from USAFA in 1999, he won the General Lauris Norstad Award as the Outstanding Cadet in Area Studies. On active duty, he was a career intelligence officer, commanding at the unit and squadron level. From 2006 to 2009 Captain Leonard taught in DFH, and he retired as a lieutenant colonel. He returned to the Academy as an Assistant Professor in 2017. His degrees in history are from USAFA, Florida State University, and Duke University.

His academic work focuses on African intellectual history, particularly in the 20th century. His most recent book, *Intellectual Decolonization in West Africa: Time and the Escape from Empire* (Bloomsbury, 2026) follows a group of post-colonial West African intellectuals as they employed a non-linear understanding of time, allowing them to understand and describe past, present, and future simultaneously through creative approaches to social construction and political form that relied on a careful analysis and application of narrative myths, tales, stories, poems, and parables. Dr Leonard has published more broadly on the origin, movement, and exchange of ideas between and among Africans and Europeans regarding social structure and the appropriate form of political rule both during and after the colonial period, including his first book, *Anthropology, Colonial Policy and the Decline of French Empire in Africa* (Bloomsbury, 2020), and research articles in historical, regional, and anthropological journals. He has also published extensively on university-level teaching. His next book-length project, tentatively entitled, *The Sahara: An Imaginative History*, traces the position of the world's largest dry desert as both source and site of human dreams for a better world.

For a complete bio go here.

Lick'em with GLCM

by Dawn M. Hewitt (DFH 1989-1993)



The Soviets built up both conventional and nuclear weapons in Europe through the 1970s. US tactical nuclear weapons on the continent were increasingly obsolete thus nullifying any attempt by NATO to use the strategy of Flexible Response. The Carter administration developed the Dual-Track Strategy which proposed the US deploy 108 Army Pershing II missiles and 464 USAF Ground Launch Cruise Missiles (GLCM pronounced glick 'em) to Europe. In conjunction with this deployment, NATO would vigorously pursue a nuclear disarmament program with the Soviet Union.

The first two bases to open were RAF Greenham Common, UK and Comiso AB, Italy. I was selected to attend the very first class of second lieutenants at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona. I was the second woman to enter GLCM and the first female lieutenant (the first woman came from Titan and left GLCM in January 1985). After attending a three month school, I was sent to Greenham Common along with six other lieutenants. We had to finish our in-theater training and were certified for alert duty 19 December 1984.

Greenham had some unique issues. The first sight upon arriving at the base was the refuse along the outer fence courtesy of the Peace Women. Although it was Europe's leaders that talked President Carter into deploying GLCM (carried out by President Reagan), there were citizens in the UK who vehemently opposed the deployment of "cruise" despite the increasing Soviet threat. The Peace Women established several peace camps about the base that were a perennial source of squalor and rats. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) occasionally joined the women and the two groups tried to follow convoys to Salisbury Plain and disrupt the training exercises.

I started pulling alerts in the GLCM Alert and Maintenance Area (GAMA) at Greenham on 27 December, but I had been involved in field training since November with my Commander, Capt Vic Santiago. Although GLCM was part of NATO's Victor Alert system (with nuclear loaded aircraft able to take off in fifteen minutes and GLCMs to launch in 20-30 minutes), GLCM's primary mission was to disperse to the field in the event of a war. Greenham had six flights, the most of any GLCM base in Europe.

It was an honor to be selected as one of four launch officers to train with C Flight, the first flight that would certify for the field. In my two and a half years at Greenham, I logged more field time than any other Launch Control Officer (LCO). A GLCM saying was "A Navy weapon, in an Army environment, operated by the Air Force." And it was very much like being in the Army. Each flight consisted of two Launch Control Centers (LCCs), four Transporter Erector Launchers (TELs) with 16 missiles, and numerous support vehicles. Aside from the LCOs (later increased to six), there were: a Flight Commander, an Assistant Flight Commander, 19 Maintenance personnel, 44 security personnel (22 of which were RAF Regiment), and a paramedic. There were also one to three comm relay teams with two airmen on each team (deployed separately). We wore BDUs before they were *de rigeur* in the Air Force. And we were kitted for the field with load-bearing equipment (LBE), an M-16, and a 40-60 lb backpack.

I had some issues with the equipment. I needed an extra small gas mask. Supply had to order one from Ramstein AB which they failed to do despite numerous prompts. When I was assigned to RAF Molesworth and finally received a gasmask that fit, I learned that RAF Alconbury had extra small gas masks the moment I arrived in England. Although I could work with the issued long underwear shirt, the pants were impossible, and I quickly ordered and paid for thigh highs and long underwear. The rainsuit didn't fit (and this was England), but I made do with the poncho which reached my ankles. Unfortunately, they never got me winter boots that fit, and I had to be extra vigilant in regard to frostbite during the winter dispersals.

All of Greenham's field training was conducted on Salisbury Plain. To avoid traffic and the Peace Women we would depart at o-dark-thirty always varying our gate and route and typically arrived at the training site about two hours before dawn. En route the LCOs would have to ride in the LCCs to monitor the radios. There were no windows, and the vehicles traveled through frequent roundabouts which was

nauseating. Since the vehicle chair was impossible to move back and forth on its tracks I frequently omitted wearing my seatbelt. Once the vehicles left the roads for the dirt and grass of the British training grounds, it got truly rough. I learned a lesson when I bounced so high my head hit the ceiling, which was fortunately padded.

Upon reaching a suitable treed site we would emplace. That meant establishing connectivity with the base and higher headquarters, between all the relevant vehicles, and all foxholes. This was followed by camoflauging every item. On an early dispersal our opposite crew number dug the shared foxhole. That night when an alarm went off and Vic and I scrambled from our pup tents and jumped in, I fell a considerable distance. Although the other two officers were short, they were enthused about making the foxhole deep enough for the 6' Vic. Unfortunately, at 5'2" I couldn't see over the top, much less bring my weapon to bear.



C Flight preparing for "launch" in the field

The LCCs, the HQ truck, and the medic were located at the center of the camp. Maintenance surrounded us. The outer perimeter was manned by the RAF Regiment and Security Police. I was the only female LCO in 1985. There was one woman in maintenance, but women were not allowed in GLCM SPs until late 1986 (the RAF Regiment never allowed it).

In March 1985, after numerous field exercises, C Flight underwent the very first GLCM Field NATO TAC EVAL. There were roughly 76-80 members of C Flight and 150 NATO evaluators. Instead of one instructor in the LCC for half of our daily shifts there were two to four officers almost continually observing our operations. I had serious claustrophobia. The lack of privacy caused far more stress than the lack of sleep.

One day, Vic and I found ourselves alone in the LCC for an hour. We quickly shampooed our hair, washed up, changed to fresh clothing, Vic shaved, and we prepared some hot meals. Then I received a phone call from the maintenance team who guarded the door. There were two Belgian officers outside who wanted to check our comm documents. We cleared them in and they introduced themselves. After a short chat, I was asked to produce a particular NATO COMSEC document. I went through the drawer and produced it. They each took a brief glance then one said, "You really do wear green nail polish."

I had a difficult time with the camo sticks. We had to wear camo whenever we were outside the vehicle. My oily skin whisked the paint away in less than an hour, and I would be yelled at for not wearing camo. To show I was in the spirit of things, at every dispersal I would paint my fingernails green. I did better with the face paint once I switched to British tubes (at my own expense).

After some more chit-chat and a cup of tea, they departed. I commented to Vic, "That was a strange visit. They just wanted to see that one comm document?"

Vic shook his head, "Dawn, they didn't come to check that comm document, they came to check you out!"

C Flight passed the NATO TAC EVAL and the US Nuclear Surety Inspection with flying colors. Thus I became the first female dispersal certified in GLCM.

Field exercises and Force Generation exercises continued through 1985. On the return from one field exercise, I was riding shotgun in a TEL. The Peace Women were crazy enough to leap in front of the trucks. Our standing orders were to never stop. The drivers had to be experts to swerve a transport going 45-55 mph without killing someone. Three women leaped in front of our TEL and threw paint filled balloons at the windshield. The driver swerved around them without stopping, but I had to assist in breaking out the glass so he could see. England's winter wind was blowing in as I scrambled into my jacket and jammed my cap on. I feared there would be another incident and I would never get the paint out of my hair! We returned to base thoroughly frozen but avoided any further paint bombs. In late November I was selected, with Capt Ray Robinson, for a TDY to Dugway Proving Ground in Utah to launch two GLCMs that had been downloaded from Greenham TELs. The first GLCM crashed halfway through its course and the second one had to be



At the LCC Deputy Station

blown up as the F-15s failed to be on target on time (missiles had to be followed the entire flight by aircraft). Nonetheless, it was one of the most exciting days in my GLCM career.

Instead of moving to either the Training or Evaluation shops, I was continuously crewed with new commanders to help them learn the ropes and ensure they didn't crit (make a critical error--not great for one's career in nuclear weapons). Early in 1986 I was assigned as deputy to one of the weakest commanders and

failed to receive credit for carrying him. Meanwhile, I had constant stomach aches when I pulled alert with him as I had to be hyper vigilant to catch his mistakes. That August we had an evaluation that was unexpectedly observed by USAFE Evaluators. USAFE demanded to know why a deputy who ran the evaluation from start to finish was sitting in the squadron instead of in a shop. By September my new DOV commander (officer who qualified, tested, and graded the launch crews) and I went to the field for a four-flight NATO TAC EVAL; Fuzzy Conejo and I were the only



Preparing to camoflage the LCO foxhole

LCOs to be named an "Outstanding Performer." Meanwhile, the lieutenant DOV was crewed with Dave and subsequently the two of them crit a ride, seriously hurting the commander's career although the deputy replaced me when I departed Greenham.

However, before I could depart I had to duke it out with MPC. With the departure of Titan, Minuteman was pressured into accepting female LCOs. The powers that be forbade mixed crews in Minuteman. The flaw was the lack of qualified women to be commanders; the Titan women had all moved on. MPC, desperate for experienced female commanders, told me I would be sent to Minuteman. I had spent two and a half years at Greenham. I never had a problem with a lieutenant or a Titan officer because I was a woman. The Minuteman officers were a different kettle of fish. From Belgium two officers started rumors that a flight commander had impregnated me at school. The squadron deputy threatened to boot me from the AF my first month on base if I didn't pull my weight. The senior commander from DOT (training) refused to crew with me when it was pointed out he lacked full theater flight field experience. He informed me that if the LCC caught fire I wouldn't be able to pull him out. He conviently ignored that the remaining field experienced deputy was 5'5" and wouldn't be able to pull his 6'4" frame from the LCC either. I was constantly told how men and women could not work together without sleeping together (never mind I hadn't slept with anyone in the wing). Two officers who were late arrivals to the system constantly sniped at me and even went as far as to steal my pens from my desk and lower my chair each evening. I told MPC if they attempted to send me to Minuteman I would resign my commission. Being a groundbreaker in one weapon system was enough for a lifetime.

In April 1987 I arrived at RAF Molesworth to a completely different world. My deputy knocked on my VOQ door the day of my arrival to introduce himself. He had PCSed from Belgium. Henceforth, we worked together like an oiled machine. By the end of April there were three female launch officers. There was even a female Lt Colonel at the SP squadron and another assigned to DOX (plans). I can't remember any LCO being from Minuteman although three were flight commanders. It was a whole new environment.

That didn't mean less work. RAF Molesworth was not yet online. The GAMA was still under construction and all crews were prepping for future certification. Neither was field training forgotten although many combat skills were practiced on base rather than at the British training grounds. This was because President Ronald Reagan and Premier Mikhail Gorbachev were preparing an INF Treaty for signature and Molesworth had been told to keep a low profile. The Soviet Union was finally ready for arms reduction in regards to tactical nukes.

During 1987 I only did one field exercise but scored 100 twice on exams for two Nuclear Security Inspections as the wing received 18 of its 64 nuclear missiles and reached Initial Operational Capability ahead of schedule and in time for President Reagan's talks at Reykjavik. On 8 December 1987 the INF Treaty was signed spelling the end of GLCM

The wing prepared for its first inspection on 20 July 1988 when ten Soviet inspectors arrived. Everyone found the idea of meeting actual Russians quite exciting. I was assigned to oversee a team in one of the operational bays. The subject of discussion was the obvious KGB officer who wore 1970s denim and the shopping spree the Soviets had enjoyed at the BX.

I left Molesworth in August, released early to start my Academy career as the 303 TMW was deactivated on 31 January 1989.



Launching at Dugway Proving Ground, UT

After her assignment to DFH, Dawn went on to several amazing assignments including in Europe as a Balkan Political Analyst during the war in the former Yugoslavia. She was an exchange officer to Kingston, ON where she not only taught at Queen's University and the Royal Military College of Canada but wrote "From Ottawa to Sarajevo." She was a Crisis Operations Officer at the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Africa, Europe) and wrote a journal article on Angola "Peacekeeping and the Lusaka Protocol." She was a deputy group commander at 12AF and a UN Military Observer (UNMO) in Kosovo where she was chief of the multinational team in Sector North. She concluded her career as Chief of Sub-Saharan Africa at SAF/IA where she oversaw 48 African countries for the Deputy Secretary of the Air Force/International Affairs. She retired from the AF in 2006 and now lives with her husband, Sean, in NH.

At the 51st Congress of the International Commission of Military History

by Donald M. Bishop (DFH 1975-79, 2022)



Eight members of the US Commission on Military History attended the annual Congress of the International Commission of Military History, held in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil in late August.

For 2026, the theme of the conference was “Borders: Integration and Harmony versus Separation and Conflict.” This nontraditional theme included “nation-state formation and territorial delimitations,” “borders as physical, cultural, and economic spaces,” “cooperation mechanisms,” peacekeeping, and other related topics – with the counsel that papers “must be free from ideological biases and particularized partisan positions.”

A heady mix of presentations was the result. Papers and sessions addressed the Korean DMZ; carving out a Brazil surrounded by Spanish, British, French, and Dutch territories; the borderlands between Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire; Woodrow Wilson and Bulgaria; and the difficulties of determining the new nations and borders when Austria-Hungary collapsed. I learned details of the borders between Spain and Gibraltar; China, Taiwan, and Xinjiang; Cameroun and Nigeria; Navarre; Ecuador and Peru; China and Myanmar; British India’s northwest frontier, South Africa, and Sakhalin. A presentation on borders in Irish history made me realize how little I knew about the centuries before, say, 1916 and "The Troubles."

The counsel on “particularized partisan positions” was appropriate. During sessions on the aftermath of the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas – it assigned Brazil (at the time yet undiscovered) to Portugal – I sensed that both Spanish and Portuguese scholars considered their countries had somehow been disadvantaged -- given the short stick, so to speak.

Foz do Iguaçu -- where Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay meet – was an ideal location for the gathering.



ICMH President
Harold E. Raugh, Jr.
Friend of DFH

ICMH president (and Friend of DFH) Harold E. Raugh, Jr. (an Army FAO who taught history at West Point and became an Army command historian in a follow-on career) opened the conference with a brilliant paper on “layered borders.” “When borders are accepted, legally defined, and supported by cooperative institutions, they often evolve from military frontiers into zones of stability, collective security, and economic integration.”

Two members of the US Commission on Military History made presentations to 150 leading military historians from 30 countries. Retired Army colonel, attorney, and historian Fred Borch spoke on "Nation-State Formation: The Role of the Army in the Origins of the American Republic, 1775-1983." I spoke on "Boundary Conflicts between Canada and the United States: The Great Warpath, the Great Lakes, and the Peace Treaties."



Fred Borch



Yours truly

Sessions convened in the headquarters of the 9th Battalion of Military Firefighters in Foz. August 25 is Soldiers Day in Brazil, and we were guests at the parade of the 34th Mechanized Infantry Battalion. Afterwards we rode in the battalion's VBTP-MR Guarani armored personnel carriers (co-developed by Italy's Iveco Defense Vehicles and the Brazilian Ministry of Defense and manufactured in Brazil). On another day we all trekked along the spectacular falls of the Parana River. Alas, none of us can now look at Niagara Falls the same way as before. Electricity is generated by the hydroelectric dam, and the Itaipu Bridge between Brazil and Paraguay has boosted the economies of both countries

There's a gratifying feature of ICMH congresses. They always include a separate spouse schedule. While scholars listened to droning voices indoors, spouses visited the Catholic cathedral, the Buddhist temple, and a local orphanage. The day following the last session, we visited the town's old airport museum (with its homage to Alberto Santos-Dumont), followed by observing the farming, harvesting, and processing of tilapia at an integrated fish farm. Finally we enjoyed yet another Brazilian *churrasco.*

The success of this world-class ICMH Congress was largely due to the hard work, planning, coordination, and execution skills of the dynamic and flexible General Marcio Tadeu Bergo, the President of the Brazilian Commission, and his dedicated team.



General Bergo

Retired DFHers might consider becoming members of the US Commission and attending the International Commission's congresses. The US Commission's president is Hans Pawlisch, another Friend of DFH. The 2026 Congress will be held in Sofia, Bulgaria, and 2027's is slated for Morocco.



Hans Pawlisch
USCMH President
Friend of DFH

I went for a haircut after my return to Virginia. My regular barber came to the US from Vietnam; in the re-education camps he had been denied any schooling as the son of an ARVN officer. In the US, he made up for lost time and earned an AA from Northern Virginia Community College. When I mentioned I had attended a conference in Brazil, he asked me, without any prompting, "What do you think about how the world was divided by the Pope?" He remembered the Treaty of Tordesillas. Fresh from the Congress, I gave him the full lowdown.



AFA Presents Phillip Meilinger With Lifetime Achievement Award

The Air & Space Forces Association (AFA) presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to retired Col Phillip Meilinger, the former dean of the School of Advanced Airpower Studies, at the 2026 Air, Space & Cyber Conference on September 14. The prestigious award recognizes a lifetime of work in the advancement of aerospace.

Meilinger has made enduring contributions to the Department of the Air Force as an Airman, leader, educator, and intellectual. During 30 years of service as a command pilot, staff officer, and educator, he shaped how the Air Force understands airpower employment, operational concepts, and joint warfighting. As the first Dean of the School of Advanced Airpower Studies, he established a premier institution for developing strategic thinkers and advanced the study of operational art, airpower theory, and leadership.

A prolific author and historian, Meilinger's books, including *10 Propositions Regarding Air Power* and *Bomber: The Formation and Early Years of Strategic Air Command*, have shaped generations of Airmen by advancing foundational concepts of airpower, air superiority, targeting, and strategic effects. His lifelong commitment to education, mentorship, and intellectual development has strengthened the Air Force and its future leaders.



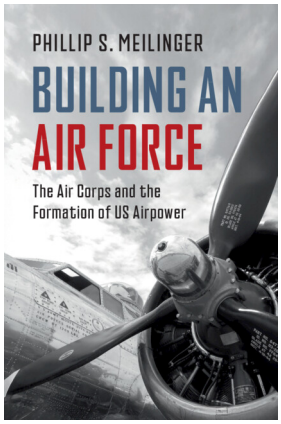
Retired Col Phillip Meilinger (center) receives AFA's Lifetime Achievement Award from AFA Chair Kathleen Ferguson (left) and AFA President & CEO retired Lt Gen Burt Field (right) at the 2026 Air, Space & Cyber Conference in National Harbor, Md., on September 14. Photo by Craig Hudson, for Air & Space Forces Association.

Reprint courtesy of AFA

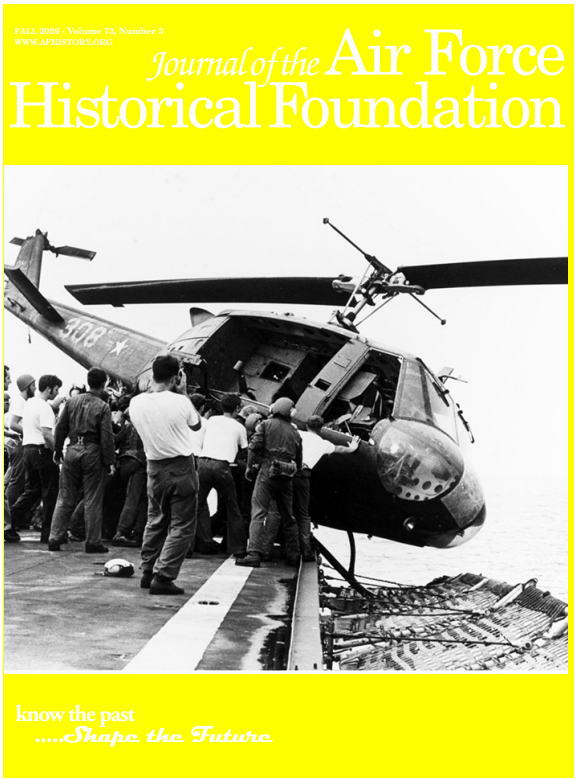
Building an Air Force: The Air Corps and the Formation of US Airpower

by Phillip S Meilinger (Class of '70, DFH 1978-1979, 1986-1989)

We often seek simplistic answers to the question "Why?" Why the US became the world's dominant air power falls victim to that same urge. Phil Meilinger seeks to correct that mistake by weaving a story that explains the rise in terms of a series of contributing factors. Each factor by itself is important, but when combined they provide the environment for innovation, expansion, trial, error, reward, and explosive development. We often focus on the Air Corps Tactical School as the incubator for airpower thought, and Phil covers that point. However, the magic he provides comes from the contributions of commercial aviation, air racing, engine development, structural design, and a contracting system that encouraged innovation and research. Unlike many other authors who select one of these factors and attribute cause and effect, Phil builds the case that it is the combination of all of these factors that prepares the US to exploit the onset of war to readily expand airpower on every front. Most importantly, it led American military and civilian airpower advocates to make the US an air power much like we had become a sea power. This book is a unique contribution to understanding how we prepared, met and exploited the challenge of life in the third dimension. Reading it gives you an incredible understanding of why we have been and still are the world's leading air power. Mahan wrote twenty books on every dimension of sea power on his way to becoming the dominant voice in understanding American sea power. This book places Phil Meilinger within striking distance of becoming a similar icon of American airpower. [LAW]



To order a copy, go **here**



CHECK THIS OUT!

An article by retired Col **Karen Wilhelm** of the Class of 1980 (a military history major) is in the Fall 2026 issue of the *Journal of the Air Force Historical Foundation.* In "80s Ladies at the Air Force Academy: the Doors Open," she drew on archival research, oral histories, and her own experiences as a member of the class.

In a recent *Checkpoints* article on the first class that included women, "A New Day: First female USAFA cadets begin 47-month journey," Wilhelm recalled that "segregating the female cadets encouraged rumors. Several male cadets believed that the women's separate housing area included not only showers, but also bathtubs and feather beds." Many male cadets openly expressed their resentment over the admission of women, and she recalled that "It never occurred to me, for example, that there would be people who thought I shouldn't be there." She is now working on a longer treatment of the integration of women at USAFA.

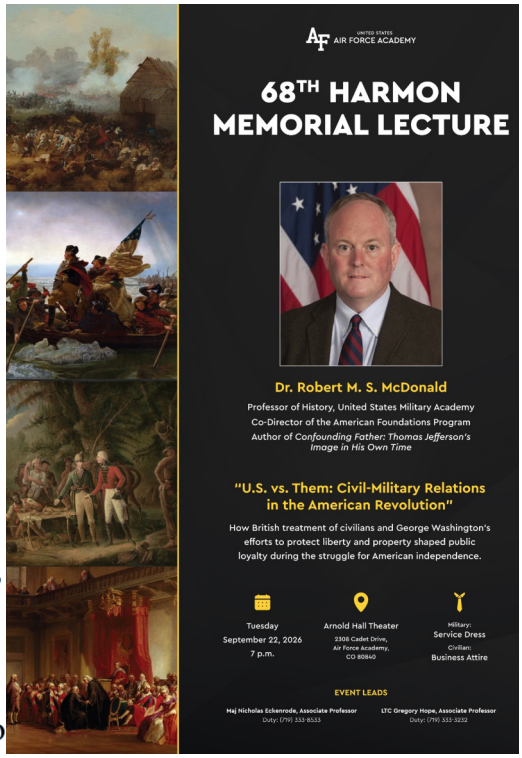
Karen worked for Col Phil Caine in CW, teaching in the military studies division from 1988 to 1992.

The 68th Harmon Memorial Lecture

On 22 September 2026, the Department of History hosted Dr Robert M. S. McDonald, Professor of History at the US Military Academy, for the 68th annual Harmon Memorial Lecture at the Arnold Hall Theater. The Academy's first superintendent, Lt Gen Hubert R. Harmon, believed military history should play a central role in officer education, and with the nation celebrating 250 years of independence, this year's lecture focused on the American Revolution.

Professor McDonald, also co-director of the American Foundations West Point, presented "U.S. vs. Them: Civil-Military Relations in the American Revolution." He examined the Revolution as a struggle for civilian support, as Americans weighed loyalty to the British Crown against the cause of independence. Although British forces won more battles than they lost, their naval attacks on coastal towns and harsh treatment of civilians increasingly alienated Americans. By contrast, Gen George Washington cultivated public trust by respecting civilians' rights to liberty and property. These differing approaches illustrated how an army's treatment of civilians shapes public loyalty and influences the course of a war, regardless of battlefield success.

The lecture drew approximately 1,200 attendees, primarily cadets in USAFA's core history courses, along with faculty, alumni, and distinguished visitors. McDonald's participation also reflected USAFA's and West Point's shared commitment to using military history to prepare future officers for the demands of military leadership.



Andrews Award + 33: History major, now SACEUR, Outlines NATO's Theory of Victory



Cadet Alexus G. Grynkewich graduated from USAFA in 1993, having received the Andrews Award for the Outstanding History Major. He then received a master's degree in history under AFIT auspices from the University of Georgia.

Since pilot training, he has flown the F-16, F-22, B-1, B-2, B-52, C-17. E-9. F-15, HH-60, MC-12, MQ-1, MQ-9, QF-4, and TI-2. He commanded a squadron, a wing, an air expeditionary task force, and the Ninth Air Force. He was the J-3 on the Joint Staff. And he is now Supreme Allied Command Europe (SACEUR) and Commander of US European Command (EUCOM).

On 1 October 2026 he addressed the Warsaw Security Forum. He reiterated that "NATO is a defensive alliance, constructed to preserve peace. And as such, we have no plans, no intentions, and no ambitions beyond the protection of our people and the defense of our territory."

"No one should mistake our defensive nature for weakness or lack of resolve," he continued. "If someone is foolish enough to attack us, we will fight. We will stop the attack and deny them the ability to achieve their objectives, whatever those may be. We will, in short, ensure any attack, against any Ally, proves utterly futile."

And he spoke of "Our Theory of Victory." "We will block the initial attack. If the attack persists, we will blunt it and prevent enemy advance. And if required, we will break the enemy's forces and the operational warfighting system that is arrayed against us."

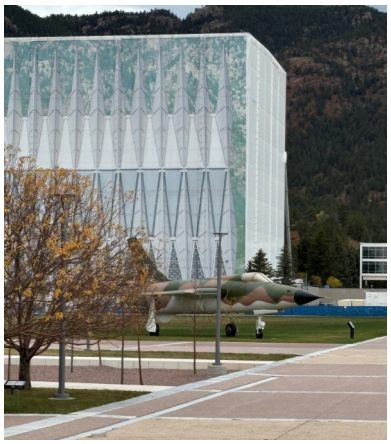


Read his full address on "**Our Theory of Victory**." [DMB]

USAFA Cover Up: The Chapel Under Wraps

Since 2019, the Cadet Chapel has been in a "box" undergoing significant and overdue renovations. Many cadets, past and present, have never seen what it looks like, much less been inside. So, to solve that issue, contractors recently covered the "box" with a facimile of the Chapel. The left picture shows the canvas going up. The picture on the right is the finished product. What do you think?





AIR FORCE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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SAVE THE DATE:
15 APRIL 2027



AFHF ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM, UDVAR-HAZY CENTER

1830-2230, formal attire encouraged, details and awardee list to follow in January

Join AFHF as we celebrate the 85th anniversary of the Doolittle Raid and the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the USAF as a separate service.

The AFHF awards banquet is a long-standing tradition of honoring the finest individuals and the most outstanding units in the USAF and USSF. Former DFH'ers were well represented at the 2026 banquet.

80's Ladies

2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the entrance of the first class of women to the USAF Academy. To celebrate this event, members of the class have developed a podcast—"80s Ladies and Beyond." Each episode consists of an interview with a member of the class (both men and women are planned to contribute) who discuss their experiences as cadets and highlight how those experiences influenced their careers in the USAF and beyond. Follow these links to enjoy "80s Ladies and Beyond:" **PODCAST; TRAILER**

The Journal of the Air Force Historical Foundation recently published an excellent article by Karen Wilhelm (USAF, 80). Karen Wilhelm, Ph.D., served nearly 29 years in the USAF beginning as an enlisted avionics technician. She graduated from the Air Force Academy in 1980 as a member of the first class to which women were admitted, with a B.S. in military history. After retiring in 2007, she earned her doctorate in liberal studies from Georgetown University where her thesis examined the nature of mobilizing for war in the 21st century from a US perspective. She has written articles for both the *Air Force Journal of Logistics* and *Airpower Journal* and taught at the George Mason Schar School of Policy and Government. She is currently researching the history of the integration of women at the Academy, from which this article is drawn. Read more about Karen on page 9.

This is not the first time an article on this subject has graced our journal's pages. In 2007, an article by history major, Allison Gawlinski, was published and can be accessed at the link **here**.

Cadet Allison Gawlinski was a history major in the USAFA Class of 2007. She grew up in Manchester, Connecticut. In the summer of 2000, she studied French at the Lycée Jean Piaget in Switzerland. She graduated as a scholar from Manchester High School in 2002. Ms. Gawlinski is an active member of the Civil Air Patrol, where she earned the Earhart Award as a cadet, and was cadet of the year for the Connecticut Wing in 2002. Prior to entering the United States Air Force Academy, she attended Northwestern Preparatory School on a Falcon Foundation Scholarship. Cadet Gawlinski participated in the Academy Exchange program in the spring of 2006, went to school at the United States Naval Academy for that semester, and interned in the Air Force Historical Office at Bolling AFB, in Washington, D.C.

Gone But Not Forgotten
E. Paul Semmens
4 September1946 - 11 November 2024





DFH has only recently learned of the death of retired Army Col E. Paul Semmens, who taught in DFH from 1977 to 1980, at Fort Payne, Alabama, in late 2024.

A graduate of St. Mary's High School in Colorado Springs, he received his BA and MA in history from Colorado State University. He was commissioned in the Air Defense Artillery in 1968. He rose through that branch to command a battalion of the 52nd ADA Regiment in Georgia, the 10th ADA Brigade in Darmstadt, Germany, and US Army Space in Colorado Springs.

He excelled as an instructor, trainer, and mentor – at USAFA, the Air Defense Artillery School at Fort Bliss, and the National Training Center at Fort Irwin. After he retired from the Army, he was President of PRIMA Enterprises, Inc. and Imprimis, Inc, training national and global missile defense forces and THAAD officers and soldiers until he again retired in 2016. A lifelong Catholic, he bicycled the Camino de Santiago in Spain. For a full obituary go here. [DMB]

A Day of Giving
1 December 2026

The Academy Foundation is conducting their annual giving day on Tuesday, 1 December 2026. As you may know, cadet activities and research are no longer funded, which presents us with an opportunity to help. For example, each year cadet history majors are given the opportunity to fire period weapons. The activity costs approximately $2,500. Last year the DFHAA was able to provide the funds for this activity. Please consider donating again this year to the general department fund. Here are the steps to donate:

1. Go to this link: **Donation · United States Air Force Academy · Give Campus**. Click on the "Make a Gift" button.

2. At the top of the page, choose "One Time" or "Recurring" and either choose an amount or type in an amount you want to give.

3. Click on the "Search or Browse Other Opportunities."

4. Scroll down and click on "Academics."

5. Scroll down to "History Department Fund." Fill in your personal information as requested.

6. Payment options are at the bottom of the page.

Let us know if you have questions.

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The Air Force Academy Foundation (AFAF) accepts gifts for DFH. The AFAF is the organization "singularly charged with this abiding stewardship of donated funds" in support of the Academy's mission, providing margins of excellence beyond what federal funding can achieve. If you're interested in giving to DFH through the AFAF, visit their home page at this **link**. Then click on the **"Give Now"** button in the upper right-hand portion of the homepage. Scroll down to **"Other Giving Opportunities."** In the drop-down menu, click on **"Academics"** and scroll down to **"History Department Fund."** Or write to them at: **Air Force Academy Foundation, 3116 Academy Drive, USAF Academy, CO 80840-4475, (719) 472-0300.**



DFHAA Reunion 2027!
12-14 October

The dates are set for next year's reunion! We are planning and creating the itinerary for this biennial event. Our goal is to provide a space for us to come together and renew old ties and make new friends. As with our last reunion, we will book rooms at the Antlers Hotel downtown Colorado Springs. It is a lovely facility with plenty of room for us to spread out. The food was excellent and the staff very accomodating. Of course, being downtown has its perks too as some of our favorite old haunts are still there and the city is walkable. We can't promise that the weather will be wonderful, but October in the Springs is always nice (even when it snows).

In addition to a visit to Colorado Springs, you will have a chance to spend time with current members of the department and link up with friends you may not have seen in a long time.

Although the agenda hasn't been created yet, we will share it with you as it shapes up. For now, mark your calendars!

