

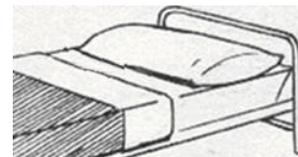
## Early History – Donald White



In 1954, while stationed at Seoul City AFB K-16, I got orders returning me stateside to Clinton County AFB in Wilmington, Ohio. A co-worker two tents from me lived in Columbus so I inquired about this base. He said he had driven through that area several times and there was no base there. I said the Air Force says there is a base and they are sending me there. After a thirty day leave back home, I boarded a Greyhound bus in Champaign, Illinois headed to Wilmington, Ohio on New Year's Eve. I stepped off the bus in dress blues with my duffel bag onto a dark and deserted street. Wondering what to do next. I noticed a small lit sign about a block away saying Sims Cab. Hoped it was open so I hiked down there. Opened the door and the guy behind the counter was a little startled to see a military man at that late hour. I told him I needed to be transported to Clinton County Air Force Base. He seemed to be a little puzzled about the name, but said there were some airplanes at the edge of town. I said "Okay, take me there".



On the way, I could see a rotating beacon, a good sign. Arrived at the entry post which was the size of a large phone booth. On a tall stool, sound asleep was a staff sergeant. The cab's horn woke him up. I handed the sergeant a copy of my orders out the cab window. He said first sergeant Gibbs had told him there was a new airman coming. He gave my driver directions to the barracks and said I would need to go across the street to the storage quonset hut and get my bedding. Driving through all those old WWII wooden buildings, I thought this base is "rinky-dink", but was impressed that they knew I was coming. The barracks was a wooden floored open bay with about a dozen guys in old metal beds wheezing, snoring and babbling. I decided to forget the bedding, flipped down the folded mattress. Took off my jacket, tie and shoes and retired for the night. When I woke up, two early risers were standing at the end of my bed staring at me. I quickly explained I had arrived early morning and was there on re-assignment from Korea.



They invited me to join them for breakfast at the mess hall. During our conversation they were curious how Korea was and what I did in Korea. I told them that I had graduated from A&E school at Sheppard AFB, Texas, and took a B-26 specialist course that turned out to be in demand in Korea, so I was sent there. My unit had three B-26's - one had speakers in the bomb bay assigned to psychological warfare and the other two planes were used to drop supplies to South Korean intelligence agents working in the fields. None were armed. The speaker plane had a Korean woman on a microphone in the rear gunner compartment. Her messages drew so much ground fire and fear of injury that they changed to a tape instead of a live person. After about thirty days on the flight line, an opening came up for a flight mechanic on the B-26. Always wanting to fly, I applied and got it. There was



also an ulterior motive for taking this assignment - if you flew seventy-five missions you could return stateside which would cancel the one year requirement. On B-26 missions, I would ride right seat single control to monitor the engines so the pilot could maintain the radio, watch for enemy aircraft and spot the small

bonfires the Korean agents would build on the ground for the drop zone. This required early morning and late night flights. With a shortage of flight mechanics. My flight chief said I would be trained on the C-47. C-47s were used for flying flare and leaflet missions. The C-47 had a chute like a stovepipe sticking through the fuselage that allowed the parachute flare to slide out. Young Korean men, hired by the Defense Department handled the flares. The Army would call for illumination if the enemy was advancing in the dark. Leaflets were in a



parachute pack with an explosive. After the pack slid out, the explosive would detonate allowing the leaflets to drift for miles. There was a joke from the Army thanking us for a sanitary wiping paper out in the field since there was always one within arm's reach. I'm sure they were right since we dropped a ton of them. One of the leaflets dropped could be used by an enemy combatant, wanting to defect, by holding it up approaching front lines to assure him safe passage to a detention center. I thought with the combination of missions, I would be going stateside in about ninety days. They signed the armistice the day after my fiftieth mission. All missions were canceled and I was stuck for the full year. But still alive and well.

And now there I was sharing breakfast hopefully with new friends and a new assignment in the 2252 Air Reserve Flying Center under Continental Air Command which included the Civil Air Patrol. At that time the base was under active Air Force control. I think there were six C-46 aircraft on the flight line.



Working with reserve officers and airmen would be a new duty and a new experience and I was ready. That day I could never imagine that little base could affect my life with events and relationships that are still here today, but it did.

Senior MSgt Retired  
Donald White