



THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC



**SECAF/CSAF Letter to Airmen: Air Force Heritage**

**October 5, 2006**

To the Airmen of the United States Air Force

Just over 100 years ago, American inventors from Dayton, Ohio, ushered in the era of manned flight. Since then, adaptive and flexible Airmen in uniform have continued to innovate, pushing the limits of imagination and technology to dominate the Air, Space, and now Cyberspace, in an unrelenting quest to broaden our knowledge, expand our horizons, and ensure our nation's security. The United States Air Force's Air, Space, and Cyberspace power give our nation unprecedented and unparalleled military options - options no other nation has ever had. We have truly become something amazing.

Nearly sixty years ago, President Harry Truman signed the National Security Act and on September 18, 1947 the United States Air Force became an independent service. This year, we commemorate the 60th Anniversary of our proud Service - born of revolutionary ideas, forged in combat, and proven through decades of progress and achievement. In doing so, we pause to reflect on our remarkable heritage, reaffirm our commitment to today's fight, and resolve to continually expand our reach toward our limitless horizons.

We have every reason to be proud when we reflect on our remarkable heritage. We've been led by innovative air power pioneers who overcame dangerous times, daunting challenges and terrible enemies. The list of our great captains goes on and on: Billy Mitchell, Hap Arnold, Tooey Spaatz, Curtis LeMay and Bennie Schriever come immediately to mind. Yet not all our air power heroes are household names. Over 54,000 courageous Airmen have made the ultimate sacrifice in battle while serving our nation; still tens of thousands more bear the physical and emotional scars of our years of combat. It's fitting, then, that on October 14th, 2006, we will dedicate a long overdue Air Force Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, honoring the dedication, sacrifice and accomplishments of these courageous air and space power pioneers and warriors. This inspiring monument overlooking Washington, D.C., also pays tribute to the millions of Americans who have served in the world's finest Air Force, its predecessor organizations, the 700,000 Airmen who serve today across our Total Force, and the millions yet to serve.

As we remember, we must also reaffirm our commitment to our Core Values - Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do - which are the bedrock upon which we operate and build our future. We must also resolve to reinvigorate our Air, Space and Cyberspace capabilities. So even while we're engaged in the current Long War, we're transforming ourselves into an information age force that will be able to dominate across our domains and have dislocating effects at all levels of war in this relatively new century. We're building on our history and soaring toward our horizon.

September 18th, 2006 marked the 59th birthday of the United States Air Force and the dedication of the Air Force Memorial will kick off our yearlong commemoration of six decades of global Air and Space Power. This year more than ever, let's embrace the fact that our boundless future builds on our glorious past and pay homage to the connection between the monumental achievements of America's pioneering Airmen and today's innovative war fighters. We remain amazed at today's Airmen and at the Air Force we have become. Thank you for what you do every day for our Air Force and our great nation!



  
Michael W. Wynne  
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