

The United States Air Force Heritage of America Band



The United States Air Force Heritage of America Band has a rich history of fostering our national heritage, building and sustaining American patriotism, and enhancing the *esprit de corps* in the United States Air Force. It was one of the original Army Air Corps bands created by order of the Secretary of War on October 1, 1941. Named the Air Force Band at Barksdale Field, Louisiana, the group was awarded the American Theater Campaign ribbon for its service during World War II.

In June 1946, after a short stay at Brooks Field, Texas, the band moved to Langley Air Force Base, Virginia and began to have an immediate impact on the musical life of the East Coast. The renamed Tactical Air Command Band provided excellence in military music throughout the Mid-Atlantic region for the next 40 years, even producing its own local television show. Some of its more notable audiences have included the Queen of England, the President of France, the Shah of Iran, and several U.S. presidents.

The unit consists of 61 active-duty personnel who are assigned to two primary ensembles, the Concert Band and the Blue Aces popular music ensemble. Within the Concert Band there are several sub-groups, to include the

Rhythm in Blue Jazz Ensemble, the Heritage Brass Quintet, the Tradewinds and Langley Winds woodwind quintets, the American Clarinet Quartet, the Heritage Aire Celtic Ensemble, and the Heritage of America Dixie Players. Each year, the band's components travel over 30,000 miles, performing an average of 500 times for more than one million people throughout an six state region from Pennsylvania to South Carolina.

Renamed the United States Air Force Heritage of America Band in 1997, the unit remains dedicated to the highest musical standards. Its exceptional performances and more than fifty recordings have won the band worldwide acclaim and a lengthy list of awards, including four Colonel George S. Howard Citations of Musical Excellence for Military Concert Bands, eight Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, three Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards, North Carolina's Order of the Long Leaf Pine, and numerous Mayoral proclamations. Under the leadership of its commander and conductor, Major Douglas Monroe, the USAF Heritage of America Band will remain at the forefront of preserving and enriching America's musical heritage into the 21st century.



COMMANDER

MAJOR DOUGLAS MONROE

Commander/Conductor

Major Douglas Monroe is the Commander of the United States Air Force Heritage of America Band, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. He oversees the operation and administration of the sixty-member squadron, which includes eight different musical ensembles. He is responsible for supporting Air Combat Command, six active duty Air Force wings, three Air Force Reserve wings, and the communities in a six state region from South Carolina to Pennsylvania.

A native of Livonia, Michigan, he began his musical studies at the Interlochen Arts Academy, receiving his high school diploma in 1981. While at Interlochen, he was selected as one of two representatives from his state to join the McDonald's All-American High School Band. He completed his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education and Clarinet Performance at Michigan State University and earned his Master of Music degree in Clarinet Performance from Arizona State University. Major Monroe also studied at the Manhattan School of Music, The Ohio State University, and attended the Aspen Music Festival.

After two years as principal clarinetist with the Arizona Opera Orchestra, Major Monroe entered the enlisted ranks of the military as a clarinetist with The United States Army Field Band in Washington, D.C. While with the Army Field Band, he appeared frequently as a soloist, arranged music performed by the ensemble, and appeared as a guest conductor on many recital series concerts.

Following a competitive audition, the USAF accepted Major Monroe as a band officer. He began his first assignment as the Deputy Commander of the USAF Air Combat Command Heritage of America Band at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, in June of 1992. After attending Squadron Officers School in 1996, he served as the Deputy Commander of the United States Air Forces in Europe Band at Sembach Air Base, Germany. At Sembach, he was the Officer in Charge of the internationally renowned "Ambassadors" jazz ensemble - the band that Major Glenn Miller led during World War II. Major Monroe led the "Ambassadors" on numerous diplomatic and community relations missions for the USAFE Commander. In November of 1998, Major Monroe was appointed as Commander of the USAF Band of the Golden West at Travis Air Force Base, California. During his tenure at Travis, he expanded the band's mission to include five Air Force Reserve Command wings while continuing aggressive support of the nine active duty wings in the band's geographic area of responsibility. Based on his success there, General Hal M. Hornburg, ACC Commander, chose Major Monroe to return to Langley AFB and assume command of the USAF Heritage of America Band, beginning in July of 2004.

Major Monroe has led performances for several distinguished officials including Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush; German Chancellor Helmut Kohl; and American Ambassadors to the United Kingdom,



Germany, France, Belgium, and Italy. Additionally, he has conducted several performances for American servicemen at forward-deployed locations in Bosnia and Turkey. He has performed in many of the world's finest concert halls including New York's famed Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C., the historic Royal Albert Hall in London, the Schauspielhaus in Berlin, and the Plzen Opera House in the Czech Republic.

Major Monroe's military decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Air Force Commendation Medal with one oak leaf cluster, the Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster, and the Army Commendation Medal. He was also named the 2002 Air Force Band Officer of the Year.