MI-24 “HIND”
ON DISPLAY WITH THE MUSEUM’S COLD WAR EXHIBIT
North Korean MiG-15 pilot, Lt. No Kum-Sok, following his defection to the United States, graduated from the University of Delaware, with degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering. He anglicized his name to Kenneth H. Rowe, married an émigré from Kaesong, North Korea, raised two sons and a daughter, and he became a US citizen. During his US career, he worked as an aeronautical engineer for Grumman, Boeing, Pan Am, General Dynamics, General Motors, General Electric, Lockheed, DuPont, and Westinghouse.

In 1996, he wrote and published a book, “A MiG-15 to Freedom”, about his defection and previous life in North Korea. He retired in 2000 after working 17 years as an aeronautical engineering professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Rowe currently lives in Daytona Beach, Florida. He says he never second-guessed his decision to escape from North Korea and make a new life for himself in the US.

The topic theme for this month is related to the Korean War and the armistice on July 27, 1953. The Korean War and its hostilities killed over 2.5 million people and is memorialized at the museum with a unique diorama portraying Kimpo Air Base (K-14) that was located on the western edge of Seoul, South Korea. Kimpo was home to F-86 jet fighters that daily engaged North Korean aircraft. This diorama represents an event at Kimpo on the morning of September 21, 1953.

For Lt. No Kum-Sok, a 21-year old, elite North Korean Air Force MiG pilot, the dawn heralded anything but just another day. As he poured over operational orders and charts, his mind was racing. Today would be the day he would take his airplane, Russia's finest and most secret jet fighter, the MiG-15bis, to the South and defect.

American radar near Kimpo Air Base had been shut down temporarily that morning for routine maintenance. Lt. No landed downwind on the runway, almost hitting an F-86 Sabrejet landing at the same time from the opposite direction. Had he tried to land in the right direction, he would have been spotted and shot down.

The ultimate prize was now in hand -- America's first MiG, primed and ready for study and evaluation. Within the day, Lt. No's MiG was gone. A cargo plane was brought in to fly it to Okinawa for testing. That plane is now on display at the National Museum of the USAF, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH. Our museum’s MiG-15 has been restored with painting and markings of the original MiG. Now paired with an F-86, the diorama, along with other airfield articles and a “manufactured” Quonset hut, visually communicates display authenticity.

This diorama exhibit provided an excellent opportunity in 2007 for Ken Rowe (Lt. No) to reunite with Birmingham native, Sgt. Tom Feltman. As former adversaries, they had become friends via the Internet.
During the extended visit of the lead plane of the D-Day invasion 75 years ago, many local schools** had the opportunity to attend educational sessions involving this historic World War II event and learn more about the impact D-Day had on the history of the world.

Shown above are students from the Bluff Park Elementary School participating in Take Flight Day!

**Many students had the opportunity to tour the actual aircraft that led the aerial invasion on D-Day some 75 years ago. Shown here are students from the Central Park Elementary School.

Ages: 8 - 13
8:45am - 3:30pm
July 22nd - July 26th

To register for camp or to learn more about this educational opportunity, please visit our website
During the early 1960s, it became apparent to the Soviets that the trend towards battlefield mobility would result in the creation of flying infantry fighting vehicles, which could be used to perform both fire support and infantry transport missions. The first expression of this concept was a mock-up that was designated V-24 based on another project, the V-22 utility helicopter, which itself never flew. The V-24 had an infantry compartment that could hold eight troops sitting back to back, and a set of small wings positioned to the top rear of the passenger cabin, capable of holding up to six missiles or rockets and a twin-barreled GSh23L cannon fixed to the landing skid.

The design was opposed by several senior members of the armed forces, who believed that conventional weapons were a better use of resources. Despite the opposition, M. L. Mil, founder and general designer of the Mil Moscow Helicopter Plant, persuaded an expert panel to look into the matter. While the panel's opinions were mixed, a request for proposals for a battlefield support helicopter was issued. The development of attack helicopters and gunships by the US Army during the Vietnam War fostered support for the Mi-24.

A directive was issued on May 6, 1968 to proceed with development of the twin-engine design. Work proceeded under Mil until his death in 1970. A full scale mock-up of the design was reviewed and approved in February 1969. Flight tests with a prototype began in September 1969 and the first free flight was conducted on Sept. 19, 1969. A second prototype was built, followed by a test batch of ten helicopters. Acceptance testing for the design began in June 1970, continuing for 18 months. Design changes were made until the Mi-24A entered production in 1970, obtaining its initial operating capability in 1971 and was officially accepted into the state arsenal in 1972.

Following completion of the Mi-24, development began on a unique attack helicopter with transport capability. The export version of the Mi-24 was called the Mi-25.

In October 2007, the Russian Air Force announced it would replace its Mi-24 fleet with Mi-28Ns and Ka-52s by 2015.

**A CLOSER LOOK AT THE MI-24 NOW ON DISPLAY AT THE SMF**

The museum's Mi-24 “Hind-D” attack helicopter was built in Russia and flown by the Libyan Arab Republic Air Force. It was abandoned at a remote location in Chad during a series of sporadic clashes from 1978 to 1987 between Libyan and Chadian forces.

In June of 1988, a daring nighttime mission with 2 - MH-47D helicopters from the US Army 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment recovered the abandoned Mi-24 and flew it to a waiting USAF C-5 “Galaxy”. After 67 hours in-country, the mission was a complete and an unmitigated success.

The Mi-24 arrived at Ft. Rucker, Alabama on June 16, 1988 and it was operated and evaluated by the military prior to its current “assignment” at the Southern Museum of Flight.