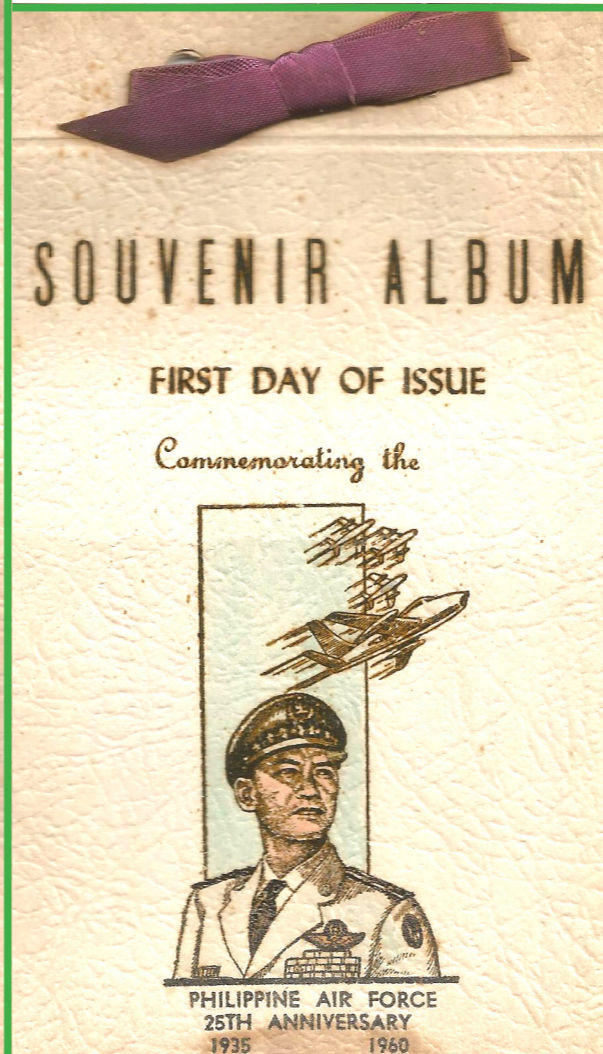


**May 2, 1960**  
**25<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE PHILIPPINE AIRFORCE**



**TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (1935 - 1960)**

The birth of the Philippine Air Force is today celebrated and commemorated with special stamps issued by the Bureau of Posts. Exactly twenty-five years ago, Lt. William L. Lee (now a Brigadier General), popularly known as the "Father of the PAF," made the first flight on the first aircraft bearing the Philippine Army Air Corps insignia on May 2, 1935, thus marking the foundation day of the Philippine Air Force.

The air defense of the country was originally in the hands of the Philippine Air Service, created in 1921, with three JN-4 biplanes manned by pilots from the Philippine Constabulary and Philippine National Guard. Failure of the Philippine Legislature to appropriate funds for its operations, however, caused its disbandment in 1922.

Thirteen years later, Capt. R.L. Maughan, aviation technical adviser to Gov. Gen. Frank Murphy, succeeded in passing Act No. 4194, authorizing the creation of an air unit in the Philippine Constabulary with an appropriation of P519,000.00.

With a strength of 116-men, based in San Juan del Monte, the Philippine Constabulary Air Corps, later called Philippine Army Air Corps, was created on January 2, 1935, under General Order No. 1, issued by then PC Brig. Gen. Basilio Valdes. This was followed by the foundation day on May 2, 1935. The technical advisers of the PAAC were Capt. Ivan Procter USA Air Corps, followed by Lt. William L. Lee and later by Capt. Mark Lewis in 1938.

The need for training schools for pilots was fulfilled in 1937 by the creation of the Tactical and Service Companies commanded by Lt. Basilio Fernando (Fernando Air Base in Lipa City was named after him) and Lt. Mariano Reyes, at Zablán Field near Camp Murphy, using Stearn 73-L-3 Primary Trainers. This was expanded to other places; the Observation Squadron to Clark Field and later to Lahug Field, Cebu; the Advanced Flying School under Lt. Pelagio Cruz and 10th Bombardment Squadron under Lt. Pedro Q. Molina to Maniquis Field, Nueva Ecija.

After its induction into the USAFFE by Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the PAAC played a major part in the second world war. Basa Air Base in Pampanga held the memory of the first Fili-

pino pilot casualty, ..... Lt. Cesar Basa. Rather than bow to the Japanese, a large number of the PAAC survivors joined the guerilla units.

Liberation found the PAAC in March 1948, on equal footing with its sister services as a major command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and renamed the Philippine Air Force, with Col. Edwin Andrews as Commander. Col. Eustacio Orobia, Brig. Gen. Pelagio Cruz, the late Brig. Gen. Benito Ebuén and Brig. Gen. Pedro Q. Molina have subsequently headed the PAF, with the last as the incumbent chief.

While the main responsibility of the PAF is to provide a strong, effective air defense of the country, it also renders support to other AFP major services and assists in the socio-economic program of the government.

The air mail stamps issued to commemorate its 25th anniversary, features the first plane used by the PAF flying below the modern saber-jet, at 10 and 20 centavos denominations, colors red and blue respectively. The stamps were designed by Mr. Nemesio Dimanlig, Jr., philatelic designer of the Bureau of Posts.

