

# building spang

Story by  
Andrew Stamer

**I**n the Eifel region of Germany, sits Spangdahlem Air Force Base, and it is growing. In a landmark case, land has been added on both sides of the base in order to substitute all of the capability of Rhein-Main Air Force Base to both Ramstein and Spangdahlem Air Force Bases.

Europe District's construction includes a new fire station and troop processing center on the runway's south side, and many other projects on the northwestern part of the base.

The Northwest Expansion, as it is called, is one part of this new addition to the base. This expansion comes from approximately 125 acres that was acquired through the German Government, said Udo Stürmer, engineering flight commander, 52nd Civil Engineer Squadron at Spangdahlem. Another 125 acres were also added to the southern portion of the base.

To obtain this land, the base had to explain and justify a need for more land to the German Government, said Stürmer, who is a local national employee who has been at Spangdahlem for approximately 10 years.

And now that the land has been turned over to the Air Force by the German Government it is something that Spangdahlem can use and build on, said Stürmer.

"In the future, we are trying to become even bigger," he said.

Spangdahlem was also able to acquire the land because of the relationship with the

surrounding communities.

"We have a great relationship with the surrounding communities," said Stürmer. "You hear the complaints, but it is just the minority, the majority loves the military presence here. Not only because they leave their money here, there's also a lot of friendship to that."

Approximately €160,000 is being spent every day, he said. All of this is to allow for big planes, such as C-17s and C-5s, to gas and go.

While the Corps is actively involved in building on both sides of the base, most of its work is being performed in the Northwest Expansion.

What's planned for this area is a new hospital, dormitories, transit quarters, fitness center, chapel and a gas station, said John Thoele, construction and quality assurance representative, Europe District.

"It's logical that what you do first is your infrastructure," said Thoele, which includes the sewer and storm lines, high pressure lines for fire



Photo by Andrew Stamer

**John Thoele, construction and quality assurance representative, shows off some of the new kitchen hardware in Spangdahlem's Club Eifel.**

hydrants and electrical substations.

Trees have even been planted along the newly paved roads.

"We are trying to do something to give it a nice view and to make it a nice environment here, for our military population," said Stürmer.

And since the infrastructure has been laid, the Corps has been able to work on their newest projects on the new land, which include new roads, a guard house and visitor center, both of which will be at the new main entrance to the base.

As the contractors worked to put on the final coats of paint, light fixtures, and flooring, the Air Force soon had the first Corps project on the Northwest Expansion delivered to them, just in time for the holidays.

Working with the civil engineers from Spangdahlem, Europe District was able to help get Club Eifel, which is a new collocated club for officers and enlisted personnel, finished in late October.

"Nobody believed that the club was going to be done by the end of October, including myself," said Stürmer. "But, I think that was the good thing that everybody questioned ... I think if we had not asked the question at each and every meeting with all of our partners, that it would not have happened."

The new club is part Officers' Club and part Enlisted Club, but is more than just a



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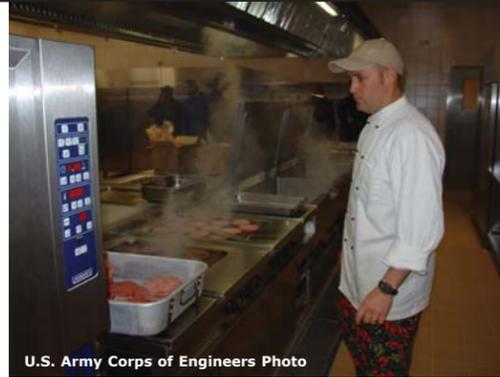
**A contractor lays tile in the foyer of Club Eifel. Final touches are also being done throughout much of the club which houses casual dining, an Officer's Club, an Enlisted Club, a slot machine room, a banquet hall and a sports bar.**

# AIR SUPPORT



Before opening Club Eifel at Spangdahlem Air Force Base, Germany, the Corps tested the kitchen hardware (top, right). John Thoele (bottom, right) shows the new club's accents such as the woodwork on the walls and the floor tiling.

Photo by Andrew Stamer



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Photo



Photo by Andrew Stamer

John Moreno (top, left), project engineer, Europe District, watches as contractors put a sports-themed restaurant together. John Thoele (bottom, left) looks at the restaurant as the finishing touches are being completed.



Photo by Andrew Stamer

watering hole for the ranks.

This is a grand club, which will be used for grand occasions, such as balls, with a capacity to hold more than 400 people in the ballroom alone. There is also a slot machine room, casual dining area, hair salon, and themed sports bar.

Until about a year and a half ago, the base had separate clubs for officers and enlisted personnel. These were consolidated in anticipation of the move to the collocated club, said Fred McKenney, services business operations flight chief, 52nd Services Squadron.

Initially consolidating the two clubs into one

before the move into the collocated club worked because it made it easier to make the move into the new building, said McKenney.

In comparison between the old clubs, McKenney said it is like night and day.

"We went through a typical 20- to 30-year-old facility to a state-of-the-art facility, which incorporated a lot of computerized lighting and a built in music system," McKenney said. There are also multiple television sets in the bars.

The construction of the club is also going to improve the quality of life for Airmen.

McKenney had taken many of Spangdahlem's new Airmen to the club before it was finished, and all of them were impressed.

"Every one of them joined the club," said McKenney. "You saw their eyes light up when they saw where they were going to be able to go."

For McKenney, who has 30 years of experience in this type of work, he believes this is "one of the finest facilities in the Air Force."

With any project, to go from a hole in the ground to one of the finest in the Air Force, takes a lot of cooperation from the key players. All of whom had to partner up as a team and overcome challenges.

The Corps of Engineers, the German Government, U.S. Air Force Europe, and the base civil engineers still meet on a monthly basis to make sure that any problems they may face are ironed out early. This is to ensure there is no delay in a project's completion. It also makes everyone

involved aware if a problem is expected, so it's not a surprise, said Stürmer.

These meetings are useful for the continuous planning and work being done now and in the base's future. They have also proved useful, because it was these scheduled meeting with all the team members that led directly to the timely delivery of the collocated club.

*"One of the finest facilities in the Air Force."*

"We didn't all agree all of the time, and we didn't always like what we heard," said McKenney

about the club. "But at the end of the day we made it through to see the completion of this fantastic facility."

From the civil engineers side of the house, the feeling about the club remains consistent. "Look at the club. It speaks for itself," Stürmer said.



Photo by Andrew Stamer

John Thoele points out the new visitor center (left, top) and the troop processing center (right). The new main gate, with the latest in force protection requirements, is also currently under construction.



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