

NEMOC Plaque and Anchor Celebrates the Commands 47 Years of History

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NAVSTA Rota's NEMOC closed its doors in 2006 as part of the Navy's realignment of duties and consolidation of weather services to Sembach, Germany.

The anchor used to be on the front lawn of the NEMOC building – now the U.S. Air Force 521st Air Mobility Operations Group building – when Michael Gilroy noticed that it had been relocated and served no significance to the Air Force.

"I thought it would be a nice gesture to commemorate the anchor by relocating it," said Gilroy. He also worked to have a plaque added to honor those who served at the command during its 47 years on NAVSTA Rota, Spain.

As an aerographer's mate, Gilroy received his first assignment to Rota in 1974 as a 2nd class petty officer after completing forecasting school. He advanced to the rank of chief before being commissioned through the limited duty officer program. He was able to return to Rota as the department head of a mobile unit from 1988-1991.

Gilroy has since traveled back and forth between Rota where he still owns an apartment. The memories of the command as well as the friendships made here – both within the military and with the locals – is what gave Gilroy this idea.

"That is one of the many wonderful reasons why doing this (installing the anchor and plaque) was important to me," he said. "The friendships and relationships...both with people I served with and knew through the military but more importantly the people I've met here in Spain."

While Gilroy provided the inspiration, Command Master Chief Gary Rosenbaum, CMC for Commander, Task Force (CTF) 65 and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 60, agreed to assist in the logistics of the project. In essence, Gilroy had the idea and Rosenbaum had the contacts to make it happen.

"As a former Aerographer's Mate, I used to come TAD (temporary assigned duty) to NEMOC for training," Rosenbaum explained. "We are a small community and we remain in communication with each other whether we served together or not."

Additionally, Rosenbaum hopes that this project will not only serve as a dedication to those who were stationed at NEMOC or within the meteorological field, but also allow the greater Rota community to connect with the history of the base.

"This is really dedicated to everybody that served in the meteorological and oceanographic community here in Rota, Spain," said Gilroy. "That's the reason for this anchor and plaque."