

Annual Excursion: Trip to AIDC & CCK Air Force Base

We headed south to Taichung on the 5th of November, a beautiful charming autumn day for our annual excursion. The spectacular day-long program was held at Taiwan's renowned and principal aircraft manufacturing company, 漢翔 (The Aerospace Industrial Development Corporation, AIDC).

After a comprehensive welcoming orientation, professional engineers guided us through two of the manufacturing facilities in AIDC: one produced civil aircrafts and engines, and the other produced specialized Indigenous Defense Fighters (IDF, 經國號戰機) and Wind Chasers (追風機, ASTRA). The productions impressively continued throughout our visit.

Following the tour, we were invited by the AIDC Chairman and his wife for a luncheon at the AIDC club where they presented a pleasant singing performance. One of our ladies also sang splendidly after. Lunch was equally wonderful, with delicate and delicious dishes such as a slow-cooked chicken soup and a Hunan-style steamed chili fish. It was a lovely meal and we all enjoyed our time, making it hard to say good-bye to the warm and generous welcome at AIDC.

A trip to the Ching-Chuan-Kang Air Force Base (CCK, 清泉崗空軍基地) followed our visit to the AIDC. We were awestruck by the size of the enormous air force base that equaled to 2000 football fields and held accommodations, convenience stores, church, and golf courses. The CCK visit also began with a lovely orientation in the conference room where the club received a framed photograph of flying IDF aircrafts and each member received a medal as gifts.

We had the chance to visit both the well curated The US Air Force in Ching Chuan Kang AFB Footprint Museum (美軍足跡館) and the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing ROCAF Museum (空軍第三戰術戰鬥機聯隊隊史館) at the base. This gave us insight into the history the CCK, its aircraft production and the life the US military held there. We were informed by the beautifully conserved collection that included equipment, uniforms, photographs and church remains.

Our rich program ended with a visit to taxiway where two IDF aircrafts stood for us to see and take photos. It was in the late afternoon, just before the sunset. The windy weather gave us a nice breath of fresh air, and the sudden gush of wind almost felt like flying.

Many thanks to Club Board Director Alice King and the pre-tour group of our Club President Vivienne Shen, who organized such a great visit for us to these unique and exclusive places. Once again, our special thanks to the AIDC and CCK for their hospitality, professionalism and of course, their generosity in sharing their precious time. The shared knowledge, experiences and memories made our trip extremely valuable.

By Yolanda Chen